



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel tov to the Rov and Rebbezen on birth of a grandson born to Mr & Mrs Yaakov Royde in Manchester.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Motti Gershon and Mr & Mrs Leo Stern on the forthcoming wedding this week of Chaim to Esther. The Aufruf takes place this Shabbos and the Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in Beis Menachem Hall.

Ovos uBonim Melava Malka

The Ovos uBonim annual Melava Malka takes place this Motzei Shabbos in the Beis HaMedrash at 7.45pm.

Shtenders

We are pleased to confirm that the new shtenders have arrived. Those who ordered should have received a text confirming so. The subsidised cost is £100 on the condition that they are only for use in the Shul. There are spare if anyone who did not order would still like one. For details speak to Avi Stern 07813 326 423.

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Spiritual Growth

Jeff Horwich

When Moshe Rabbeinu erected the Mishkan he first put up the curtains and then the support beams. The Sforno offers two possible explanations for this apparent disorder: - either the people held the curtains until the supports were in place or a miracle occurred which held the curtains until the supports were ready.

The Shem MiShmuel questions why was it necessary to throw in this additional complication to the building process or even to rely on a miracle?

He answers that although Hashem was about to dwell amongst the Bnei Yisroel, this was not because they had reached a spiritual level to deserve it. Moshe was afraid that the Bnei Yisroel would become spiritually complacent and would assume that they were already deserving of Hashem's presence and would therefore not endeavour to grow spiritually.

Just as the Shechinah was to arrive before the Bnei Yisroel were ready, so too the curtains arrived "early". This way Moshe hoped that the Bnei Yisroel would not think that they already achieved the ultimate spiritual level but instead would recognize the need for continual growth.

The sedra mentions that Moshe Rabbeinu placed the second set of luchos in the aron- but what happened to the first set?

Although there are different opinions as to where they were stored, the consensus appears to be that they were never discarded.

Why was it necessary to keep this broken artefact which would serve as a reminder to the shameful incident of the golden calf?

Rav Dessler pursues the matter further in Michtav Me'Eliyahu. The Bnei Yisroel were on a much higher spiritual level at the giving of the first luchos than at the second giving - it was a level that would not be achieved again. Why - asks Rav Dessler - do Chazal teach us so many

lessons based on pesukim relating to the first set of luchos?

He explains that the reason that the first luchos were preserved was precisely because they related to a time of higher spirituality. Even though such lofty heights are not attainable nevertheless they represent a goal to strive towards.

This week's parsha concludes the activities relating to the construction of the Mishkan. Rav Avigdor Miller made an interesting insight. Over the past four sedras, we have been dealing with the construction of the Mishkan, the spiritual centre of the Jewish people, in minute detail yet the creation of the universe takes up only 25 verses.

The creation of the entire universe from the largest galaxy, to the smallest quark is covered in a few hundred words whereas The Mishkan - a mere portable building, takes up four sedras

The Mishkan was the epicenter of spirituality within the Jewish encampment. This was later transferred to the more permanent Beis Hamikdash. In the Mishkan one was able to elevate himself spiritually. Although a simple building it was full of holiness. The Torah says: "They shall make a Mikdash (Mishkan) for Me, so that I may dwell amongst them" (Shemos 25:8) . It doesn't say, "so that I may dwell within it (the Mishkan)", it says, "so that I may dwell amongst them (the people)". The entire point of the Mishkan was to bring us closer to Hashem.

This helps us to understand the the different emphasis between the description of the Mishkan and relating the creation of the universe. The importance of forming a spiritual connection is far more important to Hashem than the whole universe itself.

Many people think, "Who am I that what I do matters to Hashem - I am just a tiny speck in the whole universe?" So we are shown clearly that we are important - our actions and development as Jews are of the utmost concern of Hashem. Every action that we do to improve ourselves is "giving Hashem joy".

The Week Ahead

פרשת פקודי	מברכין אדר ב', פ' שקלים
Candle Lighting	5.29pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	5.34pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.39am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur	4.45pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	5.15pm
Motzei Shabbos	6.35pm
Ovos uBonim Melava Malka	7.45pm
Sunday ראש חודש	7.00am / 8.00am
Monday ראש חודש	6.30am / 7.00am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Mincha & Maariv all week	5.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	5.47pm (Shabbos 5.42pm)

The analogy of the downward moving escalator and spiritual growth is often told. We can not expect to stand still and go upwards – it is only through setting higher standards, resolving to move upwards and applying determined effort that we are able to achieve spiritual improvement...

Heavenly Whisperings

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Purim is one of the most joyous festivals in the calendar and is celebrated with an overflow of buoyant spirits and loving affinity with fellow Jews. The history behind the festival has timeless lessons that are as relevant today as they were for our people in the times of Megillas Esther.

At the end of a seventy-year exile period in Babylon, the Jewish people expected to be redeemed, in line with a well-known prophecy passed down the generations after the Destruction of the Holy Temple. When the seventy-year mark passed and they remained in exile, gloom and feelings of having been rejected by G-d began to eat away at the Jewish soul. As the events of the Purim story unfolded, with Haman's ascent to power and his vicious plot to annihilate the Jews, the situation seemed more and more hopeless. In the depths of their despair, Mordechai and Queen Esther emerged as Hashem's tools of salvation. The Babylonian exile and the nation's trials and tribulations were then acknowledged as purposeful and meaningful. The entire nation re-embraced Torah and mitzvos with renewed faith and devotion.

The Purim message is meant to uplift and fortify us not only on Purim but day in and day out, as we encounter the full gamut of life's challenges. At the conclusion of this week's Torah portion, the last in the book of Shemos, there is another important message that can assist us as we encounter the many bumps in our life journey that test our faith and endurance.

The Torah tells us that the Jewish people were accompanied in their desert travels by a miraculous pillar of cloud during the day. At nighttime they were led by a pillar of fire that never left the camp. What insight can we glean from this miraculous phenomenon? What was the significance of these two symbols of G-d's presence that never once deserted the people during the 40-year odyssey across the wilderness, until they entered the Promised Land?

I believe that the Torah is imparting to us a very important message. The first test recorded in the Torah that was given to Avrohom Avinu was Hashem's command to 'leave your land, your birthplace, and your parental home to the land that I will show you.' Hashem shrouded Avraham's destination in obscurity. The commentaries explain that this obscurity was an essential part of his challenge.

As we move along the road of life, we often feel unsure of our ultimate destination. Each stage of our lives is fraught with worry. Will we find our bashert? Will we be blessed with children? Will we be able to raise them properly? Will we be able to provide for our families? Will we marry off our children? Will we succeed in our career goals? The list goes on and on.

Even when things seem to be as clear as day, our goals often seem to be shifting. When we finally conquer the peak and momentarily enjoy the plateau, there invariably looms another peak up ahead whose summit is in the clouds.

The pillar of cloud that led the Jewish people throughout the wilderness at each stage of their journey symbolizes the ever-shifting end point that tends to elude us as we make our way through life's vicissitudes. Just as the Jewish people continued traveling into a cloud and the cloud itself kept moving forward, so in life we need to stay on course and keep moving forward, even if our ultimate destination appears blurred or elusive.

At times we are beset with a mist of darkness and long for sunlight. We sometimes feel a clammy feeling welling within us, urging us to abandon our spiritual struggles. We are unmotivated. We feel overwhelmed and paralyzed. Life's challenges seem overwhelming.

At times like these we need to allow ourselves to be led by the "pillar of fire," our internal spiritual compass that will lead us in the right direction. We follow our instincts—not our emotional, impulsive instincts, but the voice of conscience and the whispering of our soul. This thought is embodied in the pillar of fire that led the Jewish people at night through

their sojourn in the wilderness.

I fondly treasure memories of the close relationship I merited to have with the great Reb Sholom Noach Berzovsky, the Nesivas Sholom of blessed memory. He was a giant of spirit, always bursting with an optimistic and positive approach to life although he was extremely frail, thin and of a physically diminutive stature. I once asked him, "Rebbe you are so weak and you suffer physical ailments. How do you always seem to display such strength and youthful vigor?"

I recall the smile that broke out on his face as he told me, "Naftali, I always feel that I am simply a sack of bones with a neshama that is moving me along. I long gave up on relying on my body to propel me forward in life."

The pillar of fire, our neshamos, that connects us to our heavenly source can also serve as our spiritual guide as we move into life's uncharted waters, urging us to press on and not to surrender to fear. Knowing Hashem is with us, illuminating the darkness and lighting the way forward, infuses us with strength.

The more we internalize the message of the pillar of cloud and fire, the more it will fortify us with reassurance and confidence in our life's path, ensuring that we realize its ultimate, blissful destination.

He Did It

Rabbi Raymond Beyda (Torah.org)

"As Hashem commanded Moshe" Shemot 39:43

Motive and agenda lie behind all activities that a person performs. One buys and sells, gives and takes, goes and comes for reasons very often not known to the person them self. A person may attest to a very selfless purpose while actually working towards a selfish goal. Training oneself to be other oriented is part of the maturing process of life.

In our Parashah the Torah states that Moshe did as commanded by Hashem. This phrase is repeated with each of the many varied tasks necessary for the construction of the Tabernacle, tailoring of the garments for the Kohanim and the performance of the service of offerings in the new House of G-d. It could have been mentioned once and we would understand the loyalty of our leader to the commands of Hashem. Our Sages learn different lessons from every extra letter of our holy book and this repetitious phrase is no exception.

Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman hy'd, who was killed by the Nazis in WWII, would say: "What is the difference between previous generations and our generation? In our times a person cannot speak about anything he does without injecting a hint of ego into the conversation. In earlier periods it was quite different. When a person spoke about oneself the listener had difficulty discerning about whom the person was talking and did not sense that he was praising himself. In the parashah the Torah says "And Moshe did ... as Hashem commanded Moshe". Why doesn't it say, "As Hashem commanded him"? Answered Rav Elchonon "It is as if Moshe was standing on the side describing the virtues and good deeds of another person - not himself." It was, he explained, "as if G-d was using a certain Jew named Moshe to accomplish His holy mission. It was as if Moshe himself had no subjective gain in the matter."

It was said about Rav Elchonon that he did not ever take credit or brag about his accomplishments in Torah and good deeds. His attitude was that a person is a soldier in the army of Hashem and must do his job faithfully without any self interest at all. One must remove oneself from the picture as if there was another filling the role for which he was chosen.

One time he visited the home of the Mashgiah who was very ill. The Mashgiah's wife commented to Rav Elchonon that the Mashgiah kept saying that the young men of the institution of learning were doing "too much" on his behalf.

"For himself he can say they may not serve him", retorted Rav Elchonon, but for THEIR MASHGIAH the boys must work and serve and do all that they can to bring him back to good health. Even the Mashgiah must be concerned that the Mashgiah get well. After all - the Yeshivah does need a Mashgiah."

Learning to work l'shem shamayim – for the sake of Heaven – requires one to learn to remove self-interest from one's primary motivations. One must learn to speak about one's accomplishments as if another did them. It is not matter of I did it but one of I was chosen to do it.