



AT THE ARTSCROLL YOM TOV TABLE

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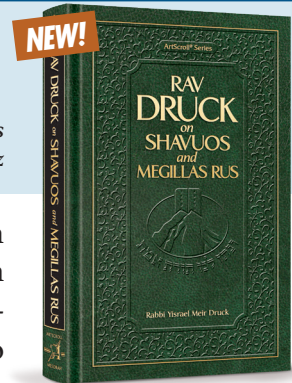
WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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

SHAVUOS

EVERY PERSON CAN KNOW ALL OF TORAH

Rav Druck on Shavuos and Megillas Rus
by Rav Yisroel Meir Druck, adapted by Mrs. Malky Heimowitz



At times, we feel disheartened when we contemplate the immense breadth and depth of Torah. How, we wonder, can a human being learn and master all of Torah? It's impossible! Yet the Torah indeed demands that we learn and know all of it, and we *daven* for this in the morning *Krias Shema* blessings, as we beseech, "Instill in our hearts to understand and elucidate, to listen, learn, teach, safeguard, perform and fulfill all the words of Your Torah's teaching with love." We truly strive to know, understand, and fulfill all of Torah.

Still, when a person stands before a library of *sefarim*, of which he is familiar with only a minute fraction, he might despair of ever learning all of Torah — never mind remembering all of it.

Chazal (*Vayikra Rabbah* 19:2) address this tendency to despair with an analogy to two people's reactions to seeing a large mound of earth: One who is a fool, what does he say? "Who can possibly cut down this mound?" One who is wise, what does he say? "Behold, I will cut away two boxfuls of earth today, and two boxfuls tomorrow, and so on, until I will cut away the whole of it."

Similarly, one who is a fool says, "Who can possibly learn the entire Torah? Tractate *Nezikin* consists of thirty chapters! Tractate *Keilim* consists of thirty chapters!" One who is wise, what does he say? "Behold, I will learn two laws today, and two laws tomorrow, until I will learn all of the Torah in its entirety."

This is what Hashem commanded Moshe Rab-

beinu to teach the Jewish people: "See what a person can achieve! See that Hashem called on Betzalel, who is but thirteen years old, and recognize that a person can grasp all the secrets of the Torah and master all its treasures. It is not distant from you — just look at Betzalel!"

What lesson can we take from this? How, indeed, can we master all of Torah?

Consider the following contemporary parable.

A well-known company posted a notice announcing a contest: There are 1,800 steps to the summit of a certain mountain. Whoever would climb to the top in three minutes would win the princely sum of \$5 million.

All those who read this notice shook their heads dismissively. "There's no point in even trying," they said. "Why bother?" Some clever individuals calculated that in order to climb 1,800 steps in three minutes, a person would have to climb 600 steps a minute, or 10 steps a second — without taking a break for even a moment. Clearly, they all concluded, this contest is a joke, for the task is impossible.

But one wise person said, "This notice was posted by a respected company, and if they announced this contest, there must be some way to carry out this task, for by law one may not publicize a contest that is impossible to complete. Obviously, the task is very difficult, proportional

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Rav Yisroel Meir Druck

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

EVERY PERSON CAN KNOW ALL OF TORAH

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to the generous prize being offered, but there must be some way to succeed in this task. Although I don't know how it's possible to succeed, I am going to try, since I know it has to be doable."

He approached the mountain, and when the signal was given, he started running up the stairs as fast as he could. Already in the first second, he failed to achieve the desired pace, but as he was unable to ascend ten steps in one second, and as the clock ticked, he fell farther and farther behind the number of steps he needed to climb in order to make it to the summit in time. Yet he persisted in making a super-human effort to climb more and more steps.

The people watching from below shook their heads scornfully, as if to say, "What was he thinking? He has barely made it up a quarter of the steps, and already the three minutes are almost up."

Yet to everyone's surprise, when the runner reached the 500th step, with only seconds remaining, he discovered that he no longer had to push himself to continue running, for that step turned out to be an elevator, which carried him up to the top of the mountain in a split second.

The same principle applies to the study of the holy Torah. At first, mastering all of Torah seems to be an impossible task, and indeed, the beginning is exceedingly difficult. This initial difficulty causes many people to despair and not even bother trying. Such people are termed "fools" by Chazal, in the above *Midrash*, similar to the fool who sees a mound of earth and says, "Who can possibly cut down this mound?" The fool does not begin to learn at all, for he says, "Who can possibly learn the entire Torah? There are so many *masechtos*, so many *perakim* — it's not realistic." And with that, he gives up.

The wise person, in contrast, does not focus on the seemingly impossible vastness of Torah. Hashem gave us the Torah, and it cannot be that He gave us an assignment that we are incapable of fulfilling. The wise person therefore learns two *halachos* today and two tomorrow, doing what is in his power and recognizing that "it is not incumbent on you to finish the work" (*Avos* 2:16). He knows that if Hashem wills it, he can manage to complete the entire Torah in this manner.

When a person consistently exerts himself to learn Torah, doing everything he can, he will sense that the gates of wisdom are opened before him. By

simple mathematical calculation, a person cannot master the entire Torah by learning two *halachos* today and two *halachos* tomorrow, just as the contestant in our parable could not possibly climb 1,800 stairs in three minutes. But when a person musters all his strength and pushes himself to succeed, he receives the Torah as a gift, like the winner of the contest who was carried to the summit in an elevator.

All that is required of the person is to adopt the mindset of that wise person, who understood that the task before him cannot be impossible to execute.

This idea is expressed in the following account of the *Gemara* (Shabbos 88a). A Sadducee once saw that Rava had put the fingers of his hands under his leg while he studied and was crushing them. So engrossed was Rava in his learning that he did not notice that his fingers were flowing with blood. The Sadducee said to Rava, "O impulsive people, who put their mouths before their ears [in saying, '*Naaseh venishma*']! You still persevere in your impulsiveness! First you should have heard what the Torah entailed, and if you were able to fulfill it you should have accepted it, and if you were unable to fulfill it you should not have accepted it."

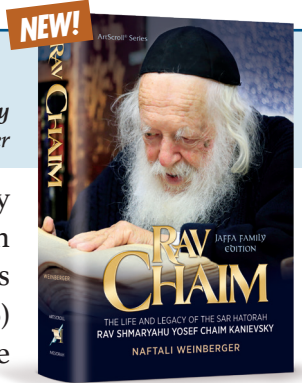
Rava replied, "We, who go in the ways of complete faith, it is written about us (*Mishlei* 11:3), *Tumas yesharim tancheim*, The perfect [faith] of the upright shall lead them. Those who go in the ways of perverseness, it is written about them (*ibid.*), *v'selef bogdim yeshadeim*, and the perverseness of the faithless shall destroy them."

Rashi explains that Rava's words, "We, who go in the ways of complete faith," mean that we trusted God as one would out of love, and we relied on Him not to burden us with something we could not uphold. In other words, we trusted that if Hashem was giving us the Torah, we would be able to fulfill it, for if it was impossible to fulfill, He would not have given it to us.

This logic applies to us today as well. We must rely on Hashem that if He gave us such a vast and profound Torah, there must be a way for us to grasp it, even if this seems like an impossible task. We must trust Hashem and follow Him wholeheartedly, beginning by learning two *halachos* today and two *halachos* tomorrow, until, through our tenacity and exertion, we reach the point along the way where we discover the "elevator" that will carry us beyond the usual abilities of a human being. 📖

RUS, THE EISHES CHAYIL

Rav Chaim – The Life and Legacy of the Sar HaTorah, Rav Shmaryahu Yosef Chaim Kanievsky
by Naftali Weinberger



In line with trying to give girls a Biblical name, around *Purim* time Rav Chaim Kanievsky would suggest the name Esther; around *Chanukah* he would recommend Yehudis (based on the *Midrash* of *Yehudis* on *Chanukah*); and Rus was the name he chose for *Shavuos*.

Rav Chaim had a special love for *Megillas Rus*, and toward the end of his life, he asked one of his children to take some of his money and buy him a *Megillas Rus* written on parchment. He once told his daughter, Rebbetzin Rus Tzivyon, that the name Rus was the favorite name of his father, the Steipler. He advised the parents of many of his granddaughters and great-granddaughters who were born during *Sefiras HaOmer*, from after *Pesach* until *Shavuos*, as well as other people whose daughters were born around *Shavuos* time, to name the babies Rus. He explained that Rus was the mother who saw



Rav Chaim Kanievsky

more *nachas* from her progeny than any other personality in *Tanach*, as the *Midrash* states (*Yalkut Shimoni, Rus, Remez 596*) that Rus merited seeing the birth of her great-grandchildren, David and Shlomo.

RAV CHAIM HAD A SPECIAL LOVE FOR MEGILLAS RUS.

Rav Chaim would invite his daughter, Rebbetzin Rus Tzivyon, to visit every *Shavuos*, saying that this was “her *Yom Tov*.” Every year since her childhood, he would invest the effort to come up with a new *chiddush* (original thought) on *Megillas Rus*, in her honor, and present it after the day meal on *Shavuos*. One year, he explained how the entire song of *Eishes Chayil* describes Rus, and he quoted a *Midrash* to that effect (see *Midrash Zuta, Rus 4:i*). Another time, he pointed out that we don’t find any *Midrash* that says *Eishes Chayil* refers to any other woman. 📖

HAPPINESS INSURANCE!

Beis HaLevi on Ahavas Yisrael with commentary and insights by Rabbi David Sutton

Regarding the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos*, the Torah (*Devarim 16:11*) states, *You shall rejoice before Hashem, your God — you, your son, your daughter, your slave, your maidservant, the Levi who is in your cities, the convert, the orphan, and the widow among you...*

Rashi points out that the verse mentions four members of the household — son, daughter, servant, and maidservant — corresponding to four needy people among you — Levi, convert, orphan, and widow. To this Hashem says, “If you make My four happy, I’ll make your four happy.” (*Levi* here includes *talmidei chachamim*, as they devote their time to Hashem’s service, just as the *Leviim* did. [See *Haamek Davar, Devarim 26:11*].)

We have a 100-percent guarantee from Hashem: If you want your fam-



The Beis HaLevi

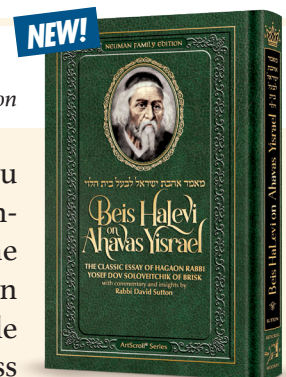
WE HAVE A 100-PERCENT GUARANTEE FROM HASHEM.

ily to be happy on *Yom Tov*, you must bring happiness to Hashem’s “family.” Everyone wants their children to be happy. People often spend countless hours and thousands of dollars just so that their children should be happy. But many times, their efforts prove unsuccessful.

Well, we have the solution, and it’s a guarantee from Hashem! What can be better than that? And this applies not only to *Shavuos*, but to the other *Yamim Tovim* as well.

Rav Chaim Palagi (Introduction to *Moed L’Kol Chai*) writes something frightening. He says, “I have seen, with my own eyes, the

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Rabbi Chanina Herzberg, by example, inculcated within his children the importance of having a *rebbe*. His children knew that Abba didn't make a move without first consulting his *rebbe*. After his *rebbe's* *petirah*, his children witnessed how he would constantly ask himself what his *rebbe* would do in any given situation.

At R' Chanina's *levayah*, the children who spoke all echoed one thought. The most important thing their father taught them is the importance of having a *rebbe*.

It wasn't just about having a *rebbe*, but also about being willing to accept *mussar* from him. During the *shivah* for R' Chanina, R' Yehuda Kelemer, *rav* of Young Israel of West Hempstead and R' Chanina's dear friend, shared a *dvar Torah* he had told R' Chanina, which R' Chanina had enjoyed. The *Gemara* (*Yoma 37a*) states that one who walks on the right of his *rebbe* is a boor (an uncultivated, uncivilized person).

The Manestricher Rebbe explained: The right side is the side of *kiruv*, as in: "The left hand should

always push away, while the right hand draws the person close" (*Sotah 47a*). One who only wants his *rebbe* to give him compliments, to tell him



Rabbi Chanina Herzberg with his *rebbe*, Rav Shlomo Freifeld.

"I'M LUCKY TO HAVE A REBBI TO SET ME STRAIGHT."

he's good and wonderful, is, in the words of the *Gemara* in *Yoma*, an *ignoramus*, a boor. It takes a wise person to be ready and willing to accept criticism from his *rebbe*.

Hearing this *vort*, R' Chanina's son told a story about his father. In

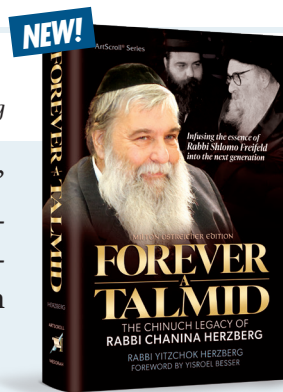
1986 (5746), R' Chanina purchased a summer home in Woodridge, New York.

That *Pesach*, the family spent a beautiful *Yom Tov* there, and R' Chanina decided to spend the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos* upstate, as well, enjoying the refreshing country weather. The preparations were made and the Herzberg family excitedly headed to Woodridge.

Five minutes before *Yom Tov*, the phone rang. When R' Chanina answered the call, he began to shake. It was his *rebbe*, Rav Shlomo Freifeld.

"R' Chanina! A *Yid* in the mountains for *Shavuos*!?" and he hung up the phone, not even allowing R' Chanina to respond.

R' Chanina told his children what had occurred. "My *rebbe* is right," he conceded. "I don't know what I was thinking. How could I spend *Shavuos* away from the *yeshiva*? I'm lucky to have a *rebbe* to set me straight." 📖



HAPPINESS INSURANCE!

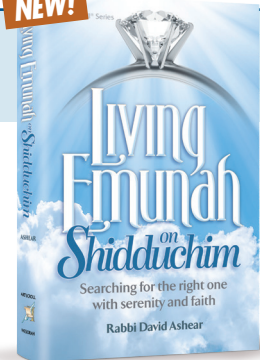
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homes of very wealthy people, whose homes are filled with bounty, yet all day and night the fire of *machlokes* is constantly burning. Their homes are filled with sibling rivalry and the like. And this is especially prevalent when the *Yom Tov* season arrives. Instead of experiencing the happiness of the *Yom Tov*, they are filled with agony and suffering. I have noticed that the reason is that they don't give charity to the poor for *Yom Tov*, and they thus do not see the fulfillment of the *Rashi* [mentioned above]. I have repeatedly admonished them and showed them this *Rashi*."

There is a certain *rabbi* in the Syrian community of

Brooklyn who raises large sums of money and distributes them to needy families before *Pesach*. One year, during the *Pesach* break, the *rabbi's* son desperately wanted to go to a certain top *yeshivah*, but he was not yet accepted. He tried various sorts of *protektzia* and the like, but to no avail. The *rabbi* noticed that the situation was making his son very nervous and tense. The *rabbi* assured him, saying, "I am confident that Hashem will grant you what you need. I made Hashem's children happy, and in return, Hashem promises that He will make mine happy as well. There is nothing to worry about!" Sure enough, in a very unexpected way, the boy was accepted to the *yeshivah* of his choice.

When Hashem makes a promise, we can be sure that He will fulfill His pledge. 📖



One of the main reasons we are required to do our *hishtadlus* is to cover up the miracles of Hashem. Hashem wants His hand to be hidden, and by making an effort, we help accomplish that goal. The age-old question is: How much effort do we need to expend?

Simply put, the answer is: As much as is necessary to conceal the *Yad Hashem*. If it is unrealistic for the effort we made to produce the hoped-for results, then we must do more. It is likewise true that putting in too much effort is also a problem. But as Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler explained, that is only because extra effort may imply that we think we control the results. If someone expends a lot of *hishtadlus* while truly believing it is not his effort that produces the results, putting in that extra effort is not a sin. Therefore, if someone is not sure he made enough *hishtadlus* to conceal the *Yad Hashem*, he should do more, all while believing that he is merely trying to create a conduit for Hashem to send His blessing in the most natural way. For example, if a father hopes his daughter will marry the “top boy” in *yeshivah*, but she graduated at the bottom of her class, he cannot say, “I’ll make the suggestion and if it’s meant to be, the boy will say yes.” In such circumstances, it is illogical that the boy would agree to meet his daughter. The father would need to do much more appropriate *hishtadlus* for the *yad Hashem* to be covered.

Rav Yisrael Meir Felman recounted that Aryeh Fink,* a boy from the Slabodka Yeshivah, got engaged, but before the wedding, someone slandered him to the parents of the *kallah* and they called off the *shidduch*. Devastated, Aryeh turned to Rav Felman for guidance.

Rav Felman went to Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach and told him what had happened, adding, “I personally know that everything they said about Aryeh is false. What should I do?”

Rav Shach offered to personally accompany Rav Felman on the three-hour drive to the girl’s parents’ home to talk to them.

When they arrived, Rav Shach began to sing Aryeh’s

praises. “I heard your daughter was engaged to Aryeh Fink and I want to personally tell you how fortunate you would be to get such a wonderful young man as a son-in-law!” He then proceeded to describe all his great qualities. After the rabbis left, the parents immediately called the *shadchan* to reinstate the *shidduch*.

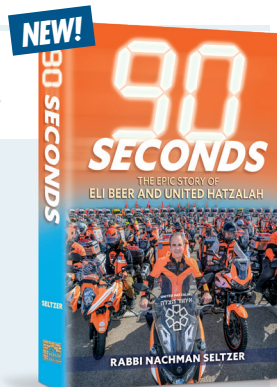
In that instance, Rav Shach did not just say, “If it’s meant to be, it will happen.” Since the parents were fed negative information about Aryeh, it was not logical to expect them to reverse their decision to end the *shidduch*. They needed to be spoken to first; therefore, Rav Shach made an effort to help. Had the parents remained opposed to the *shidduch*, Rav Shach could have said, “It’s not meant to be. We tried.” All that we do with our *hishtadlus* is try to make things appear as natural as possible. Hashem does not need our efforts to accomplish anything, but He wants us to conceal His hand.



Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach

A merchant asked if he should lower his prices a little on his products to increase his business. He explained that in his very competitive industry, if his prices were better, he would probably get more business. His question basically was, “Should I say, ‘If I’m meant to get the business, I’ll get it,’ or should I lower my prices to attract buyers?” The answer is: If his current chances of getting business are equal to those of others in the industry, he would not need to lower his prices, because it already seems natural for Hashem to give him business. But if, for whatever reason, his chances of getting customers are significantly lower than those of his competitors, he would need to make the *hishtadlus* of lowering his prices to make it seem more natural for Hashem to send business his way.

The most difficult part of *hishtadlus* is honestly believing that it is not we who are producing the results when we make the *hishtadlus*. If we could make a normal effort and always believe that the results are being determined by Hashem, we will never be considered at fault for the amount of *hishtadlus* we invest. 📖



During the course of his fundraising forays, Eli Beer has crossed paths with many fascinating individuals. One such person is Leonardo Farkas, a philanthropist from Chile. From the trademark curly blond hair cascading down to his shoulders to his penchant for handing out hundred-dollar bills to every person he meets at the *Kosel*, Farkas is a real personality. Despite his vast wealth, he has never lost touch with his roots.

Growing up as a child in Chile, Leonardo's father told him stories of his escape from Europe before it was too late. The knowledge that his father had to run for his life from the home where he was born never left him.

A talented musician, Leonardo Farkas began his professional career playing piano at the Concord Hotel in the Catskill Mountains, where he serenaded his audience with South American music. People loved listening to him sing and play, and on a good day they gave him tips. Usually, the tips were nothing much to write home about, but once in a while someone would give him one hundred dollars. He still remembers his feelings of gratitude at receiving those tips.

Over the years, Leonardo became extremely wealthy through his ownership of mines and other business ventures, but the more money he made, the more he gave away. When a horrific mining accident occurred in Chile, Leonardo gave ten thousand dollars to the family of each one of the workers

who had died — and it wasn't even his mine.

When he was young, before he became wealthy, Leonardo remembers watching people vie for *shishi*, the *aliyah* for the sixth portion of the weekly Torah reading. He remembers how they were willing to spend money to receive that *aliyah* and filed that piece of information away in his mind. Years later, he began frequenting a different *shul* every *Shabbos* and would always purchase *shishi*, donating a large sum of money to the *shul*.



Leonardo Farkas with Eli Beer outside of United Hatzalah headquarters

Eli first met Leonardo in 2008, and after Eli had gotten to know Leonardo to some degree, he decided to ask the billionaire if he would be willing to sponsor all United Hatzalah activities in the city of Haifa.

"How much does it cost?" Farkas wanted to know.

"Fifty thousand dollars."

"I'll tell you what," Farkas said. "I'll give you a hundred thousand dollars and sponsor two cities: fifty for Haifa and another fifty for Tzefas."

Eli was blown away. It wasn't often that a donor gave him double the amount he'd asked for. It was

yet another example of the type of person Leonardo is: a man who gives charity without being asked for it.

Then Eli made a mistake.

Eli was so overcome when Leonardo had offered to sponsor two cities that he sent him an email about a week later, explaining that Tzefas was in need of a new ambulance and asking whether he would be willing

to sponsor that as well in addition to the hundred thousand dollars he'd already given.

It was too much.

While Eli is famous for using *chutzpah* and getting away with it, this wasn't *chutzpah*, it was stupidity — and Leonardo Farkas was decidedly not amused.

His response was emphatic:

"Never contact me again!" he wrote. "I've already sent the hundred thousand, which I had promised, and with that, our relationship has come to an end!"

For the next three days, Eli Beer couldn't sleep. There was no excusing the mistake he had made with Leonardo Farkas. It was a wrong move on every level, and there was no way to justify what he had done.

Eli felt like he'd just caused real damage to United Hatzalah because Leonardo had been so generous and had told Eli that he planned on contributing generously on an annual basis.

How could you continued on page 7

make such a stupid mistake? he asked himself over and over.

Eventually, Eli began drafting an apology. He must have written one hundred drafts, trying to find the exact words that expressed the level of remorse he felt for having treated such a good person with such disrespect. He wrote and erased, wrote and erased, trying to get it right.

Then, one day, he just sat down and wrote another email — every word emanating from the deepest recesses of his heart:

Dear Leonardo,

I have learned so much from the mistake that I made. I will never make the same mistake again — not with you and not with anyone else. It was a terrible mistake. I'm so passionate about United Hatzalah, I think about it all day. It's my dream, my life, and when I know that there's a need, I ask right away and I don't think twice. And this can sometimes be a problem. I promise you that the lesson you taught me will remain with me forever, and I will make sure to be more careful in the future. I am asking you for forgiveness and begging you not to punish the organization because of my mistake. Please continue supporting Haifa and Tzefas — and I will never make the same mistake again. I have learned a lesson for life.

Eli Beer

When Eli pressed the Send button, his heart was pounding. Was the email too little and too late? But there was nothing more for him to do. He had done the best he could to make amends, and the rest was up to the One above.

Leonardo replied to Eli's email two hours later:

Dear Eli,

I forgive you, and I'm sending you the ambucycle that you asked for.

Leonardo

After that, they became best friends. The next time Leonardo visited Israel, Eli gave him a tour of United Hatzalah headquarters. He loved everything about the organization. Eli also took him to the *Kosel*



Leonardo Farkas, Mark Gerson, Ambassador David Friedman, and Eli Beer

“I DON'T NEED ANYTHING,” THE MAN REPLIED. “I HAVE EVERYTHING I COULD POSSIBLY NEED.”

and watched the love for Hashem and the Jewish people that poured forth from the Chilean Jew.

They became such close friends that Leonardo asked Eli to accompany him on a very unique trip — a journey back into his past.

The destination was Ukraine and Romania.

“I did some research,” Leonardo explained, “and I managed to find the location of the village where my father was born. I also found out the name of the family who helped my father escape from Europe before the war. The man himself is no longer alive, but his son still lives in the same village, and I want to visit him and give him a token of appreciation for what his father did.”

Eli wasn't the only one who came along for the ride. A large group of rabbis was invited to join Leonardo for what promised to be an epic and historic moment. They flew to Ukraine in Leonardo's private plane and were driven by limo to the graves of a number of famous rabbinical figures of the past, among them the tomb of Rav Nachman of Breslov in Uman.

Eventually, they made their way to the home of the benefactor's son, who lived in a little village near Satu Mare on the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. As they drove down the street of the little village, they passed a series of tiny houses, simple and austere. Each was bordered by a garden, and in some cases cars of uncertain vintage were parked nearby.

As they approached the home of the man they were coming to see, Leonardo handed Eli a bag and asked him to hold on to it.

“What's inside?”

Eli almost fainted when he heard the answer. It was a quarter of a million euros — enough money for the man to live calmly and peacefully for the rest of his life.

The man they had come to see lived in what was essentially a corrugated shack set a little ways back from the road. There was a goat tethered to a tree in front of the house, and a bunch of chickens were running around, pecking at the ground. An aged Russian-made Lada was parked just outside, a throwback to the days when Romania was part of the USSR.

When their vehicles came to a stop in front of the man's house, he rushed outside to greet them, ushering the entire

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party into his home, where he had set up a buffet in their honor.

Obviously, they couldn't eat any of the cooked food, but the gesture was heartwarming, and they were at least able to eat some home-grown fruits and vegetables that were set out as well. There was a piano in the living room, and Leonardo played in honor of the occasion.

At some point in the conversation, they turned to the purpose of their visit.

"Tell me something," Leonardo said to the Romanian gentleman.

"How much money do you make a month?"

"I earn three hundred euros."

"And your wife, does she work?"

"Yes."

"What does she earn?"

"Two hundred and fifty euros every month."

"Do you have children?"

"I have a daughter."

"And what does she do?"

"My daughter is currently studying in university."

Leonardo paused.

"Tell me something," he said to the son of the man who saved his father's life. "Is there anything you would want to do if you had the money? Maybe renovate your house or buy a new house? Maybe purchase a new car? I want to do something for you."

Eli was standing right there as they spoke. He could feel the two hundred and fifty thousand euros through the thin material of the bag he was holding.

"I don't need anything," the man replied. "I have everything I could possibly need."

He opened the window and pointed at the Russian Lada parked outside. "I have a car. It works well.

It even has air conditioning."

"What about your house?"

"My house? Look at my beautiful house. I don't need anything. My house is perfect. I'm a lucky man."

"What about your daughter? Maybe she needs money to pay for her university?"

"No, I saved money for years to pay for that. It's all taken care of."

It was an incredible scene. Leonardo Farkas — a truly wealthy man — had traveled all that way to visit the son of a man who had saved

"TODAY I MET THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD."

his father because he wanted to reward him with two hundred and fifty thousand euros, and the man was refusing to accept any part of the gift.

"You don't need anything?" Leonardo asked him.

"No, I'm happy with what I have. I don't need or want anything more."

Eli was incredulous. He was looking around at the old man's old house, at his old car, and he knew that he had never imagined such a situation in his wildest dreams — where a person would turn down such a gift because he felt that he already had everything in the world. It was impossible to fathom.

Leonardo was begging him.

"Please let me give you the money."

"No, I don't want it. I'm happy that you came to visit me, and I want us to remain friends. But I don't want your money."

"Okay, I get it," Leonardo told the man. "You don't want the money. Is there anything you would want me to use the money for? Anything we can do to help your village?"

The man considered his words.

"You can donate the money to the local elementary school," he said at last. "Their building is very old, and it would be nice if it would be renovated and turned into something special for the children."

With that, the visit came to an end and the group took leave of the man in the shack with the Lada parked a few yards from his front door.

Leonardo ended up doing exactly as the man requested. In addition, he found the cemetery where his grandfather was buried and paid for it to be renovated as well. He also hired a caretaker to make sure it remained in good condition.

Later that day, Eli Beer sat down and wrote a letter to his children.

Dear kids,

Today I met the richest man in the world. You're probably thinking that I met Bill Gates or someone like that. But I'm actually talking about an old Romanian man who turned down 250,000 euros because he has everything in the world that he wants and needs. Meeting him really brought home the words of Pirkei Avos: "Who is rich? He who is satisfied with his lot."

Most rich people in the world will never be truly wealthy because they will always want more than what they have. But not this man. He wanted nothing more and was truly satisfied with everything he'd been given from Above.

Like I said — a truly wealthy man.

Abba 📧

Rav Moshe Mordechai Shulsinger, one of the great *geonim* and *mechabrei sefarim* of Bnei Brak, was eager to raise a genuine *talmid chacham*, and in his great fervor, he would often “happen to” walk by the Karliner *cheder* in which his son learned and check in on how the boy was progressing.

The *menahel* of the cheder was Rav Yidel Ackerman, a respected Stoliner *chassid*, and after noticing the visitor in the school hallway yet again, he approached and offered a one-line insight into proper *chinuch*.

“Yungerman,” said Rav Yidel, “*Yiddishe nachas kleibt zach tzubislach, Yiddishe nachas comes together slowly.*”

In this pithy line, he was saying that success would not come instantly, nor is it meant to come

that way, under impatient, insistent, overly attentive eyes.

People evolve, developing stage by stage, and this takes time.

Perhaps this is why the word

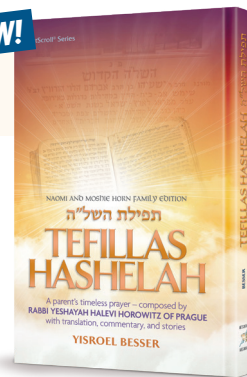
for the pride parents enjoy from their children, “*nachas*,” actually means “placidness.” (*Rashi to Bereishis 33:14* translates the word “*le’at*, slow pace,” as “*nachas*.”)

Tefillah is always helpful and necessary, but at times, looking on carefully from the background, focused not on the immediate present but on the ultimate goal, is a more

effective route to having *nachas*. 📖



Rav Yidel Ackerman



A *rav* in Eretz Yisrael once ruled on a question of *halachah* using a certain leniency. The question was whether a certain *melachah* could be performed on *Yom Tov Sheini Shel Galuyos*, and this *rav* said it was permitted. When Rav Avrohom Genachovsky heard this *rav*'s decision, he declared it to be mistaken.

Rav Genachovsky was an expert on all aspects of *halachah*, and an expert on *gemilus chassadim* as well. He knew the *rav*'s mistake needed to be corrected, but knew it had to be done deftly, so as not to deflate his self-respect. Rav Genachovsky consulted the Steipler about the issue. “Clearly the *melachah* is not permitted, and the *rav* needs to be corrected,” the Steipler told him.

A student who was very close to Rav Genachovsky wondered how he would manage to make the correction without hurting the *rav*'s feelings. When he saw Rav Genachovsky take out a piece of paper to write the *rav* a letter, he supposed that the strategy would be to start out with great accolades for the *rav*'s Torah knowledge and then point

out that he had made one error.

However, Rav Genachovsky wrote something else entirely. He wrote that he had heard that the *rav* had ruled that the *melachah* in question was not permitted, and he wanted to compliment him on his astute ruling and assure him that he was correct. He included the fact that the *Shulchan Aruch* confirmed his ruling, and that the Steipler had confirmed it as well.



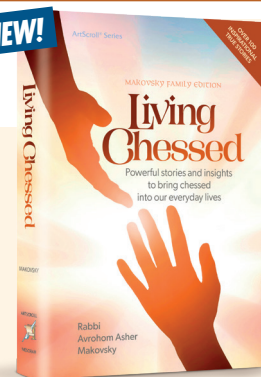
Rav Avrohom Genachovsky

What would this *rav*'s reaction be to Rav Genachovsky's letter? He would have thought that the *gadol* misheard his ruling, believing that he said the opposite of what he said. He would have also absorbed the compliment conveyed in the letter; the great Rav Genachovsky thought well of him and reached out to contact him! But at the same time, he would have learned of his mistake and been grateful that his incorrect ruling could be corrected. His mistake was addressed without him

ever having to feel the shame of a great *posek* pointing it out to him, even in the kindest way.

This story awakens us to a stumbling block we may not be careful enough to avoid. That is the way in which we correct people. People sometimes feel that when someone does something wrong, this is the time to let them know what is wrong with them. “You should be more careful.” “You should have paid attention.” “You need to think before you speak.” But there is no need to rub salt in the wound when somebody makes a mistake. This is true with employees, students or children, and especially so when we're speaking to a spouse or a parent.

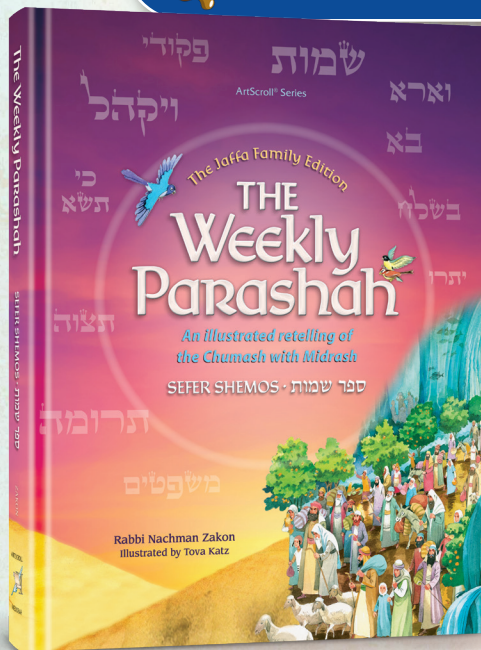
Chessed means handling the situation the way we would want our own mistake to be handled — with the least possible amount of pain and embarrassment and the most possible protection of our dignity. 📖





Yom Tov for Children

שבועות



Hashem Speaks

When Hashem said His first command, "I am Hashem, your G-d," it was so powerful that the Jews moved back about eight miles, and their souls actually left their bodies. Hashem sent a special dew to fall on their bodies. The dew brought them back to life, and angels brought them back to Har Sinai.

The powerful voice of Hashem was heard again. It was the second command, "You must not have any other god." The same thing happened to the Jews that happened to them the first time.

Worried to Death

After their souls left their bodies twice, the Jews were terrified. When they were brought back to Har Sinai again by the angels, they begged Moshe, "You speak to us, and we will hear what Hashem has to say from you. We are afraid that if Hashem continues to speak to us we will die."

"Hashem doesn't want you to die," Moshe said. "He spoke to you to make you famous, as the only nation that Hashem ever talked to. Also, after seeing how powerful and awesome Hashem is, you will be afraid of Him and won't sin."

אתנכי הו

Moshe Speaks to the Jews

Hashem and Moshe did as the Jews asked. Instead of Hashem speaking to the people directly, Moshe went up into the darkness of the cloud. There, Hashem told him the rest of the commandments, one by one. After each one, Moshe announced it to the Jews below.

How could three million Jews hear Moshe speaking? Even if he spoke in a very loud voice, the Jews in the back would not have been able to hear him! What happened was that Hashem made Moshe's voice loud enough for all three million Jews to hear every word he said.



How do you know George Washington was a real person, and that the American Revolution really happened?

Everyone knows it's true because the Americans alive at the time of the Revolution were there when it happened. Many people actually met President Washington. They wrote it down and told their children about it. If it was all made up, the people living at the time would have said the whole thing is a fake story.

We are the only religion in the world that says that Hashem came and spoke, not just to Moshe or to a few people, but to the whole nation of three million people. How can it not be true? All the people who were alive at Mattan Torah then told their children exactly what happened, who told their children — up to this very day!

It Happened at Sinai

The Torah was given on a Shabbos, in the month of Sivan, 2448 years after the world was created.

Here is a list of some other fascinating things that happened on that great day of Mattan Torah.

- ▶ Hashem picked up Har Sinai and held it in the air over the heads of the entire Jewish nation. He told them: "Either accept the Torah, or you will be buried under the mountain when it drops."
- ▶ Hashem didn't come down alone. Along with Him came an honor guard of 22,000 angels.
- ▶ The Jews not only heard the voice of Hashem, but somehow they were able to see the words He spoke as well.
- ▶ Many years before, Hashem tested Avraham by asking him to sacrifice his son Yitzchak. At the last moment Hashem sent an angel to stop Avraham from sacrificing his son. Avraham offered a ram instead.
The shofar blast the Jews heard at Har Sinai came from the shofar made from the left horn of Avraham Avinu's ram. When Mashiach comes to end our present exile, we will hear a blast from a shofar made from the same ram's right horn. May we hear that shofar blast very soon!
- ▶ Did it ever happen to you that after a class the students argue about what the teacher said?
After the Aseres HaDibros were given, the Jews discussed them and every Jew heard exactly what the other heard. There was no disagreement between the three million people who were at Sinai as to what Hashem had said.
- ▶ Before saying each of the commandments separately, Hashem said all of them at the same time, something no human can do.

FASCINATING FACTS

The numerical value of the Hebrew word "Torah" (תורה) is 611. If we add the two commandments that Hashem spoke to the Jews directly, not through Moshe, we get 613. 613 is the total number of mitzvos in the Torah.

There is a hint of that in the famous verse that says (Devarim 33:4): "Torah tzivah lanu Moshe — Moshe commanded us the Torah." From Moshe we got the Torah — that is, 611 mitzvos. The other two we heard directly from Hashem.

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Shavuos:

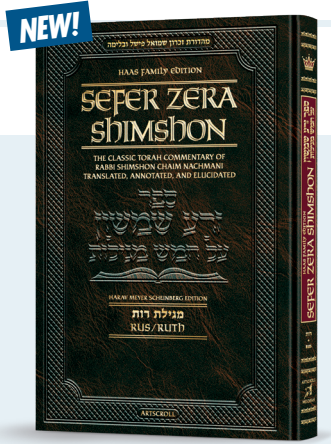
Approximately how many Jews were present at Har Sinai for Matan Torah?

*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 Emor question is: BOAZ ULANO, Monsey, NY

*The question was: For which non-relative is there an exception to the rule that a Kohen may not touch a dead body?
The answer is: A meis mitzvah, a dead person who has no one to bury him.*





Boaz instructs Rus to collect produce that his harvesters leave behind, and he informs her that he commanded them not to touch her.

Zera Shimshon puzzles over the connection between Boaz's instructions to Rus and his command to his harvesters, and why such a command was even necessary.

He therefore clarifies that when harvesters start from the middle of a row and forget produce behind them, the law is that the produce is not considered *shich'chah*. Accordingly, since Boaz instructed Rus to follow harvesters who followed such a pattern, she may have been concerned that they would stop her from taking produce that was not considered *shich'chah*. He therefore commanded them not to touch her, and informed her of this command so she would not be afraid to take the produce.

The question arises: If Boaz wanted Rus to take more than just *shich'chah*, why did he not give her an outright gift and save her from the disgrace of collecting in the field as a pauper? And, when he did give her six measures of barley, why did he not give it directly to her or even specify that it was a gift for her?

Faced with these questions, *Zera Shimshon* raises additional questions about that incident: For when Rus presented Boaz's barley to Naomi, she said, *for he said, eilai, to me*, "Do not come to your mother-in-law empty-handed." And yet there is no evidence that Boaz ever said those words! Finally, *Zera Shimshon* wonders why the word *eilai* is pronounced but not written in the verse.

Addressing these questions, *Zera Shimshon* explains

that Boaz wanted to be sure that no one would ever challenge his marriage to Rus or his right to her field. Her marriage was therefore linked to the purchase of her field. This indicated not only that she was fit to be married just as her field was fit to be redeemed, but also that the final redeemer's acquisition of her had to be linked to the acquisition of her field. In this way, no one would ever be able to challenge their marriage. Accordingly, Boaz avoided doing or saying anything that might be misconstrued as a betrothal of Rus, until he had given the first redeemer a chance to transfer to him all of his rights to Rus and her field.

Boaz thus was careful not to present a respectable gift to Rus in any way, for this might have implied that there had also been a betrothal — as is true regarding *mishlo'ach manos* on *Purim*. Instead, he had her gather produce from the field as a pauper, where there would be no such concern — as is true regarding *matanos la'evyonim* on *Purim*. And, for the same reason, even when he measured barley for her in the granary, he did not give it to her directly nor say what it was for. Rus, however, understood that it was a gift for her to share with Naomi and said so when she brought it to her. This is alluded to in the absence of the word *eilai* in the clause, because he said "to me," which implies that Boaz said this in his heart, but not verbally, and Rus understood it on her own and stated it to Naomi. 📖

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY-JUNE / סיון

| SHABBOS | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 |
| Gittin 11 | Gittin 12 | Gittin 13 | Gittin 14 | Gittin 15 | Gittin 16 | Gittin 17 |

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY-JUNE / סיון

| SHABBOS | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 |
| Yoma 1:6-7 | Yoma 1:8-2:1 | Yoma 2:2-3 | Yoma 2:4-5 | Yoma 2:6-7 | Yoma 3:1-2 | Yoma 3:3-4 |

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

MAY-JUNE / סיון

| SHABBOS | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 |
| Demai 28 | Demai 29 | Demai 30 | Demai 31 | Demai 32 | Demai 33 | Demai 34 |