



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ח מרחשון תשע"ז - לך לך - 28th October 2017 - Volume 10 - Issue 14

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazal Tov to Mr & Mrs Jeff Horwich on the occasion of Vidi's wedding to Sorele Saperia this Sunday. Mazel Tov also to Sorele's grandparents Dr & Mrs Michael Wilks. This ShabbatUK, The Office of the Chief Rabbi is honoured to join Ohr Yerushalayim to celebrate Vidi's Aufruf this Shabbos with a Kiddush after Davenning in Beis Yaakov Hall, Broom Lane.

Mazal Tov to Mr & Mrs Malcolm Fagleman on the occasion of Hadassah's wedding to Hudi Scherer on Tuesday.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Dov Black on the engagement of Motti to Miriam Frenkel from London.

Challah Bake

Over 25 Primary School boys and girls gathered together for the inaugural OJ challah bake. All the kids had a great time plaiting and shape their dough adding on a sprinkling from a choice of poppy seeds, sesame seeds, chocolate drops and coloured sprinkles to personalise them. Thank you to all the ladies who helped supervise what was a truly enjoyable event.

Rov's Shabbos Shiur

The Rov's Shabbos afternoon Shiur takes place half an hour before the second Mincha and will be learning Hilchos Krias HaTorah.

Clocks Go Back

A reminder that the clocks go back an hour on Motzei Shabbos. A reminder also that everyone, especially children and bike riders to wear something hi-viz after dark so they can be easily seen by drivers.

I 'Na' Know...

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

Avrohom was tested ten times, each test bringing latent potential to the realm of realization, programming the spiritual DNA that would be passed on to his descendants, the nation of Israel.

Soon after Avrohom's arrival in Eretz Yisroel, a famine struck. According to Rashi, this was one of his tests, seeing if he would have complaints against Hashem who first instructed him to go to Eretz Yisroel and was now rendering it unfit for him to remain. Avrom, personifying the middah (attribute) of bitachon (firm trust) in Hashem, accepts the Divine decision, even though its understanding is beyond him, and descends to Mitzrayim.

"And it was, as they drew close to Mitzrayim, and he (Avrom) said to Sarei (Avrohom's wife, name later changed to Sarah): Hineh 'na' yadati (I 'na' know) that you are a good-looking woman." [12:11] Afraid of what the Egyptians might do to the husband of such a woman, they agree to only mention that Sarah is Avrohom's (married) sister (she was actually his niece, however, with grandchildren called and considered children, a niece would also be called and considered a sister).

Much discussion is generated over the word 'na'—"I 'na' know that you are a good-looking woman." The usual meaning of 'na' is please. However, Rashi here explains it to mean 'now'.

What is the meaning of Avrohom now being aware of Sarah's beauty?

Rashi explains that the simple understanding is that Avrohom, of course, was well aware of her beauty and had been for quite a long

time. However, now that they were traveling to a place known for its adulterous ways (S'forno) where such beauty was not commonplace, Avrohom now needed to be concerned about that beauty and take steps to avert any harm that her beauty might cause.

The Gaon of Vilna writes that a very righteous person has what's called 'chut shel chessed' (a 'thread of charm') surrounding them. The Talmud [Megillah 13A] teaches that Queen Esther actually had a greenish complexion. She did not have natural beauty, yet her righteousness gave off a beautiful glow.

The difference between a natural beauty and a 'chut shel chessed' can be discerned in a situation where that beauty will cause others to stumble. In such a situation, the natural beauty will remain, posing its dangers, while the 'chut shel chessed' will dissipate.

The Vilna Gaon explains that when Avrohom saw that Sarah's beauty had remained, even as they were approaching the dangers of Mitzrayim, he now knew that (in addition to the beauty of her righteousness) she had natural beauty and he had better plan to stave off that danger.

Alternatively, Rashi offers a different explanation. He writes that the normal way of the world is that a person gets harried from the wearying effects of travel (ever try riding a camel for even five minutes?) and looks it. However, when Avrohom saw that Sarah's beauty was unaffected by the rigors of travel, he now understood just how beautiful she was and he knew that they had to make some preventative plans before they reached Mitzrayim.

Although there are many different interpretations as to Avrohom's awareness of Sarah's natural beauty, his appreciation of Sarah's innate beauty and qualities resounds throughout the story of their life together and her subsequent death.

As such, the relationship of Avrohom and Sarah stands as a beacon of light to us, thousands of years later...

I've witnessed many relationships. Some have been worn out and have lost their luster from the rigors of travel down the road of life while others have built on the hardship-tests that life invariably deals, becoming stronger and more beautiful with every jolt and bump along life's road. I remember my father and I bringing my grandfather to the hospital to visit his wife, my grandmother. At the time, my grandparents a"h had

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת לך לך

Candle Lighting	5.31pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	5.36pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.26am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
Rov's Shiur	4.45pm
2nd Mincha	5.15pm
Shalosh Seudas	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	6.35pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	4.25pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

been married over sixty years. While we were there visiting, a nurse came to take my grandmother out of her bed for some sort of treatment. My grandfather immediately jumped up to smooth out the sheets, making sure that my grandmother would be as comfortable as possible when she would again lay down.

Each Shabbos, my grandfather would walk the considerable distance to the hospital to spend the afternoon with her. My brother told me the impression it made on him when he went to pick him up after Shabbos and found him sitting next to her, stroking her arm. Seeing the beauty in each other, each of them in their eighties.

I've also witnessed tragically sad situations. Relationships where the surreal glow of the wedding smiles have become jaded over time.

Each relationship is, of course, unique and each has its particular hurdles and difficulties. However, a common denominator in any good relationship is the focus on the positive. Every one has faults and every relationship is begun with that realization. The early glow comes from the focus being on the beautiful aspects of each person.

As we wind our way down the long and winding road of life, our focus must be on the positive qualities of those making the trek with us, allowing us to enjoy the constant surprise of 'na' {now} knowing and realizing just how beautiful our co-travelers are.

Count Us If You Can **Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)**

In this week's portion, Hashem challenges his loyal follower Avram to a most difficult task.

"He took him outside and said, 'Gaze up at the heavens and count the stars if you able to.' Then G-d said, 'thus shall be your children'" (Genesis 15:5).

Hashem says count the stars if you can, and then concludes that thus shall be your children. What is thus referring to? If it is a reference to the amount of stars, then why did Hashem tell Avram to attempt to count them? Surely they both knew it was an impossible task for a mortal being. In addition, from the sentence structure it would appear that the word thus may actually refer to the impossible attempt to count the stars?

Many people assume that Hashem assured Avram that his children will be as numerous as the stars, but those words were never spoken. After all, there may be more stars in heaven than people on earth!

Perhaps then, it is not the actual number of stars that personify the Jews but the attempt to count and understand them. The constant curiosity and mystery that surround the galaxies are the metaphor for the Chosen People.

Rabbi Yosef Weiss, in his recently published work Visions of Greatness, tells the story of one Sam Goldish, an observant Jew who lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma and works for the United States Department of Defense.

Working on a major government contract, Sam was involved in a major project that needed constant defense department scrutiny. Huddled with a dozen co-workers examining structural modifications for a tank, one worker mentioned that there was a string hanging from Sam's pants.

He offered to remove it, and Sam, eyes fixed on the schematics, nodded his approval. What happened next was more significant. The co-worker tugged innocently at the string and it did not yield. In fact, seven other strings followed. Sam's tzitzit were revealed. The startled workers gasped. They had never seen that sort of sartorial ornament.

For the next hour, a debate among a dozen gentile workers ensued – in the heart of the Christian Bible belt – all about whether or not Jews must wear fringes. Each worker claimed to be an authority on Jews, each said they knew the religion and were well versed in its customs — yet no one had heard of tzitzit! They refused to return to the meeting until Sam showed them, in a King James edition of the Bible, that one of the workers had on hand, exactly where in the Bible it stated that Jews are to wear fringes on the corners of their garments.

The fascination with the little strings far surpassed their interest in the army's latest tanks.

Perhaps Mark Twain asked it best:

"If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

G-d assures Avram that the interest in his kin will rival man's fixation with the starry worlds that he will never reach. The intrigue that surrounds the Jew is inversely proportional to the space he fills in the universe. No matter how tiny the glow of Judaism may seem, civilizations study it, societies try to imitate it, and mystified as they are, some nations try to destroy it.

The proverbial Hubble telescopes of the gentile world will be just as fascinated, fixated, and constantly occupied in utter mystery of the immortal and indestructible lights that twinkle past the dark clouds of civilization – the Jew. And though those gentile observers may never discover the answer to our immortality, nor understand the reason of our resilience, one thing they will surely understand – we shine.

