

YICHUS

NEWSLETTER

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Featured Lesson: The Other Brothers of Moshe Rabbeinu

Transcribed from a lecture by R' Chanoch Posy



Jewish Genealogical Society

In this issue we will take examine the lineage of two people who are not well known – אלדד ומידד (Eldad and Meidad).

נְאַלֶּנוּ נַאֲשֶׁר תְּטָאת אֲשֶׁר נוֹאַלְנוּ נַאֲשֶׁר חָטָאנוּ (Please, master, do not put sin upon us for acting foolishly and for sinning). Then Aharon says, "אַל נָא תְהִי כַּמַת אֲשֶׁר בְּצֵאתוֹ מֵרֶחֶם אָפוֹי (Let her not be like the dead, which comes out of his mother's womb with half his flesh consumed!). We do not understand what the last portion of that phrase means. What does the expression יַצַאֶּבֶל הַצִּי בְשֶׂרוֹ (half his flesh consumed) mean?

It is said in the name of the Divrei Chaim (R' Chaim Halberstam of Sanz [1793 –

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ELDAD AND MEIDAD

by Geilan Grant

Who Were They?

The identities of Eldad and Meidad are actually auite interesting. The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 15:19; Tanchuma, Behaalosecha #12) tells us that they were also Kemuel ben Shiftan and Elidad ben Kislon (respectively), who are two of the Nesiim mentioned in Parshas Matos (Bamidbar 34:21, 24). Targum Yonasan and

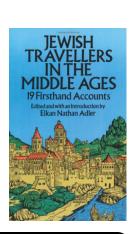
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Eldad & Meidad - Where Is Their Final Resting Place?



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eld ad and Meidad lists it as a cave in Edrei (also known as Daraa, a city in southwestern Syria, near Jordan), citing page 253 of Burial Places of the Fathers, published by Yehuda Levi Nahum in the book called: Sohar la-hasifat ginzei Teiman (Heb. צהר לחשיפת גנזי תימן), Tel-Aviv 1986.

The book, Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages: 19 Firsthand Accounts, on page 127, recounting the account of Rabbi Jacob, the messenger of Rabbi Jechiel of Paris (1238 - 1244), records a slightly different location. He writes, "... from Nebi Zerua where are the tombs of Eldad and Meidad". The author mentions that it is one parasang (about 34 of a mile) from Edrei, and it is near the graves of Abel, Cain and Job.



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1876]) that there is an argument as to who Eldad and Meidad were. The Torah tells us that when Moshe assembled the 70 Elders, he chose six representatives per tribe. Two of those were excluded from the total, to yield 70. Eldad and Meidad were the two who were excluded. They were certainly neviim (prophets), as illustrated by the Torah (Numbers וַיִּשָּׁצְרוּ שְׁנֵי אֲנָשִׁים בַּמַּחֲנֶה שֵׁם הָאֶחָד " (11:26 אֶלְדָּד וְשֵׁם הַשַּׁנִי מֵידָד וַהָּנַח עֲלֵהֶם הָרוּח וְהַמָּה יַבַּכְּחָבִים וְלֹא יָצְאוּ הָאֹהֶלָה וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ בַּמַּחֲנֶה" (Now two men remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the second was Meidad, and the Spirit rested upon them. They were among those written, but they did not go out to the tent, but prophesied in the camp). The two of them said a nevuah (prophecy). What nevuah did they say? They said, " משה מת ויהושע מכניס" (They prophesied that Moshe would die and Yehoshua would bring the Jewish nation into the Land of Israel [Rashi, quoting the Sifrei Behaalosecha 1:42:21, Sanhedrin 17a]). Immediately, the next verse states: "וַיָּרֶץ הַנַּעַר וַיַּגֵּד לְמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמַר אֶלְדָּד וּמֵידָד מָתְנַבְּאִים בַּמַּחֲנֶה. וַיַּעַן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן-נוּן 'מְשָׁרֵת מֹשֶׁה מִבְּחֲרָיו וַיֹּאמַר אֲדֹנִי מֹשֶׁה כְּלָאֵם (The lad ran and told Moses, saying, "Eldad and Meidad are prophesying in the camp!" Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant from his youth, answered and said, "Moses, my master, shut them in!"). In other words, basically, kill them; wipe them out. What is Moshe's response? ַניאמֶר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה, הַמְקַנֵּא אַתָּה לִי וּמִי יָתַן כָּל-עַם " ''יְהוָה נְבִיאִים--כִּי-יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת-רוּחוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם' (Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? If only all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would bestow His spirit upon them!"). In other words, "I am not the person that seeks revenge," and he forgave them. And to prove that, in Numbers 34:21 we are told that one of the Nesiim (chieftains) was named אֱלֹינָד (Elidud), and that was the same Eldad we are speaking of, just with a slight variation of his name. The promotion to a Nasi is proof of Moshe's forgiveness.

To understand how these two verses go together, the *Divrei Chaim* quotes *Targum Yonasan*, regarding, "Who were Eldad and Meidad?" He explains that they were the children of Yocheved, mother of Moshe Rabbeinu. What were the circumstances? He offers two possibilities for when Yocheved conceived them:

- 1. after the passing of Amram, father of Moshe, which could have occurred many years prior to the Jews leaving Egypt
- 2. after Amram and Yocheved separated from each other

Yocheved then married Elitzafan ben Parnach, and she had two children: Eldad Meidad. Eldad and Meidad were therefore half-brothers of Moshe, Aharon and Miriam from their mother (maternal half-brothers). If that is true, says the Divrei Chaim, we can explain the verse " אַל-נָא יְהְהִי כַּמֵּת" to mean don't treat your sister like a na (meis - corpse), because "אֲשֶׁר בְּצֵאתוֹ מֵרֶחֶם אָמוֹ", she came out of your mother's womb too. "נַיֵּאַכֵל חֲצִי בְשֵׂרוֹ" – And Eldad and Meidad were only halfrelated to you, with "הַצִּי בְשֶׂרוֹ" meaning, half your flesh-andblood. Aharon said as follows: If you forgave Eldad and Meidad, your half-siblings, then Miriam, who is your full-fledged sibling, and also saved your life (Exodus 2:4; the story of Moshe in the basket) you must surely forgive.

That is one possibility as to the identity of Eldad and Meidad. However, there is also a different possibility. The Daas Zekeinim

mi'Baalei Tosfos (a commentary compiled by later generations of scholars from the Franco-German group of Tosafists in the 13th century) provides us with a different picture of the lineage of Eldad and Meidad. In Numbers 11:28, Daas Zekienim tells us: "Who were Eldad and Meidad? There was a Tanna (an author of Mishnah) named Rabbeinu Hillel that discovered a grave in the Land of Israel with the inscription פה נקבר אלדד ומידד אחי אהרן מן האב ולא מן " האם" (Here lies Eldad and Meidad, brothers to Aharon from his father, but not from his mother).

The question we ask is, if they were "אחי אהרן מן האב ולא מן האם – paternal brothers", why only mention Aharon? Given the choice to claim lineage from either Aharon HaKohen or Moshe Rabbeinu, notwithstanding the stature of Aharon, a great tzadik, wouldn't it rather have said " אחר משה מן האב ולא מן האם" - Moshe's paternal brothers?! In other words, why were Eldad and Meidad seemingly only Aharon's brothers and not Moshe's? To answer that question, we first establish Eldad and Meidad's lineage. After Yocheved and Amram separated by matan Torah (the giving of the Torah) because they weren't allowed to stay married (being a nephewaunt marriage), Amram That new remarried union produced these two children (Eldad and Meidad). There are three problems with this Midrash:

- Given the timeline, Eldad and Meidad would have been 1½ years old at the time they prophesized.
- According to Rashi (R' Shlomo Yitzchaki [1040 1105]) in Exodus 3:6, Amram passed away prior to the Maseh Hasneh (burning bush). This was many years prior

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Eldad and Meidad ~ אלדד ומידד

- to both the Exodus and Matan Torah. How was Amram then alive to have fathered children after Matan Torah?!
- Now that we have an alternate approach for the lineage of Eldad and Meidad, the question returns: Why would the tombstone say אחי אהרן (Achi Aharon – Aharon's brother) and not אחי משה (Achi Moshe – Moshe's brother)?

Perhaps the first 2 problems can be pushed off as follows, leaving the focus on the third problem:

- For the age at prophesy, we find numerous occasions in the Torah where young children were far more advanced than 21st century children (Rivka marrying at 3, Er marrying at 8, Yocheved prophesizing the birth of Moshe at 5, etc.)
- 2. How did Amram father children after his passing? This can be attributed to a *Chilukei Midrashos* (conflict between

- Midrashim).
- 3. Why would the tombstone not mention Moshe? A novel approach to explain the inscription.

So, let us concentrate on the third question. We know that there is a Gemara in Tractate Zevachim (101b) that asks: The Torah tells us that Miriam was stricken with Tzaraas (leprosy). The law is that you need a Kohen to look at the tzaraas and pasken (rule) on it. Who was that Kohen? The Gemara suggests that it was Moshe, because Moshe had a din Kehunah (law of being a Kohen) - that is, he was considered of Kohen. The Rambam (Maimonides) also says Moshe had a din Kehunah (Hilchos Tumas Tzaraas, 9:2), as does the Gemara in Sanhedrin (34b). The Gemara proves that Moshe was considered a Kohen from the fact that he performed the Avodah (Divine service) during the Shivas Yemei HaMiluim (the seven-day inauguration period of the Tabernacle). The Gemara answers,

however, that it is not enough to be a Kohen, you need Aharon u'bonov (Aharon and his descendants). While Moshe may have been considered a Kohen, he was not Aharon u'bonov. The Gemara asks further: Maybe Aharon did it? That is not possible says the Gemara, since Aharon was a korov (close relative) and was not qualified in this case. He had a psul kurvah (invalidation due to relation). The Gemara concludes: So who did it? Hakadosh Boruch Hu Himself did it.

The Maharsha (R' Shmuel Eidels [1555 – 1631]) in Zevachim (101b) questions this premise. The Rogatchover Goan (R' Joseph Rosen of Rogachev [1858 – 1936]) also asks the same question: Why differentiate in the reason for disqualifying the brothers; Aharon as a close relative, and Moshe as lacking in Aharon u'bonov? They should both be disqualified as close relatives!

To understand the Rogatchover's answer, we have to take a step back. We know that ger shenisgayer k'katan shenolad dami (one that converts to

Judaism is considered like a newborn child). A convert to Judaism is considered a new person. The Gemara (Tractate Kidushin 17a-b; also Yevamos 97b) goes so far as to say that really, by strict Biblical law, siblings who convert would be allowed to marry each other. The Rabbis prohibited it as it is a disgusting practice. Legally though, they are completely new people. Based upon this "newness", the Maharal (R' Judah Loew of Prague [c1520 – 1609]), as quoted by the Shev Shmaytsa (R' Aryeh Leib Heller [c1745 - 1812]) in his Hakdama (introduction), asks about our understanding of a verse in the Torah. It describes a great bichiya (wailing), as recorded in Numbers 11:10. This occurred after Matan Torah, when the Jews were told about the passage of arayos (forbidden relationships). Many Jews had to separate from their wives, in the case of those whose wives were their sisters or aunts, etc. Why would there be such an outcry? Why would they need to separate? If the law is that ger shenisgayer k'katan shenolad dami, then all the Jews were totally new people and a nephew and aunt would not be related anymore.

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Kehas And Yocheved Did Not Share A Mother -- A Tradition From The Early Prophets That Eldad And Meidad Were Paternal Brothers To Moshe.

The Torah Shelaimah, Volume 8, in the מילואים (pages 244 - 245), states: On page 53, letter "tes" (v), it must be explained that according to the Lecach Tov [by 11th century author Tuviah ben Eliezer] who was mentioned earlier, that Kehas and Yocheved did not share the same mother. It is explained in the Midrash, as brought by the commentary of Tosfos Hadar Zekainim and Das Zekainim to Parshas Pinchus (Bamidbar 26:59) "The name of the wife of Amram, Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, that was born to her (Heb. "Osa" - אותה), to Levi". And there is a Midrash that "Osa" was the wife of Levi. And it explains in Sefer Tzavaos Hashevatim (Book of The Wills of The Tribes), Levi 12:13, that the name of Levis's wife was Malkah; meaning that Kehas and Yocheved were not from the same mother. It is brought in the Jerusalem Talmud, Yevamos, Chapter 11, Halacha 2 (as per Torah Shelaimah, Perek 2, 296 and in the Miluim there), that according to R' Meir, a father's sister "yekayeim," may be retained, and according to R' Yehudah, a mother's sister from her father may be retained - see further there. According to this, it comes out that by the strict letter of the law, a Ben Noach is not prohibited in these relationships. Aside from the prohibition of marrying an aunt which was intrinsic to Yocheved, there was another prohibition that the Torah was going to prohibit – namely, remarrying your divorced wife after she was married to another, as is explained in Targum Yonason ben Uziel to Bamidbar 11:26, "there remained two men in the camp, the name of one was Eldad and the name of the second was Meidad, the children of Elitzaphan, son of Parnach, born to Yocheved the daughter of Levi at the time she separated from Amram her husband, and she married him before the time she bore Moshe".

However, another Agadata found in the writings of the Rishonim argues on this Agada, and this is Sefer Toldos Yitzchok by the RIK, on Parshas Behaalosecha. He writes: "It is a tradition in the hands of the early prophets that Eldad and Meidad were brothers of Moshe from his father,

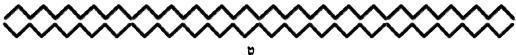
being that Amram learned from Moshe the prohibitions of incest that the Torah would in the future prohibit, and so he separated from Yocheved his aunt, and he took another wife and bore these, as it states, "crying to their families" (Numbers 11:1), meaning regarding the family members that became prohibited to them (Shabbos 130a). And this is Eldad, whose name translates as, "there is no prohibition of aunt", and similarly Meidad, whose name translates, "is there a prohibition of aunt here?" And they said that R' Hillel, who was from the Land of Israel, wrote to Rav Amram that he saw their graves, and that it was inscribed on them, "Eldad and Meidad, brothers of Aharon, from the father and not from the mother". This matter is brought also in the commentary of Tosfos Daas Zekeinim, Hadar Zekeinim and Pane'ach Raza (by Isaac ben Judah Halevi of the 13th century); there, however, not using the phrase mentioned above, "a tradition in the hands of the early prophets" and from an unknown source. And it is brought that they were brothers from their father and not from their mother.

See the Gemara in Pesachim 119b that relates, they said to Yaakov, "Take (the cup) and bless". He responded to them, "I cannot bless, as I married two sisters in their lifetime which the Torah in the future prohibited to me". They said to Moshe, "Take and bless". He responded to them, "I cannot bless, as I did not merit entering the land of Israel, not in my lifetime nor after my death". And in Sefer Asara Mamoros by the Maharam Padua (R' Meir ben Yitzchok Katzenellenbogen [c1482 - 1565]) it is written that Moshe did not enter the land because Amram his father married his aunt. And similarly we find, in the Ramban's commentary, that Rachel passed away close to entering the land because of the prohibition of marrying two sisters because the judgment is to the G-d of the land. Also see what the Sefer Tzioni (R' Menachem ben Meir Tzioni of Speyer [late 14th century]), Parshas Vayeiytzei writes regarding the reason Yaakov married two sisters.

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קהת ויוכבד לא היו מאם אחת --קבלה מנביאים הראשונים שאלדד ומידד היו אחי משה מן האב

רמד מילואים ב



קהת ויוכבד לא היו מאם אחת. — קבלה מנכיאים הראשונים שאלדר ומידד היו אחי משה מן האכ

> דף 53 אות ט. יש להעיר שכדברי הלקח טוב שהבאנו בפנים שקהת ויוכבד לא היו מאם אחת מבואר בשם מדרש בפי' התוס' הדר

זקנים ודעת זקנים פ' פנחס במדבר כו. נט: ושם אשת עמרם יוכבד בת לוי אשר ילדה אותה ללוי. ויש במדרש ש"אותה" הוי אשתו של



מילואים רמה

לוי. ומבואר בספר צוואת השבטים לוי יב. יג.

שם אשתו של לוי שמה ימלכה. הרי שקהת

ויוכבד לא היו מאם אהת. מבואר בירושלמי

יבמות פי"א ה"ב מובא בתו"ש פ"ב רצו. ובמי־
לואים שם לר"מ שאחות אביו יקיים ולר"י

דאחות אמו מאביה יקיים עיי"ש. ולפי"ז מצד

דין ב"נ לא היה איסור. ומלבד איסור דודתו

היינו מחזיר גרושתו לאחר שנשאת כמבואר

ביוב"ע במדבר יא. כו: ואשתיירו תרין גוברין

במשריתא שמיה דחד אלדד ושמיה דתנין מידד

בנוי דאליצפן בר פרנך דילידת ליה יוכבד ברת

לוי בזמן דפטרה עמרם גברה ואתנסיבת ליה

ליד דלא ילידת ית משה.

אולם נמצאת אגדה אחרת בספרי הראשונים החולקת על אגדה זו והיא בספר תולדות יצחק לרי"ק פ' בהעלתך כותב: קבלה ביד הנביאים הראשונים כי אלדד ומידד היו אחי משה מן האב שידע עמרם ממשה איסור עריות שעתידה תורה לאסרם ופירש מיוכבד דודתו ולקח אשה אחרת והוליד אלו שנאמר בוכה למשפחותיו על עסקי משפחותיו הנאסרים להם וזה הוא אלדד

פירש אין בו איסור דד שהיא דודתו וכן מדד וכי אסור דד יש בזה. ואמרו כדשלח ר' הלל שהיה מארץ ישראל כתב לרב עמרם שראה קברם שכתוב עליהם אלדד ומידד אחי אהרן מן האב ולא מן האם. ענין זה מובא גם בפי' התוס' דעת זקנים והדר זקנים ופענח רוא שם. אמנם לא בסגנון הנ"ל "קבלה ביד הנביאים הראשונים". וא"י מקורו. ומבואר שהיו אחים מן האב ולא מן האם.

וראה בגמ׳ פסחים קיט: אומר לו ליעקב טול וברך אומר להם איני מברך שנשאתי שתי אחיות בחייהן שעתידה תורה לאוסרו עלי, אומר לו למשה טול וברך אומר להם איני מברך שלא זכיתי ליכנס לארץ ישראל לא בחיי ולא במותי. ובספר עשרה מאמרות לרמ״ע מפאנו כותב שמשה לא נכנס לארץ מפני שעמרם אביו נשא דודתו. ויש כעין זה בפי׳ הרמב״ן שרחל מתה סמוך לכניסתה לארץ משום איסורא דשתי אחיות יען כי המשפט לאלהי הארץ. וראה בספר ציוני פ׳ ויצא מ״ש טעם שנשא יעקב שתי אחיות.

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They should be permitted to stay married!

The Maharal answers that since the Gemara tells us in Tractate Shabbos (88a) that Hashem held a mountain over the Jews (Kafah Aleihem Har K'gigis – Held the mountain over them like a barrel) in order to compel them to accept the Torah. The Gemara comments that the Jews were not complete geirim – because it was somewhat of a forced geirus (conversion). They were lacking in the ger shenisgayer k'katan shenolad dami. Why? Because Hashem "forced" them, as it were, to convert, so they were not complete geirim.

[As an aside, R' Naftali Trop (Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim in Radun, Belarus [1871 – 1928]) answers this question differently. He says that ger shenisgayer k'katan shenolad dami only applies to someone who started off as an oved kochavim (star worshipper), an idolater, but a Jew, even before Matan Torah, had kedushas Yisroel (holiness of Jews) without the status of mishpachas Yisroel (family of Jews). Or, some say, mishpachas Yisroel without kedushas Yisroel. Avrohom Avinu (Abraham our Patriarch) wasn't an idolater, and he wasn't a ger. He was the first Yid (Jew). There was a difference. So, ger shenisgayer k'katan shenolad dami would not work to make the Jews into totally new people because they already possessed some level of holiness.]

If we understand the thought process of the Maharal to be that the reason Jews were not considered completely newborn and still had the yiichus to each other was because of Kafah aleihem har k'gigis, we must realize that this would only be true of anybody who was subject to Kafah aleihem har k'gigis. But, the Rogatchover says, Moshe Rabbeinu was **not** subject to Kafah aleihem har k'gigis, because he was on top of the mountain! The mountain wasn't under him, he was in heaven with the Ribbono Shel Olam. He was not forced to be m'gayer (convert). If that is true, says the Rogatchover, we can now understand why Moshe Rabbeinu had to be disqualified because he was not Aharon u'bonov. He was technically not a korov, because he and Miriam were no longer related. She remained Aharon's brother, because Aharon and Miriam were under the mountain, and they **were** subject to Kafah aleihem har k'gigis, so they were not considered k'katan shenolad; but Moshe Rabbeinu was a katan shenolad. Therefore we could not say that Moshe Rabbeinu was a psul kurvah. He was just missing Aharon u'bonov.

If that is true, we can to answer that this is why the inscription on the tombstone of Eldad and Meidad said po nikbar Eldad u'Meidad, Achi Aharon min h'av v'lo min h'aim, because there was no longer such thing as the brother of Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe Rabbeinu was a katan shenolad. Everyone else did not have that attribute, so they were all still related.

MIDRASHIC GENEALOGY: Cont. from first page

Yerushalmi (Bamidbar 11:27), however, say that they were the sons that Yocheved had with the Nasi Elitzafan ben Parnach when she was divorced from Amram (or after Amram died; see Genuzos vol. 2, p. 79). Daas Zekeinim (Numbers 11:27) quotes a different opinion in the name of R. Hillel, who saw the graves of Eldad and Meidad, upon which was stated that they were Moshe's brothers through their father but not through their mothers. See Torah Shelemah (Miluim to vol. 8, #9) who discusses the topic further.

Standards

GEDCOM Standards for Death Date

Mokotoff does not offer a standard specific to Death Date (see: AVOTAYNU, XXIV, 3 (Fall, 2008), pp. 3-6).

Slawson (see: Getting It Right: The Definitive Guide to Recording Family History Accurately. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2002, p. 112) offers a standard:

If you are unable to locate the Death Date, you may record the date as:

- Infant if before age 3
- Child between age 3 & before age 8
- Deceased more than
 110 years ago
- o otherwise leave it blank

See next issue for Standards regarding victims of the Holocaust with no known date for when they perished.



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