

Connections



A Project of the Shluchim Office



PARSHAS VAYIGASH
HEI TEVES 5765

Connecting Tzeirei Hashluchim around the World!

VOLUME 1
ISSUE 11



PARSHAS VAYIGASH

"Tatti's home!" called out little Chayah Mushka as she saw her father's car pull into the driveway. Her sisters and brothers scrambled to the door to greet their father. It was not every day that Rabbi Weiss, a busy *shliach*, made it home in time for supper. "Hello, everyone," boomed Rabbi Weiss. Each one of the children received his share of patting, hugging and whirling, and the house filled with lots of giggles and squeals.

Except for Levi. He hadn't run to the door and didn't join in the fun.

"What's wrong, Levi?" questioned his father. "You look like Tishah BeAv and it's only a day after Chanukah! Come, let's have supper and you'll tell me what's bothering you afterwards."

Later, when the younger children were in bed and the house was quiet, Rabbi Weiss sat down with Levi in the living room. Levi didn't need much coaxing.

"Tatti," he began. "You know, it's not so easy to be the only Lubavitch boy in the class. Sometimes I have to convince the boys to do something or explain why I do different things. It's hard to stand up in front of everyone else."

Rabbi Weiss stroked Levi gently. "I know how you feel. But remember, you're Levi, and Levi is a son of Yaakov. The children of Yaakov are strong and trusting, like Yehudah in this week's parshah."

Levi smiled and listened as his father explained: "In this week's *parshah*, Yehudah faces a real challenge. He has to stand up before the ruler of *Mitzrayim*!

"Let's see how he does it. The *parshah* begins: *Vayigash eilav Yehudah* - 'And Yehudah approached him.'

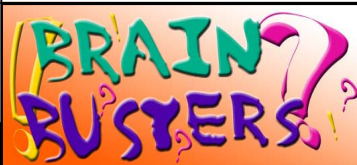
"The *Midrash* tells us that the first step of *Vayigash* - Yehudah's approach - was that he braced himself. Yehudah probably drew a deep breath before he began to speak, but still, he took on the challenge. He knew it wasn't going to be easy, but he was going to do the best he could.

"Yehudah did not count on himself alone. The word *Vayigash* also means to approach in *Tefillah*. Yehudah *davened* and asked *HaShem* to help him in his mission.

"*HaShem* was watching. He saw how brave and determined Yehudah was, and He listened to his prayers. And then everyone saw how Yehudah's approach worked: Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, and the difficult time they were going through finally came to an end.

"So when you have to confront a difficult situation again, try to do it like Yehudah did. Daven to *HaShem* and stand up to the challenge with determination. When we face a challenge with courage and trust, *HaShem* helps us overcome our difficulties."

From Please Tell me What the Rebbe Said (Adapted from Sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayigash, 5751)



"Connections" Newsletter
is a weekly publication produced by
Chinuch Yaldei Hashluchim
connections@shluchim.org

I am a mixed up head.
Who am I?

Please send your answers to connections@shluchim.org

The answer to last week's brain buster is *Mattisyahu*.

Congratulations to **Chana Silberstein** from Ithaca NY, for solving the brain buster.



FROM THE DESK OF... DR. GETZEL

This is a letter I received in the mail one day – out of the blue. It really wasn't out of the blue, it was more like out of the white since it was snowing outside and everything was white. Anyway I have permission to share it with you. So please read it carefully and then fill out the Mitzvah Mission.

Dear Dr. Getzel,

I had this beautiful dream that Moshiach came and we were all living in Eretz Yisroel. People were nice and friendly. The Goyim didn't bother us. Everyone was learning Torah. They were so happy too. I saw children. They were all learning Torah. Children who used to complain that school is boring were now eagerly begging their teachers to teach them more. There were even children who convinced their teacher to have a sleepover. Most of the night they sat and learned together.

I was having so much nachas watching this take place before my very eyes. I began to cry. But I was so happy. I guess they were tears of joy. Then I saw your house with the green roof. It was right near the Beis Hamikdosh. Thousands of children were gathered around. They were the Tzeirei Hashluchim from around the world. They all came to meet you in person and to thank you for writing to them every week. I saw my email pals from Venezuela and Alaska. My brother met his email friend from Hong Kong.

Somehow we all managed to squeeze into your little green-roofed house. It must have expanded to make room for all of us to fit inside. We said pesukim together and sang and danced. You told us that our Shlichus isn't over yet. We now have a big job to help teach all those children who haven't been to a Jewish school. We organized ourselves to walk around the entire Yerusholayim. It was a much bigger than it used to be. We went to find all the children from Texas and Alabama, Wyoming and Saskatchewan and all the rest of the world. We even found children from Iowa!

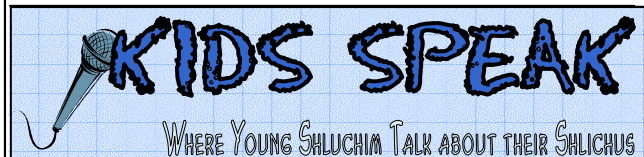
When all the children came together we had a big rally. Everyone enrolled in a Jewish school. It was amazing to see how motivated everyone was. Teachers didn't need to discipline at all. Everyone just cooperated and learned. They were so interested in catching up on all the knowledge they had missed learning in Golus. I felt so proud to be part of all of

When I woke up the next day I knew I had to change. I became an excellent student in school. I met Fred from my swimming group and told him about coming to my school. I invited Sammy over for a Shabbaton. He brought his friends Michael and Moshe. They had a wonderful time and learned a lot as well. Now they all come to learn in my school. They are proud to be part of a Jewish school. My sister invited her friends for another Shabbaton. She arranged it for seven girls she knew from day camp. My mother helped her too. Now they are all lighting their own Shabbos candles at home and next year some of them will be in her class.

See you in Yerusholayim,
Your friend Chaim – a young Shliach in
The United States

Thank you Chaim for sharing this beautiful letter with all of us. I can't wait for your dream to become true! Did you also help bring children in your city closer to Yiddishkeit? Did you teach them to do more Mitzvos? Please tell me about them so I can print it in 'Connections' too.

*Sincerely,
Dr. Getzel*



MUSHKA GIMENT, age 12

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

Last year when I was in 6th grade I was learning in NY. One Friday afternoon I walked into the Kingston pizza shop and my cousin was sitting there with a not frum Spanish couple. He introduced me from Arkansas and right away this couple said that they had Jewish cousins that live in Arkansas. After Shabbos my cousin contacted my father and he told him where these people live and who they are. And it so happens that they lived right near us. We then invited them for a Friday night meal and it was right in middle of when we were building our Chabad House. It so happens that the wife is a designer and she wanted to help us design our Chabad House. They then had a baby girl and they named her in our Chabad House on a Shabbos. It just shows how even if you are away from home your are still helping your parents on shlichus.

Hey kids, send us a short paragraph about your shlichus and we will publish it in our future "Connections"! Please include your name, age, and location. E-mail us at: connections@shluchim.org



POCKET CALENDAR



BAIS TEVES

On this day Rabbi Yaakov Kuli, רבצין מנוחה רחל, husband passed away.

On this day the פריערדיקער רבי succeeded in escaping from Poland.

DALED TEVES

On this day, זמן שניאור זלמן, ר' חיים שניאור זלמן, the son of the צמח צדק passed away.

HEY TEVES

On this day, ר' מרדכי דובער סלונים, רבצין רחל מנוחה passed away.

דין נצח—the sefarim were returned to the Rebbe's Library.

VAV TEVES

On this day the פריערדיקער רבי was imprisoned for the 3rd time.

(From Days in Chabad)

עשרה בטבת

This coming Wednesday, December 22 is עשרה בטבת.

The 10th day of Teves is observed as a fast day. It is known as עשרה בטבת and marks the beginning of the siege (surrounding) of ירושלים in 588 BCE by נבוכדנצר מלך בבל. This siege was the beginning of the destruction of the first בית המקדש.

עשרה בטבת is the only Fast day that can fall on a Friday. When that happens, the Fast is not moved to Thursday or Sunday, since it is mentioned in Sefer Yechezkel as ".this exact day, this very day."

We add special additions to our davenning, **סליחות & ענינו** and we have a special Torah Reading for this day.

What else happened on עשרה בטבת?

- The Navi זכריה passed away.
- The capture of ירושלים in 37 BCE by king Herod.
- The Decree for the Elimination of Jews from German Economic Life took effect in 1939.
- The Nazi District Commander of Warsaw decreed that no Jew was to greet a German in public, in 1939.

ARE YOU A PARSHA EXPERT?

QUESTION: In the Torah portion of Vayigash, Yosef finally reveals himself to the Shevatim. "I am Yosef," he says, "is my father still alive?" Yehudah had just told Yosef that Ya'akov Avinu was unwilling to send Benyamin down to mitzrayim, because he was afraid that he would die there. He had also just stated that if something would happen to his brother Benyamin in mitzrayim, he was afraid that his father might not survive. It is obvious that Yosef knew that Ya'akov was still alive. Even more, we see that Yosef didn't even wait for a response, but immediately ordered them to bring their father.

"Is my father still alive?" was therefore not said as a question, but as an expression of surprise. Yosef was shocked that his father was still among the living.

At the time Ya'akov Avinu was 133 years old, relatively young compared to the how long Avraham Avinu and Yitzchok Avinu lived. Why, then, was Yosef so surprised?

ANSWER: When Ya'akov Avinu heard that Yosef had died, he was constantly mourning for him. For 22 years he suffered terrible grief, "and refused to be consoled." Ya'akov Avinu's pain was simply unbearable. It was therefore surprising to Yosef that his father hadn't given in to such terrible suffering.

Yosef then tells his brothers to "Hurry back to my father." The element of speed was required not only to inform Ya'akov Avinu that Yosef had been found alive, but also to bring him to mitzrayim as soon as possible. Every moment that passed without father and son being reunited placed Ya'akov in danger for his life.

Ya'akov Avinu was in mourning for Yosef 22 years. This corresponded to the 22 years Ya'akov did not observe the mitzva of כיבוד אב ואם because he ran away from his parents house to charan. His 22 years of mourning for his son were a punishment for this shortcoming.

However, at the exact moment the 22 years were up, the decree from shamayim that he be separated from his son no longer existed. Yosef thus urged his brothers to "hurry," for there was no longer any reason to delay "even the blink of an eye."

We learn from Yosef that it is forbidden to cause even a moment of unnecessary suffering to anyone anywhere, in any situation.

Taken from L'Chaim Weekly (Adapted from Volume 15 of Likutei Sichos)



Stories of our Rabbeim

The Story of Hei Teves - Didan Notzach!

The Lubavitch Library has a fascinating history. During the Russian Revolution, the Russians confiscated the Rebbe Rashab's big Sefarim collection and to this day, it is still in the hands of the Russian government, in the main library in Moscow. Several years later the Friediker Rebbe began to rebuild the library, buying books throughout Europe and asking his Chassidim for donations. When the Friediker Rebbe left Poland in 1939 to go to America, his library was confiscated again. At the end of the war, he managed to get some of the books back.

About twenty years later, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky discovered that some of the Friediker Rebbe's library was being kept in an institute in Poland. After 3 years of negotiation the Polish government agreed to release the books.

When the Rebbe recovered from his heart attack in 1977, his first visit out of his home was to the Lubavitch Library nearby. There he spent many hours looking through the newly returned books and manuscripts. As Rabbi Krinsky remembers, "It must have been very pleasing and invigorating for him." Soon after, Agudas Chassidei Chabad began extensive renovations and hired new staff to maintain the library and catalogue the books.

In the winter of 1985 Lubavitch Library staff noticed valuable books were disappearing from the shelves. Before long, it became obvious that some of the rare Kabbalistic and biblical commentaries were missing. They tried to find out who could be taking the Sefarim, but were not successful. Finally they installed a hidden camera. For several weeks, the camera's videotape was blank, then the image of the Rebbe's nephew Barry Gourary appeared, entering the library's basement late at night and leaving shortly afterward with a full shopping bag.

Barry Gourary was the grandson of the Friediker Rebbe, but unfortunately was no longer Lubavitch or even frum. When he was asked to return the books, Barry said that his mother and his aunt (Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka) gave him permission to take what he wanted from the library and he was going to sell them and get a lot of money. The Rebbetzin said that it wasn't true and that she hadn't given him permission. The directors of the library changed the locks and installed a security system.

Barry had already taken about 400 valuable books from the library and sold some of them, making a great deal of money. Many people, even Barry's father, Rabbi Shmaryahu Gourary, begged him to return them nicely but he refused. The Rebbe himself asked for the return of the books quickly and amicably. "They belong to the community and ultimately will certainly be restored to their rightful owner," he insisted.

Everything that Lubavitch tried, even offering Barry money in return for getting the Sefarim back, didn't work. He kept insisting that the Sefarim were his personal property. They tried calling him to a Din Torah but he refused to come. In a situation like this, the Rabbanim said that Lubavitch can take him to a government court. Lubavitch told the court that the Sefarim belonged to them but Barry claimed that since he was the Friediker Rebbe's only grandson, the library belonged to him.

The question that the judge had to decide was this: Does property of the Rebbe belong to his family or to the Chassidim?

The court case lasted 23 days. Every day of the trial, the Rebbe went to the Ohel and Chassidim all over the world davened that Lubavitch should win the case. The trial was over in March 1986 but the verdict was only given 10 months later, in January 1987. The judge decided that the Sefarim belonged to the Chassidim!!!

It was late morning when the exciting news reached Crown Heights. Within a few hours, Chassidim all over the world had heard the exciting news: Australia to Brazil, from Yerushalayim to Detroit.

The Rebbe spoke about what lesson we can learn from the whole court case. He said that the court case is showing us that we aren't doing enough to study the sefarim and to spread Yiddishkeit. He said: "Start by making your own home a place where Torah study is increased. So, too, increase prayer and all mitzvahs, beginning with charity and good deeds. All of you will accomplish great things for the sake of heaven!"

(excerpts taken from Shmais.com—the story of ה' טבת)



THE REBBE SAID THAT IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO HAVE YOUR SEFORIM ON YOUR SHELF—YOU LEARN FROM THEM.

Dr. Getzel

ה' טבת

עשרה בטבת

Level 1: Ages 5-7

Kids! Fill out the answers to the questions below, and fax it to the Shluchim Office at (718) 221-0985 no later than Wednesday, December 22nd, עשרה בטבת. We will אי"ה be making a raffle from the correct answers and mailing prizes to the winners!

ה' טבת

1. Where are the Sefarim that were in the Rebbe Rashab's library? _____
2. Who collected the Sefarim that are in the Lubavitcher library? _____
3. Where was the first place that the Rebbe went after he had his heart attack? _____
4. How did the directors of the library find out who was taking the sefarim? _____

6. Who did the judge decide that the Sefarim belong to? _____
7. When (date and year) was the victory – Didan Netzach? _____

עשרה בטבת

8. Who was the king of Bavel whose soldiers surrounded Yerushalayim? _____
9. Who was the Navi in Yerushalayim at that time? _____
10. What year did this happen in? _____
11. How could children (under Bar or Bas Mitzvah) commemorate this fast? _____

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **e-mail:** _____

Congratulations to Chaim Rapoport, age 6 from Vineland, NJ for winning last week!

Good Luck!

ה' טבת

עשרה בטבת

Level 2: Ages 8-12

Kids! Fill out the answers to the questions below, and fax it to the Shluchim Office at (718) 221-0985 no later than Wednesday, December 22nd, עשרה בטבת. We will be making a raffle from the correct answers and mailing prizes to the winners!

ה' טבת

1. What did Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka say when she was called to be a witness in the court case?

2. What was the question that the judge was deciding? _____

3. When (date and year) was the victory – Didan Netzach? _____

4. What language is 'Didan Netzach' and what does it mean? _____

5. What are 3 fasts that are connected to the Beis Hamikdash? A. _____

B. _____ C. _____

עשרה בטבת

6. Which Navi tells the story of Asarah B'Teves? _____

7. What 2 Tefillos do we add during Davenning on Asarah B'Teves? _____

8. What is the Krias HaTorah of Asarah B'Teves? _____

9. Asarah Beteves is the only fast that can fall on a certain day of the week. Which day is it?

10. What is one other event that happened on Asarah B'Teves? _____

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **e-mail:** _____

***Congratulations to Yisrolik Kievman, age 10 from Liverpool, England
for winning last week!***

Good Luck!