

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**

*Parashat Shemini & Parah*

23<sup>rd</sup> Adar Sheni 5782

*Maqam Husseni*

Issue #978

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**

*Haftarat Vayhi Devar*

March 26<sup>th</sup> 2022

*Candle Lighting 6:55pm \* Shekiah 7:13pm \* Shir Hashirim 6:50pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 6:35pm \* Shabbat Ends 7:56pm & Rabbenu Tam 8:26pm  
Time for Talit 5:38am \* Seasonal Hour 72:00 \* Alot Hashahar 5:22am \* Netz Hachama 6:50am  
Weekday Minha 7:05pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 6:21pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 7:51pm \* Chatzot 1:01  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:58am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 10:10am*

***Shabbat April 2<sup>nd</sup> will be Rosh Hodesh Nissan***

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Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

This week we read in the Parasha about a powerful occurrence, a terrible tragedy that took place within our nation – the passing of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aharon HaCohen. This happened during an outstanding time for our nation, and caused a meaningful interruption to the proceedings. It was a very wonderful day for the *Nation of the Desert*, Rosh Hodesh Nissan, the day that the Mishkan was inaugurated, the day that Aharon HaCohen brought the first sacrifices for himself and the nation, the day Aharon lifted his hands and blessed the nation. The nation was experiencing a blessed time in history. Moshe and Aharon had entered the Ohel Moed, recited a special prayer to Hashem, that Hashem rest His Shechinah upon the nation, and renew the treaty between Hashem and His nation that had been blemished through the sin of the Golden Calf. When these two brothers, Moshe and Aharon, came out of the Mishkan from the Ohel Moed, they gazed upon the nation that surrounded them and blessed them from Hashem. At that moment, the glory of Hashem was revealed to the nation, and a fire descended and accepted the Olah sacrifice. They knew at that moment that their repentance was accepted, that their sin was forgiven, and the barriers set forth between them and their Father in heaven had been taken down. They then began to sing a holy melody, engrossed in happiness like the day the heaven and earth were created. Suddenly! So suddenly and unexpected, death came and prevented the powerful happiness from continuing. For many generations to follow, we read about how the children of Aharon, the special beloved boys, were suddenly taken away

from the nation, right before their eyes. Moshe then turned to Aharon his brother and told him that his two sons, who were so close to Hashem, were taken away that day, at that powerful moment during the celebrations, because of their holiness, in order to be honored by the nation, and Aharon was silent. The question is: shouldn't those who are holy and deserving of honor be blessed with longevity, and not pass away during the inauguration of the Mishkan at a young age? How did this benefit the people and sanctify Hashem's Name? The answer is: When the nation celebrated this great moment in history, the inauguration of the Mishkan with Hashem's Shechinah resting upon the nation, the nation started reaching such high levels of happiness that they were experiencing light-headedness in front of Hashem, which is dangerous and can lead to a lack of honor and dignity, as well as sin. Such is the nature of man, that levity leads to transgression. The honor of the Mishkan and Hashem's holy Shechinah was threatened to be diminished in their eyes by their gaiety and celebrations, which posed a terrible danger to the whole nation. When they witnessed those who were closest to Hashem perish due to lack of honor and respect for the Mishkan, this immediate shook up the nation and helped them refocus with awe and respect for Hashem and the Mishkan. No longer did they feel so high that their minds were floating away, they now were alert and awake once again and understood clearly that honor and respect must be maintained during the greatest moments of celebration, keeping gaiety in check. This was a powerful merit for Nadab and Abihu, to be the ones

who instilled the proper respect and honor for the Mishkan into the hearts of the people for generations to come. Their passing sanctified the holy Name of Hashem in a way so much more effective than they could have ever achieved during their lives. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### **Insights on the Parasha**

**1** – The Parasha lists the names of various non-kosher birds: 1)*Ozniah*- the root word ‘Oz’ means strength, for it has great strength in order to fly for extended periods of time, and can eat iron, metals, and glass. 2)*Daah*- can fly very quickly. 3)*Kaat*- able to see very far, from Babel to Israel. 4)*Ayah*- Has a large head and notices its surroundings, and turns its head in focus. 5)*Tachmas*- Steals food from the other birds. 6)*Netz*- Has very powerful wings to fly for extended periods of time, and fights with other birds as well. 7)*Shalach*- A bird that draws fish from the water.

**2** – The Pasuk states that Aharon lifted his hands and blessed the nation. We were uninformed as to what Aharon was reciting in his blessing, until the Pasuk explains: “*Yevarechecha Hashem Veyishmerecha*”. We do not know what is best for us. We might believe something will be beneficial when in fact it would be harmful, and vice versa. Only Hashem knows exactly what each and every one of us needs. The best advice and blessing would be to accept what Hashem gives with happiness and satisfaction, with the knowledge and assurance that Hashem is taking care of everything.

### **Parashat Parah – The Completely Red Heifer**

The third of a four Parasha series, we have the custom to be strict with listening to the Torah reading in Shul, since some hold that hearing it is a biblical obligation. Technically, Hachodesh should precede Parah since the Mishkan was established by the first of the month and the Parah was burnt on the second of the month. Rather, the order is switched since the Parah purified our nation, so that they wouldn’t be pushed off to have to celebrate Pesach Sheni instead, and it therefore takes precedence. The ashes purified those who were impure from a corpse, and it rejuvenated the person to a life of purity. We must consider ourselves like ashes before Hashem and fulfill His every command. The Pasuk says: ...*A completely red cow which is without blemish and upon which a yoke has not come. You shall give it to Elazar the Cohen; he shall take it to the outside of the camp... The Cohen shall take cedar wood,*

*hyssop, and crimson thread... The Cohen shall immerse his clothing...* The way we must learn Torah is hinted within these verses. *Parah*, besides meaning cow, could also mean to *produce*. We must produce and excel in our Torah studies. *Adumah*, besides meaning red, could also mean *blood*, which is warm, as we must learn with warmth and feeling. *Complete and without a blemish* – our studies must be thorough and exact. *Upon which a yoke has not come* – when a person learns Torah for the sake of heaven, in order to know how to properly serve Hashem, then he will be saved from all yokes of this world, as long as he carries the yoke of Torah. *Elazar the Cohen handles the services*, and just as he is careful with this service and the other services in the Temple, so must we be careful with our Torah studies. *He takes it to the outside of the camp* – one who wishes to study properly must remove himself from the general public and the common commotion found amongst commoners. He must learn to meditate in Torah and be able to spend time engrossed in thought. *The blood is taken out* – one must understand not just the Torah’s superficial understanding, but must delve deep into the life source, to uncover and extricate every bit of the Torah’s secrets that he can. One must remember that as far along as he gets, and as much knowledge as he may collect, he must always be as the *hyssop*, a simple and plain type among its kind. Just as the *crimson thread* creates beauty and fine productions, so too must a studious Torah learner produce beautiful thoughts and words of wisdom from his mouth. *The Cohen immerses his garments for purity*, and we must purify our soul’s clothing, our body, by improving and perfecting our character and behavior. May we merit to study Torah properly and to act with great character so that everyone praises our nation as holy. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### **History in Brief**

*80 years after the Temple’s destruction, in the year 150AD.* After Hadrian the Caesar died, Antoninus became the sixteenth Caesar of Rome. He was a very close friend of Rabbenu Hakadosh, a wise man whom his enemies feared. He was successful in all ways and brought peace to the lands. He avoided and prevented war unless absolutely necessary. He would say: it is better to keep one of my people alive than to kill a thousand of my enemies. He reformed laws that are still followed even today, and was known as “The Pius” because he was a man of

dignity and honor in his actions. Under Antoninus, the Jews hoped for some respite from all the terrible decrees that Hadrian had passed against them. Unfortunately, the wicked Tarnus spread lies of rebellion about the Jews in Jerusalem, about how they were planning to cause trouble against the Romans during their time of peace, and in doing so Tarnus brought death to thousands of Jews, claiming he was putting them in their places and stamping out a rebellion.

### ***The Road to Health and Recovery***

A lack of drinking water causes a decrease in blood volume and therefore a decrease in blood pressure. An adult who takes blood pressure medication, and does not drink enough, can have too much blood pressure and a lack of blood supply to the brain, which can then cause a stroke and kidney damage. Adults, and all those around adults, must be careful with drinking enough water. Now that we have learned how important drinking water is for our health, it is important to be careful not to be drawn after methods that recommend little drink, since they are very dangerous. Sudden onset of weakness or drowsiness of the face (crooked mouth), or to the arm or leg, usually on one side, can be caused from a lack of water. Sudden onset of confusion, difficulty in speech or understanding, sudden disturbance in balance, sudden vision disorder, sudden sharp headache without a known cause, all are warning signs of a stroke. Early detection and quick reaction to these signs with the provision of medical treatment within 4 hours can save lives and prevent serious disability. It should be noted that this can sometimes be but a short passing incident, which is a vital warning sign of the danger in the case of a repeat event. Lifestyle changes can reduce risk factors, improve health, maintain functionality, and prolong life. Until now, we have been dealing with the food we eat - what to stay away from and what to fight against. Now we will approach issues no less important - the digestion process. On this subject, we will elaborate on this process in detail, and whoever is careful will be able to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### ***Mussar: Haughtiness***

Haughtiness is the coin that the King of kings discontinued. The Torah warns a Jewish king about being haughty over his brothers. If such a warning is given to a king, all the more so must we be cautious with such a felony. One who is haughty is disgusting in the eyes of Hashem. Even if one is not haughty in

words or in action but only haughty in thought, he is still an abomination, as it states in Mishlei: *Hashem considers all who are haughty in heart an abomination.* Haughtiness chases away honor. When a person is not honored, he is drawn into fights, jealousy, and hatred. One form of haughtiness is expressed when one tries to impress ladies in order to bring them to laughter and lightheadedness. Likewise, women should be aware of the sin to cause men to gaze at them by acting and dressing haughty, creating immoral ideas in their minds. Punishment is severe for creating a stumbling block in which many sin through. Of the worst forms is the breach of dress code in which parts of the body are exposed unnecessarily. A bride who walks to her Chupah dressed in exposing clothing must deal with the burden of hundreds of men which are brought to sin. At night when her soul goes up to heaven, she will be judged for this and not have what to pardon herself with. Therefore, cover yourself and do not cause others to sin. May Hashem bring us atonement, Amen.

### ***Rishon LeSion: R' Rephael Meir 1801-1893***

In the year 1880 the Rishon LeSion R' Avraham Ashkenazi passed away from this world and returned his soul to heaven. As they returned from the funeral and burial, R' Rephael turned to his close friend R' Yaakov Shaul who was also a leader and said: the time has come for R' Yaakov to lead as the Rishon LeSion. R' Yaakov thought for a moment and responded that indeed R' Rephael was more worthy and befitting for the position of Rishon LeSion than he was. The matter was decided and R' Rephael was appointed to the position. Many years followed with prosperity and peace, as other leaders in the world recognized the greatness of R' Rephael. Alongside the Rishon LeSion, the Ashkenazim of Jerusalem had a leader named R' Shmuel Salant, who was loved by his people and feared by the non-Jews. In 1881, three days before Pesah, a group of Englishmen came to visit. Noticing all the activity leading up to Pesah, they asked what was the reason for such preparations. They were told about the Jewish holiday of Pesah and were then invited to the home of R' Rephael Meir, the leader and Rishon LeSion.

### ***Story***

Shimon was a flour merchant who leased a wheat grinding mill along the waterfront from the governor to produce flour. Each month they would meet

briefly so that Shimon would pay the monthly rent. That month, however, the situation felt very different. The governor looked at Shimon sadly and told him that unfortunately he could not continue leasing the mill to him, as he was offered a much larger amount and he knew Shimon would be unable to match it. Therefore, he must do his best in business and lease it to the highest bidder. Shimon began thinking quickly and started putting some puzzle pieces together in his mind. The previous week he had noticed a wealthy non-Jew had moved into the neighborhood of the governor. He had felt a little nervous at the time and didn't know why so he had just brushed the feelings aside.

### **Laws: Pesah**

**1** – All who keep Hametz in their possession during Pesah transgress a positive and negative commandment. One must sell his Hametz through the Rabbanim that are in charge. One who did not sell cannot benefit at all from the Hametz, not even to smell it, and must destroy it.

**2** – Do not buy Hametz after Pesah from anyone except those who have sold it through the Rabbanim.

**3** – The sick and elderly can appoint a messenger to sell their Hametz through the Rabbanim. If one sells another's Hametz without his knowledge, *Bediavad* (aftermath) it's a sale; however, it is *Lechatechilah* (initially) not a sale unless one first receives permission.

**4** – Vessels used for Hametz must be cleaned with boiling water in order to render it fit for use during Pesach. Vessels used over fire require the *Leeboon* koshering process, while *Hagalah* isn't good enough to render it fit for use. Ovens, however, cannot be cleaned with *Leeboon*.

**5** – Electric ovens must first be cleaned well by hand, not used for 24 hours, and then turned on to the maximum and left on for one hour.

**6** – One should use handmade Shemura Matzah for the Seder.

**7** – Work (physical labor) may not be done Erev Pesah after Chatzot, unless a non-Jew is the one working. Business deals and transactions, however, may be performed until 4:00pm.

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