



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Mike Krebs on the birth of a son. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 4 Kersal Gardens (Bury New Road next to the Sem)

Oneg Shabbos

The first in the Winter Oneg Shabbos season takes place this Friday night from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the home of Dr & Mrs Leon Bernstein, 69 Singleton Road.

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush this Shabbos after Davenning in the hall which is sponsored by Rabbi & Mrs Benji Silverstone to celebrate the recent birth of their daughter.

Mr & Mrs Shawn Sachs invite the Kehilla to a Kiddush after Davenning at their home, 7 St. Paul's Road to celebrate the recent birth of their daughter.

Seuda Shlishis

Many weeks Seuda Shlishis slots are still available for sponsorship. The cost is £65 - why not sponsor a week, or join with a friend and share the cost.

ותן טל ומטר

A reminder that we start saying ותן טל ומטר from Maariv on Thursday night.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

What's Holy?!

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

And Yaakov awakened from his sleep, and he said, "Indeed, HASHEM is in this place, and I did not know." And he was frightened, and he said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of G-d, and this is the gate of heaven." (Breishis 28:16-17)

Yaakov found himself incidentally at the holiest site in the universe, the place where the Temple resided for almost a 1000 years and the where Avraham had been ready to yield his beloved son. He detected the holiness of that place and he declared aloud, "How awesome is the place!" Many a good searching Jew has found himself there over the years and it has become a spring board for great things. Indeed something is going on there at "the gate to heaven", the portal to all prayers. How can we all relate even today to the holiness of this place with our western slanted intellects?

I was thrown into the deep end of the swimming pool of public speaking a bunch of years back. If I had any fears they were either confirmed or dispelled by the following incident. I was involved with a tour consisting of a few dozen-college students who were visiting Israel for the first time. It was Friday night at the Kossel, the Western Wall, and the head of our contingency led us in a twenty-minute dance around the plaza where many had gathered to pray. By the time we had finished, our numbers had swelled to hundreds, as we swallowed up groups with energy and spirit. The one, who had so enthusiastically orchestrated the dancing, now pulled everyone close around him for a

quiet word before the evening Shabbos prayer. When he had their attention, he stepped out and pushed me in suddenly and said, "Label, say something!" I was totally unprepared. The awe of that Wall and the place was plenty to strike me silent. I looked up at the faces of the now hundreds of people. I felt like that ubiquitous deer on the highway, Bambi, frozen and staring into the headlights.

With help from heaven I was able to open my mouth. I uttered Yaakov's very words, "How awesome is this place!" Then I asked, "What are we all doing here? Are we here to talk to the wall?" I saw some heads beginning to nod. "This is the last unsullied, non-commercial, holy place in the world.

There exists within each of us also a pure and unexploited point of holiness, as well. Here on the Holy Shabbos, that remnant of holiness within us has been drawn magnetically to this hold-out of holiness. I realized quickly that the word "holy" was a hollow word for most and maybe even me. What was I saying? I needed to define and add a colorful picture to the term- "holy". With even more continued help from heaven, it occurred to me that just days earlier I was been walking through the streets of New York City. I too was searching for holiness. I asked, "What holiness is to be found there? What do people treat as holy? Where do we find in a world of cynicism and shattered idols that there is a place where everyone universally behaves with authentic reverence? In only one place- At the ATM room.

Everyone, even in bustling NYC, enters quietly and respectfully. Each inserts their piece of plastic. The machine engages us so politely and clearly. Then we enter our PIN# and wait for the good news. Chamber music might be appropriate as the confessional screen lights up and tells us the brutal truth. We have made withdrawals, too many. We have made deposits. We are flirting dangerously with the over draft. A record is there of all our transactions if we wish. The final request and closing and we each back up three steps as if from a silent prayer, "Oseh Shalom Bimromav..." putting the receipt or money privately and deeply

The Week Ahead

פרשת ויצא

Candle Lighting	3.41pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.46pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.57am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
Rov's Hilchos Shabbos Shiur	3.02pm
2nd Mincha	3.32pm
Seuda Shlishis	following
Motzei Shabbos	4.52pm
Ovos uBonim	6.07pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

into our pocket. We have been touched. The same is when we approach the Wall in prayer. Although we all hold the same Prayer Book and say the same words, as the plastic card, we each have a personal identification number. We are weighing in collectively and individually and making ourselves aware of our spiritual bank accounts. We have made withdrawals. We have made deposits...etc."

It has occurred to me that the money industry has usurped the best words for what we seek in personal relationships, Mutual, Fidelity, Trust, Bond, Interest, Provident, Security, Exchange, and even more. It's not a new phenomenon. King Solomon told us more than two thousand years ago, if you want to achieve authentic awe, feel it for real you must "seek it like silver". Then you will know what's "Holy"!?

Lend Me an Ear

Rabbi Raymond Beyda (Torah.org)

And Rachel saw that she had not borne a child to Yaakov, so Rachel became envious of her sister; she said to Yaakov, "Give me children – otherwise I am dead."

Yaakov's anger flared up at Rachel, and he said, "Am I in place of G-d Who has withheld from you fruit of the womb?" (Beresheet, 30:2, 3)

When Rachel Imenu a'h saw that Leah, her sister, bore four son's to their husband Yaakov, she became jealous and complained to her spouse. He reacted angrily as quoted in the verse above. The Midrash reveals that Hashem became incensed with Yaakov for his insensitive reaction to his wife's sorrow. "Is this the way one answers those in distress? I swear that your children will bow before her son!" And so it was many years later when the brothers bowed before the viceroy of Egypt – Yosef the son of Rachel.

One might ask, "Why the angry response? What would Yaakov be expected to say? After all, he did tell the truth! The gift of children is dependant on the grace of the Almighty!"

Our Rabbis explain that our Patriarch was expected to minimize the problem and show concern and sympathy for Rachel's plight. It would be best if he changed his words in order to console and lift the spirits of his downtrodden spouse.

In Gemara Bava Metzia (84b) the story is told of a time when Rabbenu Hakadosh was teaching a lesson when some people passed talking a calf to slaughter. The calf broke loose and ran to lean against the robes of Rabbenu Hakadosh as if to be begging mercy and assistance. Rabbi (Rabbenu Hakadosh) stood by and coolly said, "go to your slaughter – it is for this that you were created." A man of his stature, The leader of his generation, should have been more compassionate and more selective in his use of words even to a calf. True – the calf was created to serve as food for the human being – yet a better choice of words was in order. Rabbi suffered a stomach ailment for 13 years due to this faux pas.

His remedy came when a maid in his palace was sweeping away a nest of baby rodents from the palace floor. When Rabbenu Hakadosh instructed her to leave them alone the servant replied, "The mistress would not like me to leave rodents – even babies – in her palace." I say be gentle -- they are babies!" was the quick response. His ailment disappeared. A harsh word brought on the illness and a kind word healed the malady.

A contemporary Rosh Yeshivah said, "We have a gmach (organization that supplies people's needs free of charge- like a free loan fund, a free bridal gown loan, and other free kindnesses) what we need is a Gmach that lends an ear!" This organization would listen to other people's woes. The members would console and advise – even if they were unable to help in a practical sense. This in essence was Hashem's complaint to Yaakov Avinu zt'l, "Is this how one should answer the downtrodden?"

The greats knew this important trait. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein zy'a used to give approbation on many sefarim (books on Torah subjects). His approval was written on his stationary which had his address AND PHONE NUMBER in the heading. When he became older and his health became weak his wife suggested that he change the number and keep it private. She explained that this was a way to cut down on the volume of calls and also the hours during the night that disturbed the Rosh yeshivah's much needed rest. "What are you suggesting?" Rav Moshe responded, "that a fellow Jew might need me and I will not be available to hear his plight?" Of course the stationary remained as always with the

rabbi's phone number clearly displayed for all to see.

In an age where e-mail, text messaging, I-M and the like are making our interaction with friends and others more and more impersonal, we must re- focus ourselves on real communication. It is not merely the speed with which your message is conveyed that is important – it is how much of your heart is infused in your reply.

Modeh Ani... I Am Thankful!

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

And she conceived again and bore a son, and she said, "This time, I will thank HASHEM! Therefore, she named him Yehuda, and [then] she stopped bearing. (Breishis 29:35)

This time, I will thank: since I have taken more than my share, consequently, I must offer up thanks. - Rashi

It's a little hard to digest the notion that our great matriarch Leah had not been thankful up until this point. HASHEM had already granted her three healthy children prior to Yehudah's birth and even without that there's plenty to be thankful for! What does she mean, "This time I will thank HASHEM"?

Rashi must have been troubled by the same question. He offers a little contexture to her intention. Leah understood there would be 12 children from amongst 4 bearing mothers. That's how it turned out too. When she bore her 4thchild it was apparent that she was disproportionately gifted. When Leah realized that she was a majority shareholder in the production of the Jewish People it created a cosmic shift in her attitude. Now she is adopting a posture of continuous, non-stop, ever increasing gratitude.

Yehuda, the name, contains the letters of HASHEM's name! Yud and Hey and Vuv and Hey. Only there is a Dalet, which stands for humility and poverty plugged in the middle. Yehuda represents and is the lowly, humble servant who carries The Name of HASHEM through history. His existence, his mere presence is a living constant reminder of the goodness of HASHEM. As a surviving tribe, it is no mistake that we, the Jews, the Jewish people bear the name for all time, Yehudim, Yehudi-hence Jew. That's what a Jew is. The first words we declare upon awaking in the morning is, "Modeh Ani..."- I thank, I admit, I acknowledge my indebtedness! My Rebbe simply explained that what we are declaring that what I am is a MODEH!

I am a thanking being, a grateful creature! That is who we are! We are appreciators of HASHEM generosity.

I was launching a 3rd grade class of boys into Davening just this morning. We were talking about this point before pressing the start button and racing past Modeh Ani! I was listing some odd things to be thankful for and giving some practical reasons why our lives would be painfully difficult without for example, elbows! Imagine trying to get a piece of food into your mouth if you could not easily bend your elbow. Now appreciate the elegance and kindness of the design.

One boy politely detonated a bomb of a question into the middle of this otherwise basic discussion. "Rebbe, what do we get from all these things that HASHEM gives us? He was asking sincerely, and not at all cynically. It was deserving of a real answer. I was taken aback for a moment! I do believe he was truly curious about this arrangement we have with HASHEM. He gives us abundantly and we reflect back many thanks. What's the good? Why? Now I had the opportunity to land a lesson that only became crystal clear to me as I was forced to explain it to a class of 3rd graders.

Picking up a board marker I presented it to this boy, acting as if I was a great and mighty King. What if the King of England gave you this marker!? Would you leave it in your desk? Would you lose it? Would you use it foolishly? "No!" emphatically was his and everyone's unanimous answer. "You might even want to bring it home and frame it- treasure it forever! "What if the King told you to use it, but only for learning and for good things in school? Would you write on the walls of the school with it or scribble on your desk!? Of course not!

When we realize that what we have is from HASHEM, we are immediately committed to using it for what it was meant to be used for by the giver. (The gift connects the giver to the receiver, while the "thanks" connects the receiver to the giver. It's a hug, a two-way, reciprocal relationship.) So if I realize HASHEM gave me a mouth, can I use it to say bad and hurtful things? No! I must only use it for saying things, like "thanks"! Now let's begin, "Modeh Ani..."