



Parshat Yitro 5769

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This weeks Sephardic Melave Malke will be by David S Cohen, 392 Avenue T at 7:30. Please don't be late! Shiur dedicated for the *refua shelema* of Rahamim ben Miriam. For further info please contact Mark Nakash 917-754-2217 or MarkNakash@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE! March 21 (Shabbat Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei) - YNA Shabbaton for recent alumni at DRS.

Countdown to the Shabbaton: 5 Weeks to go! For details and to register [Click Here](#). Space is Limited!

Spotlight**Melave Malke this past Motzaei Shabbat:**

- Close to 50 recent alumni gathered at the home of Morris Elman (5768) in Brooklyn on Motzaei Shabbat Parshat Bshalach for a Melave Malke. Morris made a siyum on Massechet Makkot. Rav Bina spoke and noted that this was the week of the second yahrzeit of the father of Albert twins (5767-68).

Monday:

- The entire Yeshiva took a tiyul to Chatmar Binyamin, a border patrol army base outside Beit E-I. They were given an overview of the base's operations by a senior commander who then demonstrated for them explosive monitoring, target practice (paintball guns), and a taste of day-to-day training regiments.
- The students then traveled to Shiloh, where they were given a tour of Tel-Shiloh, the archeological site of the Mishkan.

**Sunday:**

- Chugim were moved up a day to Sunday night in

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order to incorporate a Tu B'Shvat celebration. Shana Bet had a special Tu B'shvat Seuda at R' Nebenzahl's apartment. The Rav then left the floor open to questions on a wide range of topics. This replaced the weekly sicha normally given on Sunday nights. Some of the questions and answers are printed below, in place of the sicha.



Mission to Sderot, by R' Ariel Cohen

On Wednesday 3 Shvat, R' Ariel Cohen (former staff), R' Uri Schneider (5758-59) and Danny Landesman (Shana Bet) traveled to Sderot to show support for the residents.

We joined a small group of Rabbis and American Jewish community leaders. We began with a visit to the local police station where a bomb-squad expert (*barak*) spoke to us about the thousand Kassam missiles which have landed in Sderot. Each missile was labeled with the date and precise area in which it had landed. The bomb expert described for us the constant fear he eats, sleeps, and wakes up with just dreading the siren which may sound at any moment.



We then toured various areas overlooking Gaza. We toured the Yeshivat Hesder (our hosts) and heard very moving stories from soldiers who had fought in Gaza. We then met with families whose homes had been ruined by Kassams - both physically and emotionally, as many had also lost relatives to these missiles. We were very touched by the overwhelming sense of *achdus*.

Thursday 4 Shvat, we visited an elementary school where we presented the children with a gift from America. This was followed by the main event - the dedication of the Yeshivat Hesder. The building as well as the dormitories are literally rocket - proof. Shiurim were given by Rabbanim HaGaonim Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl and Rav Zalman Nechemiah Goldberg, who in addition to *shiurim*, gave their words of bracha to the Yeshiva. Rav Bina was honored for his role in establishing a Rennert Kollel in Sderot - Rebbetzin Malke Bina accepted the award on his behalf. The festivities continued into the night, as we were literally whisked off the dance floor at 9:00 PM to catch our ride to the airport.

Anyone interested in supporting the Yeshiva as well as the people of Sderot (whom you can well imagine are facing difficult financial times), may email Ariel Cohen at Cohen613@gmail.com.

Questions and Answers with Rav Nebenzahl

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

Given that this past Sunday night was Tu B'Shvat, the chugim were moved up from Monday night, replacing the regular Sunday night sicha. Shana Bet had the privilege of joining Rav Nebenzahl for a seudah. Following the seudah, the Rav opened the floor for questions. Questions were asked on a wide range of topics. Although Rav Nebenzahl is available to answer students' questions every morning and evening, we would like to take this rare opportunity to share some of these questions with the general public.



Q: What is the significance of Tu B'Shvat?

A: Tu B'Shvat marks a new year for certain mitzvot hatluyot ba'aretz, such as terumah and maser. Unfortunately, thus far we have not been blessed with much rain but Chazal tell us that Tu B'Shvat marks the date when most of the year's rains have already fallen. With that in mind, Tu B'Shvat is a day to thank Hashem for all the rain that has fallen thus far. Because rain is our sustenance we then must thank Hashem for His Kindness in providing food for all. Of course we also thank Hashem on Tu B'Shvat for the opportunity of fulfilling these Land dependent mitzvot.

Q: Which of the Land-dependent mitzvot are d'Orayta today and which are d'Rabbanan?

A: Orlah and Revai are d'Orayta. There are opinions that Shmitta is a Torah commandment today, although the majority of poskim do not follow this view.

Q: If you find a bug on one side of your fruit, may you eat the other side of the fruit?

A: Yes - as far as I know the prohibition against eating bugs is not a mitzvah hateluyah ba'aretz.

Q: As the Rav mentioned, there has unfortunately been very little rain this year - do we still celebrate Tu B'Shvat?

A: Tu B'Shvat is not a celebration. Outside of not saying tachanun there is nothing inherently in it that may be considered a celebration. It is simply the new year for mitzvot hatluyot ba'aretz.

Q: What is this idea of davening for a good etrog on Tu B'Shvat?

A: It is not something that is mentioned in the Shulchan Aruch.

Q: I heard that there is an inyan al pi kabbalah to eat fruits on Tu B'Shvat.

A: I am sorry I do not consider myself well-versed in areas of kabbalah.

Q: The Torah prohibits cutting down fruit-trees as ba'al taschit, under what circumstances would it be permitted to move a fruit-tree?

A: It depends what and how much is to be gained by moving it.

Q: If I see a non-religious Jew eating on a fast day, do I have an obligation to tell him not to?

A: If you will be able to influence him.

Q: When is the Rosh Hashana for vegetables?

A: Rosh Hashana (1 Tishrei).

Q: Should we be reciting the special tefillah for rain?

A: Certainly, we are in dire need of it, just keep in mind that it was only established to be said by the chazzan in the repetition of the Shmone Esrei.

Q: In the Kedusha on Shabbos and Yom Tov, many shuls have a custom that some of the words are sung to a tune. If the people have already recited these words on their own, may they sing the words with the chazzan, in effect they are saying the same words twice.

A: I believe there is nothing wrong with it, perhaps when you should not say the Shem Hashem but just concentrate on it.

Q: Most Yeshivot do not have time set aside for learning Tanach, should we try to find some time to learn it?

A: Nach is a book which comes highly recommended. I believe it is a good idea to set aside some time for it.

Q: If I decide to learn navi, should I just read the psukim straight to get an overview, even without any meforshim?

A: It is very important that nach be studied along with the comments of Chazal. In addition to Rashi, I recommend using Da'at Sofrim.

Q: If a person is an istenis (finicky) and is not comfortable going to the mikveh, but really wishes to tovel on Erev Yom Kippur, can he fulfill this obligation by having a shower?

A: With the provision that he use a minimum of nine kabim of water.

Q: May a person begin shnayim mikra ve'echad targum for the next week's parsha, on Shabbos afternoon even if he has not yet davened mincha?

A: I believe he may once the time of mincha has arrived even if he has not davened yet.

Q: My mother insists that I am not getting enough sleep and I should learn less at night and get more sleep, should I listen to her?

A: Yes.

Q: If I wish to remain in Eretz Yisrael to learn, but my parents want me to return to chutz la'aretz, how far should I argue at the expense of kibbud av va'em?

A: I believe Rav Bina is better equipped to answer such questions.

Q: I would like to learn more Gemara in bekiut style, should I learn with some of the Rishonim?

A: Certainly Rashi, I would recommend the Rosh because it gives you a synopsis of Tosafot and the Ri"f.

Q: I understand that the Rav paskened that in the Ramban shul, the nusach of the minyan is determined by the Shliach Tzibbur, does this mean that if I am the chazzan for Maariv I can say "Baruch Hashem leolam amen v'amen"?

A: I believe not, because that is something which is not said in the entire

Eretz Yisrael.

Q: May we brush our teeth on Shabbos?

A: The custom of the Ashkenazim is not to.

Q: How long should a person sit and learn before getting married?

A: I believe a person should get married as soon as possible and continue learning afterwards.

Q: May a man learn with his wife?

A: Absolutely.

Q: How would the Rav recommend striving for greater deveikus with Hashem?

A: By learning mussar.

Q: I know that I must strive to learn all of halacha during my lifetime, what should I concentrate on before getting married?

A: Certainly family laws must be studied before getting married, Shabbos, kashrus, Pesach as well.

Q: There is a sefer which has recently become popular which claims that a person with greater emunah receives more shefa from Hashem even if he is a secular Jew who is not interested in following all the dictates of the Shulchan Aruch.

A: I don't understand how anyone could make such a claim, the Shulchan Aruch begins by discussing emunah, there is no such thing as one without the other.

Q: We know that Shana Bet boys have the obligation to sit and learn like everyone else. On the other hand, should they be devoting part of their day to giving chizuk to some of the Shana Alef boys?

A: Absolutely, I would say approximately half a seder should be devoted to that.

Q: A person who wakes up in the middle of the night, must he do netillat yadayim?

A: Not if he is planning to go back to sleep.

Q: Is it permitted to make a call to America when Shabbos has ended here and it is still Shabbos there, if we are only planning to leave a message on the voice mail?

A: Many poskim permit this.

Q: What if they have an answering machine where they would be able to hear the message?

A: I believe it is the same question.

Q: If I have fifteen minutes available before Shacharit and have to run out immediately afterwards. Should I spend the time learning or rather recite the korbanos?

A: The Mishna Brura writes that if you have the ability to learn, this is better. I would, however, try to make sure to at least say Parshas HaTamid.

Q: We just read that Hashem told Moshe to tell Pharaoh that the Jewish people wished to go out for three days. In the end they left and did not return, what then did it mean that they were going for three days?

A: Moshe simply said that they needed three days to offer korbanos to Hashem, he never discussed what he would do afterwards. What would happen if a thief stole my hat in the park and I then asked him if I could just use my hat for mincha? Have I obligated myself to give it back to him afterwards?

Q: May a person exercise before davening?

A: If it will help him daven better.

Q: If a person does not believe that he has what it takes to pursue a career in learning, how long should he continue learning.

A: Moshe Rabenu learned until age 120. When you reach 120 and you know as much as Moshe Rabenu then you can stop learning.

Staff Dvar Torah

by Rav Yoel Rakovsky, Shana Alef Rebbe

MATAN TORAH - TEACHING US HASHEM IS EVERYWHERE

There is a very interesting Medrash in the beginning of Bereishit, which says that when Hashem was creating the world, all the letters of the alef-bet came before Him. Each one was given a chance to ask Hashem if He would please start the creation of the world with him (with that letter). The procession began with the last letter, tuf, and continued one by one, in order. As the letters tuf through gimmel passed by, each presented his case before G-d, and were rejected in turn. The tuf, for example, was disqualified for finishing the word mavet, (death), the shin, for beginning the word sheker, (falsehood). Finally there were only two letters left! They were bet and alef. G-d then said that He will create the world beginning with a bet because through the bet the bracha (blessing) is brought to the world. Hence the first letter of the Torah is a bet, in the word Bereishit, because the whole Torah is the bracha of the world.



Then G-d said to the alef, "Why don't you come in and state your case that the world should be created through you?" The alef answered, "How can I interfere after You have already decided to create the world with the bet?" So G-d said, "Even though I am creating the world with the bet, the alphabet will begin with alef and through you my unity will be seen."

In the Medrash on Yitro, this week's Parsha, it says that the alef was upset for 2000 years that it wasn't chosen to begin the Torah, and never really had a fair chance to plead its case before Hashem. G-d finally gave in and as an additional compensation, began the Ten Commandments with the word anochi starting with the letter alef.

Rabbi Yaakov, the son of the Ishbitzer Rebbe, writes in his sefer, the Bet Yaakov: The Gemara in Shabbos says that anochi is an acronym of "Ana Nafshi Ktavit Yahavit", which means that the four letters of the word anochi, are actually initials which stand for four words that G-d is saying to us: "My Soul I am writing and giving". The Bet Yaakov explains that every time a person learns Torah, he is seeing more and more how G-d is found everywhere, because Hashem wrote "His

soul" into the Torah.

Hashem created the world with the letter bet, with bracha. The world is teeming with life, with bounty, with a myriad of natural laws and systems. We know there is One Creator behind all this, but it is not always obvious to every onlooker. Hashem was mastir (hid) Himself in the creation. But when He gave us the Torah on Mount Sinai, then He opened with the letter alef, with Oneness. It is through the Torah that we learn to see the One. And we come to realize that there are natural laws in the world, but Hashem's word overrides all that. When Hashem wills it, the sun can stop in its track for Yehoshua bin Nun and vinegar can be kindled as if it were oil for Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa.

The next phrase of the first commandment, following "anochi Hashem Elokecha", is "asher hotzeyticha me-eretz Mitzrayim" which literally means "that took you out of Egypt." The Bet Yaakov adds an additional interpretation of this phrase, based on the fact that the word Mitzrayim (Egypt) contains the word tzar (narrow). The phrase then means "that took you out of narrowness". Until the Revelation and the Giving of the Torah, we were unable to see Him everywhere, because of our narrow vision. But now that He wrote Himself into the Torah and gave us that unbelievable gift, we can learn to see Him everywhere. And every time we learn Torah, the Torah that we learn goes deeper and deeper inside us, until the Torah becomes part of us, and we, part of the Torah.

Alumni Dvar Torah
by Ezra Weinblatt (5766)

Blessing Hashem for Everything

This week's parsha begins with Yitro's arrival. When Yitro heard of the wonders that Hashem did for B'nei Yisrael against the Egyptians, his reaction was: "Baruch Hashem asher hitzil etchem miyad Mitzrayim..." (Shemot 18:10). Commenting on this pasuk, the gemara states (Sanhedrin 94a) that it is a disgrace that Moshe and B'nei Yisrael did not bless Hashem prior to Yitro's "Baruch Hashem." What does the Gemara mean when it accuses the Jewish people of not praising Hashem?! Did last week's parsha not contain the entire Shirat HaYam? Is that entire Shira not praise to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, so what does the Gemara mean?

I found in the sefer Imrei Baruch by Rav Baruch Simon Shlit"a a message that we should all strive to incorporate into our own lives. Rav Simon quotes the Ketav Sofer who offers an explanation based on Rashi's commentary on the previous pasuk: "VaYichad Yitro." Rashi explains that the word yichad comes from the word chadudin meaning that Yitro's flesh became prickly (in colloquial English we would say he developed goose bumps) when he heard about what took place in Egypt because he was very pained over their destruction. The Ketav Sofer is quick to point out, however, that Yitro may have been pained, yet we still read in the very next pasuk that he said: "Baruch Hashem." Yitro was a living example of the Mishnah in Berachos (9:5) which states that a person is obligated thank Hashem for the bad in the same way that he is obligated to do so for the good. Yitro taught Moshe and the Jewish people that we must praise Hashem even when things do not appear so rosy. The Gemara's rebuke is for the fact that Yitro was the first to recognize this.

This is an extremely amazing quality, but how can we be expected to actually incorporate this into our daily lives? We may intellectually know that everything that Hashem does is for the best (Berachos 54a), but are we really on the level where we thank G-d for what appears bad to us? I once heard from Rav Avraham Schorr the following interpretation of the Mishnah in Berachos which we have just

cited. The Mishnah teaches us that "a person is obligated to thank G-d for the bad just like for the good as the pasuk says, 'V'ahavta et Hashem Elokecha b'chol levavcha, uv'chol nafshecha, uv'chol meodecha.' B'chol levavcha means with your two yetzers (yetzer harah and yetzer hatov), b'chol nafshecha means even if Hashem takes away your nefesh, and b'chol meodecha means b'chol mamoncha (with all of your wealth). Alternatively, with every midah (treatment) that metes out to you (whether good or bad) you are to thank Him.

If the Mishnah is trying to teach us a general principle that we must thank G-d for the bad and the good, why is it stated matter-of-factly as the second interpretation of b'chol meodecha? At the very least this should be the first explanation, and then "alternatively it means with all your wealth"! Rav Schorr offers a beautiful explanation - that it is precisely from the ordering of the Mishnah that we learn the obligation to thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu for the bad as well as for the good. When we thank Hashem b'chol mamoncha, when we realize that all of our earthly possessions are an expression of love from Hashem, then we will be able to thank Hashem even for that which does not appear good on the surface. When we internalize these lessons we will understand that when it comes to everything in life - there is no one we can truly rely on other than Hakadosh Baruch Hu - both good and bad.

The following powerful incident illustrates what we have been discussing. The Sanzer Rav, Rav Chaim Halberstam, had a son who died very young. As he was walking away from having buried his son, his talmidim noticed that he was smiling. Surprised and curious, they asked the Rav how could smile at such a tragic event. The Rav responded: "It's as if you are walking down the street and feel someone coming from behind you giving you a slap on the back. You angrily turn around to see who hit you only to notice that it is your best friend coming to say hello. Suddenly your anger disappears ..." May we all be zocheh to internalize this message. Have a good Shabbos.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

**Announcements
Yeshiva**

from

the

Mazal Tov

The Yeshiva would like to wish a Mazal Tov to:

- Steven Jaspan (5758) on his engagement to Hila Reich.
- Brian Khunovich (5761, 5762) on his engagement to Itiya Brand.
- Elie (5761, 65) and Daphna Mishaan on the birth of a baby boy.

Tehillim List

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

- Toiby Yehudit bat Tama Gaisa
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanel 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
- Perla bat Miriam
- Rachel bat Sarah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Nachum Tzvi ben Ratza
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly Bat Yaerah

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, let our office know so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - let us know! We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh