



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**דף יומי:** יבמות ע"ז - יום ד' דחנוכה - א ליכטיג און פרייליכן חנוכה!

**מצות תעשה:** 0 מצות לא תעשה: 0 מברכים ר"ח טבת, יום שני ושלישי (מולד: ליל שני, חלקים 0 + 13:22)



## Torah Thoughts

... וקבעו שמונת ימי חנוכה אלו ...

... and they established these eight days of חנוכה ...

The חנוכה of יום טוב would be lacking if it passed by without discussing the יוסף's well-known question (ת"ר) and hearing some of the answers posed by our חכמים.

The famous question of the בית יוסף: Since the untainted jug contained enough oil to burn for one night, nothing miraculous happened on the first night that the כהנים kindled the מנורה. Since the miraculous nature of the burning was only on the following seven days, חנוכה should be observed for only seven days. Why is חנוכה celebrated for eight days?

According to the שאלות דרב אחאי גאון, the one jug of oil actually contained less than a one-day supply. If so, then even the full first night of burning was indeed miraculous.

The בני יששכר holds that we add an extra day because of an unusual event. The purity of the hidden jug was verified by the fact that it was closed with the unbroken seal of the כהן גדול. But it was never the practice — before or since — for jugs to be sealed by the כהן גדול or anyone else. Instead, a responsible כהן was put in charge of the manufacture of the oil and its safekeeping. The very fact that the חקבייה had inspired an earlier גדול to seal a jug of

oil so that it should be available when needed by the חשמונאים was in itself a miracle.

According to חז"ל, חנוכה chose תזויל, הרב דוד פיינשטיין שליט"א, a festival that revolves around oil's ability to burn, as the time to teach the fundamental truth that even natural events take place only because the חקבייה wants them to. When seen from the perspective of the חקבייה's will, the burning of oil is no less miraculous than would be the burning of water. In order to hammer home this truth, חז"ל decreed חנוכה be observed for eight days. The first day's lighting is to remind us that even the normal burning of oil is only in obedience to the חקבייה's wish.

Others explain that there was no logical reason for the חשם to think they would find any pure oil. After returning to the בית המקדש they found its purity and sacred materials in shambles. Their desire to begin the מצנה of lighting the מנורה immediately was so strong, they initiated what seemed a hopeless search for pure oil — and they succeeded! To commemorate this נס, we add another day of חנוכה - כ"ה כסלו - חנוכה.

*This powerful desire to battle against all odds for the sake of a מצנה represents the miracle of Jewish survival.*

Adapted from: Chanukah (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



## Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

ד' טבת  
5617 - 5694  
1857 - 1933

אבם צובה was born in Dweck ר' חיים שאול הכהן [Aleppo], Syria, to the city's רב, ר' אלהי, and his wife. As a young בחור, his primary רבנים were מרדכי ר' Abadi and תאוויל ר' Tawil. He also studied the principles of קבלה under Mishan and ר' נסים Harari-Raful. Later on, he was recognized as an authority and prolific writer in the מסורה of קבלה. He married ר' אלהי, ר' אברהם Cohen's daughter. In 1890, he moved to ירושלים and learned in נשיבת בית א-ל. After six years of study, he opened חנוכה. He lost his sight at age forty-two as a result of eye surgery. In 1930, the Munkacser Rebbe זצ"ל wrote in glowing terms about a visit to ר' חיים שאול in his ספר the מנחת אלקנה. Although he was blind for thirty years, ר' חיים nevertheless continued giving שיעורים and wrote ten classic קבלה ספרים about ספרים.

## Gedolim Glimpses

Shortly before ר' חיים שאול הכהן Dweck's פטירה, the financial conditions in his home were so severe that there was no money to buy the food needed for שבת. When asked what could be done, he replied, "ואין עוד מלבדו", *There is no existence except דו!* [דו is the Provider!] The Munkacser Rebbe chose that particular week, which was the week of חנוכה, to send ר' חיים שאול a money order of 500 gold crowns. The funds arrived early in the day on Friday, in time to purchase all that was needed for שבת.



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לעיני ה' ישעיהו דוב עי"ה בן יבלחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י

This week's Pirchei Weekly is dedicated In honor of the

אברהם מרדכי ורדיגר Bar Mitzva of

# Living with the Torah

## The Significance of Prayer

... קחו מזמרת הארץ... וקסוף משנה בידכם... וקל שקי יתן לכם החמים לפני האיש...

Take of the land's glory ... And take double money in your hand ... And may I grant you mercy before the man... (יד, יב, יד)

יעקב explains that יעקב was telling his sons, *I have done everything — I have sent a gift; I have given double money; now, you lack nothing — but prayer. Behold! I will pray for you.* We learn from יעקב the correct approach that one must use when confronting a challenge. He first ascertained that there were sufficient funds for purchasing the necessities for his large family. He even sent a gift for the Viceroy to assure a swift and pleasant exchange. Last, after all of his השתדלות, he began to daven, because when all is said and done, תפלה will be most effective.

אֶלְקָנָה, an extremely wealthy man, lived during שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ's reign. His home was open to all. Suddenly, almost overnight, he went bankrupt. He lost everything except one goat. He was now impoverished, in worse condition than many of those whom he had previously assisted.

שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ would often change his royal garb for ordinary clothing and discreetly go out among the people and associate with the common citizen to get an unbiased perspective on what was happening in his country. One day when שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ chose to go out, it was extremely hot. When אֶלְקָנָה noticed a poor man passing his home in the intense heat, he ran to him with cold water and a piece of meat. He began to converse with the guest. In the course of the conversation, אֶלְקָנָה mentioned that he had once been wealthy but was left with only a single goat, which he had just slaughtered in honor of his guest. Moved by אֶלְקָנָה's kindness, שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ said, "I am a good friend of שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ. I will give you a letter that you should take to him, and he will reinstate you to your original position."

When אֶלְקָנָה arrived at the king's palace, he was told that שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ had gone to the בית המקדש. He entered the בית המקדש to find שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ prostrated on the floor supplicating ה' on behalf of יִשְׂרָאֵל. When אֶלְקָנָה heard the king pray, he thought to himself, "If the king himself prays to ה'

for blessings, why should I turn to the king? I might as well turn to the Source of all blessing — ה'." He began to pour out his heart to ה'.

He left אֶלְקָנָה filled with confidence that his prayers would soon be answered. A few days later, אֶלְקָנָה went to the forest to chop some trees. He went over to a tree and for some reason found it difficult to chop. After resting for a short while, he tried again to fell the tree, to no avail. אֶלְקָנָה sat down and began pouring his heart out to ה'. He then decided to dig up the tree by its roots. Soon after he began digging, אֶלְקָנָה discovered a hidden treasure. He profusely offered his deep gratitude to ה'. אֶלְקָנָה invested his newly found treasure in various business ventures and soon became far wealthier than he had ever been before.

שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ asked his servants if anyone had ever come to see him with a letter. They replied that a man had been there and left upon hearing that the king was in the בית המקדש. His curiosity piqued, the king changed into his commoner's clothing and started out in search of אֶלְקָנָה. Arriving in אֶלְקָנָה's town, he was shocked to see that אֶלְקָנָה now lived in a palace surrounded by servants. אֶלְקָנָה invited him to eat, drink and rest. Looking at אֶלְקָנָה, שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ queried, "Don't you recognize me? I am the poor man for whom you slaughtered your only goat. I gave you a letter to give to שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ. Apparently, you succeeded in seeing him and receiving his aid."

"No!" answered אֶלְקָנָה. "It is true that I went to see the king, but he was unavailable. After discovering that he was busy praying to ה', I decided that I should do the same. I poured out my heart and ה' listened to my pleas."

"I am שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ," the king replied. "Praised are you that you did not rely on man and trusted instead in ה'. As He is the Source of everything, why should we not pray to the source?"

While there can be great benefit in seeking the בְּרָכָה and תְּפִלוֹת of a צַדִּיק, whose תְּפִלוֹת are very powerful, to intercede on one's behalf, a person should never lose sight of the importance and efficacy of his own תְּפִלוֹת.

(Adapted from: Peninim on the Torah - R' Scheinbaum)

## Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל ו' סעיף ד'

R' Smith was sitting in his study reviewing the פְּרָשָׁה when his son, Ari, came running in, shouting "Dovid is really bothering me again!" R' Smith invited Ari to come inside, sit down, and tell him what this was all about. When Ari finished his story, R' Smith asked, "Ari, stop for a moment and try to imagine if the situation would be reversed. How would you honestly react to Dovid?" After a few moments of calm thought, Ari smiled. He knew the answer.

Was it a problem of הרע לשון for R' Smith to listen to Ari's story?

**Answer:** It is not a problem to listen. In fact, it is permitted and encouraged. R' Smith's purpose in listening to Ari's story about Dovid was to calm Ari down and help him gain a better perspective of Dovid's position. R' Smith obviously should not accept Ari's version of the story about Dovid as the absolute truth.

\*Stories adapted from Guard Your Tongue, A Daily Companion, A Lesson a Day and various real-life situations.

## Questions of the week

1. What בְּרָכָה did יוֹסֵף bestow upon his brother בְּנִימִין that the other brothers had received at an earlier time?
2. What stirred יוֹסֵף's compassion towards his brother (as opposed to his **brothers**)?

1. All the other brothers had been blessed with חן (see 33:3) before יוֹסֵף was born. יוֹסֵף now gave the בְּרָכָה of חן to בְּנִימִין (43:29).  
 2. and the troubles that he had endured, thus stirring יוֹסֵף's compassion towards אֶלְקָנָה (43:30).

## Halacha Corner

הלכות עתה ודומה  
הנהגה

1. If one forgot to recite נְעִיל הַסִּפּוּס during בְּרַכַּת הַמּוּזוֹן and realizes this error before reaching the name of ד' of the next בְּרַכָּה, one should go back to נְעִיל הַסִּפּוּס and continue from there.
2. If one does not realize the error until after saying the name of ד', one does not repeat בְּרַכַּת הַמּוּזוֹן or שְׂמוּנָה עֲשָׂרָה.

\*Since we only discuss 1-3 הלכות, it is important to consider these הלכות in the context of the bigger picture. Use them as a starting point for further in-depth study.

# Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,  
**D**weck זצ"ל ר' חיים שאול was sensitive about any deviation from the spiritual growth in his community. Often, he wrote a strong קול קורא, signed together with other leading רבנים, about immodest dress, shaving with a razor and participation in the political events organized by irreligious Zionists. He signed another קול קורא announcing that seventy-two רבנים would fast and daven for three consecutive days and collect monies to save Yemenite/Russian Jews from pogroms.

R' Dweck's independent approach led to a fierce challenge that threatened to delay the printing of his major work, אגף שלמה. One day, two חכמים, opponents of שאול's approach, went to ר' Nahum, R' Dweck's financial supporter who managed the publishing process, and strongly criticized R' Dweck. They told R' Nahum that ר' חיים was a radical in his teachings. R' Dweck had no authority to override the teachings of those who had gone before him and that it would be אסור to print the new ספר.

These remarks deeply disturbed R' Nahum. He drastically delayed the production process of the ספר and decided to send some samples of the manuscript to two תלמידי חכמים (R' Hirsh Shapiro זצ"ל and the לשם זצ"ל, R' Shlomo Elyashiv זצ"ל), who immediately recognized the worthiness of the work and sent back their enthusiastic התקמות, filled with glowing words of praise for the author and his work.

As soon as the enthusiastic התקמות reached R' Nahum in ירושלים, he immediately regained his courage and resumed the production process, thereby pleasing R' Dweck, who never did receive an explanation for the delay.

My תלמיד, sometimes ד' send us a לשועה in the most interesting way. These התקמות not only helped in the printing of R' Dweck's ספר, but they also strengthened forever the bond between a רבי and תלמיד!

יְהִי זְכוֹר בְּרוּךְ

רבי, בגידות

Adapted from: Aleppo City of Scholars (ArtScroll)

# Sage Sayings

Despite his blindness, ר' חיים שאול זצ"ל never forgot the words of תורה or the מסורה of קבלה he had learned from his רבנים. His תלמיד, R' Suleiman Moussafi זצ"ל, asked him how he recalled such deep thoughts with such clarity. Pointing, R' Dweck asked, "What's this?" "A window." He then replied (in his native tongue, not Yiddish), "וי פיל זאכן גייט" — How many things go into making a window? Analyzing the parts, and seeing the whole, that is the way to remember your learning!"

Source: Aleppo City of Scholars (ArtScroll)

# Understanding Davening

על הנסים ... בנמים ההם בזמן הזה

[We thank You...] for the miracles ... [that You did with our forefathers] ... in those days during this time.

The wording בנמים ההם, in those days, seem superfluous. The miracles that ד' did for our forefathers were obvious בנמים ההם. The גמרא explains that the חכמים decided to make the הלכה of תפילה the following year. Why did they wait? נסים, miracles, happen constantly throughout our גלות, but usually they are not tied to any specific time. There are special times of the calendar year that are auspicious for נסים. Those times are made into טובים גמרים. When ר' חיים saw [with הקדש] that the following year was a time for נסים, תפילה was established. The words בנמים ההם are together with נסים — those נסים were tied to this time of year!

לענין ר' משה צבי בן הר"י טוביה הלוי זצ"ל



# This Week in History

1546 / 1702 B.C.E. – Yahrzeit of יאיר ר' חיים בן יאיר. He was born in Leipnik in the Moravian province of Austria (today part of the Czech Republic) in 1638, to דבורה and ר' משה שמשון. His grandmother was מרת אסתר, daughter of the מראג of Worms. Her husband, ר' שמואל, was murdered during a pogrom in 1615, and she never remarried. ר' חיים lived in Worms until her grandson יאיר's אגדה, at which time she undertook a pilgrimage to ישראל but died on the way. ר' יאיר esteemed her to such an extent that the title of his most famous work, חות יאיר, is based on her name.

He married שרה, the daughter of משה ברילין Brillin of Fulda. At the age of 23 he received סמיכה in Frankfurt and served as רב of Mainz. In 1666 he was appointed רב of Koblenz where he served for 3 years before returning to Worms.

One of his works, מקור חיים, a major commentary on the שולחן ערוך אורח חיים, was ready to be printed when the commentaries of the ט"ז and the מגן אברהם were printed. ר' יאיר חיים withdrew his own commentary from the printer, intending to rework it in accordance with the ט"ז and the מגן אברהם. Sadly, he never finished it. מקור חיים was finally published in 1982 by Mechon Yerushalayim. He published some of his father's works in a ספר called חוט השני.

Besides his halachic expertise, he had complete mastery of all the sciences, music and had a deep interest in history. He also wrote poetry. He compiled a 46-volume encyclopedia on many topics. In 1689 the Worms community was decimated by the French. Gradually, it was rebuilt. In 1699 he was finally appointed רב of Worms where his father and grandfather had served before him. He served for only three years until his death in 1702 (others have the date as 1701).

AS A BOCHUR, R' CHAIM STEIN ZT"l ESCAPED FROM LITHUANIA DURING WWII FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE GERMAN ARMY, TOGETHER WITH A SMALL GROUP OF TELSHE BOCHURIM. THEY FOUND THEMSELVES IN A SIBERIAN TRAIN DEPOT DURING CHANUKAH WITH NO CANDLES OR OIL...

LET'S TRY TO FIND A WAY TO LIGHT...



WITH GREAT RESOURCEFULNESS THEY THOUGHT OF A WILD IDEA...

LET'S SCRAPE THE GREASE FROM UNDER THE TRAIN WHEELS AND USE A SMALL PIECE OF CLOTH AS A WICK...

INGENIOUS! I HAVE A TIN CAN.

HERE... TAKE A PIECE OF THE LINING FROM MY JACKET!



PAINSTAKINGLY THEY TRIED FOR HOURS TO GATHER OIL THAT DRIPPED FROM THE TRAIN. IT WAS FREEZING COLD AND ICY...

THE WIND IS BLOWING AND THERE IS MOISTURE FROM THE SNOW... IT IS JUST IMPOSSIBLE...

IT'S JUST NOT LIGHTING... I HAVE USED UP MOST OF OUR MATCHES...



THE PLAN WAS FINALLY ABANDONED. LEFT WITH NO CHOICE, ALL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WENT TO SLEEP. R' CHAIM STAYED AWAKE WITH ANOTHER BOCHUR, BORUCH BARONE.

IF WE CAN'T DO THE ACTUAL MITZVAH, AT LEAST WE CAN TALK IN LEARNING ABOUT CHANUKAH, AND PERHAPS HASHEM WILL CONSIDER IT AS IF WE HAD ACTUALLY FULFILLED THE MITZVAH.

GEVALDIG! I'M READY... THE GEMARA SHABBOS DAF CHOF ALEF SAYS...



THE TWO BOCHURIM LEARNED TOGETHER UNTIL VERY LATE AT NIGHT. ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEY HEARD A KNOCK ON THE DOOR OF THE TRAIN DEPOT. A MARZOUK, A MEMBER OF AN ASIATIC PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THAT AREA, WAS STANDING AT THE DOOR...

DO YOU BOYS NEED CANDLES TO BE ABLE TO READ?

THANK YOU, HASHEM! YES... PLEASE... YOU MUST HAVE BEEN SENT BY G-D!



IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET CANDLES AT THAT TIME, BUT THE MARZOUK GLADLY GAVE THEM TWO CANDLES. THE BOCHURIM TOOK THEM FROM HIM AND PERFORMED THE MITZVAH WITH TREMENDOUS JOY AND GRATITUDE TO 'T, AND THEY ALL SPONTANEOUSLY GOT UP AND SANG...

HANEROS HALOLU KODESH HEIM! THESE LIGHTS ARE HOLY!

CHASDEI HASHEM KI LO SOMNU!



R' CHAIM WOULD CONCLUDE AS HE RETOLD THE STORY, "...WE SAW WITH OUR EYES WHAT WE LEARNED IN YESHIVA. WE MUST ALWAYS TRY OUR BEST... HASHEM WILL DO THE REST...!"

מרים חסיה סנד ר' בנימין משה זצ"ל STEIN WAS BORN IN SKUDVILL, LITHUANIA, AT THE AGE OF 9, HIS FATHER SENT HIM TO LEARN UNDER R' ELYA LOPIAN IN NEARBY KELM. AS A BOCHUR OF 15, HE WENT TO Yשיבת טעלו (עלטער טעלור רב) R' YOSF LEB (ר' יוסף לייב) BLOCH AND HIS Rבי מבהק (ר' חיים טעלור) RABINOVITZ. LATER IN LIFE, HE PUBLISHED חיים טעלור (ר' חיים טעלור) OF חדושים חדושי ר' חיים. DURING WWII, HE WAS EXILED TO SIBERIA. IN 1946, HE MARRIED שמה נריידל, DAUGHTER OF ר' חיים אריה לייב רב, OF UZDA. AFTER ESCAPING FIRST TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THEN TO FRANCE, THEY FINALLY IMMIGRATED TO THE US IN 1947. HE IMMEDIATELY JOINED THE תנהלה טעלו, CLEVELAND. HE WAS A מתמיד עצום, A בקי בכל התורה כלה, AND WAS מורה דרך FOR THOUSANDS OF תלמידים FOR OVER 60 YEARS.

