

HAMA'YAN

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This issue of
HaMa'yan
is dedicated in memory of
Mrs. Frieda FAGIN
of blessed memory

Mother of our dear friend and devoted
Chairman, Board of Governors
American Friends of Yeshivat Sha'alvim

תנצב"ה

May her memory ever serve as a blessing
and an inspiration to her dear family

הגיליון מוקדש

לזכרה ולעילוי נשמתה של

מרת פריידא בת ר' חיים אלחנן ורחל ז"ל

פייגין

אמו של ידיד מסור של הישיבה

יו"ר ועד הנאמנים של ידידי ישיבת שעלבים בארה"ב

ישיבת שעלבים

Abstracts

A Summary of a Meeting with Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל, in Anticipation of the Shemittah year.

In 1986, before the advent of the Shemittah year, the following individuals assembled in the home of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל: R. Yona Emanuel זצ"ל, the editor of HaMa'ayan, and – may they live long – his son-in-law Rav Ze'ev Weitman (then the Rav of Kfar Etzion, now the Rav of “Tenuva”), Rav Elyashiv Knohl (then a member of Kibbutz Kfar Etzion and now the Rav of the kibbutz), and Rav Eliahu Blumenzweig (then a Ram in Alon Shvut's Har Etzion Yeshiva and now the Rosh Yeshiva in Yerucham) in order to clarify specific issues concerning Shemittah observance in Kfar Etzion. Rav Blumenzweig's summary of the meeting is presented here with the editor's comments. Rav Auerbach refers to the “Heter Mechira” as a leniency that is difficult to rely upon, yet he advises to execute the sale so that those who are lenient will have what to rely upon, as well as afford those who are stringent an additional reason for leniency in trying circumstances.

Rav Gedalya Eiseman: “Orot HaTeshuvah”, and its Author Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook זצ"ל

Rav Gedalya Eiseman שליט"א, the “Mashgiach” (spiritual supervisor) of Jerusalem's Kol Torah Yeshiva since 1944, was born in 1910, and is now considered the elder “Mashgiach” in the Yeshiva world. Presented in this volume is a letter that he, then an elder student in Lithuania's Kamenitz Yeshiva, wrote to Mercaz HaRav's Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook זצ"ל (apparently in 1936). The letter was written due to his having read the book “Orot HaTeshuvah” written by Rav Tzvi Yehuda's father, Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook זצ"ל. Rav Eiseman, who maintained a warm relationship with Rav Tzvi Yehuda throughout the years, describes, in superlative terms, his impressions of “Orot HaTeshuvah” and its author. He quotes from the book, expresses his feelings in their regard, and thanks G-d for having awarded his generation with the presence of Rav A. I. Kook. He conveys his anguish at the fact that some Torah scholars have not succeeded in understanding the intentions of Rav Kook.

Rav Yosef Avivi: The Ruling of the Shelah to Blow 100 Blasts of the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah

Rav Yosef Avivi, one of the leading scholars of Kabbala in our generation,

investigates the accepted custom in most communities of blowing 100 blasts of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah. He refers to Rav Yesha'ayahu Horowitz ז"ל, known as "the Holy Shelah", as the one who popularized this custom, which is rooted in Kabbalistic works known to him. Rav Avivi describes the earliest source for this popular custom, and the way in which it reached the Shelah.

Professor Nachum Meir Bronsnick: The Term "Vaday", and its Usage as a Metaphor for Hashem

In the Piyutim (liturgical poems) recited on Yom Kippur we describe G-d in many terms; one of them is "HaVaday". The expression "Vaday" means the opposite of "doubt", it also connotes that He is "real" – He exists; in addition "Vaday" conveys "truth", as well as "obligation". Professor Bronsnick, an internationally known researcher of Midrash and Piyut, provides textual references for each meaning from the Written Torah, the Words of the Sages, and from the Piyutim. He concludes that "Vaday" in reference to G-d includes the meanings of truth and of certainty, based upon the various contexts as they appear in Piyutim.

Rav Dr. Nathan David Rabinovich: "Shabbata DeRigla": A New Historical Explanation of Halachic Discussions

Rav Dr. Nathan David Rabinovich of New York analyzes the expression "Shabbata DeRigla" that appears in several discussions in the Talmud. Its most simple meaning refers to the Shabbat that occurs during the festival of Sukkot ("DeRiglah"), when the Amoraim would visit their teachers and the Exilarch ("Reish Galuta"). However, based on the Letter of Rav Sherira Gaon and additional sources, Rav Rabinovich suggests that "Shabbata DeRigla" refers to a special Shabbat where the leaders of the community would greet the Exilarch, the prince of the Jews in Babylonia. A special ceremony would take place in his honor. Its purpose was to tighten the bonds between the official Jewish leadership in Babylonia and the Yeshivahs and Torah sages. Participation in this ceremony on the Shabbat of the "Lech Lecha" Sedra, immediately after Sukkot, was considered a Mitzvah. This exempted the traveling sages from fulfilling the Mitzvah of sitting in a Sukkah. This thesis enables Rav Rabinovich to solve profound difficulties in two Halachic discussions in Masechet Sukkah and to resolve several texts.

Rav Eliezer Weil: The Time of the Recitation of the “Va’aneinu Borei Olam” Prayer, Intended to Prevent Drought

To our regret, in recent years the winters in the Holy Land have been relatively warm and dry; the prayer for rain recited on Shemini Atzeret has not resulted in abundant rainfall in our land. The customary response to such a situation is to include in the Shemoneh Esre the recitation of the “Va’Aneynu Borei Olam” prayer, whose source is found in the Tur of Rav Yaakov the son of “the Rosh”. Virtually every community decides when to begin and when to conclude the recitation of this prayer – based upon the weather and on emotional factors. Rav Eliezer Weil, Rav of Shadmot Mechola in the Jordan Valley, clarifies what the appropriate time to begin and to cease reciting this prayer is. He endeavors to relate this custom to the ancient law of declaring special fasts for rainfall, as it appears in the Mishna in Masechet Ta’anit (which for various reasons does not apply nowadays). He believes that this prayer should be recited prior to the 17th of the month of MarCheshvan, and that one should cease reciting it following a specific quantity of rainfall, determined, according to the same laws that govern the abovementioned fasts (even if the land is in need of more rain). He concludes his article in quoting the ruling of Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon of Alon Shevut, whose opinion differs with regard to certain details. Rav Weil debates Rav Rimon’s decisions and reinforces his own opinion.

Rav Gidon Perel: A Year since the Passing of Rav Avraham Shapira זצ”ל

Rav Gidon Perel, Rav of Alon Shevut in Gush Etzion, eulogizes his Rav, “Mercaz Harav” Rosh Yeshiva and the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rav Avraham Shapira זצ”ל, at the approach of the first Yahrzeit (on the first day of Sukkot). He lovingly describes the warmth and humility that emanated from Rav Shapira, his scholarship and intellectual sharpness, his unique sense of humor and uplifting prayer, his forcefulness in communal matters, and the special atmosphere that Rav Shapira generated in his yeshiva. May he rest in peace.

Rav Yehuda Shaviv: Between the Joy of Yom Kippur and the Joy of Sukkot

Rav Yehudah Shaviv describes the marvelous relationship between the joy of “Our time of Rejoicing” namely – Sukkot, and the proper joy of Yom Kippur that precedes it. While seriousness and responsibility characterize the Day of Judgment, the individual experiences the joy of being released of his sins. The

joy of Sukkot, in contrast, is more of a communal joy that finds greater expression in the public domain than in the private domain.

Responses and Comments

The section dealing with responses is longer than usual in this volume. Rav Banner, a Ram in the Sderot Yeshiva, and Prof. Merzbach And Prof. Bronsnick from Jerusalem, briefly respond to various issues which had been discussed in the previous issues of “HaMa’yan”. Rav Kinarti, a Ram in the Itamar Yeshiva in the Shomron, wrote about having a leap year occur during Shemittah year in contemporary times (as was the case this year). Other lengthy responses include that of Rav Dr. R. B. Pozen and Rav Y. Loyfer, who adamantly oppose the classification of the grammarian, Rav Zalman Hene, as a wicked individual (as Rav Katzman advances in a previous issue). Although he established new principles of grammar, and disputed earlier authorities, this does not brand him as “wicked”. Rav Yoel Friedman, a member of the leadership of “The Institute of The Torah and The Land”, and a “refugee” from Gush Katif, disputes the conclusion of Professor Spiegel, concerning the identity of an anonymous responsum that was publicized in a previous issue. Subsequent to an analysis of the responsum and parallel responsa, he maintains that the author is Rav Shlomo Sirlieo and not the Radvaz or Rav Yosef Korkus. Professor Spiegel replies to the comments of Rav Friedman.

The issue concludes with a review of recent Judaica received By HaMa’yan.

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HAMA’YAN Editorial Board wishes its subscribers, readers and all “Am Yisrael”, in these days of “Motzaei Shvi’it”, that we all be blessed with a “Shavua Tov” – seven good years blessed with “Parnasa”, redemption, The love of Torah and “Yirat Shamayim”. כתיבה וחתימה טובה