

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE
Mesorah
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פרשת וירא
י"ח חשוון תשפ"ג
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RABBI YITZCHOK
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

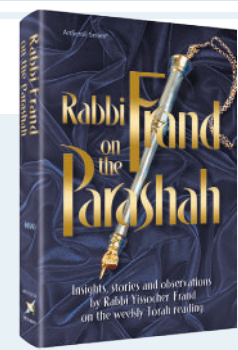
DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY

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

PARASHAH

CHESSSED BEGINS WITH THE EYES

Rabbi Frand on the Parashah



וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיֵּרָא וַיִּרְץ לִקְרֹאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֲרָצָה.
*He lifted his eyes, and he saw: and behold three men were standing upon him.
 And he saw and he ran toward them from the opening of the tent,
 and he bowed toward the ground (18:2).*

What makes a person worthy of the title “*baal chessed*” (a person devoted to kindness)? Most of us would answer that a person who is always ready to do a favor for another person is considered a *baal chessed*. While readiness to do people favors is very admirable, it seems that a *baal chessed* has to be a cut above that.

The curtain opens on this week’s *parashah* with Avraham sitting outside his tent, disappointed that he cannot cater to any guests. Finally, Hashem takes mercy on him, and “He (Avraham) lifted his eyes, and he saw: and behold three men were standing upon him. And he saw and he ran toward them from the opening of the tent, and he bowed toward the ground” (18:2).

This verse seems redundant. The word “*vayar* — he saw” appears twice. What does the second appearance of this word add?

In his *Sha’arei Orah*, Rav Meir Tzvi Bergman explains that a kind and open heart does not a *baal chessed* make; one must also focus on perceiving people’s needs. There are many times when we would be willing to do a favor, but the opportunity passes because we don’t notice that someone is in need of our help.

The Torah teaches us that the first step toward being a *baal chessed* in Avraham Avinu’s image is *vayar*: We have to have our eyes open. Indeed, when the *Gemara* wants to describe someone who is the opposite of a *baal*

chessed, it states, “*Otzem ein-av* — one who shuts his eyes from charity” (*Kesubos* 68a), not “one who shuts his wallet from charity,” because charity does not begin with one’s wallet, but with one’s eyes.

There are two stories, one famous and one not so famous, that illustrate this cogent point.

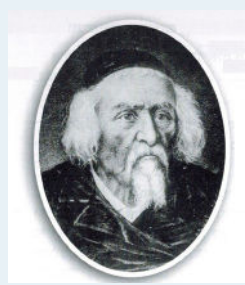
A Jew once came to the *Beis HaLevi* before *Pesach* and asked whether milk has the status of “*chamar medinah*” (a beverage commonly used in that country), which would qualify as a substitute for the four cups of wine for the *Seder*. The *Beis HaLevi* answered that it did qualify for use. Immediately after the man left, the *Beis HaLevi* sent him money not only for wine, but for meat as well. He deduced that a Jew would not ask whether he could drink milk at his *Seder* if he had chicken or meat on his menu.

A similar, less-known story happened with Rav Yaakov Weinberg, *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivah Ner Yisrael.

A divorcee with young children called him before *Succos* one year and asked him if she was absolutely obligated to build a *succah*. She explained that she was in difficult financial straits, and the cost of the *succah* would be a strain on her budget. Since she was a woman, she reasoned, she didn’t have to sit in the *succah*, and her sons were too young to be obli-



Rav Meir Tzvi Bergman



The Bais Halevi



Rav Yaakov Weinberg

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The verse (*Tehillim* 92:16) says about Hashem, *Tzuri velo avalasah bo, My Rock, in Whom there is no wrong*. Since Hashem is our “Rock,” our place of refuge on which He told us to rely, He has to help us, because otherwise, it would be an *avlasah* (injustice). Hashem “has to” come through for us, as it were, because we are counting on Him, because He is our “Rock.” He is reliable because He knows we rely on Him.

The *Chofetz Chaim* (*Zechor LeMiriam*, Chapter 20) teaches this concept in the context of the story of Lot in Sedom, discussed in this week’s *parashah*. When the people of Sedom surrounded his home and wanted to kill his guests, Lot pleaded with them not to hurt the guests, *Ki al kein ba’u b’tzeil kora-si, because they have come under the shelter of my roof* (*Bereishis* 19:8). The guests accepted Lot’s invitation to his home, trusting that he would care for them, and this made him obligated to protect them. All the more so, the *Chofetz Chaim* writes, if we trust in Hashem, He will surely care for us, for our reliance on Him “obligates” Him to do so.

The *Chofetz Chaim* emphasizes

that this message is especially relevant during our time. The prophet Tzefaniah (*Tzefaniah* 3:12) says about the generation before *Mashiach*, *Vehisharti bekirbeich am vadal vechasu b’sheim Hashem, And I will leave in your midst a humble and destitute people, and they will take shelter — vechasu — in the Name of Hashem*. The way we protect ourselves during the troubled and dangerous times before *Mashiach*’s arrival is by looking to Hashem as our “Rock” and relying on Him.

ONCE WE PLACE OUR TRUST IN HASHEM, HE COMES THROUGH FOR US.



Rav Nosson Wachtfogel

Rav Nosson Wachtfogel made this point in explaining a story the *Gemara* (*Bava Metzia* 85a) tells about Rav Yehudah HaNasi. A calf was being brought for slaughter, and it ran from the slaughterer and tried to hide under Rav Yehudah’s cloak. He said to the animal, “Go! This is why you were created!” The animal was then returned to the slaughterer. For

this insensitivity to the animal, the *Gemara* says, Rav Yehudah was punished, and he endured terrible suffering from an illness for many years.

What did Rav Yehudah do wrong? Is it not correct that animals are for human consumption?

Rav Wachtfogel explained that once the animal sought refuge with Rav Yehudah, he had an obligation to protect it. When someone (or, in this case, something) relies on a person, he has to respond.

This is the fundamental principle of *bitachon*. Once we place our trust in Hashem, He comes through for us, because otherwise, it would be an *avlah*. But this requires that we place our trust fully and sincerely in Hashem. We have to make it clear in our minds that we rely exclusively on Hashem.

Tov lachasos b’Hashem mibtoach b’adam. The best thing we can do for ourselves is to place our trust in Hashem — and then He will certainly come through for us, whenever we need Him. 📖

CHESED BEGINS WITH THE EYES *continued from page 1*

gated in the *mitzvah*. Beyond that, the children were only going to be with her for three days of *Succos*, and the rest of the time they would be with their father.

Rav Weinberg replied that according to the strict letter of the law, she was correct. But he told her that she was an *ishah chashuvah* (distinguished woman), and it was vital that her children see her as such. For

that reason alone, Rav Weinberg explained, it would be worthwhile for her to have a *succah*. “A Jewish house should have a *succah*,” he concluded.

The next day, a prefab *succah* was delivered to the woman’s door. The package did not say who paid for it, but it wasn’t hard to figure it out.

Rav Weinberg exercised the *vayar*. He “saw” the need. 📖

THIS WEEK’S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

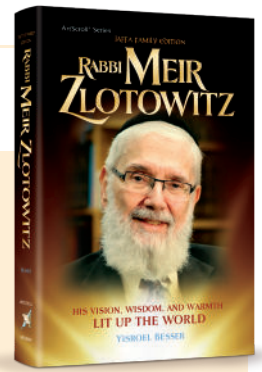
NOVEMBER / חשוון

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
12 י"ח	13 י"ט	14 כ'	15 כ"א	16 כ"ב	17 כ"ג	18 כ"ד
Nedarim 18	Nedarim 19	Nedarim 20	Nedarim 21	Nedarim 22	Nedarim 23	Nedarim 24

THIS WEEK’S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / חשוון

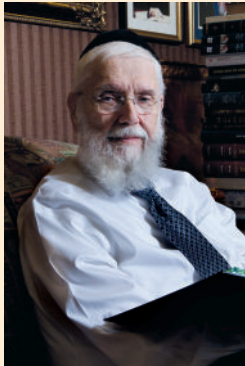
SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
12 י"ח	13 י"ט	14 כ'	15 כ"א	16 כ"ב	17 כ"ג	18 כ"ד
Bikkurim 3:7-8	Bikkurim 3:9-10	Bikkurim 3:11-12	Bikkurim 4:1-2	Bikkurim 4:3-4	Bikkurim 4:5 - Shabbos 1:1	Shabbos 1:2-3



ArtScroll/Mesorah is now celebrating the historic completion of the Schottenstein Talmud Yerushalmi in Hebrew and English after over sixteen years of intense scholarship. The Jewish people will forever be enriched by these Torah masterpieces.

Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz predicted that the Schottenstein Yerushalmi will go down in history as ArtScroll/Mesorah's "crowning achievement."

Already, many thousands of people all over the world have begun the serious and satisfying study of Yerushalmi, something that would have been unthinkable for them just a few years ago. Now that this treasure is available for all people, thousands are ready to enthusiastically begin the 11th cycle of Talmud Yerushalmi's Daf Yomi on November 14th.



In honor of this occasion, we share several anecdotes about Rabbi Zlotowitz, who, beyond being the founder of ArtScroll/Mesorah, was a wise and cherished friend to so many, lighting up the world and so many lives with his vision, wisdom, and warmth.

Some people are kindhearted," says Reb Shmuel Blitz, "but Reb Meir Zlotowitz was different. It wasn't just compassion that motivated him in dealing with others, but a clear sense of what the person standing before him really needed."

Reb Meir had an ability to see deeper. He was a "maskil el dal," blessed with both the perception to see what others lacked and the generosity of spirit to fill that need for them.

• • • • •

Chanoch Weisz recalls reading a book about Apple founder Steve Jobs. "And you, Meir, are the Steve Jobs of the Jewish world," he told his friend.

Reb Meir's face colored and he looked down in obvious embarrassment.

"What are you talking about?" he asked. "By us, it's the donors who change the world, not me."

More than once, Reb Meir was asked to involve himself in business discussions with his donors, either making connections or providing references. Often, he was invited to join in business deals by donors who liked him and wanted to see him succeed.

"We need someone with your brains, insight, and people skills," a donor recalls telling him. "You'll invest with me and you'll end up rich. Think how much more you can do for Klal Yisrael if we let you in on this deal."

Reb Meir rejected the offer outright. "I have a mission in life, and if donors become business partners, then they see me differently and I won't be effective in my real job. Thanks, but no thanks."

To another donor who extended the same offer, Reb Meir explained. "Imagine I join you in a deal and it fails — our relationship will sour, and then Klal Yisrael will lose out. How can I take the chance?"

• • • • •

An industry colleague once pointed out to Reb Meir that some publishers preferred to create books

that would eventually rip, so that customers would be forced to buy new ones.

"That makes sense if you're running a business," Reb Meir said, "not if your mission is to give someone a *siddur* that can become their best friend."

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Reb Meir's generosity was matched by the speed with which it was dispensed. He met his old friend, Rav Meir Stern, at a *chasunah*. The two old friends caught up and Reb Meir asked the Passaic *rosh yeshivah* how fundraising for the *yeshivah* was going. The *rosh yeshivah* sighed.

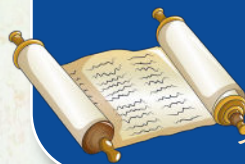
A week later, an envelope arrived at the *yeshivah*: a donation from Reb Meir Zlotowitz — not one check, but twelve head checks, post-dated over the upcoming year, his part in easing the burden of an esteemed friend.

In his later years, Reb Meir felt an obligation to teach others how to give. If he heard that a *rav* of a *shul* was making a *simchah*, he would call one of his acquaintances in that *shul*. "I assume you know that if a *rav* makes a wedding, the *baalei batim* are expected to help out: I'd like to be a part of whatever you're doing."

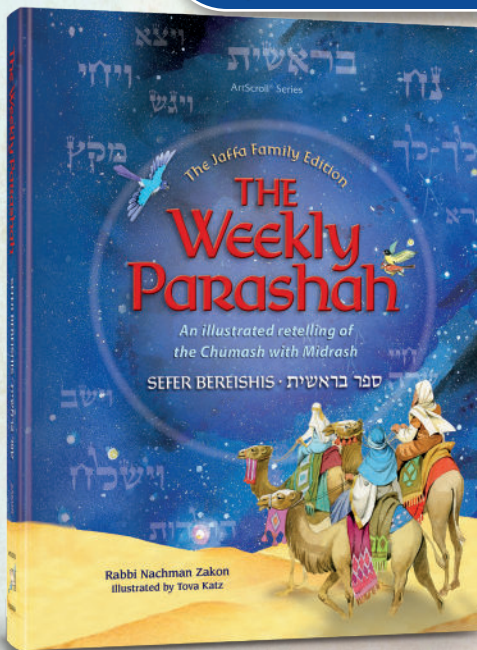
Occasionally, when he received a wedding invitation in the mail, he would respond with a phone call. "I see you're making a wedding, and money might be tight. I'd like to know if you need help, and if yes, can I arrange for a loan at any terms that work for you?"

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

NOVEMBER / חשוון	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	12 י"ב	13 י"ג	14 י"ד	15 ט"ו	16 ט"ז	17 ט"ח	18 ט"ט
			Berachos 1	Berachos 2	Berachos 3	Berachos 4	Berachos 5



Parashah for Children



פרשת וירא

The Visit

Hashem came to visit Avraham on the third day after his bris. Why? Because of his bris, Avraham wasn't feeling well. He was very weak. Hashem came to do bikur cholim. That's the mitzvah to visit the sick.

Good Meals and Drinks

Sick people usually lie in bed. Not Avraham. He was sitting at the entrance of his tent when Hashem visited him. Why was he there instead of in bed? He was looking for travelers whom he could invite in as guests.

In those days, there were no rest stops on the highways where you could buy food and drinks. Avraham was always busy doing chessed, an act of kindness, by inviting guests. He gave travelers good meals, drinks, and a place to rest during their journey. All free of charge!

Hachnasas orchim is the mitzvah of giving people a place to eat or sleep. It was a mitzvah that Avraham and Sarah were always doing. They did it perfectly.

While they were taking care of their guests, Avraham and Sarah would talk to them about Hashem. Avraham would talk to the men, and Sarah would talk to the women. Some of their guests even stopped bowing to idols because of what they heard in the tents of Avraham and Sarah.



How many doorways did Avraham and Sarah's tent have?

Four, one on each side. That way, no matter what direction travelers were coming from, it would be easy for them to come in.

New Cycle DAF YOMI YERUSHALMI

The 11th Yerushalmi Daf Yomi Cycle Begins this Monday, November 14 / כ' חשוון

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