



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**פרשה: חיי שרה - הפטרה:** והמלך דוד זקן (מלכים א א:א-לא)  
**דף יומי:** סוטה י"ב - משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם ברכי נפשי

**מברכים ראש חודש כסלו,** (מולד ליל חמישי בשעה: 18:35 + 11 חלקים)



## Torah Thoughts

ותמתת שרה... ונבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולביתה  
 and to cry for her שרה died ... and אברהם came to eulogize שרה  
 (בראשית כג:ב).

פְּרַשְׁת וַיְרָא at the end of מדרש תנחומא which says that the מלאך המוות [Angel of Death] came to שרה and told her that אברהם took her son יצחק, bound him up to the מזבח, lifted the knife to slaughter him, brought the knife down to the child's neck ... and then the angel paused. When שרה heard this part of the story, she died from the shock of what she thought was the death of her only son, יצחק.

Rav Dovid Kviat asks a simple question. When the מלאך המוות comes to any person when his time is up, he does not require the use of any scare tactics to accomplish his task. Why then did he scare her to death, so to speak? Did he get gleeful pleasure from shocking שרה, so she would die this way? Why didn't he just come and take her נשמה [soul], and achieve his goal? שרה, after all, lived a full 127 years. Her time was up. She certainly did not die prematurely. Why does the מלאך המוות have to resort to tricks here before taking her נשמה?

The answer is that this is what our Sages mean when they say, "Where did אברהם come from? He came from הר המריקה." The מלאך המוות did not give up! He was not satisfied that אברהם had passed the test of the עקדה, the binding of יצחק. The מלאך המוות had one more trick up his sleeve.

"I'll kill שרה as a result of the עקדה! When אברהם comes back,

proud of having come through the test unscathed, when he feels good about himself, and good about the עקדה, he'll find that his wife has died as a result of the עקדה. We'll see what his attitude will be then!"

Will he say "Oy, the עקדה cost me my wife!"? Will אברהם have regrets, perhaps, even for an instant, about the עקדה?

This is a very common phenomenon. People die. Doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists can testify that one of the most common reactions after people die is that relatives start blaming themselves. "Had I taken him to the doctor one more time, perhaps he would have lived; had I done this or that, maybe he would still be alive. Maybe if I would have been a better person, he would have lived." The family members suffer terribly from guilt!

The מלאך המוות wanted to see whether he could get אברהם to regret his actions at the עקדה even temporarily. That is what תו"ל mean when they say "הר המריקה came from הר המריקה" — i.e. with הר המריקה fresh in his mind, knowing that he had passed the test.

"Maybe," the Angel of Death reasoned, "I can get him to have second thoughts about his righteousness on הר המריקה." But the מלאך המוות was not successful. אברהם came from הר המריקה — to mourn and to eulogize שרה — with the same dedication and trust in G-d that he demonstrated on הר המריקה.

Adapted from : Rabbi Yissocher Frand Tape # 72 (with kind permission)



## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

**כ"ז מרחשוון 5688 - 5760 1907 - 1999** Leizer זצ"ל, the Pshevorsker Rebbe, also known as R' Yankele of Antwerp, was born in Galicia, Poland. He received תלמוד ש"ס from several prominent רבנים while he was still a בחור. Upon the advice of his רבי, R' Chuna Halberstam זצ"ל, the Koloshitzer רבי, he agreed to serve as the רב of Yashlisk, even before his marriage. In 1930, he married בתו 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 פטירה in 1976, R' Yankele became רבי. His ספרי צדיקים and כתבי קודש are testimony to his greatness in תורה and שמים.

## Gedolim Glimpses

On June 29, 1940 (June 29, 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 2<sup>nd</sup> letter was sent in the days of מרדכי and אסתר. Just as ישראל saw a נשועה at that time, we will also see a נשועה!" This lifted the people's spirits and, ultimately, the רבי's words proved true.



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

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# Living with the Torah

# Chessed Foundation

והָהָה הַנַּעַר אָשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלָיָה הֲטִי נָא כְּדָף וְאֶשְׁתֶּה וְאֶמְרָה שְׂתֵּה וְגַם גְּמִלְקֵד ... אֵתָהּ הַכֹּחֶת לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיָצֵחֶק וְבָה אֲדַע כִּי עֲשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנָי. (בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ד: י"ד)  
 "Let it be that the maiden to whom I shall say, 'Please tip your jug so I may drink,' and who replies, 'Drink, and I will even water your camels,' **her will You have chosen** for Your servant, for **יָצֵחֶק**, and may I know through her that You have done kindness with my master."

*She is [a] fitting [spouse] for him, in that she will perform acts of kindness, and she is worthy to enter the household of אַבְרָהָם. The meaning of הַכֹּחֶת is בִּירְתָּהּ — You have selected (רְש"י).*

In the first פָּרָק of מִפְרָג, the מַפְרָג explains that the reason אֶלְיָעָזֶר sought a girl with the מִדָּה of חֶסֶד was that he needed to find a wife with a trait that is one of the three pillars that hold up the world — חֶסֶד. יָצֵחֶק represents the second pillar, עֲבוּדָה; and together they had יַעֲקֹב, who represents the third pillar, תּוֹרָה. This is what we learn in the מִשְׁנָה in פְּרָקֵי אֲבוֹת (א:ב) — **עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם: (א) בְּרֵאשִׁית, (ב) יָצֵחֶק, (ג) עֲבוּדָה.** These three pillars — חֶסֶד, עֲבוּדָה, and תּוֹרָה — are the fundamental traits that keep the world in existence, and are also the foundation of הַיְשָׁרָאָל.

The מַפְרָג explains further that all of these מִדּוֹת are intertwined. חֶסֶד is linked to יָצֵחֶק. יָצֵחֶק's עֲבוּדָה is linked to חֶסֶד — יַעֲקֹב needed to find a wife for חֶסֶד that represented יָצֵחֶק — one of the three pillars of the world — to complement יָצֵחֶק to build the pillar of תּוֹרָה — יַעֲקֹב. A בֶּן תּוֹרָה has these three traits intertwined.



When R' Yaakov Yitzchok Spiegel was accepted to Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, NJ, he headed straight to the בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ to learn. He assumed that someone would let him know where he would be sleeping, so he didn't waste time worrying about it. Instead, he spent the afternoon deep in study among the other students in the Lakewood יְשִׁיבָה.

It was only when evening arrived that he realized that he still did not know where to spend the night. The בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ had begun emptying out, students hurrying off in all directions. R' Yaakov Yitzchok

looked around, but he did not even know whom to ask. He stood, undecided for a moment, before finally making up his mind. He would simply sleep in the בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ that night. In the morning he would find a way to sort it all out.

In the middle of the night, the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה, R' Aharon Kotler, זצ"ל (1891-1962) came into the בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ. He immediately noticed a form sprawled out on one of the benches. Coming closer, he realized that it was none other than his new תַּלְמִיד, sleeping restlessly in the בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ.

R' Aharon watched as the young man slowly opened his eyes, clearly unable to sleep well in his uncomfortable position. "Why aren't you sleeping in your bed?" he asked softly.

R' Yaakov Yitzchok squinted upward at the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה, his eyes bleary with exhaustion. "No one told me where I was supposed to sleep, so I thought I would just sleep here."

"Come, please get up. You won't be comfortable here or feel rested for learning tomorrow," the רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה urged him. "I prepared a bed for you myself."

As R' Yaakov Yitzchok struggled to his feet, R' Aharon gave him precise directions on how to find his room. R' Yaakov Yitzchok followed the directions to a private room with a beautifully made bed. Still exhausted, he immediately sank into the bed and slept soundly for the rest of the night.

The next day, R' Yaakov Yitzchok woke up feeling rested and refreshed. He met his fellow students and told them how well he'd slept in his private room.

"A private room!" some of his friends marveled. "What in the world are you talking about?"

It was only then that R' Yaakov Yitzchok discovered that R' Aharon had remained awake the rest of the night, just so his תַּלְמִיד could sleep comfortably ... in R' Aharon's own bed!

Adapted from: Visions of Greatness VII (with kind permission from CIS)

## Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל ח' סעיף ו'

\*Harry Weinberg was new in town. Although he went to *shul* 3 times a day and kept שִׁבְתָּה in public, rumor had it that not only was he not שׁוֹמֵר שִׁבְתָּה, he was a missionary! Yechezkel Jacobs was not one who was ever aware of the 'town rumors.' He had a business opportunity and was looking for a partner and asked Manny if he should partner with Harry. Manny knew about the rumors and was concerned about saying anything that is הָרַע.

**What is the correct way for Manny to handle the situation?**

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

**Answer:** As we learned last week, the אִסוּר of אִשְׁרָאָה does not apply to an אִשְׁרָאָה fact. In no case, it is only a rumor; therefore, Manny should advise Yechezkel, only privately, that he heard an unsubstantiated rumor.

## Questions of the week

1. Where do we learn that one is obligated to thank ד' upon hearing good news?
2. What do we learn from the fact that the תּוֹרָה enumerates the one hundred and thirty-seven years of יִשְׁמָעֵאל's life?



1. When אֶלְיָעָזֶר heard from רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבָה and אַבְרָהָם that they were willing to let אֶלְיָעָזֶר go, he turned to thank ה' (טז:א-טז:ב) — 24:52).  
 2. From the fact that the תּוֹרָה enumerates the one hundred and thirty-seven years of יִשְׁמָעֵאל's life, we can deduce that אֶלְיָעָזֶר spent fourteen years in the יְשִׁיבָה of אַבְרָהָם before he went to אַבְרָהָם (טז:א-טז:ב) — 25:17).

## Halacha Corner

הלכות עניני ד'ומא:  
 משיב הרוח ומוריד  
 הגשם

- משיב הרוח is an additional praise of ד', not a direct request for rain; therefore, if one accidentally says מוריד instead of משיב הרוח, ומוריד is an added praise and no correction is needed.

- יתור טל is a direct request for rain; therefore, one who missed יתור טל, or said יתור, must correct himself and say יתור ויתור.

\*Since we only discuss 1-3 הלכות, 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,

The Rebbe R' Yankele of Antwerp would often tell his תלמידים: "המדות are the most important thing in ד'." 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 עם הארצות, ignorance!'

After returning home, R' Yankele gave it some thought and could not believe that he had spoken to ר' יוסף that way. He began to pace up and down in the house, very upset that he had spoken in such a fashion. He then phoned ר' יוסף and begged him for מחילה. Of course, ר' יוסף 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 ר' יוסף a heartfelt letter asking for forgiveness. ר' יוסף did not understand what the fuss was about.

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

My תלמיד, not only did R' Yankele teach us how sensitive we ought to be regarding even the remote possibility of hurting someone, he also revealed to us a secret about making an apology. A great person who says a true, heartfelt "I'm sorry," does not lose his stature; on the contrary, he becomes even greater!

יהי זכרו ברוך!

בְּיָדֵיךָ, Your רבי

Story adapted from Hamodia (with kind permission)

# Sage Sayings

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

Source: Hamodia (with kind permission)

# Understanding Davening

...למנצח...יענה ד' ביום צרה

For the Conductor, [a psalm of דוד]: May ד' answer you on the day of distress...

The מדרש teaches with a משל how we should view living through a צרה, a day of distress. A father and his son were traveling together for a very long time. The exhausted son impatiently asked his wise father, "And where then is the city?" The father replied, "My son, take note of the following sign. When you see a graveyard before your eyes, then you will know that you have reached the outskirts and the city is very close!" So, too, explains the מדרש ד' מדרש at a time when they are experiencing difficulties and it seems to them like there is no hope for salvation, rest assured that you are about to be redeemed, as it says, יענה ד' ביום צרה. Every תפילה recited during these times will protect and bring the צרה closer.

לעיני ר' משה בן הר' טוביה הלוי זצ"ל



# This Week in History

20 מרחשון 5024/1263 – Yahrzeit of רבינו יונה בן אברהם. He was born in 4970/1210 in Gerona, Spain, and died in 5024/1263 in Toledo, Spain. He was a first cousin of the רמב"ם and his daughter married the son of the רמב"ם. He was the רבי of the רמב"ם and the רמב"ם, among others. In his youth he traveled to France to learn under הרמב"ם.

He was a fierce opponent of the רמב"ם's philosophical views. However, when 24 wagonloads of the תלמוד were burned by the Church in 1242 at the same spot in Paris where the רמב"ם's מורה נבוכים had been burned by the non-Jewish authorities in Paris nine years earlier, רבינו יונה realized his terrible mistake regarding the רמב"ם and publicly admitted it. As related by his תלמיד, R' Hillel of Verona, רבינו יונה promised to travel to טבריה to the מנן of ten people. רבינו יונה began his journey from France with that intention, but he was detained in Barcelona.

He was referred to by his contemporaries as רבינו יונה and as one of the greatest תלמידי חכמים of his time. He gave many שיעורים wherever he went, always quoting the רמב"ם's halachic decisions and interpretations of the מורה with great reverence. After three years, he again set out to fulfill his promise, but was detained in Toledo, where the community implored him to stay for a while to teach them. He died there suddenly, never completing his journey to ישראל.

His שיעורי תשובה, ספר חסידים, is considered one of the all-time greatest מוסרי works. R' Chaim Volozhin once commented that not every מוסר ספר is appropriate for all people; however, he said, שיעורי תשובה is appropriate for every Jew for all eras in all situations.

רבינו יונה's other works include a פרוש on פרקי אבות and אגרות התורה, ספר התורה, משלי, אבות רבינו יונה על הר"י and his students wrote עליות דרבינו יונה.



# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

פירכי אגודת ישראל של אמריקה  
PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

ON THE NIGHT OF ROSH HASHANAH, R' YEHUDA AND HIS FAMILY GATHERED AROUND THE TABLE ON THEIR ROOF FOR THE FESTIVE CHAG MEAL. WHILE BRINGING THE WINE FOR KIDDUSH TO THE TABLE, R' YEHUDA'S WIFE TRIPPED.

...TSK... THIS IS THE ONLY WINE WE HAVE... THIS IS NOT A GOOD START FOR THE YEAR..

THIS IS A GOOD SIMAN - IT IS A SIMAN BERACHAH TO HAVE A HOUSE WHERE WINE SPILLS LIKE WATER.



AFTER HEARING THAT THERE WAS NO OTHER WINE, R' YEHUDA SUGGESTED THAT THEY CONTINUE WITH MAKING KIDDUSH ON THE CHALLAH. AS HE LIFTED THE CHALLAH HE KNOCKED INTO THE OIL LAMP, AND ALL THE OIL SPILLED ONTO HIS SPECIAL CLOTHING FOR THE CHAG.

OH, NO! THIS IS NOT A SIMAN TOV FOR THE YEAR..

...V'ROMAMTANU MIKOL LASHON... VATITEN LANU...B'AHAVAH...



AFTER KIDDUSH R' YEHUDA SIMPLY WIPED UP THE OIL AND CONTINUED WITH THE SIMANIM.

ON THIS WE SAY...SHANAH TOVAH UMETUKAH...



THEN, WHEN IT WAS TIME TO SERVE THE SOUP...

HASHEM YISHMOR...

THIS IS A SPECIAL SEUDAH THAT IS GOING TO BRING TREMENDOUS BERACHAH FOR THE YEAR...



WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THERE IS NOTHING GOOD THAT HAS HAPPENED AND WE'RE ONLY AT THE FIRST MEAL OF THE YEAR...



THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT GETTING ANGRY ON ROSH HASHANAH IS WELL KNOWN. ALL THE BOUNTY FOR THE NEXT YEAR DEPENDS ON THIS DAY. HASHEM HAS SENT US A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY SO THAT WE WILL MERIT A BEAUTIFUL AND SUCCESSFUL YEAR!



HACHAM YEHUDA MOSHE FETAYA זצ"ל WAS BORN IN BAGHDAD, IRAQ, TO R' MOSHE, A WELL-KNOWN TALMID HACHAM AND MEKUBAL. GROWING UP IN HIS FATHER'S HOME, HE DEVELOPED HIS SPIRITUAL ROOTS, HIS THIRST FOR תורה AND HIS KIND PERSONALITY. IN HIS YOUTH, HE STUDIED AT MIDRASH TALMUD TORAH, WHERE HE DEVELOPED HIS EXTRAORDINARY INTELLECT AND DESIRE TO LEARN תורה AND KEEP מצוות. HE LEARNED IN BET HAMIDRASH ZILKA UNDER HACHAM SHIMON AGASI AND HACHAM ABDALLAH SOMECH, WHO GAVE HIM SEMIHAH AS BOTH A TEACHER AND POSEK. AT AGE 25, HE AUTHORED HIS FIRST WORK ON KABBALAH. HE CAME TO ירושלים IN 1905, 1923 AND FINALLY IN 1934. HE WAS A תלמיד מבהק OF THE BEN ISH HAI. HE AUTHORED MINHAT YEHUDA, AMONG OTHER WORKS.

