

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

פרשת וארא
ג' שבט תשפ"ד
5784
JANUARY 13, 2024
ISSUE #172
RABBI YITZCHOK HISIGER, EDITOR
DESIGN & LAYOUT:
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

UNEQUALLY EQUAL

Rav Moshe on Chumash

Adapted by Rabbi Avrohom Biderman, compiled by Rabbi Avraham Shlomo Fishelis

הוא אהרן ומשה.

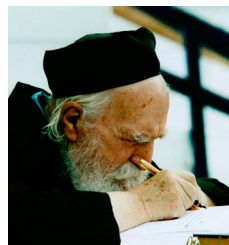
This was Aharon and Moshe (6:26).

Rashi notes that there are places where Aharon is listed before Moshe and other places where the order is reversed. This indicates that they were equal to one another.

But could that be? Hashem Himself attested that Moshe was unique and greater than anyone, both in his personal behavior and in his level of prophecy (*Bamidbar* 12:3, 7-8): “Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the face of the earth! ... In my entire house he is the trusted one. Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a clear vision and not in riddles, at the image of Hashem does he gaze.”

The answer is that every person is born with his own unique talents and capabilities. Everyone must become his own personal best — improving his *mid-dos*, studying Torah to the best of his ability, and performing *mitzvos* as well as he possibly can. A smarter person is not greater than a person who is less gifted; Hashem granted him his intelligence as a gift, and how great he truly is depends on what he did with that gift.

Although Moshe was, objectively, greater than Aharon, Aharon was as great as Moshe in that they both realized their full potential.



Rav Moshe Feinstein

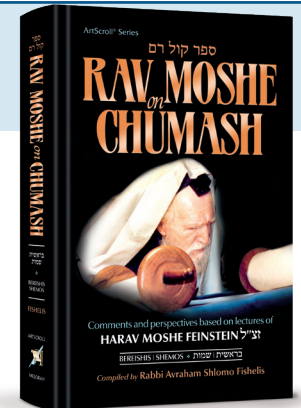
We now have a better understanding of a story recounted by the *Gemara* (*Bava Basra* 10b):

Rav Yosef the son of Rav Yehoshua became ill and fell unconscious, and his soul temporarily went to Heaven. When he awoke, his father asked him, “What did you see in the next world?”

“I saw an upside-down world. Those held in high esteem in this world are considered lowly in the World to Come, while those who are lowly here are regarded highly there,” answered Rav Yosef.

“You have seen a properly arranged world!” Rav Yehoshua rejoined.

In this world, people who have fewer capabilities are less respected even if they have achieved their full potential, while those who have accomplished more are held in high esteem even if they could have done much more. In Heaven, however, people are judged based on how well they fulfilled their mission in this world. So their evaluation is very different — but truer — than it is in this world. 📖



HUMBLE LEADERSHIP

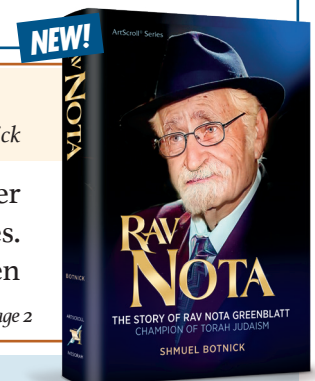
THE GABBAI

Rav Nota – The Story of Rav Nota Greenblatt by Shmuel Botnick

A keen understanding of human nature played a role in Rav Nota Greenblatt’s success rate.

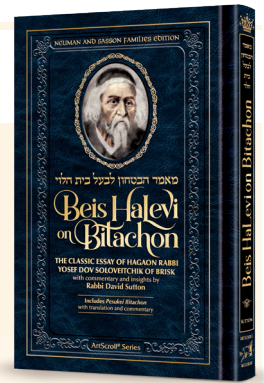
He once learned of a man who had

married and then quickly left town after draining his wife’s financial resources. He did not give her a *get*. The man then moved to another large *continued on page 2*



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF
ר' יהודה יודל בן הרב אליעזר זאב ז"ל

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION



The *Beis Halevi* teaches that when a person faces any kind of problem or crisis, he should reinforce in his mind the concept of *Ein Od Milvado* — that there is nothing besides Hashem.

This idea was famously developed by Rav Chaim of Volozhin in *Nefesh HaChaim* (3:12), where he writes that in times of trouble, one should internalize the notion that the problem arose only because G-d willed it, and if G-d wills that it should go away, it will go away that very instant.

This technique, Rav Chaim taught, is a powerful tool with which to overcome any trouble or crisis that confronts a person.



Rav Yisrael Eliyahu Weintraub

Rav Chaim explains that *Ein Od Milvado* means not only that the outcome depends solely on Hashem. It means that no one and nothing, no matter how powerful or invincible they seem, has any power over us, because there is nothing else but Hashem. The lion charging at us is an expression of G-d's will and He can will it to disappear. It means that no matter how insurmountable a challenge may seem, if Hashem wants us to overcome it, we will overcome it, but in truth there is no challenge. Nothing exists but Hashem.

One earlier source of this concept is the story told in

the *Gemara* (*Chullin* 7) of Rav Chanina ben Dosa, who was being threatened by a witch who sought to cast a spell on him. Rav Chanina announced that he had no fear of her witchcraft, because there is no force in the world other than Hashem.

Rav Yitzchak Isaac Chaver (*Be'er Yitzchak*, glosses on *Mayim Adirim* 67) says that the concept of *Ein Od Milvado*, in essence, is the secret of *bitachon*. When one comes to the realization that there is nothing that exists other than the will of Hashem, he will not have any personal desires or wishes. When one subjugates his desires and wishes to *continued on page 3*

THE GABBAI *continued from page 1*

city and did the same thing, though using a different name. Thus, two women were left *halachically* bound to a man whose whereabouts — and name — were a complete mystery. Rav Nota shared this story with a few *bachurim* and then his voice took on a triumphant tone. “I managed to get two *gittin* out of the guy!” he said proudly.

“Two *gittin*? But how did you find him?”

Rav Nota explained: “I figured that after he left, he’s likely to move on to another city with a Jewish community and try the same *shtick*. I also heard that in the previous cities in which he lived, he had served as the *gabbai* of a *shul*. I therefore assumed that, wherever his next destination was, he’s likely to be a *gabbai* there as well.”

Rav Nota smiled. “A *gabbai* bleibt a *gabbai*,” he said.

“A *gabbai* remains a *gabbai*.”

“Over the next few months, in whichever city I found myself, I would ask, ‘Is there a new *gabbai* in town?’”

“Finally, I asked this question to the rabbi of a certain *shul* and he said yes! There is a new *gabbai* in town and, not only that, he is engaged to be married to a woman from the community. The rabbi even told me that he was set to be the *mesader kiddushin* at their wedding.”

Rav Nota expressed his fears as to who this individual might be and the rabbi arranged a meeting. Sure enough, Rav Nota guessed right. This was the man he had been looking for. Rav Nota prevented the upcoming marriage from happening while simultaneously managing to procure consent to write divorce documents for the two previous wives as well.

Upon completing the story, Rav Nota smiled again. “A *gabbai* is a *gabbai* wherever he may be!”



Rav Nota Greenblatt

JANUARY / יָנוּאָר

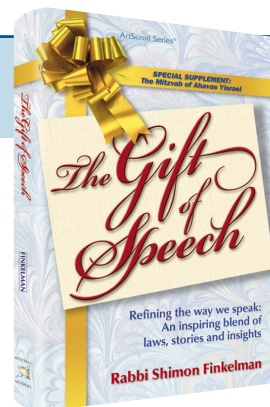
THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
13 Bava Kamma 72	14 Bava Kamma 73	15 Bava Kamma 74	16 Bava Kamma 75	17 Bava Kamma 76	18 Bava Kamma 77	19 Bava Kamma 78

JANUARY / יָנוּאָר

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
13 Kesubos 4:6-7	14 Kesubos 4:8-9	15 Kesubos 4:10-11	16 Kesubos 4:12-5:1	17 Kesubos 5:2-3	18 Kesubos 5:4-5	19 Kesubos 5:6-7



The annual dinner of Agudath Israel in the spring of 1999 was dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Moshe Sherer, who had passed away one year earlier on the day of that year's annual dinner. In preparation for the dinner, Rabbi Sherer's son, Rav Shimshon, visited Agudah headquarters in lower Manhattan. He entered the huge office building and walked across the lobby to the receptionist, a gentile woman. Rav Shimshon wished her a “Good morning” and asked if he had to sign in. “If you're here to visit Agudath Israel, it's not necessary,” she replied. Rav Shimshon said that, indeed, he had come to visit Agudath Israel.

He added, “Rabbi Sherer, the late president of Agudath Israel, was my father. Did you know him?”

“Did I know him?” the woman responded. “I smile every day because of him!”

She explained: “Among all those who occupied offices in this building, Rabbi Sherer was always the first to arrive for work each morning. He would enter the building briskly, as if he was in a hurry to do something important. He would press the button for the elevator and then, as he waited for the elevator to descend, he would hurry across the lobby to my desk. ‘Good morning — and keep on smiling,’ he would tell me. And I knew that he meant it.

“Tears are welling up in my eyes as I say this. At times, my life is rough, but then I remember your father's words and I smile.”

Hearing this, Rav Shimshon was reminded of an incident that happened in his youth. As a young boy, he would walk through the streets of Boro Park on *Shabbos*

morning together with his father as they made their way to *shul*. Rabbi Sherer wished a “*Gut Shabbos*” to every Jew he passed and a “Good morning” to every gentile.

One *Shabbos* morning, young Shimshon asked his father, “Daddy, are you running for president? Why must you say ‘Good morning’ to every single person whom we pass?”

Rabbi Sherer replied, “As you know, when I was a student at Mesivta Torah Vodaath, I had the great privilege of serving as an assistant of sorts to the *gaon* and *tzaddik* Rav Elchonon Wasserman when he visited America in 1938. I first met Rav Elchonon when I reported to his room one morning at the Broadway Central Hotel. I greeted the *tzaddik* with a “*Shalom Aleichem*” and then we headed for the elevator to go downstairs.

“As we waited for the elevator, Rav Elchonon turned to me and asked, ‘*Vi azoi zogt men ‘Gut morgen’ oif Eenglish?*’ (How does one say ‘*Gut morgen*’ in English?) I replied, ‘Very much like we say it in Yiddish — ‘Good morning.’

“R’ Elchonon then paced back and forth and practiced saying ‘Good morning.’ The elevator arrived, and as we entered it, Rav Elchonon wished the gentile elevator attendant, ‘Good morning.’ He then turned to me and asked, ‘*Hob ich gut gezokt?*’ (‘Did I say it well?’)

“And so,” concluded Rabbi Sherer, “I learned from Rav Elchonon that saying ‘Good morning’ to everyone is something that a Jew should do.”



Rabbi Moshe Sherer

EIN OD MILVADO *continued from page 2*

the will of Hashem, Hashem reciprocates by redirecting any threats, either from natural forces or from people, away from the *baal bitachon*.

Based on this idea, Rav Yisrael Eliyahu Weintraub (*Yiras Chaim*, glosses on *Nefesh HaChaim*) explains the *Midrash (Yalkut, Tehillim 719)* that states that even a wicked man who has *bi-*

tachon will be saved. For the power of *bitachon* is based on the concept of *Ein Od Milvado*, which has the power to save anyone, regardless of his level. Of course, this does not mean that a sinner can free himself of punishment through his *bitachon*, for every sin will be accounted for either in this world or in the World to Come. (See *Kovetz He'aros, Beurei Aggados 5*.)

This concept is found also in

the writings of the *Rishonim*.

The *Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim 3:51)* writes that Hashem's *hashgachah* — supervision — over a person is commensurate with the person's connection to Him. The perfect person, the *Rambam* teaches, is one who never removes his mind from Hashem, and such a person is always supervised and under God's direct, supernatural protection.

This week's
Yerushalmi Yomi
schedule:

JANUARY /
שבט

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
13 Terumos 11	14 Terumos 12	15 Terumos 13	16 Terumos 14	17 Terumos 15	18 Terumos 16	19 Terumos 17



Parashah for Children

פרשת וארא

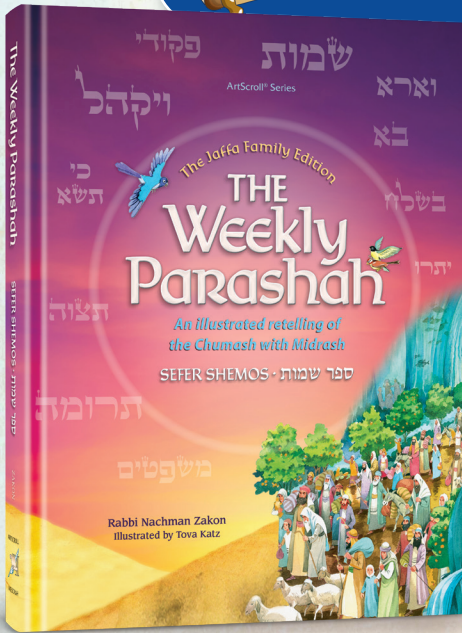
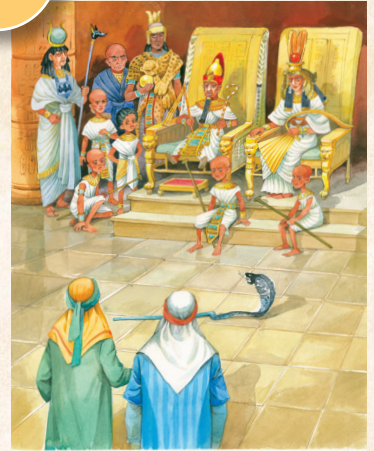
The Big Joke

Once again Moshe and Aharon stood in Pharaoh's throne room and spoke to the little man on the big throne.

Moshe said to Pharaoh, "Let my people go."

Pharaoh answered, just as Hashem said he would, "Do something miraculous to prove that Hashem sent you."

Aharon threw the walking stick to the floor. Miraculously, it turned into a snake, hissing and sliding back and forth on the floor. Its head lifted up as it looked for someone to bite into with its poisonous fangs. What a frightening sight!



You would think that Pharaoh and his guards would have been terrified. But they weren't scared at all. They just laughed.

"This is a sign?!" said Pharaoh. "In Egypt anyone can do this magic." Egypt, at that time, was a center of sorcery. Many Egyptians could do magic — even children!

Pharaoh brought some schoolchildren into the throne room and said to them, "Turn your sticks into snakes." And they did!

Pharaoh then called his queen. The queen also let her stick fall and it became a snake.

Then Pharaoh's chief wizards, Yochani and Mamrei, did the same with their sticks. They also made fun of Moshe.

Not Funny!

All the Egyptians were laughing. But not for long!

By now the floor was covered with snakes. Aharon's snake lowered its head to the ground. Its body became stiff and suddenly it changed back into a stick. Then ... the stick began to move as if it were alive! One by one, Aharon's stick swallowed all the snakes.

The Egyptians stopped laughing. This was something they couldn't do! Pharaoh was scared. "What if Aharon tells the stick to swallow me and my throne?" he wondered.

And yet Pharaoh didn't give in. Pharaoh was stubborn and hardened his heart to say: "No, they are not leaving!"

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Va'eira:

If all the water in Egypt changed to blood, where did Pharaoh's wizards get water to turn into blood?

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 Vayigash question is: EPHRAIM YEHUDA FRANKEL, Staten Island, NY

The question was: Yosef gave each of the brothers a suit of expensive clothing. Why did Binyamin get five sets of clothing? The answer is: This was a hint to something that would happen in the future. Mordechai, the hero of the Purim story, was a descendant of Binyamin. And he, too, would one day wear five sets of clothing. After Haman was hanged, Achashveirosh gave Mordechai permission to wear five types of royal clothing: one blue garment, one white, one purple, a crown, and a linen robe.



To download At the ArtScroll Shabbos Table, visit www.mesorahheritage.org/shabbosnewsletter

Monthly and weekly dedication opportunities available. To sponsor, contact newsletter@artscroll.com