

So now that you've made your decision, put the plan into action to bring about your intended goal. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### The Iron Dome

“Having an army is a truly major expense but it may be needed to put down insurrections. There have been times when riots occurred, and the army stood ready to shoot looters. The mere knowledge that such a force was available to the authorities discouraged the wilder elements of society from rioting.”

Our prayers and Hashem's love for His people is an Iron Dome defense system against the insurgents' daily plots to annihilate Israel. (Norman D. Levy; Based on Rabbi Miller's, Duties of the Mind.)

### Good Neighbor Policy

Shortly after Rabbi Mattisyahu Salomon assumed the position of *Mashgiah* of *Bet Midrash Gavoha*, and his family came to Lakewood, they moved into a home on Sixth Street, a block from the Yeshivah. Their neighbors were the Epsteins, with whom they soon developed a strong friendship. The families had children the same ages, and a *simhah* by one was a *simhah* by the other. In autumn of 1999 one of the Salomon girls became engaged. There was great joy in the Salomon home and delight and excitement in the Epstein home as the girls looked forward to dancing at their close friend's wedding.

Tragically, this was not to be. A few weeks later, the Salomon's beloved neighbor, Rabbi Shimon Epstein, suddenly passed away. Rabbi Epstein was a *talmid hacham*, a *mohel* and *shohet*, and was known in Lakewood for the inordinate amount of *hesed* and charity that he performed, often done in secretive, sensitive ways. His funeral was attended by thousands, including many who had long ago moved to other places.

The Epstein family was plunged into mourning, and as mourners the children would not be permitted to attend festive gatherings such as weddings for the next twelve months. Hence attending the Salomon wedding was out of the question. This only added anguish to their unexpected suffering.

During the following weeks the Salomons made a conscious effort not to talk about the wedding plans within earshot of the Epsteins, but the wedding day moved inexorably forward. It would be a day of great celebration in Lakewood befitting a *simhah* in the *Mashgiah's* family.

On the day of the wedding the Epstein daughters went to work and came home as they usually did, around 6 o'clock. When they arrived there was a note on the table, “To our dear friends the Epsteins: Please do not prepare dinner this evening. Your dinner will be served to all of you shortly. We will miss you at the wedding but we wanted you to share in our *simhah* and so the caterers will be at your home with the wedding dinner. May we share in future *simhahs*. The Salomons.”

Within an hour a truck came from the wedding hall in Lakewood with the full course meal, including dessert, for every member of the Epstein family.

And if that was not enough, as the Epsteins were enjoying this unexpected meal, someone came and brought them pictures that had just been taken at the wedding. Rav Mattisyahu had arranged that someone take pictures of the *badekken* and *hupah*, run with the finished film to a local photography store that developed pictures within an hour, and then deliver the processed pictures to the Epsteins. Thus, as they were enjoying the wedding meal, they could enjoy wedding pictures! (Reflections of the Maggid)

*The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition*

ט"ה תשס"ח, חג שבועות, חג המצות, חג סוכות, חג שמחת תורה

ס"ט

## Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444  
West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764  
(732) 870-2225



### SHABBATKI

TABO ✪ ט"ז, חג המצות, חג שמחת תורה

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 60:1-22

**AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 1, 2018 21 ELUL 5778**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Friday Shir Hashirim/ Minhah: 6:11, 7:00 | Shaharit: 5:24, 6:40, 8:10, 9:00, 9:10 |
| Candlelighting: 7:12 pm                  | Morning Shema by: 8:50 am              |
| Evening Shema after: 8:10 pm             | Shabbat Classes: 5:50 pm               |
|  | Shabbat Minhah: 6:50 pm                |
|  | Shabbat Ends: 8:08 pm (R"Y 8:40 pm)    |
|  | Sunday Minhah: 7:00 pm                 |

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

This bulletin is dedicated by the Betesh family  
in loving memory of Nat Betesh לְעִלְוֵי נַשְׁמַת נָתָן בֶּן שָׂרָה

**Mabrook to Natan & Raquel Telio on the birth of granddaughter.**

**Mabrook to Charles & Raquel Yishai on the birth of a grandson.**

**Condolences to Ike Braha on the passing of his father, Mr. Jack Braha.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

”וּבָאתָ אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יְהִי בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו”

“You shall come to the *kohen* who will be in those days, and you shall say to him” (Debarim 26:3)

A tale is told of two impoverished brothers, each of whom received a monthly stipend from the town philanthropist. One day, one of the brothers, an elderly fellow, passed away. At the end of the month, when the surviving brother came to pick up the cash, he counted, recounted, and then looked up looking upset.

“This is my money,” he protested. “What happened to my brother's stipend?”

“Your brother passed away,” the philanthropist reminded him.

“I know that,” the man replied indignantly, “but who exactly is my brother's heir – you or me?”

It may have never happened, but the anecdote highlights a certain feeling of entitlement that is pervasive in contemporary society. There is a sense of expectation,

an assumption that everything is supposed to be perfect, and when something is lacking, there is distress and even resentment.

This week's *parashah* begins with the *misvah* of *bikkurim*, instructing us to take the first fruits to the *kohen* and recite certain *pesukim* at that time.

"You shall say to him," prescribes the Torah, and *Rashi* tells us what to say: "that you are not *kafui tobah*" – you are not unappreciative. *Rashi* hold that the words "to him" seem superfluous. They teach us that the declaration that G-d has fulfilled His promise to give us the land of Israel must be directed to the *kohen*. For it is only by acknowledging to another that G-d has fulfilled His promise, that gratitude is expressed.

Rabbi Frand tells a story. A young couple was opening the envelopes with their wedding gifts, and they found a check from Rabbi Moses Feinstein of FDR Drive in Manhattan made out for \$500. Back then, \$500 was a small fortune, hardly the typical wedding gift for a young couple who were not even family. The *hatan* figured that maybe Rav Moshe mistakenly added an extra zero to the check, so he and his *kallah*, accompanied by his father, visited Rav Moshe to inquire.

"If I could, I would give you a check for \$5000!" Rav Moshe answered. "Your grandfather was Rav Pesach Pruskin – my Rebbe. I feel such gratitude to your grandfather that I wanted to give you a big present. Unfortunately I can't afford to give you more than \$500."

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

---

## Thank G-d

"וְעִנִּיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אֲבִי וַיֵּרַד מִצְרַיִם"

"You shall speak up and say before Hashem your G-d, 'An Aramean attempted to destroy my father; then he descended to Egypt'" (*Debarim* 26:5)

The first fifteen verses of this week's *parashah* are directed toward the expression of gratitude. The Torah instructs us on the *misvah* of *bikurim*, bringing the first-ripened fruits of the season to the *Bet HaMikdash* as an offering of thankfulness.

However, the declaration of gratitude which is recited does not begin with thanks, but a brief resume of Jewish history. We begin with a narration of how our forefather, Ya'akov, was in servitude to the wicked Laban, how he later went to Egypt where his descendants were brutally enslaved, how we cried out to G-d amidst our affliction, how G-d delivered us from slavery, and finally, how G-d gave us the Promised land.

Gratitude must be all-encompassing. We must recall our humble beginnings and the sufferings we underwent. We must recognize that rather than bearing resentments for the suffering we experienced, we must be grateful even for that episode of our history, because it was in the blast from the furnace of Egypt that we were purified and molded into one people. We include this in our declaration of gratitude to remind us that if we are distressed in the future, we should bear in mind that at a subsequent date we will realize the constructive aspects of our distress. (*Living Each Day*)

---

## Daily Bread

"וְהָיוּ חַיֶּיךָ תְּלָאִים לָךְ מִנֶּגֶד וּפְחָדָה לְלֵלָה וַיּוֹמֶם וְלֹא תֵאֶמְרוּ בְּחַיֶּיךָ"

"Your life will hang in the balance, and you will be frightened night and day, and you will not be sure of your livelihood." (*Debarim* 28:66)

*Rashi* explains that in exile the Jewish People will be so insecure that they will never be safe from impending violence. Regarding their livelihood, they will be compelled to rely on daily purchases, never confident that the markets will be available to them the next day. In the *Talmud*, *Menahot* 103b, *Hazal* explain that this *pasuk*

refers to a situation where one has less and less to eat, in which he is relegated to go out daily to seek his bread. This is considered the epitome of unhappiness, not knowing whence one's daily bread will come, living in constant fear of what tomorrow will bring.

We must endeavor to understand this curse describing the nadir of depression in light of the following statement of *Hazal*. "The students of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai asked him, 'Why didn't the *manna* fall once a year, enabling the people to gather a full year's supply at one time?' He replied with a parable. 'A king who had one son provided him with food once a year. This posed a problem since the son would visit his father only once a year. As a result of this, the king began providing his son with his due on a daily basis, so that he would be with his only child every day. So, too, was *Klal Yisrael*. A father who had many mouths to feed would be concerned daily that perhaps there would be no *manna* for his family. Consequently, all of *Klal Yisrael* would turn to Hashem in prayer, entreating Him for their daily sustenance.'"

According to *Hazal*, the need to turn to Hashem for one's bread on a daily basis is not a curse, but a blessing. This situation strengthens his bond with Hashem through his constant communication with Him. Obviously, the generation that received the Torah on *Har Sinai* was not subject to the harsh curses which are enumerated in this *parashah*.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz, zt"l, makes a profound observation in responding to this question. The Torah does not mention a lack of food as a potential curse. It merely states that the fear and insecurity revolving around our daily sustenance will be overpowering. The dread of not having anything to eat and to feed one's family will become unbearable for the man of little or no faith in Hashem. Indeed, an individual who does not learn how to rely on Hashem as the only source of blessing can become overwhelmed with uncertainty and diffidence in his daily "wait" for bread. This lack of faith causes the individual to be divested of self-confidence and become enveloped by fear. The suspense of "what will tomorrow bring" is terrifying for the man of little faith.

The one who has trust and faith in Hashem, on the other hand, views such a situation as the optimal source of blessing, for it engenders a closer relationship with Hashem. Suddenly, his daily bread takes on a new image; it becomes imbued with the essence of *manna*. The ability to trust in Hashem and not worry about tomorrow can transform the harshest of curses into a blessing. (*Peninim on the Torah*)

---

## Certainly

It's no wonder that some people have a hard time making decisions. Manufacturers offer American consumers over 600 models of automobiles to sift through before making a purchase – and that does not take into consideration the color spectrum or available option packages from which they must select! Many products come in a variety of sizes and hues, and sometimes the exact same contents are packaged differently to grab extra shelf space on the retail floor. Even distributors of kosher wines offer several hundred gourmet choices to the observant consumer.

Deciding what product to buy is certainly confusing. Reaching a decision regarding a life choice is even more of a challenge.

Even once you have made a decision, the doubts do not end. Did you make the right choice?

Second-guessing yourself may be wise at times, but over-analyzing can prevent you from taking the positive action that will make your choice a reality. You've

probably compared notes with a friend and already asked the advice of someone whom you trust. You may have mulled over the details and potential outcome several times.