

PARSHAS NITZAVIM-VAYELEGH

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת נצבים / וילך - שבת סליחות
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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BELZ

During the month of Elul, Yeshiva Bochorim in Eretz Yisroel from Yeshiva Gedola, Yeshiva Ketana and Cheder boys from Yerushalyaim have the opportunity to personally submit their kvittel (personal request) to the Belzer Rebbe Shlita, and to wish and receive blessings in return for "א גוט" געבענטשט יאר"

SHABBOS SELICHOS

The Belzer Rav Shlita once said during his "Shabbos Slichos drasha" (speech) - "If you just say the words "Shabbos Selichos" it's enough to arouse fear!"

Selichos In Belz

The Avodah - holy task and preparations for the first day Selichos in Belz was so great that Maran Rebbe Yissocher Dov of Belz zt"l expressed: "The Avodah on this great day is harder for me than the holy Avodah on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur!"

Tehillim During Selichos

It's a minhag (custom) in Belz to recite the whole Sefer Tehillim after Shachris on the first day of Selichos. Many have a minhag to complete the entire Sefer Tehillim twice during Elul. There are 150 kapitlach - chapters of Tehillim - multiplied by two is 300, equivalent to the word כפר - to forgive - which is gematria 300. In the merit of Tehillim, Hashem should forgive our sins.

שטייטס אויף צו סליחות .. שטייטס אויף צו עבודת הבורא

Wake up to Selichos...Wake up to Serve Hashem!

The minhag was for the city's shamesh to walk around the town holding a lantern and banging with a hammer, waking everyone to Selichos. Today in Belz in Yerushalayim, Reb Yitzchak Eizik Fried Shlita drives around Kiryas Belz with a loudspeaker with the renowned Reb Yermiya Damen's Shlita singing: "ישראל עם קדושים, שטייט אויף צו" "סליחות...שטייטס אויף לעבודת הבורא"

A Good Morning - Lots of Good Years

א גוט מארגן" and return the greeting with "א - A good morning" and return the greeting with "א - A good morning - a good year!" The reason is that both should receive a bracha - a blessing.

A Yid greeted HaGoan Reb Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l one morning, and Reb Shlomo Zalman responded in return with "א גוט מארגן - אסאך" - a good morning and lots of good years!" Reb Shlomo Zalman adapted this blessing from a story.

One Motzei Shabbos Selichos, on the last Motzei Shabbos of the year, following Maariv, a Yid wished HaGoan Reb Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l "א גוטע" "א גוטע" and as usual, Reb Yosef Chaim responded, "א גוט וואך!" Soon after the Yid left Shul, Reb Yosef Chaim ran after him and said, "א גוטע וואך", "א גוטע וואך" - a good week and lots of good years!"

Reb Yosef Chaim explained that usually, one wishes for 'A good week and a good year,' but realizes that this is the last week of the year, and

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Shabbos Selichos

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the blessing is only valid for one more week. Therefore he hurried to add blessings to his bracha that the Yid should merit lots of good years!

WEDNESDAY, כ"ז אלול – YAHRZEIT OF MARAN, THE SAR SHALOM OF BELZ

Maran Rebbe Shalom Rokeach zt'l was born in the city of Brod to his parents, Harav Hakadosh Rebbe Eluzer Rokeach zt'l and Rebbetzin Rivka Henya, the daughter of Reb Yehuda Zundal Ramraz from Sokol zt'l.

The Sar Shalom was born during a war between Russia and Poland. According to how the baby Shalom was lying in his carriage, that's how the battle waged. If he lay on his right, one country would be stronger, and if he lay on his left, the other would be stronger. It was interesting to note that it benefitted the Yidden when the country on the right would hold the fort, and he would strain himself to remain lying on the right for long periods.

When young Shalom was five years old, his older sister used to pick him up and carry him across a narrow wood that served as a bridge so that he wouldn't smear from mud. Once, Harav Hakadosh Reb Moshe Leib Sossover zt'l came from the other side and wanted to cross the plank. Since it was so narrow, two people couldn't pass. Reb Moshe Leib Sossover stepped off the plank and freed the space for young Shalom to pass, saying, ***"This boy will grow up to be the Gadol Hador – the leader of this generation!"***

As a young boy, the Sar Shalom was orphaned by his father, Reb Eluzer as a young boy. His uncle (his mother's brother), Reb Yissocher Dov Ramraz

zt'l, the Rav of Sokol, took him into his home to raise and realized he possessed a gem and later took him as a son-in-law for his daughter, Rebbetzin Malka a"h. Rebbetzin Malka persuaded and supported Maran, The Sar Shalom, to strive to learn and accept the Rabbinic mantle in the town of Belz.

When the city of Belz, which wasn't far from Sokol, lost its Rav, they asked the holy Chozeh of Lublin zt'l whom he recommended, for a Rav. The Chozeh suggested the Sar Shalom. In 1816, the Sar Shalom became the first Belzer Rav – his greatness was renowned all around – thousands of chassidim, Baal Batim (business people), and Rabbanim came to Belz to be in the presence of the Tzaddik.

His Power to Heal

It was known that the Sar Shalom zt'l was on a loftier level. Through his Torah learning, his holy fingers had the strength to heal the sick.

Reb Shalom Mordechai HaKohen form Berzhan z'l came to Maran for a Refuah. Maran moved his holy fingers across the afflicted area, but it didn't heal. So Maran sat down to learn Tor Shulchan Aruch and, while learning, kept on pointing his fingers to certain words in the Sefer. Then, Maran moved his fingers across the afflicted area, and the wound disappeared.

The Berzhaner Rav asked Maran what connection his learning has with healing, to which Maran replied, "Every sickness and ailment is connected with a specific mitzvah in the Torah. Since רמ"ה – מצוות עשה – the 248 mitzvahs are parallel to the 248 organs of a person, and שס"ה מצוות לא תעשה – the 365 forbidden commandments are parallel to the 365 tendons of a person. If you learn Torah the way you're supposed to, you can feel and understand which mitzvah destroyed a certain body part that brought upon the sickness. Since I didn't learn the specific halacha of your ailment that hurt, I

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Wednesday, כ"ז אלול - Yahrzeit of Maran, the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l
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sat down to learn that halachah, and through the power of Torah learning, I understood how to heal that body part."

Kerchief Over Her Eyes

An older woman once visited Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l with her son. She shared that she remembered Maran's great-grandfather, The Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, who healed her eyes when she suddenly became blind as a young child. "The Sar Shalom once stayed at our home, and my father asked the tzaddik for a bracha to heal my ailment. The Tzaddik told his meshamesh to bring his handkerchief, and he swayed the scarf in front of my eyes, and soon after, I opened my eyes, and I could see! I even remember the kerchief. It was red and had white threads with brown stains from the 'tabik' that the Rebbe used to smell."

Maran Reb Aharon so appreciated the story that he made the woman repeat it three times.

Muted Miracles

A grandson of Reb Boruch of Mezibiz dwelled in Belz for a while. He was present when a couple came to Maran the Sar Shalom zt"l holding their young daughter, who was, unfortunately, mute, and doctors couldn't offer any remedy. Maran swiftly swept his two holy hands across her mouth, and she started speaking clearly.

Reb Boruch's grandson exclaimed. "If I could perform such miracles, I would earn lots of money!" Maran replied, "Believe me, it doesn't come alone. I stayed awake a thousand nights learning Torah diligently, and on the last night, I asked Hashem, 'Ribbono Shel Olam! You know I

didn't do it in my honor. I learned the Torah in Your honor. Therefore, I ask that I should merit that the two fingers I used to learn Torah should have the power to heal sick Yidden!"

The Great Belzer Shul

After staying awake for a thousand nights, Eliyahu Hanavi revealed himself to The Sar Shalom and taught him halachos about building a Beis Medrash. Maran understood that it was a message from shamayim (heaven) for him to build a Shul. Maran was spiritually and physically involved in building the shul, saying that he ensured that from the spot of the shul until the Beis Hamikdash in Yerushalayim, there shouldn't be an impure stone or cross in the way.

The Shul's Chanukas Habayis - inauguration was celebrated with great pomp. The Sar Shalom left some construction for his children and grandchildren to complete in their days. The Shul stood until it was tragically destroyed by the Nazis ym"s.

The Shinover Rav zt"l once asked a chassid who traveled to Belz that he should be him 'mazkir' (mention his name) to the Sar Shalom, and added, "If you aren't able to visit the Sar Shalom, then at least be 'mazkir' my name in the holy Shul in Belz!"

בעלזא וועט זיין א ווינקל פאר תורה און יראת שמים ביז משיח וועט!
"קומען"

Rebbe Shalom of Belz reined in Belz for nearly forty years until he passed away on the 27th day of Elul, 1855, just three days before Rosh Hashanah. During his eulogy at the funeral, his successor, his holy son Rebbe Yehoshua of Belz zt"l, proclaimed that his saintly father was taken from the world three days before Rosh Hashanah because he had been appointed as a member of the בית דין של מעלה - judicial panel in the Heavenly Court. And according to Halacha, a judge must be given three days'

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notice to prepare himself.

Hashem should help; we should follow in the tzaddik's footsteps and merit the Sar Shalom's promise be fulfilled: "בעלזא וועט זיין א ווינקל פאר תורה" – Belz will be a cornerstone for Torah and Fear of Hashem until Mashiach's arrival!"

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

הקהל את העם...למען ישמעו ולמען ילמדו (וילך לא:יב)
Gather the people...they shall hear and learn to fear Hashem.

The chassid Reb Shaya Raver z"l was known for conducting long Melavah Malka seudos on Motzei Shabbos. When he was asked the reason why, he explained with the following story.

A chassid came to Maran, the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, and shared that he lives in a small town where he is Boruch Hashem successful in business, yet he doesn't have any satisfaction from his wealth. His townspeople bicker because of jealousy from one another, and there's hatred among them.

The Sar Shalom advised him to return home and summon everyone to a meeting. In the Sar Shalom's name, he should say that the whole town should gather each Motzei Shabbos for Melavah Malka – for this merits achdus – unity between Yidden. And I (The Sar Shalom) assure you it will promote peace and happiness.

The chassid returned home and did what he was told, and from then on, there was peace in town.

Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l once said, "A city whose townsfolk come together for seudas Melavah Malka benefits the whole town!"

ואנכי הסתר אסתיר פני (וילך לא: יח)
But I will indeed have concealed My face...

Following WWII, in 1948, the Bilgorai Rav zt"l was sent to Europe by his brother Maran Rebbe Aharon of Belz zt"l to provide chizuk (strength) to the heimishe people survivors of the war. One Erev Shabbos, a bochur named Avraham Karp z"l, knocked on the door where the Bilgorai Rav was staying in Paris. A bochur by the name of Avrohom Karp (R' Avrohom was the son of the shochet from Prompil, which was situated near the city of Bilgorai. R' Avrohom later moved to Montreal, where he was a renowned Daf Yomi Maggid Shiur.)

The bochur Avrohom was currently learning in a Yeshiva near Paris, and he asked the Bilgorai Rav's shamesh if he could meet the Rav. The shamesh explained that now wasn't a good time since the Rav was resting for Shabbos and told him to return later. However, the bochur asked if he could meet the Bilgorai Rav now, adding that he just wanted to shake his hands and still needed to return to Yeshiva before Shabbos.

After begging relentlessly, Avrohom told the shamesh to tell the Bilgorai Rav that the son of the shochet from Prompil is here, and he wants to see him. The shamesh relayed his message, and the Bilgorai Rav said to allow him inside.

The Bilgorai Rav was happy that the bochur Avrohom Karp survived the war. Avrohom asked the Rav, "I came here to ask a difficult question that pains me terribly." He continued, "My father wanted to move from Galicia to America or Eretz Yisroel, and since he was a Belzer Chassid, he asked Maran Rebbe Aharon of Belz zt"l permission, but Maran didn't allow him to move. And now, only I remained the sole survivor from our family; the rest of them perished in the war." The bochur

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**Everyone loves a good story,
especially a chassidische story...**

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wanted to understand how such a thing could've happened.

The Bilgorai Rav was moved. He placed his head in his hands, deep in thought. After a few minutes, the Bilgorai Rav answered him. "I asked my brother, Maran Reb Aharon of Belz, the same question, and he answered me: 'It says in the pasuk ואנכי הסתר אסתיר פני - why does it have a double phrase of - אסתיר פני hiding? The answer is that there are two types of "הסתרת פנים" - of Hashem hiding His face. At times, Hashem covers the bad, which causes a stronger Hester Panim - which Hashem reveals to Tzaddikim the bad, which appears to them as if it's perfect." The Bilgorai Rav concluded, "Before the war's outbreak, there was a Hester Panim that this evil appeared to the tzaddikim as something good!"

The Bilgorai Rav asked the bochur Avrohom to stay for Shabbos, but Avrohom said that he made a 'neder' - a promise not to sleep in the city of Paris due to its spiritual decline. The Bilgorai Rav offered to annul his vow, but R' Avrohom refused for fear of spiritually harming his neshamah - soul.

פרשת כי נצבים - THIS WEEK'S VORT

כי את אשר ישנו פה עמנו עומד היום לפני ה' אלקינו, ואת אשר איננו פה עמנו היום (נצבים כטיד)

But with whoever is here, standing with us today before Hashem, our G-d, and whoever is not.

Rashi explains - ואת אשר איננו פה עמנו היום refers to future generations.

The pasuk also refers to the previous generations. Refers to the tzaddikim who live in our generation - עומד היום לפני ה' אלקינו stand with us on היום - Rosh Hashanah and daven for

US. ואת אשר איננו פה עמנו היום - and the tzaddikim who already passed on - עמנו היום - also daven with us and for us on Rosh Hashanah.

אתם נצבים היום כולכם... (נצבים כטיב)

You are standing today, all of you...

The Medrash says that "היום" refers to Rosh Hashanah, and "נצבים" refers to the parnassah - a person's livelihood since money 'sets a person on his feet.' The pasuk states אתם נצבים that when a person asks for parnassah from Hashem, היום - on Rosh Hashanah, he shouldn't just ask for himself; he should also ask for כולכם - for all of Klal Yisroel.

והיית רבית וברכך ה' אלוקיך וגו'. (נצבים לזו)

Then you will live and multiply, and Hashem will bless you in your Land...

The three things every Yid davens for are alluded to in this pasuk. רבית - בני - children in your lifetime, וברכך - חי - to live and be well, מזוני - is - food to live.

פרשת וילך - THIS WEEK'S VORT

עברתי ממתותיך ולא שכחתי (חי תבא כו: יג)

I have not transgressed any of Your commandments, and I have not forgotten.

The Midrash says: "Whoever doesn't give Maaser (a pittance from his earnings), mice will eat his wheat. The Gemara says (הוריות יג) that if one eats food that mice ate, he will forget his learning. The pasuk says, לא עברתי ממתותיך - I gave Maaser, so mice didn't eat from my wheat, and therefore, ולא שכחתי - I didn't forget what I learned.

ואנכי הסתר אסתיר פני (וילך לא: יח)

But I will indeed have concealed My face...

Harav Hakadosh Reb Menachem Mendel of 'Vorka

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פרשת וילך – This week's vort

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zt"l explained: Just like children play hide-seek and the child who hides yells out, "I hid, find me!" The child who needs to find his friend is smart enough to figure out the location based on where his friend's voice is coming from. He seeks and finds him. So, too, is with Hashem. Hashem calls out, "I hid. Find Me!" One who is smart enough hears the call from Hashem beckoning to Him and is aroused to seek out Hashem, and he finds Him.

ולמדה את בני ישראל שימה בפיהם... (וילך לא:יט)
Teach it to the Yidden, place it in their mouth...

When a person eats, he puts the food in his mouth. However, small children and weak people need to be fed the food, but they have to swallow it on their own. This is what the pasuk tells us. When the Yidden received the Torah, it was fed to them, but they needed to swallow it on their own to bring the Torah into their hearts.

פרקי אבות – פרק ה'

הוי עז כנמר וקל כנשר (אבות ה:כ)
Fierce as a tiger and light as an eagle.

The Ropshitzer Rav zt"l used to say, "When I was young, the Yetzer Hara used to have rachmanus – mercy on me and say, 'Naftuli, what's your rush? It's dark outside, the stars are still out, and it's cold...stay sleeping.' I used to yell back, "Get away from me, you're already long awake, you're working already, and you're telling me to remain asleep?..."

רץ כצבי (אבות ה:כ)
Run like a deer...

A person is required to act like a deer and utilize his strength to perform Hashem's will. When a

deer runs, it tends to turn around and look back. A person should also do that: From time to time, he should stop running, look back, and ask himself: "Am I running in the right direction? Are my actions OK? Or do I need to improve?"

פרקי אבות – פרק ו'

זוכה לדברים הרבה (אבות ו:א)
Merits lots of things...

The word זוכה also means to conquer. When one learns Torah for the sake of serving Hashem – he receives an extra strength to conquer those who wish to deter him from serving Hashem.

כל העוסק בתורה לשמה זוכה לדברים הרבה (אבות ו:א)
One who learns Torah for Hashem's sake merits lots of things...

If someone's intent of learning is לשמה – to create נחת רוח – Hashem's satisfaction and not for his reward, then זוכה לדברים הרבה – he merits more rewards for learning the Torah than the person who learns in the hope of receiving a reward.