

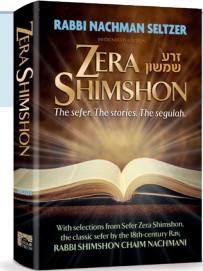
AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

PARASHAH

REPAYING EVIL FOR GOOD

Zera Shimshon from Rav Shimshon Chaim Nachmani By Rabbi Nachman Seltzer



הם יצאו את העיר לא הרחיקו ויוסף אמר לאשר על ביתו קום רדף אחרי האנשים והשגתם ואמרת אליהם למה שלמדתם רעה תחת טובה.

They had left the city, they had not gone far, and Yosef said to the one in charge of his house, "Arise, chase after the men; when you overtake them, you shall say to them, 'Why do you repay evil for good?'"

We would have expected Yosef Hatzaddik's message to be, "Why did you take the cup?" But he had his man ask, "Why did you repay evil for good?"

Yosef was delivering a *mussar shmuess* to the brothers about their jealousy and their turning against him.

This is what he was saying: "You were all so jealous of me when our father made me a special cloak, jealous enough that you were willing to sell me! But if you examine the relationship between my mother Rachel and your mother Leah, you will find exactly the opposite behavior.

My mother shared Yaakov's secret signs with her sister and willingly brought a co-wife

into the house. That's the exact opposite of jealousy!"

That is why Yosef told the one in charge of the house to ask them, "Why do you repay

THIS SHOWS US HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO FEEL GRATITUDE FOR THE HELP PEOPLE GIVE US.

evil for good?" He was referring to the good that his mother did for theirs.

This also explains why Chazal (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:18)

use the expression, "You sold the son of Rachel," a number of times in different places, instead of just saying, "You sold Yosef," or "You sold your brother."

Chazal are making a point here, stressing the same subtle message that Yosef was sending his brothers: "Where is your gratitude?" or, in other words, "Why do you repay evil for good?"

Yosef gave his brothers mussar about what he perceived as a lack of hakaras hatov—gratitude for the good that had been done for their mother by his. Of all the possible messages in the world, it is interesting that Yosef chose to focus on that one. This shows us how important it is to feel gratitude for the help people give us. 📖

INSPIRATION

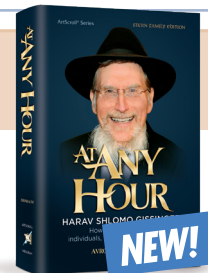
THE APPEAL

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

Thousands of people nostalgically remember the "waiting room" outside Rabbi Gissinger's office. In reality, it was his living room, and people would be seated on the couches or chairs waiting their turn. Some fidgeted nervously, knowing that the decision made inside might have a transformative impact on their

lives. Others availed themselves of the many books and *sefarim* waiting invitingly on the shelves.

Rabbi R*, a *talmid chacham* from Lakewood, was sitting in that room one night when the *rav* emerged from his office with

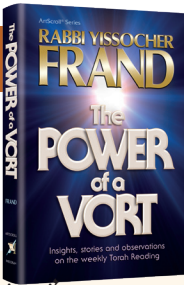


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ARTSROLLMESHORAH'S
PUBS

RISKING LIFE TO PREVENT SHAME

The Power of a Vort by Rabbi Yissocher Frand



ולא יכל יוסף להתאפק לְכָל הַנִּצְבִּים עָלָיו וַיִּקְרָא
הוֹצִיאָו כָּל אִישׁ מֵעָלָיו וְלֹא עָמַד אִישׁ אִתּוֹ בְּהַתְּדוּעַ יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחָיו.
Now Yosef could not restrain himself in the presence of all who stood before him, so he called out, "Remove everyone from before me!" Thus no one remained with him when Yosef made himself known to his brothers (45:1).

In today's social-media-driven world, the concept of public shaming, which in times of old was limited to securing a person in stocks to be exposed to the derision of his fellow villagers, has now taken on epic proportions. The shaming can now spread worldwide in seconds, often for something that isn't necessarily wrong or even true. It is mind-boggling how far removed this sort of public degradation is from the Torah's manner of handling those who have sinned — even grievously.

Prior to revealing his true identity to his brothers, Yosef sent everyone else out of the room, so that his brothers would not be embarrassed when they suddenly found themselves on the hot seat.

WHY DID YOSEF TAKE THAT KIND OF RISK?

At that moment — one of the most dramatic in the entire narrative portion of the Torah — when the brothers were suddenly faced by their betrayal, their humiliation was so complete that *Chazal* compare it to the great shame we will suffer when faced with our own actions on the Day of Judgment.

There is a dispute in a *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 93:9)* whether Yosef acted correctly when he ordered everyone out of the room. One opinion is that since the brothers could have killed him with one swift kick, he was wrong for leaving himself without any bodyguards to protect him. The other opinion maintains that Yosef knew that his brothers were righteous and would not resort to murder, so he was correct to protect their dignity by having everyone else leave the room.

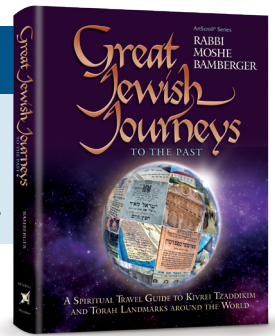
According to the first opinion, why did Yosef take that kind of risk?

It seems that Yosef was following *Chazal's (Sotah 10b)* teaching, "It is preferable for a person to throw himself into a fiery furnace rather than to embarrass his fellow publicly."

Yes, he was at risk of being killed, but he preferred death over humiliating his brothers in front of his Egyptian bodyguards. 📖

PROTECTING THE HOLY LAND

Great Jewish Journeys by Rabbi Moshe Bamberger



Rav Chaim ibn Attar (1696-1743) is referred to as the *Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh* after his monumental commentary to *Chumash*. In 1738, he left his native Morocco and traveled through Algeria and Italy on his way to Eretz Yisrael. While sojourning in Italy, he published *Ohr HaChaim* on the Torah. In 1741, he ascended to Eretz Yisrael with a group of disciples, eventually settling in Yerushalayim, where he established his *yeshivah*. Tragically, he passed away less than a year later, at age 47, and was buried on the Mount of Olives.



During World War II, the German enemy, led by General Erwin Rommel, was advancing on the Holy Land with the intent of conquering it and liquidating its Jewish inhabitants. The rabbis in Eretz Yisrael declared a fast on the *Ohr HaChaim's yahrtzeit*, the 15th of *Tammuz*, and twenty thousand Jews joined in prayer at his grave. Among them was the Husyatiner Rebbe, who seemed transfixed as he gazed at some point in the distance, while the thousands around him poured out their hearts in prayer. After a while, the *rebbe* turned to those closest to him and said that it would be good. It was later disclosed that the *rebbe* had seen Hashem's Ineffable Name spelled out in gold letters, floating in the air above the tombstone. The *rebbe's* optimistic prediction spread through the country, electrifying and inspiring the people. As Rommel was poised to push into the Holy Land, he was confronted with an immense sandstorm, which made movement of his troops impossible. This setback led to a chain of events that ultimately led to his defeat by the British Army. Field Marshall Keital, the German army commander, wrote in his memoirs that June 30, 1942, was the high point of the German military campaign in the desert, and that it was downhill after that, until the total collapse of their campaign. That day was the *yahrtzeit* of the *Ohr HaChaim*.

After 1948, when Har Hazeisim was under Jordanian control, they began building a road that ran through the cemetery on Har Hazeisim. As soon as the tractor reached the *kever* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, it broke down and was unable to restart. The Arabs brought a new tractor to clear the path, and when it came near the *kever*, it flipped over and tumbled down the valley. The planned roadway was abandoned. 📖

Q. *If we believe that all bad events come from a righteous G-d and are for our good, is feeling bad and upset a lack of faith in Hashem?*

A. There is nothing wrong with feeling pain and sadness when difficulties enter our lives, and on the contrary, these feelings are part of what brings atonement. In fact, if we did not feel any pain, there would be no point in Hashem afflicting us with pain, to awaken us to change our ways. However, at the same time, one should have an overwhelming feeling of serenity, trusting Hashem that this is all for our ultimate good.

Having such conflicting emotions simultaneously may sound impossible, but it can be done. A vivid example of this is when someone is sick and has to take a bitter

medicine that will save his life. The person will barely notice the unpleasant taste, realizing that this is saving his life.

The *Gemara* (*Berachos* 59b) discusses this very situation. A child who hears the news that his millionaire father died on the one hand is sad that his father died, but on the other hand is happy about the wealth he has inherited. Be-

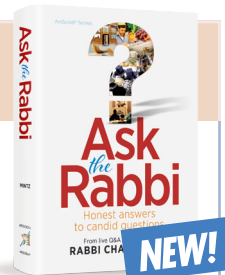
IT MAY SOUND IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IT CAN BE DONE.

cause of these mixed emotions, he recites two blessings, one for the good news and one for the bad.

In addition, any sadness or pain can only be temporary. When a parent dies, *halachah* dictates that the

children mourn for a year. After that time period is over, they must leave their mourning behind. It is as if G-d is telling them, "Get back to life! You're not more merciful than I am, and I took this the person's soul for a good reason." Of course they will miss the parent who is gone, but they have to work to switch their thoughts from sadness to happiness, secure with the knowledge that the deceased is now enjoying his reward in Heaven.

In short: One should feel pain, which is part of what brings atonement. At the same time, one should trust in Hashem that this is all for our ultimate good. 📖



THE APPEAL *continued from page 1*

a *meshulach* from Eretz Yisrael. There were about twenty people waiting to speak to the *rav*. Into the silence, the *rav* uncharacteristically addressed everyone in the room: "This *Yid* will *im yirtzeh Hashem* be marrying off a child shortly. I would appreciate if you can help him out."

As can be imagined, if the *rav* himself made an appeal, those in the room



Rav Shlomo Gissinger

felt they should do their best, and the *Yid* left with a tidy sum in his pocket and a smile on his face. Later,

I SAW THAT HE WAS A YID WHO REALLY NEEDED HELP.

when it was Rabbi R's turn to speak to the *rav* in his office, he felt sufficiently comfortable to ask the *rav* about the distinguished person for whom he had made the appeal. The shock came with the *rav*'s answer, said with complete *temimus*, "I have no idea who he is. This was the first time I ever met him, but I saw that he was a *Yid* who really needed help, so I tried to help him. 📖

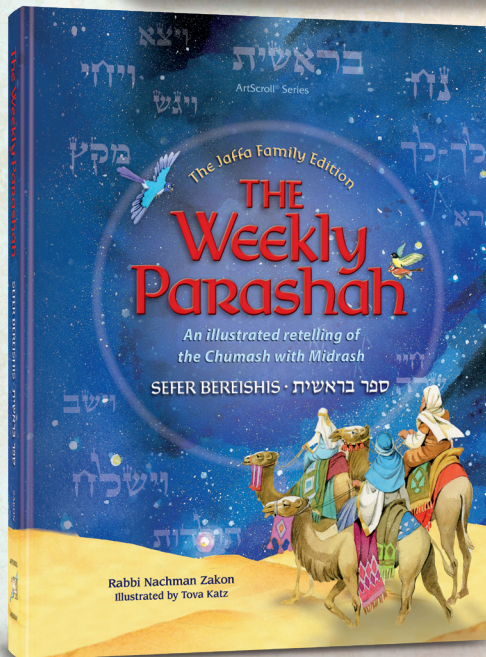
GREAT NEW RELEASES!





Parashah for Children

פרשת ויגש



Reunited



The news spread like wildfire throughout the palace and Egypt. The second most powerful man in Egypt wasn't a slave after all. He came from an important and famous family.

Pharaoh ordered his guards to bring Yosef to him. Pharaoh told him that he should tell his brothers to move their father, their families, and households to Egypt. Pharaoh promised to give them the best land in Egypt: Goshen. He would also give him the best Egypt has to offer.

Pharaoh was so excited about having Yosef's family in Egypt, he even gave them wagons to use to bring their belongings to Egypt!



Everything was so confusing and mysterious to the brothers. How did

Yosef know everything about them and their lives? Then, with just three words, "I am Yosef," it all became clear. All their questions were answered.

The same way, when Mashiach comes, all he will have to say is, "I am Mashiach," and all the questions we ever had will be answered.

In the story of Yosef and his brothers, we see what a great man Yosef was. His brothers sold him and he became a slave and a prisoner, and for many years had no contact with his father and family. Yet after all that, he forgave his brothers!

If Yosef could forgive his brothers for the terrible thing they did to him, can't we forgive others for the not-so-terrible things they do to us (like when your brother or sister takes your stuff without your permission)?

During the entire time – 22 years — that Yosef was away from his father, Yaakov was sad. Because he was sad, he could not have the high level of Hashem's Presence that he used to have. Once Yaakov found out that Yosef was alive, he became happy again. Then Hashem's Presence returned.

The happier we are, the closer we feel to Hashem, and the closer Hashem is to us. And that's a good reason to be happy with what **we have**, instead of being sad and complaining about things we **don't have**.

Next time you see an advertisement for something you don't have, don't be sad because you don't have it. Think about all you do have — and be happy!

