

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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Heritage
Foundation

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RABBI YITZCHOK
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

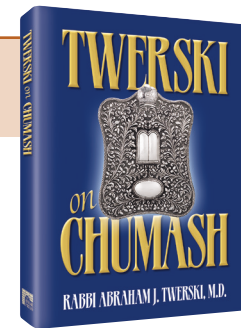
DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY

L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM



THE RABBI DR. ABRAHAM J. TWERSKI ZT"L EDITION

ArtScroll and the Mesorah Heritage Foundation join in mourning the passing of Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski, a venerated rav, a talmid chacham, a psychiatrist, the author of dozens of books, and a dear friend - and in every one of those roles he was superlative. At ArtScroll, we were privileged to publish over thirty of his books, every one a gem, a skillful blend of interpretation, Chassidic stories, understanding of human foibles, and wise and gentle advice on how to become a better servant of Hashem, a better spouse and parent, and a better human being. We dedicate this edition of At the ArtScroll Shabbos Table in his memory and present a number of pieces from some of his acclaimed and best-selling volumes.



PARASHAH

TO ACCEPT WITH GRACE

Twerski On Chumash by Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָקָחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה.

"Speak to the Bnei Yisrael and let them take for Me a portion [a donation for the Sanctuary]" (25:2).

Many of the Torah commentaries offer an explanation of why the term "let them take for Me" is used instead of the more appropriate "let them give to Me." Inasmuch as each verse in the Torah may have countless messages, there is perhaps yet another message in this verse.

It is generally assumed that there may be some hesitancy in giving, because people are by nature acquisitive and wish to hold on to their belongings.


Taking, however, is assumed to be relatively easy because everyone likes to receive. This is not universally true. Some people feel that accepting help of any kind is demeaning. They may be so fiercely independent that they will jeopardize their health and even their lives rather than accept help. It is true that the Gemara praises a person who lives an austere life rather than accept *tzedakah*, but it is critical of a person who rejects help when it is really essential. Rav Ovadiah MiBartenura says that a person who has no mercy on himself is unlikely to be merciful to others (*Pe'ah* 8:9).

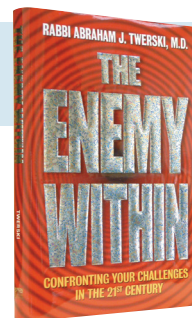
One of my patients, a woman who was recovering from alcoholism, confided in a friend that her furnace had broken down in the midst of a frigid spell and that she had slept three nights in an un-

heated apartment. Her friend said, "You could have stayed at my house for those three nights." She responded, "I don't like to impose on anyone."

I called this patient and told her that I was disappointed, because I was hopeful that she could be helpful to newcomers in recovery. She said, "Please, you can call on me at any time." I said, "I'm sorry, but I cannot. Anyone who cannot accept help has no right to give it."

There is a time for everything. There is a time when we should be independent and self-sufficient, and a time when we should accept help and even ask for it. People who cannot accept appropriate help are invariably people with unwarranted low self-esteem. This feeling may have many undesirable consequences. Some people may refuse legitimate help because they do not wish to feel beholden to a benefactor.

Perhaps this is why the Torah uses the expression "let them take for me" rather than "let them give to me." We should indeed be willing to give, but we must also be able to take when it is necessary. Inability to take when it is essential is not a commendable character trait. 



Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler says that in order to triumph in the battle with the *yeitzer hara*, we must understand the strategies it employs (*Michtav M'Eliyahu*, vol. 3, p.38). I will share with you something I have garnered in my work with alcoholics.

Alcoholics Anonymous describes alcohol as “an enemy; cunning, baffling and powerful.” This is a very apt description of the *yeitzer hara*. The way the *yeitzer hara* undermines one’s resolve is very similar to the way an alcoholic relapses. In treatment, the alcoholic is told that he must avoid “people, places and things” that were associated with his drinking. He must remain in close contact with a sober support group and engage a person with long sobriety to be his “sponsor” or adviser.

Here is the way relapse often occurs. After leaving treatment, the alcoholic may have no desire for a drink. “You could put a bottle in front of me and I wouldn’t even touch it.” This is the stratagem of the “enemy alcohol;” avoid causing a craving to lull the person into a false sense of security.

After a period free of craving, the alcoholic may wish to join his former drinking buddies, not to drink with them, but just for the ca-

maraderie. These friends welcome him, and while they drink beer, he orders a Diet Pepsi. He then thinks, “There is nothing wrong with being with my old friends. It did not cause me to drink.” Again, the “enemy alcohol” has given him a false sense of security. Eventually, the alcoholic thinks, “If I can sit with my drinking friends and not drink, that means that I have overcome my problem. It is now safe for me to

association leads to familiarity and to improper relationships. “I can watch what I want. It will not corrupt me,” but the obscenity and immorality penetrate into one’s thoughts.

“Watching violence will not cause me to act violently,” but one loses control of anger and acts out in rage.

WE MUST BE WISE TO THE INSIDIOUS MANEUVERS OF THE YEITZER HARAH.

have just one beer.” He does so, and when he does not progress to intoxication, he is convinced that he is over his problem. He no longer needs to attend regular meetings of his support group and follow the guidance of his sponsor. This is what the “enemy alcohol” has planned from the onset. Soon the person deteriorates into full-blown alcoholic drinking again.

This is the way the *yeitzer hara* operates. It does not begin by launching a frontal attack. It lulls the person into a false sense of security. He allows himself to fraternize with non-Jews. “They will not cause me to eat non-kosher.” This

The *yeitzer hara* leads one to think, “I have to get to work early or to stay late. Missing *minyan* or *Daf Yomi* will not hurt me.”

The *Gemara* says, “Make someone into your teacher.” The *yeitzer hara* says, “You don’t need a mentor. You are perfectly capable of making sound judgments.”

Our greatest *tzaddikim* feared overconfidence. They constantly engaged in soul-searching, always looking for where they might have fallen short in their service of Hashem. We cannot relinquish our guard against the *yeitzer hara*. It is a formidable enemy, cunning, baffling and powerful. 📖



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NEW!



Jaffa Family Edition

People frequently ask their rabbis *halachah* questions, such as what is permissible for use on *Pesach*, how one *kashers* utensils, how a *succah* should be built, questions about mourning, etc. However, people infrequently ask the rabbi about how one must observe the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av v'eim*, honoring one's parents. Yet, this is one of the foremost *mitzvos* in the Torah. Hashem says, "If you honor your parents, that is equivalent to honoring Me."

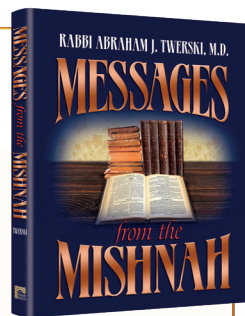
In recent times, this *mitzvah* has taken on more serious proportions. Medical science has extended our lives, so many more people are reaching their eighties and nineties. However, medical science has not yet found the cure for Alzheimer's disease, so that there are many elderly people who may be physically healthy but cannot care for themselves. It is not unusual, therefore, for a couple in their forties or fifties, who have young children to care for, must also devote time, energy, and sometimes money to help their elderly parents. They are thus pulled in two opposite di-

rections, giving rise to the term "the sandwich generation." There may be instances when the needs of the parents and the needs of the children conflict, and we must be guided by *halachah* to act appropriately.

An elderly parent who cannot look after him- or herself may move in with the children.

The grandparent may disagree with the grandchildren's behavior and the "sandwiched" parents may find that pleasing their elderly parent causes problems with their children. Must they cater to the elderly parent's wishes at the ex-

pense of properly parenting the child? At times, these issues may necessitate the help of a therapist, but we must consistently bear in mind that there are important *halachic* questions to be considered and therefore a *halachic* authority must be consulted. After all, who would not want to enjoy the benefits of the World to Come? 📖



PEOPLE INFREQUENTLY ASK THE RABBI ABOUT HOW ONE MUST OBSERVE THE MITZVAH OF KIBBUD AV V'EIM.

Let me share something that I heard from a young woman in recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction. After relating the story of her decline due to her addiction and her subsequent recovery, she said, "There is one thing I must tell you. I am a rabid football fan. The New York Jets are my team, and I will never miss a game. One weekend, I had to be away, and I asked a friend to record the game on her VCR. When I returned, she gave me the tape and said, 'By the way, the Jets won.'"

"I began watching the game and I was horrified by the Jets' terrible performance. At half time, they were 20 points behind. Under other circumstances, I would have been a nervous wreck: anxious,

pacing, and hitting the refrigerator for sweets to settle my nerves. But this time I was perfectly calm, because I knew the outcome; they were going to win.

I AM 20 POINTS BEHIND AT HALF-TIME, BUT I DON'T PANIC.

"When I entered this recovery program, I made a conscious decision to turn my life over to the will of G-d. I know that eventually it will turn out all right, because G-d is in charge of my life. Sometimes, I am 20 points behind at half-time, but I don't panic. I know that I am ultimately going to win."

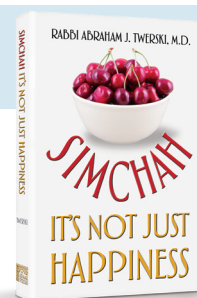
I felt chastened that I had to take

a lesson in faith and trust in G-d from a recovering addict, but the *Gemara* says, "Who is wise?

Someone who can learn from everyone" (*Pirkei Avos* 4:1), so my efforts to be wise triumphed over my pride.

This lesson has often come to my rescue when experiencing adversity. Inasmuch as Hashem is in charge, the outcome will ultimately be good, even though I cannot see this when I am 20 points behind.

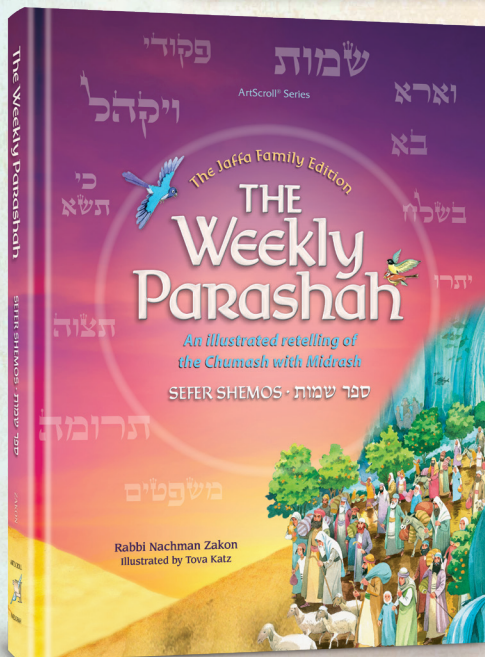
Such *bitachon* does not come naturally. It requires much work to achieve it. One must put in appropriate effort and energy to achieve the *bitachon* that will enable one to have *simchah*. 📖





Parashah for Children

פרשת תרומה



Six and Six

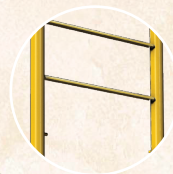
The Shulchan was made of shittim wood, rectangular in shape and covered in gold. Around its top was a decoration, making it look as if the table had a crown. Gold rings were attached to the corners at the top of the table legs. When traveling, gold-covered wooden poles were placed in the rings. The Levi'im used them to lift and carry the Shulchan.



The Lechem HaPanim loaves were stacked six on one side of the Shulchan and six on the other. To keep the breads from getting moldy during the week, they rested on gold half-pipes that served as shelves for the breads.

What kept the pipes up? Twelve gold poles were connected to the Shulchan. They rested on the floor and rose high up over the Shulchan. The half-pipes rested on the pegs coming out of the poles. One end of a half-pipe rested on one peg and the other end on the peg directly opposite. This created metal shelves for the breads to rest on.

One loaf rested directly on the Shulchan and the other five rested on the pipes. Looking at the Shulchan, you would see two towers of loaves stacked up on the Shulchan.



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parshas Terumah:

What is special about the letters of the word shittim?

Kids, ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday, February 24th, to be entered into a weekly raffle to win A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah.

