

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat Yitro

20th Shevat 5782

Maqam Husseni

Issue #969

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Haftarat Bishnat Mot

January 22nd 2022

*Candle Lighting 4:42pm * Shekiah 5:00pm * Shir Hashirim 4:40pm followed by Mincha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Mincha Shabbat 4:25pm * Shabbat Ends 5:43pm & Rabbenu Tam 6:13pm
Time for Talit 6:16am * Seasonal Hour 58:00 * Alot Hashahar 6:04am * Netz Hachama 7:14am
Weekday Mincha 4:50pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 4:25pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 5:38pm * Chatzot 12:07
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:58am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:56am*

Shovevim Fasting:

Thursday January 20th fast starts 6:05am and ends 5:25pm

Monday January 24th fast starts 6:03am and ends 5:30pm

Thursday January 27th fast starts 6:00am and ends 5:40pm

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

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At Mount Sinai, Bnei Yisrael received the Ten Commandments, which were written on two Luchot, tablets; five on each tablet. One must ask: What is special about these Ten Commandments? There is no answer to prove that these Ten chosen Commandments are the most important ones. The Rambam, Maimonides, says: The whole Torah came from heaven, every Perek, Pasuk, and letter, from beginning to end, and there is no difference between the importance of the verse: "*The sons of Hom were Cush, Mitzraim, Phoot, and Canaan*", and between the verse: "*I am Hashem*". The Gemara explains: Although they wanted to incorporate the Ten Commandments into our everyday prayers, they did not do so, out of concern that some would be misguided to think that only the Ten Commandments are true, but not the rest of the Torah. Why were they written on two tablets? Because the first five speaks of the glory of the Creator, while the second five discusses the importance of the relationship between people. This teaches us a very valuable lesson: there is equal importance regarding the Mitzvot between man and Hashem and the Mitzvot between man and his fellow, for the Torah is pure and complete, and grants repentance. Only when the Torah is pure and complete will it grant repentance and return the soul. However, one should ask: at the end of each of these tablets there is a Mitzvah that is not related to the

matters that have been discussed. On the first tablet there is a Mitzvah of *honoring parents*, which is seemingly not connected to the glory of the Creator. The second tablet concludes with the Mitzvah of '*do not covet*', which does not relate to the issues between man and his fellow, rather only in private to the individual himself, not to his friend. Rabbi Haim Sabato says that the two Mitzvot that conclude each of the two tablets really do not deviate from the principle of the commandments that precede them, but rather they actually constitute the basis for the commandments that precede them. The root of the Mitzvah of honoring one's parents is the recognition and acknowledgement of the good received from another, the simple recognition that every reasonable person understands how much he owes his parents. Even the disbeliever believes that he owes his parents so much for the many years of their hard work in raising and caring for him. This root is the foundation of all the Mitzvot between man and Hashem. This simple recognition indicates how much we owe thanks to the Sovereign King of all worlds, how many debts of gratitude we owe from the time of our creation until the last day of our lives. Now, the Mitzvah '*do not covet*' is also the basis for all the Mitzvot between man and his fellow, as it demands that we judge each other favorably, with a pleasant eye. In order to create a proper society, there

must be mutual love and respect between man and his fellow. We find that these two principles, recognizing the good we receive, and judging others favorably with a good eye, are vital to fulfill the Mitzvot of the Torah. The Torah was given to us at Mount Sinai and through these lessons we will preserve it properly. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – The Pasuk quotes Yitro as he approaches Moshe, “*I, your father-in-law, come before you*”. Rashi explains that this was actually a messenger of Yitro announcing his arrival to Moshe. The Ramban argues that these words were written in a letter to Moshe, as a messenger cannot say that he is Yitro, rather he would have said that Yitro was coming. How did the letter reach Moshe? The messenger couldn’t enter the Camp of Israel as the clouds of glory would not allow him access? Rather, the letter was written: I am your father-in-law. It was then tied to an arrow and shot into the camp. The arrow came to Moshe, and Moshe read it from him. Although there were clouds protecting from arrows, for that moment the letter was allowed to pass. Some say that the letter was tied to a dove and sent to Moshe, but Rabbi Eliezer says: it was in fact Hashem that announced to Moshe: Go out towards your father-in-law Yitro and greet him.

2 – *Aharon and the elders came to eat bread with Moshe’s father in law* – Where was Moshe? Rashi explains: Moshe was serving them. The Pasuk then speaks of the following day. What day did it follow? Yom Kippur. We can deduce that they ate during Yom Kippur and did not fast. Why? Because they had not accepted the fast upon themselves the previous day. Therefore, they did not fast that year and ate bread with Moshe’s father in law. Moshe, however, did not eat with them because he had accepted the fast the previous day as he descended from heaven.

History in Brief

80 years after the Temple’s destruction, in the year 150AD. After the Romans killed Rebi Yehuda Ben Tema, they turned their attention to Rabbi Chutzpit Hameturgeman. Who was he? He had the job of being Metargem, to explain to the group, the words of the Nasi Raban Gamliel. He was comparable to Yehonatan Ben Uziel, from the great students of Hillel Hazaken. His mouth was full of pearls of wisdom, able to explain the Torat Cohanim in 170

variations of detail. Even in his older years, he was very good looking, naturally handsome, like an angel of Hashem. When the Caesar asked him how old he was, he answered that he was 130 years old minus a day, as the following day was to be his birthday. He asked if he could be spared for one more day in order to complete his life in full. The Caesar asked him what one more day could possibly mean to him after such a long life, and he explained: he wanted to recite the Shema of Arbit and Shaharit one more time, to recite that Hashem is the Supreme Authority of everything. When the Caesar heard these words, he blasphemed the heaven. Rabbi Chutzpit broke down in tears, ripped his garments, and told the Caesar that he pitied his existence. What will the Caesar do when Hashem decides to destroy Rome and its idolatry? The Caesar immediately ordered his execution by stoning and hanging, cutting out his tongue and tossing it in the bin. When Elisha Ben Abuya witnessed this, he was astonished that a tongue that spoke pearls of Torah wisdom should be tossed to the dirt. The Students eulogized Rabbi Chutzpit with great honor and buried him respectfully. May his merits protect us, Amen.

Health and Recovery

Our children’s schedules these days are fuller than ever! Young minds and bodies need solid nutrition to keep up with the flurry of activity. In the morning rush, breakfast is an important meal that is often skipped. Breakfast is literally *breaking* an overnight *fast*. Starting the day with a balanced meal can make a difference in health and school performance. Studies show that kids who eat breakfast do better in school, have better concentration, perform better on standardized tests, have fewer behavior problems and are more energetic. Kids who eat breakfast are also more likely to maintain a healthy weight. A balanced breakfast includes the essentials: Help your kids get the morning nutrition they need by offering a variety of wholesome foods, providing a combination of healthy carbohydrates and protein. Carbohydrates are the preferred energy source for the brain. They’re digested quickly and jump-start thinking and learning. Look for whole grains, milk, fruits and vegetables. You can identify whole grain products by finding “whole wheat” or “whole grain” as the first ingredient. Protein helps kids maintain the level of energy and fullness they need to get them through the morning. It is found in meat, beans, eggs, milk, yogurt and cheese. Be sure to power up your breakfast with this important nutrient! How your

child eats today will have a striking impact on his or her health throughout adolescence and adulthood. Consuming nutritious foods helps children and teens grow, develop, do well academically and feel good about themselves. Good nutrition also helps prevent child and teen issues such as eating disorders, obesity, dental cavities and iron-deficiency anemia. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 25 percent of all children aged 2 to 18 years now meet the criteria for being overweight. Overweight and obese children are at greater risk for major health issues such as Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, joint pain, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease. Teaching your child good nutrition habits from a young age can decrease the likelihood he will become overweight. Choosing nutrient-dense foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables over empty-calorie foods such as cookies and sodas can help prevent childhood obesity and provide your child a much higher quality of life. Children require a variety of nutrient-dense foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, meat, fish and adequate calories in order to grow and develop properly. It's crucial that your child is consuming the essential nutrients he or she needs to grow. Calcium is of particular importance for children. An adequate calcium intake promotes optimal bone density which will assist teen growth and reduce the risk of bone loss in later life. The way children eat influences their growth and health during childhood, during adolescence and for the rest of their lives.

The 15th of Shevat – Tu B'Shevat

The 15th day in the month of Shevat is a very special day. The traditions and customs that we observe when celebrating this holiday were established by the Mekubalim in the 1600's, during the time when Spain and Portugal, as well as many European communities, exiled the Jewish people from their lands and borders. Many Pirushim wished to establish stringencies and prohibitions upon the nation, i.e. not to eat meat, drink wine, or consume fruits, because of the loss of the Bet Hamikdash, as we are no longer able to perform the Korban sacrifices, the wine libations, or dedicate our first fruit as Bikurim. However, the Mekubalim established that during the 15th of Shevat we should increase in our consumption of fruits, specifically fruits from the seven species: grapes, figs, dates, pomegranates, olives, wheat, and barley. Some have the custom to consume 12 types of fruit, others 15,

and others 30. The reason to increase the number is because our nation is compared to fruit. Therefore, eating the fruit is a form of praise and thanks to Hashem for creating the world with beautiful and delicious fruit bearing trees for man to enjoy. This holiday signifies the blossoming of existence. It is also a day for self-analysis and contemplation: Hashem created such wonderful and enjoyable fruits, ranging through many colors, tastes, shapes, scents, and sizes. Why – for whom to enjoy? Can man not survive with just bread and water? Hashem wishes for us to enjoy His world! We should enjoy this world and show appreciation for it. When one troubles another and causes him pain, he must realize that the world was created to enjoy and he is going against the grain of creation, against the purpose of the creation, by causing pain. We must treat each other nicely, greet each other with a smile, and honor one another, only bringing joy and happiness to each other. Have a happy holiday, Amen.

Rishon LeSion: R' Rephael Meir 1801-1893

After R' Rephael completed his fervent prayers on behalf of the people, he opened the door of his office and welcomed the wealthy man into his office. The wealthy man asked if the Rebbe can explain why he was praying with so much fervor and passion. The Rebbe explained that every year he would distribute funds to the needy who were depending on him to have their needs in order to properly celebrate the Holiday of Pesah, but unfortunately this year he didn't have even one coin to distribute and it was almost Peash. He was praying for the dire situation of his people, asking Hashem for mercy on their behalf. The wealthy man was so touched that he asked how much was needed, and took out the full fifty gold coins from his own purse and gave it to the Rebbe to distribute to the people for Pesah. He then left after wishing him a Chag Sameah. That year, as all previous years, the people were able to celebrate Peash with dignity and honor, enjoying a great miracle that they knew nothing about. Only the Rebbe knew how close it had come to not having anything to serve on their Seder table, and the Rebbe thanked Hashem with all his heart for this special mercy. R' Rephael's father was R' Yehuda, a great merchant and businessman who lived in Bulgaria, wealthy with a lot of possessions and riches. His only son, R' Rephael Meir, was born to him in 1801. When he reached the age of three, his father knew that he must move to Israel in order to raise his son in Torah.

Story

“I stood on the same stage with Ayatollah Khomeini and watched the massive crowd,” R’ Hershberg said. “At a certain point the masses kneeled and bowed to the ground. Everyone, except myself. Following the prayer, I was called to Khomeini and asked to provide an explanation for my conduct. I explained that I am a Jew and, not knowing the language of their prayers and to whom they are bowing to, I could not join in the ceremony. He was surprised by my way of thinking, but also seemed pleased from the sincerity of my words.” During their short conversation, R’ Hershberg asked for a private audience. The Ayatollah agreed and they met in his home in the city of Qom, southwest of Tehran. R’ Hershberg pleaded with the Islamic leader “to put a stop to the scheming against the Jews.” Khomeini agreed. R’ Hershberg sharing the stage with Khomeini made a very large impression on Iranian Jews and strengthened their morale. Thousands came to the central synagogue in Tehran, where R’ Hershberg prayed that Shabbos. “I spoke to them about faith and conviction in Hashem. The trip definitely included some very moving moments.” R’ Hershberg then says that Khomeini kept to his word.

Laws:

1 – When one sees a rainbow in the sky, he recites the blessing with Hashem’s name and Malchut: *Baruch...Zocher HaBerit, Ne’eman BiBrito Vekayam Bemaamaro.*

2 – We are happy and thankful for Hashem’s kindness in promising not to destroy the world again, and we must have thoughts of Teshuva, because the rainbow is a sign that without Hashem’s great kindness the world would not continue to be as it is now.

3 – Nonetheless, one should not stare at a rainbow, otherwise it will weaken the eyesight. One should just look at it in order to recite the blessing.

4 – One recites a blessing even if he can only see part of the rainbow. Some write that one should at least see half of the curve so that the blessing will not be recited unnecessarily.

5 – Upon seeing a great Torah scholar, wise and heaven fearing, who teaches Torah, one should recite with Hashem’s name and Malchut: *Baruch...Shehalak MeHochmato Lireav.*

6 – Upon seeing a very wise and knowledgeable individual who is not Jewish, one should recite with Hashem’s name and Malchut: *Baruch...Shehalak MeHochmato Lebasar Vadam.*

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