



YESHIVAT **נתיב אריה**
NETIVARYEH
AT THE WESTERN WALL
In honor of Yeshiva Luban's 50th Anniversary

The Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh Newsletter

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Parshat Nitzavim-Vayelech 5769

EVERYONE IS INVITED...

...to a concert/Melave Malke at 9:30 PM with Shlomo and Eitan Katz (5761-62) on the Yeshiva Porch, followed by a sicha by Rav Amos Luban. Slichot will then be lead by Shlomo Katz.

NOTE ABOUT YAMIM NORAIM

In order to adequately accommodate all of the alumni who plan to stay at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh for the Yamim Noraim, please register with Dina by clicking [here](#).

Please inform us as to the length of your stay, dates of arrival and departure, whether you will need a bed at the dorm and how many seats to save for davening (in case family is visiting).

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Snapshot

Last Thursday:

- New York YNA alumni joined Rav Ally Ehrman for Pizza. For information about future alumni events, contact our man in YU Darren Levin at 516-521-2664.

Shabbat Parshat Ki Tavo:

- This past Shabbat was an in-Shabbat. Rav Dani Bader and family joined the Yeshiva for all the meals. The leil Shabbat seudah was followed by an oneg with the Rosh Yeshiva. The featured speaker was Jonny Skolnick (5761-62, a Cambridge educated lawyer who has returned to Yeshiva to study).

Seudah Shlishit was hosted by Rav Yoel Rakovsky on the Yeshiva's porch, overlooking the Kotel Plaza.

Tuesday:

- Shana Alef had a tiyul to the Golan, hiking in the Metzukei HaArbel followed by fun in the Water Park in Chof Tzemach.



HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Nitzavim-Vayelech

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

ZICHRONOT - WE HELP DETERMINE OUR FATE

The *Tochacha* section of *Parshat Bechukotai* concludes with words of consolation: "I will remember My covenant with Yaakov and also My covenant with Yitzchak and also My covenant with Avraham will I remember, and I will remember the Land" (*Vayikra* 26:42) and "I will remember for them the covenant of the ancients, those whom I have taken out of the land of Egypt before the eyes of the nations, to be G-d unto them - I am Hashem" (*ibid.* 45). The *Tochachot* of *Parshat Ki Tavo* which we just read last week, however, do not end on the same note, they end with the same harshness that they began with: "and there you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as slaves and maidservants - but there will be no buyer! These are the words of the covenant ..." (*Devarim* 28:68-69). The Rishonim dispute whether or not the beginning of *Parshat Nitzavim* ("perhaps there is among you a man or woman, or a family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from being with Hashem..." *Devarim* 29:17)) is a continuation of the *Tochachot* of *Parshat Ki Tavo*. Regardless, we can certainly conclude that the words of consolation found later in *Parshat Nitzavim* serve as the conclusion of the *Tochachot* we read last week.



ETCHED ON THE HEART

Our *Parsha* teaches us: "It will be that when all these things come upon you - the blessing and the curse" (*Devarim* 30:1), the end will be "then you will take to your heart ... and you will return unto Hashem, your G-d, and listen to His voice" (*ibid.* 1-2). Despite all of the tragedies that will befall the Jewish nation throughout the generations, G-d forbid, *Am Yisrael* will continue to survive and will finally return to Hashem. Belief in the arrival of the Moshiach is one of the Rambam's Thirteen Principles of Faith. The terrible exile the Jewish people will find themselves in will not be everlasting: "If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven, from there Hashem, your G-d, will gather you in and from there He will take you" (*ibid.* 4) - the Jewish people will eventually be returned home to the Land of Israel.

Ultimately there will be no justification for exile because "Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring" (ibid. 6). The prophet Yirmiyahu elaborates on this, explaining that Hashem will make a new covenant with the Jewish nation - not like that covenant received at the exodus from Egypt which was written on Tablets of stone and which we did not keep. Rather, promises the Torah, this new covenant will be written on the Tablets of our heart and will therefore be everlasting (see Yirmiyahu 1:30-32).

REPENTANCE AND REDEMPTION

This is very simple and unequivocal - there can be no redemption until the Jewish people improve their spiritual condition. There can be no physical redemption, in which the nation resides securely within its borders, until we have corrected our sorry spiritual state. The entire purpose of the redemption is to create a Kiddush Hashem - to sanctify His Name throughout the world - "to perfect the universe through the A-Imighty's sovereignty". If reasons still exist for us to remain in exile, then the redemption would not create a *Kiddush Hashem* but rather a *chillul Hashem*. If Hashem tells us that the Land will be ours on condition that we observe Shabbat and other mitzvot, and we settled the Land without having fulfilled our end of the bargain, this is a desecration of G-d's Name. Israel's redemption can only come about with *tshuva*. The redemption WILL come about and Hashem knows that ultimately we will repent. There is a dispute between R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua (see

Sanhedrin 97b) as to whether repentance must precede the redemption as a prerequisite or whether it will occur as a necessary component of the redemption. Regardless of which opinion is the correct one, all are in agreement that without *tshuva* there can be no *geula*!

ZICHRONOT - MAN DETERMINES THE RUNNING OF THE WORLD

We mentioned last week that the *bracha* of *malchuyot* recited on

Rosh Hashana declares Hashem as King and that He decides our fate and the fate of the Jewish nation. We then arrive at the *bracha* of *zichronot* where we declare that although Hashem ultimately makes the decision, He bases it on our deeds. We dictate to Him what fate to determine for us. The midrash on the verse "See, I present before you today a blessing and a curse" (*Devarim* 11:26) comments: "from the time Hashem said these words in Sinai, at that moment 'from the mouth of the Most High evil and good does not emanate' (*Eicha* 3:38), rather evil comes to those who do evil and good comes to those who do good" (*Devarim Rabba*). The Midrash is telling us that from the day Hashem gave us the blessings and curses at Sinai, He no longer decides whether to provide us with good or bad. It is we who decide through our deeds whether Hashem will bless us for the good or G-d forbid, otherwise. Ultimately it is Hashem Who decides, but He bases His decision on our deeds. This is the blessing of *zichronot*.

IN THE MERIT OF ONE MAN THE WORLD WAS SAVED

In *zichronot* we make mention of the Flood: "You lovingly remembered Noah and You recalled him with words of salvation and mercy, when You brought the waters of the Flood to destroy all living flesh because of the evil of their deeds". What caused the flood that almost destroyed the entire creation? Man's actions! On the other hand, what saved mankind from annihilation? Man's actions as well. In the merit of one man living in that generation the world was saved. Man has the

power to destroy and man has the power to preserve. The actions of Noah, his sons, and their wives during their year in the ark, sustained the entire world, because "the world is built on kindness" (Tehillim 89:3). It was the abundance of thievery that almost destroyed the world (see Rashi Bereishit 6:13), and this fault was corrected through an abundance of acts of *chesed* performed in the ark. An entire world was saved from destruction at that time and their merit continues to sustain us many generations thereafter.

We cannot even imagine the difficult year Noah and his family spent taking care of the other inhabitants of the ark. Chazal tell us that they spent an entire year deprived of sleep (see *Tanchuma Parshat Noach*). The hotel they ran had thousands of guests and only eight waiters (Noah, his sons, and their wives). Each guest had a different menu one ate only meat, while another ate only milk, while one ate fish and others ate other food. In addition, they each preferred their food at different times - some ate during the day, some at night, some immediately prior to *vatin* (sunrise), while some preferred being fed immediately after. There were even those who ate their meal immediately prior to *tikkun chatzot*" (at midnight). The difficulty of this task cannot even be properly described. One time Noah arrived late with the lion's food and he was given a painful souvenir (see Rashi Bereishit 7:23). This injury certainly did not make his task any easier. It was these great acts of *chesed* that help put the world back on its feet.

The few animals Noah was able to offer as sacrifices upon leaving the ark have also sustained us throughout the generations. It was as a result of these offerings that Hashem swore never to bring another flood upon this world. The rainbow was given as a sign of this oath. Since that day, thousands of rainbows have been seen (with the exception of certain generations in which no rainbow was seen, for the personal merit of the righteous individuals who lived then saved them from a flood and they had no need to rely on Noah's merit (see Rashi Ketubot 7b "im ken")). One righteous person was able to prevent thousands of floods from coming down upon the world. How many offerings could he have brought? He had little to offer save a few animals and birds. Nonetheless it was these sacrifices that prevented thousands of floods over the generations. This is an example of the tremendous power man is invested with - we see how much influence one person can have.

IN THE MERIT OF THREE PEOPLE

We then mention the bondage in Egypt. It was our sins that brought about this servitude, while our being influenced by their ways almost kept us there forever. It was only the merit of our three holy forefathers that brought about our exodus: "Hashem heard their moaning, and Hashem remembered His covenant with Avraham, with Yitzchak, and with Yaakov" (Shmot 2:23-24). The merit of these three people alone helped six hundred thousand people leave Egypt and become the Chosen People who were destined to receive the Torah and to inherit the Land of Israel, the nation who would attain the World to Come and eternity - something the entire world did not merit. What caused this? Three people alone! Hashem remembered these three righteous people and sent three other *tzaddikim*: Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam to take us out of Egypt. It was, however, the merit of our three forefathers which took us out from Egypt and it is in their merit that we will see the arrival of the Moshiach speedily in our day. In the *bracha* of *malchuyot* we declare Hashem as All-Powerful - that He alone acts in this world, while in the *bracha* of *zichronot* we imply the opposite - it is man who has the power to determine how this world is run.

Man is the ladder on which "the angels of G-d are ascending and descending on it"

(*Bereishit* 28:12). We are all given the choice of following in the footsteps of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, or in the way of others. Our deeds determine our fate. Every year we beseech the A-lmighty: "*zochrenu lechaim Melech chafetz bachaim vechatvenu besefer hachaim*" "remember us for life, O King who desires life and inscribe us in the book of life". If it were possible to hear Hashem's response, He would probably be telling us: "I am inscribing you, but only in accordance with your deeds. You are the one who tells Me what to write, whether it should be '*lechaim*', or G-d forbid, otherwise. We have a great responsibility placed on our shoulders, for it is we who are responsible for our fate.

REWARD FOR THOUGHTS AS WELL AS ACTIONS

Not only every good deed, but every good thought is taken into account -nothing goes unnoticed. Regarding the mitzvah of *tzdaka* the Torah writes "because of this matter ('*hadavar hazeh*') Hashem, your G-d, will bless you in all your deeds" (*Devarim* 15:10). Rashi comments: "even if you merely committed verbally, you receive reward for the statement along with reward for the act". Rashi's comment is perhaps based on the fact that the word *davar* is often interpreted by Chazal to mean *dibur*, speech. The Torah is therefore telling us that even a verbal commitment to give *tzdaka* does not go unrewarded. Clearly, the person will not be rewarded if he does not follow through with his commitment, barring unforeseen circumstances. What is meant here is that he can ultimately be rewarded for the commitment in addition to the ultimate act itself, for a person's thoughts are also of great significance.

It is said in the name of the Chafetz Chaim that every moment of Torah learning is a fulfillment of two hundred positive commandments. I am not certain how he arrives at such a number, but it is obvious that many of the thoughts involved in learning Torah are rewarded. Let us analyze our attitude towards fulfillment of other mitzvot in comparison. Many people spend quite a sum of money purchasing their four species for Sukkot. As praiseworthy as this may be, we must keep in mind that this mitzvah can only be observed for one week of the year. Out of that week, only the first day is in fulfillment of a Torah commandment and this does not include Shabbat when we fulfill a mitzvah by not taking these species. Similarly, people spend large sums for their *shmura matzah*. In truth this purchase only has practical use at the Seder when we are required to eat matzah, perhaps we can include the remaining days of Pesach if we follow the ruling of the Vilna Gaon who is of the opinion that eating matzah during those days, although not a requirement, still fulfills a mitzvah. Talmud Torah, however, applies every day of the year. Imagine, being able to fulfill two hundred mitzvot a minute throughout my lifetime! If I were to spend on this mitzvah the amount I spend on the four species or *shmura matzah*, I would not be able to survive even if I were a multi-millionaire. The fact is I AM a millionaire! Hashem gives me so much, I just do not have direct access to my bank account. We must just know that the bank account is there and it is growing by two hundred mitzvot every minute we learn. In addition to the great reward awaiting us for learning Torah, which as we said is "equivalent to them all", it helps prevent us from speaking *loshon hara*. When the mouth is busy talking Torah then it is unable to speak *loshon hara*. Learning Torah is a way of cleaving to Hashem's thoughts.

THREE PILLARS

The Mishna tells us: "On three things the world stands: on the Torah, on the Temple service, and on deeds of lovingkindness" (*Pirke Avot* 1:2). These are three areas in which we are able to cleave to Hashem. As mentioned, TORAH is the way we can cleave to Hashem's thoughts. AVODA is the way we can cleave to Hashem emotionally. Today the Temple service has been replaced by our prayers. When we pray we must feel that we are speaking to Hashem, asking Him to fill our needs and thanking Him for what He has done for us. GEMILLUT CHASSADIM, acts of lovingkindness, is a way we can cleave to Hashem's deeds. He created the world in order to provide for His creations, to feel a close bond with Him we too must emulate His ways and do for others. This explains why these three areas were singled out as the pillars on which the world stands.

We made mention of our three forefathers in whose merit we were redeemed from Egypt. We can say that they each signify one of the three pillars mentioned in the Mishna. Each forefather's special unique portion of the Torah corresponds to one of the pillars upon which the world stands: Avraham, pillar of *chesed*, planted an *eshel* in Be-er Sheva (see Bereishit 21:33), and performed acts of kindness with his many guests - materially as well as spiritually (which is the ultimate *chesed* man can bestow on his fellow man, as the Torah describes Avraham and Sarah's work: "the souls that they had made in Charan" (Bereishit 12:5)). Yitzchak, who was bound upon the Altar as an offering, was the pillar of *Avoda* - service of Hashem. The Torah describes Yaakov as "abiding in tents" (Bereishit 25:27). Rashi explains that the tents referred to in the *pasuk* are "the tent of Shem and the tent of Ever" - the Beit Hamidrash.

GIVE A SMILE

We must go in the ways of our forefathers to learn Torah, to understand our prayer and to know to Whom we are praying, and to act with *chesed* towards one another. Acts of *chesed* can be performed even within the four walls of the Yeshiva. Chazal tell us "it is better to show one's white teeth (by smiling affectionately) to his friend than to give him a glass of milk" (Ketubot 111b). Why? Because by drinking a glass of milk one can survive for one or two days, a smile lives forever. The one who smiled at you on your first day in the Yeshiva caused you to love the Yeshiva, he gave you life. He caused you to cleave to the Torah and insured that your children and succeeding generations will be educated to a life of Torah. Perhaps when someone is thirsty a glass of milk is of more use than a smile, but on the whole the smile can give eternal life. We do not need to search for ways to do *chesed* outside the Yeshiva. Not only is a smile worth a fortune, it does not cost any money, so why not "give a smile"? It costs less than milk and is worth much more!

Blessing our fellow Jew is a tremendous *segula* for a positive judgment, for Hashem promised Avraham Avinu "I will bless those who bless you" (Bereishit 12:3) - Hashem will bless whoever blesses the Jewish people. If we wish for Hashem to bless us, then we should begin by blessing one another and wishing them a *Ketiva Vachatima Tova*. May Hashem grant a good year to us, our families, and to the entire Jewish nation speedily in our day. Amen.

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yoel Yehoshua

We are approaching the period of the Yomim Noraim, referred to as the "Days of Awe" or the "Days of Judgment". But, these are also days of opportunity.

The *pasuk* says: "Search Hashem when He is found, call to Him when He is close". The Gemara teaches us that this *pasuk* refers to the days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. The expression "when He is close" does not imply physical closeness, but rather spiritual closeness. These are days when we have the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with Hashem.



The opportunity to come close to Hashem is not limited to these days but there are opportunities to come close to Hashem throughout the entire year.

We say every day in *Ashrei*: "*Karov Hashem lechol kor'av, lechol asher yikrauhu be'emet*". Hashem is close to all who call Him, to all who call Him truthfully." Through *Tefilla* we can develop a close and meaningful relationship with Hashem all year round.

Another way of creating a closer relationship with Hashem is through learning Torah. (See *Pirkei Avot* 3:2 and 3:6)

During these coming days we have a tremendous opportunity to elevate ourselves for the coming year. There are many *mitzvot* upon which each one of us can improve, and *aseret yemei teshuva* is an auspicious time to work on ourselves. A great place to start is by improving our *tefillot* and Torah learning.

How do we go about improving our *tefillah*? This must be accomplished in small steps, each step consisting of a realistically attainable goal. If I one day decide to have proper *kavana* throughout the entire *davening*, I will end up with hardly any *kavana*. I therefore suggest that we choose one small part of *tefilla*, or even just *bracha* of *shmone esreh*. We should study its meaning and try our best to have proper *kavana* when saying it. (This idea can be found in Moreh Nevuchim). Having true contact with Hashem during one part of the *tefilla* will have a positive effect on the rest of the *tefilla* and will encourage us to have strong *kavana* there as well.

A similar method can be used to strengthen our Torah study. We should perhaps add a small amount of time to our learning schedule or perhaps learn a bit more in-depth. The hope is that this too will influence us to grow even further in learning Torah.

These are two excellent ways to enhance our relationship with Hashem during these especially important days.

When contemplating the upcoming days, I cannot help but think of the special *tefillot* in the Yeshiva led by Moreinu VeRabeinu HaRav Yaakov Katz shlit"a. His voice resonates in my mind as he calls out "KETER!!" In this introduction to Kedusha, we are saying that the angels together with the Jewish people are crowning Hashem. HaRav Katz sincerely feels this with all his heart and he is

calling all of us to join him.

May we all be *zoche* to feel a closer relationship with Hashem and feel His Kingship, may this provide us with inspiration throughout our lives and may we then merit a *ketiva vachatima tova*.

[Click here](#) to send an email to Rav Yoel.

Alumni Dvar Torah
by Sam Fromson (5768-69)

The Bottom Line

Devarim strikes a very different tone to the other *chumashim*. We are exposed to ideas from a new angle and shown concepts that have been totally absent up until this point. We find *psukim* which we have not seen in the previous *chumashim* such as:



"*ve-atem hadeveikim baHashem Elokeichem chayim kulchem hayom*" "You people that attach themselves to Hashem your God, are alive today.

"*Shma Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*" - "Hear (and internalise) O Israel, Hashem is Elokeinu, Hashem is one."

"*Ata hareita ladaat ki Hashem Hu HaElokim ein od milvado*" - "You have been shown so that you will know that Hashem is Elokim ... and there is no existence beyond Him."

The list goes on and on. *Devarim* is the final book of the Torah which follows the narratives involving the *avot*, the details of the *korbanot*, the minutiae of most of the mitzvot ... yet it comes to present us with something of huge importance. It presents the bigger picture, the bottom line of Torah.

We rack up mitzvot during our lifetime, we keep a Shabbat here ... a charitable donation there ... a lulav shaken the week after. Sometimes it seems haphazard, opportunistic even. A mitzvah packs a huge spiritual punch ... yet mostly we don't feel any different. We need a framework into which to fit these pieces into, or these mitzvot stand the risk of losing all meaning. *Devarim* is here to bring that point home, to teach us that we are in this world to forge a connection with our Creator.

Nitzavim finishes with a powerful admonition "You will choose life so that you will live and... (have the opportunity) to love Hashem your God, to listen to his voice and to attach yourself (in your entirety) to Him."

Every mitzvah, every word learnt, every kind word spoken, begs to be put into this context.

There is a saying of Chazal that goes as follows, "Even the empty ones amongst them (the Jewish people) are full of mitzvot like a pomegranate." An obvious question presents itself, if these Jews are full of mitzvot like a pomegranate, then why would they be called empty? Rav Dovid Pavarsky presented a piercing insight

to resolve this contradiction. Even a Jew full of mitzvot can be empty. If his acts are without meaning, without passion and without content, then he will still be spiritually hollow inside.

The details are certainly vital for, without that, we're lost. We say every day in the *Shema* "Don't be swayed after your heart." If we feel giving and "spiritual" without a framework, it can end in disaster. Freeing an ailing Lockerbie bomber may present itself as a compassionate act, but it could end up causing more harm than good and is certainly not the *chesed* the Torah had in mind.

That is what we need the mitzvot for. They are the breakdown of the "how", but the "why", the motivating factor behind it all, is the crux of Nitzavim-Vayeilech and, indeed, Devarim. We need create for ourselves a palpable, real, embracing attachment to God.

That is our focus for Ellul, Rosh Hashanah and beyond.

Shabbat Shalom

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Announcements from the Yeshiva



[Photo Gallery:](#) [Welcome BBQ](#)

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- Ari Strulowitz (5766-67) on his marriage to Avigayil Prero.
- Jan (5746) and Orit Wimpfheimer on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Noam Shai.
- Shamsky Schlager (5765-66) on his marriage to Hanna Sorkin.
- Paul (5750 and current Board member of Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh) and Yali (Jeniffer) Packer on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Jeremy Kenneth. Aliyah to the Torah will be at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh on Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim.
- Daniel (5748) and Gabrielle Altman on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Isaac.
- Gregory (5748) and Lara Rhine on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter, Bliss.

Visitors

The following people have visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Yaakov Finn (5765-66)
- Elliot Golend (5767)

- Jonathan Del Monte (5768-69)
- Robbie Charnoff (5765-66)

Baruch Dayan Emet

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh regrets to inform you on the passing of:

- Pauline Meyers, the grandmother of Ari Meyers (5756-57) and Yosef Meyers (5760-61).

Hamakom Yenachem Otam B'toch Sha'ar Avellei Tzion V'Yerushalayaim.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Yehudis Sara bas Esther
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlommo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa
- Temima Adina bat Keren Ronit
- Avraham ben Meela
- Bracha Sara bat Rivka Zelda
- Ita Blima bat Malka Fraidel
- Eliyahu ben Victoria

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)