

Congregation

★ ★ ★ "Beth Yosef" ★ ★ ★

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi
Parashat *Lech Lecha*
13th Heshvan 5787

Maqam Saba
Issue #1177

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, *President*
Haftarat *Lama Tomar*
October 24th 2026

*Candle Lighting 5:45pm * Shekiah 6:03pm * Shir Hashirim 5:35pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 5:25pm * Shabbat Ends 6:44pm & Rabbenu Tam 7:14pm
Time for Talit 6:14am * Seasonal Hour 63 * Alot Hashahar 6:01am * Netz Hachama 7:17am
Weekday Minha 5:40pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 5:20pm * Tzet Hacocharim 6:39pm * Chatzot 12:40
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 9:10am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 10:13am*

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Hashem said to *Abraham*, "Go forth from your land and from your father's house." With this, Hashem wanted *Abraham* to cut himself off completely, both physically and spiritually, from his past and from his family. Yet *Abraham* took his nephew *Lot* with him. One must ask why *Abraham* took his nephew *Lot*. *Lot* was not a great *tzaddik*, especially once he separated from *Abraham* and moved to *Sedom*, a place of wickedness. We also see how *Abraham* risked his life to go to war against four powerful kings in order to rescue his nephew *Lot*, who had been taken captive by them from *Sedom*, and Heaven helped *Abraham* with miracles. The answer is that *Abraham* foresaw through *Ruach HaKodesh* that *David HaMelech* would one day descend from *Lot* through *Rut HaMoabiya*. There is a hint to this in the *pasuk*, "And *Lot*, who went with *Abram*, also had sheep, cattle and tents." What is meant by "tents"? It means two tents, which are *Rut HaMoabiya* and *Naama HaAmonit*, the wife of *Shelomo HaMelech* and the mother of *Rechabam HaMelech*, the son of *Shelomo HaMelech*. This is why the verse says, "I have found *David* My servant." Where did I find him? In *Sedom*. So the sparks of holiness of the kingship of *David*, which were imprisoned in the *kelipot* (forces of impurity), would pass into holiness

through *Abraham Abinu*. And why is it called *Sedom*? Its letters stand for *Sod David Malka* (the secret of *David* the King). Wherever the spirit of the *kelipa* and impurity grows strong, it is a sign that a spark of holiness is hidden there. This is why we saw that *Achaz HaMelech*, who ruled over the kingdom of *Yehuda*, closed all the synagogues and *Batei Midrash* to keep Torah away from Israel, and then his son *Chizkiyahu HaMelech* came and spread Torah throughout Israel in great measure. So wherever the *kelipa* grows strong, it is because it holds a spark of holiness. May Hashem protect us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

"And Hashem afflicted *Pharoh* with great plagues... because of *Sarai*, the wife of *Abram*." One must ask, did we not already know that *Sara* was the wife of *Abram*? One must also ask, what was *Pharoh's* sin in taking *Sara*? He thought she was *Abraham's* sister. The explanation is that when *Pharoh* wanted to touch her, *Sara* told him that she was a married woman, the wife of *Abraham*, and even still *Pharoh* paid no attention to her. That is why Hashem brought great plagues upon *Pharoh*, and the *pasuk* gives the reason with the words *al debar Sarai* (because of the word of *Sarai*), meaning

because she had told him that she was the wife of *Abram*.

History in Brief

230 years after the destruction of the Temple, calendar year 300

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, who is called simply *Resh Lakish* in the *Gemara*, was the study partner of *Rabbi Yochanan* and his brother-in-law, having married his sister. He came from a family of Torah, for he once said, "This is the tradition I received from my fathers, that any city without *tinokot shel bet rabban* (young children learning Torah) will be destroyed in the end." From the start he knew a great deal of Torah, but the hardships of the time led him to leave the proper path, and he became the head of a gang of bandits, and they were man-eaters. With his cleverness and tremendous strength he outwitted those who came to kill him, and he would sit, eat and drink with the money he collected from them. Afterward he did *teshuba* with fasting and prayer. He would rise early and stay late before Hashem, and he occupied himself with Torah all his days. His *teshuba* was accepted, and he went and learned under *Rabbenu HaKadosh*. He would say over, "Words of Torah endure only in one who gives up his life for them." He would review his learning 40 times, corresponding to the 40 days in which the Torah was given, and only then would he go in before *Rabbi Yochanan*, with his learning clear and straight. When he was deeply absorbed in words of Torah on Shabbat while walking, he would go past the *techum* (Shabbat boundary) without noticing, fulfilling the verse, "In her love you will always be absorbed." He rose so high in Torah that he became a *talmid chaber* (student and colleague) of *Rabbi Yochanan*. *Ulla* said, "Whoever saw *Resh Lakish* in the *Bet Midrash* felt as if he was uprooting mountains and grinding them against each other with the sharpness of his questions."

Health and Recovery

Sugar is stored in the liver in the form of fat. The liver can store only a small amount in order to be available while the rest of the excess fat causes heaviness and difficulty walking and moving around, as well as other complications. These fat deposits weigh heavily on the heart and can cause various illnesses. Sugar also causes other problems such as dental cavities, vascular, glands, and digestive problems. Worms can be formed as a result. Recently, more and more doctors have been reprimanding, "It's time to monitor the intake of sugar for children, just as one would supervise them from cigarettes and alcohol". While naturally dried fruits do not add sugar in the process of drying, nonetheless their natural sugar becomes more concentrated as a result of the drying, so doctors recommend to soak them in water to return them to their natural size, and not overconsume them. Dried fruits with sugar added should definitely be avoided. It is recommended to eat one flat teaspoon of honey each day. Fruit juices such as pomegranates, carrots, and beets are not recommended because of the high concentration of sugar found in them. It is better to eat the whole fruit and chew it well than to juice it and drink it as juice. If it is not possible to eat it in its entirety, it is recommended to mix the juice with water and drink slowly. The Chazon Ish teaches: Be very careful from eating delicacies and pleasurable foods, as they say in the Midrash: Besides for a person praying that the words of Torah should enter his body, he must also pray that delicacies do not enter his body, as it says in Tractate Gittin: Do not eat a meal just because it is tasty, eat a meal because you are hungry and it is nutritious and healthy for you.

Mussar: Obligation of Man

The purpose of creation is that man fulfills Hashem's commandments. Without purpose life would be worthless. Without Mitzvot man is just like an animal. We recite in prayers that man's advantage over animal is

‘Ayin’, meaning that man has the ability to say ‘no’ – I do not wish to act in such a manner. Man has the choice to decide between good and bad. One who does not properly take advantage of this choice is therefore categorized as an animal. Also, man is equipped with ‘Ayin’ – the three Hebrew letters represent: Amira (speech) Yedia (understanding) and Netina, characteristics only given to man, but not to animals. Once man realizes his purpose, he must fulfill it truthfully with joy and happiness. One who realizes his goals and works hard to achieve them has great reason to rejoice and celebrate. Such happiness is the core of life and the foundation for success. Without happiness, holiness and even the understanding of Torah cannot enter man. Even when man is suffering painfully, he is obligated to recognize the good in his life and believe with great trust in Hashem that everything done is for the best and will occur in the proper place and time.

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

When it was suggested to *Maran* to take the weekly *Motzaei Shabbat* class at the *Yazdim* synagogue and make it the largest class in the world through satellite broadcast, *Maran* was not enthusiastic about the idea, and he had two concerns. The first was that to broadcast the class by satellite, every synagogue would need to buy and set up a television, and this would damage the education of the young generation, who would say that watching the impure device had been permitted. The second was that the class might become open to the entire public without any control, and then journalists, media representatives and all kinds of commentators would surely be present, ready to slander. They answered him that the first problem needed no television, because the class would be projected onto a screen. As for the second problem, *Maran* would need to weigh it and decide whether the loss was tiny compared to the great gain of

spreading Torah. Here it should be said, to the praise and memory of *Rabbanit Margalit Yosef a"h*, that she was the one who convinced *Maran* that the gain was enormous. She referred to this pasuk, "For the ways of Hashem are straight, the righteous walk in them, and the wicked stumble in them." After deep thought *Maran* agreed, and the broadcast began in *Parashat Pekudei* 1994. It spread to every country in the world, to Europe, to America and to Arab lands, including Iran, Tunisia and Morocco. Through this the Torah became widely known and its glory grew stronger.

Halab (Aleppo) - Syria

At the end of World War I the Ottoman Empire grew weak, and the presence of two powers, Britain and France, was felt more and more in the Middle East. These powers encouraged the local Arab nationalist movements to rise up against the Turks and promised to win them independence. The Arabs supported these two powers and drove the Turks out of the Arab countries. When the war ended, France received the mandate over Syria and expelled Emir Faisal, who had declared in Damascus that he was king of Syria. The situation of the Jewish community during this period, until France left Syria, was not at all easy. In 1937, during the first elections for the Syrian parliament, there were plans to allow the Jews to elect their own representatives as well, giving the Jewish minority the right to proper representation of its own in parliament. Many Jews were confident that their place was in the Syrian national movement, which had written on its banner the slogan "*Badna al-wahda al-Suriyya, Islam, Yahud wa-Masihiyya*," meaning "We want Syrian unity, Muslims, Jews and Christians." The Jewish community of *Halab* also suffered from pogroms and harsh, violent riots. In 1929 a massacre of the local Jews took place, following the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine.

Laws: Birkat HaGomel

1- One who flies by plane from city to city or from country to country, and the flight is at least 72 minutes, must recite *Birkat HaGomel* with *Shem uMalchut* (Hashem's name), because traveling by plane is also included in the category of those who travel through the desert.

2- One must recite *HaGomel* after any illness, even one that is not dangerous and is not an internal ailment. Anyone who was confined to bed and then got up must recite it. Therefore, one who fell ill and was bedridden even for one day, even with an illness that is not dangerous, such as a high fever and the like, is obligated to recite *Birkat HaGomel*. He does not need to have been bedridden for three days.

3- One who caught the flu and fell ill because of his own lack of care must still recite *HaGomel* once he recovers from his illness.

4- One who tried to take his own life by drinking a dangerous poison or the like, and through intensive care regained his strength and recovered, does not recite *HaGomel*, because this would not be a blessing but rather a disgrace to Hashem.

5- One who had hernia or hemorrhoid surgery and the like must recite *Birkat HaGomel* after he recovers, since every surgery carries danger. There have also been cases of mistakes with anesthesia where people did not wake up, and therefore one must recite *HaGomel*.

6- One who had surgery and has returned to his normal activities recites *HaGomel*, even though he still has a bandage on his body. But if the patient has not yet recovered and only pushed himself to leave his home to pray in shul, he should not recite *HaGomel* until he has fully recovered.

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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.

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