



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ו סיון תשע"ח – שלח – 9th June 2018 - Volume 10 - Issue 45

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Chizky Salomon on the engagement of Eli to Ruthie Epstein of Hendon.

### Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush after Davening this week jointly sponsored by Michael Freedman and Rafi Green in honour of the Yahrzeit's of their respective fathers next Friday. Chaim Aruchim.

### JRCC Appeal

Further to the appeal by Alex Strom before Shavuot, donations can be given to Chizky Salomon.

### Piece of Cake

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

It was not a good scenario. The twelve spies returned from their forty-day sojourn to the Land of Canaan and ten of them were not happy campers.

They left as an enthusiastic and united crew, selected by Moshe for what should have been an easy mission of assurance — confirming what they were already told by their forebears, as well as the Almighty — Eretz Yisrael is a beautiful land that flows with milk and honey. Instead, the only two who had anything positive to say about the land of Israel, were Calev and Yehoshua. The rest of the spies claimed that the land was not good and that there were dangerous giants living there who would crush them. And now, in the face of the derogatory, inflammatory and frightening remarks that disparaged the Promised Land, Calev and Yehoshua were left to defend it.

It was too late. The ten evil spies had stirred up the negative passions of a disheartened nation. The people wanted to return to Egypt. But the two righteous men, Yehoshua and Calev, tried to persuade them otherwise.

The first and most difficult task facing them was to get the Children of Israel to listen to them. The Torah tells us: "They spoke to the entire assembly of the Children of Israel, saying, "The Land that we passed through, to spy it out — the Land is very, very good.

If Hashem desires us, He will bring us to this Land and give it to us, a Land that flows with milk and honey. But do not rebel against Hashem! You should not fear the people of the Land, for they are our bread. Their protection has departed from them; Hashem is with us. Do not fear them!" (Numbers 14:7-9).

What did they mean by saying that the giants were "our bread"? Did they mean that the children of Israel will eat them like bread? Why bread of all things?

A story that circulated during the 1930s told of Yankel, a Jewish immigrant from the Ukraine who made his livelihood selling rolls on a corner in lower Manhattan. He was not an educated man. With poor eyesight and a hearing problem, he never read a newspaper or listened to the radio. He would daven, say Tehillim, learn a bit of Chumash, and bake his rolls. Then he would stand on the side of the road and sell his fresh-baked delicious smelling rolls.

"Buy a roll, mister?" he would ask passersby, the majority of them would gladly oblige with a generous purchase. Despite his simple approach, Yankel did well. He ordered a larger oven and increased his flour and

## לעלוי נשמת דוב יצחק ב"ר אפרים אלחנן ז"ל

### Tachanun

When we say Tachanun, as is known, we rest our head on the arm without tefillin. The face should be covered with some form of cloth (talis, jacket, shirt sleeve); the face should not rest on uncovered skin.

The ideal way to say Tachanun is sitting; but when this is not possible, it can be said standing as well.

yeast orders. He brought his son home from college to help him out. Then something happened. His son asked him, "Pa, haven't you heard about the situation with the world markets? There are going to be great problems soon. We are in the midst of a depression!" The father figured that his son's economic forecast was surely right. After all, his son went to college whereas he himself did not even read the papers. He canceled the order for the new oven and held s for more flour, took down his signs and waited. Sure enough with no advertisement and no inventory, his sales fell overnight. And soon enough Yankel said to his son. "You are right. We are in the middle of a great depression." Bread is the staple of life, but it also is the parable of faith. Our attitude toward our bread represent our attitude toward every challenge of faith. If one lives life with emunah p'shutah, simple faith, then his bread will be sufficient to sustain him. The customers will come and he will enjoy success. It is when we aggrandize the bleakness of the situation through the eyes of the economic forecasters, the political pundits, or the nay sayers who believe in the power of their predictions and give up hope based on their mortal weaknesses, then one might as well close shop.

Yehosua and Calev told the people that these giants are no more of a challenge than the demands of our daily fare. They are our bread. And as with our daily fare, our situation is dependent totally on our faith.

If we listen to the predictions of the forecasters and spies, we lose faith in the Almighty and place our faith in the powerless. However, by realizing that the seemingly greatest challenges are the same challenges of our daily fare — our bread — the defeat of even the largest giants

## The Week Ahead

### שבת פרשת שלח

שבת פרשת שלח	מברכין תמוז
Mincha	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.50pm - 7.55pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	8.54am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.47pm
Shiur	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	10.52pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Wed / Thurs Rosh Chodesh	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.45pm

will be a piece of cake.

## **A Professional Jockey**

**Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)**

The bulk of this week's Torah portion is devoted to the tragic story of the spies who reconnoitered the land of Israel in preparation for the nation's entry into the Promised Land. The consequences of their damaging report were to be felt for the next 40 years, during which the entire generation was punished, and restricted from entering the land. Only the youth together with the next generation were able to realize the nation's dream.

The Torah portion concludes with three seemingly unconnected mitzvos that were given to the Jewish people. The first details the various rituals that were to accompany all guilt and sin offerings in the Bais Hamikdash. It was necessary to bring a flour offering and a wine libation with each sacrifice in order for it to be efficacious. Secondly, the Jewish people were instructed to tithe their dough each time they make bread, and to gift a portion of the dough to the kohain. Thirdly, they were instructed with the mitzvah of tzitzis, ensuring that the four corners of their clothes were adorned with the strings and knots that were to remind them of their Heavenly connection.

What is the connection between these three seemingly disparate mitzvos, and why were they given to the Jewish people immediately following the sin of their heeding the spies' false reports concerning the Land of Israel?

The commentaries explain that the spies were of towering spiritual greatness, but also struggled with a fundamental weakness—a fear of entering the land and having to trade an openly miraculous existence for a life governed by natural forces.

In the wilderness, their every step was guided by an open manifestation of Hashem's protective "hand." They were led with a pillar of fire at night and a cloud of glory during the day. They ate manna from heaven; their clothing grew along with them, and the Divine intervention in their daily lives afforded them a unique and intimate connection with their Creator. They knew all this would drastically change upon their entry into the land, where they would transition into a material life, engaging the material elements.

They were going to have to till the soil with the trust that the earth would yield forth its produce. They would have to leave their homes each festival to ascend to Jerusalem, trusting that no external enemy would seize the opportunity to capitalize on the country's vulnerable borders.

The spies were afraid that the nation was not up to the task. So they portrayed the land in material terms, amplifying the daunting challenge of engaging the material hurdles that lay ahead. They wanted to remain in the secure spiritual incubator that surrounded them in the wilderness. The nation paid dearly for not standing up to the tough challenges of life.

In truth, our essential life's challenge is just that: to be engaged in a material world and to harness it to the physical, while not fearing constant failure. There is always the opportunity of a sin offering with which to repair ourselves when we have erred. We are instructed to reengage the most physical and material elements, wine and food, symbolized by the rituals accompanying the sacrifices, and sublimate them to the service of the Divine.

We are instructed to make proper use of our clothing, symbolized by the laws of tzitzis, that portray material success and represent the image of status and beauty. Our clothes protect us from the elements. Yet we understand that their deeper purpose is to connect the dots and recognize that all the gifts and bounty in life flow from the Divine source. We are not to fear failure for even if we slip, we can always return home.

A student of the saintly Yesod Ha'avodah complained bitterly to his teacher, "Rebbe, I keep slipping and succumbing to temptation and desire. It all seems so futile, I don't have the strength or courage to rise above my life's challenges."

The Yesod Ha'avodah responded, "I once saw a professional jockey riding his magnificent stallion. I asked him, 'Does the horse ever throw you off?' " Of course," he replied, "even the most experienced horse rider is going to be thrown."

"So what do you do when the horse throws you?" I asked him. "I jump back on as fast as I can!" he responded. "If not, the horse will run away and I'll be left with nothing."

The message of the portion is clear. Like the spies of the wilderness, we are all sent to the wilderness represented by the material world, where we are to spy out the presence of G-d amidst the distractions, temptations and moral pitfalls of our material environment. Our job is to stay on cue with our mission and seek out our Creator in creation, by overcoming the challenges that confront us. The stakes are extremely high. Success guarantees our entry into the Promised Land. Aborting our mission, on the other hand, may force us to take a long, circuitous route home.

May we take a lesson from the failure of the long-ago spies and arm ourselves with the necessary spiritual tools to achieve our goals.

## **Bearers of The Treasure Map** **Rabbi Pinchas Avruch (Torah.org)**

When the sin of the spies and the subsequent national hysteria triggered a Divine threat to destroy the Jewish nation, Moshe interceded on their behalf with prayer. The Torah reports he was successful: "And G-d said, 'I have forgiven because of your words.'" (Bamidbar/Numbers 14:20) This sequence is reminiscent of the national sin of the Golden Calf. Then, too, Moshe prayed to G-d for their survival. Upon completion of that prayer, the Torah testifies to his achievement in overturning the Divine decree against the Children of Israel. "G-d reconsidered regarding the evil that He declared He would do to his people." (Shemos/Exodus 32:14)

There is, however, a significant difference between the prayer he recited after the Golden Calf and the one delivered after the grief following the spies' report. When the Jews sinned with the Calf, Moshe implored G-d to remember the covenant He had contracted with the Patriarchs. He also beseeched G-d to consider the reaction of the nations of the world when they would discover that G-d had annihilated the Jewish people, the very nation he had miraculously excised from Egypt. But when they sinned following the reaction to the spies, Moshe again focused upon the response of the other nations, but he made no mention of the Patriarchs. Why did Moshe choose to exclude this line of reasoning now, after it had already proven successful in the past?

G-d had made a commitment to the Patriarchs that their offspring would inherit the Land of Israel. After the sin of the calf, Moshe effectively utilized this commitment to secure the survival of the Jewish nation. But, elucidates Ramban, Moshe had a problem when he came to plea on behalf of the Jews after the sin of the spies. The promised eternity of the Jewish nation was rooted in their connection to the Land of Israel as promised to the Forefathers. By accepting the false report of the spies, the Children of Israel not only rejected the land; by clearly renouncing their connection to the Land of Israel they also rejected the Forefathers with whom G-d forged the covenant to give the land. Were Moshe to mention the covenant he would merely be drawing attention to the very nature of their sin. He was compelled to abandon this petition.

By its very nature, the physical world in which we live challenges our ability to thrive spiritually, to find and maintain a connection with G-d. The Kabbalists explain that the Hebrew for "world" – olam – derives from "he'elam", meaning "hidden", because our physical world hides the spiritual realities from our consciousness. So how do we break through? How do we cut through the fog of physicality to attain our spiritual goals and forge our spiritual connections? By honoring the covenants of our Forebears and utilizing mitzvos for their intended purpose of fostering our much sought but too elusive G-d consciousness we construct a relationship with the Divine. But to rely exclusively on the cerebral rites and rituals is to sell the Torah short. Most of the mitzvos employ physical objects, allowing us to release the holiness inherent in them. Mundane acts like plowing a field, eating an apple, conducting business honestly, loving our children, even using the bathroom, possess vast untapped spirituality. The spirituality is not elusive, but we need to open our eyes when we are looking. Our Forefathers have given us their cherished map to find the hidden treasure; we must take the necessary steps.