



A Eulogy for Rabbi Shteinman

I remember the first days that I spent over 50 years ago in the Yeshiva in Ponevezh. My father, the Rosh Yeshiva, called me before I made my first steps in the Troah world and went to Yeshiva in Bnei Brak. He whispered to me: "I am sending you to Ponevezh so that you can learn from the *midos*, good personal traits, of Rabbi Aharon Leib.

More than the Torah he taught me, he taught me modesty and humility, good *midos* and the fearing of G-d. His outstanding *midos* have been a guidance to me and to thousands of students throughout the years.

He never conducted himself with haughtiness. He was someone who unified the nation with unending love. Everyone saw in him a father and a guide, an educator, a teacher, a leader.

I merited spending much time in his presence. He would often tell me that *zikui ha rabim*, enabling others, is a great thing and he of all people should know that. Throughout the years, he has spent his time teaching and being available to the public; he traveled from place to place to strengthen yeshivas and various educational institutions.

The pinnacle came in his last years when he became accepted by many as the leader of the generation, a great authority in Jewish law. Even at his advanced age, he flew time and again to countries around the world to strengthen Torah and the communities. He flew Mexico, France, the US.

He saw such actions as a pillar of Judaism. Understanding that Jews who were far from their Jewish heritage would not come to his house to visit him and would not meet a rabbi, he got up and went to meet them. He came to them to support and encourage them, and to urge them to send their children to yeshivas and Torah educational institutions.

When we see the multitudes of students in yeshivas around the world we know that Rabbi Aharon Leib had a big part in their success and their growth.

When we stand in front of the Chanukah candles, we see the similarity between them and the Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash.

However, there are three significant differences. In the Beis HaMikdash they always lit all seven lights and during Chanukah we add an additional candle every

day, gradually building count till eight. In the Beis HaMikdash the Menorah was lit during the day, and in Chanukah we light at sun down. Finally, the Menorah was lit inside while in Chanukah we light outside the house.

The deep meaning of this is that day eludes to light. When the Beis HaMikdash stood it was the light of the world, therefore the *Kohanim*, the priests, were commanded to light during the day, as during the day there is light and the light of the Menorah would shine out to the world.

Today, during a time of exile we must supersede our nature. Therefore, we light eight candles, a metaphor for going beyond nature. We light outside to shine the light outside. As the Baal Shem Tov said, we must shine light into the lowest of places.

We are obligated, each and everyone one of us, to shine our light out, *pirsumei nishah*, publicizing a miracle, to bring our light to our fellow Jews and to all who need it.

Rabbi Aharon Leib was one whose entire life was *pirsumei nishah*, publicizing G-d in the world, as Abraham did in his time. He would take the candle outside, light the flame in the streets of the city, enlightening the Universe.

His passing is a tremendous and terrible loss to the Jewish people. The ship has lost its captain, the leader of the generation. He served as a bridge between generations, from Lithuania to Bnei Brak, the city of Torah.

The entire generation is indebted to him. He broadened the world of Torah and brought it to new heights.

I have had the merit to sit in his apartment on many occasions, and take his advice on many matters. He would repeatedly say: "when you do something for another you are doing for yourself."

He did for others his entire long life, merited and gave others merit until his last day. He was one candle serving thousands and thousands and now his flame is extinguished.

His leaving of this world is terrible loss. May G-d console us all.