

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

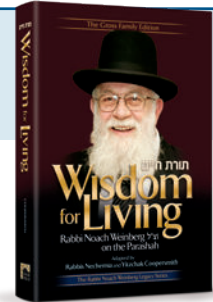
DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY  
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

פרשת בא  
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RABBI YITZCHOK  
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MRS. AVIVA KOHN

## PARASHAH

## PARTY TO THE CRIME

Wisdom for Living – Rabbi Noach Weinberg zt"l on the Parashah  
adapted by Rabbi Nechemia and Yitzchak Coopersmith



וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה עוֹד נִגַע אֶחָד אָבִיָּא עַל פְּרַעֲה וְעַל מִצְרַיִם אַחֲרַי כִּן יִשְׁלַח אֶתְכֶם מִזֶּה.  
וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וְהָ הִכָּה כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּכוֹר פְּרַעֲה  
הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשְּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבַיִת הַבּוֹר וְכֹל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה.

*Hashem said to Moshe, "One more plague shall I bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; after that he shall send you forth from here..."*

*It was at midnight that Hashem smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn animal (Shemos II:1, 12:29).*

Hashem tells Moshe, "This is it. I will strike down every firstborn of the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh until the firstborn of the foreign captive that sits in jail." "Kol bechor, every firstborn," implies that even if there was a tourist or temporary resident from a different nation who was a firstborn or had a firstborn son, he died as well (see *Rashi, ibid.* 12:29). And the Torah specifies that the firstborn of a prisoner of war was also killed in this final plague.

*Rashi* asks: Where is the fairness in killing the firstborn of a captive? Why should he die? He had nothing to do with enslaving the Jews. He was also one of the prisoners of Pharaoh.

*Rashi* gives two reasons, which means that both factors were necessary. One, these captives rejoiced at the suffering of the Jews. Two, so they would not say, "It was our gods who brought this punishment upon the Egyptians."

We can understand why the firstborn captives were killed as well. But *Rashi* does not include in his explanation why the firstborn of the temporary resident, the fellow from a foreign country who was living in Egypt, was

killed. It seems that there was a different justification for killing him, even though he wasn't part of the government persecuting the Jews. What did he do wrong?

The answer is obvious, which is why *Rashi* did not bother to state it. You cannot be a tourist or a temporary resident in a country that is committing genocide. If you stay there, even if you are not actively involved, you are condoning the atrocity and are a part of it.

The captive in jail cannot get out. He is stuck there, so *Rashi* needs to explain the justification for killing his firstborn. But there is no need to explain why the temporary resident's firstborn is killed. How can he live in a country that is persecuting another nation? His silence means he is party

to the crime.

There is no difference whether you're doing something actively or you're tacitly condoning it. As Edmund Burke famously said, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." According to intelligence services, there are 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, of which 15-25 percent seek the destruction of the West. The remaining *continued on page 3*



Rabbi Noach Weinberg zt"l

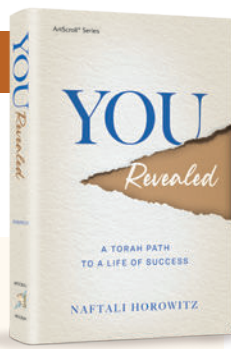
**"ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL IS THAT GOOD MEN DO NOTHING."**

ARTSCROLL LATINESORAH

## PERSPECTIVE

### DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

You...Revealed by Naftali Horowitz



My father a”h was a diamond cutter. As a child, I would occasionally accompany him to 47<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan to watch him work. It was fascinating to watch something that looks like an ordinary stone, something we would kick aside if we came across it on the street, turn into a brilliant and valuable object. The stone is held down on a whirling cutting wheel and carefully ground and polished until the brilliance is revealed and a facet is born. The stone is then turned slightly and the process repeats itself. When completed, we behold a sparkling gem.

This is life. We are here to constantly hone our rough surfaces to reveal new facets that bring a new light of abundance into our lives.

**THE UNTAPPED STRENGTHS THAT LIE INSIDE OF US WILL ONE DAY SHINE BRIGHT.**

Rav Aharon of Strashela, in his *sefer, Shaarei Avodah*, teaches that many of the most valuable items in this world are found deep underground, encrusted in rock. Think oil, gold, platinum, and gemstones. This is because it is Hashem’s will that the most valuable items should require the greatest effort to reveal.

The same is true with us. The untapped strengths that lie inside of us, buried under our negative traits, will one day shine bright. Just as my father was able to look at a rock and see a beautiful gem, we, too, must look at ourselves as a diamond in the rough and never discard the potential that lies within. We are here to cut away *continued on page 3*

## TORAH STUDY

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION

The Schottenstein Edition Ein Yaakov – Tractates Moed Kattan/Chagigah



Rava said: Anyone who is engaged in [the study of] Torah from within [the beis hamidrash], his Torah [learning] will proclaim him abroad [to the world at large] (Moed Katan 16b).

The Gemara tells us that when a person involves himself in Torah study “within,” his Torah will “proclaim him abroad.” This seems to be an unusual outcome. If Torah study is truly a private matter, too precious to put on display, why is the reward for a person’s personal study that his teachings will become known? Would such public recognition not run contrary to and defeat the purpose of keeping one’s Torah private?

The Satmar Rav, Rav Yoel Teitelbaum, answers that the intention is not that the scholar’s greatness and wisdom will become well-publicized. It is that he be recognizable as a Torah scholar even when he is outside the four walls of the *beis hamidrash*. His great knowledge of the Torah will “proclaim him abroad” — will be manifest in his behavior wherever he is. His every deed will be guided by the Torah he devotes his life to studying — and it will show (*Divrei Yoel, Mishpatim, B’Mesibah L’Chinuch Beis HaKnesses*).



The Satmar Rav

**HIS WISDOM WILL ILLUMINATE HIM AND SHINE RIGHT THROUGH HIM.**

The Gemara (*Yoma 86a*) comments that when a person studies Torah and acts honestly and pleasantly with others, it causes them to say: “Fortunate is his father who taught him Torah; fortunate is his teacher who taught him Torah... So-and-so, whose [father/teacher] taught him Torah, see how pleasant are his ways, how proper are his deeds!” So too, when a student truly takes his learning to heart, his wisdom will illuminate him and shine right through him, both inside and outside the *beis hamidrash*. 📖

#### THIS WEEK’S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

### JANUARY / טבת-שבט

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Megillah 27	Megillah 28	Megillah 29	Megillah 30	Megillah 31	Megillah 32	Moed Katan 2

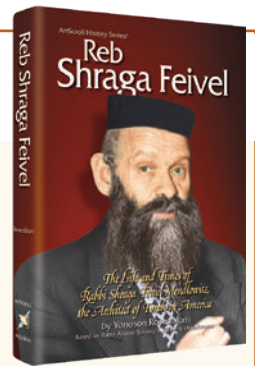
#### THIS WEEK’S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

### JANUARY / טבת-שבט

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Berachos 5:3-4	Berachos 5:5-6:1	Berachos 6:2-3	Berachos 6:4-5	Berachos 6:6-7	Berachos 6:8-7:1	Berachos 7:2-3

# THE GREATEST TRAIT OF ALL

Reb Shraga Feivel by Yonoson Rosenblum



Few have ever worked so hard at concealing their essence as did Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, the pioneer of Torah *Yiddishkeit* in America. He steadfastly refused to answer to the title rabbi.

Just being called for an *aliyah* was enough to make him blush. A *gabbai* in Mesivta Torah Vodaath once made the mistake of calling him for an *aliyah* as “*Moreinu V’Rabbeinu HaRav Shraga Feivel ben Moshe.*” Eyes blazing, Reb Shraga Feivel rebuked him, “You are giving me *semichah* (ordination)?”

No *gabbai* ever made that mistake again.

An officer of the Agudas HaRabbanim once had to introduce Reb Shraga Feivel to some strangers. Since Reb Shraga Feivel insisted that he be called “Mister,” the officer assumed that he was not worthy of the title of *menahel*

(principal) or *rosh yeshivah*, and fumbled for what to say. Sensing his discomfiture, Reb Shraga Feivel came to the rescue. “Tell them I’m the janitor of the Mesivta,” he suggested.

Despite founding and guiding

**FEW HAVE EVER WORKED SO HARD AT CONCEALING THEIR ESSENCE.**



Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz

Torah Umesorah, he had no official position in the organization and was not mentioned in any organizational material produced in his lifetime.

There was no cause so important that he would consent to be

seated on the dais or to be honored in any way. The Board of Directors of Torah Vodaath

once tried to persuade him to be the honoree at the *yeshivah*’s annual dinner. “I’m building Torah here,” he told the board, “and the Torah was not given in order that Feivel should be honored.”

He could be acerbic in poking fun at those who busy themselves with the pursuit of honor. During a *shiur* on *Shaarei Teshuvah* of Rabbeinu Yonah, he commented, “At my age, people start thinking about the fantastic *levayah* (funeral) they’ll have and who will be there.” He went on to mock the ways in which people routinely engage in the pursuit of honor. “Woe to those who sell their *Olam Haba* for a little *kavod* (honor),” was a constant theme of his. 📖

## DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH continued from page 2

rock — jealousy, selfishness, anger, low self-esteem, greed.

Each facet that we polish adds a dimension to our status as a vessel and allows new blessing to enter our lives. Improving our *middos* is the way to fortify ourselves as vessels. Abundance placed into a humble, disciplined, appreciative, empathetic, spiritual, selfless, and altruistic vessel will translate to great blessing to both the recipient and the world at large. Hashem waits for us to present ourselves to Him as such vessels.

*It was Friday afternoon in the home of*

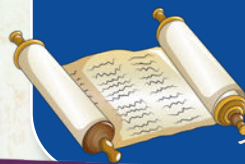


*Rav Nochum of Chernobyl, the holy Meor Einayim, and his saintly wife was facing a dilemma. She had only three coins with which to purchase food for Shabbos. Her issue was that she didn’t have a pot, and if she purchased one, there would be no money left for food. When she arrived at the marketplace, she decided to buy the pot, but when she arrived home, she starting questioning her decision. What good is a pot if you don’t have any food? When the tzaddik saw what she did, he said to her, “Git hust du gituhn — you did right. Our job in this world is to prepare the utensil; Hashem Yisbarach will surely fill it up.” 📖*

## PARTY TO THE CRIME continued from page 1

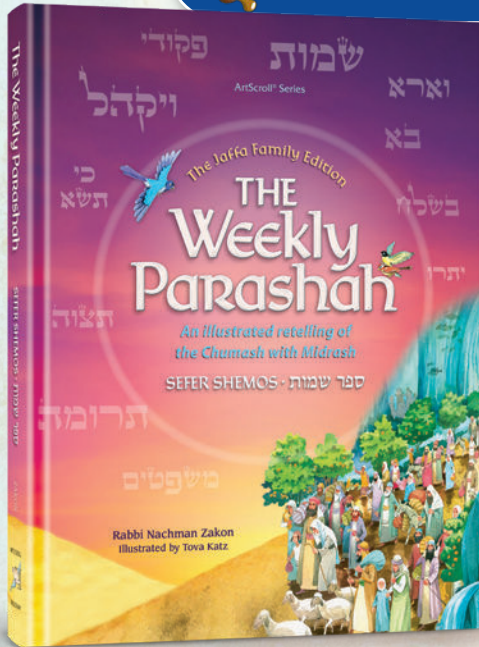
75-85 percent of the Muslim population consists of peace-loving people, but that is irrelevant if they remain silent. It is the murderous radicals who drive the agenda, as Nazi Germany painfully testifies.

When the majority is complacent, they are complicit to terror. They must take an active stance against violence. 📖



# Parashah for Children

## פרשת בא



### FASCINATING FACTS

In the year 4121 from Creation (361 CE), it looked like the Romans would make it impossible for a court to proclaim Rosh Chodesh. The leader of the last court in Eretz Yisrael was Hillel II. He and his judges calculated when the first day of each month should be for all the years to come. They made all those future first days of the month Rosh Chodesh. For over 1650 years we've been using the same calendar that they made!

## THE MITZVAH OF DECLARING ROSH CHODESH



### Look Up!

**I**n the second half of a Jewish month, the moon gets smaller and smaller, until it disappears. Then we start to see it again, little by little.

For many, many years, people who saw the first sliver of the moon would travel to the great Jewish court, the Sanhedrin, and would tell the judges what they had seen.

The judges would ask questions. How high in the sky was the moon? How wide was it? Where in the sky was it? The judges had to make sure that these people really saw the moon.

Once the court heard from two witnesses who had seen the new moon, the head of the court would say, "Mekudash, holy." Then everyone else would answer, "Mekudash mekudash." That meant that the day was Rosh Chodesh, the first day of the new month. It was a day of celebration when Jews would recite Hallel and an extra Shemoneh Esrei called Mussaf. In the Beis HaMikdash there would be special korbanos.

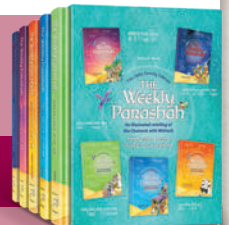
**WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!**

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Bo:

*During Makkas Choshech, was it dark for the Jews at night?*

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto:shabbosquestion@artscroll.com) by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, 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 Vayechi question is: SHIMON BERNSTEIN, Staten Island, NY**

The question was: Who was the first of the 12 shevatim to die and who was the last?  
The answer is: Yosef was the first of the brothers to die. He ruled Egypt for 80 years. Levi was the last of the brothers to die. He was 137 years old.