

THE Zera Emes זרע אמת PROJECT

והגדת
לבנוך
Keeping
Their
Torah Alive.



CHAYEI SARA • NOVEMBER 14, 2025 • 23 CHESHVAN 5786

לעילוי נשמת ר' חיים ישעיה ע"ה בן יבלחטו"א ר' אברהם יהודה • ר' מרדכי ע"ה בן יבלחטו"א ר' אברהם חיים הלוי • הבח' אליהו בן ר' מרדכי הלוי ע"ה

The Zera Emes Project by Rabbi Moshe Hubner was created to honor and share the Torah of over 250 Gedolim who weren't zocheh to descendants of their own. Their legacy lives on through their words of Torah and emunah that continue to inspire and touch countless lives. By bringing their timeless divrei Torah and wisdom to life, we create a powerful connection to the past to help inspire today's generation.

For sponsorship opportunities or to sign up to the weekly newsletter, email weekly@zeraemes.com or visit www.zeraemes.com

Children of Ches

In the beginning of the parashah, we learn that Sarah passes away, and Avraham is forced to purchase a burial plot for her. The area which he knew was to be her final resting place — the Me'aras Hamachpeilah — was owned by Ephron. To facilitate the purchase, Avraham approached the children of Ches to serve as intermediaries between himself and Ephron. He addressed them humbly, and they responded with great respect, saying, “You are a prince of God in our midst.”

The Torah then states (*Bereishis* 23:8) that Avraham “bowed to the *am ha'aretz*, the children of Ches.”

The term *am ha'aretz* is literally translated as “the people of the land.” However, in rabbinic literature, this term became associated with ignorant or unlearned people. It is therefore interesting that the Torah specifically uses this terminology here to describe the children of Ches — even though they had already been introduced a few *pessukim* earlier. Moreover, the Torah could have simply said that Avraham bowed to them, which would have been clearly understood to refer to the children of Ches. Why, then, does the Torah choose this phrasing at all? What detail is it adding?

Rav Yissachar Ber Bloch (*Binas Yissachar, Derech Emunah*) asks: if the Torah wished to use the term *am ha'aretz*, why not use it as their sole description? Why repeat “the people of the land, who were the children of Ches”? The phrasing seems redundant. Why describe them in two different ways?

Another question arises: the Torah describes how Avraham bowed to them, seemingly flattering them. Yet flattery (*chamufah*) is prohibited — particularly for a tzaddik, who may not flatter

someone unworthy. Here, the Torah seems to describe Avraham as bowing to people who might be categorized as *amei ha'aretz*. How could such an action be proper?

The answer lies in a teaching — and a story — of the Chasam Sofer, which is certainly based upon the words of Rav Bloch in his *derashah*.

The Chasam Sofer once remarked, “Every person needs a letter *ches* in his name.”

A few hundred years ago, yeshivos did not have dormitories. The local townspeople would host and feed the *bochurim*. One day, a *baal habayis* complained bitterly about the boy staying in his home. Speaking with disdain, he told the Chasam Sofer, “I have a bochur without a *ches*.” (When the *ches* is removed from *bochur* [בּוּחור], it becomes *bor* [בוּר] — meaning an ignorant or uncultured person.)

The Chasam Sofer, displeased with his attitude, immediately responded with characteristic wit:

“A *bochur* without a *ches* is better than a *baal habayis* without a *ches*.”

The man was taken aback. “But the word *baal habayis* doesn't have a *ches*! What do you mean?”

The Chasam Sofer explained:

“A true *baal habayis* is supposed to be a *machzik* Torah — one who supports Torah. Remove the *ches* from *machzik* (מחזיק), and

it becomes *mazik* (מזיק) — a damager. And a *mazik* is certainly more dangerous than a *bor*.”

Rav Bloch cites this play on words from the Shlah Hakadosh and applies it beautifully to answer all of our difficulties.

One may — and indeed should — show respect to an *am ha'aretz* who is a supporter of Torah. The Torah teaches us that Avraham was permitted to bow to the children of Ches **because** they had a *ches* in their name. They demonstrated respect for Torah when they addressed Avraham with reverence, saying, “You are a prince of God in our midst.” Having thus earned their *ches*, Avraham was permitted to bow to them — even though they may still have been, in some sense, *amei ha'aretz*.



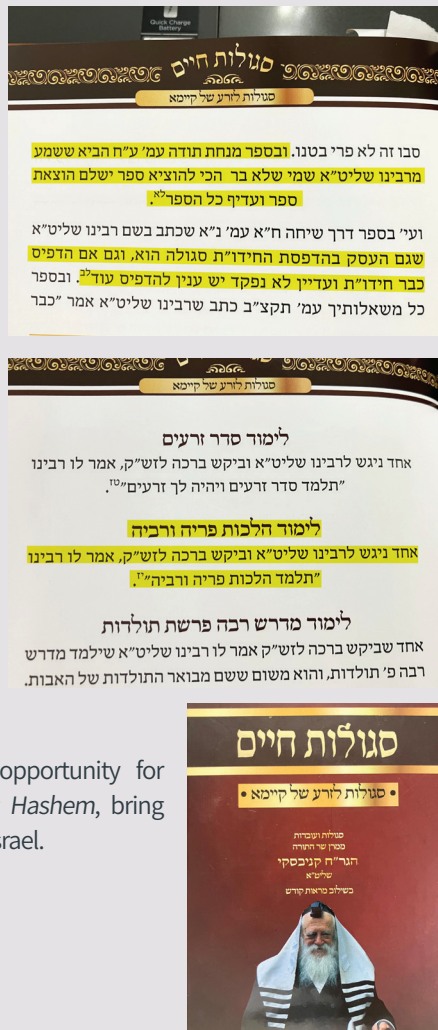
WE ARE THRILLED TO SHARE THAT THE NEXT VOLUME IN THE **ZERA EMES SERIES** IS ENTERING ITS FINAL STAGES. THIS NEW SEFER WILL, *LY”H*, WILL EXPLORE THE MITZVAH OF **PRU URVU**.

We chose this mitzvah based on the promise of Harav Chaim Kanievsky, zt”l, that learning this *sugya* is a *segulah* for children. Additionally, Rav Kanievsky famously stated that supporting the printing of a *sefer* is itself a *segulah* for children. This project unites these two *segulos* together.

Many of the Zera Emes Gedolim based their *sefarim* on the idea that the Torah they produced was also a fulfillment of the mitzvah of *Pru Urvu*, as it is widely accepted that producing *sefarim* is likened to having children.

We invite you to join us in bringing this special *sefer* to print. Your sponsorship, which can also be donated (anonymously) as a *zechus* for others, offers you a powerful opportunity for *zechuyos*, spread Torah, and, *b'ezras Hashem*, bring *brachah* to you, your family, and klal Yisrael.

TAX ID AVAILABLE.



ר' יטשכר בער בלאך

R' Yissachar Ber Bloch (1728-16 Shevat

1798) was born to R' Shimon Chasida (in AH”U, he was the only one of his generation with this special title). R' Shimon began the famous Beis Midrash in Hamburg in 1707. He authored Nizeerus Shimshon and Tosafos Chadashim on Mishnayos. He passed away 10 Kisleiv 1737). R' Yissachar Ber was a student of R' Yonasan Eibshitz and a Rav in several places before Boskowitz (1793) and Mattesdorf (1798). He was *mesader Kiddushin* of the Chasam Sofer who eulogized him (volume 3) and was very close with the Nodah Beyehudah.

There is a well-known story surrounding the passing of this great *tzaddik*. Feeling unwell, he went to the mikvah and then returned home. As word spread that his time was near, a minyan of men gathered and entered his room to be with him. However, as the moment approached, he instructed everyone to leave the room immediately. Although reluctant, they followed his directive and left. A few individuals, however, peeked through the cracks in the door and witnessed an extraordinary sight—a glowing fire illuminating the room.

After some time, they re-entered and found a note placed on the table beside his will. The note read, “Do not be concerned that I passed away without a minyan; I had one.” This note was preserved for years and seen by many rabbanim of the city, remaining a source of awe and inspiration until the upheaval of World War II.

In his will, he left specific instructions for his burial. Among them was the directive to use his study table as his *aron* and to bury his *sefer* alongside him. Additionally, he instructed that on every *vacht nacht*—the night before a *bris milah*—the community should learn from his *sefer*. He assured them that by adhering to these instructions, no calamity would befall them. To further ensure these wishes were upheld, the community engraved this guarantee into a tablet and placed it in the shul near the *aron kodesh*.

Years later, this promise was put to the test. Shortly after Pesach one year, a fire broke out, threatening the town. The Rav of the city at the time, went to the *tzaddik's* grave and declared, “You must fulfill your promise.” Miraculously, the fire ceased immediately. The Rav relates many other miraculous stories related to R' Yissachar Ber.

In recognition of his childless passing, the community instituted a custom to gather on his *yahrtzeit*. They would say Kaddish, learn Mishnayos, and light candles in his memory. Testimonies from decades later attest that this tradition endured long after his passing, a testament to the reverence and gratitude the town felt toward their *tzaddik* – who was Rav there for less than one year – and his enduring legacy.