



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**כרשה: במדבר הכטרה לשבת:** והיה מספר בני ישראל כחול הים... (הושע ב:א-כב)

**דף יומי:** בבא בתרא קכ"ה **אבות פרק ו' 64 ימים לעומר**

**שבועות יום א:** אקדמות, שמות יט:א-ככג; **יום ב:** רות, דברים טו:יט-טז:ז

**הלל שלם - ב' ימים, יזכור יום ב' דשבועות דף יומי:** בבא בתרא קכ"ט, ק"ל

## Torah Thoughts

There are no **מִצְוֹת** specifically associated with **שבועות**. **שבועות** is the **יום טוב** celebrating **תורה**, and there is no distinctive **מצוה** that represents **תורה**, other than the **תורה** itself. However, there is a special importance attached to the **מנהגים**, *customs*, of **שבועות**. A **מנהג** is a protection for the **תורה**. The letters of the word **מנהג** are the same as **המגן**, *the protector*.

The Vilna Gaon offers an interesting **רמז**, *hint*, based on five of the popular **מנהגים** of **שבועות**. They are: **אקדמות** — *Introductory praise of ה', חלב* — *eating dairy products*, **רות** — *reading the story of רות*, **ירק** — *placing greenery around the home and shul* and **תיקון** — *learning all night from שבעות ליל שבעות*. The first letters of each word spell out the word **אחרית** — *end*. The **תורה** is always referred to as **ראשית**, *beginning*, and these very diverse **מנהגים** are performed together. They represent the protection of the **תורה** and are similar to an outer protective covering (the end).

Various reasons are offered to explain the **מנהג** of flowers. Each one provides another insight into appreciating the **יום טוב** of **שבועות**.

The **רמז** explains that placing greenery around the home and in **shul** reminds us of the events of **תורה**. A miracle occurred at the time of **מתן תורה**: **הר סיני** was covered with greenery. [Our **shul** and our home are the **מקדש מעט** that represent the beauty of accepting the **תורה**.]

The **מגן אברהם** suggests that the **מנהג** of greenery is to

remind us that **שבועות** is the time we brought up our **בפורים** to the **בית**. [We thank **די** for all the goodness that we merited after we accepted the **תורה**.]

**ר' יעקב מעקדין** reasons that we have this **מנהג** because flowers offer a pleasant aroma and therefore will enhance the **יום טוב** environment. Even though this reasoning is applicable to any **יום טוב**, it applies even more so to **שבועות** as the **גמרא** says that all agree that one must have physical enjoyments on this **יום טוב**.

The **אלישי"ד** says that this **מנהג** is to remind us about the children of **יששכר**. **יששכר** is the tribe that represents **תורה**, and **יששכר** was born after an exchange of **דודאים** (a kind of flower) that **ראובן** brought home on **שבועות**.

The **מנשה** explains that this **מנהג** is to remind us about **מנשה**, who was born on **אדר**. His mother was able to hide him for three months without anyone asking questions. She then took **מנשה**, placed him in a basket and hid him in the flowery reeds. This episode took place on **ז' סיון**, the day of **תורה**.

The **בני יששכר** suggests that this **מנהג** demonstrates the difference between **ישׂראל** and all the other nations, based on the **פסוק** — *like a rose between the thorn bushes*. The other nations refused to accept the **תורה**, but **ישׂראל** said **נעשה** and accepted the **תורה** unconditionally.

Adapted from: **א שער** by **ר' ז'ב ל'פ**



## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

**ב' סיון** 5632 — 5697 1871 — 1937  
**ר' חיים אלעזר שפירא זצ"ל** of Munkács was born in Stryzow, Poland, to **ר' צבי הירש** and **ר' צבי אלימלך**, **בני יששכר** (Horowitz). He learned under his father and became the **רב** of Munkács in 1914. From his youth, he completed the **ש"ס בכלי** every two years. He was a prolific writer. In addition to his 6-volume magnum opus, **אורות ושלום**, among other **ספרים**, he wrote **נמוקי אורח חיים**, **מנחת אלעזר**, which attracted hundreds of students. Famous as a 'Wonder Rabbi,' he was visited by many world leaders, such as the Czechoslovakian President and Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, who sought the **רב**'s advice and **ברכות**.

## Gedolim Glimpses

**ר' חיים אלעזר שפירא זצ"ל**, the Munkácser Rebbe, placed great emphasis on learning and **תפילה**. He encouraged his **תלמידים** to rise early and learn **גמרא** before davening. He would say in the name of **בני יששכר** that through the learning of **גמרא**, our **שמים** go up to **תפלות** with the **רפאל** and **מיקאל** of **מלאכי די**. The first letters of the name of each of these **מלאכים** spell the word **גמרא**.



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לענין ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל לענין ה' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י

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... ותתן לנו ה' ... את יום חג השבועות הזה זמן מתן תורתנו ...  
*And You gave us, Hashem, ... this day of the שבועות Festival, the time of the giving of our תורה ... (ליל שבועות Kiddush)*

Why is this יום טוב known as חג השבועות? שבועות means weeks. It would seem more appropriate to call it חג התורה in celebration of our receiving the תורה. R' Pinchos Roberts, שליט"א, explains that in the eyes of the world, the Jews became liberated on פסח. However, the תורה's concept of freedom is different. Only one who accepts upon himself the yoke of תורה has true freedom. The name "Weeks" connects שבועות to פסח. It was only through כלל פרקי אבות's efforts to raise their spiritual standards in those preparatory weeks after they left Egypt that they became truly free. As (6:2) teaches us — *The only truly free person is one who is involved in the study of תורה.*

This does not mean you have to be free to study תורה. On the contrary, the truth is often the reverse.

Yuri Zilber was a mathematician. With a government position, he appeared to be a fine, loyal Russian citizen. Yet his true servitude was not to Mother Russia. Clandestinely, Yuri was יצחק. He spent every free moment delving into learning תורה. Every morning יצחק would tear out one page from his גמרא, conceal it in his clothing, and when he had a spare minute, he would steal away some time to learn. He would review each page repeatedly, master it, and note the topics that were difficult which he could not resolve. Ultimately, after tearing out over 2,300 pages of תלמוד, he had mastered them all. He had accomplished the impossible!

But his mission was not yet complete. In 1973, he achieved what he thought was hopeless — exit visas for his entire family to immigrate to ישראל.

The moment he got off the plane at Ben Gurion Airport, יצחק ran over to the first man with a yarmulka that he saw. With a tattered page of תלמוד ערויבין in hand, יצחק grabbed the man by the lapels and begged, "Please explain תוספות to me!" The stunned security guard stared at יצחק. Had this man lost his mind? יצחק

suddenly realized that not everyone in ישראל made the most of the opportunity they had to study תורה. Broken, יצחק began to cry. After years of living in a land where religion was forbidden, he was shaken by the fact that not every Jew who was free to do so was immersed in תורה.

Soon afterwards, R' יצחק's son Anatoly — or אברהם, as he was now called — came to meet the רב. He had come to meet the רב, ר' Chaim Shmulevitz. Just a few days earlier, opening a גמרא in public was grounds for imprisonment, torture and even death. Now here he was about to come face to face with the leader of one of the greatest ישיבות in the world.

The door opened and R' Chaim invited the 17-year-old Russian boy inside. He spoke to אברהם about his past, but was surprised when he requested to be admitted to the ישיבה. R' Chaim looked into אברהם's eyes and could sense his intense desire to become a בחור. R' Chaim explained that there were better ישיבות for one who was still a novice in learning and assured him that when the time came, he would certainly accept him into the ישיבה.

When R' Chaim finished speaking, אברהם looked at the רב with tears in his eyes, and insisted that he be given a chance to prove himself. R' Chaim turned to him and asked which מסכתא to test him on, but he hung his head in shame. R' Chaim understood that the boy had not learned much in Russia. Looking at אברהם, through his silence, R' Chaim sensed the boy's embarrassment.

Again, R' Chaim softly asked, "You don't have to be ashamed... Is there any פארהער (test) you on?"

אברהם looked up and said sadly, "I'm ashamed to say that I know only תוספות and רש"י, גמרא, סדר ניקיון and סדר נשים."

R' Chaim could not move; he was astounded! He realized that under constant danger, אברהם had learned more in his 17 years than many ישיבה boys in liberated countries accomplish during their entire lifetime of learning. R' Chaim pulled אברהם close to him and held him tight — and gladly accepted him into the ישיבה.

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

## Chofetz Chaim Moment

ספר ח"ח הלכות רכילות כלל ב' סעיף ג'

\*Eli and Levi ran a little business selling cholent on Friday afternoon in the local market. The money they made barely covered their expenses because Levi always included his taxi fare and he lived a few miles away. Eli didn't tell Levi, but he was looking for another partner who lived closer. After talking with a few people who lived closer, Eli realized that Levi was the best choice as a partner after all. He had great מדות, and he was a great cook too!

**Is it מותר to tell Levi that Eli was considering finding someone else, if many people know?**

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

**Answer:** Although Eli had discussed it with and interviewed far more than 3 people, the rules of אמת לא אמת לא אמת do not apply in our case. The reasoning, explains the חת"ס, is that revealing Eli's search will definitely cause bad feelings between Eli and Levi and may ruin the partnership, thus violating the דברי חכמים.

## Questions of the week

1. What do we learn from נעמי leaving the fields of מואב and עקב leaving שבע שבועות?
2. נעמי attempted to dissuade רות from converting to Judaism by citing various מצוות לא תעשה. Which מצוות did נעמי cite? (Try to name 3.)

1. When a פריש departs from a place, it leaves a void, for the פריש is the glory, splendor and beauty of his/her dwelling place (מקום) (1:7).
2. Among the various מצוות לא תעשה cited in her attempt to dissuade her from converting to Judaism were the prohibitions of walking outside of one's field (1:6).

## Halacha Corner

הלכות עניני דיומא - שבועות

- If, while reciting שבועות on ברכות התורה morning, one clearly stipulates that the ברכות should be in effect only until the next morning, one may recite the ברכות on שבועות morning (or on any other day) does not recite the ברכה of המפיל.
- One who goes to sleep after עלות השחר morning (or on any other day) does not recite the ברכה of המפיל.

\*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,

The Munkácser Rebbe, R' Chaim Elazar Shapira זצ"ל, left an everlasting impression on the city of Munkács. He opened schools and established a vast network of charitable institutions to ease the burden of the עניים in the city and the surrounding districts. In his time, the city of Munkács grew from just a few thousand to over 11,000 Jews. The Jews represented about half of the city's population.

One of the most memorable events in the city of Munkács was the wedding of R' Chaim Elazar's only daughter Frima on אדר תרצ"ג (March 15, 1933). Over 20,000 guests attended, coming from Europe and even the U.S. Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia agreed to open their borders and no visa was necessary for people who wished to attend the wedding. Special arches were erected throughout the city in celebration of the joyous occasion.

An American filming company was sent to Munkács to document this historic event. The Rebbe heard about the crew from America and immediately

had the חסידים bring over the crew members. He made a historic deal. He would be willing to allow the camera crew to record him on film on the condition that they promised to show his entire brief speech. He spoke directly into the camera and with fire in his eyes and his voice cracking, he waved his finger at the camera and pleaded with the Jews in America to keep 'sweet' שבת.

My תלמיד, imagine the noise and commotion of a city closed for this grand wedding. The Rebbe is marrying off his only child, born after many years. Led by his entourage towards the חופה, the Rebbe suddenly stops. Over 20,000 guests, dignitaries and police all anxiously watch the Rebbe's every action. The התנונה has come to a standstill. What is on the Rebbe's mind? שבת observance in America! The Rebbe's greatest concern, at his moment of supreme joy, was for immigrant Jews lost in foreign land. What should be our worry at the time of our שמחה? To be concerned about other Jews!

יהי זכרו ברוך!  
בגדידות, רבי Your

*A letter from a Rebbe (based on interviews)*

## Understanding Davening

... תספרו חמשים יום,  
והקרבתם מנחה חדשה לד'...  
[as it says in the תורה]...  
you shall count 50 days,  
and then offer a new  
meal offering to ד'...

The (ויקרא כג: טז) פלי יקר explains that the word חדשה, new, in this פסוק alludes to תורה. Learning תורה must be done with excitement and a feeling of newness. The פלי יקר then asks, "Why do we not find a clear reason in the תורה for the יום טוב of שבועות?" The פלי יקר answers that פסח and סוכות remind us of the special miracles that happened during those specific periods of the year. The יום טוב of שבועות, however, is quite different. If the תורה would have written the reason for this יום טוב, we might have mistakenly understood that שבועות is the only day to celebrate תורה. This is incorrect. Every day a person must learn תורה with a fresh spark of a personal מתן תורה.

## Learning Contest ערב שבת

The contest: During the weeks leading up to קבלת התורה and until מנחה every ערב, שבת פרשת שלח, learn at least 45 minutes before מנחה every ערב, שבת, in either your קשיבה or local מדרש בית. If you learn for an hour or more, you will get an additional entry into the raffle.

The contest's basic rules: There is no particular למוד to learn and you can even review תרגום ופירוש. If you arrange for a group, and you have a שיעור to learn about שבת or הלכות שבת, you will receive an extra entry in the raffle. This contest is open for all ages up to 12th grade.

Boys that are interested in joining this exciting program should please send in your signed faxes by Monday 2:00 pm to 718 506 9633. Please include your name, grade, קשיבה, city and state, your contact and fax #'s and your name will be entered into a drawing for a beautiful set of גדולות חומשים!

We will be announcing the names of those who are entered into the Learning Contest (faxes must be received by Sunday at 7:00 p.m.). Current contestants:

- Grade 1** – Binyamin Greenberg, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; Brooklyn, NY; Chaim Dov Jacobowitz, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;
- Grade 3** – Chaim Mark, Yeshiva Bais Mikrah; Monsey, NY; Yehudah Altusky, Yaakov Bell, Yissochar Dov Duskis, Yosef Nisenfeld, Yoshi Yermish, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;
- Grade 4** – Yosef Friedman, Yeshiva Ohr Shraga; Brooklyn, NY; Reuven Afrati, Avraham Yitzchak Duskis, Yaakov Nisenfeld, Yonah Miller, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;
- Grade 5** – Yosef Greenberg, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; Brooklyn, NY; Gefen Afrati, Avraham Yitzchak Duskis, Yaakov Nisenfeld, Yonah Miller, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;
- Grade 6** – Mayer Ozer Greenberg, Yeshiva Torah Temimah; Brooklyn, NY; Refael Shabtai, Yeshiva Ateret Torah; Brooklyn, NY; Eli Bell, Elimelech Terebelo, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;
- Grade 7** – Yitzi Levit, Chaim Leib Miller, Politz Hebrew Academy; Philadelphia, PA;







# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

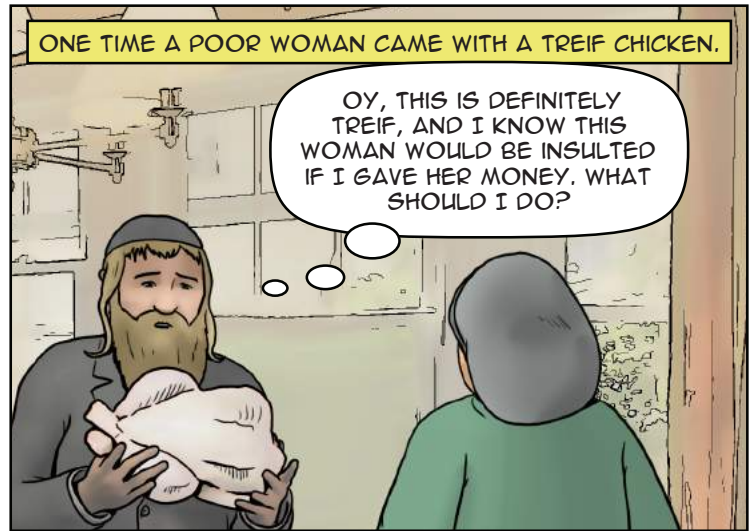
בס"ד  
PIRCHAI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA



R' TZVI PESACH FRANK HAD A BEAUTIFUL CUSTOM WHEN CHECKING THE KASHRUS OF A CHICKEN...

I CANNOT FIND A WAY TO PASKEN THIS AS KOSHER. PLEASE TAKE THIS MONEY AND BUY YOURSELF ANOTHER CHICKEN.

REBBI, THANK YOU SO MUCH!



ONE TIME A POOR WOMAN CAME WITH A TREIF CHICKEN.

OY, THIS IS DEFINITELY TREIF, AND I KNOW THIS WOMAN WOULD BE INSULTED IF I GAVE HER MONEY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?



THE SHOCHET CAME THIS MORNING. HM... I WONDER IF THE CHICKENS WERE COOKED YET.

EXCUSE ME. I NEED TO GO INTO THE KITCHEN WHERE THERE IS MORE LIGHT.

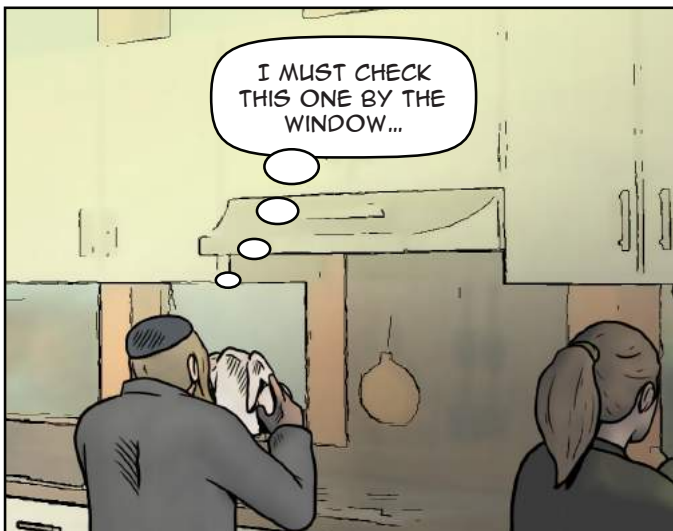


THE SHOCHET WAS JUST HERE. DID YOU START PREPARING THE CHICKENS?

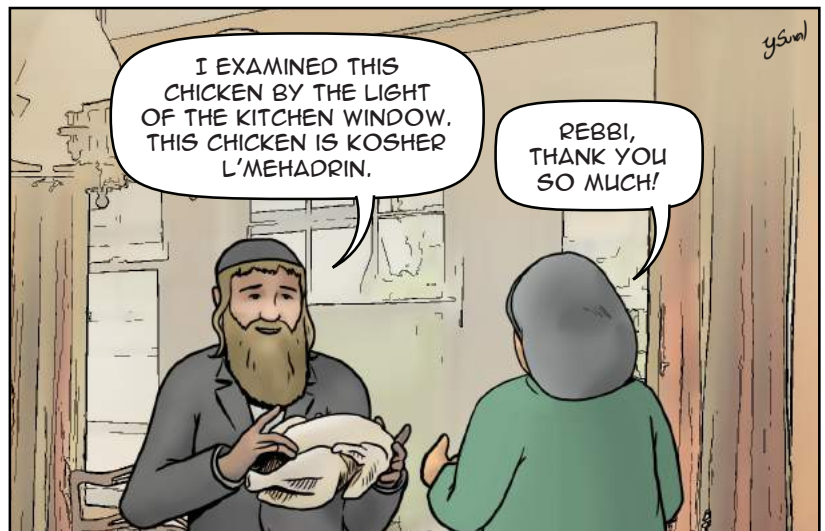
NO, NOT YET, BUT WHY-



GEVALDIG! PLEASE GIVE ME A CHICKEN... I'LL WRAP IT UP, AND THROW THIS ONE IN THE GARBAGE.



I MUST CHECK THIS ONE BY THE WINDOW...



I EXAMINED THIS CHICKEN BY THE LIGHT OF THE KITCHEN WINDOW. THIS CHICKEN IS KOSHER L'MEHADRIN.

REBBI, THANK YOU SO MUCH!

R' TZVI PESACH WAS BORN IN KOVNO, LITHUANIA, TO R' YEHUDA LEIB AND MALKA FRANK. AS A YOUNG BOY HE WAS ACQUAINTED WITH R' YISROEL SALANTER, WHO WOULD OFTEN VISIT, AND THE KOVNO ROV, R' YITZCHOK ELCHONON SPECTOR. HE LEARNED IN THE YESHIVOS OF SLABODKA AND TELZ AND WAS A CLOSE TALMID OF RAV ITZELE PONEVETZER, RAV SHIMON SHKOPP AND RAV ELIEZER GORDON. IN 1893, HE IMMIGRATED TO ERETZ YISROEL, AND LEARNED IN ישיבת עץ חיים. R' SHMUEL SALANT, CHIEF RABBI OF ירושלים, RECOGNIZED THE YOUNG PRODIGY AND IN 1907 APPOINTED HIM AS A דיין IN THE בית דין OF THE עדה החרדית. HE SERVED ON THIS בית דין FOR NEARLY 60 YEARS, EVENTUALLY BECOMING ONE OF THE LEADING דינים IN ירושלים. HE WAS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE LEADING EXPERTS ON QUESTIONS REGARDING THE NEWLY EVOLVING TECHNOLOGIES AND MEDICINE. HE AUTHORED הרצאתי, ארץ צבי, הדרת קודש, מקראי קודש, AMONG OTHERS.



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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