



Beyond a Shadow of Doubt

לא תכירו פנים במשפט בקטן כגדל תשמעו לא תגורו מפני איש כי המשפט לאלקים הוא... (דברים א:יז).

You shall not show favoritism in judgment, small and great [people] alike shall you hear, you shall not tremble before any man for the judgment is G-d's.

For four years, only R' Chaim Ozer Grodzinski זצ"ל and his immediate family knew that he had cancer. He showed no visible signs of his terrible suffering; a smile was always on his face. He refused to enter a hospital, for he was ever aware of how world Jewry, and the נשיבות in particular, had rested on his shoulders for 55 years...how could he possibly spare time for a hospital stay? When he was hospitalized, his כלל work went with him — including the burden of answering the steady stream of שאלות (halachic queries) from all over the world.

On the last Thursday night of his life he issued orders regarding the dispersal of all the charity funds in his care. To the many visitors in his room he said, "Good night." Then he whispered, "Who can be זוכה to having a good night? Even so, I have no טענות, טענות to the רבנו של עולם (no grievance to G-d)."

Friday, before noon, two men were at his bedside, R' Yechezkel Mishkovsky and R' Moshe Shatzkes (Lomza Rav) — whispering, not to disturb the sleeping צדיק, not realizing that he had already passed on.

The hospital was three kilometers from the city, but as soon as the news of his passing reached Vilna the entire length of the road was filled with people. בני תורה were assigned to transport his remains on their shoulders until the city limits, then to place them on a wagon, fearing the reaction of Soviet authorities to any unusual demonstration. He was placed in the room where he had studied תורה, rendered decisions on שאלות, dispensed חסד and צדקה, for 55 years. There, until Sunday, בני תורה recited תהלים (Psalms) and pored

over his ספרים day and night.

Those responsible for arranging the לונה on Sunday, were haunted by an ugly experience with the Soviets at the לונה of R' Lazer, the Minsker גדול: the Soviets arrested all the מספדים as well as a number of mourners. Some suggested a quiet לונה for R' Chaim Ozer, but that was rejected as impossible, for surely all of Vilna would come regardless of plans ... The authorities should be notified — but suppose they forbid a mass funeral? ... The decision: לא תגורו מפני איש — they had to do what is right for the כבוד התורה ... without fear of the soviets. A public לונה would be held, without securing permission and avoiding any official refusal. R' Yoseif Shuv, secretary to R' Chaim Ozer, would take responsibility if the Soviets were to challenge the proceedings.

Sunday morning, Vilna's entire Jewish populace gathered, joined by the נשיבה students and the refugees to whom he had been father and sole contact with the outside world. The first הקפד was delivered at his house by the ראש בית דין, the aged R' Henoch Eigesh. The procession then proceeded to the big shul, where R' Shatzkes and R' Zalman Sorotzkin (Lutzker רב) spoke. The procession continued, stopping every few blocks. A makeshift platform would be raised and a רב would speak, adding up to a total of forty הקספים! Instead of interfering, as feared, the opposite happened — the Soviets dispatched a battalion of militiamen to preserve order. Literally thousands of צעטלאך, with all sorts of requests, were thrown into the grave before it was closed. The soldiers made sure all צעטלאך reached their destination, not outside, for fear some might contain anti-Soviet propaganda.

The לונה was an unusual display of כבוד התורה in the tumultuous years during WWII, for the leader who led ישראל כלל through one of its darkest times with selfless love and devotion.

Adapted from: The Jewish Observer (with kind permission)

An Ahavas Chesed Moment

ספר אהבת חסד - חלק ב' פרק כ:ג

*The חפץ חיים offers another interesting scenario where a person is permitted to give away more than a fifth of his possessions to צדקה. The wording used by חפץ חיים when describing the אסור of spending more than a fifth is המבזבז, one who spends freely or spends without responsibility. In the case of a person who earns enough money every week, and can responsibly pay off all of his expenses, then any extra money can be given away to צדקה even though the amount given would add up to more than a fifth of his possessions.

*This is intended only as a synopsis. Review of the ספר אהבת חסד is far more extensive and appropriate. The חפץ חיים in his footnote quotes a מדרש קהלת that מאיר ר' gave away a third of his possessions to sustain תלמידי חכמים; however, he explains that this is not the מקור for his (סימן תרנ"ו) משל אברהם (אזל) since support for תורה has no הלכה. This הלכה is based on the הלכה in the name of the מוה"ק יוסף (א) מוה"ק יוסף.

Questions of the week

1. From where did משה learn the idea of extending the offer for peace even though the offer would be turned down?
2. Why does it say בָּזוּנוּ — we looted, spelled with two ז's — by the spoil of סִיחֹון and בָּזוּנוּ — we looted, with one ז — by the spoil of כְּנָז.



At the time of the war with סִיחֹון, משה first offered the nations even though he knew they would turn down the offer (אמרו לא יאמרו לו). Although the nations would turn down the offer, משה did not turn down the offer (אמרו לא יאמרו לו). משה did not turn down the offer (אמרו לא יאמרו לו). משה did not turn down the offer (אמרו לא יאמרו לו).

Halacha Corner

הלכות עניי דיומא
בין המצרים

- One **may** eat other foods after the קידוש המצות if one **did not** have in mind at ברכת המזון to begin the תענית. It is preferable to verbalize, "I do not intend to begin the תענית!"
- One **may not** greet one's friend on באב. This includes even the customary "Good morning/afternoon/evening!"

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.

... בצאתי ממצרים ... בצאתי מירושלים

עוֹלָם Agassi did not have much pleasure from הַזֶּה. He wrote and described the terrible tragedies that befell him in a sea of tears and blood. His אֶהְרֶה describes how his firstborn, who was born a few years after his marriage, was נָפַט in an

בְּיָדֵינוּ, רַבֵּי
Your
A Letter from a Rebbe, based on interviews

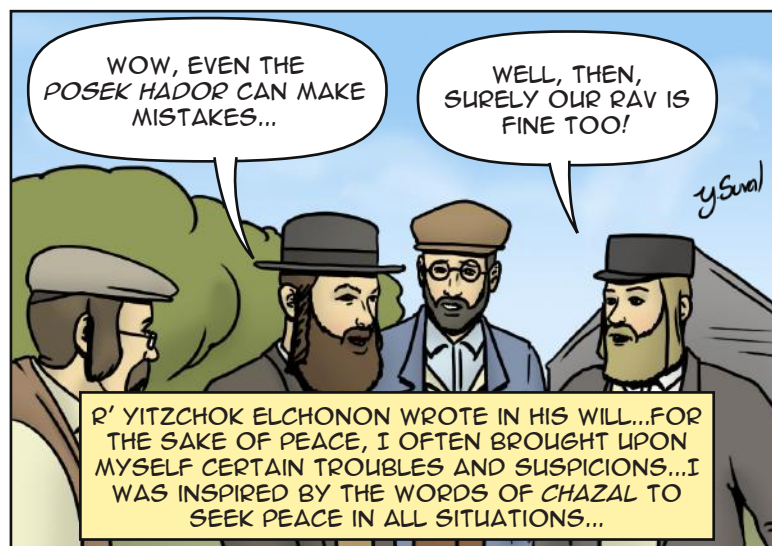
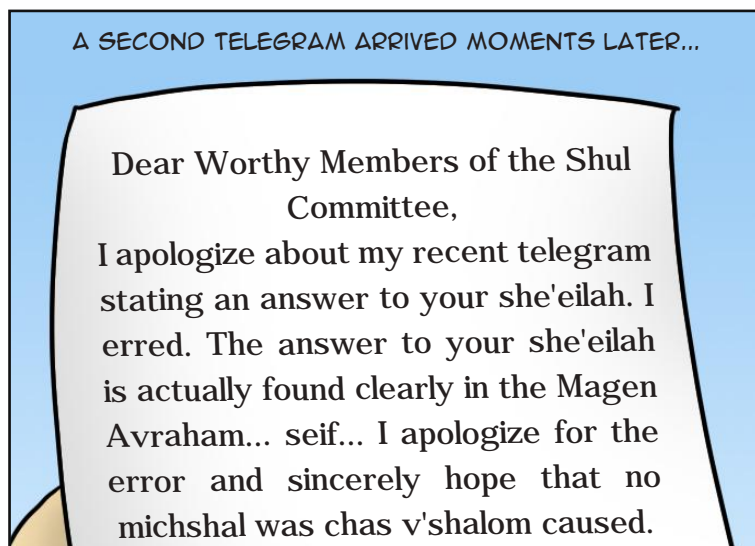
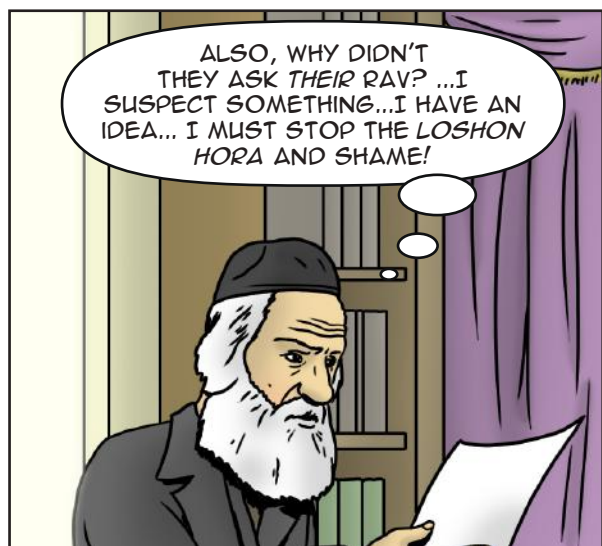


Source: Heard around the שבת table



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ר' יצחק אֶלְחֶנֶן WAS THE 3RD SON OF יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶסְקֶר (בן) OF THE LITHUANIAN TOWN OF ROUSH, BELARUS) AND רָחֵל. HIS MOTHER WAS NIFTAR WHEN HE WAS 10 YEARS OLD AND HIS FATHER WAS HIS רַבִּי. AFTER HIS MARRIAGE TO SARA RAIZEL (DAUGHTER OF R' ELIEZER YEZERSKY AT AGE 13, HE MOVED TO VOLKOVISK WHERE HIS FATHER-IN-LAW SUPPORTED HIM. THE TOWN רב, R' BINYAMIN DISKIN (FATHER OF R' YOSHUA LEIB DISKIN (צ"ל) WAS SO IMPRESSED WITH ר' יצחק אֶלְחֶנֶן THAT HE LEARNED בְּחִבְרוּתָהּ WITH HIM FOR TWO HOURS A DAY. ר' יצחק אֶלְחֶנֶן ALSO STUDIED WITH RABBI ELYAHU SHIK (צ"ל) OF LIDA. HE RECEIVED סְמִיכָה FROM R' BINYAMIN DISKIN AND R' YITZHAK ISAAC HEBER (צ"ל) FROM TIKTYN. IN 1837, ר' יצחק אֶלְחֶנֶן ACCEPTED THE OFFER TO BECOME רב OF IZABELIN, BELARUS, AND IN 1839, HE SERVED AS רב IN BIARÓZA (BEREZA) NEAR BREST, BELARUS. HE WAS APPOINTED רב OF NOVARDOK IN 1851, AND FINALLY BECAME THE רב OF KOVNO IN 1864. HE HELD THIS PRESTIGIOUS POSITION FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS (UNTIL HIS פְּטִירָה) AND WAS A BELOVED, REVERED גָּדוֹל IN HIS GENERATION. HE AUTHORED נֶחֱל יצחק, בְּאֵר יצחק, עֵינֵי יצחק, וְעַץ פְּרִי. חוֹשֵׁן מִשְׁפָּט ON נֶחֱל יצחק AND מַעְנֵי יצחק, עֵץ פְּרִי, עֵינֵי יצחק, בְּאֵר יצחק.

