Haggada thoughts 5779

**Pesach Preparation -** **Rav Moshe Landau ztl.[[1]](#footnote-1)** noted that the month of Nisan is a month of preparation, a month of work. The important part of the work is to change, to turn from being ‘slaves of Pharaoh’ to being servants of HaShem. Pharaoh is the Evil Inclination. It is everything that enslaves us. Our work is to break free from it. In Hassidism they say that the general redemption needs a prelude of a personal redemption of each and every person. That is, every one should prepare oneself, to be redeemed from all the elements that hinder his life. This is our work now: to prepare, to arrive at Leil HaSeder ready, with the proper emotions.

**STORY from Rav Dovid Lau–** **Rav Yisrael Meir Lau** Shlita once led a seder for families who had lost a loved one in the Independence War and also who had lost someone in Yom Kippur War. The seder was very difficult, many tears and crying, very few participated. Finally Rav Yisrael Meir Lau got up and said we say דישראל בארעא הבאה לשנה הכא השתא . There are some who want to be here but can’t, like those trapped in the Soviet Union. Then, there are those who are here, in Israel, but don’t want to come to the Seder. Today, I feel there are those we have to think that we want to come to the Seder but are no longer here with us, able to come. If we don’t join together for a Seder, we won’t have anything to invite these loved ones to. At that time, ten year old **(Rav) Dovid Lau Shlita[[2]](#footnote-2)** suggested to his father that they start singing Israeli folk songs to get everyone to start singing together – יחד גם אחים שבת נאים ומה טוב מה הנה ,and slowly the assembled all started to sing -- with sorrow yes, but everyone was finally together. The song finished and an older couple got up and said, from the time we lost our son in the ’48 war of independence we did not join a Seder…until tonight we decided to come, Thank You! Now, whenever Rav Dovid Lau is about to begin a seder, he looks around and always remembers that seder, saying to himself how thankful we have to be with what and who we have and that we are able to sit here together. To say thank you for what we have.

ורוממנו מכל לשוןYou **have raised us above all tongues** - Why is it that we have no thankgsgiving beracha for creating Lashon HaKodesh? After all, it is the language of the Malachim and is Kulo Kadosh! It is the language of Geulah -- why no mention of it in a Beracha of Hodaah? **Rav Avigdor Nebezahl[[3]](#footnote-3) Shlita** explained that there is a Beracha that effects the Kedusha of the day -- wherein we mention that Hashem raised us up and placed us before all other nations and tongues. Having the language gives us the ability to be the people who sing the praise -- the two come together and are in the Beracha.

זכר ליציאת מצרים **- Rav Schachter Shlita** would often note that it was interesting that we note that Shabbos is a זכר ליציאת מצרים because it is also a זכר למעשה בראשית. In fact what is the connection between Shabbos and יציאת מצרים anyway? He responded that in fact, the main difference between an עבד and a בן חורין is that the latter owns his time while the former does not. Being able to declare Shabbos and to sanctify it — using time properly in general— is a sign of freedom and a constant reminder of יציאת מצרים. It is no wonder that this is why kiddush introduces the Seder — off the bat we set ourselves free with the power to sanctify the time as a result of יציאת מצרים

**כרפס- Rav Yisroel Belsky ztl.[[4]](#footnote-4)** noted that calling it Karpas stands for Kol Sus Rechev Pharaoh that are dipped into the salt water, reminding us that they all drowned in the Yam Suf.

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**הא לחמא עניא**- Maggid begins with a מ (מה נשתנה and ends with a מ. **Rabbi Daniel Stein** Shlita [[5]](#footnote-5) explained that תושבפ does as well. Perhaps this is because the מ is one of those letters that requires the whole mouth to form. The message is clear — we should open our mouths to the words of Hashem fully and when we are done we should close it. How we use our speech makes all of the difference.

**כל שצריך יתי ויפסח- Rabbi Eliezer Zusha Portugal (1896-1982),** the Skulener Rebbe, was the chassidic rebbe from a small town, Sculeni, in what was then northeastern Romania (now Ukraine). Toward the end of World War II, in March of 1945, he found himself, along with other holocaust survivors and displaced persons, in the Russian-governed town of Czernovitz, Bukovina. Although Germany would not officially surrender until May 7, much of Eastern Europe had already been liberated by the Russian army.

Passover was only weeks away. Although some Passover foodstuffs might well be provided by charitable organizations, the Rebbe sought to obtain wheat that he could bake into properly-guarded and traditionally baked [*Shmurah Matzah*](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2846/jewish/Shemurah.htm). Despite the oppressive economic situation of the Jews, he was able to bake a limited number of these matzahs. He sent word to other rebbes in the region, offering each of them three matzahs.One week before Pesach, Rabbi Moshe Hager, the son of the Seret-Vizhnitzer Rebbe, came for the matzahs that had been offered to his father, Rabbi Boruch Hager. After being handed the allotted three matzahs, he said to the Skulener Rebbe: "I know that you sent word that you could give only three matzahs, but nonetheless my father, the Seret-Vizhnitzer Rebbe, told me to tell you that he must have six matzahs." The Skulener Rebbe felt that he had no choice but to honor the request, albeit reluctantly. On the day before Pesach, Rabbi Moshe returned to the Skulener Rebbe, saying "I want to return three of the matzahs to you." "But I don't understand. I thought your father absolutely had to have six matzahs." "My father said to ask whether you had saved any of the *Shmurah Matzah* for yourself?" Embarrassed, the Skulener Rebbe replied, "How could I, when so many others needed?" "My father assumed that is what you would do," explained Rabbi Moshe. "These three matzahs are for you!"

**מה נשתנה** - The concept of setting the storyline of the Seder into question and answer ztl. form is intriguing. **Rav Avraham Chaim Levin ztl**[[6]](#footnote-6). explained that in fact this is not only a Halacha but an ideal. Chazal tell us that שאילת חכם חצי תשובה which applies to the whole Torah (hence the style of Tosafos) but on the Seder night which highlights and entrenches faith within us, it is especially important and is Miakev.

**מה נשתנה** - We begin the Haggada with a series of questions based on the understanding that this is the Torah’s description of how the story is to be laid out. **Rav Mattisyahu Solomon Shlita[[7]](#footnote-7)** explains that the real goal of the seder night is to implant the foundations of faith within our future generations. To do so, we need to point out the extraordinary in the storyline. It is the extraordinary that piques the interest of the listeners and raises within them the desire to understand more. The more involved the listener is, in the storyline, the more likely that the faith and the story will become entrenched in the listener. Hence, the need for questions. Questions are a listener’s means of clarifying and acquiring ownership over information placed before them (All too often this is a major challenge in the Chinuch system of Emunah -- we expect our children to possess the information, we do not try to allow them to break it down and digest it. In that regard, we are cheating them.)

 הקהה את שיני**ו Blunt his teeth**- How does blunting his teeth make a difference? Perhaps one can suggest that when our young people feel left off from the party -- when they feel at odds with the mainstream, they are ready to split off. Hence, the Rasha’s comment “What is this job to YOU?” He does not see the point as he feels estranged from the community -- so why work? It reminds me of the approach of my late friend **Rav Moshe Gottesman z”l** [[8]](#footnote-8) who never gave up on anyone. He once told a rebellious student who never heard “I love you” from anyone in his life “No matter what you do, there is nothing you can do that will make me stop loving you.” Perhaps that lesson in Chinuch is a central one. Every Child is educable -- just need to find the right level.

**והגדת לבנך**- In Parshas Bo Hashem tells Moshe that the reason he is to go to Pharaoh and speak to him despite the hardening of his heart is so that Bnei Yisrael will speak to their future generations and that they (you) will know that I am Hashem. Truth be told the word VYadu is more grammatically correct than V’Yidatem. Why is the word V’Yidatem used? **Rav Shlomo Levenstein[[9]](#footnote-9)** quotes the **Belzer Rebbe** ztl. Who explains that when one tells a story, it is the speaker who knows it the best by the time the story is over. The **Kotzker Rebbe** recalled that when someone came to him for a Beracha in learning success for his son, the Rebbe demurred. He explained that when someone comes to ask for success for his child then the child learns to come to ask for success for the child. What needs to happen is that the child needs to see that the parent seeks success in living and learning a Torah life for himself -- THEN the child will learn that the matter is important to the parent too. Rav Levenstein adds that he remembers a certain person describing how he became truly great. He remembered previous generations working hard so that their children could learn. The children did the same for THEIR children etc. Etc. Finally, the rabbi in question decided that he realized that each of the generations was working hard for a child in the future and he decided to be that child.

יכול מר”ח - It Is interesting that from the birth of the Jewish nation we seem fascinated by the moon and our connection to it. Indeed many Gedolim have tried to explain the connection. My friend **Rav Shay Schachter Shlita** recently reminded me of that which he heard from **Hagaon Harav Asher Weiss Shlita** that we are like the moon because we continue to grow. Being the biggest is not the greatest thing. The greatest thing is to remember that יותר חשוב לגדל מלהיות גדול that one needs to be able to know being greatest isn’t as important or fulfilling as to always grow and have the ability to keep growing (one of the greatest antidotes to perfectionism by the way).

מתחילה עע”ז היו אבותינו Terach -- Why does Terach deserve any mention in our Haggada? It is amazing to consider human history. The first man, Adam, whose greatness is unfathomable, nevertheless raised Cain, the first murderer, in his home. In contrast, Terach, who was an idol worshiper, raised in his home Avraham, the founder of our nation and the one who established faith in One G-d. How could it be?

**Rav Shlomo Korach** ztl[[10]](#footnote-10) suggested that "In the home of Adam, the first man, there was a spiritual downfall. They turned to materialism and lust, to the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge. In addition, it was a home in which one does not admit the truth. When Adam and Eve were caught after the sin, they blamed each other instead of admitting the truth. When a child grows up in such an atmosphere, this is the result. In contrast, Terach worshiped idols all of his life, but at the end of his days he reached the truth. His whole life he was searching for the truth, and from a home in which people search for truth, even if they don't yet find it - an Avraham can emerge. Especially in our generation, it is important to show young people how important the truth is, in the home, admitting the truth and striving towards the right, proper things."

**ואקח את אברהם מעבר הנהר**-- Avraham is referred to as “Ivri” because he came from the other side of the river. The Midrash explains that this means that Avraham could withstand the fact that the whole world was opposed to his ideas and he still stood strong in his quest because it was truth. He was not swayed by public opinion. **Rav Michel Feinstein** ztl[[11]](#footnote-11) noted that this is why the Talmud (Taanis 10a) refers to Talmidei Chachamim as Yechidim. True Talmidei Chachamim are not swayed by the fact that “everyone feels this way” but rather by what Hashem expects of us.

**ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל** - Hashem calculated the Keitz - Practically speaking, this is a hard thing to accept for many. The passage of time makes it difficult for us not to lose hope. What about all of the generations that died during the ensuing years of the slavery? What about their Emunah and Bitachon? Where did it get THEM? **Rav Reuven Feinstein Shlita**[[12]](#footnote-12) notes that this type of a statement comes from a person who does not understand Bitachon. Bitachon does not mean that Hashem WILL save you. It means that He CAN save you. It means that you trust in Hashem’s outcome and that He does whatever is for the best -- even if YOU don’t get it that way. Even the slave or the ill or the oppressed, has many opportunities to do great things. The Baal Bitachon always knows that there is something positive to do -- s/he is aware that if s/he is still there, s/he has a purpose in Hashem’s plan and that purpose is L’Heitiv.

**וירד מצרימה אנוס**-- This is not true! Yaakov went to Mitzrayim willingly! He stated Elcha V’Ereinu B’Terem Amus. Why do we seem to state otherwise? **Rav Bernard Weinberger** ztl[[13]](#footnote-13) suggests that the Ones was that he didn’t get to leave as he wished. Anus al Pi HaDibur Vayagar Sham. He wanted only to visit Yosef and return but the will of the Divine was different and that was an Ones.

**בימים הרבים ההם - Rav Reuven Feinstein Shlita** explained that it is important not to give up on Bitachon because of the passage of time. The Gemara (Berachos 10a) notes that even if a sharp sword is on the neck of the person he should not refrain from praying for mercy. Sometimes, it is the belief in Rachamim in the tough moment that brings the Rachmanus (think Nachshon in the waters of Yam Suf). Rav Reuven adds that Bitachon does not mean that Hashem WILL save you but rather that he CAN save you. It does not mean that you will immediately be happy with the results but rather that you believe that it is His will and for the best.

**וישמע ה׳ את קולנו**- Tana D’Bei Eliyahu (Zuta end of chapter 11) explains that Hashem does not bring Geulah as a response to pain or slavery. Rather he brings it because of finding 10 Jews sit side by side and are able to learn with one another. **Rav Shmuel Wosner ztl** explains that this was the situation in Mitzrayim. Hashem mentions that he heard their cries but that he also recalled his Bris. The commentaries explain that the Bris referred to here, is the Bris of Torah. In other words, in a generation where the people do not merit it, the fact that there are groups who band together in order to study Torah and do Chessed can help the fledgling people move forward. In Mitzrayim, there were three groups -- the Reshaim who died in Chosheich. The unknowing Ovdei Avoda Zara who could’ve died if not for Hashem’s Chessed and the Tzaddikim who brought the other group back. We have the same situation today -- if we strengthen our Chessed and Torah study, we will be able to bring many back with us -- to another Geula too.

**ויציאנו ה,’ ממצרים - Rav Elyashiv Knoll[[14]](#footnote-14)** who served an incredible role as a well regarded Posek and Michaber Seforim noted that he was quite “mediocre” as a student. He attributed his success in the world of Torah to Hashem’s Chessed. Often he would note, “Why do I disclose this secret? So that we should all internalize the following message, parents regarding their children, and every person regarding himself. We never know when Ha Kadosh Baruch Hu will reveal Himself upon us. We should do all that we can, and there is no person who does not have a place in the world. The world is full of surprises, and we must be ready to lift up the Metziah, the 'catch', which will roll into our hands so that with it we will be able to make things much better for all who surround us and for the whole world."

משה רבינוCould it be that Moshe’s name is primarily absent from the Haggada story? **Ari Fuld Hy”d**[[15]](#footnote-15)explained that it is not a coincidence that Moshe Rabbenu is not mentioned in the Pesach Haggadah even once, nor is it a coincidence that we do not know where Moshe is buried. Hashem and Chazal did not want us putting Moshe at the center or worshipping him at his grave. In his last moments, Moshe teaches us an important Jewish principle: the nation and the Torah are more important than the charisma of the leader.

 ובאותות זה המטה - How are the Osos different from the Makos? **Rav Yechiel Yitzchak Perr Shlita**[[16]](#footnote-16) explained that the signs given to Moshe were primarily there knock off the hubris of the Egyptian ruler and to rebuild the spirit of the oppressed Jewish nation. The oppressed hangs onto the hope that there is an end to oppression and seeing the water from the Nile which ran clear of the blood of their children turn into blood on the land was a sign to them that what goes around comes around. The Makos demonstrated that Hashem is in control of nature. Hence, the Makos challenged the very nature that the Egyptians had assumed was commonplace and predictable.

 אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני ולא נתן לנו את התורה - What is the point? **Rav Chaim Soloveitchik**, “Rav Chaim” explains that had we gotten close to Har Sinai and not gotten the total Torah -- but gotten the 7 Mitzvos -- that would have been enough. **Rav Dovid Kav ztl**[[17]](#footnote-17). explained that there is a higher appreciation for the total context of a Mitzva. The Torah’s completeness gives meaning and purpose to each Mitzva but also within a wider goal for life. Still, receiving some of the Mitzvos without the complete context of the Torah system does have value. However, the idea of creating a context of Torah and Kedusha? This can only happen when there is a Matan Torah.

**וגם צידה לא עשו להם**- When we touch the Matzo we recall this great sacrifice that Bnei Yisrael made when leaving Mitzrayim. Rashi comments that the reward for the faith they displayed is “Kodesh Yisrael L’Hashem” (Think Yirmiyahu 2:2-3). What is the connection between Bitachon and Kedusha? **Rav Shlomo Wolbe ztl**[[18]](#footnote-18) explains that Kedusha is the process of being devoted to Hashem in an absolute manner. One dedicated to Torah is a Kadosh and one dedicated to hedone is called a Kadeish. Hashem is the ultimate Kadosh because He is separated apart from human behavior. Bnei Yisrael are to strive to be like Him by being absolutely dedicated to Hashem. Where does that dedication come from? It comes from Bitachon. When we are completely devoted to Him, raises us to the status of Kedoshim and the Matzo is the symbol that reminds us that we had attained that level once before.

לפיכך אנחנו חייבי**ן Lefichach Anachnu Chayavim** -- This section too, is part of the obligation of Rabban Gamliel. This section highlights all of the benefits not only of the physical Yetzias Mitzrayim but also the changeover in the psyche of the Jewish nation. Where they had been on the bottom, they were now on top. But when it comes to our relationship with Hashem, the story does not END when we are on top, it BEGINS at that point. The same thing happens at our Seder as well -- we don’t END Maggid with the Jews living happily ever after in the desert, WE are the next chapter in the story. WE finish this section singing the Hallel because we now sing it not only out of obligation but also out of recognition of the joy of the season. It is reminiscent of a thought expressed by the late **Rav Chaninah Herzberg**[[19]](#footnote-19) who told a tall guy, 6'5, who was that way since 8th grade “hey buddy your height is really based on how high you can lift someone not based on how many times you have to look down to them.”

 **בצאת ישראל ממצרים- Rabbi Ozer Glickman ztl.[[20]](#footnote-20)** noted the fact that a clear indication of Galus or even the Galus Mentality is nowhere more apparent than in the language that the people speak and express themselves in. He added that we tend to settle for precision in the language we know best while being aware that it developed in a cultural milieu foreign to us. That considered, as wonderful as it is to express our philosophical, legal and Halachic discussions in the language we think best, ideas, we need to recognize that English as a language does not accurately portray the Jewish experience -- and the nuance of language is lost. On the seder night we can fully appreciate the excitement the language component adds.

1. Rav Moshe Landau ztl. was the famed Rav of Bnei Brak. A recognized Talmid Chacham, he was especially noted in the field of Kashrus. In fact, his imprint gave Coca Cola the kosher standing it has in the land of Israel today. He passed just before Rosh Chodesh Nissan (25 Adar II) at the age of 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rav **David Baruch Lau** Shlita ([Hebrew](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language): דוד לאו; born 13 January 1966) is the [Ashkenazi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashkenazi_Jews) [Chief Rabbi of Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_Rabbi_of_Israel). He was appointed after achieving a majority of the vote on July 24, 2013.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Lau#cite_note-1) He previously served as the Chief Rabbi of [Modi'in-Maccabim-Re'ut](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modi%27in-Maccabim-Re%27ut), [Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel) and as the Chief Rabbi of [Shoham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoham). Rav Lau is the son of former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel Rabbi [Yisrael Meir Lau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yisrael_Meir_Lau). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl Shlita, former Chavrusa of Moreinu Harav Teitz, was a faculty member of [Yeshivat Mir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mir_Yeshiva_%28Jerusalem%29) before accepting positions at [Yeshivat HaKotel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshivat_HaKotel) and [Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshivat_Netiv_Aryeh), where he gives a weekly lecture in English to foreign students. He hosts many of those students in his home for [kiddush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kiddush) after [Shabbat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabbat) morning prayer services. Nebenzahl's scholarly works include a commentary on the [Mishnah Berurah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mishnah_Berurah), books about the laws of [Passover](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passover), [Succot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Succot), [Shavuot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shavuot), [The Three Weeks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Three_Weeks) and [Shabbat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabbat) (on the [tractate Shabbat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tractate_Shabbat)). He is also the author of weekly essays on the Torah portion. Nebenzahl was Rabbi [Shlomo Zalman Auerbach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shlomo_Zalman_Auerbach)'s study partner for over 40 years. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Rav Chaim Yisrael Belsky was the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshiva Torah Vodaas and along with Mori V’Rabiho HaRav Schachter Shlita, the senior Poskim of the OU. Mori V’Rabi has often remarked about the genius who was Rav Belsky -- so aware of the intricacies of mathematics, sciences, economics, production, business etc. all necessary for the diversity of Piskei Halacha that Rav Belsky needed to render. He was also a master of Piyut and music. He was a Gaon on so many levels and in his ability to relate to regular Talmidim a Tzaddik as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rabbi Daniel Stein is a [Rosh Yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Yeshiva) at RIETS where he holds the Perez and Frieda Friedberg Chair in Talmud.He is also Rav the Rabbi of Congregation Ahavath Chesed, known as the Ridniker Shteibel, a historic synagogue on the [Upper West Side](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper_West_Side) of [Manhattan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manhattan). Before that, Stein was the founding Rabbi of Kehillas Beis Sholom in [Clifton, New Jersey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clifton%2C_New_Jersey), where he served for four years [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Harav Avrohom Chaim Levin, *zt”l*, *Rosh Yeshivah*, Yeshivas Telshe Chicago, one of America’s leading *marbitzei Torah* who was a *Rebbi* to generations of *talmidim*, a dedicated leader, and a *Gadol baTorah* who embodied the lofty ideals of *mussar* and *gadlus haadam* was *niftar* on Wednesday, 20 Kislev. He was 86 years old. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Rav Mattisyahu Salomon is the Mashgiach Ruchani of Beth Medrash Gavoha of Lakewood. Prior to that, he was the Mashgiach at Gateshead Yeshiva for over 30 years. A master theologian, his thoughts and talks are collected in a series of writings called Matnas Chaim. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. My dear friend Rabbi **Moshe Gottesman** was born in Canada and has worked in Israel, Chicago and Long Island, NY. He held the position of [dean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dean_%28education%29) for the [Hebrew Academy of Nassau County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_Academy_of_Nassau_County) for almost 20 years. Gottesman was also the director of tours for Camp Sdei Chemed International for over 35 years. Gottesman has received many awards, including, the Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from [Yeshiva University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshiva_University). He (and Yblct his amazing wife Sondra) was an incredible Oheiv Yisrael who loved Torah, Torah leaders, children, The Jewish people and Medinat Yisrael. The idea expressed here is one of many lessons I learned from working with and for him. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. הרב **שלמה לוונשטיין** (נולד בשנת [תשכ"ז](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%AA%D7%A9%D7%9B%22%D7%96), [1967](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/1967)) הוא [דרשן](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%93%D7%A8%D7%A9%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%AA) [חרדי](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%97%D7%A8%D7%93%D7%99) ומחבר ספרי דרוש על [פרשת השבוע](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A4%D7%A8%D7%A9%D7%AA_%D7%94%D7%A9%D7%91%D7%95%D7%A2) ו[חגי ישראל ומועדיו](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%97%D7%92%D7%99_%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C_%D7%95%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%A2%D7%93%D7%99%D7%95). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Rabbi Shlomo Korach was considered to be the oldest of the Rabbis of Yemen. He was born in Tzan'a, and for decades he educated and taught in Israel, until his passing [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The prodigy of the Yeshiva of Slutzsk, Rav Michel Feinstein came to America with Rav Aharon Kotler in 1941. He became Mashgiach in Heichal HaRav Chaim Soloveitchik which opened in Boston (under Rav Soloveitchik ztl.) and later in Rav Moshe’s MTJ in NY. He traveled to Eretz Yisrael in 1946 and married Lifsha, the daughter of the Brisker Rav. He opened Yeshivas Beis Yehuda in Tel Aviv in 1952 and served as its Rosh Yeshiva until his passing. OUr community has a personal connection with him as Moreinu HaRav Teitz Shlita learned with him directly for many years. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Rav Reuven Feinstein Shlita is the Rosh Yeshiva of the Yeshiva of Staten Island and one of the recognized Gedolei Torah of the United States today. He is the youngest son of Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl. He and his wife were in a terrible auto accident in July 2018 and ultimately his wife, Rebbetzin Sheila Feinstein a”h succumbed to her injuries. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Rabbi Bernard Weinberger was the Rav of Young Israel of Brooklyn in Williamsburg and the author of the famed Shemen HaTov series. I thank my dear friends Marty & Miriam Knecht for introducing me to the brilliant thoughts of Rav Weinberger. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Rabbi Elyashiv Knohl, the Rabbi of Kibbutz Kfar Etzion, who passed away [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ari Fuld, American Oleh, Assistant Director of Standing Together and Israeli Hero was murdered Al Kiddush Hashem as he stopped a terrorist attack in the Gush. This thought is the last one he recorded. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Rav Yechiel Yitzchak Perr Shlita is the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Derech Ayson, Yeshiva of Far Rockaway in Far Rockaway, NY. A venerable Rosh Yeshiva and disciple of Rav Aharon Kotler ztl. Rav Perr is also a notable personality in the world of the mussar movement. His daily Vaad in mussar and weekly schmoozin in his Yeshiva contain both tremendous depth and organized common-sense approach. Some of these talks have recently been published in the works “Mind over man” and “Faith over Fear” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Rav Dovid Kav ztl. was a famed Talmid of Chevron and Mir Yeshivos and a former Chavrusa of Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz. An up and coming star in the Torah world, he was recruited by Rav Chaim Goldvicht ztl. to join the cadre of outstanding Roshei Yeshiva at Yeshivat Kerem B’Yavneh where he taught hundreds of Israeli and Chutznik Talmidim. His endearing demeanor and engaging analytic style made many students flock to talk with him “in learning.” Learning and Torah, were at the core of every one of his analyses as was the search for honesty and truth. Many of his shiurim are compiled in the Sefer Birkas Dovid. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Rav Shlomo Wolbe, famed Mashgiach of Be’er Yaakov and Lakewood East in Eretz Yisrael as well as the founder of the Beis HaMussar in Givat Shaul was an incredible inspiration to the Torah world as an ethical and rational voice on Torah living and life. His work Alei Shor is a must read for all serious students of ethics. He married Rivka Grodzinski, the daughter of Rabbi [Avraham Grodzinski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avraham_Grodzinski), of the [Slabodka yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshivas_Knesses_Yisrael_%28Slabodka%29) (Rivka passed away on October 25, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Rav Chanina Herzberg was the beloved Menahel of the Yeshiva of South Shore for over 40 years. A special talmid of Rav Shlomo Freifeld, Rabbi Herzberg, using his incredible patience and love for his Talmidim and Yeshiva, managed to raise multiple generations of young men whose dedication to Torah and even more importantly Middos Tovos is astounding. He helped the young men in the 5 towns learn to value that which was really important in life -- doing the Ratzon of Hashem and using all of your given gifts in order to do it. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Rabbi Ozer Glickman z"l exemplified Yeshiva's ideals of Torah u'Mada. He served as Rosh Yeshiva in the University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary where he taught senior rabbinic students for seventeen years. He also served as Adjunct Professor of Law in YU's Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and Adjunct Professor of Business in its Sy Syms School of Business, where he was a recipient of its Adjunct Professor of the Year Award. At the same time, Rabbi Glickman had a successful career in the world of Finance. He served as Senior Vice President and Global Head of Corporate Treasury at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. He was a member of the Senior Advisory Board of Oliver Wyman & Company, where he advised international financial institutions on issues related to risk management, active portfolio management, and investment analytics. Rabbi Glickman's course on Business & Jewish Law was one of the most popular courses on campus. In addition to rabbinic ordination from senior Roshei Yeshiva in RIETS, Rabbi Glickman received ordination from major poskim in Israel and the United States. A graduate of Columbia University in Philosophy, Rabbi Glickman received his MBA (Finance) from the Stern School of New York University where he was a University Fellow. He also pursued graduate study in philosophy and religion at both Columbia and the University of Toronto. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)