

PARDES PROJECT

*One Thousand
Homes of Dialogue*

WHY JEWS MAKE NEWS

Volume 7 Number 4



The Orthodox Union

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Why Jews Make News

The Pardes Project

Volume 1 Number 4



Feuerstein shakes hands with one of his employees Thursday.

Associated Press

Mill workers displaced by fire love their boss

By Robin Estrin
Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Mass. — It's getting to be that every time the president of the mill complex talks to his employees, they start to cry.

They love him.

On Thursday, hundreds of factory employees erupted in cheers as Aaron Feuerstein announced that he would continue paying salary and benefits to the approximately 1,000 workers left unemployed by a spectacular fire that devastated Malden Mills Industries in Methuen one month ago.

"Unbelievable what

doing for us," said Teresa Perkins, who, even on crutches, raced up to her boss to give him a huge hug.

Since the Dec. 11 fire, Feuerstein has stood behind his workers. Within hours, he pledged to rebuild. Within days, he promised his employees paychecks for 30 days and health insurance coverage for 90 days while he tried to resume operations. He even gave his union employees a \$275 holiday bonus, which had been promised before the blaze.

Soon after, he extended benefits for another 30 days.

Thursday — the

them for 30 days more.

"You're a saint!" Perkins yelled. "I love you, Aaron," another woman cried.

"Why am I doing it? I consider the employees standing in front of me here the most valuable asset that Malden Mills has," Feuerstein said.

"I don't consider them, like some companies do, as an expense that can be cut. I know in the long run that what I'm doing today will come back tenfold and will make Malden Mills a leader in the industry."

"Roll for all hourly

Point to Ponder

Many of the topics included in the Pardes curriculum are far-reaching and have broad ramifications. The intent of Pardes is to promote sensitivity and spiritual growth through exposure to a variety of Torah sources. It is not within the purview of Pardes to arrive at conclusions relevant to decisions of Halacha. Please consult your Rabbi for personal decisions.

THE JEWISH PEOPLE PRESENT A UNIQUE PHENOMENON.

One would expect the amount a particular group, race or religion to appear in the press, receive Nobel awards and generally be visible to the world population to be in proportion with their size as a people. Statistically, however, with Jews this is not the case.

How can we explain the disproportionate amount of attention the State of Israel, the Jewish businessman and the general Jewish culture receive?

Why do Jews make news?



It is customary to recite the following prayer
before entering into a Torah discussion:

(Shulchan Aruch O.H. 110)

May it be Your will, Hashem my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that You illuminate my eyes with the light of your Torah and that You save me from all stumbling blocks and errors, whether it be in discussions of what is prohibited and what is permitted or in monetary matters, whether it be in any other Halachic decisions or just in theoretical study. I pray that I do not make any mistakes, and if I do, my study partners should not take delight in them. I pray that I should not proclaim the impure pure or the pure impure, the permitted forbidden or the forbidden permitted. I pray that I should not derive joy from the errors of my study partner. Open my eyes and allow me to see the wonders of Your Torah because it is from G-d that all wisdom comes forth, it is from His mouth that I will acquire wisdom and understanding. Amen.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקי
ואלוקי אבותי שלא יאדע
דבר תקלה על ידי ולא
אכשל בדבר הלכה וישמחו
בי חברי ולא אומר על
טמא טהור ולא על טהור
טמא ולא על מותר אסור
ולא על אסור מותר ולא
יכשלו חברי בדבר הלכה
ואשמח בהם כי הי יתן
חכמה מפיו דעת ותבונה.
אל עיני ואביט נפלאות
מנורות.

Points for Study

1 Twenty-two hundred years ago a great rabbi, Shimon ben Shetach, bought a mule. He brought the mule home, and his students discovered a valuable gem hanging around its neck. All those around him rejoiced at the rabbi's good fortune. God has answered his prayers! Shimon ben Shetach took the jewel and went immediately back to the merchant to return the jewel. The merchant looked at him with amazement and proclaimed with misery, "It is clearly your jewel – you bought the mule." The rabbi argued and said, "No, it is yours – I bought a mule, I didn't buy a jewel." Upon hearing the words of the rabbi, the merchant exclaimed, "Blessed be the God of Shimon ben Shetach!"

Midrash Dvarim Raba 3:5

Source, pg. 11

2 Abraham asked G-d; why is it necessary for me to move from place to place, community to community? G-d said. Consider yourself as a box of fragrant spices. If it stands in one place it exudes no fragrance. If it moves from place to place its fragrance fills the air.

Midrash Raba Lech Lecho 39:2

Source, pg. 12

3 At forty years old, Abraham discovered his Creator. He began to debate God and bring proof of His existence to all who lived around him. When he won the debates, the King decreed to kill him, but a miracle happened and he was saved, and he went to Haran. It was there he began to teach the entire world about the existence of God and the importance of worshipping Him. He traveled from city to city until he came to the land of Canaan. Thousands of people sought out his wisdom and learned about God. These people are referred to as the 'House of Abraham'. Abraham taught everything to his son, Isaac, who in turn taught it to his son, Jacob. They each taught their generation and all of the world.

Maimonides, Avoda Zara, ch.1, para. 3

Source, pg. 13

4 It was the beginning of the 20th century. Jews en masse traveled to visit the famous sage, Leo Tolstoy, to search for a wisdom for life and guidance for the future. Amongst them was a young lady. When she stood before Tolstoy, he asked her, "What are you searching for?" She answered, "I am searching for God." The sagacious elder stood before her and said, "Three thousand years ago, your nation gave the entire world God. Now you come to me to search for Him?!"

From the book—L'Maala Min HaShemesh

5 ...I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other nation. If I were an atheist and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the nations. ...I believe that chance had ordered the Jews to preserve and propagate to all mankind the doctrine of a supreme, intelligent, wise almighty sovereign of the universe, which I believe to be the great essential principle of all morality, and consequently of all civilization...

*From a letter written by John Adams,
the second President of the United States,
to F.A. Van der Kemp (1808)*

6 We are commanded to sanctify His name... We do so by spreading our true belief in Him and his teachings to the entire world, never fearing any consequences... Our Sages tell us that it was for this reason we were taken out of Egypt, in order to sanctify His name in public.

Maimonides, Book of Mitzvos, Mitzvah 9

Source, pg. 14

7 If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been

heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning, are also way out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?

From the article "Concerning the Jews"
(Harpers, 1899) in "The Complete Essays of
Mark Twain" (Doubleday, 1963), pg. 249

8 *Rise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Because darkness shall cover the earth and its population; but the Lord shall shine upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. Nations shall walk in your light, and kings shall walk in the brightness you shed...*

Isaiah 60:1-3

Source, pg. 14

9 Sixty years ago, a man in Lithuania went to the post office to buy some stamps. When he came home, he realized that the postman had given him too much change. He went to Rabbi Yaacov Kaminetzky and asked whether he was entitled to keep the money. The rabbi told him to quickly run to the post office and return the money. A day later, the rabbi was asked the same question by another Jew and again by another. Finally, Reb Yaacov went to the postmaster and began to lecture him. He said, "You are obviously trying to trick the Jews into not returning the money. It will never happen, we are guided by the Torah."

A few years later, during the Nazi occupation, the postman was promoted to higher authority and was responsible for saving and hiding hundreds of Jews. When asked about his behavior, he said the Jews are a good people and referred to the overpayment in the post office.

1 Midrash Dyarim Raba 3:5

The main purpose of being the nerve center of civilization is, of course, to teach the world good. And that we did. 3,000 years ago the Jews taught the world about basic morals. Do not murder, steal, covet or lie. These virtues are today universally accepted as self evident. These universally accepted morals originated when a fraction of the world population accepted these principles in a wilderness. What we do today, positive or negative, will not only be disproportionately noticed but will effect the entire world in which we live and all of the future as it unfolds.

סדר עקב דברים רב פירוש למ

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

3 Maimonides, Avoda Zara chap. 1, para. 3

2 Midrash Raba, Lech Lecho 39:2

בראשית רבה פירוש רמב

פירוש רמב

48

פירוש רמב"ם על משנה זו, א"ל הוא נשבעת ואומרת שאין אמת מבין מבין...

ב"ר ברכה פותח (פ"ד ס"ח) לומר ששני טובים שכן חזק שכן... פירוש רמב"ם על משנה זו, א"ל הוא נשבעת ואומרת שאין אמת מבין מבין...

מדרש הלכות עובדת כוכבים פ"א ב

ל"א בן נח נשבעת מה שיהיה לו עול, וכן נשבעת כל בן נח... פירוש רמב"ם על משנה זו, א"ל הוא נשבעת ואומרת שאין אמת מבין מבין...

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ספר מצות עשה המצוות הרמבם

מצוה ט **חַיָּה שְׂנוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ אִמּוֹרֵי נִתְקַדְּשׁוּ**
 בתוך בני ישראל יצונו את האמורים שלא יתקדשו ויחזקו את
 שמע אליו אבל נמסור עצמנו למיתה ולא נתעוה לחשוב שכפרנו אצפם שלבותינו מאמינים כי יתעלה
 וזאת היא מצות קדוש השם המצווים בה בני ישראל בכללם. רוצה לומר התרת עצמנו למות
 ביד האנס בעבור אהבתו יתעלה והתאמנה באהדתו כמט שעשו חנניה מישאל ועזריה בזמן
 נבוכדנצר הרשע כשצוה להשתחוות לצלם והשתחוו לו כל חתמן וישראל בכלל ולא היה
 שם מקדש שם שמים אבל פחדו הכל והיתה כוח תרפה לכל ישראל על אשר אברהם וזאת
 המצוה מכללם ולא נצטווה וזאת המצוה אלא לבני המעמד והמפורסם הגדול החזק אשר
 פחד ממנו כל העולם ולהיות מפורסם ויחזקו כוח יצו השם על ידי ישעיה שלא תשלם תרפת
 ישראל בזה המעמד ושיראו בהם בחורים בעת החייה חקשה לא יפחדים המות ויתירו נפשם
 ויפריטו התאמנה ויקדשו את השם ברבים כמו שנבטחנו באמרו לא עתה יבטח יעקב ולא
 עתה פניו יתורר כי בראתו ידיו מעשה ידו בחרב יקדישו שמי וגו' **וְנִתְקַדְּשׁוּ אִמּוֹרֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**
 ונבטחו (מסורין דיה) אמרו בן נח מצוה על
 קדושת השם או אינו מצוה. תא שמע שבע מצוות נצטוו בני נח ואם אחת אמר בן חמני דא.
 הנה נתבאר לך שהיא מכלל מיני המצוות המצויות לישראל ושמו ראייתם על זאת המצוה
 מאמרו ונתקדשו בתוך בני ישראל. וכבר התבאר משפטי מצוה זו בפרק שביעי מסנהדרין.
 (בפרק שפור לא בכתבים, שם בלכות יסודי ספורים דיה)

8 Isaiah 60:1-3

ו

ישעיה

קוֹמִי אֲדוֹרִי כִּי בָא אֲדָרְךָ וּכְבוֹד יִהְיֶה
 עֲלֶיךָ יִהְיֶה וְהָיָה וְהָיָה יִכְסֶה אֶרֶץ וְעָרַפֶּל לְאֻמִּים וְעֹלָם
 יִהְיֶה יִהְיֶה וּכְבוֹד עֲלֶיךָ יִרְאֶה וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם לְאֲדָרְךָ וּמַלְכִּים
 לְנֶגְהָ אֲדָרְךָ: