

Torah Life

Weekly

פרשת לך לך תשע"ג

בנשיאות הרב שמואל לניאדו

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Torah Thoughts

ניאמר ד' אל אברהם לה לך ... אל הארץ אשר אראה

Hashem said to Avram, "Go for yourself ... to the land that I will show you" (B'reishis 12:1).

אברהם was faced with a difficult test. ד' commanded him to cut his ties with his birthplace and family and head to an as-yet-unspecified land. רש"י on this פסוק asks, why did ד' command אברהם to go, without telling אברהם precisely where it was that He wanted him to go?

ד' explains that ד' wanted his arrival at the final destination to be precious in אברהם's eyes. ד' also wanted to reward אברהם for every word of ד' that he obeyed.

The Steipler Gaon, in ברכת פרץ, offers an important insight. Unaware of when it would end, every step of אברהם's journey was an act of faith. When he finally did arrive at his destination, his joy and appreciation were far greater than they would have been if he had received the complete directions initially. The Steipler applies this concept to תורה. If one struggles to understand a piece of תורה and the meaning is obscure, he may feel frustrated. However, if he works to resolve the difficulty, when he finally does solve the problem, his joy is very great, much more than it would have been if he had understood it immediately.

This motivating thought will help those for whom learning and understanding תורה comes with great effort. If one fights the discouraging feelings, he will ultimately succeed. The energy used in struggling to understand תורה will strongly impress the תורה on one's memory.

R' Shlomo Heiman once came to R' Baruch Ber's home and found him dancing around the table with some of his students. As it was an ordinary weekday, he was curious as to what event had motivated this dancing. A תלמיד explained to R' Shlomo that for the past few days their רבי had struggled to understand the meaning of a comment of the רש"י, but he was unable to fully comprehend exactly what the רש"י was trying to convey. Then, in a conversation with a תלמיד, the רש"י's intent suddenly became clear. Ecstatic that, at last, he had an understanding of the רש"י's intent, the רבי grabbed hold of his students' hands and danced around the table!

R' Baruch Ber's שמחה, joy, left an everlasting impression on R' Shlomo. He had merited to witness R' Baruch Ber's joy in acquiring תורה knowledge. No joy in the world could ever compare to the spiritual joy R' Shlomo had seen that day!

The lesson learned from this episode is not limited to תורה study. It extends to any matter with which one struggles to achieve a goal. One should realize that his success will be far greater specifically because of all the difficult obstacles he encountered along the way.

ר' נתן צבי פינקל זצ"ל



In the last year of his life, when the ישיבה suffered from major money shortfalls, ראש ישיבה, זצ"ל Finkel, traveled to Baltimore of מיר, to fundraise. During his trip, ישיבת מיר spoke in ר' נתן צבי ישיבה and ended his דרשה by offering monies to anyone who could match a program he has in his own ישיבה: learn 12 hours daily through the end of זמן. ר' נתן צבי lovingly explained, "I saw people who love to learn. This will be a until סוף זמן. It was too good a deal to pass up!" ר' נתן kept his word!

גדולי ישראל of our Yahrzeits

(י"א חשוון)
5703-5772
1943-2011

ר' נתן צבי זצ"ל was born to Eliyahu Meir and Sara Finkel in Chicago, Illinois. He attended a local school and he had a Rabbi. At the age of 14, he visited Israel. After ר' ליזער יודל spoke to his father, he stayed an extra 8 months to learn. At 17, he return to learn in Yeshivas Mir and learn בהתמדה for 6 years, completing ש"ס each year. In 1964, he married בנימין ביוש פינקל's daughter, Leah and together they had 11 children. ר' נתן צבי began giving lessons in the Yeshiva in 1965. In 1990, he was appointed Rosh Yeshiva together with R' Refoel Shmuelevitz. On top of his שיעורים, he also gave שיעורים with עיון שיעורים. He developed בחינות to enhance the spirituality and materiality of his students, and on a similar level to the Ponovezher Rab, he built Torah in Israel.



Los Angeles, CA

5:47 עש"ק	הדלקת נרות
9:15 9:52	סוף זמן קריאת שמע
10:47	סוף זמן תפילה
6:04	שקיעה
6:42 7:16	מוצש"ק

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Living with the Torah

... on that very day... (B'reishis 17:23)

... בעצם היום הזה ...

On the very day that he was commanded [to perform the מילה] ... he was not afraid of the heathens nor of the scoffers ... (רש"י)

We need a little bit of transition from the above rashi to the story below. It should be short sweet and to the point as there is not much space available. The 1st paragraph below could become part of the transition.



The following incident was told by R' Shlomo Brevda, who heard it from Rebbetzin Greineman, the Steipler Rebbetzin's sister. It is a tribute to the Steipler Gaon זצ"ל's determination and tenacity regarding the sanctity of שבת.

R' Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky, זצ"ל, also known as the Steipler Gaon, was about to become engaged to the אשת's sister. But before he determined to make her his בלה, he felt that it was important to share with her an episode that took place while he was in Siberia.

Aside from the bitter cold and the frosty blinding snow, the back-breaking forced labor in the Russian army in Siberia required pure brute force. The Steipler Gaon had been inducted into the army against his will; yet, regardless of the terrible conditions in Siberia and the impossible work, he knew in his heart that only one task mattered — serving the Master of the world. He would do whatever was needed to accomplish that task.

One of the first obstacles the Steipler Gaon had to overcome was the army system itself — the ordinances dictated that everyone must work 7 days each week. To the Steipler, that rule was absolutely unacceptable. He approached the officer who was in charge, a brutal, anti-Semitic ogre, and asked to be granted a furlough every Saturday. The official paused for a moment and then he emitted a wicked laugh. Immediately, he answered that he would grant the request on one condition: the Steipler first had to prove himself to be a valiant warrior. He quickly ordered his men to form 2 rows and arm themselves with truncheons. The young Steipler watched the soldiers move into formation and heard the words of the evil officer, "Kanievsky, here is the deal. If you are able to make it through these lines and survive the blows from my officers, then you may rest on your Holy Sabbath. However, if you don't — ..." His voice trailed off, and he belted out a hearty laugh. Clearly he was enjoying his little game.

The Steipler did not flinch. Instead he quietly whispered a heartfelt prayer to the הקב"ה to help him survive this difficult test. He knew that he could give up and the game would be over. But if he admitted defeat, then his attempt to be released from working on שבת would be over. The guards motioned to their commanding officer that they were ready: the officer and his comrades then stood back to watch the fun.

The Steipler approached the path and again murmured one last plea. He held his hand over his head and ran between the rows of guards. With all their might they began to pummel him and beat him incessantly. The pain was unbearable, but the Steipler persisted and trudged forward. Blood trickled into his eyes but he continued to move forward. Step by step he inched ahead until finally he reached the end of the treacherous path. He collapsed at the finish line. Nobody offered to help him get up from the ground, but it did not matter because he had survived. As he lay there a smile formed on his lips. He had won. He was in incredible pain — but he had won! The שבת was still holy and he would be able to observe it. The commanding officer grudgingly informed him that he would not have to work on Saturday.

The Steipler finished recounting his tale to his בלה. He explained to her that this was his level of נפש. "The blows had hurt but I was happy to have had the privilege to suffer for the sake of the שבת." He then asked her if she was prepared to join him in his continuous sacrifice for תורה. She replied affirmatively, and they became נפלה.



A Chofetz Chaim Moment: 'ספר ח"ח הלכות רבילות כלל א' סעיף ה' How should Ari respond to Leivi's question?

*The brakes on Eli's brand new bicycle had to be adjusted. After Leivi, the 'bike expert' fixed it for him, Eli noticed some new scratch marks on the handlebars. During recess the next day, Eli told a group of friends that he was unhappy about Leivi's collateral damage. Later that day, Leivi met Ari after school and said, "Someone mentioned that you were standing next to Leivi when he talked about the repair job I did on his bike. Did he like it? What did he say?"

Answer: The הלכות רבילות applies equally, whether one speaks voluntarily or being pressured into relating the information. Ari's best course of action would be to avoid mentioning anything negative and to say only that Eli had said that Leivi had kindly fixed his brakes, without revealing Eli's dissatisfaction.



Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,

R' Noson Tzvi Finkel זצ"ל, the ראש ישיבה of מיר, had given an awe-inspiring דרשה at a נדחה. Every ounce of R' Noson Tzvi's strength was expended as he spoke. Because he was physically challenged, every word was carefully measured. After R' Noson Tzvi finished, he left immediately to go on a trip to America.

R' Don Segal was the next speaker. He began his דרשה by exclaiming, "רבותי, let me explain to you what you have been told to have witnessed today." He then proceeded to explain his introductory remarks by relating the following episode:

The Brisker Rov once called upon the head of the נדחה, R' Tanenbaum, on ערב יום כפור. The Brisker Rov was quick to get to the point. He asked R' Tanenbaum to use his political influence to procure a deferment from the army for a certain individual.

Since it was יום כפור, R' Tanenbaum respectfully told the Rov that many of his key contacts had already left their offices for the day. He reassured the Rov, however, that he was confident that after יום כפור, he would be successful. The Rov then made a telling comment, "דו! קענטסטו אבער דו ווילסט נישט! — You are able to do it, but you do not want to do it!"

R' Tanenbaum reevaluated the situation and somehow, by exerting extraordinary efforts, he was able to get the deferment signed before יום כפור. His determination had made it happen!

R' Don Segal then continued. "רבותי, R' Noson Tzvi Finkel זצ"ל, has many good excuses not to give a שיעור. Physically, he should be bedridden; however, because of R' Finkel's utter willpower, he is performing super human feats every single day!

My תלמיד זצ"ל, R' Finkel's life was an everlasting lesson that success in תורה is related to one ingredient: effort. His spiritual energy was so strong and insatiable that he was זוכה to set in motion and build the largest מקום in the world!

בקהילות

Your רבי



Sage Saying

Every נדחה ר' Finkel זצ"ל, מיר, ראש ישיבה, would speak in each of the three בתי מדרשים where the ישיבה held מתפללים, addressing thousands of תלמידים between the three locations. On the last נדחה of his life, he rose to the podium in each מדרש and said, "People want to know what תקיעת שופר, heavenly thoughts, they should have during תקיעות? You want to know what you should think about during תקיעות? — Think about someone else!"



Halacha Corner

הלכות ענייני דיומא: משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם

- Even if one ends the ברכה one can still say משיב הרוח at that point. One does not repeat שמונה עשרה unless one has begun saying the first word of the ברכה.
- 30 days after אצתת (כ"ב חשוון), if one is unsure if one said משיב הרוח, one need not repeat שמונה עשרה.

question of the week:

1. What event made believers out of those nations that were skeptical that אברהם was saved from the fiery furnace at אקרה?
2. Who informed אברהם of אקרה's capture and what motivated this person to do so?

תשובות

1. The miraculous emergence of מלך from the lime pit convinced the skeptics of that time of the existence of a universal power that was capable of doing נסים. (ד"ר בארי פארו, 14,10)
2. אברהם, who escaped from the war, informed אברהם, hoping אברהם would be killed in battle, so that he could marry שרה. (ד"ר גיבא פארו, 14,13)

רפואה שלמה יפה בת סמי

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