

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת שמות
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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 ROCHEL LEAH.

PARASHAH

LEADERSHIP QUALITY

From the forthcoming sefer on Chumash by Rav Yaakov Bender



COMING
SOON!

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' לְמֹשֶׁה הֲרַעַתָּה לְעַם הַזֶּה לְמַעַן שְׁלַחְתִּי
וּמֵאֵז בְּאַתִּי אֶל פְּרַעֲה לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁמְךָ הֲרַעַתָּה לְעַם הַזֶּה וְהֵצַל לֹא הֵצַלְתָּ אֶת עַמְּךָ.

And he said, "Hashem, why have You mistreated this people? Why have You sent me? Since I have come to Paroh to speak in Your name, he has mistreated this people..." (5:22-23).

Moshe comes to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* with a question. Hashem wanted Moshe Rabbeinu to go petition Paroh on behalf of *Klal Yisroel*. Moshe resisted, but after several days, he finally went to the palace, where he was rejected. Not only did Paroh not agree to release the *Bnei Yisroel*, but he even increased their workload.

Moshe Rabbeinu, who had "felt with his brothers," a beacon of *chizuk* and *ahavas Yisroel* to a suffering nation, was greeted with *ta'anos*, grievances and complaints.

"Why did you have get involved? You have only made things worse," the people said, and Moshe, frustrated, turned to the One who sent him and asked: "How could You have sent me to make things worse?"

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה עֲתָה תֵּרָאֶה
אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱשֶׂה לְפָרַעֲה.

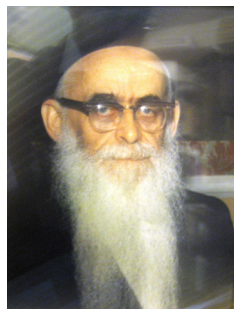
And Hashem said to Moshe, "Now you will see what I will do..." (5:23, 6:1).

Rashi comments: "You questioned My ways, not like Avrohom. Even though I told him that his seed would continue through

Yitzchok, when I told him to bring Yitzchok as an offering, he didn't question me...so you will see what I do to Paroh, but not to the kings of the seven nations when I bring them to the Land."

Moshe Rabbeinu was the "*av lenei'im*," the greatest *novi* we have ever had, and the one whom Hashem called

**A MANHIG
HAS TO FEEL
WITH OTHERS,
TO SUFFER
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TO HELP.**



Rav Hirsh Feldman

"*ne'eman*," faithful. What was his *cheshbon* in questioning Hashem?

Rav Hirsh Feldman, *mashgiach* of the Mirrer Yeshiva in Brooklyn, would relate a *vort* that he heard in the name of *chassidic rebbes*.

Every *middah*, the *Baal Shem Tov* taught, has a constructive use. *Ka'as* can be used to fuel holy passion and *ga'avah* can be elevated to *ga'avah d'kedushah*. What about the *middah*

of *kefirah*, the tendency of some people to deny anything they cannot actually see and touch? What positive use can it possibly have?

Kefirah, said the *Baal Shem Tov*, is the way a person should respond when his friend is in trouble. When you face a challenging situation, you should remind yourself that Hashem is in control and you are in His hands. It will be good and it is *already* good, but if it is another person facing difficulty, then you have to close your mind to thoughts of *emunah* and immerse yourself in trying to help.

If a person sees a figure being thrown about in the ocean, drowning, they do not shrug and say, "Hashem will help." If you walk by a burning building, you do not ignore it and reason that the *Ribbono Shel Olam* is in charge. You spring into action, and any other reaction is cruel and inhuman.

Perhaps we can use this idea from the *mashgiach* to understand

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ARTSCROLL PUBLICATIONS

A Jewish man from Eretz Yisrael comes to South Florida to raise money so that he would be able to marry off his daughter. He makes the rounds in Miami Beach, North Miami Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Hallandale and all the other Jewish communities in the area. When he is finished, he rents a car and sets off to visit several Jewish communities along the East Coast on his way up north to New York. As he is zipping along the Interstate through the State of Georgia, he is pulled over by a state trooper for speeding.

"License and registration," says the trooper.

The man hands over the papers, and the trooper examines them carefully.

"Israel? Y'all from Israel?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I'm afraid I can't just write out a summons. Can't exactly expect y'all to come back to Georgia for the hearing, can I? Y'all have to go straight to the judge right now."

Two hours later, the judge issues a fine of \$175 for speeding, to be paid on the spot. The man sighs heavily. He opens his money pouch and takes out a thick wad of cash, over \$10,000. He grudgingly peels off the appropriate number of bills and hands them to the judge.

The judge's eyes bulge in astonishment. The Interstate between Florida and New York is one of the most notorious drug-trafficking routes in the United States. Surely, this man with the Israeli passport and the sack of cash must be a drug runner.

"Excuse me," says the judge, "but where did you get that money, sir?"

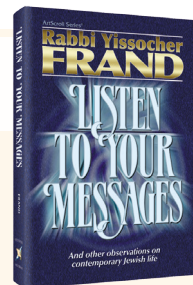
"I collected it," says the man.

"You collected it?" splutters the judge. "What does that mean?"

"You see, your honor, I live in Israel. I have a daughter to marry off, but I have no money. How am I going to make a wedding and buy her the things she needs to get started in life? So I came to Florida and went to different Jewish people and asked them to help me out. And that is how I collected this money."

"WE HAVE JEWISH PEOPLE IN NEED COMING TO US ALL THE TIME. WE DO THIS ALL THE TIME."

Listen to Your Messages by Rabbi Yissocher Frand



"You expect me to believe this?" says the judge. "You come across the ocean and go to strangers and ask them to help you pay for your daughter's wedding and you come away with a sack of cash? Is that what you're telling me?"

"Almost, your honor," says the man. "They're not strangers. They're fellow Jews."

The judge shakes his head. "I'm not buying it. Unless you can come up with affidavits that you came by this money honestly, you're not going anywhere. Next case!"

In desperation, the man calls a *rav* in Hollywood, Florida, who had been very kind and helpful to him. Close to tears, he describes his predicament. The *rav* springs into action. He collects affidavits from *rabbanim* in the different communities and faxes them to the court in Georgia. The judge is convinced, and he allows

the Israeli to continue on his way.

The state trooper, however, still finds the story too outlandish to believe. He places a telephone call to the *rav* in Hollywood.

"Let me get this straight," he says. "This guy, y' all don't know him, right?"

"That's right," said the *rav*. "Never met him before."

"He comes door to door and he asks for money?"

"That's right."

"And everybody gives him a donation?"

"Right again."

"Because he says he has a daughter in Israel who's getting married?"

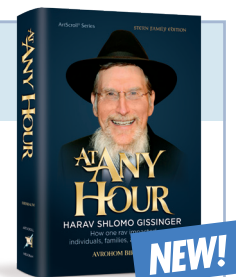
"That's right."

"What's so special about this guy?"

"Nothing," says the *rav*. "We have Jewish people in need coming to us all the time. We do this all the time."

There is a brief silence on the other end of the telephone.

"I'll have you know," the state trooper finally says, "I think I joined the wrong religion..." 📞



Shortly after the construction of Khal Zichron Yaakov's building in Lakewood, NJ was complete, the new *shul* and its *simchah* hall were opened to the public. The magnificent edifice was the treasure of the *rav*, Rav Shlomo Gissinger, who took phenomenal pride in the building and had been involved in every detail of its construction. Nothing was insignificant when it came to the *shul*: not the décor, not the wallpaper, not even the type of sink they would use in the janitor's closet; nothing was insignificant when it came to his treasured *kehillah*.

Rav Gissinger loved the *shul* so much that often, before he went to sleep, usually after 2 a.m. and sometimes much later, he would walk across the street to make sure that all was well in the *shul*, that the lights were off, and that the doors were locked.

On one such night, at 2 a.m., the door to the *shul* opened. This time, the *shul* building was not empty. There was a very frightened "welcoming committee" on hand in the *simchah* hall to "greet" the *rav*. Who was the welcoming committee? What was going on?

"I was hanging out with a few guys who had grown

up in the *shul*," remembers Azriel*, one of the boys who were present. "It was late at night and we were bored. The *shul* was open, so we went downstairs to the recently-opened *simchah* hall and, as we smoked cigarettes, we got into a heavy poker game. Suddenly, at 2 a.m. we heard the door open. Who was standing there? None other than Rabbi Gissinger! He stood there taking in the scene in its entirety, a bunch of guys surrounded by thick smoke, playing

a mean game of poker — in his *shul*, the *shul* that was his treasure! We were certainly not using the *shul* for its intended purposes.

"You could have heard a pin drop as we held our breaths. And then, the *rav* ambled over and with a smile asked, 'What is the buy in?' He could have been upset with us, really upset, and we would have understood. After all, the *shul* was so important to him, but all he said was, 'Just don't forget to turn off the lights when you are finished.'

"His reaction," said Azriel, "made a lifelong impression on me and I am sure it did the same for the others." 📖

LEADERSHIP QUALITY

continued from page 1

what was happening here in Moshe Rabbeinu's conversation with the *Ribbono Shel Olam*.

Avrohom Avinu faced a question that had no clear answer, and he stood steadfast in his faith, but he was the one facing the problem. Moshe Rabbeinu was dealing with a *nisayon* facing others, all of *Klal*

Yisroel, and so perhaps he purposefully closed off his clarity in *emunah* to be an effective *shliach*.

He could not and would not access the *emunah* of Avrohom Avinu when it was "yenenem," someone else, facing challenge.

The first time *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* "met" Moshe, He told him, וְנָעֲלִיךָ מֵעַל רַגְלֶיךָ, Take your shoes off your feet... (Shemos 3:5). In this conversation, Hashem told the young

shepherd that he was to be the leader of *Klal Yisroel*, and with this introduction, Hashem was imparting what it means to be a *manhig Yisroel*. A person who is barefoot will feel every single pebble, every bump in the road. A *manhig* has to feel with others, to suffer with them, and to do everything to help.

In Moshe Rabbeinu's *ta'anah*, one hears that he learned the lesson. 📖

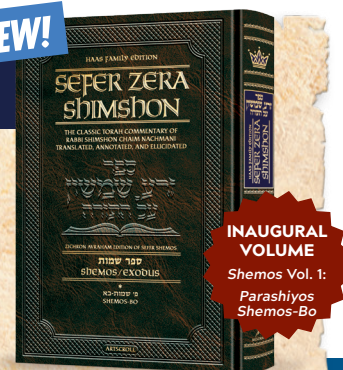
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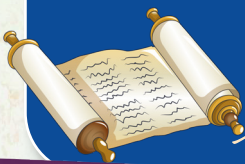
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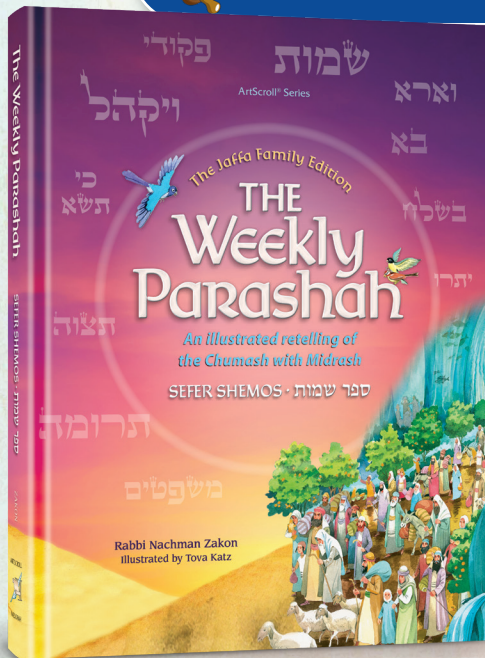
"...the person who learns the commentary will sit at his table surrounded by his children and family; beautiful blessings, all given wholeheartedly to the person who studies this work. A house filled with everything good.... The blessings will begin in this world and carry on in the world to come...."

— from the author's Introduction to Zera Shimshon

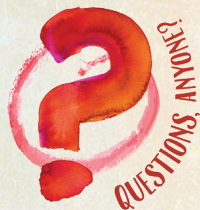




Parashah for Children



The day Moshe was put in the river was the sixth of Sivan, which would be the day the Torah would be given at Har Sinai.



The Torah tells us only three stories about the first eighty years of Moshe's life — how he killed the brutal Egyptian guard, stopped one Jew from hitting another Jew, and saved the shepherd girls who were being bullied. Why only these three?

The Torah wants to show us what was so special about Moshe, and why Hashem chose him to take the Jews out of Egypt. Moshe couldn't bear to see other people get hurt.

He jumped in and helped them right away. That's the kind of leader Hashem wanted for the Jews — someone who would care for them and protect them!

פרשת שמות

Tricked!

1n Egypt the Jews were blessed with large families — VERY large families. Women gave birth to SIX babies at a time! That bothered the Egyptians. There were just so many Jews everywhere!

The ruler of Egypt by this time was a new Pharaoh. He made believe he never heard that Yosef had saved Egypt from starving. Pharaoh was worried that his country was in danger. He believed that if Egypt was attacked, all the Jews would fight on the side of the enemy. They might even throw the Egyptians out of Egypt! Pharaoh called his three advisers — Bilaam, Iyov, and Yisro — to discuss what to do.

"Destroy them!" Bilaam said firmly.

Iyov kept quiet.

"Leave the Jews alone," Yisro protested.

The wicked Pharaoh decided to listen to Bilaam. He would destroy the Jews! He would turn them into slaves, forcing them to work harder and harder.

Pharaoh tricked the Jews into becoming slaves. He announced a new building project in the cities of Pisom and Ramses. He asked all good citizens to come, to make bricks and help build the new cities. Even Pharaoh himself showed up carrying a basket and a shovel. He tried to show everyone how important the work was. He even worked together with the others.

The Jews came too. They worked along with everyone else, making bricks and putting up new buildings. They worked extra hard that day, harder than anyone else. They were good workers, eager to show how much they could do. At the end of the day, Pharaoh's men wrote down how many bricks each Jew had made.

The next time the Jews arrived at Pisom and Ramses, they got the shock of their lives. They were the only ones there! No Egyptians had come to work. Pharaoh's soldiers surrounded them. "By Pharaoh's orders you are now slaves to Egypt," they declared. "You will spend your days making bricks." The Jews asked, "How many?" "The same number of bricks that you made on that first day."

Only one group of Jews didn't become slaves. That was Shevet Levi. They had ignored Pharaoh's first call for workers to build his cities. Their reason? They weren't going to stop their holy work of Torah study to go and make bricks. The Torah hadn't been given yet, but they learned about how to serve Hashem the way Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov had served Him.

