PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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פרשה: וארא - הפטרה: ...בקבצי את בית ישראל... (יחזקאל כח:כה-כט:כא)

דף יומי: יבמות ק"ה **מצות תעשה:** 0 **מצות לא תעשה:** 0

מברכים ר"ח שבט – יום רביעי (מולד: ליל שלישי, חלק 1 + 00:51:11)

TorahThoughts

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה אֶל מֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר לְכוּ זִבְחוּ... בָּאָרֶץ. וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לֹא נָכוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן כִּי תּוֹעֲבַת מִצְרַיִם נִזְבַּח לד'... הֵן נִזְבַּח אֶת תּוֹעֲבַת מִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִסְקְלֻנוּ.

פַּרְעֹה called to מֹשֶׁה and אַהֲרֹן and said, "Go and bring sacrifices to your G-d in the land." מֹשֶׁה said, "It is not proper to do so, for we will offer the deity of Egypt to ד' ... behold, if we were to slaughter the deity of Egypt in their sight, will they not stone us?" (שְׁמוֹת ח:כא-כב)

פַּרְעֹה was afflicted with four מַכּוֹת, *plagues*, which left Egypt in ruins. He finally agreed to allow the Jewish People to offer their sacrifices to ה'. There was one stipulation that פַּרְעֹה made — they must do it in Egypt. מֹשֶׁה then responds to פַּרְעֹה, *"It is not proper to do so, for we will offer the deity of Egypt to ד' ... behold, if we were to slaughter the deity of Egypt in their sight, will they not stone us?"* We wonder if מֹשֶׁה was actually afraid this might occur. And if he was serious, why would פַּרְעֹה have suggested the idea of slaughtering in Egypt? Was he not concerned about his people rebelling?

The חֲתָם סוֹפֵר asks this question and explains that, indeed, מֹשֶׁה was not afraid of the Egyptians rising up against them. The Egyptian nation had been brought to their knees. There was no fight left in them to protest against the Jewish nation slaughtering their god. מֹשֶׁה meant to say, however, that when the מִצְרַיִם would observe the slaughtering of sheep, their god, they would become so enraged that they would really want to kill the Jews. However, since they had been devastated by plagues, they knew that it would be even more disastrous to harm the Jews. This would hold back their inner feelings and would make their frustration that much greater — something that מֹשֶׁה felt was improper.

It is not acceptable to cause any person, whether Jew or gentile, any emotional pain. True, the מִצְרַיִם deserved the most severe punishment for their cruel treatment of the Jews. However, causing them pain was unnecessary and inappropriate.

R' Avraham Pam זצ"ל observes that this thought has much practical significance. He cites the instance of an individual who accepts upon himself a difficult חוּמְרָה, stringency, which others might find unnecessary or even foolish. Yet, in order to demonstrate that he is correct in his observance of this stringency, he will go out of his way to perform it in front of those people who he knows will feel uncomfortable. It is as if he is saying, "I do not care about you, or what you think." This type of foolish action only leads to resentment and strife. How important it is to go out of our way to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ was extremely sensitive to the needs of Egyptians. If this sensitivity is important even towards our enemies, how much more so is it important for our family and friends!

Adapted from: Peninim on the Torah (with kind permission from Rabbi Scheinbaum)

Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

כ"ח טבת
5655 - 5716
1894 - 1955

R' Eliyahu Meir Bloch זצ"ל was born in Telshe, Lithuania. His father, R' Yosef Leib, was the רַב and רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה of Telshe. After his marriage, he spent twelve years as a רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה at Telshe. When the יְשִׁיבָה could not continue under the Soviets, R' Eliyahu Meir and his brother-in-law, R' Chaim Mordechai Katz זצ"ל, traveled to America, to raise funds to move the יְשִׁיבָה to either אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל or America. When he arrived, he heard of the Nazi invasion and later learned that he lost his wife and three of his four children. In 1941, he restarted the יְשִׁיבָה in Cleveland, Ohio. As the יְשִׁיבָה grew, he won the admiration of the locals. He was a staunch supporter of אֲגֻדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל of America and was an insightful חָבֵר of their מוֹעֵצֶת גְּדוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Gedolim Glimpses

During WWII, R' Elya Meir Bloch זצ"ל walked into a סְפָרִים store on the Lower East Side and asked for a קְצוֹת הַחוֹשֶׁן. With tears in his eyes, the owner handed R' Bloch a dusty קְצוֹת and said, "This is the last קְצוֹת to be sold in America. There is no demand!" R' Bloch responded: "Don't worry, I can assure you that thousands of קְצוֹתִים will be printed and sold in America!" וְחָכָם עָדִיף מִנָּבִיא – A wise person is preferable to a prophet!

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לע"נ הבי' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחט"א יצחק צבי נ"י

This week's Pirchei Weekly is dedicated in honor of the marriage of
Yaakov and Esty Eckstein

Living with the Torah

Two of a Kind

הוּא אַהֲרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה ... הוּא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן

This is אַהֲרֹן *and* מֹשֶׁה *... This is* מֹשֶׁה *and* אַהֲרֹן (שְׁמוֹת ו:כו,כז).

הוּא אַהֲרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר ה׳ — *This is* אַהֲרֹן *and* מֹשֶׁה *to whom* ה׳ *said:* יֵשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת שֶׁמַּקְדִּימִים אַהֲרֹן לְמֹשֶׁה וְיֵשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת שֶׁמַּקְדִּימִים מֹשֶׁה לְאַהֲרֹן לוֹמַר שֶׁשְּׁקוּלִין כְּאֶחָד — *There are places where the* תּוֹרָה *puts* אַהֲרֹן *before* מֹשֶׁה *and there are places where the* תּוֹרָה *places* מֹשֶׁה *before* אַהֲרֹן, *to teach that they are of equal significance* (רַשִׁ״י from שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים; מְכִילְתָּא יב:א; רַבָּה ד:ה).

Aside from their other praiseworthy qualities, מֹשֶׁה and אַהֲרֹן were both exceedingly humble people; each one of them saw the other as being more worthy than himself.

On the eighth day of the dedication of the מִשְׁכָּן, after מֹשֶׁה had performed the service for seven days, אַהֲרֹן was instructed to offer the sacrifices of the day as כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל. As רַשִׁ״י relates, "אַהֲרֹן was embarrassed and afraid to approach. מֹשֶׁה said to him, 'Why are you embarrassed? This is what you were chosen for.'" (רַשִׁ״י וַיִּקְרָא ט:ז citing תּוֹרַת כֹּהֲנִים מְלוּאִים ד).

Later, after the sacrifices had been offered and the שְׁכִינָה had not yet descended, אַהֲרֹן said, "I know that הקב״ה became angry with me, and because of me the שְׁכִינָה did not descend." (רַשִׁ״י וַיִּקְרָא ט:כ״ג). After מֹשֶׁה and אַהֲרֹן prayed for רַחֲמֵי שָׁמַיִם, the שְׁכִינָה did come down.)

רַשִׁ״י also tells us that when the שְׁכִינָה did not descend after מֹשֶׁה's seven days of service, the people became concerned. מֹשֶׁה told them, "My brother אַהֲרֹן is worthier and more important than I, for through his offerings and his service the שְׁכִינָה will rest among you."

The genuine humility of תּוֹרָה leaders in all generations causes them to hold their peers in the highest esteem, while viewing themselves in a very different light.

*

R' Moshe Neuschloss, venerable רַב of New Square, suffered from a heart condition in his later years, for which he was under the care of a renowned New York cardiologist. As a general rule, R' Neuschloss arrived for appointments punctually or early; he was rarely late.

On one particular afternoon, R' Neuschloss arrived shortly past noon for an appointment that had been scheduled for one o'clock. After presenting himself to the secretary, he seated himself in the waiting room, withdrew a סֵפֶר which he had with him, and began to learn.

A few minutes later, R' Moshe Feinstein (henceforth referred to here as 'R' Moshe,' as he was universally known), entered the doctor's office for his appointment. The two תּוֹרָה luminaries, who enjoyed a very close relationship and often conferred about halachic issues, greeted each other warmly.

Soon afterwards, the receptionist announced that R' Moshe should come to the examination room, explaining to R' Neuschloss that R' Moshe had arrived on time for his appointment, which was scheduled for 12:30, half an hour ahead of R' Neuschloss' appointment.

R' Moshe was visibly distressed. He walked over to R' Neuschloss and said, "The רַב should go first; כְּבוֹד הַתּוֹרָה demands that he go first. And after all, the רַב was waiting here ahead of me."

R' Neuschloss smiled broadly. "כְּבוֹד הַתּוֹרָה?" he responded. "כְּבוֹד הַתּוֹרָה demands that the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה be first! And as the secretary said, the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה's appointment is ahead of mine."

Very reluctantly, R' Moshe made his way to the examination room. When he emerged some time later, he apologized to R' Neuschloss, who smiled and replied sincerely that, of course, no apologies were necessary.

Late that night, R' Neuschloss received a telephone call from R' Moshe. "As I was preparing to retire for the night," R' Moshe explained, "I was thinking about what had happened today. I feel that I erred in allowing myself to go ahead of the רַב. I ask מְחִילָה of him ..."

Adapted from: More Shabbos Stories (with kind permission from ArtScroll)

Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח״ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל ו׳ סעיף ח׳

As Dovid and Eli waited for the city bus, they had a heated debate on one of the points that Rabbi Gross had brought up in yesterday's הֲלָכָה class about בַּשְׁרוּת. Eli was losing the argument when he saw Rabbi G. race inside the Traife King restaurant across the street, order some food and wolf it down. Eli told Dovid, "Did you just see what I saw? Rabbi G., the פּוֹסֵק of בַּשְׁרוּת in my area, eating at Traife King! Now that is something we have to tell people about!"

What is the correct way for Dovid to respond?

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

Answer: There is a similar story related, purported to be true, in which Rabbi G. suffered from diabetes and realized his blood sugar levels had fallen too low. Such a situation can be life-threatening unless the person consumes some sort of food immediately. Dovid should discuss this with his רַב and find out the story behind Rabbi G.'s actions.

רש״י Questions of the week

1. How did מֹשֶׁה convey to פַּרְעֹה the precise time when מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת would happen?
2. According to the מִדְרָשׁ, for which מַכָּה did הקב״ה lift מֹשֶׁה above the heavens?

1. משה drew a marking on the wall for פרעה and said, "Tomorrow when the sun will reach this point, the hail will descend." (שמות ט׳:י״ח – 9:18).
2. According to the מדרש, הקב״ה lifted משה above the heavens for משה's protection; now, הקב״ה gave משה dominion over the heavens as well (תנחומא ז׳ – 9:22).

Halacha Corner

הִלְכוֹת שַׁבָּת מִקְרָא וְאֶחָד תַּרְגּוּם

1. Correction: לְכַתְּחִלָּה, according to all opinions, one should read the פָּרָשָׁה early and finish the reading of the פָּרָשָׁה on שַׁבָּת morning before the שַׁבָּת day meal (some say one cannot even fulfill this מִצְוָה after תְּפִלַּת מִנְחָה בְּשַׁבָּת); however, בְּדִיעֲבַד, one can catch up until the end of the day on Tuesday. Others permit one to catch up until the completion of a full cycle of the תּוֹרָה, i.e. שִׂמְחַת תּוֹרָה (or שְׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת in אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל).

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

Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,

Once, at an alumni convention of Telshe יְשִׁיבָה, the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה, R' Eliyahu Meir Bloch זצ"ל, sharply departed from his typical uplifting *shmuess*. He began his keynote speech with the words "מָעָן טאָר נִישט זיין אַ גַּנָּב – *One is not allowed to be a thief!*" Agitated, he told the assembled of his personal experience on a recent trip.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה was short of cash. He asked a businessman whom he knew quite well to lend him one hundred dollars until the next day, when he could cash a check. The רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה detected some hesitancy on the man's part. The רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה smiled and diplomatically reassured the businessman that he would bring him the money the very next day. The man was still reluctant. The רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה was pained and said incredulously, "I was clear that I will bring you the money tomorrow. Don't you trust me?"

The man, embarrassed, said, "It's not that I don't trust you, Rabbi. It's just that I've had a bad experience with a loan. "

When the full impact of his words hit R' Elya Meir, he was beside himself. Apparently, another תַּלְמִיד חָכָם had borrowed money from him and had not yet repaid the debt as promised.

He raised his voice in anger and distress to the תַּלְמִידִים. "Do you understand what matters have come to? A בַּעַל הַבַּיִת does not trust a רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה with one hundred dollars until the next day because of a 'bad experience!' You came here expecting to hear some deep thoughts. You may go back home and say that you came to Cleveland to hear the Telshe רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה say, 'מָעָן טאָר נִישט זיין אַ גַּנָּב!'"

My תַּלְמִיד, remember! You represent the תַּלְמִיד חָכָם to the rest of the world! Your every action or non-action has a ripple effect. The חָפֵץ חַיִּים explains that the same is true with granting a loan. It does not stop with the simple favor, but it continues; it helps the recipient's family life, his פַּרְנָסָה and the זְכֻיּוֹת grow with each new generation!

יְהִי זִכְרוֹ בָּרוּךְ!

רַבֵּי, Your בְּיִדִידוּת

Story adapted from The Jewish Observer

Sage Sayings

R' Elya Meir Bloch זצ"ל traveled 22 hours to אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל on an urgent communal matter. Arriving on his mother's יאָרצייט, he asked to be שְׁלִיחַ מִנְחָה for צִבּוּר. When asked about his traveling on the יאָרצייט and missing reciting קַדִּישׁ, R' Elya explained, "וואָס מיינט איר אַז מיין מאַמע ווייל בעסערי? – What do you think my mother prefers: אַז איך זאָג קַדִּישׁ – that I recite קַדִּישׁ, אָדער איך זאָל טאָן מַעֲשִׂים וואָס זיין יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא – or that I do things that will bring about glorification of ד"י's name?"

Source: In their Shadow (Feldheim Publishing)

Understanding Davening

וְגַם אֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת נַאֲקַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם מַעֲבִדִים אֹתָם...

I have also heard the groaning of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *whom Egypt enslaves* ... (שְׁמוֹת ו:ה)

A once-successful businessman whose fortune had taken a turn for the worse came to the חָתָם סוֹפֵר asking for a בְּרָכָה that his business should once again prosper. Aware that this man's brother was penniless, the חָתָם סוֹפֵר quoted the above פָּסוּק and asked the former גְּבִיר, "Who else besides ד"י heard the groan of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל? When the Jews groaned and cried, each one of them heard the cries of his fellow Jew and would try to lighten his friend's burden. In the merit of their hearing the groans of their friend, ד"י *also* listened to them and rescued them from מִצְרַיִם. Help others," exclaimed the חָתָם סוֹפֵר, "and you can be sure that ד"י will help you as well!"

לע"נ ר' משה צבי בן הר' טוביה הלוי זצ"ל

This Week in History

2nd week of שׁוֹבְבֵי"ם program - מִצְוָה שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאֶחָד תַּרְגּוּם contest:

Last week, we initiated the International Pirchei Newsletter שׁוֹבְבֵי"ם program to strengthen and train boys in the מִצְוָה of שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאֶחָד תַּרְגּוּם. The חָזוֹן אִישׁ once told someone that we need to internalize the promise of: מַאֲרִיכִין לוֹ יָמָיו וּשְׁנוֹתָיו – *[one who is maavir sedrah] will be blessed with long life* (בְּרָכוֹת דף ח:). Just imagine the efforts we would spend to get a guaranteed בְּרָכָה of long life from ר' אַמִי and ר' הוּנָא בַּר יְהוּדָה. How many weeks would we travel to get a בְּרָכָה of guaranteed יִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם from רַבֵּינוּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ? The חָזוֹן אִישׁ then added, "We are lacking אֲמוּנַת צַדִּיקִים if we are lax in this חִיּוּב דְּרַבָּנָן!"

We will IY"H be announcing the names of those who sent a fax and entered the contest (if received before Sunday at 7:00 p.m.). Last week's contestants received by Sunday:

Grade 1 - Shmuel Wertzberger & Avigdor Muller, Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn.

Grade 2 - Yitzchok Zonana, Yeshiva Yagdil Torah, Lakewood; Chaim Duvid Halberstam, Bobov Yeshiva B'nei Tzion of Toronto, Toronto.

Grade 4 - Avrohom Zonana, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, Lakewood.

Grade 5 - Yosef Zonana & Shlomele Miller, Yeshiva Orchos Chaim, Lakewood; Aryeh Teichman, Bais Mikrah, Monsey.

Grade 6 - Nochum Jordan, Degel Hatorah, Spring Valley.

Grade 7 - Avrohom Simcha Falik, The Cheder, Brooklyn; Aryeh Leib Levy, Tiferes Elimelech, Staten Island; Yitzchok Lensky, Yeshiva Elementary School, Milwaukee; Boruch Shalom Goldenberg, Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn; Shmuel Friedman, Torah Institute of Baltimore, Baltimore.

The International Pirchei שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאֶחָד תַּרְגּוּם program has been designed as follows: Boys from 1st & 2nd grade should complete the פָּרָשָׁה until שֵׁנִי, 3rd grade until שְׁלִישִׁי, 4th grade until רְבִיעִי, 5th grade until חֲמִישִׁי, 6th grade until שִׁשִּׁי, 7th & 8th grades should complete the entire פָּרָשָׁה.

If you are interested in joining this special שׁוֹבְבֵי"ם 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 מִקְרָאוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת חוּמָשִׁים.

LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס״ד

PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

RAV SHMUEL STRASHUN (THE RASHASH) WAS BUSY ONE EREV PESACH ENGROSSED IN LEARNING HILCHOS PESACH.

REBBI, TODAY IS THE DAY THE LOAN IS DUE, AND B"H I HAVE COME TO RETURN THE SUM I BORROWED!

R' YANKEL, THANK YOU SO MUCH! ... PLEASE GIVE ME THE ENVELOPE AND I WILL COUNT THE MONEY LATER.

I MUST WRITE THIS IN MY ACCOUNTING BOOK... BUT I REALLY MUST FINISH THE SUGYA FIRST!

THE RASHASH PLACED THE MONEY IN HIS SEFER AND FORGOT TO NOTE IT DOWN. A FEW WEEKS LATER HE WAS LOOKING THROUGH HIS ACCOUNTING BOOKS AND NOTICED THAT R' YANKEL STILL OWED HIM A LARGE SUM.

R' YANKEL MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN... PLEASE LET R' YANKEL KNOW THAT HIS LOAN WAS DUE A MONTH AGO.

OF COURSE, R' YANKEL CLAIMED THAT HE HAD ALREADY PAID.

AFTER MUCH TALK BETWEEN THEM, THE RASHASH HAD NO CHOICE, AND ASKED R' YANKEL TO ATTEND BEIS DIN:

I AM WILLING TO SWEAR THAT I ALREADY PAID RAV SHMUEL THE ENTIRE SUM!

LET IT GO. I AM MOCHEL! I WOULDN'T WANT AN INDIVIDUAL TO MAKE A FALSE OATH BECAUSE OF ME.

THE CASE WAS DROPPED – ALONG WITH R' YANKEL'S PARNASAH. NO ONE TRUSTED HIM, AND HE COULD NOT MAKE A LIVING. HE MOVED AWAY TO TRY TO MAKE A FRESH START.

THE NEXT YEAR BEFORE PESACH, THE RASHASH WAS ONCE AGAIN STUDYING HILCHOS PESACH...

HASHEM YERACHEM! THE MONEY WAS HERE ALL ALONG! R' YANKEL WAS RIGHT! WHAT CAN I DO?

THE RASHASH MADE INQUIRIES AND DISCOVERED R' YANKEL'S NEW ADDRESS.

THE RASHASH RACED TO R' YANKEL'S HOME. HE BEGGED FORGIVENESS AND PROMISED TO PERSONALLY GO FROM SHUL TO SHUL IN TOWN TO RESTORE HIS GOOD NAME. R' YANKEL CRIED AND EXPLAINED HIS PREDICAMENT...

REBBI... WHAT CAN YOU POSSIBLY DO TO RESTORE MY REPUTATION? PEOPLE WILL JUST THINK THAT YOU'RE DOING IT BECAUSE YOU ARE A TZADDIK AND THAT YOU HAVE RACHMANUS ON ME!

R' YANKEL, EVERYONE WILL BELIEVE ME IF I ALLOW YOUR DAUGHTER TO MARRY MY SON...

REBBI! REBBI! IF THIS WILL IY"H HAPPEN I WILL BE MOCHEL WITH MY WHOLE HEART!

THE RASHASH'S SON MET R' YANKEL'S DAUGHTER AND THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT THIS WAS A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN.

HASHEM, THANK YOU! I REALIZE THAT THIS WHOLE EPISODE CAME ABOUT ONLY IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS SHIDDUCH A REALITY...

HASHEM, I HAVE NO WORDS TO THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR MY FAMILY!

R' SHMUEL STRASHUN (THE רש"ש) WAS BORN TO R' YOSEF AND RASSA IN ZASKEVICH, VILNA. HIS FATHER WAS HIS MAIN REBBI. HE MARRIED SARAH, THE DAUGHTER OF R' YEHUDA YUDEL FROM STRESZYN (STRASHUN), NEAR VILNA. THE YOUNG COUPLE SETTLED IN HER HOMETOWN WHERE HIS FATHER-IN-LAW HAD A DISTILLERY. IN 1812 THE FAMILY MOVED TO VILNA, WHERE R' SHMUEL ESTABLISHED ANOTHER DISTILLERY, WHICH HIS WIFE RAN SO HE COULD LEARN AND TEACH. HIS CLASSIC AND BRILLIANT PEIRUSH HAGAHOS V'CHIDDUSHEI HARASHASH IS ON ALMOST EVERY DAF IN SHAS (EXCEPT FOR 2 BLATT). HE ALSO WROTE A PEIRUSH ON THE MIDRASH RABBAH. ALTHOUGH HE WAS A GREAT LEADER AND HIS שעורים WERE LEGENDARY, HE REFUSED TO ACCEPT ANY OFFICIAL POSITION.

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