A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

פרשת לך לך
י"ג חשון תשפ"ז
5787
OCTOBER 24, 2026
ISSUE #309
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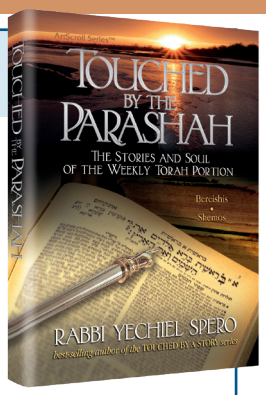
PARASHAH

EIGHTY-SEVEN STEPS HIGHER

Touched by the Parashah *by Rabbi Yechiel Spero*



In the opening *pesukim* of this week's *parashah*, Avraham is instructed to follow Hashem, to trust that He will deliver him to the land of Canaan. Avraham, the first *maamin*, believer, sets the tone for the generations after him. We are, after all, *maaminim bnei maaminim*, believers the sons of believers. And although there have been many dark moments throughout the Jewish people's history, we have followed in the footsteps of our forefather Avraham and continued to believe.

It has rarely been easy. And yet, as Rav Nachman of Breslov writes, life's נְעִימוּת, sweetness, emerges from its מְנִיעוֹת, difficulties — two words sharing the very same Hebrew letters.

Rav Yaakov Meir Schechter

And faith, which is often strengthened by means of those difficulties, gives us that which we need to survive. As Rav Mordechai of Lechovitch put it, "Without the *Ribbono Shel Olam,* we can't cross the threshold of our homes. With Him, we can cross the sea."

Rav Yaakov Meir Schechter's smile lights up a room. What many people do not know is that Rav Yaakov Meir Shechter is not a young man, despite his appearance and demeanor; in his own life he has overcome many great obstacles, and has done so with tremendous fortitude and emunah. In a unique and revealing episode, he conveys his key to making it through even the most difficult of days.

One day a few years ago, Rav Yaakov Meir was walking home after giving a *shiur* to a group of young students at the Yeshivah Shaarei Shamayim in the heart of Meah Shearim. Following the *shiur*, the eager group accompanied him home, so they could have a few minutes more to benefit from his words of wisdom. Little did they know that his greatest lesson of the day had yet to be taught.

The walk to his building took only a few minutes, and the group followed Rav Yaakov Meir up the steps, trying to keep pace with him as he bounded up to his apartment. They were all short of breath, and their legs ached by the time they reached the apartment at the very top of what was probably the tallest building in Meah Shearim.

As the young men, most of them in their teens, caught their breath, they watched in amazement as the man who was old enough to be their grandfather breathed easily. Stunned at the effortlessness with which the older man had raced up the steps, 87 in all, they wondered if it would not be easier for him to live on the ground floor, and asked him why he had not chosen to move as he grew older.

Rav Yaakov Meir looked at the boys, who by now had regained their stamina. "Do you have any idea how much I owe these steps? They have brought me to where I have to go every day. True, sometimes it is quite difficult to climb the *madreigos*, but these steps are what make us into who we are. You can view them in one of two ways. They are either the impediment to where you need to go ... or the means to bring you to your destination."

This incredibly uplifting thought puts the hurdles of life into an enlightening perspective. Sometimes we face challenges and frustrate ourselves in our struggle to overcome what stands in our way. But with a simple adjustment in our viewpoint, we can embrace our difficulties — instead of trying to do away with them. We can realize how much better we become through these very challenges.

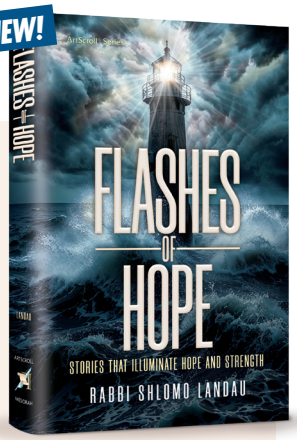
THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED BY SHMUEL BEN BARUCH AND PEREL BAT YAAKOV

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

HASHGACHAH

JUST ONE SHABBOS...

Flashes of Hope by Rabbi Shlomo Landau



The regulars at a London *vasikin minyan* were a devoted, tight-knit group, so when an unfamiliar Yid began attending, everyone noticed. Quiet and reserved, he arrived before davening and left immediately afterward. He seemed to be well-learned, but no one knew anything about him — not even his name.

R' Mordechai,* one of the regulars, invited him to learn together, hoping he would eventually open up. Their learning revealed a man of extraordinary depth and brilliance. His identity, however, remained a mystery. He never shared any information about himself — not even his name.

Finally, one day, the stranger shared his story.

"I grew up in Israel in a traditional home but wasn't frum. After serving in the army, I joined the Mossad. Following grueling training, I carried out sensitive missions around the world.

EVERY EVENING AT EIGHT, THE TERRORIST LEFT A RESTAURANT AND TURNED RIGHT AT A PARTICULAR CORNER.

"Once, a colleague and I were sent to eliminate a dangerous terrorist in Zurich. We rented separate apartments and avoided contact to prevent exposure. Every evening at eight, the terrorist left a restaurant and turned right at a particular corner, and a Friday night was chosen for us to intercept him from opposite sides at exactly eight o' clock.

"That morning, I went to a supermarket. A smiling Jew approached me. '*Shalom achi*! Are you from Israel?'

"I was stunned. Nothing about my appearance suggested that. I tried to brush him off, but his warmth slowly penetrated my defenses. Eventually, I admitted that I was Israeli.

"He invited me for Shabbos dinner. Somehow, I agreed, explaining that I had an important meeting and would have to leave early.

"The house smelled of fresh challah and chicken soup. Candlesticks and polished silver gleamed on the white tablecloth. Three little boys and two girls greeted their father with a joyous, 'Good Shabbos!' He answered them with such tenderness.

"I had never experienced anything like it. The Kiddush, the delicious food, the father singing with his children — everything radiated warmth and holiness. I lost myself in that beautiful world.

"Then I glanced at my watch and saw that it was five minutes to eight!

"My partner was already in position, and I had no way to contact him. I quickly left but arrived twenty-five minutes late, finding the street eerily quiet and my partner nowhere to be seen.

"Later, I learned that our mission had been compromised. They knew when and how we were coming. Every step we thought we were taking in secrecy had been anticipated. They had laid a carefully coordinated trap and were waiting for us.

"My partner had been murdered.

"Had I arrived on time, I would have walked straight into the same trap," he said, wiping away a tear.

"I couldn't recover. Eventually, I was discharged with a generous pension. But I couldn't forget that Shabbos meal — the meal that saved my life. I kept seeing the father, his children's shining faces, the peaceful beauty of their home.

"I yearned to experience it again and signed up for a Shabbos retreat. That was the beginning. Just as I once pursued excellence in the Mossad, I now strive to grow spiritually."

He continued describing the home and the scene of the Shabbos table when R' Mordechai suddenly asked, "Did your host have a medium-length beard? Was there a large wall clock facing the table?"

"Yes! How did you know?"

"We've met before," he whispered. "Your host was my late father. That was our home. I was one of those three boys. The girls were my sisters."

The two men sat in awed silence. One Shabbos had saved a life and transformed it. Years later, *hashgachah* had brought them together again.

YOMI SCHEDULES FOR THIS WEEK:

	SHABBOS OCTOBER 24 יג חשון	SUNDAY OCTOBER 25 יד חשון	MONDAY OCTOBER 26 טו חשון	TUESDAY OCTOBER 27 טז חשון	WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 28 יז חשון	THURSDAY OCTOBER 29 יח חשון	FRIDAY OCTOBER 30 יט חשון
BAVLI	Bechoros 36	Bechoros 37	Bechoros 38	Bechoros 39	Bechoros 40	Bechoros 41	Bechoros 42
YERUSHALMI	Yevamos 77	Yevamos 78	Yevamos 79	Yevamos 80	Yevamos 81	Yevamos 82	Yevamos 83
MISHNAH	Oholos 12:3-4	Oholos 12:5-6	Oholos 12:7-8	Oholos 13:1-2	Oholos 13:3-4	Oholos 13:5-6	Oholos 14:1-2
KITZUR	11:1-11	11:12-20	11:21-12:4	12:5-10	12:11-13:1	13:2-14:3	14:4-End
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 119a-120a	Yevamos 120b Chazara 120a	Yevamos 121a Chazara 120b	Yevamos 121b Chazara 121a	Yevamos 122a Chazara 121b	Yevamos 122b Chazara 122a	Yevamos Chazara 120b-121a

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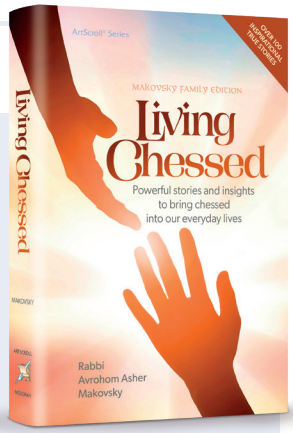
CHESSED

I'M NOT LEAVING

Living Chessed *by Rabbi Avrohom Asher Makovsky*



R' Shneur Kotler, the rosh yeshivah of Beis Medrash Govoha, arrived at a talmid's chasunah in New York on time for the chuppah. Immediately afterward, he was to return to Lakewood to attend an important meeting.

"Please wait for me here," he told the driver who had brought him. "As soon as the chuppah is over, I need to go back to Lakewood for the meeting."

The time for the chuppah had passed, and the driver sat waiting. Fifteen minutes later, R' Shneur emerged and told him, "I've changed my plans. I'm going to be staying for the whole chasunah."

It didn't matter to the driver. His job was to drive R' Shneur. But he couldn't help wondering what had happened to the crucial meeting. Furthermore, why was the rosh yeshivah planning to stay there for so long? Usually, he stayed for an hour and left.

When the bentching was finished, R' Shneur came back to the car, ready to leave. As the driver was taking him home, he decided to ask about the unusually long stay, especially since the rosh yeshivah had stressed the importance of the meeting.

R' Shneur Kotler

"It really was a very crucial meeting," R' Shneur confirmed. "In fact, I called someone and asked him to tell everyone that it was being postponed. It's not such a simple thing to do, but I felt it needed to be done. You see, I did not receive any berachah or kibbud under the chuppah. You know I don't care about these things. But I was worried that people would see that I left right after the chuppah and think I was leaving because I was a little insulted."

But why did this matter enough to cancel an important meeting?

R' Shneur explained, "I was worried this might cause some friction between the mechutanim. Probably what happened is that the kallah's side needed an extra kibbud, so my talmid's father couldn't give one to me. If he thought I was insulted, he'd say, 'Look at that! Now my rosh yeshivah is upset that I didn't give him a kibbud.' That could cause friction between the mechutanim. And friction between the mechutanim could spill over to the couple. Who knows?

Therefore, I decided to stay even longer than usual, all the way to the end. I made sure to go over to the mechutan and compliment him on the beautiful simchah, and how nicely it was done. He had to see that I was completely happy, so that the issue of my kibbud under the chuppah would disappear."

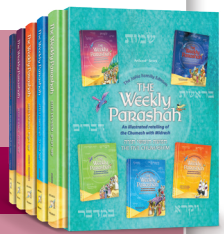
When the issue at hand is *shalom*, said R' Shneur, we have to keep in mind the last mishnah in Mishnayos (*Uktzin* 3:12): Rabbeinu Hakadosh concluded Mishnayos with the message, "*Lo matza HaKadosh Baruch Hu kli machazik berachah ela hashalom* — Hashem didn't find a *kli* that holds *berachos* except *shalom*." A *kli* is a vessel. A wine bottle, for example, is the *kli* that holds wine. And no matter how expensive a certain wine might be, without a *kli* to hold it, it becomes nothing more than a puddle on the floor. Likewise, without *shalom*, the greatest gifts Hashem can give us become useless. Money, belongings, status — none of it brings us any good if our lives are torn by strife.

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

WIN A $36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

What was Avraham in the middle of doing when he saw Og approaching him to tell him that Lot had been captured?

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 Yom Kippur is : **MOSHIE DEBRAVE, *Brooklyn, NY***

Question for Yom Kippur was: What mitzvah requires you to stop doing things that are forbidden before they actually become forbidden?
Yom Kippur Answer: Things that are forbidden to do on Yom Kippur must be avoided for a short while before Yom Kippur as well (Tosafos Yom Kippur). Same applies to Shabbos and Yom Tov.

PART 32: FROM ONE BOY'S IDEA TO EVERY SHABBOS TABLE

The Rambam famously taught: "Listen to the truth, from whoever says it." At ArtScroll, we try to take suggestions seriously, wherever they come from. One especially good suggestion came from an eleven-year-old boy. Our first reaction was: Why didn't we think of that? Our next was to get to work.

Jacob Schottenstein, grandson of our dear friends Jay and Jeanie and son of our dear friends Joey and Lindsay, suggested a series on the weekly parashah written especially for young people. Jack Jaffa immediately recognized the promise of Jacob's idea, enthusiastically embraced the project, and dedicated it. The result was *The Jaffa Family Weekly Parashah Series* — five beautifully produced, engaging volumes, one for each Book of the Chumash, that presents each parashah with clarity, warmth, and insight. Created to make the parashah accessible and engaging for younger readers, the series has become a favorite among children — and adults as well. Its success has been so great that it is now available in Hebrew as well.

Our goal was more than giving children a way to learn the parashah on their own. We wanted to give parents an engaging, efficient way to **teach it to them**: a resource they could pick up each week, enjoy together with their children, and use to bring the parashah to life at the Shabbos table.

Each parashah includes a lively summary; *Maaseh Avos*, showing how the lives of our ancestors speak to us today; a Who's Who of its people; fascinating facts; and questions and answers. The pieces are short, the writing is crisp, and the language is suited to young readers. Children can explore it themselves, while parents have a wealth of material ready to share.

Because this is Torah, accessibility must go hand in hand with accuracy. Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky once explained why he prepared a Gemara shiur for working men as carefully as one for yeshivah students: "A Gemara shiur is *Torah*! It must be correct." The same is true when presenting Torah to children. It must be faithful to its sources and clear enough to understand and remember.

The content was written by R' Nachman Zakon *z"l*, a veteran rebbi, and edited and reviewed by experienced educators familiar with the intended age group. The full-color illustrations, too, were reviewed for good taste and fidelity to the teachings of Chazal and the commentators. Every detail received care.

Readers asked for more, and we responded with a Haggadah that helps keep children involved throughout the Seder. Next comes *Sefer Yehoshua*, a beautifully illustrated introduction to a part of Tanach that is less familiar to many children — and even many adults. The team plans to continue with Sefer Shoftim.

So thank you, Jacob Schottenstein, for an idea that has given children a new way into the parashah — and parents a wonderful way to bring it home. And thank you to Jack Jaffa for helping turn that idea into a reality.