

Congregation



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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat ***Vaetchanan***

11th Ab 5786

Maqam Hussein

Issue #1169

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, *President*

Haftarat ***Nahamu Nahamu***

July 25th 2026

*Candle Lighting 8:00pm * Shekiah 8:18pm * Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 7:40pm * Shabbat Ends 9:00pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:30pm
Time for Talit 4:23am * Seasonal Hour 84 * Alot Hashahar 4:06am * Netz Hachama 5:47am
Weekday Minha 7:00pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 7:10pm * Tzet Hachochabim 8:55pm * Chatzot 1:02
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:18am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:42am*

***Hatarat Elul will be Mosae Shabbat of Parashat Vaetchanan. This is the true time,
and there is no other time for this Hatara.***

Those who wish to contact Rabbi Aharon Farhi can call (646) 552-3412

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2415 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11235

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In this *Parasha*, Moshe Rabbenu repeats the *Aseret HaDibrot* (the Ten Commandments) that were first mentioned in Parashat *Yitro*. If we look at the fourth commandment, which is *Shabbat*, there are several differences between the first *Dibrot* and the second *Dibrot*. In the first, it says: "*Zachor et yom haShabbat*" (Remember the day of Shabbat), while in the second it says: "*Shamor et yom haShabbat*" (Guard the day of Shabbat). In the first, the reason given is: "For in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth," while in the second, the reason given is: "For you were a slave in the land of Egypt." In the first it says: "You shall not do any *melacha*," and in the second it says: "All your *melacha* shall be done before Shabbat."

The reason for this difference is that the first *Dibrot* were given before the *Het HaEgel* (the sin of the Golden Calf), and the second were given after it. Before the *Egel*, the work of Bnei Yisrael was done by others, and so throughout the whole week they fulfilled "You shall not do any *melacha*". It comes out that all the days of the week you

do not work, but you must make Shabbat into a remembrance, in the sense of "*Zachor et yom haShabbat*," by believing that Hashem created the heavens and the earth. And that alone is enough for you. But after the *Egel*, you descended from your level, and now you must work all the days of the week. You do all your *melacha* with your own hands and not through others, just as when you were a slave in the land of Egypt — and therefore you must guard (*Shamor*) the Shabbat. This is why elsewhere the Torah sometimes says "*Shabbat*" alone, and sometimes "*Shabbat Shabbaton*." The difference is this: "*Shabbat*" alone refers to after the *Egel* — you have only Shabbat by itself, because all week long you work. But "*Shabbat Shabbaton*" refers to before the *Egel* — others would work for you, and so you had two Shabbatot. The first: all the days of the week you do not work, because others do the work for you and the second: the Shabbat itself. It comes out that you have two Shabbatot in hand — a physical Shabbat during the days of the week, and a spiritual Shabbat on Shabbat itself.

Therefore it says "*Shabbat Shabbaton*." May Hashem protect us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

"And Hashem said: *Rab lach*, do not continue to speak to Me any more about this matter." Moshe said before Hashem: *Ribbono Shel Olam*, You called me "Moshe My servant," and it is written in the Torah: "And if the servant shall surely say, I love my master... I will not go out free." And I love You — I will not go out free; I am not asking to die. The Torah continues: "His master shall bring him..." "and he shall serve him forever." Yet You did not fulfill this with me? So now, I beg of You — I wish to enter Eretz Yisrael. Hashem said to him: "Do not continue to speak to Me about this matter." The law of a servant is that he must say this declaration twice, as it says: "And if the servant shall *surely say*" (*im amor yomar* — a doubled expression). You said it once; do not say it a second time, in order that I will not be obligated to fulfill your request.

History in Brief

220 years after the destruction of the Temple, calendar year 270

Ribbi Hanina bar Hama the Kohen and *Ribbi Yehoshua ben Levi* decreed a fast so that rain would fall in the city of *Sippori*, but no rain fell. They then went and decreed a fast in the south of Eretz Yisrael, and rain fell. People asked them: Why did no rain fall in *Sippori*, while in the south rain did fall? They answered: Because the people of the south listen to words of Torah and humble themselves before Hashem — therefore rain fell for them. But the people of *Sippori* have a stubborn heart; they do not listen to words of Torah and do not humble themselves.

Ribbi Hanina bar Hama, who was a Kohen, would take the five *sela'im* (coins) given for *Pidyon HaBen* and return them to the father of the child as a gift, because times were financially difficult for Israel. Once, he performed a *Pidyon* for a certain father, and

after the *Pidyon* he saw the father pacing back and forth before the Rabbi, waiting for him to return the redemption money. *Ribbi Hanina* said to him: You never fully resolved in your heart to give the money for the *Pidyon*? You have done a bad thing, and your son is not redeemed. There is another story of *Ribbi Hanina* and *Ribbi Yehoshua* who went up and entered the palace of a Roman duke. When the duke saw them, he rose before them. His people said to him: Why do you stand up for these Jews? He said to them: They have the faces of angels — therefore I rose before them.

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 saltier, 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 the 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.

Mussar: Seclusion with Hashem

Seclusion with Hashem is a very important trait that is greater than the rest. Seclusion means to devote and dedicate a special 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 most optimal 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 if possible, he should try to do this a few times during each 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 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.

Rishon LeTzion -Maran Chacham Ovadia Yosef (1921–2013)

Besides Maran's works on matters of halacha, he also authored the sefer *Meor Yisrael* (two volumes) — novel insights on

Masechtot of the *Gemara* — as well as the sefer *Taba'at HaMelech* (The Ring of the King), which contains insights on the Rambam. He also authored the sefer *Halichot Olam* in eight volumes, containing insights and notes on the sefer *Ben Ish Hai*. And so wrote Maran in his introduction to *Halichot Olam*: "When I began to deliver a shiur in halacha following the sefer of the *Ben Ish Hai*, I saw clearly in the sefer *Ben Ish Hai* many halachot that go against the opinion of Maran the *Shulhan Aruch* — both because the *Ben Ish Hai* was a *mekubal* and a *hasid* who followed those paths, and because he also added rulings from his own broad knowledge. However, in our view, the words of Maran the *Shulhan Aruch* are more correct and true — especially since we have accepted upon ourselves the rulings of Maran the *Shulhan Aruch*, whether to be lenient or to be strict, because he is the *Mara DeAtra* (the halachic authority of our place)." These sefarim were published from 1998 through 2002. He also authored the sefer *Anaf Etz Abot* on *Masechet Abot* (Pirkei Abot) for the merit of the public, which was published in 2001.

Halab (Aleppo) - Syria

Halab was a "mother city" for the Jewish nation. The Jews of Halab carry with them a deep ancient tradition, and the proof of this is the building of the Great Synagogue of Halab, which was founded in the days of King David, by his army general *Yoab ben Seruya*. The word "*Suria*" (Syria) is in fact taken from the name of Yoab ben Seruya. This was about 3,000 years ago. This spiritual building gave Halab a special status and an extra measure of holiness above all the other synagogues in the world. And because of Halab's closeness to Eretz Yisrael, some of the *Mitzvot* that are dependent on the Land of Israel applied to it as well. Jews lived in Halab without interruption, and they lived there for about 500 years before the destruction of the First Bet HaMikdash. During the period of Greek rule, the Jews of Halab were persecuted by

the decrees of the Greek kings Antiochus Epiphanes. Eighty kilometers north of Halab lies the Turkish city of Antioch, and from there the Christian religion spread and took root in the city of Halab. Additionally, there was an ancient and early Jewish synagogue in Halab where Torah was studied in the year 600 CE. When the Muslims came to Halab, they took over that synagogue and turned it into a mosque, calling it "*Jami al-Hayya*" — a name it carries to this day. There is Hebrew writing at the entrance to this place that testifies that this site belongs to the Jews of Halab.

Laws

- 1- One who drinks water because he is thirsty recites the beracha of *Shehakol*. If he drank a *rebi'it* (a halachic measure of liquid) or more in one shot, he recites *Boreh Nefashot* after drinking.
- 2- However, if he has no thirst at all and derives no enjoyment from the water, he does not recite any beracha — neither before nor after.
- 3- One who drinks water on a very hot day when he is not thirsty at all, but drinks only so that he will not become thirsty and will not lose fluids while walking on the road in the heat of the day, does not recite *Shehakol* nor *Boreh Nefashot*.
- 4- Likewise, one who drinks water on the eve of a fast before sunset, so that he will not become thirsty during the fast, does not recite any beracha at all.
- 5- One who drinks water in the morning for health purposes when he is not thirsty does not recite a beracha. Likewise, one who drinks water in order to swallow a pill does not recite a beracha.

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