



# PIRCHEI Weekly

## Agudas Yisroel of America

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**פרשה: אחרי-קדושים - הפטרה:** הלוא כבני כשויים אתם לי... (עמוס טז-טו)  
**דף יומי:** כתובות פ"ט - מצות עשה: 26+38 - מצות לא תעשה: 2+13 - כ"ח לעומר - אבות ג'



## Torah Thoughts



נְכִי גֵוֵר אֶתְדַּגְרַהּ... לא תונו אתו  
*When a convert dwells among you in your land, do not taunt him* (ויקרא יט:לג).

רש"י explains that one may not taunt a גֵר by reminding him that "in the past, you were an idolater, and now you come to learn תורה that was given from the mouth of the A-mighty?"

The requirement to display special love for a convert to Judaism is constantly repeated in the תורה. According to the גמרא (בבא מציעא נט:), there are 36 references to this in the תורה! In תשובות הרמב"ם, there is an unusually long letter that the רמב"ם wrote to a certain Arab גֵר named עבדןה. This man had had a dispute with his רבי regarding whether a gentile's belief in Islam is considered זרה עבודה, idol worship. His רבי felt strongly that this is זרה עבודה, while עבדןה was of the opinion that it is not. When עבדןה kept arguing, his רבי became angry and began calling him unpleasant names, applying to him the פסוק - *Answer a fool according to his foolishness* (משלי כ"ו:ה).

עבדןה wrote to the רמב"ם, requesting his opinion on this issue. In his especially warm response, the רמב"ם wrote that עבדןה was correct; those of the Moslem faith believe in the unity of ה'. After the רמב"ם clarified his halachic opinion of the matter, he went to great length to console and appease the גֵר:

"Even though you are his תלמיד, your רבי should ask you מחילה in this matter, because he caused you pain and shame by answering you improperly and calling you a fool. After that, he should fast and cry out

to ה', and humble himself before Him so that perhaps ה' will forgive him for his עברה... Does he not realize that the תורה warns in 36 places against mistreating a גֵר in words or in deeds? ... He should have spoken to you with respect and kindness... He says that you are mistaken in a question of עבודה זרה. He should have been more concerned about embarrassing a גֵר and כעס, anger, which, as the גמרא (שבת ק"ה:) says, is comparable to עבודה זרה.

"You should know that the תורה requires that a גֵר be treated with a special degree of love. The תורה has commanded us to respect our parents and to listen to a גֵר. Yet, for a גֵר, the תורה requires that we love him in our hearts, the same way a Jew is required to love ה' in his heart ...

"Furthermore... a גֵר is a person who has left his father's house, his birthplace and his nationality to become a member of a downtrodden people... A גֵר is a person who recognizes that Judaism is the only true faith and all other religions are mere imitations... some adding and some subtracting... Is a person who understands this a fool? May ה' bless you as He blessed our forefather אבינו אברהם, and may you see the reward for your righteousness in this world and in the World to Come."

רמב"ם felt he had to console and encourage this גֵר, and his letter has become a guide in how to appreciate a גֵר in ישראל. This idea, to be sensitive and encouraging, is not limited to dealing with a גֵר, but also applies to all those who are in need, physically or spiritually, especially those who are returning to a life that is loyal to ה' and to His תורה.

Adapted from: Peninim on the Torah (5) (with kind permission from Rabbi Scheinbaum)



## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

**י"ט אייר 5645 - 5730 1885 - 1970**  
 R' Ezra Attiah זצ"ל, born in Aleppo, Syria, to Yitzchok and Leah, was named after עזרא הנביא because his mother had given birth to him after davening at עזרא's grave in Tedef, Syria. Initially, he studied in Aleppo under R' Yehuda Aslan Attiah before moving to ירושלים. In 1907, he learned in מוֹעֵד (later פורת יוסף) under R' Refael Sholom Laniado and R' Yosef Yedid. During WWI he fled to Egypt where he founded קתר תורה in Cairo, which continued to exist until 1948. Returning to ישראל, he was appointed ראש ישיבה of ארץ ישראל, a position he held until his פטירה. He also served on the Sephardic בית דין for 20 years. He was a master in nurturing תלמידים and many of them became מנהיגי הדור and גדולי ישראל, one of the most famous being R' Ovadia Yosef זצ"ל.

## Gedolim Glimpses

R' Ezra Attiah זצ"ל once overheard two boys comparing ראשונים: Who was greater, the רמב"ם or the רמב"ן? R' Ezra smiled and said, "You can use a jeweler's balance scale to measure very small things, but if you use it to weigh bars of gold, it could break. The ראשונים are like boulders. You're thinking to weigh the רמב"ם, the רמב"ן, and the רש"י? The scale cannot hold such weight!"



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לעיני חב"י ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י

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# Living with the Torah

## Serve Hashem With Joy

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת מִשְׁפָּטַי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אִתְּכֶם הָאֲדָם וְחַי בָּהֶם...  
*You shall observe My decrees and My laws, which man shall carry out and by which he shall live (ויקרא יח:).*

interprets the words וְחַי בָּהֶם homiletically: A Jew should be full of *life* when performing a מצוה, doing it with joy and enthusiasm, and demonstrating that it is from תורה and its observance that he derives vitality and fulfillment.

\*

R' Nissin Pilchik viewed himself as a plain working man, no different from anyone else. But anyone who knew him personally, or observed him as he davened and learned תורה in the בית מדרש of Karlin-Stolin, knew that this was no simple man. His soul was aflame with love of הקב"ה, His תורה, and His people. His face shone with a joy and excitement which stemmed from an appreciation of מצות and a sense of purpose. Anyone who stood in his presence could not help but be drawn closer to his Creator.

He once asked, "How was דוד המלך able to request ...? Such a request does not seem humanly possible; after all, one must eat, sleep and earn a livelihood. The answer to this is: If one eats as a Jew should eat, sleeps as Jew should sleep and does business as a Jew should do business, then he takes the בית ה' with him wherever he goes."

Virtually nothing could dampen his joy in life as a servant of the הקב"ה. Once, only a few days before פסח, he misplaced his dentures. His only concern was that without them he could not possibly fulfill the מצוה of eating מצה on the סדר night. With the help of a grandson, he searched his house but was unsuccessful. He told his grandson, "It seems that it is the הקב"ה's will that I should not eat מצה this פסח. If this is the הקב"ה's will, then

I accept it with love and joy!" With that, he took hold of his grandson's hands and began to sing and dance.

Suddenly, R' Nissin stopped and said, "We are obligated to do everything we can before assuming that there is no solution to my problem." He then phoned his dentist, who told him that it would be impossible to have a new pair of dentures made in time for פסח. After hanging up the phone, R' Nissin again broke out in joyous song.

The dentures were found before the start of פסח. Some 15 minutes later, R' Nissin's grandson found him sitting on his bed, clapping his hands and exclaiming again and again, "Thank You, הקב"ה, for helping me find my dentures."

He once related that, decades earlier, a widow, known as a difficult person, came to his house each week to do housekeeping. One year, as פסח approached, the woman asked him, "Mr. Pilchik, could you get me some מצה for the סדר?"

R' Nissin replied affirmatively. However, he later reflected, "I can give her three מצות and she'll be satisfied — but would that be the right thing to do? Can I allow a Jewish daughter to sit at her סדר all alone?"

He then considered the other side of the problem. "She is a very difficult person to get along with. If she sits at my table, it will very possibly lead to problems... I can't afford to sacrifice my סדר — I derive spiritual sustenance from it that lasts me the entire year!"

In the end, the first argument won. "I could not allow a Jewish daughter to conduct her סדר all alone."

R' Nissin concluded, "She joined us for the סדר — and it was the most uplifting סדר of my entire life!"

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

## Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות לשון הרע כולל ז' סעיף י"א

"It was the second week of school and by now, Eli had given individual presentations to everyone in the class about his kosher cell phone. It had interesting features but did not have internet or texting. Imagine Eli's horror when he came back after recess and found the phone on the floor in pieces. Someone had maliciously broken the phone. Eli started an investigation. Yankel told Eli that he heard from Rafi that Levi had been seen playing with the phone during recess.

**Is Eli allowed to believe Yankel that Levi was the culprit?**

Stories adapted from Guard Your Tongue, A Daily Companion, A Lesson a Day and various real-life situations.  
 He must not accuse Levi or spread rumors about Levi.  
 After verification can be made – not possible – and confront Levi to get the details. Only secondhand and not witnessed directly. Eli must first speak to Rafi to get the details.  
**Answer:** It is obviously an error of fact to be based on hearsay, heard only through others. It is not possible to be based on hearsay, heard only through others.

## Questions of the week

1. Why does the תורה state explicitly that אהרן performed the עבודת יום כפור exactly as the הקב"ה had commanded?
2. What should a Jew say instead of "*I am repulsed by non-kosher food, שֶׁטֶטְאָ, יֵשׁוּעָה*"?

2. A Jew should rather say "I would like to ... but My Father Who is in Heaven has decreed upon me not to ..." (ויקרא יח: - 20:26).  
 he did not wear them for self-glorification (ויקרא יח: - 16:34).  
 reason that wore them in order to fulfill a decree —  
 1. It is stated to praise אהרן. The fact that the only

## Halacha Corner

עניני דיומא  
 הלכות פסח שני -  
 י"ד אייר

1. אייר (the 14th of אייר) has its own special קדושה with regard to the eating of the מצה, and most have the מצוה not to say תחנון.
2. We do say ערב פסח שני at מצוה תחנון.
3. Some have a מצוה to eat מצה on מצוה during the day as a זכר (אייר) (others also eat the following night – the 15th of אייר).

Since we only discuss הלכות 1-3, 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,  
Although R' Ezra Attiah was primarily charged with teaching the senior שְׁעוֹר in ישיבה, פורת יוסף and tested each תלמיד personally to make sure they were given appropriate guidance. Among some of his prize תלמידים are חכם R' Avraham Harari-Rafal, שליט"א, חכם R' Baruch Ben-Haim חכם, חכם R' Ovadiah Yosef שליט"א, חכם R' Zion Levi שליט"א of Panama, and חכם R' Ben Zion Abba Saul שליט"א, the former פורת יוסף of ראש ישיבה.

Once, during שְׁעוֹר, he had an interesting dialogue with the "class clown," a very bright and witty תלמיד who did not seem destined for serious תורה learning. One day the תלמיד made a wisecrack in class. R' Ezra outwitted him with a quick, smart response. Momentarily taken aback, the תלמיד smiled and answered with another sharp quip. Again R' Ezra replied with an even more clever remark. The exchange continued until the boy ran out of things to say. Before the incident, this תלמיד thought that the life of a תורה בן was boring and lacked any form of humor. Once he saw that a person can learn seriously and still retain a sharp wit, he became a serious student.

On another occasion R' Ezra mentioned to the boys that he "had the privilege of meeting the Gerrer Rebbe." One תלמיד who held his רבי in high esteem said, "Maybe he had the privilege of meeting you!" R' Ezra saw the response as lack of אָרְךָ for the Rebbe and ignored the תלמיד for a week in order to emphasize the lesson.

R' Ezra was a master רבי and was determined to nurture תלמידים who were true גְּדוּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. He detected when a תלמיד's behavior was due to a fear of being too serious, or due to a lack of אָרְךָ. R' Ezra's reaction to a lack of אָרְךָ seemed severe, but we all know that this was the cause of the death of the 24,000 תלמידים of ר' עקיבא.

My תלמיד, R' Ezra taught us that being respectful to a רבי and to a friend is the essence of a true תורה בן. Let us take the message of this period and strive to do the same, as well as be extra careful in how we relate to our parents too!

יהי זכרו ברוך!  
רבייך, Your בְּיָדוֹת

A letter from a Rebbe (based on interviews)



# Understanding the עומר

אם אין קמח אין תורה; אם אין תורה אין קמח...  
... if there is no sustenance (lit. flour) there is no תורה;

if there is no תורה, there is no sustenance (אבות ג:כא).

The קרבן (מִצְוַת שִׁיב, שִׁיב חינוך) explains that the עומר is brought as an expression of our belief that we recognize that ד' wants mankind to live. He creates a new crop annually in order to sustain us. Before we can derive any benefit from the new crop, we first offer it up to ד' to show our thanks to Him for His kindness. The קפירת העומר, counting the days towards the bringing of the עומר towards שבועות, explains the חינוך, is an expression of our love for the תורה. Both the "flour" and the תורה were created in order to provide sustenance to the world. If חנוכה had not accepted the תורה, not only could the world not survive, but we could also not exist.

לעיני ר' משה צבי בן הרי טוביה הלוי זצ"ל



## contest הלכות חג בָּחַג and more...

to Moshe Fishof, Grade 6, Yeshivah Ketana, Lakewood, NJ, and to everyone who joined the First International חג הלכות contest! Besides the grand prize, we will send your ישיבה name and custom pens to be given to the בחורים who entered the program!

The next Pirchei Newsletter contest is designed to make each עֶרֶב שַׁבָּת fulfilling and memorable.

**The contest:** During the weeks leading up to קבלת התורה and until קרח שָׁבַת פְּרִשְׁתָּה, learn at least one hour before מניחה every שַׁבָּת, in either your ישיבה or local בית שַׁבָּת. Each week that you learn for an hour or more will be considered another entry into the raffle.

The contest's basic rules: There is no למוֹד to learn and you can even review your תרנום. However, if you can arrange for a group, and you have a שְׁעוֹר to learn שַׁבָּת, especially about קדושת שַׁבָּת, you will receive an extra chance in the raffle each week that there is a group with a שְׁעוֹר. This contest is open for all ages up to 12th grade.

If you are interested in joining this program, please send in your faxes signed by a parent by Monday 2:00 pm to 718 506 9633. Please include your name, grade, ישיבה, city and state. Please include your contact and fax number and your name will be entered into another drawing for a beautiful set of מקראות גדולות חומשים!

# Sage Sayings



On occasion, R' Ezra Attiah would spend his precious time talking with a certain individual. Perplexed, one of his תלמידים asked his רבי, "רבי, why?" He explained [in his native tongue], "אֶמְנַטְשׁ וְהָאֵם פִּעֲלַת עִם גִּעֲלַת מִיגֵעֵבֶט עִם צְדָקָה מִיט", גִּעֲלַת; אֶמְנַטְשׁ וְהָאֵם פִּעֲלַת עִם אֶ בִּיסַל חֲשִׁיבוֹת אִין זִיד, פֶּאָר עִם גִּעֲבֹן קְבוּד אִין צְדָקָה – One who lacks money, we give him charity by giving him money; one who is missing a little bit of self-respect, for him, giving him respect is צְדָקָה!"

\*Goal: Teaching Yiddish with a meaningful lesson



# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד  
PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

TIMES WERE PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR YERUSHALAYIM DURING WORLD WAR II. THE INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY STIPEND FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA AND EUROPE CAME TO AN END.

I DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH THIS MONTH TO FEED MY STARVING FAMILY.

TAKE THIS COIN. PLEASE COME AGAIN TOMORROW. WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED MONEY FOR THIS MONTH'S CHALUKAH.\*

\*STIPEND GIVEN TO NEEDY FAMILIES.

THE YUNGERMAN DECIDED TO TRAVEL TO AMERICA TO COLLECT AND SEND MONEY HOME.

TZEISCHEM L'SHOLOM... MAY HASHEM BLESS YOU TO SEE SUCCESS IN YOUR MISSION.

RAV ARYEH LEVIN TRIED HARD TO HELP THE MAN'S WIFE AND CHILDREN, BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET ANY MONEY.

ON EREV YOM KIPPUR, THE YUNGERMAN HAD NOT YET SUCCEEDED IN SENDING FUNDS TO HIS WIFE. RAV ARYEH LEVIN WENT TO PAY THE FAMILY A VISIT:

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HELPING US OUT.

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE? THERE'S NOT A SINGLE MORSEL OF FOOD TO BE SEEN. THERE'S NOT EVEN A TABLECLOTH ON THE TABLE! IT LOOKS LIKE THE FAMILY HAS NOTHING TO EAT BEFORE YOM KIPPUR! I MUST DO SOMETHING IMMEDIATELY...

RAV ARYEH LEVIN HURRIED BACK HOME AND TOOK DOWN A RARE PRECIOUS SEFER HE HAD RECEIVED AS AN INHERITANCE.

MAY OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN HAVE MERCY ON THIS BEAUTIFUL FAMILY!

HE THEN WENT TO THE HOUSE OF MENDEL RAND, A COLLECTOR OF SEFORIM.

REB MENDEL, HERE IS A RARE SEFER YOU CAN ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION. HOW MUCH WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PAY FOR THIS?

OH, MY! THIS IS A RARE FIND! IT IS ONE OF A KIND! I WILL PAY VERY WELL FOR THIS ONE...

RAV ARYEH THEN TOOK ALL THE MONEY AND RAN TO THE YUNGERMAN'S HOUSE.

I NOTICED YOU MAY NEED A "LOAN." PLEASE BUY SOMETHING FOR YOUR FAMILY FOR THE SEUDAH MAFSEKES.

BUT... WHEN DO YOU NEED THE MONEY BACK?

AT ANY TIME THAT'S CONVENIENT FOR YOU. WHENEVER YOU CAN.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

RAV ARYEH CONTINUED TO ASSIST THE NEEDY FAMILY UNTIL THE HUSBAND RETURNED.

R' ARYEH WAS BORN IN ORLAY (NEAR BIALYSTOK), LITHUANIA, TO R' BENJAMIN BEINIS AND ETHEL LEVIN. AS A CHILD, HE LEARNED WITH HIS FATHER, HIS UNCLE R' EIZIKEL AND LOCAL RABBIS. AT THE AGE OF 12, HE LEFT HOME TO LEARN IN THE SLONIM Yeshiva. AFTER ONE YEAR, HE WENT TO SLUTSK, WHERE HE WAS A TALENTED STUDENT OF THE RIDVAZ AND MELTZER. AT THE AGE OF 16, HE WENT TO HALUSK TO LEARN UNDER R' BORUCH BER LEIBOWITZ AND WAS HIS CHAPERONE. IN 1902 HE WENT TO VALOZHIN. AT THE AGE OF 19, WITH WWI LOOMING, HE TRAVELED TO ISRAEL. THERE, HE MET R' FRANK, WHO SUGGESTED A SHIDDUCH WITH HIS NIECE, THE DAUGHTER OF R' SHAPIRO. HE BECAME THE MENTOR OF MANY AND IS REMEMBERED AS THE LOVING AND Caring FATHER OF THE PRISONERS AND THE SICK.

