



# MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 7:15 PM

Vol. 14 Issue 24

## Parshas Ki Savo 5778

### THE MEANING OF REISHIS

BY RABBI DAVIDI BRONER

In this week's parsha, Ki Savo, we are introduced to the mitzva of Bikurim. When a resident of Eretz Yisroel sees a fruit from the Shivas Haminim beginning to blossom, he wraps a red string around the fruit and declares it Bikurim. During the period between Shavous and Succos, one would bring these fruits to the Beis Hamikdash and then read a short history of Am Yisroel, all the way from Yaakov Avinu's struggles with Lavan up until the capture of Eretz Yisroel. After that, the fruits were given to the Kohanim to eat.

The Rishonim ask: What's special about this mitzva that makes it the only one in which we review our history and give thanks to Hashem for His redemptions? The mitzva is introduced in the Torah in the following pasuk: *V'lachta M'Reishis Kol Pri Ha'adma Asher Tavi M'Artzecha etc.* – You shall take of the first of every fruit of the ground that you bring in from your land etc. The Baal Ha'akeida teaches us the significance and meaning of Reishis: It is the prologue that sets the theme for all that follows. Therefore, taking the first fruit of one's labor, and designating it for Hashem, creates a memento for Hashem in all future growth of that year. Another aspect that explains the significance of Bikurim being *Reishis* is the relationship that Bikurim have to other known concepts of *Reishis*. Hashem is called *Reishis* and Eretz Yisroel is referred to as *Reishis HaArotzos* (first of the lands). The Baal Ha'akeida explains that our thanks for Bikurim is really a microcosm of our gratitude to Hashem as a whole and Eretz Yisroel in particular. That is why the Bikurim are only brought from the *Shivas Haminim*, the specialty of Eretz Yisroel. With this in mind, we can understand the special prayer that is said at the bringing of the Bikurim. We thank Hashem for the beginning of our nation: Yaakov Avinu meeting the Imaos at Lavan's house, marrying them, and producing the Shevatim. We continue with our story, reaching the chapter describing the conquering and settlement of Eretz Yisroel, the two *Reishis* for which we are thankful.

We see this theme of *Reishis* in the Hagada Shel Pesach. We discuss how Lavan "*Bikesh La'akor Es Hakol*" – he wanted to destroy everything. Where did he attempt to destroy us as a nation? My father always explained that Lavan told Yaakov Avinu, "*Habanim Bonai V'Habonas*

*Benosai*" – Your sons are my sons and your daughters are my daughters. Lavan was expressing his desire to take a part in the upbringing and education of the children. If we allowed the Shevatim, who are our *Reishis*, to have their upbringing implanted with education from Lavan at their beginning, that would ruin the entirety of Am Yisroel. This fits perfectly with the Baal Ha'akeida's explanation of *Reishis* and the weight it carries.

**When Moshe Rabbeinu saw that Bikurim will eventually be abolished, he established the three times for davening**

The Baal Ha'akeida also adds that our specific times for Tefilos fit with this approach. We daven Shachris as soon as the day starts and Maariv as soon as the night begins, to lend kedusha to the time period that follows by sanctifying its beginning. For those that refer to the day from midday and midnight, we have Mincha and Tikkun Chatzos. The Sfas Emes actually links tefilos with Bikurim. He brings the Medrash Tanchuma which says that when Moshe Rabbeinu saw that Bikurim will eventually be abolished, he established the three times for davening. The Sfas Emes adds that Am Yisroel themselves are referred to as *Reishis HaAmim*. Consequently, we have a special ability to connect to the strength that using Reishis entails. Our entire day can be affected by its start, Shachris in the morning. Moreover, the Sfas Emes says, if a Jew starts off his day by davening in the morning and ends it by learning at night, this power of Reishis endowed to us causes the entire day - the time between the tefila and limud Torah - to be considered Avodas Hashem!

We discussed how the Bikurim signify our gratitude to Hashem and His gifts to us. In addition to this, the Bikurim symbolize our desire to connect to Hashem throughout all we do, as we sanctify Reishis in an effort to leave kedusha in its wake.

As we end one year and prepare to enter another, we will begin to say Selichos this Sunday morning. The Baal Ha'akeida points out how appropriate it is to get up early and begin the day with Selichos as we prepare for judgment. We are expressing our hope to be judged as righteous by imbuing our morning - and thus the day that follows - with kedusha.

May Hashem judge us and all of Am Yisroel favorably.

### DVAR HALACHA



#### GEVINAS AKUM: Background

Part 1

BASED ON THE SUNDAY MORNING HALACHA SHIUR  
GIVEN BY RABBI Y. BIBERFELD, ROSH KOLLEL  
WRITTEN BY: OVADIA GOWAR

The Shulchan Aruch writes in YD 115:2: "Chazal forbade *gevinas akum* (cheese made by a non-Jew), because they coagulate it with *ohr keivas neveilah* (the stomach lining of their slaughtered animals). And even if they coagulated it with a plant agent, it is still forbidden." The Rema agrees that this is the established custom in virtually all Ashkenazi communities as well.

*Gevinas akum* is an example of a *gezeirah* (decree) that is called a "*davar she'b'minyan*." It means that even though Chazal had a particular reason in mind when making the original *gezeirah* on cheese, once they decreed it, it applied as a blanket *gezeirah* on all types of non-Jewish-made cheese, regardless of how it was made. Nowadays in the USA, instead of using the stomach lining (called "rennet"), they use an artificial agent. Nonetheless, it is still forbidden because, as we mentioned, *gevinas akum* is a "*davar she'b'minyan*."

What is the background of this *gezeirah*? The Gemara in Avodah Zora (35a) says that Chazal forbade *gevinas akum* and then lists six opinions as to why. The six opinions are:

1. Perhaps a venomous snake drank from the milk that was used to make the cheese
2. Perhaps it contains some drops of milk from a non-kosher animal
3. Perhaps they coagulated the cheese with the stomach lining of a neveilah
4. Perhaps they smoothed the cheese with pig fat
5. Perhaps they coagulated the cheese with vinegar made from yayin nesech
6. Perhaps they coagulated the cheese using liquid that came from fruit that was orlah

Shmuel is the one who holds that the reason was because perhaps they coagulated the cheese with the stomach lining of a neveilah. The Rif and the Rambam both rule that the halacha is like Shmuel and this is why the Shulchan Aruch mentions only this reason out of the six.

Even if there was non-kosher rennet mixed in to coagulate the cheese, why should the cheese  
[cont. on back]



Menucha Vesimcha has been dedicated by **Kutest Kids Early Intervention Services.**

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# MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

DVAR HALACHA



[cont. from front]

be forbidden? Surely only a tiny amount was used and therefore the rennet should be nullified because it is less than one in sixty? The answer is that since the rennet causes the cheese to become hard, its effect is recognizable and thus it cannot be nullified, irrespective of the small proportion it makes up.

Why does the Gemara only mention *ohr keivas beheimah* "neveilah?" A *neveilah* is an animal that wasn't slaughtered according to halacha. A *neveilah's* meat is forbidden from the Torah. The Gemara implies that the stomach lining of an animal that was slaughtered in accordance with halacha is ok to use in making cheese?! But surely there must be some issue of *basar b'chalav* with this?

Tosfos ask this *kasha* (difficulty). They answer that Shmuel specifically mentioned "neveilah" because it is a Torah prohibition. But there is no Torah prohibition of *basar b'chalav* in the making of cheese because no heat is involved. Meat and milk mixed together when cold is only forbidden *m'derabbanan*.

The Tzvi L'Tzaddik asks a *kasha* on Tosfos. Even if the cold mixture of meat and milk is not forbidden on a Torah level, it is still assur *m'derabbanan* and should forbid the cheese. He answers that it must be that Tosfos hold that since there is a combination of two *derabbanan* prohibitions ((1) cold meat and milk & (2) coagulation), Chazal did not forbid this. Therefore if kosher rennet had been used to make the cheese, the cheese would've been kosher.

So, in summary, the only concern that Chazal had with non-Jewish cheese was that it might have been made with rennet from a *neveilah*. Because of this concern they forbade all forms of cheese made by a non-Jew.

Next week we will look at how the *gezeirah* applies to "hard" and "soft" cheeses.

## KOLLEL News

### MAZEL TOV:

**PHIL WACHS AND JULIET I. SPITZER** UPON THE BIRTH OF A GRANDSON, BORN TO DANNY GOLD AND MICHAL WACHS!

**RABBI EPHRAIM AND BRACHA GOLDFEIN** UPON THE BIRTH OF A GRANDDAUGHTER, BORN TO YOSHI AND TOBA GOLDSTEIN!

**DAVID AND SHARYN CHASE** ON THE UPCOMING MARRIAGE OF THEIR SON, AKIVA.

**RAPHAEL AND JILL GABAY** ON MICHAEL'S ENGAGEMENT TO Yael Mellul!

### CONDOLENCES TO:

**MARILYNNE SCHWARTZ, BEN SCHWARTZ, ALEX SCHWARTZ** AND THE WHOLE SCHWARTZ FAMILY ON THE PASSING OF THEIR DEAR HUSBAND, FATHER AND BROTHER, **MR. HARRY SCHWARTZ, Z"l**

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL WOMEN'S DIVISION PRESENTS

### ROSH HASHANAH INSPIRATION

TO BE GIVEN BY

**MRS. RACHAEL BIBERFELD,**  
THIS SHABBOS, SEPTEMBER 1ST

AT 5:15 PM

AT THE HOME THE ZEFFREN'S,  
111 BRYN MAWR AVE, BALA CYNWYD.

### SHIVTI: HILCHOS SHOFAR PART III

**TIKIOS D'MIYUSHAV  
OR TIKIOS D'MIU'MAD**

WHICH ONE IS THE REAL THING?

5 PM - 6 PM SHABBOS AFTERNOON  
MINCHA 6 PM

### DAVENING TIMES:

#### Friday, August 31:

7:15PM Candle Lighting  
7:33PM Shkiya/sunset

#### Shabbos, September 2:

8:15AM Shacharis  
9:08AM/9:44 Latest Krias Shema  
*This weeks kiddush is dedicated by  
Rabbi Yehuda and Minnie Nosenchuk  
in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son,  
David Leib*

5:00PM SHIVTI  
6:00PM Mincha  
7:32PM Shkiya/Sunset  
8:27PM Ma'ariv  
8:44PM 72 minutes

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL PRESENTS  
**Our Annual Pre-Rosh Hashanah  
EVENING OF INSPIRATION**

Our Tenth Year!

### TESHUVA:

**THE ULTIMATE TIME TUNNEL**  
THIS YEAR'S SPEAKER

### RABBI AARON PESSIN

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH  
8:30 PM

For Men and Women

AT THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL  
364 MONTGOMERY AVE, MERION STATION

## STORY

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## SHABBOS AND THE BOWLING ALLEY

One Friday afternoon Chaim was on the subway, leaving plenty of time to arrive at his destination before Shabbos. Suddenly, there was a screech . . . the train came to an abrupt halt, technical difficulties. He looked at his watch, there was still ample time to get to his destination. Apparently, the technical difficulties were quite complicated, and after an hour-and-a-half they still had not been solved. At this point Chaim was starting to get nervous; the hand of his watch was moving quickly and soon Shabbos would be here. Finally, after two hours the train started to move again, with only a short time left until Shabbos. Chaim made a quick calculation and realized that he was not going to make it to his destination. With about fifteen minutes until sunset, he ran out of the subway station and entered the first building he saw: Tony's Bowling Alley. Chaim asked to speak to the owner and was introduced to Tony. Chaim explained to him that soon it would be a Jewish holy day and he would be prohibited to carry anything. Chaim wanted to know if he could leave his bag with him. Even though he was not Jewish, he gladly agreed, and Chaim deposited his belongings, including \$300, in his office. Meanwhile, Chaim tried to figure out where he was. He found a place to daven, and then walked to the home of a friend, who lived about forty blocks away. Chaim's good friend was a little surprised to see him but he and his family made him feel welcome in their home. After the beautiful Shabbos came to an end, his friend drove him back to the bowling alley to retrieve his valuables. Everything was topsy-turvy inside. It seemed like a storm had hit and everything was thrown all over. Chaim began to realize that he might not get his valuables after all. Finally he found Tony, who had a look of amazement on his face. He explained to Chaim that there had been a robbery in the bowling alley. He took him into his office which had been thoroughly ransacked for any valuables. He said, "They took everything, but did not touch your bag. I am sure it is because you observed your holy day. The Jews are a holy people; may G-d bless you." He handed Chaim his bag with the three hundred dollars sitting safely where he had left it. More than we keep Shabbos, Shabbos keeps us.

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