

Ki Savo | Elul 14 - 20 | August 31 - Sep 6



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**Shabbos Zmanim**

Summer 2023 **Early Friday Mincha**, 18 Main  
at מנחה גדולה and every 15 minutes  
from 1:45pm-5:00pm

CANDLE LIGHTING	7:11 <sup>PM</sup>
MINCHA in tent Aleph	7:00 <sup>PM</sup>
CHABAD MINCHA	7:21 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	7:29 <sup>PM</sup>
<b>SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:</b>	
VASIKIN followed by Daf Yomi Shiur, 20↑	5:37 <sup>AM</sup>
Shachris 1 18 Main	8:00 <sup>AM</sup>
Shachris 2 Tent א	9:15 <sup>AM</sup>
Shachris 3 BAIS CHABAD 20↑	10:00 <sup>AM</sup>
Shachris 4 18 Main	10:30 <sup>AM</sup>
<hr/>	
PIRCHEI	2:00 <sup>PM</sup>
PIRKEI AVOS PEREK Gimmel and Daled	
MINCHA FOLLOWED BY SHALOSH SEUDOS	7:10 <sup>PM</sup>
SHKIYA	7:27 <sup>PM</sup>
MAARIV 1	8:07 <sup>PM</sup>
MAARIV 2	8:12 <sup>PM</sup>

**Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!**  
9:00 pm – 11:00 pm | 18 Main

**Weekday Zmanim**

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz

Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag  
and 12 min. before Shkia

**NEITZ**

S 6:25 | M 6:26 | T 6:27 | W 6:28  
T 6:29 | F 6:30 | SH 6:31

**SHEMA- Magen Avraham**

S 8:57 | M 8:57 | T 8:58 | W 8:58  
T 8:58 | F 8:59 | SH 8:59

**SHEMA- GRA**

S 9:40 | M 9:40 | T 9:40 | W 9:40  
T 9:41 | F 9:41 | SH 9:41

**TEFILA- GRA**

S 10:45 | M 10:45 | T 10:45 | W 10:45  
T 10:45 | F 10:45 | SH 10:45

**CHATZOS**

S 12:55 | M 12:54 | T 12:54 | W 12:54  
T 12:53 | F 12:53 | SH 12:53

**PLAG**

S 6:04 | M 6:03 | T 6:01 | W 6:00  
T 5:59 | F 5:57 | SH 5:55

**SHKIA**

S 7:25 | M 7:24 | T 7:22 | W 7:20  
T 7:19 | F 7:17 | SH 7:15

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Rabbi Lankry *Dear Kehila,*

## The Haftorah of Parshas Ki Savo

This week's *haftorah* brings us to the concluding dimensions of Hashem's encompassing efforts to comfort the Jewish people. The prophet Yeshaya shares with us a glimpse of the glorious era of *mashiach* and reveals Hashem's unbelievable sensitivity and concern for His chosen nation. Yeshaya says, "Lift your eyes and see them coming; your sons coming from afar and your daughters accompanied by the kings of the world." (60:3-5) The cloud of darkness and confusion which continuously plagues society will finally be lifted and the entire world will flow into Jerusalem in streams to discover the truths of Hashem and His Torah. Instead of the all too familiar scene of the Jewish people streaming out of their homeland into exile, a new flow will occur. Not only will our oppressors permit us to return to Israel, they will even personally escort us back to our homeland. And to complete this picture, nations will display sincere interest in the Jewish people's traditions and will flock to our homeland to discover our Jewish values and systems.

The prophet continues, "All the choice sheep of Kedar will gather to you.... to be offered on My altar and accepted with desire." (60: 7) The nations of the world will appreciate in sincerity the value of service to Hashem through sacrifice and will continuously offer Him an abundance of sacrifices. In place of their cruel campaign for thousands of years to destroy and never allow the reconstruction of the *Bais Hamikdash* they will finally comprehend spiritual values and utilize the *Bais Hamikdash* to capacity. The prophet adds, "And foreign nations will build your walls and their kings will contribute the funds" (60:10). Even the demolished walls of Israel's cities will be rebuilt by her oppressors, nations who previously acted so harshly toward the Jewish people.

According to the Rambam *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 11:1,4 the *Beis HaMikdash* will be built by man, more specifically by *mashiach*. Indeed, its construction will be one of the signs of *mashiach's* advent. The message of the *navi* makes sense as the *Bais Hamikdash* will be man-made so the nations can partake in the rebuilding. But according to Rashi, there will be nothing for them to do; it will come down complete from Hashem.

According to Rashi, (Sukkah 41a, Rosh HaShanah 30a – see also Tosafos, Sukkah – the *Beis HaMikdash* has already been constructed by G-d and exists in the heavenly realms, waiting for the time when it will descend to the earth. For the third *Beis HaMikdash* will be "the Sanctuary of Hashem, established by Your hands." When the setting within the world is appropriate, this heavenly structure will descend and become an actual reality within our material world. Why would we want the nations to partake at all in the building of the *Bais Hamikdash*? Why should they have that privilege after all that they put us through in 2000 years of *galut*?

Maybe this is a lesson that is appropriate for entering the *Yamim Noraim*; the ability and freedom of forgiveness. To forgive liberates us in a way that enables us to move on and rebuild. When we hold on to the past we suffer and can never rebuild anything. However, if we want the *Bais Hamikdash* we will have to rid ourselves from that hate and move on.

As the New Year is upon us and we really want to build the next year, we can only do so if we forgive.



## Bikkurim and Amalek

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

Last Shabbos we discussed the significance of the nation of Amalek. Why are the people so bad that-- as pointed out by the Ramban--we must continually tell our children the story of how they attacked us right after we left Mitzarayim? Rashi explains that no other nation dared to attack us; Amalek was the first and it is because of this that we need to eradicate its name and memories. There is, however, an inherent problem here. If we are forced to review this act each year, how are we erasing its memory? Aren't we in fact keeping the memory alive and well? It must be that by eradicating the name we are actually expunging from within ourselves a deep trait that their name evokes.

The midrash explains that Amalek is called a *letz*, a scoffer, a clown. What is wrong with a being referred to as a joker? Plenty of kids have been called clowns by their teachers. Do they deserve a terrible punishment? The *pasuk* says that the main problem with Amalek was that they 'cooled us off' – *asher karcha baderech*. Rashi provides three explanations as to what this word 'karcha' means. The simple *pshat* is that Klal Yisrael were hot and parched from their journey. This was the nation that everyone respected and revered after being showered with the miracles that took place in Mitzaryim and Amalek cooled everyone off by illustrating that this esteemed nation could also be attacked and that damage can be inflicted on those stragglers in the back of the crowd.

My friend R Dovid Gurwitz told me an amazing *gematria*: The name Yisrael is 541 minus the *gematria* of fire-aish- which is 301 and you're left with 240 which is the *gematria* of Amalek. So we can say that on a deeper level, Klal Yisrael's power is their passion and this is represented by fire. Amalek, it would seem, has the ability to cool off that fire. What is that power? The *gematria* of Amalek is also *sefek* – doubt. The power of Amalek was to demonstrate that things that happen are not to be taken at face value. Don't be so sure that Hashem runs the world. It is not so clear that Klal Yisrael is special and that Hashem glorifies himself in the Jewish people and has a special *hashgachah* on every Jewish soul.

The critical aspect of Amalek is its power of taking something significant and diluting it. Amalek removed the most significant feature of the Jewish people – its pride and specialness – thereby created a division between them and Hashem. There is nothing more important in life than living each day with the goal of being committed to and aware of Hashem.

So how does this tie into *bikkurim*?

The first fruit that a person sees budding in his field represents all the hard work he put into its growth the previous year. When a person takes that fruit and brings it to Hashem he is saying, "I recognize that everything comes from you" and by doing so he is removing the memory of Amalek from this world. He is showing that he is aware of Hashem's presence and that His constant *hashgachah* was needed so that this first fruit was able to bud and grow. How many miracles must take place in order for fruits to ripen? This is the power of *bikkurim* and the connection between Amalek, who fights *hashgachah*, as opposed to the act of giving *bikkurim* which celebrates and trains us to constantly be aware of Hashem's *chesed* in this world – *olam chesed yibane*.

Wednesday Night 8pm – Smichas chaver Rabbi Coren Office  
Shabbos Morning - Vasikin Minyan & 8:00am Minyan

# Singing My Sins?



Rabbi YY Jacobson

I want to achieve an ambitious goal with this essay: I want to bring back confession to Judaism. People attribute confession to Catholicism; they think it is the job of the priests. I believe it is time to bring it back to our people. I am going to ask of each of my readers that during the following day you should make at least one confession.

Here is a story:

The Baal Shem Tov once visited a town in which the people complained that their *chazzan* behaved strangely. It seems that on Yom Kippur, he would chant the *al chet*, confession of sins, in a merry melody, rather than in a more appropriately somber tune. When questioned by the Baal Shem Tov, the *chazzan* explained:

"Rebbe, a king has many servants who serve him. Some of them prepare the royal meals, others serve the food, while others place the royal crown on the king's head, and yet others are in charge of running the affairs of the country, etc. Each of them rejoices in his work and the privilege he has to serve and to be so close to the king.

"Now the palace also has a janitor, charged with the duty of removing the rubbish and filth from the palace. The janitor looks and deals with filth all day. He approaches it, gathers it, and removes it. Do you think that he should be depressed because he is looking at dirt all day? No! He is happy because he is also serving the king. He is **removing the dirt from the king's palace, ensuring that the palace is beautiful!** It is not the dirt he is focused on, it is the King's palace and its beauty.

"When a Jew sins, he amasses some dirt on his soul. When he is confessing his sins, it is not the sins, the guilt, the darkness, and the negativity, that he is focused on; it is the holiness and beauty of his soul. He is removing the layers of dirt that are eclipsing the soul; he is allowing his inner light to shine in its full glory. Is that not a reason to sing and rejoice?"

The Baal Shem Tov was deeply moved by this response because it captures one of his essential ideas. While other approaches in Jewish ethics focused often on the negativity of sin and its dire consequences in this world and even more

in the next world, the Baal Shem Tov and the teachings of Chassidus focus primarily on the infinite holiness of every soul and heart.

*"Just as when you look at the earth you can never estimate how many treasures are hidden beneath its crust, so when you look at a Jew you can never estimate how many treasures lie beneath his or her crust,"* the Baal Shem Tov once said.

This was one of the most important ideas of the Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760), whose birthday we celebrate on the 18th of Elul.

When you encounter a fellow Jew – and that includes yourself – who may have many a blemish, and committed many a sin and mistake, don't tell him how bad he is; tell him how good he is and how good he can be; how much Hashem loves him and needs him, and then he automatically he will want to remove the clouds blacking his inner sunlight.

It is interesting, that even to this day today, in most Jewish communities, the confession is done with a melody: *"Ashamanu, Bagadnu..."* *"Veal kulam Eloka Selechos..."* Our confession of sins is inspired by the confession in *Parshas Ki Savo*.

## An Exercise

I want each of you to make a confession today. Tell someone—your rabbi, your friend, your spouse—something very positive about yourself. One positive thing about your soul and your life. Something you are proud of. Not in an arrogant way, but as a "confession." Because when you realize how good and capable you are, you might ask yourself the question, why I'm I not living up to my potential.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:45am (18 Main)  
Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)  
**Shabbos:** Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)  
Morning 9:00 (20 Upstairs)  
After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)

## UFARATZTA



### ELUL: EESH L'REIEIHU UMATANOS L'EYONIM --Esther 9,22

...these are auspicious days to contemplate the content and teaching of a story told by my holy father-in-law\*, about the Tzemach Tzedek\*\* about *gemilas chassadim*:

The Tzemach Tzedek used to see his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe\*\*\*, after the Alter Rebbe's passing, while he was awake or in a night vision in his sleep, and the Alter Rebbe would solve all his difficulties and questions in the Torah, *niglah* and *nistar*.

## A GEMACH IS GREATER THAN GIVING TZEDAKA

Once the Tzemach Tzedek was locked in his room, learning diligently. As he was learning, many questions that he could not solve arose, and he very much wanted to see his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, as usual, but this time that did not happen, and it caused him great pain.

The next morning, as the Tzemach Tzedek passed the marketplace on the way to his saintly father-in-law, the Miteler Rebbe's\*\*\*\* *Shul* for *shachris*, he met a merchant named Mordechai Eliyahu. Mordechai Eliyahu asked the Tzemach Tzedek for a loan of a few rubles, to be paid back in the evening or the next day, as that day was a good day for him to profit,

since it was a market day. The Tzemach Tzedek told him "come to my house after *davening*, when I return home, and I will give you the loan."

For what happened next, please see next week's BET.

--- from Rebbe's letter. *Otzer Igros Kodesh B'nai Hayeshivos* edition P110.

\*6th Chabad Rebbe.

\*\*3rd Chabad Rebbe.

\*\*\*The Baal HaTanya, Founder of Chabad.

\*\*\*\*2nd Chabad Rebbe.

**Chai Elul: Yom Holedes of the Baal Shem Tov and the Ba'al HaTanya.**



# Introduction to Hilchos Esrog

by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner



## Source for using an esrog

The Pasuk in Parshas Emor states: וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר “You shall take on the first day a *p’ree eitz hadar*, a fruit of a tree, which is beautiful.” How do we know it means an esrog? Also, we need to clarify if the adjective, beautiful is referring to the fruit or to the tree.

There are a number of explanations given:

Rashi, in Chumash, quotes the *Gemara Sukkah* (35a), that the word הָדָר can also be read as הִדָּר – which dwells. While other fruits fall off the tree, an *esrog* remains on the tree from year to year.

Rashi also quotes another explanation from the Gemara. The words פְּרִי עֵץ – the fruit of a tree – seem to be superfluous, as every fruit grows on a tree. The Gemara explains that it means the fruit and the tree are the same, meaning that the taste of the fruit and the branches are the same.

The *Kapos Temarim* explains that this is not referring to the taste of the fruit itself, since the fruit does not have the same taste as the tree. Rather, it means that the taste of the peel and the branches are the same. However, the *Kapos Temarim* wonders about this, since a lemon also boasts the same characteristic – the taste of the peel and the branches are the same. So, how do we know the Torah means an *esrog*, and not a lemon? He explains that an *esrog* is unique, as it is mostly comprised of the peel. It is therefore reasonable to say that the Torah is referring to an *esrog*, since most of the fruit has the same taste as the branches.

This is all based on the explanation given by the Gemara and quoted by Rashi, that although the esrog is not spelled out, it is alluded to in the language of the pasuk.

The Rambam, in his introduction to *Peirush Hamishnayos*, discusses the concept of *asmachta*, an allusion in the language of the pasuk. He explains that whenever the Gemara finds an *asmachta*, it is not because we were unsure of the fact. We know that it is true, based on our unending chain all the way back to the generation that received the Torah, and we are not questioning its validity.

Similarly, the Rambam adds, when the Torah writes פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר, we know that the Torah means an esrog, simply because that is what was taught to Moshe on Har Sinai and handed down from generation to generation. That is what was used by our parents and grandparents, and even if there would be no clear source in the pasuk, we would know that it is an esrog. When the Gemara asks: “how do we know that it is an esrog, maybe it is a different fruit?” the Gemara was not entertaining a possibility that it is a different fruit. The Gemara was just finding an allusion to this fact in the text of the pasuk, but we have no doubt that the Torah is referring to an esrog.

The Ramban in Chumash, however, suggests that there is also a source in the simple reading of the text of the pasuk. He quotes the Ibn Ezra, who says that when the Torah requires a beautiful fruit, it is obviously referring to an *esrog*, which is, by far, the most beautiful fruit. According to this, the word “*hadar*” is an adjective, describing the *esrog* as a beautiful fruit.

The question still remains: Even if an *esrog* is the nicest fruit, where do we see in the Torah a requirement to take the nicest? As long as it is a nice fruit, it should also qualify.

We can suggest that when the Torah writes “*hadar*,” it does not mean to take a nice fruit, but to take the *most beautiful fruit*, which is an esrog. Additionally, since the *esrog* is the nicest, all other fruits cannot be called beautiful, since in comparison with an esrog they are not so beautiful.

The Ramban, himself, suggests that the word “*hadar*,” which means nice, or desirable, is actually a noun and is another word for the esrog tree, since the word *esrog* in Aramaic also means nice, or desirable. According to the Ramban the word “*hadar*” is the name of both the tree and the fruit in Hebrew and the word “*esrog*” is the name of both the tree and the fruit in Aramaic.

## In summary

Rashi and the Rambam, based on the Gemara, maintain that the source for the *esrog* is from an *asmachta*, an allusion. And according to the Ibn Ezra and the Ramban, the simple understanding of the text of the pasuk is referring to an *esrog*.

## Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

CELL: 845-499-6354



## Rabbi Scheiner

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The man wrote that he was so troubled by what he had said that he had difficulty sleeping at night, and he begged Rav Moshe for forgiveness.

Of course, Rav Moshe (who once said that he had never held a grudge against anyone) forgave the man. But to Rav Moshe, that was not sufficient enough. It was imperative that he put the man's mind at ease as quickly as possible.

Using the envelope's return address, Rav Moshe obtained the man's phone number and called to tell him that he had forgiven him.

Rav Moshe Feinstein clearly went above and beyond when it came to the care and sensitivity of others!



Torah U'Tefila as compiled by  
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## GET RID OF YOUR "SHITOS"

ולא תסור מכל הדברים אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום ימין ושמאל, –  
ללכת אחרי אלהים אחרים לעבדם –

"And do not turn away from any of the words that I command you this day, right or left, to follow the gods of others, to worship them."

The *posuk* begins that one should not turn away from any of the words – referring to not turning away from any of the *mitzvos* of the *Torah*. Why does the *posuk* switch at the end, and say that one should not worship *avodah zarah*, which is only one of the *mitzvos* of the *Torah*? Moreover, the *pesukim* before this do not even warn about serving *avodah zarah*, as the only mention of *avodah zara* is in 27:15 "ארור האיש אשר" – "עשה פסל ומסכה" – which is a warning not to "make" *avodah zarah* – but does not discuss worshipping *avodah zara*.

There are two types of people who transgress the words of the *Torah*. There are those who have *emunah* in *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*, however, their *yetzer hara* overpowers them, and gets them to transgress the *Torah*. When the *yetzer hara* does not overpower them, they do heed the *mitzvos* of the *Torah*, and when they transgress the *Torah*, they recognize that what they did is prohibited. Then there are people whose *yetzer hara* get them to transgress the words of the *Torah hakdosha*, however, they refuse to admit to

themselves that their actions were improper. They therefore come up with new "*shitos*", to explain that what they are doing is correct. Coming up with new *shitos* will ultimately bring one to worship *avodah zara*. The *posuk* here is speaking about those who make for themselves new *shitos* to explain why they are turning away from the *Torah hakdosha*. Thus, the *posuk* says, that one who turns away from all the words of the *Torah*, meaning that he comes up with explanations and *shitos* as to why he is not actually following all the words of the *Torah*, he will ultimately come to worship *avodah zara*.

This fits in well with the words of the *posuk*, as the *posuk* says that one must not turn away from any words, "right or left" – meaning one should not be more to the right, more *machmir* (stringent), or more to the left, more *meikil* (lenient). One whose *yetzer hara* overcomes him, is never "*machmir*" rather he is always *meikil*. Thus, the *Torah* is telling us that we are speaking about one who comes up with new *shitos*, and at times those *shitos* are "*machmir*" – but since it is coming from an evil source, it is improper and wrong, and will bring him to serve *avodah zara*.

The *Torah* is teaching us here that we must follow the directive of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and the *chachomim*. One should not come up with his own *shitos*, even if they are more *machmir*, rather one must follow the *mesorah*. *Elul* is a month when we must fix ourselves, and now is a good time to rededicate ourselves to the *mesorah* – to the *psak* that we must follow.

## The Blessing of Change Parshas Ki Savo

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



The year is ending -- less than two weeks away from Rosh Hashanah and the bright lights of judgment are just around the corner. Are we prepared? Look inside -- are we who we want to be? We can always be better. Better parents, children...better people.

But are we satisfied with the type of person we have become? Are we the person we dreamt we would be, years back? Look at our daily routine, our surroundings...the ebb and flow of our existence... Want to make changes? Now is the time to plan, think and rearrange priorities... One piece of advice, do not make big resolutions. Small people make big resolutions, great people make smaller promises that can be kept... Make our life great again with solid but attainable goals.

With G -- ds help this year it will stick... But last year, did we veer off the path? a little, alot? We have not been our best possible self every moment -- but we have the gift of T'shuvah for just this reason. Were we quick to judge? condemn? less than pleasant to those around us? Mitzvos go on the scale... Then shortcomings, our aveiros... Whoops -- there goes the scale! Fortunate is the person whose good deeds far outweigh his misguided actions. How can we tilt those scales?

A young man apprenticed himself to a silversmith with a large family and many obligations who promised him a modest wage each week. But time after time he was unable to pay his apprentice. His own bills were overwhelming. There was simply nothing left in the till. What to do?

"If I demand my payment, weekly, I know the silversmith won't be able to pay. Let the weeks add up -- he will surely not pay and I will end up with nothing!"

In the back of the store underneath some piled up papers and assorted clutter was a large tin can. Into this can the apprentice put silver and gold shavings every day. They were so small, hardly worth much and not missed. After two years he approached his employer. "It's been some time since I received remuneration... I know that I've learnt a lot here, but we agreed to a small salary..."

"How much do I owe?" asked the forlorn silversmith. They made the calculations...

"I simply do not have that amount of money!"

The apprentice went to the back room and returned holding a can laden with gold and silver pieces... It was now very heavy. They weighed the can -- it was a little more than the young man was owed. The silversmith was overjoyed and blessed the young man profusely for his foresight and planning!

And so it is with our lives -- we panic when our virtues are outnumbered by our failings. Watch as the scale tilts ominously in the wrong direction -- but wait... The defending angels are wheeling in cartloads of suffering, anguish and pain -- combined with our *zechusim* they tilt the scale!





## As Good (Or Bad) As Done

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

“...An Aramean tried to destroy my forefather...”  
(Devarim 26:5)

Among the precepts which Bnei Yisroel must observe after conquering the Land of Israel is that of *bikkurim*, the First Fruits; a landowner is required to bring a basket containing his first ripened fruits to the Beis Hamikdash, where he must present them to the Kohein. After taking back his basket, the landowner recites a declaration of gratitude to Hashem for His incessant benevolence, which has ensured Jewish survival throughout history.

A key passage which represents a major part of the Pesach *Haggadah* service begins with the words “*Arami oveid avi*”. Following the interpretation of the *Ba'al Haggadah*, Rashi teaches that although the simple text translates as “An Aramean succeeded in destroying my father”, the incident which it is referring to is Lavan’s unsuccessful attempts to destroy Yaakov. Rashi explains that although Lavan was not successful, Hashem considers an idol worshipper’s intention to perform an evil act as if he actually accomplished it.

The prevailing theme of the Bikkurim declaration is Bnei Yisroel expressing their gratitude to Hashem for the kindness He has bestowed upon us. Since we were saved from Lavan’s attempts to destroy us, the benefit we received was due to his lack of success. Why then do we express our gratitude couched in terms of his success? The fact that Hashem punished Lavan as if he was successful should have no bearing upon the manner in which we express our gratitude for being saved.

The Talmud teaches that a righteous person’s intention to perform a benevolent act is credited to him as if he actually performed the act. What is the justification for rewarding or punishing a person for an act he did not accomplish?

A person’s decision to commit a particular act does not guarantee that he will follow through with it. If, however, the act reflects the very essence of the person, his intention alone serves as a commitment and guarantee that he will accomplish what he sets out to do. Once a person has wholeheartedly committed himself to undertake an endeavor, virtually no force in nature can thwart his resolve. Consequently, if the person is unsuccessful, it must be due to Divine intervention. Therefore, the intent of a righteous individual to perform a good deed guarantees its performance, and even if circumstances beyond his control prevents him from fulfilling his commitment, Hashem considers the act to have been accomplished. Similarly, the resolve of the wicked to commit an evil act is so strong that it takes Divine intervention to thwart his plans. Therefore, he is punished for his intention as if he accomplished the act.

When expressing our gratitude for being saved from Lavan, we are cognizant of the fact that if Lavan had made the decision to destroy Bnei Yisroel, nothing other than Hashem’s intervention could have prevented him from succeeding. The manner in which we indicate our acknowledgement of this fact, thereby stressing that we are even more indebted to Hashem for His kindness, is by referring to the incident as if it actually occurred.

## THE AIR OF SHABBAT

Rabbi David Sutton



### Embrace Shabbat.

In his *sefer Tefillah l’Moshe* (page 191), Rav Moshe Kordevero, famously known as the Ramak, teaches that the air of weekdays is *tamei*, contaminated, while the air of Shabbat is *tahor*, pure. He draws a parallel to the difference between the air in Eretz Yisrael and the air of outside of Eretz Yisrael, as it says אוֹרֵי אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְחַיִּים, the air of Eretz Yisrael brings wisdom. Negative forces exist in the air outside of Eretz Yisrael, just as they do during the mundane weekdays. However, on Shabbat, the air becomes holy. It is for this reason that we mention Yerushalayim in our Shabbat *Arvit* prayers; Shabbat has a certain aspect of Eretz Yisrael.

This concept is also reflected in our recitation of *Shalom Aleichem*. As he left Eretz Yisrael, Yaakov Avinu dreamt of angels going up and down a ladder; the angels of Eretz Yisrael were leaving him as the angels of *chutz laaretz* were coming to accompany him. Similarly, on Friday night, the angels of the weekday leave and the new Shabbat angels come to a person’s home. We sing *Shalom Aleichem*, the *angels of peace*, to welcome the angels of Shabbat, angels of peace.

Shabbat has a flavor of Eretz Yisrael. Rav Wolbe, quoting his brother-in-law, Rabbi Kreiswirth (they both married sisters, daughters of Rav Avraham Grodzinski, *hy”d*) explains the *maamar Chazal* that teaches that the air of Eretz Yisrael brings one wisdom. *Mekubalim* teach that Moshe Rabbeinu personifies the trait of *Netzach*, eternity. Therefore, anything that he came in contact with lasted forever. For example, Moshe built the *Mishkan*, which will last forever.

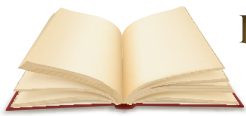
Because of this power, Moshe Rabbeinu could not build the *Beit HaMikdash*, as it would last forever and G-d wouldn’t be able to destroy it. When the Jewish people sinned, G-d would be “forced” to destroy the Jewish people instead, because of the eternal power of the *Beit HaMikdash*. This is one of the reasons why Moshe Rabbeinu couldn’t enter Eretz Yisrael. Instead, Moshe Rabbeinu went up to the mountain and looked at Eretz Yisrael.

Rabbi Kreiswirth teaches that by looking at Eretz Yisrael, Moshe Rabbeinu was able to uplift the air of Eretz Yisrael. Even after the *Beit HaMikdash* is destroyed, the air of Eretz Yisrael, which was uplifted and purified by Moshe Rabbeinu, has eternal powers until today.

ישמח משה במתנת חלקו - Moshe Rabbeinu was the one who introduced Shabbat to the Jewish people. Therefore, just as the *avir* of Eretz Yisrael remains, the *avir* of Shabbat, touched by Moshe Rabbeinu, lasts forever. It still has its purity and *kedusha*. When a person merely breathes the air of Shabbat, he fills up with a different, holier air. We must be cognizant and ready for that wonderful *kedusha* that does not just come with the time of Shabbat, but also in the air of Shabbat.

Have a wonderful day and a Shabbat Shalom.





# LESSONS FROM OUR GEDOLIM

## "I Didn't Get a Fork"

The story is told about the great Chazon Ish, Rav Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz, zt"l, when he was a young child of only seven years old. One day when his family sat down to eat lunch together, the good smell coming from the kitchen made everyone feel hungry. After all, it wasn't every day that they were lucky enough to have meat for lunch.

The Chazon Ish's mother happily filled everyone's plate, Davening that the food should give her husband and children strength to learn Torah. She passed the steaming plates of food to her family, and then sat down herself to start eating, giving a loving glance at everyone enjoying their meal. She noticed though, that little Avraham Yeshaya'le wasn't eating!

"Why haven't you eaten anything yet?" she asked her son. "Do you not like how it tastes?"

"No, Imma, certainly the food tastes very good, but I didn't get a fork."

His mother quickly got up and brought back a fork for her child. When she reached him, she saw that she had also forgotten to serve him a plate of food! When she returned to the kitchen, she couldn't help but smile. Her little Tzadik didn't want to embarrass her by telling her that she forgot his lunch altogether! Instead, he waited until she realized it on her own. And even when she asked him, he said that he 'only' didn't get a fork! (Chayei HaChazon Ish, p.13)

— Torah U'Tefilah as compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.

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# A Nation of Storytellers / Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks



A large part of what Moses is doing in the book of *Devarim* is retelling that story to the next generation, reminding them of what God had done for their parents and of some of the mistakes their parents had made. Moses, as well as being the great liberator, is the supreme storyteller. Yet what he does in *parshat Ki Tavo* extends way beyond this.

He tells the people that when they enter, conquer and settle the land, they must bring the first ripened fruits to the central Sanctuary, the Temple, as a way of giving thanks to God. A *Mishnah* in *Bikkurim* describes the joyous scene as people converged on Jerusalem from across the country, bringing their first-fruits to the accompaniment of music and celebration. Merely bringing the fruits, though, was not enough. Each person had to make a declaration. That declaration became one of the best known passages in the Torah because, though it was originally said on Shavuot, the festival of first-fruits, in post-biblical times it became a central element of the Haggadah on Seder night:

*My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt and lived there, few in number, there becoming a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians ill-treated us and made us suffer, subjecting us to harsh labor. Then we cried out to the Lord, the God of our ancestors, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. — Deut. 26:5-8*

Here for the first time, *the retelling of the nation's history becomes an obligation* for every citizen of the nation. In this act, known as *vidui bikkurim*, "the confession made over first-fruits," Jews were commanded, as it were, to become a nation of storytellers.

Time and again throughout *Devarim* comes the command to

remember: "Remember that you were a slave in Egypt." (Deut. 5:15; 15:15; 16:12; 24:18; 24:22); "Remember what Amalek did to you." (Deut. 25:17) "Remember what God did to Miriam." (Deut. 24:9) "Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you." (Deut. 32:7)

The *vidui bikkurim*, though, is more than this. It is, compressed into the shortest possible space, the entire history of the nation in summary form. In a few short sentences we have here "the patriarchal origins in Mesopotamia, the emergence of the Hebrew nation in the midst of history rather than in mythic prehistory, slavery in Egypt and liberation therefrom, the climactic acquisition of the land of Israel, and throughout – the acknowledgement of God as lord of history."

Throughout the book of *Devarim*, Moses warns the people – no less than fourteen times – *not to forget*. If they forget the past they will lose their identity and sense of direction and disaster will follow. Moreover, not only are the people commanded to remember, they are also commanded to hand that memory on to their children.

This entire phenomenon represents a remarkable cluster of ideas: about identity as a matter of collective memory; about the ritual retelling of the nation's story; above all about the fact that *every one of us is a guardian of that story and memory*. It is not the leader alone, or some elite, who are trained to recall the past, but every one of us. This too is an aspect of the devolution and democratization of leadership that we find throughout Judaism as a way of life. The great leaders tell the story of the group, but the greatest of leaders, Moses, taught the group to become a nation of storytellers.

## Cultivating Gratitude / Rabbi Ron Jawary

One of the underlying themes of the Torah is the importance of developing a sense of gratitude, both to God for all the blessings He has given us, and to anyone who does anything for us.

In fact, the Torah tells us that gratitude is one of the keys to experiencing real joy in life and the means by which we can live our lives to the fullest. That is one of the reasons why the first word that a person is expected to say in the morning is "thank you" -- to be grateful for another day of life and to put us in the right frame of mind for the day ahead.

This week's Torah portion tells us three times that the key to experiencing real joy in life is through gratitude and the cultivation of a good heart (Deut. 26:11, 27:7, 28:47). The essence of a good heart is an intrinsic ability to share with others. In fact, one of the reasons why it "isn't good for

man to be alone" is because you can't live in God's presence -- or, in fact, in anyone's presence -- if you are unable or unwilling to share, and in order to share, you must have a sense of gratitude and a good heart.

The Talmud teaches us that in physical, mundane matters we should always look at those who have less than us, but in spiritual and moral matters we should always look at those who have more. This will inspire us to be grateful for all our blessings, while at the same time inspire us to become better people and leave our mark on the world.

Interestingly, you will notice that those who really inspire us and who are truly happy usually happen to be those who are grateful for everything they have and who can give graciously of life's gifts.

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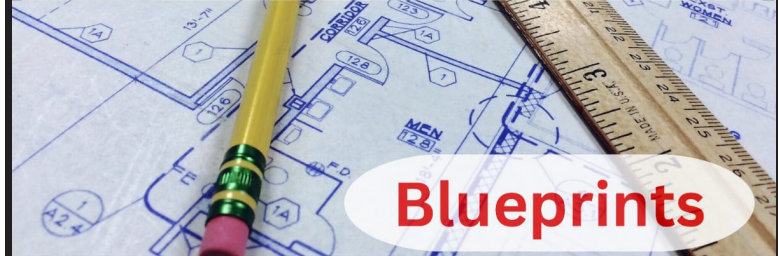
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# JOKES

## Engine Countdown

On an airplane, a stewardess came to the passenger area and announced that one of the four engines of the plane stopped working, and that they'd be in flight for an additional hour.

The passengers complained profusely. A few minutes passed.

The stewardess returned to the passenger area and told them that another engine stopped working and the plane was down to two working engines, that would result in yet another hour in flight.

The passengers were very upset and complained loudly. A few minutes later, the stewardess returned to the passenger area with the bad news that the plane was down to just one working engine which would further delay the flight. During the commotion of complaints, one passenger said "I hope that the last engine doesn't stop working. *We'll be up here all day.*"



## American Manufacturer

An American manufacturer was showing his machine factory to a potential customer from a former communist country. At noon, when the lunch whistle blew, two thousand men and women immediately stopped work and left the building.

"Your workers, they're escaping!" cried the visitor. "You've got to stop them."

"Don't worry, they'll be back," said the American. And indeed, at exactly one o'clock the whistle blew again, and all the workers returned from their break.

When the tour was over, the manufacturer turned to his guest and said, "Well, now, which of these machines would you like to order?"

"Forget about the machines," the visitor said. "How much do you want for that whistle?"

## Traveling Light

A porter loaded down with suitcases followed the couple to the airline check-in counter.

As they approached the counter, the husband glanced at the pile of luggage and said to his wife, "Why didn't you bring the piano, too?"

"Are you trying to be funny?" she replied.

"No, I really wish you had," he sighed. "I left the tickets on it."

## What's the difference?

What's the difference between an Israeli and an Israelite?  
*An Israelite has 30% less fat.*

## Lot's wife

The Rebbe was telling his students about the time when Lot's wife looked back in Sdom, and she turned into a pillar of salt. Yankee interrupted. "My mommy looked back once while she was driving," he announced, "and she turned into a telephone pole."



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You're not the only one in this situation. We're all in this together. It's possible, if not probable, that Hashem created this as a means of us sticking together. I'm asking you to do something very hard. Something you never thought you'd do. I'm asking you to call me so that we can speak confidentially. Quietly, with no one knowing, we can help you.

I urge you to contact me as soon as possible. I don't know who you are, but I'm waiting for your call.



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Sunday - Thursday  
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm  
Beginning Aug. 21, אלו'ל

התימוד יהיה  
במסכת סוכה  
פרק ג'  
תחילת פ' אורב הגזול

"The Elul Kollel personifies what Elul is truly all about"

HORAV YITZCHOK SOROTZKIN, SHLITA

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO JOIN

Shimon Eckstein  
845.729.2363

אנחנו נשמח לראות אתכם בירושלם במהלך חודש אלול

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