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פרשת קרח
ה' תמוז תשפ"ו
5786
JUNE 20, 2026
ISSUE #292
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DESIGN & LAYOUT:
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PROJECT DEDICATED BY THE JAFFA FAMILY

PARASHAH

STRIVE FOR PEACE

The Parashah and the Power of Speech by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman

וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְקַרְא לְדָתָן וְלָאֲבִירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאב, וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נֵעֲלֶה.

Moshe sent forth to summon Dasan and Aviram, the sons of Eliav, but they said, "We shall not go up!" (Bamidbar 16:12). From here we learn that one should not hold fast to a machlokes, for Moshe was seeking to approach them to make peace with words of peace (Rashi).

Korach, Dasan, and Aviram led a shameful machlokes against Moshe Rabbeinu and Aharon HaKohen. There were no two sides here; Moshe and Aharon were clearly right and the others were clearly wrong. Whatever Moshe did, including appointing his brother Aharon as Kohen Gadol, was according to Hashem's command.

Though Moshe knew that Dasan and Aviram were completely wrong and had evil intentions, he did not "stand on ceremony." He did not say, "Well, they are leading a rebellion against my leadership. They are clearly wrong. If they want to end the fight, let them apologize." Instead, Moshe sent a message to Dasan and Aviram, inviting them to come and talk so that they could find a way to end the controversy.

From Moshe Rabbeinu, we learn that we should do whatever is in our power to end a machlokes. Shalom, peace, is the greatest vessel for berachah, and machlokes is the opposite. Machlokes is compared to fire; it can rage out of control and cause tremendous destruction. That is why Chazal say that, if necessary, we may even say an untruth for the sake of shalom.

Gedolei Yisrael sometimes disagree, but they do so respectfully and are careful to ensure that no one's feelings are hurt.

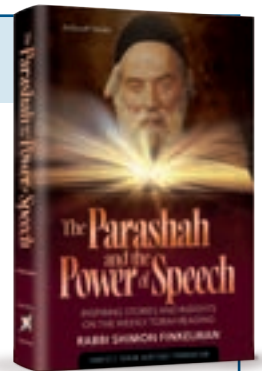
Mishnah Berurah is the classic sefer of daily halachah written by the Chofetz Chaim. While the Chofetz Chaim quotes many, many Rishonim and Acharonim in Mishnah Berurah, in only one instance does he quote a gadol of his own generation. In Chapter 585, the Chofetz Chaim quotes Rav Meir Simchah of Dvinsk, author of two famous sefarim, Meshech

Chochmah on the Torah and Ohr Same'ach on the Rambam.

What is most interesting is that Rav Meir Simchah's comment does not appear in the original edition of Mishnah Berurah; it was added in a later edition. The Chofetz Chaim's son-in-law Rav Mendel Zaks said that the following story is what caused that comment to be added:

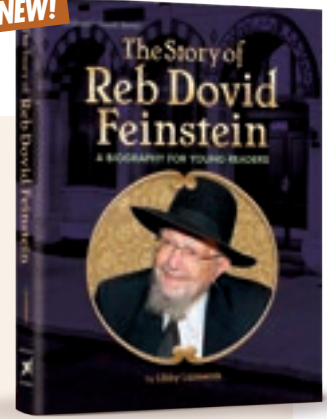
In 1910, the Czar of Russia ordered all rabbanim to become fluent in the Russian language. Until then, most rabbanim spoke Yiddish, and not Russian. A meeting of rabbanim was held in St. Petersburg to discuss the Czar's decree. Rav Meir Simchah and Rav Dovid of Karlin felt that the rabbanim should go along with the decree, while Rav Chaim Soloveitchik and Rav Shalom Ber of Lubavitch felt that they should challenge it. When it seemed that most rabbanim were going to side with Rav Meir Simchah, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik sent word to the Chofetz Chaim, then in his mid-seventies, to come to St. Petersburg and let his voice be heard. The Chofetz Chaim arrived and sided with Rav Chaim. His opinion was decisive.

The Chofetz Chaim was concerned that perhaps he had hurt Rav Meir Simchah's feelings or indirectly caused dishonor to him by opposing his opinion. To make up for this, he included a dvar Torah of Rav Meir Simchah's in his Mishnah Berurah. The fact that this was the only time that a contemporary is mentioned in Mishnah Berurah was a great kavod for the Rav of Dvinsk, and a great lesson about the lengths to which a Jew must go to avoid even a possibility of machlokes. 📖



The Story of Reb Dovid Feinstein by Libby Lazewnik

NEW!



Reb Dovid took responsibility very seriously. One Purim, he went into a local bakery to buy challos for the Purim *seudah*. The owner came over and asked to speak to him privately.

The owner had just received the news that his father had passed away. What should he do? He knew he ought to leave the store right away, but he was hesitant to close his store on such a busy day.

Reb Dovid gave him good advice. He told the man to sign ownership of the store over to a brother-in-law whom he trusted, and to ask that brother-in-law to come in and run the bakery for the day. The owner took Reb Dovid's advice, but it would be a few hours before the brother-in-law could make it to the Lower East Side.

"Go," Reb Dovid told the bakery owner. "The bakery will be taken care of until he comes."

With that, Reb Dovid stepped behind the counter to serve the customers himself!

...

Being a man of humility and silence meant that Reb Dovid could keep silent for others, too.

Once, R' Meir Zlotowitz was on the phone with Reb Dovid, whom he called every day. When another call came in, Reb Dovid put R' Meir on hold to take the call. He kept R' Meir waiting much longer than usual. After that, he returned to his call with R' Meir without a word of explanation.

That Shabbos, R' Meir Zlotowitz and his wife hosted their married children. During the meal, their son-in-law described a complicated situation that he and his wife had dealt with that week. He said that he called Reb Dovid for guidance, and Reb Dovid had stayed on the phone with him for several minutes trying to help.

"When did the call take place?" R' Meir asked. He

quickly realized that it was his own son-in-law whose call had interrupted R' Meir's phone conversation with the Rosh Yeshivah that day. But when Reb Dovid came back to his first call, he didn't say a word about it.

R' Meir was awed — though not surprised — by the way his rebbi guarded other people's privacy.

But the story doesn't end there.

After Shabbos, R' Meir told the Rosh Yeshivah that his children had shared with him what had happened, and how they'd asked Reb Dovid for advice. Reb Dovid did not react at all. Not a word or a nod. Nothing.

R' Meir had just learned another lesson about protecting other people's privacy. Even if you get the information from someone else, the keeper of a secret *continues to keep it a secret*.

...

In the last year of Reb Dovid's life, he attended a bar mitzvah. Since he was feeling weak, the father of the bar mitzvah boy told his son to say a shortened version of his *pshetel* (speech).

The father didn't want Reb Dovid to have to listen to a long speech.

Noticing the number of pages the boy held, Reb Dovid realized what had happened. As soon as the boy finished speaking, the Rosh Yeshivah leaned over and asked him to share the entire, original speech with him. He listened closely as the bar mitzvah boy did so. Not only that, but Reb Dovid then asked him a few questions.

He wanted to make sure that the boy would not feel cheated on his big day! 🎉



R' Dovid's Mishnayos shiur. R' Meir Zlotowitz is in the foreground.

	SHABBOS JUNE 20 ה'תמוז	SUNDAY JUNE 21 ז'תמוז	MONDAY JUNE 22 ז'תמוז	TUESDAY JUNE 23 ח'תמוז	WEDNESDAY JUNE 24 ט'תמוז	THURSDAY JUNE 25 י'תמוז	FRIDAY JUNE 26 יא'תמוז
BAVLI	Chullin 51	Chullin 52	Chullin 53	Chullin 54	Chulin 55	Chulin 56	Chulin 57
YERUSHALMI	Chagigah 2	Chagigah 3	Chagigah 4	Chagigah 5	Chagigah 6	Chagigah 7	Chagigah 8
MISHNAH	Keilim 12:2-3	Keilim 12:4-5	Keilim 12:6-7	Keilim 12:8-13:1	Keilim 13:2-3	Keilim 13:4-5	Keilim 13:6-7
KITZUR	162:12-163:4	163:5-164:4	164:5-165:3	165:4-11	165:12-166:3	166:4-167-End	168:1-5
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 74a-75a	Yevamos 75b Chazara 75a	Yevamos 76a Chazara 75b	Yevamos 76b Chazara 76a	Yevamos 77a Chazara 76b	Yevamos 77b Chazara 77a	Yevamos Chazara 75b-76a



The Schron family hosts an incredible Shabbaton every year for *yesomim* — teenagers who have tragically lost a father or a mother. The goal of the weekend is to provide these boys with the *chizuk* they need, ensuring that for at least one Shabbos, they feel special and beloved. It is the highlight of the year for many of them — a time of camaraderie, powerful *zemiros*, and true *achdus*.

On this particular Shabbos, R' Ruby Schron — the family patriarch and one of Klal Yisrael's most generous philanthropists — was spending the weekend with the boys. On Shabbos morning, he opened the floor for a question-and-answer session. A fourteen-year-old boy stood up and asked a pointed question that caused the entire room to fall silent.

"Mr. Schron," the boy began, "we all know you are a very wealthy man. Why do you wear such a simple suit? You do not wear designer clothing or drive a flashy car. You still live in the same house you bought forty years ago, even though you could easily afford a mansion. Why do you choose to live such a simple life?"

The room was so quiet that one could have heard a pin drop. The silence was thick with discomfort; no one could believe the boy had asked such a blunt, personal question. Everyone waited with bated breath to see how Mr. Schron would react, but he welcomed the inquiry with a warm smile and began to share a story from his youth.

"When I first got married," Mr. Schron began, "I was still learning in the Mirrer kollel and began to dabble in business. My first seder was always dedicated to my learning in the Mir, and my rebbi was the great R' Shmuel Brudny. During that time, I began to see a level of success that felt almost supernatural. I was able to afford a car, which was quite rare back then for a man learning in kollel, and I would drive my rebbi home each day."

"One day," he continued, "I turned to my rebbi and said, 'Rebbi, I'm starting to see incredible financial success, and I'm trying to understand my role and my responsibility with this newfound wealth.'"

R' Shmuel Brudny, with his penetrating deep blue eyes, looked at him and said, "Reuven, pull over."

Once the car was at the side of the road, R' Brudny said, "Reuven, there's a Gemara in Arachin (10b). The Gemara says that in the Beis HaMikdash, there was a flute made of wood that was passed down from the times of Moshe Rabbeinu. It was a very special flute, and the Levi'im would play the most beautiful music in the world on it.

"Eventually, the king of that time was so taken by its beautiful sound that he decided to cover the outside in gold, so that its outer beauty would match its inner beauty. However, the Gemara says that as soon as it was covered with gold, its sound was ruined. It never played the same beautiful music again. They actually had to remove the gold in order to restore its beautiful sound."

R' Brudny then looked at him and delivered the message of a lifetime: "Reuven, never cover yourself with that gold. As soon as you do, you will never play the same beautiful music of a ben Torah again."

R' Ruby turned to the boy with tears in his eyes. "I want you to know," he said, "it's been over sixty years, and I have not broken my promise to my rebbi."

With that, he sat down. He had spent his entire life ensuring that he continued to play the sweetest music possible, never allowing the glitter and the gold of this world to cover his true essence: the beautiful life of a ben Torah. —Related by R' Yoel Gold

WIN A \$36
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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Where did Moshe get the idea to use ketores to stop the plague?

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 question for Shavuot is: YISRAEL DAVRAYEV, Brooklyn, NY

Question for Shavuot was: What did Hashem use to revive the Jewish people after their souls departed after He declared "Anochi Hashem" at Mattan Torah?

Shavuot Answer: A special dew fell on their bodies



PART 15: LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This is another instance of ArtScroll/Mesorah responding to a need. In our early years, there was not the foggiest notion to produce literature for children, but reality intervened. Parents and educators were rightly bemoaning the lack of contemporary books for young children and teens that reflected traditional Jewish values. Just the opposite. Objectionable material infested the public libraries, and was found even in many works that were being used — for lack of alternatives — in yeshivos and day schools. ArtScroll responded to the need by publishing books for very young children and also for older children and teens.

The first, published in 1982, was a charming book, perfect for beginning readers and especially for mothers reading to their very little ones. *Mitzvos We Can Do*, as the title implies, speaks of *mitzvos* that children can perform. The text is in rhyme, the vocabulary is perfect for the target age, and the color illustrations are beautiful. But that was only the first of many.

Remember how little children always wanted Mommy and older siblings to read favorite stories over and over? ArtScroll has a long list of such books, in rhyme and in prose. Of particular note was our Middos Series, a long list of books for elementary-age children, which featured stories that were interesting in themselves, but with an underlying message of *middos tovos*.

As *mechanchim* know, the most effective lessons in *hashkafah* and *yiras Shamayim* are not “preachy.” The messages are there, but they are presented ‘quietly,’ by example, and not in LOUD, BOLD type.

As the years went by, our books for youngsters included a long list of story books for youngsters by Shmuel Blitz, and children’s versions of some of the wonderful stories by best-selling adult authors like

Rabbis Paysach Krohn, Yechiel Spero, David Sutton and David Ashear, as well as books on Jewish history and reviews of the background of the year’s Yamim Tovim by Yaffa Ganz — an award-winning author of children’s literature.

Another very important area is the many youth biographies of major *gedolei Yisrael*. The lives of our great leaders are packed with important lessons for young and old alike. A future column will deal in detail with the subject of biographies.

To produce young children’s literature of the quality that our people demand and deserve is not easy. Many writers find it hard to find the right vocabulary for those they are trying to reach. Books should stimulate readers – and even the very young who are

listeners, not readers – to learn new words and ideas, but the presentation must be age appropriate. Dialogue is another area that requires skilled writing. Many writers need help in writing conversation that sounds

“normal.” People don’t speak “literature,” they speak “conversation.” Our editors are attuned to such issues and help talented writers avoid such pitfalls. The results speak for themselves.

Starting in 1984, we began publishing novels, short stories, and series for teens. The inescapable fact is that many young people are on the lookout for engrossing and exciting fiction. If there are no such books with a proper Torah *hashkafah*, many young people will be going elsewhere and will be finding things that are harmful.

Our children’s and youth volumes are not only responding to a need, but they are also performing a valuable service. The proof is that so many of them are in yeshivah and girls’ school libraries, selected by educators who are keenly aware of how careful we must be in selecting reading material for our children.

UP NEXT: *The Beginning of ArtScroll’s Halachah Series*

