

Candle Lighting

7:15

S”Z Kriat Shema

9:36

Sunset

7:32

Motzei  
Shabbat

8:06



Parshat HaShavuah

KI –TAVO

כי תבוא

SEPTEMBER 08, 2012

כ”א אלול תשע”ב

A PUBLICATION OF



Ashreinu

חלקינו מה טוב

Enriching and Enhancing Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

RABBI CHAIM LANNER 1, 4

GABRIELLA SOBOL ('13) 2

JORDAN BROWN ('13) 2-3

REBECCA MULLER ('13) 3

MATTHEW SILKIN ('14) 3-4

**FINDING MEANING IN MITZVOT**  
RABBI CHAIM LANNER

About 300 hundred years ago on a Sunday morning in a little town in Europe, the men of the community woke up early to daven shacharit in shul. Each wore his talit and tefillin while davening to Hashem. Suddenly, government officials stormed into the shul, started beating up congregants and destroying the entire shul, including the Sifrei Torah

that were in the aron kodesh. After these barbarians left the shul, a group of the men approached the Rabbi of the community with the following question:

“Rabbi, we are very confused. We all remember you teaching us the pasuk in *Parshat Ki Tavo* that says ‘*Virau kol amay haaretz ki shem Hashem nikra alecha viyaru mimeka.*’ ‘The nations of the world will see that the name of Hashem is upon you and they will revere you.’ And you shared with us the statement of the Talmud which explains that this verse is referring to a time when the Jews are wearing their tefillin on their heads. So how is it then, that at the moment that we were all wearing our tefillin on our heads, these people could come in here and do what they did to us? Please explain it to us, Rabbi.”

The Rabbi looked at them and explained the simple answer. “Let’s read that line in the Talmud again together,” he said. “When is it that the nations of the world will revere us? ‘*Eilu tefillin shebirosh*’ – which you translated as, ‘When we are wearing tefillin on our heads.’ But if that’s what the Talmud meant, it would have said ‘*eilu tefillin she’al harosh*’ – ‘These are the tefillin ON the head.’ Instead, the Talmud says ‘*eilu tefillin shebirosh*,’ ‘These are the tefillin IN the head.’ Do you know what that means? It is not enough to go through the robotic motions of simply putting tefillin on our heads, but we need to let the message of the tefillin penetrate INSIDE our heads. We need to let the tefillin become a part of who we are. Only when that happens are we performing the mitzvah of tefillin correctly and will we be worthy of respect from the nations of the world.

This important lesson is true for all mitzvot we set out to do. While simply performing mitzvot is certainly important, internalizing their messages and allowing them to transform us into better people is a necessary step for us to take as well. Let’s take, for example, the mitzvah of charity. We have so many opportunities to give charity.

*Continued Page 4*





## IF NOT FOR HASHEM GABRIELLA SOBOL ('13)

In this week's parsha we see that when a farmer brings his first fruits to the Beit Hamikdash, he is given a statement to recite. Yet halfway through this statement, the kohen stops him and takes his basket of fruit. This begs the question: Why have the farmer begin his statement only to cut him off before he is finished? Why do we not allow the farmer to just complete his entire statement?

To understand this we have to review what it is exactly that the farmer is saying. He states that he came here to the land that Hashem promised us. This implies that he comes here on his own with no help from Hashem, and that since this land was promised to him, he now has a right to it.

It is at this point that the kohen interrupts him and takes the basket, placing it on the "altar of Hashem" ("of Hashem" seems unnecessary). This action humbles the farmer and reminds him that everything he has is from Hashem.

Once the farmer appreciates what he has, he then finishes his statement, explaining that Hashem took us out of slavery in Egypt and brought us to the beautiful land of Israel. Finally he brings these first fruits to Hashem, with modesty and recognition of the source of his success.

May we all have the *zechut* of recognizing that no matter how hard we worked to achieve something, without Hashem none of it would be possible.

---

## FOLLOW THROUGH JORDAN BROWN ('13)

This week's parsha talks about the blessings and curses the Jews will receive for following and breaking the laws given to them. Although these verses, particularly the curses, draw lots of attention, I'd like to bring focus to the closing line of the parsha.

"And you will follow the words of this covenant so that you will succeed in all that you do."

With such a strong promise of success, why do many of us feel such a struggle in our relationship with Hashem? Is this not the ultimate motivation? Why is it that we cannot follow one rule in order to achieve everything we seek to achieve in our lives?

After pondering these questions, I realized I misunderstood the verse. Man's greatest struggle is in his relationship with Hashem, and the only way to succeed in that struggle is to follow the words of the covenant. This verse should be printed across every Chumash and written on every Torah cover, as it is the map that shows the path to success in our relationship with Hashem. Once Hashem is on your side, you truly will be successful in all that you do.





## WHERE DID THAT COME FROM

### REBECCA MULLER ('13)

In *Parshat Ki Tavo* we are introduced to the mitzvah of bringing the first fruits of the *shivat haminin* to the Beit Hamikdash as an offering each season.

However, when explaining this mitzvah, the Torah also states that one should “bow down before the Almighty, your God” (Devarim 26:10). The Torah presents many other mitzvot, but only instructs us to bow with regard to this particular commandment. So, what makes this mitzvah so important that it merits to be done in conjunction with bowing? Why does this commandment seem holier than the others?

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz explains that bringing the first fruits to the Beit Hamikdash is such a holy concept as it demonstrates our appreciation for Hashem’s gift of food. By bowing down in honor of this mitzvah, we are showing Hashem that we recognize that the fruits we eat are precious gifts from Him. Therefore, bowing down allows us to convey our appreciation of Hashem for sustaining us with food. This concept can be generalized to situations other than the appreciation of food. Whenever we feel like we are taking things in our lives for granted, we should take a step back and realize that everything we have is a gift from Hashem.

Once we begin to appreciate Hashem’s gifts, we will then appreciate what we have even more because we recognize it comes from a greater power. Instead of harboring anger or jealousy toward Hashem for not providing us with everything that we want, thank Him for the things that we do have. Eventually, we will find that it is more gratifying to appreciate what we do have—after all, everything is a present from Hashem!

---

## CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

### MATTHEW SILKIN ('14)

A segment of this week’s parsha discusses a short declaration which the Jews would say when delivering the *ma’aser* to the Leviim, converts, and other parties who might receive those offerings. This mitzvah is commonly known as *viduy ma’asrot*, or “the confession of tithes.”

Many commentators are bothered by this title, as we are not actually confessing anything, so why would this mitzvah become known as a “confession?”

*Continued Page 4*



*Silkin continued*

The Seforno gives an amazing insight to resolve this problem. He cites a midrash that discusses how the firstborn of each family was destined to work in the Beit Hamikdash instead of the kohanim or leviim.

However, because the firstborns participated in the episode of the Golden Calf while the leviim did not, the right to serve as the holy priests was given over to the leviim and kohanim. Therefore, we give *terumah* and *ma'aser* to our kohanim and leviim, thereby remembering the mistakes of our ancestors and “confessing” our own shortcomings.

Hashem’s reaction to the firstborns’ sin teaches us an amazing lesson: though Hashem is in command, we still have our free will to choose our own adventure. We must learn from our ancestors’ sins to make the correct decision in every situation that Hashem puts before us – and realize that every choice is an important one.

*Lanner continued*

Sometimes there is a knock on our door, sometimes there’s an envelope in the mail, and sometimes there’s a lady standing on the corner of 441 and Palmetto during a red light. So what do we do if we are in a generous mood?

We write out a check or hand the person a few dollars, maybe even just flip them a coin or two, and then we feel pretty good about ourselves, as we should. But the question is: are we internalizing our actions? As a result of my charitable act, am I now a more generous, sensitive and giving person than I was before? If so, then I have performed the mitzvah to its fullest. If I’m just going through the motions, then a dimension of the mitzvah is still missing and there is room for improvement.

**Editor-in-Chief**

Isaac Kurtz (‘14)

**Final Editor**

Zevi Litwin (‘13)

**Editing**

Hannah Baum (‘13)  
Ari Clements (‘14)  
Kira Dennis (‘14)  
Ari Mazor (‘14)  
Jared Samilow (‘14)  
Matthew Silkin (‘14)

# Staff

Chaim Bitterman (‘13)  
Daniel Feldan (‘16)  
Seth Fisher (‘13)  
Daniel Lasko (‘14)  
Efraim Schacter (‘16)  
Gabriella Sobol (‘13)  
Simcha Stadlan (‘16)

**Layout**

Danielle Sobol (‘13)

**Proofreader**

Saige Rosenberg (‘13)

**Senior Editor**

Eliana Feldan (‘13)

**Faculty Advisor**

Rabbi Avi Hochman

Interested in sponsoring Ashreinu?  
Contact Rabbi Hochman at  
RAVH@WYHS.NET

This publication contains Torah matter-  
Please treat it with respect



7902 Montoya Circle  
Boca Raton, FL 33433  
Phone: 561-417-7422  
Fax: 561-417-7028  
www.wyhs.net