

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT OF THE
Mesorah
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פרשת חיי שרה
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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

PREDESTINED

Aleinu L'Shabeiach – Bereishis by Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein

שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה — *The years of Sarah's life (23:1).*

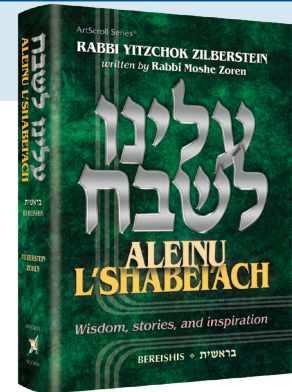
The verse has already told us, *Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years.* Why does the Torah repeat, *The years of Sarah's life?*

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky offered the following reason. People had begun to say that it was the Akeidah that caused Sarah's death. If not for that, they claimed, she might have lived for many more years. The Torah refutes this, saying, *The years of Sarah's life* — that is, these are the years that were allotted and measured out for her from the beginning. Her lifespan was not shortened by the Akeidah.



Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky

This is something that frequently happens to all of us: When a *mitzvah* comes to hand, the *yetzer hara* tries to convince us that doing it will cause us to incur a loss. We must fortify ourselves against the *yetzer's* wiles, for although the pictures it draws in our minds seem to have substance, every Jew should be aware that they have no substance at all. One can never lose by doing *mitzvos*.



PARASHAH

ALL IS WELL

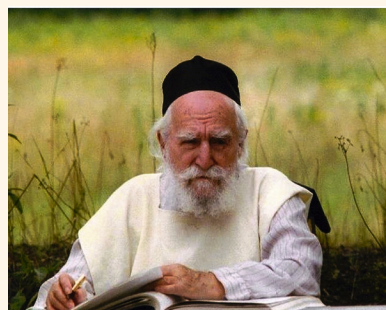
Rav Moshe on Chumash

וַיְהִי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה.
Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years; the years of Sarah's life. (23:1).

After telling us that Sarah lived 127 years, the *pasuk* reiterates the years of Sarah's life. This teaches us, *Rashi* explains, that they were all equally good.

But how could that be? For ninety years she was childless... She was kidnapped by Pharaoh and Avimelech. She suffered from Hagar and Yishmael.

The primary mission of Avraham and Sarah was doing kindness, and they continued to do that despite any obstacles or difficulties they experienced in their personal lives. Perhaps *they were all equally good* refers to what she

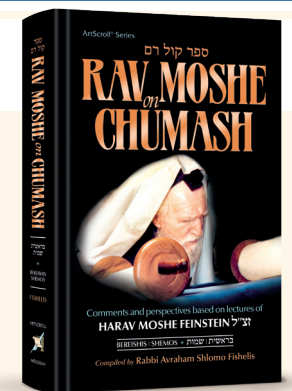


Rav Moshe Feinstein

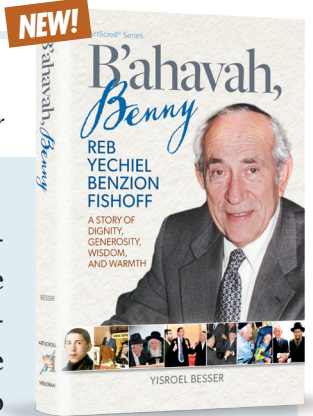
was doing, not how she was feeling.

The fortitude to carry on with one's purpose despite personal difficulties

comes only from devoted Torah observance and abiding faith in Hashem, which means recognizing that everything comes from Him. Indeed, when one achieves absolute trust in Him, challenges cease to be tests. Sarah lived with this trust, so all her years were, indeed, good.



MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION



Benny recounted:

I remember sitting next to the Rosh Yeshivah of Beth Medrash Govoha of Lakewood, Rav Shneur Kotler, on a flight from New York to Montreal, and we were chatting. He was a wonderful person.

Besides being gracious and humble, he was especially kind to me because I knew his wife, Rebbetzin Rishel, from Shanghai. She had been like a family member to the Rav, Rav Meir Ashkenazi, and I had often eaten there on Shabbos as well. During those years, she was engaged to Rav Shneur, but they had been separated by war. Her faith, spirit, and optimism were heartening and, for a young person, extraordinary.

This conversation with Rav Shneur took place in the mid-1970s, when I was giving Beth Medrash Govoha one thousand dollars a year, considered a generous donation at the time.

“Rosh Yeshivah,” I said, “I have an offer for you. Instead of my annual donation, I’ll give you ten thousand dollars right now. Open an account. The interest will be approximately twelve percent, so you’ll be able to take out the same annual donation, a bit over one thousand dollars, but you’ll also have the capital, which you will keep in the bank.”

“Reb Benny,” he smiled patiently, “I need to pay for milk for the bachurim. I can’t afford to let money sit.”

“Yes,” I said, “but imagine how

much more you can accomplish with the time you save. You will not have to worry if I will come to the dinner, and you won’t have to call me to see how I’m feeling if I have a slight fever. You’ll use that time to solicit a new donor, because my money will be sitting there, ready for you to access whenever you need it.”

Rav Shneur was an original thinker, able to hear new ideas. To his en-

explained his philosophy, “they are hard workers. There is only so much money that they can make in an hour, and therefore, a specific amount that they can make in a day. That amount might help them with their own expenses, but it is not enough to motivate them. What keeps them going and allows them to dream is the tips, the idea that maybe today, they will benefit from someone’s generosity. To me, it is just a few more dollars, but to them, it makes the whole day worthwhile. How can I not give them this joy?”

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“Benny never invested in a deal,” says Reb Shloime Werdiger. “Benny invested in people. He would call me to join him in one deal or another, and I would ask a question on the details and his answer would be, ‘Look, he’s a young guy waiting for a break. We have to stand behind him,’” or, ‘He deserves this chance to make it. His parents were such nice people.’ He saw profits differently than other people do. With Benny, the bottom line was the person and his dignity, not dollars and cents.”



Mr. Benny Fishoff



At a convention with his sons, Dov and Avi.

during credit, the Rosh Yeshivah accepted my offer, unusual as it seemed at the time. My endowment fund to Beth Medrash Govoha still exists and is a source of steady assistance to the yeshivah.

• • • • •

A friend would often eat out with Mr. Fishoff, and he ample opportunity to observe Mr. Fishoff’s lavish tipping habits. “Benny, I get that it’s proper to tip the waiters, but why do you have to give so much money?” the friend once asked.

“Listen, Moishe,” Mr. Fishoff

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / חשוון-כסלו

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
11 כז Bava Kamma 9	12 חג Bava Kamma 10	13 טט Bava Kamma 11	14 י Bava Kamma 12	15 יא Bava Kamma 13	16 יב Bava Kamma 14	17 יג Bava Kamma 15

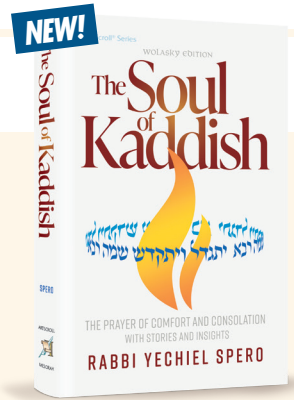
THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

NOVEMBER / חשוון-כסלו

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
11 כז Yevamos 4:13-5:1	12 חג Yevamos 5:2-3	13 טט Yevamos 5:4-5	14 י Yevamos 5:6-6:1	15 יא Yevamos 6:2-3	16 יב Yevamos 6:4-5	17 יג Yevamos 6:6-7:1

AH MAMME IZ A MAMME

The Soul of Kaddish by Rabbi Yechiel Spero



After Rav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky, *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Ner Yisroel, lost his mother, Rav Elya Baruch Finkel of Yeshivas Mir Yerushalayim sent a letter of *nichum aveilim*.

When his *talmid* handed him the letter, Rav Kulefsky asked him to read it to him, since by that time he was already nearly blind and could barely read on his own. In the letter, Rav Elya Baruch told the following story:



Rav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky

When Rav Akiva Eiger's mother died, three *rabbanim* came to be *menachem avel*. One of them asked a seemingly innocent question, "*Vi alt iz geven di mamme? How old was your mother?*"

Rav Akiva was very bothered by the question. "*Oif ah mamme fregt mehn nisht vi alt zi iz gevehn* — When

it comes to a mother, you don't ask how old she was. *Ah mamme iz a mamme* — A mother is a mother (and losing her is difficult no matter how old she was)!"

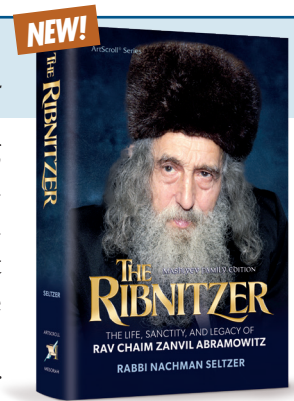
Hearing this story, Rav Kulefsky was intrigued. He stood up from his shivah chair and began to pace the floor, repeating the words, "*Oif ah mamme fregt mehn nisht vi alt zi iz gevehn*." Over and over, he repeated the phrase, each time with added intensity. Finally, he stopped, sat back down, and delivered an epic lesson.

"You think I'm getting emotional here, and that's why I'm repeating it over and over? No! Rather, it's because this is *nuch ah shtick Torah fuhn Rav Akiva Eiger* — This is yet another piece of Torah from Rav Akiva Eiger." 📖

YESHUOS

"GO BACK"

The Ribnitzer by Rabbi Nachman Seltzer



Rabbi Yaakov Zaks had an esrog business for many years. At one point, his business suffered a major setback — a setback that led to his having a heart attack. Hatzolah arrived and got to work, but nothing helped. Meanwhile, his wife called everyone she knew begging them to *daven* for him. One friend went to *daven* at the *kever* of the Ribnitzer Rebbe.

And then his *neshamah* simply drifted out of his body.

"I left this world," Reb Yaakov later told Shlomo Thaler, who had been close to the Ribnitzer, "and as I was rising up to Heaven I saw that my great-great-grandfather, Rav Mendele Strikover — the first *admor* of the Strikover dynasty — was at my



The Ribnitzer Rebbe

side, escorting me to the next world."

"How did you know that you were seeing Rav Mendele Strikover?" Reb Shlomo asked him. "Did you ever see a picture of him? Are there even any pictures of Rav Mendele?"

"You should know one thing," Reb Yaakov rejoined. "In Heaven you don't need to ask any questions. In Heaven, you just know. That's the way it is."

"Okay, so what happened next?"

"Rav Mendele brought me to a certain place next to a certain *Yid* — I didn't know who he was, though I had an idea — and told me to wait there for the *Yid* to deal with me.

"I waited for what seemed like half an hour, and for some reason, I

had a feeling that the *Yid* he had told me to wait for was the Ribnitzer Rebbe. After half an hour, the Rebbe came and asked me, 'Yankel, what are you doing here? You're supposed to be down on earth!'

"I remember answering him, 'I don't want to be down on earth. It's not good for me there. I don't want to return there.'

"I promise you,' the Ribnitzer replied, 'that it will be good. Go back.'

"After that, Rav Mendele took me by the hand and brought me back down, where I woke up just as the Hatzolah guys began shocking my heart back to life with the defibrillator." 📖

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

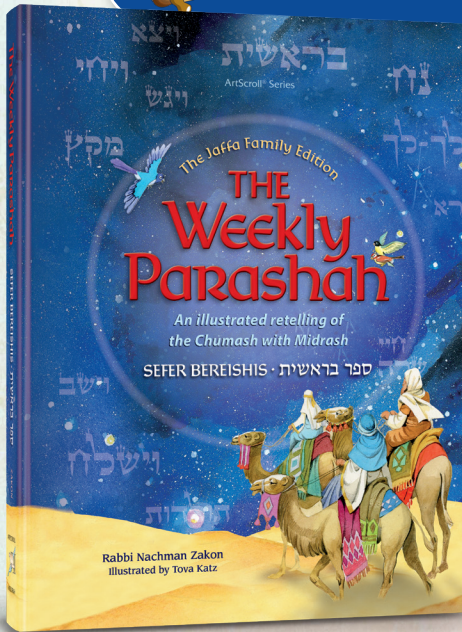
NOVEMBER /
חשוון-כסלו

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
11 כז Sheviis 35	12 כח Sheviis 36	13 כט Sheviis 37	14 א Sheviis 38	15 ב Sheviis 39	16 ג Sheviis 40	17 ד Sheviis 41



Parashah for Children

פרשת חיי שרה



The Cave

Avraham knew exactly where he wanted to bury Sarah. It was in the cave he had discovered when the angels came to visit him after he had a bris. This was the amazing cave where Adam and Chavah were buried.

But there was a problem. Avraham didn't own the property. It belonged to a man named Ephron, who was from the Hittite nation. Even a bigger problem: The Hittites ruled Chevron at that time, and the law was that land for burial could be bought only by another Hittite. It was illegal to sell land to a foreigner. Avraham had to get permission from the Hittites to buy a grave, and then he had to persuade Ephron to sell the cave to him.

Permission

After the funeral, Avraham spoke to the Hittites in Chevron and asked if they would let him have a grave for his wife. They answered with great respect that since he was a prince of Hashem he could have one for free. He could have any land that he wanted, even if it was owned by someone else. They told him they would be happy to give it to him.

Avraham then asked them to speak to Ephron and convince him to sell the cave of Machpeilah to Avraham. Avraham told them to let Ephron know that he would pay him and that he was not asking for a gift.



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Chayei Sarah:

What is the first time that the Torah says someone grew old?

*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 Bereishis is: AHRON HEINEMANN, Cincinnati, OH



The question was: How do we know that Noach learned Torah?

The answer is: Hashem told him to take seven pairs of all kosher animals into the Teivah. If Noach hadn't studied Torah, how would he know which animals are kosher and which are not?

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