



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

י"ד כסלו תשע"ח – וישלח – 2nd December 2017 - Volume 10 - Issue 19

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Adam Bookman on the occasion of Matti's Bar Mitzvah this week.

### Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush this week sponsored by Mrs Booth on the occasion of the recent birth of a grandson. - Mazel Tov!

### ותן טל ומטר

A reminder that we start saying ותן טל ומטר this Monday night at Maariv.

### Animal House

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Hutz 'n' plutz. That was a fictitious name my mother would give to a place where everything was bliss and very simple. It was the home of Chaim Yankel or whoever the mythical Jewish character of a given fable lived. But believe it or not, there was a place called Huts 'n' plutz. Of course, the 'n' plutz suffix was not added, nor was the place actually called Huts in the English language. It did however take the name in Hebrew. And it was called Sukkos. And a Sukkos are huts.

After Yaakov departed peacefully from his brother, he dwelled in a place for 18 months. When he arrived he built a quasi-infrastructure — homes for his kin and sukkos, huts, for his great herd. Then he named the city. He did not call it for the homes he built, rather for the myriad structures that he built for the animals — Sukkos, Huts.

Many commentaries are puzzled as to why Yaakov chose a name representing the temporal, animal structures as opposed to calling the city Houses or Batim, referring to the permanent dwellings he erected for his kin. After all, is it not more appropriate to name a village after the human abodes as opposed to the animal ones? Some answer that naming the city Sukkos was a symbolic expression of the paradox of all worldly permanence. Yaakov was saying that every abode, from glorious mansions to marble edifices, is only temporal. They are all Sukkos. Thus he named the town Sukkos.

My grandfather, Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky, of blessed memory, once offered a very practical approach. After Yaakov constructed homes for both his children and livestock, the dominant feature of the landscape was myriad huts scattered across the countryside. Gazing at the amazingly transformed dessert, he appropriately named the town after the scene. He called it Huts. But why tell us that? Who cares? Perhaps both questions can be answered as one.

In the northern part of Israel, Yeshiva K'far Chasidim had established itself as a prominent center of Torah scholarship. Students flocked to the Yeshiva to gain from the spiritual nourishment that the Mashgiach, Dean of Ethics, Reb Elya Lopian offered. But the Yeshiva attracted more than students seeking spiritual nourishment.

The basement in which the, pasta, flour and other dry goods were stored also attracted those seeking nourishment. It had become infested with rodents! The students decided on a simple solution to their problem of diminishing food supply and the health hazard.

They scoured the rubbish piles of the city and brought a stray cat back to the campus. Every day it would play in the yard and each evening they would bring back to the basement where it would earn its keep, receiving room and board simultaneously. Within a few weeks there

was not a rodent to be found. But the cat remained. The boys lapsed in their commitment to its welfare and even forgot to feed it.

One evening it scratched on the screen door of the aged Mashgiach HaGaon Reb Elya Lopian's home. He was puzzled. Not informed about the extermination stratagem of the student body, he wondered where the cat came from. One of the younger students explained the problems of the mice and their ingenious solution. With that, the boy explained the presence of the cat that had made its way to the sage's home.

"Are there still mice?" asked Reb Elya. "No," exclaimed the student, "there hasn't been a rodent in days!" Then he smiled while looking down at the cat and added, "thanks to this fellow." "And since there are no mice, what has he been eating?" The boy just shrugged. He simply did not know. "Ahh," sighed the sage. "You have been lax in your responsibility and gratitude. I will show you how to feed a cat." With that, Reb Elya, a man in his eighties, went into his kitchen, poured milk into a saucer and placed it down for the hungry feline.

At that moment a young student named Kavinsky captured the moment on film. The picture of the white-bearded Torah giant bending down and feeding a cat remains one of the most popular pictures among thousands of youngsters in America and Israel.

It has become Reb Elya's proud testament that even G-d's simplest creatures must be cared for, even by a sage in Israel.

Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai, a Sefardic sage who lived in the latter part of the 18th century, better known as the Chida, offers a brilliant and revolutionary explanation to the peculiar name Sukkos.

The Chida explains that Yaakov Avinu did something unprecedented for that era. Realizing that he would be spending a year and a half in unsheltered terrain, he built a sanctuary of protection for animals!

Others would have left them in the cold, caring selfishly for only their own welfare and that of their kin. Yaakov was proud of building huts for the animals and he expressed that pride in naming the entire city, not after the act that any husband and father would do for his family. He did not enshrine the town after his labor of love that would be

## The Week Ahead

### שבת פרשת וישלח

Candle Lighting	3.38pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.43pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.01am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
Rov's Shiur חנוכה הלכות	3.00pm
2nd Mincha	3.30pm
Shalosh Seudas	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	4.50pm
Ovos uBonim	5.50pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.35pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

personally enjoyed by members of his family. He did not call the village Levittown or Jacobsville. He called it after the labor of love sweated for his temporal flock. He gave a name to tell the world that he not only cared for his flesh and blood. He named the town in honor of what he had done for the beings who had no one else to depend upon. He declared the compassion one must accord to the simplest beings, even a cat.

### **On A Wing and A Prayer** **Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)**

“And he said ‘Let me go, for dawn has broken’...” (32:27)

The Torah records the climactic confrontation between Yaakov and the angel of Eisav. Wrestling with Yaakov until dawn, the angel finally concedes to Yaakov's superiority. The angel requests that Yaakov release him “for dawn has broken”.<sup>1</sup> Citing the Talmud, Rashi explains that the angel relates to Yaakov that it is his day to sing Hashem's praises as part of the heavenly chorus.<sup>2</sup> The Maharsha cites another passage in the Talmud which appears to contradict Rashi's comments. The Talmud states that angels only recite their praises to Hashem at night, deferring to Bnei Yisroel who praise Hashem by day through prayer. Therefore, asks the Maharsha, how could the angel tell Yaakov that it is his day to sing praises to Hashem if angels only sing at night?<sup>3</sup>

Since Bnei Yisroel are Hashem's primary representatives, the chariot for His “Shechina” – “Divine presence”, their daily prayer takes precedence over the songs of the angels. Prior to the existence of “Yisroel”, the angels served as the chariot for the Shechina, and as such, praised Hashem during the day. Yaakov's wrestling the angel into submission marks the onset of his transformation from Yaakov to Yisroel and the supplanting of the angels as Hashem's primary representatives with Bnei Yisroel. The angel concedes this exchange of power when he informs Yaakov that he will be called “Yisroel” for he has “striven with the Divine (i.e. an angel) and with man, and overcome”.<sup>4</sup> When Hashem actually confers upon Yaakov the appellation “Yisroel”, the verse states “vaya'al alav Elokim” – “Hashem ascended from upon him”.<sup>5</sup> The Midrash comments that this verse is the basis for the expression “The patriarchs are the chariots for the Shechina”, for they bear His glory, and through them Hashem displays His sovereignty.<sup>6</sup> It is at this juncture that Hashem calls Yaakov “El” – “Divine being”, for the entity of Klal Yisroel is finally actualized and his new position in creation is realized.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, there is no contradiction between the two Talmudic statements. Prior to Yaakov's transformation, the angels sang their praises during the day, as is reflected by the request of the angel of Eisav. After the transformation they were delegated to recite praises only at night.

### **An Accomplice to Evil** **Rabbi Ben Tzion Shafier (Torah.org)**

“The sons of Yaakov came upon the corpses of the city that had defiled their sister.” Bereishis 34:27

Shechem, the son of Chamor, set his sights on Dina. He carefully laid a trap to entice her out of her tent, and then kidnapped and defiled her. When Yaakov and his sons heard what had been done, “they were extremely distressed . . . [and said] “So shall not be done!”

Shechem became infatuated with Dina, and came to ask for her hand in marriage. “Name your price and I will pay it,” he said to Yaakov. The brothers of Dina answered Shechem, “To marry into our family, a person must have a Bris Milah.” Shechem and Chamor agreed, and they convinced the people of their town to be circumcised as well. On the third day of their Milah, Reuvin and Shimon took up their swords and killed out every male in the city.

After they were finished, the posuk says, “the sons of Yaakov came upon the corpses of the city that had defiled their sister.” The Siforno is bothered by the expression “the city that defiled their sister.” After all, it was Shechem alone who committed the act, not the city.

The Siforno answers by explaining that in that society, forcibly taking a woman was not considered abhorrent. If it had not been socially acceptable, Shechem never would have done it. Therefore, it is considered as if they were all participants.

The problem is that the Siforno doesn't seem to have answered his question. Granted the entire town may have been responsible for creating the social atmosphere that accepted such conduct, but all they did was to give Shechem the opportunity to act as he wished. They didn't join him in the act. They didn't aid him. They didn't tempt

him to do it. The most we can blame them for is giving the opportunity to Shechem to do as he chose. If so, how can the posuk say the city defiled Dina? A cog in the wheel of a killing machine

On April 14, 1944, the deportation of Hungarian Jewry began. Within 56 days, almost 500,000 men, women, and children were transported to Auschwitz for their final solution. Imagine that you were a German train switch operator at a station near Auschwitz. You came of age at a time when Hitler had been long accepted as the Fuehrer. From your youth, you were indoctrinated with the belief that the fatherland was the glory of all true Germans, and that Hitler alone was the savior of the new Germany.

It would be hard for you to deny your knowledge of where this human cargo was headed, as the air hung heavy with the smell of burning flesh. But you never killed anyone. In fact, you may not even have completely bought into the racial theory thing. Your job was just to keep those trains rolling. So you aren't guilty of murder. Are you?

At the Nuremberg Trials, the Nazis defended themselves with the mantra, “We were only following orders.” Each participant denied his guilt by claiming he was just a cog in the wheel – not a murderer himself, not a decision-maker – just a lackey. Yet, even the secular world didn't accept this because being a cog in the wheel of a killing machine makes you a part of a machine that kills. As such, you are a killer.

The Siforno is teaching us that even if a person is not an active participant in an act, he can be considered responsible for its happening. In a normal society, basic human rights are a given. If the society has failed to keep safeguards in place, then that society has failed in its most basic responsibilities. Every member of that group is therefore held accountable for that failure.

In the case of Dina, the townspeople made it possible for Shechem to do what he did. Without their easing the standards, it never would have happened. Once they lowered the accepted behavior, they paved the way for him, so they are held responsible for what he did.

A perspective on Mumbai. This concept is especially relevant in our times when the murder of innocent people has become an accepted manner of protesting for one's political rights. Inflicting terror on men, women, and children is almost part of the political process – because it advances my cause.

And who is to blame? Certainly in a society that fosters such beliefs, every member of the society is guilty. When a mass murderer has succeeded in his wanton killing, and his hometown comes out en masse to celebrate, that town is a participant in the murder. If a culture encourages the brutal torture of civilians by teaching it as an expression of religion and a “beautiful thing,” then every member of that group shares responsibility for the outcome. If the National Palestinian Authority TV programming regularly shows messages of hatred that promote murder and self-mutilation, then the TV anchors, the actors, the scriptwriters, the camera men, and all of the support staff are part of the crime. However, the guilt doesn't end there. Let CNN be the Judge. The first and primary role of government is the protection of its people. That is self-evident – unless the population is Jewish. In that case, self-preservation isn't a given, it is deemed amoral.

While it is unclear who empowered the media to be the judge and jury on issues of morality, judge they do. Their bias is clear in every report of the so-called peace process and “liberation” attempts.

Every CNN reporter who through his perverse version of social consciousness excuses away murder as a justified expression of “Arab anger and humiliation” becomes a willing accomplice with acts of terror. By creating a world order that condones the killing of Jews, they become accomplices to the very acts they are reporting. While they haven't pulled the pin on 20 kilos of explosives, their words have created the social climate that encourages this, and as such, they are guilty.

Every media outlet whose bias and prejudices condemn Israel for defending itself makes it more acceptable for global terrorism to go on unchecked, allowing and encouraging more of the same.

The events that we are suffering through, and the clear obstruction of truth that enables them, are but one last stage of our long and bitter exile. May HASHEM speedily redeem us.