



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

19th September 2015 - Volume 8 - Issue 11 - פרשת וילך - 1 תשרי תשע"ו

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Johnny Berkowitz on the birth of a grandson to Mr & Mrs Chaim Beck.  
Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Simon Grant on the birth of a grandson to Mr & Mrs Nossou Dominitz in Gateshead

### Kiddush This Shabbos

Mr and Mrs Sammy Morhaim invite the Kehillo to a Kiddush after Shul at Heathlands this Shabbos to celebrate the arrival of their daughter Elisheva Ester (Ellie).

### Rov's Shabbos Shuva Drosha

The Rov's Shabbos Shuva Drosha takes place this Shabbos after Lehning.

### Siyum HaShas

A reminder that preferences forms for the Siyum HaShas should be handed in no later than Erev Yom Kippur. Forms or further information can be requested by sending an email to [siyum@ohryerushalayim.org.uk](mailto:siyum@ohryerushalayim.org.uk).

### Simchos Torah luncheon

For members yet to reserve places for the Simchas Torah lunch and wishing to attend, a reminder to please speak to Avi Stern. The luncheon is a fully catered hot meal and tribute to the Simchas Torah Chasanim in an informal and light hearted yet uplifting atmosphere. An annual enjoyable event for entire family.

### Too Many Cameras!

Yaakov Hibbert

The chances are (depending how long you were in shul!) that at some point during your ראש השנה davening earlier this week you were disturbed in some way by a child of some sort. I had a particularly bad experience as a בעל תוקע – in the middle of Shofar blowing on 2nd day ראש השנה, I could hear a young voice in between each note asking his father, "What's that noise, Daddy? What's that noise, Daddy?" I have no intention of discussing when and how children should be brought or not brought to shul. For personal advice please consult your local rabbinic authority and don't forget to use a bit of common parenting sense! The point I want to make is entirely different. This week we read about the Mitzvah of Hakhel; once every seven years the entire Jewish Nation was to come together at the בית המקדש to listen to the King read to them from the Book of דברים.

Some years ago I had the pleasure of my father spending Shabbos with us right after he returned from a trip to America. For the best part of Shabbos all my father spoke about was the Siyum Hashas that he attended in Brooklyn. 90,000 Yidden gathered onto the MetLife stadium to celebrate the completion of the entire Talmud. Close your eyes for a moment and try and imagine the turnstiles turning as people streamed into the stadium. Imagine davening Ma'ariv with a crowd that big. Feel the stadium explode into spontaneous dancing and singing as ש"ס was completed; hear the inspirational דרשות from the גדולים who spoke. WOW! WOW! WOW!

One can only imagine what the הקהל experience was like. But there was one difference. At the MetLife stadium there were probably no buggies,

not many toddlers on their father's shoulders. But for הקהל everybody came, men women and children – of all ages.

What is the purpose of the children being there? The גמ' explains that the purpose of the children being present is for the parents benefit, "in order to reward those who brought them". The שפת אמת understands the גמ' slightly differently. Since young children will inevitably play and disturb the adults from concentrating, parents would try to leave the children at home. However the תורה says otherwise. The exposure of the young and impressionable children to such a moving event will etch into their hearts and consciousness the sanctity of the תורה. The long

## The Week Ahead

פרשת וילך	שבת שובה
1st Mincha	7.03pm
Candle Lighting	No later than 7.03pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.54am
1st Mincha	1.45pm
2nd Mincha	6.55pm
Rov's Shiur	following
Motzei Shabbos	8.05pm
<b>עשרת ימי תשובה</b>	
Sunday Selichos	6.00am / 7.40am
Monday Selichos	6.00am / 6.30am / 7.45am
Mincha & Maariv	7.00pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
<b>ערב יום כפור</b>	
Selichos	6.20am / 7.00am / 7.45am
Mincha	3.00pm
<b>ליל יום כפור</b>	
Candle Lighting	No later than 6.53pm
Kabbolas Yom Tov / Tefillas Zaka	6.53pm
Kol Nidrei	7.25pm
<b>יום כפור</b>	
Shacharis	9.00am
Yizkor	Approximately 12.15pm
Mincha	4.55pm
Maariv & Motzei Yom Tov	7.55pm
<b>יום חמישי</b>	
Thursday Shacharis	6.40am / 7.05am / 7.55am
Mincha & Maariv	6.50pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Friday Shacharis	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am

term spiritual dividends of this experience outweigh the loss of the parent's full concentration. Hence the parents deserve reward for forgoing their own spiritual growth.

Along these lines I saw the most beautiful **מלבי"ם**. He suggests that there is something that the children gain from the **הקהל** event that even the adults do not gain! As adults we analyse, scrutinise and cut up the event that we are at. We think about the logistics of arranging such an event. Even the speeches themselves we intellectually evaluate – we may even take notes to preserve what we hear. But all of this can come at the expense of missing the atmosphere of the event. Children however ONLY take this in – they don't have the mental capacity to assess the situation. Children have the real experience.

I have often gone to an explanatory **קינות** on **באב ט' באב** morning. Being a bit of an addict to writing things down, I go with my clipboard and pen. This year looking through my **באב ט' באב** folder I noticed that some years I wrote a little and sometimes I wrote three to four times that amount. Same speakers, same amount of **דרשות**, and probably more or less the same amount of information to write. I wondered as to why some years I wrote more than others. I discovered that the years that I wrote less were etched in my memory as being more meaningful. Less analysing of the **דרשות** meant a more meaningful experience for me.

Similarly I remember attending a weekly 'Vaad' with Reb Todros Miller **שליט"א** in Gateshead. There were about twelve of us who used to gather round his table every week. One week I remember him looking up to see twelve hands attentively jotting down his words of wisdom, and remarking, "is anyone actually understanding what I am saying or are you all too busy writing?!"

This says the **מלבי"ם**, is why the **תורה** stresses that the "children who do not know" should attend **הקהל**. Precisely because they lack the intellectual capacity is why they should be there.

How often do we witness events and miss the overall point. Rav Dessler **זצ"ל** once remarked that the third **בית המקדש** cannot be rebuilt because if it would appear, people would get their cameras out and take pictures and marvel at it – completely missing the point! The beauty of the simplicity of children is that they see things as they are, not fragmented into different aspects. To be **זונה** to the **בית המקדש** we have to learn to see past the external components and see the essence of it.

Rav Miller **שליט"א** added that when the daughter of **ר' חזקל זצ"ל** got married [in the 1920's] there was talk of having a photographer. **ר' חזקל זצ"ל** failed to understand the point of pictures at a **חתונה**. A **חתונה** is a time of great feelings and emotions, moods of gratitude Hashem and exhilaration as we witness the new couple finding their bashert. You can't capture the emotions on the camera, so what is the point of pictures, wondered **ר' חזקל זצ"ל**!

Today we take photos for granted. They are our memories of holidays and parties, of people and places. Every 2 minutes today we snap as many photos as the whole of humanity took in the 1800's. In the year 2000 85 billion photos were taken; an incredible 25,000 photos were taken per second! In 2013 over 70 billion pictures were uploaded on the Facebook social website. But has this resulted in our experiences being improved? On the contrary, rather than take in the beautiful view, or the wedding scene – we snap at it! Rather than feel the experience we miss out and hope that the picture will do the job for us! Photos may get clearer and clearer but our real life experiences get vaguer and vaguer. We have desensitised ourselves from appreciating the real beauty of life.

The **משנה** in **אבות** says, "**מסורת** is a protective fence to the **תורה**". **מסורת** is the passing down verbally from one generation to the next; hence the Oral law. Logically you may have thought that the best way to protect the **תורה** would be to write down the Oral Law so that it should be preserved for all time. However the **משנה** tells us otherwise. By keeping it unwritten, people engage in it and fully experience learning it; they must also review it until it is crystal clear. By writing it down this tension is lost, feeling secure that the information is down on paper, people breathe a sigh of relief and relax, knowing that the information can always be verified - much like a wedding picture. The best protection for the **תורה** is the engaging in the **תורה של בעל פה** and by writing it all down we would lose the experiential learning experience that gives us a proper live connection to the **תורה**. Writing it down weakens the indelible impression it makes on us.

The message from having the children present at **הקהל** can teach us the

beauty of simplicity. Our mind bombards us with analysis of the event. The children are at an advantage that they don't have this. They can really take in and store the moments away in their subconscious. We should look at children and learn! And next time we have an opportunity for some family time try and take it all in without a constant flashing of cameras!

## Despair Does Not Lead to Repentance

Rabbi Yissochar Frand (Torah.org)

The parsha tells us [31:16-18] that G-d predicted to Moshe Rabbenu that after his death "This nation will arise and stray after the foreign gods of the land...and they will abandon me and nullify my covenant... and I will get angry with them...and abandon them and hide my face from them...and a multitude of terrible sufferings will befall them." Then, the prediction continues the Jewish people will say on that day "It is because G-d is not in our midst that these terrible events befell us."

The simple reading would lead one to believe, that this reaction of the Jewish people is a perfect response of Teshuva -- of regret and repentance. However the verse then proceeds to say "And I will Hide my Face on that day because of all the evil they have done, for they turned to other gods."

What is the reason for this continued Hiding of G-d's Presence. Isn't the reaction of the Jewish people a noble and appropriate response of contrition? The answer lies in a verse in Psalms, [130:4] "With You is the Power of Forgiveness in order that You should be feared."

There seems to be a logical problem with this pasuk. Logically, we would think that because G-d has the power of forgiveness, that's less of a reason for us to fear Him. It makes more sense to fear an unforgiving god than One Who Forgives.

Rav Dessler, z"tl, says when people despair they have no hope and no fear. Soldiers before battle are afraid -- they don't know what will face them on the battle field. But soldiers in the midst of battle have no fear. At that point, the situation is desperate and hopeless -- there is nothing one can do. Fear only is relevant when there is hope to escape and avoid a situation, not when a situation is inevitable.

If G-d was not a Forgiver; if there was no recourse to Teshuva, there would be nothing to be afraid of during the Ten Days of Repentance. There would simply be nothing to do! "I sinned, I will be punished. There's nothing I can do about it." But since "the Power of Forgiveness is with You..." and "if I approach you correctly I can be forgiven, that's why You should be feared."

The Sefas Emes says that this is the meaning of the verses in our Parsha. When troubles will befall you and you say "because G-d is not in our midst, these troubles befell us..." That is not Teshuva! That is Despair (Yeush). When a person says I'm rotten and worthless, that is not Repentance, it is the opposite of Teshuva -- it is Despair. The sin which triggers a further negative response from G-d is the sin of declaring oneself a worthless human being, devoid of any spirituality or religious sensitivity (G-d is not in my midst).

We find a similar idea at the beginning of Parshas Netzavim: [29:9] "You are today standing, all of you." Rashi says, the Jewish people just finished listening to 98 Curses and they "turned green," thinking, "How will we ever be able to survive?" Moshe Rabbenu tells them "Don't worry. You've made G-d angry before, He has forgiven you... Don't worry. You are standing here today..." You will not be destroyed. G-d will forgive you when you do sins in the future just like he has forgiven you for the sins you've done in the past.

Moshe doesn't appear to be a good "Maggid Mussar." After he successfully alarms them with the fearsome threat of 98 Curses, why is he now undermining the effect of the entire "mussar shmues" by telling them not to be concerned by all this?

The answer is, as mentioned before: If the point of a "mussar shmues" is to cause people to feel desperate and without hope, then one has destroyed all he has set out to accomplish. The point of Teshuva is to have fear, but to also know that there is hope. To be aware that, "Although I have done wrong in the past, my situation can be corrected." A reaction of turning green, of "there is no G-d in my midst", is a counter-productive reaction which will not lead to the desired Teshuva. There is only hope when we know "You are all standing here today before G-d" and when we know that "With you is Forgiveness; consequently you we shall fear."