



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

Kiddush

Mr & Mrs Donny Wilks invite the Kehilla to Kiddush for the recent birth of their daughter Racheli (Esther Rachel) at Moor Lane Shul hall from 11:30am.

PBM Gemara Course

The Professionals Beis Medrash (PBM) Gemara course is a highly structured adult education program designed to build independence in Jewish textual study. There are currently 50 men over 7 weekly Manchester groups learning the Gemara course, 7 of whom are members of our shul. PBM would like to start a group in Ohr Yerushalayim - Are you ready to give it a go?

It is offered as an initial 6-week taster course, following which there is no further obligation to continue. For more information about the course please speak to Steven Mills.

Left Out? Left In.

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

Aharon HaKohen. As Moshe Rabbeinu told his brother, his mitzvah of Menorah would be greater than what the Nesi'im did with their sacrifices.

At least that is what Rashi says. The Ramban has a different take on the form of consolation. The mitzvah of lighting the Menorah he says wasn't much comfort for being left out of the inauguration offerings since any kohen could light it. Instead, the Ramban says, the Menorah was an allusion to when the kohanim would eventually and heroically rededicate the altar in the time of the Chashmonaim.

There might be another explanation as well, one that can be traced back to the very origin of the tribe of Levi. It may even be an explanation for another question to do with the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu, based upon the following verse:

A man of the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. (Shemos 2:1)

This of course is referring to Amram and Yocheved, just after Miriam convinced her father to remarry her mother. Pharaoh, she argued, only declared death for the boys. Amram, by causing all Jewish men to divorce their wives and not have children, decreed against the boys AND the girls.

The question is, why were they not mentioned by name? It wasn't as if it was loshon hara, and that we didn't already know who the Torah is talking about.

A clue to the answer can be found in Parashas Ki Sisa:

Moshe stood in the gate of the camp and said: "Whoever is for G-d, [let him come] to me!"

All the Levi'im gathered around him. He said to them: "G-d has said, the G-d of Israel: 'Every man should place his sword upon his thigh and pass back and forth from one gate to the other in the camp, and every man should kill his brother, every man his friend, every man his brother.'"

The Levi'im did as Moshe said . . . (Shemos 32:26-28)

The incident of the golden calf necessitated the death of its perpetrators. Moshe turned to the people to help him with the very unpleasant task, and the only ones to respond were the Levi'im. The Levi'im were the only ones prepared to carry out Divine justice on behalf of G-d.

Was this a good thing? Maybe the Levi'im were bloodthirsty, and this was their chance to take lives with Divine sanction. There was nothing heroic about that.

In response to this, we have the following:

[Leah] conceived again and bore a son, and she said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, for I have borne him three sons." Therefore, He named him "Levi." (Bereishis 29:24)

It is important to note that in Biblical times, names were more than just a way with which to refer to another person. They were actually a description of the nature of the person himself, evident by the way the name follows its explanation. "Levi" is from a word that means to accompany, making it a "relationship" name.

In other words, it was antithetical to Levi's nature to want to kill anyone. That is why he is praised so much for carrying out the deed. The only reason why he could carry it out, and with zealousness was because NOT doing G-d's will was even MORE antithetical to his nature.

Thus, Levi gives himself over completely to the will of G-d. What he wants is completely secondary to what G-d desires. When he performs a mitzvah, he leaves his own want out of the equation.

Therefore the Torah, by referring to Amram and Yocheved by their tribal name and not their personal names indicates that they acted completely with self-sacrifice for G-d. There was nothing of themselves in what they did, though that could easily have been the case.

After all, Amram and Yocheved had not divorced because they had stopped wanting to be married to one another. They had separated

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת בהעלתך

Mincha	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.51pm-8.00pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	8.54am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.49pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	10.54pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.45pm

to stop giving birth to babies who were sentenced to death before even being born. Finding a good reason to remarry would have, SHOULD HAVE stirred personal sentiments.

The verse tells you otherwise. It doesn't say that they were not elated to remarry. It tells you that even though they were they would not have, had it not been in G-d's best interest. It was such a "Levi thing" to do.

When listing the gifts of the altar inauguration, the Torah not only mentions the name of the tribe, but the name of its nasi as well. It's as if the name of the nasi was a crucial part of the equation, without which our appreciation of what went on would be limited. Indeed, this information is dissected and analyzed in Kabbalistic seforim.

It is also saying that there was something personal about the offerings that were brought. In this case, it was desired by G-d because it was a necessary element to make the inauguration complete. Just as white light ceases to be white if a color of the spectrum is filtered out, likewise the inauguration was only complete if all 12 elements of the nation came together as one.

Except for Levi. It was never his job to supply one of those elements because he doesn't have that kind of personal involvement in this world. As his name implies, Levi is here to bind together, not to be bound up with others. In the future, he will be the 13th tribe, the gematria of the word "echad," which means "one." This is what Moshe Rabbeinu told his brother.

Aharon HaKohen, on behalf of his tribe, had felt left out, especially since he had thought it was the result of his involvement in the golden calf. Moshe Rabbeinu told him that he was "left out" because he had something greater to do. It was something only the Levi'im could accomplish because of their heroic selflessness.

This was symbolized by the Menorah as Rashi comments, and was revealed in full in the time of the Chashmonaim as the Ramban explains. It is was also a profound sense of comfort for Aharon HaKohen, the very representative of what it means to give yourself up for the greater good.

It is Always a Journey

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein (Torah.org)

Every word of the Torah is eternal. There are no exceptions.

The purpose of every section of the Torah is to show us how to live our lives according to the Will of Hashem. Here, too, we can expect consistency. Every section of the Torah, every event recorded, should impact our behavior.

The description in our parshah of the unusual phenomena that attached themselves to the Mishkan would seem to belie the certainty of the last statements. What can they tell us thousands of years after having emerged from the wilderness and having no recent memory of the Mishkan?

Plenty, it turns out. One passage orients us in the direction of discovering the message. "On the day the Mishkan was set up, the cloud covered the Mishkan...,and in the evening there would be upon the Mishkan like a fiery appearance until morning. So it would always be....According to the word of Hashem would Bnei Yisrael journey, and according the the word of Hashem would they encamp."

Every person is charged with erecting his own mishkan. (The Torah commands, after all "They shall make for me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within them." Hashem does not endeavor to dwell within the Sanctuary, but to cause His Presence to dwell within us. Each of us must create the space, fashion the inner environment that can successfully invite an indwelling of the Divine.)

Note that the Torah does not say, "On the day that Moshe set up the Mishkan," which would have been more direct and more accurate. It opts instead for the passive voice – on the day the Mishkan was set up. This broadens the pasuk beyond Moshe's Mishkan to the personal ones that we all labor to construct.

Our passage warns us about some of the pitfalls along the way. On the very day that a person brings the Shechinah to a firm standing within him, he can expect dark, obscuring clouds to envelop him. Hashem will send challenges that seem to darken his clarity, to shroud it in murkiness. The night – the natural time of darkness and hiddenness – will bring an unwanted fire: flare-ups of passions and desires that his yetzer hora has prepared for him. "So it will always be. The cloud will cover it, and an appearance of fire by night." This is the way of the world, the lot that a Jew can expect. He must know that there will always be challenges, tests that hide Hashem from him, and inflame him with yetzer hora.

"And whenever the cloud was lifted from atop the Ohel, afterwards the Bnei Yisrael would journey." It is always a journey. The challenges, the darkness, the struggles – they all lead a Jew to a better place. The darkness will lift, and the cloudiness will dissipate. When that happens, a Jew will either rise to the next level, or at least begin on the road to achieving it.

The Torah hints as well at a very nuts-and-bolts suggestion about how to time our self-induced journeys to higher places. "The fool walks in darkness." The fool wishes to walk, to travel onward while shrouded in darkness. But darkness is not a time for traveling, but for staying put.

We should not attempt to reach new spiritual levels when we can detect that our internal mishkan is clouded over. Our avodah in such times is to remain firm and resolute, to hold on to what we have.

We must react to the darkness with strength and conviction to stay the course, to keep at our appointed tasks loyally and steadfastly, despite the gloomy nocturnal mists. Such a time, however, is not auspicious to setting off on expeditions to conquer new spiritual heights; it suffices at such times that we try our hardest not to fall.

It will do us no good to chafe at our restraints. "When the cloud lingered upon the Mishkan many day, the Bnei Yisrael would maintain the charge of Hashem and not journey."

However long it takes, as long as the darkness hovers, any marching we do must be marching in place. Our job at such times is to maintain Hashem's charge, not to charge onward. It is sometimes His Will that we serve Him in darkness, that we continue to do His bidding while He hides His countenance from us.

We should not blame ourselves for these periods of time, but understand that they are orchestrated by Hashem Himself. Sometimes, He simply asks of us that we serve Him in such a state.

Ironically, even our experience at Sinai, the time of our most intense and clearest encounter with Hashem's presence, did not ignore the phenomenon of avodah shrouded in darkness. "I come to you in the thickness of the cloud, so that the people will hear as I speak to you."

The Torah found it important to convey that Hashem speaks to us at times from the midst of a cloud. We should not conclude that at such times He has withdrawn, as it were, distancing Himself from us. He is near; He speaks even at such times.

Elsewhere, the Torah goes even further. "Moshe drew close to the arafel, the thick cloud where G-d was." Bais Avrohom points out that the Torah uses three expressions, in ascending order: darkness, cloud, and thick cloud.

Moshe revealed to us that even in the thick cloud, the most oppressively dark of the three, Hashem is still to be found. He may ask of us to serve Him while He seems hermetically sealed off from us. Really this is not so. He may be obscured, but He remains close to us.

The parshah suggests to us an important component of our avodah. A Jew must be able to discern at all times what tasks Hashem requires of him, what purposes He wants him to advance, what He asks of him at each particular moment. The messages we get from Him may differ from time to time. But there always is a message, and it always draws us closer to Him.