



פרשת כי תבא
אלול תשע"ט

COMMUNAL AVOS UBANIM

This Motzai Shabbos is the 7th annual communal Avos Ubanim learning program.

Fathers, Bochorim and boys from across all of Melbourne's different Kehillos will be coming together to learn the one Torah that we all share.

8:15-9:15pm in the Adass Yisroel Hall. Each boy will get a special souvenir prize.

CBD LUNCHTIME SHIUR

JBD together with Kollel Menachem invite you to a Pre-Rosh Hashana lunchtime shiur in the CBD.

The Paradox of Prayer

We spend most of the High Holidays in prayer. But what exactly should we be praying for?

With Rabbi Yonason Johnson
This Wednesday 1:15pm
Level 5 South, 459 Collins St
(Mincha at 1:00 pm)

7 REBBES | 7 INSIGHTS THE POWER OF SHOFAR

All men and Bochorim are invited to join a special Pre-Rosh Hashana Chassidus shiur.

The central Mitzvah of Rosh Hashana, the Shofar, has deep inner meaning and power.

Learn a selection of teachings from each of the Rebbeim explaining the Chassidus of Shofar.

This Thursday night Elul 26
8:30-9:30pm in the Yeshivah
lunchroom.

With Rabbi Yonason Johnson

A collection of Torah
thoughts produced by
Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא
חידוש Chiddush



Rabbi Gordon's Wednesday night Nach shiur

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The responsibility of Hagbah

We've all seen it before. The poor guy who is called up for Hagbah to lift the Torah and is not experienced or up to the task. He picks up the Torah, it wobbles. Our hearts jump. Finally we breathe a sigh of relief when the Sefer Torah is safely placed back down on the Bimah or held tightly on the chair.

Dropping the Torah is a serious scenario. How great is the responsibility that we place on the one entrusted to lift the Torah and hold it up!

Parshas Ki Savo details the ceremony of the blessings and curses which would be declared on Har Gerizim and Har Eival after the Jewish people would enter Eretz Yisroel.

Six tribes would stand atop Har Gerizim and six tribes would ascend Har Eival. The Leviim and Kohanim would stand between the two mountains. They would turn to face each of the Mountains as they declared the blessings and curses for the 11 specific Mitzvos listed in the Parsha.

The Jewish people would respond Amen aloud as they accepted these Mitzvos together with the blessings for their observance and curses should they not be fulfilled.

The final curse is; *Cursed is the one who does not uphold the words of this Torah to observe them.* The inverse would be Hashem's blessings for one who does uphold the words of the Torah.

There is debate what "this Torah" refers to. Some say that it refers to the entire Torah, an oath accepting all 613 Mitzvos and the curses that would ensue should they fail to keep it. Others say that it only refers to the Mitzvos in this passage.

There is a fascinating discussion on this final curse in the Yerushalmi (Sotah 7:4).

Literally the verse reads "cursed is the person who does not stand up this Torah". The Yerushalmi asks, can the Torah fall that it needs to be picked up?

The Yerushalmi offers two explanations of what it means that the Torah could fall and how we must stand it up;

According to the first explanation, the command is being addressed to the Chazan in Shule. Korban Haeidah explains that it is a directive to the Chazan

doing Hagbah that they take care so that the Sefer Torah not fall.

Ramban suggests that it is a warning to the Chazan doing Hagbah to make sure to show the Sefer Torah to everyone in Shule; men, women and children, so that they can see its words and pledge their commitment to keep them by declaring "This is the Torah that Moshe place before the Jewish people". To not do so would be to cause the Torah to fall as people may become lax in their observance.

According to the second explanation, the curse is addressing the Beis Din; the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people, who bare the responsibility of upholding the Torah and ensuring that it is observed and does not fall. Korban Haeida writes that they should speak up and demand from those who have the power to govern so that the Torah values and observance are upheld in our communities.

In the times of King Yoshiahu, the observance of Torah had almost ceased to exist. When he was shown the Sefer Torah (which had almost become lost to the Jewish people), he read this verse "cursed is the one who does not uphold the words of this Torah to observe them." He tore his clothing and said "it is on me (as the leader, the responsibility) to uphold them."

The responsibility of a Rabbi, community leader, or indeed any observant Jew is like the responsibility of being called up for Hagbah.

The Torah is placed in our hands to raise up high, to show its words and message proudly so that all can see them. We have to promote observance and commitment to Torah and Halacha within our homes and communities. Certainly we have to ensure that it does not fall.

Whether we chose it or not, as frum Jews we bear this responsibility full-time. The way we conduct ourselves, especially when we interact with others can lift up the pride and honour of the Torah in the eyes of those around us and inspire them draw closer to it. But if our behaviour creates a Chilul Hashem, we can Chas Veshalom cause the opposite.

We've just been called up for Hagbah. If we're a bit wobbly, perhaps we need to work-out some more.

Adding Piyutim into Davening

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

On Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur, many communities add Piyutim (liturgical poems) to their prayers. Some Kehillos also add Piyutim on special Shabbosim such as the four Parshiyos and to the davening of the Shalosh Regolim.

Customs vary greatly for community to community regarding on which day Piyutim are recited. There are also differences in how many and which Piyutim are said and where they are inserted into the davening.

The Piyutim do not form part of the essential text of the Tefillos composed by the Anshei Kneses Hagedola. They were added at later times as a Minhag.

The Piyutim are inserted into the Chazzan's repetition of the Amidah for Shachris and Musaf and may also be added to the Birchos Krias Shema (blessings before the Shema).

These Piyutim are often referred to as Yotzros. Technically this name refers to the Piyutim inserted into the Birchos Krias Shema which begins Yotzer Or. The Piyutim added into the Amidah are referred to as Krovetz (an acronym for **קוֹל רִינָה וְיִשׁוּעָה בְּאֵהָלֵי צְדִיקִים**) or as Krovos.

The question is whether or not they constitute a hefsek, a problematic interruption in the davening. The Poskim distinguish between where the Piyutim are inserted.

Piyutim in Birchos Krias Shema

In the Birchos Krias Shema, the Mechaber¹ rules that they do constitute a hefsek and this custom should be stopped. This is the view of the Rambam².

The Ram"o³ however brings the opinion of the Rashba⁴ and Rabbeinu Yonah⁵ that the Piyutim in Birchos Krias Shema are not problematic and are a widespread practise. They argue that it is permissible to add to the middle of these blessings as long as the beginning and end of the blessings remains intact. The Ram"o however does conclude that one who does not say these Piyutim does not lose out.

Piyutim in Chazoras Hashatz

In Chazoras Hashatz there is stronger grounds for reciting Piyutim since in the Amidah one may technically add to each Bracha if it is related to the Bracha⁶.

However, there is discussion whether one may insert Piyutim into the first three blessings of the Amidah. These are blessings of praise for Hashem and one is not supposed to make personal requests or supplications.

Nonetheless the Poskim permit Piyutim to be inserted into the first three blessings since they are not personal requests but are for the needs of the community⁷. The Rosh⁸, as quoted in the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch brings support for this permissibility from the fact that Rabbi Elazar Hakalir, perhaps the greatest of Paytanim composed Piyutim to be inserted into the first three blessings of the Amidah.

Rabbi Elozor Hakalir

Rabbi Elazar Hakalir was a Tana who lived in Eretz Yisroel in Kiryas Sefer. The Rosh identifies Rabbi Elazar Hakalir as the son of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. He is called Hakalir according to the Aruch because when he started to learn he was given a cake with pesukim on it as a segulah which enabled his eyes to be opened. Kalir means a small cake in ancient Greek. Others, including the Rashba⁹, suggest that he was the Tana Rabbi Elazar ben Arach.

The Alter Rebbe, based on Shaar Hakavanos of the Ariza"l, writes that there are those who will only recite the Piyutim composed by the early Paytanim such as the Kaliri, as they were composed in the way of truth. It is said that they were composed with Ruach Hakodesh and contain secrets of Torah.

The Pri Megadim writes that the Piyutim are called Krovos, related to the word **קָרוֹב** meaning close, because they draw the hearts of the Jewish people closer to Hashem.

In Practice

The Alter Rebbe did not include Piyutim in Birchos Krias Shema and was also very select and limited about the Piyutim included in the Chazoras Hashatz for the Yomim Noraim. This is also Shitas Hagr"a.

Most communities do not recite Piyutim in the Birchos Krias Shema.

It is recorded that the Baal Shem Tov would not add Piyutim even in Chazoras Hashatz except the Tefillah of Tal, Geshem and the Four Parshiyos¹⁰. The Chasam Sofer was displeased by the practise in his community to add Piyutim in Birchos Krias Shema but did not nullify the custom. Concerning the Piyutim in the Amidah he writes that they were important and that Gedolei Yisroel would ensure to finish any Piyutim skipped by the Tzibbur after davening¹¹.

Shibolei Haleket writes that it is a Mitzvah to recite the Piyutim¹².

While the Chazzan recites the Piyutim one should follow along reciting it together with the Chazzan. One should certainly not speak during that time

and should not even learn, even if just looking into a Sefer without actually reading¹³.

Pri Chadash warns that the reciting of the Piyutim should not cause one to miss zman Krias Shema and zman Tefillah. If the Chazzan left out one of the Piyutim and had already concluded the Bracha, the Piyut may not be added at that or a later point. It is advisable to recite the omitted Piyut after davening.

An individual davening on their own does not recite any Piyutim¹⁴.

The Piyutim may be said even if one does not understand them. The Rebbe advised Baalei Tefillah to look over the Machzor and learn their meaning.

The Alter Rebbe rules that when Rosh Hashona falls on Shabbos one should not extend davening past Chatzos. On a weekday, one may extend the davening with Piyutim, but not merely with Chazonus and nigunim¹⁵.

Changing Minhagim in Tefillah

On this topic, the Poskim address the ability to change customs of davening. The Alter Rebbe¹⁶ adds that one should not change their family minhagim of Tefillah. This ruling is based on the Ariza"l who explains that there are twelve gates in heaven through which the Tefillos of each tribe ascend according to their minhag.

The Mahari"l¹⁷ records that when he lost a daughter (r"l) he attributed it to having changing the minhag hamokom (custom of the community) regarding the reciting of the Piyutim.

The Bach also records how someone who tried to cancel the custom of reciting Piyutim did not live out the year. The son of Rav Chaim Vital attests that despite his father's opinion against the reciting of the Piyutim, when he served as the Shliach Tzibbur in a community whose custom it was to say them, he did recite them¹⁸.

1. OC 68:1
2. Teshuvah Pe'er Hador 64 and 129
3. OC 68:1
4. Teshuvos 1:469
5. Brachos Perek Ein Omdin
6. Shulchan Aruch Harav OC 68:2. See Tur OC 112 and Rosh Brachos 5:21.
7. ibid. See Ram"o OC 112:2
8. Brachos 5:21. See also Maadanei Yom Tov.
9. Teshuva 1:469
10. Piskei Teshuvos
11. ibid
12. Mishna Berura 68:4
13. Ram"o 68:1
14. Mishna Berura 68:4
15. Shulchan Aruch Harav OC 584:6
16. 68:2 based on the Magei Avraham. Also quoted in the Mishna Berura 68:4. Concerning changing from Nusach Ashkenaz to Nusach Ha'Ariza"l which represents the 13th gate which receives all Tefillos, see Igros Kodesh 14:91 and 391.
17. Seder Yom Hakippurim
18. Mishna Berura 68:4. See also Shaarei Teshuvah 68:1