

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

PARASHAH

SUDDEN GEULAH

Rav Pam on the Parashah by Rabbi Sholom Smith

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָהָם לְמָה זֶה צָחָקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הָאֵף אֲמַנָּם אֶלֶד וְאֲנִי זָקֵנָתִי. הִיפְלֵא מָה' — דְּבָר לְמוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַי' וְלִשְׂרָה בִּן. *Then Hashem said to Avraham, "Why is it that Sarah laughed, saying: 'Shall I in truth bear a child, though I have aged?' Is anything beyond Hashem? At the appointed time I will return to you at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son"* (18:13–14).

When Sarah heard one of the guests tell Avraham that she would have a son, she laughed incredulously, not believing that in her old age that was possible. As the *pasuk* relates, Hashem was upset with her for failing to recognize that nothing is impossible for Hashem. Ramban adds that although Sarah was not aware that the guests were Heavenly angels, and thought they were simply grateful guests who politely offered her a meaningless blessing, she still should have at least said, "Amen, may it be so." Even though her laugh was "inside her" and she was certainly on a very high level of *emunah* and *bitachon* in Hashem, nevertheless, for her exalted level of greatness it was considered a serious failing, which is why Hashem rebuked her.

The Chofetz Chaim offers a fascinating explanation into this incident. What is the Torah teaching us by describing at length her laughing in disbelief, Hashem's criticism of it, and her subsequent denial of what happened — all of which seem to paint Sarah in a very unfavorable light?

It is not to diminish Sarah's greatness, but to teach a timeless lesson for the generations near the end of history, in the days preceding the arrival of Mashiach. Just as Sarah struggled to believe that miraculous change could come so suddenly, many people in the final era will find it difficult to believe that we are on the very brink of redemption. The *yeshuah*

will seem far away, the *galus* endless, and the world calm and ordinary—without the cataclysmic upheavals one might expect before Mashiach's coming.

As the Navi Malachi (3:1) foretells, *pis'om, Suddenly, the lord (Mashiach) whom you seek will come to his sanctuary*. He will come, even without a moment's notice, even under conditions that make the *Geulah* seem to be a distant dream.

History itself has demonstrated this truth. Who could have imagined that after seventy years of Communist tyranny, the mighty Soviet Union would collapse almost overnight, without a single shot being fired? Hashem demonstrated to the world at large, and to Jews in particular, that when the appointed time arrives, He can overturn reality in a moment. The same Divine power that renewed Sarah's body and granted her a child will one day transform the world in an instant.

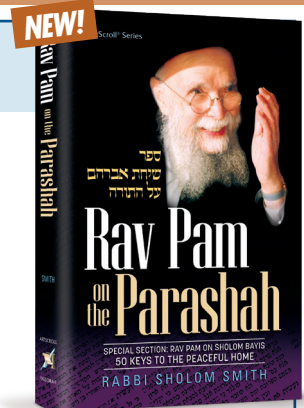
Today, Eretz Yisrael remains a small nation surrounded by countless enemies. Even its allies stand by only when convenient. According to all natural laws, salvation seems remote. Yet Hashem's message to Sarah still echoes through time: "Is anything beyond Hashem?" When the destined moment comes, the *Geulah* will arrive swiftly and unexpectedly—*pis'om*—for nothing lies beyond His power.

May we live to see this happen! 📖

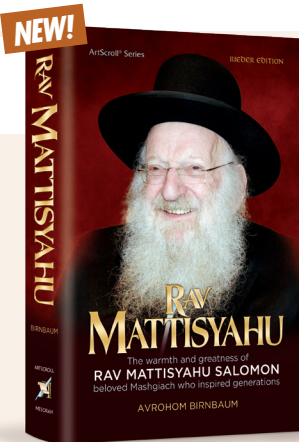


R' Avrohom Pam

**WHO COULD HAVE
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SOVIET UNION
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THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAR FATHER AND GRANDFATHER,
ר' יצחק בן ר' גרשון ז"ל, YITZCHOK GOLDBRENNER, WHOSE FIRST YAHRZEIT IS חשוון תשפ"ו.



The Mashgiach loved special children. He displayed his love for them openly and enjoyed interacting with them. Whenever he met special children, he would hug and kiss them like a loving grandfather. He understood that they were pure *neshamos*.

The Mashgiach and the Rebbetzin had a special relationship with Camp HASC, and they looked forward to visiting every year. When they visited, all of the boys would line up in front of the Mashgiach and the girls in front of the Rebbetzin, and each would get personal attention. The Mashgiach also spent time giving *chizuk* to the staff and the counselors and impressing upon them how much he valued their devotion to Hashem's special children.

On one of his yearly visits to Camp HASC, he told the children, "I want you to do me a favor. When Mashiach comes, and you are in the front row welcoming him, tell him that I am your friend. It will be a very big help for me!"

Rav Mattisyahu felt it was so important to constantly think about what Hashem does for us and to thank Him. Once, R' Mordechai Levi walked into the room where the Mashgiach was sitting and asked, "*Vos macht der Mashgiach?*" How is the Mashgiach doing?

"*Hodu laShem ki tov!*" was Rav Mattisyahu's answer.

"Nu," R' Levi said cheerfully, "*vos ken zein besser?*" What could be better than that?

And Rav Mattisyahu replied, "*Ki l'olam chasdo!*"

Throughout his life, the Mashgiach was cognizant of the *chesed* that Hashem constantly did with him and was always full of gratitude to Hashem. This sense of deep gratitude and *simchah* remained with him even in his later years when things were very difficult.



R' Mattisyahu, giving *chizuk* to special needs children

WHEN MASHIACH COMES, AND YOU ARE IN THE FRONT ROW WELCOMING HIM, TELL HIM THAT I AM YOUR FRIEND. IT WILL BE A VERY BIG HELP FOR ME!"

During those years, too, if someone asked him how he was — and everyone knew that he was really not well — he would always answer "*Hodu laShem ki tov ki l'olam chasdo!*"

The Mashgiach had a very healthy attitude as to how a person should look at life.

R' Naftali* had been diagnosed with cancer. He decided to seek advice from R' Shraga Feivel Zimmerman.

"*Baruch Hashem,*" R' Naftali told R' Shraga Feivel, "the cancer is not

so virulent and has been caught at an early stage. I have been told that there is a ninety-five percent recovery rate and only a five percent mortality rate.

"My question is this: Should I be worried about dying? In truth, I probably won't die since there is a ninety-five percent chance that I will survive. Should I ignore the thought of dying? Probably not. After all, there is a one in twenty chance that I'll die! So what should a Yid think when he receives such a diagnosis?"

R' Shraga Feivel hadn't the faintest idea of how to answer, so he called the Mashgiach.

The Mashgiach instantly answered, "If Hashem wanted a person to think he is dying, He would have given him a disease with a fifty-fifty chance. If He gave him a disease with a ninety-five percent chance of recovery, He clearly doesn't want him to walk around depressed because he is dying."

"So what should I tell him?"

"Tell the person in my name that he does not fully appreciate the gift of life. Hashem is giving him a wake-up call. Be *mechazek* him and tell him that he will survive and go on to live a long life, but he should stop taking life for granted." And he repeated, "He should appreciate the gift of life." 📺

	SHABBOS NOVEMBER 8 י"ז חשוון	SUNDAY NOVEMBER 9 י"ח חשוון	MONDAY NOVEMBER 10 י"ט חשוון	TUESDAY NOVEMBER 11 כ חשוון	WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 12 כ"א חשוון	THURSDAY NOVEMBER 13 כ"ב חשוון	FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 כ"ג חשוון
BAVLI	Zevachim 55	Zevachim 56	Zevachim 57	Zevachim 58	Zevachim 59	Zevachim 60	Zevachim 61
YERUSHALMI	Yoma 16	Yoma 17	Yoma 18	Yoma 19	Yoma 20	Yoma 21	Yoma 22
MISHNAH	Chullin 5:5-6:1	Chullin 6:2-3	Chullin 6:4-5	Chullin 6:6-7	Chullin 7:1-2	Chullin 7:3-4	Chullin 7:5-6
KITZUR	12:11-13:1	13:2-14:3	14:4-End	15:1-6	15:7-End	16:1-End	17:1-7

Shimon owned a grocery store in a busy town in Eretz Yisrael. In addition to the many shelved groceries, he also had a meat department that sold meat and chicken. Like many Israeli stores, one approached the counter and placed an order, which was cut, prepared, and packaged on the spot.

One day, as Shimon stood behind the counter, a woman approached and placed a modest order for a few pieces of chicken, some bones, and the cheapest cholent meat he carried. Shimon cut and wrapped the order, weighed it, tallied the prices, and told her what she owed.

The woman balked. Clearly, she hadn't anticipated that her items would cost so much. To Shimon it was apparent she couldn't afford the full amount. She began to haggle.

"The price of your chicken is exorbitant," she said. "Your cheapest meat costs more than it should. You should reduce the price."

Shimon responded with compassion but stood firm. "Geveret, while I'd love to help you, this is not the shuk. The prices here are competitive and fair. I'm sorry, but this sale is not negotiable."

She continued trying to get him to lower the price, but when she realized he wouldn't budge, she asked him to remove a few items from her order — even though he had already cut and packaged them — paid for the rest, and left.

Waiting next in line was a young fellow who had witnessed the exchange. He was taken aback by Shimon's unwillingness to accommodate the woman's situation.

"I don't get it," he said. "Clearly the woman was struggling. Why couldn't you just give her a discount? It's sad she had to put back items her family probably needed. I'm sure you're a charitable person — why not give her a break?"

"Had she come to my door for *tzedakah*," Shimon replied, "I would have helped her generously. But you can't run a business where prices change for different people. It just doesn't work."

The two of them continued to argue but couldn't come to a meeting of minds.

Finally, the young fellow said, "Listen, I have an idea. I'll open an account in your store, and whenever you find yourself in a similar situation, where someone is putting back items because they can't afford them, tell them to take the items and then add the difference to this account. This way you can continue to run your business properly while at the same time the needs of these unfortunate families can be met."

Shimon appreciated the idea and on the spot opened

Flashes of Inspiration by Rabbi Shlomo Landau

an account. The young fellow told Shimon to swipe his credit card for five hundred shekels to get started and asked Shimon to place any additional expenses on his tab. He assured Shimon that he would come by from time to time to pay the balance on the account.

Over the next few weeks and months there were a number of occasions when Shimon realized that a particular customer was in a difficult financial predicament, and without making a big deal out of it he gave them a discount and charged the difference to the young fellow's account.

One day the young fellow came into the store to inquire if he owed anything on the account. Shimon checked the account and shared with the fellow that there was a balance of 1,050 shekels. He explained that there had been quite a few people who were in a bad place and that he had discounted their orders.

The young man smiled, pleased. He handed Shimon his credit card and told him to charge 1,050 shekels.

Shimon swiped the card, entered the amount, and hit the green button. The transaction went through and printed a receipt. When he looked at it, his heart stopped — he had mistakenly entered **15,000 shekels** instead of 1,050.

Panicked, he tried to reverse the sale, but the machine refused to cooperate. He tried again and again, to no avail. Flustered, he turned to the young fellow and apologized profusely.


"Please call your credit card company and have them reverse the charge," he said. "My machine isn't working. I feel terrible."

To his astonishment, a small smile crept across the young man's face. He remained calm.

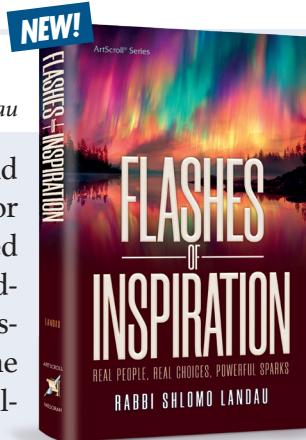
"Don't worry," he said softly. "Let's just keep the fifteen thousand shekels in the account so you can continue to assist anyone in need."

Shimon stared at him, stunned. Fifteen thousand shekels was a small fortune.

Seeing his confusion, the fellow explained. "Since I opened this account, I've experienced otherworldly success in my business. It seems the more I give, the more Hashem gives me. Clearly, the fifteen-thousand-shekel charge wasn't a mistake but a message from Hashem to increase my giving.

"I'll take the message to heart, and with Hashem's help, as I push myself to assist others, He will assist me and my family." 

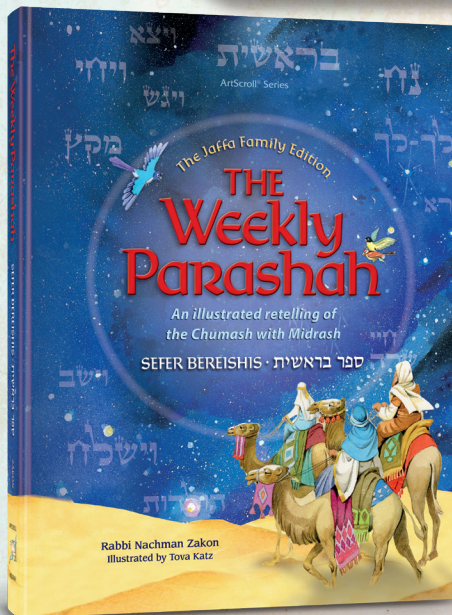
* Name has been changed.





Parashah for Children

פרשת וירא



The Akeidah Lesson

During the years of the Holocaust, doing mitzvos was very hard. The Germans would often kill Jews who tried to follow the laws of the Torah. But Jews were clever and found ways to do the mitzvos anyway, even though they were risking their lives. In concentration camps and ghettos they put on tefillin, ate matzah, lit Chanukah candles, and did many other mitzvos.

Hundreds of years earlier, during the Spanish Expulsion, the Jews were told either to stop being Jews or they would have to leave the country. Thousands of Jews left their homes and everything they owned behind and became homeless refugees. Why? So they could continue to do the mitzvos.

In the early 1900's in America, if you didn't work on Shabbos it was almost impossible to get a job. Yet there were Jews who kept Shabbos anyway, even though it meant being very poor.

Where do the Jews get the strength to do mitzvos even when it's so difficult? The Akeidah.

Avraham and Yitzchak did what Hashem wanted. Even though it was incredibly hard to do. What they did was put into the genes of the Jewish people the power and inspiration to do mitzvos no matter how hard or dangerous it might be.

Because we come from Avraham and Yitzchak we too have the power to do mitzvos we find difficult. Getting out of bed to go to shul, though we would rather sleep. Not buying a really cool outfit we would love to wear because it is not modest. Apologizing to a friend who we hurt because of something we said, even if what we said was true!

We're children of Avraham and Yitzchak, and we do the mitzvos. No matter what. And that is the lesson of the Akeidah.

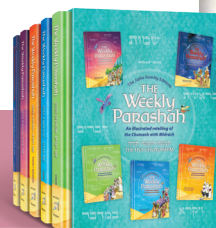
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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Vayeira:

On what day of the year did the Akeidah happen?

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*.



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