

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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

PARASHAH

TAILORING THE MESSAGE

Rav Wolbe on Chumash by Rabbi Yitzchok Caplan

שְׁנֵי לַחֹט אֲבָנִים כְּרֵאשֹׁנִים

Two stone Luchos like the first ones (Shemos 34:1)

When Moshe Rabbeinu beheld *Bnei Yisrael* worshipping the golden calf, he threw down the *Luchos* and smashed them. *Chazal* tell us (*Shabbos* 88a) that afterward Hashem thanked Moshe for breaking the *Luchos*. Eighty days later, on Yom Kippur, Moshe descended from Har Sinai with a second set of *Luchos*, with the same commandments.

What was the impetus for Moshe's decision to break the *Luchos*? In addition, if he felt *Bnei Yisrael* were not worthy of receiving the Torah, what changed eighty days later when he returned with a similar set of *Luchos*?

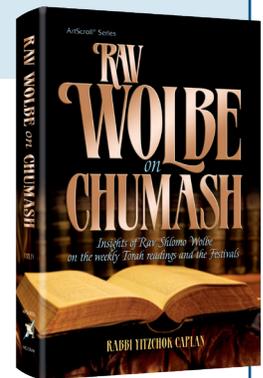
The Gemara (*Avodah Zarah* 5a) states that the second set of *Luchos* differed from the first set. Had they merited the first set, *Bnei Yisrael* would have been free from the dominion of the *yetzer hara* and would never have been oppressed by foreign nations. They would have achieved a level of existence without sin. Prior to their sin, the Torah (i.e., the first set of *Luchos*) was tailored to the needs of a nation that had reached the pinnacle of spiritual ascent. When Moshe saw that the nation had sinned, thereby falling from their newfound spiritual plateau, he understood that the Torah in its present form was not suitable for *Bnei Yisrael*. They would need a new set of *Luchos*, tailored to a nation that had tasted sin. The actual Torah would remain unchanged, but the manner in which it would be conveyed to *Bnei Yisrael* would be different.

Every generation has a specific manner in which it can, and does, relate to the Torah. Those responsible for transmitting the Torah must understand the particularities of their specific generation and transmit the Torah accordingly. The Torah remains the same; it is merely the presentation that changes.

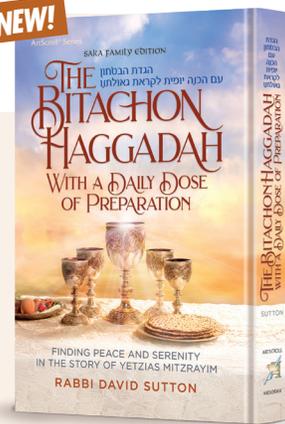
Chazal say (*Rosh Hashanah* 25b), "Yiftach in his generation paralleled Shmuel in his generation." What does this mean? Shmuel was a prophet who was compared to Moshe and Aharon, while Yiftach did not even merit prophecy. Rav Tzadok HaKohen explains that just as Shmuel succeeded in transmitting the Torah to his generation, Yiftach succeeded in transmitting the Torah to his. The difference in the spiritual levels of their respective generations was immense, but the mission remained the same. Like Shmuel, Yiftach found an appropriate means of conveying the Torah's eternal message.

Rav Yechezkel Levenstein commented that his *rebbeim* in the yeshivah of Kelm would say that speaking about the terrible punishments in *Gehinnom* in order to motivate people to improve is not the proper approach for our generation. The Alter of Slabodka would always stress *gadlus ha'adam* — the greatness of man. He understood that our era required a softer, more optimistic approach, and he tailored his discourses accordingly.

Whatever the means of transmission, the beauty of the Torah remains constant. We all have the ability to help others in their Torah growth; we need only find the right language. What spoke to the last generation might not speak to our generation, and what speaks to our generation might not speak to our children's generation. If we bear this in mind when delivering Hashem's eternal message, we will, *be'ezras Hashem*, succeed in imbuing others with a true Torah outlook, in a manner that rivals the pedagogy of Shmuel HaNavi. 📖



NEW!



The Bitachon Haggadah by Rabbi David Sutton

DAY 9: Thirty Days of Pesach Prep

Maharal (*Divrei Negidim*) tells us that the three characteristics mentioned in the Haggadah of גדול עצום ורבו — great, mighty, and numerous, are in the zechus of the three Avos. In the merit of Avraham, to whom Hashem promised (*Bereishis* 12:2), וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל — And I will make of you a great nation, Klal Yisrael became *gedolim* (as explained earlier), the ones who influence and were not influenced. In the zechus of Yitzchak Avinu, to whom Avimelech said (*ibid.* 26:16), כִּי עֲצַמְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מְאֹד — For you have become much mightier than us, they became mighty. Finally, the term ורבו is in the merit of Yaakov Avinu, to whom Hashem said (*ibid.* 28:3), וְקַל שְׂקִי יְבָרֵךְ אֶתְךָ וַיְפָרֵךְ, וַיְרַבְּךָ — And may Keil Shakkai bless you, make you fruitful, and make you numerous. It was Yaakov who had twelve children, and from there Klal Yisrael expanded.

This is a fundamental: Everything we have is in the merit of our Avos.

Quality vs. Quantity

Shibbolei HaLeket quotes Rabbeinu Yeshayah, who says that ורבו does not mean Hashem made them numerous. Rather, it means והולך ומתרבה, they are constantly increasing. And so, the *pasuk* quoted by the Baal Haggadah compares Klal Yisrael to the plants and grasses of the field, which are constantly growing.

In *Haggadah Maaseh Nissim*, R' Yaakov Lorberbaum, the author of *Nesivos*, also wonders if ורבו is actually about quantity. After all, we are not such a huge nation; many nations boast larger populations. Rather, ורבו refers to quality, as we possess a multiplying power, a potential for extraordinary growth, like a seed that grows into something else that has more seeds and continues to perpetuate. While trees may become extinct, grass is always there. It keeps growing and multiplying.

That is the potential of the Jewish people; we will be around forever. We are an eternal nation. Going back to the time of Mitzrayim, has any culture survived like ours? Hashem has granted us that power of survival, of eternity.

Resilience

In *Parashas Vayishlach* (*Bereishis* 32: 25), Yaakov Avinu wrestled with the malach of Eisav עד עלות השחר — until the break of dawn. When Eisav's malach saw that he could not overcome Yaakov, ויגע ויכר, he struck the socket of his hip, causing it to become dislocated. For this reason, the Torah says (v. 33), we are not permitted to eat the גיד הנשה, the displaced sinew of an animal, because that is where the angel struck Yaakov. The malach hit him on his hip, symbolizing Yaakov's seed, which Eisav's malach was seeking to eradicate. But our nation continues to perpetuate.

The *Sefer HaChinuch* (Mitzvah #3) speaks of the underlying reason behind this mitzvah. Even though we will suffer extraordinary difficulties during our galuyos (exiles) at the hands of the children of Eisav, we are guaranteed that we will not become extinct. And the redeemer will come and save us from our oppressors.

The *Chinuch* continues: Yaakov Avinu was limping as a result of his injury, but the sun came out and healed him, saving him from suffering. That is a sign for us. The sun of Mashiach will come and heal us from suffering and redeem us.

Until then, the seed is constantly replanting and re-blossoming.

RECAP

- We remained great, numerous, and mighty in Mitzrayim in the merit of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.
- The word ורבו does not only mean numerous, but also connotes constant growth and the potential for more growth.
- Even if we suffer extraordinary difficulties during our galus, we will not become extinct.

	SHABBOS MARCH 7 יח אדר	SUNDAY MARCH 8 יט אדר	MONDAY MARCH 9 כ אדר	TUESDAY MARCH 10 כא אדר	WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 כב אדר	THURSDAY MARCH 12 כג אדר	FRIDAY MARCH 13 כד אדר
BAVLI	Menachos 55	Menachos 56	Menachos 57	Menachos 58	Menachos 59	Menachos 60	Menachos 61
YERUSHALMI	Beitzah 45	Beitzah 46	Beitzah 47	Beitzah 48	Beitzah 49	Rosh Hashanah 1	Rosh Hashanah 2
MISHNAH	Kerisus 6:8-9	Meilah 1:1-2	Me'ilah 1:3-4	Meilah 2:1-2	Meilah 2:3-4	Meilah 2:5-6	Meilah 2:7-8
KITZUR	73:5-End	74:1-75:3	75:4-9	75:10-76:4	76:5-13	107:1-108:3	108:4-109:6
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 36b-37b	Yevamos 38a Chazara 37b	Yevamos 38b Chazara 38a	Yevamos 39a Chazara 38b	Yevamos 39b Chazara 39a	Yevamos 40a Chazara 39b	Yevamos Chazara 38a-38b

The Story Begins... by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

It was the third day of Elul zman, the start of a new year, when the boys were still on their best behavior. The Gemaros were brand-new, the notebooks fresh and appealing. The attitude of "anything can happen this year if I put my best foot forward" permeated the atmosphere.

That morning, something caught the eye of R' Lieberman, the menahel. Motti, a fine boy, already in eleventh grade, walked down the halls wearing a yarmulke that was completely out of dress code. The boys were expected to wear a black velvet yarmulke. It was standard and no one ever veered from it. But this yarmulke was bright, unusual, and drew undue attention.

R' Lieberman was nonplussed. This wasn't Motti's style at all. He wondered if something had happened over the summer that caused Motti to start heading in a different direction. Should R' Lieberman say something? Or would it be better to wait and see?



R' Yechiel Spero

After some thought, he decided to hold back. If Motti wore the same yarmulke the next day, the menahel would address it then.

The following morning, Motti came in wearing his regular black velvet yarmulke. R' Lieberman went over to him, and, with a smile, said, "I like your yarmulke today," adding with a wink, "It's an improvement over yesterday's."

Motti grinned. "Rebbi, I want to tell you what happened."

Yesterday, one of the boys came to yeshiva by mistake wearing the yarmulke he uses for sleeping, his "shluff kappel." He was so embarrassed. Seeing how mortified he was, I told him, "Don't worry, we'll switch. You wear mine, and I'll wear yours."

At first, he was hesitant, but when he saw I was sincere, he took me up on my offer and was extremely relieved. It was like the weight of the world was taken off of his shoulders.

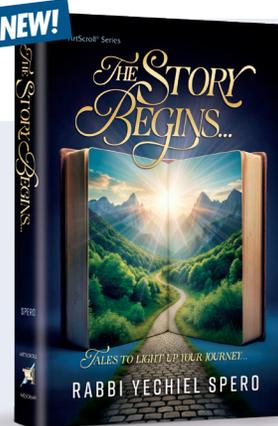
SHOULD HE SAY SOMETHING? OR WOULD IT BE BETTER TO WAIT AND SEE?

And I was happy to do it.

R' Lieberman felt a wave of admiration. Motti hadn't just done something harmless; he had done something beautiful. He had taken another boy's embarrassment onto his own head. Literally.

How often do we think we know exactly what we're looking at, only to find out later that the truth is completely different! We see a student yawning in class and assume he's bored, when really he was up late helping care for a younger sibling. We notice a neighbor avoiding eye contact and think he's unfriendly, when he's simply going through a hard time. We pass someone in shul still wearing weekday clothes on Friday night and judge, not realizing he's coming straight from the hospital.

Life is full of moments where what seems wrong at first is actually something very right. 📖



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Which two letters of the Luchos miraculously hung in the air?

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 Yisro is: MORDECHAI ZUCKERMAN, Dallas, Texas

Question for Yisro was: Where was Moshe Rabbeinu's son, Gershom, born
Yisro Answer: In Midian





PART 2: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

The above title sounds like a stale cliché, but it’s a perfect description of what became apparent with the unexpected success of ArtScroll’s Megillas Esther. In 1976, there were large numbers of English-speaking men and women who had attended yeshivos, and Bais Yaakovs. They could “study” Torah works, but with difficulty. Their mother tongue was English, not the Hebrew or Aramaic of Torah, and, unfortunately, many or most had drifted away from regular learning.

And then, ArtScroll’s Megillas Esther came along. To many, it was a revelation. A Torah work in their own language, written with literary grace, elucidating the text clearly, and introducing the background and challenges of its era. At first, R’ Meir and his colleagues had no intention of turning the ArtScroll Megillah into the “ArtScroll Series,” but many *gedolim* and Torah leaders thought otherwise. It was clear to them that the cliché was literally true. It really was “an idea whose time had come,” and it was proof that English-speaking Jews needed and wanted this new kind of Torah literature.

They prevailed on R’ Meir to continue, and he accepted the challenge, as did R’ Nosson Scherman and R’ Sheah Brander. Resolving to complete all five Megillos, they devoted day and night to complete Megillas Ruth in time for the upcoming Shavuos, and then went on to publish the remaining Megillos in record time.

Until then, ArtScroll Studios had been what its name implied: it produced artistic scrolls, brochures, and invitations. R’ Meir was a trained artist, and R’ Sheah was a graphics genius who would go on to set the standard of excellence in Jewish publishing. It soon became clear that ArtScroll Studios would have to give up its commercial role and become the full-time publisher of the ArtScroll Series. R’ Meir and R’ Sheah segued from ArtScroll Studios to Mesorah Publications, and R’ Nosson left his position as principal in Stolín and joined the ArtScroll team full time.

Many were surprised at the success of ArtScroll’s *sefarim*—yet some wondered—the traditional language of Torah transmission was Yiddish, wasn’t it? In 1976, Yiddish was still the language of instruction in most yeshivos. Even American-born rebbeim taught in Yiddish, although most of the classroom conversation and explanation of the subject matter was increasingly in English. Was it proper to render Torah *sefarim* in English? It was an innovation, and history has taught us to be suspicious of innovation in Orthodox practice. “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” And if you insist on fixing it, you may break it, as the Torah community has learned over the centuries.

An incident in the home of the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky, sheds light on the answer and how the emergence of English was understood by the greatest Torah leaders, who recognized the need and applauded it.

It was Chol Hamoed Pesach, and many people were visiting the Rosh Yeshivah, in accordance with the custom to visit Torah leaders on the festival. When R’ Nosson entered the room, a distinguished *rosh yeshivah* asked him teasingly (in Yiddish, of course), “What will you do when Mashiah comes and we won’t need English *sefarim* anymore?” Everyone laughed (except for R’ Nosson).

Then R’ Yaakov spoke up. He said, “In its time, Ladino became a language of Torah, and in its time, Yiddish became a language of Torah. Today, English is a language of Torah. The ArtScroll *sefarim* are good, and they will still be used when Mashiah comes.” It was a powerful testimonial from one of our greatest Torah leaders. As he foresaw, English has indeed become the primary language of Torah in many countries.

To us, fifty years later, it seems surprising that the question was even asked. In hindsight the answer is obvious—the need for Torah in English had arrived, and ArtScroll would help meet the need.

UP NEXT: How R’ Meir and R’ Nosson First Met