

# 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

## FINDING HASHEM IN THE DAILY HEADLINES

Rav Wolbe on Chumash by Rabbi Yitzchok Caplan

בְּאִשֶּׁר ה' אִתּוֹ

*For Hashem was with him (Bereishis 39:23).*

Toward the end of *Parashas Vayeishev* the Torah relates how Yosef was falsely accused and consequently thrown into jail. He found favor in the eyes of the jail warden, and he was accorded preferential treatment. In an exact repetition of what occurred when he was in Potiphar's house, his superior entrusted him with the day-to-day management of the jail, and Yosef took complete charge over his fellow inmates. The *passuk* tells us, "The officer of the jail did not supervise anything *for Hashem was with him*, and whatever he did Hashem granted him success" (39:23).

We should take note of the simple explanation of this *passuk*: It is possible for Hashem to live with a person no matter where a person finds himself. Even if he is in a secular or antagonistic environment, he must realize that Hashem is with him. Yosef was in a forlorn dungeon together with a group of gentiles, in the basest, most immoral land, and nevertheless the Torah tells us clearly that "Hashem was with him."

One cannot blame his environment for causing him to slacken off in his commitment to Torah and mitzvos, because Hashem can be found everywhere.

Rav Wolbe once attended a lecture in Sweden. In the middle of the speech the speaker mentioned that "the very atmosphere of Sweden is *treif*." Rav Wolbe felt a strong desire to vehemently protest such a statement, since it implied that Hashem is not to be found in Sweden! We know that "His glory

fills the entire world" (*Yeshayah* 6:3) and that He can be found in the most far-flung and desolate places. We simply have to look for Him, but if we make the effort, His presence will be clear beyond a shadow of a doubt.

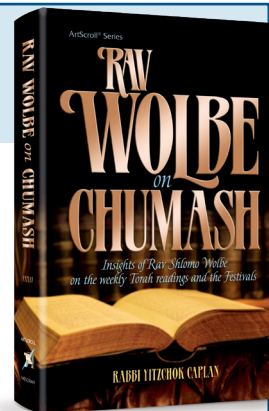


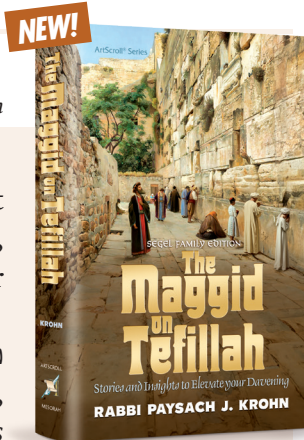
R' Shlomo Wolbe

This can be seen from the subsequent *pesukim* in the *parashah*. The Torah relates that shortly after Yosef was thrown into jail, two officers of the king were also imprisoned for their respective offenses. Rashi tells us (40:1) that the accusations leveled at Yosef by Potiphar's wife generated much negative talk about Yosef. Hashem therefore brought about the indictment of the king's officers so that attention should be shifted away from him.

Rav Yerucham Levovitz once said that if we would have the "eyes of the Torah," we would be able to see *Hashgachah* evident even in the newspapers. To this day, Hashem continues to act in the same manner. When the media starts attacking religious Jews, Hashem reveals some scandal and the spotlight is shifted away from the Jews.

Our surroundings do not always support our *avodas Hashem*, but we can choose whether or not to live with Hashem. He can be found in the dungeons of Egypt, in the subways of Manhattan, and even in the North Pole. We simply have to look for Him, and if we do, we will find Him everywhere — even in the daily headlines! 📖





### מְחִיָּה הַמָּתִים

In the spring of 2006, I attended a dinner in Monsey, New York, a fundraiser for the Rockland County Hatzolah organization, which provides volunteer emergency medical service to its community. A dinner guest, a non-Hatzolah member, was called upon to speak. He stunned the audience with his riveting story and provided insights to words of the *Shemoneh Esrei* that have stayed with me ever since.

In his early forties, trim and composed, the gentleman appeared to be the picture of health. He began his talk, “Less than a year ago, I suffered a massive heart attack.” Those startling words drew everyone’s attention.

He explained that one evening at home with his wife, he suffered a coronary occlusion. She called Hatzolah, and within minutes the first unit arrived, but they couldn’t get a steady heartbeat. A second and then a third crew came. Despite frantic efforts with defibrillators, medications, and CPR, there was no response. It seemed tragically hopeless. Finally, a volunteer told his crying wife, “There is nothing more we can do. It’s all in the hands of Hashem. Bring your *Tehillim*. We are going to rush him to the hospital.”

At this point, the speaker interrupted his own story. “There is a fascinating Ritva right at the beginning of *Maseches Taanis*. The Ritva expounds on the words of the second blessing in *Shemoneh Esrei* (the blessing called גְּבוּרוֹת, *God’s might*). The terms for Hashem’s revivifying the dead are mentioned three times. Most people assume these phrases (מְחִיָּה הַמָּתִים and לְהַחְיֹת הַמָּתִים) refer to the future, when Hashem will revivify the dead after the coming of *Mashiach* (see Shabbos Shacharis prayer, הַכֹּל יוֹדוּךָ, *All will thank You*); however, this is not how the Ritva sees it.

“The Ritva writes that only the third mention of resuscitation refers to the future, as the words are וְנֶאֱמַר לְהַחְיֹת הַמָּתִים, *And You are faithful* [at some future

date] to revivify the dead. The first two mentions refer to the present, to events in our times and in our lives.

“The first mention of מְחִיָּה הַמָּתִים is close to the prayer for rain, מְשִׁיב הָרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם, *He makes the wind blow and the rain descend*, which makes it possible for the crops to grow, for without food people would die.

“The second statement of מְחִיָּה הַמָּתִים is near the words סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, [*He supports the fallen [and] heals the sick*. Sometimes a person is so hopelessly ill that he is in the throes of death and then, at the last moment, Hashem intervenes (by sending the right medics) and, incredibly, the patient recovers. Thus, the intent of this second mention refers to someone’s recovery from grave illness.”

Resuming his personal story, the man exclaimed, “You are now looking at someone whom Hashem brought back to life, someone who experienced *Techiyas Ha-Meisim*. On the way to the hospital, to the shock and surprise of everyone in the ambulance, I came back to life. Miraculously, they were able to revive me!”

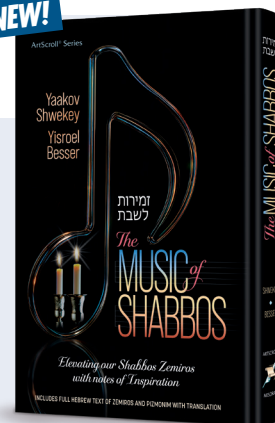
*I have thought about the Ritva’s words very often. No one — no patient, family member, or friend — should ever give up, no matter how formidable an illness seems to be. The Ritva encourages us by teaching that the same One Who can be trusted to resuscitate the dead in Mashiach’s time, can also revive the (seemingly) dead in this world. In the final analysis, it is Hashem Who provides healing.*

The Ritva’s meticulous analysis of the words of this *berachah* underscores the importance of analyzing every word of the *Shemoneh Esrei*. His innovative approach should spur our deeper study of the sacred words we pray each day. 📖



R' Paysach Krohn

	SHABBOS DECEMBER 13 בג כסלו	SUNDAY DECEMBER 14 כד כסלו	MONDAY DECEMBER 15 כה כסלו	TUESDAY DECEMBER 16 כו כסלו	WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17 כז כסלו	THURSDAY DECEMBER 18 כח כסלו	FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 כט כסלו
BAVLI	Zevachim 90	Zevachim 91	Zevachim 92	Zevachim 93	Zevachim 94	Zevachim 95	Zevachim 96
YERUSHALMI	Yoma 51	Yoma 52	Yoma 53	Yoma 54	Yoma 55	Yoma 56	Yoma 57
MISHNAH	Bechoros 5:2-3	Bechoros 5:4-5	Bechoros 5:6-6:1	Bechoros 6:2-3	Bechoros 6:4-5	Bechoros 6:6-7	Bechoros 6:8-9
KITZUR	32:8-15	32:16-22	139:1-4	139:5-11	139:12-19	139:20-End	32:23-End



צאתכם לשלום, מלאכי השלום

*May your departure be to peace, O angels of peace.*

Moments earlier, we welcomed the *malachim* to our home, the angels that accompanied us home from shul, as we are taught (Shabbos 119b): A person is escorted home from the *beis haknesses* by two *malachim*, one good and one evil. When he comes home and finds the candles burning, the table set, and the beds made, the good *malach* declares, “May it be G-d’s will that the next Shabbos be the same,” and the evil angel is forced to reluctantly answer “Amen.”

If the good *malach* has given us his blessing, why are we so quick to send these angels on their way, bidding them farewell when we have just welcomed them? There are those who omit this passage for that very reason (see *Shaarei Teshuvah*, *Orach Chaim* 32: 262), but in many homes, it is included.

R’ Shimshon Pincus offers a beautiful explanation of why that might be. At the high point of the year, Yom Kippur, the holiest man in the nation, the Kohen Gadol, enters the most exalted space in the world, the *Kodesh HaKodashim*. During those moments, he is alone.

So alone, that on the *pasuk*, *And no man shall be in the Tent of Meeting when he comes to effect atonement* (Vayikra 16:17), the Talmud Yerushalmi says that even a *malach* may not enter along with him.

At this moment of perfect union — the holiest Jew representing his people, encountering the *Shechinah* — there is no place or need for an angel.

So too, says R’ Pincus, Kabbalas Shabbos is meant to be a moment of *yichud*, a Yid greeting the Queen, the *Shechinah*. Coming from the six days of the week, he needs a boost, the angels allowing him to enter this holy realm — but now, he is home, about to make Kiddush.

In a moment, he will sanctify all of creation. Now, he gently turns to those angels and says, “Thank you for helping me reach this point, but now, I must be alone.”

Now, he is exalted, entering an exalted space at an exalted moment. Now, no angel need accompany him and no angel can approach him, for he — the Yid at his Shabbos table, his personal *kodesh kodashim* — is sanctified above all.

Those first moments after a father enters the house on Leil Shabbos are so crucial.

The children might be hungry or tired, but there is such a spiritual opportunity here, potential to create something that is not just holy, but lasting. The memories and emotions of Leil Shabbos remain etched in the *neshamah* of a child even when he has grown up and is leading his own Shabbos table.

I know this, because I saw my father, R’ Menachem Shwekey, who worked hard all week, come into the house on Friday night and instantly electrify the atmosphere. He understood that the attitude makes all the difference, and because he conveyed the feeling that this

experience was important, it *became* important to us, and we wanted to be part of it.

Each week, he would remind us of our family’s *minhag* of actually *not* reciting the passage of *tzeischem l’shalom* at the end of *Shalom Aleichem* because we want the *malachim* to stay with us.

When a father says that with conviction — *we don’t want the malachim to leave us, we want them right here!* — then the child feels that the *malachim* are a reality and he is suddenly much more aware of them.

We would join hands and circle the table, singing the traditional Sephardic chant for *Shalom Aleichem*, welcoming angels... but not letting them depart! 🎵



R’ Shimshon Pincus

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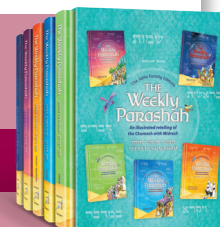
## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

*Name the four groups, or people, that Yosef was sold to.*

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto: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*.

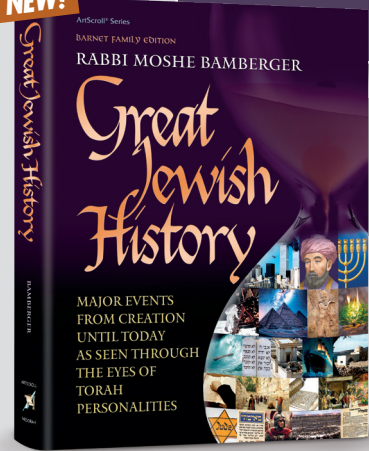
**The winner of the question for Parashas Chayei Sarah is: AARON PERTON, Atlanta GA**

Question for Chayei Sarah was: Why is Me’aras HaMachpeilah called Me’aras HaMachpeilah?  
Chayei Sarah Answer: Me’aras means “cave” and HaMachpeilah means “double,” referring to the cave’s two levels.





NEW!



# Great Jewish History

5684  
1923

## DAF YOMI LAUNCHED, UNITING WORLDWIDE JEWRY THROUGH DAILY TALMUD STUDY

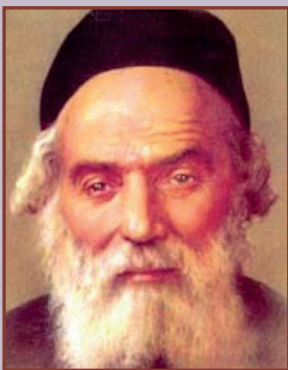
In 1923, Agudath Israel held its first Knessiah Gedolah (Great Assembly) in Vienna, Austria, with the purpose of discussing the grave and weighty problems that faced Torah Jewry throughout the Diaspora. Some six hundred distinguished

delegates were in attendance, including such Torah luminaries as the Chofetz Chaim (1838-1933) and the Imrei Emes of Ger (1866-1948). It was at this convention that Rabbi Meir Shapiro (1887-1933), the future founder of Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin, initiated a novel concept for an ambitious learning program. He encouraged Jews throughout the world to study the same *daf* of the Talmud each day, completing the entire Talmud in about seven and a half years. This would unite Torah Jewry through Torah study. Rabbi Shapiro's idea was received with great enthusiasm by those in attendance, and Rosh Hashanah of 5684, Jews from all over the world commenced the Talmud study with Tractate *Berachos*; this movement has become more and more popular with each new cycle of the Talmud. Masses of Jews have embraced Gemara through this holy initiative, bringing sanctity and meaning to their lives.



*Dais of the Knessiah Gedolah, Vienna, 1923*

## TORAH VIEWS AND NEWS



### The Brilliance of the Chofetz Chaim

A silent newsreel that was discovered in 2015 stirred great excitement in the Jewish world, as it contained the only known video footage of the saintly **Chofetz Chaim**, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (1839-1933), arriving for the first Knessiah Gedolah in Vienna in 1923. It is notable that this convention launched the Daf Yomi movement proposed by Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin. Never would this vital but revolutionary initiative have gained its universal acceptance without the Chofetz Chaim's support. Before the Knessiah Gedolah officially convened, Rabbi Shapiro approached the Chofetz Chaim and requested that he be the one to suggest the idea of Daf Yomi to the assembly. Rabbi Shapiro, being very young, felt that if the proposal came from him, it would lack the authority necessary to be accepted. The Chofetz Chaim insisted that Rabbi Shapiro be the one to present it but requested of him — inexplicably — that he wait twenty minutes before entering the grand auditorium. When the room was full to capacity, Rabbi Shapiro entered the hall. The Chofetz Chaim stood up from his seat in honor of the young rav. In deference to the Chofetz Chaim, the entire assemblage stood up, according Rabbi Shapiro the highest esteem. Thus, when he addressed the Knessiah, the audience received his groundbreaking concept with respect, all due to the Chofetz Chaim's influence and genius.



*The Chofetz Chaim arriving at the Knessiah Gedolah in Vienna, 1923*

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