

Congregation



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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat **Ekev**

22nd Av 5781

Maqam Siga

Issue #948

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Haftarat **Vatomer Sion**

July 31st 2021

*Candle Lighting 7:54pm * Shekiah 8:12pm * Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 7:35pm * Shabbat Ends 8:53pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:23pm
Time for Talit 4:30am * Seasonal Hour 83:00 * Alot Hashahar 4:14am * Netz Hachama 5:53am
Weekday Minha 7:30pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 7:04pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 8:48pm * Chatzot 1:02
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:23am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:46am*

Those who wish to contact R' Farhi can call (646) 552-3412

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Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

Lest you eat and be satisfied, and you build good houses and settle... and you increase gold and silver for yourselves... and you may say in your heart, "My strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth!" These Pesukim can easily be understood without any in-depth explanations. Nonetheless, we can ask a simple question: why was it necessary to write in the Pasuk that such a person will say *in his heart*, why not just write that the person will simply say out loud - vocally? What can be learned here by including the heart? The Pasuk is teaching us a valuable lesson about ourselves. Sure, it's easy to say out loud Baruch Hashem, Hashem helped me, thank you Hashem for everything. However, we must be careful to understand what we are feeling and thinking in our hearts and minds, and not follow our intuitions blindly. When we succeed or improve in any area of life, it is easy to follow our hearts into believing that we are great and powerful on our own. This is false, because on our own we are nothing without Hashem's help and guidance. Hashem provides us with the necessary strength every day in order to excel and complete our tasks. Perhaps you will convince yourself that you are doing nothing wrong by simply thinking such thoughts, it's not like you're saying anything with your mouth. The Pasuk teaches us that even our thoughts must be pure. Our hearts and minds must never lead us astray into thinking we are

inherently powerful on our own and deserve praise and recognition for our greatness and achievements. We must recognize Hashem, and thank Him constantly for everything – absolutely everything. Even our ideas are directly from Hashem, not just our physical actions. We believe wholeheartedly that Hashem created the world and created man. Every day is considered a new day that Hashem has created for man. An electric lamp does not have its own power to remain active – it must be plugged into the electrical outlet to constantly use electricity to continue lighting up a room. Do we see the electricity? No, but the lamp nonetheless has power only because it is using electricity from the wall outlet. So too, every action, every thought, cannot be powered without the direct connection to Hashem, our source of energy and power. This is compared to a man who looks into a room through a small hole in the door and witnesses a pen writing on paper. With his limited vision he cannot see the person controlling the pen, and could be mistaken to think the pen is miraculously writing on the paper, like a dream. The truth of course is that the pen has absolutely no power to write on its own without the person holding the pen and writing with it. There is more to the picture – more than meets the eye. Therefore, we must never allow ourselves to get carried away with our hearts and minds, thinking that we are the

ones responsible for our successes as a result of our own strength. Hashem gives us energy, and we are responsible to make sure that we do the right things with the energy given to us from Hashem. Cleanse your hearts and minds. If we recognize that everything is from Hashem and we simply cannot accomplish anything without Hashem's guidance, then we will have fulfilled the important lesson of this Pasuk. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – *“Your feet did not swell”* While traveling through the desert, their feet did not swell, even though they were walking barefoot. However, in Parashat Ki Tavo it says, *“Your shoes did not wear out from on your foot”*, meaning that they indeed wore shoes and did not go barefoot. So, what was the miracle? Did they go barefoot and yet their feet did not swell, or were they wearing shoes and yet their shoes did not wear out? Rather, understand that those who left Egypt did wear shoes. Nonetheless, even though the foot usually changes in measurements over time and a new pair of shoes is then necessary, the miracle for them is that for forty years their feet did not swell, their shoes miraculously fit their feet, and they did not need to worry about making new ones, as it was their shoes that did not wear out. However, those who did not leave Egypt, but were in fact born in the desert, did not even need shoes, and their feet miraculously did not swell or have any negative effects from going barefoot.

2 – *“Not by bread alone does man live, rather by everything that emanates from the mouth of Hashem does man live”* How does the spiritual soul of man nourish from mundane physical food? Since everything Hashem created was brought into existence using the word of Hashem, that power of speech that Hashem used is now saturated within every type of food created, so that when we eat and recite a blessing on the food, the blessing recited with our words unleashes the powerful spiritual nourishment our souls require, sourced from the holy word of Hashem during creation. This is how we nourish our souls. This is the meaning of the Pasuk – not

by bread alone does man live, not just through the physical and mundane component of food, but rather through what emanates from the mouth of Hashem, through Hashem's word from creation, that is what nourishes the soul of man and keeps us truly alive. (*Arizal*)

History in Brief

60 years after the Temple's destruction, in the year 128AD. The city Beitar, a great and powerful Jewish city close to Jerusalem, southwest near the Mediterranean Sea, was built atop a mountain, with steep valleys on three sides, surrounded and fortified with a strong wall protected from enemies. It had its own wellsprings within the city, ensuring a continual water supply in case of an enemy's siege. Myriads of Jews lived there. Besides being protected physically, Beitar was protected spiritually, as it was a stronghold of Torah study. Raban Shimon Ben Gamliel said that there were five hundred schools, the smallest with no less than three hundred students. They had a Bet Din the size of the Sanhedrin, and when a decree was passed against the Torah, i.e. not to perform Brit Milah, they would fulfill the Mitzvah at great self-sacrifice and risk. They did not hate each other, and they observed the Minhagim from their ancestors. However, while the Bet Hamikdash was standing, the wealthy of Jerusalem would bother the people of Beitar when they came to the Bet Hamikdash, and they would harass them to the point that they said it would be worthwhile to break a leg instead of making a trip to Jerusalem where the wealthy would scorn and ridicule them. When the Bet Hamikdash was destroyed, they therefore did not feel the loss as they should have, and soon after Beitar was destroyed as well. As Caesar Hadrian witnessed the rebellion intensify and grow exponentially through the leadership of Bar Koziba, he decided it was time to make a move.

Health and Recovery

Pregnant and nursing women should not eat onions, as it affects the mother's milk, and has a negative effect on the baby. Raw, and especially

fried, onions are very effective for those suffering from constipation. One should not eat onions excessively, as it can affect the brain and cause headaches and dehydration. Onions have twenty times more calcium than apples, as well as a few times more iron and vitamin A. It also has something compared to insulin, which regulates the body's sugar levels. It is always best to eat an onion raw rather than cooked or fried, and a diabetic can eat them without limit.

Rishon LeSion:

R' Chaim Nissim Abulefia 1776-1861

Even as Soliman, the leader of Damascus, advanced his army upon Tiberius, thinking it would soon be in his power, in the merit of R' Chaim no harm was committed, and all rocks and projectiles fell useless into the Kineret, completely missing all their marks. Months later, however, Soliman wished to try again, but this time he would not leave the plan up to his army to execute without him like last time. This time he would go along with them, on foot, with a vast number of soldiers, ready to once and for all take control of Tiberius. That Shabbat, as the enemy was basically at their gate, they read in Shul in that week's Haftara about how we should not be afraid of our enemies. R' Chaim took this as a sign that no harm will befall them, and so he told everyone not to worry, for Soliman will not be successful. Sure enough, they soon found out that Soliman had become terribly ill and needed to retreat in order to care for his health. All the citizens of Tiberius, both Jewish and otherwise, were in awe of R' Chaim and now all trusted his word completely. When R' Chaim reached the age of 84, he wrote a letter thanking Hashem for helping him fill a void in Israel with holiness and Torah, with Jewish people who performed the Mitzvot, in Tiberius. He thanked Hashem for the opportunity to bring his plans to fruition.

Mussar: *Inclination and Desire*

The purpose of creation is for man to overpower his Yetzer Hara and earn enjoyment and reward in Olam Haba. If not for the Yetzer Hara we would not be able to deserve reward, just like the angels. When a person is strong and remains in

control of himself and his situation, even though the Yetzer Hara is trying to convince him to lose control and act otherwise, he creates great pride and satisfaction for Hashem and he will be rewarded according to his toil. The *Sefer Hachasidim* explains that one who performs a Mitzvah by controlling himself when he is really being influenced to do otherwise by the Yetzer Hara, will be rewarded a hundred times more than one who performs a Mitzvah under regular circumstances without the pressure. The great level and heights that a *Baal Teshuva* can reach is actually so unique that even a completely righteous person cannot reach that level, since a complete Tzadik, although he has overpowered his Yetzer Hara, has never developed bad habits and the sense of regularity towards sins. Therefore, when a *Baal Teshuva*, which is anyone who has ever committed any sin and now wishes to repent, overpowers his evil inclination, his success is that much greater. When you control your inclinations and desires, it is greater than fearing heaven, since it requires so much more work. Therefore, we should appreciate our Yetzer Hara and use it to grow, gain reward, and create a sense of great pride and satisfaction for Hashem, our Father in heaven, Who wishes to merit us always, Amen.

Story

While a Jewish family was visiting the waters of Tiberius, the daughter who did not know how to swim had gone in too far and was at risk of drowning. From the road a well-dressed man took off his coat and jacket, and jumped into the water to save her. After he saved the daughter and placed her in an ambulance, they realized that the daughter had been underwater for a significant amount of time and they feared the worst regarding her full recovery. In the hospital the doctors told the family in advance that the chances of her regaining her regular brain activity and bodily functions would be nothing short of a miracle, so the family prayed and waited. They did not give up hope, and did not stop praying to Hashem, until finally the doctors emerged with great news – she would recover, despite the extended time under water without

oxygen going to her brain. It was indeed a miracle! A few days later she walked out of the hospital on her own two feet without any assistance, with a mind just as sharp as ever before. A short time later the family planned to celebrate a Seudat Hodaah to thank Hashem for the miracle, and wished to invite the man who had jumped into the water and saved their daughter from drowning. With the help of the hospital they were able to find him. He was part of a Kibbutz, but had no connection to religion.

Laws: Circumcision

1 – When circumcision is postponed because of a dangerous illness, upon recovery first wait seven days before performing the circumcision, whether for a newborn or an adult.

2 – For a baby who was not dangerously sick but if was necessary to postpone the circumcision, if he became healthy on a Thursday, then he should be circumcised a week later on a Sunday. If he became healthy on a Tuesday, then he should be circumcised a week later on a Wednesday.

3 – A baby born on Shabbat who has a problem with blood clotting and will need shots in order to assist with blood clotting, may be circumcised during Shabbat, even though he will need shots to clot the blood.

4 – The baby is named following the Milah. If the baby is so sick that they wish to pray for his recovery, then a Mi Sheberach is recited without a specific name, just saying he is a baby the son of his mother. However, some say you could use his upcoming name in order to pray for his recovery.

5 – A baby born already circumcised should nonetheless have some blood released, gently, and a careful inspection should be made that the natural circumcision is actually complete.

6 – A child born circumcised with a little bit remaining that needs to be circumcised, should

be circumcised with the complete procedure as if he was not circumcised at all.

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