

Rabbi Asher Zelig Rubenstein zt”l on his sheloshim
(25 Shevat 5774/ January 26, 2014):
Rebbe’s Personal Demand for Truth

By: Rabbi Yosef Tropper



I am still in the same shock that I was on Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vaeira (25 Teves 5774) when I learned that my dear rebbe had been niftar. Time does not heal the loss that the entire Torah world has suffered. “Avi Avi Rechev Yisrael” were the famous words that Elisha cried about his great rebbe, Eliyahu. First he mourned his own loss “avi, my father” and then he mourned the loss that Klal Yisroel suffered, “rechev yisrael, the leader of Israel.” Rebbe’s life was one that inspired me personally as a talmid and truthfully as a father figure and his life had an impact on the entire Jewish nation with his speeches and fearless divrei emes delivered across the globe. Rebbe served as our link to gedolei yisrael of this and the previous generation, with ease and comfort. Rebbe took the loftiest and most important lessons of life and shared them with us in a way that was palpable, practical and perfectly true.

From the moment that I heard the shocking and bitter news I keep going over in my mind the thought about rebbe as a person, his life, his message and the thousands of lessons that I learned from him. It is so hard to capture the essence of a man who so deeply inspired me and shaped my life through his wisdom, care and passion.

Larger Than Life

Rav Aharon Feldman shlit”a spoke about Rebbe’s fire and power. He said that it’s hard to imagine such a powerful and strong man physically, emotionally and spiritually who is no longer with us. It is an utter shock. He said that Rebbe’s tefillah and his emunah were unbelievable and were something that inspired everyone around him. Rav Asher zt”l was a legend among us and a person whom we looked up to physically and spiritually. He set high standards for himself and for his family and he demanded great things from all those whom he loved. He only demanded what he himself practiced first.

Ahavas Torah

Rebbe's love of Torah knew no bounds. Rebbe's face lit up when he learned Torah and when you shared a thought from him. Rebbe's life revolved around Torah and avodas Hashem. He always talked about how learning Torah brings one the greatest pleasure in life and we saw this embodied in him.

I once told him, I can summarize every shmooz that Rebbe ever gave with two pesukim. "In Tehillim (73:1-2) David says, 'Hashem only wants to give us good... I was almost lost before I understood this' (see Rashi and Metudos there). King David is saying that the most important understanding in life is that Hashem is the ultimate mativ, Provider of Good." Rav Asher gave me a huge hug, "that's right, there's no better life than that of a person who is in touch with the chessed and chochmah of Hashem. Very good, niflah me'od!" He kept patting my back and smiling with his huge grin.

Healthy Perishus

Rebbe was against perishus that made a person feel limited. We are here to enjoy Hashem's world he would always say with a smile. We are human beings who want Olam Haseh. Rebbe was bothered when other people only spoke about Olam Habah. His life's message was that one who learns Torah and has emunah in Hashem has a great and enjoyable life in this world as well! Rebbe taught us to be honest with ourselves and not to practice unreasonable perishus. He still shared lofty levels with us and he inspired us as we watched him strive to be greater each day.



Rebbe encouraged us to take every opportunity to learn and keep our sederim. Of course we should attend simchos and dance at the weddings of our friends, but a ben Torah does not look for excuses to leave seder. Rebbe would joke about bochrin that asked him permission to go to far off simchos without justification: "My grandmother's friend's neighbor's cousin's wedding in Natanya where I am concerned that not many people will attend and I need to be there." "A pidyon peter

chamor in the Galil, I'm really into this mitzvah Rebbe, you may not have known this about me..." Rebbe's guideline was to be honest about the importance of seder weighed against the importance and justification for why one was leaving.

Honor Torah

It was interesting to me that one time a shul a few blocks away from the yeshiva advertised a large hachnasas sefer Torah event. Rebbe told us that keeping to our seder was more important as most of us did not have any connection with that shul. Later that evening just as night seder was about to begin we heard the singing and dancing of the procession marching right past the yeshiva building. Rebbe instructed us to quickly join

for a few minutes to dance, sing and escort the Torah. He went and danced with great emotion and love and we all followed. When we returned to yeshiva I asked him, "Rebbe, I thought that you told us not to go, what happened, did the Rosh Yeshiva change his mind?" He replied to us all, "We don't go out to find these types of mitzvos without a connection to that shul, but if it comes to us, we honor the Torah, how can we not join in the simcha when it comes to our front door?! I felt it was important for all of us to stop for a few minutes and join in the simchas HaTorah." What a powerful lesson.

Rebbe's 13-year-old grandson recently made a siyum on Mishnayos Seder Taharos. Rebbe came to the celebration and was very emotional. He was so moved by this great accomplishment in learning that he shared with his family: "It was worth me coming to this world and to endure all of the challenges of olam hazeh to reach this milestone of seeing my grandson having completed Seder Taharos." Rebbe loved to share in the siyum of his children and talmidim.

Every time that I spoke at a simcha in his presence, shared a dvar Torah at his Shabbos meal or sent him a written dvar Torah he would build me up and generously compliment my work. He loved to hear our thoughts and to develop our abilities. I sent him many shtickel Torahs and he would often compliment them and add his thoughts. He told me that he had a folder in which he saved each one that I ever sent. I know of many other Talmidim whom he also did this for. So great was his love of Torah and of his students.

Many yeshiva bochrim who come to Eretz Yisrael feel a great draw to the Kosel HaMaaravi. Rebbe encouraged us to go there and to daven, to pour out our hearts before Hashem in a special place of tefillos of the Jewish nation. At the same time, Rebbe reminded us with clear direction that learning and davening in the yeshiva is a most important task as well and one should not get carried away with his visits to the kosel. The kosel is kodesh, but the learning in yeshiva is kodesh k'dashim.

He learned daf yomi as long as I knew him in addition to the iyun preparation for his shiur. He was always learning even in the car, he had tapes, shiurim and brought his laptop to play shiurim from when he traveled. Often when I would meet up with him he would share a fresh vort on yiras shamayim which he just heard or had something to add to.

High Standards

Rebbe always asked about my learning. He was michayav you to learn more and more and to think about ruchnius. You couldn't avoid the pointed questions. "I'm asking you because I love you and care. Can you make more time in your day to learn more iyun?" He asked about your family, health and parnasah, he laughed and cried with you, these things were important to him when it came to his talmidim's wellbeing, but the most important topic was, "are you growing in Torah? I am your rebbe and I worry about this."

Brainwashing

Often people accused Rebbe of brainwashing his students! They complained that before students met him they had dreams of going to college and entering the work force but

after hearing his powerful speeches they dedicated more and more time to learning Torah. Rebbe was very proud of the accusation and would not deny it. He often stated, “yes, you are right, I did brainwash your son, I took his dirty brain and I washed off the filth and grime, in this yeshiva we teach him emes and the beauty of Torah. You are right, we brainwash here!”

Emunah

Rebbe was full of emunah. In every situation in life he would say, there is a Rebbono shel Olam who is in charge. When I was going thru a hard time he told me, “Yosef, you can call me or visit any time to cry on my shoulder, I am crying with you. But never forget that the Rebbono shel Olam knows what you are going thru and He feels your pain. It is for a reason, we don’t understand, but He keeps track and knows what is best for you.”

Rebbe always told over the story about how Rav Chatzkal was once in the Ponowitz Yeshiva office and saw the staff fumbling through the box of a new appliance which had just arrived at the yeshiva. Rav Chatzkal asked what they were looking for. They replied that they needed to find the manual. “What makes you think there is a manual included? They all responded to Rav Chatzkal, “every manufacturer must provide an instruction manual.” Upon hearing this Rav Chatzkal gave a clonk on the table and announced, “this is proof for Torah min hashamayim!” The students looked at him bewildered asking him to explain. Rav Chatzkal picked up a chumash and exclaimed, “Hashem created the world and He gave us the instruction manual you see here, He is the manufacturer and must provide the manual! For best results in life, follow this guide!” Rav Asher lived every day of his life according to that manual and he achieved a happy and radiant life.

Connection to His Rebbe

Rebbe looked up to and adored gedolim. He spoke with deep love and respect of Rav Chatzkal. Rebbe had a talmid who was a grandson of Rav Chatzkal and whom he invested much time, energy and tears to help him reach his potential as a ben Torah as an expression of his hakaras hatov for this student’s illustrious grandfather. When this student had a child while learning in kollel he invited Rav Asher to the bris and honored him with krias shema. Rav Asher pronounced his part with loudness and boom until the talmid whispered the name which he would be giving the child, Yechezkel, after Rav Chatzkal, the baby’s great-grandfather. Rav Asher was so moved and in such deference for his rebbe that it took him 45 seconds to compose himself and continue to say the new name. He became deeply emotional and moved. Those present said that they saw firsthand the intimate connection and love which a talmid shared with his rebbe.

Sweet Way of Talking

Rav Asher delivered his shmoozin with a boom. He was not afraid to say what had to be said even if in his words, “you won’t hear this anywhere else in the world...” At the same time he was very caring and sensitive and all those whom he interacted with were overcome by his kindness and sensitivity. I was once in the room when Rav Asher saw a friend of mine do something slightly immature. Rebbe smiled and quoted the posuk “ki naar yisrael veohaveihu, Israel is a child and I love him.” The student got the message

that his actions were childish but also got a smile from the Rosh Yeshiva which remained with him.

The picture of Rebbe that remains etched in my mind is that of his wide smile and enjoyment of life. A shmoneh esrei and benching do not go by without me recalling how much joy and pleasure rebbe got from talking to Hashem and giving thanks.

Rebbe loved to tell over the story of "Moshe" (actual name), a colleague of his who had learned together with him in Ponevetz. Moshe was deeply drawn to Rav Chatzkal's mussar shmoozin and never missed a class just like Rebbe. In fact Moshe would sit on the steps of the bima to get a front row view of Rav Chatzkal. Moshe got engaged and the wedding was to take place in Israel. Moshe's mother called him to share the good news that she would be coming in early for the wedding. She would be landing on an El Al flight at Lod airport on Wednesday evening at 7pm. Moshe was in a challenging situation as Wednesday nights at 7pm Rav Chatzkal gave his shiur! Rav Asher spoke it over with Moshe as he was his shomer and they both agreed that only Rav Chatzkal could decide what to do. Rav Chatzkal told Moshe, there is no question, kibud aim, you must go meet your mother at the airport. Moshe accepted the psak.

On that fateful Wednesday evening at 7pm Rav Asher reported that he came to hear Rav Chatzkal's shmooz and low and behold Moshe was sitting on the step in his usual spot. Rebbe joked, "I admit that I was not dan him lkav zchus I thought his zeal to hear the shiur got the most of him." After the class Rav Asher rushed over to find out what lead to this change in plans, "weren't you supposed to pick up your mother?" "I did," replied Moshe. But her plane was scheduled to land at 7pm (Rav Asher joked that back then if the plane landed on the same day within 24 hours of its scheduled time it was considered on time.) Moshe explained, when I called the airline at 3pm today they said the plane was landing at 5pm. I thought it was a mistake but they confirmed it. I rushed to the airport and picked my mother up in a cab at 5pm and made it back in time for the 7pm shmooz. While driving back from the airport my mother said, "Moshe, do you want to hear something funny? The pilot announced that in all his years of flying he never ever made it to Israel this fast, there must have been some wind carrying the plane!" Moshe winked at Rav Asher and said, "I didn't tell my mother that the wind was my desire to attend Rav Chatzkal's shiur!" Rav Asher said he then looked at Moshe in amazement and told exclaimed, "Moshe, this story is amazing, it's mindboggling." Moshe corrected him, "it's not amazing, it's the most elementary rule, Rav Chatzkal tells us this all the time, one who wants to do the right thing will get help from heaven to do it. It's just that simple, no big feat!"

Giving Advice

Rebbe told over that whenever Rav Chatzkal would give advice he would end by stating, "that's just my opinion, you don't have to follow it if you chose not to." Rebbe wondered what this was about and he asked some of the older talmidim who knew Rav Chatzkal from Europe. He learned that Rav Chatzkal used to give advice and people who didn't follow it had terrible tragedies befall them, they lost all their money, got badly hurt and some ever passed away. Rav Chatzkal found out about this and needed to correct it and

so he began to tell the students that they were not chayav to follow his recommendations so that there would be no kitrug in shamayim on them. Rebbe told me once, "I am not Rav Chatzkal, my advice I share is what I think is best for you, and because I love you, but you are not bound by it."

Rebbe told over that he had a friend in Ponovitz who was constantly late for shachris and seder, he was unable to get up in the morning. One Bein Hazemanim he went to say goodbye to his Rebbe and told him that he had an extremely early flight the next morning as he was heading home. Rav Chatzkal was very alarmed and davened that he should oversleep and miss his flight. "I don't want them to say in shamayim, he missed shachris because he's unable to get up, but for a flight he is able." That is exactly what happened, the boy snoozed right thru and had to catch a later flight.

I had a friend in yeshiva who had the same scenario, he wouldn't get up for shachris and he had an early morning flight to catch. I was mispalel that he should oversleep and I reminded him of the story we had both heard from Reb Asher. "Yosef," he replied, "your tefillah won't work I already got a beracha and limud zechus from Rav Asher, he told me that if I'm mikabel to work on getting up early for shachris he will bless me to be able to catch my flight!" And so it was!

Rebbe told us about Rav Chatzkal's passion and hard work and how Rav Chatzkal pushed himself to get up every morning and to daven and learn with hasmadah. One bachur who had trouble getting up in the morning hung a picture of Rav Chatzkal above his bed. Rebbe was very amused to report that whenever he found that bachur oversleeping in bed he saw that the picture was overturned to face the wall. Rebbe said, "you couldn't stay in bed and have excuses with Rav Chatzkal looking at you!"

An Amazing Rebbe

When I first began to teach as a 6th grade rebbe I called up Reb Asher to get his advice. He told me that he was a milamed tinokos for a short time and he gave me words of encouragement. "Yosef, this is the only advice I can offer, if you do this you will be successful and a beloved rebbe. Every morning before you teach your class you need to do three things. Number 1- Fill your heart up with the love of the Kadosh Baruch Hu, I love you Hashem. Number 2- Fill your heart up with the love of His Torah, I love Your holy Torah. And Number 3- Fill your heart up with the love of your talmidim, habanim ailu hatalmidim and pass on your ahavas Hashem v'Toraso. Show them your love of learning and life and your care for them and you will be the best!" This I think summarizes how rebbe related to each one of us, his dear children in whom he instilled a true Ahavas Torah.

Marriage

Rebbe's focus on shalom bayis began with his own example and passed down with power to the talmidim. Rebbe always said over: The Gemara in Berachos (8a) states that they would ask the chosson (groom): Is your wife a "**motza isha motza tov, you found a wife and found goodness** (Mishlei 18:22)", or is she a "**motzey ani mar mimaves es haisha**, I have found more miserable than death, the woman! (Koheles 7:26)." This is quite an

intense question to be given to a new groom. What is it all about? Additionally, the famous question on this Gemara is why and how did they have the nerve to ask this to the chosson and what did it accomplish? Is it not considered lashon harah, evil slander, to even discuss the matter (asked by the Chofetz Chaim)? I heard this from Rebbe at countless sheva berachos.

Rebbe explained a beautiful concept here. ***Whether or not you succeed in marriage is solely in your hands!*** If one comes into the marriage focusing only on himself, he will fail. If on the other hand one strives to love, appreciate and care for his wife, he will find true happiness. These are the two options placed before the chosson. Will you be a ‘**motza isha**’, will you be focused on **finding her**... In that case, you will ‘find goodness and blessing from Hashem’ just as the verse states. Or will someone choose to be a ‘**motzey ani**’ ***focused on ani, the self***, representing selfishness and self-interests only. In that case, it will be ‘mar mimaves, more miserable than death.’ The chosson wasn’t expected to answer the question. He was simply being given vital marriage advice. He was being told that if he wanted to succeed and achieve happiness, he should learn to focus on ***“motza isha, always look to be in touch with your wife’s needs and feelings.”*** This was Rebbe in such a deep way.

Rebbe loved to share how he once overheard the following conversation and found it to be extremely powerful. “Yaakov, where is your car?” asked David. “I gave it to my wife to drive today.” “Are you kidding Yaakov, you trust her with your car?!” ***“David, if I trust her with my life, I certainly can trust her with a simple car....!”*** He always told us about how finding a good wife will determine your success in life.

A friend of mine called me to ask me a question about Rav Asher’s shidduch tapes. Rav Asher said that when you go on a date you should open the door for the young lady, how long does this apply, we are now B”H married? I reminded my friend that whenever we see Rav Asher and the Rebbetzin travel together after their years of marriage Rebbe always opens up his wife’s door first to allow her into the car! We all saw this repeat itself on so many occasions.

Why Not You?

Rebbe always told over how when his rebbe, Rav Mordecai Gifter zt”l from Telse, Cleveland was in yeshiva, he put up pictures on his wall of all the gedolim. In the middle he left a black page and on it he wrote, “why not you?” Rebbe explained that when you strive for greatness, Hashem will help you accomplish anything you set your mind to. Many of the talmidim found this advice very inspirational and followed suit.

Rebbe took things to heart. He would always say, “wow, niflah amazing, isn’t that powerful, beautiful? When he heard emes it made a deep impression on his life. He was a real shomeah, one who listens and takes to heart. He loved to talk about Vayishma Yisro, how Yisro was the only gentile in the world to take action after krias yam suf! “Daber elokim ki shomeiah anochi, I am listening Hashem.”

Normalcy

Rebbe loved to tell over the story of Rav Elya Lopian (1876-1970), a true master of mussar. A student once asked Rav Elya for permission to go to an inappropriate place. Rav Elya said, “how can you go there, it’s a place of great pritzus?! “Oh Rebbe, don’t worry, it doesn’t bother me, I don’t even notice!” Rav Elya responded with great concern, “what’s your name and mother’s name, please tell me.” Why? “Because I need to daven for you. “Why rebbe?” “You must be ill. I’m a weak old man who is blind in one eye and when I go near places like that it greatly bothers me. You are a young man with full strength and healthy eyesight, and yet you report that it doesn’t bother you, you must be sick, I will daven for your recovery.” The bachur got the message. Rebbe used to share this story all of the time. He was not embarrassed to talk about man’s own vulnerability and weaknesses. Rebbe spoke to our level and showed us that there is nothing wrong with being human, we simply need to learn how to control ourselves and accomplish. We need to strive to be great.

Many of us bochrim came to yeshiva from a non-Torah background. We often spoke to Rebbe about foolish mistakes and avairos we did when we were young. Rebbe would always reassure us and quote the Gemara’s expression of, “miyom omdi al daati, from the day that I reached maturity and understanding.” Rebbe said that the Kadosh Baruch Hu will forgive you for sins you did without knowledge. We all made foolish mistakes as kids. The Kadosh Baruch Hu understands and only holds you responsible from the time that you reached understanding. Rebbe encouraged us, now that you are in Toras Simcha and learned about emunah, limud HaTorah, emes and the purpose in life, you have reached understanding and are responsible to act accordingly. That was his message. I feel that Rebbe embodied this, he never denied his challenges as a youth, in fact he often shared them with us, he was proud of his personal work in Torah and avodas hamiddos. I believe that from the day that he saw emes he continued to pursue it and live it unrelentingly.

Davening

He had certain phrases that he loved to sing during davening. His heart was filled with passion and he was not embarrassed to express it. During maariv he would sing the words with power, “Ki heim chayeinu..., Torah is our life.” Those words meant so much to him. In Ahava Rabba he would always hum, “vikeiravtanu.... Hashem drew us close to His service...” In shema he would strengthen his perishus, “vlo sosuru... don’t turn after your eyes,” he would shake his head and wave his finger to stress the importance of not straying. This made a powerful impact on us. When Rebbe reciting the birchas kohanim and said the word “beahava, to bless the nation with love” my heart melted every time as I felt it.



Two Videos

Rebbe always told us about the two videos one of the life that you lived and the other of the life that you could have lived and accomplished. Rebbe begged us to live a life of happiness and success in bringing out our potential and doing what we know is right.

Kavod Habrios

A deranged person once opened the door in the middle of the Gemara shiur and sat down. I motioned to the Rosh Yeshiva asking whether he wanted me to remove him, Rebbe shook his head telling me, no, let him stay. The man began to ask questions. Rav Asher stopped and listened respectfully and even answered him. The man saw that he was not getting the upset response he was seeking and so he walked out. Rebbe was a profound anav. He could be powerful and booming, but he was soft and sensitive to every situation.



Misragesh

Rav Asher was deeply emotional and moved by things. He knew how to laugh and he knew how to cry. Whenever you shared sad news he would cry with you. When you shared a simcha he would rejoice. I always heard him whispering words of emunah and thanks to Hashem such as “chasdei Hashem yisbarach.” I was particularly moved whenever I would tell him a story of chasdei Hashem, emunah or hasgacha, he would shake his head knowingly and say, “I told you that Hashem is Great, He

is in charge and He is the ultimate mativ.” Rebbe used everything that he heard as an opportunity to get closer to Hashem and to be mischazek his emunah.

One of my last conversations with him took place when he was in Baltimore for my brothers aufruf and wedding in September 2013. Rebbe talked about how Hashem gives all of us talents and they are meant to be used to built Torah and produce results for Klal Yisrael, as Rav Yochanan said to Reish Lakish, “cheilecha l’oreisa, your strengths belong and are fit to be channeled for the Torah.”

He asked to speak last at the Aufruf and he shared the importance of learning from our great ancestors and the gedolim before us. He cried about the foundation that we have to build and how we must learn from the pashiyos to follow the Avos. He was overjoyed to spend that weekend with so many of his talmidim and he even told me how proud he was of many of them, especially one who was recently married and whose wife was encouraging her husband to be kovaiya itim to learn.

Using Life

Rav Zishe Salomon the mashgiach of Toras Simcha spoke about how Rav Asher shared his love with everyone. He loved Torah and he loved his Talmidim and he was willing to do anything to give a compliment and word of encouragement. He said that He stressed that he strongly believes that Rav Asher would not want the Talmidim to walk away thinking and obsessing about the tragedy of his passing, rather, they should think about what we will accept on ourselves to understand that there is an Eibishter in the world who gives us the gift of life and the ability to become a great person.

Rav Berel Eichenstein spoke about the greatness and uniqueness of Rav Asher who was a rare blend of his being a Rosh Yeshiva and Mashgiach. He was also a Talmid, he wanted to learn from anyone. He was also a yedid, a great friend who never relented his closeness in all times of needs and good. Rav Eichenstein said, “He was one of the few of my dearest friends.” He stated that he was too saddened and too shocked to even weep, my pain is too deep to even sob. “You were the captain of this ship, this yeshiva and there is no replacement.”

Faculties

I recall this story with clarity and it is very powerful for me to share. In 2005, Rebbe heard about a certain gadol who had passed away right before he began his Gemara shiur. He talked about the man’s life, his Torah and his greatness. He then exclaimed that the gadol had all his faculties until the very end. Rebbe then said that Chazal tell us that one should daven for a good death (Berachos 8a). He then gave a heartfelt tefillah asking for the same. He closed his eyes and held out his fist, “please Rebono Shel Olam...” Rebbe was zocheh to teach and learn Torah with his full cognizance until his very last day. His entire theme of life was mindfulness and I believe that the Rebono Shel Olam granted him his request in that zechus.



Conclusion

What can I say? Rebbe's life, Torah and message had a profound on me that will remain for a lifetime. So many friends have shared the sentiment with me that only Rav Asher himself could teach us what to say and how to react to this great loss and tragedy.

As I think about ways to deal with my sadness I recall a story that I believe expresses what Rebbe would say to us right now. I will never forget one Tisha b'av at yeshiva where we sat with him weeping on the floor saying kinos. He spoke about how his rabbeim wept and mourned the churban. At chatzos we finished the kinos and got up to rest. Rebbe stood up and began to give out wedding invitations to the rabbeim and posted it on the bulletin board. His daughter's wedding was coming up in a few days. I was shocked and thought to myself, how do you give out wedding invitations on Tisha B'Av?

I went over to him and asked, "Rebbe, with all due respect, it's Torah and I need to understand, isn't today a day of mourning?" Many people gathered around to hear his response to a question they also shared. With a twinkle in his eye he answered, "People think that Tisha B'av is a time for mourning and depression. This is totally wrong and not what it's all about. We spend the morning thinking about the tragedies caused by our sins and our disconnection from Hashem. At chatzos we brush off the ashes and dirt and we commit ourselves to be better and to **build**. Mashiach is born at this time according to Chazal. A day well spent produces closeness to Hashem, teshuva and geula. I am giving out this invitation because it is one of the greatest ways to continue building Klal Yisrael, a Jewish home brings the shechina and rebuilds the churvos yerushalaim." We were deeply moved.

Rebbe taught us how to mourn and how to grow from the experience. How paradoxically the mourning is to lead to the deepest connection to our inner core, values and to the Kadosh Baruch Hu. I have been unable to take any comfort since my Rebbe's passing. He was so young, he had so much more to do and to share. He was so healthy and vibrant. He was so precious to all of us. It is so hard to accept. Yet the only glimmer of comfort that I hear is Rebbe's voice in the back of my head saying with emotion and power, get up off the floor, don't fall into depression. The shmuzin that I gave were real, life has a purpose and you each have so much to accomplish. Continue in the path of the Avos and your Rabbeim and become great.

I conclude with the Rebbetzin's shtichyeh powerful words which she shared with me over the phone when I called to give comfort and really to receive comfort. I have really taken them to heart: ***"The Rosh Yeshiva zt"l planted many seeds, please make sure that you water them and reap them."*** How true and how powerful. We owe it to him and we owe it to ourselves. Yhi zichro baruch.

Special note:

The talmidim have undertaken a number of projects regarding transcribing our rebbe's Torah, to participate or offer support please contact the author at: yoseftropper@gmail.com