

Congregation

"Beth Yosef"

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat Vayhi

14th Tevet 5786

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Maqam Hijaz

Issue #1144

Haftarat Vayikrevu Yeme

January 3rd 2026

Candle Lighting 4:22pm * Shekiah 4:40pm * Shir Hashirim 4:10pm followed by **Minha Friday Night Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 4:05pm * Shabbat Ends 5:23pm & Rabbenu Tam 5:53pm Time for Talit 6:24am * Seasonal Hour 56 * Alot Hashahar 6:13am * Netz Hachama 7:20am Weekday Minha 4:25pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 4:05pm * Tzet Hacochavim 5:18pm * Chatzot 12:00 Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 9:01am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:57am**

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As Yaakov Avinu blesses his children in turn before passing away, he begins with his first four oldest children, Reuven, Shimon, Levi, and Yehuda, who were all directly involved in the sale of Yosef to Egypt. Reuven had been the one to suggest that they throw him into the pit, intending to rescue him later on. Shimon and Levi suggested that they kill him outright. Yehuda was the one who suggested that they sell him to the Arabs. Yaakov now is blessing them according to their actions. Reuven had been quick to unjustifiably, and brazenly, switch Yaakov's bed, the place where the Shechinah rested, and therefore lost his double portion as the Bechor: the Kehunah and the Malchut. While he was quick in this regard, on the contrary he was slow to save Yosef. True, he wanted to stall, have Yosef thrown into the pit now, and later return to save him and bring him back to their father, but he did not act quick enough. Instead of saving Yosef, he had gone to do Teshuvah for the incident with his father's bed, which was neither the time nor the place to do so. Yosef was currently in a life-threatening situation, and Reuven now was not quick to act, as he had been quick in other circumstances. If someone is in danger of his life during

Shabbat, you cannot say that it is Shabbat and therefore you cannot save him. The time to act is now. This is why Reuven lost his Bechor rights to Kehunah and Malchut. Shimon and Levi had murder on their minds, and were categorized as such by Yaakov, as they had killed out Shechem unjustifiably, and then had intended to have Yosef killed as well. Yehuda, however, saved Yosef from death, and said that their hands should remain clean. He suggested having Yosef sold, removing him from any danger right away, and leaving the outcome up to Hashem. Yehuda therefore merited the Malchut. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

Why did Yaakov say that Bnei Yisrael will bless their children to be like Ephraim and Menashe – were they greater than all the Avot and the Shevatim? Yaakov had mentioned that Ephraim and Menashe were born in Egypt, and were to him like Reuven and Shimon. Yaakov was testifying that even though they were born in exile amongst the Goyim, nonetheless they remained pure and righteous as his own sons Reuven and Shimon, who had been more sheltered. This

quality, to remain separate from the Goyim during exile, is what we need to be blessed with in order to survive. Even though we get weaker through every generation, nonetheless, just as Ephraim and Menashe were as great and as holy as the previous generation of Reuven and Shimon, so too we should remain as great and as holy throughout the generations as the previous generations. Also, just as Ephraim and Menashe were raised in the palace of the Pharaoh, in the lap of luxury, amongst the honored and esteemed, so too we should be blessed with honor, wealth, as well as the same high level of Yirat Shamayim, as Ephraim and Menashe, Amen.

History in Brief

200 years after the Hurban, calendar year 270. During the days of Rebbe, the six Sedarim of Mishnah were recorded for the first time, consisting of Torah Baal Peh, which Hashem had taught Moshe on Har Sinai. David Hamelech hinted to six Sedarim of Mishnah using six Pesukim of Tehillim, the first Pasuk: *Torat Hashem Temima Meshivat Nafesh* – is a reference to Seder Nashim, warning to distance from sin and be safe from death. *Edut Hashem Neemanah Machkimat Peti* – is a reference to Seder Zeraim, teaching man to trust in Hashem as he plants seeds so that Hashem sends forth rain and allows it to sprout. *Pekudei Hashem Yesharim Mesamehei Lev* – is a reference to Seder Moed, which includes all the holidays, as it says *Vesamachta Bechagecha*. The fourth Pasuk: *Mitzvat Hashem Barah Meirat Enayim* – is a reference to Seder Kadashim, to illuminate the eyes to recognize the difference between the holy and the mundane. *Yirat Hashem Tehora Omedet Laad* – is a reference to Seder Taharot, which differentiates between the impurity and purity. The sixth and final Pasuk: *Mishpetei*

Hashem Emet Tzadeku Yachdav – is a reference to Seder Nezikin, which includes a majority of the laws and judgments of the Torah. Rebi broke down each Seder into a number of portions which he called Masechet or Masechta, from the Pasuk *Hasket Ushma Yisrael*.

Health and Recovery

Folic acid is important for building up our body. It is essential for the metabolism and for preventing blood vessel diseases. It is found in green leaves such as lettuce and the like. It is important and recommended to periodically monitor folic acid levels in the body while conducting a general blood test, especially in adults today. The worldwide medical recommendation is that women aged 20-40 should intake about 400mg/day of folic acid and monitor the amounts in the blood. One of the side effects is constipation. Another important level one must monitor is Vitamin B12, which is found in animal-derived foods, especially in all types of beef, because beef has 10 times the amount of B12 than chicken. Studies in Israel indicate a high deficiency of vitamin B12 in adults, especially those who do not eat meat. This deficiency causes anemia, weakness, fatigue, and neurological dysfunction, and can also be a cause of difficulties in regular movements. These levels can be checked with a simple blood test. Vegetarians need to constantly monitor their levels of protein and vitamin B12 in the blood. If indeed a deficiency is found, first add non-fat meat to the diet and menu, two or three times per week at least. There are tablets that dissolve under the tongue to be taken once a day for adults, but they can cause digestion issues, so such tablets may not always be the best solution to increase levels. It is recommended that you occasionally receive vitamin B12 injections as directed by your

family physician based on your blood levels. Also, ask your doctor whether to take B12 alone, or to take a B12 and folic acid combination tablet.

Mussar: The Power of Evil

Our Sages teach us: When Hashem initially created the world, He made it never ending. For reasons discussed in the Gemara, He then limited parts of the world. We can learn from this Gemara that the creation of evil was also created without borders and never ending. However, evil was not changed and is still borderless. A person cannot grasp this concept and is unable to fathom the idea that evil is never ending. The Gemara teaches us concerning how many steps are necessary to complete tasks: Michael (angel) completes his tasks in one step, Gavriel (angel) in two, Eliyahu Hanavi in four, and the Angel of Death in eight. However, in times of plagues and epidemics, or other such times of calamities and misfortunes, the Angel of Death can fulfill his tasks in only one step. There are times when there is so much influence of evil and impurity that destruction can occur much quicker and easier. For example: Hitler Harasha and the Nazis, may their memory be blotted out. The power and control he had over millions and millions of people was not due to any outstanding leadership or ruler qualities that he may have developed. On the contrary, he was not healthy and nonetheless he controlled many. How did he do it? Evil and terrible powers of impurity, such unseen before in history, dwelled within him and gave him control and power, not his own abilities or qualities. Hashem allowed these forces of evil to take over, and the Holocaust took place. There was a purpose for it all, and the entire historic chapter was cause and effect of our nation's behavior and actions. During those years, the Mekubalim in Yerushalayim went to the Kotel and tried to diminish the evil power of that wicked man. However, when they tried, they realized that an overwhelming power of impurity was in effect and they didn't have the power to eradicate it or even measure it. They were forced to surrender to the situation. Nowadays, even amongst the

most religious of neighborhoods, a clear and vivid change has taken place. A decent man from 150 years ago would be shocked and appalled at the sight of situations today. Spirituality and purity have bent low to allow impurity and evil to dwell. We must realize the dangers we are facing and fight against them with all of our might. We simply cannot give up and allow impurity to be acknowledged and accepted as a part of life. If we allow a little room, it will extend without boundaries, as it itself is without bounds. A simple and practical example is the television and media. Although useful, it can be very destructive and is a terrible threat that one cannot and mustn't compromise with. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Rishon LeSion:

Maran Hacham Ovadia Yossef 1921-2013

Generally speaking, the Jewish people had a respectful relationship with the ruler of Egypt, who would come to the main Shul on the night of Yom Kippur to receive a special blessing from the Chief Rabbi of Egypt, and who would be visited as well on his birthday in the palace to receive the special blessing, *Hanoten Teshua LaMelachim*. The translator would explain the blessing in Arabic. One year, on his birthday, the Chief Rabbi was sick and asked his assistant Rabbi, *Hacham Ovadia*, to go to the palace in his place to bless the ruler. Maran wore the special robes and garbs of the Chief Rabbi and went before the ruler. He was received with great honor, with ministers, officers, and soldiers standing at attention, accompanying him to the ruler. As he sat with the ruler, he was asked where specific Pesukim were written, what they meant, and what lesson can be learnt. Maran provided in-depth answers and explanations to the delight of the ruler, and the closest advisers were very jealous of the charm and favor that the young Rabbi was having on their Egyptian ruler.

Story

R' Avraham Hillel from Baghdad 1830-1930

R' Ovadia Somekh was Rav Harashi in Baghdad of Yeshivat Midrash Bet Zilkha. Many students

passed through the doors of the Yeshiva over the years, including the famous Ben Ish Hai, Harav Shimon Agasi, and R' Avraham Hillel who we are now speaking about. Immediately upon arrival R' Ovadia Somekh recognized the great potential of the young student, his fear of heaven, and his pure soul, so he made him his own personal student. As the Yeshiva grew in size exponentially over the years, R' Ovadia appointed R' Avraham as the Rosh Yeshiva. He would teach the students a Shiur in Gemara and Poskim every day. R' Avraham's greatness in Torah, his refined Middot, his holiness, and his warmth connected him to the hearts of his young students who learned from him with great thirst, like a strong magnet, guiding them to greatness.

Laws

1 – On each string of Tzitzit, there are seven ties in the first set closest to the garment, followed by eight ties, then eleven, and then thirteen, with a total of five knots, for a total of 39 ties on each Tzitzit, the numerical value of *Tal*, as it says *Ki Tal Orot Talecha*.

2 – Some tie it a little differently, instead of 7-8-11-13, they tie it 10-5-6-5 for a total of twenty-six, corresponding to the name of Hashem. We generally follow the custom that we mentioned first.

3 – If your Tzitzit strings are tied as 26 ties instead of 39 ties, and you want to untie them to tie them as 39, you do not need to worry about undoing 26 which is for the name of Hashem.

4 – On a cake of only nuts like almonds or walnuts, you recite Ha'etz and Nefashot. However, if flour was added for flavor, or to make it more filling, then the flour becomes primary and you recite Mezonot but afterwards only recite Al Hamichya if you have eaten a Kezayit of the flour within seven minutes, because if not then you recite Nefashot afterwards.

Sponsors

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their children. Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. ***** Mr. Emil Kameo, his wife Paula, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his father *Chaim Ben Sarah a"h*, and Leilui Nishmat *Nouri Ben Rosa a"h*, Amen. ***** Mr. Shelomo Kastica and his children: Leah, Berta, Rebecca, Farha, Paula, Nouri, and Klodi.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his wife and their mother *Shafiah Bat Badiyah a"h*, Amen. ***** Mr. Albert Shaya, his wife Shoshana, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his father *Moshe Ben Miriam a"h*, Amen. ***** Mrs. Nina Saade and her blessed children: Yosef, Jack, Ziko, Sofia, Dolly, and Karen.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father *Avraham Saade Ben Shafiah a"h*, Amen. ***** Mr. Nissim Alkada, his wife Rima, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her father *Yehuda Ben Rima a"h*, and Leilui Nishmat his mother *Rachel Bat Latifah a"h*, Amen. ***** Mrs. Brenda Heffez and her blessed children: Larry, Gabriel, and Jack.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father *Avraham Ben Dora a"h*, Amen. ***** Mrs. Norma Assa and her children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her husband and their father the Shochet Hacham *Yosef Ben Najla a"h*, Amen. ***** Mr. Nissim Alkada, his wife Rima, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his father *Nouri Ben Roza a"h*, Amen.

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