

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT  
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Mesorah  
Heritage  
Foundation

פרשת חקת  
ט' תמוז תשפ"א  
5781  
JUNE 19, 2021  
ISSUE #46  
RABBI YITZCHOK  
HISIGER, EDITOR  
DESIGN & LAYOUT:  
MRS. AVIVA KOHN

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

## HISTORY

### BURNED IN PARIS

Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz by Yisroel Besser



Although he would never sit back and reflect on his own accomplishments, those closest to Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz zt"l, founder of ArtScroll/Mesorah, whose 4<sup>th</sup> yahrtzeit was just marked, heard his satisfaction in what had been accomplished through ArtScroll/Mesorah in other ways.

He would often discuss the incredible merits of the Romm family, reflecting on the immeasurable zechus of having printed the Vilna Shas, their enduring legacy. Every year, on Erev Shabbos Parashas Chukas, Reb Meir would remind his children of the sad significance of the day.

The Magen Avraham (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, 580) says that it is "worthwhile for every Jew to cry for the burning of the Torah," and relates how on Erev Shabbos Parashas Chukas, in the year 1242, twenty wagonloads filled with Gemaros and Talmudic literature, including many works of the Baalei Tosafos, were burned in Paris by agents of the church and of King Louis IX. Each of these volumes was a priceless, handwritten manuscript, in the era before

there were printed sefarim.

This was such a national tragedy that the Maharam M'Rottenburg composed a kinnah about the event, "Sha'ali Serufah Ba'Aish," which is recited on Tishah B'Av. The great men of that generation asked for Divine

**HE SAW  
HIS LIFE'S  
WORK  
AS A  
PERSONAL  
MISSION.**



Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz with  
Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman zt"l

answers by way of a dream. The Heavenly message was just three words: "Da Gezeiras Oraysa," the Aramaic translation of the first pasuk in Parashas Chukas, "Zos Chukas HaTorah - This is the decree of the Torah" (Bamidbar 19:2, as quoted by Targum Onkelos).

It was understood from the cryptic reply that the burning of the Talmud was Heavenly decreed.

The passion and heart with which Reb Meir discussed the tragedy — words of Torah lost to Klal Yisrael! — made it clear to others that he saw his life's work as a personal mission.

When ArtScroll would eventually translate the Shas into the French lan-

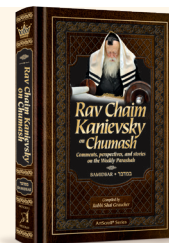
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## PARASHAH

### AHARON'S COUPLES

Rav Chaim Kanievsky on Chumash  
compiled by Rabbi Shai Graucher

וַיָּבֹכּוּ אֶת אֶהֱרֹן.  
שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם כָּל  
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
They wept for  
Aharon thirty  
days, the  
entire house



of Israel (20:29).

What is the Torah telling us by saying "the entire house of Israel"?

Rashi explains that it is teaching us that Aharon's passing was mourned by both men and women,

**AHARON MADE  
PEACE BETWEEN  
AT LEAST 80,000  
COUPLES OVER  
THE COURSE OF  
ALMOST FORTY  
YEARS.**

since he always pursued peace, and worked to restore harmony between men and their wives.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky related that the baraisa (Maseches Kallah Ch. 3; cf. Menoras HaMaor 324) teaches that 80,000 young men named Aharon escorted Aharon Hakohen's bier to his final resting place. These

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## WHO IS RICH?

Bais Halevi on Bitachon  
with commentary by Rabbi David Sutton



Our sages teach, “Who is a rich man? One who is happy with his lot” (*Avos* 4:1). On the other hand, the sages have taught that, by nature, “One who has one hundred desires two hundred” (*Midrash Rabbah*, *Koheles* 1:34). How, then, can one achieve happiness with his lot?

Rav Chaim of Volozhin (*Ruach Chaim*) explains that when a person suddenly makes a great fortune, he is ecstatic. After a short time, however, he gets used to his wealth, and the excitement slowly fades away. As more time passes, he no longer even considers himself wealthy, and now desires even more. But for one who understands that every dollar he earns is from Hashem, and that it can be taken away from him at any moment, the excitement never dissipates. Every moment that Hashem allows him to retain his wealth is a reason for celebration. Such a person is so happy and thankful with what he has that he never desires more. That is a truly wealthy man. 📖

**EVERY MOMENT  
THAT HASHEM  
ALLOWS HIM TO  
RETAIN HIS WEALTH  
IS A REASON FOR  
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## BURNED IN PARIS continued from page 1

guage for the Edmond J. Safra French Edition, the very first meeting between Reb Meir and the team of *talmidei chachamim* supervising the work on the edition took place in Paris, the city where the wagonloads of holy *sefarim* had been burnt by the church in 1242. The editor took Reb Meir and Rabbi Nosson Scherman to the actual site of the burning of the holy books. They were deeply moved, for it reinforced the importance of this new project, one that would allow Jews to connect with the light of *Torah Shebe'al Peh* in the French language. 📖

## AHARON'S COUPLES continued from page 1

were children born of couples who, because of their disagreements, wanted to get divorced, until Aharon restored their marital harmony.

Rav Chaim pointed out that this means that Aharon made peace between at least 80,000 couples over the course of almost forty years. A simple calculation reveals that he averaged restoring harmony to at least six families each and every day! 📖



Rav Chaim Kanievisky

## GREETING EVERY PERSON

*Pirkei Avos – Teachings for Our Times by Rabbi Berel Wein*

רַבִּי מִתְיָא בֶּן חֲרַשׁ אָמַר הָיִי מְקַדֵּם בְּשָׁלוֹם כָּל אָדָם.

**Rav Masya ben Charash says: Initiate a greeting to every person.**

To greet people in a friendly manner is more than just good social manners. It reflects an optimistic and friendly view of life. The Torah unalterably opposes sadness and melancholy as a psychological state of being. Accustoming oneself to greeting people, even strangers, and not only Jews, is a method for developing this positive psychological attitude toward life and its inherent challenges.

I am continually shocked by the experience of wishing someone a “Good *Shabbos*” and receiving no response. Sometimes I am re-

warded with a blank stare (like a “what’s your problem?” stare), but many times the person just walks by me as though I didn’t exist and my greeting was nev-

**IT’S MORE  
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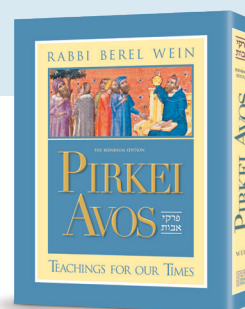


Rabbi Berel Wein

er extended. Not only is this rude, but it flies in the face of what Torah behavior should be.

Rav Masya urged Jews to be

the initiators of greetings and courtesy. He wanted

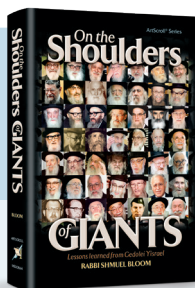


us not to stand on ceremony, not to feel that others were obligated somehow to greet us first before we respond in kind. But he certainly never imagined that there would be those who would completely ignore greetings of others when extended. A cheerful “good morning” greeting is beneficial to both the giver and the recipient. 📖



LANGUAGE  
LESSON

*On the Shoulders of Giants*  
by Rabbi Shmuel Bloom



An incident that occurred in a camp in the Catskills sheds light on the importance of words.

While I was attending Camp Munk in Ferndale, New York, Rabbi Michael Munk, the camp director, once suspected that a camper had uttered a word that was, shall we say, not quite one of the holiest words in the English language. An outstanding *mechanech* and former principal of Bais Yaakov of Borough Park, Rabbi Munk asked a favor of the young man: to bring him a *Shulchan Aruch* and open it up to Chapter 275 in the *Orach Chaim* section. Try as he might, the young man simply could not find the chapter. Rabbi Munk then asked him to find Chapter 344. Again, despite his best efforts, the young man could not find the chapter.

Rabbi Munk explained to the perplexed young man: “These chapter numbers spell

out words.

Chapter 275 spells out the word ‘*reish ayin hey* — evil.’ Rav Yosef Caro wanted to avoid the appearance of this word in his work; he therefore changed the letter sequence to *ayin reish hey*. Chapter 344 spells out the word ‘*shmad* — destruction.’ He therefore changed the lettering to *shindaled mem*. He did this to teach us that words do matter; that mere words can

affect the purity and wellbeing of a person’s soul. You should keep this in mind, young man.”

Yes, words do matter. They can affect us negatively and they can inspire us positively. Words, whether through the use of positive ones or the avoidance of negative ones, can be a catalyst for change. They can allow us to achieve spiritual and moral goals, and to pursue lofty personal and national aspirations as well. 📖



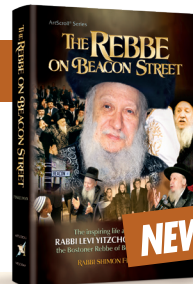
Rabbi Michael Munk

WORDS  
MATTER.

## SENSITIVITY

HE SAYS HE’S  
MASHIACH

*The Rebbe on Beacon Street*  
by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman



“The Bostoner Reb-betzin went out of her way to discover the needs of others,” recalled R’ Nesanel Peterman. “And when she discovered those needs, she did not rest until she found a way to help.

“Once, I witnessed something incredible. It was close to midnight and I was in the Bostoner Rebbe’s apartment when there was loud knocking on the door. I heard the door open and then I heard the *rebbetzin* in conversation with the man who had knocked. When the man left, someone asked the *rebbetzin*, ‘Who was that?’

“Well, he said he’s *Mashiach*,’ she replied.

“Another *Mashiach*?” the person retorted. The *rebbetzin* became very serious and said, ‘If he really is *Mashiach*, then I certainly had to show him respect. And if he’s not *Mashiach* and he’s mentally ill, then for that reason it’s important that I treat him with respect and not put him down.’” 📖

**‘IF HE  
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THEN I  
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## Newest Releases from ArtScroll

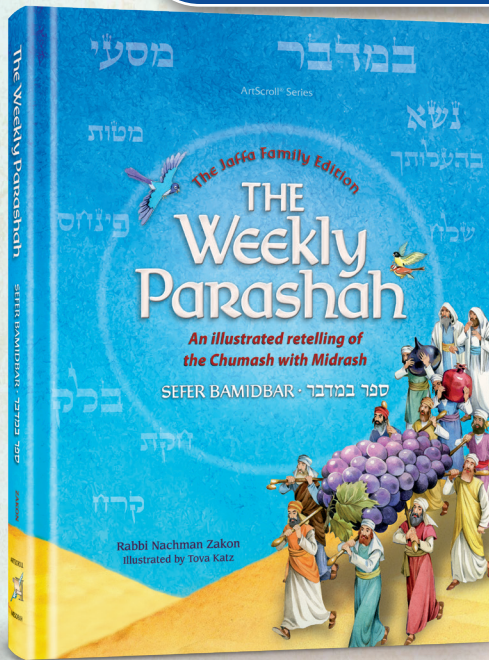


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# Parashah for Children



## פרשת חקת



### It Only Seems Illogical

**T**he Parah Adumah is a *mitzvah* that seems to be illogical. We can't understand it!

If someone is *tamei*, the water of the Parah Adumah makes him *tahor*. But if someone touches the water (except for the one being sprinkled, and the one who is doing the sprinkling), he and his clothing become *tamei*!

Also, though the ashes are used to make people *tahor*, anyone involved in making the Parah Adumah becomes *tamei*.

In other words, the Parah Adumah makes people who are *tamei meis*, *tahor* — and people who are *tahor*, *tamei*.

Is that logical? Not to you and me. As a matter of fact, even King Shlomo, the wisest man who ever lived, couldn't understand it.

That's a reason this *mitzvah* is called a "*chok*," a decree. Hashem says do it even if you don't understand it. It's My decree. And we know that whatever Hashem asks us to do makes sense, even if we don't understand.

**WIN A \$36  
ARTSCROLL  
GIFT CARD!**

## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Chukas:

**In the entire history of the world, how many Parah Adumahs have there been whose ashes were burned?**

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto:shabbosquestion@artscroll.com) by this Wednesday, June 23, 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 Beha'aloscha question is: MICHOEL FIRESTONE, Baltimore, MD**

The question was: At what age did a Levi start working in the Mishkan?

The answer is: At age 25, a Levi started learning how to do his jobs properly. After five years, he joined his fellow Levi'im working in the Mishkan.

