

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

פרשת תולדות
ה' כסלו תשפ"ד
5784
NOVEMBER 18, 2023
ISSUE #164
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

CAUSING DISTRESS

Twerski on Chumash by Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski

בְּשִׁמְעַת עֵשָׂו אֶת דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צְעָקָה גְּדֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם אֲנִי אָבִי.
“When Eisav heard his father’s words [that Yaakov had received the brachos], he cried out an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me too, Father!’” (27:34).

The Midrash states that because Yaakov Avinu had caused Eisav anguish, his descendants had to suffer the anguish of the threat of extermination by Haman, where Mordechai “cried out an exceedingly great and bitter cry” (*Esther* 4:1). Although Yaakov heeded his mother to obtain Yitzchok’s brachos and was obligated to obey her, and although he caused anguish only to Eisav, who was not deserving of his father’s blessings, this was nevertheless considered so grave a sin that it exacted Divine retribution on his children, to live under the fear of extermination. Rav Reuven Grozovsky calls our attention to this, and points out how extremely cautious we must be not to hurt another person’s feelings, regardless of how uncouth that person may be.

The Torah treats offending another person most seriously. The Torah states, “You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan” (*Shemos* 22:21), and *Rashi* explains that the prohibition of causing anguish applies to everyone, and that the Torah mentions widows and orphans because they are defenseless and are, therefore, more likely to be victims of abuse. The Torah continues, “If you dare to cause him pain, then if he shall cry out to Me, I shall surely hear his outcry. My wrath

shall blaze” (ibid. 22:22-23).

This prediction was fulfilled when we suffered the terror of Haman, because our ancestor Yaakov had caused

Eisav to cry out in pain.

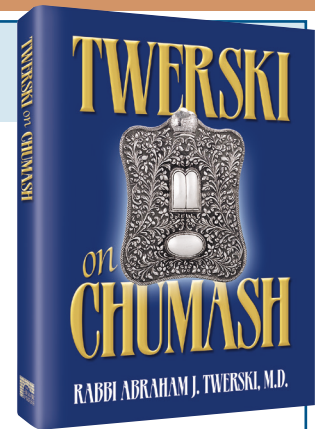
Rav Dovid Leibowitz carries this a bit further. He says that inasmuch as Yaakov was ordered to take the brachos by his mother, he was compelled to do so and would not have been culpable for causing Eisav anguish. However, he says, given that he had no choice but to hurt Eisav, he should have felt the distress at having to do so.

Parents who submit their child to a painful life-saving treatment have no choice, but they suffer the anguish at having their child feel pain. It was Yaakov’s lack of feeling distress for causing Eisav to suffer for which he was held culpable.

There may be times when we have no choice but to act in a way that may hurt others. If we truly have no choice, then we are not culpable for what we do, but we will have to answer to Hashem if we do not commiserate with the person’s distress. 📖



Rav Dovid Leibowitz



FAITH

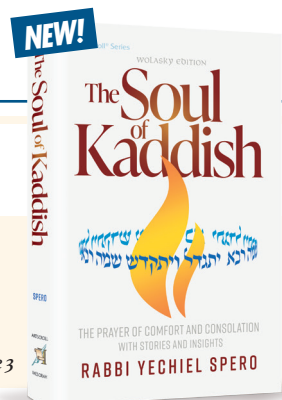
WE DON'T GIVE UP

The Soul of Kaddish by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

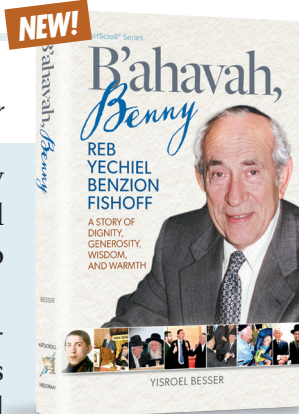
It is hard to believe. We have waited nearly 2,000 years for *Mashiach* to arrive. Amazingly, we have still not given up hope. Because we know that he is coming.

And it will take place in the blink of an eye.

“*U'pisom yavo el Heichalo* — Suddenly he will come to his *continued on page 3*



MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION



Benny Fishoff relates:

In the difficult winter of 1940, during the months in which I was separated from my beloved family, I received painful news from home. My beautiful, sweet younger brother, Yaakov Yitzchak, had passed away. I got the news on the 25th of Adar II, and I was not sure how to proceed in regard to *shivah*, since he had been *niftar* weeks earlier.

I was in Vilna, so I went to ask the *gadol hador*, Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky, who directed me to sit the full seven days, beginning right after *Pesach*. In time, the rest of my family would join little Yaakov Yitzchak in the Heavenly *yeshivah*, so without knowing their *yahrtzeits*, I marked their passing on this date, 25 Adar II.

It was the one date I could hold on to, to allow the emotions I kept in check all year to flow freely. On that day, I would say *Kaddish* for all of them, hoping that *Yisgadal v'yiskadash Shemei rabbah*, Hashem's glorious Name was being made great and holy by the survivor, one *Yid* trying to live for his beloved parents and siblings.

There were many survivors who had no interest in returning, refusing to set foot on the blood-soaked earth of Poland ever again. They had seen enough of that cursed land. I was different, desperate to remember, to hold on to something of that past.

I did return to my birthplace of Wloszczowa, hoping to find a clue, some scrap of information that could connect me to my family. I

still spoke a perfect Polish, and I walked the streets, eager to engage locals in conversation.

There was an old woman ready to talk, and I asked her if any of the Jews had remained in town. After I bribed her with a package of cigarettes, she led me to an old Jew named Benslovitch.

The elderly local looked at me suspiciously, his eyes darting in every direction. Poland was still under Communist rule and he was worried about being seen talking to me. "Do



Benny Fishoff with Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz

you speak Yiddish?" he muttered.

I assured him that I did, and that he need not worry about my loyalties, because I lived in America and had no affiliation with any local party or organization. He motioned that I should follow him home. He lived with his non-Jewish wife in a decrepit apartment, and when we were inside, I told him my name.

"Fishoff," he repeated, staring at me in astonishment. "You look just like your father!"

Then he started to shout, "Yom Kippur, Yom Kippur, that's the *yahrtzeit*."

He explained that when the Germans had invaded tiny Wloszczowa, where my parents had been in hid-

ing, they had sent all the Jews to Treblinka. Only Benslovitch and his brother had managed to remain hidden, surviving the mass purge of the town's Jews.

"The *Yidden* were all captured and sent away on Yom Kippur night. They arrived in Treblinka, and they were led straight to the ovens, all of them killed that morning. That's the *yahrtzeit* of your family."

It was chilling testimony.

When I returned to New York, I shared the account with Rav Moshe, and I asked when would be the appropriate time to keep my family's *yahrtzeit*. Should I start commemorating it on Yom Kippur instead of in *Adar*?

Rav Moshe thought for a while, and then asked me if Benslovitch was someone who could be trusted. "Is he *shomer Shabbos*?"

I recalled the symbols that I had seen on the walls in Benslovitch's home and I sighed. "No, it doesn't seem so."

Rav Moshe instructed me to continue to mark the *yahrtzeit* on 25 Adar II, as I had been doing for so many years, but he added, "It won't hurt to say *Kaddish* on Yom Kippur as well."

Confident in the *rosh yeshivah's psak*, I left.

I didn't need reassurance that Rav Moshe's ruling was correct, but

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / כסלו

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
18 א Bava Kamma 16	19 ב Bava Kamma 17	20 ג Bava Kamma 18	21 ד Bava Kamma 19	22 ה Bava Kamma 20	23 ו Bava Kamma 21	24 ז Bava Kamma 22

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / כסלו

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

Sanctuary” (*Malachi 3:1*; see *Radak*).

Mashiach will come in a flash. In an instant. He will show up suddenly.

But until then, we continue to wait.

In 5749/1989, Rav Shimon Schwab gave a magnificent talk to the Sisterhood of K’hal Adath Jeshurun on the topic of waiting for *Mashiach*. He admitted that as a young boy, he thought that *Mashiach* would come at the End of Days, as we say in *Yigdal*, “*Yishlach le’keitz hayamin meshicheinu* — He will send by the End of Days our *Mashiach*; *lifdos mechakei keitz yeshuaso* — to redeem those longing for His final salvation.” To young Shimon’s mind, it “would probably be in another thousand years.”

In time, he learned otherwise.

As a *bachur*, young Shimon Schwab was *zocheh* to be a guest in the *Chofetz Chaim*’s home. It was a visit that would leave an everlasting impression on him. Regarding *Mashiach*, the *Chofetz Chaim* told him, “Today is *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*; he may come this *Nissan* and he may not come this *Nissan*.” The *Chofetz Chaim* used the phrase *safek hashakul* — that there was a fifty-fifty chance that *Mashiach* would come that *Nissan*. At that time, the young Shimon learned that “there was a distinct possibility for the arrival of *Mashiach* to become an immediate reality.” The *Chofetz Chaim* himself had a suitcase packed, waiting for *Mashiach* to come; he lived with *Mashiach* as a reality in his everyday life.

Yet, as Rav Schwab pointed out, the *yeitzer hara* sows



Rav Shimon Schwab

doubt in our minds, causing us to think that the chance of *Mashiach* coming is remote. “The *Chofetz Chaim* held that we must believe, *be’emunah sheleimah*, that he could come today. However, he may not come today, and there is no guarantee as to how delayed his arrival may be. Even if it takes another thousand years, we have to wait and retain our hope of ‘maybe today.’”

And we have been living with that “maybe today” for nearly 2,000 years.

Rav Schwab explained the concept with a *mashal*.

A man was drafted into the army and his wife worried about him constantly. Finally, after many long months, she heard a rumor that her husband was returning from the front. From the moment she received this report, she went to the dock each day to wait for him, only to go home disappointed.

Finally, after one year of going day after day, she felt that she could not wait for her husband any longer; she had not seen any further sign that he was on his way.

Rav Schwab explained, “*Mashiach* has not come yet; he has not shown any signs of coming. Imagine what that means. My father and yours, my mother and yours, and our grandparents and great-grandparents, year after year at the *Seder*, all said, ‘*Le’shanah haba’ah bi’Yerushalayim* — Next year in Yerushalayim.’ Then came another year and another *Seder*, and he still did not come.

“Nevertheless, they did not stop singing ‘*U’vnei osah be’karov be’yameinu* — Build it (the *Beis HaMikdash*) speedily in our days!’ Unlike the woman in the *mashal*, however, if he does not materialize, we do not give up.”

Ba’agala u’vizman kariv. 📖

DATE OF REMEMBRANCE

continued from page 2

I took tremendous comfort in a Divine message.

My dear friend Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz, the visionary behind the ArtScroll/Mesorah publishing house, called me with a unique offer. He and his colleague, Rabbi Nosson Scherman, were overseeing the translation of *Shas* into English, igniting a genuine revolution.

Through making the words of *Gemara* available to the masses, they were bringing Rav Meir Shapiro’s dream, a *Klal Yisrael* united through the daily *daf*, much closer to reality.

Rabbi Zlotowitz was kind enough to allow me to sponsor one of those *masechtos*, and I seized the opportunity. *Hashgachah* dictated that the next available *masechta* for sponsorship was *Kesubos* Volume I.

When the legions of *Iomdei Daf Yomi* reached *Kesubos*, they opened the newly released ArtScroll edition, dedicated in memory of my parents and family, whose names were inscribed for eternity inside the handsome cover.

The date of that new beginning? It was the 25th of *Adar II*, the day on which I marked the *yahrtzeit* of my beloved family.

The Torah lives on... 📖

This week’s Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

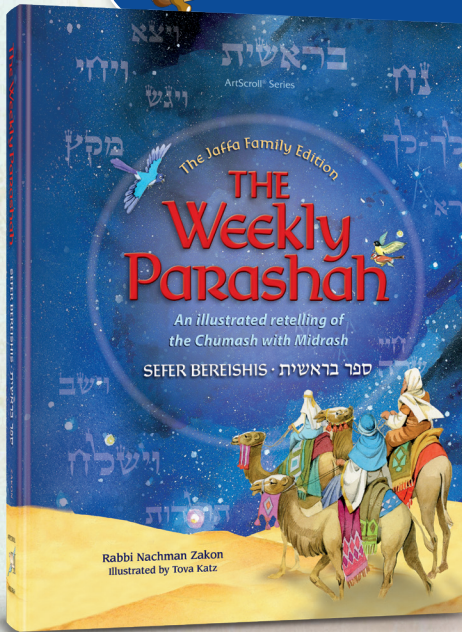
NOVEMBER / כסלו	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	18 Sheviis 42	19 Sheviis 43	20 Sheviis 44	21 Sheviis 45	22 Sheviis 46	23 Sheviis 47	24 Sheviis 48



Parashah for Children

פרשת תולדות

Happy Birth Day!



Right before they were born, the twins had a big fight. Each one wanted to come out first and be the firstborn. Finally, the evil baby overpowered his brother, and he was born first. His younger brother held onto the older one's heel, trying to stop him from being born first, but it was too late.

Ever see babies? They usually have very little hair, they have no teeth, and they're cute. But Rivkah's firstborn was different. His skin color was reddish. He had hair all over — even on his face and hands — and he was born with teeth! Not cute at all.

They called him Eisav.

The younger twin was born with a bris! Hashem Himself named the baby Yaakov, and told Yitzchak the baby's name.

Why Yaakov? Because he came out holding his brother's heel, which is called "eikev" in Hebrew.

Yitzchak became a father for the first time at age 60! Mazel tov!

When Mashiach Comes

The day the twins were born was one of the most important ever! It marked the beginning of a struggle between the Jews and Eisav's nations. That struggle would last thousands of years ... and is still going on.

The Jews believe in kindness, peace, and holiness. The way of Eisav is the way of war, greed, and evil. Eisav's nations care about money and power, and live only to enjoy the pleasures of this world. They are greedy, and want more and more and more.

All through history Eisav's evil forces have tried to destroy the Jews. Some day there will be one last struggle, when the Jews will take Eisav's power away forever. This is hinted at by Yaakov's holding on to the "end" of Eisav's body, his heel. When will this happen? Very soon, we hope — when Mashiach comes.



WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Toldos:

Shem told Rivkah that each of her two sons would have a descendent who would be a rich and powerful ruler? Who were they?

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 Lech Lecha is: DOVID RAPAPORT, Toms River, NJ

The question was: How old was Avram when he was commanded to leave his country, his hometown, and his family?

The answer is: 75

