

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

פרשת שופטים
ב' אלול תשפ"ג
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RABBI YITZCHOK
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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

PORTAL OF KINDNESS

Kedushas Levi translated by Reb Moyshe Silk



שׁוֹפְטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים תִּתֵּן לָךְ בְּכָל שַׁעֲרֶיךָ ... וְשִׁפְטוּ אֶת הָעָם מִשִּׁפְט צְדָקָה.
*You shall set up judges and law enforcement officials for yourself in all your gates...
and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment (Devarim 16:18).*

Daily, the Almighty judges us with great compassion and kindness. But we have to arouse this compassion by conducting ourselves with kindness and by looking at the positive points of our fellow Jews, judging them favorably. By doing so, we awaken this same trait on High. Then, G-d also focuses on a person's merits and on the merits of all the Jewish people. Thus, by serving G-d here below with kindness, a person awakens and opens the portal of kindness Above, through which blessings rain down on the Jewish people.

This, then, is the deeper meaning of the verse, "You shall set up judges and law enforcement officials for yourself in all your gates." We, ourselves, through our "gates," determine the judgment — i.e., "set up the judges," — that is rendered Above. The word "gates" alludes

to the portals that we make and open by our actions.

Thus, the verse concludes, "They shall judge the people with righteous judgment." This means that each person should accustom himself to judge his fellow with a "righteous judgment" by emphasizing the righteousness and merit of each and every Jew. In this way, a person opens the supernal portal, and he himself emerges vindicated from judgment. This is so because "according to the way [*middah*, which can also mean "trait"] a person judges others, he himself is judged" [*Megillah* 12a].

In other words, the trait [*middah*] that a person exhibits when judging others is the trait that G-d exhibits when He judges the person.

WE AROUSE THIS COMPASSION BY LOOKING AT THE POSITIVE POINTS OF OUR FELLOW JEWS, JUDGING THEM FAVORABLY.

• • • • •
תָּמִים תְּהִיֶה עִם ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ.

Be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d (18:13).

The underlying principle here is as follows: It is the way of G-d to bestow goodness, especially upon the Jewish people, the nation to whom He is as close as a father is to a child, and who are thus called children of the Omnipresent [*Devarim* 14:1; *Avos* 3:14]. Surely, a father fills the needs and wishes of his son even before his son asks. Certainly, G-d satisfies all the needs of the person who is imbued with such faith.

This, then, is the deeper significance of the phrase "Be wholehearted with G-d" — suggesting that when you wholly attain this level, when you believe that G-d will definitely give you what you lack, then you know that you are "with Hashem, your G-d" — that G-d is definitely with you.

Knowing and believing wholeheartedly that G-d is always with you is the vessel that ensures His being with you and fulfilling your needs. 📖

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

הלומד מחבירו פרק אחד.

He who learns from his fellowman a single chapter (Avos 6:3).

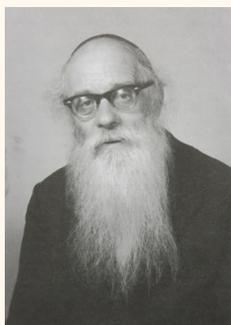
At first glance, this *Mishnah* seems difficult to understand. It begins by teaching us that if one learns even one letter from a person, he must accord that person honor. Yet the *Tanna* continues and says that we learn this directive from the fact that Dovid HaMelech gave respect to Achitofel for teaching him two things. Clearly, the proof the *Tanna* brings only demonstrates that one must accord honor to someone who taught him a minimum of two things, not one.

Rav Shimon Schwab prefaces his beautiful answer by pointing out that the *Tanna* expressed that Achitofel taught Dovid “*shnei devarim bilvad*” - only two things. What is the reason the *Tanna* inserted the word “*bilvad*”? Isn't it superfluous?

The answer is that our *Tanna* is pointing out the vast difference between Achitofel's teachings and that of the ultimate *rebbe*. Achitofel was not a good person. Hence, whatever he taught Dovid HaMelech was simply *bilvad*; just that. What he taught was a dry fact, a piece of information or knowledge, but nothing more. In contrast, the true *rebbe* can at times transmit worlds of information and meaning to his students without even needing to say more than one word

or one letter, and sometimes even with just one smile or *krechzt!*

In the words of Rav Schwab: “I remember as a very young child when our *rebbe* taught us to read *Shema Yisrael*. He started his lesson like this: ‘Now we are going to learn the most important *pasuk* in the whole *siddur*.’ And then he raised his aged, raspy voice, and with great *kavannah* he said with a trembling tone, ‘*Shemaaa... Yisraeeel...*’ We were shaken. The fear is still in my bones. He was not teaching us the reading of ‘a few words alone,’ but he implanted the seed of *emunah peshutah* in our young minds and hearts forever.”



Rav Gad Eisner

Accordingly, our *Tanna* is teaching us that if just the two pieces of knowledge that Achitofel taught Dovid rendered him being called *rebbe*, how much more so is each word and letter that a *rebbe* or *morah* teaches his/her student with passion and meaning a cause for them to be titled “my *rebbe*, my teacher.”

I recently visited the new home of a *talmid* of mine. As he and his wife proudly showed me around, I noticed an exquisite *mezuzah* case on one of the doorposts. I asked where they had gotten such a beautiful case and my *talmid's* wife told me the following: “I had a very difficult childhood. My parents divorced when I was young,

and ever since, one unfortunate situation after another seemed to come my way. My only safe haven was my day in school. Despite my defiant behavior and total lack of cooperation in doing my work, my teachers and principals stood steadfast by my side, constantly being *mechazek* me and tolerating my continual misdemeanors with patience and love. I miraculously graduated high school and seminary and finally settled down and married.

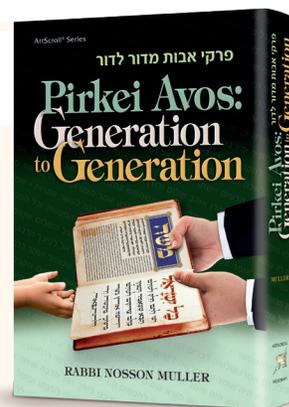
My teachers were with me all the way through.

“Even after I married, my teachers would consistently check up on me to see how I was faring. When my elementary school principal heard that we had purchased our new home, she went out and bought us this *mezuzah* holder as a gift. It reminds me each day that the *Shomer Yisrael* has many messengers that He sends to watch over us. True, there might be just one letter on the cover of the *mezuzah* holder, but to me that one ‘*ois*’ speaks volumes. When I kiss that *mezuzah*, I am thanking Hashem for so much...”

One letter is indeed so small, yet its ramifications are greater than we can ever imagine.

Rav Gad Eisner was a well-known and pious *Gerrer chassid* who endured excruciating suffering through the war years.

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THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

AUGUST / אלול

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
19 א	20 ב	21 ג	22 ד	23 ה	24 ו	25 ז
Kiddushin 6	Kiddushin 7	Kiddushin 8	Kiddushin 9	Kiddushin 10	Kiddushin 11	Kiddushin 12

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

AUGUST / אלול

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
19 א	20 ב	21 ג	22 ד	23 ה	24 ו	25 ז
Rosh Hashanah 2:9-3:1	Rosh Hashanah 3:2-3	Rosh Hashanah 3:4-5	Rosh Hashanah 3:6-7	Rosh Hashanah 3:8-4:1	Rosh Hashanah 4:2-3	Rosh Hashanah 4:4-5

Nonetheless, he became one of the greatest mashpi'im in Ger, infusing emunah and bitachon into yeshivah bachurim with much vigor and dynamism. Once, when talking to mechanchim about his war experiences, he related the following anecdote: "I recall trudging together with a group of my friends on one of the infamous death marches. After a few days of walking, I simply could not continue and felt my body giving way to all the torture and exhaustion it had endured. I realized that this was it; my time had come. I lay down on the road surface and began reciting my last prayers, knowing that even if I didn't pass out on my own, I would be shot by one of the German guards. Suddenly, I heard one of my friends tenderly call out to me, "Gade'le! Get up and loif, get up and run! You can do it!" And I did. And here I am to tell the tale.

"I want to tell you something," Rav Gad continued telling the group of mechanchim. "You know what gave me the strength and courage to stand up again? Not what he told me to do and not why he told me to do it...but how he told me! He didn't say, 'Gad, stand up.' He said, 'Gade'le, stand up!' He used the name that my beloved parents had affectionately called me when I was a young boy. It was that one extra syllable that he added to my name – not even consciously – that stirred in me a voice of the past, a voice of courage, which enabled me to somehow, somewhere, find the strength I didn't have to get up and try again."

One letter isn't just simply a letter. Sometimes it can be life itself. Literally. 📖

DO I REALLY CARE?

Beis HaLevi on Ahavas Yisroel
With commentary and insights by Rabbi David Sutton

How does one know if he is really being nosei b'ol? Does he truly care? Perhaps he is just letting out a sigh, as many do when they hear of someone's pain.

A story is told about the Chofetz Chaim when he was elderly. During the First World War, he did not sleep in his bed. He said that while Jewish soldiers were in danger at the front, he could not sleep in comfort.

That is the mark of someone who is truly carrying the burden. Someone who feels his friend's pain as if it were his own is not able to enjoy himself. This is not something that only the Chofetz Chaim

can do. Everyone on his own level can achieve this. Perhaps we are not on the level of sleeping on the floor, but there is always something we can do. We can be like Rebbetzin Chana Perel Kotler, Rav Aharon Kotler's rebbetzin, who during World War II did not put sugar in her tea.

Rav Moshe Twersky Hy"d was embarking with his family on a trip. As they were getting ready to leave, a tragedy took place in Israel. It didn't happen to anyone they knew personally, but Rav Moshe canceled the trip, turned to his children, and said, "Now is not the right time to enjoy ourselves,

while someone else is suffering." That is greatness.

Reb Elimelech (Mike) Tress was famous for living a life filled with acts of genuine chessed. He was a powerhouse of goodness and kindness. He was a great activist during World War II, and he did everything possible to save Jews. He was empathetic

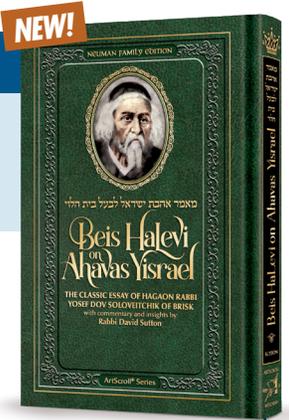
to the point that he gave away all his money to save them. It is said that he didn't even have enough money to pay for his medications. He felt that every dollar could help save another Jew.

After the war, Mr. Tress traveled to Europe to see how the survivors in the Displaced Persons camps were faring. One night, his companions became very concerned when he wasn't with them at the hotel. When they finally found him in the morning, they asked him where he had been, and he said he had slept in a DP camp. They asked him why, and he answered, "How could I go to sleep in the lap of luxury in a hotel and then come back to them? I slept together with them."

That is a sign of Jewish greatness and leadership. We empathize, not just sympathize. 📖



Reb Elimelech (Mike) Tress



This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

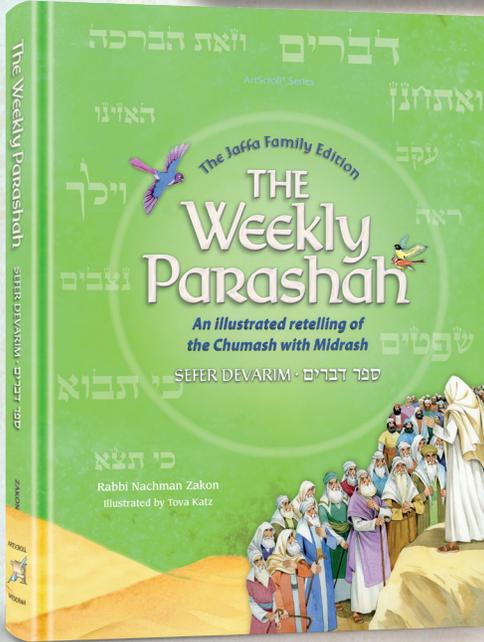
AUGUST / אלול

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
19 Kilayim 35	20 Kilayim 36	21 Kilayim 37	22 Kilayim 38	23 Kilayim 39	24 Kilayim 40	25 Kilayim 41



Parashah for Children

פרשת שופטים



Accidents Happen

Six of the cities of the Levi'im were "arei miklat." An "ir miklat" is a city where a person who killed someone carelessly by accident can go, and be safe from the "go'el ha'dam."

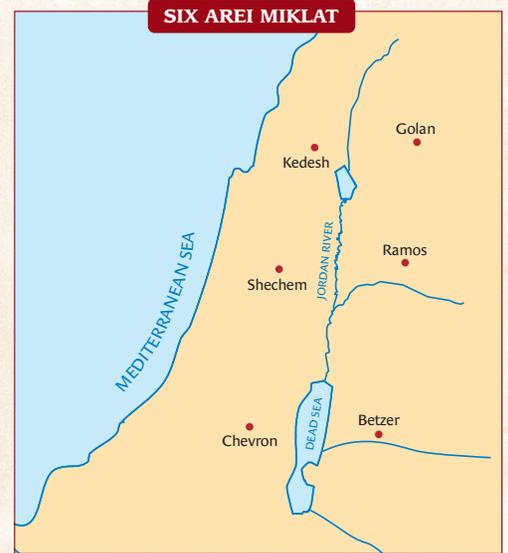
The go'el ha'dam is a relative of the person who was killed. He is allowed to kill the one who killed his relative. The person who kills mistakenly has to live in an ir miklat. As long as he stays there, the go'el ha'dam is not allowed to harm him. But if he leaves, the go'el ha'dam is allowed to kill him.

Arei miklat are only for people who kill by accident. The cities are not for someone

who kills on purpose.

The roads to the ir miklat were clearly marked with signs that said "Miklat, Miklat" so that the one who had to go there was able to find it easily. In order that the killer could get there as fast as possible, there were arei miklat in the north of the country, in the center, and in the south. There were three arei miklat on the western side of the Yarden River and three on the eastern side.

The cities were placed so that the distance from the northern border to the first ir miklat was the same as the distance between each miklat city. The distance between the southern border and the third city was the same as the distance between the northern border and the first city. This way, every third of the country had an ir miklat.



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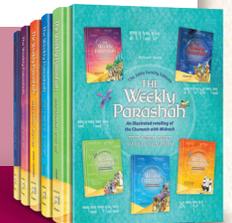
THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Shoftim:

Which country are Jews not allowed to live in?

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 Va'eschanan question is: PINCHAS ZARBAKHS, Tarzana, CA



The question was: How do we roll up a mezuzah?

The answer is: A mezuzah is rolled up from left to right. That way, when it is unrolled, the first word at the top will be the word Shema.