

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

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 RABBI YITZCHOK HISIGER, EDITOR
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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

THE NATIONS' MENTALITY

Oznayim LaTorah – Insights in the Torah by Rav Zalman Sorotzkin

אל עמק שוה הוא עמק המלך.

To the valley of Shaveh [equal] which is the king's valley (14:17).

All the nations of the world were “equally” decided: They put Avraham Avinu up on a great platform and praised him. “You are our king! You are our prince! You are our god!” (*Bereishis Rabbah* Ch. 43).

It is remarkable that only after Avraham had smitten the kings did all the nations unanimously decide to anoint him as their ruler. When Avraham risked his life for his faith in Hashem, and chose a fiery furnace rather than bow down to Nimrod, and was saved from it, the nations never glorified him as a god. When he passed through lands publicizing G-d's name, the nations never called him G-d's prince. When he provided hospitality to all passersby, the nations never noticed his righteousness and goodness, nor put him on a pedestal and praised him. When he did justice and charity, the nations never made him their king.



Rav Zalman Sorotzkin

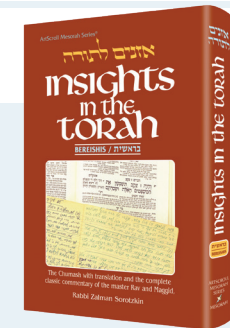
When did they show him all this honor? When did they call him prince, king, even god? When he showed his might by smiting four kings who had made the earth tremble. Only then did all the nations gather together to anoint him king,

calling him by every term of glory and admiration.

Such is the secular mentality: to honor those who know how to smite with a strong hand. Just as Yaakov's descendants honor a brilliant Torah scholar or a man of saintly deeds, so do the nations honor a man distinguished through his “hands of Eisav.” Even today, the United Nations (which is supposed to champion world disarmament) did not recognize the Jews as a nation worthy of independence until they demonstrated their might by soundly beating the seven Arab states that attacked them.

WHEN DID THEY SHOW HIM ALL THIS HONOR?

It is interesting to note Avraham's response: “Let the world not lack its King; let the world not lack its G-d” (*ibid.*). Avraham did not wish to accept upon himself even the title of king. Why? Because since all the nations had agreed to make him king over them, he would have been called “king of the world,” and such a title cannot be given to a mortal man, only to G-d. He did not, however, object, to the title of prince. Therefore, all called him the “prince of G-d” (23:6).



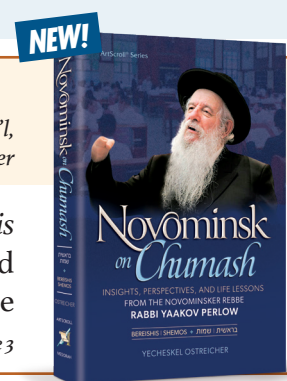
PARASHAH

MAASEI AVOS SIMAN LABANIM

Novominsk on Chumash From the Novominsker Rebbe zt”l, written by Rabbi Yechezkel Ostreicher

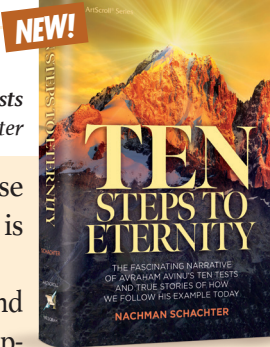
A primary focus of the Novominsker Rebbe zt”l while learning *Sefer Bereishis* was the concept of “*maasei Avos siman labanim*.” This is the concept — discussed by many *Rishonim*, primarily the *Ramban*, with sources in *Chazal* — that the actions of the *Avos* in their lifetimes laid the groundwork for all

continued on page 3



BREACH OF SHALOM BAYIS

Ten Steps to Eternity – The fascinating narrative of Avraham Avinu's tent tests and true stories of how we follow his example today by Nachman Schachter



Harry K. Wolpert was born in Lithuania on December 22, 1890, and passed away on March 10, 1991. He was chairman of the board of Yeshivas Ner Yisroel in Baltimore, Maryland, for the last fifty years of his life.

During his youth, Mr. Wolpert learned in the *yeshivos* of Kelm and Slabodka and met and heard *shiurim* from many of the *gedolim* of Europe, including the Chofetz Chaim. He came to America in 1911, settled in Baltimore, and entered the business world. *Gedolim* traveling through Baltimore to collect *tzedakah* often stayed in his home.

In 1939, Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz and his son-in-law, Rav Reuven

Grozovsky, were fundraising for the Kaminetz Yeshivah in Europe, which was suffering serious financial difficulties. They arrived in Baltimore and went to visit Mr. Wolpert.

Rav Boruch Ber, Rav Reuven and Mr. Wolpert were in the living room talking when Mrs. Wolpert turned on the radio to listen to some music. Mr. Wolpert was somewhat embarrassed and rose from his place and closed the radio. Rav Reuven and Rav Boruch Ber immediately rose from their seats, donned their coats, and prepared to leave.

Mr. Wolpert was surprised and asked them why they were leaving so suddenly.

Rav Boruch Ber answered, "We can-

not stay in a house where Hashem is not present."

Perplexed and concerned, Mr. Wolpert asked, "Why is Hashem not here?"

"Your wife turned on the radio to listen to music. When you went and shut it without asking her permission, a breach of *shalom bayis* was caused. That means Hashem is no longer here."

Mr. Wolpert immediately approached his wife and asked her forgiveness, which she granted; the *rabbanim* then removed their coats and stayed to continue their visit. 📖

SHALOM

WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE FOR SOME PEACE?

40 Days of Caring The Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

Many people want peace, but few want it badly enough to pay for it.

In Yerushalayim, a community of *chassidim* was embroiled in a *machlokes*. At the root of it were four families who had gone to war against each other and dragged the rest of the community along. The situation became so dire that the *rebbe* gave the four families an ultimatum: Make peace or be expelled from the community. This would mean that schools, *shuls*, *shidduchim*—everything within the community—would be closed to them. Essentially, they would lose their entire world.

Rav Nissan Kaplan heard about the situation. Although he had no connection to the *chassidus*, he was distraught at the thought of four families destroying themselves. The night before the *rebbe* was due to enforce his decision, Rav Kaplan called the home of one of the parties to the quarrel. After several failed efforts to get the wife to connect him with her husband, he spoke directly to her.

"I'm an international businessman," he told her. "I make investments all over the world. I want to buy your *machlokes*. Ask your husband how much he wants for it."

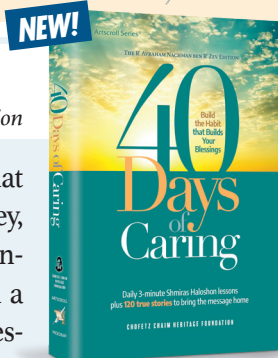


Rav Nissan Kaplan

Although the woman claimed that the issue could not be solved by money, Rav Kaplan finally convinced her to consult her husband. She called back with a price—a far lower price than the "investor" expected. He quickly got to work raising the money, and finally received it from a generous American donor who wanted a share in this unusual *mitzvah*.

"I want you to invite both sides to your home tonight and set up a *l'chaim*," Rav Kaplan told the wife. When he arrived that night, the leading parties in the quarrel were there, stonily eyeing each other across a table set with cake and schnapps. They quickly recognized that the "international businessman" was not who he claimed to be, but when he laid the money on the table and urged the men to shake hands, they took up his offer. Soon they were holding hands, dancing around the table.

And that is how one Jew who cared—and did something about it—saved four families from following Korach into the abyss of *machlokes*. 📖



THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / חשוון

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
5 Nedarim 11	6 Nedarim 12	7 Nedarim 13	8 Nedarim 14	9 Nedarim 15	10 Nedarim 16	11 Nedarim 17

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / חשוון

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

of Klal Yisrael's subsequent history. When Avraham descended to Mitzrayim, he was paving the way for the sojourn his grandchildren would make in that land. When Yitzchak dug the wells of water, he was laying the foundation for the *Batei Mikdash*. And when Yaakov went to the house of Lavan, far from the *kedushah* of Eretz Yisrael, to build the Jewish nation, he was strengthening us for the time when we would be charged with building a fortress of Torah Jewry while in *galus*.

The *rebbe* would discuss how the knowledge that our struggles were already fought and won by the pillars of our nation gives us *chizuk*, the strength and courage to perpetuate their deeds and succeed in our mission.

The *Malbim* (*Bereishis* 14:24) brings to life the *yesod* (foundational nature) of *maasei Avos siman labanim*:

Chazal have already shown us that all that occurred to the Avos was a portent for their children. Avram went down to Mitzrayim and his wife was forced into Pharaoh's house, only to then witness the king being smitten with plagues. Then Avram left with great wealth. The same was with his children: They went to Mitzrayim, Pharaoh suffered plagues, and they left with wealth. The way that the four kings were aroused to war, and Avram defeated them all, lifting up his hands to Hashem, would also occur with his children, when the four malchuyos (empires) in turn will subjugate them, and they will be saved when Hashem's Hand will be raised against their enemies. For

though the descendants would not have the ability to open the wellsprings of salvation, these sources had already been opened by the Avos, who had great merit and power, and the descendants would draw life-giving water from the well that was already dug. For all that Hashem did in days of old remains until the final generations — all that He made remains forever. These mighty people, the foundations of the earth, used their great strength to prepare the berachah for future generations whose merit would not be sufficient on their own.



The Novominsker Rebbe

WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT OURSELVES!

That is why we mention the *zechus* (merit) of the *Avos* at the beginning of each *Shemoneh Esrei*. This *berachah* is the most important one of *Shemoneh Esrei*, because without the *Avos* we cannot open our mouths. The *Avos* are the bridge we traverse all our days, the bridge that connects us to Hashem. Everything we have is from the *Avos*. A *Yid* has the *middah* of *chesed* (kindness); it

comes from Avraham. If he has the power of *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice), it is because Yitzchak implanted it in us. If we can sit at a *Gemara* and learn and understand, it is because Yaakov was an *ish tam yoshev ohalim*!

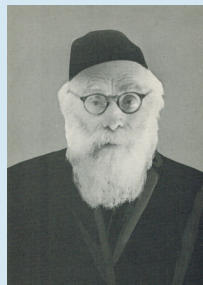
When we learn *Chumash Bereishis*, we are not just learning about the *Avos*. We are learning about ourselves! If we want to know who we are, we have to learn these *parshiyos*. Then we see what *kochos* (abilities) we have: Whatever *kochos* the *Avos* had are implanted in us, their *banim*. 📖

PERSPECTIVE

FOR ONE BOCHUR

Rav Nosson Tzvi Speaks – Insights on Chumash from Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel

A group of accomplished *bachurim* once approached Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel *zt"l*, *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Mir Yerushalayim, to complain about a particular *bachur* who was not behaving properly. They requested that the *rosh yeshivah* expel this *bachur*, but Rav Eliezer Yehudah refused. When the *bachurim* declared that if this *bachur* would remain, they

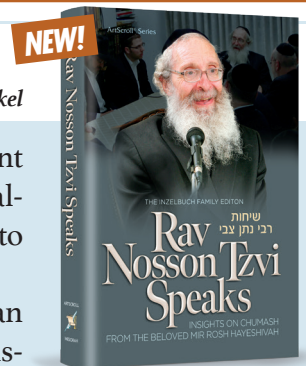


Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel

would all leave, the *rosh yeshivah* replied that it was more important to him to keep this *bachur* between the walls of the *beis midrash*, even on account of losing the others. He explained that he had no doubt that they would continue learning Torah wherever they were, whereas expelling this particular *bachur* from the *yeshivah* would likely lead him to spiritual ruin. This, he maintained,

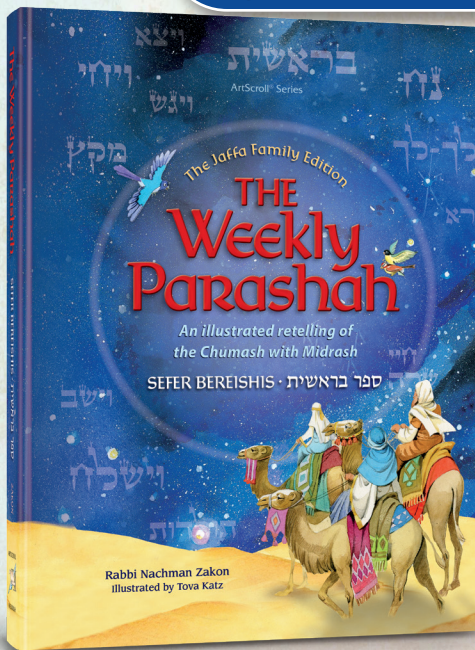
was sufficient grounds for allowing him to stay.

What an incredible display of *achrayus*! Rav Eliezer Yehudah was prepared to sacrifice the reputation and success of the Mir Yeshivah by bidding farewell to some of his leading *talmidim* in order to preserve the spiritual health and future of a single troubled *bachur*. 📖





Parashah for Children



פרשת לך-לך

The Great War

One day, Avram got terrible news: Lot was taken prisoner!

In Eretz Yisrael there was a great war between two huge armies. The larger one was the combined armies of five kings. They were fighting fierce battles with the combined armies of four kings. Though outnumbered, the army of the four kings won the war. Now the four kings were the rulers over all the land, people, and property from the kingdoms of the five kings.



One of the conquered cities was the city of S'dom. When it was captured, everything in it was taken away by the victorious army, and the people were prisoners.

Since Lot lived in S'dom he was also a prisoner. He had made the choice to leave the holy home of Avram to move to an evil city, S'dom, to get richer. Now he didn't have a penny. All his wealth had been taken from him. He even lost his freedom!

Leaving Avram had been a big mistake. Now he was suffering for it.

Og

While all this was happening, Avram was busy preparing for Pesach. He was right in the middle of baking matzos on Erev Pesach when he saw a giant soldier coming toward him. The soldier's name was Og.

Og was in the army that lost the war. He had

escaped and was running to Avram to tell him that Lot had been captured. He wasn't doing it because he cared about Lot. Og was wicked and wanted to marry Sarai. He was hoping Avram would hurry to save Lot and be killed in battle. Then Og would marry Sarai.

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

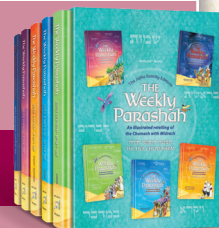
Question for Lech Lecha:

Why was Og the giant given his name?

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 Succos question is: ZEVI FINGERER, Brooklyn, NY

The question was: Among the lulav, hadassim and aravos, which should extend highest, which second highest, and which third highest when holding the arba minim? The answer is: The hadassim should extend higher than the aravos. The lulav should extend higher than both the hadassim and the aravos.



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