

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

PARASHAH /
CHANUKAH

CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

Rav Pam on Chumash from Rav Avrohom Pam zt"l, by Rabbi Sholom Smith

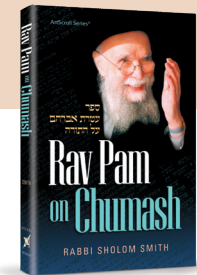
When Yosef Hatzaddik interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, he asserted that he deserved no personal credit for giving an interpretation. "It is beyond me. It is G-d Who will respond with Pharaoh's welfare," he said. On these words, the *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 89:9)* comments: "Talah hagedulah bivalav — He credited the greatness to its true Master."

When Pharaoh heard this, and the brilliant interpretation that followed, he was astounded. Pharaoh realized that Yosef could have taken this opportunity to demand anything that he wanted — wealth, honor, prestige or power. Pharaoh would surely have granted him whatever he desired. Yet Yosef disclaimed any personal credit for his interpretation. He underlined the fact that it had nothing to do with him. He was merely the mouthpiece of Hashem in transmitting to Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams. It was to Hashem that all honor and gratitude were due. It has always been the practice of great Jews not to attribute their accomplishments to themselves. This behavior is found in the miracle of *Chanukah* itself. In many accounts of the story of

Chanukah, the *Chashmona'im* are portrayed as mighty warriors who fearlessly fought the Syrian-Greek armies and led the Jewish people to victory. They displayed great courage and heroism in defeating such a formidable military force despite being heavily outnumbered. Yet in the wording of the special *Al HaNissim* prayer that *Chazal* instituted in commemoration of this great miracle, a different picture emerges: *Masarta giborim*

that brought about the victory, but the Hand of Hashem that orchestrated the miracle. They were merely the players chosen to bring about the salvation of *Klal Yisrael*.

The concern of the *Chashmona'im* was first and foremost to rectify the great *chillul Hashem* perpetrated by the Greeks and their Jewish collaborators who



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beyad chalashim — You (Hashem) delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak. The *Chashmona'im* openly admitted that they were weak people, *kohanim* who were inexperienced in the ways of war. Their great heroics are downplayed by the phrase, *You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak*. The righteous *Chashmona'im* honestly gave credit where it was due — to Hashem. It was not their strength or military tactics

sacrificed pigs on the Altar and who forbade the study of Torah, as well as the performance of *mitzvos* like *Rosh Chodesh*, *Shabbos*, and *bris milah*.

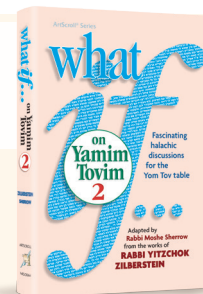
Once again, this theme is stressed in *Al Hanissim: For Yourself, You made a great and holy Name in Your world, and for Your people Yisrael You performed a great victory and salvation as this very day*. The main thrust of



Rav Avrohom Pam

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Q. Kehillas Anshei Zahav has an exquisitely beautiful, unusually large, and extremely expensive *menorah* in which the *gabbai* lights candles during the eight days of *Chanukah*. During the week, after the candles have gone out, the *menorah* is returned to the *shul's* safe. On *Shabbos*, however, the *menorah* cannot be moved, because it was a *basis* (base) for the flames as *Shabbos* began and is thus *muktzeh*. The *gabbaim* want to know if people should extend themselves in order to guard the *menorah* throughout the night of *Shabbos Chanukah*, or if they should simply light with an inexpensive *menorah* on *Erev Shabbos* so as not to deprive the would-be watchmen from the *mitzvah* of *oneg Shabbos*.

A. The *Gemara* in *Maseches Sukkah* (53a) relates in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya that during the week of the celebration of *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah*, all those who were present deprived themselves of sleep. They exerted themselves in order to glorify the *mitzvah*. There is another inconsistency in the schedule in the *Beis HaMikdash* during the week of the *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah*. During that week, the *Yidden* did not *daven Maariv*! They did *daven Shacharis, Mussaf,*

and *Minchah*, but not *Maariv*. Some explain that this *Gemara* is Rabbi Yehoshua's ruling according to his own opinion, as he maintains in *Maseches Berachos* (27b) that *davening Maariv* is not obligatory. *Tosafos*

Succah (50b) tells us that the *mitzvah* of *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah* was preordained from the Six Days of Creation. During the *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah*, the participants would absorb *ru'ach ha-kodesh* (*Yerushalmi, Succah* 5:1) and according to some opinions were even permitted to play instruments on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* on behalf of the *mitzvah*. In contrast, lighting *Chanukah* candles in *shul* is only a *min-*

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(27b s.v. *halachah*) explain that according to this opinion, one would be allowed to waive *davening Maariv* in favor of a different *mitzvah* that he could not do otherwise. Thus, when the *Yidden* were involved in the *mitzvah* of *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah*, they did not *daven Maariv*.

It would seem that this would be a precedent that one would be allowed to forgo sleeping on *Shabbos* night in order to accord honor to the *mitzvah* of lighting *Chanukah* candles.

One could argue that this is no proof at all. The *Gemara* in *Maseches*

hag, and one can satisfy that *minhag* by lighting a simple *menorah*. One could not apply the leniency found regarding the *Simchas Beis Hasho'eivah* to lighting a *menorah* in *shul*; i.e., just because the congregants want to light an expensive *menorah*, that should not come at the expense of *oneg Shabbos*.

The best solution would be to find a pair of study partners whose true *oneg Shabbos* would be to learn in *shul* the entire night. In that way, the *menorah* will be safe and the congregants will not suffer any sleep deprivation. 📖

CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

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the prayer is to emphasize that the disgrace of Hashem's name was rectified. The great victory in battle was of only secondary importance. Again, the theme of "*talah hagedulah bivalav*" is underscored. This idea is

further developed in the words of the *navi* Zechariah, which is read as the *haftarah* of *Shabbos Chanukah: Not through armies and not through might, but through My spirit, says Hashem, Master of Legions* (4:6).

May this important message of *Chanukah* inspire us all year long. 📖

PING PONG WITH THE RABBI

At Any Hour The biography of Rav Shlomo Gissinger, by Avrohom Birnbaum

Confused. Upset. Alone. In turmoil. That was the world of Bruce Abrams*, a young teenager who had been living with his family in West Orange, New Jersey until his parents turned his life upside down.

It began with a *Shabbos* visit at some rabbi's home in Lakewood...which he did not join. It continued with a relationship that was slowly bringing them closer and closer to a more enhanced level of Torah observance... to which he did not subscribe. It culminated in a move to the ultra-Orthodox stronghold of Lakewood, where his parents became members of Khal Zichron Yaakov...which he completely resented.



Rav Shlomo Gissinger

As they were inching closer and closer to the big move, Bruce felt more isolated than ever. He wanted nothing to do with his parents' new adventure, but he could not exactly venture off on his own.

And then *Rosh Hashanah* was approaching. The Gissingers invited the Abrams to join them in Lakewood for *Yom Tov* and they were thrilled to accept... other than Bruce, who had no choice but to sullenly accompany them, but he was not going to make it easy. Bruce was accustomed to going to synagogue on *Rosh Hashanah*, but he was not used to such a long, serious *davening*.

By the time the *seudah* was drawing to a close, Bruce's mood had plummeted even further. His parents were terrified that at the rate things were going, his precious, sensitive *neshomah* might be lost to *Yiddishkeit*.

Bentching was over. The adults were leaving the table. Suddenly, Rabbi Gissinger addressed Bruce: "Bruce, perhaps you want to play a game of ping pong with me downstairs?"

Thus, *Rosh Hashanah* afternoon, the afternoon of one of the holiest days of the year, found the illustrious

IN THAT ENERGETIC GAME OF PING PONG ON ROSH HASHANAH AFTERNOON, RABBI GISSINGER CAPTURED BRUCE'S HEART.

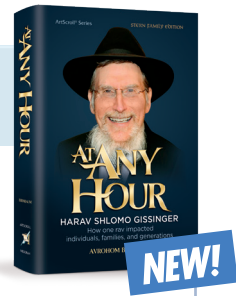
rav playing a mean game of ping pong with Bruce. It was a spirited game they played before Rabbi Gissinger walked to Kimball Medical Center to blow *shofar* for

anyone who might need to hear it.

It was a vigorous game during which the noted *rav* and *posek* showed a teen how much he valued him. In that energetic game of ping pong, Rabbi Gissinger captured Bruce's heart. From that moment, Bruce asked all his *shailos* to Rabbi Gissinger, who wisely let him move at his own pace, supporting him and helping him.

Slowly, their relationship flourished, with Bruce seeing time and time again just how much the *rav* understood him. When Bruce married, Rabbi Gissinger was *mesader kiddushin*, guiding him throughout.

Bruce currently lives in the Yerushalayim neighborhood of Ramat Eshkol and his children all attend *ye-shivos*...all because a *rav* in Lakewood understood that even *Rosh Hashanah* afternoon was a time when one needed to play ping pong with a youth in order to show understanding of his inner world... 📖



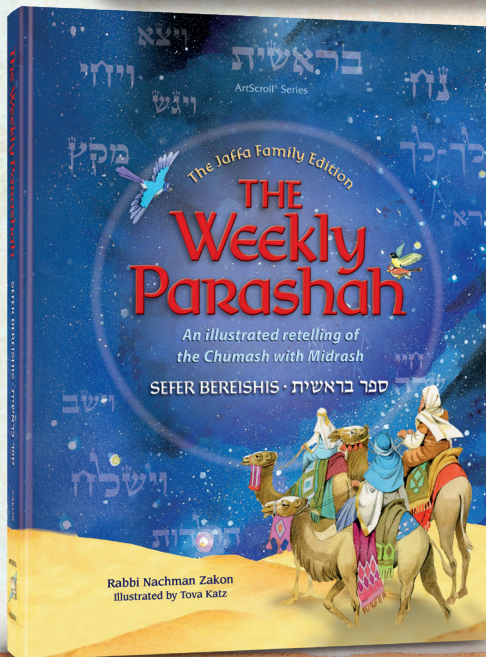
GREAT NEW RELEASES!





Parashah for Children

פרשת וישב



FASCINATING FACTS

Remember the *kesones passim* that Yaakov gave Yosef? In Hebrew, the word “*passim*” is פסיים. Its letters stand for all the groups Yosef was sold to:

- פ Peh — Potiphar
- ד Samech — socharim (slave traders)
- י Yud — Yishmaelim
- מ Mem — Midyanim

By the time Yosef arrived in Egypt he had been sold four times!



The ways that Yaakov and Yosef were similar to each other

- ▶ They looked alike.
- ▶ They both had brothers who hated them.
- ▶ Their mothers both had only two children.
- ▶ They both had angels that Hashem sent to protect them.
- ▶ They both got married outside of Eretz Yisrael.
- ▶ They both had children outside of Eretz Yisrael.
- ▶ They both had important dreams.



One of the reasons for the mitzvah to drink four cups of wine on Seder night is because the Hebrew word “*kos*,” which means cup, is mentioned four

times in the Torah when it discusses the Chief Butler’s dream and what it meant.

What does his dream have to do with Pesach?

The dream was also a message to Yosef about what would happen to the Jews in the future. The three branches were the three holy people Hashem would send to lead the Jews out of slavery in Egypt: Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam.



Why do you think Pharaoh had the Chief Baker killed, and let the Chief Butler go free?

The Chief Butler wasn’t really at fault. It’s easy for a waiter to miss seeing a fly jump into a silver cup when he is bringing it out. Or maybe the fly flew in after the Chief Butler had served the wine to Pharaoh, while the cup was

standing on the table waiting for Pharaoh to drink.

The Chief Baker was not careful. He should have sifted the flour and checked the dough more before he baked it. He was sloppy about his work. Pharaoh could have broken a tooth on the pebble or choked on it. So Pharaoh felt the Chief Baker was guilty.