

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת משפטים  
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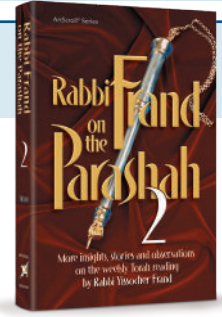
WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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

## PARASHAH

## LEND YOUR HEART

Rabbi Frand on the Parashah 2



כל אִלְמָנָה וְיָתוּם לֹא תַעֲנוּן. אִם עָנָה תַעֲנֶנּוּ אֹתוֹ כִּי אִם צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי שְׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקוֹ.  
*You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan. If you [dare to] cause him pain, he shall cry out to Me; I shall surely hear his outcry (22:21-22).*

Chazal teach us that the prohibition of causing pain to others is not limited to widows and orphans; the Torah chooses widows and orphans as examples of individuals who are most sensitive. Having undergone the trauma of losing a loved one, a widow and orphan are likely to feel that they are being taunted or hurt because they are vulnerable, with no husband and father to protect them. Tears flow easily from widows and orphans, and Hashem, our merciful Father, hears their cries.

The same applies, say Chazal, to any person, and especially to the underprivileged who feel vulnerable.

A passage in the Talmud (*Shabbos 55a*) discusses the implications of Chazal's words:

Rav Yehudah was sitting before Shmuel, and a woman came in crying. Shmuel did not pay attention to her.

"Rebbi," asked Rav Yehudah, "do you not agree that 'One who shuts his ear to the cry of the pauper, he, too, will call out and not be answered?'" (*Mishlei 21:13*).

"Sharp one!" replied Shmuel, "Your master (i.e., Shmuel) will not be burnt, but your master's master will be burnt. Mar Ukva is the head of the *beis din* (and he was obligated to heed the woman's cry)."

The Talmud does not tell us who was right. Was Rav Yehudah correct in his assessment that Shmuel would be punished for ignoring

the woman, or was Shmuel correct in placing the blame on Mar Ukva, as the head of the court?

*Tosafos (Bava Basra 10b)* fills in the blank for us. The Talmud relates that Rav Yehoshua's son Yosef once had an "out of body experience," in which he died and went up to Heaven. When he came back to life, his father asked him, "What did you see?"

"*Olam hafuch ra'isi* —I saw a world turned upside down," said Yosef. "Those considered prestigious in this world occupied lower positions in heaven, and those who are subservient here are considered more prestigious in heaven."

*Tosafos* writes that according to a tradition passed down from the *Geonim* to Rabbeinu Chananel, Yosef saw that Shmuel was considered a disciple of Rav Yehudah in Heaven because of the instance in which he objected to Rav Yehudah's handling of the poor woman.

Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi, *rosh yeshiva* of Ateres Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael, finds this *Tosafos* very difficult to understand. The Talmud records more than 500 instances in which Rav Yehudah quotes Shmuel's teachings. It is obvious that Shmuel was Rav Yehudah's master and taught him much of what he knew. How could the situation become reversed because of an isolated incident in which Rav Yehudah was correct? It must be, explains Rav

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The Klausenberger Rebbe



Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi

ARTSCROLLS  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY



You are given an island where several tribes live. By nature and culture, these tribes are exploitative and belligerent. This results in much suffering on the island, caused by war, poverty and prejudice.

They have been living this way for centuries without any sign of improvement.

Your assignment: To try to improve this society. To teach its members to live together in harmony and reduce

suffering to a minimum or eliminate it entirely. To create a healthy society.

Your resources: You have all the resources that a highly advanced technology can offer. You have the entire island under surveillance and can see what is happening in any place at any time.

You have such devices as cloud-seeding equipment and can plant underground explosives. Within reason, you

can control weather, flooding, volcanos and earthquakes, and produce any “natural” phenomenon on cue.

You also have devices that can be used to implant ideas through subliminal suggestion. You can implant ideas to entire populations or to certain select leaders. However, you

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

must take into account the severe limitations of subliminal suggestion. If you try to implant any ideas that go against the basic nature of the populace, they will be totally rejected and your efforts will be in vain.

One alternative would be to implant ideas that somehow would make use of the acknowledged bad nature of these people.

Your restrictions: Under no circumstances are the natives of this island to be aware of your presence.

This supersedes all other considerations.

The cultural shock caused by your revealing yourself would disrupt the entire fabric of the island culture. It would cause much suffering and more than offset any good that you could possibly accomplish.

The natives would be reduced to a state of almost vegetable-like dependence from which they would be unlikely to recover. If they did recover, they might rebel so violently as to eliminate any positive values they might have originally had. Therefore, the restriction that you not reveal yourself must be followed without exception under any circumstances.

But aside from this restriction, you have a free hand to proceed as humanely or as ruthlessly as you see fit.

In short, you have the opportunity to play G-d.

What would you do?

## LEND YOUR HEART continued from page 1

Ezrachi, that the one lesson Shmuel learned from Rav Yehudah outweighs all the Torah that Shmuel taught him. It is imperative to respond to a person's tears. We must ask an obvious question, however. Shmuel explained that he did not heed the woman's cries because he was not in the position to do so. Why, then, was he punished?

The answer may lie in a story told about the Klausenberger Rebbe *zt"l*. Many people in the DP camps following the Holocaust had a very difficult time coping with the crushing loss of their families and friends. One fellow was so devastated that he abandoned his *Yiddishkeit* altogether. His friends tried to coax him to return to religion, but to no avail. Someone suggested that he go speak to the Klausenberger Rebbe. At first he resisted, but he finally agreed. The man came out of his meeting with the Klausenberger Rebbe after an hour, a changed man. He donned his *yarmulke* and began to keep Shabbos once again. His friends were shocked. What could the Rebbe possibly have said in that one hour that accomplished more than they had in months?

“I went into the Rebbe and began to tell him about all of the family members that I lost,” he related. “As I spoke, tears began to stream down my face.

“The Rebbe turned to me and said, ‘I also lost my family. I had a wife and eleven children before the war, and now I have no one.’

“With that, he took my hand, held it in his, and began to weep along with me.

“We sat like that for an hour, weeping unchecked. Finally, I felt that I had gotten all the grief out of me; I felt that someone cared more about me than about my abandonment of Judaism. I felt that I could move on.”

• • • • •

Perhaps Shmuel was not in a position to do anything. He could not render a verdict in the woman's favor; that was Mar Ukva's role. But he could listen and empathize.

When a person comes to cry to us, we often do not have answers for his or her problems. Writing a check will not solve all the problems in the world. We cannot return a widow's husband to her, or an orphan's father to him. But we can listen. We can lend them our hearts.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky on Shidduchim by Naftali Weinberger

Rav Chaim Kanievsky often says: The time to begin *davening* for one's child's *shidduch* is the day the child is born. *Tefillah* is a most powerful tool for having one's hopes and aspirations realized.

When asked at what point in *davening* one should pray for a proper *shidduch*, Rav Chaim replied: During the conclusion of *Shemoneh Esrei* by *Elokai Netzor*.

When asked from what age a *bachur* should begin to *daven* that he should find his *zivug*, Rav Chaim responded, "From *bar mitzvah*." (One would assume that a girl should begin *davening* for her *zivug* from *bas mitzvah*. That a girl should begin *davening* at her *bas mitzvah* was confirmed by Rav Chaim's children. They told me that Rav Chaim told his daughters at their *bas mitzvah* that they should begin to *daven* for a good husband



Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman



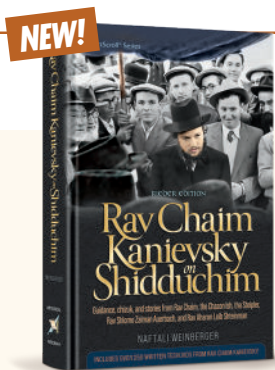
Rav Chaim Kanievsky

and for children.)

Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman said: *Chazal* teach that it is good to *daven* before the *tzarah* comes (*Sanhedrin* 44a). Though finding one's *zivug* is not in the category of a *tzarah*, since in our days finding one's *zivug* has become so difficult, it is best to begin

**TEFILLAH IS A MOST POWERFUL TOOL FOR HAVING ONE'S HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS REALIZED.**

*davening* for an appropriate spouse for one's children before they are at the age of *shidduchim* (*MiZekeinim Esbonan*, Vol. 3, p. 74). When Rav Aharon Leib was told that a group of young girls sat for a long time on *Shavuos* night reciting *Tehillim*, he said: "Very good! They have what to *daven* for. Finding a *shidduch* these days is no simple matter. They should *daven* for this from a young age" (*Sos Asis*, p. 9). 📖



Make Your Berachos Meaningful by Rabbi Mechel Handler

David HaMelech instituted that everyone should recite one hundred *berachos* daily to build up our appreciation and joy for all the good that Hashem bestows upon us. Saying these *berachos* is like receiving a phone call one hundred times a day to remind us that Hashem is running the show and that He loves us and is taking care of all our needs.

The *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Beis Yehudah in Detroit, Rav Leib Bakst, learned in a *yeshivah* in Lida in his younger years. One day, the *Chofetz*



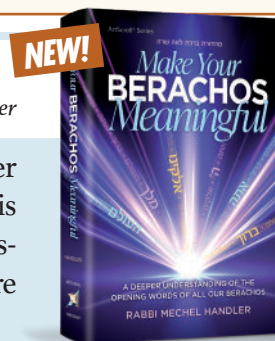
Rav Leib Bakst

*Chaim* traveled by train from Radin to Lida to strengthen the community in the areas of *kashrus* and *shemiras Shabbos*. A large reception was held for him, and there was barely any room to move. Rav Bakst recalled that he was in such awe of the *tzaddik hador* that all he was able to say to the *Chofetz Chaim* was that he was the son of Rav Yaakov Yehoshua Bakst, whom the *Chofetz Chaim* knew personally. He then heard the *Chofetz Chaim* say to himself, "*Ribbono Shel Olam*, look at this *bachur* who

left his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, to come here to learn Torah."

Rav Leib said, "The *Chofetz Chaim* then grabbed my hand and said, 'My child, be careful with *berachos*, and with that you will be saved from all travails and suffering.'"

And so it was: Rav Bakst survived the travails of the Holocaust, including exile in Siberia, as well as in Kobe, Japan, and Shanghai, China — all in the *zechus* of reciting *berachos* properly, with *kavanah*. 📖



## THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

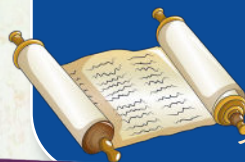
JAN-FEB / שבט-אדר א'

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
29 כז	30 כח	31 כט	1 ל	2 א	3 ב	4 ג
Moed Katan 17	Moed Katan 18	Moed Katan 19	Moed Katan 20	Moed Katan 21	Moed Katan 22	Moed Katan 23

## THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

JAN-FEB / שבט-אדר א'

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
29 כז	30 כח	31 כט	1 ל	2 א	3 ב	4 ג
Peah 2:8-3:1	Peah 3:2-3	Peah 3:4-5	Peah 3:6-7	Peah 3:8-4:1	Peah 4:2-3	Peah 4:4-5



# Parashah for Children

## פרשת משפטים

### Into the Future

**W**hen he was in Shamayim, Moshe saw Hashem putting crowns on the letters of the Torah. (These are thin lines that are drawn on top of some of the letters of the Torah.) “What are they for?” he asked.

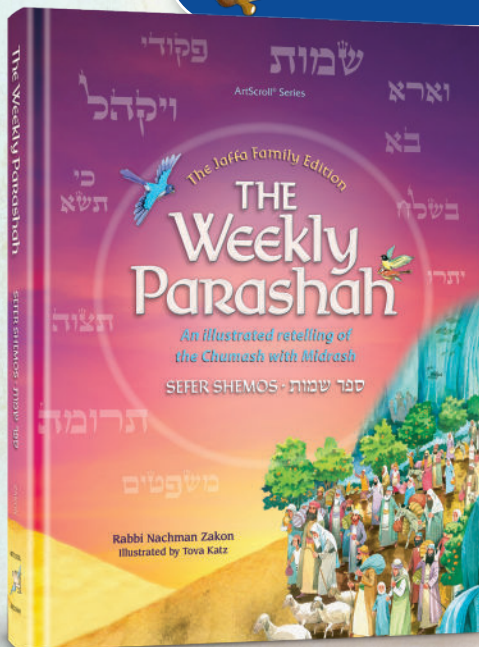
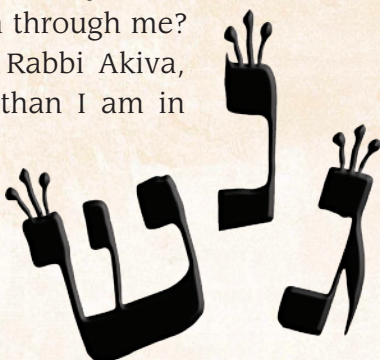
Hashem explained that one day, there would be a great tzaddik who would explain the many laws that are hidden in the crowns on the Torah letters. That tzaddik would be ... Rabbi Akiva!

Moshe asked to see this tzaddik. Hashem brought Moshe hundreds of years into the future, to Rabbi Akiva’s yeshivah. Moshe listened to Rabbi Akiva teach. He



realized that Rabbi Akiva was explaining things in a way that he did not understand. Moshe felt bad, until he heard Rabbi Akiva tell his students: “What I have taught you are the laws given to Moshe at Har Sinai.” When he heard this, Moshe felt better. But he asked Hashem, “Why are You giving the Torah through me? Give it through Rabbi Akiva, who is greater than I am in learning.”

Hashem answered, “Quiet. This is My decision.”



### FASCINATING FACTS

The great Rabbi Akiva was a shepherd who did not start learning Torah until he was 40 years old! He started learning, sitting with young children so he could catch up. He went on to become one of the greatest Rabbis and teachers who ever lived! It’s never too late to start learning Torah!

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Mishpatim:

Which shevet was Yehoshua bin Nun from?

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 Bo question is: **SHUEY MASSOUDA, Far Rockaway, NY**

The question was: During makkas choshech, was it dark for the Jews at night?  
The answer is: During makkas choshech, it wasn’t dark for the Jews – even at night.

