

# AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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

פרשת משפטים  
א' סבת תשפ"א

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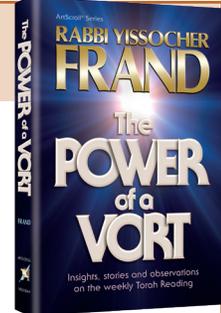
RABBI YITZCHOK HISIGER, EDITOR

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AVIVA KOHN

## PARASHAH

## NO EXCUSE

The Power of a Vort by Rabbi Yissocher Frand



כָּל אֶלְמָנָה וְיָתוּם לֹא תַעֲנוּן. אִם עָנָה תַעֲנֶנָּה אֹתוֹ כִּי אִם צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקָתוֹ.  
*You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan. If you [dare to] cause him pain...!  
— so that he shall cry out to Me, I shall surely hear his outcry (22:21-22).*

In warning us not to cause pain to a widow or an orphan, the Torah uses an unusual formulation:

כִּי אִם צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקָתוֹ - *so that he cried out to Me, I shall surely hear his outcry.* Although the words *כִּי אִם* can validly be translated as “for if,” a more standard translation would be “so that.” But could the Torah truly be talking about someone so callous that he would cause pain to a widow or orphan specifically in order to cause them to cry?

The *Kol Eliyahu* links this question to *Chazal's* explanation of the saga of Chanah and Peninah, Elkanah's two wives (*Shmuel I*, Ch. 1), which we read about in the *haftarah* on *Rosh Hashanah*. The *navi* tells us that Chanah had no children and Peninah, who had ten children, would taunt her about it. While this sounds

really cruel, *Chazal* teach that Peninah actually acted out of noble intentions. She wanted Chanah to *daven* with all her heart, and she knew that if Chanah would feel more miserable about her situation because of the teasing, she would *daven* with more intensity. Despite Peninah's

*Eliyahu*. We are talking about a person who says, “I'm not trying to cause pain to the widow or orphan out of callousness. I'm doing it so that they will call out to Hashem. I want them to *daven* more intensely so that Hashem will help them.” Nevertheless, says the Torah,

### EVEN THE NOBLEST INTENTIONS DO NOT EXCUSE HURTING ANOTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS.

noble intentions, the pain she caused Chanah was unacceptable, and she was punished in the most severe way. Chanah eventually gave birth to Shmuel Hanavi, and each of Peninah's ten children died.

Even the noblest intentions do not excuse hurting another person's feelings.

This is what the *pasuk* is warning us about, says the *Kol*

this sort of action is never acceptable, and the punishment will be severe: *וְחָרָה אַפִּי וְהָרַגְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בַּחֶרֶב וְהָיוּ נְשֵׁיכֶם אֶלְמָנוֹת וּבָנֵיכֶם יָתוּמִים - My wrath shall blaze and I shall kill you by the sword, and your wives will be widows and your children orphans (22:23).*

*No matter how well-meaning we are or how grand our intentions are, we may never cause anguish to another person.* 📖

## FAITH

## SOMETHING TO RELY UPON

The 6 Constant Mitzvos by Rabbi Yehuda Heimowitz and Rabbi Shai Markowitz

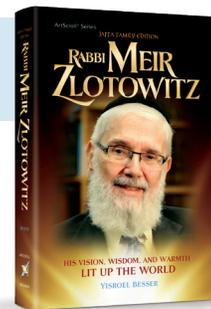
Life can be frightening without *emunah*. The world is moving at a dizzying pace, and technological advancements bring us live reports of world events

that we would not have been aware of had we lived 100 years ago. *Emunah* allows us to understand some of these events, but

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ARTSCROLL PUBLISHED MONTHLY



Rav Dovid Feinstein once shared an interesting *halachic shailah* he had received. There was a secular Jewish woman who kept a single custom from her parents' home: she would go to the local *shul* on *Yom Kippur* and fast all through the long day. Her husband mocked the practice, telling her that it was hypocritical to express repentance when she had no plans to actually change, but she was tenacious about holding onto this tradition and she always came home after *Yom Kippur* feeling inspired and cleansed.

The day meant a lot to her, and eventually, she asked her husband to come to *shul* as well. At first he refused, but she was so persistent

that one year he agreed to come to the *shul* for a few minutes. In order to reassure himself that it was merely an act of generosity to his wife and nothing more, the husband first went to the local Burger King, where he devoured a non-kosher hamburger. Only then did he wander into the *shul* for *Ne'ilah*, the final prayer of the holy day. He picked up one of the *machzorim* and, bored, started to flip through the book. He began to read the *Yom Kippur* overview, penned by Rav Nosson Sherman, and found himself swept into the narrative, feeling the power and potency of the day. He experienced a rush of remorse and was overwhelmed by a single thought: *What*

*am I doing with the life G-d has given me?*

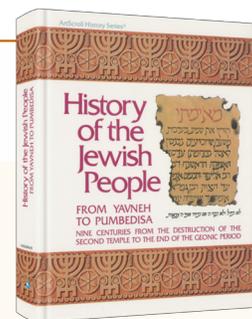
That night, he and his wife sat down for a long, honest conversation. They embarked on a road to full return, and, with the guidance of Rav Dovid Feinstein, they celebrated their marriage with a *chupah* and proper *kiddushin*.

Rav Dovid would tell the story in Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz's presence and add, "And do you know why this man called me recently? The man who became *frum* through ArtScroll called to ask a *shailah* about fasting on *Shivah Asar B'Tamuz!*" 📖

HISTORY

THE YARCHEI KALLAH

History of the Jewish People Volume 2 - From Yavneh to Pumpedisa by Rabbi Hersh Goldwurm



One of the most important contributions to the spread of Torah in Babylonia was the institution known as *Yarchei Kallah*, which took place during the months of Adar and Elul. Then, agricultural activity - the source of livelihood of a great many Babylonian Jews - was at its lowest ebb, and former students from the various *yeshivos* would come back to their mother *yeshivah* to renew and improve their knowledge. Also they would be given "homework," as it were, for the coming five months, for they would be told which tractate of the Talmud would be studied at the next *Yarchei Kallah*, so

that they could study it during the intervening time. Though it is not known when or by whom this custom was initiated, an apparent reference to it is found in the following passage: "When the sages would leave Rav's *yeshivah* [at the end of the *Yarchei Kallah*], 1,200 [permanent] students would remain" (*Kesubos* 106a). It may well be that Rav was the originator of the custom which has been revived in modern times in Israel, America, and Europe. 📖

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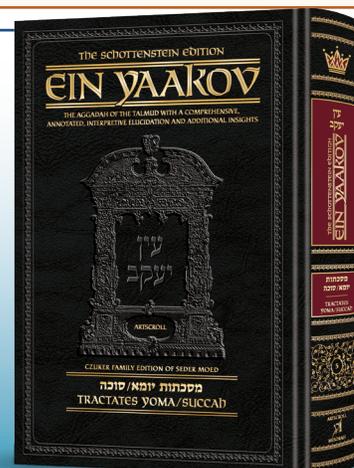
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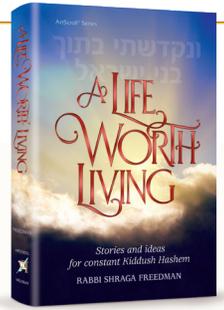
- ▶ A new, flowing, and readable translation
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- ▶ An "Additional References" section
- ▶ The complete newly typeset Mesoras HaShas edition of Sefer Ein Yaakov
- ▶ The full classic Vilna page of each Gemara cited.

Also available: Tractate Berachos vol. 1 & 2, Eruvin / Pesachim



## WHEN YOUR LIFE IS ON THE LINE

*A Life Worth Living* by Rabbi Shraga Friedman  
From the Foreword by Rabbi Moshe Tuvia Lief



A certain Jewish man owned a nursing home in Baltimore, in which all of the residents were not Jewish. Due to the makeup of its clientele, the nursing home served non-kosher meals. One day, however, the owner discovered that one of the elderly women living in the home was indeed Jewish. He arranged for kosher food to be served to her, but the woman refused to accept the meals; she insisted on being served the same non-kosher fare that was provided to all the other residents. The case was brought to court, and the judge ruled that if the resident did not begin receiving the meals she wanted within thirty days, the entire facility would be shut down. The owner called Rav Noach Weinberg and begged him for a *heter* to serve non-kosher meals to the woman, but Rav Weinberg ruled that it was forbidden. Several months later, Rav Weinberg encountered the man and asked him how the story had ended.



Rav Noach Weinberg zt"l

**“WE FIGURED IT OUT. SHE AGREED TO EAT KOSHER.”**

The nursing home owner replied, “We figured it

out. She agreed to eat kosher.”

“How did you do that?” Rav Weinberg exclaimed.

“We made her *shomer Shabbos*,” the man replied.

The *rav*'s incredulity grew. “How did you do that?” he demanded.

“My life was on the line,” the owner said simply. “I was in danger of losing the facility and my entire livelihood, and I had no choice: I had to figure out how to get her to become religious.”

*All of us must realize that our lives are on the line as well; our entire existence revolves around our obligation to create a kiddush Hashem. If we understand that, then we will make any sacrifices that are necessary — giving up time, money, or anything else that is required — in order to carry out our mission and achieve the purpose of our existence. With every step we take, every breath we breathe, every word we speak, and every action we perform, we represent Hashem.* 📖

### SOMETHING TO RELY UPON

*continued from page 1*

more importantly, it gives us the sense of security that Someone is orchestrating each and every one of them.

*A man once went to the Chofetz Chaim to bemoan his lot in life.*

*“I earn my livelihood as a peddler, traveling from village to village. Sometimes I am away from home for a few days, sometimes for a few weeks. I travel through the bitter cold of winter and under the blazing summer sun. Until recently, I was able to comfort myself in my travels, because I knew that in a matter of days or weeks, I would be able to go home, where my beloved wife would be waiting for me*

**FORTUNATE ARE THOSE WHO REALIZE THAT EVERY MEASURE OF PAIN HAS A PURPOSE.**



The Chofetz Chaim

*with some good food, a comfortable bed, and the radiant warmth of a Jewish home.*

*“Recently, however, my wife died.*

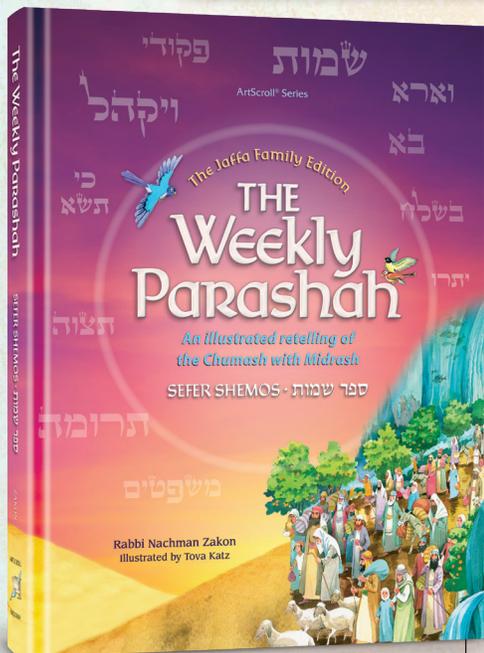
*Now, not only do I have to suffer from my conditions on the road, but I don't even have the comfort of knowing that I will eventually be able to restore my strength; I have no home to return to!”*

The Chofetz Chaim extracted an important message from this man's tale of woe. Our journey through this world is at times filled with pain and difficulty. Without *emunah*, one can become discouraged during such times. Fortunate are those who realize that this world is fleeting, that every measure of pain has a purpose, and that they will soon be able to return “home” and enjoy the warmth of the Divine Presence in the World to Come. 📖



# Parashah for Children

## פרשת משפטים



### Be Careful

**B**esides being careful with people's property, we also have to be very careful how we treat anyone. We have to be nice to others, and not say something that might hurt their feelings. Certainly, we should never take advantage of anyone.

The Torah warns us to be especially careful about how we treat widows, orphans, and converts. Why? Because they feel there is no one to protect them. The widow has no husband to stand up for her. An orphan has no father or mother to take care of him, and a convert has no Jewish relatives to help him.



There is no question that the temptation to cheat is sometimes strong. Copying an answer on a test from someone else is a type of lying. You are pretending you know something, but you really don't. It's a lie! The next time you want to cheat on an exam, ask yourself: Do you want a better mark, or would you rather be close to Hashem? It's all up to you. It is always your choice.

**If you decide not to cheat, and get a lower mark, you might want to tell your parents or your rebbi / morah that you chose not to cheat. They will be proud of you. More important: The Creator of the world will be proud of you.**

### Kushta

**T**here is a huge reward for people who tell the truth — they will live long. The Gemara tells us about the unusual city of Kushta. Everyone who lived there was very, very careful to tell only the truth. As a result, no one in the city died young.

Hashem does not want to be around a liar. Telling the truth brings people closer to Hashem. Telling a lie pushes them away from Hashem.

The Baal Shem Tov and the Alter of Kelm taught that if you want to become a great Jew ... be very careful not to lie.

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## THE WEEKLY QUESTION

*Question for Parashas Mishpatim: How long before the world was created did the Torah exist in Shamayim?*

*Kids, ask your parents to email the answer to [shabbosquestion@artscroll.com](mailto:shabbosquestion@artscroll.com) by this Wednesday, February 17th, 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*.*

