



PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

December 19, 2015 - תשע"ו - 19 - Vol: 3 Issue: 8



פרשה: ויגש - הפטרה: ...ואתה בן אדם... (יחזקאל לז:טו-כח)
דף יומי: גיטין א' וכן טלומטר לברכה

Torah Thoughts



... ויגרא את העגלות אשר שלח יוסף ... ותחי רוח יעקב ... (בראשית מה:כו)
And יעקב saw the wagons יוסף had sent ... and the spirit of יעקב was revived.

Before יעקב would allow himself to accept the news that his long-lost son יוסף was alive and was now the viceroy of Egypt, he needed some solid proof.

According to the מדרש, the wagons יוסף had sent to transport יעקב to Egypt were really a hint to the סוּגְיָא they had discussed privately on the last day they had seen each other — עֲגָלָה (The Hebrew word for wagon is עֲגָלָה, related to the word עֲרִיפָה.) This was the sign that fully convinced יעקב and revived his spirits. Why, indeed, was this such a conclusive proof?

During the time of the Vilna Gaon, there was a woman whose husband vanished without a trace. She was left a living widow, unable to remarry because her husband might still be alive.

Thirty years passed, and then, one fine day, a man appeared on her doorstep and declared, "My dear wife, I'm back!" Then he told her a pitiful story about what had kept him from returning. Perhaps this was her husband. Yet, she was not sure.

"Test me," the man said. "Ask me any question about our life together. See if I know the answers."

She asked him a lot of questions, and he seemed to have all the right answers. He knew all about their respective families, wedding day, etc.; still, she remained doubtful. She sought the advice of the בית

דין. He was very convincing, and yet, his wife was not convinced. What should they do? The people believed the man, but his wife refused to talk to him. They sought the counsel of the Vilna Gaon.

"Take the man to shul," said the Gaon. "See if he knows where his מְקוֹם קְבוּעַ, usual seat, is."

They took him to the shul and asked him to point to his seat. The man hemmed and hawed, but it was obvious that he could not do it. Then the man broke down and admitted that he had learned all the information from the husband whom he had befriended many years earlier. A few months later, the true husband came home, and the wife accepted him immediately.

The 'miracle' of the Vilna Gaon was the talk of the town, but he explained his reasoning. "If this man was an impostor, he was far from a צַדִּיק. Such a person would seek out all sorts of details to 'prove' his identity, but it would not occur to him to find out about the holy matters. I asked that you question him about a שְׂבָקֵדְשָׁה to test his knowledge of such a matter."

Similarly, יעקב knew that if the man claiming to be יוסף was an impostor, he might have extracted all sorts of information from the real יוסף. But יעקב also knew that it would never occur to a faker to ask which סוּגְיָא he and יעקב had last been discussing. When יוסף referred to the סוּגְיָא of עֲרִיפָה, יעקב was now fully convinced that he had indeed found his long-lost son.

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



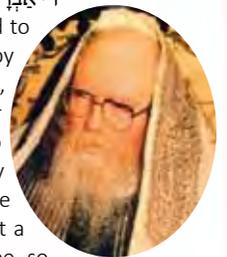
Yahrzeits of our Gedolim



'' **טבת** 5678 - 5750 1918 - 1990 ר' אברהם אבא למפער זצ"ל was born in Krula, Hungary, to שרה טובה and יוסף. The family relocated to Pittsburgh, PA, in 1928. In 1930, he went to learn in the ישיבות of Rakhiv (Ukraine) and Székelyhíd (Romania). At age 17, he received סמיכה. In 1939, he married רחל רייטמן of Rosenbaum of Nadvorna's daughter. ר' אברהם אבא relocated to Newark, NJ, where he served as רב from 1950-1966 until his father's פטירה. He then returned to Pittsburgh, filling his father's place for 2 years, before emigrating to ישראל. He settled in אשדוד, a city bereft of תורה, and with his ישראלי אהבת התורה, and אהבת ישראל he energized the city with תורה. He authored אמונת אברהם.

Gedolim Glimpses

Towards the end of his life, ר' אברהם אבא למפער visited Antwerp. His חסידים arranged to take the רבני for a medical examination by one of the top doctors in the world, planning to pay his exorbitant fee. After the examination, the doctor refused to take payment for his efforts, saying, "Any man in his sickly condition should be depressed with such pain, yet I never met a happier person in my life! If he can be so happy while being so sick, then he must be a very holy person. I can't take a penny from such a holy man!"



Dedication opportunities are available. If you would like to sponsor or receive this publication via email, please send an email to pircheiweekly@agudathisrael.org

לעיני רי ישראל בן אברהם זי"ל
לעיני הני ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן בלחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י



This week's Pirchei Weekly is sponsored by Camp Agudah



Living with the Torah

A Mother's Wish

כי איך אָעלָה אַל אָבִי וְהַנְעַר אֵינְנוּ אִתִּי ... (בְּרֵאשִׁית מִד: לֵד)
 "For how can I go up to my father if the youth is not with me?"

R' Meir of Premishlan זצ"ל often remarked, "Every individual who passes on — after 120 years — is required to stand before the Heavenly Tribunal and give an accounting of the years that he spent in this world. At that time, he will be questioned regarding the way he raised his children. 'Did you raise them in the ways of the תּוֹרָה,' he will be asked, 'or חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם, in a way that is contradictory to the תּוֹרָה's ideals?'"

"This is alluded to in the following verse: **כִּי אֵיךְ אָעֻלָּה — אֶל אָבִי — For how can I go up to my Father in Heaven and stand trial before the Heavenly Tribunal, וְהַנְעַר אֵינְנוּ אִתִּי, if the youth is not with me?** — if I did not ensure that my child was with me to receive a תּוֹרָה education?"

* * * * *

An outsider might have thought that this was not a home filled with joy. Here was little Ezra, sitting at the שֶׁבֶת table with his mother, a woman widowed for the last few years. Their simple, bare apartment had very little other than two wooden chairs, a table, and the straw mats upon which Ezra and his mother slept.

שֶׁבֶת brought with it a mixture of bittersweet emotions. On the one hand, there were the memories of Ezra's father, which only accentuated the awful, gnawing loneliness and sadness; on the other, Ezra's mother would burst with pride listening to her son repeat the words of תּוֹרָה as they sat together eating their beautiful but meager שֶׁבֶת meal. Ezra would sing his Sephardic melodies and his mother would smile with love. When the meal and the דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה were finished, Ezra would open his גַּמְרָא and begin learning.

With a kerosene lamp as his only light, Ezra learned with extreme diligence, his entire body and mind absorbed in the words of the גַּמְרָא, as he transformed his mother's sadness into joy. Leah, familiar with the הִלְכָה that one must not read on שֶׁבֶת by the light of a wick lest he tamper with the oil to increase the light, would always sit opposite Ezra while he learned to make sure he did not accidentally transgress that הִלְכָה. For hours on end, Leah kept a table-side vigil, watching her son and admiring his perseverance and determination to learn.

One Friday night, Leah sat opposite her son as usual, smiling at his incredible diligence. An hour passed and then, exhausted from the work of the previous week — she was maintaining two jobs just to eke out a living — Leah began drifting off to sleep. Ezra noticed that his mother had dozed off and quietly closed his גַּמְרָא, so as not to disturb her. Since she was asleep and could not watch over him to ensure that he did not touch the light, he could no longer continue to learn.

Suddenly, Leah woke up. She realized what must have happened and insisted he resume learning. But Ezra would not hear of it. "Ima, you are tired. You must go to sleep."

Leah gazed deeply into her son's eyes. "Ezra, I will not be able to sleep if I know that you have stopped learning תּוֹרָה because of me."

His mother had tears in her eyes and Ezra could feel her encouragement and sense her utter devotion. With a smile, he sat down at the table, looked gratefully at his mother and continued to learn, recharged by his mother's undying commitment to his תּוֹרָה learning.

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"ב

*Tony, the gentile president of a public company, and various other senior staff members would meet on the first Monday of each month to discuss company strategy. Tony and a few of his fellow staff members had arrived a bit early and had a friendly, informal discussion before the meeting about various non-business related topics. When the meeting started at 9:00 a.m., Eli had not yet arrived. Shlomie told Tony that this was typical; lateness was always an issue with Eli.

Why is Shlomie's comment worse than regular הרע הרע?

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

The chance of a negative result is much greater with a gentle. The chance of a gentle will almost definitely be believed, and the potential to a gentler. However, the result will not be believed, and no damage will result. When one relates a matter to a listener there is a possibility that the listener will follow the matter and will not believe it, and no damage will result. However, the result will not be believed, and no damage will result.

Questions week

1. What 2 food items did יוסף send יעקב that are known to calm a[n elderly] person?
2. From where do we learn that listening to לשון הרע can cause one to have שְׂנְאָה against the person who is being slandered?

1. (a) The ש"ס says that he sent old wine and (b) the ש"ס says that he sent split beans (אֵלֶּיךָ אֶת הַיַּיִן הַזֶּה וְאֶת הַבִּיבָנוֹת הַשֵּׁנִי). (45:23) — 45:23. 2. (a) The ש"ס says that the brothers would start arguing and blaming each other for speaking ג'ר' about him, thus causing them to hate him (אֵלֶּיךָ אֶת הַיַּיִן הַזֶּה וְאֶת הַבִּיבָנוֹת הַשֵּׁנִי). (45:24) — 45:24.

Halacha Corner

הלכות עניי דיומא:
תענית צבור—
עשרה בטבת

- Except for תשעה באב and יום כפור, all fasts begin at עלות השחר. It is important to note that one must not begin eating מונוגות or פת within one half-hour before עלות השחר.
- If one is weak and needs to eat before עלות השחר, he must make a תנאי before going to sleep at night that he intends to eat before עלות השחר.

*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,

In 1968, when ר' אברהם אבא, the Pittsburgher Rebbe, turned 50 years old, he decided to emigrate to ארץ ישראל. He came with מסיירת נפש, leaving behind חסידים, his father's קהלה, and several married children, but he felt he had a new mission to fulfill.

While deciding where to settle, the Rebbe had a dream in which he envisioned a Sephardi חכם dressed all in white, standing by the ocean. "I am חסדאי אבן שפרוט," the חכם said. "Come to אשדוד and bring Jews back to אבינו שבשמים. You must turn the חול into קודש." The Rebbe later learned that אבן שפרוט, who lived in the time of the גאונים, brought an entire city to תשובה and was responsible for bringing תורה from the ישיבות in בבל (פומבדיתא and סורא) to Spain by making ר' משה בן חנוך (from the חכמי בבל) the רב in Cordova.

When ר' אברהם אבא first moved to אשדוד, its inhabitants were almost entirely made up of traditional immigrants from the former Soviet Union, North Africa,

and India, with little תורה learning in the city. ר' אברהם אבא built up after-school programs for the children and started monthly שיעורי תורה for adults. He used to go from shul to shul every שבת to encourage people to wear their טליתים home after davening and thereby infuse the city with an atmosphere of שבת שבת.

If the Rebbe noticed litter on the street he would pick it up and then throw it into a garbage can, saying that all of us have the responsibility to keep ארץ ישראל clean. The Pittsburgher Rebbe later explained that he also had a deeper intention. In his heart he would ask ד' to remove the spiritual impurity from אשדוד as well. Today, almost 50 years later, the city of אשדוד is one of the fastest-growing centers of תורה in ארץ ישראל.

My אברהם אבא, תלמיד ר' taught how with single-minded determination, constant תפלות and boundless love for all Jews, one person can change his entire city forever.

יהי זכרו ברוך!

רבני Your

A letter from a Rebbe based on interviews

Sage Sayings



The Pittsburgher Rebbe, ר' אברהם אבא, devoted many years of his life to the mission of bringing Jews back to אבינו שבשמים. When asked why he moved to Newark rather than New York, he replied, "The Hebrew spelling of these two cities is identical except that Newark lacks the letter י. איך וויל — צוריק ברענגען דער ייד צום נוא-ארק! By the time he left Newark, he had been מקרב hundreds of families and even opened a Chassidische ישיבה.

Source: Hamodia

Understanding Davening

Four תעניתים were established by the בית due to the destruction of the בית and the exile from ארץ ישראל. צום (ניסן) is in the 4th month from ניסן; צום (אייר) is in the 5th month; צום (תמוז) is in the 7th month; and צום (חשוון) is in the 10th month. The יומא (ה.) tells us that every generation in which the בית is not built in its days, is considered as if the בית was destroyed in that generation. The purpose of these תעניתים is not just for us to remember the pain, but to change our ways. The primary cause of the current מצוקה was שנאת חנם, hating others for no reason; therefore, on a תענית like עשרה, we should perform acts of אהבה, kind deeds for no reason.

לענין משה בן ה' טוביה הלוי זצ"ל



This Week in History

7 of יארצייט — 1821-1892 / 5581-5653 טבת 7 of Mir and author of טוב ליפמן. Born in Slutzk, his father, ר' יהודה זאב, was the son of ר' שבתאי, a דין in Slutzk. His mother was a daughter of the famous בצלאל, a son of טוב ליפמן or, as he was fondly known, Reb Lippele, was known as an עלוי even in his youth. At 17 he married the daughter of ר' שמעון זמל of Slutzk. His first רבנות was in Shumyachi, a position that he held for 11 years. He also headed the local ישיבה, which was the largest in the whole region. From there he moved to Chislavichi, where he lived until 1874. After his wife's פטירה, he married the daughter of ר' יעקב לייב of Molestoyka. After the fire that broke out in Chislavichi, ר' טוב ליפמן became רב of Mir, serving also as ראש ישיבה. ר' איסר זלמן מלצר, a native-born Mirrer, was among his תלמידים.

ר' טוב ליפמן was fluent in the works of all ראשונים, and his expertise in תורה and הלכה was well known, as were his activities for the הכלל, resulting in an invitation to take part in the rabbinical conference in St. Petersburg of 5640 / 1880 under the leading גדולים of the time: ר' יצחק אלקהן of Kovno, ר' יצחק ספקטור of Lodz, and the בית הלוי of Brisk.



LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

בס"ד

THERE WAS A YOUNG BOCHUR WITH DOWN SYNDROME WHO WOULD FREQUENT YESHIVA ZICHRON MEILECH ON A REGULAR BASIS. ONE TIME, RAV CHAIM EPSTEIN WAS JUST STARTING HIS SHIUR, WHEN THE BOCHUR HAD A TERRIBLE SEIZURE JUST OUTSIDE THE YESHIVAH.

SOMEBODY CALL HATZOLAH!

WHAT'S THE EXACT ADDRESS?

HATZOLAH CAME IMMEDIATELY AND THE BOY WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL.

AFTER THE SHIUR RAV CHAIM EPSTEIN ASKED WHY HE HAD HEARD EMERGENCY SIRENS DURING THE SHIUR. A TALMID EXPLAINED WHAT HAD TRANSPIRED.

WHO WENT WITH HIM TO THE HOSPITAL?

HATZOLAH WENT WITH HIM. THEY TOOK HIM.

DID ANYONE FROM YESHIVA GO ALONG? WHO IS WITH HIM NOW?

THE ROSH YESHIVAH COULD NOT DETERMINE IF SOMEONE WAS WITH THE BOCHUR. HE ASKED A TALMID TO ACCOMPANY HIM. WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT THE HOSPITAL, THEY RAN INTO A PROBLEM:

SIR, ONLY THE PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBERS ARE AUTHORIZED ENTRY TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.

I'M THE DEAN OF SCHOOL THE BOY ATTENDS. HE'S UNDER MY CARE AND IS LIKE MY CHILD... IS ANYONE WITH MY CHILD?

IT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR HOSPITAL STAFF TO SEE A FAMILY MEMBER TAKING INTEREST IN A PATIENT.

I WILL SPEAK TO MY SUPERVISOR.

EVENTUALLY A NURSE ALLOWED THE ROSH YESHIVAH INTO THE EMERGENCY ROOM. THE ROSH YESHIVAH WENT AND SAT BY THE BOY'S BED. SEEING THE ROSH YESHIVAH, THE BOY'S FACE LIT UP.

CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING? WE MISSED YOU IN YESHIVA TODAY!

REBBE! REBBE! I NEED A REFUAH BROCHAH.

HAVE A SPEEDY REFUAH SHLEIMAH MIEN KIND!

THE ROSH YESHIVAH STAYED WITH THE BOY UNTIL THE PARENTS WERE CONTACTED. THEY BOTH CAME TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM:

ROSH HAYESHIVA...WE HAVE NO WORDS TO THANK YOU!

I OWE YOU...YOU HAVE SUCH A SPECIAL SON, WHO BRINGS DAILY BROCHA AND SIMCHA TO OUR YESHIVA! WE ARE SO LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HIM IN YESHIVA TOMORROW!

ע"ה נ. SHAINA ITTA EPSTEIN AND ר' יוסף דוד זצ"ל WAS BORN IN MIR, POLAND, TO R' CHAIM EPSTEIN AND SHAINA ITTA EPSTEIN. DURING WWII HIS FAMILY ESCAPED WITH THE YISHBA TO SHANGHAI. THE EPSTEIN FAMILY ARRIVED IN THE USA IN 1946. THE YOUNG ר' CHAIM EPSTEIN WENT TO LEARN IN YESHIVAH TORAH VODAA'S UNDER R' AHARON ZVIL FOR OVER 7 YEARS. IN 1961, HE MARRIED מוֹשֶׁה בֶּנְדֶר. IN 1971 HE BECAME A MEGID SHENOR OF ADELPHIA FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE BECOMING ראש ישיבה OF בני תורה FOR THOUSANDS OF זכרון מלך. HE WAS ONE OF THE PROMINENT תלמידים OF ר' אהרן קטלר זצ"ל WHO LIVED BY AND TAUGHT HIS REBBE'S MESORAH THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE.