



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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

**משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם ברכי נפשי (שבת מנחה)**

**דף יומי: קדושין ע"ו מצות עשה: 1**

## TorahThoughts

... למען ייטב לי בעבורך וְהִיְתָה נַפְשִׁי בְגִלְגָלָה (בְּרֵאשִׁית יב:יד).  
...they will then be good to me for your sake, and that I may live on account of you.

רש"י (רש"י) – They will give me gifts. – יתנו לי מתנות

אברהם asked שרה to inform the officers of the Egyptian border control that she was אברהם's sister in order that they relate the information to שרה. שרה would be satisfied to offer אברהם some gifts to take אברהם's life would be spared.

What was it that motivated אברהם to want to be concerned to receive gifts from שרה? For starters, it appears rather startling that אברהם should be interested in receiving any monetary benefits, as the פסוק (משלי ט"ו:כ"ח) tells us: וְשׂוֹנֵא מִתְּנֹת יְהִיָּה – one who hates gifts will live, especially at a time when his life was in mortal danger.

Furthermore, the sequence of אברהם's request is also rather unusual. First, אברהם tells שרה that the reason why she must deceive the officers and act like his sister was in order to first collect שרה's gift. Then, almost as an afterthought, אברהם mentions that it was also vital for שרה to act this way in order to save his (אברהם's) life.

Another interesting question is based on a contradiction in אברהם's thought process mentioned further in this week's פרשה. Why did אברהם change his very noble attitude which he displayed with שדום? When אברהם recaptured שדום, he publicly refused to partake in sharing the spoils – not even a small shoestring. אברהם explained that the new wealth might lead to someone saying that the king of Sodom

had made אברהם rich. אברהם's wealth was solely from ה'. He was subsequently rewarded with the תפלוין of מִצְוָה that use רצועות, the leather straps. Concerning שרה, not only does אברהם have no problem taking from שרה's treasury, but he even asks שרה to create a situation which would assist him in collecting gifts!

The דברי אברהם explains, based on the רמב"ן, that אברהם's life was focused on paving the road for לְבָנָיִם – our forefathers' deeds should be the model for future generations. אברהם went to שרה because of a famine; so too יעקב and his children should follow the same route when they suffered because of a famine. שרה's being taken captive caused שרה to be afflicted with severe plagues; likewise, it was the בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל's captivity that caused שרה and the בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל to suffer the מכות. שרה wanted the בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל to be able to leave אברהם with great wealth, so he accepted the gifts from שרה's treasury.

למען ייטב לי – The דברי אברהם interprets the פסוק differently. In order to get gifts because of you – usually if one wants to live longer, he refrains from accepting gifts [as in וְשׂוֹנֵא מִתְּנֹת יְהִיָּה – one who hates gifts will live]; however, וְהִיְתָה נַפְשִׁי – I will still live, since these gifts are taken solely for the sake of future descendants.

The primary concern of our אבות was to prepare the way for their future generations.

Adapted from: Aleinu L'shabei'ach (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



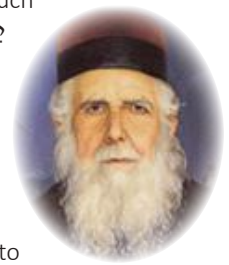
## Yahrzeits of our Gedolim

קצור Toledano, author of the Sephardic חכם רפאל ברודו זצ"ל Toledano, author of the Sephardic **5731 – 1890** was born in Meknes, Morocco, and opened a תלמוד תורה, was born in Meknes, Morocco, and opened a תלמוד תורה. He was close to ר' Berdugo and ר' Alkobi and they taught him in all areas of the תורה. He served as the אב בית דין in Meknes and opened a תלמוד תורה. He was deeply involved in the קהילה and established societies for **1890 – 1971** (aiding the sick and elderly), **1890 – 1971** (to teach בעלי בעלי), **1890 – 1971** (to help poor brides), **1890 – 1971** (providing clothing for the needy), and others. His תלמוד תורה had a daily program with 150+ in attendance. In 1963, he arrived in ארץ ישראל where he continued his teaching. He traveled the length and breadth of ארץ ישראל, opening תלמוד תורה all over even at an advanced age.

לעיני ה' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחטי"א יצחק צבי נ"י

## Gedolim Glimpses

From a young age R' Raphael Baruch Toledano זצ"ל was known for his תורה and diligence in learning for long stretches at a time. One time R' Raphael Baruch visited the תלמוד תורה. It was obvious from the unusual honor that the תלמוד תורה showed during and after the visit that he greatly admired his humble visitor. The תלמוד תורה said to one of his תלמידים as R' Raphael Baruch was leaving: "True תורה emanates from this man."



לעיני ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל

אחינו כל בית ישראל, הגתונים בערה ובשביה, העומדים בין בים ובין ביבשה, המקום ירחם עליהם ויוציאם מערה לרחה, ומאפלה לאורה, ומשעבוד לגאולה, השתא בעגלא ובזמן קריב, ונאמר אמן:

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# Faith Amid the Darkness



והאמן בה' ויחשבה לו צדקה (בראשית טו: ו).

And he [Avram] trusted in Y, and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

The Holy One, Blessed if He, reckoned it for Avram as a source of merit and as righteousness regarding the trust that [Avram] trusted in Him (רש"י).

In a world steeped in idol worship, אברהם אבינו came to recognize the existence of the One and Only G-d Who created heaven and earth and guides all that occurs. Y subjected אברהם to ten difficult tests, climaxing with the test of the עקידה.

In our morning prayers, we make mention of אברהם's pure, unshakable faith: "It is You, Y, the G-d, Who selected אברהם ... made his name אברהם. You found his heart faithful before You." אברהם's faith is part of the spiritual inheritance of every Jew; it is the spark within our souls that can never be extinguished. And it is this faith that has given Jews the strength to face the darkest of times with composure and courage.

For almost 40 years, R' Shimon Schwab led Khal Adath Jeshurun in Washington Heights, which faithfully observes the traditions of the Frankfurt קהילה of pre-War Germany. R' Schwab, at the age of 25, was appointed to his first position as רב in 1933, when he became District Rabbi of Ichenhausen, Bavaria.

It was during that same year that the Nazi party swept to power and Hitler ימ"ש was appointed Chancellor of the German Republic. As the months passed, the situation for German Jewry deteriorated rapidly and rabbis were prime targets of Nazi harassment.

On שבט פ' תש"א, R' Schwab ascended the pulpit and discussed the Sin of the עגל הזהב. He quoted R' Samson Raphael Hirsch, that in making the עגל הזהב, the Jews had not sought, חס, a substitute for their Creator. Rather, they wanted a substitute for their teacher, מנשה, for they erroneously believed that they could not possibly have a relationship with Y without an intermediary. R' Schwab quoted R' Hirsch's words that, in fact, a Jew can achieve a connection to Y even without such a "mittler" (German for middleman).

An informer in the audience went to the Gestapo and reported that the *Rabbiner* had declared before his congregation that the Jews did not need a "Hitler." Soon, a member of the Gestapo appeared at R' Schwab's door, informing him that he had been blacklisted for his treacherous statement against the Führer. He was ordered to appear at Gestapo headquarters.

Fully composed, R' Schwab entered the headquarters carrying a copy of R' Hirsch's commentary on the תורה, written in German. After the charges against him were read, R' Schwab explained how they were based on a gross misunderstanding of his words. To prove his point, he opened the volume which he held and pointed to the passage where the word *mittler* appeared.

Though the officer seemed satisfied with this explanation, he said that it was not easy for one's name to be removed from a Nazi blacklist. He instructed R' Schwab to phone him the following week to see what had been decided.

For the next two months, R' Schwab placed a weekly call to the officer, only to be told each time that nothing had been decided and that he should call again the following week. When he placed what would be his final call in this episode, the Gestapo officer exploded. "How dare you call me each week, pestering me like this? What Jewish insolence!" The officer continued to insult him, but in between his diatribes, he also shouted, "Es is shein arleidegt! It [the matter of the blacklist] has already been taken care of!" R' Schwab understood.

R' Schwab knew, however, that it would only be a matter of time before he would be arrested; therefore, he sought a rabbinic position overseas and was appointed רב of Shearith Israel Congregation of Baltimore in 1936.

Years later, when relating this episode, R' Schwab revealed that throughout those harrowing two months, he never slept in his nightclothes. An acquaintance of his who had spoken out against the regime had been taken away in middle of the night and was found hanged the next morning. R' Schwab knew he might meet the same fate and he felt it would be a degradation to the תורה for the רב to be found hanging in his nightclothes. He was prepared to sacrifice his life if need be, but he was not prepared to sacrifice the honor of the תורה.

Adapted from: *More Shabbos Stories* (with kind permission from ArtScroll)

## An Ahavas Chesed Moment

ספר אהבת חסד - חלק ב' פרק י"ז

\*Among the many reasons for the serious wrongdoing in refraining from giving צדקה to out of town עניים, the חפץ חיים quotes a few מאמרי צדקה about the opportunity presented when an עני asks for צדקה. The מדרש (ויקרא רבה ב' פרשה לד: ט) teaches in the name of ר' אביו that when an עני is standing by your door, Y is standing on his right side. This is learned from (תהלים קט: לא) ... כי יעמד לימין אביו. Because He stands to right of the poor person... If one gives the עני then be aware, that He who stands at the עני's right side will pay you your reward.

\*This is intended only as a synopsis. Review of the ספר אהבת חסד is far more extensive and appropriate. The מדרש חפץ חיים quotes the מדרש (ויקרא רבה ב' פרשה לד: ח) that כלל ישראל had the מן and the מואב and did not need refreshments from עמון and מואב, yet, מואב and עמון were still severely punished for not doing a חסד. Imagine the severity of refraining from doing a חסד with a poor person who really needs your חסד?

## Questions of the Week

1. Some nations were skeptical that אברהם was saved from the fiery furnace at אור פ'שדים. 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 furnace in the time of the skeptics of a universal power that was capable of effecting מצילת אברהם, hoping that אברהם would be 2. Who informed אברהם of לוט's capture, and what motivated this person to do so? — 14:10) (אברהם נצלה מן האש) — 14:13) killed in battle, so that he, יצחק, could marry ארבעה נשים.

- Even if one ends the ברכה of משיב הרוח one can still say אלה קדושים
- 30 days after עשרת הדיברות, if a person is unsure if he said משיב הרוח he need not repeat עשרת הדיברות unless one has begun saying the first word of the ברכה of משיב הרוח

Reviewed by R' Gedalyahu Eckstein

\*Since we only discuss a few 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

עניני דיומא: משיב הרוח וזמוריד הגשם

## Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

R' Raphael Baruch Toledano זצ"ל once traveled to the Atlas Mountains on behalf of an important communal need. He was shocked by the miserable poverty of the local Jewish community. With winter coming, most of the townsfolk lacked basic warm clothing.

R' Raphael rushed back to his hometown and successfully raised funds to purchase a substantial shipment of cloth for sewing warm garments for the Atlas community; however, since WWII was raging at the time, material for winter clothing (in high demand for army uniforms) was not easy to procure. In fact, he had technically violated the law with his public fund-raising activities during wartime.

R' Raphael turned to ד' for help, pouring out his heart in תפלה, but the situation seemingly took a turn for the worse. A whistleblower informed the authorities that the חכם had violated the law, and a messenger arrived at his home with an order for him to present himself immediately to the governor.

R' Raphael presented his

case to the governor with a heartfelt petition. He vividly described the situation of the local people in the Atlas community. R' Raphael ended his plea, "Your Honor, please note that the entire fund-raising campaign was actually done on your behalf. I have no ties to the Atlas Mountains. The only common bond is your jurisdiction. You rule over both districts. As a dedicated citizen, I have done my civic duty to help the country and the governor; I respectfully request that you make available the necessary cloth for immediate shipment to those unfortunate citizens."

The governor was moved and flattered. Without any cost to himself he would be earning a good name. He thanked R' Raphael and authorized the release of the cloth — and even paid the shipping costs.

My תלמיד, R' Raphael taught us that if something needs to be done, we must try. Daven! ד' has His ways. He often sends the salvation of a problem with the problem itself!

יהי זכרו ברוך!

בגידודות,

Your רבי

*Adapted from: A Legacy of Leaders*

## The 10<sup>th</sup> International Pirchei שמו Contest

The annual International Pirchei Newsletter [תי"ת] program is designed to strengthen and train boys in the מצנה. שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום. The שנים תזון איש once told someone that we need to internalize the promise of: מאריכין לו ימיו ושנותיו — [one who is maavir sedrah] will be blessed with long life (ברכות דף ח:). Just imagine the efforts a person would spend to obtain a guaranteed ברכה of long life from ר' אמי and ר' יהודה. How many weeks would we travel for a ברכה of guaranteed שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום? The שנים תזון then added, "We are lacking אמונת אלהים if we are lax in this צדיקים תורה."

R' Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל writes that the שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום is equal in importance to all מצות דרבנן, and that the need had never been as great as in his times — and surely this applies even more so to our own times — to have a deeper understanding of תורה, the תורה שכתב.

This year's שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום contest will have 2 independent raffles; the 1<sup>st</sup> will cover the remainder of ספר בראשית and the 2<sup>nd</sup> will cover the weeks of תי"ת.

The Pirchei Agudas Yisroel Weekly שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום program has been designed as follows:

Boys from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade should complete the פרשה until שני.

3<sup>rd</sup> grade should complete until שלישי.

4<sup>th</sup> grade should complete until רביעי.

5<sup>th</sup> grade should complete until חמישי.

6<sup>th</sup> grade should complete until ששי.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades should complete the entire פרשה.

If you are interested in joining this special שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום program this year and will review the weekly פרשה according to your grade level, please send a fax every week signed by a parent to 718 506 9633 — include your grade, name, school, city & state, and your contact # and fax #. Due to the numerous requests, we will once again accept email submissions from parents or rebbeim of participants (please include same details as faxes) at shnayimmikracontest@gmail.com. We kindly request rebbeim to send a single fax/email per class/yeshiva with a typed list of names to facilitate accuracy. All names submitted will be entered into a raffle to win a beautiful set of גדולות חומשים.

We would also like to receive feedback from elementary schools or individuals that are interested in promoting this extra-curricular activity in order to train בר מצנה boys to be fluent in this special מצנה. Please fax/email any comments and/or suggestions to same fax/email.

## Sage Sayings\*

Young רפאל ברוך Toledano זצ"ל attended a סיום, but did not partake of the סעודה. He apologized and explained: On the preceding day, he heard a man who was found guilty in בית דין criticizing R' Yaakov Toledano (Raphael's father, the ראש בית דין). Young Raphael rebuked the man sharply. R' Yaakov heard, and taught his son a life lesson. In his native language, he sternly explained, "פערזענליכע באליידיקונג פארבייט נישט תוכחה מיט א — One must never confuse rebuke with personal insult; מיר טאר קיין מאל ניט באליידיקן א מענטש! — we must never insult a person!" To atone for upsetting his father, he had accepted upon himself to fast the entire day. \*Goal: Familiarization with the Yiddish language

