

Recovery points from the Bas Ayin

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Today is the yahrzeit of the Bas Ayin.

Rabbi Avraham Dov of Avritch was a rabbi from Ukraine, first in Avritch and later in Zhitomir. In 1830 he moved to Eretz Yisroel and became the head Ahskanazi rav of Tzfas. During the 1837 earthquake, Rabbi Avraham Dov foresaw the disaster moments before it occurred and managed to save many from his congregation who were in midst of the Mincha prayers. His book the Bas Ayin on the Torah is well respected in Chasidic circles. Rabbi Avraham Dov of Avritch is buried in the Tzfat cemetery

Here are some great points from his holy sefer in this weeks parsha that can help us BE"H in recovery and keeping clean.

1- A person should work on desires one small step at a time. The way to do it is thru learning more Torah, even shelo lishmah. The light of the torah will eventually help the person have a full recovery and teshuva and give him the strength & ability to keep fully clean.

2- Someone who has fallen has a much greater potential to reach greatness than someone who was always clean. The reason is that this person has humility because of his past deeds and Hashem is very close to those who are humble. Another benefit of being humble is that it allows the person to be able to look deeply into his personal flaws and work on correcting them.

3- Being too humble can lead to inferior feelings and Atzlus. A person should never say "who am I (knowing my past) to serve such a great G-d". Always remember that Hashem created the world with the Midas Hachessed and he wants our avodah regardless of what our past looks like.

what he is most famous for (besides his monumental book of Chassidic thought, Bas Ayin) is his part in the earthquake miracle of 1837.

In the deadly earthquake of 24 Tevet 5597 (January 1, 1837), 5,000 people lost their lives, of whom 4000 were Jews, more than 80% of the community. It was between the afternoon and evening prayers, when most of the men were in shul, that the tremors and rumblings suddenly began. Of all of Tzfat's shuls only two remained standing (Ari-Sephardi and Abuhav), and many hundreds of Jews at prayer perished under the collapsed debris. In the shul of the Avritcher Rebbe, as elsewhere, panic set in, and the congregants began to bolt for the outdoors.

"Come to the ark if you wish to be saved!" shouted the Rebbe in a powerful voice. Immediately everyone crowded around him. The Rebbe threw himself on the ground, praying and weeping. Local tradition records that although most of the building collapsed, the part where the men were clustered remained upright and everyone was saved. A plaque outside the shul today testifies to this miracle. The line between the original structure (over the Ark) and the reconstructed portion is clearly visible. One source (Eden Zion) states that while nearly all the walls collapsed, the domed ceiling miraculously remained aloft, almost as if it were suspended in the air!

Just before Rabbi Avraham Dov passed away in the epidemic of 1840, on the 12th day of the Jewish month of Kislev, he announced that his would be the last life claimed by the terrible plague. And so it was.

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