

Nitzavim Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

This week's parsha takes place on the last day of Moses's life. He was 120 years old. He began his farewell speech to the Jewish people which continues through the end of the Torah. Moses, again, reminded the Jewish people that there will be consequences for their actions if they don't listen to God and follow his Torah. They will be exiled from the Land of Israel and will be spread out all over the world. However, he assured them that when they do teshuva, when they repent, God will gather them from the four corners of the world and bring them back to the land of Israel. There, God will once

again bless them and they will have plenty of food to eat. They will have lots of money, and there will be everlasting peace. Moses also reminded the people that God always gives a person free-choice to do good or bad.

We are never forced to do good and God will not stop us from doing bad things if that is what we choose. Therefore, it is important for us to make sure that we always choose to do the right thing.

TORAH COMICS



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Love of Torah and Love of Gold

To love Hashem your G-d, to obey His voice (30:20)

R'Abba, the Sage, loved Torah deeply and was pained that not everyone devoted themselves to its study. Once, he came to a city whose beis medrash was all but deserted. He proclaimed that all those who desired wealth and long life should come and study Torah.

Many people gathered to study under this great teacher and soon were caught up in the beauty and magic of the study of Torah. They were willing students and R' Abba was a happy and devoted teacher.

Once, a young man came to R' Abba. He stated his purpose, "I wish to study Torah, so that I may become rich."

R' Abba never turned anyone away. "Sit down and join the others. By the way, what is your name?"

"My name is Yossi."

R' Abba smiled. "Yossi? Then you shall become known as 'R' Yossi the Wealthy.'"

Yossi sat down among the other students and began learning. Time passed. When he realized that R' Abba's promise was not being fulfilled, he went to his teacher and complained, "You promised me wealth, if I studied Torah. I have studied and studied, but

am as poor as when I first came!"

R' Abba was too angry to speak. He felt that if he opened his mouth, he would say things that he might later regret. He had hoped that his new student would eventually be happy to study for the sake of knowledge and would spurn riches. How disappointed and angry he was. Turning aside, R' Abba ran to his room, unable to face this student.

When he was all alone, he heard a Heavenly voice saying, "Do not punish him for he will one day become a great man."

R' Abba was mollified. He left his room and hurried to find Yossi. Smiling sweetly at him, he cajoled him, "Do not be discouraged so easily, my lad. You must continue to study. The riches will yet come."

Encouraged by the Rebbe's promise, Yossi went back to study.

Some time later, a man came to R' Abba bearing an object wrapped up in cloth. "I am a very wealthy man," he introduced himself. "I, myself, never had the opportunity to study Torah, but I value it highly. I would like to give this valuable gold goblet to someone who will agree to study in my stead." He unwrapped the object and lo! A magnificent gold goblet studded with pre-

cious stones shed its brilliant radiance.

"This, and eleven more of its kind, shall go to the person who agrees to study Torah and to give me a portion of the reward he will receive in the World to Come." R' Abba hurried to fetch Yossi and introduced him to the rich man.

The rich man and Yossi soon struck a bargain. Yossi agreed to study Torah for the rich man and the latter awarded him with much gold and silver.

Time went by and Yossi became a very learned scholar. By now, he had acquired a deep love for the Torah. One day, his teacher found him weeping bitterly. He rushed over and asked him why he was unhappy.

"I wish to study Torah for its own sake, not for gain."

R' Abba understood that, finally, Yossi had reached the point where he rejected riches and wished to study out of love for Torah. He wished to dissolve the agreement he had made with the rich man. R' Abba summoned that man and said, "Give your wealth to the poor and I guarantee you a portion in the World to Come as if you had both studied Torah and given charity."

Yossi gave back all he had ever received and continued to study out of love.

The Mitzvah That Saved

For it is your life and the length of your days (30:20)

Everyone was so happy about the exciting upcoming marriage that no one paid attention to the one member of the family who seemed anxious and worried, R' Akiva, the father of the bride-to-be.

His heart was heavy, for many years before, some gentile stargazers had

warned him that his daughter would die on her wedding day. She would be bitten by a snake, so the stars foretold. And there was nothing that could be done to prevent it, they added.

The day of the wedding arrived.

In the midst of the festivities, a poor man appeared and stood in the doorway. He looked longingly at the platters heaped high with steaming

food. When had he last eaten his fill? He longed for some tasty morsel and looked about to see if he could find anyone to bring him some food. He was too embarrassed to enter and mingle among the invited guests, nor was he able to catch anyone's attention. There was too much hustle and bustle.

He did not turn away, though; he was hoping, against hope, that someone might notice and take pity on a

PARSHA STORIES

starving beggar. And someone finally did. It was the kallah herself. She saw the forlorn figure by the doorway and read his longing look at the laden tables. Quickly and quietly, she slipped away and brought him a heaping plate of delicious food, the portion reserved for her, and begged him to eat to his heart's content. Just as quietly, she slipped back to her seat, without anyone being the wiser.

When it was all over, the kallah went to her room, removed the beautiful gold pin which had adorned her wedding veil and stuck it between two stones in the wall.

The next morning, when she woke

up, she looked for her lovely brooch. There it was, right above her head, stuck in the wall. She plucked it out and gave a cry. The pin, she saw, had pierced the head of a poisonous snake, killing it. There it was, coiled in death, wedged tightly between the stones, its grey color blending with the grey of the wall.

She ran to her father and told him how she had found the snake in her bedroom, pierced to death by her golden pin.

R' Akiva sighed with deep relief. "Tell me, dear daughter, did you perform any worthy deed yesterday that saved you from death?"

She thought and then replied, "Yes, father. During the wedding meal, I noticed a beggar in the doorway looking longingly at the tables of food. No one paid him any attention, so I arose myself and brought him a plate with a heaping serving, my own portion, in fact."

"You did a worthy deed, my daughter. And this mitzvah saved your life. You were fated to die by snakebite, but Hashem had mercy on you, just as you showed pity towards the hungry beggar."

(Adapted from Tractate Shabbos 156b)

TALES OF TZADIKIM

A Gift for the Sultan

And all the nations will see your righteousness and all the kings, your glory (Haftorah Parashas Nitzavim, Yeshaya 62:2)

If he had his way, the vizier thought to himself countless number of times, there would be no Jews in Morocco. He hated the Jews, but, although he was very powerful, he could do nothing. For the sultan showed favor towards his Jewish subjects and would not let the wicked vizier harm them.

The cruel viceroy bided his time. And then the opportunity arose. The sultan decided to travel to the distant provinces of his land, leaving his viceroy in charge of affairs. The vizier prepared a trumped-up charge against the Jews of the capital and incited the Moslem populace to attack the Jewish quarter. The bloodthirsty Arabs did not need much of an excuse.

The sultan had, meanwhile, reached the city of Meknes where R' Chaim ibn Atar, the Or HaChaim Hakadosh, lived. The Or HaChaim knew of the danger threatening his brethren and wished to avert it. He went to the palace where the sultan was staying and asked for an audience. He was refused.

"Tell the king that I have brought him a gift for his birthday, but that I insist on giving it to him personally." The sultan, his curiosity aroused, gave instructions for the Jew to be brought before him.

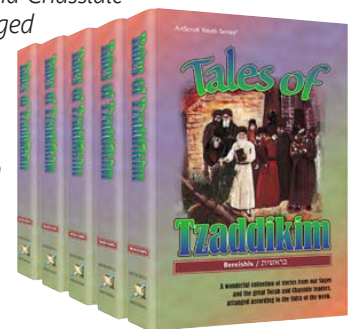
R' Chaim bowed deferentially and took out a small mirror from his case. "This is my gift to Your Majesty. It is a mirror with special powers. Just look into it, and tell me what you see."

The sultan gazed into the small looking glass and his eyes grew round with

wonder. There was the capital, his palace, his throne — and the vizier sitting on it as if he were sultan! A heavy scowl suffused his features as he ordered his servants to prepare for his immediate return home.

The sultan arrived just in time to prevent a massacre. In a fit of fury, he slew his rebellious vizier. And the Jews of Morocco breathed freely, once more, thanking Hashem for the great miracle.

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

CRACK THE
PARSHA CODE

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

MEDIUM Qs

1. How old was he?
2. What will God do in response?
3. Who is talking to the Jewish people in this week's Parsha?
4. What do the Jews have to do if they want to be saved from exile?
5. What did Moses remind the people regarding their choices?

6. What will happen to the Jewish people if they don't listen to God?
7. What will the people have when they come back to the Land of Israel?
8. What does Moses tell the people about some of the things that will happen to them in exile?
9. What does Moses tell the Jewish people about repentance?

HARD Qs

1. On the L D of M's L, he makes another T between B Y and H
2. M W's B Y to not S I's, like the people in M did.
3. B Y took R for each other's A's but not ones that were done in P
4. H will B the L, and nothing will G, as a P for S'ing I's
5. H will send B Y into G, but with T they can be R'ed
6. The T is not F away in the H, and it is not across the S, everyone is A to L it
7. M calls the H and E to be W's that B Y will get R'ed for K'ing the T, and P'ed for not keeping it
8. M concludes his S, by telling B Y to be careful to L H , and to K His M's

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PARSHA STORIES

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Even Hashem Paid a Visit

In all their affliction He was afflicted (Haftorah Parashas Nitzavim, Yeshaya 63:9)

The Baal HaTanya wielded much influence among Russian Jewry. When he was once imprisoned by the Russians, it caused such a furor that even the Czar became involved in the case. Wishing to interrogate the distinguished prisoner himself, he paid a visit to the cell, disguised as an army officer.

As soon as he stepped over the

threshold, the Rebbe instinctively sensed that he was the king. He rose and recited the proper blessing when one sees a king. The Czar was furious at having been unmasked and began shouting, "Why do you think that I am the king? You are mistaken. And for being so bold and arrogant to think that the king would deign to visit you, you deserve to be punished."

The Baal HaTanya was unaffected. "Your Majesty need not take affront at being discovered visiting a prison cell.

Even the A-mighty visited a prisoner."

The king was further enraged, for he thought the rabbi was playing with words. "You are talking nonsense!" he shouted.

"What I said is true, Your Majesty. It says so explicitly in the Torah. 'And he (Yosef) was put in prison... and G-d was with Yosef.' So you see, the A-mighty did visit him in prison."

The rabbi's manner and his words pleased the Czar and he was no longer angry.

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7

1. Moshe said: "You're standing here Today before Hashem. Leaders, elders and police; All of Israel's men. Your women and your children (Every son and daughter), And the strangers in your camp Who chop wood and draw _____"
2. Hashem told our children That they would be His nation, And He would always be their G-d In every generation. This was the promise that G-d

made So very long ago.
He'll never break His word to us
Who are we, do you know?
_____ and ____

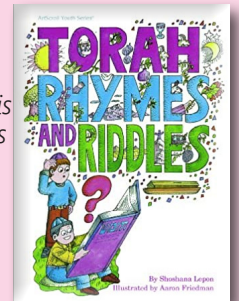
3. We are made of wood and stone,
Of gold and silver, too.
Other nations bow to us;
Don't copy what they do. _____

4. I'm not found in the heavens;
I'm not across the sea.
I'm in your mouth and in your heart,
As near as I can be.

The _____

5. Hashem has begged us to choose life,
To listen to His voice.
But in the end, it's up to us
For He gives us _____

Torah Rhymes and Riddles by Shoshana Lepon (Author) and Aaron Friedman (Illustrator) is filled with rhyming riddles that test young children's comprehension of the weekly Parsha. For more great children's Torah books, visit artscroll.com



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Know Before Whom You Stand

"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 29:9)

R'Mendel of Rimanov and the Apter Rebbe (the "Oheiv Yisrael") once came to visit the Chozeh of Lublin when he lived in the city of Lantzut. That Shabbos, thousands of people flocked to Lantzut to bask in the glow of these three tzaddikim.

This situation did not please the maskilim (proponents of the Enlightenment) in the area. One of them went to the local government with a false accusation against the three tzaddikim. He said that the Rebbes were inciting the people against the government.

As the three Rebbes sat at their melaveh malkah meal on Motza'ei Shabbos, a group of gendarmes appeared at the door.

"You are under arrest!" barked the officer in charge.

The tzaddikim were taken to the city of Raisha and thrown into jail.

The Jews in the area were shocked and panicked. They tried various ways to get the government to let the prisoners go, but without any success. On Sunday, the gentiles' day of rest, it was hard to find anyone with the authority to set the Rebbes free. The three tzaddikim were forced to remain in prison until at least Monday morning.

On Monday morning, the Rebbes were taken to court to face the judge. R' Mendel of Rimanov, being fluent in German, was spokesman for the three prisoners.

"What is your source of employment?" the judge asked.

"We are employed in serving the Holy One, Blessed be He, with pure thought and complete devotion," R' Mendel replied.

"And what is your purpose in coming to Lantzut?"

"We came to learn from our old friend, R' Yaakov Yitzchak Hurvitz, who is more knowledgeable than we are in

this holy service."

"And why are you wearing white clothes?" the judge demanded.

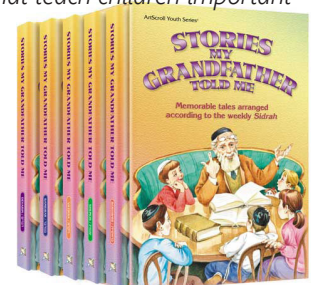
"And why are you wearing black clothes?" countered R' Mendel.

The judge became furious. "Don't you know before whom you are standing?" he thundered. "Answer my questions!"

"We know the precise meaning of the expression, 'Know before Whom you are standing,' R' Mendel answered calmly. "And if the judge speaks to us

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lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

in anger, we will refuse to answer.”

As he said those words, the Rimanover Rebbe removed the shtreimel from his head. The radiance of

his face filled all who saw him with a mighty awe.

The judge was consumed with sudden terror. He began to tremble all

over. With difficulty, he managed to stammer, “You’re ... free. Go home ... all three of you! I don’t want any dealings with people like this.”

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Candle Burns

“And you will return to Hashem, your G-d, and listen to His voice” (Devarim 30:2)

One night, R’ Yisrael Salanter walked from his home to the beis midrash to learn Torah. As he passed the shoemaker’s window, he saw a small flickering light. R’ Yisrael was surprised that the shoemaker was working such late hours. He entered the shop and found the shoemaker sitting on his bench fixing a pair of shoes by candlelight.

R’ Yisrael greeted him, then asked, “Tell me, why are you sitting and fixing shoes so late at night?”

“Rebbe,” the shoemaker answered simply, “as long as the candle burns, one can still make repairs.”

R’ Yisrael was moved to the depths of his soul. In the shoemaker’s words he found a deep and wonderful idea, a tremendous piece of mussar. Shlomo HaMelech said in Sefer Mishlei: “Ner Hashem nishmas adam — A person’s soul is Hashem’s candle.” A soul is compared to a candle. As long as the soul resides inside a person, he can still work to repair his character and his behavior.

For days afterwards, R’ Yisrael could be heard pacing his room, repeating to himself with great feeling, “As long as the candle burns, one can still make repairs.”

An elderly Jew walked into the Petach Tikvah shul that is named after R’ Chaim Ozer Grodzinski. When

it came time to read the Torah portion, he was given the honor of being called up to the Torah. But instead of the usual berachah, bitter sobs burst from the old man’s lips.

It was a few minutes before he was calm enough to go on. Afterwards, he had this story to tell.

“I am 83 years old today. The last time I stepped into a shul was when I became a bar mitzvah ... seventy years ago! I went to shul with my father. We went to the gaon R’ Chaim Ozer’s shul, where I was called up to the Torah.

“The gaon didn’t recognize my father, who came to shul only on Shabbos.

“Where does the boy go to school?” R’ Chaim Ozer asked my father after davening.

“He goes to gymnasia (public high school),” my father answered.

“Hearing this, R’ Chaim Ozer said, ‘Know this, my friend. If you continue to send your son to the gymnasia, the years of a generation (seventy) will pass before your son will hear the Torah read again.’

“My father did not heed his warning. I continued at the gymnasia. And it’s been seventy years from that Shabbos when I last heard the Torah read.”

The man’s voice shook as he spoke, and it was difficult indeed to comfort him.

When the Klausenberger Rebbe was a child in the city of Rudnik,

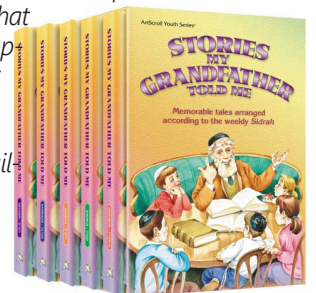
a certain Jew, who had thrown off the yoke of Torah, lived there. This man would be awakened in the middle of the night by the sound of crying coming from the beis midrash next door.

One night, the man gathered his courage and went to see where the sobs and sighs were coming from. He was amazed to see the future Rebbe, then just a child of 4, weeping bitterly near the open aron kodesh. The little boy was bemoaning his sins and pleading to Hashem, “Light up our eyes with Your Torah and let our hearts cling to Your mitzvos.”

The child cried for two hours and conducted a tikkun chatzos at midnight before starting for home. He didn’t want anyone in his family to notice that he had been gone.

The non-religious neighbor was shaken to the depths of his being at the sight of a pure and innocent child crying and pleading for his life, while he himself, a hardened sinner, walked around carefree without thinking about his soul at all. From that night on he began to repent, and became a G-d-fearing Jew.

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Adam Neumann

born April 25, 1979

Adam Neumann is an Israeli-American billionaire businessman and investor. In 2010, he co-founded WeWork with Miguel McKelvey, where he served as CEO from 2010 to 2019. In 2019, he co-founded a family office dubbed 166 2nd Financial Services with his wife, Rebekah Neumann, to manage their personal wealth, investing over a billion dollars in real estate[6] and venture startups.

Following mounting pressure from investors based on disclosures made in a public offering filing, Neumann resigned as CEO of WeWork and gave up majority voting control as of September 26, 2019. Forbes estimated his net worth to be around US\$2.2 billion as of May 2023.

Adam Neumann was born in 1979 in Beer-sheba, Israel. His parents divorced when he was seven, and he lived in 13 different homes by the time he was 22. He has dyslexia and could not read or write until he was in third grade. In his teens, he lived on a kibbutz in southern Israel. He served as an officer in the Israeli Navy. He later attended the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College in New York City.



Neumann married Rebekah Neumann in 2008. He lives in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City with his wife and their six children.

In 2018, Neumann gave a keynote speech at an event held by UJA-Federation of New York where he spoke of observing Shabbat with his family every week and the role

Judaism has played in his personal and professional growth.

Time magazine named Neumann as one of the 100 most influential people of 2018. He was awarded the EY Entrepreneur of the Year in 2015

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. On the LAST DAY of MOSHE'S LIFE, he makes another TREATY between BNEI YISROEL and HASHEM
2. MOSHE WARNS BNEI YISROEL to not SERVE IDOLS, like the people in MITZRAYIM did.
3. BNEI YISROEL took RESPONSIBILITY for each other's AVEIROS but not ones that were done in PRIVATE
4. HASHEM will BURN the LAND, and nothing will GROW, as a PUNISHMENT for SERVING IDOLS.
5. HASHEM will send BNEI YISROEL into GALUS, but with TESHUVA they can be REDEEMED
6. The TORAH is not FAR away in the HEAVEN, and it is not across the SEA, everyone is ABLE to LEARN it
7. MOSHE calls the HEAVENS and EARTH to be WITNESSES that BNEI YISROEL will get REWARDED for KEEPING the TORAH, and PUNISHED for not keeping it
8. MOSHE concludes his SPEECH, by telling BNEI YISROEL to be careful to LOVE HASH-EM , and to KEEP His MITZVOS
4. teshuvah, repent
5. They are free to choose to do good or bad
6. They will be sent out of the Land of Israel and will be spread out all over the world
7. Money and food
8. They might not understand why they are happening but God has a reason for them
9. It is always within their reach

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. 120
2. He will gather the Jews from all over the world and bring them to the Land of Israel
3. Moshe
1. Water.
2. Abraham, Yitzchak & Yaakov.
3. Idols.
4. The Torah.
5. Free will

PARSHA GAMES

Shofar Race

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: Use this game as a fun way to help children remember which shofar sound is which.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: Have all the children line up on one side of the room. Mark a finish line on the other end of the room. Instruct

the children that they can only move with steps that correspond to the sound that is called out: Tekiah, one big step, Shevarim, three regular steps, Teruah, nine baby steps. If a child takes the wrong steps they have to start from the beginning again. Mix things up by saying two sounds together, i.e. Shevarim-Teruah. The first child to the finish line wins.

HALACHA OF THE WEEK

Tekiat Shofar

Everyone is obligated to hear the shofar on Rosh Hashana. There are three types of sounds that are blown:

Tekiah- one long, straight blast: _____

Shevarim- three medium blasts: _____

Teruah- nine short blasts: _____

One should make sure to hear all the sounds that the chazan blows and should not talk from the time he hears the blessing on the shofar until the last sounds are blown at the end of davening.

FOCUS OF THE MONTH

Teshuva

There was a man who earned his livelihood by smuggling illegal goods across the border from one country to another. One day the smuggler was approached by a businessman who asked him to help smuggle his wares. The smuggler agreed and they set a price and picked a date to do the smuggling. When the day arrived, the businessman was very nervous that they would get caught. On the other hand, the wagon driver, who makes the bulk of his livelihood through smuggling, remained calm. He was quite used to it. However, when almost at the border, he began to get

nervous. Although he had done this many times before, the sight of the border guards approaching sent a chill down his spine. The only ones, who had no fear at all, as they approached the border, were the horses. They had no idea what was going on and what would happen if the illegal goods were discovered.

The same is true with Rosh Hashana. There are some people who start to

get nervous and prepare at the beginning of Elul, others when Rosh Hashana itself comes, and there are others who don't realize what is going on so they don't get nervous at all.

LEADER TIP:

This will be our final week focusing on Teshuvah. Use this opportunity to discuss with the children that it is almost Rosh Hashana. On this day it will be decided whether we will have a good year or a bad year. Use the following mashal, parable, to illustrate the point that if we think about what happens on Rosh Hashanah, we will take it very seriously. We should use every opportunity we have to prepare as best as we can, by doing teshuvah and doing mitzvot.

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