

Rav Shteinman זצ"ל



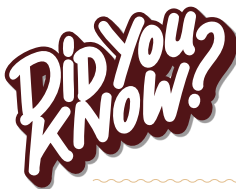
Rav Aharon Yehudah Leib Shteinman was born on 15 Cheshvan, 5675 (1914). Raised in Brisk, he was already learning vast amounts at a young age. Later, after moving to Eretz Yisrael in the 1950s, he became the *rosh yeshivah* of various yeshivos, including the Pon-evezh Yeshivah Ketanah (high school). He had such mastery over halachah that Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, one of the *gedolei haposkim*, would some-

times check what Rav Aharon Leib (as he was called) said about an issue before giving his own *psak halachah*. Toward the end of his life, Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach, one of the *gedolei hador*, would advise people to discuss their issues with Rav Aharon Leib or Rav Elyashiv.

In time, Rav Aharon Leib became a leader of Klal Yisrael. Countless peo-

ple came to his home asking for help. He truly cared and cried for others. Despite having thousands of *talmidim*, he remembered most of them by name. He ate and slept very little, lived very simply, and always ran from honor. Rav Aharon Leib was also very sensitive in matters of *bein adam lachaveiro*.

He was *niftar* on 24 Kislev, 5778 (2017).



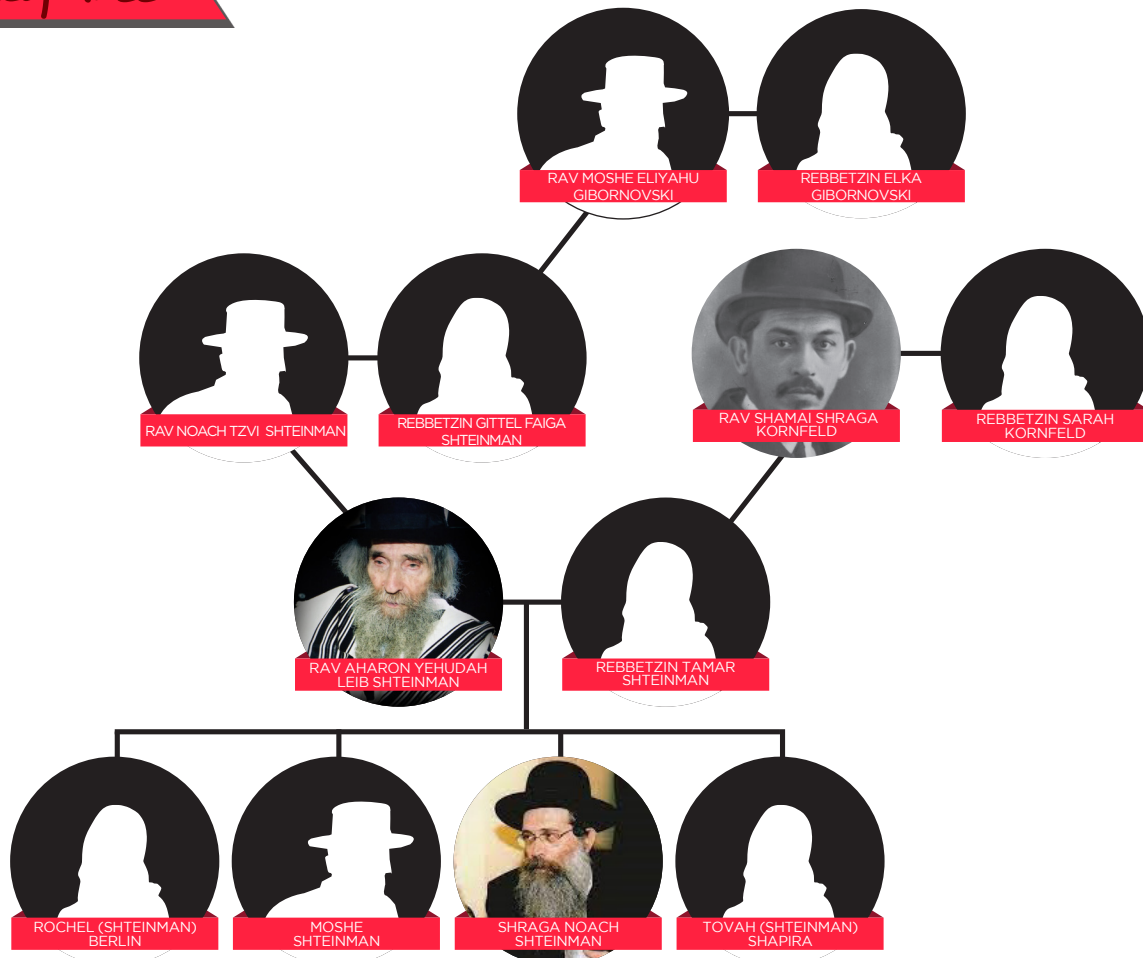
When Rav Aharon Leib was a *bachur*, some boys once put a long, shallow container of water in his bed so that when he would get in, he would get all wet. They waited for him to come but he never did, because he was in the *beis midrash* learning all night!

Rav Aharon Leib's *sefarim* are called *Ayeles Hashachar* because the word "AYeLeS" is an acronym for Aharon (Aleph), Yehudah (Yud), Leib (Lamed), Tamar [his wife] (Taf).

Rav Shteinman's family name was originally Shteiman (without the "n"), but at some point a clerk in Switzerland (where he ran before WWII to escape the Polish draft) changed it to Shteinman. This change made its way onto all his documents, so he found it easier just to keep the new last name.

Rav Don Segal noted that even though Rav Aharon Leib's home was so simple (he did not even own an oven or phone), thousands would ask him if their *esrog* was beautiful (he was known to be an outstanding expert in this regard) - because he had an eye for the beauty of mitzvos.

Family Tree



Rav Aharon Yehudah Leib Shteinman was the son of Rav Noach Tzvi and Rebbetzin Gittel Faiga Shteinman. Rav Noach Tzvi was a *melamed*, *shamash* of the Brisker Rav, and head of the *chevra kaddisha*. Rebbetzin Gittel Faiga was the daughter of Rav Moshe Eliyahu and Rebbetzin Elka Gibornovski. (Elka's sister was the mother of Rav Simchah Zelig Riger, the *Dayan* of Brisk.) Rav Aharon Leib had three siblings: Moshe Eliyahu, Eliezer Zev, and Golda.

Rav Aharon Leib married Tamar, the daughter of Rav Shamai Shraga and Rebbetzin Sarah Kornfeld. Rav Shamai Shraga learned in the mornings and was a *shochet* in Antwerp, Belgium. Tamar had one sibling, Rochel, who married Rav Nosson Orgel. Before Rebbetzin Tamar dedicated herself fully to her husband, she was a Bais Yaakov teacher. Rav Aharon Leib and his wife had four children: Rochel (who married Rav Zev Berlin), Moshe (who married Gittel Valis), Shraga Noach (who married Chana, the daughter of Rav Chaim and Rebbetzin Batsheva Kanievsky), and Tovah (who married Rav Dov Shapira).

SOME OF RAV SHTEINMAN'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS:



Rav Aharon Leib was one of the major forces behind Lev L'Achim, one of Eretz Yisrael's *kiruv* organizations, eventually becoming one of its leaders.

When he was in his 90s, he began to travel around the world to strengthen Torah; his destinations included many cities in America.



He established the many yeshivos of the Orchos Torah network, which grew to include over 2,000 *bachurim* and 1,300 *kollel* men.



Rav Shteinman published *Ayeles Hashachar*, a work of over 20 volumes of his *chiddushim* on Torah and *Shas*.



Rav Aharon Leib led and supported multiple protests to uphold Torah values. One rally, in Adar 5774 (2014), was attended by around one million people.





RAV AHARON LEIB was learning Torah with one of his grandsons when they heard someone making a noise with his throat, announcing he was there. It was a *bachur*, who approached the grandson and

said, “I have an important question for the Rosh Yeshivah. Can I ask him now?” The grandson nodded. The *bachur* added, “But please don’t interrupt me, even if I sound strange.”

He then turned to Rav Aharon Leib and said, “Does the Rosh Yeshivah like to eat steak?” Rav Aharon Leib replied, “I don’t think I’ve ever eaten steak. I’m not even sure what it is.” The *bachur* explained, “Steak is a very good piece of meat that people like to eat. I would like to bring the Rosh Yeshivah a steak. Of course it would have the best *hechsher*. May I bring the Rosh Yeshivah a steak to eat?”

Not surprisingly, Rav Aharon Leib responded that he did not want a steak. He then asked the boy, “But why are you offering me, and not anyone else in Bnei Brak, a steak?” The *bachur* began to cry, saying, “Just like the Rosh Yeshivah is not interested in steak, I am not interested in learning Torah!”

Rav Aharon Leib placed his hand on the boy’s shoulder and waited for him to calm down. Then he asked, “Tell me, is honey sweet or bitter?” The boy answered that honey is sweet. Rav Aharon Leib continued, “What

would you say if someone told you that honey is bitter?” The boy wasn’t sure what to say and shrugged his shoulders.

Rav Aharon Leib elaborated, “Yes, honey is definitely sweet. If someone doesn’t taste the sweetness, it could be that he has a sore in his mouth that is making his food taste bitter. If he would get the sore healed, he would be able to taste the sweetness of honey. Torah is also defi-

ninitely sweet. If you do not taste its sweetness, it is because something is getting in the way. If you can remove whatever that is, you too will be able to taste its sweetness.”

Rav Aharon Leib spoke encouragingly to the *bachur* for a few more minutes and then concluded, “Try to taste that sweetness of Torah and then come tell me how you are coming along. But I have one thing to ask of you: When you visit, please do not bring me a steak — the sweetness of Torah is enough for me! Instead, have some steak with your friends in yeshivah before coming.”

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RAV SHTEINMAN'S DVAR TORAH

The Greatest Test

In *Parshas Lech Lecha*, Hashem tested Avraham Avinu by telling him to leave the place where he grew up. Although we know that this *nisayon* was one of Avraham’s great tests, it seems like it should have been easy, since Hashem had told Avraham that he would have children if he left. Now, let’s think about this for a minute. Most people who don’t have children will travel to any doctor in the world if they think he can help. Was it any different for Avraham when he was told that he would only have children if he left his birthplace? Moreover, Hashem told Avraham that he would have wealth and his name would become great in the world if he left. What made this *nisayon* such a challenge?

In truth, as long as a plan makes sense and looks normal — like going to a doctor — a person will do anything and go anywhere. However, when something is not the natural, “normal” thing to do, and it requires one to choose to think and believe something out of the ordinary, that is when the *yetzer hara* comes and it becomes a great test.

Avraham was told he would receive fantastic rewards if he left his homeland, but since leaving his land was not the natural thing to do in his circumstances, he still had to believe that everything Hashem told him was true. It was not something that he could plainly see made sense. He had to strengthen himself to listen to Hashem and follow His commands. This is what made this *nisayon* so difficult.

(Ayeles Hashachar, Al HaTorah, Parshas Lech Lecha 12:1)