



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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סוכות שבת: קהלת... ויאמר משה אל ה'... הפטרה: והיה ביום ההוא... (יחזקאל לח:יח-לט:טז)

שמיני עצרת: עשור תעשה... הפטרה: יהי ככלות שלמה... (מלאכים א:ח:נד-ט:א) זכור תפלת גשם הלל שלם (סוכות) (All days of)

שמחת תורה: וזאת הברכה... בראשית ברא... הפטרה: ויהי אחרי מות משה... (יהושע א:א-יח

דף יומי - ביצה שבת: כ"ה, שני: כ"ח, שת: כ"ט



## Torah Thoughts



**מצוה שכא - מצות שבייתה ממלאכה ביום שמיני של סוכות**  
**מצוה שכב - מצות קרבן מוסף ביום שמיני של סוכות, שהוא נקרא שמיני עצרת**  
**מצוה שכג - מצות שלא לעשות מלאכה ביום שמיני בו**

The **יום טוב** חנוך lists at least 3 מצוות associated with the **יום טוב** we know as **שמיני עצרת**. There are many messages that are applicable to **יום טוב** in general and to **שמיני עצרת** in particular that the **חנוך** conveys.

The underlying purpose of resting from work on **יום טוב** (mentioned in **מצוה רצו**) is that we should think about the **יום טוב** and the miracles that **ד'** performed for the Jewish nation during this time. On **יום טוב** we should reach a new level of appreciation of **ד'** and praise and glorify Him. If a person is preoccupied with his daily work he will not have any free time to think about **ד'** or anything spiritual.

**חז"ל** teach us that this **יום טוב** is called **תג העצרת** because it is the end of the cycle of all the **נמים טובים** of the year. The word **עצרת** usually means *gathering*, however in this context the word **עצרת** is formed from the root, **עצר, to stop (restrain)**. There are no particular miracles that happened on **שמיני עצרת** that normally would be a reason to make it into a **יום טוב**.

We might wonder, why this was made into a special **יום טוב**? **חז"ל** answer this question by way of a short but beautiful and deep **משל**, *analogy*: It is like a king who invited his sons and many dignitaries to a banquet for a certain number of days. Once it was time for them to leave, he asked his sons to linger with him for one more day for

private parting celebration. In the time of the **בית המקדש**, during the **יום טוב** of **סוכות**, we offered **קרבנות** for the 70 nations of the world. It is as if **ד'** is telling **ישראל**, "קבל ישראלי עלי פרידתך", *[My beloved nation], Stay with Me for one more day, because your parting is difficult for Me.*" (סוכה נה: לו) ; see also: **רש"י ויקרא כג: לו**

This is a highly unusual **יום טוב** that was given specifically to **ישראל** to celebrate the intense love of **ד'** towards His people. On all other **נמים טובים** we reflect about the miracles that He performed for His nation during that particular period of time and sing the praises of **ד'**; however, on **שמיני עצרת** we simply stop our daily routine just to reflect on all of the love that **ד'** has for His nation. We have finished a year full of praises for all of His miracles. We are also now beginning our New Year with a clean slate with unique **מצוות** that envelop the entire body, **מצוות** that bring inner **שמחה**. The **קרבנות** and meals of **יום טוב** are like **ד'** making His **סעודת פרידה, parting celebration**, so that we can begin a new cycle energized with this message.

The **מצוה** of refraining from work is for both men and women. Women are exempt from time-sensitive **מצוות** because they are responsible to the home, looking after the family. However, the **מצוה** of reflection on the **יום טוב**, His love for His nation, His Goodness and all the miracles that **ד'** performed for us, also involve a **לאו** and are, therefore, obligatory for a woman.

ספר החנוך על מועדי השנה Some Messages and Ideas based on:



## Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

**י"ט תשרי**  
**5480 – 5558**  
**1720 – 1797**  
(גרי"א/א), born in Vilnius, Lithuania, to **שלמה זלמן** and **טריינא**, displayed extraordinary talent while still a young child. He married his first wife **תנה** at age seventeen. By age twenty, **רבנים** were submitting their difficult **הלכה** problems to the **גרי"א**. His writings are on **תנייך** (אדורת אלגהו) **תנייך** (אדורת אלגהו) **משנה** (באור הגרי"א) **שלחן ערוך**, **ירושלמי**, **בבלי**, **מדרש** and many more **הלכות** including **התורה**. None of his writings were published during his lifetime. Though he lived during the period known as the **אחרונים**, he is held by many to have the authority of the **ראשונים**. One of his most famous **תלמידים** was **ר' חיים וולוז'ין**, who established the learning method used in many of today's **שיבות**.

## Gedolim Glimpses

When he was lying on his deathbed, the Vilna Gaon **זצ"ל**'s family called for the local doctor, **ד"ר יעקב לובשיץ**. The Vilna doctor checked him over. As he bent down to listen to the **גאון**'s heartbeat, he heard the **גאון** quietly mumbling to himself. After the doctor straightened up, one of those present asked him nervously, "ווי האלט ער?" — Where is he holding [health-wise]?" The doctor smiled and said, "ער האלט אין מסכת פלים!" — He is holding in פלים!"



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

לע"נ ר' אברהם אליעזר בן ר' נתן בנימין ז"ל למשפחת עקשטיין, יארצייט כ"ו תשרי

Esrogim Before Sukkos

ועגן ד' עליהם ... בנסעם מן המדבר (במדבר י: לד). And the cloud of 'd... when they journeyed from the camp.

R' Sh"y quotes the ספרי (פג) that describes א'קלאל ישראל (פג) that describes journeying with seven clouds. [Ed. Note: The 4 clouds on the sides and the 2 on top and bottom created a soft carpet-feel, uniquely secluded, climate-controlled environment.] The front cloud, however, had multiple tasks. Wherever א'קלאל ישראל travelled, not only did it serve as a huge directional beacon, but it was also a super large bulldozer / steamroller which flattened every slight bump and mountainous bulge, and filled every crevice and valley to level the road. It also behaved as an astounding bug killer that quietly killed every one of the myriads of ferocious and deadly wilderness species like snakes and scorpions.

The מןרהי on this רש"י (quoted by the בי"ח ב, ב"ח) asks why on this סוכות do we simply focus our memory on the one cloud that protected us from the sun? One possible answer is that this cloud was a different protection to any of the others walls. Everyone needs some sun, each person had just the right amount of light. The young babies and older people needed the most protection. Different from the others that were constant, this cloud actually adapted to each person specifics needs. We thank א'ד on סוכות not just for the many protections, but also for the loving fatherly way He protected us.

In some way, the same can be said about our גדולים and leaders. We can learn not only from their guidance in תורה and everyday matters, but also from the loving selfless manner in which they protect us.

R' Elazar Meir Preil, (1878-1933), a renowned תלמיד חכם and author of ספר המאור, was the רב of Elizabeth, New Jersey for 14 years. American Jewish communities in the 1920s and 1930s were not as observant as they are today, and the רב's role in guiding his community in תורה observance was crucial. Quite often, communal observance and understanding of תורה dictates and

principles was totally dependent on the רב's commitment to these ideals.

Few Jews during those years brought their own ארבע מינים. They took it for granted that their רב would purchase sets of the ארבע מינים and allow the members of the congregation to use them.

In 1933, a few weeks before סוכות, R' Preil became very ill. A few hours before יום טוב, he called his friend and colleague, R' Nossou Nota Zuber of nearby Roselle, New Jersey. "I need you to come in a hurry," R' Preil said anxiously, "and I need you in person. What I need you to do for me cannot be done by telephone."

Although he was busy before יום טוב, R' Zuber came rushing to R' Preil's home. Upon entering he found his friend in bed, weak and deathly ill.

"I have only one son, my Yehoshua Yosef, who is nine years old," R' Preil said to R' Zuber. "If Heaven forbid I die before or during סוכות, my sets of the ארבע מינים would automatically become his [by virtue of Jewish inheritance laws]. If the ארבע מינים are his, no one in shul will be permitted to use them."

In order to fulfill the מצוה of taking the ארבע מינים on the first day of סוכות they must be owned by the user (see סוכה כט). A minor cannot halachically transfer an item from his possession. Thus, the townspeople would not have ארבע מינים to use on סוכות because R' Preil's nine-year-old son could not transfer ownership.

"I need you to take ownership of my ארבע מינים on behalf of my community," said R' Preil. "Then regardless of what happens to me, the ארבע מינים would belong to the קהלה and everyone will be able to perform the מצוה on טוב יום."

The קנין (transaction) was performed.

R' Preil passed away six hours later. Even in the face of death, with remarkable foresight and responsibility to his community, he selflessly protected his community from a potential spiritual disaster.

Adapted from: Echoes of the Maggid (with kind permission from ArtScroll)

An Ahavas Chesed Moment

ספר אהבת חסד - חלק א' פרק ז' ח'

\*There is a possible misunderstanding in ר' ה"י's teaching of ממשכנן על א'דקה, that we can force and take a collateral for א'דקה. It does not mean that the הלכות of א'דקה, משכון, collateral, apply only when the loan is from a private lender, but not from public א'דקה funds. Even if the money borrowed is from a public גמ"י or א'דקה, if at the time that the loan was originally initiated there was no משכון, then it is forbidden for א'דקה to enter the home of the borrower to attempt to retrieve a משכון.

\*This is intended only as a guide. Please review any real-life situations with a competent Rov. The scenario of ממשכנן על א'דקה refers to a case where a person promised to give a certain amount of money for א'דקה. If the person refuses to make good on his pledge, then the גבאי א'דקה or שליח בית דין can collect the pledge even if it means taking a משכון. This is because a promise to א'דקה is not a loan.

Questions of the Week

- 1. Where do we find that א'דקה davened that the few שמונאים should win against the many myriads of the Greek army?
2. Who wrote the last eight פסוקים of the תורה which describe א'דקה's death?

1. When א'דקה blessed א'דקה before his death, he said to them, "I am blessed with tears...".
2. א'דקה wrote the last few פסוקים of the Torah that describe א'דקה's death...

- The second ברכה of א'דקה is שמונה עשרה and since rain is referred to as משיב הרוח, we add משיב הרוח in the second ברכה.
One who remembers neglecting to say משיב הרוח before ending the ברכה of מתיחה המתים, should say משיב הרוח at the place he is up to when he realizes the error.

Reviewed by R' Gedalyahu Eckstein

\*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.

Halacha Corner

הלכות עיני דיומא: משיב הרוח ומורי דהגשם

## Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

In 5551 (1791), the Vilna Gaon sent a message to R' Yaakov Kranz זצ"ל, the Dubno Maggid (5500-5564/1740-1804), to please come and revive his *נשמה עיפה*, *tired soul*. The two shared an unusually close relationship. It is said that the Maggid originally met the Gaon many years before, in 5518 (1758), when he was 18 years old. At that time, the Gaon gave him special instructions and set him on his path to become a successful Maggid.

The only letters that were ever found in which the Vilna Gaon wrote terms of endearment and longing were the ones written to the Dubno Maggid. The Maggid's warm, outgoing personality and *בין אדם* were matched by his *תורת*. He was a *תורה* in both *תורה* and *תורה*, and he refrained from any worldly pleasures or honors.

There is a well-known episode about an unusual debate that is said to have taken place between the Vilna Gaon and the Dubno Maggid. On one occasion,

the Gaon asked him, "You give *מוסר* everywhere you go; why don't you give me *מוסר* as well?" The Maggid grew ill at ease. How could he rebuke the Gaon? But the Gaon was insistent. Finally, the Maggid spoke: "רבי ומורי, you sit at home with your doors closed. Is it any real *קונץ*, *wonder* (literally, trick) that you are a *צדיק*? Perhaps if you went out into world you would be a different person!"

The Vilna Gaon is said to have cried for a few moments. He then responded that the basic imperative for a Jew is to become a *תלמיד חכם*. It is not written anywhere that a person has any obligation to produce *קונצן*, *magic*, in order to become a *תלמיד חכם*.

My תלמיד, the Gaon and the Maggid both left their legacy in *תורה* and *תורה* that only a few people in the centuries after them ever left. Both of these men served *די* to the best of their ability and were successful accordingly. *די* is only asking you to be the best you!

הי זכרו ברוד?

בְּיָדֵינוּ, Your רבי

A letter from a Rebbi, based on interviews

## Sage Sayings

The Vilna Gaon's life was totally dedicated to *תורה* and *עבודה*. He inspired his תלמידים to do the same. His תלמיד, R' Chaim Volozhin זצ"ל opened the Volozhin *ישיבה* which became the model for *ישיבות* to the present day. It is said that he would offer words of encouragement when he heard the term "Vilna Gaon": "דער וואס וויל נאך, וועט זיין א גאון!" — If you only have the will, you too will become a *גאון*!

Source: 2,000 Years of Jewish History (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



## Understanding Davening

... הושע נא — Please save...

These two words are usually printed as a single word; however, they really are 2 separate words. The word *נא* = 51. The 51<sup>st</sup> day after the beginning of *אילול* is *הושענא רבה*. On that day we add many extra *תפילות* and have many *מנהגים* similar to *ראש השנה* and *יום כפור*. We are also judged for *מים*, water, which means our *פרנסה*, at this time. Therefore, we are asking *ה'* to save us on this 51<sup>st</sup> day. The word *הושענא* usually refers to the bundle of willow branches which we *קלאפ* with on *הושענא רבה*. The *גימטריה* of the word *הושענא* = 432, which is the same as *כי לא* = 432, for Your kindness will never forsake us *די* [when You show us Your mercy] *אֲלֵכֶינִי* [even if You appear as *די*].

The contest may be over, but the learning never ends...

### PAI NEWS

ישיבת חול המועד

Open Beis Hamedrash /

learning אבות ובנים

Thursday / Friday /  
שבת קודש (of course!) /  
Sunday /

Monday (הושענה רבה)

Come one, come all! Bring your friends (& your masks)!

For the times and location nearest you please contact your local Pirchei branch coordinator. Special prizes for those boys who attend all four days!





# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד  
PIRCHAI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

ONE YEAR, RAV YAKOV WAS PRIVILEGED TO HAVE A SON OF RAV MICHEL YEHUDAH LEFKOWITZ IN HIS CLASS.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF AN ESROG OVER A LEMON?

REBBI, ONCE I SAW MY FATHER CUT OPEN AN ESROG FROM THE ESROG TREE IN HIS YARD. HE SHOWED SOMEONE FIVE DIFFERENCES...

THAT YEAR, BEFORE SUCCOS, THERE WAS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

MOREINU HORAV MICHEL YEHUDAH! ...WHAT AN HONOR!... PLEASE COME INSIDE. IS EVERYTHING OK?

B"H EVERYTHING IS FINE. I JUST CAME TODAY TO SHOW MY GRATITUDE TO YOU FOR TEACHING TORAH TO MY SON THIS YEAR.

WOW! THIS IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ESROG!... WHAT DID I DO TO GET SUCH APPRECIATION SO EARLY IN THE YEAR, YOUR SON IS SUCH AN ASSET AND HE SHARES HIS KNOWLEDGE WITH SUCH HUMILITY!...

TAKE IT, THIS IS OUR HAKORAS HATOV FOR BEING SUCH A SPECIAL REBBE. CHAG SAMEACH...

THE NEXT YEAR, A FEW WEEKS BEFORE SUCCOS, THERE WAS ONCE AGAIN A KNOCK AT RAV YAKOV'S DOOR...

HI! WE WOULD LIKE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE ONCE MORE...PLEASE TAKE THIS. IT'S ONE OF MY BEST ESROGIM!

BUT MOREINU HORAV, I'M NOT EVEN YOUR SON'S REBBI THIS YEAR!

LAST YEAR, MY SON BECAME A BETTER PERSON IN YOUR CLASS. THAT DIDN'T CHANGE JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T TEACH HIM ANYMORE. YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF TO BE A WONDERFUL MELAMED! CHAG SAMEACH!

THE SAME SCENE REPEATED THE FOLLOWING YEAR AND RAV MICHEL YEHUDAH LEFKOWITZ CONTINUED TO DELIVER FINE ESROGIM TO RAV YAKOV FOR MANY YEARS AFTER.

I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR BEING SUCH A WONDERFUL MELAMED TO MY SON. PLEASE TAKE THIS. I CHOSE IT MYSELF..JUST FOR YOU!

MOREINU HORAV MICHEL YEHUDAH, YOUR KIND ACT OF HAKORAS HATOV CARRIES ME ALL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR... THANK YOU!

רבי לֵפְקוֹוִיץ לְעִיל לֵפְקוֹוִיץ WAS BORN IN VOLOZHYN, BELARUS TO מִשֶּׁה ר' (NEARLY 80) AND חַיָּה (IT WAS A SECOND MARRIAGE FOR BOTH). HIS FATHER WAS נִפְטָר BEFORE HIS מִצְוָה. AS A בֶּן בְּחֹרָר, HE LEARNED IN אִשְׁכּוּזָה IN רַמֵּילֵס UNDER חַיָּה ר' שְׁלֵמָה ר' הַיִּמָּן. IN 1932, ר' לֵפְקוֹוִיץ EMIGRATED TO אֵילִיטָה WITH HIS MOTHER. HE LEARNED IN אִשְׁכּוּזָה AND WAS CLOSE TO חַיָּה ר' לֵיב חַסְמֻנְדָּה, ר' אִיסָר זְלַמֵּן מְלִצְרֵה, ר' חַוּוֹן אִישׁ. IN 1940, HE MARRIED אֶסְתֵּר, DAUGHTER OF ר' גְּרִישׁוֹנְאוֹוִיץ. HE THEN BEGAN GIVING IN שְׁעָרֵי תַּבְּרָת צִיּוֹן. ALONG WITH ר' שְׁלֵסְטִיָּה קַנְיֵבְסְקִי (PONEVEZH) IN 1954, ר' לֵפְקוֹוִיץ BECAME חַיָּה ר' חַיָּה ר' אֶהֱרָן לֵיב שְׁטֵינְמָן. VISITED HIS EVERY רֶגֶל רַבֵּי מִיכָל. יוֹם טוֹב AND VARIOUS OTHER חַיִּים. HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN SAVING THE LINEAGE OF חַוּוֹן אִישׁ אֶתְרוֹג, WHICH WAS CERTIFIED AS כֶּשֶׁר FOR THE מִצְוָה OF אֶתְרוֹג BY THE אִישׁ חַוּוֹן HIMSELF. A MEMBER OF THE מוֹעֲצַת גְּדוּלֵי הַתּוֹרָה, מְפַעֵל הַשֵּׁס, AND OF THE אֶחֱשֵׁי הַקִּרְיָה אֶתְרוֹג אֶתְרוֹג, HE PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN THE FIGHT FOR תּוֹרָה-TRUE EDUCATION IN תּוֹרָה, תּוֹרָה, תּוֹרָה AND TALMUD TORAH'S IN אֵילִיטָה. HE WAS A חַיָּה מוֹרֵה דָרָךְ FOR THOUSANDS IN תּוֹרָה, תּוֹרָה, תּוֹרָה AND עֲבוּדָה.



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