

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

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

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**

**Parashat Vayeshev**

26<sup>th</sup> Kislev 5784

**Maqam Siga**

Issue #1052

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**

**Haftarat Roni VeSimhi**

December 9<sup>th</sup> 2023

*Candle Lighting 4:10pm \* Shekiah 4:28pm \* Shir Hashirim 4:05pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 3:55pm \* Shabbat Ends 5:10pm & Rabbenu Tam 5:40pm  
Time for Talit 6:13am \* Seasonal Hour 55 \* Alot Hashahar 6:02am \* Netz Hachama 7:08am  
Weekday Minha 4:10pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 3:56pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 5:05pm \* Chatzot 11:45  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:47am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:42am*

***Wednesday December 13<sup>th</sup> will be Rosh Hodesh Tevet***

*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

The *Pituchei Chotam* asks why the episode of Yehuda and Tamar is written in the Torah adjacent to the episode of Yosef and Potiphar's wife. He explains that they are written next to each other to teach us that just as Tamar's intentions were to act completely for the sake of heaven, as she knew that the king Mashiach would one day come to fruition because of her act, so too were the intentions of Potiphar's wife, as she too knew that there would one day be descendants and offspring from her and Yosef. A question now arises: If they were of the same intentions, why is Tamar's name blessed and why did she merit that the seed of Mashiach should come forth from her descendants, while the wife of Potiphar is considered cursed? The great *sage from Navardik* explains: It is true that these two women were both destined for greatness and would be considered blessed ones in the history of the Jewish nation; however, before anyone is granted such honor and prestige, they are first given a test that grades their level of sensitivity towards other people. This is where the difference between the two women lies. Tamar was ready and willing to give up her life and be burned in a fire, along with the unborn twins inside her womb, in order not to embarrass Yehuda in public. She only gave a hint so that Yehuda would be able to act of his own accord. What's more, she knew that her offspring were destined to be great kings within the Jewish nation, yet she still valued another's feelings and did not embarrass Yehuda. Tamar had

passed the test and therefore deserved the honor and glory in Jewish history. The wife of Potiphar, however, did not pass the test. When Yosef ran out of the house and left her behind, she had a choice and could've passed her test. Instead of preserving Yosef's honor and remaining quiet, believing that heaven had different plans for her and if she were to have descendants from Yosef that it would happen in due course, in whatever way heaven had planned it to transpire – what did the cursed one do? She vilified and slandered his righteous name by claiming that he had planned to force her to perform adultery. With this terrible act, she had proven that she did not deserve the great honor she could have been destined for, and she became cursed. This is why the two episodes are next to each other. After these episodes came the episode of the dreams of the Royal Cupbearer and the Royal Baker. Why did Yosef interpret the dream of the Cupbearer favorably but interpreted the dream of the Baker pessimistically? While in jail, Yosef had explained to the two men why he had been imprisoned, told them that he was innocent, and explained with modesty that it was not his own merits that had saved him from sin, but the merits of his righteous fathers. The Cupbearer believed him, but the Baker did not. Their beliefs were evident in their dreams, and had actually caused their dreams. The Cupbearer dreamed of a grapevine, symbolizing Yosef, for just as the grapevine does not mix, so too had Yosef been

careful not to mix. He dreamed of three tendrils on the vine, symbolizing the fact that Yosef was saved in the merit of his three fathers. “*And it was as though it budded*” – it seemed as if the vine had budded in its own right, just as Yosef seemed to be righteous and merited to be saved in his own right; however, he had in fact been saved in the merit of his predecessors. Therefore, Yosef interpreted this dream favorably. The Baker, however, who did not believe Yosef, dreamt of three wicker baskets upon his head, symbolic of the three fathers. He believed that Yosef had in fact sinned and disgraced the name of his three fathers and deserved to be in jail, so his dream therefore then included birds that were eating from the three royal baskets, desecrating them, just as he believed Yosef had desecrated his fathers’ memories. The Hebrew word for bird has the same numerical value as the name Yosef; 156. Therefore, Yosef interpreted his dream pessimistically, as he had accused a righteous person. One who accuses the innocent falsely pays dearly for his wrongful actions. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

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

The Pasuk mentions that when Tamar gave birth and called her third son Shella, Yehuda was in a place called Keziv. The Maharam explains why the Pasuk included this information: the custom was that the first son’s name was given by the father, the second son’s name was given by the mother, the third son’s name was given by the father, and so on. Really it was Yehuda’s turn to name the son, but since he was in Keziv, as the Pasuk mentions, therefore the mother Tamar was the one who named the third son Shella.

### ***Chanukah!***

The Greeks that governed Israel did not wish to absolutely control the lives of the Jewish people. All they wanted was for the Jewish people to completely disregard the Torah and join the Greek faith, specifically regarding whatever obligations the Greeks had decided were important to observe as law at that point in history. Matityahu and his family, the Hasmoneans, understood that this was actually a wicked plot devised by the Greek king Antiochus to destroy the Jewish nation without having to shoot even one arrow. The Greek War against the Hasmoneans was not aimed at the

physical existence of the Jewish people; on the contrary, they were prepared to grant the Jews far-reaching rights, and to allow them to enjoy all the achievements of Greek culture and science. The struggle was against the Jewish soul: the Greeks sought to separate the Jewish people from its holiness, and to turn it into a nation like all other nations. When they conquered the Jews and were able to destroy the Bet Hamikdash, as other rulers had done, they in fact did not care to destroy it. They did not mind the existence of a spiritual and cultural center where people could express their feelings and beliefs. They also did not pour out the oil that was used to light the Menorah. They did not care if the Jews used the oil to light the Menorah, as if saying, “You can continue working and performing the services in the Temple, along with the lighting of the Menorah, for all other nations also offer sacrifices and light candles, as much as anyone else, to whom they love and believe in. You, too, may continue to fulfill the customs of your forefathers, but with one catch: you must continue the services without the *purity* of the oil.” Oil naturally does not mix in with water but instead floats up, thus the purity of the oil symbolizes the super-rationality between spiritual and physical, as is the essence of the Jewish people using non-intellectual things. In fact, it is impossible to distinguish between unclean oil and pure oil, by use of neither taste nor smell, as they contain no substantial differences. The Greeks would ask: “Do you want to remain Jews? Do you want to continue studying your Torah? We have no objection! Do you want to observe Mitzvot? Why not! However, we strongly oppose the non-intellectual values that you attribute to Torah and Mitzvot, regarding the holiness you give them. For example: If a holy scroll falls on the floor, you go crazy and fast as a result of what happened, while for all the books in the world you would surely not fast, and do not regret if a person would be the one to fall! why don’t the books grieve over the fall of a person?” The Greeks, in fact, were very supportive of commandments that have reason and logic, such as honoring parents, holidays based on historical miracles, while wondering what could possibly be the problem with wearing Shatnez? Why not work on Shabbat? Why do you not eat meat with milk and the like? Although the Greeks managed to defile all the oils, only one small jug

of oil remained sealed, with the seal of the high priest. They simply could not defile that one. This little jug of oil symbolizes the inner-most points of the Jew. There is an evil inclination that asks us the same type of questions that were asked by the Greeks, as the Greeks seek to separate the Jews from the sanctity of the Torah and absolute adherence to Hashem. This is all in fact very difficult to overcome. Thus, one can and must always then awaken the small jug that remains pure within us, the innermost essence of a Jewish soul, which one can utilize in order to overcome any and all spiritual difficulties.

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

The foot of a diabetic is a dangerous area of the body from which trouble begins. A diabetic must guard his feet most, because the nerves that communicate sensations to the brain are impaired, so they no longer feel pain or impact like a healthy person. As a result, if they experience sores or cuts on their feet or legs, by the time they realize the damage and potential harm the situation will have already deteriorated to a point that is very difficult. That is why it is important to examine each foot daily. Pay attention to any soreness, redness, or abnormalities, and not walk around barefoot. Maintain good hygiene and cleanliness of your feet and wipe them well after washing. It is advisable to wear cotton socks, as well as wearing properly fitted shoes that will not cause pressure or scraping to the feet. It is important to trim your toenails carefully. Sometimes, neglect can be the difference between healing and amputation. It is imperative for patients with diabetes to be cautious of everything that we have discussed. As well, much care is required to maintain proper gum health, as neglect in gum treatment can result in the development of heart disease, kidney failure, stroke, and osteoporosis. This is because the gums are saturated with blood vessels, so when there is inflammation, the problem comes into direct contact with the blood.

### ***Mussar: Return to Hashem***

When a person sins, he is distancing himself further from the true and just path. He sits in darkness and loses touch with Hashem. If he continues to sin, he will soon find himself in total darkness, completely closed off from Hashem's

light. This results in a broken person who cannot realize goodness in his life. Everything seems bitter and he is in doubt whether Hashem exists or not. This shell of depression and hopelessness he has entrapped himself in only gets stronger and thicker the more he transgresses and he soon loses all focus and touch of purpose and meaning in life. He has nothing to hold on to and he is falling quickly down a dark and endless hole. He curses himself and others and complains about everything. He soon thinks death is an escape route and an opportunity to be free. Even if he hears awaking words, he does not know how to apply it. There is but one resolution to his problem: The person must break through the depression, laziness, and unwillingness to continue and begin to fight by thinking about the goodness Hashem has given him and be happy and joyous. Only with joy can one begin to heal himself and open the gates to his future. Talk, pray, and pour out your heart and soul to Hashem to guide you, for He hears all. *"Hashem is close to those who call out to Him"* – when? – *"When they call out to Him with truth"*. Fortunate are those that give others happiness and reasons to rejoice, for they are healing souls and giving hope. With this one can remove their shells of darkness that block out Hashem's holy light, Amen.

### ***Rishon LeSion: The Humble Gaon Hacham Yaakov Attieh 1922-2016***

In 1950, he started his family with the daughter of his revered Rebbe, Hacham Shelomo Zaafrani zt"l. She stood at his side as his right hand throughout their life together, with all the hardships they shared, moving to Israel, establishing Yeshiva and taking care of Talmidim in the city Bat Yam. After they married, they spent some time in Lebanon, in Beirut, and after a month they wanted to return to Halab, but the Jews in Beirut didn't want him to leave them, they asked him to stay and guide them in Torah and Mitzvot. The Arabs in Syria were not good, they burned down Shuls and Jewish homes in Halab, so he remained for the time being in Beirut, leading the Jews of that congregation. Within a year, a Talmud Torah was established, teaching the children to grow properly. He was the primary rabbinical authority, and he called the new school Otzar HaTorah. With great wisdom and understanding,

he taught the young students Torah, and the older students he taught the laws and practice of Shechitah slaughtering, as well as Brit Milah, as he was an expert in both areas.

### **Story**

Zusha was a Jewish clothing merchant and expert tailor. All the more prestigious and prominent of society, especially the monarchy, would come to him for services whenever in need of a new wardrobe. Every Chanukah and Shavuot, he would close up shop and travel to a nearby city to visit his Rebbe. He would pay people to stand guard at the entrance, to watch out for thieves, and to inform those who came that the owner went away for a few days and would be back soon afterwards to return to business. Zusha was always very careful to abide by the laws of the land, and he honestly paid all taxes in full. He would not do business with other areas that the government had not allowed. When he was audited, they were pleased that his books were clean and in proper order. There was one book that he did not share with auditors, because it didn't concern them. This was the book in which he wrote how much each person owed him in borrowed credit. Not everyone could afford his services, and so he allowed them to enjoy his products on credit, promising that they would pay him in full one day when they were able.

### **Laws: Birkat Hamazon**

**1** – One should sit while reciting Birkat Hamazon, in order to properly concentrate on the recitation. He should not lean, which would be haughty, but should sit straight and respectful. If he was traveling and ate while traveling, he can then recite Birkat Hamazon while traveling, so as not to delay his travels.

**2** – Leave the bread on the table while reciting Birkat Hamazon, one who doesn't will not see blessing, but do not place a full loaf on the table because that would appear like idolatry.

**3** – Do not leave empty or dirty dishes on the table while reciting Birkat Hamazon, or leftover bad food remnants to be thrown away, because we say *this is the table that is before Hashem*.

**4** – One shouldn't remove the meat/chicken bones from the table, or the shells/skins, before Birkat Hamazon, because the sparks of holiness in these pieces are released during Birkat Hamazon. But this is specifically regarding bones/skins/shells, otherwise the table should be cleaned and cleared.

**5** – We cover a knife on the table during the week when reciting Birkat Hamazon, and according to

Kabbalah we remove it or cover it also on Shabbat and Yom Tov.

### **Sponsors**

\*\*\* **Rabbi Isaac Yedid, his wife Frieda, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. \*\*\* **R' Harry Leebir, his wife Pessy, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, and blessings and success for **Rabbi Aharon Farhi and his sons David, Leon, Alber, and Jack,** Amen. \*\*\* **Mr. Joey Ronnie Tawil, his wife Laura, their parents, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. \*\*\* **Mr. Abdo Shakalo, his wife Reem, their parents, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. \*\*\* **Mrs. Eva Farhi Guindi, her husband Leon, their parents, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her father **Yosef Ben Bahie a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Mrs. Bella Daye and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. \*\*\* **Mrs. Suzi Farhi, her husband David, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her brother **Avraham Ben Linda a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Mrs. Tania Antabi and her son Soly Shaalo, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her mother **Linda Bat Tera Esther a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Blessed siblings: Azar, David, Charlie, Estella, and Arlit of the Halabi Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their sister **Sonia Bat Rachel a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Blessed siblings: Sammy, Seymour, and Renee of the Esses Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Ovadia Ben Rina a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Mr. Nissim Kassab HaCohen, his wife Maggie, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his mother **Odette Bat Sofia a"h,** Amen. \*\*\* **Mrs. Leah Bareket and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her husband **Yehuda Ben Rima a"h,** Amen.

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