

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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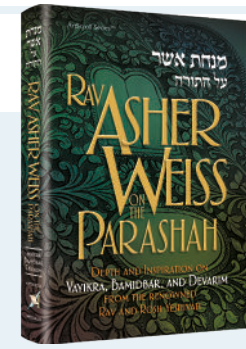
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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

PARASHAH MIND AND HEART

Rav Asher Weiss on the Parashah



“Her husband had revoked them (his wife’s vows) and Hashem will forgive her” (*Bamidbar* 30:13). The *Gemara* states that this *pasuk* refers to a woman who accepted a vow of *nezirus*, and her husband heard and annulled it. She was unaware that he had annulled it, but she nevertheless drank wine and contaminated herself with the ritual impurity of a corpse. (*Rashi*: Although she did not sin, she requires forgiveness, since she intended to sin.)

When Rebbi Akiva reached this *pasuk*, he would cry and say, “If a person who intended to eat pork and unknowingly ate lamb requires forgiveness, then how much more so does a person who fulfilled his intention to eat pork” (*Kiddushin* 81b).

Why is a person held responsible for his intention to sin, when in practice he did nothing wrong?



Rav Asher Weiss

A person’s level of spiritual perfection is measured by the degree to which he devotes himself to Hashem.

On the one hand, a person cannot be considered devoted to Hashem unless he studies Torah and fulfills all Hashem’s commands with the greatest attention to detail. Before the Torah was given, our forefathers found other ways to serve Hashem. The *Rishonim* tell us that the *Avos* were able to focus on the spiritual essence of the *mitzvos*, without having to fulfill them in practice.

For example, Yaakov achieved the spiritual benefit of donning *tefillin* with the staves he placed before the watering troughs of Lavan’s sheep. However, once the Torah was given on Har Sinai, all other gates of spiritual advancement were shut. There remains only the one well-trodden path of Torah and *mitzvah* observance, which we all must follow.

On the other hand, although we must be devoted to Hashem in practice, by fulfilling His *mitz-*

vos, the primary measure of our spiritual fulfillment is the devotion of our hearts. “The Merciful One desires our hearts” (*Sanhedrin* 106b), our Sages tell us. When a person serves Hashem, fulfilling the practical *mitzvos* with all the limbs of his body, seeds of inspiration are planted in his heart, as stated in the writings of our Sages, the *Rishonim*, and the giants of *Mussar* and *Chassidus*.

For this reason, the *Gemara* here teaches us that if a person desired to sin by eating pork, and attempted to do so, although his attempt was foiled, he still requires forgiveness. He has defiled his heart with thoughts of sin, and thus proven himself unfaithful to Hashem.

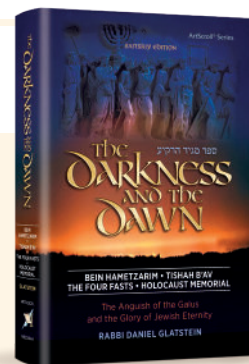
The two central pillars of our service of Hashem can both be found in the same *siman* of *Shulchan Aruch*, in the laws of reciting *Shema*:

“*Shema* must be recited with *kavanah*, awe, reverence, and trembling... The letter *dalet* must be stressed so that it not sound like a *reish*. The letter *ches* must not be said too quickly. The letter *aleph* must not be drawn out” (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 61:1, 6-7).

Our service of Hashem must be composed of burning devotion and enthusiasm on one hand, and precise attention to *halachic* detail on the other. Only when these two factors are balanced can we accept upon ourselves the yoke of Hashem’s service by reciting *Shema*.

The mind and the heart are two sanctuaries in which the Divine Presence rests. We pray that we may be worthy to purify ourselves in these two aspects: that we may serve Hashem with our minds — by understanding *continued on page 3*

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The *Ramchal* tells of a frightening incident that took place in 1648 with the great *mekubal*, Rav Shimshon Ostropoler.

In the years 1648 to 1649, vicious decrees, known as the *gezeiros* of *Tach v'Tat*, were issued against *Klal Yisrael*. The communities who fell victim to them wondered why they were being subjected to such insurmountable challenges.

Rav Shimshon Ostropoler, one of the *gedolim* of the time, was able to obtain an audience with the *sitra achra* (the realm of evil). He implored him by oath to explain why *Klal Yisrael* was being tormented to such an extent. Why was he prosecuting the Jewish people, causing them so much more suffering than every other nation in the world?

The *sitra achra* offered him a deal. He told Rav Shimshon that if they would stop keeping *Shabbos*, stop performing *bris milah*, and cease learning Torah, then the *sitra achra* would stop his prosecution. Rav Shimshon Ostropoler

responded that while there were many things that he may be willing to forgo, he would never, ever, acquiesce to give up even one letter of *limud haTorah*.

The *Ramchal* then pens the immortal words: Our engaging in *limud haTorah* is poison to the *sitra*

TORAH STUDY IS THE ELIXIR OF LIFE, THE SAM HACHAIM.

achra. For *Klal Yisrael*, on the other hand, Torah study is the elixir of life, the *sam hachaim*.

Our Chief Rectification

While the *Mishnah* at the end of *Sotah* depicts a very bleak picture of the days leading up to the coming of *Mashiach*, the remedy has already been prepared for us. The *Ramchal* (*Derech Etz Chaim*) teaches that the study of Torah is the chief

of all our rec-

tifications. We were able to ward off destruction for many centuries through the sweet melodies of Torah study, but as soon as the music stopped, the *Ribbono Shel Olam* was no longer willing to ignore the prosecutions of the *sitra achra* for the iniquities of the Jewish people.

Fortuitously, we still know the melody. The learning of Torah is still the source of all life and blessing for our people, and if one can immerse in its life-giving teachings, it becomes an oasis of *chayim* even in the most intense days of mourning. At a *siyum*, there is no mourning for the *Beis HaMikdash*. In a *beis midrash*, no commemoration is needed for the *Churban*. In the realm of Torah, there is no *Churban*. In the realm of Torah, it is as if the *Beis HaMikdash* has been built. 📖

INTEGRITY

STAMP OF HONESTY

The Pirkei Avos Treasury by Rabbi Moshe Lieber

A famous incident involving Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky — and one that he felt was a *mitzvah* to publicize — serves as a classic instance of our responsibility for the public image of Jews and Judaism.

Shortly after Rav Yaakov assumed the position as *rav* of Tzitevian, Lithuania, a Jew came to him and reported that the postmaster had mistakenly given him change for a hundred-*lit* note instead of for the ten-*lit* note with which he had paid. Rav Yaakov advised the man to return the money. Several weeks later, Rav Yaakov was in the post office, and this same postmaster gave him more stamps than he had paid for, and Rav Yaakov re-

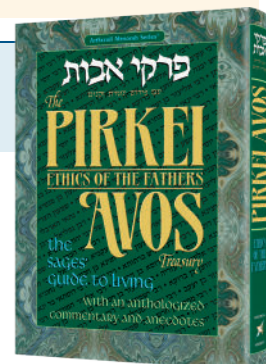


Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky

turned the excess stamps. The sly smile on the postmaster's face convinced Rav Yaakov that the postmaster was deliberately testing him to see whether the new rabbi was

honest. Rav Yaakov was delighted that he had been presented with such an opportunity for *kiddush Hashem*.

Years later, he learned from survivors of Tzitevian that the postmaster had been one of the few locals who had been willing to hide Jews from the Nazis. Rav Yaakov was convinced that such displays of honesty had been a major factor in that decision. 📖



A BERACHAH FOR THE CAMPER

Touched By Their Tears by Rabbi Yechiel Spero



It was not unusual for those waiting to speak to the Skverer Rebbe to be standing in line in his home at 2 a.m. People came to ask questions or receive advice about their children, businesses, and other matters.

This particular time, the line included a young man named Yoni. He was about 18 years old and was dressed in jeans and a very nice three-button shirt: standard fare for someone dressing nicely on a Saturday night, but not exactly standard dress for those coming to see the Rebbe. Yoni's clothing and white-crocheted *yarmulka* drew more than a few glances from the others — mostly dressed in *shtreimlach* and long coats — as they all waited patiently for their turn.

Finally, it was Yoni's turn. He walked into the Rebbe's inner chamber with some trepidation. Gathering his courage, he looked at the Rebbe and asked him for a *berachah* for a *refuah sheleimah* for Yerachmiel ben Baila.

The Rebbe looked up, and then closed his eyes, and repeated with great concentration, "Yerachmiel ben Baila zol hubben ah *refuah sheleimah*."

As he was about to leave, one of the Rebbe's *gabbaim* grabbed Yoni by the arm and asked excitedly, "From where do you know the name Yerachmiel ben Baila?"

Yoni explained that he worked in the summer in a camp called HASC (Hebrew Academy for Special Children). "All types of children, from all different backgrounds, come to HASC. Yerachmiel ben Baila is my camper. I spent every day with him the first half of the summer. I dressed him in the morning and played with him and fed him and even put him to bed at night."

The man listened carefully.

As Yoni continued speaking, he couldn't help but wonder why the man was so interested.

"Today is Yerachmiel's birthday. I wanted to buy him a birthday present, but I could not figure out what to get him. He would not be able to play with a video game or even a ball. So I decided to come to Skver, since the boy

is a Skverer *chassid*. I figured that the best birthday present I could get him would be a *berachah* from his Rebbe. So that's why I came here tonight."

Yoni was surprised to find that the man to whom he had been speaking was crying. "I'm sorry. Did I say something wrong?"

"No, not at all . . . I just want to thank you. You see . . . Yerachmiel ben Baila is my son."

The first time I heard this story was a few weeks after it had happened. I had just finished reciting the Tishah B'Av Kinno's in camp, and a head counselor from another camp called me and told me the story. He apologized for calling on Tishah B'Av, but insisted that it was a story that could not wait, and was appropriate for the day.

Indeed it was.

In galus, especially in today's day and age, each faction of Klal Yisrael is so specialized. One wears one type of hat and the other wears another. Some people dress in white shirts and others in blue ones. Some wear black velvet yarmulkas, some wear leather ones, and some — like Yoni — wear those of the white-crocheted variety. Generally, the groups do not mix with one another. Each group has its own mode of dress, hashkafah, and unique approach to serving Hashem. Unfortunately, very often there is a lack of tolerance on the part of one group for another.

There is one time when those invisible but very tangible barriers are broken down, and that is in the face of adversity and tragedy. Indeed, we then find that we have the ability to rise above our petty differences and unite.

If only we would realize that if we could put aside our differences to be marbeh kevod Shamayim, there would be no need to come together to overcome the difficult challenges we face, as there would be none to overcome.

*For as soon as we put aside the *sinas chinam*, the truly senseless hatred, Mashiach will come and all tragedy will disappear.* 📖



The Skverer Rebbe

MIND AND HEART continued from page 1

and scrupulously observing every nuance of *halachah*; and with our

hearts — by devoting ourselves to Him with burning enthusiasm. For these two traits, David HaMelech

prayed, "Create a pure heart for me, *Elokim*; and a steadfast spirit renew within me" (*Tehillim* 51:12). 📖

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

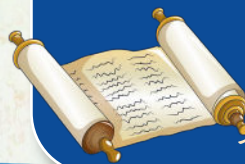
JULY-AUGUST / אב

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
30 ב	31 ג	1 ד	2 ה	3 ו	4 ז	5 ח
Kesubos 24	Kesubos 25	Kesubos 26	Kesubos 27	Kesubos 28	Kesubos 29	Kesubos 30

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

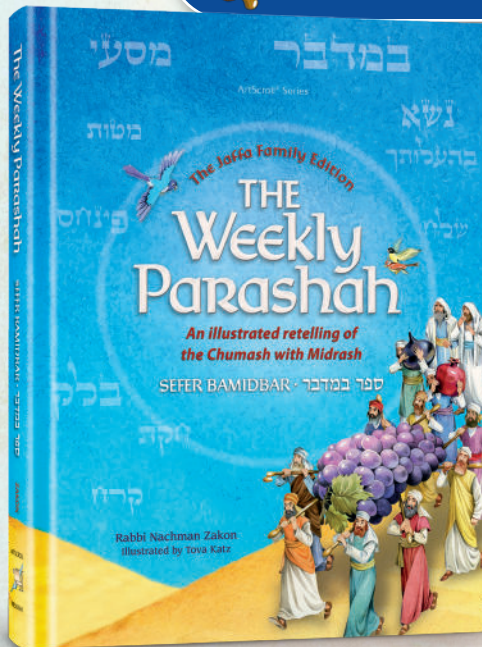
JULY-AUGUST / אב

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
30 ב	31 ג	1 ד	2 ה	3 ו	4 ז	5 ח
Terumos 10:11-12	Terumos 11:1-2	Terumos 11:3-4	Terumos 11:5-6	Terumos 11:7-8	Terumos 11:9-10	Maasros 1:1-2



Parashah for Children

פרשת מטות-מסעי



What was the big mistake the shevatim of Gad and Reuven made when they asked Moshe to live outside of Eretz Yisrael?

Their love for making money came before wanting to live in Eretz Yisrael with the rest of the Jews.

BIG MISTAKE! When the time came for the Jews to be sent into exile, before the destruction of the first Beis HaMikdash, who were the first shevatim to suffer being conquered, uprooted from their homeland, and exiled far away? The shevatim that had decided not to live in Eretz Yisrael. Because they put making money before living in Eretz Yisrael with the rest of the Jews, they went to exile first!



How long were the shevatim of Gad and Reuven away from home, fighting in the wars to conquer Eretz Yisrael and dividing the land?

Fourteen years, seven to conquer the land and seven to divide it. By the time they got back home, their children who were left behind ... had grown into teenagers and young men!

FASCINATING FACTS

There is another reason for half of Menashe being on the other side of the Yarden River. It has to do with the past. Remember? Yosef sent his son Menashe to find Yosef's cup in Binyamin's saddle pack and accuse the brothers of being thieves. When the cup was found, the brothers tore their clothing in grief. It was Menashe who caused the brothers to tear their clothing, so Menashe's shevet was torn. They didn't live together. Half of them were on one side of the Yarden River, and half on the other.

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Matos-Masei:

How many stops did the Bnei Yisrael make during their journey through the desert?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to 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 Chukas question is: MOSHE SCHWARTZ, Lakewood, NJ

The question was: Who made the second Parah Adumah in history?

The answer is: Ezra. The first Parah Adumah was made in the desert by Aharon's son, Elazar. There was no need for another Parah Adumah until about 1,000 years later, during the time of Ezra. Ezra was the person who built the Second Beis HaMikdash.

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