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Rav Bina and Alumni Reunion at Camp HASC

• *Monday:*

Rav Bina will be at Camp HASC to speak to our students and alumni at 10:00 PM.

• *Thursday:*

Rav Bina will be at Camp HASC to speak to our students and alumni from 9:00 PM and he will be giving his Ohr Hachaim Shiur at 11:30 PM.

• *Shabbat:*

Rav Aharon Bina and Rav Channan will be spending Shabbat at Camp HASC. Rabbanit Bina will be giving a shiur on Shabbat.

• *Motzei Shabbat:*

Alumni Reunion Melave Malka at Camp HASC 11:30 PM in the staff dining room.

Five Towns Melave Malkas for the Summer!

Bring friends from any Yeshivah.

9:45-11:00 Basketball/Swimming

11:00 BBQ/Dvar Torah

This week's Melave Malka will take place at 11 Manor, in Lawrence. The Melave Malka will not be every week, and will be weather permitting. Call 516-318-1207 to check.

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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Va'etchanan

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



Printer Friendly Sicha

"Ve-ahavata et Hashem Elokecha ... Bechol Nafshecha"

"You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul" (Devarim 6:5). Chazal derive from this pasuk: "'with all your soul' - even if He takes your soul" (Brachot 61b). Someone who finds himself, G-d forbid, in his last moments of life is obligated to love Hashem despite his pain and his strong desire to live. It may be easy for us to speak in such terms, but this is extremely hard to carry out. How are we expected to fulfill this commandment? We must believe that we are giving back to Hashem a pledge which He gave us to safeguard but which does not belong to us.

Chazal bring the following story about R' Meir: While R' Meir was giving a shiur on Shabbat afternoon and was unaware that in the meantime two of his sons had died at home. What did their mother do? She placed them on the bed and covered them with a sheet. On Motzaei Shabbat, when R' Meir returned from the Beit Midrash she approached him saying: "My teacher - I have a question to ask you ... yesterday someone left me something for safekeeping and he has now come to claim it, must I return it or not?" R' Meir responded: "can it be that if you have something that belongs to another that you need not return it?" She led him to the room, brought him closer to the bed and removed the sheets that were covering her two sons. He saw that they were lying there dead and began to cry. His wife said: "My teacher, did you not just tell me that we must return what was given us for safekeeping - 'Hashem has given, and Hashem has taken away, blessed be the Name of Hashem' (Iyov 1:21) (see Yalkut Shimoni Mishle remez 964). On the other hand, a human being is no ordinary object. It is forbidden to return a soul before Hashem demands it. Regarding any other object, although the Shulchan Aruch forbids returning it prior to the agreed upon time (see Choshen Mishpat 293:1), the Rashba is permitted, applying the principle: "a worker can withdraw from his employment even in the middle of the day" (Baba Metzia 10a - see Chidushei HaRashba Kiddushin 13a). All are in agreement, however, that the "object" we are speaking of may not be returned "in the middle of the day". This object that we

are guarding must be protected and developed so long as Hashem, in His infinite kindness, provides us with the opportunity to do so.

The pasuk states "a man of kindness brings good upon himself"(Mishle 11:17) - a man of kindness - just as he carries out acts of chesed for others, does kindness for his own soul and worries about its needs and existence. Chazal tell us that when Hillel would take leave of his students from the Beit Midrash he would walk with them. His students would ask: Rabbi, to where are you going? He would reply "to perform a kindness for a particular guest in my home". Day after day, Hillel would respond in this fashion to this question, until finally his students asked him "do you really have a guest in your house every day of the year?" He replied: "this unfortunate soul, is it not a guest within my body? It is here today and gone tomorrow" (Vayikra Rabba 34:3). The guest for whom Hillel performed an act of kindness everyday was his own soul! If his soul was in need of breakfast, then he must feed it, just as he would feed a stranger staying in his house. The act of chesed here is even greater than with a stranger, for if a stranger does not eat in my house, presumably he can find another place to go. This guest, however, has nowhere else to go and therefore takes precedence over all other guests.

Few of us are on Hillel's level and consider eating to be an act of kindness towards our soul. In a more humorous fashion, the pasuk "ki hillel rasha al taavat nafsho" "when the wicked man glories in his personal desire" (Tehillim 10:3) has been interpreted as referring to the Tanna Hillel. The evil person who is only eating for himself, claims to be no different than Hillel - Just as Hillel's eating is an act of chesed, so is mine!. This is not the true meaning of the pasuk and is only quoted in jest. There is however another place in Tanach where we see a true reference to such behavior. Amos said of the people of his generation that they are people "who sing along to the tune of the lute, considering themselves like David with their musical instruments" (Amos 6:5). The wicked people play music and compare themselves to David - "David plays and so do I". The only difference is that David's playing is "leShem Shamayim", his music brings honor to the A-lmighty, while the wicked only play for their own pleasure. It is important that we "bring good upon ourselves" - that we watch our health. This includes eating as required, and doing whatever else is necessary to maintain our health, thereby safeguarding the object Hashem gave us for safekeeping.

We must protect our souls as well as our bodies - our souls need to eat as well. What sustains the soul? Chazal comment on the pasuk: "yet the wants of his 'nefesh' are never satisfied" (Kohelet 6:7) by comparing this to a simple man who married a princess. If he were to offer her all that this world has to offer, it would mean nothing to her. By the same token, if one were to feed his soul with all the delicacies of this world it would mean nothing for it is way above that (see Kohelet Rabba 6:1). A princess married to a villager gets no pleasure out of village life. What could this man possibly offer her? Some onions and garlic? In the house of the king she was accustomed to the delicacies of the king. This is how the soul feels in this world - it was carved from under the Throne of Glory and is accustomed to spiritual delicacies - Torah and Mitzvot. It may

be true that "over there" there are no Mitzvot to fulfill, yet the soul basks in spiritual pleasure. What does it receive in this world? Breakfast, lunch, and dinner? This is not what it needs! It needs to exist within the body, but what the soul really needs in order to sustain itself is Torah and Mitzvot - spiritual food. We must take care to provide our souls with the proper nourishment.

Sometimes man can become lazy and neglect to provide for his soul the nourishment it needs - he can invent all kinds of excuses for why he is now absolved of his obligation to perform a particular Mitzvah or learn Torah. Regarding all these excuses, the Chafetz Chaim gave a marvelous parable: a simpleton once witnessed the king drowning at sea and he jumped in to save him. The king, wishing to show his gratitude for saving his life, ordered that this man be given a sack, brought to the treasury, and given one hour to fill the sack. Whatever precious stones and diamonds he could take in that hour would be his. The simpleton did not fully understand what was happening and thought that the king's intention was to "repay evil for good" (Bereishit 44:4). Was it not enough that he saved the king's life? Was his reward now to be this slave labor of having to carry all these stones? He was very lazy and decided to carry out his orders in a deceitful. At the end of the hour he had placed only a small number of stones in his sack and exited the king's treasury with an almost empty bag. When he returned to his village he joyfully related what had transpired and how he had managed to outmaneuver the king and avoid the king's "decree". Among the villagers were those who recognized the value of these stones, they mocked him saying "you silly man! If you would not have been so lazy you could have taken enough precious stones from the king's treasury to support yourself and your descendants until the end of time. Instead you took a few stones whose value will only sustain you for a short while!"

The same may be said of the soul - Hashem sends it to this world to be filled with as much Torah, Mitzvot, and good deeds, as can be crammed into the sack - enough to sustain us for all generations. What happens? Man becomes lazy - he finds "heterim" not to learn now, to take a break, to eat, sleep, etc. The end result is that he leaves this world with only a few precious stones. It is true that we must eat and sleep, but together with this we must try to fit as much Torah, Mitzvot, and good deeds in to this sack as possible. What we have just said is especially worth remembering during the upcoming bein hazmanim period. It is true that we have a "heter" not to learn during bein hazmanim, after all it was created for having a rest from the difficult toil of learning we have done during the zman. We must understand, however, that this "heter" is no more than the king "permitting" us not to collect precious stones from his treasury. If we "take advantage" of this "heter" and do not gather the pearls, have we gained anything? I am not saying that we should not take a break during bein hazmanim, but we must keep in mind just how much rest we really need. Despite the fact that bein hazmanim was created to give us a rest, there is a "heter" to learn as well.

We have just discussed how to protect the soul. There are situations, however, which require forfeiting our lives. The commandment "bechol nafshecha" "with all your soul" includes the obligation to give it up in certain circumstances. We all know that there are

three cardinal sins which we are required to die rather than violate. During a time of persecution which is classified as a "shaat hashmad" we must give up our lives rather than transgress even a minor Mitzvah (see Sanhedrin 74a). The Rishonim dispute whether we are permitted to die rather than violate a Torah prohibition when not required to do so. If a non-Jew (not during a "shaat hashmad") were to threaten to kill us if we do not desecrate the Shabbat, are we permitted to die? Would this be viewed as being "machmir" in the laws of Shabbat (see Tosafot Avoda Zara 27b "yachol"), or as being "meikel" in our obligation to protect our lives and this would therefore not be permitted (see Rambam Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:4 and Ramma on Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 157:1). Some authorities forbid giving up one's life in this scenario unless he is a man of stature - an exceptionally pious and G-d fearing individual and the generation is weak in that particular Mitzvah. Such a person would be allowed to give up his life in order to sanctify Hashem's Name so that the nation will be witness to this and thereby learn to love and fear Hashem with all their hearts as he does (see Nemukey Yoseph Sanhedrin 18a in the paging of the Ri"f).

In cases where mandated by Halacha, it is a tremendous merit to be able to give up one's life "al Kiddush Hashem". R' Akiva said: "all my days I was troubled by this verse: 'with all your soul', even if He takes your soul, I said to myself, when will the opportunity come to my hands that I may fulfill this verse" (Brachot 61b). If so, the question we can raise is must we cry over a loved one who dies "al Kiddush Hashem", after all he was worthy of something wonderful to be able to die in such a manner. It would appear that there is no cause for crying over his death. The answer is that one must cry! In the words of Chazal: "cry for the mourners and not for the lost object for it has gone to eternal rest while we are left to sigh" (Moed Katan 25b). The pain we feel is not for the departed, he had the opportunity to sanctify Hashem's Name and now resides in one of the loftiest places in Gan Eden: "those executed by the government enjoy such an exalted level here that no other person can stand in their enclosure" (Baba Batra 10b). What about us who are left behind? This loved one is missing from OUR lives, and it is for this that we may cry. We cry for all those who have been killed "al Kiddush Hashem", for they are all missing from our lives. It is for this reason that Tisha B'Av is a day for mourning and lamenting all the tragedies and all those who were killed "al Kiddush Hashem" throughout the generations - the "asara harugei malchut", the atrocities in Germany, and many many more.

There is a commandment regarding customs of mourning: "You are children to Hashem, your G-d - you shall not cut yourselves and you shall not make a bald spot between your eyes for a dead person" (Devarim 14:1). What is the connection between the two halves of the pasuk? One of the interpretations offered is that one who returns his soul to Hashem is like a child returning home to his father. "You shall not cut yourselves" for there is nothing to be sorry for. If a good friend was visiting you, should his returning home make you sad? You can be sad for yourself that he is no longer with you, but you have no reason to feel sorry for him - he is after all returning to his father.

"A person is obligated to bless G-d for the bad just as he blesses G-d for the good"

(Brachot 54a). When the daughter of R' Natan Adler z"l (the Rebbe of the Chatam Sofer) died, he recited the bracha "baruch dayan haemet" with the same joy that he was accustomed to reciting "shehecheyanu" on the night of Yom Tov (see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 222:3). It is very hard for one to reach such a level.

Yoseph had explained to his brothers: "although you intended me harm, Hashem intended it for good" (Bereishit 50:20) - you did not bring upon me any harm. You may have intended bad, but from Hashem's perspective everything was for the good. We cannot learn from here that we are permitted to throw another person into a pit and sell him into slavery, after all kidnapping someone and selling him into slavery is punishable by death (see Devarim 24:7), but we see how Hashem had only good in mind. The story is told of a man who came to his Rav with a question - My Rabbi and teacher! I learned in the Mishna that we are required to bless Hashem for bad just as we bless for the good. How can we do this? Can a person sincerely bless Hashem for tragedies and illnesses? The Rav responded: "I do not know how to answer this question, the best person to ask would be R' Zusha for his life is filled with tragedy yet he always manages to have a smile on his face! Go ask him! The man approached R' Zusha explaining that the Rav had sent him to explain to him how one can fulfill this Mishna. R' Zusha answered: "I do not understand why the Rav sent you to me! I have never known suffering - from the day I was born until now Hashem has only done good for me ..."!

It is told about the Gaon M'Vilna that prior to his passing, he took hold of his Tzitzit and began to cry. His students asked him: "Rebbe, why are you crying, in a mere few days you will reside with all the tzaddikim in Gan Eden, who does not yearn for such an opportunity? The Gr"a responded: "I am crying that I am leaving this world - a world in which for a mere few kopecks one can fulfill the Mitzvah of Tzitzit, and I am going to a world in which all the money in the world will not afford me the opportunity to fulfill even a single Mitzvah" (see Aliyot Eliyahu note 117). The Gr"a was not lamenting his leaving this physical world - what did it mean to him? He was crying over no longer having the opportunity to serve Hashem. The only desire of a true servant of Hashem is to serve Hashem, he has no desire for the pleasures of this world. This is what he will miss when in the next world. Who can begin to imagine the life the Gr"a has in Gan Eden as reward for all the Torah he taught and learned, and his self-sacrifice for Torah and Mitzvot. But he will not be able to serve Hashem. It is this he was crying over.

When Hashem came to reclaim the soul of Aharon, Moshe said to Aharon (following Hashem's directive): "'go up unto the bed' - and he went up, 'stretch out your hands' - and he stretched them, 'close your mouth' - and he closed it, 'shut your eyes', and he shut them - immediately Moshe desired the same death, this is the meaning of what which was said to Moshe (when it was his turn to die) - 'and die as Aharon your brother died' (Devarim 32:50) - the death which you longed for" (Rashi Bamidbar 20:26). How are we to understand this exchange? For one hundred and twenty years Moshe battled Pharaoh, Sichon, Og, and even some of his own Jewish nation. Is it really of any significance to him whether he spends the last five minutes of his life on a bed or a bench? Is this what Moshe Rabenu is worried about? I think that what Moshe desired

was to be given commandments and instructions from Hashem up until the very last moment the way Aharon was given - go up on the bed, stretch out your hands, etc. Moshe desired this as well - to serve Hashem until his final breath. Moshe, in fact, merited a commandment no other human being received - the commandment to die: "ascend to this mount of Avarim, Mount Nevo which is in the land of Moav, which is before Yericho and see the Land of Canaan that I give to the Children of Israel as an inheritance, and die on the mountain where you will ascend" (Devarim 32:49-50). I am not aware of any other place in Tanach in which there is an explicit commandment to die - with the exception of Moshe Rabenu. This, however, is not the final commandment issued him, for when Moshe is already atop Har Nevo: "Hashem said to him: this is the land which I swore to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov saying:" (Devarim 34:4). Chazal explain: "what is the meaning of the word 'saying'? The Holy One, Blessed is He, said to Moshe: 'go SAY to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov - the oath that I swore to you, to give the Land of Israel to your descendants, I have now fulfilled to your children'" (Brachot 18b). The Jewish nation is about to enter the Land of Israel and Moshe dies by being commanded to immediately proceed to Gan Eden to relay this information to the holy forefathers. (This idea can help explain the difficult passage in Chazal which claims that Har Nevo is connected to Maarat HaMachpela. This is very hard to understand from a natural perspective, for Har Nevo is on the other side of the Jordan and Maarat HaMachpela is in Hebron. Perhaps there is an underground tunnel connecting them, but I am not aware if this is what Chazal had in mind. Here we find the connection - Moshe goes from Mount Nevo immediately to the graves of the forefathers in Maarat HaMachpela. There is a Yerushalmi which tells us that when Rabbanim gave discourses they often interchanged the letters "hei" and "chet" (see Yerushalmi Peah perek 7, halacha 5). By interchanging the "hei" and "chet" the names Har Nevo and Hebron are composed of the same letters ("hei/chet", "bet", "reish", "vav", "nun")).

During this period we mourn the destruction of Yerushalayim. What we have said regarding mourning a loved one applies to mourning the destruction of Yerushalayim as well. We have to mourn the Destruction to feel precisely what it is we are missing, so that we can then improve our ways and correct that which needs correcting. If we do not understand what is missing, we have no motivation for improving our ways. By not feeling the loss of the Beit Hamikdash, we cannot understand how terrible was the violation of the three cardinal sins: avoda zara, adultery, and murder, and the senseless hatred that existed during the second Beit Hamikdash (see Yoma 9b). What was the Destruction, what is missing from our lives? Shabbat is not the same without the Korban Musaf and our Pesach Seder is not the same without the Korban Pesach. There is much more lacking from our lives - for example we have no Sanhedrin! There is no end to the disputes found among the Rishonim and Achronim and there is no Sanhedrin to rule whether we must follow the opinion of the Ri"ף or Rabenu Tam, the Ktzot or the Netivot. We must try to feel this lack. We must do tshuva not only for the sins that lead to the destructions but for any subcategories of these sins as well. What today can be classified as a secondary form of Avoda Zara? Giving too much importance to this world.

Rather than understanding that this world is nothing, we place much importance in it -

we place value on things which to Hashem are of no consequence. What are ancillary forms of adultery? closeness (touching), gazing, and all else that the Shulchan Aruch forbids. Secondary forms of murder include embarrassing someone in public. Many Rishonim rule that the obligation to die rather than to violate murder applies to embarrassing someone in public no less than to actually killing him, just as one should rather die than come in close contact with forbidden relations no less than the act of adultery itself. Chazal after all tell us: "Better had a man thrown himself into a fiery furnace than publicly put his neighbor to shame" (Sotah 10b). Many commentaries understood this adage in its plain and simple meaning (see Tosafot ibid. and Shaarei Tshuva by Rabenu Yona - Shaar 3, note 139). I thought that we can add taking revenge and bearing a grudge to the list of subcategories of Avoda Zara as well as murder. We can derive this from Yoseph's words to his brothers: "it was not you who sent me here, but Hashem" (Bereishit 45:8). Yoseph is teaching us that one who takes revenge and bears a grudge is according a human being power of his own - as if he was able to do something without a heavenly decree. There is not only a degree of Avoda Zara in this attitude but of bloodshed as well. Revenge and bearing a grudge can lead to acts that border on killing, if not murder itself, G-d forbid!

In addition, to transgressing of these three cardinal sins, Chazal tell us "Yerushalayim was destroyed only because they desecrated the Shabbat in it, as the verse states: 'and from My Sabbaths they averted their eyes and I became profaned in their midst' (Yechezkel 22:26)" (Shabbat 119b). We thank G-d, do not intentionally violate the Shabbat but there are many halachot we must master to avoid unintentional transgression of the Shabbat. Chazal describe Hilchot Shabbat as being: "like mountains suspended by a hair" (Chagiga 10a). We must master all the halachot to know how to eat fish without violating the prohibition of "borer" and how to warm food without violating the prohibition of "bishul". In addition, Chazal tell us: "Yerushalayim was destroyed only because they diverted the schoolchildren in it from their Torah studies, as it states: 'to pour fury on little children in the streets' (Yirmiyahu 6:11), what is the reason that 'fury will pour out'? Because little children are 'in the streets'" (Shabbat 119b). Today, the moment Tisha B'Av has passed, we divert our children from their Torah studies for the bein hazmanim recess. We should at least see to it that this break from learning is only what is necessary to help us garner strength for the upcoming Elul zman, no more. Until what point is one considered a school child? Until he is able to answer any question ranging from Massechet Brachot and through Massechet Uktzin without hesitation. Is this not the amount of Torah knowledge we are required to master? As the Torah states: "You shall teach them" (Devarim 6:7). which Chazal interpret: "'and you shall teach them' - that the words of Torah should be sharply honed in your mouth, that if a man asks you something you will not stammer before answering him" (Kiddushin 30a). Can any of us answer a question from anywhere between Brachot and Uktzin without any hesitation? One who can answer such a question has certainly fulfilled the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah, but one who cannot is still viewed as a school child - I would venture to say that anyone in our generation is still in this category.

Although during bein hazmanim we need not learn with the same intensity as we do during the zman, we must do our utmost to utilize this time to review what we have covered during the zman. Perhaps we can spend the time learning things which we do not have time for during the zman, such as bekiut and Tanach. Hashem did not give us twenty four books of Tanach in order that they remain on the bookshelves! It was known that the Gr"a would not accept a potential student into his Yeshiva if he did not have a mastery over the Tanach. If Yeshivat Hakotel were to institute such a requirement, I am afraid we would have to close our doors. Even if this is not a prerequisite for acceptance into our Yeshiva, it is worthwhile to know these twenty four holy books. Once we have finished the Tanach, it is worthwhile going through the books of the Mishna - to know the contents of Uktzin and other Massechtot we do not always get to learn. Once we have finished that we can move on to Gemara. We are no longer in the category of "five years old for learning the written Torah" (Avot 5:21), nor "the age of ten for learning Mishna" (ibid.), we have already reached "the age of fifteen for Talmud" (ibid.) and we therefore may learn Gemara. The Rambam describes learning Gemara as understanding everything from beginning to end and being able to derive one thing from another and compare one thing to another (see Hilchot Talmud Torah 1:11). This complete mastery and understanding is as opposed to the Ri"f, Rambam, Ktzot, and R' Chaim that are written and printed for us and thus would remain in the category of Mishna. There is no need to mention that during bein hazmanim one must take care to recite Kriyat Shma and Shmone Esre during the proper times as well as to make all efforts to daven with a minyan.

Bein Hazmanim is also a good opportunity to honor our parents. Although while in Yeshiva we are also fulfilling "kibud av vaem", for any son who grows to be a Talmid Chacham is bringing great honor to his parents, whether while they are in this world or after one hundred and twenty years. At this time we must do our best to fulfill the simple understanding of this Mitzvah - in "this world" terms. This is also an opportunity to set an example - to be a Kiddush Hashem to people outside the Yeshiva - let them see the positive influence the Torah has on those who learn it. In the words of Chazal: "that the Name of Heaven become beloved through you - that one should read Scripture, learn Mishna, and serve Torah scholars. And your dealings with people should be conducted in a pleasant manner - what do people say about him? 'Fortunate is his father who taught him Torah, fortunate is his teacher who taught him Torah. Woe unto people who do not learn Torah, this person who learned Torah see how pleasant are his ways, how refined are his deeds, regarding him Scripture states 'He said to Me: 'you are My servant, Israel, through whom I am glorified' (Yeshayahu 49:3)" (Yoma 86a). By being such an example, you can influence others to send their sons to Yeshiva, it is worthwhile becoming a Talmid Chacham. "But one who learns Scripture, studies Mishna, and serves Torah scholars, and his business transactions are not conducted faithfully, and whose manner of speaking with people is not pleasant, what do people say about him? 'Woe unto that person who learned Torah, woe unto his father who Taught him Torah, woe unto his teacher who taught him Torah. This person who learned Torah see how perverse are his deeds, and how ugly are his ways. Regarding him Scripture says:

'when it was said of them these are the people of Hashem, but they departed the Land' (Yechezkel 36:20)" (ibid.). From observing such a person, people can, G-d forbid, decide against sending their children to Yeshiva. It is incumbent upon us to sanctify Hashem's Name wherever we may be.

The main goal of bein hazmanim is to rest as a means of preparing for Elul. Elul may be quantitatively a short zman but in quality it is great - it is the source of spiritual nourishment for the entire year. A good Elul can, with Hashem's help, culminate with a "ketiva vachatima tova" - something we are in desperate need of. If we look back on this past year - how many terrorist acts and other tragedies, we see the importance of being signed and sealed for a good decree. They speak of the situation getting worse, G-d forbid, but we have been through enough - let us do our best to merit a "ketiva vachatima tova". The key to this is a good Elul. We must rest well during bein hazmanim in order to have a good Elul.

We must strengthen our understanding and realization that all that happens to us is decreed in Heaven - not by one political party or another. Of course we must choose the right path, but we must realize that if Hashem wishes, any Prime Minister will succeed, and when it is not His wish - nothing will succeed. All that happens to us is decreed above and Hashem works based on our actions. In the end, our actions determine how the world is run. This is particularly true in Eretz Yisrael, the Land in which the Divine Providence is more visible. In Parshat Ekev we find two sections dealing with the Land of Israel. The first of these sections being: "For Hashem, your G-d, is bringing you to a good Land; a Land with streams of water, of springs and underground water coming forth in valley and mountain ... You will eat and you will be satisfied and bless Hashem, your G-d, for the good Land that He gave you" (Devarim 8:7-10). Later on in the Parsha we find "for the Land to which you come, to possess it - it is not like the land of Egypt that you left, where you would plant your seed and water it on foot like a vegetable garden. A Land that Hashem, your G-d, seeks out; the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year's end" (Devarim 11:10-12). What is the difference between these two sections? It appears to me that the first section does not deal with the uniqueness of Eretz Yisrael in contrast to Chutz la'Aretz, but rather as opposed to life in the desert. In the desert water emerged from a rock and bread descended from heaven. Now, Hashem has brought us into a land in which the food is natural - you plant and it grows. The proof for this is the description "a Land with streams of water, of springs and underground water coming forth in valley and mountain". Are there no springs in Chutz la'Aretz? There are many lands in which one plants and harvests. It must be that the Torah at this point is praising life in Eretz Yisrael as opposed to what it was in the desert. (This can answer the question posed to me by R' Yonah Emanuel zt"l. The Torah commands us: "You will eat and you will be satisfied and bless Hashem, your G-d, for the good Land that He gave you". If you ate and are satisfied then thank Hashem for the Land of Israel. This is all fine for one who lives in Eretz Yisrael. Where does it say that one who lives in New York must thank Hashem for the produce of America? Yet, there is not a single posek who rules that the obligation of Birkat Hamazon in Chutz la'Aretz is only D'Rabbanan! Based on what we

have just said we can answer this question. The obligation to bless Hashem "for the good that Land that He gave you", does not refer to the Land of Israel as opposed to Chutz la'Aretz, rather to this Land as opposed to the desert. The pasuk refers to a Land in which we can grow our own food - this clearly applies to other fertile lands as well.

The second section, however, deals with the uniqueness of Eretz Yisrael in comparison to Chutz la'Aretz - "A Land that Hashem, your G-d, seeks out; the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year's end". Eretz Yisrael is not run exclusively by laws of nature - if we are righteous it will rain, if not there will be no rain and perhaps worse things will happen. This idea is unique to the Land of Israel. It is only here that Hashem's Providence is so visible. Those of us who live in Eretz Yisrael must take care that Hashem's vigilance over us be for the good, that "the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year" be for the good. We must do our utmost to merit a "ketiva vachatima tova". If we pray that we merit learning Torah through tranquility of body and soul, which is truly what we yearn for, then there is a chance Hashem will accept our prayers and we will merit serving Hashem through serenity and joy. We will then, with Hashem's help, reach a world in which "the earth will be as filled with knowledge of Hashem as water covering the sea bed" (Yeshayahu 11:9), speedily in our day. Amen.

Kollel Rennert Dvar Torah by HaRav Nissan Salmani

"NACHAMU NACHAMU AMI"

The haftarot beginning this week and recited for the next seven weeks are referred to by Chazal as the shiva d'nechemta - the seven haftarot of consolation. According to one explanation we are being consoled for remaining in exile and not having yet merited salvation.



The Avudraham (seder haparshiot vehahtarot) views the opening words of these haftarot as an ongoing conversation between Hashem and the Jewish nation - with the prophets acting as liaisons.

Haftarat Vaetchanan begins: "nachamu nachamu ami" - Hashem is instructing the prophets to console the Jewish nation.

Haftarat Ekev - "and Zion said, Hashem has forsaken me" - they refuse to be comforted. Haftarat Re-eh- "oniyah soarah lo nuchama" "O afflicted, storm-tossed, uncontrolled one." The prophets are reporting to Hashem that the Assembly of Israel refuses to be consoled.

Haftarat Shoftim - "It is I, I am He Who comforts you" - Hashem informing the nation that He will comfort them Himself.

Haftarat Ki Tetze - "sing out, O barren one ... breakout into glad song and be jubilant"

Haftarat Ki Tavo - "arise! Shine! For your light has arrived"

In these last two haftarat Hashem is commanding the Jewish nation, to sing out in joy, they have been comforted.

Haftarat Nitzavim-Vayelech (Nitzavim when separate) - "I will rejoice intensely with Hashem, my soul will exult with my G-d, for He has dressed me in the raiment of salvation, in a robe of righteousness has He cloaked me ..." - now I have what to rejoice about.

The Midrash (Eicha Zuta Parsha 1) wonders why the prophet prophesied with the double language: "nachamu nachamu ami" - why is the word nachamu written twice. Rebbi explains that each of the plagues suffered by the Jewish nation was actually of double severity, as we find Yirmiyahu lamenting: shever al shever nikra "disaster upon disaster has occurred" (Yirmiyahu 4:20), and bacho tivke balaila "she weeps bitterly in the night" (Eicha 1:2), and eini eini yorda mayim "my eye continuously runs with water" (ibid. 16), and chet chata Yerushalayim "Jerusalem sinned greatly" (ibid. 8). Since the Jewish nation sinned doubly: 'For she has received from the hand of Hashem double for all her sins' (Yeshayahu 40:2 - haftarah for Vaetchanan), and since she suffered double, then the comfort and consolation will be double - nachamu nachamu ami, uri uri livshi uzech Zion "wake up! Wake up! Don your strength O Zion" (middle of haftarah for Shoftim), hitoreri hitorerikumi Yerushalayim "Awaken yourself! Awaken yourself! Arise O Jerusalem" (middle of haftarah for Shoftim), anochi anochi hu menachemchem (beginning of haftarah for Shoftim), and much more. They said to Him: You are granting us double "for I struck you the blow of an enemy" (Yirmiyahu 30:14), to which Hashem responded: "do not read it as the blow of an enemy, rather the blow of Iyov - what I have done to Iyov: "Hashem added on to all that Iyov had had, until there was double" (Iyov 42:10), Hashem said: if I gave Iyov double then certainly to my children: "they will inherit a double portion in their land" (Yeshayahu 61:7).

In the Sefer Torat HaMinchah (by a disciple of the Rashb"a) on Parshat Vaetchanan we find an answer to the question posed by Midrash Eicha: "the prophet used the double language: nachamu nachamu ami to mean a double consolation - console those who were in that generation and console those in the future generations - in other words, in every generation the sages and speakers must inform the Jewish nation of the consolations which are written.

May it be the will of Hashem that He fulfill in us the words of the prophets soon and may our eyes see His return to Zion with mercy. May we merit fulfillment of the pasuk: "gladden us according to the days You afflicted us, the years when we saw evil" (Tehillim 90:15) - Rashi explains that He should bring us joy in the days of the Moshiach for the same number of days which we have suffered in the exile and the number of days which we saw evil.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Visitor Log

The following people visited/learned in Yeshiva:

- Ari Finkel (5765)

Baruch Dayan Emet

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

- The father of Daniel Scherban (5769). The family will be sitting shiva in Nes Zion at Rehov HaBanim 50.

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

Printer Friendly Tehillim List

- Ditza bat Vardit
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shaindel
- Chaya bat Grunia
- Yitzchok ben Shayna Ita
- Moshe Zanvel ben Brindel
- Gershon Yitzchok ben Mottel Tzerel
- Reuven ben Tova Chaya
- Rivka Margalit bat Etta
- Chaya Meira Mindel bas Chava Golda
- Sarah Nechama bas Russ Malka
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Elazar ben Nouber
- Na'ava Bat Ami bat Sara Leah
- Gilad ben Aviva
- Edmund ben Nazir
- Devorah Leah bat Hindel
- Avram Gershon ben Tzippah
- Sarah Nechama bas Russ Malka
- Dovid ben Miriam
- Avraham David ben Miriam Goldeh
- Ephraim Yitzchak ben Golda
- Margalit bat Rachel
- Yaacov ben Baila
- Leah bat Eidel
- Ester Bas Lea
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Chaya Esther bat Golda Rachel
- Shayna bas Chava
- Eliezer ben Sorah
- Fruma bat Rochel
- Yonatan Moshe ben Devorah Tova
- Naomi Sara bas Henna Miriam
- Fruma bas Ita
- Tinok ben Esther Sharon
- Leah Bat Rivkah
- Zacharia Kalman ben Yael Margolit
- Eliezer ben Sorah
- Shmuel Chai Ben Hadassa

- Evelyn Bat Dina
- Rafael Pinchas ben Esther
- Avraham Pinchas ben Sarah Etel
- David Yosef ben Faige Perel
- Tsilah Blimah bas Tsipporah
- Tuvia ben Yachad



And of course we are always davening for the safe return of Gilad Shalit (Gilad ben Aviva)

[Submit Names](#) to the list.

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

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,
Rav Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh