



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**פרשה: ויחי - הכפרה:** ...ויקרבו ימי דוד למות... (מלכים א ב:א-י"ב)  
**דף יומי:** גיטין י"ג חזק, חזק, ונתחזק!  
**ותן טל ומטר לברכה**

## Torah Thoughts

... וַיִּט שְׂכָמוֹ לְקַבֵּל ... (בְּרֵאשִׁית מ:ט)

*Yet he bent his shoulder to bear ...*

The **הַפֶּץ חַיִּים** was asked the meaning of the words *yet he bent his shoulder to bear*. Is the **תּוֹרָה** not sweeter than honey? How can it be called a burden?

The **הַפֶּץ חַיִּים** answered by way of a **מִשָּׁל**: A wealthy man who made his living by selling precious gems was informed that there were mines in Africa full of precious stones. He decided to journey to Africa to purchase some of these gems at a low cost and eventually resell them at a nice profit. He made the necessary preparations for his trip, taking along 3,000 gold coins for purchasing the gems, plus another 400 coins for traveling expenses.

Upon his arrival in Africa, he located the mines where the gems were sold. He spent all 3,000 gold coins on the purchase of valuable gems. As he turned to leave, one of the mine owners offered him some very rare gems of outstanding quality, their beauty unmatched by any gem that he had ever seen, at an unbelievably low price. After giving the matter some careful consideration, the man decided that it was worthwhile to purchase the gems with the money he had planned to use for his trip home. True, his trip would not be easy. He would have to forgo many comforts; but for gems of this quality, it would certainly be worthwhile.

His journey home was rough. Wherever he stopped, he slept outdoors on straw, like a pauper. On one of his stops, he met an old friend who, like him, was a successful businessman. Shocked to see this man of prominence traveling under such miserable conditions, his friend asked him what had happened. The wealthy man told his friend all about his trip to Africa and his last business deal. The man's friend listened to his explanation, but there was still something troubling him.

"I know that you are accustomed to the finer things in life. Are you not suffering from the hardships of your journey?"

"I am indeed suffering," replied the wealthy businessman, "but each time I stop, I open my treasure box and look at the gems I am carrying. That fills me with joy and I console myself with what I will gain. After that, the conditions of the trip don't bother me at all."

Man descends to this world to fulfill the **מִצְוֹת**. One may be tempted to enjoy the exciting pleasures this world offers. To overcome this urge, one need only look at the great reward awaiting him in **הַבַּיִת הַקָּדוֹשׁ**, and his heart will fill with joy! He will then find it easier to forego these pleasures. This, concluded the **הַפֶּץ חַיִּים**, is the meaning of *yet he bent his shoulder to bear* — **הַפֶּץ חַיִּים** appreciates the value of **תּוֹרָה**, so he is willing to suffer in this world to attain it.

*Adapted from: A Shabbos Vort (with kind permission from ArtScroll)*



## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

**י"ז טבת**  
5660 - 5750  
1900 - 1974

ר' ציון ר' סלמאן מוצפי זצ"ל was born in Baghdad, Iraq, to **בן איש** and **פּרְחָה**. As a youth, he was very close to the **מְדַרְשׁ**, gaining much from his **שְׂבֵת שְׁעָרִים**. He learned in **בית זלקה**. By the tender age of 16, he had already worked through the **טור**. At the age of 18, he was certified as a **שׁוֹחֵט** and **מוֹהֵל**. His teachers included **ר' חיים שאול הבהן**, **ר' יהודה משה שוּעָה פּתִינָא זצ"ל** and **ר' דוּעַק זצ"ל**. In 1935, he joined **ר' פּתִינָא** in **אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל**. In 1948, he moved his **ר' רױשְׁלֵיִם** in **רְחוֹב רֶשֶׁב״ם** to the "Tevig" Shul on **קֶבֶר רַחֵל**, from **בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן**, **נְשִׁיבָה** gave him **סְמִיכָה**, but **ר' סלמאן** insisted that he not be referred to by any title. He authored **בְּיַת לְחֵם הַיּוֹדָה** (on the entire **חַיִּים**) with **ר' פּתִינָא**.

## Gedolim Glimpses

When **ר' סלמאן מוצפי זצ"ל** was nine years old it was announced that Bagdad's Chief Rabbi and other officials would visit his **תּלְמוּד**. **תּוֹרָה**. The **מְנַהֵל** informed the young **סלמאן** that he wanted the visitors to test him as the school's top **תּלְמִיד**. He politely refused, explaining that his friends might become jealous. The **מְנַהֵל** insisted and placed 'guards' at the school's gate. Undaunted, the young boy hid. Years later he recalled, "I suffered for 2 hours, but was happy that I did not arouse the jealousy of my friends!"



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לעיני רי ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל  
לעיני הבן ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחט"א יצחק צבי נ"י

# Living with the Torah

וְהוֹדָה אֶתְּךָ יְהוָה אֶחָדָּךְ ... וְלָבָן שְׂנִים מִחֶלֶב (בְּרֵאשִׁית מִט: ח-יב) *וְהוֹדָה* - you, your brothers shall acknowledge ... and white-toothed from milk.

יְבִיגִי writes that every letter of the אֶלֶף-בֵּית is included in וְהוֹדָה's blessing, with the exception of the letter ו, to teach that the battles won by וְהוֹדָה's royal descendants will not be won with the help of weapons (וְיָוִן — *weapons*), but rather with the Name of הַקַּבְיָהּ. And in fact וְהוֹדָה's own name includes all the four letters of הַקַּבְיָהּ's 4-letter Name and in addition a ד (fourth letter of the אֶלֶף-בֵּית) because he was the fourth son.

\* \* \* \* \*

The טָלִית that R' Tzvi Hirsch owned bore the silver עֶטְרָה of his grandfather, the Sigheter Rebbe. He received it as a wedding gift and it held a very special place in his heart. As the Nazis forced his family from their home, the one item he felt he must take along was this treasured טָלִית. Upon arriving in Auschwitz, he was ordered to immediately relinquish all his possessions, including his cherished טָלִית. He was assigned to sort through the articles of the recent arrivals and was reunited with his טָלִית. But he knew it would be impossible to hide such a bulky item. If he wanted to keep his טָלִית, he would have to modify it. He transformed it into a טָלִית קָטָן, which could be worn underneath his prisoner uniform.

The bathhouse guard, a German Communist named Fanicks, was given the glorified task of checking to make sure that the inmates did not bring along any extra clothing. Noticing that R' Tzvi Hirsch's thin frame was bulging, Fanicks grabbed him and interrogated him about his suspicious garment. The רַב replied that it was "אֶפְרָיִם גֵּאָטְס קלֵבֵד" — *a spiritual garment*." Suddenly, the vicious guard's face became suffused with rage. He told R' Tzvi Hirsch to join him in the adjacent room where he planned to show him a thing or two about G-d. Without warning, he began beating the רַב mercilessly for his "criminal behavior."

# The Treasured Tallis

"I will teach you for once and for all! Your friends and family are being murdered by the thousands, and you are foolish enough to still believe in G-d? How dare you!" As the רַב lay on the ground, broken in spirit, Fanicks stood over him and warned that unless the רַב had a valid explanation, he would be killed.

R' Tzvi Hirsch knew this was no idle threat. He recognized that if he did not come up with a good response he would die. He uttered a silent prayer, and then nervously related the following מִשְׁל: "A great world leader, suffering from a perilous disease which required surgery, summoned the most prestigious surgeon. The surgeon had to cut deeply into the patient's chest in order to perform the operation. After opening the man's chest, the doctor continued to cut until he was able to reach the area needing repair. A shoemaker stood by, watching in horror. He knew that when he formed a shoe, he would never pierce through the heart of the leather with a knife. To his eyes, not only was this doctor not healing the man, but he was stabbing him in the chest — killing him!

"Now, do you think that the surgeon would stop because some disapproving shoemaker, who knows nothing about medicine, wants him to? Most certainly not!" R' Tzvi Hirsch looked up toward his enemy. "I am a simple shoemaker who knows nothing about medicine. No, I do not understand why the most compassionate and benevolent Father is allowing harm to befall His children. But one thing I do know. I am a simple-minded man of mere flesh and blood who understands nothing about the ways of the A-mighty!"

A miracle happened. The guard's face softened. He even smiled. He was amused, perhaps even amazed, at the Jew's answer. As a reward, not only did he pardon the offender and return to him his contraband טָלִית, he even invited R' Tzvi Hirsch to come to him for any extra provisions he might need for the duration of the war. But all of that was secondary. More importantly, he still had his most prized possession — his treasured טָלִית.

*Adapted from: Touched by a Story 2 (with kind permission from ArtScroll)*

## Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל ח' סעיף י"ג

\*Lemel was born Jewish and even had a true Orthodox upbringing. However, looking at his behavior of the last thirty years, no one would have thought that Lemel was Jewish. Lemel would constantly cause problems for his Jewish neighbors and he despised anything Jewish. Lemel belonged to the local missionary and would hold many meetings in his home about the methods to teach his Jewish neighbors about the 'other' life.

**Is there any prohibition to believing about Lemel?**

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

**Answer:** There is no reason to believe about someone like Lemel, who is mentioned in a public. Such a person has already removed himself from the "circle" and, as we have mentioned in a previous week's *Chofetz Chaim*, it is permissible to derogatorily inform about a person.

## Questions of the week

- From which action of יַעֲקֹב do we learn that a person is required to give honor to royalty?
- How does רָשִׁי"י deduce which two of the brothers wanted to kill יוסף?

1. יַעֲקֹב exerted himself to sit up on his bed, because his son יוסף was a ruler (48:2).  
 2. יוסף wanted to rescue his brothers. The hatred of the brothers was not total. יוסף would not have spoken in the presence of the older brothers. This leaves יוסף and יוסף's brothers (49:5).

## Halacha Corner

הלכות עניני דומא:  
הלכות שנים מקרא  
ואחד תרגום

- There is a חַיִּיב for every individual to read the weekly רמב"ם הלכות תפלה פרק י"ג once (see תרגום פְּרָשָׁה twice and פְּרָשָׁה once).
- לְבַתְּחֵלָה, one should read the פְּרָשָׁה early and finish the reading of the פְּרָשָׁה on שַׁבַּת morning before the שַׁבַּת day meal.
- Some say one cannot even fulfill this מצוה after מִנְחָה בַּשַּׁבַּת.

\*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,

It was mid-afternoon on a **שבת** in Bagdad when one of Iraq's high-ranking treasury officials arrived with urgent haste at the office of R' Salman Mutzafi זצ"ל. The official was accompanied by the British Consul as well as a delegation of English businessmen to conclude an important business deal. In light of the urgent nature of the matter, a messenger was sent to R' Mutzafi's home to fetch him.

Not finding him there, the messenger went to the **בית מדרש**, where he discovered R' Mutzafi sitting and learning, together with his **רבי משה**, רבי יונה משה זצ"ל. They were studying from **ספר** on **קבלה** written by R' Chaim Vital זצ"ל on the teachings of his **רבי**, R' Yitzchok Luria זצ"ל, also known as the **אריז"ל**. Upon hearing the summons, he asked his **רבי**'s permission and left with the messenger.

Dressed in his **שבת** attire — a silk robe with a white coat over it, and a light-colored turban on his head — R' Mutzafi went to greet the delegation. When he

walked in, everyone stood and bowed. R' Mutzafi turned to the assembled group and said, "The sun will set in two hours, and about three-quarters of an hour after that the **שבת** Queen will depart, and then I will be able to attend to you gentlemen. I am a Jew, and I observe my G-d's commandments."

His candid declaration took the officials by surprise. After a few moments of silence, the British Consul said, "We respect your religion and your commitment, and your honesty. This is a business partner we can trust. We will wait here until your **שבת** is over."

The Rav returned to his **רבי**, with joy in his heart. He had never felt the holiness of the **שבת** as much as he did that day!

My **תלמיד**, there is at least one other similar story with R' Mutzafi. He taught by example that one's true commitment to **ד'**'s **מצוה** enhances both the **מצוה** and one's stature!

יהי זכרו ברוך!

בגידודות, Your **רבי**

Story adapted from: **Stories My Grandfather Told Me**  
(with kind permission from ArtScroll)

## 2nd Annual Pirchei Shovvim Contest

Do you remember last year's **שובביים** contest that had the participation of over 200 boys from many States within the US, Canada and UK? This year we are calling it the **שובביים** contest. Do you know why?

Next week's **פרשה** is **שמות** – the first **פרשה** of **שמי**. Have you ever heard of this term? This is an acrostic of the **פרשיות** **תרומה**, **משפטים**, **יתרו**, **בשלח**, **בא**, **וארא**, **שמות**, and **תצוה**. According to the **אריז"ל** these **פרשיות** are especially opportune for **מצוה** and for strengthening our resolve to do **באר**. This auspicious time is mentioned in the **באר**.

Throughout the world many places have dedicated these weeks for **שיעורים** to strengthen **מצוה** in the home. Pirchei Agudas Yisroel Newsletter will be dedicating the next eight weeks to strengthening the **מצוה**. It is noteworthy that R' Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל writes that the **חיוב** of **שנים** **מקרא** **ואחד** **תרגום** is equal in importance to all **מצוה** **דרבנן**. R' Moshe notes that the need had never been as great as in his times – and surely this applies even more so to our times – to have a deeper understanding of **שבת**, the **written תורה**.

The Pirchei Agudas Yisroel Newsletter **שנים** program has been designed as follows:

- Boys from 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade should complete the **פרשה** until **שני**.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade until **שלישי**.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade until **רביעי**.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade until **חמישי**.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade until **ששי**.
- 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades should complete the entire **פרשה**.

If you are interested in joining this special **שמי** program this year and will **איינה** review the weekly **פרשה** according to your grade level, 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 **גדולות חומשים**.

We are also interested in hearing feedback from elementary schools and / or individuals that are interested in helping to promote this extra-curricular activity in order to train **בר** **מצוה** boys to be fluent in this special **מצוה**. Please feel free to fax any comments or suggestions to 718 506 9633.

## Sage Sayings



R' Salman Mutzafi זצ"ל told his sons of an interesting episode (his children believe it happened to their father): A **חכם** once undertook to fast the entire week, except for **שבת**. On Thursday his **רבי** invited him to a **מצוה**. He resolved his dilemma and partook of the meal by reasoning to himself [in his native tongue], " **סיאיזו פיל מער שווער נישט זאגן אנדערע וועגן מצוה מעשים**! – **טובים ווי צו פאסטן!**"

Source: Heard around the **שבת** table



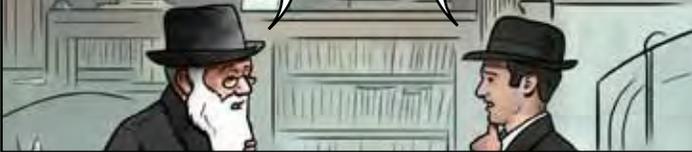
# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד  
PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

ONE POVERTY-STRICKEN BOCHUR AND HIS PARENTS DECIDED HE SHOULD GO TO LEARN IN THE FAMOUS GRODNO YESHIVA UNDER R' SHIMON SHKOP. AFTER A DIFFICULT TWO-WEEK TREK, HE ARRIVED, EXHAUSTED, AT THE DOOR. R' SHIMON WELCOMED HIM, SAT HIM DOWN, AND BEGAN HIS FARHER (TESTING)...

SO THIS IS MY FIRST QUESTION: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ATE ANY HOT FOOD?

BUT ... ER ... ABOUT, UH, TWO WEEKS AGO!



THE ROSH HAYESHIVA GOT UP FROM HIS CHAIR, COMPASSIONATELY TOOK THE BOY BY THE HAND TO THE KITCHEN, AND PERSONALLY PREPARED A HOT TASTY MEAL.

ENJOY THE HOT CHICKEN SOUP, AND THEN WE CAN CONTINUE WITH YOUR FARHER..

REBBI, HOW CAN I THANK YOU ENOUGH?



THE ROSH HAYESHIVA THEN OPENED HIS GEMARA. HE LOOKED AGAIN AT THE EAGER BUT NERVOUS BOY AND ASKED...

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SLEPT ON A BED?

ER... REBBI... ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO...



R' SHIMON AGAIN GOT UP AND LED THE BOY TO A BEDROOM IN HIS HOME. (SOME SAY IT WAS HIS OWN BED.)

PLEASE DO NOT ASSIST ME WHILE I CHANGE THE SHEETS... I WANT YOU TO REST AND WE WILL CONTINUE IN THE MORNING!

OH, REBBI - THANK YOU!



THE NEXT MORNING THE BOCHUR WENT TO SEE THE ROSH HAYESHIVA AGAIN. R' SHIMON WELCOMED HIM WARMLY.

YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED! MY SON, DO YOU IMAGINE THAT AFTER THE HARDSHIPS YOU UNDERWENT IN YOUR DESIRE TO LEARN TORAH, I WOULD NOT ACCEPT YOU IN OUR YESHIVA?



THE BOCHUR LIVED THROUGH THE HORRORS OF THE HOLOCAUST. HE NEVER ABANDONED HIS PURE FAITH IN HASHEM AND EXPLAINED TO HIS CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN...



EVERY TIME I FELT LIKE GIVING UP BECAUSE OF MY SUFFERING I PICTURED THE FACE OF THE KIND ROSH YESHIVA AND TOLD MYSELF, "I WANT TO LIVE! IF THE JEWISH NATION AND OUR HOLY TORAH CAN PRODUCE SUCH SPLENDID PEOPLE, THEN THESE EVIL ONES CAN NEVER DESTROY US...!"

R' SHIMON SHKOP WAS BORN IN TURZ, POLAND, TO ר' יצחק שמואל הכהן ורחל. HE STUDIED IN MIR AND THEN VOLOZHIN, UNDER R' CHAIM SOLOVEITCHIK AND THE NETZIV. IN THE EARLY 1880'S HE MARRIED לאה, A NIECE OF R' LEIZER GORDON. FOR 18 YEARS HE TAUGHT HIS UNIQUE APPROACH USING BOTH THE ANALYTICAL דרך החיים AND THE SYSTEMATIC דרך הניב. IN 1903, HE SERVED AS רב OF MOLTSH, AND IN 1907 AS רב OF BRANSK. IN 1920 HE BECAME ראש ישיבה שערני תורה OF ראש ישיבה GRODNO AND TRANSFORMED IT INTO ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS ישיבות IN POLAND. HIS תלמידים INCLUDED, ז"ל, R' ELCHONON WASSERMAN, R' YOSEF SHLOMO KAHANEMAN, R' YITZCHOK DOV KOPPELMAN AND MANY MORE. HIS שיעור ישר IS A CLASSIC LEARNED IN ALL ישיבות TO THIS DAY. HE WAS אגדת ישראל OF מועצת גדולי התורה.



For any inquiries or comments please feel free to call 347-838-0869 • Illustrated by: Yishaya Suval [www.leilshishi.com](http://www.leilshishi.com)

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