

Rav Elazar of Worms (the Roke'ach) was born in Magentzia in 1160. He received his Torah education from his father. When he moved to Metz, he studied under Rabbi Eliezer, the author of the Yereim. Afterwards, he moved to Shpera. There, he learned the secrets of the Torah (Kabbalah) from Rabbi Yehuda HaChassid.

Later in his life, he settled in Worms and established a yeshiva there. Many of the Torah giants of that generation were among his students. One of such students was Rav Yitzchak of Vienna, author of the Ohr Zaru'ah. The Roke'ach past away in Worms in 1230, and was buried there. It's fascinating that his study hall still stands to this day! It is known as Rashi's Beit Medrash.

Although he is primarily known for his halachic work - i.e., the "Roke'ach", Rav Elazar was a prolific writer on all parts of Torah. Among the subjects for his commentary are the Talmud, Tanach, Midrash, the Siddur and liturgy. He also wrote ethical and Kabbalistic works, as well as many *piyutim*. His commentary on the Siddur was published in two volumes as *Perushei Sidur HaTefilah LaRokeach* by Rabbi Moshe Hershtler and his son Rabbi Yehuda Alter Hershtler (Jerusalem 1992).

Among the prominent works authored by the Roke'ach is set of works entitled *Sodei Razei*, *Sefer HaShem* (a commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah*), and *Chochmas HaNefesh*. The first part of *Sodei Razei* is also known as *Sefer Alpha Beta*, or *Sod Ma'aseh Bereshit*, which contains an index of Kabbalistic topics in alphabetical order. It is apparently one of the primary sources of *Megaleh Amukos* of R' Moshe Natan Nota Shapira of Krakow, and of *Yalkut Reuveni*. These three works were published from manuscript in a single volume by R. Aharon Eisenbach, under the aegis of *Machon Sodei Razya*, Jerusalem 5764 (2004).

**Hints & Answers\*** **SHMIRAS SHABBOS:** *Sefer Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchosa* (23:9) writes: "It's permitted to remove dust from furniture with a dry cloth." **RHYME:** "cheeks". **RIDDLE:** Reuven immersed a *tammeh* vessel in a mikva that had exactly 40 *se'ah* of water. When he took the vessel out of water, the vessel naturally had some mikva water on it, making the volume of water in the mikva less than 40 *se'ah*. Hence, the vessel when from the state of *tummah* to the state of *tahara*, while the mikva turned from being *kosher* to being *pasul* | \*Note: *Menucha's* answer are not intended to be taken as final decisions in halacha, but rather as a springboard for discussions, further study.

## Shmiras Shabbos

### Removing Dust from a Chair



It was a real special surprise when Abba came home from shul on a Shabbos morning with a guest. "Kids, this is Akiva Meir," said Abba, "He is a guest in our city and I was a lucky winner to ask him if he had anywhere to go for Shabbos lunch."

Kids were thrilled to have an unexpected guest. Chaim and Yankele quickly went to the porch to get a chair for the guest. When they brought it in, their brother Benny took a quick look at it and found on it what he expected to see - a layer of dust. "Great job, Chaim and Yankele," praised Benny, "But the chair is very dusty!"

"Nu, so what? Big deal. We'll just wipe it away with a wet rag," said Yankele.

"I think because it's Shabbos today, we better use a dry napkin to clean away this dust," said Chaim.

"You must be kidding me!" exclaimed Benny, "Dust is muktza! Forget about using this chair."

"But what is our guest going to sit on?!" asked Yankele, "We don't have any more chairs."

Benny thought for a moment and then said, "I'll give our guest my chair and I'll just stand during the seuda."

**Question:** With whom do you agree - with Chaim, Yankele or Benny?

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### DEDICATIONS

♦ Put your dedication in next issue



### Parsha Pearls

Why does the Torah dedicate almost the entire parsha to the story of Korach? In parshas Chayei Sarah the Torah records twice Eliezer's story of finding Rivka: when it actually happened and when Eliezer told over the story in Lavan's house. Rashi (on verse 23:42) cites words of Chaza"l that explain this repetition: *"Rabbi Acha said: Conversations of our forefather's slaves is more precious to Hashem than the Torah of their children. [We can see this from the fact that] Eliezer's story is recorded twice in the Torah, while many main parts of the Torah were only given as hints."*

We see from these words of Chazal that the more significant something is, the more time the Torah spends on it. Hence, the obvious question this week is, why does the Torah dedicate almost the entire parsha to the story of Korach - a story of a group of people who went against Moshe and Aaron?! It appears that, through this, Hashem is telling His children for all generations the following message: "Notice how significant in My eyes is your respect of the Torah leaders of your generation!"



### Ask Around Your Shabbos Table

On the day of Korach's rebellion Moshe sent a messenger to Dasan and Aviram to summon them so that he could solve the dispute. They utterly refused and acted with brazenness (see Bamidbar 16:12-14). Yet the next morning, Moshe made a second attempt, as the Torah says, ...וַיָּקָם מֹשֶׁה וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם... *Moshe arose and went to Dasan and Aviram...* (Bamidbar 16:25) And on this verse, citing the words of a Midrash, Rashi writes: כַּסְבוֹר שִׁישָׂאוּ לוֹ פָּנִים (*Moshe thought that they will respect him [and agree to end the dispute]*).

**Ask Around Your Table:** In light of who Dathan and Aviram were and in light of how they reacted to Moshe's request to make peace on the previous day, why would Moshe think that now they will respect his words?!

**Answer:** The Torah is demonstrating to us that a Jew should always project positively!



### Rhymes for Kids



Even with Dasan and Aviram Moshe tried to make peace.

What do you think we can learn from this?

Shalom is what a tzadik always seeks,  
Bringing smiles to people's \_\_\_\_\_.



### Parsha Riddle



*Our parsha teaches us that Kohanim may eat sacred things (e.g., Teruma) only in a state of purity. Try to solve the following riddle related to the laws of tummah and tahara.*

Reuven did something, and something that was *tammeh* became *tahor*, while something else that was *kosher* became *pasul*.

What did Reuven do?



### DID YOU KNOW THAT



You probably knew that we grow from our mistakes. But did you know that there might be a hint to it in the actual Hebrew word "mistake"? In Hebrew, a mistake is "שגגה". And "he will make a mistake" in Hebrew is: "ישגה". But if we replace the "*shinn*" with a "*sinn*" (which is allowable for a *drasha*), then the word is יִשְׁגָּה - which means "he will grow", For example this word is used in the following verse:

יִשְׁגָּה בְּלִבּוֹ יִכָּרֵז כְּאֶרֶץ יִכְרֹחַ כְּתָמָר (Tehillim 92).

It appears that the message is obvious: A tzadik grows from his own mistakes!