



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

ח כ"א כסלו תשע"ח - 9th December 2017 - Volume 10 - Issue 20

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Moishy Weiss on the birth of a son. Mazel Tov also to grandparents, Mr & Mrs Adam Bookman. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 69 Upper Park Road.

Mazel Tov to Dr & Mrs David Wolfson on the birth of a grandson, born to Mr & Mrs Dovid Benveniste.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs David Issler on the birth of a great granddaughter, born to Mr & Mrs Moshe Grynhaus.

### No Shiur This Shabbos

As the Rov is away this Shabbos, there will be no Shiur before the second Mincha.

### Save The Date

The Shul will be holding a Chanuka family fun day next Sunday (17th December). See the back page for further details.

### Reminder

A reminder to all those who took on Mishnayos to learn לעלוי נשמת Bernard Morris ז"ל to finish them by next Shabbos. The Siyum will take place א"ה at Shalosh Seudas.

## Oh Baby!

**Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)**

Baby. In the sixties it was a term of poetic affection meted to any living organism that a particular party was interested in. In the school yard, its chant — and a directive to stick its head in a sauce usually reserved for a roast — is a verbal taunt usually invoked by one of two immature sparring partners.

But when the Torah refers to someone as a child or a na'ar it is taken very seriously. Often it raises a flag. It is reason to analyze and deduce. The word na'ar is often translated a child. It is hardly used for an infant and rarely for a mature adolescent. But when applied in those circumstances, the commentaries note its usage, and they comment.

In fact, when infant Moshe is found in a reed basket floating on the Nile, the Torah tells us that the daughter of Pharaoh heard a na'ar crying. (Exodus 2:6). Rashi comments on the apparent anomaly. After all the word na'ar is not used for an infant. He explains by quoting Midrashic sources that Moshe had a voice like a mature lad.

This week, the term na'ar is also used, and on the surface it is not complimentary. "Yoseph was 17-years-old and was a shepherd with his brothers by the flock, but he was a na'ar with the children of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives." Again the expression na'ar raises a flag. The Medrash obviously feels that that term should be reserved for children younger than teens. And so the Medrash asks, is it fitting to label a 17-year-old a Na'ar? It teaches us that at that age Yoseph acted immaturely; dressing his hair and adorning his eyes to look handsome.

(Ramban feels that the term na'ar would apply, as he was youngest of all the brothers except for Benjamin, a mere child at the time.)

The Sfias Emes asks a powerful question. If the term na'ar is out of place for anyone even approaching his late teens then an earlier verse surely needs clarification.

In Parshas Vayeira Avraham travels for three days together with his sons Yitzchak and Yishmael, and his servant Eliezer, pursuing Hashem's command to bring his son as an offering on Mount Moriah. As he finally sees the mountain, he knows it is time to conclude the journey alone with only Yitzchak. So Avraham tells Yishmael and Eliezer, "remain here with the donkey, and I and the na'ar will go yonder." (Genesis 22:5).

Yitzchak was 37-years old at the time, yet not one commentator is troubled that his father calls him a baby! Why?

A man once approached my grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, of blessed memory, quite distraught.

"I know this may not sound like a major problem," he began, "but my 17-year-old daughter is very upset with me. It has come to a point that she hardly talks to me. It began a few nights ago. My wife and I were with a number of old friends at a wedding when my daughter walked by. I introduced her to them by saying, 'This is my baby.'

"I could see that at the moment she became very upset. Moments later she pulled me to aside and was crying. 'You still think I'm a baby!' she sobbed. 'I am almost eighteen already, and all you do is call me your baby! Won't I ever be a grown-up in your eyes?' Ever since then she doesn't want to talk to me."

The man shrugged as he pleaded with the sage. "I really don't want to make this into a major issue, but I'm not sure how to resolve this. Perhaps the Rosh Yeshiva can guide me."

Reb Yaakov put his hand on the man's shoulder. "You live in Flatbush, don't you?"

At the time Reb Yaakov was staying at his youngest son, Reb Avraham's home, and he invited the man to visit him there together with his daughter. He assured him that he would not discuss the incident but was confident that by the time the visit was over the matter would be resolved."

## The Week Ahead

### שבת פרשת וישב

Candle Lighting	3.35pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.40pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.06am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	3.28pm
Shalosh Seudas	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	4.48pm
Ovos uBonim	5.48pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Wed / Thurs / Fri חנוכה	6.35am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.35pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

The next day the man and his daughter visited Reb Yaakov at Reb Avraham's home. Reb Yaakov invited the man and his daughter into the dining room where they discussed a variety of issues from school work to life in pre-war Europe everything but the incident at the wedding.

About 10 minutes into the conversation, my uncle, Reb Avraham, came down the stairs. Reb Yaakov looked over to him and invited him to join the conversation. But first he introduced Reb Avraham to his guests.

"This is my baby!" exclaimed the revered sage as he gave a warm hug to his 55-year-old son.

Needless to say, the impact on the 17-year-old girl changed her perspective on her father's comments. Fifteen minutes later they left the house with a renewed and invigorated relationship!

The Sfes Emes answers his question very simply. When the Torah in a narrative describes someone as a na'ar it is a flag for concern. It needs explanation, whether complimentary or otherwise. But when a father calls a child his na'ar there is no need to explain. It is simple and more than acceptable. And Hashem Himself refers to his children that way. "When Israel was a na'ar and I loved him, and since Egypt I have called him my child" (Hosea 10).

## Freeing the Spirit

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Divine providence seems to work in strange ways, especially for Joseph languishing in an Egyptian prison. Unjustly accused of making advances to Potiphar's wife, Joseph has been thrown into the dungeon and left there to rot. But destiny requires that he be released and elevated to high office in the royal palace, and to effect this important result, divine providence contrives a very outlandish set of circumstances.

As we read in this week's Torah portion, ten years after his incarceration Joseph meets up with two discredited palace functionaries, the royal cupbearer and the royal baker. One morning, he finds them despondent. He questions them and discovers that they both had disturbing dreams the previous night. He offers astute interpretations of their dreams, and the sequence of events bears out his predictions. Two years later, when Pharaoh has his own puzzling dreams, the cupbearer remembers Joseph's interpretive skills and recommends him to Pharaoh. Joseph is brought to the palace, where his brilliant interpretations and wisdom win him high office, and the rest is history.

This story certainly makes for high drama, but why were all these farfetched developments necessary? Why didn't divine providence manifest itself in a simpler way? Couldn't Joseph's release and rise to power have been effected through more commonplace events?

The commentators explain that Joseph's release from prison is meant to serve as a paradigm of the ultimate in human emancipation. The vicissitudes of life can cause a person to experience confinement of many sorts, not only physical incarceration but also psychological and emotional bondage of the spirit, which can often be far more painful. How is a person to extricate himself from these situations? How can he escape the isolation sometimes imposed by his conditions?

The answer is to focus on the needs of others. As long as a person is absorbed in his own miserable condition, he cannot help but wallow in self-pity to some degree and to walk on the edge of despair. Once he shifts his focus to others, however, his presence in confinement is no longer purposeless and negative. On the contrary, his is a positive presence bringing relief to others and fulfillment to himself. By freeing the spirit, he will in effect have emancipated himself from the shackles of his condition.

Joseph personified this approach. Unjustly accused and imprisoned, he did not withdraw into himself to bemoan his awful fate. Instead, he immediately became the heart and soul of the prison, always there to help a stricken inmate. In this sense, he effected his own emancipation even as he still remained confined within the prison walls. And to drive home the point, Hashem contrived that his

actual physical release should also be the result of the kindness he performed for others.

A prisoner was thrown into a cell with a large number of other prisoners. The walls of the prison were thick and damp, and high up on one side, far above the heads of even the tallest prisoners, was a tiny, heavily barred window that looked out over a barren piece of land. Every day, the new prisoner would drag his bed to the wall under the window. Then he would climb onto the bed, stand on his tiptoes and, stretching, was just able to rest his chin on the stone windowsill. The other prisoners gathered in groups to talk or play games, but the new prisoner never participated. He just stood there all day, staring out the window.

"What do you see out there?" a prisoner asked him.

"Nothing," he replied.

"Then why do you stand there all day?"

"As long as I look out at the world outside," the new prisoner replied, "I still feel a little connection with it. I still have a little bit of my freedom. But once I turn away from this window and look only at the cell and my cellmates, all my freedom will be gone. Once I surrender to my situation, I will truly be imprisoned."

In our own lives, we are often pummeled by the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Assailed by financial difficulties, family and childrearing problems, pressure in the workplace and all sorts of other strains and stresses, we can easily find ourselves becoming gloomy and depressed.

So what can we do? How can we regain the equilibrium and morale we need to deal with our problems constructively? By throwing ourselves into helping families less fortunate than ourselves or an important community project. For one thing, focusing on others immediately relieves the distress of our own situations. But more important, it elevates us spiritually and allows us to view our troubles in the broader perspective of what has lasting value in the ultimate scheme of things and what does not.

**Ohr Yerushalayim invites you to a**

# Family Chanuka FUNDAY

**Sunday 17th December**  
**1.30-3.30pm**  
**followed by Mincha,**  
**Children's Speaker**  
**and Candle Lighting**

**CIRCUS SKILLS FOR ALL AGES**

**ARTS & CRAFTS FOOD**

**Suggested donation: £5 per child or £20 per family 4+**