



# PIRCHEI Weekly

Agudas Yisroel of America

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**כרשה: דברים - שבת חזון הפטרה: חזון ישעיהו... (ישעיהו א-א: כז)**

**צום תשעה באב יהיה ביום ה' הבא**

**דף יומי: חולין ע"ט אבות: ב' מצות עשה: 0 מצות לא תעשה: 2 שבועות לראש השנה: 8**

## Torah Thoughts

איכה אֶשָׂא לְבַדִּי כְרָחֶכֶם ... וְרִיבֶכֶם (דברים א: יב)  
How can I alone bear your burdensome difficulties ... and your quarrels?

contrast the word איכה, *how*, in this same context, to the painful cry of the later נביאים, who also used the word איכה when they were referring to the חורבן of the מִקְדָּשׁ. The בְּתִי מְקֻדָּשׁ of חורבן this איכה differently than the others, singing it to the tune of פְּסוּק which is read on תְּשֻׁעָה בָּאֵב. The obvious connection is the single word, איכה.

The גִּרְיָא suggests a deeper connection between the פְּסוּקִים. מְגִילַת says the word לְבַדִּי, *alone*. Another form of לְבַדִּי is found in מְגִילַת, איכה, *How the city sits in solitude*. This, says the גִּרְיָא, is the common essence of the tragedy of תְּשֻׁעָה בָּאֵב. Both had similarities as regards to feeling of loneliness. Being a leader of a קהילה, *community*, is an awesome responsibility, but it is easier to accept those responsibilities when one knows that he has the full support and encouragement of his קהילה. The role is significantly easier to bear when the leader does not feel that he is alone. When a leader makes decisions that are appealing, he is a popular leader. When the rulings are controversial, because they do not exactly meet the likings of the people, suddenly the same leader is under siege. He now finds himself with a difficult feeling of being alone.

מֹשֶׁה was not complaining about the burdens of leadership. He was addressing the fact that it is lonely at the top. מֹשֶׁה was able to

bear the burden of the problems of יִשְׂרָאֵל only to the extent that יִשְׂרָאֵל were able to understand his position. מֹשֶׁה did not need this support. He was quite capable of directing the affairs of יִשְׂרָאֵל. מֹשֶׁה was a leader, and yet, as he painfully says, even he felt alone. As a leader of the nation that left the slavery of מִצְרַיִם, he had to deal with many different situations that were sometimes unpleasant for the people to accept.

The גִּרְיָא laments a similar condition in יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. People who were in distress were left to care for themselves. Nobody else was concerned with helping other people with their day-to-day issues.

There are lonely people in every community who do not seek any צְדָקָה or gifts. They yearn only for a little bit of friendship—a "hello", a quick visit on שַׁבָּת, someone to share their joy and pain. They do not want to be alone. We must make an honest effort to alleviate their loneliness.

תְּשֻׁעָה בָּאֵב is always read on the שַׁבָּת before פְּרִשְׁת דְּבָרִים, and is the saddest שַׁבָּת of the year. This שַׁבָּת carries a special message of loneliness: איכה, *How the city sits alone*.

This year, more than ever, יִשְׂרָאֵל, is so alone in גְּלוּת. This שַׁבָּת is an appropriate time to reflect about others, especially those who are lonely, and to uplift their spirits. May the world witness the Unity of יְדִי, His special nation and the תּוֹרָה, speedily in our time.

Adapted from: *Peninim on the Torah* (with kind permission from Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum)



## Yahrtzeits of our Gedolim

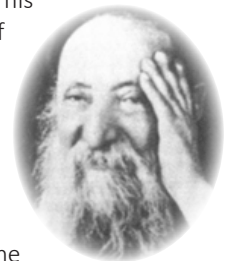
אב' מנחם אב Grodzinski ר' חיים עוזר הי' born in Iyve, 5623 – 5700 Lithuania, to דוד שלמה and ר' דוד שלמה. He learned 1863 – 1940 in the Volozhin under R' Chaim of Brisk (son-in-law of R' Yisrael Salanter (זצ"ל). Upon his father-in-law's פטירה 2 years later, he served as the unofficial רב of Vilna for 55 years. His only child, a girl, was נפטרת at 20. He was a founder and the first president of אגודת ישראל and was the leader of European Jewry. As the יושב ראש of the ועד הקשיבות, he distributed funds to the European קשיבות. His love for the יחיד and the קלל were legendary. With his brilliant mind, phenomenal memory and unusual מקסירת, he authored שו"ת אחיעזר (three volumes).

לע"נ ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל

## Gedolim Glimpses

Once, Grodzinski ר' חיים עוזר spent his vacation at a place on the outskirts of Vilna. He was offered a very comfortable apartment which his עסקנים liked and suggested he rent. ר' חיים checked it out. Turning to his helpers he said, "I see the kitchen is situated at quite a distance from the living room. Ask the maid, to look at the setup with the kitchen. Only if she agrees should we take it!"

Source: *Men of Distinction*



לע"נ ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל

אחינו כל בית ישראל, הגתונים בערה ובשכיה, העומדים בין בים ובין ביבשה, המקום ירחם עליהם ויזיאתם מערה לרנחה, ומאפלה לאורה, ומשעבוד לגאולה, השמא בעגלא ובזמן קריב, ונאמר אמן:

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# שליט"א R' Abba Brudny — Lessons Learned

**הזקק and התעוררות from גדולים on the message of a catastrophic event:**

During this period, the 3 weeks of **בין המצרים** and the following weeks leading up to **ראש השנה** (a period of 9 weeks in all), this column will be featuring some timeless תורה messages from our אבא, both past and present, on how we can change ourselves for the better during a communal, national and/or world tragedy.

מצות עשה מן התורה לזעוק ... על כל צרה שתבא על הצבור ... אבל אם לא יזעקו ... אלא יאמרו דבר זה ממנהג העולם איננו לנו ... הרי זו דרך אכזריות ... וחסידיו הצרה צרות אחרות.

*It is a מצות עשה דאורייתא [to gather together as a community] to wake up and repent [lit: cry / wail] ... when any communal tragic event occurs ... If one does not wake up and repent, but rather says that this is a natural tragedy, this is an act of cruelty ... [since it causes] additional [בנמת קרי] calamities to occur (רמב"ם) (הלכות תענית פרק א:א-ג).*

In 2011, after a decade had passed since the world changed from the tragedy of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Elul 5761, (September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001), the intense impact of the event was still painfully felt around the globe.

During that decade and after that as well, the world was beset by many individual, communal, national and global tragedies. In fact, some of the worst historical 'Heaven sent' weather related disasters (earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes) occurred in the last two decades. Hamodia turned to the גדולים to provide a perspective on unfathomable events.

Reflecting on the catastrophic events of a decade ago, we realize that we —as Jews whom חז"ל taught to pray for שלום מלכות— must take a measure of the pain and suffering that was brought upon the United States on September 11, 2001. Indeed, we should beg the רבוננו של עולם to protect this country where we have found hospitality and the freedom to practice our religion in a manner that is unprecedented in our history.

With pain we recall the victims and the families in our community that lost their loved ones על קדוש ד'. Because New York

City is the city with the largest Jewish population in the world, it was a natural target for the terrorists' heinous crimes. The קדושים we lost in the attacks of 9/11 were murdered in cold blood because of their Jewishness.

As the entire civilized world bore witness, the spilling of innocent blood crystallized awareness that ישמאל is — as the מלאך related to הניר — a פרא אדם (wild man). The חפץ חיים is reported to have said that this "פרא אדם" quality of ישמאל will not change until the time of the redemption. On that infamous day in 2001, one lesson the world learned was the actualization on the חפץ חיים's words. Thousands of attempts at publicizing that lesson, and hundreds of op-ed articles, could not deliver that message to mankind as effectively and as unequivocally as the השנאה's plot that unfolded on that day.

Our community, whose eyes and hearts are focused on ארץ ישראל, can find a measure of solace in this tragedy: Those who lost their lives on September 11 can be considered among those who אין — no creature on Earth can reach their exalted place in הנבא, for with their very lives they clarified the distinction between evil and righteousness, and between man and beast.

Another lesson learned on that day is that man's greatest advances are dependent on ד's grace. In the blink of an eye a mammoth edifice is torn asunder and all the efforts and energies that were invested in building it are for naught. The supreme command that was once personified by the Romanoff Tsars, the evil empire of the Third Reich, and the influence of the power-hungry students of the school of Marx and Lenin, are gone without a trace. Is it possible that Western culture, too, can be heading into an abyss? Those who will hold steadfastly to the ways of our forefathers will merit to find refuge, as the פסוק promises: ובהר ציון תהיה פליטה: — but on הר ציון there shall be a remnant (עבד'ה א: יז).

*Adapted from: Hamodia Magazine 9/11 - Ten Years Later (with kind permission)*

## Right? שמע קריאת Davening

Due to a number of requests from our readers we are focusing on the correct reading of קריאת שמע. It is fascinating to note that the שולחן ערוך and later משנה ברורה and אחרונים including the השולחן list many of the most common mistakes. For example, please read the following out loud just a little fast (record it if you can) and then re-read below at how it may sound:

- 1) In the קריאת שמע we must be careful to pronounce ..... אשר אנכי
- 2) and: ... אשר את ... אשר ד' ...
- 3) and: ... אשר ד' ... אשר אתם ...

אשר אנכי אשר את אשר ד' אשר אתם  
אשר אנכי אשר את אשר ד' אשר אתם  
אשר אנכי אשר את אשר ד' אשר אתם  
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אשר אנכי אשר את אשר ד' אשר אתם

\*This is intended only as a brief synopsis. Pay close attention as you read from your קידוש to avoid misreading the holy words of your precious קידוש.

## Questions of the week רש"י

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 סִיחוּן and בָּזוּנוּ — we looted, with one ז — by the spoil of ...

At the time of the war, משה first offered the offer to the other nations even though they would turn down the offer (2:27-28).  
2. The word בָּזוּנוּ is from the root בָּזַן, which means 'disgraced', 'spoiled', 'looted'.  
1. The word סִיחוּן is from the root סִיחַ, which means 'to offer', 'to extend'.

## Halacha Corner

הלכות עניי דיומא:  
בין המצרים

- One sits alone for the סעודת המפסקת, on the ground or on a low stool, and eats hard bread and a hard boiled egg dipped in ashes.
- One takes on some aspects of the fast. בָּאָב on מנחה should be recited early enough to allow time to finish eating the סעודת המפסקת before שקיעה, sunset.

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.



## Focus on Middos

Dear תלמיד,

The חפץ חיים זצ"ל would not initiate any public action, or sign any public document, until he consulted with R' Chaim Ozer Grodzinski זצ"ל. The חפץ חיים considered him as a living embodiment of תורה and showed him the utmost respect.

Once when they were both to sign a public proclamation, the חפץ חיים refused to sign first, claiming that R' Chaim Ozer personified כבוד (the honor of תורה). R' Chaim Ozer, in turn, deferred to the חפץ חיים, claiming that he both encompassed כבוד התורה and should also be respected due to his old age. The חפץ חיים then countered that R' Chaim Ozer was more than מרא דאתרא of Vilna; he was the מורה of כלל ישראל, as well and should sign first.

Finally, R' Chaim Ozer won the "argument," backing his claim with "וקדשת" — you shall sanctify the פה — even over his protest — and the חפץ חיים was a פה. The חפץ חיים yielded,

providing that R' Chaim Ozer sign alongside his signature, not on the following line. Such was the גדולי between the two ישראל.

An example of one of R' Chaim Ozer's last שאלות:

A number of visas to leave Vilna had been granted and the question arose: who is more entitled to them, the old רבנים and ראשי ישיבה, or the young ones?

His פסק: The older רבנים should get the visas, for they would work tirelessly to see to it that those left behind would also get visas.

My תלמיד, this פסק was the opposite of secular reasoning. R' Chaim Ozer, who embodied תורה and the love for תורה, knew that a רבי's desire is that his תלמיד should be more successful than himself. Therefore, it follows that the older רבנים would have the stronger will to help the younger רבנים be successful.

יהי זכרו ברוך!  
רבי, Your בנדידות

Story adapted from: *The Jewish Observer*

## Sage Sayings

R' Chaim Ozer Grodzinski זצ"ל, dealt with many of the most difficult issues of his time. Seeing that the spiritual environment on the street was being contaminated with bad influences, he insisted that a בחור must actively work on שמירה, *guarding oneself*. "א' ישיבה אן קיין משגית און" — A מוסר איז א בור ברשות הרבים and מוסר is a an open pit [hazard] in a public place!"

Source: Heard from R' Paysach Krohn שליט"א

## Understanding Davening

... בצאתי ממצרים ... בצאתי מירושלים

This קינה (לייא) is based on a מדרש which contrasts leaving ישראל and leaving ירושלים. Upon travelling from מצרים to being one nation going from slavery to freedom; when leaving the ruins of their once glorious capital of ירושלים, they travelled as captives and were sold as slaves as they were dispersed into גלות, exile. We place an egg on our סדר plate to remember תשעה באב (the 1st day of the week as תשעה). תשעה באב and תשעה באב are both referred to as a מועד. What is the underlying message that connects them? Leaving מצרים, the world saw, and we felt, ד' protection; so too, in our גלות. Even though He is hidden, ד' is with us and is protecting us. May we be זוכה to ביום אחד — on that day... ד' will be One, recognized by all the nations.

## This Week in History

1572 - 5332 / 1534 - 5294 מנחם אב — זצ"ל Luria Ashkenazi, father of modern קבלה (אריז"ל / ארי הקדוש), born in זצ"ל to Rav Shlomo Luria Ashkenazi (נד של שלמה and ש"ס on חקמת שלמה) and Lipke Sarah (nee Frances). The חידא said on him that he reached such a high level because אלקיו הנביא purified him with ashes of אדמה.

His father passed away shortly after his birth, and he learned under Rav Klominus until the latter's פטירה. He then moved to Egypt where he learned under זמרא (ר' דוד בן זמרא) from age 14. Among the other תלמידים was Ashkenazi (שיטה מקובצת). At age 22, he dedicated himself to the study of the זוהר, spending the next 7 years in near-total seclusion and meditation.

In 1570, at age 36, he emigrated to ארץ ישראל (per instructions of אלקיו הנביא) to pass all of his חיים ר' Vital in צפת in northern ישראל, where his colleagues included Karo (שולחן ערוך), the kabbalist (רבי"ק) Cordovero (who was niftar that year), and (לכה דודי) ר' שלמה אלקבץ זצ"ל, משה אלשיך הקדוש זצ"ל. From צפת, where he lived for 2 years until his פטירה at age 38, קבלה revolutionized the study of קבלה, and became universally regarded as one of its most important figures. His תלמיד מבהק ר' Vital, collected אריז"ל's lectures into the 6 volume חיים.



# LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

בס"ד  
PIRCHEI AGUDAS YISROEL OF AMERICA

R' SHIMON SCHWAB ONCE SPENT SOME TIME IN DENVER VISITING HIS SON R' MYER, THE DEAN OF THE CITY'S BAIS YAAKOV.

MY SON, AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE SEVERE DIFFICULTY WALKING. COULD YOU PLEASE TAKE THIS \$20 AND PICK UP MY SUITS FROM THE CLEANERS?

PAPA, OF COURSE... THIS IS MY SPECIAL ZECHUS!

WHEN R' MYER CAME HOME HE RETURNED WITH TWO SUITS AND GAVE THE CHANGE TO HIS FATHER.

MYER, YOU GAVE ME FAR TOO MUCH CHANGE - THE CLEANER MUST HAVE CHARGED YOU FOR ONLY ONE SUIT!

PAPA, YOU ARE RIGHT! BLI NEDER, FIRST THING IN THE MORNING I'LL GO BACK AND RETURN THE EXTRA MONEY.

MYER, I APOLOGIZE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE, BUT IT SHOULD NOT WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW. CAN WE GO RIGHT NOW? AND I WANT TO COME ALONG!

PAPA, OF COURSE... BUT ISN'T IT BETTER TO STAY HOME, BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY WALKING?

R' SHIMON INSISTED, EXPLAINING THAT HE WANTED TO ALSO HAVE A SHARE IN THIS KIDDUSH HASHEM.

MYER, PLEASE PARK THE CAR IN FRONT OF THE CLEANERS, AND EXPLAIN TO THE PROPRIETOR THAT I WOULD HAVE COME MYSELF BUT I HAVE DIFFICULTY WALKING...

R' MYER TOLD THE PROPRIETOR WHAT HIS FATHER HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO SAY AND POINTED TO HIS FATHER IN THE CAR.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR RETURNING THE MONEY, BUT, RABBI, YOU AND YOUR ELDERLY FATHER SHOULDN'T HAVE MADE A SPECIAL TRIP FOR THIS! YOU COULD HAVE BROUGHT THE MONEY TOMORROW.

I KNOW! MY FATHER IS A RABBI, AND TO HIM THE MATTER OF HAVING MONEY IN HIS POSSESSION THAT DID NOT BELONG TO HIM NEEDED TO BE RECTIFIED RIGHT AWAY. IT COULD NOT WAIT TILL TOMORROW!

ר' SCHWAB WAS BORN TO יהודה AND ר' חנה IN FRANKFURT-AM-MAIN, GERMANY. IN 1926, HE LEARNED IN THE TELZ YESHIVA (LITHUANIA) AND THEN IN MIR (POLAND) BEFORE BECOMING IN DARMSTADT, GERMANY. IN 1930, HE MET WITH IN THE SPRING OF 1930, HE SPENT A WEEKEND WITH R' YISRAEL MEIR KAGAN (WITH THE LEADER OF NON-HASSIDIC EASTERN-EUROPEAN ASHKENAZI JEWRY. THE VISIT MADE A STRONG IMPRESSION ON HIM, AND HE WOULD LATER OFTEN REFER TO THE ENCOUNTER IN PUBLIC SPEECHES THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE. HE MARRIED RECHA FROELICH IN 1931. IN 1933, HE BECAME THE רב IN THE DISTRICT OF ICHENHAUSEN IN BAVARIA. ESCAPING NAZI GERMANY IN 1936, R' SCHWAB SERVED AS רב IN BALTIMORE, WHERE HE FOUNDED THE BAIS YAAKOV SCHOOL FOR GIRLS OF BALTIMORE. IN 1958, HE JOINED R' JOSEPH BREUER, SERVING AS רב OF שוורץ, קהל עדת ישורון IN BALTIMORE. A PROLIFIC WRITER, HIS MAGNUM OPUS, מְעִין מְעִין, SELECTED WRITINGS, עיון תפלה (RAV SCHWAB ON PRAYER, EDITED POSTHUMOUSLY BY HIS ELDEST SON), AND MORE, REFLECT HIS ORIGINAL THINKING, PRACTICAL AND HISTORICAL GENIUS.



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