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SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת חוקת-בלק
"ב תמוז תשפ"ו

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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

PROJECT DEDICATED BY THE JAFFA FAMILY

PARASHAH

ANALYZING THE NEWS

Rav Pam on the Parashah by Rabbi Sholom Smith

כִּי חֶשְׁבוֹן עִיר סִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֶמֹרִי הוּא וְהוּא נִלְחַם בְּמֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב הָרֹאשׁוֹן וַיִּקַּח אֶת כָּל אֶרְצוֹ מִיַּד עַד אֲרָנֹן — *For Cheshbon — it was the city of Sichon, king of the Emori; and he warred against the first king of Moav and took all his land from his control, until Arnon (Bamidbar 21:26).*

As Klal Yisrael made their way towards Eretz Yisrael, they came to the lands of Sichon, king of the Emorim, and Og, king of Bashan. Moshe requested safe passage through Sichon's land, but the mighty giant refused, and instead went out to war against the Jewish nation. Rashi describes the power and security of Sichon's land, Cheshbon: "Had Cheshbon been populated by mere gnats, no creature would have been able to conquer it due to its impregnable fortifications. And if Sichon had even been in a weak village, no one could have conquered him. How much more if Sichon and his great army were in the heavily fortified city of Cheshbon!

"Instead of troubling the Jewish people to lay siege to each town separately, He put into the hearts of the Emorim's men of war to gather together in one open area, where they will all fall at one time to Bnei Yisrael." With the Emori cities wide open and undefended, Bnei Yisrael were able to easily conquer the entire land without opposition.

Midrash Tanchuma adds that the Emorim had been so confident of victory that they had not even secured the gates of their cities, making their capture by Bnei Yisrael easy and without any casualties!

The Gemara (*Chullin 60b*) says that initially Bnei Yisrael had been forbidden to make war on Moav, as the land was the inheritance of the children of Lot who earned this reward for his descendants because he had bravely accompanied Avraham to Mitzrayim and had not disclosed to Pharaoh the fact that Sarah was Avraham's wife.

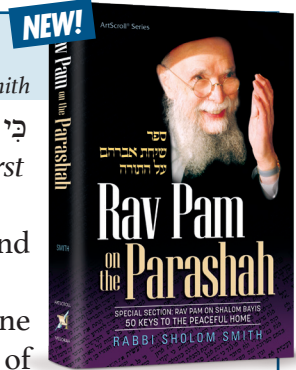
However, when Sichon captured the Moavi land of Cheshbon and made it part of his own kingdom, he thereby "purified" it for Bnei Yisrael, who were

now permitted to conquer and take possession of it.

One can picture the scene when Sichon captured the city of Cheshbon. There was probably a pompous victory parade in his honor and he likely received congratulations from his countrymen for acquiring such a valuable piece of territory for the kingdom. Yet, little did he realize that his entire victory was not for him at all. It was to make possible at a future date the transfer of that land to his archenemies, the Jewish nation, who would later kill him and take away his entire country!

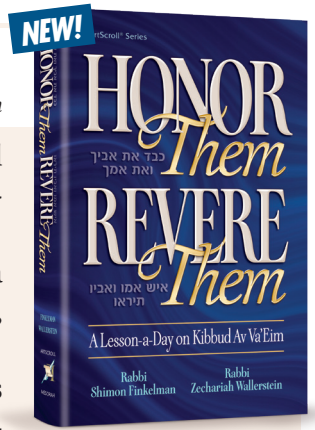
There is much to apply to our times from these long-ago incidents. A major portion of the nonstop news cycle today is analysis. Every action or reaction is analyzed by experts who offer their learned opinions as to the what, why, where, and how this or that was done. A Torah Jew understands that these brilliant commentators fail to take into account the only real factor that matters — Hashem — and everything else is often totally irrelevant, and occasionally completely off-base.

It is an axiom of Jewish belief that whatever occurs in the world, even in some far-off corner of the globe, is for the ultimate benefit of Klal Yisrael, even though it may not be evident for years, decades, or even centuries. This stresses the concept of *emunas chachamim*, belief and trust in the judgment and insight of the great Torah leaders of every generation who are the only ones who have the ability to interpret events taking place and who can offer a *daas Torah* perspective on what is happening and what it means. 📖



MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Honor Them, Revere Them by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein



Kibbud av va'eim demands that children seek to avoid upsetting their parents whenever possible, even when the issue centers around the fulfillment of a mitzvah.

Halachah states that in keeping with the rule of *zerizim makdimim l'mitzvos*, that the zealous perform mitzvos as early as possible, a *bris milah* should take place in the morning.

What if the baby's grandparents want the *bris* to take place in the afternoon so that their friends and relatives will be able to attend after work? The baby's parents should respectfully explain the importance of having the *bris* in the morning, or at least before mid-day. If the grandparents are still insistent that it take place in the afternoon and they will be upset if it is held in the morning, their request should be granted.

If the grandparents want the *bris* postponed for another day, a clear violation of Halachah, their request should not be granted. However, even in this instance, it is important to deny their request respectfully. They should be told that following Halachah will be a source of merit both for them and for the newborn.

A father who would soon be celebrating his son's *bris* posed the following question to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach:

His father would be flying in from overseas for the *bris*. His flight was scheduled to arrive before sunrise. If the *bris* was held right after *Shacharis*, the grandfather would probably get there on time, but he would feel pressured.

Rav Shlomo Zalman replied that nowhere in *sifrei halachah* is there any discussion as to whether or not *zerizim makdimim l'mitzvos* takes precedence over *kibbud av va'eim* — because there is no question that it does not take precedence! Therefore, the *bris* should be postponed to about an hour before noon so that it

will still be in the morning and the grandfather will not be under any pressure.

Rabbi Aharon Brustowsky, a rebbi in the Lakewood Cheder, related:

When one of his children was born, there were serious complications at birth, but everything was resolved and both mother and child were fine. The doctor said it was a miracle. Rabbi Brustowsky and his wife thought that perhaps the miracle was in the merit of his dedication to teaching Torah to *tinokos shel beis rabban*. Therefore,



R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach

NOWHERE IS THERE ANY DISCUSSION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT ZERIZIM MAKDIMIM L'MITZVOS TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER KIBBUD AV VA'EIM — BECAUSE THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT IT DOES NOT TAKE PRECEDENCE!

Rabbi Brustowsky wanted to schedule the *bris* at an early hour so that he would be able to be in class on time, just like on any other

day.

As with any important question, Rabbi Brustowsky called his rebbi, Rav Elya Svei, to ask if his plan was correct.

Rav Svei responded, "You are making a correct *cheshbon* (calculation) as far as your class, but what about your parents and in-laws? They will have to wake up very early to come in from New York and be on time."

Only after Rabbi Brustowsky assured his rebbi that both his parents and in-laws would be arriving in Lakewood the night before the *bris* did Rav Svei approve the plan. 📖

YOMI SCHEDULES FOR THIS WEEK:

	SHABBOS JUNE 27 י"ב תמוז	SUNDAY JUNE 28 י"ג תמוז	MONDAY JUNE 29 יד תמוז	TUESDAY JUNE 30 טו תמוז	WEDNESDAY JULY 1 טז תמוז	THURSDAY JULY 2 י"ז תמוז	FRIDAY JULY 3 י"ח תמוז
BAVLI	Chullin 58	Chullin 59	Chullin 60	Chullin 61	Chulin 62	Chulin 63	Chulin 64
YERUSHALMI	Chagigah 9	Chagigah 10	Chagigah 11	Chagigah 12	Chagigah 13	Chagigah 14	Chagigah 15
MISHNAH	Keilim 13:8-14:1	Keilim 14:2-3	Keilim 14:4-5	Keilim 14:6-7	Keilim 14:8-15:1	Keilim 15:2-3	Keilim 15:4-5
KITZUR	168:6-171:1	171:2-173:1	173:2-175:3	175:4-176:7	176:8-177:8	121:6-End	177:9-178:3
ORAYA	Yevamos Chazara 76b-77b	Yevamos 78a Chazara 77b	Yevamos 78b Chazara 78a	Yevamos 79a Chazara 78b	Yevamos 79b Chazara 79a	Yevamos 80a Chazara 79b	Yevamos Chazara 78a-78b

In the aftermath of the Second World War, R' Motel Zitnitsky found himself in a DP camp in Sweden. Before the world collapsed, R' Motel had been a great *talmid chacham* and an accomplished *marbitz Torah* in Poland. He was the head of a beautiful home and the father of six children. But in a horrific tragedy at the start of the war, his wife and all six of his children were murdered outside the gates of Treblinka. R' Motel alone survived, moving from one labor camp to another, enduring the unimaginable.

At the war's end, he was a bedraggled survivor slowly attempting to regain his footing. Finally, a glimmer of light appeared in the darkness. The rav of the camp, R' Jacobson, suggested a shidduch to him. R' Motel finally had the opportunity to go on with life, to rebuild.

The day of the chuppah arrived. A makeshift canopy was set up in the camp courtyard. The kallah was waiting. The chuppah was scheduled for two o'clock, but the *chassan* was nowhere to be found. His friends began to search frantically through the camp. They checked his room, the barracks, and the makeshift beis midrash, but he had vanished.

Finally, a friend found him. He was in a small side room, sitting alone at a wooden table with his head buried in his hands.

"Mottel!" his friend said, tapping him on the shoulder. "Mottel, *s'iz shoyn tzeit far der chuppah!* (It's time for the chuppah!)"

R' Motel did not move.

"Mottel, *der rav vart!* (The rabbi is waiting!)"

Still, there was no response. His friend's voice grew urgent. "Mottel, *der oilam vart! Der chuppah shteit!* The people are waiting! The chuppah is ready!"

Slowly, R' Motel lifted his head. His face was soaked with tears. In a broken, hollow voice, he cried out, "Vos

chuppah? Ven chuppah? Ver chuppah? (What chuppah? When chuppah? Whose chuppah?) What will be with my Kreindel? What about my Chaim Yitzchok? My Rifkele..."

He began to recite the names of his murdered wife and each of his six children, one by one. His voice was choked with a grief so heavy the room seemed to darken. He finished the list and dropped his head back onto the table, consumed by the weight of everything he had lost.

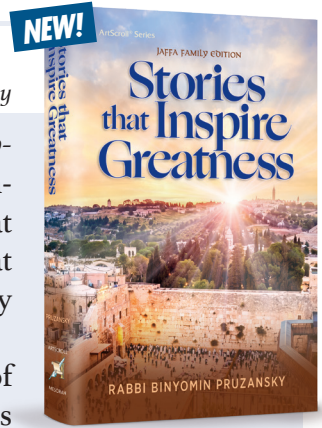
A heavy, painful silence filled the room. Then, with a sudden, thunderous force, R' Motel slammed his fist onto the table. The sound echoed like a gunshot. He pushed himself up, his back straight and his eyes blazing with an almost supernatural resolve.

"*Ober m'geit!*" he declared. "But we are going forward!"

With his head held high, he marched out of that room and toward the chuppah.

Those who witnessed that moment said that in that single, powerful thump of the fist, they heard the resounding cry of the Jewish people throughout history. It was the eternal declaration that we do not live in the past; we live for the future. No matter how deep the wound is, we keep moving forward.

This is a message for each of us. Our past may be filled with personal struggles, failures, or negative thoughts that try to hold us back. But we must refuse to define ourselves by yesterday's devastation. Instead, we look forward with *emunah*, knowing that Hashem will help us thrive again. Despite the challenges we are grappling with at this moment, we must commit to taking the next step toward a life of meaning and purpose. 📖



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Which three mountains weren't flattened by the cloud in the midbar?

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 Naso is: SHLOMO MARIN, Lakewood, NJ

Question for Naso was: Why didn't the members of Kehas's family get even one wagon to transport the items in the Mishkan?
Naso Answer: Because they carried the holiest Mishkan items on their shoulders so they didn't need any wagons at all!



PART 16: HALACHIC WORKS – AUTHORITATIVE AND PRACTICAL

ArtScroll's extensive library of books on halachah began with R' Simcha Bunim's first sefer, the "Radiance of Shabbos," which was published in 1986. Since then, R' Simcha Bunim has written more than a dozen works that deal with practical halachah, with a host of them dealing with the intricate laws of Shabbos.

In addition to his learning and research, R' Simcha Bunim had the great blessing of having had a personal relationship with the *gaon* and *posek hador*, R' Moshe Feinstein zt"l, and was able to discuss *halachic* issues with him.

We take very seriously our responsibility to assure the accuracy of all our publications, but this responsibility is especially acute with regard to works of halachah. The qualifications of an author or his co-author are of prime importance, as is their ability to express themselves accurately and clearly. Otherwise, a reader may misunderstand or wrongly infer that something is permitted or forbidden. Once accepted, a *halachic* work would go through layers of reading and editing, with constant interplay among authors, editors, proofreaders and, whenever still necessary, consultation with senior *poskim*, to ensure that it was communicated accurately and clearly.

The results of this meticulous system ended up producing a long list of *halachic* works that have won the approval of leading authorities and the confidence of *Klal Yisrael* as a whole – a topic which will be discussed in the next issue of *50 Years of ArtScroll*.

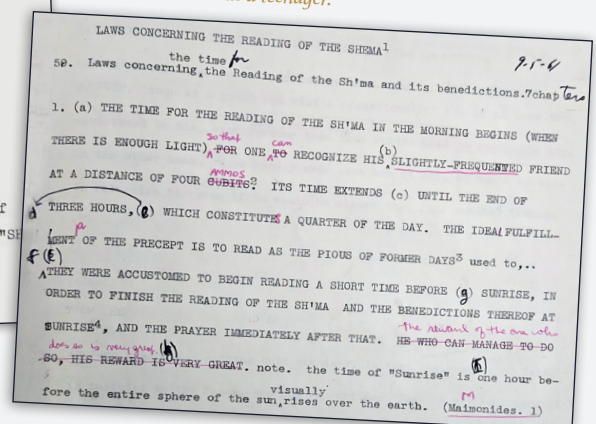
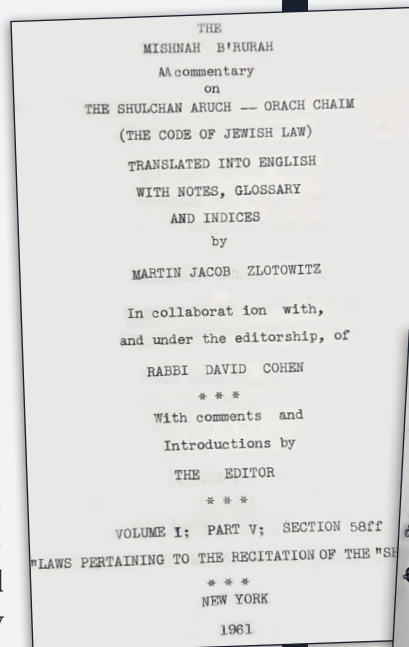
A fascinating sidenote: One of the most frequently requested halachah sefarim is, understandably, *Mishnah Berurah*. After all, it is likely the most wide-

ly studied work of practical halachah, so wouldn't it make sense to give it a comprehensive ArtScroll elucidation? So why haven't we done it?

The answer goes to the heart of the principles that guide us: We follow the guidance of our *gedolim*. On more than one occasion, R' Dovid Feinstein zt"l made it clear that we should not be producing a *Mishnah Berurah*. As in all areas, his word was the final decision.

There is a poignant postscript to this story. As a teenager, Meir Zlotowitz carefully guarded a sheaf of papers on which he spent countless hours in his spare time — an English translation of the *Mishnah Berurah* that he had begun on his own.

Title page and the start of Siman 58 of the Mishnah Berurah R' Meir translated as a teenager.



The *Mishnah Berurah* remained a lifelong dream that he had both the ability and the opportunity to bring to fruition. It would have fulfilled a personal aspiration that began in childhood while answering one of the most frequent requests ArtScroll receives. Yet for R' Meir, as for ArtScroll itself, personal dreams and popular demand could never outweigh *daas Torah*. R' Dovid Feinstein ruled that ArtScroll should not produce a *Mishnah Berurah*. The guidance of the *gedolim* was, and remains, the principle that stands above all else. End of story.

UP NEXT: The Books that Shaped our Halachah Series