

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

פרשת בהר-בחוקותי  
כ"ב אייר תשפ"ג

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RABBI YITZCHOK

HISIGER, EDITOR

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MRS. AVIVA KOHN

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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

PARASHAH

## MEASURING TRUE VALUE

Rabbi Frand on the Parashah 2

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ כִּי יִפְלֵא נָדַר בְּעֶרְכָּךָ נִפְשֵׁת לֹה׃  
*Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them:*

*If a man articulates a vow to Hashem regarding a valuation of living beings (27:2).*

Immediately following the portion of the *tochachah*, warning of the curses that will befall *Klal Yisrael* if they do not heed the Torah, we find a discussion of *arachin*, the laws of a person who promises to donate his own value or the value of another person to the *Beis HaMikdash*. The *Baal HaTurim* finds the confluence of these two portions of the Torah disturbing. Why is *arachin* associated with the *tochachah*?

In his characteristic mathematical style, the *Baal HaTurim* notes that if we tally the sum of the different types of *arachin* one can donate — ranging from 3 *shekalim* for a young girl to 50 *shekalim* for a grown man — we come to a total of 143. There are 45 curses in *Parashas Bechukosai*, writes the *Baal HaTurim* (other sources find 49 curses), and another 98 in *Parashas Ki Savo*, for a total of 143.

The premise behind the association of the *tochachah* and *arachin* is *tzedakah tatzil mimaves* — giving charity saves from death. One of the best uses for charitable funds is to donate them to the *Beis HaMikdash*, and a person who pledges the various *arachin* that equal 143 receives protection from the 143 curses in the Torah.

I heard a homiletic explanation for the association of the *tochachah* and *arachin* from Rabbi Moshe Sherer, which provides us with a *mussar* perspective with which to conclude *Sefer Vayikra*.

When you talk to a *frum* Jew, you usually hear

his or her sentences peppered with “*Baruch Hashem*,” “*Im Yirtzeh Hashem*,” “*Bechasdei Hashem*,” and similar phrases that portray strong faith in Hashem. But are those words really an indicator of strong faith? As we grow up, we hear Hashem being mentioned frequently

by our parents and teachers, and these figures of speech are so ingrained in our psyche that we might be saying them without giving much thought to the words that we utter. How do we know if a person is really on the lofty level of faith indicated by frequent mention of Hashem, or if those figures of speech are no more than vestiges of his or her upbringing?

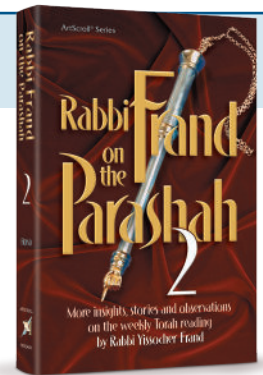
A famous story is told about the Satmar Rav’s last visit to Eretz Yisrael. When the Rebbe was about to leave for America, a worried *chassid* approached him and asked, “Who will we go to for *berachos* once the

Rebbe leaves?”

“Go into *shul* in the morning,” the Rebbe replied, “and find a man wrapping *tefillin* over a number tattooed on his arm. A person who survived the *gehinom* of the Holocaust and still puts on *tefillin* every day is worthy of giving *berachos*.”

The true measure of a person’s *erech* (value; singular for *arachin*), said Rabbi Sherer, can only be determined after he or she survives a

*continued on page 3*



Rabbi Moshe Sherer

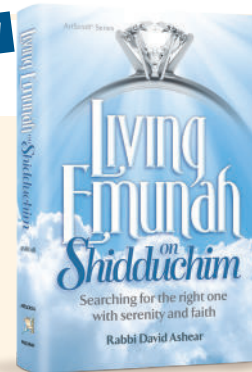


The Satmar Rav

**SOMEONE WHO GOES THROUGH A DIFFICULT PERIOD IN LIFE AND STILL TALKS ABOUT HASHEM’S KINDNESS IS TRULY FAITHFUL.**

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

NEW!



The *pasuk* says (Tehillim 118:23), “*Mei’eis Hashem hoysah zos hee nis-flas b’eineinu, This emanated from Hashem, it is wondrous in our eyes.*” One explanation is that if a person accustoms himself to saying, “*Mei’eis Hashem hoysah zos – this was from Hashem,*” then “*hee nis-flas b’eineinu*” - he will merit to see wonders with his own eyes.

All day long, Hashem is guiding billions of people to the exact circumstances in which He wants them. If we take a step back and connect the dots to a sequence of events, we would be awestruck at seeing how Hashem was so involved in what seemed to be regular, normal, everyday life.

On January 10, 1948, at 9:09 a.m., Marcel Sternberger boarded a train on the Long Island Railroad as he did every day. While he was en route to work, he decided to visit a sick friend in Brooklyn, so he got off that train and boarded a different one. He remained in Brooklyn until the afternoon, when he took a Manhattan-bound train to go to his Fifth Avenue office.

The train was crowded, and no seats were available. But as soon as he entered, someone jumped up and got off. Mr. Sternberger raced to take his seat.

The man sitting next to him was perusing the classified section of a Hungarian newspaper. Mr. Sternberger understood Hungarian.

“Excuse me,” he inquired politely, “are you looking for a job?”

The man replied, “No, I’m looking for my wife.”

*He explained that he was from Debrecen, Hungary, and during the war, he had been taken by the Russians to bury the German dead. By the time he returned, his city had been liberated, but he had no idea what happened to his wife. He came to America to search for her, hoping she had been liberated and brought to the United States. Now*

**“PLEASE HOLD ON. YOU ARE ABOUT TO EXPERIENCE THE BIGGEST MIRACLE OF YOUR LIFE.”**

*he was in New York City, beginning his search in a very large country.*

*Marcel Sternberger recalled that just a few days before, he was at a large gathering where he met a woman from Debrecen, Hungary. She related that she had been liberated by the Allies and brought to the US, and her husband had been taken by the Soviets to bury the German dead. Her story moved him very deeply. He wrote down her name and phone number, intending to connect her with the women in his family. Perhaps they could help alleviate some of the terrible pain and emptiness in her life.*

*“What’s your wife’s name?” he asked his seatmate, who replied, “Marya Paskin.”*

Mr. Sternberger pulled a slip

of paper from his wallet and read the hastily scrawled name.

Marya Paskin.

“What is your name, sir, if I may ask?”

“Béla Paskin,” the gentleman replied.

Struggling to maintain his composure, Mr. Sternberger said, “Please get off the train with me at the next stop; I want to make a phone call with you there.”

They got off the train and went to a telephone booth. While Mr. Paskin waited outside, Mr. Sternberger called the number, and Mrs. Paskin answered the phone. He introduced himself and reminded her of their meeting days earlier. Then he asked for her husband’s name.

“Béla Paskin,” she replied.

“Please hold on,” Mr. Sternberger said. “You are about to experience the biggest miracle of your life.”

He handed the phone to Mr. Paskin and, moments later, watched as the man slapped his forehead and screamed in joy and disbelief.

With tears in his eyes, Mr. Sternberger began to reflect on the chain of events leading up to this moment. First, he had spontaneously decided to go visit his sick friend in Brooklyn. Afterward, in the middle of the day, he rode a subway line he never traveled, toward Manhattan. The single seat that became available was next

*continued on page 3*

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY / אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
13 כב	14 כג	15 כד	16 ה	17 ו	18 ז	19 ח
Sotah 45	Sotah 46	Sotah 47	Sotah 48	Sotah 49	Gittin 2	Gittin 3

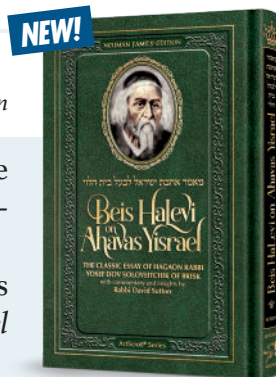
THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY / אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
13 כב	14 כג	15 כד	16 ה	17 ו	18 ז	19 ח
Shekalim 5:5-6	Shekalim 6:1-2	Shekalim 6:3-4	Shekalim 6:5-6	Shekalim 7:1-2	Shekalim 7:3-4	Shekalim 7:5-6

# A TIME FOR AHAVAS YISRAEL

Beis HaLevi on Ahavas Yisrael with commentary and insights by Rabbi David Sutton



In the days between *Pesach* and *Shavuos*, we mourn the passing of R' Akiva's 24,000 students who perished during this time. As we know, the *Gemara* (*Yevamos* 62b) teaches that they died as a punishment for the lack of respect that they had for one another. It is important to note that when the *Gemara* describes a lack of respect, it is not meant as we use the term today. Even what we call respect doesn't come close to the way R' Akiva's students acted toward one another. Rather, on their great level, they were held accountable for even the most infinitesimal manifestation of disrespect.

Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach told the following story to illustrate what respect truly means: The two great Torah giants of their generation, Rav Akiva Eiger and Rav Yaakov Loberbaum of Lissa, known as the *Nesivos HaMishpat*, were guests together in another town. In *shul*, the *gabbai* called up Rav Akiva Eiger to receive an *aliyah*. When he heard his name, he fainted. Why did he faint? Because he felt that it was a lack of respect to Rav Yaakov that the *gabbai* chose him to receive the *aliyah* rather than giving it to Rav Yaakov. In an effort to revive Rav Akiva Eiger, Rav Yaakov whispered in his ear, "The reason you were given the *aliyah* is not because they felt that you were greater

than I am, but because you are the *rav* of a city with more inhabitants."

With that, Rav Akiva Eiger was revived. This is how *gedolei Yisrael* respect one another!

Of course, during the *Sefirah* period, we properly adhere to the laws of mourning and refrain from haircuts and shaving, weddings and music, and the like. But we often forget why we are doing so. Indeed, *Kaf HaChaim* (493:5) writes, "All that we do is in order to remind ourselves to stay away from hatred, jealousy, desire, arrogance, and honor. And to acquire the traits of love, humility, and peace."

The main point is to actually remember what caused the students of R' Akiva to perish — their lack of respect toward one another — and try to rectify their sin.

Similarly, Rav Chaim Palagi (*Moed L'Kol Chai* 6:11) writes, "The love of friends, at all times, should be an internal love of the heart and soul, and not merely external. How much more careful must one be during the time between *Pesach* and *Shavuos* that there should be an increase of obvious love and endearment." 📖

## WE OFTEN FORGET WHY WE ARE DOING SO.

### MEASURING TRUE VALUE continued from page 1

period of life similar to those described in the *tochachah*. When a person is finding success in his or her ventures, it is easy to talk about Hashem's kindness and mention Him often in speech. "*Baruch Hashem*" and "*Im Yirtzeh Hashem*" uttered in good times are not an accurate measure of a person's faith; it is easy to have faith when things are going well.

Someone who goes through a difficult period in life and still talks about Hashem's kindness rather than complain about his lot in life or reject G-d is truly faithful.

The Torah teaches us that a person who survives a *tochachah* with faith intact has great *erech*. 📖

### SEE HIS WONDERS continued from page 2

to a man who "happened" to be reading a Hungarian newspaper. This piqued his interest and caused him to start a conversation with a total stranger. And he had just "happened" to meet Mrs. Paskin a few days before and was moved enough by her story to take down her contact information.

This is a *hashgachah pratis* story of Hashem bringing two people together in a simple but wondrous way. Such stories take place thousands of times a day. We don't get to hear all of them, but they happen. The more we try to connect the dots, the more of Hashem we'll be able to see. And the more we say, "*Me'eis Hashem hoy'sah zos*," then "*hee nisflas b'eineinu*" - we will merit to see his wonders. 📖

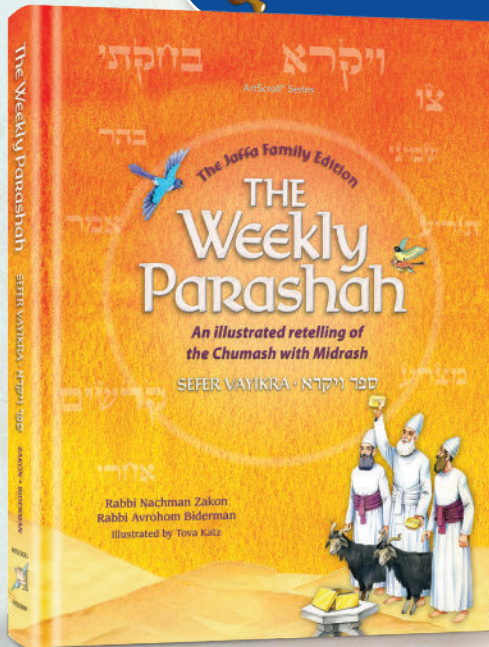
## This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	בב	בב	בד	כה	כו	כז	כח
	Demai 14	Demai 15	Demai 16	Demai 17	Demai 18	Demai 19	Demai 20

MAY / אייר



# Parashah for Children



## פרשת בהר-בחוקותי

### Interest

One way of helping out another Jew in need is to give him a loan — without charging him “ribbis,” or “interest.”

What is “interest”? When a person goes to the bank for a loan to buy a house, do you think the bank manager says, “WOW, you’re such a nice guy, we want to help you — here’s a loan of \$100,000. Please pay us back when you have a chance.”

Not exactly...

More likely, the banker will let the person have the loan. But the person will have to promise to pay the bank back all the money they lent him, plus another large sum. After all, the bank wants to be rewarded for letting you use their money! When a man borrows \$100,000 from a bank, he will, over time, pay back a lot more than that to the bank.

Charging people for lending them money is called lending with “ribbis.” Lending money to Jews and charging them ribbis is not permitted.

Not only is the one lending the money doing a sin, but so is anyone involved in the deal. The borrower, the witnesses, and even the one who writes up the contract — ALL of them have broken the ribbis commandment!



How many negative commandments are broken when someone lends with ribbis?

Six. Ribbis is so bad that the Torah counts one act of lending with interest as six separate sins.

WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

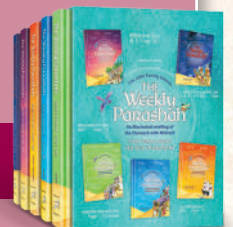
Question for Parashas Behar-Bechukosai:

**Why is the fiftieth year called Yovel?**

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 Tazria-Metzora question is: SHIMON LERMAN, Jackson, NJ**

The question was: What are times when a Kohen may not check for tzaraas?  
The answer is: Shabbos, Yom Tov, and the week of a person’s wedding and sheva brachos.



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