



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

Chayim Aruchim

We regret to inform of the Petira of the late father of Yosaif Bernhardt in South Africa. The Shiva ended Thursday morning. Simchas.

Rov's Yom Tov Collection

The Rov is currently collecting for the annual distribution of top-up funds to local families for Yom Tov.

Generous Donations should be given to the Rov at any time.

Please Keep Us Updated

If you have changed address in the last few months please let us know so we can update our records. Please email details to office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk

Kind-Hearted Enemies

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein (Torah.org)

An Amoni or Moavi shall not join the congregation of Hashem. Even their tenth generation shall not join the congregation of Hashem – forever – because they did not greet you with bread and water on the road when you were leaving Egypt, and because he hired Bilam...to curse you.

Be'er Yosef – It is hard to imagine that these two reasons to keep Amon and Moav at arm's length can be spoken in the same breath. The first misdeed seems like a breach of good manners. It would have been the civil thing to offer some food to some people in need passing nearby. The second was a diabolical plot that, had it succeeded, would have put the entire Jewish people in peril, and could have meant their destruction. How can these two factors be placed on the same playing field?

One possibility is that the first reason greatly compounds the gravity of the second. By contracting Bilam to curse Klal Yisrael, they to disrupt the connection between the Jewish people and their heavenly Protector. Moreover, they sought to use HBKH's power for their nefarious plans. Had their plan succeeded – had Bilam gotten the opportunity to make full use of the power of a Divine curse – the results would have been catastrophic. The upshot of the episode is Hashem's love for Klal Yisrael, and the pains He took to prevent their falling prey to an unseen danger.

Yet, they would not be the last group to attempt to deliver a body blow to the Jewish people. The Torah makes no provision for distancing any future oppressors from marrying into the Jewish nation. Such enemies seem to be the everyday state of affairs for us. Amon and Moav, however, were different. There was a history that bound us together. They could have been expected to take the initiative to be of assistance to us in our time of need. After all, they came into being as a people only because of Avrohom! He risked his life to take on the four mighty kings who had captured Lot. Later, Lot was rescued from the overturning of Sodom only in the merit of Avrohom.

In other word, they owed us. And not only did they turn their backs on that debt of gratitude and not offer us food and drink as they should, but they conspired to destroy us. This made their crime much more serious.

Alternatively, the Torah might be teaching a lesson about the power of chesed. The ancient Egyptians were also anathematized. Yet they were only distanced for three generations, while Amon and Moav's disqualification has no limit. What made the Egyptians different is that they had hosted Yaakov and his family when they left Canaan and took up residence in the south. All the viciousness that they visited upon us in later years did not erase the fact that at one point, they provided refuge for us during years of famine. This tempered the Divine edict against their marrying in to the Jewish people, allowing it to expire after a few generations.

The same could have happened to Amon and Moav, had they greeted us on the way into Israel with bread and water. Their punishment for hiring Bilam would have been cut back in recognition of the chesed they would have done. When they failed to seize the moment, they were punished fully for funding the plot to curse us.

The Torah here stresses the value of the small, simple deed. One genuine display of kindness would have had huge impact on the way Amon and Moav are treated and remembered. No small mitzvah goes unrewarded – and Hashem overlooks no good deed, even when performed by evildoers.

Thanks to Egypt

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

Ki Seitzei discusses many different mitzvos and ideas but there was one that really struck me. The parsha discusses the different nations and their ability or inability to join the K'hal Hashem. (Even though they will be accepted as converts, there will be severe restrictions on who they will be allowed to marry. That is the meaning of K'hal Hashem.)

Male members of the nations of Amon and Moav cannot marry into the K'hal Hashem. Even ten generations after the original conversion, the K'hal Hashem is off limits to the descendants. [23:4]

However, when it comes to our good friends the Mitzrim {ancient Egyptians}, a different law applies. "Do not abhor the Egyptian because you were a stranger in his land." Rashi points out that our stay there was no vacation—they ultimately threw our newborn boys into

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת כי תצא

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1st Mincha / Candle Lighting | 6.20pm / not before 6.33pm |
| 2nd Mincha / Candle Lighting | 7.43pm / no later than 7.43pm |
| Seder HaLimud | 8.40am |
| Shacharis | 9.00am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 9.44am |
| 1st Mincha | 2.00pm |
| Ovos uBonim | 5.00pm |
| 2nd Mincha | 6.00pm |
| 3rd Mincha | 7.43pm |
| Rov's Shiur | Following |
| Maariv & Motzei Shabbos | 8.48pm |
| Sun | 7.15am / 8.20am |
| Mon / Thu | 6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am |
| Tue / Wed / Fri | 6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am |
| Mincha & Maariv | 7.35pm |
| Late Maariv | 10.00pm |

the Nile—nevertheless, since they were our hosts in our time of need (when we first went down to Mitzrayim), “the third generation (the grandchildren of the original convert) can enter the K’hal Hashem.” [23:8-9]

(To avoid any confusion or misunderstandings, I would like to point out that these post-conversion marriage restrictions apply to the ancient nations of Amon, Moav, (Edom) and Egypt. All other nations were able to convert and enter the K’hal Hashem immediately. Since all of the nations have been moved and mixed up over time, any modern day convert has the status of the vast majority of nations, and can enter the K’hal Hashem with no marriage restrictions.)

We look back on relationships and experiences that we’ve had and we see that there were positive and negative aspects. It happens quite often that if, when we make the tally, there seems to have been more negative than positive, we will then view the entire relationship or experience in a negative way. We’ll feel freed from the need to show appreciation for that which we did gain.

Our parsha illustrates the piercing hakaras hatov {sense of gratitude} that a Jew must not just feel but act upon. All of the horrors that we as a nation endured during the enslavement in Mitzrayim cannot erase that relatively minute benefit that we gained from them. The first two generations cannot enter the K’hal Hashem—they drowned our children—but the third generation can—they hosted us when Yaakov first descended.

At the same time, perspective must be maintained and we can’t allow ourselves to be stepped upon. The Talmud [Sanhedrin 91.] relates that the Egyptians came before Alexander with a grievance against the Jews. Quoting the verse that the Jews took vessels of gold and silver on the way out of Mitzrayim, they demanded compensation.

A fellow by the name of G’viha ben P’sisa went to argue the case for the Jews. “Just as your source was a verse from the Torah, I will also draw from a verse in the Torah. ‘And Bnei Yisroel were in Mitzrayim for four hundred and thirty years.’ You Egyptians owe us the wages of six hundred thousand workers who put in four hundred and thirty years of work!”

Alexander, impressed by his line of argument, offered the Egyptians a chance to respond. They asked for three days to craft a response. When the three days passed and they still had no way to counter the argument, they left town in a hurry.

More than their due we needn’t give but their fair compensation cannot be ignored. When it comes to hakaras hatov, details cannot be washed away by the overall picture.

Sometimes, however, the obligation of hakaras hatov requires us to ignore a detail and focus on that overall picture.

The family trip that we took was primarily to attend a wedding in the USA of a very close friend and talmid {student}, and to visit and spend time with close family. Due to a disparity in ticket prices, on our way to the States we were able to spend a Shabbos with close friends in England at virtually no extra cost. Shabbos was beautiful and the opportunity to experience a different country with my family was truly a once in a lifetime (on a Rabbi’s salary!) experience.

Our continuing flight to New York wasn’t until Monday, allowing us to spend Sunday touring the Tower of London and taking a boat ride up and down the Thames River. Every part of the day was an experience, including even the bus and train rides to and from.

As we got off the last train, ready to return to the home of our friends, I was filled with a serene feeling of contentment and thanks to Hashem for having allowed my family to share such an experience. That feeling was permeating throughout my entire body until the moment that I reached into my pocket and realized that it was empty—my wallet was gone. British pounds, American dollars, Israeli shekel—gone. Israeli license, New York license—gone. Credit cards, debit cards, bank cards—gone. Last but certainly not least, my wallet-sized wedding picture that I’d carried for eighteen years minus a few days—gone. Suddenly, it was nausea that was permeating throughout my entire body. I felt that detail of the lost wallet washing away the entire experience. I was in danger of confining my memory of the

England trip to a lost wallet...

Hakaras hatov to others is the stepping-stone to hakaras hatov to Hashem. It is on that foundation that we can build our avodas (service to) Hashem. At times it requires dwelling on details and at times it requires ignoring them. As we prepare for the upcoming Yomim Nora’im {Days of Awe—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur} the focus must always be a feeling of profound appreciation for all that He has given us.

Putting The “Snap Crackle and Pop” Into One’s Marriage Relationship

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

The Torah says (regarding the draft deferment of the Jewish soldier for the first year after his marriage): “He shall be free do go home and make his wife happy (v’semach es ishto) for one year.” [Devorim 24:5]

Rashi comments on the words “v’semach es ishto” by citing the Aramaic Targum: “v’yachdee yas itsei”. Rashi explains that anyone who translates the pasuk to mean “v’yachdee IM itsei” is making a mistake. The two versions of Aramaic translation quoted by Rashi hinge around the interpretation of the Hebrew word “es”. “V’semach ES ishto” could mean “You should MAKE your wife happy” or it could mean “You should be happy WITH your wife.” Rashi says the former translation is correct and the latter translation is erroneous. Rashi supports his position by stating that the meaning of the ‘piel’ grammatical form of the word v’semach is to make someone else happy. Had the meaning been “you should rejoice WITH your wife,” the expression would have appeared as “v’sAmach es” not “v’sEEmach es”.

However, the Targum of Yonasan ben Uziel quotes the very translation that Rashi rejects as erroneous. Yonasan ben Uziel was a Tanna! How can Rashi imply that a Tanna does not know how to properly translate a pasuk in Chumash?

The Shemen HaTov offers a beautiful interpretation to resolve this difficulty. Certainly, the meaning of the pasuk is — as Rashi says — that the husband must try to make his wife happy. But if one’s intent in marriage is to make the other partner happy then they will ultimately find happiness together. A marriage only works when each party is trying to make the other one happy. When each person tries to make the other one happy, they will wind up both being happy. On the other hand, if one approaches marriage from the perspective “What is in it for me?” then no one will be happy.

This interpretation of the Shemen HaTov could shed light on the universally expressed blessing when a child is born that the parents merit to bring the child to Torah, to the marriage canopy (Chupah), and to ma’asim tovim (good deeds).

The sequence of this blessing is often questioned. Why do ma’asim tovim appear last in the list? It sounds from this wish like good deeds only begin after one is married. Is that the case?

I once heard the following explanation: When one is single and he goes shopping for breakfast, he walks down the cereal aisle to make his selection. He thinks to himself, “What kind of cereal do I like? Cheerios. What about Rice Crispies? I can’t stand Rice Crispies.” He buys himself a box of Cheerios every single week.

Then he gets married and goes shopping for the family. The first week he brings home Cheerios. His wife tells him “I hate Cheerios. I like Rice Crispies.” If he can afford it, then fine, he buys two boxes — one of Cheerios and one of Rice Crispies and everyone is happy. But what if he cannot afford it? He will have to make a choice. He goes to the store and looks at the cereal aisle and asks himself “What should I buy? Should I buy Cheerios or should I buy Rice Crispies?”

The pasuk in this week’s parsha cries out to him: V’Semach es Ishto. “I am going to buy Rice Crispies!” After marriage, even the act of buying cereal — which until the time one gets married was just a mundane shopping chore — now becomes a Gemillas Chessed, an act of kindness. The mundane act of shopping is turned into a ma’aseh mitzvah (an action with religious nuance). Therefore we understand: First Torah; then Chuppah; and after that even buying cereal will fall into the category of Ma’asim Tovim.