

# Parashas Yisro

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת יתרו

י"ה שבט תשפ"ו / February 5, 2026



YARHZEIT OF MARAN REB YEHOSHUA OF BELZ ZT"l  
Der Mittler Rav זצ"ל  
Tuesday, February 10, 2026 - כ"ג שבט

[click here to learn more about the Mittler Rav zt"l](#)

Reb Yehoshua Rokeach zt"l was the youngest son of the first Belzer Rebbe, the Sar Shalom zt"l. Though it was common in that era to anoint a close disciple to take over the Rabbinic leadership after a Rebbe's passing, the concept of hereditary rabbinical succession, with a son assuming the mantle after his father, was new.

Compared to his father, Reb Shalom, who traveled to meet and learn from great Chassidic leaders of the time, Reb Yehoshua, on the other hand, had yet to travel to any. He used to say, "My father was my only Rebbe, and he taught me everything and revealed all that will happen to me until I pass on. He never told me to travel to other Rebbes; therefore, I don't."

The Mittler Rav was from the leading Rabbanim who combated the "Maskilim" - the enlightenment movement at the time. Together with Reb Shimon Sofer zt"l, the Krakov Rav, they established "Machzikei Hadas" to fight the maskilim and established "Kol Machzikei Hadas" - a religious newspaper to combat the rebellious papers.

The head of the Maskilim met in Lemberg with leading Rabbanim, with Reb Yehoshua presiding. The Maskilim proposed a treaty saying that the Maskilim and Chassidim should agree on a 'middle way approach to Yiddishkeit' since there's no 'side route' to Yiddishkeit; either to be completely removed

from Torah or completely adhere to the ways of Chassidus.

Reb Yehoshua told the head of the Maskilim to come to the window and describe what he saw outside. He answered, "I see people walking on the sidewalks and horses in the middle of the road." Reb Yehoshua replied with a smile: "Yes, yes! You said well. Only horses go the middle way!"

## He Saw Eliyahu Hanavi at the Seder

As a young child, during a Pesach Seder, Reb Yehoshua zt"l cried bitterly, and no one could calm him down. His father, the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, took his son on his lap and asked why he was crying. Reb Yehoshua said that he slept during "חמתך שפוך" and no one woke him up to see Eliyahu Hanavi. Reb Shalom calmed his young son by repeating חמתך שפוך, and the child stopped crying.



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## YARHRTZIET OF REB YEHOShUA ROKEACH ZT"l

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### HIDDEN HEALER

The Mittler Rav zt"l once noticed that his grandson, Harav Nuchem Aharon zt"l (the son of Reb Leibish of Magriv zt"l), had a broken finger.

The Mittler Rav asked him, "Why didn't you go to a doctor?" His grandson replied, "It's good like this. I am soon to be summoned to the army, and with such a finger, they will surely exempt me."

The Mittler Rav exclaimed, "No, my child! I want my children and grandchildren to be soldiers in Moshiach's army, and he will certainly not accept people with physical defects. You may ask, 'What should I do now about the army?' Do not worry— with Hashem's help, you will surely be exempt."

As he spoke, the Mittler Rav placed his holy hand upon the broken finger, and it was instantly healed.

The Mittler Rav then warned his grandson not to repeat or publicize the incident of the healing. However, after some time, his grandson could not restrain himself and shared the miraculous episode with his friends.

Before long, the pain in his finger returned. When he came back to his grandfather seeking a bracha, the Mittler Rav said, "Now I can no longer help you. Travel to see a doctor in Vienna— the Malach Refuah is there as well— and there you will merit a complete refuah."

### MAKING THE DOCTOR BELIEVE

During his final year, Reb Yehoshua of Belz zt"l underwent surgery in Vienna. Before the surgery, Reb Yehoshua asked the doctor, a non-religious Jew, if he believed in Hashem. The doctor replied, yes. Reb Yehoshua continued asking, "Do you believe in Moshiach?" The doctor responded, "No, since it says that Moshiach will be a pauper riding on a donkey, how will a poor person scare the other nations?"

Reb Yehoshua lifted his long eyebrows and fixed his holy eyes on the doctor. The doctor became so frightened that the surgical knife dropped from his hand. Reb Yehoshua explained to him, "If I, a simple person, can startle you so, then Moshiach will surely cause a panic across the world."

The doctor became a baal teshuvah and escorted the Rebbe back to Belz by train. Midway, Reb Yehoshua said Shema and was niftar. (The doctor merited to be the tenth person in the minyan as the Rebbe's neshama departed this world.)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BELZ

### GOOD FRUITS \_ GOOD CHILDREN

On Monday, Chamisha Asar B'Shvat, R' Yechezkal Halpert, a representative of Merkaz Mosdos Belz, presented a kvittel bearing the names of the children of supporters, "Chaver HaMamlacha," to the Belzer Rebbe shlita. The Rebbe bestowed a heartfelt bracha that they merit "גוטע פירות — קינדער וואס זיצן און לערנען" — "good children who sit and learn Torah.

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**WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BELZ**  
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## EXPANSION OF BELZ SHUL IN YERUSHALAYIM

A historic announcement was made last week in Belz, as final authorization was granted to expand the massive Belzer Beis Medrash at the chassidus' world center in Yerushalayim, which has long struggled to accommodate the tens of thousands who come to be in the presence of the Belzer Rebbe shlita.

The approval was granted on Tes Shvat, Belzer Yom Hatzalah, the day established by Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l to commemorate the miraculous rescue of himself and his brother following the Holocaust. After years of dedicated effort by askanim, final clearance was granted to proceed with the long-awaited expansion.

Under the plan, the Beis Medrash will be enlarged on three sides, and the 'Groyse Shtib' will be rebuilt as a vast multi-level tish hall, dramatically increasing capacity for Yomim Tovim and major gatherings. Special recognition was given to the project's architect, askan R' Aharon Ostreicher, and to R' Elimelech Landman for their tireless dedication in bringing the project to fruition.



## BELZ AND BEYOND

Behind the scenes of Belz Institutions in Israel's activities

## COMPLETING HILCHOS RIBIS AT YESHIVA OHEL YEHOShUA – CHAIFA

The bochurim of Yeshiva Ohel Yehoshua in Haifa have just completed learning the perek "איזהו נשך" in Maseches Bava Metzia, which focuses on the halachos of ribis – the Torah prohibition against charging or paying interest on loans. In honor of this milestone, Harav Pinchas Wind shlita, the renowned Rosh Kollel for Hilchos Ribis, visited the yeshiva and delivered a comprehensive shiur on the practical application of hilchos ribis in day-to-day life. The bochurim then had the opportunity to ask questions, which were addressed with clarity and insight.



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## EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY

especially a Chassidishe story..



לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה (יתרו כ"ד)

*You shall not make yourself a carved image  
not any likeness.*

During government elections in the Lemberg parliament, Maran Reb Yehoshua of Belz zt"l instructed the community to support a certain nobleman who was friendly to the Yidden. The community followed his guidance, and the nobleman was elected as poritz for parliament.

Delighted by his victory and grateful for the support, the poritz invited Maran to visit him in his new palace, not far from the city of Belz. Maran accepted the invitation. The palace was built in aristocratic splendor, with seventeen interconnected rooms, each leading to the next. Maran was led through all seventeen beautifully decorated rooms until they reached the last, mostly empty room, where the poritz wanted to present Maran with a gift in appreciation. In one corner, a light shone upon a custom portrait of the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, carefully commissioned by the poritz during the Sar Shalom's lifetime. Upon seeing the image of his holy father, Maran was awestruck and unsure how to respond.

The poritz ceremoniously presented the portrait to Maran and arranged for it to be sent with his servants in a royal carriage to Maran's home in Belz.

Once home, Maran Reb Yehoshua was in a great dilemma. He had never seen such an honor given to his father, yet he worried: if the poritz visited, he would surely inquire about the portrait. What could Maran say? If he refused or explained, the poritz might become angry and act against the Yidden. The thought tormented him, and he walked

anxiously around his house.

Eventually, Maran dozed off. In a dream, his saintly father appeared and said, "What is troubling you? You know I do not have peace in this world while an image of me exists below. I brought the poritz to your city knowing he owned a portrait of me and that it would reach you. I command you to burn this portrait. I promise you, the poritz will forget all about it."

Maran awoke and immediately followed his father's instruction, burning the portrait. True to the promise, the poritz never mentioned it again and forgot the gift entirely.

כבד את אביך ואת אמך למען יארכו ימיך (יתרו כ"ב)

*Honor your father and your mother, so that  
your days will be lengthened.*

In the early years following his marriage, Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l was not well. His doctor forbade him from immersing in the mikvah, and his father, Maran Reb Yissocher Dov of Belz zt"l, knowing his holy son and concerned he might not follow the medical advice, summoned him and forbade him to immerse until his condition allowed it.

Some time later, on a cold winter's morning, Harav Reb Pinyala Ostalia zt"l noticed Maran Reb Aharon walking in the direction of the mikvah. Fifteen minutes later, he saw him returning home and wondered how Maran Reb Aharon could go against his father's command.

The next day, early in the morning, Reb Pinyala hid near the mikvah. To his astonishment, he saw Maran Reb Aharon enter, begin removing his clothes, and ascend the steps. Upon reaching the final step, Maran Reb Aharon paused and declared: "הגני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצות" "I am ready and

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willing to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring my father by not immersing in the mikvah."

After saying this, Maran Reb Aharon turned around and walked home, fully obeying his father's instruction.

ומשה עלה אל האלהים (יתרו יט:ג)

## THE REBBE'S TORAH



*Moshe ascended to Hashem.*

The Medrash (שמו"ר כח:א) relates that when Moshe Rabbeinu ascended to Shamayim to receive the Torah, the malachim became jealous and sought to challenge him. Hashem therefore changed Moshe's appearance to resemble Avraham Avinu and reminded the malachim that they had once eaten in Avraham's home.

The malachim were envious of the great kedushah and spiritual light that emanate from a human being who fulfills the Torah and its mitzvos. They, too, desired to merit this holiness and descend to this world to perform mitzvos. Hashem responded that they had already witnessed this phenomenon when they came down to visit Avraham Avinu.

As the Medrash (בר"ר מה:יד) explains, when the malachim first arrived, the pasuk states "והנה שלשה אנשים נצבים אליו" indicating that they initially stood on a higher level than Avraham. However, after Avraham Avinu fulfilled the mitzvah of hachnasas orchim by serving them food, the Torah states "והוא עומד עליהם" teaching that Avraham Avinu rose to a higher level than the malachim through the performance of a mitzvah.

## THIS WEEK'S VORT

### פרשת יתרו

אשר שם האחד גרשם כי אמר גר הייתי בארץ נכריה...אליעזר כי) אלקי אבי בעזרי (יתרו יח:ג-ד  
*The name of one was Gershom, for he had said, "I was a sojourner in a strange land,"... Eliezer, for "The G-d of my father came to my aid...*

Why are the words by Gershom's name in the past tense — "כי אמר גר הייתי בארץ נכריה" — "while by Eliezer's name it is in the present tense — "כי אלקי אבי בעזרי"? "Because when Gershom was born, the period of "גר הייתי בארץ נכריה" — "when Moshe was a foreigner in a strange land — had already passed. By contrast, the verse by Eliezer is in the present tense, "אלקי אבי בעזרי" to teach that Hashem continuously provides help at all times.

הגבל את ההר וקדשתו (יתרו יט:כג)  
*Bound the mountain and sanctify it.*

When encircling the word "הר," the letters surrounding it spell the word "קדוש." The letter preceding "ה" is "ד", the letter following is "ו." The letter preceding "ר" is "ק" and the letter following is "ש" — spelling the word "קדוש." The passuk is telling us הגבל את ההר - circle around the word "הר" from both sides, then וקדשתו - you will find the word "קדוש."

וישמע יתרו (יתרו יח:א)  
*And Yisro heard.*

The word "יתרו" can be defined as 'understanding' and 'extras.' A person needs to think and understand that whatever is extra, he should throw away; he shouldn't run after extras, just feel satisfied with what he has.