

Torah Thoughts

And these are the names of Bnei Yisrael. (Sh'mos 1:1)

Most people think that they must do something unusual or remarkable in order to be considered as an individual that was *מקדש שם שמות*. This is incorrect. There are some special *צדיקים* who by just mentioning their name create a *קדוש השם*. How so? R' Noach Katz, the grandfather of the author of *מלבושי יום טוב*, was such an individual.

R' earned himself the nickname "ר. נת-הו"ה." It happened shortly before his passing. He casually mentioned to someone that when they will ask him in *שמות* if he had studied *תורה*, he would reply, "כן, — yes," for he completed *ש"ס* 55 times, the *גימטריה* of *הו"ה* (the Hebrew letters ה=5 and ו=50). He was called *ר. נת-הו"ה* long after his death.

R' had the great *זכות* that anyone who heard this unusual name and asked why he was so called, would be told the story and that he completed *ש"ס* 55 times. The questioner would be inspired and would redouble his own efforts in *תורה* study.

On the words, "ואלה שמות בני ישראל" — *And these are the names of the Children of Israel*," *רש"י* comments, "Although He counted them by their names in their lifetime, He counted them again after their death to make known how precious they are to Him." *רש"י* then quotes *תנ"ח*'s comparison of *בני ישראל* to the stars. Regarding the parallel between *בני ישראל* and the stars, R' Mordechai Gifter *נצ"ל* explains in *פרקי תורה*: The stars are always present whether by night, when they are seen by everyone, or by day, when the sun's light renders them invisible to all. Similarly, the *בני ישראל*, particularly the *צדיקים*, exist eternally, even in their deaths, when their "light" is no longer visible, but shines brightly in *שמות*. In the *זכות* of the influence that *צדיקים* have on their *תלמידים* and followers during their lifetimes, as well as after their deaths, they continue to reach greater heights, and that is their eternal existence in the *עולם האמת*.

The *תורה* tells us about people whose names allude to their evil ways — *אדם* and *נמרד* — for instance — their names are always associated with the ways of the wicked. Fortunate are those *צדיקים* — such as *יוסף הצדיק* and *ר. נת-הו"ה* — whose names inspire others to emulate them and follow in the path of *ד'*.

It is not only famous people who can reach this level. Even an ordinary Jew has the power to influence others positively simply by the mention of his name. For instance, a person can be so careful in using his time that when people mention his name they automatically mention that he is a *מתמיד*; or a person can be so careful in his dealings with others that anyone who mentions his name adds, "What a *בועל מדות טובות* he is!" Even a *תיבה בחור* or a young child, who is outstanding in some way, can have people associate his qualities too when people mention with his name. He also belongs in the category of those whose very names are a *קדוש השם*.



The Munkatcher Rebbe *רבי* described his *רבי*, R' Mordechai Gifter *נצ"ל*, by the tape of the final *שעור* his *רבי* gave. At a certain point, he hears for the first time his *רבי* is not satisfied, he is unable to tie the pieces together perfectly. He tries once and then again, but it doesn't *go*. R' Gifter begins to cry and then thunders to the *בְּחוּרֵים*, "נון אויס יעדער מינוט" — make use of every minute! There will come a day when the gifts you have from *ד'* will be no more ... nothing lasts for ever!" That was my *רבי*!

Yahrzeits of our גדולי ישראל

כ"ג טבת
5676-5741
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R' Mordechai Gifter *נצ"ל* was born in Portsmouth, VA to *מטלא* and *ישראל*. His family moved to Baltimore so that they would receive a better *תורה* education. At *בר מצוה* age, he went to *ישיבת יצחק אלחנן* in NY. He went to *ישיבה*, Lithuania, in 1932. In 1939, he became engaged to *שושנה Bloch*, *זלמן*'s daughter. The wedding took place in America in 1940. In 1943, he became *רב* in Waterbury, CT. A year later, he joined the founders of *Telz* in Cleveland as *משגיח*. He emigrated to *ארץ ישראל* in 1977, to found *Telz-Stone* near *ירושלים*. After R' Sorotzkin *נצ"ל* two years later, he returned to Cleveland. He served *כלל ישראל* with every essence of his *חכמה* and warm personality, as *רבי* and leader of the *מועצת*.



Los Angeles, CA	
4:39 עש"ק	הדלקת נרות
8:49 9:29	סוף זמן קריאת שמע
10:19	סוף זמן תפילה
4:58	שקיעה
5:39 6:10	מוצש"ק

להצלחת

דוד ישראל נ"י

Living with the Torah

She opened it and saw him, the boy (2:6)

... ותפתח ותראהו את הילד ... like צדיק writes (הלכות תשובה, הוב) that every person can be a משה רבינו. One who achieves his potential by maximizing the talents and abilities bestowed on him by ד', can [on his own level] become as great as משה רבינו.

When משה רבינו rescued בתיה from the water, she had no idea that this child would one day be the leader of קלל ישראל and would be the one who would bring us the תורה. Similarly, every child has the potential to attain great heights, and as parents and teachers, we need to treat each child as though he is a potential משה רבינו.



No one could have predicted that the ראש ישיבה, R' Mordechai Gifter would turn out to be a תורה giant who taught thousands of תלמידים. His family background gave no indication that he would become the ראש of the Telz ישיבה — his father was a grocery store owner, and few of his relatives were תורה. He attended to Hebrew school, and, at בר מצוה, knew just one בלאט. Despite his background, however, this young American boy had a tremendous thirst for תורה and grew into one of the leaders of his generation.

R' Gifter used to say that his original plan had been to learn in the Telz ישיבה in Lithuania for one year and then go into business or become a lawyer. Two things which he observed, made him change his mind. One was the sight of 400 בְּחורים sitting and learning תורה in the Telz בית מדרש, their faces alight with an otherworldly glow; the 2nd was seeing a certain בְּחור whose appearance bespoke nobility. R' Gifter was so captivated by this בְּחור's regal manner that he assumed that the בְּחור belonged to an aristocratic family. When he inquired who the בְּחור was, he learned that in Telz there was no one who belonged to a princely or aristocratic family. The noble carriage of this בְּחור was purely a reflection of the sweetness of תורה that suffused him. When R' Gifter saw how profoundly תורה can affect a human being, he decided to remain in the Telz בית מדרש. He left six years later, having mastered all of the treasures of ש"ס.

For years afterward, he would reminisce about the תלמיד הקם in Telz who would review 70 folios of מסכת שבת in the time between the עיליות during שבת morning קריאת התורה.

He would also tell the בְּחורים in Telz, Cleveland, about the unique "עונג שבת" in Telz, Lithuania. After the סעודה שבת-morning, he said, the בְּחורים would go into the בית מדרש to learn, without a תברותה, until מנחה. Their תברותות then were אפי"ו and אפי"ו.

In this environment, an American born בְּחור grew into one of the greatest ראשי ישיבה of our time. When he was barely 50 years old, the Steipler Gaon told people that he was the גדול הדור.

R' Gifter and the Steipler Gaon wrote their תורה thoughts on postcards. Each treasured the other's words. The Steipler would begin his letters with elaborate titles, but R' Gifter was uncomfortable with all the acclaim. He kindly asked the Steipler Gaon to abstain from praising him, explaining that the Steipler did not really know him.

The Steipler Gaon responded in the next letter: "It is not true that I do not know you, since I have read your comments on the שְׁעוּרִים given by the Telzer (צ"ל ר' יוסף לייב), רב, and from there I can see your greatness. Still, רצונו של אדם זהו קבדו, fulfilling the will (wishes) of a person is honoring him..." R' Gifter could not hide his greatness from the Steipler.

Any תלמיד has the potential become his רבי's future prized תלמיד. Do you think that R' Tarnish, צ"ל, a Hebrew school רבי in Baltimore, realized that the new boy from Virginia was going to be the future בישראל...and every תלמיד should dream of greatness. R' Gifter did. As a young בְּחור he hung pictures of the גדולים in his dormitory room, and left an empty frame with the words written inside, in bold, "Why not You?"



A Chofetz Chaim Moment: ספר ח"ח הלכות לשון הרע כלל ח' סעיף ד' Can the questioner tell others about the new רב's error?

*The city's רב was retiring and the shul committee met to discuss their options. Many תלמידי חכמים vied for position. The committee voted for the one young רב who stood out, with his brilliance and בקיאות in ערוה בקיאות. In his 1st week, someone came with a שאלה. The רב was nervous and mixed up his שיעור. פוסקים. After the questioner arrived home, he received a call from the רב. The רב apologized for his error and explained that he was still inexperienced.

Answer: The תלמיד applies even to an תלמיד; however, relating לשון הרע about a רב it is much more תמור. Not only are we obligated to honor our הוראה, but it will cause a tremendous ד' and cause people to refrain from asking שאלות, questions, and they will פסקו their own שאלות wrongly.



Focus on Middos

Dear Talmid,

One תלמיד, who attended Telz ישיבה over 40 years ago told over the following personal story:

Generally R' Mordechai Gifter, צ"ל, would daven מנחה with the בולל, late in the afternoon. But on the 7th of אלוול, the day that the women and children of Telz in Lita were massacred הי"ד, R' Gifter observed בית מדרש פאר דער, and he was the שולית צבור in the main יארצייט.

After מנחה, as R' Gifter made his way home, he passed some בְּחורים who had missed מנחה. He stopped each one and let them know how disappointed he was. That night, R' Gifter gave a shmuess. At first he looked around and suddenly, he thundered, "דרני וואָבן פאר דער — Three weeks before the Day of Judgment!"

And then again, "דרני וואָבן פאר דער יום הדין!" — Three weeks before the Day of Judgment!"

The booming roar of his voice made the room tremble.

Then R' Gifter mimicked the שאַקלען (shaking) of the בְּחורים as they daven, and he continued, "And then you are going to daven ... וואָס דרניסט דו? — אין דער רבובו של עולם וועט זאָגן! — מיר אַ קאַפּ?!" — Why are you bothering me?!"

It is over 40 years later, and this תלמיד is now in the professional field. However, every year, three weeks before the יום הדין, this individual hears his רבי's voice thunder, "דרני וואָבן פאר דער — יום הדין!" He sees an image of his רבי, and saying, "And then you are going to daven ... וואָס דרניסט דו? — אין דער רבובו של עולם וועט זאָגן! — מיר אַ קאַפּ?!" This thought rejuvenates the תלמיד every year for his יום הדין preparation.

My תלמיד, if a תלמיד is hearing his רבי's shmuess 40 years later, we can learn a great deal about the sincerity of the רבי and his message. However, there is another lesson that is equally important, about a תלמיד who listened and internalized his רבי's message too!

בְּידידות, Your רבי



Sage Saying

R' Mordechai Gifter, צ"ל, would often shout something encouraging when he saw the boys playing ball. When they looked at him with surprise, wondering why the ראש was cheering them on, he would explain himself, "אַ — אַזוי דארף — A person must do everything he does with all of his strength! זיין אינ לעבן! — This is the way it must be in life!"



Halacha Corner

הלכות ראש חודש

- Although one can be חייב by eating any special food, it is praiseworthy for one to wash for bread and have a full סעודה in honor of ראש חודש.
- The monies sent to the רבי with the children will always be paid back in full by ד' and this beautiful מנהג should not be forgotten.

question of the week:

1. How did יתרו know that the Egyptian that had saved his daughters was from יעקב's family?
2. Which animal, that was from אַבְרָהָם's time, that will live until the time of משה, did משה use?

תשובות

1. Knowing that the waters of the well rose toward משה, יתרו recognized that משה must be from the family of יעקב. (2,20) ד"ה למה זה עונתו.
2. A special יעקב, donkey. This donkey was saddled for אַבְרָהָם and is the donkey that משה will be revealed upon, as the פסוק (זכרי ט: ט) tells us: ... (4,20) ד"ה על המור ... עני ורב על המור.

נערך על ידי הרב שמואל לניאדו

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