



PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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פרשה: וירא הכטרה: ואשה אחת מנשי בני הנביאים... (מלכים ב' ד:א-לז)

דף יומי: נדרים י"ח משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם ברכי נפשי (שבת מנחה)



Torah Thoughts



וְדַ' אָמַר הַמַּכְסֶּה אֲנִי מֵאֲבָרְהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה (בראשית יח:יז) ... וַיִּגַּשׁ אֲבָרְהָם ... (יח:כג) אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ הַמְּשִׁים צְדִיקִים ... (יח:כד) אוֹלֵי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים ... (יח:כט)

He said, "Will I hide from אַבְרָהָם that which I am about to do?"... אַבְרָהָם came forward ... What if there should be 50 righteous people ... What if 40 would be found there? ...

When ד' was about to destroy קָדִים, He told אַבְרָהָם about the imminent destruction of קָדִים. When he was told about the impending destruction, אַבְרָהָם prayed...50, 40, 30... Ultimately ד' decided to destroy קָדִים anyway.

This narration is hard to understand. ד' knew that he was going to destroy קָדִים. ד' knew up front that קָדִים did not possess 50 or 40 or even 10 righteous people. So what was He doing? Was He playing games with אַבְרָהָם? It seems as if He was dangling a little prize called קָדִים in front of אַבְרָהָם, challenging him to save the city. It seems as if He was teasing אַבְרָהָם, because there was no way that אַבְרָהָם could win the prize! אַבְרָהָם grasped for the prize, as it were, but could never catch it! It appears as if ד' was setting אַבְרָהָם up for disappointment.

The fact is that it is possible that ד' was actually doing a tremendous service to אַבְרָהָם. אַבְרָהָם. This exercise helped אַבְרָהָם to become the pillar of הַסֵּד [altruistic kindness] that he would ultimately represent. We fail to realize that when we pray for something or for someone, those prayers have an effect on us regardless of whether those prayers are answered or not. How many times have we come

together as individuals or as a community and poured out our prayers for somebody? There are unfortunately times when "it did not work" and the effort was seemingly to no avail. We ask ourselves "What did we do?" We did what we could. We fasted. We cried. We gave charity. But it did not help!

This is a tremendous mistake. It did help. Even if it did not help anyone else, at least it helped us! We became better people because we were concerned about somebody else — a neighbor, a friend, a member of the community. We prayed and we gave our hearts. We did something. We became better.

This is what ד' was telling אַבְרָהָם. "Pray! I will not destroy קָדִים until you pray. Why? I know your prayers will not be effective. I know קָדִים is doomed. But that is irrelevant. You, אַבְרָהָם, will become a different person as a result of those prayers. You will perfect your attribute of הַסֵּד, your attribute of caring and compassion. That is what it is all about."

This is so important when we pray for something or someone. We should never think that the prayers are for naught. We do not know what the prayers accomplished — even for the person for whom we are praying. Maybe, somehow, they lightened the load. We can only speculate about that. But there is one thing regarding which we can be certain — we became different people as a result of those prayers.

*Adapted from R' Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes
Tape # 347 (with kind permission)*

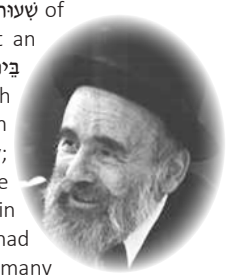


Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

י"ח מרחשון
5683 – 5747
1922 – 1986
ר' אַרְיֵה Partzovitz was born in Trakai, Poland to ר' חַשְׁקֵי שְׁלֵמָה (חַשְׁקֵי שְׁלֵמָה) and קִישָׁא (a grandchild of the רַב of the city's רַב). At the age of 9, he attended Ramailles in Vilna under נְשִׁיבָה in Vilna under ר' הַיִּמָּן Heiman. He later went to learn in Baranovich, and then in Kamenitz at the age of 14. ר' אַרְיֵה was a תַּלְמִיד מְבָהֵק of ר' חַשְׁקֵי שְׁלֵמָה, and based many of his שְׁעוּרִים on their שְׁעוּרִים. He joined מִיר at age 15, and escaped with the נְשִׁיבָה to Shanghai. After WWII, he lived briefly in Toronto before immigrating to יִשְׂרָאֵל, where he joined מִיר. There he married עֲטִיל ר' חַיִּים שְׁמוּאֵלֶבִּיץ. He became רַש"ד in 1979. His שְׁעוּרֵי ר' חַשְׁקֵי שְׁלֵמָה and שְׁעוּרֵי ר' חַיִּים שְׁמוּאֵלֶבִּיץ (published posthumously) are classics in many נְשִׁיבָה today.

Gedolim Glimpses

Anyone who was זֹכֶה to attend the final שְׁעוּר of ר' אַרְיֵה Partzovitz, will never forget an immortal lesson in אֲמִתּוּת. Sitting in the בֵּית מִדְרָשׁ in his wheelchair, he had a גְּמָרָא with a sheet of paper listing, in order, the main points of his קְלָלִי. This was reality; the illness had progressed. In the middle of the שְׁעוּר, ר' אַרְיֵה paused and thought, in obvious pain, before closing his גְּמָרָא. He had a קִשְׁיָה. Although he had given the שְׁעוּר many times in the past, he could not continue if in his mind he had a קִשְׁיָה!



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לְעִינֵי ר' יִשְׂרָאֵל בֶּן אֲבָרְהָם ז"ל
לְעִינֵי הַבַּיִת יִשְׁעֵיהוּ דוֹב עֵינָהּ בֶּן יִבְלַחֲטִיָּא יִצְחָק צְבִי נִי

As the handles of the clock turned back, שַׁבַּת מוֹצָאֵי שַׁבַּת Learning Programs are in full swing. To join the שַׁבַּת מוֹצָאֵי שַׁבַּת וּבְנֵימִי Learning Program at a location near you, please contact your local Pirchei Branch Coordinator for time/location in your area or call National PAI headquarters @ 212 797 9000 ext. 272.



Melting Hearts



... קח נא את בנך אֶת יְחִידְךָ ... וְלָךְ לָךְ אֶל הַר הַמְרוֹנָה ... (בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ב:ב)
"Please take your son, your only one...and go to the land of Moriah."

R' Chaim of Sanz זצ"ל (the דְּבָרֵי חַיִּים) said, the תּוֹרָה tells us about two important mountains. The first is הַר הַמְרוֹנָה, the mountain where עֲקִידַת יִצְחָק took place. The second is הַר סִינִי, the mountain on which the תּוֹרָה was given to the Jewish people.

When הַקַּב"ה chose a mountain to build the בַּיִת הַמְקֻדָּשׁ, which mountain did He select? One might think that הַקַּב"ה would have selected הַר סִינִי, as that is where the Jews received the תּוֹרָה. Surprisingly, הַר הַמְרוֹנָה did not select הַר סִינִי but הַר הַמְרוֹנָה. What is the reason for this?

It is in order to teach us, answered the דְּבָרֵי חַיִּים, just how beloved the quality of מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ is to הַקַּב"ה! הַר הַמְרוֹנָה is the site where, with extraordinary נֶפֶשׁ אֲבִינִי, מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ bound his dear son יִצְחָק as an offering to הַקַּב"ה. It was this מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ that sanctified הַר הַמְרוֹנָה forever and rendered it the most appropriate site on which to build the בַּיִת הַמְקֻדָּשׁ.



Raising money for the יְשִׁיבָה מִיר [יְשִׁיבַת מִיר] entailed enormous מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ, self-sacrifice. It also involved בְּזִיווּנוֹת, degradations, ... but, often enough, the sweet smell of success after a particularly trying episode of מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ.

Like the time R' Nosson Tzvi Finkel זצ"ל arrived for an appointment with a philanthropist whose office was located on the eighteenth floor. "Eighteen" wasn't the lucky number that day; the elevator service was out of operation.

As the ראש ישיבה's escorts were figuring out what to do and weighing the wisdom of asking the גָּבִיר to leave work and come down to meet them in the lobby, R' Nosson Tzvi had already hit upon the solution: he was hobbling to the stairwell. Naturally the escorts tried to inject a little reasoning into what was seemingly a brash, unwise and dangerous decision—but to no avail.

"This isn't a good idea," one of them muttered, expressing

the perfectly obvious. Because of the ראש ישיבה's ailment, he had a choppy style of locomotion that wasn't even remotely suited for the steps—certainly not 18 flights of them. R' Nosson Tzvi understood all of this, but he also understood that a little more than a tenth of a mile up lay a potential treasure—the possibility to acquire vitally needed funds for the יְשִׁיבָה. This was going to require מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ, but that was the way the ראש ישיבה operated. "Convenience" was a concept thoroughly foreign to him.

Truth be told, eighteen flights would be a daunting task for many without physical disabilities, and surely no small number of individuals faced with the same dilemma would seek to reschedule the appointment. Each step was a battle; each flight a war. The feat took 45 stressful, strenuous, arduous minutes. And it was as mentally stressful as it was physically draining. By the time R' Nosson Tzvi made it to the destination, the mind over matter factor had long since been eroded and the ראש ישיבה emerged from the door and collapsed in the waiting room onto the luxurious pile carpet.

The office staff fretted as to whom to call: 911? a doctor? EMS? But the גָּבִיר himself, who was horrified as anyone by the ראש ישיבה sprawled out on the floor, instinctively knew what to do to revive the צַדִּיק. Without any hesitation he removed his checkbook and entered a sum that he had not even considered heretofore. It (along with some water) did the trick.



R' Nosson Tzvi's superhuman effort could open doors and break down barriers. One rich גָּבִיר expressed his regret as he refused the ראש ישיבה's request for a large donation.

"I can't," he declined, assuming that he had put the matter to rest.

"I can't either," R' Nosson Tzvi countered, "but I do anyway."

After just a moment of uncomfortable silence, R' Nosson Tzvi received the full donation.

Adapted from: **For the Love of Torah** (with kind permission from Feldheim)

An Ahavas Chesed Moment

סֵפֶר אֲהַבַת חֶסֶד - חֶלֶק ב' מִרְק י"א

*The הפַּעַם חַיִּים explains that laziness weakens a person's opportunity to be involved in גְּמִילוּת חֶסֶד. How? For example, if one has set aside funds for lending and the borrower is not forthcoming in returning the loan, laziness will allow a חוֹב to go uncollected. It's easier to just leave the situation as is and have a reason to say that there are no more funds. Collecting owed money involves effort and sometimes is frustrating, but it increases the opportunity to be able to lend again. We all know לָפָם

צִצְרָא אֲגָרָא - directly proportional to the effort is the reward!

*This is intended only as a synopsis. Review of the סֵפֶר אֲהַבַת חֶסֶד is far more extensive and appropriate.

שְׁמוֹת כּוּב: (מִשְׁפָּטִים בְּפִסּוּקִים) מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ חַיִּים explains the order of the חֶסֶד חַיִּים. The חַיִּים חַיִּים quotes אֶת חֶסֶד חַיִּים, When you take security. This is to teach us לָדָא אֶרְאֵי - one should first lend money, but then also be involved in claiming it. Claim it to lend again to others!

"R" Questions of the week

- 1. Where do we see the כָּלֵל that when one davens for a friend and he himself needs the very same thing, he will be answered first?
- 2. Why was there so much happiness in the world on the day that יִצְחָק was born?



1. The פָּרָאֵם beginning with מִן הָרָעָה מִן הָרָעָה מִן הָרָעָה follows the מִן הָרָעָה about 21:1. 2. On that day, many things happened: Many infertile women had children, many sick people were healed, and many unanswered תְּפִלּוֹת were answered (מִן הָרָעָה מִן הָרָעָה מִן הָרָעָה).

- מְשִׁיב ... הַנֶּשֶׁם, is an additional praise of ד'; therefore, if one accidentally says מוֹרִיד הַטֶּל instead of הַנֶּשֶׁם ... מְשִׁיב, it is an added praise and no correction is needed.
- וְתוֹן טַל וּמְטָר is a direct request for rain; therefore, one who missed וּמְטָר, or said וְתוֹן בְּרָכָה, must correct himself and say וְתוֹן טַל וּמְטָר.

Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

וְצִ"ל Partzovitz ר' נחום, מיר ירושלים of ראש ישיבה, was a גאון in explaining the incisive פֿשט in the סוגיא. He focused on ראשונים, especially רש"י, and built many שעורים on an extra word or phrase. However there was more to his שעור than just פֿשט, as a תלמיד wrote:

"One שיעור קללי was based on a כתובות in תוספות. תוספות answered a question which both ר' חיים and ר' ברוך ר' נחום found problematic. ר' נחום reviewed both פֿשטים and argued that, while both פֿשטים were brilliant, neither explained תוספות's response. He then proceeded to explain תוספות's response with a different approach.

"All of this was pretty standard in a שעור קללי. What was a life-changing moment, was how R' Nochum argued on ר' נחום and בער ר' ברוך בער ר' חיים and ר' ברוך בער, רבני פון, towered over anyone he knew intellectually. He must have uttered "the רבני" about a dozen or more times in a trembling voice before finally, in a spurt of shame, with eyes averted, he said; "אבער, אבער, אבער, דאס ... איז נישט דער פֿשט אין דער תרוץ פון תוספות! — but, but, but ... that is not פֿשט in תוספות's response."

My תלמיד ר' נחום, giving שעורים during the last 10 years of his life, under his difficult physical conditions, was itself one of his greatest lessons, for even outside the שעור, he was teaching. When he was first hospitalized, he immersed himself in יומא, explaining, "My Zeide, the גאון, ר' נחום, said that he knew the שלמה הפהן by heart, and that if משיח arrived, he could immediately serve in the בית המקדש. Should I not do the same?" ר' נחום lived his life as a תלמיד of his רבנים and thus became the ultimate רבני.

יהי זכרו ברוך!
 רבני Your
 בגדידות,

A letter from a Rebbi based on interviews



Understanding Davening

... ותן טל ומטר לברכה על פני האדמה ...
 ... And give dew and rain for a blessing upon the face of the earth ...

There is an important difference between mentioning rain in the 2nd ברכה of שמונה עשרה, משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם (Who makes the wind blow and makes the rain descend, or מוריד הטל, Who makes the dew descend) and mentioning rain in the 9th ברכה — ברוך עלינו. The 2nd ברכה expresses praise to ד', the One Who gives us life, and provides wind and moisture as needed in the seasons of the year. In the 9th ברכה we are making a request. We are asking ד' to give us rain; therefore, this request is made only when rain is actually needed (in מרחשון / December 4th / 5th elsewhere).

This Week in History



20 מרחשון 5024/1263 – Yahrzeit of רבינו יונה בן יונה. Born in Gerona, Spain, in 4970/1210, he traveled to France to learn under ר' שלמה מן החר מבגלי התוספות ר' נחום's first cousin and his daughter married the רבני's son. His תלמידים included the רשבי"א and the רמב"ם.

He was a fierce opponent of the רמב"ם's philosophical views. However, when 24 wagonloads of the תלמוד were burned by the Church in 1242 at the same spot in Paris where the רמב"ם's מורה נבוכים had been burned by the non-Jewish authorities in Paris 9 years earlier, he realized his terrible mistake regarding the רמב"ם and publicly admitted it. As related by his תלמיד, ר' Hillel of Verona, רבני יונה promised to travel to טבריה to the רמב"ם's קבר, where he would beg forgiveness with a מנגן of 10 people. He began his journey from France with that intention, but he was detained in Barcelona.

His contemporaries referred to him as ר' חיים and as one of the greatest חכמים of his time. He gave many שעורים wherever he went, always quoting the רמב"ם's halachic decisions and interpretations of the גמרא with great reverence. After 3 years, he set out again, but was detained by the community of Toledo who implored him to stay for a while to teach them. He died there suddenly, never making it to ישראל.

R' Chaim Volozhin once commented that not every מוסר ספר is appropriate for all people; however, שערי תשובה רבינו יונה (one of the all-time greatest מוסר works) is appropriate for every Jewish נשמה for all eras in all situations. רבינו יונה's other works include a פירוש פרקי אבות on פירוש ספר היראה, משלי, פרקי אבות on פירוש ספר היראה, and עליות דרבינו יונה, אגרת היראה, and רבינו יונה על הרמב"ם.

Sage Sayings

were renowned for their clarity in פֿשט. His depth in פֿשט would not just span the פֿרק or the מסכת; it had to fit in perfectly with the words of the ראשונים. He would often say, איך גלויב נישט אז דער ראשונים האבן נישט געוויסט ווי אזוי צו שרייבן! יעדער I do not believe that the ראשונים did not know how to write! Every word is exact. We only need to know פֿשט." Source: *Sunset* (Hanoch Teller)

LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד
PIRCHAI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

AFTER THE CHEVRON MASSACRE IN 1929, AGUDAS YISROEL OF EUROPE MADE APPEALS FOR FUNDS IN ORDER TO ASSIST THE SURVIVORS.



*SIGNED WITH TEARS

R' ELYA MEIR BLOCH WAS ASKED TO COLLECT IN THE CITY OF PONEVEZ. HE LEFT TELZ LATE AT NIGHT...



I WILL SPEND THIS NIGHT LEARNING AS A ZECHUS FOR MY MOTHER'S NESHAMAH, A"H.

R' ELYA MEIR ARRIVED IN PONEVEZ THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON...



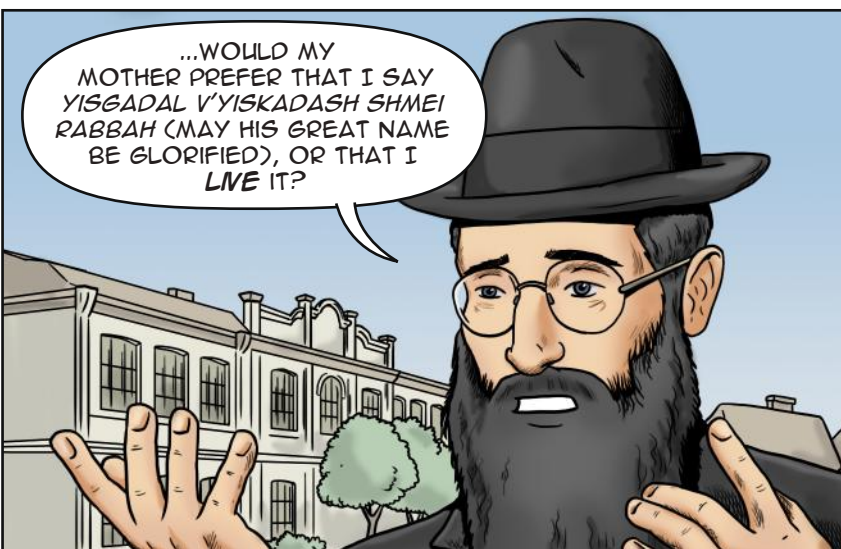
RABBOSAI, IS THERE A CHIYLV FOR MINCHAH HERE?...TODAY IS MY MOTHER'S YAHRTZEIT...

OY, VEY! TELZ IS OVER 12 HOURS AWAY. HOW COULD THE REBBI HAVE DAVENED SHACHARIS WITH A MINYAN?



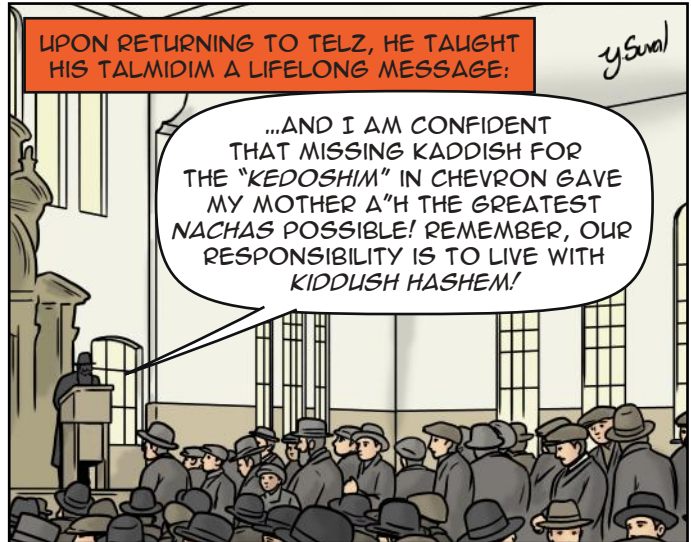
REBBI, FORGIVE ME FOR ASKING, BUT DID REBBI SAY KADDISH FOR HIS MOTHER THIS MORNING?

YOU ASK WELL, BUT ANSWER ME, MY FRIEND: WHAT DO YOU THINK?...



...WOULD MY MOTHER PREFER THAT I SAY YISSADAL V'YISKADASH SHMEI RABBAH (MAY HIS GREAT NAME BE GLORIFIED), OR THAT I LIVE IT?

UPON RETURNING TO TELZ, HE TAUGHT HIS TALMIDIM A LIFELONG MESSAGE:



...AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT MISSING KADDISH FOR THE "KEDOSHIM" IN CHEVRON GAVE MY MOTHER A"H THE GREATEST NACHAS POSSIBLE! REMEMBER, OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO LIVE WITH KIDDUSH HASHEM!

BLOCH WAS BORN IN TELSHE, LITHUANIA, TO R' YOSEF LEIB (RAB OF TELSHE) AND CHASYA (DAUGHTER OF GORDON R' KAPLAN). EIGHT YEARS AFTER HIS MARRIAGE TO KAPLAN, HE SPENT TWELVE YEARS AS A RAISH IN TELSHE. WHEN THE SOVIETS TOOK OVER TELSHE, HE TRAVELED TO AMERICA TO RAISE FUNDS TO MOVE TO EITHER ISRAEL OR AMERICA. WHEN HE ARRIVED, HE HEARD OF THE NAZI INVASION AND LATER (IN 1945) LEARNED THAT HE HAD LOST HIS WIFE AND THREE OF HIS FOUR CHILDREN. LATER HE REMARRIED TO NECHAMA SPOLONSKY. IN 1941, HE RESTARTED THE Yeshiva IN CLEVELAND, OHIO, TOGETHER WITH R' CHAIM DOV KELLER (OF TELSHE, CHICAGO, FOR OVER 60 YEARS) WHO WAS HIS TALENTED TALENT IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE Yeshiva. AS THE Yeshiva GREW, HE WON THE ADMIRATION OF THE LOCALS. HE WAS A STALWART SUPPORTER OF THE Yeshiva OF AMERICA AND WAS AN INSIGHTFUL RABBI OF THEIR TORAH AND HIS RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.

