



# Eternal Connections

BUILDING  
OLAM HABA AWARENESS

Mitzvos are opportunities

## Final Moments

Rav Aryeh Levin, known as the *tzaddik* of Yerushalayim, was admired and loved by Jews across the religious and political spectrum. Once, he was asked to address the students in a secular Israeli middle school.

As part of his speech, Rav Aryeh shared the following powerful story that occurred during one of his visits to political prisoners during the time of the British Mandate in Palestine:

"Two of the inmates, Meir Feinstein and Moshe Barzani, were about to be hanged for their 'crimes' against the British Mandate," he began.

"As their rabbi, I was granted permission to speak to them during their final moments. Just imagine, they had only five minutes left to live! Only five minutes left on this earth."

Rav Aryeh paused his story and asked his listeners for their input. "What do you think these young men requested?"

Various children suggested different ideas: perhaps they asked for a delicious meal or to see a photo of their families one last time.

After a few minutes, Rav Aryeh continued his story: "All these young men wanted was the chance to recite *Shema* while wearing *tefillin*!"

"And as soon as they put on those *tefillin* and recited *Shema Yisrael*, they cried like babies. They cried so many tears, it was as if every tear that had ever been created from the moment they were born until that moment came out at once. A faucet of tears, of yearning, of pain."

Rav Aryeh looked at the pre-bar mitzvah-age boys he was addressing and pleaded, "Let your first time wearing *tefillin* be like their last time. You're alive now. You're beginning to wear *tefillin*. Live it and cherish it."

We have only a limited amount of time in this world, but our *neshamos* will live on forever in the world to come. But it is the choices we make now, during our brief sojourn here, that will determine what our everlasting future will be like. That is why we need to grab every moment here, not just the final ones.

(Rabbi Yechiel Spero, *Vayime'an*, Artscroll Publications)

**Our time here won't last forever. Let's treat every opportunity for growth as if it's our final moment on this Earth.**

לע"נ אברהם יצחק בן חיים צבי

For sponsorship opportunities, email us at  
[EternalConnections@ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org](mailto:EternalConnections@ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org)

## Take This Home

The next time a mitzvah comes your way, any mitzvah – be it making a *berachah*, reciting *Asher Yatzar*, refraining from *lashon hara*, treating a parent with respect, guarding your eyes from looking at something questionable, etc. – imagine for a moment that it's your final chance to do that mitzvah. No doubt it will change the way you do that mitzvah!

## In Short

"*Kol Yisrael yeish lahem cheilek l'Olam Haba*.' Why do we start *Pirkei Avos* with this? To make us think about where real life is going to be – in this world or in Olam Haba? ...We are in this world as a gateway to get to Olam Haba through Torah and *mitzvos*."

As heard from Rabbi Yitzchok Sorotzkin

## It Happened to Me!

### My Olam Haba Moment

I suffer from a chronic health condition, which is relatively minor, but hinders my functionality in certain ways. Sometimes I feel frustrated, imagining how much more energetic and productive I could be if I didn't have this issue.

Something I recently read changed my perspective. The writer had experienced a wrenching tragedy and kept a journal in which he chronicled his journey through grief. One of his points was that *yissurim* are a way to draw closer to Hashem and are thus our ticket to Olam Haba. They are a quick way to gather eternal wealth (based on *Chovos Halevavos*). But if we don't utilize them properly by bringing ourselves closer to Hashem, if all we do is complain about our situation, then we're taking perfectly good "money" and throwing it away.

It was a lightbulb moment for me. I don't want to throw my pain away. Let me put it in my pocket for eternity by remembering that it's from Hashem, Who wants me to be close to Him.

– L.W., Ramat Beit Shemesh

**Share how Olam Haba awareness is making a difference in your life. Send your story to [EternalConnections@ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org](mailto:EternalConnections@ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org).**