

Congregation

◆◆◆ "Beth Yosef" ◆◆◆

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat Vayhi

14th Tebet 5782

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Maqam Hijaz Haftarat Vayikrevu Yeme David

Issue #964

December 18th 2021

*Candle Lighting 4:12pm * Shekiah 4:30pm * Shir Hashirim 4:05pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 3:50pm * Shabbat Ends 5:12pm & Rabbenu Tam 5:42pm
Time for Talit 6:20am * Seasonal Hour 55:00 * Alot Hashahar 6:09am * Netz Hachama 7:15am
Weekday Minha 4:20pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 3:58pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 5:07pm * Chatzot 11:52
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:54am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:49am*

Sponsored generously by the good-hearted:

Mr. Edmond Nahum, his wife Lina, and their children. May Hashem bless them with spiritual and physical success, Mazal Tov on the Bar Mitzvah of their son **Jacob**, Mabrouk, Amen.

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

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Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

Parashat Vayhi tells us about the happiest moment in the life of our grandfather Yaakov. At the end of his life, while lying in his sickbed, he opens his eyes and observes the crown surrounding him: *his twelve sons*. This was the gaze of an elderly father who, at the end of his life, witnessed the reunion of his awesome family. Now he surveyed his sons with a look in which he noticed the essential differences between them: differences in character, behavior, greatness, and fate. And so, he said to them: *'Gather so that I will tell you what will come to pass at the end of days.'* The gaze of the father of our holy nation penetrated like a magnificent laser beam into the distant future. There in Goshen, in the land of Egypt, Yaakov told his sons, who were forming into the chosen people, something of essence about the final redeemer, who will one day be the Mashiah. Let us analyze the blessing he gave to his son Yehuda: *"Yehuda – you, your brothers shall acknowledge"* – It should have said *'Yehuda, your brothers shall acknowledge you'* – Rather, Yaakov's intentions were the following: He was telling Yehuda *'You'* are not like your other brothers, specifically Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, whom Yaakov had criticized and chastised moments before he spoke to Yehuda. Yehuda thought he was next, so Yaakov calmed him with these words. Another explanation: Yaakov was saying *"Yehuda, you"* – the essence of him, his name, is himself. The name Yehuda comes from the root word that means 'to admit', as Yehuda had admitted to his actions during the story with Tamar.

Nobody had ever yet admitted to their sins since creation before Yehuda. *"Your brothers shall acknowledge"* – they will acknowledge that the kings of our people will come forth from *you* and lead our nation, as it says that all of the tribes of our nation gathered to crown David as king. *"A lion cub is Yehuda"* – first he is but a cub, small in height and progress, but steady in growth, as Nachshon Ben Aminadav was first to jump into the Yam Suf, and he was first to offer the sacrifices of the princes; the tribe of Yehuda was in the front when the nation fought the Canaanites; the first of the Shofothim, Atiel Ben Kenaz, was from Yehuda; and Yehuda was the one to deal with the incident concerning Binyamin, who was accused of stealing the goblet. Then he grew to be a lion, as David was appointed king of Israel. *"From the prey, my son, you elevated yourself"* – from the prey of my son, Yosef, you elevated yourself, as Yehuda claimed *"What gain will there be if we kill our brother..."* Yehuda was destined for royalty – perhaps he would be afraid of Yosef and his dreams of royalty and therefore would want to take action to prevent this appointment. Nonetheless, Yehuda elevated himself and actually saved Yosef from death instead. *"The scepter shall not depart from Yehuda"* The privilege of providing Israel's sovereign ruler – symbolized by the royal scepter – shall not pass from the House of Yehuda. *"Nor a scholar from among his descendants"* Translated also to mean that his scribe, the scribe of the king, shall be at the foot of his throne, and never

removed. *“Until Shiloh arrives”* This means until the coming of Mashiah, who will descend from his seed. The word *Shiloh* refers to Mashiah in order to indicate that he will be born naturally from a woman like any other human being and will not descend like an angel from heaven. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – *“If you please – if I have found favor in your eyes, speak now in the ears of Pharaoh”* When Yosef wished to be granted permission to go up to the land of Canaan in order to bury his father, he sought the help of Pharaoh’s household and required their friendship and assistance in order to make his request to Pharaoh through them. The *Rebbe from Kutzk* asks the following question: Why couldn’t he just ask Pharaoh directly for permission – why did he need to rely on others? This teaches us that Yosef had only been given his royal position because of the merit of his father Yaakov, so that he could make the family’s transition to Egypt comfortable and easy. Once Yaakov passed on, it was no longer necessary for him to be high in command and therefore was no longer able to speak to Pharaoh on his own, directly, as he now lacked the merit.

2 – *From Asher – his bread will have richness, and he will provide kingly delicacies.* If Asher fulfills his role and provides spiritual delicacies in honor of our King, by assisting and strengthening the learning of Torah, then his bread will have richness and he will not need to worry about his livelihood. It says *from Asher*, since the reward he will enjoy in this world is not drawn from the principle, but only *from* the fruits of his Mitzvot, while the principle reward remains intact for the next world.

History in Brief

80 years after the Temple’s destruction, in the year 150AD. On the 27th of Sivan, about 8 months after the Roman’s murderous execution of R’ Akiva, they captured Rebi Chanina Ben Teradyon, rolled him in his Sefer Torah scroll, placed him on a pile of wood, and tried to light him on fire. They took a soaking wet sponge and placed it over his heart so that he would live in pain as long as possible while being burned alive. However, the fire cooled and moved away from him. The officer in charge of the execution asked him why the fire was not burning him as the Romans had decreed. He explained that he swore by Hashem that the fire should not touch him until he knew for certain that his death by fire was actually decreed in heaven. He told the officer that he would advise him as soon as he found out for sure. The officer sat bewildered waiting. The officer then told him to run away, save himself, and whatever the Romans would do to him as a

consequence for allowing him to escape he would accept. Rebi Chanina told him, “Empty one! If heaven has decreed this upon me, there is no escaping, if not you then someone else will carry out the decree of heaven. However, whoever actually does it will be punished for doing so.” The daughter of Rebi Chanina sat and cried. She asked her father if this was the reward for learning Torah. He explained to his daughter that the fires of this world were preferred over the fires of Gehinam if he required atonement. If she was crying over the Torah burning as well, the Torah itself is fire, and fire cannot consume fire. The holy letters will ascend to heaven, only the parchment will be left to burn. He was proud to be burned with the Torah, for just as the Torah will be accepted to Hashem, so too shall he.

Health and Recovery

1 – A young person should eat two meals a day. When one requires more meals, he should eat less during each meal. **2** – One should not eat unless he feels hungry. **3** – One should wait six hours between meals. **4** – During a meal, one should first eat light items, i.e. grapes, figs, berries, melons, etc. and not at the end of a meal. This will avoid stomach issues and excessive gas.

Mussar: The Days of the Shovevim

The days of Shovevim begin Monday December 20th and continue until Thursday February 10th. The word *Shovevim* is comprised of the initial letters of the six Parashiot included in these weeks: Shemot, Vaera, Bo, Beshalach, Yitro, Mishpatim. During a Jewish leap year, like this year, two more weeks are added to the Shovevim – Terumah and Tetzaveh – known as *Shovevim Tat*, with the word ‘Tat’ being formed with the two initial letters of the two extra weeks. This time frame in essence requests from each and every Jew to awaken from their slumber and produce a personal calculation. Ask yourself: What am I doing? What can I do better in order to serve Hashem and improve my spirituality and holiness? We must first fix the mistakes that we do constantly or frequently, and repent, for this is the proper time. *“Behold, the cries of Bnei Yisrael have come before Me.”* – our prayers must be voiced strongly during these days. The clear advice is to increase in Torah learning each day, whether with a study partner or by attending an extra Torah class. Torah has the power to bring repentance, *“Like storm winds upon vegetation”*. Some have the custom to fast every Monday and Thursday during this time period from Alot Hashachar – 6:11 AM, until 5:00pm, a ½ hour after Shekiah (this time fluctuates during the six weeks). One who wishes to fast must accept upon himself from Mincha of the previous day in *Shema*

Kolenu, or at the end of the Amidah if he forgot: “*Behold I accept a Taanit upon myself for tomorrow, Beli Neder.*” This *Kabballah* (acceptance) enables you to say Anenu during the fast. If he did not make a Kaballah, he may not say Anenu, but still fasts. One must be careful with the following: (1) Do Teshuvah (2) Learn Torah (3) Recite Tehillim each day (4) Be careful with Netillat Yadayim (5) Feed the poor (6) Eat the correct amount of bread for blessings (7) Be careful with Birkat Hamazon and all Berachot (8) Answer Amen with concentration (9) Be careful not to talk during Chazara, Kaddish, and Sefer Torah, for it is compared to wasting seed (10) Concentrate during Keriat Shema and pronounce each word clearly (11) Dip in the Mikveh (12) Try to be a Sandak (13) Go up for an Aliyah and read with the reader (14) Say Berich Shemeh when taking out the Torah (15) Give charity each day (16) Be careful with Oneg Shabbat (17) Honor Torah and its learners (18) Pray with concentration and tears (19) Learn Mishnayot (20) Do Mitzvot properly (21) Be careful with Mayim Acharonim and say Birkat Hamazon without stalling (22) Be one of the first ten in Shul (23) Be careful with Tefillin (24) Look into the Torah when it is shown to the congregation (25) Work to make peace between friends and spouses (26) Train children to serve Hashem (27) Bring joy to the bride and groom (28) Guide others to repentance. (29) Complete 100 Berachot each day (30) Distance from fights and problems (31) Don’t speak Lashon Hara (32) Speak optimistically about our nation (33) Recite Keriat Shema before going to sleep (34) Be careful with Seudat Shelishit and Melave Malka. (35) These days help a person return to holiness if treated properly. Therefore, during these days, our responsibility is greater than all other days of the year. All souls can be repaired to the level it was at Har Sinai, during the acceptance of the Torah and the revelation of the Shechinah. Watch over these weeks and Shabbatot with holiness and purity, for they will be beneficial for you in return, and will erase all of our sins. May Hashem merit us, Amen.

Rishon LeSion: R’ Rephael Meir 1801-1893

As the homes in Jerusalem were busy with preparations for the upcoming holiday of Pesah, those who were poor knew that they would have everything they needed to celebrate properly, as R’ Rephael Meir was in charge of collecting and distributing the charity funds. Unfortunately, that year the Rabbi was not successful in securing the necessary funds, and he did not have even one coin to provide for the poor who relied on his assistance. He hoped that someone would soon be planning to travel to areas outside of Israel, who would help him collect if he provided him with a letter and his signature, but unfortunately nobody was planning to travel. He tried mailing a letter, but he knew there was not enough time for the letter to reach its destination and then bring back a response. Shabbat HaGadol came and left, and it was almost the night of Bedikat Hametz, but salvation did not

come. He then dipped in the Mikveh and went to his inner chamber of his Bet Din. While standing on the threshold, he instructed his attendant that nobody should disturb him, even if a very distinguished man comes to call. Anyone who comes must wait until he came out of his own. The Rabbi then entered his room and locked the door. The attendant knew that his holy Rabbi would be unavailable until maybe Pesah, and he would need assistance in order to properly prepare for the upcoming holiday.

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 10th of Tevet. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Story

On September 28, 1941 – Erev Yom Kippur – a chilling announcement was sent out to all districts in Kiev: “All Jews in the city of Kiev and its vicinity must appear on Monday September 29, 1941 (Yom Kippur) by 8 a.m. at the corner of Melnikova and Dokhterivskaya Streets, next to the Jewish cemetery. Bring documents, money, and valuables, and also warm clothing, bed linen, etc. Any Jews who do not follow this order and are found elsewhere

will be shot.” Facing death if they did not comply – and hoping that perhaps they would simply be relocated rather than harmed – Kiev’s Jews complied. The Jews were forced to the edge of town, where a deep natural ravine named Babi Yar lay. For centuries, the large rugged area had been home to military camps and cemeteries – including one Jewish burial site. An entire Nazi division, led by a Nazi war criminal, was brought in to murder the Jews of Kiev. Jews were taken to the edge of the ravine, were forced to remove their clothes, and were shot in small groups of ten. Their bodies fell into the ravine’s depression below. Loud music and airplanes circling overhead drowned out the screams of the victims so that unless the person was from the small group of ten currently being shot, they did not know what was about to happen to them. Over the course of two days, September 29 and 30, 1941, over 33,000 Jews were murdered at Babi Yar. It was the largest single Nazi massacre up until that point during the war.

Laws:

1 – If one is in middle of praying the silent Amidah and he hears the congregation reciting Kedushah, he should pause and listen to the Hazzan recite Kedushah and have in mind to fulfill his obligation along with the congregation. This is only if the Hazzan is someone who knows that he is supposed to fulfill the obligation of those listening to Kedushah and he is a regular Hazzan, however if he is not a regular Hazzan and does not know the Halacha to fulfill the obligation of others with his Kedusha, or if you are unable to hear the words from the Hazzan, then you do not pause in the silent Amidah and instead continue praying.

2 – When a father puts Tefillin on his son who is now Bar Mitzvah, he should recite: Blessed is Hashem who absolves me from consequences. He should make sure to recite this within the first three days of the Bar Mitzvah birthday. Some say within the first thirty days is also acceptable.

3 – The same applies to a father of a daughter who reaches Bat Mitzvah.

4 – If the father is not available to recite this, a grandfather should recite instead.

5 – Before anyone recites a blessing, if his hands are dirty with oily or sticky substances, whether from food or otherwise, he should first wash his hands without a blessing, dry them on a hand towel, and then he could recite a blessing.

Sponsors

*** **Mr. Alfonse Kabbani, his wife Golda, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Mazal Tov to **Mr. Albert Jamal and his wife Dina** on the birth of a granddaughter **Golda**, Mabrouk, Amen.

*** **Mr. Yosef Ishay, his wife Suzette, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Mazal Tov to **Mr. Hoter Ishay and his wife** on the birth of a grandson **Yosef**, Mazal Tov to **R’ Rachamim Haber, Mr. David Ishay and his wife Rina** on the birth of a granddaughter **Rina**, and Mazal Tov to **Mr. Joey David Bawabe and his wife Rachel** on the birth of a newborn baby, Mabrouk, Amen. *** **Mr. David Nisani, his wife Ziva, and their children.** Blessings, health, and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mrs. Salma Flah and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **The Hasbani Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother **Rachel Bat Sarah a”h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Ovadia Nahum, his wife Sabah, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Mazal Tov on the birth of a grandchild, Mabrouk, Amen. *** **Mr. Alex Ballas, his wife Stella, and their children.** Blessings, health, Refuah Shelemah, and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Mrs. Berta Malbasati and her siblings: Ovadia, Yitzhak, Morris, Eli, Natan, Celia, Lyzet, Lillian, and Claudi.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Avraham Nouseiri Ben Sabrie a”h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Victor Guindi HaCohen and his children Henry, Freddy, and Bella.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their mother **Nadia Chaya Bat Victoria a”h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Leon Farhi, his wife Eva, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat **Rachel Sithon Bat Bahia a”h**, Amen. *** Askani Tzibur **Mr. Isaac Jrade and his family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his mother **Jamila Bat Bahie a”h**, 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. *** **The Khafif Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their brother **Moshe Ben Rachel a”h**, Amen.

This week’s sponsorship total is \$2,000.

Tizku L’Mitzvot, Amen!

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