



Ohr Yerushalayim News

י"ד טבת תשע"ו – 26th December 2015 - Volume 8 - Issue 24

News This Week

Free External Tefillin Check

Mr Moshe Rosenberg will be offering free external Tefillin checks on Sunday and Monday from 8.00 to 10.00am in the Shiur rooms. Further details on the back page.

Seeing and Believing

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

Ya'akov called for his sons and said, "Gather and I will tell you what will happen to you at the End-of-Days." Bereishis 49:1

When we look at history in the brother's time and history in our day, it seems as if theirs took place on a different planet than ours, in another solar system altogether. Our reality is just so completely different than their reality was, which is why we tend to disassociate ourselves from it. Their story just seems like good fiction to us.

Actually, they're identical. Shocking, eh? It's like someone saying about fraternal twins, "Identical, right?" when they really look and act so different from one another. The only thing about them that is identical as far as you can see is their birthdate!

Then, to your utter amazement and surprise, the mask comes off one of them, revealing a face that looks just like the other. Then the other stops with a fake accent, and all of a sudden he sounds just like his brother. After that, they explain how they were acting different from one to appear different, but now that the charade is over they can be themselves, which is just like each other.

The same thing happened with Yosef and his brothers. When they first stood before Yosef, he was dressed and more than likely "decorated" like the rest of Egyptian royalty. If what we see on cave walls is accurate, then he would have looked very different than his brothers at that time.

We certainly know he acted very different from them. They were humbled by that time and acted contritely before Yosef. He on the other hand was unduly harsh and accusatory. He did such a good job that they believed him all the way to the end, not suspecting once that it was him. As far as they were concerned, he was the farthest thing from them.

Then he revealed himself. The mask came off, and his demeanor changed. Within a second, he and his brothers were the same again, to the brothers' utter surprise. All of a sudden what had appeared to them to be so far from their reality was in fact the same as theirs.

History changes but man does not. He just develops more sophisticated means to do what he has always done: make life physically comfortable.

I know of couples who are happily married today, but only as a result of the persistence of one of the two. The other one said repeatedly that they did not think that the shidduch was relevant and refused to go out. Undeterred, the rejected party kept at it until finally, for one reason or another, the rejecting party agreed, perhaps just to put the final nail in the coffin.

It didn't happen that way though in the end. To the rejecting side's surprise, they actually took a liking to the rejected, and eventually were married. The persistent side never doubted the match. The side that

did is grateful that the other side kept at it and never gave up. So much in life is never what it seems on the surface. That is why someone must look below the surface to see what is really going on.

For example, when Moshe Rabbeinu went down to Egypt and demanded the release of the Jewish people, Pharaoh balked. When Moshe Rabbeinu threatened Pharaoh in the Name of God, Pharaoh balked even more. He just didn't believe in God, at least not the God of the Jewish people, or at least not the kind of God that interferes with human history.

Is it any different when Professor Steven Hawking claims that science explains Creation better than the Bible? Is it different when Richard Dawkins pushes Evolution while claiming to be an atheist? There was a battle between religion and the "science" of that time, and there is a battle between religion and the science of our time.

One may argue and say that the two arguments cannot be compared. Hawking et al are geniuses who have used extreme intelligence and modern physics to come to their conclusion. Pharaoh fought against God in his time out of ignorance and because of superstition. His conclusion may have been ahead of its time, but it was for the wrong reason.

Or so agnostics and atheists would like to believe. The basic belief is, knowledge is accumulative, so whatever the Egyptians knew in their time was the most basic of basics. Some people try to read mystery into some of their greatest accomplishments, but for the most part we do not have much respect for their understanding of how the world actually works.

Let's break it down and see where the real myth is. The Egyptians may have had a far more sophisticated understanding of the world than we think, but for the sake of this discussion, it really doesn't matter. What counts is that they had a model that made sense out of reality, and believed in it wholeheartedly.

In some instances they may have actually been scientifically correct.

The Week Ahead

פרשת ויחי

Candle Lighting	3.38pm
Mincha	3.43pm
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.17am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
Rov's Shiur	3.03pm
2nd Mincha	3.33pm
סעודה שלישית	following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	4.53pm
Ovos uBonim	6.08m
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon Bank Holiday	7.10am / 8.10am
Tues / Wed	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Fri Bank Holiday	7.15am / 8.20am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

Where they weren't, they had explanations that worked for them, especially since they apparently knew how to perform miracles via sorcery, which is basically technological advancement without the math to make it work. If a person went back just 200 years in time with a cell phone and used it, he would be burned at the stake as a witch.

God, on the other hand, was the true Force behind everything, which Moshe Rabbeinu tried to explain to Pharaoh. God, however, did not fit into the Egyptian model, especially because He made demands that were not consistent with the Egyptian approach to life. Acceptance of God implied moral responsibility and a spiritually responsible lifestyle, and the Egyptians, rejecting that, rejected God.

Scientists today cannot say with 100 percent certainty that their version of Creation is correct. They can only say that it is the best model they have thus far come up with to explain reality as THEY see it, which in itself is very limiting. Just because a person cannot see around a corner does not mean around the corner does not exist, or that it does not impact the reality they are able to see.

If there are parts of reality that they are not seeing, for one reason or another, it means that their explanation of existence is only partly true, if at all. This is because there are other aspects of existence that may change their equations when factored into the big picture. Science is constantly being revised to account for newly discovered facets of existence. It is becoming increasingly more accurate, but is not yet necessarily accurate enough.

One inherent problem with science is a couple of assumptions it has made, perhaps for convenience sake. It assumes firstly that all aspects of the equation to explain existence are physical. Based upon this assumption, many scientists tend to believe, it should be possible to find the missing components of their equation in the physical world, with physical means.

What if, though, at some point, or on some level, the "components" stop being physical? What if science hits a proverbial wall at some point because of its assumption? What are the options at that point, and what determines the direction of the scientist?

It seems that there are two options. The first is popular with secularists and those who do not like the idea of an objective morality that is binding on mankind: Seeing is believing, so if we can't see it we don't have to believe in it. The second option is to accept the fact that there is more to reality than what the physical eye can see, and that believing also leads to seeing. It's the old Jews versus the Greeks thing again, which was the old Jews versus the Egyptians thing again.

As it says in Tehillim, some lights can only be seen with God's light (Tehillim 36:10). Kabbalah explains that this amounts to "believing is seeing," because the key light for seeing ALL of truth, not just a part of it, is only available to people who are spiritually responsible. This idea is covered in a book called "Chanukah Lite." Torah is a tree of life, but only for those who "grasp" it (Mishlei 3:18), that is, who delve into it and make a sincere effort to understand its truth.

It's a standoff, just like it was back in Egypt. The science side is stubborn and holds fast to its non-God approach because it needs God to not exist to keep it alive. Inject God into the picture and it undermines the work of many scientists and their genius. It's not easy being bright and finding out that you were wrong about the truth, or only partially right. Just ask Yosef's brothers, who went completely speechless when he revealed himself to them.

The Yes-God side is stubborn because it knows the truth. Some religions have evolved over time, but not Torah Judaism. It started with the big picture and has struggled to maintain it, not build one after the fact. Its righteous adherents have literally seen the light, the "Hidden Light" of Creation because they have merited to do so. It has only further "confirmed" that which was already confirmed.

The problem is, though this something you can talk about with a non-believer, it is not something you can share with him. Until a person is willing to open himself up to God's truth he will remain on the other side of the looking glass, from a side that is blurry at best. Then he will "merit" to be a stumbling block for himself and others, because God works measure-for-measure, allowing a person to hang himself with the noose he himself ties.

Of course, the disbeliever thinks that the believer is bluffing, delusional, or both. Thinking that knowledge and wisdom are the same thing, he assumes that people less intelligent than himself cannot possibly know more than him about life. He is convinced that their difference of opinion is the result of ignorance, not intelligence. They refuse to consider otherwise.

It was true in Yosef's time.

It was true in Moshe's time.

It was true in the time of the Chashmonaim.

It will be true in Moshiach's time as well.

Each time, we were unable to convince the "other side" of its error in thinking. Each time, we could not win the debate because the other side was not in a position intellectually, and certainly not spiritually, to hear what they were missing. Each time, it remained a stand-off.

That is, until God Himself stepped in. Once He did, then the truth became clear to everyone, albeit too late. Yosef's brothers suffered extreme humiliation and were never the same again. Pharaoh lost everything by the time the Jewish people finally went free. The Greeks were defeated and were soon replaced by the Romans.

As for our generation, we are still waiting for the debate to end. We are still waiting for an end to the stand-off between the believers and disbelievers. We're not going to do it on our own, that's for sure. Only God, through some incredible revelation, can finally show the world the other dimension they have discounted until now.

What will it be?

When will it happen?

More importantly, when such a Divine revelation finally does occur, will it be the last one the non-believers will be able to see? If the past is a sign of what will come, it would be wise for them to open their minds and hearts, at least for a moment, just to examine what it is they do not believe in. Then, perhaps, they will merit to walk the path that has a future.

תורה קדושה
מאור ישראל

Following previous successes in various Shuls
we are pleased to inform the public of a

Free External Tefillin Examination

taking place in the Shiur rooms of
Ohr Yerushalayim, 470 Bury New Road

On Sunday 27th & Monday 28th December
from 8.00am to 10.00am

Shacharis
Sunday 7.15 / 8.20am, Monday 7.10am / 8.10am

By **Moshe Rosenberg** ד"ר
Certified Sofer and Batim Expert

Commonly Found Problems:
Rounded Corners
Nicks
Warped Base
Stretched Retzuos
Fresh Painting Needed
& much more

Don't miss this unique opportunity to assure
yourself that your Tefillin are 100% כשר
as opposed to 99% כשר which is 100% מסול!

Tefillin Check