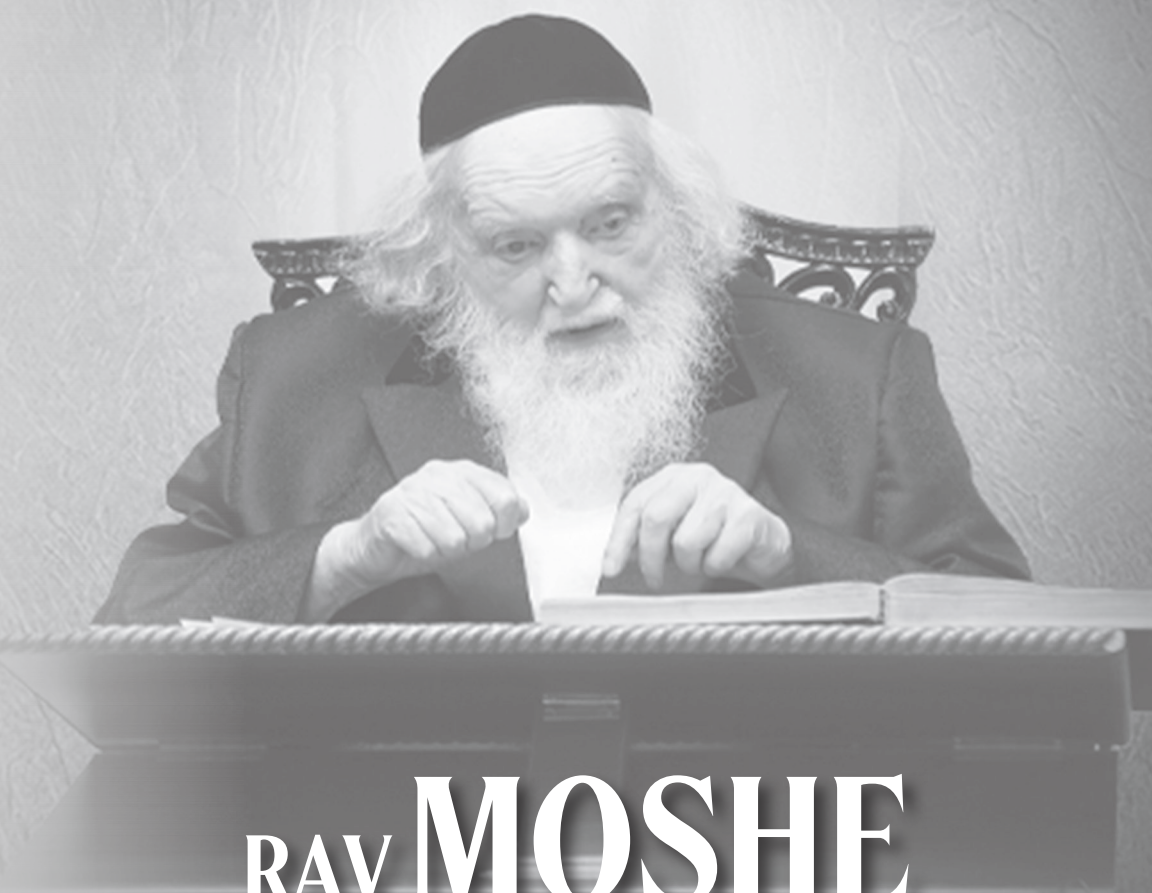


**RAV MOSHE
STERNBUCH
ON CHUMASH**

===== Devarim =====



Machon Aleh Zayis



RAV MOSHE STERNBUCH ON CHUMASH

===== Devarim =====

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Michtav Berachah

I was very gratified to hear of the forthcoming publication of an English collection of *divrei Torah* and *aggadah* that I have said on the parshah, including those I merited to hear from my *rabbeim*, the *gedolei hador* of the previous generation.

This work is especially fitting for our generation, which is beset by confusion and spiritual weakness. Studying the parshah strengthens one's faith and teaches him to perceive the Hand of Hashem in all events. I trust that this sefer will bring encouragement to many, inspiring them to greater *emunah* and *yiras Shamayim*.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my grandson Rav Pinchas Yehuda Sternbuch *shlita*. Aside from investing his heart and soul for the success of the yeshiva and the bachurim, he also has expended much effort to ensure the success of this sefer. I also thank Rav Shimon Szimonowitz *shlita* and his staff at Machon Aleh Zayis for their efforts in preparing and publishing this work, and for their worthy undertaking to disseminate Torah in Klal Yisrael. I also wish to express my appreciation to my dear friend Rav Reuven Schron *shlita* and to the other donors who generously undertook to cover the publishing expenses for this work. May the merit of the Torah stand by them and their families, and may Hashem grant them all good, materially and spiritually. *Etz chaim hi lamachazikim bah, v'somcheha me'ushar*.

I thank Hashem, Who in His great kindness has granted me the privilege throughout my life to study and teach Torah, and to witness the growth of the yeshivah that I was *zocheh* to establish, where *bnei Torah* toil in Torah and refine their *middos*. I also wish to express my appreciation to my son, Rav Ephraim Zalman *shlit"a*, who devotes himself wholeheartedly to the talmidim, guiding them to attain higher levels in Torah, *yiras Shamayim*, and *middos tovos*.

May Hashem, in His mercy, continue to grant me strength to teach His Torah and to publish additional sefarim for the benefit of Klal Yisrael. May the Torah never depart from my mouth, nor from the mouths of my children and descendants, and may we merit soon the complete redemption, when we shall see the glory of Hashem revealed in the world.

בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁכַּח

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Introduction

With heartfelt gratitude to Hashem, we express our thanks for the great kindness He has shown us in allowing us to publish this sefer, Rav Moshe Sternbuch on Chumash, a work that brings the Torah wisdom of *Maran Posek Hador*, Rav Moshe Sternbuch *shlita* to the *tzibbur* at large.

The teachings collected here are drawn primarily from the Rav's many years of delivering *shmuessen* on the weekly *parshah* in his *Beis Medrash*, Merkaz HaTorah, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and later in his *Beis Medrash HaGra* in the Har Nof neighborhood of Yerushalayim, and in the *Yeshivah Gedolah* under his leadership in Beit Shemesh. Additionally, halachic discussions were selected from Rav Moshe's many halachic works and inserted in the relevant *parshiyos*. These *divrei Torah* were published and widely distributed each week in tens of thousands of copies throughout Eretz Yisrael and abroad, and were eventually collected and published in Hebrew in the *Biurim V'Hanhagos al HaTorah* and *Vayaged Moshe* series.

In these talks, Rav Moshe Sternbuch presents incisive halachic analysis and profound insights into the *pesukim* and words of *Chazal*, along with guidance in *avodas Hashem* and practical lessons for navigating the challenges of our generation. His words often draw upon the wisdom of the great Torah giants of earlier generations with whom he merited a close connection.

In recent years, many have requested that these teachings be made

available in English as well. Rav Shimon Szimonowitz and the team at Machon Aleh Zayis have undertaken this project, with the hope that it will bring the Rav's timeless guidance to an even wider audience.

Included alongside the collected teachings are relevant stories told by Rav Moshe of the *gedolim* he merited a connection with, including Rav Elchanan Wasserman, Chazon Ish, the Brisker Rav, the Tchebiner Rav, his *rebbe* Rav Moshe Schneider *zt"l* and many others. Additionally, relevant stories told by Rav Moshe's *talmidim* about Rav Moshe himself were selected from the Hebrew books *Gadol B'kirbech* and *Me'onos Arayos* to add context and give readers a glimpse of the greatness of the author, thereby enhancing their ability to properly appreciate and absorb Rav Moshe's elevated words.

We conclude with a heartfelt *tefillah* that Hashem grant Rav Moshe *shlita* many more years of strength and tranquility, so that we may continue to learn from the wellsprings of his Torah and wisdom. Just as we have merited to bring this volume to completion, may we be privileged to continue publishing more of his teachings for the benefit of Klal Yisrael.

Devarim

Torah — A Way of Life

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל.

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Yisrael (Devarim 1:1).

Sefer Devarim is comprised primarily of words of rebuke and *mussar* to Bnei Yisrael, with relatively few new mitzvos. *Chazal* even refer to it (*Tanna D'vei Eliyahu Rabbah* 4) as the “*Sefer Tochachos*,” the book of rebuke. Nevertheless, it possesses the same holiness and importance as the other *chumashim*, both in its sanctity and in the obligation to study it.

Torah is derived from the word *horaah*, teaching (see Rashi *Taanis* 16a s.v. *chad*), and is meant to teach a person an all-encompassing way of life that follows the *ratzon Hashem*. The halachic aspect and the ethical aspect are equally important components in living a life according to the *ratzon Hashem*.



Loving Rebuke

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל.

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Yisrael (Devarim 1:1).

The Midrash (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:2) contrasts Moshe’s prophecy with Bilaam’s. Moshe rebuked Bnei Yisrael to inspire them to follow the ways

of Hashem, whereas Bilaam praised them, causing them to grow haughty, which ultimately led to their spiritual downfall in Shittim, where they sinned with *Bnos Moav*.

The *Daas Zekeinim* offers a parable to illustrate this Midrash:

A prince had two ministers, one who loved him and one who secretly hated him. The minister who loved him constantly warned him not to sin, reminding him that even the king's beloved son would not be spared punishment if he acted wrongly. The other minister, however, encouraged him to do as he pleased, assuring him that the king loved him too much to punish him for anything he did.

Similarly, Moshe Rabbeinu, out of his great love for Klal Yisrael, rebuked them and warned them to refrain from sin, thereby sparing them from Hashem's harsh judgment. Bilaam, however, praised them and emphasized their closeness to Hashem, reassuring them that they would not be held accountable for their sins. His words ultimately led to their terrible sin and the severe punishment that followed.

People mistakenly view those who tolerate every behavior of Klal Yisrael (no matter how terrible) as true lovers of Klal Yisrael. The Midrash teaches the opposite. A true *ohev Yisrael* does everything in his power to prevent another Jew from sinning. He will fight and do anything in his power to stop the *aveirah* and save him from the inevitable harsh punishment, whereas one who ignores the sins of others is indifferent to the terrible fate that awaits them.



Effective Rebuke

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל בעבר הירדן וגו'.

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Yisrael on the other side of the Yarden... (Devarim 1:1).

Rashi explains that all the places mentioned in this *pasuk* allude to the

sins Bnei Yisrael committed throughout their years in the *midbar*. Moshe protected their honor by delivering the rebuke through hints rather than discussing the sins explicitly.

Moshe's intent was not only to avoid shaming Bnei Yisrael, but also to ensure that his rebuke would be effective. When a person is rebuked openly and his honor is attacked, he instinctively rejects the criticism in order to defend himself. It is far more effective to speak in a way that allows the sinner himself to recognize his wrongdoing. With his dignity preserved, he is able to accept the rebuke.

This lesson is alluded to in the very mitzvah of *tochachah*. The *pasuk* (Vayikra 19:17) states, *Hochei'ach tochi'ach es amisecha v'lo sisa alav cheit*, "You shall reprove your fellow, and do not bear a sin because of him." The words *v'lo sisa alav cheit* can also be understood literally: "Do not place the sin upon him." Though a person must rebuke his fellow, he should not openly "place the sin upon him" by directly accusing him. Instead, he should speak subtly, allowing the sinner himself to recognize his wrongdoing and accept the rebuke.



Only Themselves to Blame

וחצרת ודי זהב.

And Chatzeros and Di-zahav (Devarim 1:1).

Rashi explains that Chatzeros alludes to the dispute of Korach, while Di-Zahav, which literally means an abundance of gold, refers to the *Cheit Ha'eigel*, which resulted from an excess of gold.

Why did he rebuke them for the dispute of Korach before mentioning the *Cheit Ha'eigel*, which had occurred earlier?

Rav Hirsh Farber, in his sefer *Kerem HaTzvi*, explains that the severity of the *Cheit Ha'eigel* could have been mitigated by looking at Bnei