

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

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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 A NEW PERSONALITY

Twerski On Chumash by Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski

והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו.

And they shall confess their sins that they did (5:7).

There is not a single superfluous letter in the Torah. Yet the words “that they did” seem to add nothing to the sentence.

The Torah is telling us that sins do not occur in a vacuum. A person must have had a mindset that was conducive to sin in order for sin to occur. He must have done something improper which caused him to be in an altered state of spirituality that enabled him to sin.

Rav Mendel of Kotzk said that the reason a person should not sin is not just because it is forbidden, but because he should not have free time to sin. If a person is engaged in studying Torah, doing *mitzvos* and conducting himself in his daily activities according to Torah teachings, he will simply not have any available time to commit a sin. Therefore, if a person has sinned, it is not enough that he regrets his sin and resolves not to repeat it. True *teshuvah* requires that he review his behavior and see where he had been lax in leading a total life of Torah that allowed the sin to occur. He must then correct his lifestyle so that the opportunity for sin does not recur.

This is what the Torah is telling us. “They shall confess their sin,” but that is not enough. They must also do some serious soul-searching and discover “what they did” that made the sinful act possible. This, too, they must confess and correct.

A recovering alcoholic who was sober for twenty years said, “The man I once was drank. And the

man I once was will drink again.” This is an important insight. The character traits that he once had resulted in his drinking. In recovery, he underwent significant personality

changes, which enabled him to abstain from alcohol. If he were to revert to his pre-drinking personality, he would certainly drink again.

In my book, *Addictive Thinking*, I described the nature of thinking that allows addictive behavior to occur. Sustained recovery requires changing the way one thinks. This is equally true of any improper act. The only way one can prevent a sin from recurring is by making salutary changes in one’s character, thereby

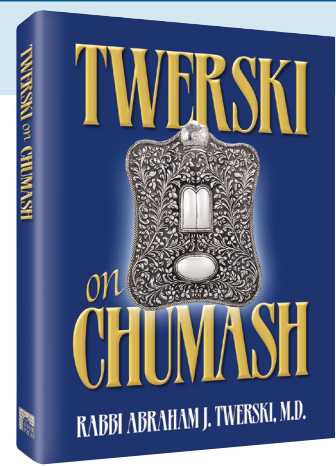
creating a personality that cannot do this act.

The *Rambam* states that this is why *teshuvah* works. Reuven cannot be held culpable for something that Shimon did. Nor can this new person, whose previous personality was discarded, be held culpable for what a previous personality did.

The realization that “they did,” i.e., the character makeup that had existed was responsible for the wrongful deed, enables a person to divest oneself of those character traits and develop this new personality. 📖



Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski

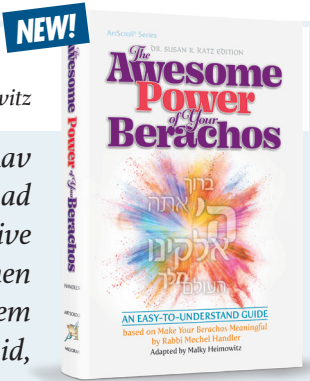


MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED BY HOWARD AND SURI BORISKIN
IN LOVING MEMORY OF ליבה בת צבי ע"ה — LYNN BORISKIN

THE POWER OF SHEHAKOL

The Awesome Power of Your Berachos by Rabbi Mechel Handler, adapted by Malky Heimowitz



Of all the *berachos* we say, *Shehakol* might be the one we recite most often. It's the *berachah* we say each time we drink water to quench our thirst, and it's the *berachah* we say over so many of the foods we eat: milk and cheese, meat and chicken, candy and ice cream.

The rule is that when eating foods whose *berachos* are different, we say the more specific *berachah* first. For example, the *berachah* of *Borei Pri Ha'eitz* is said before *Borei Pri Ha'adamah*. That's because *Borei Pri Ha'adamah* technically can include both fruits and vegetables, while *Borei Pri Ha'eitz* includes only fruits. Since *Shehakol* is the most general *berachah*, its priority is lowest. Therefore, when we are about to eat a *Shehakol* food as well as another type of food, we say the *berachah* of *Shehakol* last.

Yet the humble *Shehakol* is no simple *berachah*. It's actually a powerful statement of our faith in Hashem. The words *Shehakol Nihyeh Bidvaro* literally mean "that everything came to be through His word." So when we say *Shehakol*, we are declaring our belief that Hashem made everything.

Have you ever heard the phrase *ein od milvado*? The meaning of these words is that there is no power other than Hashem. There is a fa-

mous *segulah*, taught by Rav Chaim of Volozhin, that a person cannot be harmed if he believes with a full heart that *ein od milvado*. Since he recognizes that nothing else in the world has any power, Hashem will protect him from what might seem to be harmful forces.

The *berachah* of *Shehakol* expresses the same basic idea as the phrase *ein od milvado*: Everything comes from Hashem.

WE ARE DECLARING OUR BELIEF THAT HASHEM MADE EVERYTHING.

Therefore, each time we say *Shehakol*, we can access the powerful *segulah* of *ein od milvado* if we focus completely on the idea that Hashem is in charge of everything.

During World War I, Rav Moshe Avraham Berezovsky, head of the Jewish community in Baranovitch, heard banging on his window. German soldiers forced the door open, and, with their guns drawn, demanded that everyone face the wall with their hands up. Then they ordered Rav Moshe to give them all his money and valuables. But robbers and looters had already taken all his valu-

ables, so Rav Moshe had nothing to give them. When he told them this, they said, "If we don't get your money within five minutes, you are dead."

Rav Moshe calmly asked his son Velvel to bring him a cup of water. He recited the *berachah* of *Shehakol* with *kavanah* and took a sip of water. Suddenly, deafening explosions and sounds of shooting were heard. The Russians had just entered the town! The German soldiers fled, and Rav Moshe and his family were spared. Later, the family asked Rav Moshe why he had asked for a cup of water during those moments. He explained that he had learned from his grandfather, the Rebbe of Lechovitz, that when a Jew recites the *berachah* of *Shehakol*, it is a *segulah* to be spared from harsh judgment.

A hint to this can be found in the *halachah* (*Berachos 40a*) that if a person said *Shehakol* over any food, he has fulfilled (*yatza*) his obligation to recite a blessing, even if *Shehakol* is not really the correct *berachah*. The word *yatza* can also mean "he left." So if a person finds himself in great danger, he can "leave" the danger and be saved in the merit of the *berachah* of *Shehakol*. 📖

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

JUNE / סיון

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3 ג	4 ד	5 ה	6 ו	7 ז	8 ח	9 ט
Gittin 18	Gittin 19	Gittin 20	Gittin 21	Gittin 22	Gittin 23	Gittin 24

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

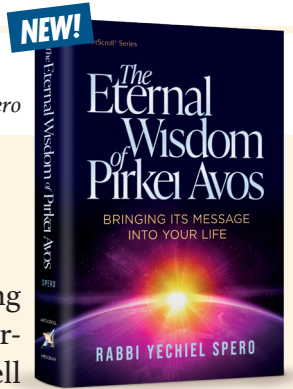
JUNE / סיון

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3 ג	4 ד	5 ה	6 ו	7 ז	8 ח	9 ט
Yoma 3:5-6	Yoma 3:7-8	Yoma 3:9-10	Yoma 3:11-4:1	Yoma 4:2-3	Yoma 4:4-5	Yoma 4:6-5:1

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

JUNE / סיון

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3 ג	4 ד	5 ה	6 ו	7 ז	8 ח	9 ט
Demai 35	Demai 36	Demai 37	Demai 38	Demai 39	Demai 40	Demai 41



יוֹסֵי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אָמַר יְהִי בֵיתְךָ פְּתוּחַ לְרוֹחָהּ וְיִהְיוּ עֲנִיִּים בְּנֵי בֵיתְךָ.
**Yose ben Yochanan, leader of Yerushalayim, says: Let your house be open wide;
 treat the poor as members of your household...**

Yose Ben Yochanan Ish Yerushalayim teaches that one should open his house to guests and that poor people should be treated as members of his household. The *sefer Otzar Margaliyos* (p. 170) wonders why the *Mishnah* reveals the hometowns of Yose ben Yochanan and Yose ben Yoezer in these *Mishnayos*. What difference does it make where they come from?

There is a difference in mindset between large cities and smaller ones. Yose ben Yoezer came from Tzereidah, a small town. Thus, he felt it prudent to teach the people of his small village the importance of respecting and honoring *talmidei chachamim*. While villagers, with constant passersby through their towns, may excel at *hachnasas orchim*, they have little exposure to *gedolim* and Torah scholars, and they require guidance in revering Torah giants.

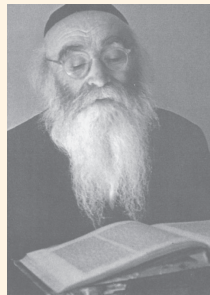
In the large cities, though, people have a tendency to focus more on the *talmidei chachamim*, who frequent larger cities, as men of means compete to show honor to their respected visitors.

Often, however, the poor and indigent get brushed aside. It is for this reason that Yose ben Yochanan of Yerushalayim taught the importance of opening one's home to the poor. Yerushalayim was a large city where they excelled in respecting *talmidei chachamim*.

Gedolim lived in the city and Torah giants often came by. But he suspected that the residents may be lacking in their overall *hachnasas orchim*, so his words focused on the needy and the importance of opening one's home wide to all kinds of guests.

Rabbeinu Bachya (*Shemos* 25:23) mentions that it was customary for people to fashion their coffins from their dining room tables. Obviously, this was not done due to a lack of wood.

Rather, there was great meaning to this custom. Just as the *Mizbe'ach* facilitated atonement for one's sins, our "*mizbechos*," our tables, where we provide food and drink to our guests, help us gain atonement for our sins, as well. The table's components serve as an appropriate coffin, as they invoke merit for the *chesed* performed at the table.



Rav Aryeh Levin



Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman

There are costs to hosting guests. There is the financial burden of buying extra food, as well as the emotional strain and lack of privacy. The effort takes its toll. Nonetheless, the *Gemara* (*Shabbos* 127a; *Shevuos* 35b) reveals that hosting guests is greater than greeting the *Shechinah*.

Certainly, this sublime *mitzvah* is a worthy investment, an opportunity worth grabbing.

Rav Aryeh Levin, the *tzaddik* of Yerushalayim, once approached Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman and asked if he knows anyone who sells "Rav Nesanel Sofer" *retzuos*, *tefillin* straps. Rav Nesanel's *retzuos* were reputed as the absolute finest, and Rav Aryeh's had become torn.

Reb Yaakov Yosef asked Rav Aryeh how much money he was willing to spend, and Rav Aryeh responded, "Up to two *lirot*," a large sum in those days. Impressed, Reb Yaakov Yosef told him he would procure the *retzuos* for him. A short while later, Reb Yaakov Yosef brought the *retzuos* to Rav Aryeh, and Rav Aryeh handed him the money.

Rav Aryeh was curious as to how Reb Yaakov Yosef had managed to procure such rare *retzuos* on such short notice. Reb Yaakov Yosef explained, "I, too, owned *retzuos* from Rav Nesanel Sofer and I know how precious and rare they are. Yet I also know the value of the *mitzvah* of *hachnasas orchim*. Throughout my life, I was able to provide for my guests, but lately, our funds have been depleted and, because of this, I am concerned I won't be able to continue having guests.

"So I sold you my own *retzuos*. I can buy less costly *retzuos* and use the extra money to host guests for the next month."

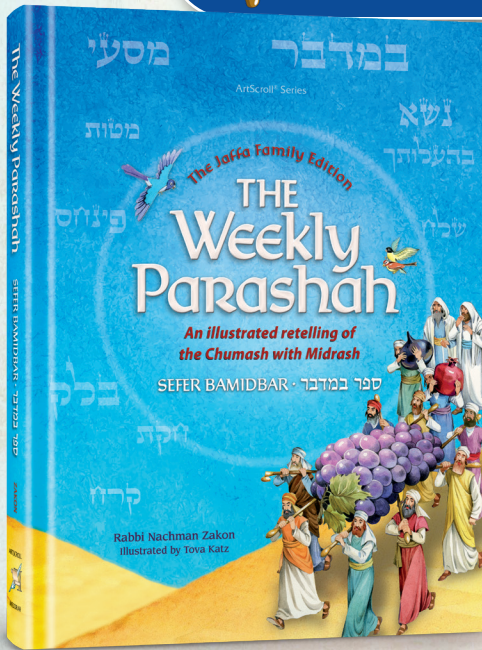
One month of guests versus a lifetime of the best *retzuos*.

Reb Yaakov Yosef chose the *mitzvah* of *hachnasas orchim*.

Rav Aryeh was amazed by Reb Yaakov Yosef's commitment and sacrifice for his guests, and grateful that the money he spent on his *retzuos* would serve a worthy cause. 📖



Parashah for Children



פרשת נשא

Gershon's Job



Hashem told Moshe that when they count the Levi'im, the men in Gershon's family should be counted from ages 30 to 50. Then He told Moshe what Gershon's job is.

Roof and Curtains



The family of Gershon was responsible to remove all the curtains that separated the different sections of the Mishkan, and to take down all the coverings that were on top of the Mishkan. They also removed all the curtains that surrounded the Chatzer (Courtyard of the Mishkan) and packed them away. Everything was folded up and put on wagons by members of the Gershon family. They would also

maintain and repair all of these utensils, as necessary.

Moshe, Aharon, and Aharon's sons told the men of Gershon what they had to do. Then Aharon's son Issamar was in charge to make sure the job was done properly.

Boards, Poles, and Bases



Hashem told Moshe that the Merari family should be counted from age 30 to 50. Then He told Moshe what Merari's job would be.

The family of Merari took apart the Mishkan building — all the kerashim (beams) and berichim (poles) of the walls and entranceway of the Mishkan. They also took down the amudim (pillars) that held up the curtains.

All these parts were put on wagons. Aharon's son Issamar was in charge of the Merari family.



FASCINATING FACTS

Each family of the Levi'im had to do its own job. No family of Levi was allowed to do the job of another family.

Levi'im who sang were not permitted to close the doors of the Beis HaMikdash. That was the job of the Levi'im who guarded the gates.

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Naso:

Could a bald man become a nazir?

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 Behar-Bechukosai question is: YANKY LICHTENSTEIN, Jackson, NJ

The question was: Why is the fiftieth year called Yovel? The answer is: When Yovel begins, the shofar is blown. The word "Yovel" also means a ram's horn. This name hints at the ram's horn out of which the shofar was made.

