

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת נצבים-וילך
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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 DO NOT DESPAIR

Rabbi Frand on the Parashah

אַתֶּם נֹצְבִים הַיּוֹם בְּלִבְכֶם — *You are all standing here today. (Devarim 29:9)*

Immediately after enumerating the long litany of ninety-eight curses they would face if they disobeyed Hashem, Moshe called together the Jewish people and said, “You are all standing here today.” What is the significance of this sequence of events?

The Midrash, quoted by Rashi, explains that when the Jewish people heard the curses they turned green. “Who can withstand all these curses?” they moaned despondently. “What will become of us?”

Therefore, Moshe called them together to calm them down. “Don’t be so worried,” he said. “You are all standing here today. After forty turbulent years in the desert, after angering Hashem so many times — with the Golden Calf, the *Meraglim*, the complainers — you are still here today. Hashem has not destroyed you. So you see, you do not need to despair.”

The commentators are puzzled. Moshe seems to be taking the wind out of his own sails. First, he read off all the horrible curses to scare the Jewish people into obedience, to put “the fear of the Lord” into them. The threat of the curses accomplished their purpose. The people were terrified. Then, all of sudden, he relented and told them that it’s not so bad.

They don’t have to be so terrified. Wasn’t he defeating his whole purpose by taking the sting out of the *Tochachah*?

The answer is that there is a vast difference between healthy fear and hopelessness. It is a good thing to be realistically apprehensive about the future. It is unhealthy to live in a fool’s paradise, believing you can do as you please without suffering any consequences. But hopelessness is destructive. It demoralizes, debilitates and reduces a person to a bowl of quaking jelly.

Moshe saw that the Jewish people had gone beyond fear when they heard the curses. They lost

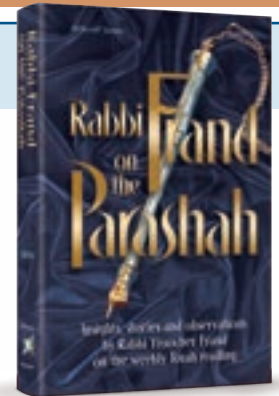
hope and threw in the towel. Therefore, he had to calm them down until they recovered their hope and all they felt was a healthy fear.

Our Sages tell us (*Bava Metzia* 59a) that after the destruction of the Temple “all the gates of prayer were closed, except for the Gates of Tears.” The Gates of Tears are the channel of last resort for prayers, and they are never closed.

But if they are never closed, asks Reb Bunim of Peshis’cha, why is there a need for gates at all? Why not remove the gates and leave the entranceway wide open?

There are some tears that do not get through, says Reb Bunim of Peshis’cha. The gates screen out tears that don’t sincerely cry out to Hashem for help; tears that simply express despair and hopelessness. Yet if a person in a state of helplessness then turns to Hashem as his sole hope, wringing out the perspiration of his heart and soul and sending his hope-laden tears heavenward, there are no barriers in Heaven to a prayer of this sort. It travels directly to the Heavenly Throne.

The Izhbitzer Rebbe explains that this is the reason why all Jews are called *Yehudim*, specifically after Yehuda. Because when the brothers stood accused of theft before Yosef in Egypt, the Torah tells us that Yehudah “stepped up” to argue in their defense. When all seemed to be lost, when faced with the overwhelming weight of evidence against them, Yehudah never gave up hope. That is the definition of a Jew, a person who knows that the Almighty will never abandon him. A person who never gives up hope. 📖



Rabbi Yissochroel Frand

Steps to the Throne by Rabbi Nosson Muller



The Chiddushei HaRim's very first address upon assuming leadership took place during the days of *Selichos*, a week before Rosh Hashanah. He illustrated a Jew's obligation during this exalted time of year with a powerful parable.

When someone moves to a new home, he said, he doesn't bring everything from his previous dwelling with him. Much of the old stuff is disposed of. His furniture has taken a beating over the years. They won't fit with the fresh new look. He carefully chooses what to take along and what to throw in the trash.

When we move from one year to the next, we should view the transition as if we are changing our residence. In twelve months, it is natural for junk to accumulate. As we move on and start over, we should take a hard look at our stuff and decide what is worth holding onto, and what not.

Moving day is just a week away. Sift through your possessions. Be ready to enter your beautiful new home!

The Dubno Maggid brings a similar parable, with a more humorous bent. He tells of the simple villager in the big city, who decides to be fitted for a beautiful new suit at the best tailor in town.

When it is ready, he comes to try it on, and is unhappy with the finished product.

"You aren't that great at your job, after all," he says to the tailor. "Everyone told me to come specifically here, but after all the measurements you made me stand for, you can't make a suit that properly fits. What a waste of money and time!"

"You really aren't used to getting new clothes, are you," responded the amused craftsman. "I know what I am doing. Your suit is perfectly made, and it fits perfectly. However, you didn't remove your old and bulky clothing before you put it on. Of course it is uncomfortable and tight!"

Before Rosh Hashanah, every Jew must first shed his "old outfit." It is torn, soiled, and just takes up space. Without taking it off, the beautiful new suit waiting for you will make for a ridiculously odd look.

It won't fit!

My rebbi, the Novominsker Rebbe, used to liken this

idea to a diamond placed in a setting filled with particles of dirt. As beautiful as the diamond is, it won't fit into its setting.

If you don't properly clean out the crevices of your *neshamah* with *teshuvah*, the diamonds you insert with your Torah, *tefillah*, and *avodas Hashem* will never settle correctly in place.

•••

With tefillah playing such a central role during the days of Selichos and the entire Yomim Noraim, prayer is something that should be analyzed carefully during this time of year.

For a believing Jew, the point of *tefillah* raises a foundational question. If we are supposed to have something, if we have earned it, Hashem gives it to us. That is unquestionable!

If we aren't, will our prayer change Hashem's mind? He knows what is coming to us better than we ever will. If we deserved what we are asking for, would we not have already received it?

What exactly are we doing when we stand before Him and beseech? What is its purpose?

This fundamental question has been raised by countless commentators. The answer of the *Sefer Halkkarim* is foundational as to how every Jew must approach *tefillah*. Davening, he says, does not change Hashem's mind. Of course not. It changes us!

There is a submission inherent in prayer. When one prays properly, he grows in his understanding of servitude to Hashem. A renewed awareness that he lives completely under His benevolent control makes him an entirely different kind of person.

Earnest prayer is guaranteed to produce a changed man. Before we davened, we were indeed undeserving. But now we have davened and now we have changed! The situation is different because *we* are different!

With the very act of prayer, the Jew reaches new levels and earns merits previously beyond his reach. 📖



The Novominsker Rebbe

"YOU REALLY AREN'T USED TO GETTING NEW CLOTHES, ARE YOU," SAID THE AMUSED CRAFTSMAN.

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

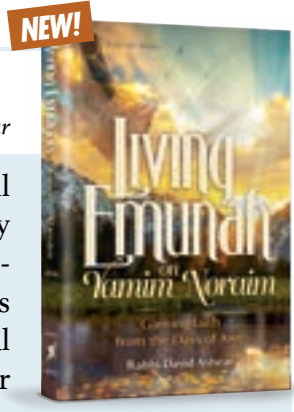
SEPT-OCT / אלול-תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
28 כה	29 כו	30 כז	1 חה	2 ט	3 י	4 יא
Bava Basra 95	Bava Basra 96	Bava Basra 97	Bava Basra 98	Bava Basra 99	Bava Basra 100	Bava Basra 101

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

SEPT-OCT / אלול-תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
28 כה	29 כו	30 כז	1 חה	2 ט	3 י	4 יא
Bava Metzia 3:5-6	Bava Metzia 3:7-8	Bava Metzia 3:9-10	Bava Metzia 3:11-12	Bava Metzia 4:1-2	Bava Metzia 4:3-4	Bava Metzia 4:5-6



As we take steps to improve ourselves during the glorious month of Elul, we must remind ourselves of the value of every single improvement we make, no matter how small it may seem. Whatever we do is very precious to Hashem and will benefit us at some point in the future.

Rabbi Silver's* daughter Esther was diagnosed in 2019 with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a life-threatening condition which, until then, had no known cure. The doctor told the young rabbi that the FDA had just approved a new prescription gene therapy called Zolgensma, but the cost for a one-time infusion was a staggering \$2.2 million. Furthermore, it was only approved for children under the age of two, and Esther was just a month shy of her second birthday.



Rabbi David Ashear

HE WAS ABLE TO GET THE MEDICATION AND SAVE HER LIFE.

The Silvers immediately tried to get the medication through their insurance plan, but it was denied. They hired a lawyer to fight the insurance company on their behalf but lost the case. With just a week remaining before her second birthday, little Esther's life was on the line. Rabbi Silver had to come up with a plan — fast.

"Can we pay for the medication out of pocket?" he asked the doctor.

"Of course — but how would you get the money to do that?"

"I have a very rich Father," Rabbi Silver replied. "Hashem is my Father, and He can do anything."

Many family members took upon themselves life-changing *kabbalos*, and the next day, they launched a

chesed campaign online. Amazingly, in just five days, they collected the full \$2.2 million. *Ashreichem Yisraell!* However, the actual cash would not be available for at least another few days, and they didn't have time to wait.

A certain wealthy gentleman heard about the urgent situation and offered to lay out the \$2.2 million from his own pocket. The Silvers took the money and managed to get the medication and have it administered in the hospital the

same day — July 19, 2019 — the day before Esther's birthday. *Baruch Hashem*, today Esther is doing well.

When the Silvers went to repay the kind benefactor who laid out the money, he refused to take it. "It was my *zechus* to give it," he insisted, overwhelming them with his generosity.

The next task was to inform the more than 20,000 donors on the *chesed* page that the family no longer needed their money. Most of the people said they still wanted their donations to be used for charitable purposes. Rabbi Silver used the \$2 million to start a new fund to provide for children with special medical needs.

Our people are amazing! Their desire to help others knows no bounds.

From the time Esther was diag-

nosed until she actually got the medication was an emotional roller coaster for the family.

They have so much *hakaras hatov* to Hashem for bringing about their salvation. When the young rabbi had a chance to reflect on and contemplate all the events that had taken place, he had a striking revelation. Eight years previously, when he was not yet religious, he was faced with a very big test. His friends were going out to party on the night of Tishah B'Av and were urging him to come along. Deep down, he knew how wrong that was. He managed to fight the peer pressure and stayed home.

"That night was the turning point in my life," he later said. Overcoming the challenge gave him the strength to grow in religious observance — and eventually become a rabbi.

The night of Tishah B'Av when he passed his test was July 19, the exact same date on which, several years later, he was able to almost miraculously get the medication, give it to his daughter, and save her life.

Everything we do for Hashem is precious to Him. He remembers everything and uses it to help us. Everyone has their own tests, on their own level. The common denominator is that no deed is ever considered small by Hashem. The sacrifices we make to do His will will be used to help us both in this world and the Next. 📖

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

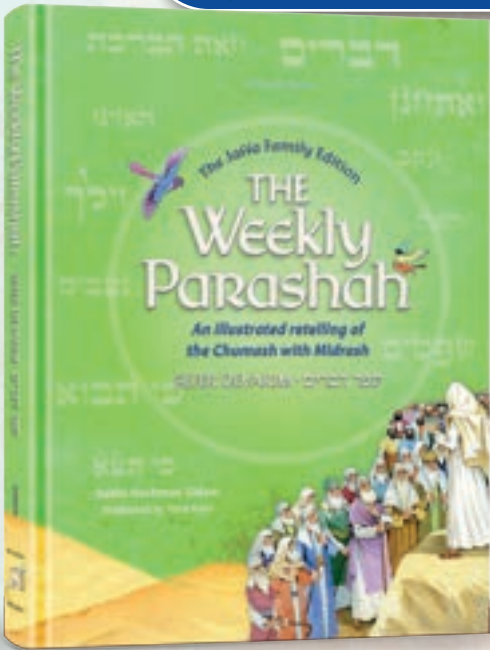
SEPT-OCT / אלול-תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
28 Orlah 9	29 Orlah 10	30 Orlah 11	1 Orlah 12	2 Orlah 13	3 Orlah 14	4 Orlah 15



Parashah for Children

פרשת נצבים-וילך



A Promise — and a Miracle

Hashem guarantees in this week's parashah that the Torah will never be completely forgotten by the Jewish people.

Let's talk about miracles. Not the kinds of miracles like when the sea splits or sticks turn into snakes. Let's talk about miracles that are hidden — and yet, everyone knows they are happening. Miracles are all around us, if we just take the time to notice them.

For instance, look at your face in the mirror. Do you see your eyes? Amazing! How do two small, round balls let you see?

It's a miracle that happens all the time — so we call it nature.

Here is another example of a hidden and yet open miracle. Look all around you. See all the people in yeshivos, Bais Yaakovs, and Daf Yomi shiurim. They're all learning Torah.

Don't take it for granted; it's a miracle!

Do you know how many times over the centuries our enemies tried to force us to forget the Torah, to stop studying it, to destroy it? How many times they made fun of us, or put us in jail, or burned our sefarim, or even killed us, trying to stop us from learning Torah?

It happened as long ago as the miracle of Chanukah, and it happened around 80 years ago, during the Holocaust, and many times in between.

Miraculously, the Torah survived and is still being learned. More people are learning Torah today than ever in our history.

How could that be?

It's a miracle — and it's also a promise. It's the promise that was made in this parashah, in the words, "For it [the Torah] will not be forgotten from the mouths of its children."

One of the great Rabbis said 300 years ago: "The survival of the Jewish people is a greater miracle than everything that happened in Egypt."

WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Nitzavim – Vayeilech:

How long did it take Moshe to write 13 Sifrei 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 Re'eh question was: BRACHA MUNK, Lakewood, NJ

*The question was: Which two karbonos did people coming to Yerushalayim for Yom Tov have to bring?
The answer is: An Olas Re'iyah and a Shalmei Chagigah*