

MeOros HaChodashim

The Month of Tammuz

Illuminating Lights & Insights into the
Months of the Jewish Calendar



Rabbi Tal Moshe Zwecker

In memory of Mindel Hartstein bas R' Meshulam Zev Wolf
"לעילוי נשמת מרת מינדל הארטשטיין בת ר' משולם זאב וואלף מייער ע"ה"

Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5780

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With a Spot Light on the teachings
of the holy students and disciples
of the holy Baal Shem Tov

and especially from the holy luminary:
Rav Chaim ben Attar
The Holy Ohr HaChaim
haKadosh

Rabbi Tal Moshe Zwecker

*Life Changing Lessons Based on the Lights from the Ohr
haChaim HaKadosh*

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“And Hashem completed on the seventh day His work that He did, and He abstained on the seventh day from all His work that He did.” (Bereishis 2:2)

Parashas Bereishis

Shabbos Is the Soul of the World

“Hashem completed” (Bereishis 2:2).

The Ohr HaChaim cites a statement of Chazal in Chagiga 12 that the world was incomplete, wavering and shaking unstably until Shabbos came and substantiated the world, giving it a strong, solid foundation to exist.

The meaning of this, explains the Ohr HaChaim, is that on Shabbos, Hashem created the soul for the world. This is the secret, deeper meaning of the pasuk “on the seventh day He rested” – *vayinofash* – meaning literally that Hashem gave it a soul. Shabbos is the soul of the world.

He Who Guards Shabbos , Shabbos Guards Him

Rav Mordechai Chaim of Slonim told how the Ohr HaChaim once traveled through the desert together with a caravan troupe. When they refused to stop for Shabbos, the Ohr HaChaim alighted from the caravan and, alone in the wild, he remained behind as the others traveled onward, all so as not to desecrate Shabbos.

The desert was bleak and the Ohr HaChaim was all alone until a huge lion came and sat beside the Tzaddik, guarding him the entire Shabbos against the wild animals and other dangers of the wilderness. After Shabbos, the lion allowed the Ohr HaChaim to climb onto its back and carried him to safety. You can imagine how the members of the caravan felt when they saw the Tzaddik return after a Shabbos alone in the desert, safe and sound, unharmed and riding on a lion! (Maamar Mordechai)

Parashas Ki Sisa

Waiting for Shabbos

Veshomru Bnei Yisrael es haShabbos – “And Bnei Yisrael shall safeguard the Shabbos” (Ki Sisa 31:16). The Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh has a novel interpretation of these words – “And Bnei Yisrael waited, anticipating the arrival of *Shabbos*”. He translates the *pasuk* this way based on the meaning of the word *shomar* in Bereishis 37:11 where it says, *ve’oviv shomar es hadovor*, which the *meforshim* explain as *mamtin umetzapeh mosai yovo* – “waiting to see when it would finally happen”. Our *pasuk* concludes with the words, *la’asos es haShabbos*, which the Ohr HaChaim explains (in this new context) as, “in order to observe *Shabbos* for the sake of the *mitzva* and not for physical rest and relaxation or enjoyment”.

To Create More Shabbos

Laasos es haShabbos – Another novel interpretation is based on the *Maamar Chazal* in *Yoma* 81 that we are obligated to add extra time to *Shabbos* from our weekday, by accepting *Shabbos* early, as opposed to stopping *melocha* only with the onset of *Shabbos*. Instead, we prepare beforehand and we go out and greet *Shabbos* as a *chosson* greets his *kalla* by going out before she even arrives. This is achieved by advance preparations in honor of *Shabbos* and taking care of all arrangements before the onset of *Shabbos*. This is how we read *laasos es haShabbos* – we make or create [more] *Shabbos*, because *Hashem* agrees that whatever time we add from the weekday to the sanctified time of *Shabbos* is also properly called *Shabbos* as well. We thus see that we are actively creating more *Shabbos*, by adding hours from Friday (by accepting *Shabbos* early) and Sunday (Saturday night, when *Shabbos* departs, by lengthening *Shabbos* into Saturday night/Sunday). These hours were mundane and Bnei Yisrael transform them into *Shabbos*! ***Veshomru Bnei Yisrael es haShabbos laasos es haShabbos*** – “**And Bnei Yisrael will safeguard the *Shabbos* in order to rectify the *Shabbos*” (31:16).** The *Ohr HaChaim* offers another *peirush* to our *pasuk* based on the *Medrash* in *Bereishis Rabba* ch. 11 that *Shabbos* argued before *Hashem* that everyone had a mate except for her, to which *Hashem* answered *Shabbos* that Bnei Yisrael would be her mate and partner. Based on this *Medrash*, *Shabbos* was missing this detail; she lacked a partner and was thus incomplete. Her completion or rectification is fixed by Bnei Yisrael’s observance and safeguarding of *Shabbos* in order to partner with her as her mate. We can therefore reread our *pasuk* as, “Bnei Yisrael shall safeguard the *Shabbos* ***laasos es haShabbos*** – in order to rectify her and partner with her. Keep *Shabbos* in This World to Earn the Day of Total *Shabbos* Forever Another novel way that the *Ohr HaChaim* translates our *pasuk* is based on the *Gemora* in *Rosh HaShana* 31a that the coming world of *Olam HaBa* is known as a day that is *kulo Shabbos* – a total *Shabbos* day. And *Chazal* say in *Medrash Shemos Rabba* ch. 25 that *Shabbos* observance is a *mitzva* whose weight is equal to all the other *mitzvos*. We can thus read the *pasuk* as ***Veshomru Bnei Yisrael es haShabbos*** – “And Bnei Yisrael safeguarded *Shabbos* in order ***laasos es haShabbos*** in order to create for themselves *Olam HaBa* and earn that final day that is completely *Shabbos* for all generations hence. This is why the *pasuk* ends with *ledorosom* – “for all future generations”, as opposed to this world, which does not endure for all generations, as a *bris olom*, a covenant promised to those who observe *Shabbos* that they inherit the future supernal world of *Olam HaBa*.

The Soul Named Shabbos

The *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* also points out that on *Shabbos* we are given an extra soul known as *Neshoma Yeseira* (*Beitza* 16a). This soul is a secret gift that *Hashem* granted only to Bnei Yisrael and not to any of the other nations. *Chazal* also say in *Shabbos* 10b that *Hashem* told us He has a great gift waiting in His hidden treasure chambers called *Shabbos*. This treasure called *Shabbos* is the name given to that extra soul, which is hidden in the King’s most secret treasure chamber. The extra soul named *Shabbos* is the gift that *Hashem* gave us on *Shabbos*. She is called *Shabbos*, explains the *Ohr HaChaim*, because she comes from the world called *Kulo Shabbos* (*Rosh HaShana* 31a). That world lacks any sadness and is filled with pleasure, happiness and delight. *Hashem* therefore commands us on *Shabbos* to distance ourselves from any form of affliction, sadness or exertion. This is why the *Torah* specifically forbids those categories of *melocha* that contain some mental aspect of the mundane and is forbidden, as is taught (*Beitza* 13a): *Melech machsheves asra Torah* – the *Torah* forbids *melochos* that have an aspect of thought to them. Even mundane forms of speech are forbidden for this reason (*Shabbos* 113b).

We can now reread our *pasuk* again as ***Veshomru Bnei Yisrael es haShabbos*** – “And Bnei Yisrael safeguarded the extra soul named *Shabbos* – ***laasos es haShabbos*** – In order to receive a portion in the next world, which is also named *Shabbos*. The reason for this, explains the *Ohr HaChaim*, is that it is impossible for someone to receive the gift of the next world of all *Shabbos* without having had a taste,

some experience of it, previously in this world. Without having received a branch to grasp onto, without having had the *Neshoma Yeseira* named *Shabbos*, he would have no way to receive the final reward of a day that is *kulo Shabbos* in the coming world. This is the meaning of *ledorosom* – for all generations to come, because when all of Bnei Yisrael observe *Shabbos* and receive the extra soul named *Shabbos* and grasp and taste the *Shabbos*, then in the future all the generations will come together in that new world, the day that is completely and totally *Yom SheKulo Shabbos*, together, forever.

The Chida's Testimony on the Ohr HaChaim's Preparation for Kiddush

Once, when the *Chida* was on one of his travels in the lands of Ashkenaz, one of the *Admorim* asked him to relate a story that described his *Rebbe's* holy *avoda* in *nigla* and in *nistar*, and here is one of the tales he told: The *Ohr HaChaim* had a special *minhag* to prepare himself to make *Kiddush* on *Shabbos*. Every *Erev Shabbos* he would sit and study and review with his *talmidim* the laws of testimony and witnesses – *Hilchos Eidus* in the *Rambam*. They would especially review the laws dealing with what things disqualified a witness and rendered him *posul* – unfit to give testimony. They studied this in order to do full *teshuva* [over any of these disqualifications.] Not only did the *Ohr HaChaim* do this as a preparation before making *Kiddush*, but when he picked up the *Kiddush* cup to recite the *berocha* over it, he would be aflame with such excitement and thoughts of *teshuva* and *kedusha* that all those present were also seized with pangs of regret and remorse so great that they would beg and plead that they too should merit to be *eidim kesherim* (proper witnesses) to testify to the Creation of the world in six days! (By Rav Yitzchok Alfaya in *Kuntres HaYacheli* Section *Bais Hashem* Chapter *Mid-dos Tovos* #18)

Parashas Balak

Barrier to Entry

“The Lord placed something into Balaam's mouth,” (Balak 23:5)

The *Ohr HaChaim* on *Bamidbar* 23:5 explains the *pasuk*, “*Hashem* placed *dovor* (something) inside the mouth of Bilom”. *Hashem* placed a barrier in Bilom's mouth between his defiled, impure mouth and the divine words of holiness that *Hashem* wished him to speak. Because Bilom was a horribly defiled and disgusting person, the spirit of revealing the future through *Ruach HaKodesh* could not descend upon him. Even the words themselves were holy and they could not dwell within an impure *goy*. *Hashem* therefore made a *tikkun* so that He would not need to dwell in a disgusting, impure place, a barrier between the power of speech and the spoken word itself, and the mouth of that swine Bilom.

This is what *Hashem* meant when the *pasuk* says that He placed “something” into the mouth of Bilom: *Hashem* placed a barrier to make a separation between them, and Bilom's mouth became a separate entity. When the *pasuk* says, “So shall you speak and say,” it means the *Ruach HaKodesh* will speak.

The Ner HaMaarovi has Gone Out

In the year 5503 on *Parshas Balak* during *Sholosh Seudos*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* suddenly told the *talmidim*, “I believe that the *Ner HaMaarovi*, the Western Candle, has been extinguished.” After *Havdola* the *talmidim* asked the *Ba'al Shem* what he meant. He explained to them, “The holy *Tzaddik*, the *mechaber* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, has left this world. The way I know this is because there is one secret regarding *Netilas Yodayim* (when we wash our hands before *HaMotzi*), and this secret is only revealed to one *Tzaddik* in each generation. Until today, this secret was given to the *Ohr HaChaim* – and now that secret has been revealed to me. I realized that if I have been given this secret I must be the only one who knows – and this must mean that the *Ohr HaChaim* is no longer with us in this world.” (Gloss *Menachem Tzion* to *Shem HaGedolim Seforim Alef Siman* 54)

Parahas Pinchos

No One is Ever Left Behind

How Pinchos Saved Zimri

“The name of the *Ish Yisrael* who was slain, who was slain with the Midianite woman” (Pinchos 25:14).

The *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is bothered by the seemingly repetitive mention of the word “slain” or “struck (down)” in our *pasuk*, as opposed to the single occurrence of the word in the following *pasuk* referring to the Midianite princess, Kozbi. He tells us, therefore, that this *pasuk* can be read in one of two ways: either as “The name [and soul] of the *Ish Yisrael* was struck down [because] he was struck by the Midianite woman [spiritually]”, or as “The name of the *Ish Yisrael* who was struck down [physically by Pinchas], he was struck by the Midianite woman [spiritually, through his relationship with her]”.

The *Ohr HaChaim* points out that Zimri was struck twice: physically, his body was struck down and slain by Pinchas who, in a zealous act of righteousness, killed him; and his soul was also struck down by his relationship with Kozbi, the Midianite princess, which defiled his name and his inner essence, the Jewish soul. The *Ohr HaChaim* says that this is why the *pasuk* points out the name of the *Ish Yisrael* – because we know that a person’s name influences and expresses his soul’s nature (*Berochos* 7b, *Yoma* 83b). When Zimri sinned with Kozbi, he fatally wounded his own name, together with his Jewish soul, dealing himself a lethal blow even before Pinchas slew him.

Nonetheless, the *Ohr HaChaim* concludes in the name of the *Mekubolim* that *Lo yidach mimenu nidach* – “No one is ever left behind”; there is hope and a *tikkun* (rectification) for every Jew, no matter what. All the sparks of *kedusha* will eventually be ingathered and uplifted. No matter how far a Jew might stray and – Heaven forbid – blemish or defile his soul, *Hashem* guarantees that it will be rectified and will return to its root source in the end.

Therefore, says the *Ohr HaChaim*, the *pasuk* still calls Zimri an *Ish Yisrael* – an Israelite, a Jew. The *pasuk* testifies that although his act was sinful, and, since he was killed in the midst of sin he surely did not have time to do *teshuva*, nonetheless he is still called *Yisrael* – he still achieved his *tikkun*. How? Pinchas did that for him. Pinchas' act was not a random act of vigilante justice or murder; it was a zealous act of righteousness *lishma* – for the honor and glory of *Hashem*, with pure motivations. Thus, by killing Zimri, Pinchas did him the ultimate favor and was *mesaken* him, thereby atoning for his sin and elevating his soul.

Winning the War

When the Husyatiner *Rebbe* was visiting *Eretz Yisrael* during the Second World War, the Germans had already reached Syria and General Rommel was near Egypt. The *Rebbe* and his *Chassidim* arrived on the 15th of *Tammuz*, the *Ohr HaChaim's Yahrzeit*, at his *kever*. Everyone feared that the Nazis would reach *Eretz Yisrael* and the *Rebbe* poured out his heart with *Tehillim* to prevent this. After the *Tehillim*, the *Rebbe's* face was aflame and he lay his head on his arm for a moment. When he lifted his head he was smiling and he declared, “The trouble has passed and is gone. No sword of war shall pass through our holy land!” The *Tepliker Rav* asked the Husyatiner how he could confidently say such a thing. The *Rebbe* answered that he gazed at the *tziun* of the *Ohr HaChaim* and saw on it the Divine Name *YHV”H*. He took this as a clear sign that the danger had passed. A day or so later the German Nazis, may their bones decay, suffered devastating defeats near Egypt and Syria, and they lost the Russian front of the war. Thus, in the merit of the *Ohr HaChaim*, *Eretz Yisrael* was saved and spared from the Nazis.

After Three Times They Gave Up

Rav Chaim Uri Lipshitz used to tell this story about the *Ohr HaChaim* that he heard from the Arabs: After the Six-Day War, when *Yerushalayim* was under Jordanian rule, the Jordanians decided to renovate and destroy the Jewish cemetery at the Mount of Olives. They began using a tractor to demolish *kevorim* but when the tractor reached the *kever* of the *Ohr HaChaim* the tractor overturned, killing the Arab driver. That did not deter them, however, and they sent a second tractor, which for some reason broke down just as it reached the *Ohr HaChaim's kever*. They fixed the tractor and had the engine repaired, and then the second tractor also turned itself over and the driver was seriously injured. Finally, they decided to use a metal sledgehammer to demolish the *kever* by hand, but this time somehow the hammer flew out of the worker's hands and struck the foreman in the head. Finally, they admitted that the Divine Hand must be involved and they gave up! From then on their nefarious plot was over; never again did the Jordanians try to demolish the *tziun* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, and eventually control of the *Bais HaChaim* returned to Jewish hands. (*Hillula Kadisha* 15th of *Tammuz* p. 612)

Parashas VaEsChanan

Learning to Love

“And you shall love Hashem with all your heart, with all your soul, and all your wealth and possessions.”
(Devarim 6:5)

The Ohr HaChaim cites for us the three types of material love that are listed in *Moed Katan*, 28a: Love for our children, love for ourselves and our life, and love of money and physical possessions. In the original language, these are *Banei, Chayei U'Mezonei*.

Now, says the Ohr HaChaim, these three loves are the collective desire and passion that most people in the world share. If even one of these objects of deep desire is missing, a person is as if dead and lost, Heaven forbid. If a person should lack two of them — for example, being poor and childless — this can cause a person much heartache and distress, to the point where he is spiritually crippled and feels as if his heart breaks within him. Even if he may strengthen himself and his heart, this can still fail because his emotions could likely overcome him in his grief.

The *mesechta* continues, informing us that having these things is not dependant on our *Avodas Hashem* or on our love for Him, meaning that even those who truly love Hashem could lack any of them.

In our *pasuk*, Hashem commands us to love Him even more than these three things (children, life, and money), even if, Heaven Forbid, they would be taken away from us. This is why the *pasuk* says to love Hashem “with all your heart” — this refers to our children, whom we love with all our hearts; “with all your soul” — this refers to our life; “and with all your material possessions.” Your love for Hashem must be greater than all these three and surpass them, even if they would be taken away.

The Ohr HaChaim then reverses this idea, explaining that if we are obligated to love Hashem more than our children, more than ourselves, and more than our money and possessions, and if our love for Hashem should so surpass the love for these, that even if He were to take them away, we would still love Him, then how much more so should we love Hashem for having gifted us and granted us with any one of these three, and all the more so for those of us blessed with all three!

To help illustrate further just how great our love for Hashem must be, the Ohr HaChaim brings the following parable:

Imagine a childless person, longing for children to love and care for, and to carry on his name and legacy who is simultaneously also a pauper who is starving to death, lacking sustenance and nourishment.

Then, imagine that a prophet visits, and reveals, in G-d's name, that He will heal his sickness, that one day he shall be healthy and his wife shall bear him children, and that they shall also be blessed with unimaginable wealth.

Can you imagine how much this person would love the bearer of these glad tidings, and how much he will love Hashem, the Master Who grants him these gifts and bestows upon him life, health, wealth, and children?!

This is what Hashem commands of us all, obligating us to love Him forever and always, as if He filled your lack, having given children to the barren and childless, so love Him with all your heart! And love Him with all your soul, as if He returned your very soul to you, healed you and saved you from death! And love Him with all your possessions, as if He granted you immense wealth when you were poor. All these descriptions are to help us understand and be able to actualize just how much we should love Hashem.

The Ohr HaChaim then offers another mashal to illustrate how greatly our souls desire Hashem, so much so that it surpasses any love we have ever possibly experienced in this world:

There was once a wealthy merchant who had many possessions, and much land and holdings. One day, he learned that his life was in grave danger where he currently resided, so he decided that he must travel far away, to a distant land, in order to save his life. He feared what may happen to his wealth while on this long journey, so he figured out a way to convert all his possessions to something he could carry. He sold all he owned and purchased a valuable gemstone worth thousands of golden dinars.

He went on his way and eventually arrived at a distant city in a far away land. There, he had hoped to build his fortune once more; however, by the time he arrived, he had already spent all his money, and having no other assets, he was left penniless and poor. So instead of the wealth he once enjoyed, he came to this new town as a pauper, living frugally like someone of no means.

Although our once wealthy merchant now lives like a vagabond, he can still gladly rejoice that he is out of harm's way, since his journey had saved his life, and he is now safe, in a safe land and peaceful city. Furthermore, all his great wealth from his home country is, in fact, still with him, in the form of the priceless gemstone.

The merchant's home country is This World, and all the possessions he acquired there are our *mitzvos*. The danger to his life while living there is the risk we all face during our time on Earth, that we may sin, thereby losing our merits and connection to Hashem, *Chalilah*. The gemstone, which he acquired by trading in his possessions, represents our *dveikus* to Hashem, which has the potential to grow stronger and stronger with each *mitzvah* accomplished here. His new, safe home is, of course, the Next World, and in this section of the *mashal*, the wealth he lacks represents actual material prosperity, worth nothing in the World to Come.

We now can see that this extends even to our existence in this world: Even if we lack physical wealth, or children, or perhaps any of Hashem's material blessings during our lifetime, when we realize that true, eternal wealth comes in the currency of *mitzvos* and *dveikus*, we will understand that this is the only thing truly worth investing in.

Just as our merchant realized that his inability to rebuild his fortune, though disappointing at first, paled in comparison to the fact that his life was now no longer in danger; so too, we must realize that the precious gemstone of our *dveikus* and *mitzvos* ultimately outshines any other worldly pursuit — by a long shot.

Explains the Ohr HaChaim, when a person attaches to Hashem in *dveikus* and love, crowning Him King over himself and his life, this is a Heavenly acquisition worth more than all worldly wealth, because who or what can compare to Hashem?!

Though people may suffer and lack in this world, they can still rejoice in having acquired Hashem as their G-d, regardless of their Earthly circumstances. If they are fully invested in Him, then, at journey's end, when they reach their final destination in the Next World, they will safely have their priceless reward with them forever.

Segulos of the Ohr haChaim

Three Segulos – *refua*, * *shemira* * and *zera shel kayoma*

The *Gedolei Yisrael* recommended studying the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* not only as a way to be spiritually uplifted and for success in material matters, but also for its many wondrous *segulos*:

Once, when Rav Pinchas Koritzer's son was sick, he ordered him to study a page of *Ohr HaChaim* each day as a *segula* for a *refua sheleima*. (*Imrei Pinchos Shaar HaTorah* #133)

Rav Avrohom Elimelech of Karlin-Stolin remarked, “*Dem lernen Ohr HaChaim das iz a segula zu heintige machlos* – that studying the *sefer Ohr HaChaim* is a *segula* against today's diseases.” (*Pri Yesha Aharon*)

Rav Pinchas of Koritz said that keeping a copy of the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* in one's home was a *segula* for *shemira* – safeguarding the home. (*Imrei Pinchas, Shaar HaTorah* #53)

On different occasions, *Tzaddikim* remarked that the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is a *segula* for *zera shel kayoma* – healthy children. The *segula* is to study the *sefer* on an ongoing basis on every *Erev Shabbos*, and this *segula* has been reported to be tried and true. There is also a *segula* to study on *Leil HaSeder* the portion of *Ohr HaChaim* on the *pasuk* in *Shemos* 13:8 *Vehigad'ta levincha* – “and you shall tell your son”, to merit having sons. (*Shivchei Ohr HaChaim*)

Some connect this *segula* with the *mesora* that *Tzaddikim* said the reason the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* never had children was that he channeled all his creative efforts into his holy *sefer* to give birth to novel concepts, insights and *chiddushim*. Since all his power to produce offspring was instead channeled into his *sefer*, it would make sense that it contains the *segula* for having children. (Rav Binyomin Mendelson, *GAV”D Komemiyus*, in the name of Rav Simcha Bunim of Ger – *Libom Shel Yisrael*)

One week, after the *Ohr HaChaim shiur* here in *Beit Shemesh*, the *Maggid Shiur*, the son of Rav Nosson Nota Biderman of Lelov-Yerushalayim, told me how recently, two *yungeleit* here in *Beit Shemesh*, whom he knows personally, both married for several years with no children, decided to try out this *segula*. They accepted upon themselves to study together *bechavrusa* the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* every day after davening for ten minutes. After having done this for about a year, both of them were *B”H* blessed with healthy children – *zera shel kayoma*!

Praises for the Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

Ruach haKodesh

When the *Ba'al Shem Tov* first opened the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* he was pleasantly surprised to see that it contained many of the foundations of the path of *Chassidus* he himself was teaching. He remarked, "All his words are *ruach hakodesh* – divine spirit and intuition – and it is truly one of the seventy facets of the *Torah* – *shivim ponim baTorah*."

Moshiach of Our Generation

Rav Pinchas of Koritz hugged and kissed the *sefer* and said, "Studying this *sefer* is beneficial to the soul like studying the holy *Zohar*, because the mechaber had the soul of *Moshiach* in his generation, like Rav Shimon *bar Yochai*." He also said, "There is no other work like the *Zohar* where one can hide himself, except the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*." He explained that in many other *seforim* one has to search a lot before he finds *Hashem*, whereas this is not so in these two *seforim*.

A New Light

The holy *Chozeh* of Lublin said, "I have no other *sefer* like the *Zohar*, which reveals wondrous things, except the *Ohr HaChaim* and *Meor Einayim*." He also remarked that the *Ohr HaChaim* was *kulo chiddush* – entirely novel and new.

Mora De'Ara De'Yisrael

From the time that the Belzer *Rebbe*, Rav Aharon of Belz, moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, he never recited *tachanun* on the *Yahrzeit* of the *Ohr HaChaim* on the fifteenth of *Tammuz*. The reason for this was that the *Ohr HaChaim* was *Mora De'Ara De'Yisrael*, the Master and chief *Rav* of *Eretz Yisrael*.

He Saves Whoever Studies His Sefer Regularly

Rav Chaim Palagi writes that it is recorded that during the wars in Poland, the holy *Alshich* revealed himself to a wise sage who had studied his *seforim* regularly. "It was revealed to me in a dream that this is also true regarding the holy *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* by Rav Chaim *ben Attar* [that the author will stand by whoever studies it regularly and save him in times of trouble and need]. (*Kaf HaChaim* by Rav Chaim Palagi 31:55)

Yeshivas Ohr HaChaim

The Tosher *Rebbe* used to ask the *bochurim* of his *Yeshiva* to add extra diligence in their *Torah* study and learning on the day of the *Yahrzeit* of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*, explaining that he had named his *Yeshiva Yeshivas Ohr HaChaim* after Rav Chaim *ben Attar* and this was because the tract of land acquired for the *Yeshiva* was in fact purchased on his *Yahrzeit*.

The Tosher *Rebbe* attributed his success in its acquisition to the merit of the *Tzaddik* and the *Ohr HaChaim's* power that had stood by him. (*Avodas Avoda Sichos Kodosh Balak*)

The Dream About the *Ohr HaChaim*

Rav Chaim Palagi writes in his sefer Nefesh Kol Chai 400:80:

I have a tradition from my master Rav Nissim Zerachia Azulai, a grandson of the Chida, who in turn received this tradition from the Chida himself, that all true Torah scholars and Talmidei Chachomim experience machlokes (strife) against them even when they are innocent, as it says (Shemos 16:7), “Who are we that you complain against us?”

Over forty years ago, when I printed and published my sefer Semicha LeChaim, I dreamed that night that Rav Chaim ben Attar, author of the Ohr HaChaim, Pri To’ar, Chefetz Hashem and Rishon LeTzion, appeared to me and told me not to fear, and he gave me three reasons: First, that I had semicha from my grandfather and that he, the Ohr HaChaim, would guard my door. Second, because just as when the Ohr HaChaim wanted to print the Pri To’ar an anonymous wealthy donor suddenly appeared and donated all the money needed to publish it, the same has now happened to me with my sefer, and third, I should see what he writes in his sefer Ohr HaChaim regarding the pasuk in Ki Sovo, Devorim 26:7.

When I awoke, I went to look at his sefer and this is a summary of what the Ohr HaChaim says there: “And Hashem saw our oppression” – this refers to whoever relies on the Torah and all who toil in Torah; they have many oppressors and many seek them out [to harm them]”. That is a summary of his holy words.