



Ohr Yerushalayim News

13th June 2015 - Volume 7 - Issue 48 – פרשת שלח לך – כ"ו סיון תשע"ה

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Laurence Ross on the birth of a grandson.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Maurice Wacks on the wedding of their daughter, Sheina to Aharon Michaels in Israel on Sunday.

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush this Shabbos after Davening for Shabbos Mevorchin sponsored by Mr & Mrs Rafi Green for the forthcoming Yahrzeit of Rafi's father.

JRCC Appeal

We are pleased to welcome Mr Alex Strom who will be speaking on Friday night on behalf of the JRCC.

Morning Chabura

The morning Gemoro Chabura starts Meseches Rosh HaShana on Monday 22nd June - further details on the back page.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Going Up

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

However, the men that went up with him said, "We are not able to fight the people; they are stronger than us!" (Bamidbar 13:31)

One of the biggest fiascos of all of history remains to be the episode of the Spies. Had it not occurred nothing else ever would have gone wrong, not then, not now, not ever. Moshe Rabbeinu would have been Moshiach, history would have come to an end, and evil would have been banished from Creation. How could they have erred so grievously when so much was at stake?

Obviously they didn't know. Unless they were masochists who welcomed suffering, they had to have believed that rejecting Eretz Yisroel could work. They had to have thought that it was a viable option to stay in the desert, and that G-d would agree to their decision if there was a national consensus. This is why they were so surprised when G-d had the exact opposite reaction. I've dealt with this issue in previous years.

Instead, I want to bring up a different discussion based upon a disagreement between Rashi and Tosfos regarding the following statement of the Talmud:

During the 40 years the Jewish people were in the wilderness the north wind did not blow upon them. What was the reason? If you want I can say, because they were under Divine displeasure. . . (Yevamos 72a)

Why did this make a difference? Because the north wind heals wounds, and without this wind it was dangerous to perform Bris Milah. Consequently, the Jewish people did not perform the all important mitzvah of Bris the entire time they wandered in the desert. It is one of the first things they did after entering Eretz Yisroel just before bringing a Pesach Offering. An uncircumcised male must not eat from the Korban Pesach.

This part everyone agrees to. The disagreement is over what it was that angered G-d and denied them access to the healing power of the north wind, and therefore Bris Milah and Korban Pesach. According to Rashi, it was the sin of the golden calf. According to Tosfos it was a different sin altogether.

After all, as Tosfos points out, G-d forgave the Jewish people for the sin of

the calf. The sin that He did not forgive them for during the 40 years in the desert was the sin of the Spies. In fact, the Jewish people were in excommunication during that time, so if any sin caused the north wind to stop blowing their way, it was this sin.

This makes sense on one level. On the other hand, why should the sin of the Spies take away the mitzvah of Milah? What is the connection between the two?

The connection has to do with Eretz Yisroel itself. The Zohar says:

Come and see: For 400 years, the minister of the children of Yishmael stood and begged before G-d. He said to Him, "Whoever is circumcised has a portion in Your Name."

He answered him, "It is so."

He said to Him, "Yishmael is circumcised. Why does he not have a portion in You like Yitzchak?"

He told him, "One was circumcised properly and according to the full requirements, while the other was not. Furthermore, one cleaves to Me as is specified on the eighth day, while the others are distanced from me for many days [being circumcised only at age 13]."

He said to Him, "But still, since he is circumcised, should he not have a good reward for this?"

Woe is to the time that Yishmael was born into the world and was circumcised. What did G-d do [to appease Yishmael]? He distanced the children of Yishmael from supernal cleaving and gave them [only] a portion below in the Holy Land on account of their circumcision. In the future, the children of Yishmael are destined to rule over the Holy Land for a long time while it is empty, like their circumcision which is empty and imperfect. They will prevent the Children of Israel from returning to their place until the reward for the merit of the children of Yishmael is complete. (Zohar, Shemos 32a)

If performing Bris Milah is the merit to control Eretz Yisroel, then rejection of the Land means losing the right to perform Bris Milah. Yishmael may not have performed a complete Bris Milah, lacking the mitzvah of priyah, but he did enough of it to warrant having control over the Land for 1300

The Week Ahead

פרשת שלח לך

Mincha
Candle Lighting
Seder HaLimud
Shacharis
סוף זמן ק"ש
1st Mincha
Ovos uBonim
2nd Mincha
3rd Mincha
Rov's Shiur
Motzei Shabbos
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday / Friday
Wednesday / Thursday ראש חודש
Mincha & Maariv
Late Maariv

שבת מברכין תמוז

7.30pm
7.52 - 8.00pm
8.40am
9.00am
8.53am
5.00pm
5.00pm
6.00pm
9.51pm
following
10.56pm
7.15am / 8.20am
6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
7.45pm
10.45pm

years. It works out to be 100 years for each year of age he was when he performed Bris.

The question is, what is special about Bris Milah that it is so strongly associated with Eretz Yisroel? The answer becomes apparent after better understanding Bris Milah and Eretz Yisroel.

Why did G-d make Avraham leave home and move to Eretz Yisroel? Why couldn't He just set Avraham up in Charan and be his G-d there? What is so special about Eretz Yisroel that the Torah says:

I am G-d your G-d, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be a G-d to you. (Vayikra 25:38)

and the Talmud says: A person should rather live in Eretz Yisroel, even in a city where the majority of inhabitants are gentile, than outside the Land, even if the majority of the city's inhabitants are Jewish. All those who dwell in Eretz Yisroel are like those who have a G-d, and all those who dwell outside the Land are like those without a G-d. (Kesuvas 110b)

After all, this could be true only because G-d already gave the Jewish people the Land. The fact that G-d designated Eretz Canaan to be the inheritance of the Jewish people itself may be what gives it importance. But why did G-d designate the Land in the first place?

This can be explained by way of analogy.

Imagine a person who decides he wants to have an office 50 floors above ground level. He loves the view from such a height and has decided that his work will be more inspired with such an inspiring view.

To have such an office he has to build it on top of 49 other levels. In other words, his dream office will be on the top of a skyscraper, and even though his floor will be the last to be built it was the first to be planned. Everything else that will be built from the ground up to the fiftieth floor will be only to reach his level.

Though Eretz Yisroel is physically attached to the same earth as the rest of the nations of the world, attached to a continent made up of many other countries it is not so, spiritually. This is because even though the temporal world exists on one physical plane, the spiritual world exists on five, from the bottom up: Asiyah, Yetzirah, Beriyah, Atzilus, and Adam Kadmon. Translated they are: Action, Formation, Creation, Emanations, and First Man, names that mean very little without explanation.

The important point is that there are different levels of spiritual reality. Just as two people can sit together and yet be on very different spiritual levels, so can lands adjoin one another and yet exist on very different spiritual planes. Eretz Yisroel is on the level of Yetzirah, and the rest of the lands are only on the level of Asiyah, on a different spiritual plane altogether.

Since this is the case, spiritual potential is much greater in Eretz Yisroel. To live there requires a higher level of soul, and when a person makes aliyah, he gets one. When he moves to the Diaspora, he loses it. When G-d told Avraham to "go for himself," He meant for the sake of his true self, his higher level of soul, which he could not receive until he lived in land that supported it.

This is why G-d made living in Eretz Yisroel the condition for Him to be G-d of the Jewish people. You can't pick up the Divine "signal" the same way on the level of Asiyah that you can on the level of Yetzirah. G-d took us out of Egypt means that He took us out of the level of Asiyah, to bring us to the level of Yetzirah so that we can relate to Him as G-d.

This is also the reason for the Talmud's statement. Whatever a Jewish community can give you in the Diaspora it can't elevate a person to the level of Yetzirah, not like living in Eretz Yisroel does. This is true even if the community in Eretz Yisroel is predominantly gentile, because they cannot reduce the spiritual state of the Holy Land.

This brings us to the mitzvah of Bris Milah. Ostensibly the mitzvah of Bris is more symbolic than anything else, meaning that performing it proves our loyalty to G-d and our commitment to use even our most base instincts in a holy manner. Other than the removal of some skin, does it really change the person? Adults who have had Bris done did not seem to change dramatically after the act.

It may not change the person, but it does change the level of reality on which they live. It certainly changes his spiritual potential, which might not be apparent at first but which becomes more obvious over time. A person who receives a deposit of money in his bank account does not change much because of the fact. It is only once he starts to spend it that it becomes clear he is richer.

Likewise, Bris Milah enriches a person spiritually. It won't be apparent at first, but once he starts to "spend" his spiritual potential, it will become

clear that he is spiritually richer. Though this may not be clear when a baby has Bris Milah at the age of eight days old, it will be clearer to someone who receive Bris as an adult.

The same is true about Shabbos as well. When a person accepts Shabbos, spiritually as well as physically, he does not simply experience a holier day. Rather, he or she who keeps Shabbos ascends from the level of Asiyah to the level of Yetzirah. We don't work on Shabbos because on the level of Yetzirah, the level of Gan Aiden, work of such a nature is not necessary. It is called "Chillul Shabbos" because it is the performance of work suited for Asiyah on the level of Yetzirah.

The same is true about Eretz Yisroel. Ideally, according to the Talmud, one is not supposed to have to perform physical labor to survive in Eretz Yisroel. As the second paragraph of the "Shema" says, G-d makes the Land miraculously produce food when the Jewish people are loyal to Torah and mitzvos. Like Adam HaRishon in the Garden of Eden, "working" and "guarding" the Land means learning Torah and keeping the mitzvos.

When the Jewish people opted to remain in the desert, they chose the level of Asiyah over the level of Yetzirah. They accepted to live with a lesser level of spiritual potential, the exact opposite of what Bris Milah teaches us to do. Rejecting Eretz Yisroel was the same as rejecting Bris, and as a result they lost the right to perform it.

Even though we have continued to perform Bris Milah ever since the Jews entered the Land in Yehoshua's time, it does not mean that rejecting the Land does not have a similar effect. There have been times when Bris Milah has been banned, and today there are countries that want to forbid it until a person is old enough to decide on his own if he wants it performed. This is more of a message from Heaven than it is from those against Bris.

Making aliyah may be difficult. Rejecting the Land, however, makes life even more difficult. The Intifadah began for a reason, and I don't mean the one the Arab's claim. World pressure on Israel to surrender land is increasing, and that means something, not as far as the world is concerned but as far as Heaven is concerned.

It takes a special person to live in the Diaspora as if he is really in Eretz Yisroel, and that usually requires being there for all the right reasons. The Spies were sure they had them, and ended up being dead wrong. What about our generation?



Exciting Opportunity!

The morning Gemora Chabura will be starting

מסכת ראש השנה

on Monday 22nd June

under the guidance of

our Rosh Chabura

R' Gidon Rosen

9am - 10am every morning

To arrange a Chavrusa or

for more information

please call

R' Gidon Rosen 07595940821

or Ari Scherer 07967523589

Morning Gemora Chabura