

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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PARASHAH

IGNORE THE ODDS

Living Emunah on the Parashah 2 by Rabbi David Ashear

There are many situations in which people have great needs, but the odds of getting what they need are extraordinarily low. The natural reaction in those situations is to despair. It could be a doctor giving a patient a grim report, a specialist telling a couple they will most probably never have children, a financial expert predicting that a business will fail — and the list goes on.

What is the proper attitude for a person to have when facing those bleak scenarios? The *pasuk* says in *Parashas Shoftim* (*Devarim* 20:1), *כִּי תֵצֵא לְמִלְחָמָה, עִם רֵב מְאֹד לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם* —

When you go out to battle against your enemy and see horse and chariot, a people more numerous than you, you shall not fear them.

The Torah there is speaking about Klal Yisrael going to fight a war. If they saw a nation much larger and stronger charging toward them, they were not permitted to be afraid. The *pasuk* concludes with the reason: *כִּי ה'*

אֱלֹהֵיךָ עִמָּךְ, הַמַּעֲלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם מִצִּרְיִם —

For Hashem, your G-d, is with you, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt. The same Hashem Who destroyed the mightiest empire of its time would be with them in this battle as well.

R' Mattisyahu Salomon explains that a charging nation, far more numerous and powerful, seems like an insurmountable problem. According to the natural order, defeat would be inevitable. The statistics would predict certain loss. But the Torah is telling us that victory has nothing to do with statistics or odds. The reason is simple — wars are decided solely by Hashem. Not only is there nothing to fear, but the Torah actually gives a *lo taaseh*, a prohibitive

commandment, forbidding fear in such a situation.

Rabbeinu Yonah writes in *Shaarei Teshuvah* (*Shaar* 3:32) that although this commandment was directed to the Jewish nation regarding a *milchemes mitzvah*, it applies to every individual whenever he is facing trouble. In his words: "We are thus warned that if a person sees that trouble is near, he should have the salvation of Hashem in his heart and trust in it."

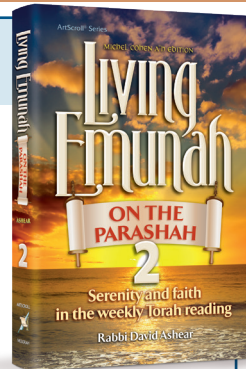


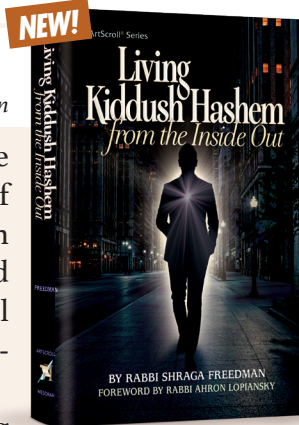
R' Mattisyahu Salomon
with R' Malkiel Kutler

THIS MEANS THAT WHEN A DOCTOR SAYS THE CHANCES OF RECOVERY ARE SLIM, IT IS A CALL FOR THE PATIENT TO RECOGNIZE THAT HE HAS HASHEM — AND FOR HASHEM, ODDS DON'T EXIST.

This means that when a doctor says the chances of recovery are slim, it is a call for the patient to recognize that he has Hashem — and for Hashem, odds don't exist. That reality should be so strong in his mind that it enables him to overcome fear and feel calm, knowing that he is in the loving hands of Hashem, Who always does what is best.

It turns out that whenever a person is facing such situations, he has a mitzvah from the Torah to ignore the odds and feel confident in Hashem's salvation. He should make the normal *hishtadlus*, pray, and remember: for Hashem, there is never such a thing as odds. 📖





Imam Tawhidi had been raised to hate Jews. It was not something he chose. It was the world he grew up in, the air he breathed, the language of belonging. Jews were spoken of as enemies, as people to avoid, distrust, reject.

One winter afternoon in 2013, Imam Tawhidi was driving alone along a lonely stretch of Australian highway between Melbourne and Shepparton when his car conked out. Rain fell in torrents. The sky was darkening. There was no roadside service, no nearby town, no one he could reasonably call for help. He pulled onto the shoulder, opened the hood, and quickly realized he had no idea what he was doing.

He waited. Car after car passed. Truck after truck thundered by. No one slowed.

Night was coming, and with it the quiet fear of being stranded in the middle of nowhere.

Then a vehicle pulled over behind him.

The driver stepped out, and Imam Tawhidi saw immediately that the man was Jewish. Black hat. Beard. *Tzitzis* hanging at his sides.

His chest tightened with anger. Of all the people in the world... this is who stops?

The man approached gently. "Are you alright?"

The response was sharp and defensive. Imam Tawhidi told him to leave. He insulted him. He tried to push him away.

The Jewish man did not argue. He walked back to his car. Then, moments later, he returned. Slowly. Quietly. Persistently.

Even after being rejected, the Jewish man remained in his car behind Imam Tawhidi's vehicle, waiting patiently.

As the rain continued and the sky grew darker, something shifted. Fear overpowered pride. Imam Tawhidi finally gave a small signal for the man to come back.

"I can take you to the nearest town," the man said.

Imam Tawhidi locked his disabled car, gathered his

belongings, and climbed into the back seat, unable to bring himself to sit beside him. The Jewish man drove him to a small town and left him safely at a modest motel for the night. He asked for nothing. No payment. No thanks.

The next morning, returning by taxi to the spot where his car still waited, the weight of the night finally settled on Imam Tawhidi. He saw the open road in daylight, the empty fields, the long distance to anywhere at all. He understood what that stranger had done.

A man he had been taught to hate had been the only one who stopped. From that day on, something inside Imam Tawhidi changed. On every long drive afterward, he began stopping for stranded motorists.

He waited with them. He drove miles for water, for tools, for help. Sometimes he even turned around on busy highways just to ask a stranger, "Are you okay?"

Gradually, Imam himself underwent a deeper transformation and has since become one of the

most prominent Muslim voices speaking out against Islamic extremist ideology and antisemitism.

Tawhidi has announced plans to launch an organization and educational program aimed at educating a new generation of Muslims and protecting them from radicalization. With a platform that now reaches millions of people, he seeks to prevent others from rewriting history and distorting the truth.

He learned the power of kindness and human dignity from a man he once would not even look at. It changed his life and has had a ripple effect felt around the world. 🌍

**IMAM TAWHIDI SAW
IMMEDIATELY THAT
THE MAN WAS JEWISH.
BLACK HAT. BEARD.
TZITZIS HANGING AT
HIS SIDES.**

	SHABBOS AUGUST 15 ב אלו	SUNDAY AUGUST 16 ג אלו	MONDAY AUGUST 17 ד אלו	TUESDAY AUGUST 18 ה אלו	WEDNESDAY AUGUST 19 ו אלו	THURSDAY AUGUST 20 ז אלו	FRIDAY AUGUST 21 ח אלו
BAVLI	Chullin 107	Chullin 108	Chullin 109	Chullin 110	Chullin 111	Chullin 112	Chullin 113
YERUSHALMI	Yevamos 7	Yevamos 8	Yevamos 9	Yevamos 10	Yevamos 11	Yevamos 12	Yevamos 13
MISHNAH	Keilim 24:15-16	Keilim 24:17-25:1	Keilim 25:2-3	Keilim 25:4-5	Keilim 25:6-7	Keilim 25:8-9	Keilim 26:1-2
KITZUR	206:7-207:5	207:6-208:9	208:10-209:6	209:7-210:End	211:1-11	211:12-212:End	213:1-214:End
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 94a-95a	Yevamos 95b Chazara 95a	Yevamos 96a Chazara 95b	Yevamos 96b Chazara 96a	Yevamos 97a Chazara 96b	Yevamos 97b Chazara 97a	Yevamos Chazara 95b-96a

The *yemei haratzon*, the month of Elul, were the most intense days of the year in Rav Baruch Mordche's yeshivah. From Shabbos Mevarchim Elul, the Rosh Yeshivah demanded more, because the season itself demands more.

Elul, he told the *bachurim*, is not a period on the calendar, but a concept, and that concept is *Ani ledodi, ve-dodi li, I alone am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine*. There is a flow of Divine closeness available, but it is only accessible to one who desires it.

He quoted the Gemara that discusses the prohibition against sorcery. "There shall not be found among you one who causes his son or daughter to pass through the fire....or directs inquiries to the dead." The Gemara explains that this refers to a person who starves himself and sleeps in a graveyard so that a spirit of impurity should settle upon him.

When Rabbi Akiva would arrive at this verse he would weep and say: If one who starves himself so that a spirit of impurity will settle upon him succeeds in doing so, all the more so one who starves himself so that a spirit of purity will settle upon him will be successful...

The Rosh Yeshivah asked a simple question: Just because the forces of impurity that reside in the cemetery crave more *tumah*, so they are willing to settle on one who desires *tumah*, who says that the forces of purity have a similar inclination to rest on a person?

"The Gemara is not teaching us about the *cheftzah* of hunger, but about the *cheftzah* of *ratzon*," he answered. "Someone who truly wants to be impacted by the *ruach* of *tumah* will get it, because that is their deepest desire, and *ratzon* is an unstoppable force. If so, imag-

ine the heights that a person who desires *kedushah* can reach."

"That," the Rosh Yeshivah concluded, "is *ani ledodi*," that craving and hunger, and it generates *v'dodi li*, the spirit of *kedushah* that rests upon a person.

This was the backdrop to one of the most dramatic moments of the year in Ateret; after Shacharis on Rosh Chodesh Elul, his hand would rise, then come down with force on his *shtender*.

"Elul," he would roar, ushering in the month.

In Elul in Ateret, nothing was new; the demands and expectations were the same as they were throughout the year, but *everything* was new; the air charged with possibility. In Elul, the challenge issued by the Rosh Yeshivah was this: Look inside, and see if the Torah you have learned has remained external, or if it has become part of you!

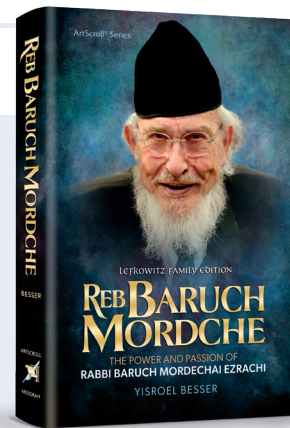
Elul, the Rosh Yeshivah would say in the name of R' Elya Lopian, is a *datche*, the vacation for the *neshamah*, its opportunity to be rejuvenated before the new year.

Every Shabbos of the year, he would greet the *bachurim* with a warm "*gut Shabbos*," but during Elul, he added another wish as well; *a gut Shabbos uhn a gutten Elul*.

One Elul night, he stood up to speak after Maariv. Rather than give a *shmuess*, the Rosh Yeshivah said that he simply wanted to make two announcements.

First, he said, he had some not-such-good news to share; two weeks of Elul had already passed.

Second, he had some good news as well; there were still two precious weeks of Elul remaining. 📖



R' Baruch Mordche

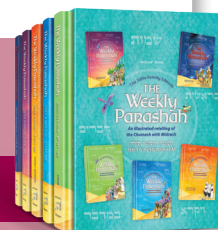
THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Give an example of an animal whose zeroa, lechayayim, and keivah are given to a kohen. Give an example of an animal whose zeroa, lechayayim, and keivah are NOT given to a kohen.

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 Devarim is: YEHEZKEL EZRA NAKAR, Brooklyn, New York

Question for Devarim was: What are the four names of Har Chermon? Devarim Answer: Chermon, Sirion, Senir and Sion



PART 23: THE SCHOTTENSTEIN ERA BEGINS

The first volume of the ArtScroll Talmud, Tractate Makkos, took the world by storm. Its extraordinary reception gave ArtScroll the confidence to proceed with succeeding volumes, timed to coincide with their study in the Daf Yomi cycle. According to that schedule, Tractate Eruvin Volume I would be the next practical one.

There was one problem: How would Mesorah Heritage Foundation pay for its editorial work, with each volume costing hundreds of thousands of dollars? R' Zlotowitz's friend, Rabbi Raphael Butler, suggested that Mr. Jerome Schottenstein of Columbus, Ohio, might be receptive to sponsoring a volume.

The Schottenstein's *rav* and trusted confidant, Rabbi Alan J. Ciner, encouraged Jerome to meet with R' Meir and R' Nosson. With the wholehearted support of his wife and children, Jerome agreed to underwrite the first volume of Tractate Eruvin. Before it was finished, he committed to a second volume and advanced the funding for both.

Not long afterward, Jerome became seriously ill. Around the same time, an even greater opportunity arose. We were seeking a sponsor for the entire Talmud project, and another philanthropic family had expressed interest. Yet R' Meir believed that the Schottensteins should receive the first opportunity to undertake this historic role.

In the spring of 1991, R' Meir and R' Nosson traveled to Ohio to meet Jerome, stopping first in Wickliffe to visit Rav Mordechai Gifter where they received his blessing.

Jerome, with his son Jay and Rabbi Ciner beside him, listened as R' Meir proposed that the Schottenstein family sponsor the naming of the entire English

edition of the Talmud. After hearing the proposal, Jay turned to his father and observed that there could be no greater distinction for a Jew than to have his family name permanently linked with Torah. The decision came quickly. By the following day, the partnership was finalized.

From that moment, the monumental undertaking would be known as the Schottenstein Edition of the Talmud. The family name would eventually appear in shuls, schools, and Jewish homes across the globe. At a celebratory dinner, Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, then Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, described the project as one of the most consequential publishing achievements in Jewish history.

Jerome lived long enough to witness the start of his extraordinary vision, but sadly, passed away on 5 Adar II, 1992.

In addition to perpetuating Torah study, Jerome was a role model of another very important element of Jewish continuity. He was committed to involving his children in his philanthropies so that *tzedakah* would be as central to their lives as it was to his. In achieving this goal, no one was more successful than Jerome: After his passing, Jay—only 37 years old, and with every understandable excuse to step away from the enormous 15-year, multi-million dollar undertaking his father had begun—joined with his wife, Jeanie, in accepting responsibility for carrying the entire project forward.

To this day, they and their children continue to undertake landmark ArtScroll/Mesorah Torah projects, ensuring that Jerome's devotion to spreading Torah continues to illuminate generations. Jay's words to his father became far more than a reflection on that historic moment: Through the devotion of the Schottenstein family, the Schottenstein name has become permanently—more than any other philanthropist in Jewish history—linked with Torah.

UP NEXT: The ArtScroll Series — Who's It For?



Top: Jerome with R' Nosson and R' Meir
Bottom: R' Dovid Feinstein and Jay