



# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת מקץ  
ל' כסלו תשפ"ו

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RABBI YEHUDA MUNK  
EDITOR

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MRS. CHANIE LANDAU

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

## PLAY THE ROLE

*Living Emunah on the Parashah 2 by Rabbi David Ashear*

In the beginning of *Parashas Mikeitz*, we read about Yosef being appointed viceroy of Mitzrayim. Pharaoh told him (*Bereishis* 41:40): אֶתְּהָהּ עַל בֵּיתִי — *You shall be in charge of my palace, and by your command shall all my people be sustained; only by the throne shall I outrank you.* In the very next *pasuk*, Pharaoh tells Yosef: רְאֵה נָתַתִּי אֶתְּךָ עַל כָּל אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם — *See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt.*

Sefer Vavei HaAmudim asks: Why does the second *pasuk* repeat what Pharaoh had just told Yosef? R' Reuven Karelenstein explains that Pharaoh was certain Yosef would be unable to emotionally handle the news that he was being elevated from prisoner to ruler of an entire country. He assumed Yosef would lose his equilibrium. He never imagined that Yosef would look exactly the same after hearing such astonishing news.

When Pharaoh did not see the reaction he expected, he thought Yosef perhaps hadn't understood, and therefore repeated himself: "*Yosef, look! I have appointed you over all of Mitzrayim!*" Yet Yosef still showed no visible emotion. Pharaoh then gave him his royal ring and paraded him in the king's chariot — and Yosef remained completely composed.

What astonished Pharaoh is natural for a G-d-fearing Jew. The middah Yosef embodied is called *middas hahishtavus* — the belief that everything that happens comes from Hashem, and a person's task is simply to fulfill his mission wherever he is placed. Whether in jail or in power, he serves Hashem in the situation Hashem wants for him, and that is all that matters.



R' Meyer Yedid

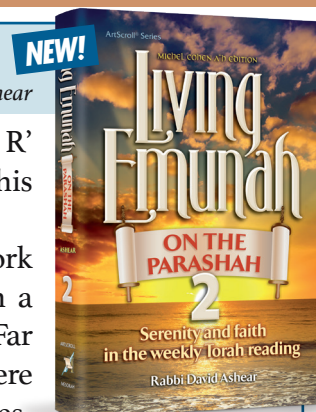
I heard a *mashal* from R' Meyer Yedid that brings this point home.

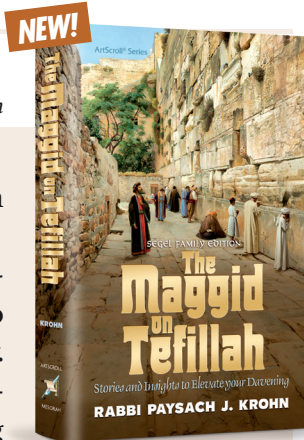
Two large ships left New York Harbor at the same time on a one-month journey to the Far East. Thirty days later, they were within a few miles of their des-

tinuation when the captain of each ship received a phone call from his company superior, informing him that there had been a change of plans and he needed to turn around and head back to New York. One of the captains became so upset, he began throwing objects in anger. The other captain, however, just turned his ship around calmly, as if nothing unusual had happened, smiling and sipping his coffee as he had been doing before.

How could it be that these two captains had such different reactions to the exact same hardship? When the matter was investigated, it was discovered that the first captain was on his way to the Far East primarily for his own benefit. He had quite a few business matters to attend to there, and now he would not be able to do so. The second captain, however, was working exclusively for his boss, and therefore, it didn't matter to him where he was. He had to do whatever his boss asked him to do and then he would be paid full wages. This is how he was able to remain calm and happy.

This is the story of our lives. We are all here on a mission to serve Hashem, wherever He puts us. It doesn't matter where we are, because wherever it is, we're working for our Boss, and when we do as He requests, He's going to pay us full wages. 📖





## עַל הַמִּחְיָה

The blessing of *Al HaMichyah* is basically an abridgement of *Bircas HaMazon*. It is interesting and puzzling to note that the words *וְעַל מִזְבֵּיחְךָ*, *upon Your Altar*, are included in this blessing, as there is no mention of the *Mizbei'ach* in *Bircas HaMazon*.

It occurred to me that perhaps this is because in the very first *siman* in *Shulchan Aruch* (1:3), the Beis Yosef writes, *רָאוּי לְכָל יִרְאָה שָׁמַיִם מִצָּר וְדוֹאֵג עַל חֲרָבֵן בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ*, *It is proper for every God-fearing person to feel anguish and pain over the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash*.

The *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid., note 11) writes that the Shelah HaKadosh instructs us that after every weekday meal, one should preface the *Bircas HaMazon* with *עַל נִהְרֹת בָּבֶל* (*Tehillim* ch. 127) and on Shabbos preface it with *שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב ה' אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן* (ibid. ch. 126), as both refer to the loss of the Beis HaMikdash.

Perhaps this is why *וְעַל מִזְבֵּיחְךָ*, *upon Your Altar*, has been added to *Al HaMichyah*, as it is also a reference to the loss of the Beis HaMikdash.

There are those who say that R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach commented that this is one reason we eat doughnuts on Chanukah, after which one would recite *Al HaMichyah*, so that we can say the words *וְעַל מִזְבֵּיחְךָ*, to commemorate that during the Chanukah era the *Mizbei'ach* was rededicated. As cited in *Maoz Tzur*, *אֶזְ אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמָּר חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ* — *Then I shall complete with a song of hymn the dedication of the Altar*.

R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld personally embodied what the Beis Yosef writes in the first *siman* of the *Shulchan Aruch* regarding the Beis HaMikdash.

In 1920, shortly after the League of Nations gave Great Britain control of Palestine, the British appointed Sir Herbert Samuel — an assimilated Jew — as high commissioner. One of his first official functions was to pay his respects to the country's prominent rabbis, in-

cluding a visit to R' Yosef Chaim in the Old City.

R' Yosef Chaim lived in a simple basement apartment with no luxuries and not even electricity. R' Moshe Blau, the leader of Agudas Yisrael who was arranging the meeting, felt that such humble surroundings were not suitable for receiving the high commissioner with proper honor. He suggested that the meeting be held in a more fitting location.

R' Yosef Chaim refused, explaining that it would be deceptive to create the impression that he lived on a higher standard. R' Blau then proposed bringing in a new table and chairs to replace the Rav's rickety furniture. Again, R' Yosef Chaim refused, saying that this too would be deceptive.

Seeing he could not persuade him, R' Blau arranged for Sir Herbert to visit the basement apartment as is.

A squad of police led the high commissioner's entourage, and Sir Herbert was personally escorted by the *tzaddik*

Dr. Moshe Wallach, founder and head of Shaare Zedek Hospital. Dozens of people followed as the group wound through the narrow streets of the Old City to the Battei Machseh neighborhood.

R' Yosef Chaim, wearing his Shabbos clothes as a sign of respect, came forward to greet the representative of the King of England. Sir Herbert descended the steps and, entering the little abode, looked around and asked half-jokingly, "You couldn't find a lower apartment?"

R' Yosef Chaim replied, "Please come to the window. I would like to show you something." From the window, the Kosel HaMaaravi was clearly visible, its small, unpaved area intentionally neglected by the Arabs.

Pointing upward, R' Yosef Chaim said, "If He [Hashem] can live like that, I can live like this."



R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld

	SHABBOS DECEMBER 20 ל כסלו	SUNDAY DECEMBER 21 א טבת	MONDAY DECEMBER 22 ב טבת	TUESDAY DECEMBER 23 ג טבת	WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 24 ד טבת	THURSDAY DECEMBER 25 ה טבת	FRIDAY DECEMBER 26 ו טבת
BAVLI	Zevachim 97	Zevachim 98	Zevachim 99	Zevachim 100	Zevachim 101	Zevachim 102	Zevachim 103
YERUSHALMI	Succah 1	Succah 2	Succah 3	Succah 4	Succah 5	Succah 6	Succah 7
MISHNAH	Bechoros 6:10-11	Bechoros 6:12-7:1	Bechoros 7:2-3	Bechoros 7:4-5	Bechoros 7:6-7	Bechoros 8:1-2	Bechoros 8:3-4
KITZUR	33:1-6	33:7-End	34:1-4	34:5-13	34:14-35:7	35:8-36:10	36:11-26



מִזְמֹר לְדֹד שֶׁבֶטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתְךָ הִמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me

Seemingly, the rod and the staff are two opposites, the rod used to strike a wayward son or servant, while the staff is a form of support. How can tools used in conflicting ways both provide the same comfort?

Perhaps we can explain this with a *vort* I heard from R' Sruly Bornstein, in the name of his relative R' Shmuel Yaakov Bornstein, the Rosh Yeshivah of Kiryas Melech, with whom he ate many Shabbos *seudos*.

When we read Megillas Esther, we all rejoice at Haman's humiliation as he is forced to lead Mordechai on a horse through the streets of Shushan, but if you think about it, nothing had really changed. The Jews were in the same bleak situation, with the decree of their destruction still in effect. Haman's disgrace and the honor shown to Mordechai did nothing to change that reality, so what was the point of the whole incident?

R' Shmuel Yaakov quotes the commentary of the Vilna Gaon in the Siddur HaGra, on the words in *Shemoneh Esrei* that describe Hashem as a *Mishan u'Mivtach l'tzaddikim* — a Mainstay and an Assurance for the righteous. Faith in the Ribbono shel Olam is itself a catalyst for salvation, the Gaon says, and if people would rely on Him with perfect faith, they would be helped.

At times, however, it is hard to find that clarity, reality giving little reason for hope. How should a Jew find that initial burst of faith? In such a situation, the Gaon

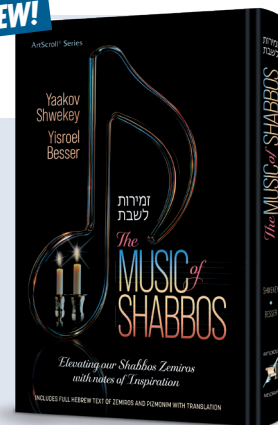
explains, Hashem sends a *mishan*, a sign of love and support, a glimpse of His dominion and might. This *mishan* leads the Jew to *bitachon*, to belief — and this belief creates salvation.

The Gaon brings an example of this — Mordechai, being led astride the royal horse. For Mordechai himself, perhaps there was no reason to rejoice, but for the Jews, looking on from their windows and porches, it was a clear sign that Hashem had not forgotten or forsaken them; it was a *mishan* upon which to lean. Their biggest enemy was being humiliated in front of their most respected leader, and the sight itself filled them with confidence and optimism — the *bitachon* that led to a full *yeshuah*.

In times of darkness, we just need that little spark of clarity, and then, we can generate salvation by believing. Perhaps this is what the *pasuk* is saying here as well. Even when our relationship with Hakadosh Baruch Hu is one of “the rod,” such as it was for Mordechai and the Jews in the kingdom of Achashveirosh, Hashem still sends us “His staff,” evidence of His love, reminders that He is supporting us even in difficult times. This imbues us with faith, and that faith will change darkness to light. 🌟



R' Shmuel Yaakov Bornstein



**Editor's Note:** Perhaps that is the secret of Chanukah as well. In the deepest night of *galus*, when the world feels ruled by “the rod,” Hashem still places in our hands a quiet *mishan* — a single, trembling flame. A *ner Chanukah* is so small that *halachah* does not even require it to give off usable light, yet that tiny glow proclaims everything: We are not forgotten. Just as the sight of Mordechai on Haman's horse ignited hope in a nation still under decree, the menorah reminds us that even before the full *yeshuah* arrives, Hashem is already holding us up.

A single spark can push back a great darkness; a single moment of clarity can awaken enduring faith. In the bitter night of exile, we do not wait for sunrise to begin to believe. We begin with one small flame, and from that fragile light comes our faith that “*kareiv keitz hayeshuah*” — that dawn is on its way.

— Rabbi Yehuda Munk

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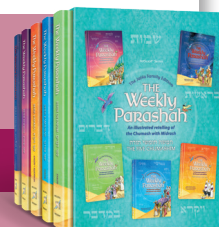
## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Who did Binyomin have in mind when naming his ten children?

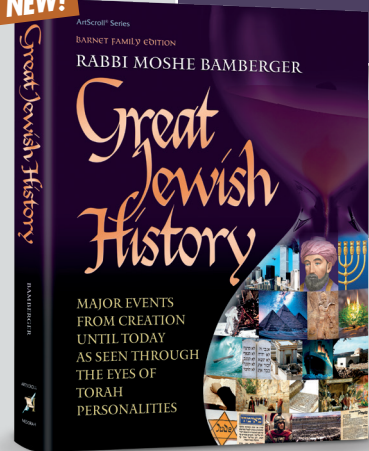
Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto:shabbosquestion@artscroll.com) by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the question for Parashas Toldos is: AVRAHAM PERTON, Atlanta GA

Question for Toldos was: Who else died on the day Avraham Avinu passed away?  
Toldos Answer: Nimrod.



NEW!



# Great Jewish History

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## OUTNUMBERED CHASHMONAIM DEFEAT SYRIAN-GREEK ARMY; TEMPLE REDEDICATED, CHANUKAH INSTITUTED

Over two thousand years ago, Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia and head of the Greek army, conquered the Middle East from Egypt to India, and introduced Greek philosophy and culture. The Greeks transformed the ancient world by rejecting the worship of a Higher Being and emphasizing human intellect and beauty, in contrast to Judaism's focus on the Creator and spiritual ideals. Recognizing the Holy Torah as a threat to their culture, the Syrian-Greeks sought to eradicate its observance, passing laws against Jewish practices like *bris milah* and *Shabbos*, and building theaters and gymnasiums to lure Jews into Greek culture. These practices were highly effective, leading many Jews to assimilate into Greek society. These Jews were called Hellenists, *misayavim*. Over time, it seemed as if Greek culture would completely swallow the Jewish people and their traditions, and Torah would, *chas veshalom*, be forgotten. However, nearly two hundred years after the Greek conquest, the Chashmonaim, a small band of Jews dedicated to Hashem and His Torah, rose against the mighty Greek oppressors and, with God's assistance, triumphed. Additionally, when the Jews reentered the Holy Temple that the enemy had defiled, they found only one jug of pure, untainted oil with which to light the Menorah in the Holy Temple. Although the amount of oil was enough for only one day, it miraculously lasted for eight. The annual eight-day festival of Chanukah commemorates the miracle of the oil as well as the military triumph.



Ancient oil menorah,  
Byzantine-Islamic period,  
6th-9th century, depicting a  
seven-branched menorah-like  
motif with two Torah scrolls

## TORAH VIEWS AND NEWS



### The Salvation of the Oral Law

**R**abbi Ovadiah Yosef (1920-2013) points out that the entire corpus of Oral Torah in our possession today is a direct result of the Chanukah miracle. The Mishnah features the opin-

ions of the Tannaim from the time of Hillel, approximately a century before the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash and onward. Our laws are based on their words; Sages of earlier generations are not mentioned. Had the miracles of Chanukah not taken place, all traces of the Oral Torah would be lacking. The celebration of Chanukah, therefore, is nothing less than the celebration of the survival of *Torah Shebe'al Peh*. We may find a hint to this in the verse (*Mishlei* 6:23), "The commandments are a lamp and Torah is the light." The lamp — of the Chanukah Menorah — preserved the Oral Torah that shines so brightly to this day.



### To Keep a Promise to Aharon

**T**here is a Midrash that Aharon HaKohen felt bad when he saw that the heads of the tribes brought offerings as part of the *Chanukas HaMishkan*, the consecration

of the Tabernacle. Hashem consoled Aharon that his portion is greater than that of the Nesiim, for he has the privilege of lighting the Menorah. The **Ramban** (1194-1270), based on a Midrash, explains the extra significance of the kindling of the Menorah as alluding to the lighting of the Menorah in the future as a result of the Chanukah miracle brought about by the Chashmonaim — descendants of Aharon. Aharon was appeased by this promise, for the impact of the salvation of Chanukah will last beyond the existence of the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash — it will illuminate the Jew in *galus*.