



PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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פרשה: בא - הפטרה: הדבר אשר דבר ה' אל ירמיהו... (ירמיהו מו:יג-כח)
דף יומי: יבמות קי"ב **מצות תעשה:** 9 **מצות לא תעשה:** 11 - **ותן טל ומטר לברכה**



Torah Thoughts



קדש לי כל בכור פטר כל רחם ...
Sanctify for Me every firstborn, those who open every womb ...
(שמות יג:ב)

The last and most spectacular of the plagues was בכורות during which ד' bypassed every Jewish בכור, firstborn, and slew every Egyptian בכור. Because of this miracle, the בכור of the Jewish people, human and animal, are forever sanctified. Originally, the בכורים were meant to be the כהנים who performed the עבודה in the בית המקדש; however, they lost this privilege when they sinned with the הזהב. Nonetheless, despite their fall from grace, the בכורים still remained sanctified regarding הרבון, firstborn animals and other observances.

R' Simcha Zissel, the Alter of Kelm, wrote a letter to Baron Rothschild, praising him for his efforts on behalf of ישראל. In this letter, he raises an interesting question. What did the Jewish בכורים do in Egypt to earn this high level of sanctification? True, they were involved in a great קדוש השם, but did the בכורים do anything at all to make it happen? They did not contribute at all to their rescue during the plague. The בכורים also had nothing to do with their being born first. Their role was totally passive. Clearly, even passive participation in any type of קדוש השם is a very great opportunity. A person gains tremendous merit if הקב"ה chooses him to play a role in a קדוש השם, even if it is only a passive role.

"If this is the reward for a person who has a passive role in a קדוש השם," wrote R' Simcha Zissel, "how can we begin to imagine the reward of a person who is actively making a קדוש השם every day? You, Baron Rothschild, considering who you are and what you have done for the Jewish nation, have actively and publicly sanctified the Name of ד', and there is no limit to the honor, respect and gratitude you have earned."

There is a valuable lesson we must all draw from the מצוה of קדוש השם. If a passive contribution to a קדוש השם created such an everlasting reward for the בכור, we can be quite sure that for an active contribution to a קדוש השם the true reward is an even greater one. There are always many opportunities for us to actively contribute towards קדוש השם. We make a קדוש השם in the way we conduct our daily lives: the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we do business and the way we treat others, both Jewish and non-Jewish.

If we say that extra "Good Morning," if we are consistently honest and we go the extra mile to make that קדוש השם so that it will be said about us, "ואמר לי עבדי אתה... אשר בך אתפאר" — *You are My servant, Israel, through whom I will be glorified* [ישעיהו מט:ג]; that they can say about us, "How beautiful are the ways of a religious Jew," then, as the Alter of Kelm writes, our reward will be very great. It is within our power to cause people who observe us to remark, "**Look at him! Look how beautifully a religious Jewish child behaves.**"

Adapted from: Rabbi Frand on the Parashah (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

ט' שבט 5642 - 5728 1882 - 1968
R' Eliezer Silver זצ"ל was born in Obeliai, Lithuania, to R' Bunim Tzemach and Malka. He learned in Dvinsk ר' מאיר) אור שמח with the Rogatchover Gaon, the קמניצה from ר' חיים סולובייציק and Grodzinski. In 1907, R' Silver and his wife Pearl immigrated to the US, where he took a position as רב, first in New York, then in Pennsylvania, and later on, in Massachusetts. In 1931, he accepted an invitation to become רב in Cincinnati, where he remained until his passing. He founded the American branch of אגודת ישראל and established the חפץ חיים. In 1949, he founded the Chofetz Chaim Day School in Cincinnati. He published ענפי ארז in 1960. His son, R' David, published צמח ארז in 1968.

Gedolim Glimpses

R' Eliezer Silver זצ"ל was renowned for his selfless dedication on behalf of ישראל. He would often travel throughout the USA and Canada to raise funds and deliver fiery speeches for his Yiddische brethren during their most difficult hour. He had a unique way to deal with the קשיות of his host's food. It is said that he brought his own food in his top hat. He would explain to the host that he ate chicken only from his own שחיטה!



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

Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,
DR' Eliezer Silver זצ"ל was a **אָהבת ישׂראל** whose **אַהבה** love for his fellow Jew, knew no bounds. He was instrumental in saving tens of thousands of Jews during the WWII era. In 1939, he founded and was president of the Vaad Hatzolah. He raised over \$5,000,000 to buy not just the freedom, but the lives, of many thousands of Jews trapped behind enemy lines. [Editor's note: \$5 million during 1939-1945 is worth more than \$300,000,000 by today's standards. In 1939, a loaf of bread cost 8¢, a NY subway ride was 5¢, and an average house cost under \$4,000.]

After the war, he traveled to Europe to visit the DP camps filled with Holocaust survivors. On one such visit, he was approached by a man who defiantly said, "Rabbi, I will never be a religious Jew!"

"What makes you say that?" asked R' Silver softly.

"I saw something in the camp that I will never forget," he grumbled. "There was a so-called 'religious' man who had smuggled a **סדור** into the camp. He had the sole **סדור** in the barracks and only agreed to lend it to an inmate on one condition: in return for half a day's ration of bread!"

"And what happened?" asked R' Silver curiously.

"Many gave half their bread so that they could use the man's **סדור**!" he answered in an angry tone. "I want nothing to do with a religion where a religious person robs starving people of their bread!"

R' Silver understood the young man's pain, and addressed him as would a loving father. "My dear son, why are you focusing on that one individual who made such a difficult demand? Why don't you look at the beautiful devotion of all of those people who gave up their bread just to pray from that **סדור**?" The man thought for a long time and then smiled.

My **תלמיד**, this broken man and R' Silver considered the same situation. Yet, they each viewed it very differently! R' Silver saw a side to the story that the man had missed in his anger. If you are hurt, you will often not see the whole picture! Speak about your frustration with a **רבי** or a close friend. You may be surprised how they view the same picture.

יְהִי זְכוֹר בְּרוּךְ

רְבִי יוּר, בְּיָדֵינוּ

A letter from a Rebbe – based on interviews



שׁוֹבְבִים Program

מָנָה - 3rd week of שׁוֹבְבִים program of שְׁנֵים מִקְרָא וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם contest:

We may be in the heart of winter, but the spiritual fire is warming the many Pirchei branches in America and beyond. As you can see below, new boys of all ages are signing up daily for the International Pirchei Newsletter שׁוֹבְבִים program. This unique program is dedicated to strengthening and training boys in the beautiful **מָנָה** וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם contest!

The **מָנָה** וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם (אויך רבייה ב') ערוך השלחן it was established by מִשֶׁה רִבְנֵי. This format of learning the weekly **מָנָה** was enacted at the same time מִשֶׁה רִבְנֵי enacted the **מָנָה** וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם of **עֵרֻד הַשְּׁלַחן** on Mondays, Thursdays, שָׁבָת, and יוֹם טוֹב. The **עֵרֻד הַשְּׁלַחן** explains that the reason for learning this way was in order to understand תּוֹרָה שְׂבָתָה clearly and appreciate the nuances that תּוֹרָה שְׂבָתָה use for תְּרַגּוּם. According to מִשֶׁה רִבְנֵי, this method of learning was very similar to the way מִשֶׁה רִבְנֵי was taught by ד' ד' thought it through two times in His heart and then explained the תּוֹרָה וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם verbally with the reasons (ד' ד' עֵרֻד הַשְּׁלַחן אויך רבייה ד'). This therefore became the practice in every Yiddische home throughout the entire history of **יִשְׂרָאֵל**!

We will announce the names of those who are entered into the שְׁנֵים מִקְרָא וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם contest (faxes must be received by Sunday at 7:00 p.m.). Below are the current contestants, many with more than one entry.

Grade 1: Moshe Shmuel Guttman, Shmuel Wertzberger, Avigdor Muller, Yitzy Yaiche, & Ari Korsinsky, Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn; Duvl Gersten, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore; Yehuda Leib Solomon, Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, Wickliffe; Chaim Ozer Falik, The Cheder, Brooklyn.

Grade 2: Yitzchok Zonana, Yeshiva Yagdil Torah, Lakewood; Chaim Duvid Halberstam, Bobov Yeshiva B'nei Zion of Toronto, Canada; Avrohom Netanel, Yeshiva Ateret Torah, Brooklyn; Akiva Lowinger, Lakewood Cheder, Lakewood.

Grade 3: Yehoshua Indich, Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, Cleveland Heights; Ephraim Gersten, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore.

Grade 4: Eliyahu Falik, The Cheder, Brooklyn; Avrohom Zonana & Avigdor Miller, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, Lakewood, NJ; Mordechai Picholtz, Aharon Ginsparg & Yehuda Banher, Yeshiva Tiferes Tzvi, Chicago, IL; Yitzchok Meir Kassin & Simcha Abraham, Yeshiva Bais Hatorah, Lakewood, NJ; Yitzchok Zev Solomon, Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, Wickliffe, OH.

Grade 5: Yosef Zonana & Shlomele Miller, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, Lakewood, NJ; Reuvein Kassin, Yeshiva Bais Hatorah, Lakewood, NJ; Aryeh Teichman, Bais Mikrah, Monsey, NY; Yedidya Grant, Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn, NY; Tzvi Landsman, Yeshiva Ketana Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, NY; Hershy Friedman, Clifton Cheder, Clifton, NJ.

Grade 6: Nochum Jordan, Degel Hatorah, Spring Valley, NY; Akiva Kagan, Bais Mikrah, Monsey, NY; Yehoshua Reidler, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD; Boruch Heineman, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, Lakewood, NJ.

Grade 7: Avrohom Simcha Falik & Levi Yitzchok Prosky, The Cheder, Brooklyn, NY; Aryeh Leib Levy, Tiferes Elimelech, Staten Island, NY; Yitzchok Lensky, Yeshiva Elementary School, Milwaukee, WI; Boruch Shalom Goldenberg, Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn, NY; Shmuel Friedman, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD; Eliashiv Portal, Bais Mikrah, Monsey, NY.

Grade 8: Menachem Hochberg, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD; Shimi Friedman, Yeshiva Ohr Boruch, Chicago, IL.

The International Pirchei וְאַחַד תְּרַגּוּם שְׁנֵים מִקְרָא program has been designed as follows: Boys from 1st & 2nd grade should complete the פרשה until שְׁנֵי, 3rd grade until עֶשְׂרִים, 4th grade until רִבְעִי, 5th grade until חֲמִישִׁי, 6th grade until שִׁשִּׁי, 7th & 8th grades should complete the entire פרשה.

If you are interested in joining this special שׁוֹבְבִים program, please send a fax every week signed by a parent to 718 506 9633 – include your grade, name, school, city & state, and your contact number and fax number. Your name will be entered into a raffle to win a beautiful set of **גְּדוּלוֹת חֻמְשֵׁים**.

Sage Sayings

When a young boy was having a hard time answering R' Eliezer Silver זצ"ל during a פִּאָרְהָרָה, his father protested, "He came for a פִּאָרְהָרָה, not a pin test!" So R' Silver asked easier questions, which the boy was able to answer. Afterwards, the man got up the courage to ask, "Could R' Silver take the pin test?" With his characteristic smile, R' Silver called to his wife, פִּיֶּרְל, בִּיטֶץ קֵעֵנט איר מיר ברענגען אַ נאַדל? — Pearl, please could you bring me a needle?" Needless to say, R' Silver passed successfully!

*A "pin test" is when one sticks a pin into a gemara and asks the person what word is at that spot on every daf.

Source: Heard at the שְׁבָת table



LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד
PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

WHILE ON A BREAK DURING A MAJOR CONVENTION OF MANY GEDOLEI TORAH IN ST. PETERSBERG, THE RABBONIM WERE TALKING IN LEARNING.



RABBOSAI, MY SON, CHAIM, ASKED ME AN INTERESTING QUESTION...

THE BEIS HALEVI PRESENTED THE TZIBBUR WITH AN ABSOLUTELY ASTONISHING KASHA.

AT FIRST THE TZIBBUR OF GEONIM SAT QUIETLY, GRASPING THE PERPLEXITY OF THE KASHA, AND THEN ALL AT ONCE EVERYONE BEGAN OFFERING SUGGESTIONS AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS THAT WERE KNOCKED DOWN ONE AFTER ANOTHER.



TOSFOS IN YEVOMOS DAF...

BUT THEN HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN....

THE RAN IN NEDORIM HAS A SEVORAH...

HOWEVER, THAT IS NOT APPLICABLE HERE...

THE BEIS HALEVI WAS SURPRISED THAT R' YITZCHAK BLAZER WAS SITTING ON THE SIDE QUIETLY WITHOUT JOINING THE PILPUL. HE RAISED HIS HAND TO SILENCE THE CROWD.



RABBOSAI, I CAME UP WITH ONE ANSWER, AND MY SON CHAIM CAME UP WITH ANOTHER...

THE BEIS HALEVI PUT FORTH AN AMAZING PSHAT, AND THEN TOOK IT IN ANOTHER DIRECTION TO EXPLAIN WHAT HIS SON CHAIM HAD ANSWERED. EVERYONE WAS ASTOUNDED AT BOTH ANSWERS.

AFTER THE CONVENTION THE BEIS HALEVI WENT HOME A BIT DISTURBED.



DID YOU NOTICE THAT DURING THE ENTIRE DEBATE, R' YITZCHAK BLAZER DIDN'T COMMENT?

YES. I WONDER WHY. IT'S WELL KNOWN THAT HIS BRILLIANCE IS EQUAL TO HIS TZIDKUS!

THE BEIS HALEVI HAD AN INTERESTING IDEA THAT MIGHT CLARIFY WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

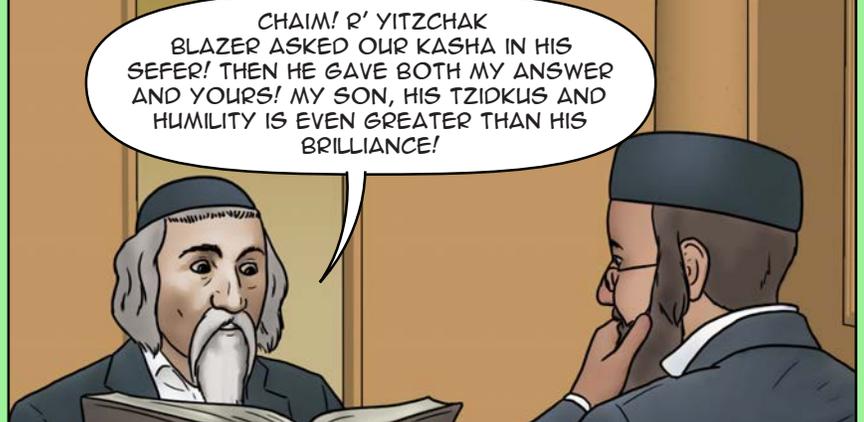


CHAIM, CAN YOU PLEASE GET ME THE PRI YITZCHAK?

YES, THAT'S THE SEFER THAT R' YITZCHAK BLAZER WROTE.

INDEED, I'D LIKE TO REVIEW HIS WORK.

THE BEIS HALEVI READ OVER THE INDEX OF TOPICS AND WAS SHOCKED BY WHAT HE SAW...



CHAIM! R' YITZCHAK BLAZER ASKED OUR KASHA IN HIS SEFER! THEN HE GAVE BOTH MY ANSWER AND YOURS! MY SON, HIS TZIDKUS AND HUMILITY IS EVEN GREATER THAN HIS BRILLIANCE!

רבי יצחק בלאזר זצ"ל, ALSO KNOWN AS פטרבורגר רבי איצלה, WAS BORN IN THE SMALL TOWN OF SHNIPISSOK, A SUBURB OF VILNA, LITHUANIA, TO רבי שלמה, A RENOWNED תלמיד חכם AND צדיק. WHEN HE WAS 14, HIS FATHER PRINTED A פרוש THAT רבי איצלה רבי HAD WRITTEN ON גמרא בנה קמא. AT THE AGE OF 15, HE MARRIED, SETTLED IN KOVNO, AND BECAME A תלמיד סגור OF רבי ישראל סלנטר. HE TRANSCRIBED MANY OF HIS רבי'S LETTERS. IN 1862, HE WAS APPOINTED רב OF ST. PETERSBURG. FOR 16 YEARS HE FOUGHT VALIANTLY AGAINST THE משכילים. HE ALSO WROTE THE פרי יצחק. HE RETURNED TO KOVNO TO GIVE שיעורים AND SPREAD THE מוסר TEACHINGS OF HIS רבי. TOGETHER WITH THE דרך המוסר, HE TRAVELED TO קלם AND ישיבת סלבודקה AND ישיבת סלבודקה. IN 1904, HE EMIGRATED TO ארץ ישראל AND AUTHORED אור ישראל AND אור אור.



For any inquiries or comments please feel free to call 347-838-0869 • Illustrated by: Yishaya Suval 718-395-9794

י"א מנחם אב 1837 - 1907 5667 - 5597