



The Weekly Parsha Shiur of Maran, Rosh HaYeshiva, the righteous Kabbalist,
Our Rabbi Benayahu Yissachar Shmueli Shlit"a

Excerpts for Parshat Re'eh 5786 (2026)

Refused to Sit Beside the Author of *Masoret HaShas*

A person must strengthen himself and take **mussar books**, and read them every day, because only in this way will he be aroused towards our Father in Heaven! **Mussar books are a must!** Rabbi Dan Segal brought from a book *Be'er Yitzchak*, where a **story is written** that took place with the author of *Masoret HaShas*, Rabbi Yosef Shmuel of Krakow: The author of *Masoret HaShas* was a great spiritual giant among giants, and he was among the descendants of the holy Shelah, **and the genius Chida** in his book *Shem HaGedolim* writes about him, that he studied the entire Shas 42 times with **deep analysis**.

And it is told there in the book, that when the author of *Masoret HaShas* passed away, a few days after his passing, when his wise students gathered at the study hall to study, suddenly they saw the Rabbi, author of *Masoret HaShas*, enter and sit in his place... and they were **amazed and greatly alarmed**, and they asked him: "My dear friend... but you went to your eternal home?" And he said to them: "Do not be afraid... I returned... but they sent me from Heaven to tell you what happened to me above." And he said only a little of what he was allowed to say.

And the author of *Masoret HaShas* recounted his experiences: When I came to Heaven, they judged me and it was a very frightful experience, and it was ruled according to all that I toiled so much in Torah, that I should sit beside the **holy Shelah**, whom I was privileged to be **among his descendants**.

And behold, suddenly the Shelah came and said: "**I do not accept him beside me!**" And they asked him: "Why so?! Is he not a genius of the universe! He disseminated Torah all his days!" The Shelah said: "True, a genius, a great rabbi, a great righteous man, but he did not study mussar with his students; before the study of Gemara he did not teach them mussar. And I authored the book *Shelah*, which is entirely mussar hewn out of flames of fire, and I put strong emphasis on mussar; see the book *Shelah*, what is Shabbat, what is moral behavior, and I poured tears to bring [people] back in repentance. But he, the author of *Masoret HaShas*, he indeed taught Torah, but he did not guide them in the path of *mussar*, he did not teach mussar. Therefore, he will not sit beside me!"

End of the matter, the Heavenly Court ruled: **that the claim of the Shelah is not accepted**, and the author of *Masoret HaShas* will sit beside him, because that is his place, but, the author of *Masoret HaShas* was required **to descend below**, to tell the students this matter, so that they would all strengthen themselves in the study of *mussar*." And the author of *Masoret HaShas* finished his words: "Only now, after I came to you, am I able to ascend above and sit in my place beside the holy Shelah."

See what an astounding thing, what the importance of ethics is! Therefore, now is the time that we should do complete repentance, walk in the ways of Hashem, and there will be great salvation with Hashem's help. And it all depends on us.

Go Buy Me 10 Books

We in the "Porat Yosef" yeshiva, every day before studying Gemara, the Wise Rabbi would enter, and he would study *mussar* with us every day before the lesson. And in addition to this, **Rabbi Avraham Raful, A"H**, an elder of the rabbis of Aram Tzova [Aleppo], would walk around among the classrooms, every day entering a different classroom, once a week to every classroom, and he would give us mussar, and he would ask us "What is up with you? What did you study? What did you do? What are you studying? Are you walking in the way of Hashem? Did you read *Mikra* [Scripture] twice and *Targum* [translation] once? Were you meticulous about how you recite blessings?", and the Rabbi was old and entirely exuding honor, **when you saw him, you were afraid**.

Our Rosh Yeshiva told us, in our time there was the synagogue manager (*gabbai*) of Porat Yosef, **Rabbi Nissim Nachum**, and the Rosh Yeshiva was sitting in the Old City with the teacher **Rabbi Ezra Adas**, and one day the inspector Rabbi Nissim Nachum entered, who was the *gabbai* of the yeshiva, he came to see what they were doing and what they were studying, and behold he asks the Rabbi: Did you study mussar? And the Rabbi says to him "No!". And he asks: "Why?" And the Rabbi says to him: "We do not have books." Rabbi Nissim heard this, pulled money

out on the spot and sent one of the students: "Go buy 10 [copies of] *Chovot HaLevavot* [Duties of the Hearts]" and the Rabbi says to him: "Maybe tomorrow we will buy", and Rabbi Nissim did not agree: "No! Right now, you buy! There is no tomorrow! Right now, you need to study mussar." This is how a person needs to walk, with Torah and ethics together, and in this way, he also becomes a glorious vessel. If a person does not study ethics, how will he advance? When a person sees the path, then he accepts upon himself strengthening, and then he comes out innocent on the great and awesome Day of Judgment.

A Doll's Head Peeking From the Water

And if a person accepts upon himself some commitment to strengthen himself in a certain matter, let him know that this commitment will save him. **Rabbi Baruch Rosenblum**, may Hashem protect him, relates that **a certain young married student (*avrech*)** accepted upon himself to be meticulous about washing hands in the best possible way, whatever happened. And he took upon himself to be careful also with washing before prayer. He says: I will also fulfill "Prepare to meet your L-rd, O Israel."

Bain HaZmanim [yeshiva vacation] arrived, he was at the Yarkon [River] and needed to pray, what would he do? He did not give up, he took a boat, went down into the Yarkon to take water in order to wash hands, wow, **he sees some head of a doll**, thinks it's a game. Moving closer he sees a girl who is drowning.

He knows CPR, immediately lifted her, took her out, performed CPR on her and saved a soul from Israel, by virtue of what was he privileged to this? By virtue of the commitment that he accepted upon himself to wash hands before prayer!