

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

*** 2108 Ocean Parkway Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223 ***

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat Vayeshev

23rd Kislev 5780

Maqam Nahwand

Issue #871

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Haftarat Ko Amar

December 21st 2019

Candle Lighting 4:13pm * Shekiah 4:31pm * Minha Friday Night 4:15pm

Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 3:55pm * Shabbat Ends 5:13pm & Rabbenu Tam 5:43pm

Time for Talit 6:21am * Seasonal Hour 55:00 * Alot Hashahar 6:10am * Netz Hachama 7:16am

Weekday Minha 4:20pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 3:59pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 5:08pm * Chatzot 11:53

Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:55am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:50am

Shabbat and Sunday (December 28/29) will be Rosh Hodesh Tevet

Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

The story of Yosef's brothers selling him as a slave to Arabs is bewildering. We bear witness to an unusual relationship between Yosef and his brothers, based on jealousy and hatred. The Pasuk states that Yosef's brothers realized how Yosef was loved by his father more than they were loved. This bothered them, made them jealous, and they hated him as a result. The question is: How could these holy brothers fall prey to transgressing the commandment *not to hate your brother in your heart* – to the point that they even declared 'let us go now and we will kill him', to additionally intentionally transgress the commandment *do not kill*? All because Yaakov gave Yosef the Ketonet Pasim, a special tunic? Can the gift of one fancy tunic cause such a terrible downfall in spiritual level? Isn't it natural for a father to always appreciate and fuss over the youngest child, a child that was born to the father in his advanced age? How can we understand their behavior? Allow us to digress from the obvious, and explain that the brothers saw the situation differently, as follows: Avraham had two sons, Yitzchak and Yishmael, and while Avraham brought Yitzchak closer to serving Hashem and blessed him, he gave gifts to Yishmael and sent him away during his lifetime, in order that Yishmael not inherit Avraham along with Yitzchak. Yitzchak as well had two sons, Yaakov and Esav, and while Esav was given Mount Seir, Yaakov was blessed that the chosen nation would descend from his offspring. These brothers of Yosef realized that while Yaakov their father had sent them away to shepherd the sheep, he had kept behind Yosef and was teaching him all of the Torah that he had acquired while learning in the Midrash of Shem and Eber. They feared that their father would follow the same route as his fathers had, had planned to settle with his other children, pushing them to the side, while Yosef would emerge as the father of the chosen nation that would receive the Torah at Har Sinai. Yosef indeed even had dreams that indicated these ideas, and their father, who was in fact concerned over the fulfillment of the dreams, thus produced the fancy tunic. They therefore

judged Yosef as an instigator and troublemaker by publicizing such dreams, and they decided that he must be taken care of at once in order to secure their position in history. If this was the path that Yosef planned to take, seemingly shutting them out of their inheritance of future generations, then they would resolve to send him away, send him loose amongst the Goyim, and allow him to face the challenge of becoming lost from their future nation. Yosef Hatzaddik, loved dearly by his father, was forced to spend the prime years of his youth away from his father, away from his birthplace and hometown. Taken to a distant and strange land, he was positioned in the care of unimportant individuals. Everything strongly indicated that he would be forced to live a simple and quiet life, certainly not popular or important enough to gain the attention of the people. Nonetheless, his claim to fame sprouted forth while in these unpromising circumstances. Being sold as a slave to a servant of Pharaoh was actually an integral part to Hashem's master plan that successfully secured his position as the viceroy, giving him unbelievable responsibility over Egypt, a superpower at the time. The Zohar explains that the entire story was Hashem's plan, in order to fulfill Hashem's promise to Avraham during the covenant treaty. Yosef did not fault his brothers for their actions, rather he understood that it was all Hashem's master plan, and he forgave them. The *Seforno* explains: In his first dream, Yosef described his sheaf as *rising and standing*. This refers to his rise to power as the viceroy of Egypt, which was not merely temporary, but remained standing and secure over a substantial period of time – throughout the rest of his life. At the age of 30 he stood before Pharaoh, appointed as viceroy, where he would remain in power until he passed away at the age of 110, 80 years later. No other King mentioned in Tanach lasted in power longer than Yosef. From this we can learn the outstanding and unbelievable ways of Hashem. We really cannot begin to understand what Hashem is planning for us. A person could be suffering and yet that specific form of pain is actually building the

foundation for his ultimate salvation. Why did the holy brothers of Yosef have to be the messengers of Hashem to carry out this plan? The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains: Bnei Yisrael's salvation had to result specifically from the brothers selling Yosef. When the brothers threw Yosef into a pit and then sold him as a slave, they became dominant over him. Their dominance continued even after he became the ruler over Egypt, translating their dominance over Yosef as their dominance over Egypt as well. Thus, Egypt could never truly dominate over Bnei Yisrael, and as a result of this power, they were able to merit salvation. This is why the brothers had to be the messengers of Hashem to sell Yosef. The *Chafetz Chaim* teaches us: all terrible and unfortunate obstacles that we have been facing throughout our nation's exile will one day be revealed to us as the integral components to the foundation of our final and absolute salvation – similar to the story of Yosef. In the future we will realize the entire picture. Now, however, we are not privy to all the details. In *Sefer Yeshaya*, the Prophet describes how we will one day thank and praise Hashem for all the suffering and pain inflicted on our nation throughout exile, as at that time the details of their importance within the master plan will be as clear as day for all of us to see. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – Yaakov loved Yosef because he was a child of his old age, *Zekunim*. The Baal Haturim elucidates: The word *Zekunim* serves as an acronym for five of the names of the six orders of the Mishnah: Zeraim, Kadashim, Nashim, Yeshuot (Nezikin), and Moed. Several commentators ask why there is no allusion to the sixth order, Taharot. It is possible that Yaakov did teach Yosef much or most of Taharot, but did not complete that order because he deemed some material unsuitable for one who was not yet marriageable age. The Admur Rem explains: some material is best to learn on one's own and not with others.

History in Brief

After Caesar's victory over the Jews, the emperor worried that the spirit of the Jews would rise up once again in rebellion. He sent his army minister, Basus, to subdue the remaining few fortresses still controlled by the Jews, specifically: Machur, Horidion, and Masada. Basus first went to subdue the fortress of Horidion, but given the poverty of the inhabitants of Horidion, the remaining Jews simply betrayed the fortress and surrendered to the Romans without war. Basus then ventured on to the fortress Machur, which was in fact a magnificent fortress, as it was positioned atop a rock that rose high up to the sky, with a deep abyss surrounding it. Basus tried to coordinate an attack, but Machur had the advantage of position. Every day the Jews successfully killed many soldiers of their enemy from their high vantage point of attack. There was a brave and valiant fellow named Elazar who killed many men of the Roman army. One day the

Romans kidnapped Elazar and stood him bare in front of the Jews behind the wall. They cut deep into his flesh with their whips, and placed a cross on him to denounce him and crush the spirit of his people. The Jews of Machur then sent a message to Basus, saying, "We will surrender the fortress on condition that you let us escape in peace with the young man Elazar". Basus answered them in agreement. Then they opened the gates of the city and fled for their lives in the dead of night, surrendering the fortress Machur to the Romans. Reneging on his agreement, Basus immediately set out on his way to chase down the fugitives, resulting in a war between them that intensified until the Romans overpowered the Jews and killed about three thousand men.

Health and Recovery

The foot of a diabetic is a dangerous area of the body from which trouble begins. A diabetic must guard his feet most, because the nerves that communicate sensations to the brain are impaired, so they no longer feel pain or impact like a healthy person. As a result, if they experience sores or cuts on their feet or legs, by the time they realize the damage and potential harm the situation will have already deteriorated to a point that is very difficult. That is why it is important to examine each foot daily. Pay attention to any soreness, redness, or abnormalities, and not walk around barefoot. Maintain good hygiene and cleanliness of your feet and wipe them well after washing. It is advisable to wear cotton socks, as well as wearing properly fitted shoes that will not cause pressure or scraping to the feet. It is important to trim your toenails carefully. Sometimes, neglect can be the difference between healing and amputation. It is imperative for patients with diabetes to be cautious of everything that we have discussed. As well, much care is required to maintain proper gum health, as neglect in gum treatment can result in the development of heart disease, kidney failure, stroke, and osteoporosis. This is because the gums are saturated with blood vessels, so when there is inflammation, the problem comes into direct contact with the blood.

Chanukah!

The Greeks that governed Israel did not wish to absolutely control the lives of the Jewish people. All they wanted was for the Jewish people to completely disregard the Torah and join the Greek faith, specifically regarding whatever obligations the Greeks had decided were important to observe as law at that point in history. Matityahu and his family, the Hasmoneans, understood that this was actually a wicked plot devised by the Greek king Antiochus to destroy the Jewish nation without having to shoot even one arrow. The Greek War against the Hasmoneans was not aimed at the physical existence of the Jewish people; on the contrary, they were prepared to grant the Jews far-reaching rights, and to allow them to enjoy all the achievements of Greek culture and science. The struggle was against the Jewish soul: the Greeks sought to separate

the Jewish people from its holiness, and to turn it into a nation like all other nations. When they conquered the Jews and were able to destroy the Bet Hamikdash, as other rulers had done, they in fact did not care to destroy it. They did not mind the existence of a spiritual and cultural center where people could express their feelings and beliefs. They also did not pour out the oil that was used to light the Menorah. They did not care if the Jews used the oil to light the Menorah, as if saying, "You can continue working and performing the services in the Temple, along with the lighting of the Menorah, for all other nations also offer sacrifices and light candles, as much as anyone else, to whom they love and believe in. You, too, may continue to fulfill the customs of your forefathers, but with one catch: you must continue the services without the purity of the oil." Oil naturally does not mix in with water but instead floats up, thus the purity of the oil symbolizes the super-rationality between spiritual and physical, as is the essence of the Jewish people using non-intellectual things. In fact, it is impossible to distinguish between unclean oil and pure oil, by use of neither taste nor smell, as they contain no substantial differences. The Greeks would ask: "Do you want to remain Jews? Do you want to continue studying your Torah? We have no objection! Do you want to observe Mitzvot? Why not! However, we strongly oppose the non-intellectual values that you attribute to Torah and Mitzvot, regarding the holiness you give them. For example: If a holy scroll falls on the floor, you go crazy and fast as a result of what happened, while all the books in the world would surely not fast, and do not regret, if a person would be the one to fall! why don't the books grieve over the fall of a person?" The Greeks, in fact, were very supportive of commandments that have reason and logic, such as honoring parents, holidays based on historical miracles, while wondering what could possibly be the problem with wearing Shatnez? Why not work on Shabbat? Why do you not eat meat with milk and the like? Although the Greeks managed to defile all the oils, only one small jug of oil remained sealed, with the seal of the high priest. They simply could not defile that one. This little jug of oil symbolizes the inner-most points of the Jew. There is an evil inclination that asks us the same type of questions that were asked by the Greeks, as the Greeks seek to separate the Jews from the sanctity of the Torah and absolute adherence to Hashem. This is all in fact very difficult to overcome. Thus, one can and must always then awaken the small jug that remains pure within us, the inner most essence of a Jewish soul, which one can utilize in order to overcome any and all spiritual difficulties.

Rishon LeSion: Rabbi Yom Tov Algazi 1727-1802

In a large courtyard that stood in ancient Jerusalem lived a certain Jew with his whole family, but unfortunately in the course of time he fell upon very hard financial times and moved away from his property after being forced to sell his house to a gentile in order to pay up his debts to his creditors. Shortly afterwards, as the Mekubal Rabbi

Gedaliah Hayon was passing by this courtyard, he decided that this house and property was suitable to be used for his Bet Midrash. Immediately he approached the gentile and purchased the property. This house became known as the Kabbalah Yeshiva, Bet-El. The house would shelter under its beams many families of the Kabbalistic dynasty, bringing in the best of Jerusalem. In the upper part of the house lived the Kabbalist Rabbi Gedaliah Hayon, while below was used for his Midrash. The teachings of Torah and the voices in prayer did not stop for even one moment during the day. The Kabbalists were active in four shifts during the 24 hours of the day: the first shift began at midnight, waking to mourn for the destruction of Jerusalem. They then learned Kabbalah until the morning light. The second shift also learned Kabbalah. At noon, the third shift replaced them and studied in depth with great care the secrets of Rabbi Ovadia Bartenura's commentary on the Mishnah. Even with the beginning of night the voices of Torah learning did not stop. The fourth shift learned Gemara with Rashi and Tosafot until midnight, at which point the cycle of shifts restarted. The house remained alive and vibrant with holiness until the passing of Rabbi Gedaliah Hayon. Before his passing, he appointed his prized Talmid to take his place as the leader. His student's name was Rabbi Shalom Sharabi.

Story

Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua sees in his dream, as he stands in the heavenly court, that the angels are bringing several packages and sacks of his Mitzvot and Torah study into the courtroom. Then the rabbi sees in his dream that he is waiting for the judges to begin his hearing. Suddenly, the door of the courtroom opens again, and in storms a black angel, his face horrific and his eyes burning. It was evident that he was terribly angry. The angry angel glanced around, surveying the sacks and packages that filled the hall. He then turned to Rabbi Avraham, and asked in a squeaky voice, "Do you know what the meaning of the many packages and sacks that lay here in the courtroom?" The rabbi was shocked by the black angel's horrific appearance. In fear, he replied: "These are the pages of my teachings and all the Torah study that I have learned during my life in the world. They are laid out as a lasting proof to bear witness to my good deeds while the court decides my judgment." The angel grimaced and then turned to look contemptuously at the stacks and packages. He began strolling between them, glancing closer at some of them occasionally. Suddenly the black angel rose up and began to squeal with high voices that shook the courtroom: "You call this Torah study?! Were these Torah pages studied for their own sake? Why did you truly learn them? Did you not have a calculated reason to study each and every page? Look here, there was some personal interest that only existed in that world. This page you learned in order to pass a test to receive ordination, to earn the honor of instructing many others. And these pages you learned in order to be accepted as a rabbi in a small

town. Your teachings, your lectures, and your rulings – were they not in order to show everyone the breadth of your knowledge, for personal pride and vanity?!”

Laws: Chanukah

- 1** – We begin lighting the Chanukah lights this year on Sunday night, the 22nd of December.
- 2** – It is customary for women not to do any work while the Menorah is lit; without leniency.
- 3** – The Menorah must be placed within 10 Tefachim (80 centimeters) from the floor of the room.
- 4** – One should place the Menorah by the window or by the stairs that open to the outside. If one lives in an apartment that is above ground level 9.6 meters, he should place the Menorah by his entrance, on the left side where you enter, opposite the Mezuzah.
- 5** – We light the Menorah in Shul between Mincha and Arbit, even if three stars didn't come out yet, in order to publicize the miracle with a crowd. Some have the custom to allow a Katan who has reached his Chinuch years to light the Menorah in Shul. It is customary to light the Menorah in Shul during Shacharit without a Beracha.
- 6** – The first one lit each night is called the Ner Mitzvah, the second, third etc. are called Ner Hidur (beautify). Therefore, the Baal Habayit himself should light the Ner Mitzvah, and the rest could be lit by Katanim who have reached the age of Chinuch (discipline). However, if they have not reached the age of Chinuch, do not allow them to light. The Shamosh, however, can be lit even by a Katan who has not yet reached the age of Chinuch.
- 7** – The proper time to light is 5:00pm, and if one did not, he may light until 5:15pm. If one did not light by Tzet Hacoachavim (3 stars), he may light until Alot Hashachar, and must awake all who are sleeping to join in lighting. If he cannot wake them, he must light without a Beracha. If he makes a Beracha, we cannot give him any rebuke.
- 8** – One who is not able to be in his house by Tzet Hacoachavim, and will come at a later time, should appoint his wife to be his Shaliach (messenger) to light by Tzet Hacoachavim, and he will have completed his Mitzvah through her, even though he was not around.
- 9** – Once a person lights the candles, he has fulfilled the Mitzvah. If they extinguish immediately, whether due to wind or accidentally while trying to fix them, he has fulfilled his obligation, however, it's a special mitzvah to relight them, without a blessing.
- 10** – One should not begin lighting until he has completed all of the Berachot, and one should not begin saying Hanerot Halalu etc. until after the first light is lit and he has pulled his hand away.
- 11** – Friday, Erev Shabbat, we first light the Menorah and afterwards the Shabbat candles. As long as one candle is already lit the women may begin lighting Shabbat candles and need not wait for the rest to be lit. “Bameh Madlikin” is not recited. One must put enough oil in the Menorah on Friday for it to last one hour. Likewise, enough wax, if applicable, for one hour. Mincha should be prayed early

with a Minyan before lighting the Menorah on Erev Shabbat. Mincha in Beth Yosef Friday afternoon of Chanukah will be 2:00pm.

12 – The first night of Chanukah we recite Al Hanissim, and continue throughout Chanukah. If one forgot to say Al Hanissim in the Amidah and remembered before saying Hashem's name in the Beracha of “Ve'al Kulam,” he can say it there (Modim and Al Hanissim). The same applies to Birkat Hamazon. If one was too late in remembering, he should say it (Modim and Al Hanissim) after Elokai Netzor and after the Harachamans.

Sponsors

*** **Mr. Eli Hakoun, his wife Amina, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Dr. Faraj Alkadaa, his wife Lina, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mr. Soly Araman, his wife Victoria, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mr. Yosef Saadia, his wife, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **The family of Mayer Sutton a”h.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mrs. Evelyn Antabi and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mr. Eli Levy, his wife Becky, and their children.** Blessings, health, and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **The Shakalo family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother **Touni Mazal Bat Rachel a”h,** Amen. *** **The Hafif Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother **Rachel Bat Zakie a”h,** Amen. *** **The Nakab Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Jamil Ben Aysah a”h,** Amen. *** **Mrs. Celia Jajati and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Yehuda Leon Ben Jamila a”h,** please join us for a Derasha Thursday 7:00pm in Ahi Ezer, Tizku L’Mitzvot, Amen. *** **Mrs. Touni Levy-Shrem, her husband Shaul Shahoud, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her brother **Hacham Avraham Shrem Ben Rachel a”h,** Amen. *** **Mr. Charlie Katan, his wife Margalit, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his father **Avraham Ben Salma a”h,** Amen. *** **Mrs. Berta Zirdok and her children Rafi, Joey, Vivian, and July.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Daniel Ben Aysah a”h,** Amen. *** **Mr. Moshe Saadia and his family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen.

*This week sponsorship total \$1300.
Tizku L’Mitzvot, Amen!*

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