



# Family & Friends

## Parshas Ki Savo

September 19th 2024 - Elul 16 5784



### Leiberman Siyum

#### PARSHAS KI SAVO RAV MORDECHAI ALTUSKY

This week's parsha of bikurim instills within our nation the obligation of Hakaras Hatov - gratitude. Upon annually offering bikurim we recite, as part of the offering service, the historical episode where Lavan attempted to murder Yaakov Avinu. The question arises why must we continuously reference this bygone event? Would it not be more apropos to begin by mentioning the new crop? By mentioning the story of Lavan, we are in essence saying that I am alive today and able to bring bikurim because of the fact that Yaakov Avinu's life was saved.

In a similar vein, when a father merits the birth of a child, he should reflect upon previous generations. This reflection begins with gratitude to Hashem Yisbarach for bringing him into

this world, giving him parents who properly raised him, enabled him to marry his eishes chayil, and blessed him with his own child.

Rav Shimon Schwab zt"l related a fascinating story with Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l, the mashgiach of the Mirrer Yeshiva (in the city of Mir). The Mashgiach had a free loan fund for student expenses. One time, Rav Shimon Schwab required such a loan for travel expenses. Upon returning from his intended trip, he returned the funds along with a 'thank you' for the efforts. To which the Mashgiach exclaimed, "What is this? You're paying interest by saying thank you!" (Although many poskim are of the opinion that a borrower may offer thanks, apparently the mashgiach agreed with more stringent opinions that consider an offering of thanks to be a violation of receiving interest). The next year the story repeated



Mazel Tov

*Heartfelt Mazel Tov wishes to:*

Rabbi & Mrs. Avraham Shalom Zuckerman on their son's recent wedding.

Yeshayahu Schechter on his upcoming wedding.

Rabbi & Mrs. Yonason Keyak on the grandson's birth.

Mr. & Mrs. Yehuda Benjamin on their daughter's birth.

Mr. & Mrs. Yossi Adams on their son's birth.

Rabbi & Mrs. Tzvi Piontnica on their daughter's wedding.

Rabbi & Mrs Daniel Berger on their son's bar mitzvah.

Mr. & Mrs. Shimon Zimberg on their recent wedding.

itself, but this time Rav Schwab was careful not to say thank you. Whereupon the Mashgiach exclaimed, "Where is the hakaras hatov?" Rav Schwab answered that last year the Mashgiach said that a thank you is not allowed. The Mashgiach answered as follows. "Of course you're not allowed to say thank you, but the thank you should be bursting out of you. You should have to clench your teeth with all your might to keep it from coming out. I don't

see that by you. Where is your hakaras hatov?"

The juxtaposition of this parsha with Rosh Hashana, teaches the additional element of this commandment that gratitude starts from the beginning.

Gut Shabbos!

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## ROSH HASHANA 5785

During the first week of Elul, multitudes of individuals, at different stages of life, migrate to the shores of Eretz Yisrael. These mavericks, for the most part, will unintentionally draft their personal history in tandem with their circadian rhythm and daily routine. Many will acquire enriched characters in step with the societal norms. Others, will remain the quintessential expatriate in a foreign country.

Unlike the entire year where we manage to move through life, Rosh Hashana mandates contemplation and preparation, each in his own unique way. Every morning, the primal call of the shofar offers a piercing reminder that we are approaching the finish line. Come next Wednesday and it will be game over; the first round of the finals will finish. It is true that we can try out as a



Melave Malka in Yeshiva

second and third round choice, but everyone will agree - winners strive to be a first-round pick.

As the weeks of Elul progress, the atmosphere grows increasingly contemplative, with each person beginning to focus more on their internal state in preparation for Rosh Hashana. This time of year, demands reflection, asking each individual to evaluate their past year and plan for the future. Unlike the rest of the year, when people can easily move through their daily lives, Rosh Hashana requires intentional preparation. It is a time when we are compelled to pause, look inward, and determine how we want to improve in the coming year.

The famous story is told of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement, once visited a shoemaker late at night during the month of Elul. He noticed the shoemaker working by the dim light of a small candle, still mending shoes despite the late hour. Surprised, Rabbi Salanter asked him, "Why are you still working so late into the night?"

The shoemaker, without looking up from his work, responded, "As long as the candle is burning, I can still repair."

This simple statement had a profound impact on Rabbi Salanter. The shoemaker's words, spoken in a literal sense about his craft, were transformed into a spiritual metaphor. The "candle" represents the neshamah - soul, the divine spark within each of us. As long as this candle burns - as long as we are alive - we can still repair ourselves, mend our flaws, and improve.

Rabbi Salanter used this story



Celebrating at the Jacobovitch Bris.

to teach that Elul and Rosh Hashana are the moments when we must recognize that our "candle" is still burning. We still have the opportunity to reflect on our past year, evaluate where we've faltered, and make the necessary changes to become better individuals.

Throughout his life, the Rosh HaYeshiva, זצ"ל, instilled in his talmidim that Torah and its study are the nexus of life itself. Social integrity, refined character traits and building spiritual muscles are all byproducts of this goal. Rosh Hashana is the time of year to realize our objective and recalculate our route in life to reach this destination.

May Hashem Yisbarach rain down blessing on the yeshiva, our friends and families, as well as all of Klal Yisrael, and be inscribed and sealed for a happy and healthy and peaceful year.

### Newsletter Contacts:

For all e-Newsletter related issues and sign-up requests:

[newsletter@torahore.org](mailto:newsletter@torahore.org)

For all other Yeshiva related issues:

[office@torahore.org](mailto:office@torahore.org) /

718-434-5185