



# PIRCHEI Weekly

## Agudas Yisroel of America

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**פרשה: וילך** **הפטרה: שובה ישראל**.. (הושע יב-ב; יואל ב-יא-כז; מיכה ז-יח-כ)

**יזה"כ: שחרית:**... אחרי מות... (ויקרא טז, במדבר כט-ז-יא) **הפטרה:**... סלו סלו פנו דרך... (ישעיה מ"ד-נח"ד)

**זיכור:** מנחה ויקרא יח **הפטרה:**... ויהי דבר ה' אל יונה... (ישעיה מ"ד-נח"ד)

**דף יומי:** כתובות: שבת פ"ז יזה"כ צ"א

**מצות עשה: 2** **לדוד ה' אורי** **גמור חתימה טובה!**



## Torah Thoughts



R' Aharon Kotler זצ"ל writes that even one who is categorized as a **רשע** by the Heavenly Court on **ראש השנה** can still affect a change in his verdict through **תשובה** during the **ימים נוראים** ( **משנת ר' י** **קמים נוראים** ( **אגרון**, Volume II, p. 179). Sincere **תשובה** always accomplishes; no one should ever consider himself beyond the point of return. Even one who has sunk to the lowest levels of spiritual decadence can be born anew through **תשובה**. This truth is illustrated in two incidents recorded in the **מדרש** (**בראשית רבה**, 65:22).

At the time of the **חרבן**, when the Romans were preparing to enter the **בית המקדש**, they declared, "Let a Jew enter first."

They turned to a Jew named Yosef of Shisa and told him, "Enter! Whatever you take is yours to keep."

When Yosef entered and came out carrying a **קנטורה** of gold, the Romans said to him, "It is not fitting for a commoner to use this. Enter again and take something for yourself."

This time, however, Yosef refused, saying, "Is it not enough that I have angered my Creator once? Must I anger Him again?"

The Romans, however, were insistent that he obey their order. When he persisted in his refusal, they tortured him to death. As they tortured him mercilessly, he cried out again and again, "Woe unto me that I have angered my Creator ..."

The second incident involved Yakum of Tzroros, the nephew of the **תנא** of the **תורה**. Once, he was riding on a horse on **שבת** when he came upon Roman soldiers escorting his revered uncle, who was being carried on

a horse, to the gallows.

Yakum exclaimed, "Look at the horse that my master let me ride and look at the horse that your Master has made you ride."

Yakum replied, "If this [i.e. the earthly pleasures which Yakum was enjoying] is the lot of those who anger **ד'**, how much more will be the reward of those who do his will!"

Yakum responded, "Has anyone done His will more than you?"

Yakum replied, "If this is how **ד'** acts toward those who do His will, how much more with those who anger Him."

These words cut through Yosef like a knife. He subjected himself to all **ד'ן** **בית דין** (stoning, burning, beheading and strangling).

Yakum fell asleep and saw a vision of Yakum's bed being born aloft.

He exclaimed, "In a brief moment, he has preceded me to **גן עדן**."

Yosef of Shisa and Yakum of Tzroros had each sunk to unimaginable levels of depravity. Yet, even when they had sunk so low, a spark of holiness still burned within them. Suddenly, each was overcome by the enormity of his sins and the spark within him burst into a huge flame. In a moment, each had become a **בעל תשובה**.

**May we and all of ישראל merit to be inscribed and sealed in the Book of צדיקים, as we return to ד' with all out hearts and souls.**

*Adapted from: Inspiration and Insight (with kind permission from ArtScroll)*



## Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

**ז' תשרי**  
5682 – 5766  
1922 – 2005

**Zeilberger ר' בנימין** was born to **יהודה** and **תנה** in **Koenigshaufen, Germany**. At age 14, just two months before the **פטירה** of the ailing **צ"ל**, he went to learn in **Mir** and managed to hear several **shmuessen** from the **משגיח**, which had a profound impact on him. He escaped the **חרבן אירופא** along with the **תורה** to **Shanghai**, where he remained for the duration of the war. In 1947, he arrived in the USA where he learned in **בית מדרש** in **Brooklyn, NY**. He married **רחל**, a granddaughter of **ר' יהודה**. He then joined **בית התלמוד**, transmitting **תורה** and **נאמנות** to generations of **תלמידים** for the rest of his life, vigilantly ensuring that the **רוח**'s unique **תורה** would remain unchanged from that forged by its founders.

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## Gedolim Glimpses

**Zeilberger ר' בנימין** taught by his own example a fundamental quality for a growing **עלמה**. "The bigger a person becomes, the more he understands that there is no such thing as a something small." He recalled one of the **לוגים** at **יהודה** saying, "The bigger a person becomes, the more he understands that there is no such thing as a something small." He recalled one of the **לוגים** at **יהודה** saying, "... **יהודה**'s 'Good morning!' was equivalent to a **שמונה עשרה**!" **יהודה**'s total concentration involved giving a blessing from every fiber in his body!"



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

**לרפואה שלמה לר' מאיר שליט"א בן פעסי ע"ה, ולר' יצחק יעקב שליט"א בן דינה ע"ה בתוך שאר חולי עמנו ישראל**  
**לעיני ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל**  
**לעיני ה' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחטי"א ר' פנחס דוב שליט"א, יארצייט ט' תשרי**



## Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

There was a group of תלמידים in the Mir from Germany, and for these בחורים to learn in the Mir represented a form of מסירת נפש. One of the lions of that group was בנמין Zeilberger זצ"ל, who learned with tremendous התמדה and was well-respected in the ישיבה.

One יום כפור he took ill. As the day progressed, his condition worsened. Shortly before נעילה, someone returned to the בית מדרש from a visit to בנמין with the news that his life was in danger.

As בנמין hovered near death, the thoughts of the בחורים were with him. They prepared to daven נעילה with renewed concentration, ready to storm heavens for this budding תלמיד חכם. At that holy hour, the angelic figure of the משגיח suddenly headed towards the ארון קודש. He ascended the steps, opened the פרכת, and burst into weeping — the simple, trusting cries of a child entreating his father. "Tatte zisse! The גמרא says that one defending angel, one זכות, is sufficient to have You tear up a judgment. בנמין came here from Germany to learn and persevered despite many obstacles to toil in learning. רבוננו! Does בנמין not have

one מלאך to judge him favorably? He who invested such energy and heart to becoming what he is, does he not have one זכות to counter the evil decree?"

The משגיח descended from the ארון קודש, and in the waning minutes of the day, the בחורים lost themselves in התפלה, charged and invigorated by the conversation they had just overheard.

On מוצאי יום כפור they were greeted by the joyous sight of their friend's face slowly regaining its normal color. Within days he had returned to full strength and took his place at the top of the ישיבה...

My תלמיד, the חפץ חיים explains that davening for a חולה is a מצוה of מוץ. The easiest חסד you can do for a friend, even if you cannot physically help, is to daven for him. Imagine the זכותים of an entire ישיבה in exile, torn away from their families, spending their last moments of יום כפור solely davening for someone else!...! (Often when one does a חסד for others, ד' pays them back directly from that חסד — בנמין ר' Zeilberger married the granddaughter of ר' אהרן!) (ירוהם!)

הי זכרו ברוד!  
רבי Your  
בדידות,  
A letter from a Rebbi, based on interviews



## Understanding Davening

... השיבנו ד' אליך ונשובה — Bring us back to You, ד', and we shall return...

The גמרא (יומא פו:) teaches us the amazing power of an individual's sincere תשובה. The גמרא says in the name of R' Meir: תשובה is so powerful that if one does תשובה, the sins of the whole world are also forgiven. R' Akiva Eiger explains this גמרא in the גליון השי"ס, quoting הר"ם מפאנו, basing his understanding of the ערבות of בריית, being responsible for other people's מצות, if someone else does תשובה, then we are forgiven in his merit! Such is the power of ערבות. This is one of the reasons why all of our תפילות are written in the plural form. We are all bound together as one!



על דעת המקו' ...  
אנו מתירין להתפלל עם העברניים.

With ד's approval ...

we grant permission to daven together with habitual transgressors. Many have sought to explain the origin of this beautiful תפלה — uniting all Jews together in our prayers. Others have asked why do we say כל נדרי, All vows, prohibitions, oaths...? One theory is that this was added at the time of the Spanish Inquisition when Jews, known as Maranos, were forced to renounce Judaism and join another religion. Their conversion was made under oath. On יום כפור, these Maranos would risk their lives to secretly daven and express their remorse for the vows which they made. The Jews of the other lands knew of their plight and added this introduction and the annulling of all vows — כל נדרי.

## Sage Sayings

Zeilberger ר' בנמין were amazed by the instant recall of names and so many personal details so characteristic of their extremely personable רבי. The same phenomenal memory was manifested in his learning. תלמידים explained, — דאס איז נישט געווען צוליב זיין אומגעוויינטלעכע זכרון — this was not because of his unusual memory; נאר צוליב זיין גוואלדיגע ליבשאפט צו תורה און יעדער תלמיד! — this was simply a reflection of the depth of his immense love of learning and of each תלמיד!

Source: Heard Around the Shabbos Table



# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

A FEW DAYS BEFORE YOM KIPPUR THE BELZER REBBE, R' AHARON ROKEACH, CAME TO VISIT R' AKIVA SOFER. AFTER THEIR DISCUSSION...

BEFORE I LEAVE, PLEASE BENTCH ME!

WHO AM I TO BENTCH THE BELZER REBBE?

YOU ARE A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE CHASAM SOFER.



THE BELZER REBBE WOULD NOT GIVE UP, AND WAS NOT SATISFIED WHEN R' AKIVA SOFER TOLD HIM, 'ZOL DER REBBE ZEIN GEBENTCHED! MAY THE REBBE BE BLESSED.'

NO, PLEASE PLACE PUT YOUR RIGHT HAND ON MY HEAD. I NEED YOUR FULL BRACHA!

CHAS V'SHOLOM THAT I SHOULD BENTCH THE BELZER REBBE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE...

PLEASE, PLEASE DO A YID A TOIVA...



THE BELZER REBBE KEPT INSISTING AND WOULD NOT RELENT.

YESIMCHA ELOKIM K' EFRAIM... YEVORECHECHA...

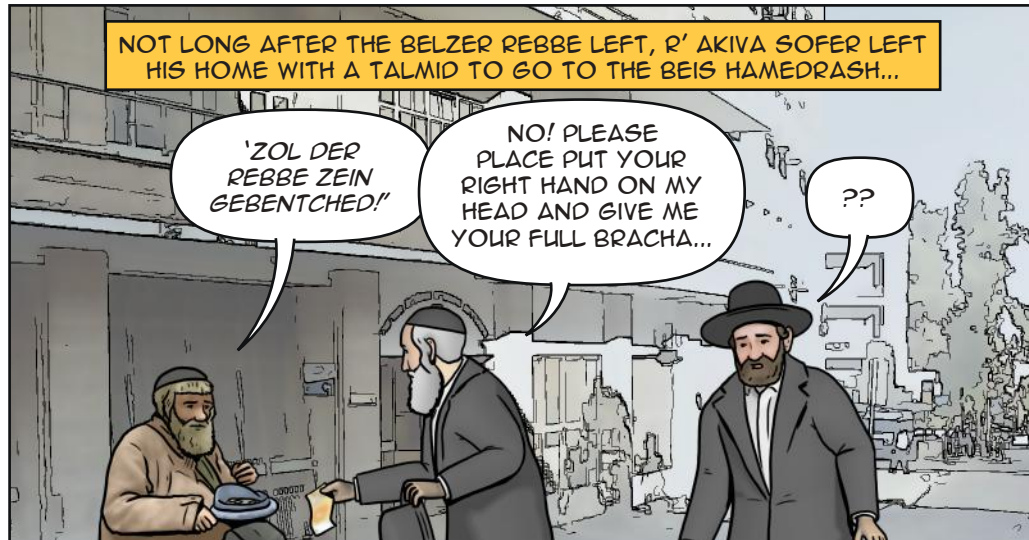


NOT LONG AFTER THE BELZER REBBE LEFT, R' AKIVA SOFER LEFT HIS HOME WITH A TALMID TO GO TO THE BEIS HAMEDRASH...

'ZOL DER REBBE ZEIN GEBENTCHED!'

NO! PLEASE PLACE PUT YOUR RIGHT HAND ON MY HEAD AND GIVE ME YOUR FULL BRACHA...

??



THE PAUPER STOOD UP AND CLEARLY FELT VERY HONORED TO GIVE THE BRACHA AS INSTRUCTED.

REBBI, CAN YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT THAT WAS ALL ABOUT?

I LEARNED THIS FROM THE BELZER REBBE...



IF THE BELZER REBBE ASKED ME FOR SUCH A BRACHA, THEN I CAN SURELY ASK A JEWISH PAUPER FOR THIS KIND OF BRACHA...



R' AKIVA SOFER WAS BORN IN PRESSBURG (BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA), TO A FATHER OF PRESSBURG, KNOWN AS THE SON OF ROCHEL ROSA SOFER. AT THE AGE OF 20 HE WAS APPOINTED TO SERVE AS A SON TOGETHER WITH HIS FATHER. HE RECEIVED FROM HIS FATHER FROM PRESSBURG (HUNGARY). AFTER HIS FATHER'S PASSING, HE BECAME A RABBI AND AT THE AGE OF 29. HE WAS A CHARISMATIC PIONEER (HE INITIATED THAT THE RABBIS SHOULD SERVE MEALS) AND HIS FLOURISHED, AS DID HIS STATURE. HE WAS APPOINTED TO THE COUNCIL OF ORTHODOX RABBIS IN HUNGARY, WHICH REPRESENTED 300 COMMUNITIES. IN 1939, UPON THE ADVICE OF HIS UNCLE, HE ESCAPED TO SWITZERLAND, AND FROM THERE, HE IMMIGRATED TO AMERICA AND SETTLED IN NEW YORK. THERE, HE FOUNDED THE COMMUNITY OF PRESSBURG IN NEW YORK, WHERE HE TAUGHT FOR TWENTY YEARS. HE WAS THE AUTHOR OF 'SEFER AKIVA'. HE ALSO SERVED AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF ORTHODOX RABBIS IN AMERICA AND WAS A MEMBER OF THE HONORARY COUNCIL OF THE HONORABLE. HIS ESTEEMED AMONG OTHERS INCLUDED THE GREAT RABBIS OF AMERICA AND THE GREAT RABBIS OF EUROPE.

