



PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

October 10, 2021 - מרחשוון, תשפ"ב - Vol: 9 Issue: 2



פרשה: לך לך הכפרה: למה תאמר יעקב... (ישעיהו מ:כז-מא:טז)

דף יומי: ראש השנה ז' משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם ברכי נפשי (שבת מנחה)

מצות עשה: 1



Torah Thoughts



Some of the questions the חנוך answers:

Why does it happen that some מצות are repeated in the ברית של? Why does the father's ברכה at the מילה mention the ברית של? What special lifelong message should a person internalize about having a מילה? Why did ד' create a person incomplete and requiring a מילה?

מצוה ב - מצות מילה

מצוה ב - מצות מילה, the מצוה of מילה, circumcision. This is learned from בייני וביניכם ובין זרעך אחריד, המול לכם — This is My covenant ... between Me and you and your future generations; you shall circumcise every male (י:). מצוה ב is repeated in a few places in the תורה, as are many other מצוות. מצוה ב explain the unique purpose for the repetition of any מצוה. [For example, the חנוך (סנהדרין נט.) גמרא explains that the repetition of the מצוה of מילה on the eighth day following the birth of a male child overrides the prohibition of making a wound on שבת.]

Each Jewish boy becomes complete and is included in the ברית of אברהם through the מילה. מצוה ב explains that the ברית that a father makes at the ברית is: Blessed ... Who made us holy through His מצוה and commanded us to bring him [this boy] into the Covenant of אברהם אבינו.

The חנוך continues: The assembled guests at the ברית כשם שזכה לברית, כן זוכה הקל לתורה: ברכה [joyfully] answer with a ברכה: וזכה ולמעשים טובים — just as the child merited to [enter into] the Covenant [of אברהם אבינו], so too may ד' give him the merit to reach [the milestones of] תורה [בר מצוה, marriage and good deeds (i.e. fulfilling מצוות)].

משך שי המצוה

The חנוך explains that one of the many reasons for the מצוה of מילה is so that the people whom ד' calls "His nation" should be outwardly different from the other nations. The physical appearance of a Jewish person should be different so that he will realize that just as his body is different, so is his נשמה different too. Our different נשמה means that our makeup is unique and we have different spiritual feelings. We must therefore realize that our inner drive to be close to ד' is also not the same.

You may wonder, why did ד' make the מצוה of מילה? Why couldn't ד' simply create every baby boy to be born complete without requiring any changes? The חנוך concludes that one of the reasons that a baby is born with an imperfect body is to teach us that a child's נשמה requires work to be complete. Just as we are born needing 'manual' completion to our body, so too, we are charged with a lifelong task: to perfect our נשמה and constantly work on refining our deeds.

Excerpts from the ספר החנוך על פרשת השבוע - לך לך



Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

ט"ז חשוון 5654? - 5762 ר' אלעזר מנחם מן שדך זצ"ל, was born in Lithuania and learned in Ponevezh at age 7. At 13, he moved to Slabodka and became a תלמיד מובהק, and gave him סמיכה and also proposed שדך's marriage to his niece, Gittel Golomovsky in 1923. שדך would often remark, "All my תורה is in her זכות." From 1927-1939 he served as רב in Kletsk and Karlin. During WWII, שדך moved to Vilna. In 1940, he escaped to ישראל and was רב until 1952. Then he became רב of Ponevezh. The האמת אהוב אצלו" — The truth is beloved to him!" and he stood up for שדך. The Steipler insisted that שדך must approve every public letter and sign on top. He authored עזרי.

Gedolim Glimpses

...I request of all the תלמידים who know that they benefited from me, be it from תורה, or in יראת ד', or in מדות, that they be kind towards me and learn for the elevation of my נשמה — even just one מוסר, or משנה thought. This will have made it all worthwhile, for I, too, dedicated myself completely for the sake of your success in learning, and if I will be able to act and to advocate on your behalf, I will do so, בלי גנדר.



Source: the נאמרה of R' Shach

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

In honor of the wedding of Yakov Yehoshua Levine and Sheindel Gerber & In honor of the wedding of Ahron Barkin and Toby Waldman



Resilience and Resolve

... on that very day...
On the very day that he was commanded [to perform the *מילת*]
... he was not afraid of the heathens nor of the scoffers ... (רש"י)

הקב"ה hurried to do as he was commanded by הקב"ה that very day, without any fear of what others might say, so that his enemies and/or advisors should not say, "Had we seen him, we would have stopped him."

The following incident was told by R' Shlomo Brevda, who heard it from Rebbetzin Greineman, the Steipler's sister-in-law. It is a tribute to the Steipler Gaon's determination regarding the sanctity of *שבת*.

R' Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky, נצי"ל, also known as the Steipler Gaon, was about to become engaged to the *איש*'s sister. But before she became his *כלה*, he felt that it was important to share with her an episode that took place while he was in Siberia.

Aside from the bitter cold and the frosty, blinding snow, the backbreaking forced labor in the Russian army in Siberia required pure brute force. The Steipler had been inducted into the army against his will; yet, regardless of the terrible conditions in Siberia and the impossible work, he knew in his heart that only one task mattered — serving the Master of the world. He would do whatever was necessary to accomplish that task.

One of the first obstacles the Steipler Gaon had to overcome was the army system itself — the ordinances dictated that everyone must work seven days a week. To the Steipler, that rule was absolutely unacceptable. He approached the officer in charge, a brutal, anti-Semitic ogre, and asked to be granted a furlough every Saturday.

The official paused for a moment and then he emitted a wicked laugh. Immediately, he answered that he would grant the request on one condition: the Steipler first had to prove himself to be

a valiant warrior. He quickly ordered his men to form two rows and arm themselves with truncheons. The young Steipler watched the soldiers move into formation and heard the words of the evil officer: "Kanievsky, here is the deal. If you are able to make it through these lines and survive the blows from my officers, then you may rest on your Holy Sabbath. However, if you don't ..." His voice trailed off, and he belted out a hearty laugh. Clearly he was enjoying his little game.

The Steipler did not flinch. Instead he quietly whispered a heartfelt prayer to help him survive this difficult test. He knew that he could give up and the game would be over. But if he admitted defeat, then there was no way he would be released from working on *שבת*. The guards motioned to their commanding officer that they were ready. The officer and his comrades then stood back to watch the fun.

The Steipler approached the path and again murmured one last plea. He held his hand over his head and ran between the rows of guards. With all their might they began to pummel him and beat him incessantly. The pain was unbearable, but the Steipler persisted and trudged forward. Blood trickled into his eyes but he continued on. Step by step he inched ahead until finally he reached the end of the treacherous path and collapsed at the finish line. Nobody offered to help him get up from the ground, but it did not matter because he had survived. As he lay there, a smile formed on his lips. He had won. He was in incredible pain — but he had won! The *שבת* was still holy and he would be able to observe it. The commanding officer grudgingly informed him that he would not have to work on Saturday.

The Steipler finished relating his tale to his *כלה*. He explained to her that this was his level of *מסירת נפש*. "The blows hurt, but I was happy to have had the privilege to suffer for the sake of the *שבת*." He then asked her if she was prepared to join him in his continuous sacrifice for *תורה*. She gave her consent, and they became *התרו וכלה*.

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

An Ahavas Chesed Moment

ספר אהבת חסד - פתיחה לתשלומי שכר שכיר

*As an addendum to the חסד חלק א' the חסד חיים writes about the severity of withholding the payment of a hired worker. He explains that he felt the burning importance to write about this *אסור* since this is found in daily practice and is tied to many *לאוין* in the *תורה*. He gives an example of a hired worker [e.g. a babysitter] that is not paid because it involves changing a note [bill] of large denomination or going to [the bank to] withdraw the money. This *אסור* becomes even more severe and is compounded if the worker is an *עני*.

*This is intended only as a guide. Please review any real-life situations with a competent Rov.

The חסד חיים quotes a *תורה* that writes harshly about those that pay a hired worker late. He also points out that the *אסור* applies even if the person eventually gets paid in full. One who withholds payment for work that was done or does not pay the agreed upon price is guilty of the an additional *אסור* of stealing.

"רש" Questions of the week

1. Some nations were skeptical that *אברהם* was saved from the fiery furnace at *אור כשדים*. What made believers out of them?
2. Who informed *אברהם* of *לוט*'s capture, and what motivated this person to do so?



1. The miraculous emergence of *אברהם* from the lime pit in *הרומים* convinced the skeptics of that time of the existence of a universal power that was capable of effecting *אברהם* (14:10) — *אברהם* (14:10).
 2. *לוט*, who escaped from the war, informed *אברהם*, hoping that *אברהם* would be killed in battle, so that he, *אברהם*, could marry *לוט*'s daughter (14:13) — *לוט* (14:13).

- Some are *נוהג* to say *הגשם* with a *קמץ*; others say *הגשם* with a *גול*.
- *הגשם* refers to rain as in *גבורת ד'* to provide *פרנסה* and should read as part of *מכלכל חיים* (without a pause).
- *הגשם*, referring to rain as *ד'*'s seasonal weather change, ends a thought and one should pause before *מכלכל חיים*.

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.

Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

R' Yitzchak Zev (Reb Velvel) Soloveitchik זצ"ל, the Brisker Rav, was very close with R' Schach זצ"ל and the Rav enjoyed learning together with him. The Brisker Rav would show R' Shach his writings and would probe R' Shach's every subtle reaction as he read them.

The Rav chided his other תלמידים, comparing their reactions to his חדושים with that of R' Shach. He once related a חדות on מגילת רות, but the תלמידים did not respond the way he expected. The Brisker Rav said to his תלמידים, "Wait till I tell this to Reb Leizer. He will understand its depth and react with enthusiasm!"

In the Brisker Rav's חסדמה on עזרי, אבי עזרי, R' Shach's magnum opus, he writes, "Who am I to give an approbation on R' Shach? He is one of the גדולים of our time and certainly does not need my חסדמה!"

Once the Brisker Rav was saying a שיעור. He posed a difficult קושנה and attempted to find a solution. R' Shach walked into the room. The Rav's eyes immediately lit up, and then he

delivered a brilliant answer with excitement.

When R' Shach left, the בחורים asked their Rebbe why he didn't tell them the answer before R' Shach came in. The Brisker Rav responded that the תרוץ was Reb Leizer's. They looked on in astonishment, as he said, "I want you to know that the קושנה is Reb Leizer's, the תרוץ is Reb Leizer's; it is all Reb Leizer's! When I learn through a סוגנה, there are times that I think that I have no solution to a difficult question. But then I think how much enjoyment Reb Leizer will have when I am able to offer פשט. So I work harder and harder, until I solve the problem. It's all Reb Leizer's."

My תלמיד, your enthusiasm with the Rebbe's שיעור will help make it even more geshmake. If you are excited and ask questions, then when your רבי prepares his שיעור, he will try to imagine your possible probing questions, and will develop his שיעור accordingly. Together, a רבי builds his תלמיד and a תלמיד builds his רבי!

בגידות, Your רבי

Story adapted from: *The Jewish Observer*

Sage Sayings

During the Gulf War, some תלמידים approached R' Shach and asked if they needed to wear gas masks. R' Shach said that it would be the right thing to do. A little later, they met R' Chaim Kaniewski who said that it was not needed. When they told R' Chaim that his opinion contradicts R' Shach's, R' Chaim smiled. "איך ווייס עפעס וואס ר' שך ווייס נישט" — I know something that R' Shach does not know. "איך ווייס מיר האבן די זכות פון ר' לייזער שך" — I know that we have the זכות of R' Leizer Shach!"

Source: *The Jewish Observer*



Understanding Davening

משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם

Who makes the wind blow and makes the rain descend

ר' יוסף explains (ברכות לג.) that we mention גבורת גשמים, the Strength of Rainfall, in the תהיית המתים because rainfall can be compared to the revival of the dead. When a seed is placed into the ground, it first disintegrates. When it becomes saturated with rain, it begins to develop and then sprouts forth from the earth. A tree that is capable of producing thousands of tasty, nutritious apples can develop from the decaying seed of a rotten apple. Similarly, when a human body is placed into the ground, it first disintegrates. At תחיית המתים it will come to life again: ומצמיח השועה, He causes the ultimate salvation, תהיית המתים, to sprout forth from the ground.

This Week in History

16 מרחשוון 5759 / 1998 — Yahrzeit of R' Simcha Avrohom Sheps זצ"ל. He was born in a small village near Lomza, Poland, to ישעיהו ר' דבורה and ר' ישעיהו. He learned in the local חדר until the age of 11, when he went to learn in the ישיבה קטנה of Bransk. He then went to the ישיבה in Lomza until his מנחה, בר, after which he traveled to Baranovitch to learn under R' Elchonon Wasserman הי"ד and R' Dovid Rappaport הי"ד. At the age of 16 he went to learn in the Mir until WWII.

While in the Mir, he was close with R' Chaim Shmuelevitz זצ"ל, R' Aryeh Leib Malin זצ"ל, and R' Yonah Minsker זצ"ל, among others. In 1936, he had the opportunity to join a group of elite תלמידים to go to learn under the Brisker רב. He spent 2 years in Brisk with R' Henoch Fishman זצ"ל and R' Naftoli Wasserman הי"ד (son of R' Elchonon), and he considered the Brisker רב to be his מבנה רבי.

In 1939, while in Japan with the rest of the Mir, he received a visa and emigrated to the US. Upon his arrival in New York he became a רבי in ישיבת תורה ודעת. During this time, he developed a lifelong relationship with R' Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל, R' Eliezer Silver זצ"ל and many others. In 1942 he married his rebetzin, Sora Weitzman. Since R' Simcha was a נתום, R' Shlomo Heiman זצ"ל escorted him to the תפא.

When R' Shlomo Heiman became ill in 1943, R' Simcha took over his רועה. For almost 50 years he was מרביץ תורה at Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. His legendary שיעורים brought to life the Brisker דרך תלמידים to thousands of תלמידים. When recalling their רבי, his תלמידים spoke not only of the אהבת התורה that he taught them, but also his love for them and how he supported many תלמידים with his own funds. His דרשות and שמועסן were published posthumously under the title מורשת משכת ברא קמא on שיעורים. In 5759, his שיעורים were collected in the ספר דברי שמחה.

RAV SHNEUR KOTLER TRAVELED TO A WEDDING IN NEW YORK CITY AND HAD AN IMPORTANT MEETING TO ATTEND IN LAKEWOOD THAT SAME EVENING.

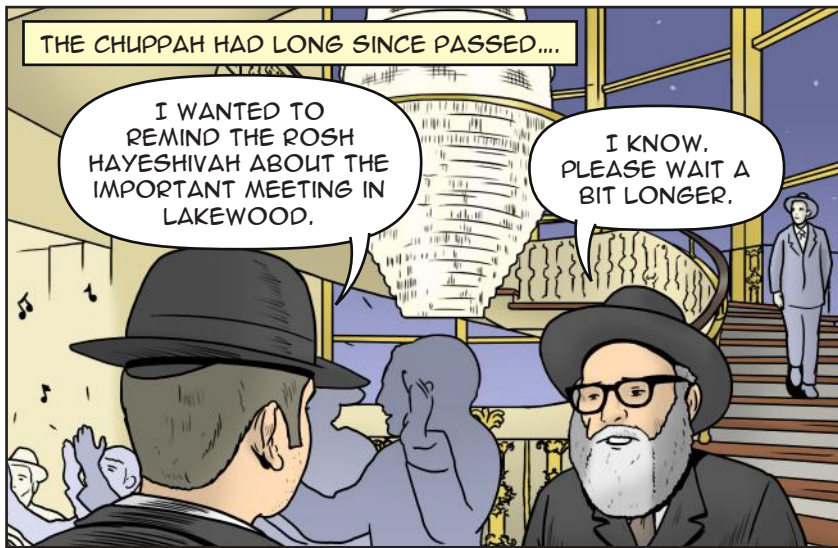
THANK YOU SO MUCH. PLEASE WAIT AT THE DOOR OF THE WEDDING HALL. I INTEND TO LEAVE RIGHT AFTER THE CHUPPAH.



THE CHUPPAH HAD LONG SINCE PASSED....

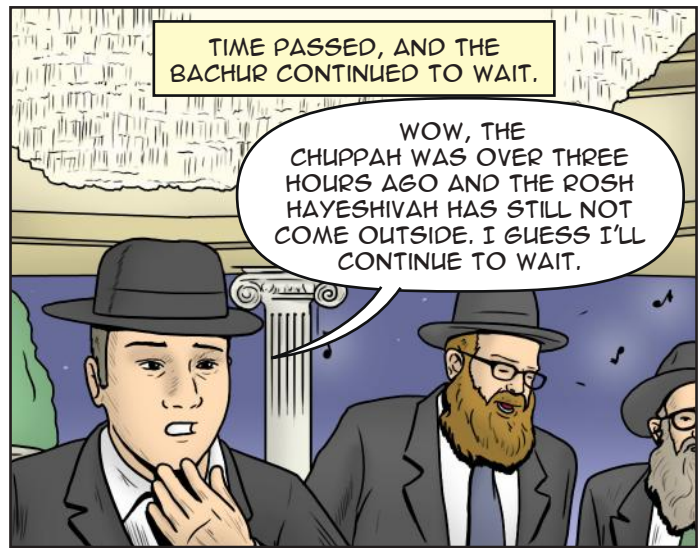
I WANTED TO REMIND THE ROSH HAYESHIVAH ABOUT THE IMPORTANT MEETING IN LAKEWOOD.

I KNOW. PLEASE WAIT A BIT LONGER.



TIME PASSED, AND THE BACHUR CONTINUED TO WAIT.

WOW, THE CHUPPAH WAS OVER THREE HOURS AGO AND THE ROSH HAYESHIVAH HAS STILL NOT COME OUTSIDE. I GUESS I'LL CONTINUE TO WAIT.

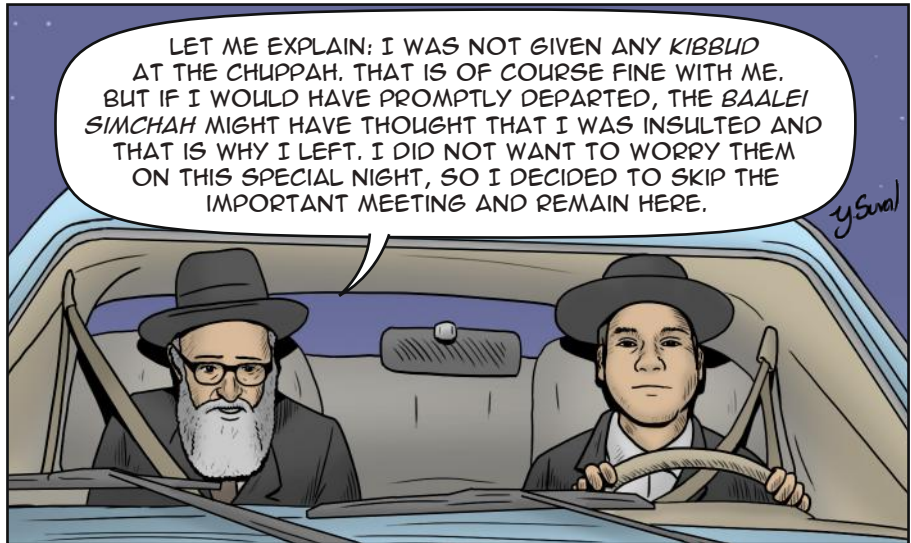


FINALLY, AT THE VERY END OF THE WEDDING, RAV SHNEUR WAS READY TO DEPART.

ROSH HAYESHIVAH, IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING, WHAT ABOUT THE IMPORTANT MEETING IN LAKEWOOD THAT BEGAN HOURS AGO?



LET ME EXPLAIN: I WAS NOT GIVEN ANY KIBBUD AT THE CHUPPAH. THAT IS OF COURSE FINE WITH ME. BUT IF I WOULD HAVE PROMPTLY DEPARTED, THE BAALEI SIMCHAH MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT THAT I WAS INSULTED AND THAT IS WHY I LEFT. I DID NOT WANT TO WORRY THEM ON THIS SPECIAL NIGHT, SO I DECIDED TO SKIP THE IMPORTANT MEETING AND REMAIN HERE.



R' YOSEF CHAIM SHNEUR KOTLER WAS BORN IN SLUTSK, RUSSIA. AS A YOUTH, HE LEARNED WITH HIS FATHER AND LATER UNDER R' BARUCH BER LEIBOWITZ זצ"ל. IN 1940, HE ESCAPED TO ARץ ISRAEL. THERE HE LEARNED IN Eץ CHAIM LED BY HIS GRANDFATHER, R' ISSER ZALMAN MELTZER זצ"ל, AND ATTENDED SEFORIM GIVEN BY R' YEchezkel SARNA זצ"ל AND THE BRISKER ROV זצ"ל. IN 1947, HE JOINED HIS FATHER IN LAKEWOOD. HE BECAME ישיבה IN 1962. HE TRANSFORMED LAKEWOOD FROM A ישיבה OF 200 TO ALMOST 1,000 תלמידים AT THE TIME OF HIS פטירה. HE ALSO PIONEERED ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY כוללים IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD. HE SERVED ON THE מועצת גדולי התורה OF אגודת ישראל, חנוך עצמאי AND תורה ומסורה, AND LED THE EFFORT TO HELP REFUGEES FROM RUSSIA AND IRAN.



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