

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**  
**Parashat Vayigash**  
7<sup>th</sup> Tebet 5782

**Maqam Bayat**  
Issue #963

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**  
**Haftarat Vayhi Devar**  
December 11<sup>th</sup> 2021

*Candle Lighting 4:10pm \* Shekiah 4:28pm \* Shir Hashirim 4:05pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 3:50pm \* Shabbat Ends 5:10pm & Rabbenu Tam 5:40pm  
Time for Talit 6:15am \* Seasonal Hour 55:00 \* Alot Hashahar 6:04am \* Netz Hachama 7:10am  
Weekday Minha 4:15pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 3:56pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 5:05pm \* Chatzot 11:49  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:49am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:44am*

***The fast of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet will be Tuesday December 14<sup>th</sup>  
Fast begins 6:06am and ends 4:55pm, for the strict 5:06pm***

*Those who wish to contact Rabbi Aharon Farhi can call (646) 552-3412*

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**Vaad Tehilim Torah c/o R' A. Farhi**  
**2415 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11235**

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Yehuda *approached* Yosef to discuss the accusation and punishment that Yosef had laid claim and passed judgment against Binyamin for stealing his goblet. Yehuda had done his best to return his brother to their father, as he had promised to do, but he was now coming up short. Our Sages teach us that Yehuda was *approaching* not the king before him, but rather he was approaching himself, through prayers to Hashem and in preparation of war. He tried first to approach the ruler by leaning into his emotions, as the Pasuk says: *"For should he leave his father he would die... If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you will not see my face again... My wife bore me two sons... Since his soul is so bound up with his soul."* He understood that a ruler was like a father, and a father must have mercy. He was hoping that this ruler before him would have mercy on Yaakov Avinu and not take his precious son Binyamin away from him. However, this approach did not bear fruits. Yehuda then got straight to the point and offered himself as a slave instead, reasoning that he was stronger and worth more. This *approach* was direct. Yehuda decided to approach Yosef and speak to him in a reproachful and rebuking manner, to speak to his heart and directly include righteousness, truth, ethics, morale and feelings. Why did Yehuda choose to act in this fashion? Why is he providing irrelevant information about their hardships when he should be defending Binyamin who was being accused of committing a crime against the king? From last week's Parasha we can see that Yosef had been the cause for all this. Yosef had first involved himself by asking too many questions about their family. He then acted in a peculiar fashion in which no other ruler

would have acted. He accused, *"You repaid bad instead of good,"* and *"Only the one who had taken the goblet shall be imprisoned."* These are not regular accusations. A regular ruler would claim treason not just against one, but against all as a group. Yosef was accusing with rebuke and with intent to reveal morale. His whole purpose was in fact to test the brothers and see if they had grown and overcome the mistake they had all made before, leaving a brother behind because they thought he was sinful. Will they fall once again, or will they succeed? When Yehuda finally offered to exchange himself in place for Binyamin, all the trouble and pain Yosef was putting his brothers through had now proven beneficial. The exact blemish of selling Yosef as a slave was now fixed by trying to save Binyamin from becoming a slave. They had now passed this test. The Rambam comments that the brothers had now reached the level of complete Teshuvah. *"Then Yehudah approached him."* Yehuda, at the end of last week's Parasha, had first proposed, *"Here we are: We are ready to be slaves to my lord..."* Yehuda was speaking then out of a loss of hope, for he believed that all was lost and he would be faced with the terrible consequence of breaking the promise he had made to his father: *"If I do not bring him back to you and stand him before you, then I will have sinned to you for all time."* Rashi explains: this would be a sin transgressed in both this and the next world. Now, however, he was in fact approaching *himself*, strengthening his trust and belief in Hashem that all will turn out for the best. He repeated what he was claiming and demanding, for now his words had a new power and strength attached to them, and they will hit their target of Yosef's heart.

Firstly, he reasoned to the ruler before him, Binyamin was much too young to be of any value as a slave. Secondly, taking him away from his father would cause extreme pain to their elderly mourning father. Thirdly, it would be so much more valuable to accept Yehuda as a slave in place of Binyamin. *“Yosef could not endure in the presence of all who stood before him.”* Words spoken from the heart to the heart have an enormous amount of ability and potential. Yosef was not able to hold his true identity from his brothers anymore, and he emptied the vicinity of everyone else so as not to embarrass his brothers when he reveals the truth. In fact, the Midrash teaches us, it was Hashem and the ministering angels that were impressed with the self-sacrifice of Yehuda’s approach for his brother Binyamin. Hashem decided that the Bet Hamikdash would be built in the portion of the lands of Yehuda and Binyamin. From here we see the great value of the special love shared between two brothers, as they are worthy of Hashem’s Shechinah to dwell in their midst. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### ***Insights on the Parasha***

**1** – Yehuda explained that if Yaakov sees that Binyamin was not with them, then he would pass away as a result. Of course if Yehuda would first explain to Yaakov that Binyamin had been caught stealing and was paying the price for a sin then Yaakov would understand and agree with the verdict, as Yaakov was a righteous man of truth and would not pass away if he understood this. However, Yehuda knew that he would never even have the chance to explain, because once Yaakov saw them from a distance returning without Binyamin, the response and reaction would be immediate and he would pass away from the pain before they even had a chance to explain. (*Ohel Yaakov*)

**2** – Yaakov Avinu told Pharaoh that the days of his life were short and bitter. This perspective was unacceptable in heaven. Hashem had saved him from Esav, Lavan, returned Dina, returned Yosef, and now it looked like Yaakov was complaining. As a consequence, the number of words he spoke in these two Pesukim, 33 words, would correspond to the number of years Yaakov would lose, as his father Yitzchak lived to 180 but he would live to only 147. We must learn from here to always accept our pain with happiness and never complain, and learn to understand that everything Hashem does is for the best.

### ***The 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet***

During World War 2, over seventy years ago, the indescribable Holocaust was committed by the Nazis YS”V, who succeeded in destroying a third of our

nation. We will never forget those terrible, dark times that our people had to face. Almost two thousand years ago, Yerushalayim was taken by the wicked Titus. In 1163, our people were abused and troubled by the crusaders. In 1559, many perished both spiritually and physically in the Spanish Inquisition. In 1649, the terrible years named ‘Tach Vetat’, referring to their Hebrew years, brought about horrible decrees for the Jews. As we all know, not long ago the Nazis tried to wipe us out and leave no trace behind. Our Torah says, *“Love your fellow as you love yourself”* and *“Love the sojourner”* but our enemies feel the need to annihilate us and our remembrance. Many times the Satan was given the power to destroy, and during the Holocaust, while the Germans conquered about 20 European lands, our people were tortured and killed in ways unimaginable to normal people. Our leaders did not decree fasts in memory, for it would be too difficult and hard for us to fulfill. However, we have the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet, which includes all the sufferings and pain our people went through. This day is sanctified Leilui Nishmat all the souls and martyrs from the time of the Temple’s destruction until this very day. We must all fast during the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet with the correct understanding and intentions. May Hashem put an end to our sufferings and pains, quickly, and send a Refuah Shelema to those who are in need of it, and may we be redeemed with the coming of Moshiach, Amen.

### ***History in Brief***

*80 years after the Temple’s destruction, in the year 150AD.* Rebi Chanina Ben Teradyon once visited Rebi Yossi Ben Kisma who was sick and asked him if he would merit Olam Haba. Rebi Yossi asked him if he performed worthy deeds. Rebi Chanina was a collector of charity, and one Purim the money he collected became mixed with his personal money. Not able to differentiate, he gave all of the money to charity. Rebi Yossi told him that he indeed would merit Olam Haba, and he wished to be there with him. Rebi Chanina would soon be sentenced to death, burned while wrapped in a Torah scroll. A short while later Rebi Yossi Ben Kisma passed away, and all the dignitaries of Rome came to his funeral and burial to pay respect, as he was an honorable man even amongst the nobles of the world. When they returned from the funeral, they found Rebi Chanina teaching Torah to a large group. They asked him why he was studying and teaching Torah, and he explained because Hashem commanded him to do so. Immediately they sentenced him to death. They wrapped him in a Torah scroll and burned him. His daughter who was the sister of Beruria the wife of Rebi Meyer Baal Hanes, was decreed to live with lowly adulteresses. What sin did she do to deserve such

a fate? One time, as she was walking past some nobles of Rome, she heard them comment that she walks very beautifully, and in response she began walking with more precision to increase the beauty. Hashem is very careful with the actions of the righteous, and she was therefore decreed to live with lowly adulteresses as a punishment.

### ***Health and Recovery***

When a person puts too much salt into his body, what happens to his body from within? It is known that our bodies consist of sixty to eighty percent water. When we drink, the water reaches the right places, but when the body has excess salt, the nature of the salt is to absorb water, so instead of the water reaching the right places in the body, it attaches instead to meat. That then forms pressure on the blood vessels from the outside. This pressure causes the heart to work harder to push the blood through the blood vessels, causing a disease called hypertension, which is nicknamed by doctors as “the silent killer”. In conclusion, we need to understand: products being marketed in the stores have a lot of salt in them, in order to make the food taste better and sell better, but then we also add salt later in our plates. Salt is the first enemy to destroy our bodies and bring us many diseases and problems, so it is our duty to be vigilant and relentless, because of the dangers to our health that lurk and creep into our lives and those of our loved ones. It is important to keep track of how much sodium every product contains, and choose products that contain less sodium. Prepared foods should not contain more than an average of 350 mg of sodium per gram.

### **Rishon LeSion:**

#### ***R' Raphael Meir 1801-1893***

As the month of Nissan approached, the homes in Jerusalem were busy with preparations for the upcoming holiday of Pesah. The women cleaned every corner of their homes, and the men baked Matzah for the Mitzvah. Those who were poor knew that they would be supported by the congregation and they would have everything they needed to celebrate properly. R' Raphael Meir was in charge of collected the charity funds and distributing them accordingly. He worked hard to collect, with a pure heart and a determined poise. He would also uplift the spirits of the poor and give them hope and happiness. Unfortunately, this year the Rabbi was not successful in securing the funds, and he did not have even one coin to provide for the poor who relied on his assistance.

### **Mussar: Fasting**

Our Sages of blessed memory teach us: All who fast are called holy. Fortunate are those who are able to fast. There are many Segulot in fasting, such as the ‘Sitra Achara’ (Yetzer Hara) cannot cling to one who is fasting. Fasting leads to humbleness, since one loses his strength from not eating and realizes his limits as a human. One who is fasting is not tested from heaven, since Hashem sees the

person testing himself, and he is already considered one who overpowers his inclination. He is then fit for the Shechinah to rest upon him, and his prayers are heard without any prosecutors objecting. There are many angels that are created through performing Mitzvot, but cannot ascend unless the person uses the power of a fast. A person who fasts is credited to have brought a sacrifice consisting of the fat and blood that he has lost while fasting. Unfortunately, many are fooled by their evil inclination that they are unhealthy and therefore fasting will result in sickness. They are led to believe that fasting in such a state would cause them to be punished in the next world for neglecting their bodily needs. Fasting is an excellent form for attaining forgiveness. Our great and holy sages knew the severity of their sins and fasted many fasts, as David Hamelech says, “*My knees are weak from fasting*”. Rebi Elazar and Rebi Yehoshua fasted until their teeth turned black in order to atone for specific sins. Rav Huna fasted 40 times for a specific reason as well. There were many others as well. So much more must we understand our need to atone for our many unbearable sins. Fasting is difficult, but what else can we do? Eat, drink, and be merry? Do not listen to your evil inclination who tells you that it is too unbearable for he is trying to destroy you! Many who fast turn out a lot healthier than those that do not. One who wishes to purify himself is definitely helped by heaven. One must especially be careful with obligatory fasts, such as the upcoming fast of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### ***Story***

When the Germans captured the city Kiev on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September in 1941, the Russian army fled from their post. The city filled with Jewish people were petrified of what would come next. On September 28<sup>th</sup>, the order was passed that all Jews were to report to the center of town near the cemetery the following morning on Monday September 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am. They were to bring with them all their valuables, gold, silver, jewels, fine clothing, but they were not permitted to wear anything. Any Jew that did not follow these orders, or was found anywhere else at 8:00am would be in terrible danger. Also, any non-Jew found to be looting a Jewish home will be in terrible danger. The innocent Jews of Kiev followed the instructions and came out at 8:00am, men, women, children, babies, and elderly. Tens of thousands of Jews were standing in the town center. There simply wasn't enough room for everyone to stand.

### **Laws: Fasting**

**1** – All are obligated to fast the four Rabbinical fasts, one of which takes place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet.  
**2** – The obligation to fast spans from Alot Hashahar until Tzet Hacoachavim. Alot Hashahar, according to the Ben Ish Hai and Maran Ovadia Yosef zt”l is as follows: one and a fifth seasonal hours before Netz Hachama. The current seasonal hour consists of 55 minutes. Add the

fifth, 11 minutes, and Alot would be 66 minutes before Netz, which is 6:06am. The fast will end a half seasonal hour after Shekiah which will be 4:55pm, or for those who wish to be strict it will end at Tzet Hacocharim precisely at 5:06pm.

**3** – One who goes to sleep without intending to wake up before the fast begins cannot eat anymore even if he wakes up before the fast begins. However, if he goes to sleep with the intention to wake up before the fast begins in order to eat then he may eat until Alot Hashachar.

**4** – These fasts do not prohibit washing, showering of any sort, smearing, wearing leather shoes, or relations.

**5** – Pregnant and nursing women, with the following specifications, are not obligated to fast. She has to have been pregnant for three months already from the time she conceived. However, if she is still within three months and she is feeling sick and is in pain, then she may eat.

**6** – Once a woman gives birth, she is not obligated to fast for 24 months, even when she stops nursing. This applies as well to a woman who miscarries. Nonetheless, even though they are allowed to eat, those who eat should only eat what they need to and should not apply any effort to eat enjoyable foods.

**7** – A sick person (not necessarily in danger), or an old weak person, who will be in pain from fasting, are not obligated to fast.

**8** – Boys under age 13 and girls under age 12 are not obligated to fast.

**9** – A married couple within their seven days of Sheva Berachot, a father of a newborn son receiving a Brit Milah, the Sandak (holder of the baby during the Brit procedure) and the Mohel are all obligated to fast.

**10** – One shouldn't wash or brush his mouth on the morning of the fast. However, if one has to, he can, provided that he face downwards and make sure not to swallow anything.

**11** – An otherwise healthy person who has to swallow pills or tablets for pain relief and the like may swallow them without water as long as they do not have a flavoring. If one cannot swallow without water, little water is allowed for swallowing. Liquid medicine may be consumed as well, as long as you do not enjoy the taste or flavoring and do not derive pleasure besides for the desired effects. If the sickness is serious, then you may consume the medication even though there is flavoring. Smoking is permitted during these fasts.

**12** – One who eats accidentally less than a Kezayit must finish his fast and may recite Anenu in Mincha. If he already ate a Kezayit, he still completes the fast, but cannot recite Anenu in Mincha.

**13** – One who accidentally recited a blessing in order to eat must taste a little in order to derive pleasure and not waste a blessing.

**14** – If one forgot to say Anenu in Shomeah Tefillah, he continues and recites it at the end of Elokai Netzor.

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Tizku L'Mitzvot, Amen!*

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