



**Weekly Shiur from Maran HaRishon
LeTzion HaGaon Rabbi David Yosef shlita,
Saturday Night Parashat Nitzavim –
Vayelech 5786, Shiur #366**

English

Parashat Nitzavim – Vayelech

The Yom Tov of Rosh Hashanah

Topics of the Shiur:

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From the Opening Remarks of HaGaon Rabbi Rafael Busso shlita, Graduate of the Bet Midrash *Yechaveh Daat* and Rabbi of the Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon:

...With the permission of Maran HaRishon LeTzion shlita, we, the *avrechim* who have merited to live here in the neighborhood as members of the *Yechaveh Daat* community, merit to see tangibly how a leader of the generation should look. At two o'clock in the morning, when I have trouble sleeping and am on the balcony, I see Maran shlita returning on foot from hours of diligent study. We spoke just now about Hashem's mercy on *Am Yisrael*, that He loves us and cares for us. Part of His mercy is that He provides us with a leader who teaches us the Torah of Hashem and the Torah of life: how to study with in-depth analysis (*iyun*), sharpness (*pilpul*), and precision, delving to the core of the reasoning without relenting or compromising understanding by even a single gram, dwelling in the depths of *halachah*. And also what a Torah of life is: how to apply the Torah to life—in conduct, in *chesed* (loving-kindness), and in compassion toward everyone, with a smile and a good word at every opportunity. We thank *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* for granting our generation a leader who, with Hashem's help, will lead us until the coming of the righteous redeemer, guide us, and show us the upright path. May *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* lengthen his days over his kingdom. Amen, *ken yehi ratzon*.

Shiur of Maran HaRishon LeTzion shlita

The Difference Between the Second Day of *Rosh Hashanah* and the Second Day of *Yom Tov*

Thank you very much to my dear friend, HaGaon Rabbi Rafael Busso shlita, who is one of the veteran scholars studying with us, a great *talmid chacham*, highly talented, a son of holy ancestors who walks in the path of his forefathers. May it be Hashem's will that he continues to ascend higher and higher, spreading his wellsprings outward, to magnify Torah and make it glorious.

It is written in the Torah (*Vayikra* 23:24), “In the seventh month, on the first day of the month.” However, *Chazal* established that on *Rosh Hashanah*, we observe two days even in *Eretz Yisrael*. Nevertheless, one must know that there is a major difference between the two days of *Rosh Hashanah* and the second day of *Yom Tov* observed in *Chutz LaAretz* (the Diaspora).

The second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz* was instituted by the *Chachamim* because in their time, the sanctification of the month (*kiddush hachodesh*) was determined based on sighting the new moon. Two witnesses would come before the *Bet Din* and testify that they saw the new moon, and the *Bet Din* would sanctify the month.

They did this in *Eretz Yisrael*, and then they would immediately dispatch messengers throughout the world to announce when the month had been sanctified.

In those days, the world was not so large. There was no America or Australia, and even large parts of Africa and Europe did not exist in terms of Jewish settlement; the Jewish people were scattered at most as far as Babylon, but no further. Thus, on every festival, it was possible to send messengers quickly right after the month was sanctified, and notify all Jewish communities when the month had been sanctified. However, because a mishap could occur—such as the messengers not arriving in time, leaving those in *Chutz LaAretz* uncertain when *Yom Tov* fell—the *Chachamim* instituted that two days of *Yom Tov* should always be observed due to doubt. Except for *Yom Kippur*, because it is very difficult to fast for two days, the *Chachamim* did not institute a second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz* for *Yom Kippur*. Although the *Tur* (O.C. 624) brings that some used to fast two days, nowadays almost no one can do so, as it is practically impossible. But for all other festivals, two days are observed in *Chutz LaAretz*.

The Second Day of *Yom Tov* is Treated Like the First

The *Gemara* (*Betzah* 4b) explains that the second day of *Yom Tov* is treated like the first day of *Yom Tov* regarding all prohibitions of *Yom Tov*. Even though it is Rabbinic (*de'rabbanan*), we do not say for every halachic question or doubt that because the second day of *Yom Tov* is Rabbinic, we should rule leniently (*safek de'rabbanan lekula*). Rather, the second day of *Yom Tov* is observed exactly like the first day in every respect. For example, regarding *Kiddush*, one recites *Kiddush* and its blessings on the second day of *Yom Tov*, and we do not apply the rule of *safek berachot lehakel* (ruling leniently in doubts regarding blessings). The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 23a) discusses this, and the underlying principle explained there is that the *Chachamim* instituted reciting the blessings on the second day of *Yom Tov* just like on the first day so that people would not treat it lightheadedly. The *Gemara* further states that in their time, they would excommunicate anyone who desecrated the second day of *Yom Tov*. The *Chachamim* were very strict so that people would not come to treat it with disrespect.

The Second Day of *Yom Tov* Nowadays

In our times, there is no longer a concern that people might make a mistake regarding the dates. Today, one can easily make a phone call; there is no need to send messengers as in their time, and one can instantly notify any location. Nevertheless, according to all opinions, two days of *Yom Tov* are still observed in *Chutz LaAretz* nowadays, because since the *Chachamim* instituted it, we are concerned lest the original problem return (*shema yachzor davar lekilkulo*). Furthermore, we have a rule: once a decree was established by a *Bet Din*—the *Sanhedrin* (the Sages of Israel during the Second Temple period), we do not have the authority today to annul Rabbinic enactments.

Sanctifying the Month in the Month of *Tishrei*

Regarding *Rosh Hashanah*, the situation was quite different according to the *Gemara* (*Rosh Hashanah* 30b). This is a complex topic in the *Gemara*. We see that

even in *Eretz Yisrael* they had a significant problem, because *Rosh Hashanah* falls on the first day of the month—the very day on which the month is sanctified. Therefore, they instituted the additional day, and thus nowadays we observe two days throughout the world, including in *Eretz Yisrael*. However, there is a fundamental difference: the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz* is observed out of doubt (*safek*)—whether the first day is *Yom Tov* or the second day is *Yom Tov*. In contrast, for *Rosh Hashanah*, there is a permanent Rabbinic enactment to observe two days even in *Eretz Yisrael*. This is no longer a matter of doubt, and it is possible that both days are holy. For example, if they sanctified the first day, and later the witnesses arrived late, there is a situation where they would sanctify the second day as well, making it sacred from the Torah. Therefore, it is a permanent enactment that both days are *Yom Tov*.

An Egg Laid on Yom Tov and Fruit That Fell from a Tree

On the second day of *Rosh Hashanah*, there are certain stringencies that do not exist on the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz*. For example, although we observe the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz* exactly like the first day, it is nonetheless observed due to doubt. Thus, if an item was forbidden on the first day—for instance, a hen laid an egg on *Yom Tov*, making it *muktzeh* and forbidden to move or eat, or a deer was trapped in a trap on *Yom Tov* and slaughtered, or fruit fell from a tree or was picked by a non-Jew on *Yom Tov*—these items are forbidden on that first day. All these rules apply both on Shabbat and on *Yom Tov*: an egg laid on *Yom Tov* or Shabbat is forbidden on that day; an animal trapped on Shabbat or *Yom Tov* is forbidden on that day; fruit that was picked or fell from a tree on Shabbat or *Yom Tov* is considered *muktzeh* and forbidden even to move, and certainly forbidden to eat. However, on the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz*, that egg, deer, or fruit becomes permitted. This is because we apply a *mima nafshach* (either way) argument: if the first day was the true *Yom Tov*, then indeed on the first day we did not move or eat the egg or fruit, but on the second day—which is actually a weekday—it is permitted. And if the second day is the true *Yom Tov*, then the egg was laid, the fruit fell, or the animal was trapped on the previous day, which was actually a weekday. Therefore, they are permitted on the second day of *Yom Tov*.

Yoma Arichta

On *Rosh Hashanah*, the rule is different. Because it is a permanent enactment of the *Chachamim* to observe two consecutive days even in *Eretz Yisrael*, and not due to doubt, the two days are considered as *yoma arichta* (one long day). The two days are considered a single period of sanctity. Therefore, an egg laid on the first day of *Rosh Hashanah*, or fruit picked or fallen on the first day of *Rosh Hashanah*, remains forbidden on the second day of *Rosh Hashanah* as well, because the *Chachamim* designated both days as a single holiness (*kedushah achat*). Thus, whatever is forbidden on the first day remains forbidden on the second day. However, one must know that this rule applies only as a stringency (*lechumra*), but not as a leniency (*lekula*). For example, in *Chutz LaAretz*, where two days of *Yom Tov* are observed, if on the first day of *Yom Tov* a person wants to cook or prepare something for the second day of *Yom Tov*, it is strictly forbidden. This is because one day of *Yom Tov* does not prepare for the second day, as the second day is observed due to doubt. Just as it is forbidden to prepare on *Yom Tov* for a weekday, so too it is forbidden to prepare on the first day of *Yom Tov* for the second day. The two days of *Rosh Hashanah* are considered *yoma arichta* only regarding stringencies. Regarding leniencies—such as preparing on the first day for the second day of *Rosh Hashanah*—it is forbidden. This year, the question does not arise for the first day, because the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* falls on Shabbat, and on Shabbat one may never prepare for *Yom Tov*, and even an *eruv tavshilin* does not help for this. Therefore, one must be very careful in every household, on every *Rosh Hashanah* and especially this year when the first day falls on Shabbat, not to make any preparation—whether heating food or any other preparation—until *tzet hakochavim* according to the Geonim, which is approximately 20 minutes after sunset (*shkiyah*). Only then is it permitted to begin preparing and heating food for the second day of *Yom Tov*.

The Blessing of Shehecheyanu on Festivals

There is another example regarding *yoma arichta* on *Rosh Hashanah*. There is a question discussed by our *Rishonim*: the *Chachamim* instituted for us to recite *Shehecheyanu* on every festival, thanking *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* for granting us life and bringing us to this season (“*Shehecheyanu vekiyemanu vehigianu la’zeman hazeh*”). The *Gemara* (*Eruvin* 40a) states that the enactment to recite *Shehecheyanu* applies to *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* as well. The *Gemara* discusses whether on *Yom Kippur* one recites *Shehecheyanu* over a cup of wine, since usually on festivals we recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush*.

One Who Forgot to Recite Shehecheyanu

One must know that if a person forgot to recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* on a festival, he may recite it even after *Kiddush*; it does not hinder the fulfillment of the mitzvah if it was not said during *Kiddush*. The only exception is the night of the *Seder* on Pesach: if he remembers after finishing the *Haggadah* and reciting

the blessing over the second cup, he can no longer recite *Shehecheyanu*, as he has missed the opportunity. This is because we say in the blessing over the second cup after the *Haggadah*, “And He brought us to this night to eat matzah and maror,” which serves in place of the *Shehecheyanu* blessing. However, on other festivals, such as *Sukkot*, if a person forgot to recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* on the first night, he may recite it throughout all seven days. Even if he remembers on *Hoshana Rabbah*, an hour before *Simchat Torah*, he may still recite *Shehecheyanu*, and subsequently on *Simchat Torah*, he recites *Shehecheyanu* again. Similarly on *Shavuot*, if he did not remember that he had not recited *Shehecheyanu* until right before sunset, he may still recite it. It is an enactment to recite it for the festival, and we customarily include it in *Kiddush*.

Kiddush on Yom Kippur

On *Yom Kippur*, we do not recite *Kiddush* over a cup of wine. However, most *Rishonim* hold that on *Yom Kippur* one must intend in the middle blessing of the *Amidah* prayer (“*Kaddeshenu bemitzvatecha*”), where we conclude “King over all the earth, Who sanctifies Israel and the Day of Atonement,” to fulfill the mitzvah of *Kiddush* on *Yom Kippur*. That is, there is a *Kiddush* on *Yom Kippur*, but not over wine.

On all Shabbatot, the mitzvah of *Kiddush* is from the Torah according to most *Rishonim*, derived from the verse (*Shemot* 20:8), “Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it”—remember it with words spoken over wine. Most *Rishonim* hold that the *Chachamim* added the requirement to perform *Kiddush* specifically over wine. But on *Yom Kippur*, there is no *Kiddush* over wine, so we fulfill the obligation through the prayer. Therefore, on *Yom Kippur*, when there is no *Kiddush* over wine, it is very important that every person praying, upon reaching the conclusion of the middle blessing and saying “*Kaddeshenu bemitzvatecha*,” should intend in his mind that he is now performing the *Kiddush* of *Yom Kippur*, and then conclude “King over all the earth, Who sanctifies Israel and the Day of Atonement.” Some say this is a Biblical mitzvah. I have written at length on this topic in *Halachah Berurah*, vol. 16 (*Siman* 271). This is very important because mitzvot require intent (*mitzvot tzrichot kavanah*).

The Blessing of Shehecheyanu on Yom Kippur

Accordingly, the *Gemara* discusses the blessing of *Shehecheyanu* on *Yom Kippur*. Perhaps we should bring a cup of wine for a young child who does not need to fast, say a child of six or seven years old, and he will recite *Borei Peri HaGefen*, while we recite *Shehecheyanu*. In this way, we would recite *Shehecheyanu* over a cup of wine just like on all other festivals. However, the *Gemara* (*Eruvin* 40b) states that it is forbidden to do so. This is because the child will see that wine was brought on *Yom Kippur* and a blessing was recited over it, and later when he grows up, if he happens to be in a place where there are few knowledgeable Jews, he might erroneously think that one recites *Kiddush* over wine on *Yom Kippur*. In the language of the *Gemara*, “they might come to be drawn after it”—people might come to make a mistake in the future. Therefore, the conclusion of the *Gemara* is that on *Yom Kippur*, “its time is said even in the street”—we recite *Shehecheyanu* without a cup of wine. We are accustomed that when the *hechal* (ark) is opened on the night of *Yom Kippur* and the Torah scrolls are taken out, we recite the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*. Among the Sepharadim, according to the *Arizal*, the person who acquired the honor of holding the first Torah scroll taken out of the *hechal* during *Kol Nidrei* recites *Shehecheyanu* aloud and fulfills the obligation for the entire congregation.

The Blessing of Shehecheyanu During Kol Nidrei

One should know that for blessings like this, it is preferable for one person to recite the blessing and fulfill the obligation for everyone based on the principle of *shome’a ke’oneh* (one who hears is like one who recites). As the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 20b) states, this is because *berov am hadrat Melech* (“In the multitude of people is the King’s glory”) (*Mishlei* 14:28). If every person recites the blessing individually, it does not reflect *berov am hadrat Melech* in the same manner. Therefore, on the night of *Yom Kippur* when *Shehecheyanu* is recited, one person recites it and fulfills the obligation for the entire congregation. However, this is provided that the person who acquired the first Torah scroll for *Kol Nidrei* is capable of reciting the blessing and intending to fulfill the obligation for everyone.

When my father, Maran zt”l, arrived in Tel Aviv, he prayed at the “Ohel Moed” synagogue. It was a neighborhood where many residents were not observant. However, Maran zt”l devoted himself to that synagogue, giving classes and sermons, and transformed it completely. It became filled with people who loved Torah. To this day, I meet great Torah scholars who are the children or grandchildren of those who lived in Tel Aviv during that period in 1969. In the first year Maran arrived there, the person who acquired the first Torah scroll for *Kol Nidrei* was a Jew who was not observant. Furthermore, he arrived at the synagogue wearing leather shoes. Maran zt”l called him over and instructed him to remove his shoes while holding the Torah scroll. Naturally, he agreed and removed his shoes before holding the Torah scroll. However, the problem was that since he was not a Shabbat observer, could he fulfill the obligation for the entire congregation? And even if one were to say he could, did he understand what it meant to recite a blessing and have everyone answer “Amen”

to fulfill their obligation? He did not understand the concept of *shome'a ke'oneh* or fulfilling the obligation for others. Therefore, Maran zt"l allowed him to hold the Torah scroll, honored him, and made a *Mi Sheberach* for him, but when it came to the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*, Maran zt"l announced that he himself would recite the blessing, and he recited it himself. The person holding the Torah scroll was not offended at all; he did not even realize that according to custom the blessing normally belonged to the one holding the first Torah scroll. Indeed, Maran used to mention this in his classes: in any place where the person who acquired the first Torah scroll for *Kol Nidrei* is a simple person who does not fully understand *shome'a ke'oneh* and how to fulfill the obligation for others, one should not offend him or explain too much. Rather, simply announce that this individual will hold the Torah scroll, and the Rabbi will recite *Shehecheyanu* and intend to fulfill the obligation for the entire congregation.

If the person holding the scroll understands and knows that he should recite *Shehecheyanu*, and he acquired the scroll and paid significant money for it and wants to recite *Shehecheyanu* himself, one can announce that he will recite the blessing aloud, and each member of the congregation should recite the blessing softly along with him. Although we lose the aspect of *shome'a ke'oneh* to some degree, and there is a discussion whether reciting it simultaneously reflects *berov am hadrat Melech*, this is the proper solution. We have no other choice, as we cannot entrust this important blessing to someone when we are uncertain if the congregation fulfills their obligation through him.

The Blessing of Shehecheyanu on the Second Night of Rosh Hashanah

On the first night of *Rosh Hashanah*, we recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* just like on every festival. On the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz*, on every second day of *Yom Tov* we recite *Shehecheyanu* just like on the first day. As I mentioned earlier, the *Chachamim* instituted the second day of *Yom Tov* to be observed exactly like the first day so that people would not treat it lightheartedly. Therefore, the *Chachamim* instituted the recitation of *Shehecheyanu* on every second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz*—on Pesach, Sukkot, Shavuot, and Simchat Torah. Only on the seventh day of Pesach do we not recite *Shehecheyanu*, because it is part of the same festival of Pesach. Regarding *Rosh Hashanah*, there is a dispute among the *Rishonim*. Some say that because we define the two days as *yoma arichta* (one long day), and we say that an egg laid on the first day is forbidden on the second day, consequently one fulfills the obligation of *Shehecheyanu* on the first day for the second day as well. Other *Rishonim* hold that what we say about *yoma arichta* is only a stringency, but regarding *Shehecheyanu*, it is no different from the second day of *Yom Tov* in *Chutz LaAretz*.

Having a New Fruit on the Second Night of Rosh Hashanah

In practice, the *Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 600:2) rules that one should bring a new fruit (from a new season, that one has not yet tasted), to the table on the second night, recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush*, and intend to include the new fruit in the blessing. The *Rama* adds: or wear a new garment. However, the *Shulchan Aruch* concludes: even if one does not have a new fruit or garment, he should still recite *Shehecheyanu*.

One must understand the words of the *Shulchan Aruch*: what is the purpose of bringing a new fruit? Since there is a dispute whether one needs to recite *Shehecheyanu* on the second night of *Rosh Hashanah*, according to those who hold that one should not recite *Shehecheyanu*, how does bringing a new fruit help? According to their view, reciting *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* for a fruit would be an interruption (*hefsek*)! Imagine that on one of the Shabbatot of the year, someone brought a new fruit to the table during *Kiddush*, placed it on the table, and recited *Shehecheyanu* on the new fruit right at the end of *Kiddush*—that would be an interruption! He would have to recite *Borei Peri HaGafen* again, because the *Shehecheyanu* blessing is unrelated to *Kiddush* and acts as an interruption, just as if he had begun chatting in the middle of *Kiddush*. So why would *Shehecheyanu* over a fruit not be an interruption here?

Drinking the Cup of Kiddush Standing

My father, Maran zt"l, was meticulous on Friday night: after completing *Kiddush* while standing—there is a dispute about this, but that was the practice according to the Kabbalists—as soon as he concluded "*Mekadesh HaShabbat*," the household members would answer "Amen," and he would drink from the cup while still standing. Once I asked him why he did not sit down to drink, and he answered me as follows: sitting down to drink is not a halachic requirement; it is a matter of proper etiquette (*derech erez*). It is considered unseemly to drink while standing, so a person should act politely, sit down, and drink. On the other hand, if he is holding the cup in his hand, and in order to sit down he would have to place the cup on the table, that is certainly not desirable. Even during *Havdalah*, when we hold the cup while reciting the blessing over spices, we transfer the cup to the left hand, hold the spices in the right hand, and recite the blessing over spices. The proper way is to hold the spices initially in the right hand while reciting *Borei Peri HaGafen*, and then, after finishing *HaGafen*, place the spices on the table for a moment, transfer the cup to the left hand, take the spices in the right hand, and recite the blessings over the spices and the candle, and then return

the cup to the right hand. It is not good to place the cup on the table while reciting the blessings over spices and the candle. Similarly during *Kiddush*—that is how my father explained why he did not insist on sitting down to drink. I follow his custom and drink the *Kiddush* cup while standing, and whenever guests visit, they look and wonder why I drink standing. But that was his custom, because sitting is a matter of etiquette, and in a situation where sitting would cause the cup to be set down or spilled, he drank standing.

A Blessing in Vain is More Severe

Let us return to the topic of *Shehecheyanu*: why do we bring a new fruit for *Shehecheyanu* on the second night of *Rosh Hashanah*? We must explain that when the *Shulchan Aruch* writes to bring a new fruit, it is merely an added preference. This is because the *Shulchan Aruch* himself concludes that if one does not have a new fruit, he should still recite *Shehecheyanu*. Thus, the *Shulchan Aruch* definitively decided the halachah that one recites *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* on the second night. If we compare the severity of an interruption versus a blessing in vain (*berachah levatalah*), a blessing in vain is far more severe. Therefore, it is preferable to bring a new fruit so there is no concern of a blessing in vain, and even if there were a concern of an interruption, an interruption is the lesser concern. According to the *Arizal*, one does not need a new fruit at all, and one may simply recite *Shehecheyanu* during *Kiddush* on the second night.

Reciting Shehecheyanu Over a New Fruit

Generally, one recites *Shehecheyanu* at the time of eating a new fruit. Although the *Gemara* (*Eruvin* 40b) indicates that one recites *Shehecheyanu* upon seeing the new fruit, the accepted custom is not to recite *Shehecheyanu* until the time of eating. On *Rosh Hashanah*, however, when we place the new fruit before us during *Kiddush*, we see the new fruit, so we return to the core law that the blessing of *Shehecheyanu* applies to the seeing of the fruit. Nevertheless, it is proper right after drinking from the *Kiddush* cup to recite *Borei Peri HaEtz* over the new fruit and taste from it. My father, Maran zt"l, used to do this: on *Rosh Hashanah*, they would bring quinces or clementines, recite *HaEtz*, and taste them.

An Additional Blessing on Dates During the Meal

However, later during the meal, when the dates (*tamar*) are served as part of the *simanim*, the question arises whether one needs to recite *HaEtz* again over the dates. If the dates were not on the table during *Kiddush*, and at that time one did not explicitly intend to include them, one does not need to recite a new blessing over other fruits. As the *Rashba* (*Berachot* 41b) and all *Rishonim* agree, if a person recited *HaEtz* without specific intent, and did not think about other fruits that would be brought later, he does not need to recite a new blessing over those other fruits, even if he did not explicitly intend to include them. However, if the other fruit brought later is one of the Seven Species (*Shivat HaMinim*), in that case, explicit intent is required to include it. If he did not explicitly intend to include it, he must recite the blessing again, as the *Rashba* writes. The *Ben Ish Chai* (*Vayishlach* 1:15) writes that we do not rule like the *Rashba* in this matter, arguing that because Maran cited the *Rashba* in the *Bet Yosef* but omitted it from the *Shulchan Aruch*, this indicates Maran did not rule like the *Rashba*. However, Maran zt"l in *Yabia Omer* (vol. 4, O.C. 20:3) questioned this, noting that Maran cited the *Rashba* in the *Bet Yosef* in more than one place, and furthermore, looking closely at the *Rishonim*, several *Rishonim* cited the *Rashba's* ruling as halachah, and no one disputes the *Rashba*. Therefore, in such a matter, we rule like the *Rashba*. Thus, if a person brought a new fruit to the table, recited *Kiddush*, and recited *Shehecheyanu*, and right after *Kiddush* wants to take the new fruit and recite *HaEtz* over it, he should explicitly intend to include the dates that he will eat later during the meal. Then he will not need to recite *HaEtz* over the dates during the meal. But if he did not explicitly intend to include them, and the dates were not on the table at that time, then when the dates are served later, because dates are one of the Seven Species, he must recite *Borei Peri HaEtz* over them again.

YaKNeHaZ

One must pay attention that this year, because the first day falls on Shabbat, in the *Kiddush* on the second night we have five blessings in the order of *YaKNeHaZ*: 1. *Yayin* - *Borei Peri HaGafen*. 2. *Kiddush* - The blessing of *Kiddush* for the festival. 3. *Ner* - The blessing over the candle (*Borei Me'orei HaEsh*). 4. *Havdalah* - The blessing of *Hamavdil ben kodesh lekodesh*. 5. *Zman* - The blessing of *Shehecheyanu*.

One must pay attention during the *Havdalah* blessing to say: "Between the holiness of Shabbat and the holiness of Yom Tov You have divided," and pause, then: "And You have sanctified the seventh day above the six days of action," and pause again, then: "And You have divided and sanctified Your nation Israel with Your holiness." In some prayer books, the punctuation is missing, and people become confused and recite the text incorrectly.

"Never Again?!"

We are approaching *Rosh Hashanah*. Another week has passed, and now we are

very close. In less than two weeks, we will stand on the Day of Judgment. We are filled with awe and fear before the judgment: "And creatures will be remembered on it, to recall them for life or for death." We must all awaken and make every effort to merit a good judgment on the Day of Judgment. I think the most important and fitting thing in these times, given our current situation, is to strengthen ourselves in Torah study. There is nothing more important than this. If we reflect, we are surrounded by enemies who wish to destroy us, and the situation is not simple. If anyone among us relies on having a strong army—I heard them say on Holocaust Remembrance Day, "Never again!"—how do they know "never again"?! With Hashem's help, there will never be another Holocaust, with Hashem's help! But how do they know "never again"?! We have so many enemies; if, G-d forbid, they come against us, will any of the nations stand up to defend us?! Look at what happened three years ago when they attacked us and committed a terrible massacre: the world clicked their tongues in condemnation. But later, when we rose up to defend ourselves—"The Jews gathered and stood for their lives"—the entire world turned against us. Does anyone imagine that the world would lift a finger if, G-d forbid, our enemies succeeded in their goal to destroy us?!

The Severe Accusation

We have no guarantee in these matters. We have no one to rely on except our Father in Heaven. But my friends, I feel there is a severe accusation against *Am Yisrael*. The very fact that people speak against Torah scholars, and the media and those around them speak against those who study Torah, is deeply painful. The Torah has always been the single thing that preserved *Am Yisrael* more than anything else. Only the Torah protected us! What happened to Jews who stopped studying Torah and observing mitzvot? Over the generations in exile, they assimilated among the nations. Even here in *Eretz Yisrael*, among those who do not have Torah and do not have mitzvot, the danger of intermarriage exists today as well. In *Eretz Yisrael* too, there are enough non-Jews for intermarriage to occur.

We must return and remind ourselves, especially now when there is so much negative talk against our holy Torah, our mitzvot, and everything holy. They speak against everything sacred. When we ask for separation between men and women, the men say, "We want separation," and the righteous women also say, "We want separation." So what do the courts rule? That the state is forbidden to fund such events, because it constitutes discrimination against women. According to their distorted logic, modesty (*tzniut*) is called "discrimination"!

We all remember what happened in Tel Aviv three years ago, when they planned a public prayer, and because they understood there would be challenges, they wanted to create three areas: one for men, one for women, and one for those who wanted mixed seating. But even that was problematic to the critics; the very fact that there was a separate section for women was considered wrong to them... Modesty in their eyes is considered something negative! To such an extent.

We see the consequences of distancing oneself from the Torah. When we try to explain this, they do not understand what we want, viewing it as discrimination. Similarly, regarding military service: they demand that women serve alongside men, as the Supreme Court ruled. They are the ones who decide everything here, ruling that women must not be excluded. So if soldiers say, "We are not willing to go on an operation with women," they are court-martialed and sent to prison! Because they are viewed as impinging on women's dignity. Therefore, I say that our path is to overcome all of this. We are not seeking battles, wars, accusations, or arguments; nothing good will come of that. What we must do is our part: awaken Heavenly mercy upon *Am Yisrael*. The best way to do this is to engage in Torah, to study as much as possible, and with Hashem's help, this Torah study will protect us.

The Precepts of Hashem Are Righteous, Gladdening the Heart

In my sermon last night, I mentioned a well-known idea that is worth repeating: how vital Torah study is, and how much life it grants a person. When a person studies Torah, as the verse states (*Tehillim* 19:9), "The precepts of Hashem are righteous, gladdening the heart"—it brings him to joy. Furthermore, we see with our own eyes that when a person is in distress or sorrow, if he comes to study Torah, he revives! He is able to endure.

I remember when my father, Maran zt"l, was appointed Chief Rabbi, I was a young man, and people caused him many troubles. They caused him immense distress; what they did to him was terrible. I will not detail who or what, but when he would arrive home, he was in deep pain. Every time he would tell me: "Know that I am in such pain, and if I go to sleep, I will not be able to sleep from distress! I cannot believe what they are doing to me and how they act against the Torah." But he would say: "When I sit down to study, I forget the entire world. I study—and I calm down. It gladdens me, and were it not for the fact that I can sit and focus on learning, I would not be able to endure." He was refined and noble-souled, and it pained him so deeply. He would always repeat the verse (*Tehillim* 119:92): "Were Your Torah not my delight, I would have perished in my affliction."

Den Garma D'Asirai Bir

The *Gemara* (*Berachot* 5b) relates that Rabbi Yochanan [- Rabbi Yochanan lived in the first generation of *Amoraim*, and some say he lived during the period of the *Tannaim*; he lived to a very old age] once went to visit Rabbi Eleazar, who was crying, and Rabbi Yochanan began to comfort him. I will not go into everything the *Gemara* relates there, but there is one very interesting detail: Rabbi Yochanan said to him, "Why are you crying? If it is because of children—*den garma d'asirai bir* (this is the bone of my tenth son)." The explanation is that Rabbi Yochanan had ten children, and all of them passed away during his lifetime—tragic! His tenth son fell into a cauldron—a huge pot of boiling liquid—and they could not extract him until nothing remained of him except a tiny bone, smaller than a barleycorn, which according to halachah does not require burial. Rabbi Yochanan took that bone, carried it with him, and used it when comforting mourners. Look at what a righteous man! He buried ten children, and what he held in mind was how to comfort other mourners. Thus he said to Rabbi Eleazar: "Why are you crying that you had no children?"—for Rabbi Eleazar had no children. "I had children, and look at what remained of them; all of them passed away, and this is the only bone remaining from my tenth son!" Rabbi Yochanan was an exceptionally strong person. A person who buried ten children, yet was able to go about and speak words of comfort.

We saw this during the Holocaust as well. For example, the Admor of Sanz (Rabbi Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam zt"l), whose wife and children were all murdered, yet he maintained his strength, fought for Judaism, fought to rebuild *Am Yisrael*, and later remarried and brought more children into the world. He did not despair even after everything he endured. Like Rabbi Yochanan, he did not despair; he continued his holy work.

Twenty-Four Proofs

The *Gemara* relates that Rabbi Yochanan had a companion in heart and soul with whom he studied much Torah—Resh Lakish (Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish). The *Gemara* relates that Resh Lakish passed away, and after his passing, Rabbi Yochanan came to the yeshiva to deliver the class, and every few minutes he could not continue; he would weep and cry: "Where are you, Resh Lakish? Where are you, Resh Lakish?" He was unable to study or teach due to the passing of Resh Lakish. The Sages saw that he was in such deep distress, so they brought Rabbi Eleazar ben Pedat to him, who was a great scholar in Torah. Whenever Rabbi Yochanan would state an idea, Rabbi Eleazar would bring twenty-four proofs to support him. But Rabbi Yochanan said to him: "Where are you compared to Resh Lakish? When I stated an idea, Resh Lakish would raise twenty-four difficulties against me, and I would offer solutions, and we would debate and clarify the topic thoroughly! You bring me proofs?! I do not need proofs! I know that what I stated was correct!" [Parenthetically, that was how my father, Maran zt"l, was... When I merited to sit with him and study day and night, he cared when I challenged him; he did not wait for me to say "Very nice" or "This is excellent." He wanted to hear why not, what was not working, what criticism there was, in order to clarify the matter thoroughly, to analyze it properly so as to arrive at the true and correct conclusion.] The *Gemara* relates that Rabbi Yochanan continued to weep until his mind was affected, and he fell into a state of deep depression. The Sages prayed for mercy for him, and he passed away. They did not pray for his recovery, because they knew he could not be healed; he was in such deep pain without Resh Lakish that he could not endure.

Were Your Torah Not My Delight

The question arises: a person buried ten children—and maintained his strength, yet when his study companion passed away, he could not endure?! The answer is: "Were Your Torah not my delight, I would have perished in my affliction." When Rabbi Yochanan buried his children, he was in deep brokenness; a father loves his children, and his heart was shattered, but what did he do? He sat and engaged in Torah. "The precepts of Hashem are righteous, gladdening the heart"—the Torah encouraged him, and the Torah calmed him. But when Resh Lakish passed away, the Torah he studied before was no longer the same Torah! He could no longer study as before! And then he could no longer endure.

We must strive to study much Torah, so that the Torah gladdens us, and the Torah protects us from every foe and enemy. May we all merit to be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Good Life, in the Book of the Righteous and Pious, in the Book of Sustenance and Good Livelihood, Salvations, and Consolations. And included in this blessing are all the listeners of Radio "Kol Berama" who are with us and hearing this *shiur*.