

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

פרשת דברים
שבת חזון
ח' אב תשפ"א
5781
JULY 17, 2021
ISSUE #50
RABBI YITZCHOK
HISIGER, EDITOR
DESIGN & LAYOUT:
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PARASHAH

A VISION

Touched by the Parashah by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

Parashas Devarim is read on the *Shabbos* before *Tishah B'Av*, known as *Shabbos Chazon*, because its *haftarah* (*Yeshayahu* 1:1-1:27) begins with the words, "*Chazon Yeshayahu* — The vision of Yeshayahu." On *Shabbos Chazon*, we contemplate the meaning of *Tishah B'Av*.

Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev has a very inspiring insight on this exalted and special *Shabbos*. Human beings live within the realm of time. We can see only what is happening in our own time period; the past and future are not before us. However, the past, present, and future are all right in front of Hashem. Thus, the third *Beis HaMikdash*, in all its glory, is in front of Hashem. He is only waiting for the right time to bring it down. Rav Levi Yitzchak explains that *Shabbos Chazon* is the *Shabbos* of the *neshamah's chazon*, "vision," when Hashem takes the spiritual component within us and shows each of us a vision of the *Beis HaMikdash* in its splendor. And when we see this image, perhaps we will be inspired to bring it down to earth, so we can have it in reality.

Rav Levi Yitzchak highlighted this thought with a

meaningful parable. Once there was a king who wanted to give his child a beautiful garment, so he hired the best tailor to sew a suit for him.

After a few weeks, it was finally ready. The child was so proud to wear the smart suit, which fit him so well and



made him look so handsome. After a while, he started to run around, not being careful with his valuable suit, and it became torn. When the father saw the damaged garment, although he was disappointed, he still wanted his child to have a fine suit of clothes, so he purchased another suit for him, with the hope that this time he would take better care of it.

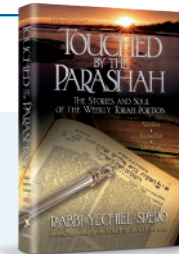
However, before long, the young prince began to climb trees while wearing this suit, and a short while later, it, too, was ripped. This time, the father realized that he could not just give him another suit to wear. If he wanted his son to really take pride in the garment

and to care for it properly, he would have to make him prove that he was worthy of it.

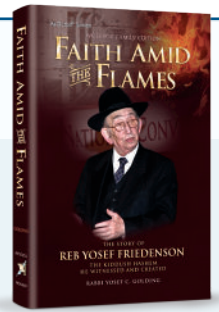
Thus, he asked the tailor to sew an even nicer suit than the previous two, but he did not give it to his child right away. Instead, he kept it in a closet. He would show it to his child every once in a while, and the king would tell his son that he would give it to him only when he was able of caring for it. Although the child wanted the suit very badly, he also wanted to continue to play and run and climb and do things that the other children did.

One year, when the king showed the suit to his son, the boy decided that he was ready to become more responsible and not continue his childish ways, so that he could finally wear the magnificent suit.

The Al-mighty gave us two suits: two *Batei Mikdash*, but we tore them. We destroyed both of them with our carelessness. He is ready to give us a third suit, but we have to show that we are ready to wear it and not ruin it as we did the other two. So every year, on *Shabbos Chazon*, explains Rav Levi Yitzchak, Hashem reveals an image of the



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We arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau on Sunday morning, *Tisha B'Av*, 1944, and were greeted with the shouts of “*Raus! Raus! Schnell! Schnell!*” together with the sounds of vicious, barking dogs. By this time we were truly starving and exhausted. Despite this, we couldn’t bring ourselves to eat the first soup that they gave us. Eventually, with no choice other than to starve to death, we got used to that food.

They sent us all to be deloused and to take a shower. Some of us were sure that we wouldn’t come out, because we had already heard the story that people go into the showers but, in actuality, gas comes out. We were then all taken to quarantine, to the gypsy camp, as it was too big for the number of gypsies they had. The men and women were put in separate barracks, and that’s where we remained for a week to ten days — in the *tzugoyne lage* (quarantine camp).

During that time, the earlier prisoners told us right away what’s going on; beatings, gassing, and burning. We were warned by the German guards that if we did not follow orders, we would end up “*in der himmel*,” as they pointed upwards to the crimson sky. The fear of selection escorted us, day and night, the entire time we were in Auschwitz. In truth, Auschwitz was always night; even daytime was night.

During the day you could smell a very distinctive smell, but at night you saw all. And that red skyline remained like that for about two months, because a few days after we came, the Jews from Lodz started

coming. All their transports went through a selection *r”l* — because there were children and old people, which had not been the case with us.

However, the strength of spirit that was displayed under the most horrific circumstances is nothing less than mind-boggling. One example is a young Hungarian Jew by the name of Binyamin, who slept near my bunk in Bloc 22 in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Binyamin rose early every morning to *daven*. By some unfathomable miracle, he managed to keep his *tefillin* hidden under his straw sack, and he risked his life each morning anew when he put them on. But there was much more. Every morning, when he would say *Birchas Hashachar*, he would repeat loudly the *pasuk* “*Ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu umah na’im goraleinu*” about ten times! “How fortunate are we, how good is our portion, and how sweet is our lot!”

Try for a moment to picture it: a young Jew who, after having been in the camp for only a few months, is already an emaciated sack of bones. He is surrounded by the smoke and ash of the crematoria and the stifling stench of his stuffy barracks, his body racked with agonizing hunger pangs, and all that awaits him is another day of hard work, amid tongue-lashings and beatings.

And there he stands in the corner, his back straight and his head held high. Despite it all, he is still proud and even “fortunate” that he is a Jew. 📖



Reb Yosef Friedenson

A VISION continued from page 1

third and final *Beis HaMikdash* to our *neshamah*, even while we are still suf-

fering in exile. This is done with the hope that this year we will decide, once and for all, that we want to im-

prove our ways, so that we can wear the suit, and take pleasure in the third *Beis HaMikdash*. 📖

New in time for Sefer Devarim!



The Jaffa Family Edition
The Weekly Parashah features age-appropriate text and graphics, gorgeous illustrations, and fascinating sidebars on every page.



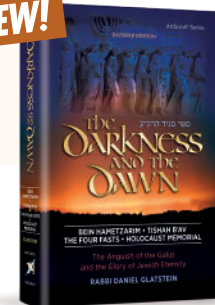
The Sefer and Segulah That Has Captivated Klal Yisrael!

HAAS FAMILY EDITION

SEFER ZERA SHIMSHON

CHAYA BISTRITZKY EDITION
OF SEFER DEVARIM





The following is a fascinating historical fact.

During the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, three hundred thousand Jews left Spain on *Tishah B'Av* in 1492. At the time, there was a *psak* issued by the *gedolei Yisrael*, among them the *Abarbanel*. The ruling issued — a *hora'as sha'ah* for that specific time and place — was that they should be accompanied on their journey by orchestral music. They left Spain amidst music and song. On *Tishah B'Av*, the musicians played — something we normally regard as forbidden.

There were a few reasons for this interesting ruling.

The *rabbanim* sought to boost the spirits of the exiled multitudes who were forced to abandon their homes. They wanted to encourage them, to infuse them with hope and *bitachon* that Hashem was with them.

Furthermore, they were employing music as a way of expressing gratitude to Hashem that they had withstood the *nisayon* and did not convert to Christianity. They were *zocheh* to be *mekadesh Sheim Shamayim*, to sanctify God's Name, and that was a cause for celebration.

Rav Eliyahu Ki Tov tells us another reason for the music that filled the air as the Jews were expelled from Spain. There is a fundamental lesson being taught by this seemingly incongruous act. The *rabbanim* wanted *Klal Yisrael* to learn that we never cry when we leave *galus*. We shed tears only when we leave Yerushalayim. Therefore, they were directed to leave Spain not with tears, but with music and song.

It was a tragedy, a devastating event. Over three hundred thou-

sand Jews were left homeless, evicted from a country where they had flourished for centuries.

But they had never truly belonged in Spain. They were not really leaving their homes. They were leaving a place of exile, a stopping place along the long road of *galus*. A Jew does not cry when he leaves a place of exile.



The edict expelling the Jews from Spain.

Because we don't belong there.

Rav Yechiel Halperin records the following startling comment in his entry for the year 1620. In writing about the suffering at the hands of the Crusades, the author of the *Sma* (*Sefer Me'iros*

Einayim) was asked why the community of Worms (Vermaiza) suffered far more persecution, pogroms, and *gezeiros ra'os*, evil decrees and edicts, during the times of the Crusades than any other *kehillah*.

The *Sma* writes that the *kehillah* of Vermaiza was founded by Jewish exiles who made their way to Germany following the destruction of the First *Beis HaMikdash*. After seventy years

of exile, many Jews returned from Babylon to Eretz Yisrael, but none returned from Worms.

The community in Yerushalayim wrote to the people of Worms, urging them to join them in their new homes, in their settlement in Yerushalayim. The complacent Jews of Worms dismissed the invitation. They responded, "You stay where you are, in the great Yerushalayim, and we will stay where we

**WE NEVER
CRY WHEN WE
LEAVE GALUS.**

are, in the little Yerushalayim."

They were too comfortable in *galus*. That is why they suffered more devastation than the rest of European Jewry.

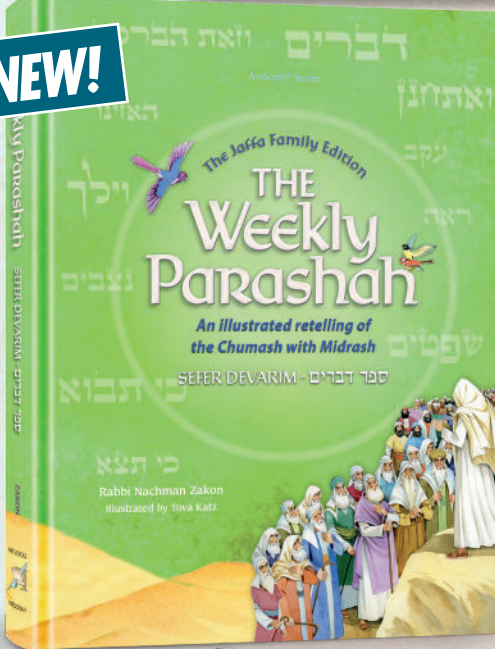
Rav Avraham Saba, one of the great *Kadmonim*, was one of the leaders among the *gerushei Sefarad* and author of the classic work on *Chumash*, *Tzror HaMor*. He was similarly asked why the Jews of Spain suffered so much. What was the reason they suffered such a terrible fate? The *Tzror Hamor* answered, "It was their arrogance. They were under the illusion that they were in their own land, and they constructed homes that were grand and ostentatious — like palaces."

The lesson is an obvious one. We are in *galus*. We are not yet home. And we must not feel comfortable until Hashem enables us all to return, together, to the Holy Land. 🌟

Parashah for Children

פרשת דברים

NEW!



Devarim: The Last of the Torah's Five Books

Sefer Devarim is made up of the words Moshe spoke to all the Jews in the last 36 days of his life. You can say this was the final Torah class that Moshe gave his students, the entire Jewish people.

For Moshe these were the last lessons he would give his beloved people, whom he had led for over 40 years. What did he tell them?

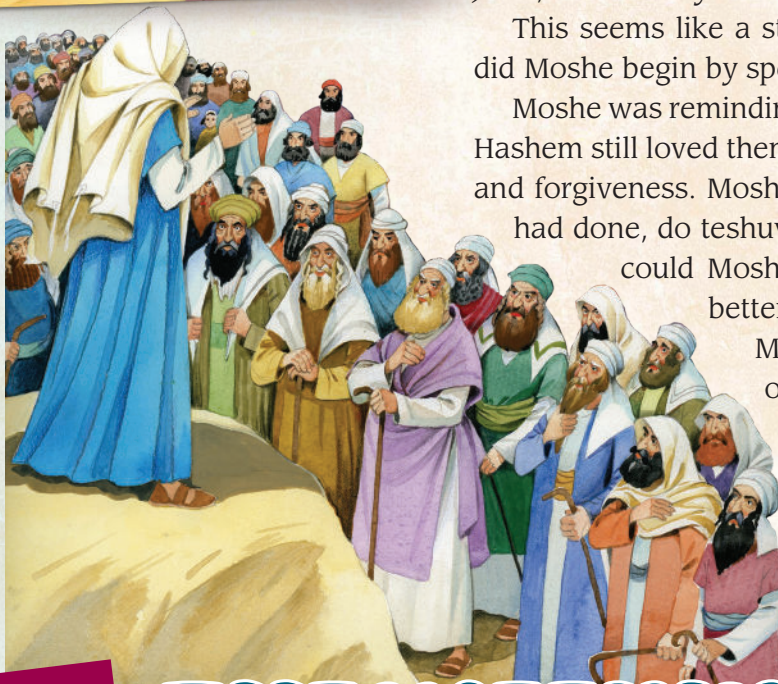
Sefer Devarim begins with Moshe reminding them about some of the sins they had done in the desert. To protect the dignity of the Jews, Moshe only hinted at the sins they had done.

This seems like a strange way to start a final goodbye. So why did Moshe begin by speaking about their sins?

Moshe was reminding the Jews that even though they had sinned, Hashem still loved them. He had treated them with mercy, kindness, and forgiveness. Moshe wanted the Jews to think about what they had done, do teshuvah, and not sin again. What greater last gift could Moshe give the Jews than to inspire them to be better, and to come closer to Hashem?

Moshe also used his last days to review many of the Torah's laws that he had taught them before. He also taught them many new laws.

Imagine how the Jews felt, knowing that this was the last time they would benefit from Moshe's wisdom, love, and leadership in person!



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Devarim:

In how many languages did Moshe explain the Torah?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday, April 14, to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the Parashas Balak question is: ELI BERNATH, LAKEWOOD, NJ

The question was: Who hated the Jews more, Balak or Bilam?

The answer is: Bilam. Bilam wanted the Jews destroyed. Balak just wanted the Jews not to conquer his country.

