

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת ואתחנן
ט"ו אב תשפ"ה
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RABBI YEHUDA MUNK
EDITOR
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MRS. AVIVA KOHN

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

PICK UP YOUR TEFILLIN!

Messages from Rav Pam by Rabbi Sholom Smith

וְקִשְׁרֹתֵם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ — *Bind them as a sign upon your arm and let them be ornaments between your eyes (Devarim 6:8).*

This *pasuk*, which is part of the first *parashah* of *Krias Shema*, is one of the sources in the Torah for the *mitzvah* of placing *tefillin* on one's arm and head. *Tefillin* is a precious *mitzvah* for which Jews since time immemorial have gone to great lengths and expense to perform. During the Holocaust, there were Jews in the concentration camps who traded away their meager ration of bread for the privilege of briefly putting on a pair of *tefillin* that had somehow been smuggled into the camp.

Rav Pam would often repeat a story about the chassidic master R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, the author of *Kedushas Levi*. The Berditchever Rav once saw a simple Jew accidentally drop his *tefillin*. The Jew paled with fright and quickly picked them up, kissed them, and lovingly wiped off the dirt.

Taking in the scene, the Berditchever Rav raised his eyes heavenward and declared, "Master of the World! Look down from heaven and see how a



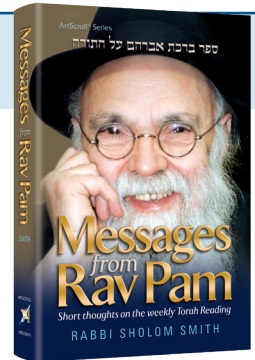
Rav Avrohom Pam

simple Jew expresses his deep love for his *tefillin*, which have fallen to the ground. You, too, our Heavenly Father, also wear *tefillin* (see *Berachos* 6a), which contain the *pasuk* (*Divrei HaYamim* 17:21) *Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth!* How long can You allow Your *tefillin*, Your precious people, Israel, to lie on the ground? It is almost 2,000 years since Your peo-

**WHY DON'T YOU PICK US UP
AND HUG AND KISS US,
AS THIS SIMPLE YID
DID FOR HIS TEFILLIN?**

ple were sent into *galus*. Why don't You pick us up and hug and kiss us, as this simple *Yid* did for his *tefillin*?"

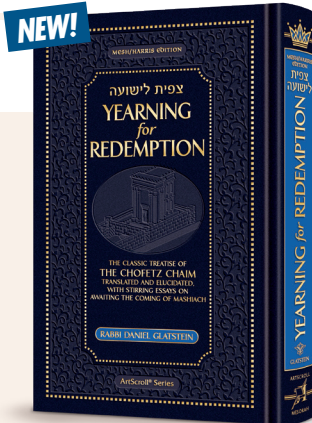
This *parashah* is always read on the first Shabbos after Tishah B'Av. We hope and pray that Hashem will finally respond to the Berditchever Rav's appeal and bring us the long-awaited Final Redemption. 🇲🇳



YOMI SCHEDULES FOR THIS WEEK:	SHABBOS AUGUST 9 טו אב	SUNDAY AUGUST 10 טז אב	MONDAY AUGUST 11 יז אב	TUESDAY AUGUST 12 יח אב	WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 יט אב	THURSDAY AUGUST 14 כ אב	FRIDAY AUGUST 15 כא אב
	BAVLI	Avodah Zarah 52	Avodah Zarah 53	Avodah Zarah 54	Avodah Zarah 55	Avodah Zarah 56	Avodah Zarah 57
	YERUSHALMI	Pesachim 72	Pesachim 73	Pesachim 74	Pesachim 75	Pesachim 76	Pesachim 77
	MISHNAH	Zevachim 8:6-7	Zevachim 8:8-9	Zevachim 8:10-11	Zevachim 8:12-9:1	Zevachim 9:2-3	Zevachim 9:4-5
	KITZUR	194:1-11	194:12-195:7	195:8-196:1	196:2-8	196:9-19	196:20-197:5

BARUCH HASHEM, FOR THE MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION AND THEIR EFFORTS
IN MINING THE GEMS OF TORAH THAT ENRICH OUR SOULS!

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION



How can we realistically yearn for and await the coming of Mashiach when he has not come for so many generations preceding ours? How can we possibly expect him to arrive now, if those who were much greater than us did not merit the *Geulah*?

The Chofetz Chaim answers this question by comparing the later generations, who despite their lower spiritual stature can nevertheless bring Mashiach, to a dwarf riding on the shoulders of a giant. Picture a giant of immense height. Try as he may, he will not be able to reach the top of a building that is just beyond his reach. If he were to take even a dwarf who is only a few feet tall, and place him on his shoulders, the dwarf will be able to reach the top of the building with ease.

However, from the Chofetz Chaim's elaboration in *Tzipisa L'Yeshuah* about the resilience of the later generations, another perspective emerges. The Chofetz Chaim explains that the challenges confronting the later generations, and the powerful allure and temptations so widespread in our time, surpass many of the difficulties faced by earlier generations.

R' Ovadiah Yosef relates a beautiful *meshal* that highlights this point:

A princess resided in the palace and exerted great influence over the king. When someone desired an audience with her father, it was the princess who would make the arrangements — if she were so inclined. If someone needed a favor from the king, the princess could make it become reality.

Naturally, anyone who sought a favor from the king would do his best to befriend the princess, trying to win her over so she would take up his cause. They would bestow lavish gifts on the princess, hoping that whenever they might need help from the palace, she would recall the gifts fondly and agree to assist them.

The princess lacked nothing, so a simple gift would not have impressed her. For a present to catch her attention in a memorable way, it would have to be luxurious, opulent, and extravagant. Anything ordinary would not have the desired effect.

One day, after residing in the palace for many years, the princess fell victim to the slander of those who were jealous of her. The fabricated charges resulted in

her banishment from the palace. Cast into a cold, dark dungeon, she remained imprisoned there for some time, suffering greatly at the hands of the warden. The meager prison meals provided insufficient nutrition, and she became extremely weak.

A concerned citizen who lived near the prison took pity on her and smuggled bread and water into her cell. She ravenously devoured the food he brought, consisting of items she never would have considered consuming while residing in the palace.


Ultimately, the princess was proven innocent and the king realized that the libelous accusations spread about her were false. He ordered the princess to be released from prison and reinstated in the palace.

From then on, any gift she received, irrespective of value, paled in comparison with the meager meals she had been given while languishing in prison. The gifts that forever remained most dear and meaningful to her were the bread and water she received when she would otherwise have died of starvation.

Rav Ovadiah holds when the *Beis Ha-Mikdash* was standing and Hashem's Presence there was obvious to all, Hashem treasured only those mitzvos done properly.

Now, however, Rav Ovadiah emphasizes Hashem is no longer in His palace. *Shechinta b'galusa*, the Divine Presence is in exile. When God is in exile, even the smallest mitzvah can find favor in His eyes. A small mitzvah performed in our times may be more valuable to Hashem than the combined mitzvos of an entire generation of several hundred years ago.

Perhaps then, it is for this precise reason that it is our lowly generation that has the power to bring Mashiach and can merit Mashiach more than any generation before us. To some degree, we are not simply dwarves standing on the shoulders of giants; rather, we can be likened to the tallest of giants standing on the shoulders of the giants who preceded us.

The arrival of Mashiach, the coming of the *Geulah*, is dependent on us. And if the Ribono shel Olam has left it up to us, then He trusts that we are fully capable of rising to the challenge. 



Rav Ovadiah Yosef

**SHE RAVENOUSLY
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PALACE.**

רָצַפִּי אוֹמֵר: נִחְמוּ נִחְמוּ עִמִּי, יֹאמַר אֱלֹקִים — *The penguin says: Comfort, comfort my people, says your G-d. (Yeshayah 40:1)*

The flightless aquatic bird called a *retzifi*, the penguin, is characterized by its willingness to remain in a frigid climate throughout the winter rather than migrating to warmer climates like most other birds. The *sefer Kenaf Renanim* explains that these birds survive the harsh winter by staying close to each other, gathering in close clusters, nuzzling under each other's wings to fend off the wind. Their name hints at this characteristic, since it shares a root with *ratzof*—connection.

Every bird's song is a reflection of the natural instinct Hashem invested in it, and the penguin is no exception. Living as it does in one of the world's least hospitable habitats, it teaches us the proper way to live in the inhospitable environment of *galus*. And that is to accept that wherever Hashem has placed us, no matter how challenging, this is where we need to be. This is the venue in which we can accomplish the purpose for which He sent us into the world. The penguin doesn't complain that Hashem chose the South Pole as its home. He knows this is the environment a penguin requires.

Furthermore, the penguin teaches us that by staying close to each other and sharing our warmth, we can survive that which we could not survive on our own. The penguin sings, *Nachamu nachamu ami, yomar elokeichem, Comfort, comfort My people, says Your God*, because when we learn the ways of the penguin, accepting our challenges and supporting each other, we will merit redemption.

The *sefer Kenaf Renanim* draws another lesson from the *pasuk's* words, *yomar elokeichem*, which includes the Name of Hashem that represents His attribute of strict judgment. This tells us that even when we are subject to this attribute, with the cold wind blowing in our face, we can find within ourselves the strength Hashem has given us to accept it.

Mabit adds an inspiring insight on the repetition in the words, *Comfort, comfort, my people*. Normally, he says, people seek comfort when something terrible happens, *Rachmanah litzlan* (Heaven forfend). However, in *Bereishis* 6:6, the word usually used to mean "comfort" is used instead to mean, "And Hashem reconsidered" [*vayinachem Hashem*]. This was in the context of Hashem's decision to destroy mankind with a flood.

Rashi explains that the true essence of the word "comfort" is indeed "to change one's mind." That is because when a person is comforted, he looks at a situation differently. As we might say, he "reframes" the situation in a way that eases his pain. The source of pain has not disappeared; if someone has lost a loved one, that person is still gone. However, the mourner, over the course of time, with the support of those around him, finds a way to accept his loss.

For the Jewish people, the first mention of *comfort* in the penguin's song addresses the pain of *galus*. We can find a certain degree of comfort in accepting that



THE PENGUIN TEACHES US THAT BY STAYING CLOSE TO EACH OTHER WE CAN SURVIVE THAT WHICH WE COULD NOT SURVIVE ON OUR OWN.

Hashem has a plan, that our suffering is bringing us necessary growth, strength and rectification that will ultimately allow us to merit the *Geulah*. However, the tribulations of *galus* do not disappear at this level of comfort. That waits until the second *comfort*, which is when the *Geulah* is achieved. Then, not

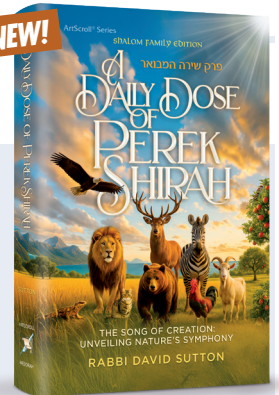
only will our troubles disappear, but also, we will understand how they paved the path to redemption.

A final insight comes from the words, *G-d will say*. The future tense conveys that Hashem will provide this double layer of comfort in the future. For now, we can only have the first degree of comfort.

The penguin tells us to hold on and be patient. Although we are buffeted by icy winds, our suffering isn't wasted. Hashem promises that one day, He will comfort us completely, so that our troubles will turn into triumphs and all our questions will evaporate.

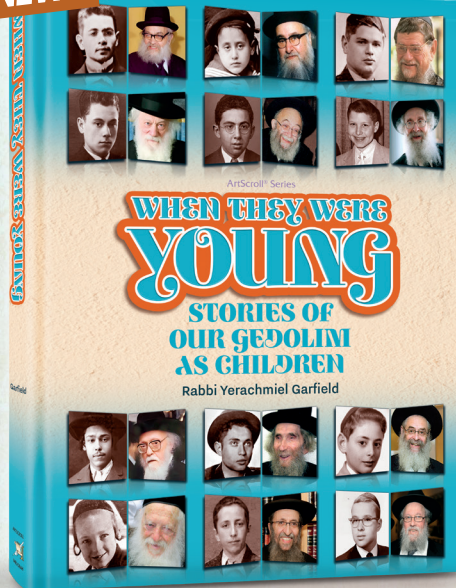
Practical Take-Away

The penguin gives us supremely useful advice on how to deal with difficulties. When you face a challenge that you can't fly away from, remind yourself that you can seek support from others, and trust Hashem to give you what you need to endure. 🐧



NEW!

When They Were Young



Rabbi Shimon Schwab

Shimon Schwab was born in 1908 to R' Yehudah (Leopold) and Chana (Hanna), in Frankfurt, Germany. He first learned in his hometown, a *kehillah* that had been established by R' Shamshon Raphael Hirsch. He then went to Telshe in Lithuania and Mir in Poland. This was not common among German *bachurim*.

Shimon married Recha Froehlich.

R' Schwab served as rav in Germany before fleeing with his family to Baltimore, Maryland. There he served as rav of Shearith Israel Congregation. In 1958, R' Schwab was chosen to serve as assistant rav to Rabbi Dr. Yosef Breuer in Khal Adath Jeshurun of Washington Heights. After Rabbi Dr. Breuer passed away, R' Schwab became the rav of the *kehillah*. He remained at this post until his own *petirah* in 1995.

As a gifted speaker, R' Schwab was often called upon to speak at conventions and large gatherings of Jews. In addition, until today, his writings continue to inspire.

A SHABBOS TO REMEMBER

RABBI SHIMON SCHWAB

הרב שמעון שוואב זצ"ל

Position: Rav of Khal Adath Jeshurun (KAJ)

Place: Washington Heights, New York

Publications: *Maayan Beis HaSho'eivah*,

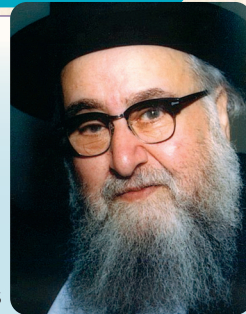
Iyun Tefillah/Rav Schwab on Prayer,

Rav Schwab on Yeshayahu, *Rav Schwab on Ezra*

and *Nechemiah*, *Rav Schwab on Iyov*, and others

Birth: 1908 **Petirah:** 1995

Known for: His leadership as the rav of Khal Adath Jeshurun in Washington Heights; his speeches and writings



In his youth, Shimon Schwab spent an unforgettable Shabbos with the *gadol hador*, the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan.

On Erev Shabbos, the Chofetz Chaim asked him, "Are you a Kohen?"

Shimon wondered why the Chofetz Chaim was asking him this. Perhaps he was preparing *aliyos* for the next day's *minyan*.

Shimon shook his head. "No," he replied.

A STORY FROM HIS YOUTH

"Perhaps you're a Levi?" the Chofetz Chaim asked.

Again, Shimon answered, "No."

The Chofetz Chaim sighed. "Ah, what a pity! You see, Mashiach is coming soon. And when he comes, the Beis HaMikdash will be rebuilt. People will want to enter, to feel its special *kedushah*. But only Kohanim can enter certain parts of the Beis HaMikdash, and Leviim can enter even fewer areas. And if you're not a Kohen or even a Levi, you will not be allowed inside the building. Maybe you know that I am a Kohen. So, why aren't you a Kohen?"

Shimon answered, "Because my father isn't a Kohen."

"And why not?" the Chofetz Chaim asked. Then he answered his own question. "Because 3,000 years ago, many Yidden sinned with the *Eigel HaZahav*, the Golden Calf. At that time, Moshe Rabbeinu called out, 'Mi laShem eilai! Whoever is with Hashem, come to me!' All the people of Shevet Levi, the Kohanim and Leviim, ran to him, including my ancestors. But others, including your ancestors, did not.

"So now, we have Kohanim and Leviim, and only they can get into the holier areas of the Beis HaMikdash. Therefore, don't forget: When you hear the call of 'Mi laShem eilai,' you must come running!"

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Va'eschanan:

Why is a mezuzah rolled up from left to right?

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*.

Winner for Chukas: GITTY GRUBER, Staten Island, New York

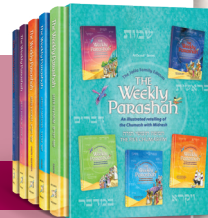
Question for Chukas: How did the water of Be'er Miriam get to each shevet?

Answer: The Nasi of each shevet would draw a line in the sand with his walking stick and the water would flow from Be'er Miriam to each shevet.

Winner for Balak: YITZCHAK TAUB, Lakewood, New Jersey

Question for Balak: Why did Bilam build specifically seven altars?

Answer: Bilam wanted to build as many altars as all the Avos had built.



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