

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**

*Parashat **Lech Lecha***

11<sup>th</sup> Heshvan 5783

*Maqam Saba*

Issue #1003

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**

*Haftarat **Lama Tomar***

November 5<sup>th</sup> 2022

*Candle Lighting 5:30pm \* Shekiah 5:48pm \* Shir Hashirim 5:20pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 5:10pm \* Shabbat Ends 6:29pm & Rabbenu Tam 6:59pm  
Time for Talit 6:31am \* Seasonal Hour 6:00 \* Alot Hashahar 6:19am \* Netz Hachama 7:31am  
Weekday Minha 4:30pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 5:09pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 6:24pm \* Chatzot 12:39  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 9:19am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 10:19am*

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Without any introductions or information regarding who exactly Avram is or where he came from, our Parasha begins with Hashem commanding him to leave his place of residence, the place where he had resided since birth, and move on to another unknown location. Our Sages teach us that this was one of the ten tests that Hashem gave Avraham. The Midrash tells us: R' Levi says that this was the first of the ten tests, while the last test was the Akeda, and they were similar, as you find Hashem instructing Avraham to pick up and go in both tests. What was the test for him to leave his birthplace and place of residence? Let us first discuss our opening issue. The previous Parasha ended with the birth of Avram and the death of his father Terah. The Midrash teaches us that Terah had complained to Nimrod that his son Avram had destroyed all of his idols, so Nimrod threw Avram into a fiery furnace. Hashem made a miracle and Avram was saved. The place was called 'Or Kasdim' to commemorate this incident and miracle. The Pasuk hints to the miracle by saying "I am Hashem who took you out from Or Kasdim" – it doesn't say *who took you*, rather it says *who took you out*, out of the flames with a miracle, just like "who took you out of Egypt". After that miracle our Parasha begins with a commandment to Avram, his

first test. We may ask: if Avram merited to be saved from a fiery furnace due to his complete devotion to Hashem, by which he succeeded to spread and sanctify the holy name of Hashem through his actions, why was it only written in a hint and not written outright? It was not written straight out because Avram had acted not according to the Halacha. The Rambam explains that the generations before the Torah was given were not commanded to give up their life in order to sanctify Hashem's name. Even though Avram knew the whole Torah and kept it, this Mitzvah was not to be kept, and therefore since this act was performed only because he was strict on himself, the Torah does not write it openly. Let us now answer our other question: What was the test for him to leave his birthplace and place of residence? As well, how is this test compared to the test of the Akeda? Avram traveled far and wide gathering followers to the faith of Hashem and brought them back home with him. He was the leader and teacher of myriads of converts. He was now commanded to leave them behind without giving them any reason, and move on to some unknown location while throwing away all that he had worked so hard for throughout the years. The converts would perhaps as a result decide to change their minds and, without spiritual guidance, they

may forget about Hashem. Still, Avram listened to Hashem and passed the test. The comparison between this and the Akeda is that in both scenarios Avram had to act against his nature and give up what his life seemed to mean and symbolize. Here Avram had to give up all his work and toil he had done to gather converts, and during the Akeda Avram was prepared to kill his son for Hashem, a type of ritual act that is performed for a certain idol, a type of idolatry which he had fought against his whole life, and an act of cruelty to take a life, completely against his nature of kindness. In both tests Avram acted against his nature and nonetheless succeeded. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

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

**1** – The Pasuk states that Avraham believed in Hashem and it was considered *Tzedaka*. Tzedaka here refers to a merit, which Avraham acquired as if he had fulfilled a Mitzvah. For just believing, Avraham benefited. Hashem had spoken directly with Avraham and promised many blessings for him and his children for many generations to come. If Avraham gained merit for believing in that scenario, all the more so do we gain merit for believing in Hashem's words. We who are in exile for thousands of years and do not hear directly from Hashem, if we believe that we will be redeemed once more, even while suffering from our enemies and sicknesses, all the more so will we gain great merit for our trust, faith, and belief in Hashem!

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

*100 years after the Hurban, 170AD.* Rebi Shimon Bar Yohai teaches: when you pray, don't speak the words out of habit, but rather ask Hashem for mercy and forgiveness. Learning Torah is greater than prayer. He would say that had he been by Har Sinai, he would have asked Hashem to give man two mouths, one for Torah and one for prayer, but then he changed his mind, because if man

already has the test and speaks negatively with the one mouth, how much more damage would he do if he speaks negatively with two mouths! Hashem tells man: My Torah is in your hand, and your soul is in My hand. If you guard My Torah, then I will guard your soul. If you forsake it, I will forsake you, heaven forbid. R' Shimon would say, if you see two people together not learning, go and teach them Torah and receive reward, as it says, at a time to act for Hashem, the Torah is put aside. The understanding: when you see Torah being put aside by others, that is the time to act for Hashem, by teaching them Torah, and you will receive great reward as a result. He would also say: if men eat together and do not speak words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten on a table sacrificing for the dead. Also, if you see someone lose his money, it is because he did not give tithes, ten percent of his money to support Torah learning, Shuls, Midrashim, and to help the needy.

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

**1-** Everyone's digestive tract is different and functions differently. **2-** Do not chase after good tasting food which is harmful for you. **3-** Soft foods such as cereals and soups are able to be digested quickly, and their nutrients enter the blood easily. They are then quick to adapt to any part of the body where they can provide quality nourishment. **4-** Cleaner blood generally services the organs on the right side of the body, while the less pure blood services the organs on the left side of the body. **5-** Excessive sweating is a sign of weakness in the body. **6-** Sweat is salty. When one is sick, the sweat becomes more salty, just as the taste of saliva in the mouth changes depending on the sickness. **7-** The persistence of worrying melts the fat in the body and dries the meat. **8-** Enjoying delicacies often decreases the quality of body's blood. **9-** The following activities causes weakness to the body and a plurality of diseases: the pursuit of women - unrestrained avarice – constant demand of power and

authority - being envious of others – one who troubles his mind with thoughts of why others are getting rich why he isn't, why others are happy while he isn't; such thoughts are constantly causing restlessness to the mind, which weakens the body and begins causing a number of diseases.

### ***Gaon Hacham R' Shalom Cohen 1931-2022***

For many years, even from their youth, R' Shalom Cohen learned Torah together with our great Gaon Hacham Ovadia Yossef ztl, and they shared a strong bond through the Torah and Halacha. When he was of marriageable age, he married his Rabbanit a"h, the daughter of R' Mansur Ben Shimon ztl, one of the Rabbanim of Yeshivat Porat Yosef. She passed away in 2017, five years before her husband R' Shalom. After his wife passed away, R' Shalom would stay in the home of his daughter in Ramot, Jerusalem. His lifestyle was clear and simple, modest and purposeful. His home was filled with hundreds of Sefarim that he would spend his time learning. When he wasn't learning Torah at home, he was learning Torah in Yeshivat Porat Yosef, serving as the Rosh Yeshiva. He served as a leader of the Chevre Moetzet Chachme HaTorah, and spent his life in Jerusalem, the same place he started his life of spirituality and holiness.

### ***Mussar: Seclusion with Hashem***

Seclusion is a very important trait that is greater than the rest. Seclusion means to devote and dedicate a special frame of time to privately speak with Hashem and ask from Hashem what you need. Speaking with Hashem should be done privately where nobody sees and one should ask Hashem to help him come closer to Him and serve Him better, in the best and optimum way. This conversation with Hashem could be conducted in any language and should express whatever is in your heart, whether it is regret or repentance for the past, or the intentions to be

closer to Hashem from that point on. Every person should come closer to Hashem using the tools Hashem has given him, each on his own level. The key is consistency – every day one should make an effort to draw closer, as this will also make the day into a happier one. Even if a person can only speak about one thing with Hashem, that is also a great thing. He should be strong and steadfast, and he should try to do this a few times during the day. The added result: you will see success and salvation in your kids. These conversations with Hashem help void evil decrees without even knowing about their possibilities. A person must know: a Jewish man's sword is his prayer, as this is the connection between Hashem and man. If you see a change in your daily life, don't say it's a coincidence; rather be a devout believer that it's all from Hashem. Ask from Hashem that you shouldn't be put to test, that you should not experience disgrace due to the Yetzer Hara's strong and sharp strategies against man. Who can withstand them? Pray to Hashem so that He will help and save you from the Yetzer Hara. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### ***Story***

After the Rebbe blessed Bella and her daughters, he continued on his journey to Shimon the businessman in the next town. When her husband Nissan heard that she had gone to the Rebbe Mordechai for a blessing, he became very angry. He was even more furious when he found out that she had given him the Kuppah of Tzedakah in order to receive the blessing of livelihood. They thought he would surely be happy with the promise of wealth, but instead he ran out of the house to chase the Rebbe's carriage. The skies began to pour heavy rain, large raindrops that began to flood the streets. Nissan stood by the door of his house trying to decide if he should perhaps wait for a bit until the heavy downpour subsided, or perhaps run out and catch up with the Rebbe.

### **Laws: Shabbat**

The Zeman Talit, *Time for Talit*, this week *Lechatechilah* begins one Shaah Zemanit, *Seasonal Hour*, before Netz Hachama, at 6:31am. The Seasonal Hour this Shabbat is currently 60 minutes, and Netz is currently 7:31am, which makes the current Time for Talit 6:31am. Alot Hashahar is one and a fifth seasonal hours before Netz. If Netz is 7:31am, one and a fifth of 60 minutes makes it 72 minutes before Netz, which makes Alot Hashahar 6:19am this Shabbat, according to the Ben Ish Hai and Yilkut Yossef.

**1** – One who desecrates Shabbat intentionally is punishable with stoning. However, there are seven conditions: 1. The sin must be prohibited Biblically, not Rabbinically. 2. The person must know it is a Biblical prohibition. 3. The person must know it is Shabbat. 4. He must be actively warned before desecrating Shabbat that he will be stoned for the sin. 5. He must then answer that he is desecrating Shabbat nonetheless, and then perform the sin immediately. 6. There must be two kosher witnesses who witness everything from beginning to end. 7. The witnesses must then testify in Bet Din. If all conditions are met, then the sinner is punished by Bet Din with stoning.

**2** – If any of the conditions are not fulfilled, then he is punished by heaven and not by Bet Din.

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