

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**

*Parashat Reeh*

30<sup>th</sup> Av 5782

*Maqam Raast*

Issue #997

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**

*Haftarat Ani'a So'ara*

August 27<sup>th</sup> 2022

*Candle Lighting 7:19pm \* Shekiah 7:37pm \* Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 7:00pm \* Shabbat Ends 8:17pm & Rabbenu Tam 8:47pm  
Time for Talit 5:02am \* Seasonal Hour 7:00 \* Alot Hashahar 4:47am \* Netz Hachama 6:19am  
Weekday Minha 7:20pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 6:36pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 8:12pm \* Chatzot 12:57  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:38am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:55am*

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

*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 Re'eh is read every year before Rosh Hodesh Elul, the month when we ask for mercy in judgment and busy ourselves with Selihot. The Rambam says: during this month of mercy we must increase our contributions to charity and our performance of good deeds. The Rambam does not specify any other Mitzvah, such as Tefillin, but rather he specifies charity. Parashat Re'eh in fact mentions many instances of charity, during the paragraph which commands us to be warm-hearted and open-handed to our brethren, such as: "You shall surely open your hand", "You shall surely give", and "You shall lend him his requirement", as well as regarding your Jewish Bondsman: "Adorn him generously". All instances mentioned are each different forms of charity. In Parashat Emor, when the Torah discusses the Moadim, listing the holidays, it first mentions Shabbat and afterwards mentions Pesah, Shavuot, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Between Shavuot and Rosh Hashana, the Torah mentions the Mitzvah of leaving behind certain amounts for the poor when harvesting your field. Why was this Mitzvah of charity mentioned right in middle of listing the Moadim, specifically right before Rosh

Hashana? This was intended to hint the importance of making charitable contributions to the needy during the month of Elul, right before Rosh Hashana. Tzedakah has the power to annul decrees and save from strict judgment. In fact, charity has the ability to save from death. Besides for Tzedakah, a person should also spend more time with prayers and Selihot. Even though the Gemara says that: reproduction, longevity, and livelihood are all based on a person's Mazal, and not directly related to a person's merits, nonetheless if a person serves Hashem with dedication and devotion, he can merit the blessings of children, wealth, and extended years of life, even if his Mazal would not have provided him with such blessings. Hacham Ovadia Yossef ztl explains: even when Mazal denies a person of livelihood, offspring, or longevity, nonetheless prayer can override the restrictions and completely change the course of your future, as the Pasuk hints: *if you serve Hashem (through prayer) then your bread and water will be blessed (livelihood) nobody will be barren in your household (offspring) and the number of your days will be filled (longevity)*. There is no greater form of service to Hashem today than praying with

concentration and devotion. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### **Insights on the Parasha**

**1** – *The Blessing: that you listen to the commandments of Hashem.* This Pasuk is teaching us that one who fulfills the commandments of the Torah will not only attain blessings, but is also gaining the merit of being able to fulfill the Torah – “*The Blessing: that you listen*” – part of the blessing is being able to *listen* and fulfill the Torah. When one fulfills the commandments of Hashem, he is automatically sweetening his life, strengthening his soul, and reaping the rewards in this world, while investing in his rewards for the next world as well. (*Or Hachaim*)

**2** – *If there shall be a destitute person among you from one of your brethren* - Our sages teach us that when the Torah describes someone as *one*, it is signifying importance and greatness. The *Or Hachayim* explains here that although the poverty stricken may seem forsaken and of little significance and importance, the Pasuk refers to him here as *one*, teaching us that he is indeed very precious and dear to Hashem, as he constantly cries out to Hashem for help and guidance and relies on his Father in heaven for survival. We must therefore be very careful with his treatment.

### **History in Brief**

*100 years after the Hurban, 190AD.* Rabi Yaakov Ish Kofer Chitya was a student of Rabi Akiva, a holy Hacham, the Rabbi of Rabbenu Hakadosh, and would greet Rabi Akiva every day, even though he was growing older and weaker. His Rebbe told him that since it is hard for him, he does not need to come to him every day. Rabi Yaakov answered that the Pasuk says seeing the Hachamim after their life blesses a person with longevity. If that is true, then surely visiting your Rebbe during his lifetime will bring blessing of longevity. When Rabbenu Hakadosh heard this explanation, he began visiting the Rabbanim every day. Rabi Yehoshua Ben Karcha was the son of Rabi Akiva. When he married a woman, he made a deal with her that she would support the family while he learned Torah. He was so poor that he did not have shoes to wear during the week. He understood that if his father Rabi Akiva and the other Hachamim who were the ten martyrs that the

Romans killed had given up their lives for the sake of Torah, then certainly he can sacrifice for the sake of learning Torah as well.

### **Health and Recovery**

Diabetes is, for the most part, an age-dependent disease, so anyone who is relatively healthy but is over 45 years of age is nonetheless at risk for diabetes and must undergo a blood test to properly diagnose. Obesity 90% of the time will lead to developing diabetes. Anyone with a waist circumference over 102cm for men, and over 88cm for women, is at risk for diabetes. Anyone who has checked his blood while fasting and his results show a blood sugar level over 100 should consult a doctor. Even if he has tested his blood two hours after a meal, if his sugar level is over 200, this still requires clarification, even though the level is low enough for after a meal. Those with close relatives, such as a father, mother, sibling, or child who is diabetic, should monitor their sugar levels starting at the age of 25. Also, a woman who gives birth to a baby weighing over 4 kg, 9 pounds, should be concerned. If you have diabetes, you should be more careful than others, and often monitor your blood sugar levels to notice early signs of danger, such as a gradual rise in blood sugar, high blood triglycerides, constant thirst, or increased or sudden decreased secretions of liquids. You have to especially be very careful when dealing with obesity that comes from overeating, which is in fact a tough war against temptations.

### **Rishon LeSion:**

#### ***R' Yaakov Shaul Elyashar 1817-1906***

As R' Yaakov fulfilled a Shelichut mission in the areas near Izmir Turkey during Aseret Yeme Teshuva, he wanted to return to Izmir for Yom Kippur. He traveled back to Izmir with a colleague, discussing the holiness of Yom Kippur. During the journey, they noticed a group down the road quickly approaching them. His heart began to beat faster when he recognized that they were not friendly and in fact dangerous. He told his colleague that he was not worried. He was sure that the holy Sages in Jerusalem who sent him on this mission would protect him from danger. However, he said with tears streaming down his face, he considered himself as an empty vessel void of

goodness, full of sins. They quickly went off the road and traveled by foot through mountains and rough areas. Finally, when they reached their destination safely in the evening, R' Yaakov sang praises of thanks to Hashem for miraculously saving them from danger.

### **Mussar: Honoring Parents**

The obligation to honor your parents is so great the Pasuk compares it to honoring Hashem. As well, disrespecting them is a great sin. Unfortunately, nowadays children, and even adults, are very lax and unjust with this terrible sin, causing their parents unnecessary pain and suffering daily. Hashem will serve them justice one day and they will eat the fruits of their sins in this world, having to deal with children who will disrespect them as well, measure for measure, while the principle punishment for their sins remains intact for the world to come. Yaakov Avinu was away from his parents for twenty-two years, not serving his parents, and was therefore punished that he be separated from Yosef for twenty-two years. There is no escaping justice; everyone is punished according to their level. Yosef's life was shortened because he remained silent when told *Your servant Yaakov*, which was disrespectful to his father. For a parent to forgive a wrong action or disrespectful gesture committed against them is not simple. We must be very careful to always be respectful and honor them as best we can. We mustn't ever stray from their wishes, cause them to yell or scream, anger them, or embarrass them in any way. Each time we fulfill their words, we fulfill a great Mitzvah from the Torah. We can learn a great lesson from the following story: a student was once learning by his Rabbi and went home to eat something while the Rabbi clarified a certain difficulty. When he was done eating, his mother asked him to perform a chore. Not wanting to miss the lesson, he told her that he'd do it later. On the way back to the class, he realized that the purpose of his learning was in order to perform the Mitzvot, and he therefore returned home to help his mother. When he finally arrived back to learn, his Rabbi asked him which great Mitzvah he had performed while he was gone, for the great Sage Abaye had accompanied and escorted him back into the class. Abaye was an orphan and never had the opportunity to honor his parents. He therefore

joined in presence with those who would fulfill the great Mitzvah he was never able to do. May we fulfill this Mitzvah properly, Amen.

### **Story**

As Bella and her daughters approached the Rebbe's carriage, she explained with tears pouring down her cheeks that although her husband Nissan works very hard, he is not successful. They live in poverty with little to eat, but that does not compare to the pain of their daughters not being blessed to get married and build their own family. The Rebbe asked her if she had Rubles in her home, not the copper coins, but the full Rubles. She looked at him in wonder and told him that she had nothing, they were in real poverty, and certainly didn't have any full Rubles! What was the Rebbe asking her? The Rebbe explained that in order to bring forth an abundance of blessings into her daughters' lives, to redeem her family from poverty and misfortune, she had to take the Pushka filled with Tzedaka money from her house and distribute it to charity. Bella then remembered the Pushka that they would often donate money into, and understood that it had been years since they last emptied it and gave it away. She realized that nothing was hidden from the Rebbe.

### **Laws: Pidyon Haben**

- 1** – A firstborn that had a Pidyon performed four weeks and one day after birth, i.e. he was born Shabbat morning 5am, and the Pidyon was performed on Sunday at 6pm, four weeks and 37 hours from birth – the Pidyon must be redone, without reciting a blessing, on the night of the second day, which is the beginning of thirty one days from birth. The Cohen who received the first five coins should return them as a present. However, if it was performed when it was only 5pm on Sunday, which was not yet 4 weeks and 37 hours from birth, then a blessing may be recited when the Pidyon is redone. The father should recite Shehechyanu on a new garment or similar.
- 2** – If the time for Pidyon arrived but the baby was never healthy enough to have a Brit Milah, the Pidyon is nonetheless performed on time, and the Brit Milah will be performed when the baby is healthy enough. The Mitzvah of Pidyon will in fact also help improve the baby's health.
- 3** – If the baby became fit health-wise for Milah at

the same time that the Pidyon can be performed, the Milah takes precedence and is performed first, followed by the Milah.

4 – If one did not yet perform the Pidyon and now it is Erev Shabbat, he should perform the Pidyon right away, as each day there would be an obligation ignored. One should then have just cake on Friday afternoon, not a meal, in order to eat a Seudah for Shabbat properly with an appetite.

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