

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT  
OF THE  
Mesorah  
Heritage  
Foundation

פרשת ויגש  
א"א טבת תשפ"ד  
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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

## THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

Rav Asher Weiss on the Parashah

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחָיו אֲנִי יוֹסֵף הַעוֹד אֲבִי חַי וְלֹא יָכְלוּ אָחָיו לְעֹנוֹת אֹתוֹ כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפָּנָיו.  
*And Yosef said to his brothers, "I am Yosef! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him because they were left disconcerted before him (45:3).*

"Abba Kohen Bardela said: Woe to us, for the day of judgment! Woe to us, for the day of rebuke! ...Yosef was younger than his brothers, yet they could not stand before his rebuke... When *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will come to rebuke each person according to what he is, how much more so" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 93:10).

The giants of *mussar* have often asked: What rebuke was inherent in Yosef's revelation to his brothers? He did no more than proclaim his true identity and inquire after his father's welfare. Why was this considered an "astonishing" rebuke, which his brothers were unable to withstand?

The most effective *mussar* does not involve scathing criticism, harsh rebuke, or terrifying descriptions of the horrors of *Gehinnom*. The best *mussar* is nothing more than the revelation of the inescapable truth, which is so startlingly obvious that it cannot possibly be denied.

Rather than confronting the truth and dealing with it, man often prefers to flee from it. He flees from Hashem, he flees from himself, and he flees from the still small voice in his heart, which gently whispers to him that he must change. Rather than heed this voice, he rushes headlong into endless delusions of fancy, in frantic escape from the truth — yet his flight is futile, since ultimately, the truth is inescapable. The truth will give him no peace, by day or by night. It will cut him off at every exit. The small voice in his heart will grow and grow, until it becomes a thundering roar that cannot possibly be ignored. Only then, with nowhere else to run, man

will finally turn to confront the truth, and then bury his head in shame for what he has done.

Yosef's brothers had taken a defenseless youth and sold him into slavery. They turned a deaf ear to his pleas for mercy. They caused untold pain and misery to their poor father. After the deed was done, they buried any feelings of gnawing guilt deep within their hearts, and turned, each one of them, to his occupations.

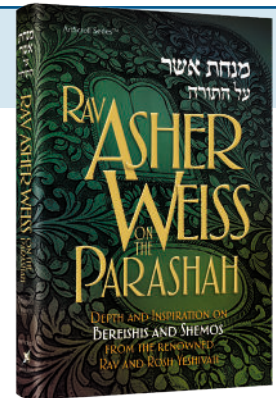
Yet Hashem would not allow them to forget. He gathered them all together, on the pretense of descending to Egypt, to bring food for their families. Then, with no warning at all, the truth suddenly surfaced. They were at long last confronted with the severity of their crime. "I am Yosef! Does my father yet live?" And his brothers could not answer him, for they were astonished by him.

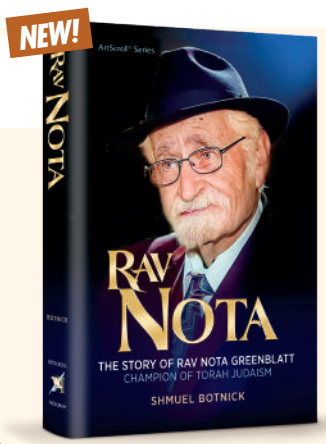
The moment of truth had arrived, and they were struck speechless, unable to utter even one word in their own defense.

The same is true in our own lives. We flee from the truth, never taking a moment to hear the still small voice that calls to our heart, saying, "Return to Hashem." Deep down, we know that it is a crooked path we walk, yet we pay no heed, until Hashem stops us and thrusts the truth in our faces. Then, no word of rebuke is necessary. It is painfully obvious. Woe to us for this most terrible rebuke of all. Woe to us for the day of judgment. 📖



Rav Asher Weiss





At the heart of Rav Nota Greenblatt’s philosophy of life was his utter disinterest in anyone recognizing his breadth of Torah knowledge, and his contentment with being perceived merely as a generous man. Proud Brisker that he was, Rav Nota sustained a life-long admiration for Rav Chaim Brisker. It wasn’t uncommon that, while delivering a *shiur*, he’d say, “Rav Chaim explains...” Then he’d stop and motion to one of the attendees, “Nu, bring me a Rav Chaim.” The designated emissary would scurry off, returning with Rav Chaim Brisker’s *sefer*, *Rabbeinu Chaim HaLevi Al Ha-Rambam*. Rav Nota would hold the *sefer* in his hand and then share the idea contained within it — without opening it.

Yet it wasn’t Rav Chaim’s genius in Torah that bestirred Rav Nota’s fascination. Rav Nota shared a story about Rav Chaim, the quintessential *Litvak*, paying a visit to the *Avnei Nezer*, a singularly brilliant Chassidic Rebbe for whom Rav Chaim held the deepest respect. During that historic visit, the two Torah giants met in private and discussed various complex issues. Following the meeting, the students and followers of the *Avnei Nezer* asked their Rebbe how he felt about this *Litvishe gaon*.

“*Gaon? Vuhs gaon? A tzaddik vi der Litvak iz nisht duh by unzereh. Gaon? What gaon?*” he responded. “A *tzaddik* like that *Litvak* does not exist by us.”

He is a brilliant *talmid chacham*, the *Avnei*

*Nezer* was saying, but his unparalleled piety is what marks his rare character.

Rav Nota loved this story, for it described so much of what he believed in. As towering a genius as someone might be, their foremost quality must be their righteousness and refinement of character.

Rav Nota constantly repeated Rav Chaim’s epitaph: “*Rabbeinu hagadol, rav hachessed, sar haTorah, hagon ha’amiti* — our great rabbi, who performed multitudes of *chesed*, leader of Torah, the true *gaon*.” The phrase “*rav hachessed* (who performed multitudes of *chesed*)” comes before “*hagon ha’amiti* (the true *gaon*),” and Rav Nota always found that emphasis noteworthy.

But his brilliant scholarship couldn’t remain a secret forever.

Reb Berish Kipper grew up in Memphis and his father, Reb Meyer, told him that, as a young man, he noticed that a light in the Greenblatt home always seemed to be on, even at 2 a.m. “My father took his friends, who had never encountered such dedication to Torah, for a late-night ride in his car. He drove up to the Greenblatts’ home and showed them the light streaming from its window. ‘Look,’ he’d say, ‘do you see that? That’s Rabbi Greenblatt, continuing to learn Torah even at this hour.’”



THIS WEEK’S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

DECEMBER / סבט

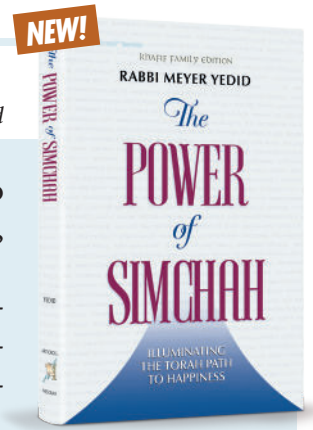
SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
23 א	24 ב	25 ג	26 ד	27 ה	28 ו	29 ז
Bava Kamma 51	Bava Kamma 52	Bava Kamma 53	Bava Kamma 54	Bava Kamma 55	Bava Kamma 56	Bava Kamma 57

THIS WEEK’S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

DECEMBER / סבט

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
23 א	24 ב	25 ג	26 ד	27 ה	28 ו	29 ז
Yevamos 15:10-16:1	Yevamos 16:2-3	Yevamos 16:4-5	Yevamos 16:6-7	Kesubos 1:1-2	Kesubos 1:3-4	Kesubos 1:5-6

*The Power of Simchah* by Rabbi Meyer Yedid



Why do we tend to focus on the things we are missing rather than the many things we have?

A major part of it is entitlement. We feel as though we're supposed to have everything. We should have parents who love us, house us, feed us, and give us everything we can imagine. We're supposed to have good health. We're supposed to get married at exactly the age we decided is right.

If this is a person's attitude, then as soon as something goes even slightly wrong, it becomes intolerable.

I was once talking to someone who had a series of things go wrong in his life, and he kept saying, "Why me?"

"Let me ask you something," I responded. "For the first thirty-five years of your life, when all you received was *berachah*, did you ever ask, 'Why me?'"

"Why did you wake up now and start asking, 'Why me?'"

The reason is that he felt that everything was coming to him. And a person who thinks that way can't be happy with anything he has, because it was owed to him. On the contrary — when he doesn't get something he wants, he feels that it's unfair.

The road to *simchah* is paved with the recognition that we're not entitled to anything. Hashem didn't have to give us anything — from the smallest to the biggest things we have.

There is a story about a person who goes out into the street and sees a line of dozens of people waiting. He asks someone what every-

one is waiting for, and the person answers, "There's a guy up front who is writing out checks of \$100 million to each person who comes to shake his hand."

Naturally, he takes his spot at the back of the line. He can see from afar that, indeed, each person who shakes the guy's hand walks away with a certified check for \$100 million. In his mind, he's already spending the money. He's calling a realtor, a travel agent... By the time he reaches the front of the line, he has spent \$95 million of it. Finally, it comes his turn, and not only does he shake the guy's hand,

## IT'S ALL A GIFT.

but he bends down to kiss it.

The guy asks for his name, writes out a check, and hands it to him. He walks away, opens the check, and he can't believe his eyes — it's written out for \$10 million.

First, he's so distraught that he doesn't know what to do with himself. Then he gets angry. How could the guy give him "only" \$10 million?

He waits to see what the next guy gets, and sure enough, it's \$100 million.

He comes home, and his wife takes one glance at his face and is stricken with fear. She's never seen him so mad before! He's been fired dozens of times and he has never been this angry.

"What happened?" she asks.

"Nothing," he snaps.

"What do you mean, nothing? There's obviously something bothering you."

She keeps pestering until he finally says, "You want to see what happened? Here," and he throws the check on the floor.

His wife picks it up, opens it, and sees that it's a \$10 million check.

"Are you crazy?" she asks him. "You're upset about \$10 million? You never even dreamt that in the course of your entire life you would earn this much!"

"You'll never understand," he says.

"What does that mean?" she asks. "What is there not to understand about \$10 million?"

"You don't understand," he retorts. "This was supposed to be \$100 million!"

This sounds like a dumb *marshal*, but in truth, don't we do this all the time?

We're sitting on the value of billions of dollars. How much is each of our senses worth? How much is each child worth? But somehow, when we're missing a few hundred thousand dollars, we're miserable.

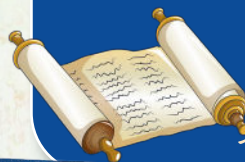
Hashem owes us nothing. We didn't make anything in our body ourselves. It's all a gift, and each organ and each limb is priceless.

View everything through the lens of not being entitled to anything and you'll be even happier with what you already have. 📖

*This week's  
Yerushalmi Yomi  
schedule:*

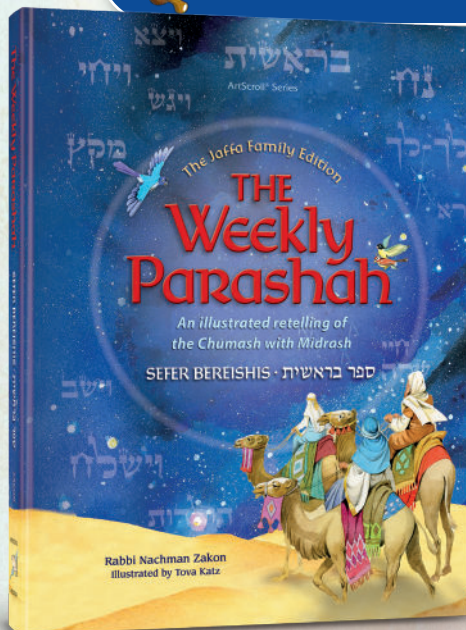
DECEMBER /  
טבת

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
23 א Sheviis 77	24 ב Sheviis 78	25 ג Sheviis 79	26 ד Sheviis 80	27 ה Sheviis 81	28 ו Sheviis 82	29 ז Sheviis 83



# Parashah for Children

## פרשת ויגש



### Beautiful Music, Great News

**T**he brothers returned to Eretz Yisrael. They were very excited about telling Yaakov that Yosef was still alive. The question was how to break the news to him.

At the time Yaakov was 130 years old. The brothers were afraid to surprise him and say, "Guess who we found alive? Yosef!" The shock of hearing that, after so many years of believing Yosef was dead, could kill a man of Yaakov's age!

What to do?

The brothers decided they had to prepare Yaakov for the news. They sent Yaakov's granddaughter Serach, Asher's daughter, to do the job. How? Serach came to Yaakov's tent, carrying a harp. She played her instrument and sang a song with the words, "Yosef is still alive." This was a gentle way of preparing Yaakov.

Slowly Yaakov began to understand what Serach was singing about. The brothers then came in and told him the great news: Yosef is alive and is ruler of Egypt.

### Is It True?

**E**ven though Yaakov had heard Serach's song, and the brothers had told him that Yosef was alive, Yaakov wasn't sure he could believe them. They had told him that Yosef had been killed by animals. Now they were saying Yosef was alive. Which story was true?

And even if Yosef was alive, Yaakov wondered, was he still a tzaddik? Had he become like an Egyptian in the way he talked and acted? Did he still believe in Hashem?



### Serach

Since Serach was the first one to give Yaakov the good news about

Yosef, he gave her a blessing. He blessed her that she would live forever! And indeed, Serach never died. She lived for a very, very long time, and she went straight to heaven without dying.

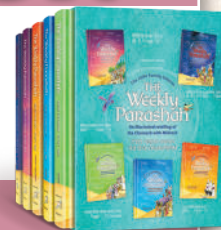
Before Yosef died, he asked the Jews to promise to take his coffin with them when they left Egypt. When the time came to leave Egypt, no one knew where Yosef had been buried. Moshe Rabbeinu went to Serach, who had been there when Yosef died. She remembered Yosef's funeral and told Moshe where he would find Yosef's remains. Serach was still on this earth in the time of King David. That was 650 years after she told Yaakov that Yosef was still alive!

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Vayigash:

**Yosef gave each of the brothers a suit of expensive clothing. Why did Binyanim get five sets of clothing?**

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 Tehillim raffle for Parashas Vayishlach is: YEHUDIS AND YISROEL HILMAN, Lakewood, NJ**