

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

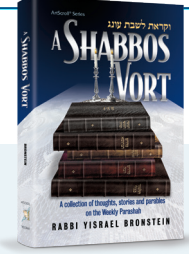
WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY  
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

## PARASHAH

### SHALOM FIRST

A Shabbos Vort  
by Rabbi Yisroel Bronstein



אִישׁ כִּי יָדַר נֶדֶר - *If a man takes a vow to Hashem (30:3).*

In his youth, Rav Yaakov Meshulam Ornstein (known as the *Yeshuos Yaakov* after his work by that title) was known as a very gifted child. By the time he was 12 years old, the rich men of his city vied with each other to claim him as a son-in-law.


On one occasion, one of these men sent a great Torah scholar to test the boy to see if he was indeed as brilliant as he was rumored to be. When they met, the boy extended his hand and offered the scholar the customary "*Shalom aleichem.*"

**AS HE TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO GREET HIS FRIEND, HE NEED NOT FEAR THAT HE WILL DIE MIDSENTENCE.**

"Perhaps you would be able to tell me," asked the scholar, "a *pilpul* (a sharp-witted Torah discourse) regarding the expression '*Shalom aleichem.*'"

"Certainly," he responded. "Let me ask you a question: Why is it that when two individuals meet, one of them says, '*Shalom aleichem,*' while the other responds, '*Aleichem Shalom*'?"

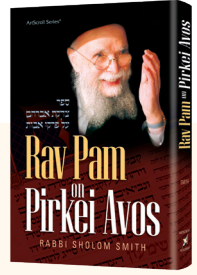
"The answer," said the boy, "is as follows: In *Maseches Nedarim* (10a), *Chazal* state that one who takes a vow should not say, 'For Hashem is this vow,' for perhaps he will die in the middle of saying his words and will have uttered Hashem's Name in vain. Rather, he should say, 'This vow is for Hashem.'

'*Shalom,*' continued the boy, "is one of the Names of Hashem. It would therefore stand to reason that one should not be permitted to say, '*Shalom aleichem,*' for he might die in the middle of saying the greeting and he will have pronounced Hashem's Name in vain. However, *Chazal* have stated elsewhere, 'One who precedes his friend in offering him '*Shalom*' has his days and years extended.' This is why the one who greets his friend first is permitted to say, '*Shalom aleichem.*' Since he took the initiative to greet his friend, he need not fear that he will die midsentence, for he is rewarded by having his years lengthened. His friend, however, must respond, '*Aleichem Shalom.*'" 

## PIRKEI AVOS

### CONTROLLING ANGER

Rav Pam on Pirkei Avos by Rabbi Sholom Smith



Rav Eliezer says: Let your fellow's honor be as dear to you as your own and do not anger easily (Avos 2:15).

*Tiferes Yisrael* sees a correlation between these two statements of Rav Eliezer. Many times, an outburst of anger is the result of one person insulting another one. The victim retaliates and the

**THE SIN IS NOT LIMITED TO WHEN ONE ERUPTS IN FURY.**

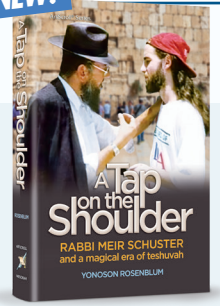
anger level escalates rapidly until there is an explosion of bitter acrimony on both sides. Thus, if a person is extremely careful to uphold his fellow Jew's honor and respect, it will spare him from an angry outburst and its harmful after-effects.

Rabbeinu Yonah comments that the *Mishnah* stresses "do not anger easily." This is because Rav *continued on page 3*

ARTSCROLL MESSAGES FOR PUBLICATION

"A Tap On the Shoulder" by Yonoson Rosenblum

NEW!



While the *Kosel* was the most likely spot for one of Rabbi Meir Schuster's taps on the shoulder to coincide with a just-expressed request for Heavenly guidance, such cases were not limited to the *Kosel*.

Chaim Harris came to Israel shortly after completing his tour of duty in the Naval Reserves. In the navy, he was engaged in intelligence gathering while stationed in the Aleutian Islands off the coast of Alaska. He was the only Jew among about 4,000 sailors, marines, and coast guard members stationed together with him.

After completing his service, Chaim went to Israel hoping to find Zionism and socialism combined on a kibbutz. Instead he spent much of his time fielding questions from young kibbutz members about how they could obtain green cards to work in the United States. Disillusioned, he left the kibbutz for a long weekend and went to Yerushalayim to look for a *yeshivah*. After four hours of searching on his first Sunday morning, he gave up and decided to go to the Central Bus Station and purchase a ticket for Ein Gedi.

At the bus station, he uttered a prayer: "G-d, I've just spent four hours walking around Your Holy City seeking to connect. I probably don't

deserve it and maybe I'm too late, but please give me a little help." He then purchased his ticket for Ein Gedi, and as he turned from the ticket counter, there was Rabbi Meir Schuster. Reb Meir asked him whether he was Jewish, his name, and what he was doing. Chaim's answer that he was looking for a *yeshivah* must have left Reb Meir dumbfounded. It was decidedly not a common response to his queries.

### SUDDENLY, CHAIM'S EYE CAUGHT SIGHT OF RABBI MEIR SCHUSTER, FOLLOWED BY TWO LONG-HAIRED YOUNG MEN LEAVING THE KOSEL PLAZA.

Just then, however, the bus to Ein Gedi arrived, and Chaim ran to find his seat. As he settled in, he looked out the window to see Reb Meir looking up sadly at the bus. Chaim thought to himself, "What a dummy I am. I asked G-d for some help and it arrived immediately. Then I didn't take it."

But he need not have worried.

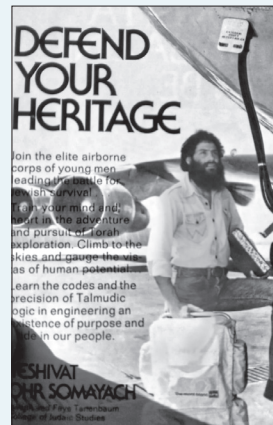
Reb Meir had gotten the name of the kibbutz where he was staying, and the next week, Chaim received a postcard inviting him to spend *Shab-*

*bos* in Yerushalayim. This time he did not pass up the opportunity. The following Friday night, he was standing in the Gerrer shtiebel in Geulah, wearing newly cleaned jeans, hiking boots, and a khaki shirt. Soon he was surrounded by a dozen or so young *chassidische yingelach* staring intently at him. He realized that he must have looked as foreign to them as they did to him.

Eventually, Chaim returned to Cleveland, his hometown. One night, he was watching the nightly news with his family, and Walter Cronkite had a segment on prospects for peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors. "What will bring peace?" Cronkite intoned, as the camera panned the Kosel Plaza.

Suddenly, Chaim's eye caught sight of Rabbi Meir Schuster, followed by two long-haired young men leaving the Kosel Plaza. He jumped from the living room sofa and yelled out, "That's what is going to bring peace."

Not long after that, he was back in Israel and learning at Ohr Somayach. He has lived and raised a large family in Israel over the last forty-five years. 📖



Chaim Harris in an iconic recruiting poster for Ohr Somayach

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## A PLACE IN HASHEM

Beis Halevi on Bitachon with commentary by Rabbi David Sutton



### Where is Nature?

Rav Yitzchak Hutner once commented, “Secular scientists have been trying to find a place in the universe for Hashem to exist. Torah sages have been trying to find a place in Hashem for the universe to exist!”

Meaning, one who thinks that the world is governed by nature will not find Hashem in the universe. But one who understands that there is nothing in the universe other than Hashem will not understand how “nature” can accomplish anything on its own.

Yuri Gagarin, the first human in outer space, remarked, “I thought I would find God in the Heavens, but He was nowhere to be found.” Rav Mordechai Gifter commented to that, “Well, I also saw the first visit to the moon, and I saw God everywhere!”

### What Are Your Needs?

A poverty-stricken man once approached Rav Simchah Bunim of Peshis’cha and asked him “How can I possibly recite the blessing every morning thanking Hashem ‘*She’asah li kol tzarki*, Who takes care of my every need,’ when I don’t have a penny to my name? Perhaps I am saying a blessing in vain.”

Rav Simchah Bunim replied, “Do you know what your ‘needs’ are? Your ‘need’ is to accept whatever Hashem gives you with love!”

The ideal *bitachon* is when one gives up all his cravings and accepts whatever Hashem gives him with love. 📖

## CONTROLLING ANGER

continued from page 1

Eliezer acknowledges that for one to be totally anger-free is virtually impossible. Even the greatest people have moments of anger. The *kuntz* (trick) lies in being able to control the surges of anger and limit them to when they are absolutely unavoidable.

Rav Chaim Vital writes that his *rebbe*, the *Arizal*, was more vigilant about avoiding anger than about avoiding any other sin. He quotes Kabbalistic sources describing the intense damage inflicted by anger on a person’s *neshamah* and the great difficulty of repairing that damage once it has been inflicted. This is alluded to in the words (*lyov* 18:4): “Who tears apart his soul in anger.”



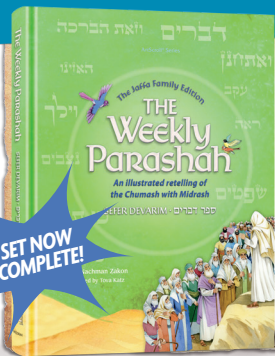
Rav Avrohom Pam

The classic work on the topic of anger is *Erech Apayim*, by Rav Avrohom Yellin. He writes that the sin of anger is not limited to when one erupts in fury. Even if a person allows anger to simmer in his heart without releasing it in words or deeds, that, too, is sinful.

Shlomo HaMelech (*Koheles* 11:10) cautions us, “Banish anger from your heart and remove evil from your flesh.” The *Gemara* (*Nedarim* 22a) defines evil as *Gehinnom* and says that whoever is angry, all types of *Gehinnom* afflict him. This does not mean only the fires of retribution in the World to Come. It means the terrible suffering that a person who angers easily brings upon himself in this world. His life is not a life, as the *Gemara* (*Pesachim* 113b) puts it, as it is filled with misery and frustration. Uncontrolled anger leads to an avalanche of sins, including *lashon*

*hara*, *rechilus*, baseless hatred, acts of violence, revenge, and many more. It leads to many physical ailments as well, which, if left unchecked, considerably shortens a person’s life. Contemplating the terrible price one pays for allowing his tendency to anger to go uncontrolled will help a person do everything possible to rid himself of this destructive *middah*. 📖

# New in time for Sefer Devarim!



The Jaffa Family Edition  
The Weekly Parashah features age-appropriate text and graphics, gorgeous illustrations, and fascinating sidebars on every page.

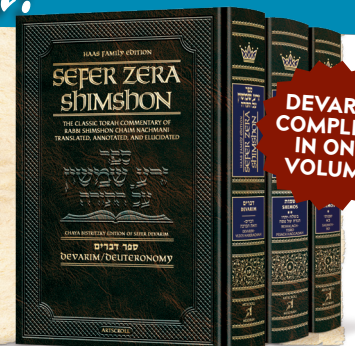


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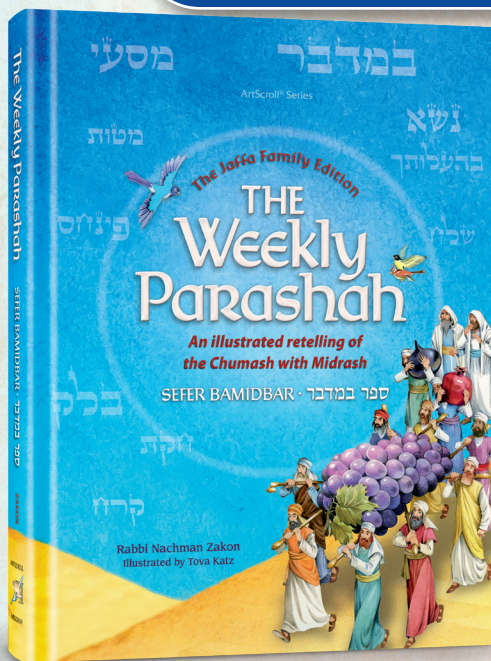
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# Parashah for Children

## פרשת מטות-מסעי



### Bli Neder

**H**ow often have you heard people promise something and then say the words “b’li neder”? Many times, right? “B’li neder” means: “Even though I want to do what I said, I don’t want it to be a neder (a promise).”

What’s wrong if it is a neder? If for some reason a person doesn’t do what he promised to do — so what? Can’t he change his mind?

The answer to that question is at the beginning of this parashah, when Moshe taught the laws of nedarim to the nesi'im, and then to the Jewish people.

A person is not allowed to make a neder and then not keep his word. By saying “b’li neder” the person is saying: “I plan to do what I said, but it’s not a neder.” That way, if the person ends up not doing what he said he would do, he hasn’t committed the sin of breaking a neder. Of course, if he can, he must still do what he said he would.

Sometimes a person who made a neder realizes that he made a mistake. Or maybe something happened that he did not expect. But he made a neder, and it’s a sin not to do what he promised! What should he do? Can he be released from his neder?

Yes, he can!

He can go to a Rabbi who is an expert in Torah law, like the nesi'im were. Or he can go to a beis din of three learned people. He can explain why his neder was a mistake. If they agree that he had a good reason, they can release him from the neder.



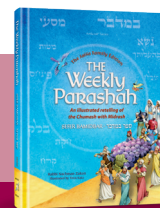
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## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Mattos-Masei:

**What were the names of the five kings of Midian?**

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto:shabbosquestion@artscroll.com) by this Wednesday, April 14, to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name 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 Parashas Chukas question is: MALKY WEISSMAN, LAKEWOOD, NJ**

The question was: In the entire history of the world, how many Parah Adumahs have there been whose ashes were burned? The answer is: There will be ten Parah Adumahs in total. Nine were already made. The tenth will be made when Mashiach comes.