

PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת עקב
August 3, 2023 / ט"ז אב תשפ"ג



**Yahrzeit of Maran Reb Aharon
of Belz ז"ל - כ"א אב - Tuesday,
August 08, 2023**

A Living Sefer Torah

A fire broke out in Beis Medrash when Maran Reb Aharon of Belz ז"ל was a child. The crowd was more concerned about saving the Sifrei Torah, tefillin, and seforim over their own lives. People ran in and out to save whatever they could and forgot about little Ara'la, who was inside.

Suddenly, people noticed his grandfather, Maran, Reb Yehoshua of Belz ז"ל, emerging from the flames holding onto his grandson, running and panting, saying, "I also saved a living Sefer Torah from the fire – one who will ignite thousands and thousands of Yidden to serve Hashem and to learn Torah!"

Conquering Desires

Maran Reb Aharon of Belz's a"h mother a"h once gave her 'Ara'la' some chicken liver for lunch. During the day, the Rebbetzin was informed of a kashrus question about the chicken. The Rebbetzin was hysterical and ran to her husband, Maran Reb Yissocher Dov of Belz ז"ל, and told him about the mishap. Should she send a messenger to Cheder to tell her Ara'la, not to eat the liver?

Maran, Reb Yissocher Dov calmed his wife and told her it wasn't necessary to send someone to Cheder.

When 'Ara'la' returned home in the afternoon, his mother noticed he was holding the bag of liver and asked why he hadn't eaten it. Maran, Reb Aharon responded, "I strongly desired to eat the liver. However, since I strongly felt that desire, I resolved to conquer my feelings and refrained from eating the liver."

Doing a Complete Favor

Maran Reb Aharon once received a gold pocket watch as a gift, which he wore dangling from his vest pocket. A Yid once noticed the watch and asked him for the time. Young Ara'la removed the watch from his pocket and told the Yid the exact time, including the minutes and seconds. Another Yid, who witnessed the interaction, asked Ara'la. "Why was it necessary to tell the exact minutes and second – is it that you wanted to show off your new watch that you received as a gift?"

Ara'la answered, "No, absolutely not! When you do a favor for a Yid, one has to fulfill it to his utmost, as much as he is able!"



To Learn More About Reb Aharon of Belz ז"ל
worldofbelz.org/history/reb-aharon-of-belz/



PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

Yahrzeit of Maran Reb Aharon of Belz
ז"א אב - כ"א אב - Tuesday, August 08,
2023
continued

Seventy Years

There were three sisters who, together with their frum and ehrliche mother, survived the Holocaust and came to Eretz Yisroel after the war. Upon arrival at Eretz Yisroel, their mother became gravely ill and was admitted to Hadassah Hospital in Tel Aviv in serious condition.

The sisters heard about the Wondrous Belzer Rebbe and went to his home in Tel Aviv late at night. Since they couldn't enter the Rebbe's chambers at such a late hour, one sister raised her voice and started crying. When Maran heard their screams, he told his gabbai to allow them to enter.

They told the Rebbe about their mother's illness, and one sister started making a raucous and threatening that if their mother died, they would all steer from the Torah path and go live on a non-frum kibbutz since the only thing that kept them together was their mother's ehrlichkeit.

Maran sat engrossed in his thoughts when suddenly he awoke and asked his gabbai to ask the girls how old their mother was. They answered that she was fifty-six years old.

Maran responded, "Dovid Hamelech said, ימי 56 נאר אוי! אוי! שנה. אבן שבעים בהם שנותינו? – a man's years are seventy years, oy, oy, just fifty-six? Maran repeated himself a few times until the gabbai told the daughters they could leave the room. When the girls returned to the hospital to check on their mother's well-

being, they were surprised to see her in a much better state till she slowly recuperated and was completely healed.

The mother merited to see her daughters build beautiful, ehrliche homes filled with Torah and Chassidus. She was niftar at age 70.

The Kozhnitzer Maggid ז"ל explained a reason why שבת נחמו ואתחנן coincides with שבת נחמו after Tisha B'Av. Since one isn't allowed to learn Torah on Tisha B'Av, after Tisha B'Av, we read in עשרת הדברות ואתחנן about the Ten Commandments. To show that the days of mourning have passed and we are ready to accept the Torah.

Two Nights – Two Children

Maran Rebbe Aharon wanted to travel to Lizensk for the yahrzeit of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech ז"ל. His chassidim searched for a place for him to stay and found an apartment by a Gerrer Chassid who lived in Lizensk.

When they arrived at the chassid's home, Maran was escorted to his room, but Maran said he couldn't stay in this room, pointing to the ceiling.

At first, they couldn't understand what Maran was alluding to, but afterward, they realized that the host's daughters slept above Maran's room. Therefore, Maran didn't want to stay in that room. The host's ten-year-old son offered his room to Maran, but Maran refused to accept his offer. Even after the boy said he could sleep at a nearby relative, Maran didn't want the child to give up his room for him. The boy didn't give up until Maran agreed to stay in his room and spent two nights there.

PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

**Yahrzeit of Maran Reb Aharon of Belz
zt"l - כ"א אב - Tuesday, August 08,
2023**
continued

Many years later, following WWII, this child survived, married, and settled in Eretz Yisroel. However, after being married for a while, he was still childless and came to Maran with a kvittel to ask for a bracha to be blessed with children.

Maran read the kvittel, thumped his two fingers on the table, and exclaimed, "Two nights." The gabbai, Reb Sholem Foigel z"l, who was present in the room, wondered aloud, "What does the Rebbe mean by saying 'two nights'?" Maran replied that he slept in his room for two nights; therefore, he deserved two children.

The two children told the story to Reb Yitzchak Shloma Unger z"l.

He Heard Her Cry

A woman came with a kvittel to Maran, asking for a bracha for her daughter, who had already passed the shidduchim age. She was suggested to a widower who was told that his wife died in the labor camps, and he came to Eretz Yisroel after the war.

Maran told her, "Hashem should help to find something better." When the mother returned home and repeated Maran's words, the family argued that she probably didn't explain the situation well. So, the mother returned to Maran and repeated the same request. Maran answered again, "I told you already. Hashem should help you find a better suggestion."

The woman started crying that her daughter was embarrassed being single for so long, and here they finally have a promising suggestion..." Maran, whose tremendous ahavas Yisroel felt the pain of the broken woman, told her slowly. "What can I do? How can I agree to a shidduch with a yid who still has a wife? What will happen when his first wife appears? Go home, and Hashem will send you a better shidduch for your daughter."

Two weeks later, the Yid, who was suggested to her daughter, received a letter from his wife that Baruch Hashem had survived the war, and she was on the way to Eretz Yisroel.



Send your Kvittel to the Tzion of Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l on the Day of His Yahrzeit
worldofbelz.org/21av

כ"א אב. כ"א אב

Reb Chaim Nota Katz z"l once mentioned the name of his mother a"h to Maran, Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l. When Maran asked when is her yahrzeit, he answered, "כ"א אב". When Maran heard the date, he turned pale and repeated a few times "כ"א אב, כ"א אב, כ"א אב."

Remember with a Spodik

PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

**Yahrzeit of Maran Reb Aharon of Belz
ז"ל - כ"א אב - Tuesday, August 08,
2023**
continued

The last time Maran Reb Aharon of Belz ז"ל departed from Tel Aviv to Yerushalayim, he asked for his 'spodik' (tall shtreimel), saying that he wants the children to remember him with wearing a spodik.

בין אור לחושך

Thirteen and a half years following ט' שבט תש"ד when Maran Reb Aharon of Belz ז"ל arrived to Eretz Yisroel until כ"א מנחם אב תשי"ז, chassidim in Eretz Yisroel were worthy to be in the presence of light, a מלאך האלוקים.

On the Motzei Shabbos, a week before his petira, Maran didn't say the words "בין אור לחושך" during Havdalah. A week later, Motzei Shabbos, Parshas Eikav, כ"א אב, at 3:55 am, Maran's holy neshama returned to His creator בקדושה ובטהרה.

Klal Yisroel suffered a tremendous loss. Thousands of Yidden from all over Eretz Yisroel escorted the Aron to Har Hamanuches, where until today, thousands daven for their ישועה at the tzion.

**EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY...**

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת... (עקב ה:י)
You will eat, and you will be satisfied.

A wealthy chassid, a miser, approached Harav Reb Yitzchak of Vurke ז"ל to discuss

something. This chassid lived a very penny-pinched life. His daily habits consisted of eating a slice of black bread and a piece of herring.

During their discussion, the Vurke Rav reprimanded the chassid: "If Hashem blessed you with abundance, you're required to eat fish, meat, and wine!"

The chassidim wondered why it bothered their Rebbe what the wealthy miser ate. The Vurke Rebbe explained. "Don't think it bothers me what this person eats. What troubles me is the poor person. However, if the wealthy person affords himself such meager food, he won't share his meager food with the poor. However, if he eats the food of someone of his stature, fish, meat, and wine, then the poor person will at least receive bread and herring from him!"

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת... (עקב ה:י)
You will eat, and you will be satisfied.

The Rebbe Reb Boruch of Medzhybizh ז"ל once visited the city of Kshaniv. He asked his host to prepare a lavish meal worthy of a king. His host explained that today was a fast day in Kshaniv since it didn't rain for a while. Why would the Rebbe disturb our fast day?

"You don't understand," explained the Rebbe. "Your act of fasting signifies that you can manage without food and drink. Therefore, I asked you to prepare a seudah to show Hashem that you can't live without food and drink!"

את ה' אלקיך תירא... (עקב י:כ)
Hashem, your G-d, you shall fear...

PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

**EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY...**
continued

The Holy Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev zt"l spent one summer in the birthplace of the holy Rebbe Moshe Zvi of Savraner zt"l.

The Barditchever stayed in a guesthouse opposite a lake. One evening, a group of young bochorim came to swim in the lake. The Barditchever was standing on the terrace facing the lake and said he smelled a whiff of kedusha coming from the lake – one of the young boys was the future Savraner Rebbe.

While swimming in the lake, this holy child told his friends that a tzaddik was in town and that we should go and greet him. The boys dressed quickly and went to mekabal panim – to greet the Barditchever Rav.

When they arrived, the Barditchever asked, 'This Child,' "Do you know how to learn?" The young Savraner answered yes. The Barditchever asked which Gemara he was learning, and he answered which. The Barditchever Rav then asked a question, and the child explained. The Barditchever Rav asked a stronger question, and he answered. This scenario was repeated eight times, each response being 'better than before.'

The last answer was so sharp and strong that Barditchever Rav expected the child to become animated, flail his hands, and show facial expressions while delivering his brilliant answer. Still, the boy didn't budge from his place.

The Barditchiver wondered aloud, "How can you deliver such a brilliant piece without becoming animated or moving your body?"

The holy child answered, "It says in the Torah את ה' אלוקיך תירא..., Chazal explained that the word את was added for Talmidei Chachamim. And my being within a tzaddik's presence, I needed to answer like that!"

The holy Barditchever Rav kissed the young Savraner Rebbe on his forehead and complimented, "You are well-learned!"

ברוך תהיה מכל העמים... (עקב ז:יד)
You shall be the most blessed of all the peoples...

A leading porutz of Galicia suffered from terrible headaches and went to a renowned hospital in Lemberg to see a specialist. However, the doctors in Lemberg couldn't relieve his severe headaches. The porutz was very distraught and decided to return to his palace, bid farewell to his family, and then commit suicide.

When his friends learned of his intentions, they suggested he travel to Belz since the tzaddik there has the power to heal.

When the porutz arrived in Belz, he told the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l his problem and shared his fate. He begged Maran to wish him a complete recovery. The Sar Shalom contemplated what to do before wishing him a complete recovery. Maran said, "This deed can create a tremendous Kiddush Hashem which will benefit the Yidden. Therefore, I said, whoever Hashem helps, will result in what it says in the pasuk, ברוך תהיה מכל העמים... the Yidden will be the most blessed of all the people."

The porutz bid farewell from the Sar Shalom and returned home, completely healed.

PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

**EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY...**
continued

והסיר ה' ממך כל חולי וכל מדוי... (עקב ז:טו)
*Hashem will remove from you every illness
and all the bad maladies.*

The Chassid Reb Avraham Yehoshua Herbst z"l related that when he was a young bochur, he learned in the Yeshiva Tiferes Tzion in Bnei Brak, and he used to walk every Friday night to Tel Aviv, to the tish of Maran, Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l.

Since the tish finished very late, Reb Avraham Yehoshuah used to sleep overnight in the Beis Medrash on a hard, wooden bench. Shabbos morning, when the Bilgorai Rav zt"l came to daven, he noticed the young bochur rise from the bench with aching bones.

With a warm, fatherly smile, the Bilgorai Rav approached him and asked how he was faring and if his shoulders weren't aching from sleeping on a hard bench. The bochur's shoulders were aching, and before he could respond, the Bilgorai Rav placed his hands on the bochur's shoulders and started to massage them gently. The bochur started feeling some relief, and the Bilgorai Rav continued massaging until the bochur felt completely better. When the Bilgorai Rav was done, he wished the bochur, "You should never have to experience shoulder pain for the rest of your life!"

Reb Avraham Yehoshua concluded that while serving in the army, where he spent nights sleeping on cold grounds, he never experienced pain!"

THIS WEEK'S VORT – פרשת עקב

והיה עקב תשמעון... ושמרתם ועשיתם אותם (עקב ז:יב)
*These shall be the rewards when you obey...
and observe and perform them...*

The word עקב can also mean the 'end.' Hashem asks of us – והיה עקב תשמעון – at the end before Moshiach comes, every Yid will need to do teshuvah – repent. ושמרתם. (The word can also mean to wait), so why do you wait for the last minute? ועשיתם אותם – do teshuvah right away and keep all the mitzvahs so we should be worthy of the final geulah – redemption.

זכר תזכור את אשר עשה... לפרעה ולכל מצרים... (עקב ז:יח)
*You shall remember what Hashem did to
Pharaoh and all of Egypt...*

The word זכר is written without the letter "ו" to allude to the fact that we should not forget what Hashem did to the "six hundred" horsemen who drowned in the Yam Suf.

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת... (עקב ח:י)
You will eat, and you will be satisfied.

Not only during hunger or poverty should you reach out to Hashem. ואכלת ושבעת וברכת. – Also, when you have plenty, don't forget to thank Hashem for all the good He bestows upon you.

לא בצדקתך... אתה בא לרשת את ארצם... (עקב ט:ה)
*Not because of your righteousness... are you
coming to possess their land...*

Moshe Rabbeinu told the Yidden. Not because of your worthiness did you merit



PARSHAS EIKEV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS
continued

This week's vort – פרשת עקב
continued

Eretz Yisroel. It's in the merit of the Avos. With this statement, Moshe affirmed that Eretz Yisroel will always belong to the Yidden, even when the generations will be weaker since it's in the merit of our ancestors.

אבדתם מהרה... (עקב יא:יז)
And you will be swiftly banished...

This pasuk comes to imply that you should banish – the middah (trait) of rushing. Each action you do should be calm and clear-headed with yishuv hadas.

ארץ חטה ושערה וגפן...לא תחסר כל בה (עקב ח:ט)
Land of wheat, barley, grape, fig, and pomegranate: a Land of oil-olives and date-honey...you will lack nothing there.

These pasukim impart that Eretz Yisroel is blessed with the seven species, Shivas Haminim. The Mefarshim asks why Eretz Yisroel is blessed more than all other countries. When these species also grow in other countries. The answer is, "In other countries, the species don't grow "all together." In Eretz Yisroel, they do!

פרקי אבות - פרק ד'

בן זומא אומר איזהו חכם הלומד מכל אדם (אבות ד:א)
Ben Zoma said: Who is wise? Someone who learns from every person.

The word אברהם. משה. is the acronym for אד"ם. Despite their greatness, these three

tzaddikim excelled in the middah of ענוה – they were very humble. Avraham Avinu kept the Torah commandments even before the Torah was given on Har Sinai. Moshe Rabbeinu was the most prominent leader by Klal Yisroel, and Duvid Hamelech was a king. The Mishna tells us הלומד מכל אדם – to be like these three people and learn Torah humbly.

איזהו חכם הלומד מכל אדם (אבות ד:א)

The holy Baal Shem Tov zt"l explained this Mishna with a parable. A person who looks into a mirror sees his blemishes. So, too, A Yid who looks at another Yid only sees the other's failures, but he should know that the other's failures reflect his own.

גופו מכובד על הבריות (אבות ד:ו)
His body is respected amongst humanity.

To honor the Torah, a person must first worry that גופו מכובד על הבריות – he should be conscientious about his body and clothing, cleanliness, belongings, and surroundings – so he shouldn't disgrace others. And if he is careful with all this, then the words of the Torah that emit from him will be valued by others.