



PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America



כרשת חיי שרה - הכטרה: והמלך דוד זקן (מלכים א א:א-לא) - **דף יומי:** שקלים ח'
מצות עשה: מצות לא תעשה: מ משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם

Torah Thoughts

גַּר וְתוֹשֵׁב אֲנִי עִמָּכֶם ... וְאֶקְבְּרָה מֵתִי מִלְּפָנֶי

"I am an alien resident among you ... that I may bury my dead.
(B'reishis 23:4)

די put אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ to the test ten times. It is generally understood that these tests were progressively harder. It would be logical that once אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ successfully proved himself, די presented him with a more difficult test. Each test brought out a higher level in אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ closeness to די. It is generally accepted that the tenth and most difficult test was the עֲקִידָה. After all, what could be more challenging than to sacrifice the child born to him by שָׂרָה in his old age?

רַבֵּינוּ יוֹנָה, however, lists the עֲקִידָה as the ninth test. If this is so, what was the tenth test? The burial of שָׂרָה. When אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ could not find a place to bury שָׂרָה, he was forced to buy a plot from עַפְרוֹן for an exorbitant sum. True, it must have been frustrating for אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ to be forced to pay anything, let alone an exorbitant sum, for די had promised him the whole land of כְּנָעַן. However, is this in anyway comparable to the test of the עֲקִידָה? Why was the burial of שָׂרָה considered to be a higher test than the עֲקִידָה?

When אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ returned from the עֲקִידָה, he had reached a level of achievement so special that the Jewish people throughout history

constantly refer to this merit. It undoubtedly took every ounce of spiritual strength to withstand such a test. אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ proved that he was ready to sacrifice his son, if די so commanded. אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ returned home with a sense of boundless love to די, ready to share his experience with his wife. One can imagine his pain when he found that שָׂרָה had passed away and then his additional pain when he ran into difficulties buying a small plot for her burial.

אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ could easily have thought, "How much more do I have to go through? Isn't it enough that I have just gone through the ordeal of the עֲקִידָה? Do I have to go through this as well? I have put in so many years of effort. I have glorified די's Name in so many places, for so many years. I have made so much קִידוּשׁ הַשֵּׁם. Don't I deserve some respite for what I've done for די all my life?"

This was a very subtle test, but the ultimate test. אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ could have reacted inappropriately. However, he still had an important lesson to teach the world. By example, he demonstrated that there is no retirement from עֲבוּדָה and a person cannot 'live' on past efforts. Being faithful to די is a lifetime's work. There is no such notion as retirement in growing closer to די and becoming a better person. If one internalizes this final test of אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ then all our years not just the retirement ones will certainly be golden.

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



Yahrzeits of Gedolim

כ"ז מרחשון
5688 - 5760
1907 - 1999

R' Yaakov Leizer זצ"ל, the Pshevorsker Rebbe, also known as R' Yankele of Antwerp, was born in Galicia, Poland. He received סְמִיכָה עֲרוּדָה in סְמִיכָה while still a בָּחוּר. Upon the advice of his רַבֵּי, the Koloshitzer רַבֵּי, R' Chuna Halberstam זצ"ל, he agreed to serve as the רַב of Yashlisk, even before his marriage. In 1930, he married אֵלֶטֶע בִּינָה, the daughter of מֹשֶׁה יִצְחָק ר"ר of Pshevorsk, known as R' Itzikel. Together, they were sent to Siberia until the end of WWII. Until R' Itzikel's final day, R' Yankele did not leave his side. With R' Itzikel's פְּטִיעָה in 1976, he became רַבֵּי. His סְפָרִי צְדִיקִים and כְּתָבֵי קוּדֶשׁ are testimony of R' Yankele's greatness in תוֹרָה and יְרֵאת שָׁמַיִם.

Gedolim Glimpses

On כ"ג סיוון, תשי"ט (June 29th, 1940) R' Itzikel זצ"ל and R' Yankele זצ"ל, along with many Galician Jews, were gathered and taken by train to Siberia. Turning to face the broken-hearted crowd, R' Itzikel said, "Today is a special day in our history; it is the day that the 2nd letter was sent in מְרַדְכֵי and אֶסְתֵּר's days.

Just as קָלָל יִשְׂרָאֵל saw a נִשְׁוּעָה at that time, we will also see a נִשְׁוּעָה!" This lifted the people's spirits and, ultimately, the רַבֵּי's words proved to be true.



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This week's newsletter was dedicated in memory of לעילוי נשמת משה יוסף נחמיה בן הרב מנחם צבי ע"ה

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

Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,
The Rebbe, R' Yankele of Antwerp, would often tell his תלמידים: "מדות" are the most important thing in "עבודת ה'". The Rebbe lived his exalted life by these words, as the following story, related by Dayan Eliyahu Sternbuch, שליט"א, the leader of the Antwerp community, clearly illustrates:

R' Yankele was once "arguing in learning" with his friend R' Yosef Weiss, the city's שוחט, and they got into a heated debate over a certain פשט. At a high point in the argument, R' Yankele muttered, 'I don't know how one can speak with such האכזרות עם, ignorance!'

After returning home, R' Yankele gave it some thought and could not believe that he had spoken to R' Yosef that way. He began to pace up and down in the house, all upset that he had spoken in such a fashion. He then phoned R' Yosef and begged him for מחילה. Of course, R' Yosef forgave him, not having been offended in any way. That was the way one spoke when arguing in learning. However, R'

Yankele did not calm down. He sat down to write him a heartfelt letter asking for forgiveness. R' Yosef did not understand what the fuss was about.

The story did not end there. R' Yankele then wrote another letter to R' Chaim Kreiswirth, זצ"ל, with whom R' Yosef had a connection because of his שחיטה work, and asked him to try to persuade R' Yosef to truly forgive him for what he had said. R' Yosef told everyone that he hadn't even felt the slightest bit offended; R' Yankele had spoken with such refinement that he simply did not understand why the Rebbe was being so apologetic.

My תלמיד, not only did R' Yankele teach us how sensitive we ought to be on even the remote possibility of hurting someone, he also opened up a secret about an apology. When a great person says a true and heartfelt "I'm sorry", he does not go down in stature, on the contrary, he becomes even greater! ... יקחי זכרו ברוך!

רבי Your, בנידיות

Story adapted from Hamodia (with kind permission)



Understanding Davening

...שים שלום... עלינו ועל כל ישראל עמך

Place peace ... upon us, and upon all of [כָּל] Your people...

The דובר שלום notes that the expression עלינו ועל כל ישראל עמך, upon us, and upon all of [כָּל] Your people, is not changed when a person davens alone to על כל ישראל עמך, upon me and upon all of [כָּל] Your people. He explains that שלום, peace, is the unity of two [contradictory] forces. We are asking for שלום between our own spiritual conflicts and also for the organs in our body to work together harmoniously. We are also asking that there should be no conflicts between ourselves and our friends and שמים. We continue and request that this harmony in body, mind, between friends and שמים should be bestowed upon all ישראל!

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



This Week in History

22nd **5387 / 1670** – Yahrzeit of the מחוקק חשון Lima ר' משה – זצ"ל תלמיד of R' Yehoshua Falk (פרישה קדישה, סמ"ע) זצ"ל (Author of the רב of Slonim and Brisk and אב בית דין of Vilna (the ש"ך, ר' sat on his דין and was considered the leading authority in הלכה in Lithuania.

24th **5404 / 1643** – Yahrzeit of אבן ר' Azulai ר' אברהם – זצ"ל. He was born in Fez, Morocco and emigrated to ישראלי. He wrote famous works in קבלה. His great grandson was יוסף ר' חיים יוסף ר' חיים Azulai, the חיד"א.

25th **5710 / 1949** – Yahrzeit of יונתן ר' Bilgoray Bilgoray Rov. He was the son of the 3rd Belzer Rebbe ר' יחזקאל דוב, and was the father of the present Rebbe שליט"א. He was a brilliant leader and through his written notes of every Belzer מנהג, served as a link between the Belz of Europe and the new community that his brother, ר' אהרן זצ"ל, established in ישראלי.

28th **5024 / 1263** – Yahrzeit of יונה רבינו. He was known as a חסיד by the ראשונים and was both a cousin and מחותן with the רמב"ן. He was the רבי of the רשב"א and the ר"א. His famous works, ספר ספרי מוסר ותשובה, שיערי תשובה and התיאור, are the only תשובה written by the ראשונים. He wrote תשובה as a פקדה and שיערי תשובה for publically denouncing the works of the רמב"ם. Many of his ספרים were lost, but we still have his פרוש on פירוש אבות, משלי, קבא בתרא on פירוש פירוש and his פרוש to ריף.

Sage Sayings

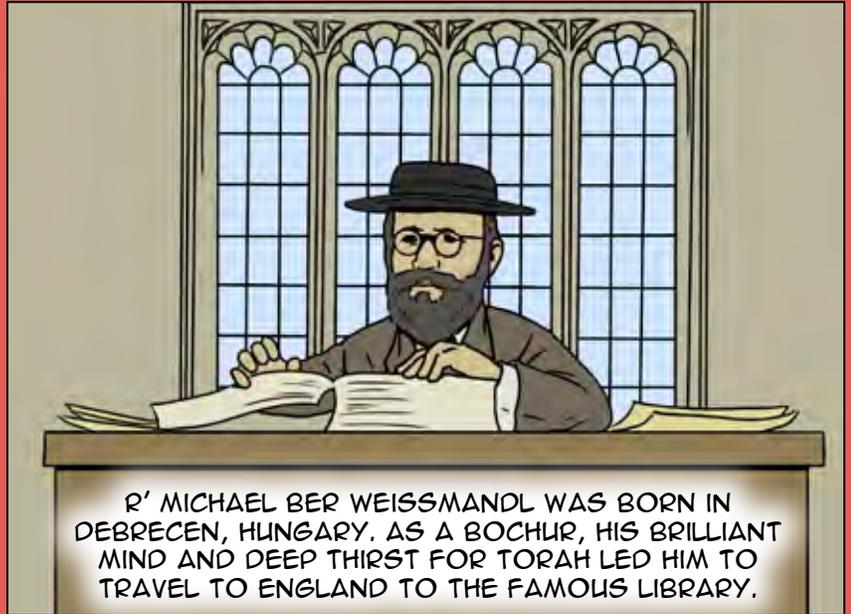
For אושפיזין ז' עקב (on the 3rd day of סוכות) an especially large crowd came to the 2nd tisch of the new רבי, R' Yankele. When the table broke, due to the crush of people, R' Yankele smiled and began explaining how the צדיקים say that before משיח, there will be רבנים who are not worthy to be מנהיגים. R' Yankele then added, "אוי! מי שטופט זיך שוין ביי אזעלכער דארע שטעקנס." — Oy! They are already pushing to get close to such 'thin sticks' [unworthy people]."

Source: Hamodia (with kind permission)

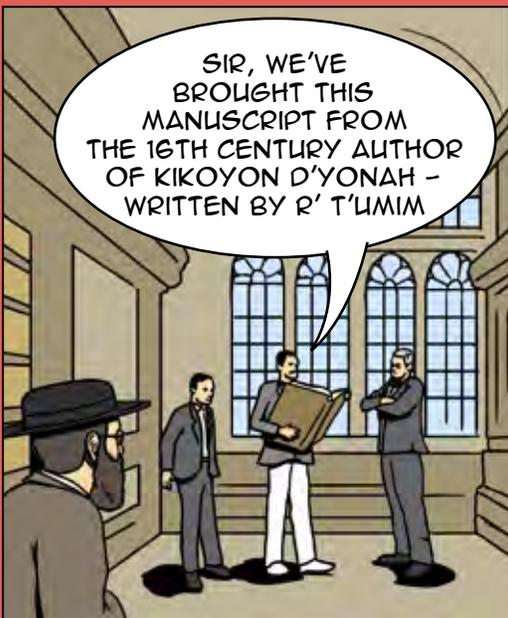


PART 1 OF 2

THE FAMOUS BODLEIAN LIBRARY IN OXFORD, ENGLAND IS THE HOME OF MANY RARE AND ANCIENT HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS



R' MICHAEL BER WEISSMANDL WAS BORN IN DEBRECEN, HUNGARY. AS A BOCHUR, HIS BRILLIANT MIND AND DEEP THIRST FOR TORAH LED HIM TO TRAVEL TO ENGLAND TO THE FAMOUS LIBRARY.



SIR, WE'VE BROUGHT THIS MANUSCRIPT FROM THE 16TH CENTURY AUTHOR OF KIKOYON D'YONAH - WRITTEN BY R' T'UMIM



SIR, IF I MAY INTERRUPT, THE ANCIENT MANUSCRIPT BROUGHT TO THE LIBRARY WAS ACTUALLY WRITTEN BY HIS SON JOSHUA, THE FIRST EDITION WAS EDITED IN AMSTERDAM IN 1690 BY JOSHUA, AND THE SECOND PRINTING WAS IN 1712 AT HANAU, GERMANY.

AMAZING! I BELIEVE YOU ARE RIGHT! WHAT IS YOUR NAME, YOUNG MAN?

FROM THEN ON, HE WAS TREATED WITH GREAT REGARD. HE WAS EVEN GIVEN THE RARE PRIVILEGE OF USING THE LIBRARY'S FACILITIES WHEN THEY WERE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.



1938. THE NAZIS GATHERED SIXTY RABONIM AND SENT THEM TO BURGENLAND, BORDERING SLOVAKIA ON THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN BORDER.

STOP! WE CANNOT HAVE YOU COME INTO SLOVAKIA.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT US TO DO?

LET AUSTRIA DEAL WITH THEIR RABBINER!



UNFORTUNATELY, THEY WERE NOT ACCEPTED BY THE AUSTRIANS WHEN THEY TRIED TO RETURN TO AUSTRIA.

WE ARE IN IMMINENT DANGER! WE HAVE LOST THE SMALL PROTECTION OF ANY COUNTRY'S CITIZENSHIP!

WE MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY! HASHEM HAS HIS PLANS, EVEN THOUGH ITS HARD TO UNDERSTAND!

TO BE CONTINUED...

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION: • WHAT IS THE CORRECT APPROACH WHEN FACING A DIFFICULT SITUATION? (LIKE THE 60 RABONIM) • WOULD YOU TRAVEL BY BOAT IN THE 1930S TO LEARN MORE TORAH - WHAT DOES THAT TEACH YOU ABOUT A PERSON WHO DID? • ...CAN YOU COME UP WITH MORE?