

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת עקב  
כ"ג אב תשפ"ב  
5782

AUGUST 20, 2022

ISSUE #104

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DESIGN & LAYOUT:  
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

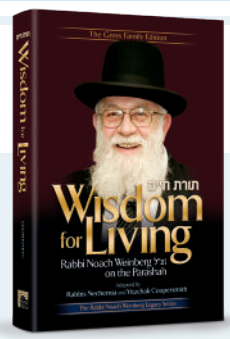
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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

## PARASHAH

### WANTING FEAR OF HEAVEN

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



וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל מָה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שֶׁאֵל מִעֲמֹד כִּי אִם לִירָאָה אֵת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ.  
Now, O Yisrael, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you?  
Only to fear Hashem, your G-d...(Devarim 10:12).

The Gemara derives from this *passuk* that everything is in the hands of Heaven except fear of Heaven (*Berachos* 33b). Since fear of Heaven is the only thing completely in our power, it is the only thing Hashem can ask of us.

However, every *Shabbos Mevarchim*, the *Shabbos* before the new month, we pray to Hashem to give us fear of Heaven: “and grant us long life... a life that has within it fear of Heaven and fear of transgression...” Why do we pray for fear of Heaven if it is entirely in our hands, not Hashem’s?



Rav Noach Weinberg

In truth, everything is a gift from Hashem, including fear of Heaven. We cannot even lift a finger without the Almighty enabling us to do so. However, before fulfilling our requests, Hashem evaluates what the impact of granting our wishes will be. Will it draw us closer to Him or push us further away? If what we seek is truly good for us and consistent with Hashem’s plan, then there is no reason for Hashem not to grant it to us. But if that which we covet will cause us to escape reality and distance ourselves from Hashem, then He will likely be disinclined to give it to us.

Even spiritual goals require this assessment, because they, too, can cause us to move further away from Hashem. For example, if learning a lot of Torah causes a person to become complacent or arrogant, it distances him from Hashem and is therefore bad for him.

The only desire that does not need this evaluation is *yiras Shamayim*, fear of Heaven. By definition, *yiras Shamayim* plants us firmly into reality and brings us closer to Hashem. A person cannot be awake and asleep simultaneously. Similarly, if we are fearing Hashem, we cannot be escaping reality and ignoring Him.

### ONLY YIRAS SHAMAYIM COMES WITH AN IRONCLAD GUARANTEE THAT ONE WHO TRULY WANTS IT WILL SUCCESSFULLY ATTAIN IT.

“Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for fear of Heaven” means that only *yiras Shamayim* comes with an ironclad guarantee that one who truly wants it will successfully attain it.

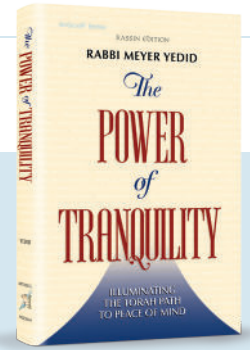
There are no obstacles to getting it; it is completely in our hands, because it is the only accomplishment that can never be counterproductive.

The Torah describes fear of Heaven as a small thing. “Now, Yisrael, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d...” No big deal! That’s all G-d wants from us.

But attaining *yiras Shamayim* is not so easy. “Is it just a small matter?” the *Gemara* asks incredulously (*Berachos* 33b).

True, *yiras Shamayim* is not simple to attain, but it is eminently doable. Nothing is stopping you from attaining it. All that is required is for you to truly desire it. In this respect, fearing Hashem is a small thing. 📖

ARTSCROLL LAMENTS ORNAMS  
PUBS



A person has a stomachache with such severe abdominal pains that he feels that he is about to die. After half an hour of these excruciating cramps, the person doesn't even want to live.

Suddenly, as quickly as it came, Hashem allows the person to get rid of whatever was causing the pain.

What a relief!

Ever hear a person saying a *berachah* after that? *Asher. Yatzar. Es. Ha'adam. Bechochmah...* Each word is recited slowly, with a big smile. What a *simchah*!

But the point of that turn of events wasn't for that first *Asher Yatzar*. It's so that the next *Asher Yatzar* should be said with the same appreciation.

A fellow once told me, "Remember last year, at this time, my life was in danger and the doctors told me that I might not survive? Look at me. It's almost the anniversary of that date and I'm still here."

"If you're waiting for your anniversary," I told him, "then you missed the boat. How have you been living this entire year? Have you raised your level of joy throughout the year? The purpose of that prognosis was to wake you

up so that you enjoy every day of your life, to make you view each day as a gift from Hashem!"

Another example: A person gets into a car accident, and his car is totaled. The police who investigate the accident tell him that had he been hit one second earlier, it would have killed him instantly. So the person makes a huge *seudas hoda'ah* to thank Hashem. That's all very good. But if this person does not carry that forward to the rest of his life, he missed the point.

This is why we Jews are always saying *berachos*; in fact, we're supposed to say 100 *berachos* each day.

We recite some of those *berachos* with the proper excitement. When a person buys a new suit and says a *Shehecheyanu* on it, he generally says it with a certain level of excitement. But it should not stop there, because you make hundreds of *berachos* on each suit you wear. Each morning you recite a *berachah* of *Malbish Arumim*, thanking Hashem for clothing.


Did you ever see the excitement

of a boy who is getting his first "big-boy" suit after wearing children's clothing all his life? A person has to try to feel that same excitement every day when he says *Malbish Arumim*.

When you are able to walk, you have to be excited about it.

Spend a few hours in a hospital visiting a person with such severe back pain that he cannot get out of bed.

Then he has surgery and he can walk again. You know what kind of *simchah* he feels? *Chazal* wanted us to feel that same joy each day as we recite the *berachah* of *Zokef Kefufim*, thanking Hashem for being able to stand upright.

A few years ago, someone told me that his doctors had warned him that he could lose his entire eyesight within a few months. Can you imagine his elation when he survived with his eyesight intact? We should all feel that each day when we see for the first time, and then thank Hashem with joy when we recite *Poke'ach Ivrim*. 



Rabbi Meyer Yedid

## WATCH YOUR STEP

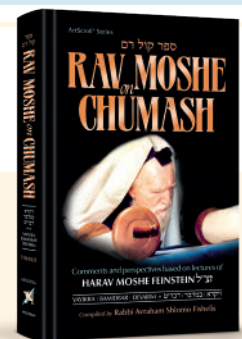
*Kol Rom - Rav Moshe On Chumash - Volume 2 from Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l, compiled by Rabbi Avraham Shlomo Fishelis, adapted by Rabbi Avrohom Biderman*

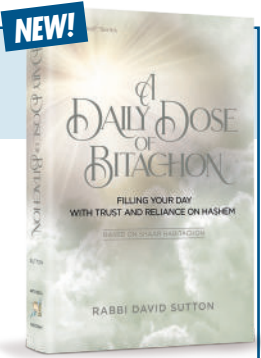
וְהָיָה עֵקֶב תִּשְׁמָעוּן אֶת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָאֵלֶּה.

*It shall be because you hearken to these ordinances (7:12).*

The Hebrew word *eikev* has several meanings, including *because* and *heel*. *Rashi* explains that our *pasuk* uses this word to allude to observing those *mitzvos* that one tends to "trample with his heel," meaning that he considers them to be insignificant.

How could people be so disrespectful of Hashem's commandments — such as speaking *lashon hara* (evil speech), praying without concentration, being lax in *Shabbos* observance, or other *continued on page 3*





One advantage of the *baal bitachon* is that he is free of the negative side effects that often come along with money. The *Chovos HaLevavos* states that he will benefit from his money while remaining free of the preoccupation and worries that normally come along with it.

The *Chovos HaLevavos* is turning our attention to the often ignored fact that some of the good things in life cause collateral damage. For example, steak tastes very good and is packed with protein, but sometimes, its heaviness causes indigestion and increased cholesterol. We'd like to enjoy the pleasures of life without the drawbacks, and the *baal bitachon* can do so.



Rav Yerucham Levovitz

Rav Yerucham Levovitz, the famed *mashgiach* of Mir in Europe, had a heart problem and was told by his doctor to stop drinking coffee. At just around that time, in the early 1920s, Sanka, the first decaffeinated coffee, hit the market. An American student who had been visiting the States brought a jar back to the Mir for Rav Yerucham and explained that the bad part, the caffeine, had been eliminated. Rav Yerucham

couldn't believe it. "The coffee itself isn't the bad part?" he wondered. The student explained that it wasn't.

Rav Yerucham had a cup and, sure enough, it tasted like coffee!

Rav Yerucham was a *baal mussar* as well as a great thinker, and therefore, this experience did not go unanalyzed. He gave a long discourse in his *yeshivah* on the topic, using decaffeinated coffee as a *mashal*. "We

## BITACHON IS THE SECRET.

think we need the 'poison' to enjoy the good in life," he said. "But we can take worldly pleasures and decaffeinate them!"

But how do we decaffeinate money?

The *Chovos HaLevavos* says that *bitachon* is the secret. We all want money even though we know about people who win the lottery or inherit a fortune and it brings worry and suffering.

The most negative side effect of money is the constant worry that comes with it. It's a rule: *Marbeh*

*nechasim marbeh daagah* – The more assets you have, the more worry you have (*Avos* 2:7).

Rav Ades tells of a young man who became a billionaire at 40. The man says he wishes he could have the quality of sleep that he had at 19. Now, as a billionaire, he needs sleeping pills.

*Koheles* teaches: *Mesukah shenas ha'oveid im me'at v'im harbeh yochel v'hasava lashir ainenu maniac lo lishon* – Sweet is the sleep of the laborer, whether he eats little or much; the satiation of the rich does not let him sleep (*Koheles* 5:11).

As a side effect, wealth, like caffeine, sometimes causes insomnia. Nevertheless, we can enjoy the pleasure and energy it brings to our life if we neutralize its effect on our nervous system — with *bitachon*.

*If you find yourself sleepless from stress about business or expenses, imagine that you are turning your accounts over to Hashem. He has the password to your bank account and full access to your finances. He tells you, "Go to sleep. I'll take care of it."* 📖

### WATCH YOUR STEP continued from page 2

laws — that they "step on them"?

Generally, this does not happen suddenly; it is a process that begins with small, "innocent" infractions. But as someone repeats them, he becomes inured to the sin and his breaches become habitual and difficult to uproot.

Since becoming accustomed to "stepping on" *mitzvos*

is the result of habitual neglect, parents and educators have the responsibility to train children when they are young to stay away from that first small deviation. This is the best way to prevent them from ultimately

### THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN SUDDENLY.

"stepping on" Hashem's *mitzvos*. 📖

#### THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

### AUGUST / אב

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
20 כב	21 כד	22 ה	23 ו	24 ז	25 ח	26 ט
Kesubos 45	Kesubos 46	Kesubos 47	Kesubos 48	Kesubos 49	Kesubos 50	Kesubos 51

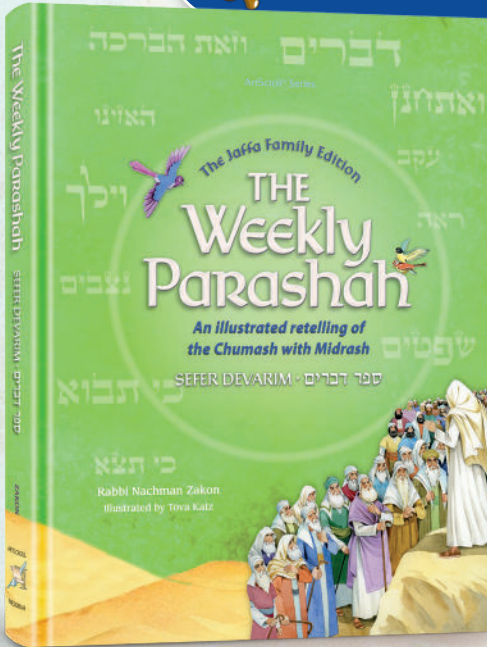
#### THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

### AUGUST / אב

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
20 כב	21 כד	22 ה	23 ו	24 ז	25 ח	26 ט
Maaseros 4:5-6	Maaseros 5:1-2	Maaseros 5:3-4	Maaseros 5:5-6	Maaseros 5:7-8	Maaser Sheini 1:1-2	Maaser Sheini 1:3-4



# Parashah for Children



## פרשת עקב

### Thirty-One Kings and Armies

**T**he Jews were about to enter Eretz Yisrael. But it was not an empty country at the time. It was called Canaan. The Canaanites had been living there for centuries. There were a lot of them. Many lived in well-defended cities that were surrounded by thick, high walls.

To conquer the Canaanites, the Jews would have to fight the THIRTY-ONE(!) kings of Canaan and their armies. These armies had professional, trained soldiers.

The Jews had been learning in the “yeshivah of Moshe Rabbeinu” for 40 years! Before that they had been slaves. How could they go to war against 31 armies?



They had won a few wars before, but then Moshe was with them. This time they would be facing the enemy without Moshe.

### Nothing to Be Afraid Of

**M**oshe explained why they have NOTHING to be afraid of:

If you are thinking in your heart, “How can I conquer so many nations? They are so much bigger than we are!” — Don’t be afraid of them!

Moshe told the Jews to remember all the great miracles that happened in Egypt — what happened to Pharaoh, and to all the Egyptians. He promised that Hashem will do the same to the Canaanite nations. In addition, Hashem will send a swarm of hornets to blind the enemy.



How long did it take to conquer Eretz Yisrael?

Seven years!

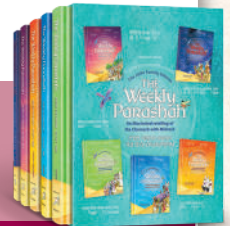
**WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!**

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Eikev:

**Why did Moshe Rabbeinu throw dust into the stream?**

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 Mattos-Masei question is: MOTI DOLINGER, Passaic, NJ**

The question was: How many stops did the Bnei Yisrael make during their journey through the desert?  
The answer is: 42