



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**פרשה: ויחי - הפטרה: ... ויקרבו ימי דוד למות... (מלכים א ב:א-י"ב)**  
**דף יומי: יבמות צ"א מצות תעשה: 0 מצות לא תעשה: 0 חזק, חזק, ונתחזק!**



## Torah Thoughts

... אשר לקחתי מניד האמרי בחרבי ובקשתי

... which I took from the hand of the Emori with my sword and with my bow (בראשית מח:כב).

The **גמרא** asks, "Did **יעקב** take it (שכם) with his physical sword and bow? Surely **יעקב** realized what is expressed in the **פסוק** *For I trust not in my bow, nor can my sword save me!* Surely **יעקב** did not attribute his miraculous victory to his personal power. It seems highly unusual for **יעקב** to even mention the weapons that were used in the battle against his enemy.

The **גמרא** therefore interprets **בחרבי** as referring to **יעקב's** spiritual sword, his prayer, and **בקשתי** as alluding to **יעקב's** spiritual bow, as if it is read **בקשתי** my heartfelt requests. There is no other way to understand **יעקב's** words. **תרגום אונקלוס**, who rarely deviates from the basic interpretation of a **פסוק**, also translates the words **בחרבי ובקשתי** the same way, **בצלתי ובבעותי** - with my prayer and heartfelt requests. On the contrary, **יעקב** was acknowledging that his success was solely due to **ד' answering his תפילות**. What are these two types of prayers that are alluded to in the terms "my sword" and "my bow"?

The **Brisker Rov זצ"ל** explains that there are two basic forms of **תפילה**. One form of **תפילה**, represented by the word **בחרבי** - *my sword*, is the standard daily prayer as defined by the **אנשי כנסת הגדולה**, *the Men of the Great Assembly*. A sword is a very sharp object, which is, in and of itself, a dangerous weapon.

With just minimal movement it can be very effective. The standard **תפילה** has, in its own right, remarkable spiritual powers by virtue of the authors - the **אנשי כנסת הגדולה**. Hence, it is compared to a sword, which, by the very nature of the sharp blade, is a dangerous weapon. However, a sword is powerful only if the enemy is within the limited area around the person holding the sword. If the enemy is far away, then the sword cannot do any damage. Similarly, the words of the **אנשי כנסת הגדולה** are so spiritually strong that one can fulfill his minimal obligation in **עשרה** with just having **כונה** with the first **ברכה**. However, these words are used in a standard setting and only during certain times of the day.

Another form of **תפילה** is each person's free-flowing, personal and heartfelt plea to **ד'**, represented by the word **בקשתי**, my bow. In contrast to a sword, the value of the arrow as a weapon is only by virtue of the amount of pressure the archer exerts in shooting the arrow from the bow. Man's personal **תפילה** is like a bow and arrow; the power of his personal **תפילה** is determined by the degree of sincerity and concentration of his **תפילה** to **ד'**. This is the meaning of the **גמרא (תענית ח.)** which states that one's personal **תפילות** are not heard unless one prays with great feeling and intensity.

It may have appeared to some people that it was **שמעון** and **לוי** who physically won the battle against **שכם**. **יעקב** explained to his children that the true source of their success was solely due to **ד'** listening to **יעקב's** heartfelt **תפילות**, and therefore it was rightfully his to give away.

Adapted from: A Shabbos Vort (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

**י"א טבת**  
**5545 - 5613**  
**1785 - 1852**

R' Shlomo Eiger, born in Lisa, Hungary, was the youngest son and **תלמיד** of the famous R' Akiva Eiger **זצ"ל** and his wife, Glikcha. He was a merchant in Warsaw, but when he lost his property during the Polish rebellion in 1831, he became the **רב** of Kalisz. After his father's **פטירה** in 1839, R' Shlomo was appointed to fill his place as **רב** of Posen. In community affairs, he attempted to enable Jews to work in agriculture, instead of being merchants, and he planned an agricultural settlement for Jews with the agreement of the Kaiser. He fought strongly against the inroads of the Reformers. He authored the **גליון מהרש"א** on the **גמרא** and several other **ספרים**. His son, R' Yehuda Leib, became a **Kotzker חסיד** and founded the **חסידות** of Lublin.

## Gedolim Glimpses

In a **הספד** for his uncle, R' Shlomo Eiger **זצ"ל**, the **כתב סופר** noted that with the **פטירה** of R' Shlomo Eiger we once again lost his father, R' Akiva Eiger. "As long as R' Shlomo was still alive, he served as his father's substitute, as a direct connection to his greatness. But now we are left bereft of both of our leaders simultaneously."



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

This week's Pirchei Weekly is dedicated  
לעיני יעקפקע יהודית בת ר' אברהם  
by Peter and Debby Rebenwuzel



## Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,  
R' Shlomo was the successor of his father, the renowned R' Akiva Eiger זצ"ל of Posen. Before leading his son to the חתונה on his wedding day, R' Akiva Eiger placed both his hands on the חתן's head and blessed him, as is customary. For many years no one knew or thought much about what the ברכה had been or if it had been fulfilled, until the רב of Warsaw, R' Chaim Davidson זצ"ל, posed an unusual question to R' Shlomo.

It was the talk of town that R' Shlomo had an uncanny ability that was most apparent during the period of time when he headed his father-in-law's business. He was required to deal with men of the aristocracy on a daily basis. Often, R' Shlomo had to interrupt his studies with his תלמידים in order to conduct business with his guests. When he had seen the gentlemen out, R' Shlomo returned to his תלמידים and ספרים and invariably returned to his subject without missing a word.

The רב of Warsaw asked R' Shlomo wherein lay this remarkable ability. R'

Shlomo's eyes took on a faraway look, as he recalled his wedding day.

"As my father was about to lead me to the חתונה, I stood there awaiting his ברכה for health, children, and that I merit to build a נאמן and be a credit to him and to my mother. My father placed his hands on my head and whispered to me his ברכה and most ardent wish.

"My son," he said with emotion, "... I know that you will, at some point, be obliged to assist in your father-in-law's business and this will involve תורה בטול. I therefore bless you that whenever you must interrupt your learning, may ד' give you the wisdom and clarity of mind to return to the ענין exactly where you left off without having to waste more time going back to the beginning of the subject."

"... it has been fulfilled."

My תלמיד, the biggest ברכה that R' Akiva Eiger could wish his son under the חתונה was that his time would be used properly and not wasted. This would be the source for all other ברכות that he could ever wish for the בנה and חתן.

רבי Your, בגידות

Story adapted from Dei'ah V'dibur

## Sage Sayings

When R' Leibele Eiger became a Kotzker תסיד he was extremely careful to show his father R' Shlomo the beauty of חסידות. He asked his רבי how he should explain his long preparations for davening. The Kotzker רבי answered, "האגלה אקער": א האלצהאקער: זאג דיין טאטע אז דער רמב"ם פאסקענט: — Tell your father, the רמב"ם rules: a woodchopper is paid even for the time spent preparing the ax for chopping!" Preparation for a מענה is part of the מענה!

Source: Heard around the Shabbos table

## Understanding Davening

What is the source for saying ונתחזק ונתחזק?

Some cite the הלכה (או"ח קל"ט: י"א) רמ"א on the הלכה to hold the ספר תורה עצי הקיים when reciting the ברכת התורה. The מנהג writes that this מנהג is based on the words לא ימוש ספר התורה הזה מפיך — the book of the Torah shall not be removed from your mouth (הוושע א: ח). יהושע held the תורה tightly in his hand. After יהושע finished reading the תורה, ד' blessed him with the ברכה of ונתחזק ונתחזק, be strong and courageous. The טעמי explains that ונתחזק ונתחזק is repeated 3 times similar to a הדרן at a סיום, which is repeated 3 times. [Ed. Note: The words ונתחזק ונתחזק appear 3 times in that פסוק.] The אגלה רבה writes that the numerical value, גימטריקה, of the word ונתחזק is 115 and  $3 \times 115 = 345$  which is the גימטריקה of משה. [Ed. Note: Perhaps this is to reaffirm that the תורה that we have as our מסורה is exactly the same תורה that was given by ד' to משה רבינו.]

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



## This Week in History

11 טבת 5408 / 1647 – This day was established as פורים of Mezhibuzh. The Jews of Międzyrzec (מזיבוז'ה), Poland, were saved from the pogroms led by Chmielnicki ימ"ש and the Cossacks during the infamous ת"ח ות"ט (1648-1649). Interestingly, the hero responsible for saving the city was called מרדכי and his wife's name was אסתר.

14 טבת 5501 / 1741 – This day was established as פורים חבדון, or פורים. On 11 טבת, 5501, the Pasha (Persian or Turkish Governor that ruled over a country or a province) demanded that the Jews in his regime give him 50,000 גרוש to annul his extermination order. The Jews fasted for three days and on the morning of 14 טבת a large sack with 50,000 gold coins was miraculously discovered on a windowsill in the main shul.

16 טבת 5399 / 1638 – This day was established as פורים Baghdad the 1st. The Turkish leader Sultan Morad IV conquered the city of Baghdad from the Persians for the second time with the help of the Jews. The day was celebrated as a יום הנס (a day of miracles) by the קהלה Baghdad, and the city has a מנהג not to say תחנון on this day.



THE ROSH HAYESHIVA, RAV GEDALYA HAYUN, WAS TROUBLED BY A DIFFICULT QUESTION ON SOMETHING HE WAS LEARNING. HE POSED IT AS AN OPEN QUESTION TO THE YESHIVA BUT NO ONE WAS ABLE TO ANSWER IT.

THIS IS NOT QUITE RIGHT... IT MAY SOUND RIGHT, BUT IT CONTRADICTS WHAT I LEARNED IN...

HASHEM! PLEASE HELP ME FIND A RESOLUTION FOR THIS DILEMMA!

RAV HAYUN WENT HOME EXHAUSTED. HE WAS THE LAST ONE TO LEAVE THE BAIS HAMEDRASH...

THE NEXT MORNING, RAV HAYUN NOTICED A NOTE HAD BEEN SLIPPED BETWEEN THE PAGES OF HIS SEFER.

WHO WROTE THIS?

THE NOTE PROVIDED A CLEAR, DETAILED EXPLANATION THAT BEAUTIFULLY ANSWERED THE QUESTION THAT HE HAD ASKED.

FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS THE SAME MYSTERIOUS WRITER LEFT DETAILED ANSWERS TO MANY OF THE ROSH HAYESHIVA'S QUESTIONS.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS? IT'S AS IF A MALACH IS COMING AT NIGHT AND PLACING THE ANSWERS IN MY SEFARIM!

ABBA, LAST NIGHT I NOTICED THE SHAMASH OF THE BET MIDRASH FLIPPING THROUGH YOUR SEFARIM AFTER EVERYONE WENT HOME. THIS WASN'T THE FIRST TIME I SAW HIM GOING IN AFTER EVERYONE HAD LEFT.

THE NEXT DAY RAV HAYUN POSED A DIFFICULT QUESTION TO THE YESHIVA. AFTER EVERYONE HAD LEFT HE HID HIMSELF IN THE CLOSET.

OH, MY! MY DAUGHTER WAS RIGHT! THE SHAMASH IS A HIDDEN TZADDIK!

TO THE WONDERMENT OF THE ENTIRE YESHIVA, THE NEXT MORNING RAV HAYUN ASKED THE YOUNG RAV SHALOM SHARABI TO SIT AT HIS RIGHT SIDE. HE LATER REVEALED TO HIM ALL THE GREAT SECRETS OF KABBALAH.

HIS BRILLIANCE IN TORAH SHINES SO MUCH BRIGHTER WITH THIS EXCEPTIONAL TRAIT OF HUMILITY!

HE LATER BECAME R' HAYUN'S SON-IN-LAW AND WAS A KNOWN GREAT LEADER.

THE רש"ש (ר' שלום שרעבי) WAS BORN IN THE JEWISH SHARAB QUARTER IN TAIZ, YEMEN. HE LATER MOVED TO ERETZ YISRAEL. ON THE WAY HE MADE STOPS IN INDIA, BAGHDAD AND DAMASCUS. IN ERETZ YISRAEL HE TOOK A POSITION AS שמש IN ישיבת המקובלים (BETH EL) UNDER THE ראש הישיבה ר' GEDALYA HAYUN. AFTER ר' GEDALYA'S נטירה IN 1747, THE רש"ש WAS APPOINTED ROSH YESHIVA (AT 27 YEARS OLD). HIS סידור הכוונות IS THE MAIN סידור USED TODAY. HIS WRITINGS INCLUDE אמת ושלוה, רחובות הנהר, דרך שלום AND נהר שלום, IN WHICH HE ANSWERS 70 QUESTIONS POSED BY THE חכמים OF TUNIS. HE ALSO COMPILED THE מנהגים OF THE YEMENITE JEWS IN מנהגי רש"ש. HIS תלמידים INCLUDE (מהר"ט אלגאזי) ר' יום טוב אלגאזי AND חיד"א. THE רש"ש IS CONSIDERED THE FATHER OF ALL CONTEMPORARY SEPHARDIC KABBALISTS.

