



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ט ניסן תשע"ה – פרשת שמיו – 18th April 2015 - Volume 7 - Issue 40

## T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Charles Bursk on the recent birth and Bris of their son, Shalom Yitzchok.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Yehuda Issler on the birth of a son.

### חיים ארוכים

We wish **חיים ארוכים** to Mrs Rachel Stern on the Petirah of her mother, Rebbetzen Herman.

### Annual Mishnayos Siyum

There are still plenty of Mishnayos available for the annual Siyum which takes place after Shavuot. Please put your name against the Mishnayos you intend to learn on the list on the notice wall.

## T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### Theory of Relativity

Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann (Torah.org)

At the end of the previous Sidrah (Tzav - seems a while ago, doesn't it) Aaron and his sons were instructed to remain at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting for seven days while Moshe performed the inauguration service for the Tabernacle. At the beginning of this week's Sidrah the inauguration period comes to its climax: Aaron and his sons are anointed as Kohanim - from this point onward only Kohanim are eligible to serve in the Mishkan. However, just when the joy of the inauguration ritual reached its peak, tragedy struck. Aaron's two oldest sons, Nadav and Avihu, brought an unauthorized fire before Hashem and lost their lives as a result.

"A fire went forth from before Hashem and consumed them, and they died before Hashem." (10,2)

Aaron must have been crushed. He had reached the pinnacle of his life - the day he was anointed as Kohen Gadol, High Priest - and all seemed to be going so well. Then his whole world came crashing in. Moments after the completion of the inauguration service, his two oldest sons lay dead upon the floor of the Holy of Holies.

How would we react to such a tragedy?

How did Aaron react? "Va-yidom Aaron, And Aaron was still. (10:3)" He said nothing. He did not even open his mouth. Surely there was much to say: Why? How could this be? Where is the justice?... Va-yidom Aaron, Aaron was still.

Many mefarshim see this as proof of Aaron's unshakable faith in Hashem. By saying nothing, Aaron said everything: If this is what is meant to be - then so be it. Hashem controls the world, not me. How can I expect to understand my Creator - nothing I can say can add or detract from what has happened, so I will remain still.

Perhaps, also, Aaron's reaction can serve as an example of how to react when confronted with a situation one doesn't know how to handle. Sometimes something unexpected or unwanted happens: we are besieged by a sudden rage or confusion - we are temporarily disoriented. In the spur of such a moment, we open our mouths and say things we may later regret. Sure, we will later excuse ourselves - after all, what we said was in the heat of the moment. But what was said was said; it can't be taken back. Maybe Aaron was bewildered. He was

confused and terrified. He didn't know how to react. So he didn't. When bad things happen, or even just inconveniences, it is important that we have a mechanism in place to control our reactions. Temper-tantrums and nervous fits are things we should all put behind ourselves. My son's rebbe (he is in Kitah Alef, 1st Grade) has a wonderful method of putting things in perspective. Say, for instance, that a child had wanted a certain chair. He didn't get it, and now he is throwing a temper-tantrum. On his blackboard, the rebbe has a scale with numbers from one to ten. He stops the child for a moment and asks him: "Let's say this scale represents bad things - number one is a very little bad thing, like if your mother forgot to send you a snack. Number ten is a very big bad thing, like if chas ve-shalom your house burned down and all your clothing and books and toys and everything was destroyed. (There are, of course, much worse things even than this, but we are talking about grade-one.) Now where, on this scale, do you think not getting the chair you wanted belongs? Is it an eight? (No, he concedes.) Is it a six? (No, it's probably not a six.)" And so on - you get the point.

What has the rebbe done? He has taken a situation which the child, overcome by his emotions, thought was terrible and horrible, and put it into perspective. Relatively speaking, it's really not so bad. Maybe, he realizes, it's not worth throwing a fit about.

I have tried this with my children at home. It's amazing how making them do this - to "grade" what they are upset about - can calm them and force them to reflect on how badly they are overreacting.

Now grown adults don't often fly into a rage over the colour of their chair, yet if we examine our lives we're sure to find situations where we could greatly benefit by putting things into perspective. Someone cuts you off while you're driving. The old lady is taking ages to count her pennies at the front of the bakery line on a Friday afternoon. Your wife/husband/friend etc. kept you waiting for fifteen minutes, or a half an hour. The cleaners lost your daughter's favourite dress. The caterer forgot to deliver the kishke for the kiddush you're making this Shabbos. Someone - everyone forgot your birthday. The list goes on and on. All

### The Week Ahead

פרשת שמיו	שבת מברכין אייר
1st Mincha / Candle Lighting	6.30pm / Not before 6.45pm
2nd Mincha / Candle Lighting	7.45pm / No later than 7.57pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.36am
1st Mincha	6.00pm
2nd Mincha	8.04pm
Rov's Shiur	following
Motzei Shabbos	9.09pm
Sunday Rosh Chodesh	7.00am / 8.00am
Monday Rosh Chodesh	6.30am / 7.00am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Thursday	6.45am / 7.10pm
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm

Of these things can and do get us upset. Yet if we take a moment to consider, on a global scale, where "one" is a very minor disturbance and "ten" is the absolute worst thing one could ever imagine, then where - honestly - do these things belong?

A friend of mine who owns a business told me that he once lost a long-time friend because the item which his friend had given in wasn't ready on time and couldn't be used for the simcha he was planning to make. Can you imagine? Aren't there worse things that can happen?

A woman was once going on-and-on about how difficult Pesach cleaning was. Then, suddenly, a family member fell very ill. Now, as she tried to juggle Pesach cleaning with going back-and-forth from the hospital, and with her emotions, just "plain" Pesach cleaning didn't really seem so hard at all.

Recently, someone got really upset with me for something I had done. It was not something that was terribly important. Before berating me, they said, "I know that this really isn't worth getting so upset about, but..." With these few words, they put things into perspective. I saw right away that they were able to cope with their anger, and not blow things out of proportion.

When we find ourselves losing control, we would be well-advised to remember the example of Aaron, and remain silent. By taking a moment to stop and reflect, and think about how much worse things could be, we can control our emotions and not say something we may regret later. Put things into perspective - and don't waste valuable energy and emotions on petty anger and nervousness. It doesn't take an Einstein to figure it out - it's all relative.

## Striking At the Heart of What the Jewish People are All About

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

In this week's portion we have the tragic event of the death of Aharon's two oldest sons. At the height of the joy of the dedication of the Tabernacle, Nadav and Avihu were consumed by a 'foreign fire' which came down from Hashem and killed them.

The Talmud tells us [Eruvin 63a] "Aharon's sons did not die until they issued a halachic ruling before Moshe their teacher". There are different interpretations among the Sages exactly what Nadav and Avihu did to warrant this terrible punishment. One of the opinions expressed in the Medrash and the Talmud was this teaching that they issued their own ruling in front of their teacher.

A student is not allowed, by Halacha, to issue a ruling in the presence of his teacher. One who does so is deserving of the death penalty. This is the interpretation given to the Biblical expression "they offered a foreign fire". The crime was not the offering of the sacrifice per say; the crime was that they took independent action without consulting with Moshe their teacher.

The Gemara in Eruvin further relates that R. Eliezer had a student who issued a halachic ruling in R. Eliezer's presence and R. Eliezer announced that this student would not live out the year -- which is exactly what happened.

If we think about this, it is very difficult to comprehend. What is so terrible about ruling on a halachic question in front of one's teacher? We understand that there is a matter of honoring a Rabbi (Kavod haRav) or of a Torah scholar. But that this should be a capital offense, is difficult to comprehend. Moreover, we also know the rule that a Rabbi has a right to "forgive his honor" (Rav she'machal al k'vodo, k'vodo machul). A teacher can say "You don't have to stand up for me". We would think that any time a student rules in front of his teacher, the teacher should forgive. Why was R. Eliezer not more compassionate? Why did he say with certitude that this student would die within the year?

Apparently, in these situations forgiving (mechila) doesn't help. The teacher does not have the ability to forgive. Why not?

The Mir Rosh Yeshiva, zt"l, explains that the sin of issuing a halachic ruling in one's teacher's presence is a much more basic sin that merely not showing this teacher the proper respect.

The Talmud relates in tractate Chagiga (14a) that the prophet Isaiah came to the Jewish people before the destruction of the Temple and he gave them 18 curses. He told them of the terrible things that would befall them. Included in these things was that "there would not be found in Israel one versed in Chumash or in Mishneh, in Talmud or in

שמונה עשרה – גבורות: רב להושיע

Great to save

When praising or, more accurately, describing an attribute of Hashem, one may not simply cast around for something that one feels appropriate and simply state that. It has to have a source within the Torah in order for it to be both valid and respectful, as we see in the Mishna in Berochos 33b, that saying "Hashem should have mercy on us in the same way He has mercy on the nest of a mother bird" is not a valid or respectful form of prayer.

In which case we need to ask, what is the source of the phrase רב להושיע?

In Yeshayah (Isaiah) 63 the prophet asks a question whose phraseology should be familiar to anyone who regularly sings the zemer: ברוך ה' יום יום: – חמוץ בגדים מבצרה? מי זה בא מאדום – זה הדור בלבשו? – זה הודור בצפנה ברב כחו? – this one in splendid clothes? - who moves [people around] with his massive strength?

The prophet provides Hashem's answer: אני מדבר בצדקה רב להושיע - I speak with righteousness, abundantly able to save.

This anthropomorphism is conveying a simple yet fundamentally crucial message to us. It concerns the end of days, when the saar (angelic lord) of Edom will be destroyed by Hashem Himself.

In the checks and balances that make up the justice system of Hashem, the saar of Edom should be destroyed on the basis of our merits and nothing else. However, due to our many sins and that of the preceding generations we can no longer expect anything from Hashem on the basis of our mitzvos.

With that in mind the prophet reassures us that Hashem will uphold His promise to His people and destroy their oppressor - רב להושיע - through His charity, described as אני מדבר בצדקה.

Aggadah; there would be no Judges and no Prophets and no one capable of sitting in a Yeshiva." But the ultimate curse he told them was that "... they shall behave haughtily, the youth against the elder and the base against the honorable." [Isaiah 3:5].

We can somehow live with ignorance and with the absence of Prophets, but when does Klal Yisroel descend to the deepest of pits? When do they hit rock bottom? When there is no honor given to elders. The reason for that is because the Medrash says that Israel is compared to a bird. Just as a bird cannot fly without wings, the Jewish people cannot exist without their elders. Elephants can exist without wings, cats can exist without wings, all animals can exist without wings -- except a bird.

The rest of the world can exist without their elders. For the Egyptians, the Romans, the French, the Americans, the Italians it is nice to have elders -- but it is not crucial to their very being. But the Jewish people is not a Jewish people without their elders. Just as a bird cannot exist without its wings, that which keeps Klal Yisroel afloat is its elders.

Therefore the curse of curses that Isaiah gave to the Jewish people before the Churban was that they will reach the stage that the young people will be disrespectful to the elders.

This said R. Chaim Shmulevitz is the terrible crime of issuing a ruling in front of one's teacher. When people issue opinions and comment on every aspect of life or Halacha without consulting their elders, they are doing a terrible injustice to all of us. They are stripping us of our Gedolim. That is the crime of Moreh Halacha lifnei Rabo, making a ruling in front of one's teacher. It is not an affront to the Rebbi per say, it is something that strikes at the heart of what the Jewish people are all about.

We are a nation of tradition. "Ask your father and he will tell you; your elders and they will say to you" [Devorim 32:7]. Without that tradition of consulting the elders, the Talmidei Chachomim, the older generation, we will not exist. Therefore when a student teaches the law in front of his teacher, he is stripping the Jewish people of something that is essential to their whole being. For this reason, there is no forgiving on the teacher's part of this terrible sin.

And for this reason the joy at the erection of the Tabernacle had to be dampened with the death of Aharon's two sons -- because this lesson had to be learnt. We are not a nation without our elders.