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פרשת נצבים-וילך
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PARASHAH

DO NOT DESPAIR

Rabbi Frand on the Parashah

אתם נצבים היום בלכם — *You are all standing here today.* (Devarim 29:9)

Immediately after enumerating the long litany of ninety-eight curses they would face if they disobeyed Hashem, Moshe called together the Jewish people and said, "You are all standing here today." What is the significance of this sequence of events?

The Midrash, quoted by Rashi, explains that when the Jewish people heard the curses they turned green. "Who can withstand all these curses?" they moaned despondently. "What will become of us?"

Therefore, Moshe called them together to calm them down. "Don't be so worried," he said. "You are all standing here today. After forty turbulent years in the desert, after angering Hashem so many times — with the Golden Calf, the *Meraglim*, the complainers — you are still here today. Hashem has not destroyed you. So you see, you do not need to despair."

The commentators are puzzled. Moshe seems to be taking the wind out of his own sails. First, he read off all the horrible curses to scare the Jewish people into obedience, to put "the fear of the Lord" into them. The threat of the curses accomplished their purpose. The people were terrified. Then all of sudden, he relented and told them that it's not so bad. They don't have to be so terrified. Wasn't he defeating his whole purpose by taking the sting out of the *Tochachah*?

The answer is that there is a vast difference between healthy fear and hopelessness. It is a good thing to be realistically apprehensive about the future. It is unhealthy to live in a fool's paradise, believing you can do as you please without suffering any consequences. But hopelessness is destructive. It demoralizes, debilitates and reduces a person to a bowl of quaking jelly.

Moshe saw that the Jewish people had gone beyond fear when they heard the curses. They lost hope and threw in the towel. Therefore, he had to calm them down until they recovered their hope and

all they felt was a healthy fear.

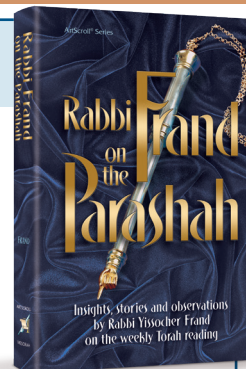
Our Sages tell us (Bava Metzia 59a) that after the destruction of the Temple "all the gates of prayer were closed, except for the Gates of Tears." The Gates of Tears are the channel of last resort for prayers, and they are never closed.

But if they are never closed, asks the Kotzker Rebbe, why is there a need for gates at all? Why not remove the gates and leave the entranceway wide open?

There are some tears that do not get through, says the Kotzker Rebbe. The gates screen out tears of desperation and hopelessness. Despair is not considered a prayer to the Almighty.

If a person is in a state of helplessness and desperation, if he feels backed into a corner, yet sees Hashem as his only hope of salvation, if he then calls forth his innermost feelings and thoughts, and sends his hope-laden tears heavenward, there are no barriers in Heaven to a prayer of this sort. But if he cries without hope in Hashem, those tears stay with him and don't ascend to the Heavenly Throne.

The Izhbitzer Rebbe connects this concept with the very essence of Jewish identity. The name Jew is derived from the tribe of Judah, as is the Hebrew name Yehudi. Why are all Jews known by the name of one tribe? Because when the brothers stood accused of theft before Yosef in Egypt, the Torah tells us (*Bereishis* 44:18) that Yehudah "stepped up" to argue in their defense. When all seemed to be lost, when faced with the overwhelming weight of evidence against them, Yehudah never gave up hope. That is the definition of a Jew, a person who knows that the Almighty will never abandon him. A person who never gives up hope. 

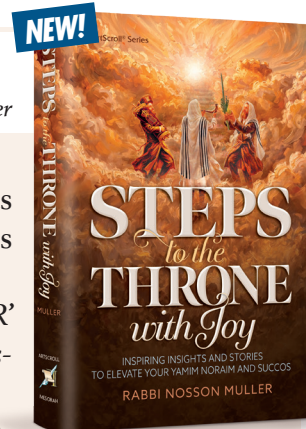


THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED BY DAVID LEBOR AND DR. TALIA EISENSTEIN IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAR BROTHER LEON LEBOR ז"ל - פנחס ובאשא - פסח יהודה בן פנחס KILLED ON 9/11 AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER.

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

IT'S ALL IN THE HEAD...REALLY!

Steps to the Throne with Joy by Rabbi Nosson Muller



The literal translation of Rosh Hashanah is “head of the year.”

Why is it called by that name? Wouldn't a term meaning the “beginning of the year” be a more accurate description of the day?

Many *sefarim* suggest the same answer. Rosh Hashanah is not just the first day of the year but the most important day, as well. Just like a person's body depends on the health of his brain, and functions only per its stimulus, a person's year depends on the health of his Rosh Hashanah. The 12 months to come — its successes and failures, its joy, and its pain — hinges entirely on what happens during the 48 hours that initiate the upcoming year.

When passing a construction site, it is common to see a sign affixed to the fence warning passersby not to indulge their curiosity by touching the wall.

Careful: Wet Paint

Yet, the inner child inside of us all relishes the rush of adrenalin in testing boundaries and taking chances. Many people will gingerly touch it, hoping to prove that annoying sign wrong.

However, when the sign warns of a live electrical current, no one dares test its veracity. Everyone gives the open wires a wide berth.

Calling Rosh Hashanah, the head of the year, as opposed to just the beginning, says R' Meilech Biderman, cautions us to be careful, to give the day the weight it deserves. It warns us that we are not just dealing with harmless wet paint.

A pulsing electric current runs through these 48 hours. Our future hinges on how we approach it and how we perform. It is incumbent upon us to proceed

with great caution and care.

Rosh Hashanah is, indeed, its most accurate description. It is truly the head of the year.

A fellow once inquired of R' Chaim Kanievsky about the wisdom of a particular business deal.

“There is significant risk involved,” he said, “But it will return a handsome profit if all goes as planned. Is taking on that kind of risk in the realm of permitted hishtadlus?”

“Hishtadlus?” R' Chaim replied with a smile. “The only kind I know to definitely work is davening well on Rosh Hashanah.”



R' Chaim Kanievsky

A PULSING ELECTRIC CURRENT RUNS THROUGH THESE 48 HOURS. OUR FUTURE HINGES ON HOW WE APPROACH IT AND HOW WE PERFORM.

R' Aharon Leib Shteinman responded similarly to a man asking how much business activity is permissible during the Nine Days, a period in which we are told to minimize such efforts.

“I have no answer for you regarding exactly how much commerce is proper to engage in during the Nine Days” he said. “I only know about hishtadlus during the Ten Days, the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah. Use that time properly and you will be fine!”

They were each conveying an identical message.

Make Rosh Hashanah the head of your year. Make the days count! 📖

	SHABBOS SEPTEMBER 5 בג אלו	SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6 כד אלו	MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7 כה אלו	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8 כו אלו	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9 כז אלו	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10 כח אלו	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 כט אלו
BAVLI	Chullin 128	Chullin 129	Chullin 130	Chullin 131	Chulin 132	Chulin 133	Chulin 134
YERUSHALMI	Yevamos 28	Yevamos 29	Yevamos 30	Yevamos 31	Yevamos 32	Yevamos 33	Yevamos 34
MISHNAH	Keilim 28:10-29:1	Keilim 29:2-3	Keilim 29:4-5	Keilim 29:6-7	Keilim 29:8-30:1	Keilim 30:2-3	Keilim 30:4 Oholos 1:1
KITZUR	130:1-End	131:1-4	131:5-9	131:10-16	131:17-132:End	133:1-8	133:9-15
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 101b-102b	Yevamos 103a Chazara 102b	Yevamos 103b Chazara 103a	Yevamos 104a Chazara 103b	Yevamos 104b Chazara 104a	Yevamos 105a Chazara 104b	Yevamos Chazara 103a-103b

HOW DO YOU SPELL ONE THOUSAND?

Inspired By Time
by Rabbi Yehoshua Frankenhuis

The *maggid* R' Avraham Mordche Malach once shared a simple but profound *mashal*.

Imagine a classroom of thirty children, each taking a different final exam.

One student is answering math questions, another geography, another science, another spelling.

In the middle of the test, Avi raises his hand. "Rebbe, how do you spell one thousand?" The teacher smiles patiently and gives him the answer.

A few minutes later, Moshe raises his hand with the very same question.

"How do you spell one thousand?"

This time the teacher frowns. "Moshe! You're in the middle of a spelling test! You can't ask that now."

Moshe is confused. "But you just told Avi!"

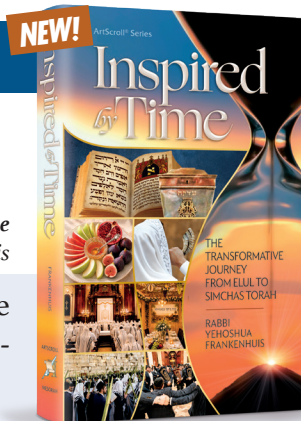
The teacher explains, "Avi's test was math — it wasn't about spelling. But your test is. You have to figure it out on your own."

So it is in life. We often look around and wonder why others seem to have it easy while our experiences feel unbearable. Why is one person spared while another is tested so painfully?

The answer is that each *neshamah* has its own exam.

Hashem, the perfect teacher, designs every *nisayon* with precision — tailor-made for each person, down to the smallest detail. And with every test He sends, He gives the exact strength needed to withstand it.

This is one of Elul's most powerful lessons. The *nisyonos* of life are real. They can be frightening, overwhelming, even crushing. But the Torah assures us: If the test has come to you, then inside you lies the *ko'ach* to pass it. Hashem never gives a test that is beyond your strength. 📖



THE JAFFA FAMILY EDITION

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

For what reason did children have to come to Hakhel?

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 question for Re'eh is: ARYEH PAS, Bnei Brak

Question for Re'eh was: What were the two korbanos that everyone coming to Yerushalayim for Yom Tov was required to bring?
Re'eh Answer: An Olah Re'iyah and a Shalmei Chagigah



PART 26: THE GEDOLIM APPROVE AND ENCOURAGE

Gedolei Yisrael have always been wary of attempts to “improve” and “innovate” in Torah observance and learning; to which the Chasam Sofer famously applied the dictum “*Chadash assur min haTorah*.” Therefore, as we have often said in these columns, we have always sought, and been subservient to, the counsel of *gedolei Yisrael*. What would the great Torah leaders in America and Eretz Yisrael say about the proposed Schottenstein Talmud?

We prepared a sample of a few *blatt* and showed it to *gedolei Yisrael* in America. Their approval and encouragement is expressed in their enthusiastic *haskamos* and *michtvei berachah*, which are printed in several volumes of the Schottenstein Talmud. Two themes are prominent in their letters: that ArtScroll’s earlier works provide assurance that it presents the Torah correctly and according to the *mesorah* of Chazal, and that it is vitally important to help our generation learn and understand the *Gemara*.

It was especially gratifying that R’ Dovid Feinstein and R’ Shmuel Kamenetzky said in their letters that their late fathers, the *gedolei hador* of the previous generation, were supporters of our work and would have approved and encouraged the new Schottenstein Talmud.

To the few who approached R’ Dovid Feinstein contending that the Schottenstein Talmud would make learning too easy and stop people from laboring (*yegia*) to understand, R’ Feinstein would reply that, to the contrary, by elucidating the basic flow of the *Gemara*, ArtScroll enables them to direct their labors toward a deeper and more complex understanding.

After gaining the approval of American *gedolim*, Rabbis Zlotowitz and Scherman went to Eretz Yisrael to present the plan to the *geonim* R’ Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and R’ Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv.



The Novominsker Rebbe addressing the 11th Siyum HaShas at Madison Square Garden

Both strongly approved the initiative and urged the visiting rabbis to publish it despite any opposition. They authorized us to publish the following in their names:

R’ Auerbach: There is no question that your work is vital to our generation. This is an essential *harbatzas Torah* undertaking that will surely be blessed with great success.

R’ Elyashiv: Since we live in a generation exposed to all sorts of translations by unqualified people who denigrate the holiness of the Talmud and Oral Law, in my opinion there is no more important time than now to act for the honor of Hashem. It is a great *mitzvah* to proceed with this project.

The significance of that encouragement became even more apparent as the project progressed and its impact spread. At the 11th Siyum HaShas of Daf Yomi, the Novominsker Rebbe publicly reflected on what the completed Schottenstein Shas had come to mean for Klal Yisrael. These were his words:

“...I believe we’d all be remiss at this point not to acknowledge in public the tremendous contribution made by those Torah scholars, the writers, the editors, and the benefactors of the society known as ArtScroll, the publishers of the Schottenstein Shas, who have made the study of *Gemara* accessible to so many thousands of thirsty Jews eager to drink from the fountain of Torah. The completion of the Schottenstein Shas in our day is a historic milestone, a sign I believe from Providence that Torah can and will be advanced *be’ezras Hashem* on all frontiers of Jewish life.”

What began with the blessing and encouragement of the *gedolei Yisrael* became, with extraordinary *siyata diShmaya*, a historic vehicle for *harbatzas Torah* — opening the world of *Gemara* to generations of Jews and helping bring us to a time when more Jews are learning *Gemara* than at any other point in Jewish history.

UP NEXT: Jewish History à la Wein