

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi
*Parashat **Ki Tavo***
20th Elul 5781

Maqam Siga
Issue #952

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President
*Haftarat **Kumi Ouri***
August 28th 2021

*Candle Lighting 7:17pm * Shekiah 7:35pm * Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 6:55pm * Shabbat Ends 8:15pm & Rabbenu Tam 8:45pm
Time for Talit 5:13am * Seasonal Hour 77:00 * Alot Hashahar 4:48am * Netz Hachama 6:20am
Weekday Minha 7:15pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 6:36pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 8:10pm * Chatzot 12:56
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:39am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:56am*

Selihot weekdays and Sunday at 4:50am in Beth Yosef

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

With each passing second, minute, hour, each day of Selihot that we utilize, the outstanding day of Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, draws closer to us. On this day the future of all living creatures will be decided. Will they live, how much longer, in what condition, for the good or otherwise heaven forbid. We are now completing a year which encompassed many blessings and many tragedies. It had all been decided from last year's Rosh Hashanah! What will transpire next year is right now in our control. It is up to us to decide what kind of year we are going to experience. We must believe this with all our heart and soul, for then we will take the proper precautions to ready ourselves for this awesome day. Fortunate is the one who increases his good deeds and decreases his sins, for then the scales will tip in his favor. This is really not so difficult, even though it is very important, since every feeling of regret and every thought of repentance and resolution causes the scales to tip in one's favor. An idea must be remembered and kept in mind at all times: although we perform many Mitzvot, we mustn't forget to do them Leshem Shamayim, for the sake of and in the name of Heaven, for one who does so with sacrifice and humbleness receives multiple amounts of blessings and protection, more than one who does the Mitzvot otherwise. We pray on Rosh Hashanah that the old year should end with its curses, and the New Year should begin with its blessings. Appropriately, our Parasha discusses blessings and curses. The Parasha begins by discussing the laws of Bikkurim, while we are in the midst of the month of Selihot, days of mercy and preparation for judgment. What

can we learn from this topic? An owner of a field comes before a Cohen with his new fruits and declares a few words that Rashi explains serves to prove that he appreciates what Hashem has done for him and that he does not take it for granted. Hashem has given him a field with trees and allowed them to sprout fruits. It is not good enough for him to just say thank you, he must perform actions to show his gratitude. He takes his first fruit and carries them in a basket to Yerushalayim, to the holy temple, and places it before the holy altar, waves it there, then recites the declaration stated in the chapter of Bikkurim. This entire Mitzvah is in essence a complete performance of Hakarat Hatov, gratitude and recognition. Hakarat Hatov is so important that the world was created for Bikkurim, as our Sages teach us, "Bereshheet" – in the beginning, Hashem created the world – "Bereshheet" – Bishvil Resheet – for the purpose of 'Resheet' – the first of our crops, otherwise known as the Mitzvah of Bikkurim. Until when is this great Mitzvah an obligation? Even if the person lives far away and has to travel terribly difficult roads, he must make the trip and take with him the Bikkurim. Even if they only cost a little bit, he places them in a basket and carries them over his shoulder to Yerushalayim. A poor man, wealthy man, and even a prince all must perform this Mitzvah equally. As they travel, whoever they pass must walk a little distance along with them as they meet up, no matter how important a stature you behold, the young and old with the judges, Sages, and ministers alike. They travel with praises and thanks to Hashem, their cows adorned with gold and bells upon their horns,

and recite praises of joy when they reach the holy gates of the Temple. We too can perform this great Mitzvah even today, with a little modification. How? When we sanctify our time of day to Hashem, an hour of praying, an hour of learning, an hour of performing kindness, we are bringing Bikkurim to the Mikdash Me'at, the miniature sanctuary, the Bet Knesset, Bet Midrash, and even our homes! By performing these acts, we are showing recognition and appreciation to Hashem as well, just as there is an obligation to bring Bikkurim. This is very important to understand and materialize into our schedules. Therefore, increase your prayers, learning schedule, and performance of good deeds and you will actually be making the best preparations for the High Holidays. May Hashem grant us opportunities to thank Him for His kindness and to bring Bikkurim, and may we be written for a year of life and only blessings, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – The Torah states that the curses listed in this week's Parasha will befall a person who does not serve Hashem with happiness. The Pasuk seems to imply that even though a person fulfills the commandments, he is nonetheless deserving of curses just because he did not do so with happiness. How can this be understood? The *Rav of Kutsck* explains: You need to read the Pasuk a little differently, as follows: The Pasuk says the curses befall a person because he did not serve Hashem with happiness. Do not understand this to mean that he did serve Hashem, but just did not do so with happiness. Rather, understand that he did not serve Hashem, and was happy while not serving Hashem. It is one level for someone to sin, but someone who sins with happiness and malicious intent will therefore be the one who deserves the terrible curses listed in the Parasha.

2 – *Hashem shall place you as a head and not as a tail.* If you are a head, how can you be a tail? Why write both terms? The two terms are not redundant, for it is possible for a nation to be a head, i.e. a leader, to some, but to also be a tail, a follower of others. Hashem promises that if Bnei Yisrael is worthy, it will be respected by everyone, and subservient to no one. (*Ramban*)

History in Brief

80 years after the Temple's destruction, in the year 148AD. As the Romans entered Beitar, they slaughtered Jews without reserve, spilling blood like water. The blood accumulated and rose until it reached the noses of the horses as the Romans continued riding through the city. The blood drained into the sea, coloring the water as far out as 6km (roughly 20,000 feet, or roughly 3.5 miles). The ground soaked up the

blood and did not need fertilizer to produce rich crops. The bodies were not buried, rather they were left in disgrace for the birds to eat. Hadrian had a garden that was eighteen by eighteen Mil in size, where he used the bodies of these unburied Jews to form a gate around the garden, standing upright in disgrace for all to see. These bodies were left out, unburied, for many years, and yet miraculously Hashem did not allow the bodies to rot and decay, until Antoninus became the Caesar of Rome, and he allowed the bodies to be buried. After the Jews buried the bodies, the Sages established the fourth blessing in Birkat Hamazon, *Hatov Vehemetiv* – Hatov for the bodies not decaying or rotting, and Hametiv for the burials. Not only was Beitar utterly destroyed, but many other Jewish cities as well. The fugitive Jews hid in fear and ate the meat of the dead just to survive. Each day one would take a turn to go out of hiding and bring back a dead body for everyone to eat. One day, the one who went out found a dead body, but realized it was his father, so he buried it in the dirt and went back empty-handed. When he told them he could not find anything this time, another person went out, found the buried body in the dirt, and brought it back. The son ate meat from his father's dead body, and did not know until afterwards that it was his father.

Health and Recovery

Everyone has to be aware of the level of cholesterol in their blood, as is known, there's a good type called HDL, and there's cholesterol called LDL. Any good type higher than 40 improves the situation. Any bad type less than 99 improves the situation. Once, a 49-year-old man came to the medical center to buy medicine for his daughter. The medical center noticed that it had been more than eight years since the man had last come in for a visit to the clinic. The first diagnosis showed that he suffered from a number of problems, such as high blood pressure, but the most significant diagnosis revealed extremely severe diabetes that required immediate treatment. If it had not been for the diagnosis, his condition would have worsened. Within a few days he would have reached a state of real danger. Each person must take tests to discover early manifestations of disease, so that treatment can be easier and more beneficial to promote healing. It is time to make a change in our lives. What change is required of us? These days, a large percentage of the food available to us contains too much sugar, salt, margarine, fats, food coloring, and many types of unhealthy materials and ingredients. Praise Hashem who gives us plenty of good things to eat and drink, most of all water, which you have to drink a lot of in order to stay healthy and hydrated. There's plenty of fruits and vegetables. Every fruit has a different color and taste, changes that

make a unique contribution to our health. Fruits and vegetables strengthen the immune system, prevent disease, affect blood thinning, reduce cholesterol, improve vision, help the digestive system, and contain many vitamins and minerals.

Rishon LeSion:

R' Chaim Abulefia 1776-1861

In 1840, at the age of 64, R' Chaim had to deal with a terrible situation. On Rosh Hodesh Adar, a priest in Damascus had disappeared, and all the other priests convinced the governing council to find the murderer. The council, as well as the priests, were known anti-Semites who would like nothing better than to blame this on the Jews and teach them all a lesson. They hired false witnesses to testify against the Jews, stating that the priest was last seen entering the streets of the Jewish quarters, and was never seen again since. Also, they testified that they saw human bones in the courtyard of a Jewish man in that area. The Jewish people of course responded that the accusations were preposterous and the witnesses were obviously paid to lie. But it was no use. The honorable and wealthy Jews were imprisoned along with their Rabbanim and leaders. R' Moshe Abulefia, son of R' Chaim, was one of the defendants imprisoned. He was forced to stand on his legs for consecutive hours, without food, drink, or sleep. The Jews tried to prove their innocence but were unsuccessful. His father, R' Chaim, could not bear the pain of his son being imprisoned and tortured. The news each day about his son's deteriorating situation brought more pain and suffering to R' Chaim, heavier each day without consolation.

Mussar: Fortunate is the generation that understands the Shofar's blows

The Rambam writes: A person whose nature is to enjoy this world and indulge in its pleasures forgets the purpose of life and creation. He is riding on the chariot of pleasures and is being led to destruction by the Yetzer Hara. He hasn't any idea where to turn. He is in a deep slumber and cannot understand his surroundings. Hashem gave us the month of Elul out of mercy. He gave us Rosh Hashanah, the 10 day of repentance and Yom Kippur in order to awaken us from whatever degree of sleep we may be in, so that we should use our own intellect and logic and not that of the Yetzer Hara. In the Amidah, the Beracha of repentance (Hashivenu) is preceded by the Beracha of knowledge (Atah Honen) since one needs intellect in order to do what's right. Therefore, David Hamelech A"H said: *Fortunate is the generation that knows the Shofar's blows*. It does not say 'hear', rather 'know' – for thoughts and knowledge is what is significant.

Fortunate is Yisrael who knows which path to follow in life – the knowledgeable path. A Shofar has a wide top and a narrow bottom in order to signify that we must decrease our worldly matters while having pity for those who increase, and we must increase our spiritual matters. We must understand the purpose of the Shofar. There is a Mashal (parable) of an ignorant villager who saw a huge fire and heard the alarm sound off. He thought that the alarm was meant to extinguish the flames and so he purchased more alarms in order to successfully put out the fire. The people of the village mocked him and explained that the alarm was only meant to warn people of the fire and to run to safety. The alarm does not extinguish the flames! Some believe that the Shofar brings repentance. This is the same mistake the ignorant villager made! The Shofar's purpose is to awaken Bnei Yisrael to take action and repent, extinguishing the fire of the Yetzer Hara. May we be written for a good year, Amen.

Story

In July 1492, the new state of Spain expelled its Jewish populations as part of the Spanish Inquisition. As a response, the Turkish Sultan Mohammed II, sent out the Ottoman Navy under the command of his Admiral to Spain in order to evacuate them safely to Ottoman lands. More than 150,000 Jewish refugees had sought refuge with the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan had sent out Imperial Edicts throughout the Empire that the refugees were to be welcomed. Sultan Mohammed II had a Jewish physician, whose name was Jacob. Jacob was a learned and wise man, and the Sultan appointed him as his finance minister. Jacob had a considerable influence over the Sultan, and it was as a result of this influence that the Sultan granted many rights and privileges to the Jews in his empire. Jacob had a Rebbe, Rabbi Moshe Capsali, that he would visit as often as he could. Rabbi Moshe was appointed by the Sultan as the Chief Rabbi (Chacham Bashi) of all Jews in the Turkish empire. He became the official representative of the Jewish people and had a seat in the council of all caliphs. Rabbi Moshe Capsali's rank was higher than that of the Christian patriarch, being next to the chief spiritual leader of the Mohammedans. Dr Jacob had a peaceful and pleasant life until things changed terribly. Dr Jacob had a beautiful daughter named Miriam. Unfortunately, Salim, a young man from a prestigious and wealthy family in the empire that was close to the Sultan, saw the doctor's young daughter and wanted to marry her. He went to visit the home of Dr Jacob to ask for her hand in marriage, to the utter disbelief and consternation of the Jewish doctor. How could he get out of having his daughter marry a non-Jew?

Laws: *Rosh Hashanah*

1 – Some have the custom that the head of the household recites the blessings as well as the Yehi Ratzon and everyone else fulfills their obligations by reciting Amen afterwards. In any event, if you hear another recite a Yehi Ratzon, you should recite Amen afterwards.

2 – If one is tired during Rosh Hashanah and needs to rest, he may only do so after Hatzot (midday). One should not be angry, even in his mind, during Rosh Hashanah, since it might be bad for the person during these days, besides for the prohibition of being angry that is all year round. Be friendly, smile, and don't be particular or stubborn about anything.

3 – Shehechyanu is recited at the end of Kiddush on both nights, but not in the day.

4 – One who forgot to say 'Yaaleh Veyavo' in Birkat Hamazon on Rosh Hashanah should follow these rules: If he said Hashem's name in the Beracha but did not say Boneh Yerushalayim, then he should say with Malchut, "Baruch Atah... Asher Natan Yamim Tovim Le'amo Yisrael, Et Yom Hazikaron Ve'et Yom Tov Mikraei Kodesh Hazeh, Baruch... Melech Al Kol Ha'arets Mekadesh Yisrael Veyom Hazikaron." If he remembered after he began the fourth Beracha, he can end the Beracha with "Asher Natan Yamim Tovim..." However, if he began to say "Hakel Avinu Malkenu" then he may not go back and must continue as usual.

5 – The blower of the Shofar and the congregation must be careful not to speak between the Beracha and the blowing. 'Baruch Hu Ubaruch Shemo' must not be recited for this Beracha.

6 – One is forbidden to talk during the blowing until the end of Mussaf.

7 – A Shofar is Muktzeh on Shabbat and may not be touched. Women are accustomed to be strict and come to Shul to hear the Shofar. If a woman or man cannot make it to Shul, a blower may blow for her or him. However, it is forbidden for her, or for her blower, to make the Beracha, if the blower already fulfilled his obligation. For a man, however, a Beracha may be recited.

8 – The blower and congregation must have in mind to fulfill their obligation to hear the Shofar. After prayers blowing without purpose is prohibited.

9 – During the Ten Days of Repentance, *Oseh Hashalom* is recited at the end of the Amidah, and the

Chazzan recites it in Kaddish Titkabal of Shacharit and Mincha, but not in the Kaddish Titkabal of Arbit, or at the end of Selihot. However, Friday night when the Chazzan recites the Beracha of Seven after the Amidah, if he then says *Oseh Hashalom* in that Kaddish Titkabal, he has what to rely upon.

Sponsors


*** *Anonymous*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** *The young man Yosef Leon Farhi, his parents, and his siblings*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** Askan Tzibur *Mr. Zuki Jrade and his family*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his mother *Jamilia Bat Bahie a"h*, Amen. *** *Mr. Victor Guindi HaCohen, his wife Nadia Chaya, and their children*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Refuah Shelemah for *Nadia Chaya Bat Victoria*, Amen. *** *Blessed siblings: Dibo, Mark, Sammy, Touni, Kety, Lina, and Nadia of the Khafif Family*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother *Olga Bat Zakie a"h*, Amen. *** *Mr. Isaac Anbi and his children*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother *Eva Aysha Bat Liza a"h*, Amen. *** Askan Tzibur *Mr. Shlomo Cohen, his wife Gila, and their children*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his mother *Kourjie Yaffa Bat Simha a"h*, Amen. *** *The Janani Family*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat *Jack Yaakov Chaim Ben Sara a"h*, Amen. *** *The young woman Rutie David Farhi, her parents, and her siblings*. Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen.

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