

מאת מנ"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
רב דקהל אהבת ישראל, קליבלנד הייטס

bread-meal for no good reason and makes a *beracha* on that food. (In *halacha*, this is called שאינה צריכה - a blessing that is not required. It is not as bad as a ברכה לבטלה said in vain, because according to the way he [wrongly] chose to eat, the *beracha* did actually exempt the first food that he ate.)

A Beracha Made in Vain. A ברכה לבטלה can certainly bring one to poverty since it is stricter than the previous category of *beracha*. This happens often when a person forgets that he had already made a *beracha* previously on a certain item, and he repeats the *beracha*. One must be very conscientious not to allow this to happen. If it did happen, one should immediately say, "ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד" (5). If he did not catch his mistake right away, he may say this *posuk* even later since some *Poskim* (6) hold that it helps for a ברכה לבטלה even later on.

Merit of Saying Hashem's Name Properly. From all of the above, we can infer that if one says *Hashem's* Name correctly and appropriately, with proper feeling and concentration, it not only wards off poverty, but it is a great merit to bring wealth and many other blessings to a person and his family (7).

Printed Names of Hashem, R' Yonason Eibeschutz ZT"L (8) writes that if a person is not careful about showing respect for a printed Name of *Hashem*, it will bring him poverty. He adds that the poverty among *Yidden* in his time was due to the fact that they allowed pages with the Name of *Hashem* on them to roll around on the floor or on the ground. Many *Gedolim* have protested against newspapers that print *Hashem's* Name in full, because these papers often end up on the street or in garbage cans, and this is a terrible disrespect to the Name of *Hashem*.

(1) נדרים א (2) ספר יש נחללי טזג (3) מנחת אלעזר
(4) בכה (5) אורח דרב אחאי פרק נה (6) אורח ריו
(7) עיני פסקי
(8) תשובות בר"ט (ט) ספר אורים ונחומים כ"ב

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Laws and Customs that Merit a Good Parnassa (57)

Uttering Hashem's Name. The *Gemara* (1) states that in any place that *Hashem's* name is uttered unnecessarily, poverty often comes to that place. One should be careful when davening or saying *berachos* that no Name of *Hashem* should come out of his mouth without being part of a meaningful phrase or sentence. This applies even if one says *Hashem's* Name in any language, e.g. G-d (2). There are a number of English expressions that have unnecessary utterances of *Hashem's* name in English, such as "Oh my G-d," and the like. One should be careful about these as well.

Hashem's Name on a Recording. If one recorded *berachos* with the Name of *Hashem* on it, and he lets it play over and over - even for no real purpose - it is not called saying *Hashem's* Name in vain. This is because it is only prohibited for a human mouth to utter *Hashem's* Name in vain, and not when a machine plays it. The *Munkatcher Rebbe ZT"L* (3) writes (with regard to the old-time gramophones) that even though there is no classic prohibition of saying *Hashem's* Name in vain, there is still a lack of respect in the sounding of *Hashem's* Name in such a manner and therefore, by doing this unnecessarily, it can bring one to poverty.

Unnecessary Beracha. In *Sheiltos D'Rav Achai* it says (4) that one who makes an unnecessary *beracha* is equal to one who says *Hashem's* name in vain with regard to the punishment of poverty. An example of this is when one is preparing for a bread-meal where the *beracha* on the bread will apply to all the food he is about to eat, and he takes a bit of food right before the

הוא היה אומר ...

Chacham Yehudah Birdogo ZT"L (Mayim Amukim) would say:

"At Har Sinai, the Torah says, 'And Yisroel camped there across from the mountain,' which refers only to the males. The women, in keeping with the proper observance of *tznius* remained a little further away. Thus, when Moshe was instructing the people, he spoke first to the women - 'So shall you say to the house of Yaakov' and then to the men - 'you shall say to sons of Yisroel.' To emphasize that their distance was not any sort of demonstration of disrespect towards the women, they were instructed first, to show that this is the proper path of service of *Hashem*, by separating the genders."

R' Shimon Schwab ZT"L would say:

"The phrase 'Giving of the Torah' is related to the word 'מתנה' - 'gift' since the *Torah* wasn't merely 'presented' or 'given,' but was a special gift which created a profound and permanent impression upon the Jewish people and bound them to *Hashem* and His *Torah* forever. In addition, the Talmud teaches that just as *Hashem* gave Moshe the 'gift' of *Torah* (for, despite Moshe's greatness, it would have otherwise been impossible for him to master the *Torah* in 40 days and nights), He will ultimately grant the gift of *Torah* to anyone who strives diligently to learn it."

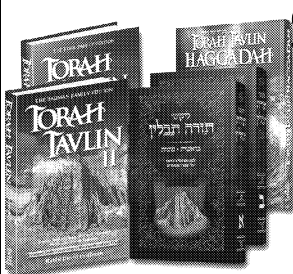
נא להחפץ לרפואה שלימה מהרה ענין הילד
אפרים יחזקאל שרעא בן מרים נ"י בעדן שאר חיי

R' Shloime HaLevi Karliner ZT"L would say:

"He who is a complete Jew at home is only half a Jew on a journey. He who is half a Jew at home is only a quarter Jew on a journey. He who is barely a quarter Jew at home, is no Jew whatsoever on a journey!"

לעילוי נשמת האשה העצמית בת רבי יעקב ע"ה - יאחזקאל ח' סיון - תתנא נשמתה צדורה בענין החיים
TORAH TAVLIN IS AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE! TO SPONSOR/DEDICATE AN ISSUE, RECEIVE BY MAIL FOR YOUR SHUL OR HAVE IT E-MAILED TO YOU DIRECTLY. PLEASE CALL 845-821-6200 OR SEND AN E-MAIL TO: TORAHTAVLIN@YAHOO.COM.

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלתר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישיא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה



AVAILABLE IN YOUR LOCAL JUDAICA BOOKSTORE!

Special Double Issue!

תורה תבלין

בראתי יצד הרע ובראתי לו

TORAH TAVLIN
Publication

34 MARINER WAY
MONSEY, NY 10952

*יטסודליק מוקדם אין לאדור זמן צענע קבלת השבת (נשיאמיר "בואי כלה")

שבת קודש פרשת במדבר - חג השבעות - זמן מתן תורתנו

Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar - Chag HaShavuos

ה'ז' סיון תשע"ב - May 26-28, 2012

בין החמה בר סיון - 5:28

מ"ט בעומר פרק ו' דאבות

טיב התבלין

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל חכם רבינובין שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים ע"ה

מן התורה "עכל"ה.
ונראה שכונתו אינה על כך שאין לומדים כלל תורה, שהרי ענינו הרואות בקיומן של כל כך הרבה ישיבות וכוללים שבהם הוגים בתורה בהתמדה רבה, ועם זאת עדיין לא נושענו, ולכן נראה שכונתו היא על מה שמתעצצין ללמוד בדקות הבודדות שבני לבני, כאשר בדרך כלל הן נשחקות בלא יודעין ובלא להרגיש בהן, וזוהי התעצלות שרבים וטובים מבני התורה דשין בהכא.

ומרגלא בפומיה דאמור"ר שליט"א בשם החפץ חיים זצ"ל שעל האדם לשון בעצמו כמה פרקים שיהיו שגורים על פיו, בכדי שיוכל לחזור עליהם בדרכים, לקיים מה שנטמר "ובלכתך בדרך". וכבר היה מעשה באמור"ר שליט"א שפעם אחד ביים הפורים הפך אותו שיכור והשמיטו על הארץ והיה מוטל על הדרך חסר אונים מבלתי יכולת לקום, ומשהבחינו בו עובדי אורח ניגשו אליו והקימוהו, ואחר כך התבטא בפני נכדו - כמסיה לפי תומו - ואמר לו, באותה שעה שהייתי שרוע על הארץ לא עלה בלבי שום עוגמת נפש על כך שאני שוכב על הארץ, כי על כן, בין כך לא היה לי ביטול זמן, באשר ששיננתי באותן הדקות דברי תורה שהיו שגורים על פי ונמצא שלא היה לי ביטול תורה וביטול זמן בזה....

ומלבד מה שהלימוד באמצע הדרך הוא דבר המחויב מצד חובת לימוד התורה, היא גם משאירה רישומא קדישא על אם הדרכים, וכפי שהיה פעם מעשה במרן החזון איש זצ"ל שהלך פעם בדרך ובאמצע הוא נעצר ואמר שהוא מרגיש שביה המקום דיברו שני בחורים בלימוד ויש כאן קדושה. הרי שבגודל קדושתו הוא הרגיש את הקדושה שנשארה במקום ההוא שבו דיברו שני בחורים בדברי תורה.

וביום השבועות שהוא יום מתן תורה, ראוי לאדם שיערוך לעצמו חשבון נפש כמה דקות יקרות נאבדו ונפסדו לו מבלי לנצלן ללימוד התורה, וידע שעל כל זה יביאנו האלוקים למשפט, כי גדולה מזו דרשו חז"ל על הפסוק (איוב ז' ט) "לא תרפני עד בלעי רוקי" - ששואלן חשבון ליום הדין אפילו על זמן קצר כדי בליעת הרוק במה הוציאו שצריך שיוציא כל ימיו בתורה ובעבודת ה' כב.

ושמעתי פעם שהחפץ חיים לא קשר את שרוך מנעליו כי עשה לעצמו חשבון שבמשך השנה יכול להצטבר מזה כשיעור של כמה דקות ביטול תורה, מה שאין כן אם בכל יום לא יקשור את מנעליו שאז הוא

רעונות ופירשים לעורר את האדם לעבודת הש"י והתחזקות באמונה ובטחון מאת

בואו ונחשוב חשבונו של עולם
לכל יום ויום אנו אומרים בברכת התורה "אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציונו לעסוק בדברי תורה". ויש לנו לבאר שהדמיון בין לימוד התורה לעסק הוא, שכשם שבעסק צריכים להקפיד על עריכת דין וחשבון ברור על כל הנעשה והנשמע בעסק, ואם יתגרש מתפקיד עריכת החשבון ולא ידע כמה היא ההכנסה וכמה היא ההוצאה כי אז הוא מועד לכשלון והפסד רב, כמו כן צריך להיות לענין הלימוד, שצריך לערוך מידי פעם חשבון נפש נוקב על כמות ואיכות הלימוד באופן שמה שלמד יהא שמור אצלו כמאן דמנא בקופסא.

ואמנם, זה שלימוד התורה דומה לעסק, הוא רק בנוגע לחלק ההתמדה וההתאמצות מצד האדם, אבל ודאי שלענין הרווח שבו התורה מרויח בלימוד, אין שום דמיון והשוואה בין הדברים, אלא מעלתו ורווחו של העוסק בתורה גדול ועצום לאין ערוך ממעלתו ורווחו של בעל העסק, ואין הכוונה בזה דוקא על קבלת הגמול והשכר בעד מפעלו של הלומד - שהרי זה הוא דבר שאינו מן העיקר, וכמאמרם ז"ל (אבות פ"א מ"ג) "אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס", אלא הכוונה בזה על כך שלומד התורה יכול לנצל את שעותיו הרבה יותר מכפי מה שבעל העסק יכול לנצל, שהרי בעל העסק מוגבל בעשיית עסקים מסוימים, ולא על כל דבר יפול שם עסק, וכשהוא שוכב על יצועו או הולך בדרך איננו יכול לעסוק בעסקו, מה שאין כן לענין הלומד תורה שיכול לקיים את מצוותו זאת בשכבו ובקומו ובלכתו בדרך, ולא זו בלבד אלא שבכל דקה ודקה הוא יכול להרויח מאתיים מצוות, וכפי אשר חישוב ומצא החפץ חיים זצ"ל שבכל דקה ניתן להגות מאתיים תיבות מן הפה, והרי בכל תיבה שהאדם לומד הוא מקיים מצוה, ונמצא שבידו להרויח מאתיים מצוות בכל דקה.

וראוי להדגיש כי מאתיים מצות הללו הן מן המצוה שהיא גדולה וחשובה יותר מכל המצוות שבעולם, וכמאמר התנא במשנה (פאה פרק א' משנה א') "ותלמוד תורה כנגד כולם", וכן איתא בירושלמי שכל המצוות שבעולם אינן שוות כמו תיבה אחת של תורה. וכאשר יתבונן בזה האדם הוא יבוא להעריך על נכון את גודל יקרת ערכה של התורה ובה יתגה יומם ולילה.

והנה ידועין דבריו של האור החיים הק' בפרשת תצוה (שמות כז כ) שכתב שהגאולה הרביעית תלויה בזכות משה, "ולזה נתארך הגלות כי כל עוד שאין עוסקים בתורה ובמצוות אין משה חפץ לגאול עם בטלנים

יחסוך זמן של ביטול תורה במשך השנה. כל כך נזהרו גדולי ישראל שלא לבזבז את זמנם היקר, אלא ניצלו אותו בשלמות ללימוד התורה. ומכלל האמור תצא הקריאה וההתעוררות לבעלי הרכב שבדרך הילוך נסיעתם ישמיעו טעפי"ס של דברי תורה, ובזה יקיימו מצות

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות

בסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

וזאת עשו להם וחיו ולא ימותו וגו' (במדבר ד-ט) – התורה היא מקור החיים

לַרֵךְ להבין את הכפילות, שהרי מאחר שנאמר 'ולא ימותו', מדוע הוצרך לומר 'וחיו'? וכתב ה'תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל', 'וייחון בחיי דצדיקי, ולא ימותון באישא מצלהבא-ב'אש הצולבת', והיינו, ש'ולא ימותו' מדבר אודות המשך חייהם בעוה"ז, כיון שלא ייפגעו מאז צולבת על שלא יהיו נוהרים כראוי בכבוד ארון הקודש, ואילו **כוונת 'וחיו' היא אל חיי הנצח**, שיזכו אליהם גם בתור שכר על נשיאתם את כלי הקודש וארון הקודש, וגם ע"י שיזכו אל החכמה האלוקית ואל ההתרוממות הרוחנית מכוח שארון הקודש נושא ומרומם את נושאייו גם במובן הרוחני. וכדאיתא בגמרא (סוטה ל"ה), "ש"נשא ארון את נושאייו וכו'", ופירש ה'אורח לחיים' (פרשת קרח, ד"ה רב לכם בני לוי), ש"מי שהיה נושא את הארון, היה הארון נושא ומגביה זה האדם, נושאו אליו אל בחינת חכמה וכו'", והיינו, שהיה נושא ומרומם אותו גם במובן הרוחני.

אבל **אכן עורא' פירש, 'וחיו-יוסיפו חיים' והיינו בעולם הזה**, וזאת משום שהם עוסקים עם ארון הקודש שיש בו התורה שהיא חיים, וכדאיתא במדרש (במדבר רבה, ה' ח'), "אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא, התורה היא חיים, שנאמר, 'עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה', ונאמר, 'כי חיים הם למוצאיהם, ולכל בשרו מרפא', ובני קהת מחזיקים בתורה-ה'יינו, שנושאים את ארון הקודש שיש בו התורה' שהיא חיים, בדין הוא שיחיו-ה'יינו, שיוסיפו חיים' ולא ימותו".

ועל דרך זה כתב ה**נצי"ב בספרו 'העמק דבר'**, "וחיו-יוסיפו חיים' (**הראב"ע**). פירוש, כי כל קדושה נותנת חיים לנזהר בה כראוי, ועובד אדום ובני יויכחו, שנתברכו הרבה בשמירת הארון כראוי", וכוונתו אבל מה דאיתא בגמרא (ברכות ס"ג), "פתח רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי וכו' ודרש, ויברך ה' את עובד אדום הגיתי בעבור ארון האלוקים וכו', מאי היא ברכה שברכו, אמר רב יהודה בר זבידא, זו חמות-אשתו של עובד אדום הגיתי, ושמונה כלותיה-י'שהיו לה משמונה בניה' שילדו שישה שישה בכרס אחד", והיינו שארון האלוקים שבו התורה השפיע אליו חיים. (ויש להוסיף, שזה-י'שהתורה השפיעה אליו חיים' נרמז בברכתו, וכמו שכתב ה'בן יהוידע', "נראה לי בס", שיזכו לכך בזכות התורה שבארון שנקראת טוב, דכתיב 'כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם', והיינו ט' של טוב אלו ט' נשים הנזכרות, שכל אחת ילדה ו' בנים, וזהו ו"ב של טוב"). וכן כתב ה'אורח' הק', "וחיו-פירושו, כי בהתעסקם בארון שבו התורה שהוא מקור החיים, יאריכו ימים וכו'".

ויש להבין, מדוע התורה היא מקור החיים ומשפיעה חיים? ויש ליישב בהקדם שתי הקדמות, הראשונה היא, מה שכתוב בספרי המקובלים, ד'ישראל ואורייתא וקודשא בריך הוא חד', וכן כתב הרמח"ל בספרו (דרך ה', שער ד' פרק ב' אות ב'), "בכלל ההשפעות

מה אהבתי תורתך ... כל היום היא שיחתי

"יתן ה' לכם ומצאן מנוחה אשה בית: attempted to part with them: *Hashem shall grant you (the merit) that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband.*" The discrepancy seems to be in the word "לכם" which refers to the daughters-in-law, and yet it is in the masculine form, whereas the next word "ומצאן" is in the feminine form.

The Rokeach, Rabbeinu Elazar of Worms ZT" L and

"ובלכתך בדרך" וכמו כן אלו הנוסעים בדרכים יקרו לעצמם איזה ספר ובו יהגו במהלך הנסיעה, ואין לך שמירה מעולה מזו להניצל מפגעי הדרכים הנתונים בחזקת סכנה (עיין קהלת רבה פרשה ג ב) שהרי אמרו חז"ל (סוטה כא ע"א) שתורה מגינה ומצל.

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
מגיד משישים בק"ק בית שמש

הנשפעות ממנו יתברך לצורך בריותיו, יש השפעה אחת עליונה מכל ההשפעות, שעניינה הוא היותר יקר ומעולה שבכל מה שאפשר שיימצא בנמצאים, והיינו **שהוא תכלית מה שאפשר שיימצא בנמצאות מעין המצאות האמית' שלו יתברך, ויקר ומעלה מעין אמיתות מעלתו יתברך**, והוא מה שמחלק האדון יתברך שמו מכבודו ויקרו אל ברוואיו, ואמנם קשר הבורא יתברך את השפעתו זאת בעניין הנברא ממנו יתברך לתכלית זה, **והיא התורה**", וכן כתב האבודרהם (ברכת ק"ש, ד"ה אהבת עולם), "שאומרים ו'דבק בלבנו תורתך', ע"ש ו'לדבקה בו", והיינו, כיון שדביקות בתורה היא הדביקות בה', וב'סדר מוצאי שבת, ד"ה אליהו הנביא), "שאומרים ו'מודובקים בתלמוד תורה', על שם ו'לדבקה בו', כיון **שכל הנדבק בתורה כאילו נדבק בשכינה**". ועוד יש להקדים, זה שכתוב במדרש תנחומא פרשת תרומה אות י"א, "אמר לו הקב"ה למשה כו', מתים נכנסים לפני ויוצאי חיים, זה מטה אהרן, וכמו שנאמר 'ויחי ממחרת, ויבא משה אל אהל העדות, והנה פרח מטה אהרן לבית לוי, ויוצא פרח ויצץ צץ ויגמול שקדים', ארזים ששלח חירם מלך צור לשלמה למלאכת ביהמ"ק, הריחו בחייו של עולם והרטיבו. א"ר לוי, כשהכניס שלמה את הארון לביהמ"ק, הרטיבו כל העצים והארזים שהיו שם ועשו פירות וכו'", והיינו, שה' הוא מקור החיים ומשפיע חיים.

ומעתה יש לבאר היטב, מדוע התורה משפיעה חיים, שזאת משום, שהתורה היא חד עם קודשא בריך הוא, שהוא מקור החיים ומשפיע חיים, ולכן גם על ידה זוכים לחיים.

וכן כתב הגר"ח **מוולין בספרו 'רוח חיים'** (אבות א' א', ד"ה הם אמרו), "וכי גם בעסקו בגמרא פירוש תוספות ועיונו בהם ובכל הפילפולים, הוא נדבק בהקב"ה, כי הכול מסיני, ואף מה שתלמיד וותיק עתיד לחדש נמסר למשה מסיני, והוא הורידה לארץ, וקודשא בריך הוא ואורייתא חד הוא, והדבוק בתורתו דבוק בו יתברך שמו. וסופר מאדונינו דוד **הגאון בעל הט"ז**, שאשה אחת צעקה אליו, אהה אדוני, והנה בני נחלש למות, ויאמר לה, התחת אלוקים אני, ותאמר, אל התורה שבאדוני אני צועקת, כי קודשא בריך הוא (שהוא מקור החיים ומשפיע אותו) ואורייתא חד הוא, ויאמר לה, הלא זאת אעשה לך, הדברי תורה שאני עוסק כעת עם תלמידי, אני נותן במתנה להילך, אולי בזכותי יחיה, כי בדבר הזה תאריכו ימים כתוב, ובאותה שעה חלצתו חמה".

וכיון שפרשה זו מלמדת אודות זאת שהתורה היא מקור החיים, כמה זה מתאים שהיא נקראת לפני חג השבועות-זמן קבלת עמל תורתני', משום שע"י התבוננות ביסוד זה יתעורר בלבנו רצון לקבלה.

יתן ה' לכם ומצאן מנוחה אשה בית אישה וכו' (רות א-ט)

The Book of *Rus* contains the history of the roots of *Dovid HaMelech*, and since we have a tradition that the day of *Shavuus* is the birthday as well as the anniversary of the death of King David, we read this *sefer* on *Shavuus*.

In light of this, we may ask a question on the words Naomi told her daughters-in-law, Rus and Orpah, as she

When his turn finally came and R' Yissachar Dov wished the *Rav* a good *Yom Tov*, the *Rav* greeted him warmly and asked him where he was staying. To R' Yissachar Dov's dismay, however, he did not issue any invitation! Having no choice, the Sokoler Rav made his way to his hotel rather dejectedly and prepared to have a lonely, meager holiday meal.

As he was about to begin reciting *Kiddush*, R' Yissachar Dov was startled by a knock at the door. He opened the door hesitantly, to find a messenger from the Leipnicker Rav, R' Boruch Frenkel-Teomim, carrying a large tray of food laden with many delicacies. "The *Rav* wishes you a *Gut Yom Tov* and sends you this tray in honor of the holiday," the messenger told him, and he turned to leave. R' Yissachar Dov gratefully accepted the tray and thanked the man heartily. But he was nevertheless puzzled that the *Rav* should send him the food and not invite him to his home.

His perplexity grew the next day when R' Boruch invited him to come home with him for the daytime *seudah* (festive meal). This was what he had wanted all along - but why hadn't he invited him for the meal the night before?

During the meal, R' Boruch sensed his guest's perplexity and explained himself. "Yesterday you were an unexpected guest; we had no idea that you were in Leipnik and therefore we could not prepare sufficiently according to the honor of the Sokoler Rav. As we had only enough food for our family, I felt it was improper to invite you. According to *halachah*, if a meal is only sufficient for the host, it's not proper for a guest to accept his invitation. Thus, I sent you what I could instead.

"I could not invite you last night but I could send the food to you, for you would not be aware of what we had at home. Today, however, knowing that you were here, we were able to prepare enough to invite you."

משל למא הדבר דומא

גמטל: There was once a businessman who used to buy merchandise on credit and then pay back his debts with the revenue from his sales. Wholesalers never hesitated to extend him credit because they knew they could trust him to make good on his debts. In the course of time, however, the businessman went bankrupt, and he was left with no choice but to inform his creditors of the bad news.

Shortly thereafter, this man knocked on the door of one of his largest creditors in the middle of the night. He asked to receive an exact accounting of what he owed. "Listen," said the debtor, "you know my situation, and how I cannot pay the full amount. Perhaps we can reduce the debt to a more manageable sum." That is a common-enough request, and it would certainly have been worth it to the wholesaler to forgo some of what was owed him if he could at least recover the rest. The two men proceeded to haggle over the debt, cutting here and trimming there. Everywhere he could, the debtor asked for a bit more of a reduction. The creditor agreed to all these requests with a heavy heart in the hope of recouping at least some of his loss.

After intensive negotiations, the two men finally agreed on a greatly reduced sum, and the debtor stood up and with a great sigh of relief announced, "*Boruch Hashem*, that's only half the amount we started with!" The creditor looked at him in surprise. "Okay, but what about the payment?"

"The payment?" said the debtor. "You know I'm bankrupt. What makes you think I have any money to pay you?"

The wholesaler sat in stunned silence. Finally, he spluttered, "If you had no intention of paying me, why did you get me up in the middle of the night to go through this whole farce of negotiating a reduction of your debt?"

"You see," replied the debtor, "it bothers me greatly that I am unable to pay my obligations and it keeps me up at

night. Finally, I couldn't take it any longer. I came here tonight to negotiate a reduction and I am very grateful for your help. Now my debt is not so overwhelming, and perhaps I can go home and still salvage some sleep from the night."

As he listened to this account, the wholesaler's face turned beet red. "This whole time you've just been taking advantage of my good will? In that case, I retract every one of my concessions, and I hereby inform you that you still owe me for every bit of merchandise I was foolish enough to advance you. I certainly hope you don't sleep until you pay every penny! I thought you sincerely intended to pay me as much of your debt as you could. I see now that it was all a joke to you and therefore the debt remains down to the last penny!"

גמטל: In response to a request by those who urged the *gedolei hador* to issue a number of lenient halachic rulings that would appease the Reform elements and prevent them from drawing further and further away from the *Torah*, the **Beis HaLevi, R' Yosef Dov HaLevi Soloveitchik ZT" L**, offered this parable. He concluded it by saying, "This story exemplifies those who ask *rabbanim* to compromise and agree to certain leniencies for the sake of restoring peace among our people. If it were true that these people were genuinely interested in committing themselves to a life of *Torah* and *mitzvos*, but didn't feel capable of upholding all the *Torah's* stringencies, then maybe, just maybe, there might be some room to discuss such a request. But we know full well that all they desire is to abandon the *Torah* completely to fulfill their own base desires. Even if we were to permit them to keep only the Ten Commandments and nothing else, they would still be unwilling to accept that. So, why should we be willing to make any concessions whatsoever when they have no interest in fulfilling even the watered-down compromises they are asking us to endorse!"

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויתלדו על משפחתם לבית אבותם וכר' (במדבר א-יח) – פרש"י הביאו ספרי יחוסיהם... כל אר"א להתייחס על השבט עכ"ל

It was a cold, dark, wintery night in the Janowska Death camp. The Nazi killing machine rolled on as their hapless Jewish victims lived in fear, day by agonizing day. Suddenly, a snarling shout pierced the night sky: “You are all to evacuate the barracks immediately and report to the vacant lot. Anyone remaining inside will be shot on the spot!”

Pandemonium broke out in the barracks. People pushed their way to the doors while screaming the names of friends and relatives. In a panic-stricken stampede, the prisoners ran in the direction of a big, open field. In the middle were two huge pits. Suddenly, the inmates realized where they were rushing that dark night deep in the Polish countryside.

Once more, the cold, clipped, German voice roared into the night. “Each of you who values his life and wants to cling to it must jump over one of the pits and land on the other side. Those who miss will get what they rightfully deserve.” Imitating the sound of a machine gun, the voice trailed off into the night followed by wild, course laughter.

It was clear to the inmates that they would all end up in the pits. In the best of times it would have been near impossible to jump over them, all the more so that cold night. The prisoners standing at the edge of the pits were skeletons, feverish from disease and starvation, exhausted from slave labor and sleepless nights. Though the challenge that had been given them was a matter of life and death, they knew that for the S.S. and the Ukrainian guards it was merely another devilish game.

Among the thousands of Jews on that field in Janowska was the **Bluzhober Rebbe, R’ Yisroel Spira ZT”L**. He was standing with a friend, a non-religious, freethinking Jew from a large Polish town whom the *Rebbe* had met in the camp. A deep friendship had developed between the two and they looked out for each other.

“Rabbi, all our efforts to jump over the pits are in vain,” said the man to the Bluzhever Rebbe. “We only entertain the Germans. Let’s sit down in the pits and wait for the bullets to end our wretched existence.”

“My friend,” said R’ Yisroel, as they walked in the direction of the pits, “man must obey the will of G-d. If it was decreed from Heaven that we be commanded to jump, then jump we must. If we fail and fall into the pits, we will reach the World of Truth one second later. So, my friend, we really have no choice: we must jump.”

The *Rebbe* and his friend were nearing the edge of the pits; the pits were rapidly filling up with bodies.

As they reached the pit, R’ Yisroel closed his eyes and commanded in a powerful whisper, “We are jumping!” With a mighty effort, the *Rebbe* and his friend left their feet and jumped. When they opened their eyes, they found themselves standing on the other side of the pit.

“We are here, we made it, we are alive!” the friend repeated over and over again, “Rabbi, for your sake, I am alive; indeed, there must be a G-d in Heaven. Tell me, how did you do it?”

The Bluzhober paused. “I was holding on to my ancestral merit, the *yichus* (lineage) of my forefathers. I was clinging to the coattails of my father, my grandfather, and my great-grandfather, of blessed memory,” said the *Rebbe* as his eyes searched the black skies above. “But tell me, my friend, how is it that you reached the other side of the pit?”

“I was holding on to you!” replied the *Rebbe*’s newly religious friend.

אקדמות מילין ושריות שותא אולא שקילנא הרמן ורשותא ...

On the morning of *Shavuos*, the Ashkenazi custom is to recite “*Akdamus*” a *piyut* composed by **Rav Meir ben Yitzchok ZT”L of Worms**. *Akdamus* is a beautiful poem filled with praise of *Hashem*, the *Torah* and the Jewish people. Written in Aramaic, this poem has annually uplifted Jewry over hundreds of years of persecutions, reminding us of our glorious status and of the eternal nature of the *Torah* and the Jewish people. On *Shavuos*, the day of the Giving of the Torah, it is especially fitting to read this *piyut*.

The following tale, connected to Rav Meir, the composer of Akdamus, is based on the writings of a ninth-century traveler of mysterious origin who visited Jewish communities in North Africa and Spain. Calling himself Eldad HaDani, he brought news of the tribes of Dan, Naftali, Gad and Asher residing in the land of Havilah, beyond the river known as Sambatyon. The tale he told is widely known as the “Story of Akdamus.” This is what Eldad HaDani said:

When the Jewish nation was exiled to Babylonia after the Destruction of the First Temple, among them were the *Leviim*, whose task it had been to sing in the Holy Temple. The wicked conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar, commanded them to appear before him with their harps and sing to him, but they refused. “How can we sing before Israel’s enemy?” they said. “If only we had sung more of *Hashem*’s praises when the Temple still stood, it might not have been destroyed!”

With tears in their eyes, they hung their harps in the willow boughs along the Euphrates River and then bit off their thumbs so that they could no longer play. Then they came before Nebuchadnezzar and held up their bloody fingers. Enraged at their impudence, the Babylonian king ordered them all executed first thing in the morning.

be stopped by man, by a human voice, a human hand. My children, be human in this inhuman valley of death. May the merit of our Father Avraham protect you, for whoever saves one Jewish soul, it is as if he saves an entire universe.”

The train ride took a few days and on the eve of the holiday of *Shavuos*, the train arrived in Auschwitz. The skies above Auschwitz were red with fury and ash. This time, the father spoke aloud, as if to himself. “On this day, millenniums ago, the Almighty came down to man in fire and smoke and gave his commandments. Today, it is man who is commanding in fire and smoke. And what is his command? ‘Thou shall kill!’”

A murderer, a person who lives by the credo “Thou shall kill,” is a person who has lost control of his evil inclination, and allowed it to rule over him completely. The *gemara* (מכות י) says that the provinces of Gilad and Shechem in the Land of Israel were populated by murderers, as the *posuk* states, “*Gilad is polluted with blood ... the way of murderers is in Shechem.*” (רושעו-ו-חט). According to **R’ Tzaddok HaKohen ZT”L**, this is because Gilad and Shechem were the inheritance of the tribes of

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH

דרגה יתירה

נעשה ונשמע אמרו כאחד (ומידות)

When the great Rabbi Akiva was challenged by Papus ben Yehuda about the relationship of the Jewish people to *Torah*, he answered with a *mashal*, a well-conceived parable: A fox was once walking down by the river-bed when he saw a fish swimming nervously about to and fro. The fox asked the fish, “Tell me, why are you so nervous? Why are you frightened?” The fish answered, “I am afraid of the nets of the fishermen who mean to catch and kill me.” The fox thought for a moment and then replied, “If so, then why don’t you come out of the water and onto the dry land, so their nets will not reach you?” To this, the fish answered, “You claim to me the wisest of the animals? In the water is where I live. There is a chance I will be caught and die; but out of the water I will surely die.” The same thing applies, explained Rabbi Akiva, to the *Torah* and the Jew. *Torah* is the lifeline of a Jew. Without its study and observance, a Jew is like a fish out of water.

The *Medrash* (בראשית רבה צ-ג) takes this parable one step further. Fish have an unusual behavior. Although they need to be submerged in water at all times, whenever it rains, they swim to the surface in a frenzy to catch every drop of water that falls from the sky. Similarly, the Jewish people must never be complacent with the level of *Torah* they are maintaining. A Jew must constantly be yearning and striving to grow spiritually in order to increase his understanding, commitment and connection to the *Torah*.

Chazal have taught us that at *Har Sinai*, at the very

Ephraim and Menashe, the sons of Yosef. Yosef was the epitome of self-control; he literally destroyed and subdued his evil inclination. However, his descendants could not live up to this potential and their natural inclination for bloodshed became manifest as murder.

For this reason, denotes **R’ Yaakov Meir Shechter Shlit’a**, the commandment, “*Thou shall not kill*,” directly precedes the commandment, “*Thou shall not commit adultery*” in the *Aseres HaDibros*. Because when a person redirects his latent aggression, not to fight with humanity but rather to battle against his own evil inclination, he will never commit an immoral act.

Th *Medrash* says: “*There are three stubborn groups in the world: One among the animals, one among the plants and one among people. Among people, it is the Jewish nation. You may think that this is a disgrace, but it is really praise, for a Jew is stubbornly ready to say, ‘Let me be a Jew, or let me die.’*” Even the simplest Jew is willing to give up his life for the sanctification of the Holy One Blessed be He. In this manner, he exhibits the attribute of *Yosef HaTzaddik*, who was willing to die rather than sin.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

moment that the Jewish people declared "נעשה ונשמע" - “*We will do and we will hear*,” six-hundred-thousand angels descended from on high and placed two crowns upon each person’s head, one for “*Naase*,” and one for “*Nishma*.” **Rabbi Zev Leff Shlit’a** asks the following question: We understand the greatness of “*Naase*” - we will do! This shows a total commitment and belief in *Hashem*, by accepting the *Torah* and pledging to do whatever it says, without even asking what it says beforehand. But what is so great about “*Nishma*” that they deserved to receive a crown for this as well?

Rabbi Leff explains that when *Klal Yisroel* loudly proclaimed the word “*Nishma*,” their intention was much more than simply “we will hear.” They were conveying to the *Ribono shel Olam* that we will always be open to hear, to listen, to grow more and more, to work hard and strive to reach our fullest potential in *Torah*. This great desire to be עמל - to toil and labor in the pursuit of *Torah*, was the greatness that earned them the second crown.

We have just read about the importance of toiling in Torah: "אם בחקתי תלכו" - “*If you will follow in My ways*” - *by toiling in Torah*.” (Rashi) This is *Amailus B’Torah*! This is our goal, what we hope to achieve in *Torah*.

In order for us to receive the *Torah* on *Shavuos*, we must be willing to work very, very hard to make it a part of us. May all *Yidden* be *zoche* to receive the two crowns this *Shavuos*, one of “*Naase*” and the other of “*Nishma*.”

³
Chacham Yaakov Culi ZT”L (Yalkut Me’am Loez) both propose that the word “לכם” was specifically stated for its letters also form the word “מלך” (king). This is an allusion to the fact that both kings, *Dovid HaMelech* and his successor Shlomo, would be descended from one of Naomi’s two daughters-in-law. The omission of the final letter “ה” from the word “ומצאן” hints that only one of them - Rus - was destined to give birth to a line of kings.

Additionally, the Rokeach notes that the numerical value of the four words of Naomi’s blessing: “ה' לכם ומצאן” add up to 412, which is equal to the *gematria* of “בית” - a reference to the *Bais HaMikdash*, which would be built by *Shlomo HaMelech* on the site purchased by his father Dovid, the direct descendants of Rus.

R’ Eliyahu Kitov ZT”L (Sefer HaToda’ah) adds that the Book of Rus demonstrates the major theme of *Chag HaShavuos*; namely, the conversion of the profane to the holy, the physical to the spiritual, from Moavite to Jewess, the ancestor of *Dovid HaMelech* and the future King and Messiah. It was Rus’ conscious selflessness and self-improvement that allowed her to climb up the spiritual ladder to the sublime heights of pure *Torah*.

יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלקיך בחורב וכו' (דברים-ד)
The *Torah* contains no explicit mention of a festival called “מתן תורה” - “*Giving of the Torah*.” It was the Jewish people themselves who chose to name the *Shavuos* holiday *Zman Matan Toraseinu* (the Season of the Giving of Our Torah) above all the names mentioned in the *Torah*. As we say in the *Shavuos tefillos*: “*And You, Hashem our G-d, gave us festivals and seasons of rejoicing, this Shavuos Festival day, the season of the Giving of our Torah*”

Shavuos, like *Pesach* and *Sukkos*, the other *Torah* festivals, aims to instill in us the quality of gratitude If *Pesach* teaches the Jews to be grateful for the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, *Shavuos* reminds the Jews to be thankful for being rooted in their own land, the homeland of the Jews. This gratitude is expressed by celebrating the holiday as “חג הקציר” - “*Harvest Festival*” and “חג הביכורים” - “*First-fruits Festival*.” These two Biblically-inspired names express the satisfaction of the Jew in having his own land and his own produce of the field and fruit of the orchard. But with the name “זמן מתן תורתנו” - “*Season of the Giving of the Torah*,” with which we primarily mark the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos*, the Jewish people sought to express their gratitude to the Creator for giving them the *Torah*, by virtue of which the Jews became the chosen people.

We are certainly pleased and grateful for having *Eretz Yisroel* and being an agricultural nation like all other nations. But throughout the generations, the Jews also sought to show the Master of the Universe that they were

grateful to Him for their spiritual endowment: that most precious of gifts, the holy *Torah*. That is why the name “*Matan Torah*” is so deeply etched in Jewish tradition, more deeply than all the other of the holiday’s names.

Rabbi Aaron Shurin, a co-founder of Poalei Agudath Israel and a member of the *Vaad Hapoel* of Agudath Israel in America, relates how the first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion, was quite knowledgable in the words of *Tanach*, with an unusual ability to quote *posukim* from all over the words of the *Neviim* and *Kesuvim*.

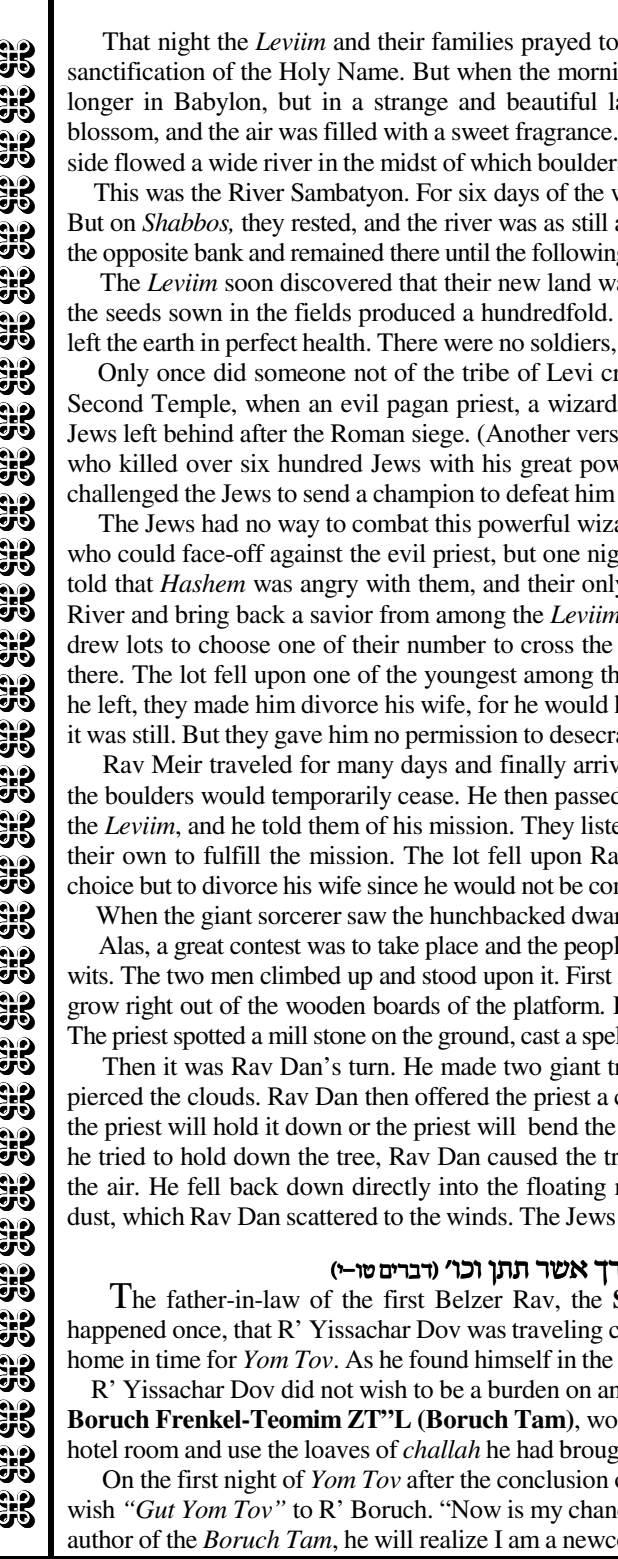
At a private audience that was invited to with the Prime Minister in 1961, Ben Gurion became passionate about the Land of Israel and the Jewish people. Holding up a *Tanach* in his hand and citing passage after passage, Ben-Gurion suddenly stood up and said, “Tell me, Rabbi Shurin, how many millions would your President Kennedy give to be able to say that the Bible is an American creation?”

That is how much the *Torah* is ingrained in the emotion and intellect of every Jew. Thus, we prefer the name “*Season of the Giving of Our Torah*” above all the other names. To be sure, all the other designations are beautiful jewels in the crown of the *Shavuos* holiday. But the “*Giving of the Torah*” is the crown itself - the crown of the Jewish people as a whole and of every individual Jew.

לא תרצח. לא תנאף.... (שמות-כ-ג)
It was the new month of *Sivan* 5704, Spring 1944. The Jewish community of a small Czechoslovakian town where Jews had lived for generations was coming to an abrupt end with a single train ride to Auschwitz. The cattle cars were sealed. More than eighty people were squeezed into a single wagon. The poor Jews comforted each other amidst the choking heat, filth, and fear of the unknown.

“Papa, where are they taking us?” one young child asked.
“My children,” said the child’s father, addressing all of his little ones and all who would listen. “You must know that once there was an altar on *Har HaMoriah* in the holy city of Jerusalem. The Lord commanded a father to take his only beloved son and sacrifice him upon that altar, in order to test his faith in *Hashem*. As the father was about to fulfill the command and lifted the knife, *Hashem* spoke to Avraham and said, ‘*Lay not thy hand upon the lad*.”

The children shivered with fear as their father continued. “Today, my children, there is another huge altar, not on a sacred mountain but in a profane valley of death. There, man is testing his own inhumanity toward his fellow man. The children of Avraham are again a burnt offering, this time by the command of men. But man, unlike the Lord, will not stop the knife. To the contrary, he will sharpen it and fan the altar flames so that they may totally consume their sacrifice. A man-made fire, a knife held by man, must



⁶
That night the *Leviim* and their families prayed to *Hashem* and prepared themselves to die *Al Kiddush Hashem* - in sanctification of the Holy Name. But when the morning mist lifted, the *Leviim* found to their surprise that they were no longer in Babylon, but in a strange and beautiful land they had never seen before. Everywhere fruit trees were in blossom, and the air was filled with a sweet fragrance. On three sides, the land was bordered by the sea, and on the fourth side flowed a wide river in the midst of which boulders rolled and crashed with a ceaseless thunder.

This was the River Sambatyon. For six days of the week, the rocks in the river’s midst continued their tireless churning. But on *Shabbos*, they rested, and the river was as still and smooth as glass. To keep out enemies, a curtain of fire arose on the opposite bank and remained there until the following sunset, when the rocks resumed their weekday commotion.

The *Leviim* soon discovered that their new land was a paradise. The trees and flowers bloomed twice each year, and the seeds sown in the fields produced a hundredfold. Grandparents never saw a grandchild die before them and the old left the earth in perfect health. There were no soldiers, judges, or guards among them, for all was peaceful and just.

Only once did someone not of the tribe of Levi cross the Sambatyon. It happened soon after the Destruction of the Second Temple, when an evil pagan priest, a wizard fluent in the ways of sorcery, ruled Jerusalem and tormented the Jews left behind after the Roman siege. (Another version of the story has it with a Christian Monk in medieval Germany who killed over six hundred Jews with his great powers of witchcraft.) He was a giant of a man, and like Goliath, he challenged the Jews to send a champion to defeat him in wisdom and wizardry, or he would destroy them all.

The Jews had no way to combat this powerful wizard and they felt a great despair come over them. They had no idea who could face-off against the evil priest, but one night all the sages of the city had the same dream in which they were told that *Hashem* was angry with them, and their only chance to defeat the priest was to venture across the Sambatyon River and bring back a savior from among the *Leviim*, known as the *Bnei Moshe*. The sages in Jerusalem (or Germany) drew lots to choose one of their number to cross the Sambatyon and summon a champion from among the inhabitants there. The lot fell upon one of the youngest among them, a man by the name of Rav Meir (author of *Akdamus*). Before he left, they made him divorce his wife, for he would have to desecrate the *Shabbos* to cross the river on the one day that it was still. But they gave him no permission to desecrate the *Shabbos* to come back.

Rav Meir traveled for many days and finally arrived at the banks of the Sambatyon. He waited until *Shabbos* when the boulders would temporarily cease. He then passed through the river into the land of *Bnei Moshe*, the descendants of the *Leviim*, and he told them of his mission. They listened sympathetically and then they, too, drew lots to choose one of their own to fulfill the mission. The lot fell upon Rav Dan, a dwarf, hunchback and lame individual. He, too, had no choice but to divorce his wife since he would not be coming back. He crossed the Sambatyon, and made his way to the city.

When the giant sorcerer saw the hunchbacked dwarf, he laughed. “So this is whom you have sent to challenge me?”
Alas, a great contest was to take place and the people erected a wide platform in the middle of the city for this contest of wits. The two men climbed up and stood upon it. First it was the priest’s turn. Chanting magic incantations, he made wheat grow right out of the wooden boards of the platform. But Rav Dan conjured up roosters that quickly devoured the wheat. The priest spotted a mill stone on the ground, cast a spell on it, and caused it to levitate and spin in the air at great speed.

Then it was Rav Dan’s turn. He made two giant trees sprout up out of the platform. Within seconds their leafy tops pierced the clouds. Rav Dan then offered the priest a choice: either he will bend one of the trees down to the ground and the priest will hold it down or the priest will bend the tree and he would hold it down. The priest chose the former but as he tried to hold down the tree, Rav Dan caused the treetop to spring back into the sky, throwing the priest high up into the air. He fell back down directly into the floating mill, which ground his body to pieces until nothing remained but dust, which Rav Dan scattered to the winds. The Jews cheered for they were saved by the great Rav Dan.

ועשית חג שבעות לה' אלקיך מסת נדבת ידך אשר תתן וכו' (דברים-טו-ו)
The father-in-law of the first Belzer Rav, the **Sar Sholom ZT”L**, was **R’ Yissachar Dov of Sokol ZT”L**. It happened once, that R’ Yissachar Dov was traveling close to the holiday of *Shavuos* and he realized that he could not get home in time for *Yom Tov*. As he found himself in the city of Leipnick, Moravia, he decided to spend *Shavuos* there.
R’ Yissachar Dov did not wish to be a burden on any of the townspeople, but he decided that if the *Rav* of Leipnik, **R’ Boruch Frenkel-Teomim ZT”L (Boruch Tam)**, would invite him, he would accept. Otherwise, he would remain in his hotel room and use the loaves of *challah* he had brought with him.
On the first night of *Yom Tov* after the conclusion of *Maariv*, all those present in the main synagogue formed a line to wish “*Gut Yom Tov*” to R’ Boruch. “Now is my chance,” thought the Sokoler Rav to himself. “When I greet the famous author of the *Boruch Tam*, he will realize I am a newcomer in the city and will surely invite me for the meal!”