



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI  
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

OD YOSEF HAI  
50 FINCHLEY LANE, NW41DJ  
TEL: 020 8203 5701

## ***Thoughts on Parashat***

### ***KI TAVO***

***Year 23***

***by Dayan Abraham David***

Moses tells the Bnei Yisrael that on their crossing the River Jordan they were commanded to immediately set up twelve great stones and write on them the Torah. Some commentators say the whole Torah, while others explain all the mitzvot of the Torah. They were commanded to put up again another twelve stones in Har Eval where the Berachot and Kellalot were said, to stress the importance of the Torah in our lives. What is difficult is what follows in the Pasuk '*Lema'an asher tavo el ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokecha noten lecha*', so that you may come to the land which G-d is giving you. This mitzvah is being made as a condition for their coming into the land, the Ibn Ezra explains that this was the first mitzvah they would fulfil on entering the land indicating to them that by keeping this mitzvah, the first mitzvah they would be helped to conquer the land. The Ramban explains that this is referring to all the Torah written on these stones, for our coming into the land is for the fulfilling of the Torah. We should also know that it is because of the Torah and mitzvot,

we will merit conquering the inhabitants and inheriting the land. It would seem that even though we had been promised the land because of the Avot, even with that promise to our forefathers the generation that would come would need the merit of the Torah to succeed. The Or HaChaim explains this further from the repetition of the word '*lach*', to you. '*Ka'asher diber Hashem 'Elokei avotecha lach*', Moshe had previously told them that they were inheriting the land only because of the wickedness of the nations in it and to fulfil the promise to the Avot and not in their own merit. Now he tells them that if they write the Torah on these stones at the very beginning to remind them of their purpose in the land they would be inheriting the land in their own merit and not just because of '*zechut avot*'. The Talmud in Nedarim explains why the Land of Israel was lost '*Al ma avda ha'aretz*' and answered '*Al ozbam et torati*' because they left My Torah.

The Raan explains that it does not mean literally that they did not study the Torah for that would have been an obvious reason and could have been explained by the prophets but as Rav Yehudah said '*shelo berchu baTorah techilah*'. They did not say a beracha for the Torah i.e. they treated it like just another mental

faculty and did not give it its importance as 'G-d's Torah' to make a blessing for it and that is why they lost the Land.

Eretz Yisrael is like no other land; it is the palace of G-d where the dictates of the King must be adhered to most strictly. The constitution of the land are the laws of the Torah and suited only to the Jewish people. It will be a land of milk and honey only when they dwell there and they can only live securely in it when they give the Torah its true respect. The stones reminded them and gave witness to this, for on entering the land they put up these stones showing the importance of the Torah. We too need to be reminded that the days of awe and judgement are soon approaching and we must come back to ourselves through the study of the Torah and Tefilot that is why we have the custom of Selichot to awaken us.

## **TORAH GEMS**

The Parasha speaks in detail about the Mitzvah of Bikurim, the bringing of the first fruit. After conquering and dividing the land among the tribes and individuals, the Bnei Yisrael had the Mitzvah of bringing the offering of the first fruit of their land to the Temple. The Rambam in Halachot Bikurim describes how this Mitzvah was performed with much ceremony and celebration. People gathered together to take their offerings together up to Jerusalem. They decorated their fruits in baskets and marched with song and dance passing slowly through the villages and towns, swelling in numbers until they reached the gates of Jerusalem. They sent messengers into the city to inform of their arrival. Dignitaries and officials were sent

out to welcome them and they marched in with great pomp and pageantry. The workers and shopkeepers of the city stood up for them in respect as they passed on their way up to the Temple to hand their baskets to the Cohanim. In the Temple they were allowed to make a great declaration of gratitude citing the poor beginnings of our forefathers until G-d made them into a great nation and brought their descendants into the Promised Land of milk and honey and here I am with my gift of gratitude. Why the special honour given to those who brought the Bikurim more than by any other Mitzvah, even the giving of Ma'serot which was of greater value and quantity, needs explanation? This Mitzvah went against the natural tendency of a person. A farmer works his field and looks forward to the reward of his toil and labour, anxious to enjoy the first fruit of his labour of what he owns and is his. But he is told to understand and recognise it is G-d who has given you everything, go out and mark the very first fruit and dedicate it to its true owner in gratitude. A further lesson is that the beginnings are important, put your best thoughts forward when you dedicate or lay the foundations for any beginning. There your thoughts and ideas must be pure and exact and for the correct purpose, for our actions follow the beginning Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of the year, and on this day we are judged strictly because our aspirations and intentions must be perfect without compromise as the foundations of a building must be without any error. If we make that effort then we can look forward to the Mercy of Yom Kippur with Din BeRachamim.

## **TORAH INSIGHTS**

On the last day of Yom Tov Pesach, on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> year of the shmittah cycle the Jewish farmer in Eretz Yisrael is obliged to complete distribution of his maaserot. He then makes a vidduy declaration that he has cleaned out all the maaserot from his home, he has given the Levi his portion, his maser oni to the needy, the Ger, the orphan and the widow. He has enjoyed and used his maaser sheni in Jerusalem, all according to the halacha. I have made myself happy in the presence of G-d and in Jerusalem and I have made others happy too “Samachti ve simachti”.

He then makes a strong request of G-d, “Hashkifah memeeon kodshecha, min hashamayim vubarech et amcha Yisrael; closely look down upon us from your holy dwelling place, from the heavens and bless your people Yisrael. The Kli Yakar observes that the lashon hashkifah is used as a scrutinising harsh look and results in punishment as at Sodom, so how come it is used here, he explains that the Torah wants us to know that taking care of the Leviyim (those who study the Torah) the poor and the needy can change even the most difficult situation of harsh judgement to mercy, rahamim. When a Jew can say “samachti ve simachti” I have spent my time happily in the service of G-d and enjoyed it and I have made others happy too then his supplication reaches up to “me-on kodshecha” to the upper sanctuaries of Hashem’s abode where there is only simcha where Hashem is mishtasheiah with tzaddikim, and from this source of happiness he sends down through ‘shamayim’ the Heavens bountiful blessings to our

world to make us full of joy and happiness.

## **STORIES OF TZADDIKIM**

Late one Friday night, a Jewish robber broke into the home of Rav Hillel of Kollemaye. He stood for a moment, taking in the contents of the room, then rushed over to the table and grabbed the silver candelabra.

The Rav was sitting right at the table, engrossed in his learning. Startled, he looked up from his sefer and called out, “Stop! How dare you steal and also transgress the prohibition of Muktzeh on Shabbat!”

The robber laughed derisively and bolted for the door. The Rav shouted after him, “I hereby release my ownership of the candelabra. They are now yours – as a gift from me!”

One hand on the door, the robber turned and spoke mockingly, “You are only so benevolent because you have no choice!” Then he vanished into the night, and the Rav returned to his studies.

A few minutes later, Rav Hillel was interrupted again – this time by a commotion in the street. He glanced out of the window and saw a policeman holding the robber in a firm grip. In his hands, the thief still had the candelabra. The Rav rushed outside and asked the policeman, “What’s all the fuss about?” The policeman responded by saying, “This man has stolen these candelabra from someone.” But the Rav said, “They are his, I gave them to him as a gift. You may free him now.”

The policeman stared at the Rav incredulously, then requested that he accompany them to police headquarters. The chief of police knew the Rav quite well and upon hearing his contention that the candelabra had been a gift to the man, the chief released the man and dismissed the matter.

Once outside, the robber embraced the Rav with tears rolling down his cheeks. "Rebbe," he wept. "Rebbe, please forgive me!"

The Rav calmed him down and invited him to be his Shabbat guest. The man spent the remainder of that Shabbat with Rav Hillel, who spoke to him about the values of Torah and Jewish living. And the erstwhile thief became a true Baal Teshuvah.

## **Shabbat Shalom**

### **HALACHOT**

1. The 13th Attributes of Mercy , the *Yud Gimmel Middot Hashem*, *Hashem El Rachum* is a prayer given by G-d to Moshe Rabenu which is promised to bring results of mercy and forgiveness hence it is most important to say it with deliberation and thought
2. Since it is a '*dabar shebekedusha*' it has to be said with a minyan of adult men as a prayer. When there is no minyan it should be said as if reading the Torah with the *Ta-amim*.
3. If there is no minyan at the beginning of the Selichot the *Yud Gimmel Middot* should be read with the *Ta-amim* as above, when the minyan gathers they should say 3 pasukim of the Ashre and then say the Kaddish and continue without going back to the *Yud Gimmel Middot*.
4. If one began the '*Vayabor*' with the congregation but they rushed on with the *Yud Gimmel Middot* or if he was slow he can continue saying it as a supplication since he started with them. But if he said the *Viduy* or the *El Melech* with the congregation and they finished saying the *Yud Gimmel Middot* before he started it he can

only continue with the *Ta-amim* as a *yahid*.

5. When we say the *Hashem Hashem El Rachum Ve Chanun* we should pause between the two names of Hashem so as not to make it as if addressing to two deities.

**We have a regular Youth Minyan organised by Jason Ibrahim and Jordan Moses followed by a kiddush**

*If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush Please contact  
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825 871749  
For Seuda Shlishit or to rent the  
Nancy Reuben Hall for a Simcha  
Please contact  
Yanky David 07725 408724*

### **SHABBAT TIMES**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Shabbat commences                                    | 7:34 pm |
| Shabbat terminates                                   | 8:40 pm |
| Mincha Erev Shabbat for the summer                   | 7:15 pm |
| Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat                         |         |
| Shacharit  | 8:30 pm |
| Shiur Pirke Avot                                     | 6:00 pm |
| Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit | 7:00 pm |
| Selichot   | 6:00am  |
| Shacharit Sundays                                    | 7:00 am |
| Shacharit Weekdays                                   | 6:50 am |
| Mincha followed by Arbit for the summer              | 7:30 pm |