

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT
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פרשת אחרי מות
כ"ו ניסן תשפ"ד

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RABBI YITZCHOK

HISIGER, EDITOR

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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 FREE CHOICE

Rabbi Nison Alpert on the Sidrah

וַנֵּתַן אֶהָרֹן עַל שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים גִּרְלוֹת גֹּזֵרֶל אֶחָד לֵה' וְגֹזֵרֶל אֶחָד לְעִזָּאֵל.

And Aharon shall place lots on the two goats: one lot "for Hashem" and one "for Azazel" (16:8).

The matter of the two goats, with one carrying the transgressions of the Jewish people and being sent to Azazel, is truly a wonder. Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch writes that the fact that the two goats, each destined for a different fate, must be identical as to their appearance, height, and monetary value teaches something about the nature of free choice. Should it be one's desire, he can overcome his material drives and devote himself to Hashem. And, just as easily, he can turn his back on Hashem and devote his energies to the call of his *yeitzer hara*. In that case, he'll find himself in Azazel, unworthy of participating in civilized society.

And it's all a matter of free, personal choice. One cannot say that the life he chose was an accident of fate, that he was compelled by where and how he was raised, whether or not he had money, or any other external factor. Rav Hirsch says that we see from this verse that the goat whose fate it was to be dedicated to Hashem is no different from the one that wound up going to Azazel. In fact, were it not equally suited to have been the one going to Azazel, it could have been the one that wound up going to Hashem!

Rav Hirsch's thought is quite beautiful. However, the reason one went to Azazel and the other to Hashem had nothing to do with free choice. Rather, it was simply a matter of the draw. Purely external factors accounted for the respective fates of the two goats. There was nothing that the animal could do to wind up going in one direction instead of the other. Wouldn't that, then, show quite the opposite of what Rav Hirsch was trying to teach?

I would like to propose the following approach.

Perhaps the prayers of *Yom Kippur* can provide us with an insight.

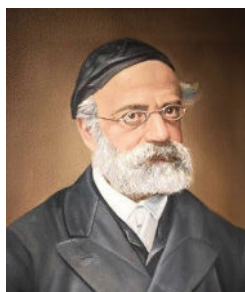
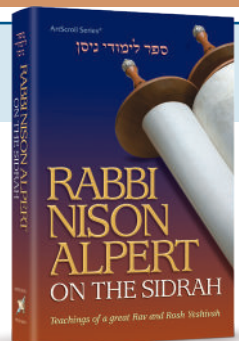
One could say that, in relation to *Torah Shebiksav*, the Written Torah, of the two goats, the prayers of *Yom Kippur* serve as *Torah Shebaal Peh*, the Oral Torah. Let me explain.

The underlying theme of *Shabbos Shabbason* and *Yom Kippur* is that all the world's creatures pass before Hashem, to be judged as to who shall live and who shall die. They are judged as to whether they will experience tranquility — or suffering, G-d forbid. Will their year be one of wealth — or of poverty? And the individual has no control over his fate of the moment of judgment. His deeds, good and bad, of the previous year have been weighed and evaluated. It is too late for him to change them.

When it comes to the goats, their situation seems to be quite the same. They are identical as to appearance, height, and monetary value. Their fate will be "sealed" when the lots are drawn. The goats have no power to determine whether they will become an offering to Hashem or go to their death in Azazel. This symbolizes the judgment of *Yom Kippur*, a day of awesome holiness, a day when all creatures pass before Him and none have the power to alter their fate at that moment. If a person has not earned the designation of a *tzaddik*, his fate rests with Hashem's mercy.

This must be internalized down to the very depths of our being. It must fully penetrate our entire thought process. We must live with the

continued on page 2



Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch

The Beis Yisroel by Yisroel Besser



Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, a member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of Degel HaTorah and world-renowned *posek*, is a child of Gerrer *chassidim*. When he was a teenager, his brother was seriously ill and his mother sent him to the Gerrer Rebbe to ask for a *berachah*.

The *Beis Yisroel* heard the *bachur's* request. "I will certainly *daven* for your brother," the Rebbe said, "but remember that you, too, are a *Yid*, and a *Yid* does not need any agents to be heard in Heaven. You can stand by a wall and talk to the *Ribbono shel Olam* and He will hear. I will *daven*, but so must you."

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Rav Yaakov Nissan Rosenthal opened a *kollel* in Haifa, creating a stronghold of Torah in the heavily secular city. It was not easy to solicit funds for a *kollel* in Haifa, and it happened that a check with which Rav Rosenthal had paid a vendor did not clear, because there were insufficient funds in the account.

The *Beis Yisroel*, who would visit Haifa each year, very much appreciated how greatly the *rav* and the

kollel had influenced the town's spiritual climate and the Rebbe would visit the *rav* when he was in Haifa.

Somehow, the *Beis Yisroel* heard about the check that bounced and he went to discuss it with Rav Rosenthal. He shared his view, making it clear that even though it was surely an innocent mistake, a *Yid* cannot allow a check to bounce — for a *talmid chacham*, whose every action reflects Torah, it is certainly improper.

The Rebbe offered to pay the accumulated debts of the *kollel* if the

of money, a new donation for the *kollel*, beyond the funds the Rebbe had already given for the debts.

Rav Rosenthal immediately went to the Rebbe's lodgings to thank him for the gift. "To give a *psak* to a *Yid* is no great *chochmah* (to just offer rebuke is not a very impressive feat)," the Rebbe said.

The Rebbe felt that the reproach had been necessary, but now, he wanted to do more.

The relationship between the Rebbe and the *rav* deepened after that.

Though people wondered how Rav Rosenthal funded a *kollel* in a city without a natural donor base, he would not satisfy their curiosity, saying only that he had a secret benefactor. It was only after the *petirah* of the *Beis Yisroel* that Rav Rosenthal shared the identity of his benefactor.

After that conversation in which he had paid off the accumulated debt of the *kollel*, the Rebbe had started sending money each year, and it was those funds that kept the *kollel* afloat. 📖



The Beis Yisroel



Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein



Rav Yaakov Nissan Rosenthal

rav would pledge that he would never again write a check unless he was absolutely certain that there was sufficient coverage. Rav Rosenthal agreed, and the Gerrer Rebbe wrote the check and left the apartment.

A few minutes later, a *bachur* came up to the *rav*, and he handed him an envelope from the Gerrer Rebbe. It contained a large sum

FREE CHOICE *continued from page 1*

absolute recognition that all is in the hands of Heaven. Our fate rests with Him alone.

He sees everything and misses nothing. He will judge us and He is just. He is a G-d of truth. His justice is never skewed or corrupted.

OUR FATE RESTS WITH HIM ALONE. HE SEES EVERYTHING AND MISSES NOTHING.

He is righteous and honest.

He is the One Who has given purity and sanctity to this day. And He is the One Who gives this day the power to atone for us. Even though we have sinned, in His mercy He places our sins upon the head of the goat and disposes of them in Azazel. 📖

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

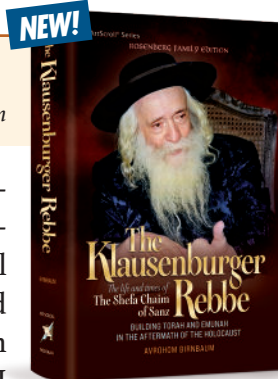
MAY / ניסן-אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4 כו	5 כז	6 ח	7 ט	8 י	9 יא	10 יב
Bava Metzia 66	Bava Metzia 67	Bava Metzia 68	Bava Metzia 69	Bava Metzia 70	Bava Metzia 71	Bava Metzia 72

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

APRIL / ניסן-אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4 כו	5 כז	6 ח	7 ט	8 י	9 יא	10 יב
Nazir 9:3-4	Nazir 9:5 - Sotah 1:1	Sotah 1:2-3	Sotah 1:4-5	Sotah 1:6-7	Sotah 1:8-9	Sotah 2:1-2



Meshulem lost everything in the war — everything. He was all alone. Even more than that, he was angry, and he decided that he was done with Torah, done with *mitzvos*. His friends tried to convince him...to no avail. Meshulem was not willing to listen to anyone.

“But, Meshulem,” his friends pressured, “the Klausenburger Rebbe is in the camp. Why don’t you go to him? He knows how to give *chizuk*.”

“I don’t need *chizuk*,” Meshulem retorted bitterly. “I saw everything with my own eyes. I saw what they did. I am done with *chizuk*! I want nothing more to do with G-d or religion.”

His friends were persistent, and finally, Meshulem relented.

“Fine!” he snapped. “I’ll go to him, but on one condition — the Rebbe should not speak one word to me about *Yiddishkeit*.”

The Rebbe agreed.

Meshulem walked in, and before the Rebbe could even say a word, Meshulem said, “Please only ask me ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions. I will not answer with more than one word!”

The Rebbe asked him, “Are you angry?”

“Of course!”

“Why?” the Rebbe asked.

“What kind of a question is that?” Meshulem exclaimed. “I lost holy parents, brothers and sisters. All of them were *tzaddikim*. And me!” he exploded. “I was always the black sheep. I was a nothing!

Yet, I am the one who remained alive. Is that called *Hashgachah*? Is that called Hashem running the world?”

“This also happened to you?” the Rebbe cried out in astonishment. “Just like it happened to me? I also lost parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, my wife, and all of my eleven children. I, the lowest of them all, am also the only one who remained alive!”

The Rebbe then put his hand on Meshulem’s shoulder and began to

twenty minutes, after unburdening all the pain and anger from my heart, I was able to do *teshuvah* and start keeping *mitzvos* again.”

•••••

It was in Kiryat Sanz, Netanya, at the *Shabbos sheva berachos* of his oldest son, the current Sanzer Rebbe. The *minhag* in Sanz at a *Shabbos sheva berachos* is that before reading from the Torah on *Shabbos* morning, the *chassan* delivers a *pilpul derashah* in *halachah* and *aggada*. The Rebbe’s son indeed gave a brilliant, intricate *derashah*.

After the *chassan’s derashah*, instead of continuing with *Krias HaTorah*, the Klausenburger Rebbe walked up to the *bimah* and gave his own *derashah* on the same *sugya*, adding many new *chiddushim* to those of his son. When he was about to finish, the Rebbe began speaking, completely uncharacteristically, on a personal note. He said, “I am standing here, amazed and astounded! What good thing could I have done in my life to give *nachas* to Hashem that He has repaid me with such *berachah*? After thinking about this a lot, I came to the conclusion that I never, ever, expressed any displeasure or complaints against Hashem, no matter how much I suffered. Whatever I endured, I accepted Hashem’s will with love...”

“HE SPOKE TO MY HEART!”



The Klausenburger Rebbe

cry, tears coursing down his cheeks. Meshulem also began to cry, shaking with sobs, the bitters tears streaming from his eyes. One minute passed, two minutes...a full twenty minutes of heaving, cleansing crying.

When R’ Meshulem, who had come to the New York area to spend *Yom Tov* with his children who live in Flatbush, told this story to Rabbi Paysach Krohn, Rabbi Krohn asked him, “So, what made you do *teshuvah* and start living as a *Yid* again?”

“Those twenty minutes!” was his reply. “At that meeting, the Rebbe didn’t speak to my brain. He spoke to my heart! After crying for those

This week’s Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

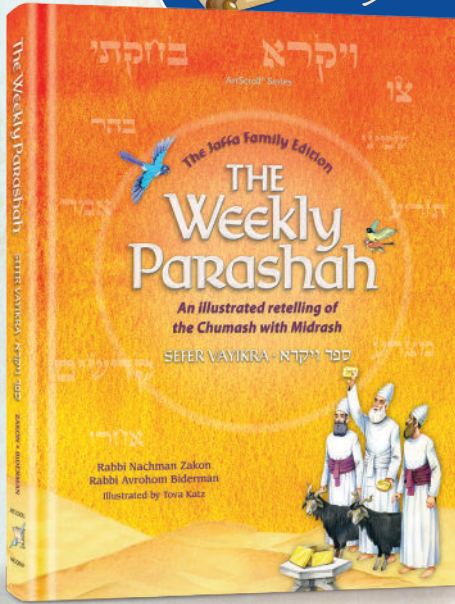
APRIL / ניסן אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4 כו Maasers 16	5 כז Maasers 17	6 ח Maasers 18	7 ט Maasers 19	8 י Maasers 20	9 יא Maasers 21	10 יב Maasers 22



Parashah for Children

פרשת אחרי מות



Pushed Off a Cliff

The Kohen Gadol goes to the Azazel goat. He leans his hands on its head and says Vidui. This Vidui is for the sins of all the Jewish people, asking Hashem to forgive them. Then the Kohen Gadol gives the goat to a man who leads the animal out of the Beis HaMikdash. We watch as the man and goat disappear from view as they walk together.

Where are they going? To Azazel, a high cliff in the Judean Desert, about ten miles from Yerushalayim. In a way this animal is carrying an invisible heavy load — the sins of all the Jews! It's as if Hashem is saying, the Jews don't want their sins. Get rid of them!

After climbing up the cliff, the man who brought the Azazel goat takes the red band that had been tied to the goat's horns. He ties half of it to the animal's horns, and he ties the other half to a nearby rock.

He pushes the goat backward over the cliff. It falls down and breaks to pieces before it even reaches halfway down the mountain.

And then, an amazing miracle happens!



From Red to White!

The red strip tied to the rock turns white! This is a symbol that Hashem has accepted our teshuvah, and our "red" sins have turned "white and pure."

LOOK! There was a red ribbon that was hanging at the Beis HaMikdash entrance. IT'S TURNED WHITE, TOO! This miracle happened at the exact moment that the Azazel goat reached the desert.

It is a direct and miraculous message to all of us from Hashem that we have been forgiven.

The Kohen Gadol now goes to the bull and takes the parts that would be burned on the Mizbei'ach. The rest of the korban is sent to be burned outside Yerushalayim.

While this is happening, the Kohen Gadol reads from the Torah.

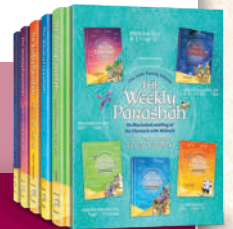
WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Acharei Mos:

On Yom Kippur, why did the Kohen Gadol say some of the pesukim by heart? Why not read it from the Sefer Torah?

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 Parashas Shemini question is: AVROHOM STEFANSKY, Lakewood, NJ

The question was: In the entire world, there are only four animals that have one kosher sign. What are they?
The answer is: The camel, hyrax, hare and pig.

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