

Now you can understand the Agadas of Rabba bar Bar Channah

Who has never heard of the greatness and holiness of Rebbe Eliyahu of Graiditz, described by the *Sho'el u'Meishiv* of Levov as a "Patriarch of Torah wisdom and fear of Heaven, the holy and pure Gaon, renowned in the world for his fear of Heaven and his sanctity, the divine Mekubal, our master and teacher Rebbe Eliyahu, son of Rabbi S., Av Beis Din of Graiditz. Even today the name of the "tzaddik of Graiditz" is spoken with unbounded respect, and his amazing miracles form a part in the conversations of all those who seek to praise tzaddikim.

Nonetheless, not everyone knows just when and how he became renowned as a miracle worker, what it was that made his home into the address for anyone who suffered bitterly from personal troubles. This reached the point that a year after one notable event he was forced to put a notice in the newspaper the *Magid* to the effect that it was not necessary to come to him any more, since he would continue to daven for those who had seen him even without their taking the trouble to come to him.

In his youth, while he was still studying under his main Rebbe, HaGaon Rebbe Akiva Eiger, zatzal, the name of Rebbe Eliyahu Gutmacher of Graiditz became known as a holy Gaon who knew all the secrets of the Torah. Over a number of years, when he held Rabbinical positions in a number of different communities, he emerged as a leader of the people by all standards, and won respect as one of the Rabbis whose involvement in the affairs of the people as a whole left a lasting imprint.

While he was still studying under his main Rebbe, Rebbe Akiva Eiger, zatzal, he discovered his

Rebbe's copy of the *Sefer HaZohar*, its margins filled with comments and innovations. From that time on Rebbe Eliyahu also began to study the hidden Torah, and he achieved distinction in this area as well. Still, this by itself did not give him a reputation as a miracle worker, even though a select few already knew that he had powers in this regard as well.

In 5633, Rebbe Eliyahu published his work Tzafnas Paneach, a deep exposition of hidden meanings in the sayings of Rabba bar Bar Channah (the sayings on which, as is known, the Sefer Likutei Moharan by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov is based).

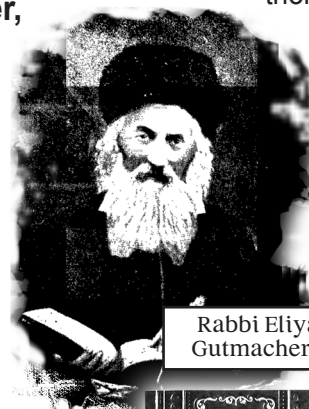
The publication of this sefer, throughout which is displayed Rebbe Eliyahu's extensive familiarity with Kabala and the many kinds of miraculous cures and other wonders that can be accomplished through it, produced an awareness of Rebbe Eliyahu's powers as a miracle worker, and multitudes of Jews began to seek him out and to treat him with awe and sanctity. So many Jews came to bang on his door by day and by night that being already old and weak, he was forced to issue a public letter asking that people not bother to come to him, and also not to burden him with letters, owing to his old age and infirmity, assuring them that he would daven for them even from a distance. This

letter appeared in the journals of the time "HaMagid" and "HaLevanon" of Adar 5634.

This sefer, which brought renown to the Tzaddik of Graiditz, has now been brought back to life through the valuable activities of the "Limud Agada" Institute, which has been active in promoting study of Agada for a number of years. In this period, during which Daf Yomi learners are studying the teachings of Rabba bar Bar Channah, it is being republished.

Dozens of sefarim have been written by Gedolei Yisroel over a number of generations to elucidate the teachings of Rabba bar Bar Channah that appear in Bava Basra 73-74. Three of these give particularly thorough explanations and the "Limud Agada" Institute is now publishing them together in one volume under the name "Agadata D'vei Rav", which will be available in the coming weeks.

In the center of each page appears the text of the maamarim in clear letters with vowels, surrounded by commentaries by Gedolim from a number of periods, including: the **Rashbam's** commentary, **Tzafnas Pa'aneich** by the Tzaddik of Graiditz, along with **Rapaduni BaTapuchim** by Rabbi Elyakim Getz, Rav of Hildesheim and **LeBinyamin Amar** by Rabbi Binyamin Zeev Wolf HaLevi Boskowitz (son of the **Machtzis HaShekel**), and at the bottom of the page a digest of commentaries by other Gedolim.



Rabbi Eliyahu Gutmacher Zt"l

