



# MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Vol. 22 Issue #34

BY RABBI  
HESHY GOOTBLATT

## ONE LARGE AMERICANO PLEASE

PARSHAS  
KI SAVO

Have you ever wondered what is so American about an American?

Well, in Europe, they have these microscopic 1 oz. drinks they call espresso - and they charge the same price for this little thing as a full 12 oz. coffee!

Now, Americans don't like getting ripped off; we would never pay \$5 for that tiny drop. But it does taste good. So what do they do? They take this 1 oz. flavor-packed shot of espresso, add some hot water - and voilà! Now it's something worth paying for.

So, it's called an Americano, because Americans want quantity over quality. **We like big, huge, massive things**, and if the quality goes down as the volume increases - it is well worth it.

Is the Torah American?

The pasuk says, **ולתתך עליון על כל** הגוים - that Hashem placed Klal Yisroel **higher** than the other nations. In this context, does "higher" mean big, as in big and tall? Like a skyscraper that dominates the skyline higher than all the rest? Is the Torah saying we are the full 12oz vs the small espresso?

Additionally, is Klal Yisroel's status as **עליון** connected to the mitzvos of *Bikkurim* and *Ma'aser*, and to the blessings and curses mentioned in the Sedra? Or is it just an advertisement break?

The Mashgiach, Rav Mattisyahu, clarifies the distinction between big and high.

Something "big" occupies a lot of space - both on the ground and as high as it goes. But something "high" is something **that is disconnected from what is below**.

High is a different dimension: elevated and above that which is attached to the ground. A skyscraper may be taller than the clouds passing by, but the clouds are unbound, high in a different sense.

In fact, high may just be the exact **opposite** of big!

For example, the Torah tells us that we are the least of all the nations in number, but that is not a contradiction to being the highest and most elevated of all nations.

With this insight, the entire parsha becomes a running lesson, and we can also understand why Chazal organized it to be read before Rosh Hashanah.

Hashem wants Klal Yisroel to be an elevated nation whose primary existence is spiritual. We do not belong here in this physical world as residents. We would be better adjusted somewhere higher - a place closer to Hashem.

Hashem gives us the mitzvos of *Bikkurim* and *Ma'aser* to remind us that our land and produce are a gift and are not really ours. Hashem then urges us to recognize that our lives are not natural. Rather, if we keep our focus as an elevated nation, attached to Hashem, we will have dazzling blessings unmatched by any natural process. And if we lose focus, Chas V'shalom, we bring upon ourselves curses outside the boundaries of the natural order.

**Average is not us.**

Hashem will not tolerate us being normal.

Either we live the reality of **עליון מכל** הגוים, or we fall **מטה מטה** - lowest of the low.

There is no greater mistake than thinking we are simply taller. The Torah teaches us that we are **עליון**--disconnected from the world below.

The Yamim Nora'im are a time when spirituality is easier to feel, allowing us the opportunity to go higher and draw inspiration to lead more elevated lives in the coming year, thereby meriting unbound blessings.

**עליון - not American.**

## Tefillah Treasures #48

BY RABBI YOEL D. ZEFFREN  
ASSOCIATE ROSH KOLLEL



### Eilu Devarim IX: Bestowing a Kindness Hachnosas Orchim

Chazal tell us (Shabbos 127a) that welcoming guests is greater than receiving the Shechinah. In fact, Sanhedrin 103b teaches that feeding guests is of such great significance that it can cause Hashem to overlook a wicked person's sins. Rashi explains that when one feeds guests, Hashem does not focus on the shortcomings of the benefactor and refrains from bringing retribution upon him.

We learn this from Avraham Avinu, who left to receive guests while speaking with Hashem, saying, "Please, my Master, do not pass by Your servant." Michtav Me'Eliyahu (1:141, 2:180) asks: Is this not a great disregard for Hashem's presence? He explains that receiving the Shechinah is a gift that one receives, whereas welcoming guests requires a person to forgo his own interests, time, and resources. Through this act, one acquires a deeper recognition of the truth and a profound emunah that becomes deeply entrenched in his heart.

Chazal teach (Bava Metzia 86b) that in the merit of Avraham Avinu's actions, his descendants were sustained and protected during their sojourn in the wilderness for 40 years. Yet this seems disproportionate reward. Why should such a simple act generate such tremendous reward? Additionally, the Chofetz Chaim (Ahavas Chesed 3:2) asks: The recipients of Avraham's kindness over his many decades were idol worshippers. Why, then, did he receive such great reward? He answers that although this may have been true of his guests, Avraham's intentions were completely pure. Hashem therefore ensured that he would not lose out, sending him the choicest of creations—the angels—and generating such long-lasting benefits.

The impact of pursuing purity is immeasurable. The Shem Mishmuel (Beshalach 5672) illustrates this by asking: What act of kindness was there in feeding angels if they do not actually eat physical food? He explains that Avraham infused the food with such purity of heart and generosity that, through his welcoming of the guests, the food itself was transformed into something spiritual that could be enjoyed even by angels.

According to Rav Dessler, while there may be additional reward commensurate with the greatness of the recipients, there is also a greater purity of heart, benevolence, and pursuit of truth when one serves simple people or even those who are difficult to serve. Perhaps we can say that the more challenging or less appealing our guests may be, the greater the opportunity to fulfill Hashem's will and achieve true spiritual growth.

It was related at the funeral of Rabbi Uri Mandelbaum that once, an indigent man arrived at the Yeshiva of Philadelphia looking for a place to stay for Shabbos. Concerned for their safety, the yeshiva boys sent him to Rabbi Mandelbaum, a rebbe in the yeshiva, assuming that he, too, would find a tactful way to decline.

Astoundingly, Rabbi Mandelbaum gave him a bed in his basement. Yet, not wanting to risk his family's safety, he sat the entire night on a chair beside the basement door, in case his guest came up the steps with sinister plans. He simply said, "He may look suspicious, but if he genuinely needs a place to stay, how can I refuse him?" The sleepless night was a small price to pay for an opportunity paramount to prophecy.



## BRACHA ON FRAGRANCE - PART 2

**Q:** I pick up a freshly brewed cup of coffee, and it has a wonderful aroma. Do I recite *Hanosein Rei'ach Tov Bapeiros*?

**A:** Coffee beans are considered a fruit for the purposes of the *bracha* on fragrance, so *Hanosein Rei'ach Tov Bapeiros* is recited on the aroma of coffee. However, a *bracha* on a fragrance is only recited when one picks up the item with the intention of smelling it. Therefore, if one picks up the coffee to drink it, no *bracha* is recited, even if he subsequently decides to smell it. If he picks it up to smell it, a *bracha* is recited, even if he then drinks it. The determining factor is whether he picked it up to smell it or to drink it.

שו"ע או"ח סי' רט"ז ס"ב, ביה"ל שם, מ"ב סקט"ז. וכבר כתבתי למעלה שהחזו"א (או"ח סי' ל"ה) פליג על זה.

**Q:** There are a bunch of people at *Havdalah*, so I thought of just taking the cover of the *Besamim* and smelling it. Is that okay?

**A:** No. A *bracha* is not recited on a fragrance that has no substance of its own. Therefore, a *bracha* may not be recited on an item that merely absorbed the fragrance of another substance. Examples include the cover of a *Besamim* container that has absorbed its fragrance, or oil that had a fragrant flower soaked in it and was then removed.

שו"ע או"ח סי' רי"ז ס"ג, מ"ב סקט"ו, ועי' בשו"ע סי' רט"ז ס"ו.

**Q:** Is a *bracha* recited on scented oils?

**A:** It depends on how the oil is made. An essential oil contains the concentrated fragrant components extracted from a plant, and the appropriate *bracha* is recited when smelling it. An infused oil is made by soaking a plant in regular oil and then removing the plant. No *bracha* is recited on the infused oil once the plant has been removed. However, if the fragrant plant remains in the oil, a *bracha* is recited when smelling it.

שו"ע או"ח סי' רי"ז ס"ג, מ"ב סקט"ו, ועי' בשו"ע סי' רט"ז ס"ו.

**Q:** When making *Havdala*. I realized that I don't have *Besamim*. Can I take cinnamon from my pantry and recite a *bracha* on it?

**A:** Yes. Although the cinnamon is kept in the pantry for eating rather than for its fragrance, and one would not recite a *bracha* if he happened to smell it while eating something with cinnamon, in this case he specifically takes it in order to smell it. Therefore, he may recite the *bracha* of *Borei Minei Besamim* on it. Ideally, one should set aside a container of spices specifically for the *mitzvah* of *Besamim*.

שו"ע או"ח סי' רט"ז ס"ב, ביה"ל שם, מ"ב סקט"ז, מ"ב סי' רצ"ז סק"י. ולחוש לשיטת החזו"א (או"ח סי' ל"ה) העצה היא ליטול מעט קינמון מהבקבוק ולהניחו בידו או בטישו, כדי לייחדו להרחה, ואז לכו"ע יכול לברך עליו (שמעתי מר"ז סמיט).

## THE SHABBOS AFTERNOON HALACHA SERIES

WITH RABBI MORDECHAI WEIS  
בענייני דיומא

Shiur: 5:30 PM  
Mincha: 6:00 PM

## PARSHAS KI SAVO

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC:

## HAGBAH/GELILAH

How to perform this special mitzvah the proper way



THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL & THE ORAYSA CHABURA PRESENT

## CHALITZAH

A GLIMPSE INTO A RARE PRACTICAL HALACHA  
An In-Depth Shiur & Demonstration of the Chalitzah Process

WITH RABBI YITZCHOK MAYER LEIZEROWSKI

RAV, BETH MIDRASH HARAV B'NAI JACOB  
VETERAN MEMBER OF THE BEIS DIN OF PHILADELPHIA

TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 1, 8:20 PM

In the Simcha Hall of the Philadelphia Community Kollel  
Special Refreshments Served - Maariv Following Program

FOR MEN



לעילוי נשמת  
חיים אברהם מאיר שמואל  
בן עובדיה ברכציון  
יארצייט י"ז אלול

Rabbi Yitzchok Mayer Leizerowski is the longtime Rav Beth Midrash HaRav B'nai Jacob in Northeast Philadelphia and a respected member of the Philadelphia rabbinates. He is the son of Rabbi Boruch Halevi Leizerowski zt"l, renowned talmid chacham and posek who served as Beis Din of Philadelphia. Growing up immersed in the world of practical halacha and the Philadelphia Beis Din, Rabbi Leizerowski has decades of firsthand exposure to complex areas of halachic practice. He has been involved with personally witnessing the chalitzah process as performed under the auspices of the Beis Din of Philadelphia, giving him a unique perspective on this rare and fascinating mitzvah and its practical application.

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## PARSHAS KI SAVO SHABBOS ZEMANIM

Friday, August 28

6:00 pm - Mincha/Maariv  
6:15 pm - Plag Hamincha  
7:20 pm - Candle Lighting Latest  
7:38 pm - Shkiya/Sunset

Shabbos, August 29

8:15 am - Shacharis  
9:07/9:43 am - Latest Krias Shema  
6:00 pm - Mincha  
7:36 pm - Shkiya/Sunset  
8:31 pm - Maariv  
8:48 pm - 72 minutes