



Ohr Yerushalayim News

9th October 2013 - Volume 6 - Issue 17 – פרשת ויצא – ו' כסלו תשע"ד

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Levi Goldman on the birth of a son. The Sholom Zochor takes place at their home, 72 Albert Avenue.

Kiddush This Shabbos

Mr & Mrs Andrew Addleman invite the Kehilla to a Kiddush Hoda'ah this Shabbos to celebrate the first birthday of their son, Izzy.

Girl's Rosh Chodesh Group

Once again our girls Rosh Chodesh group for year 5 and up looks forward to another fun activity on Sunday from 2.00 to 3.30pm.

Get creative and bring along your cameras as we print out and make Chanukah presents with our special guest Mrs Ann Nissen. Guaranteed to be great fun. Cover charge £2.

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Caught Not Taught

Rabbi Chaim Dovid Green (Torah.org)

In this week's parsha the Torah talks about exposing our children to Torah, and Torah functions.. "And their children who don't know will hear, and learn to fear Hashem Your G-d _all of the days_ etc." Why does the Torah stress "all of the days"? Either the goal is to see to it that observance remains throughout one's generations, or it is a statement about the quality of our observance of Torah. That is to say that we can understand the words "all of the days" as expressing expectations to us specifically about how we perform commandments, as opposed to making sure observance remains in our families. Even so, we'll see that the two really go hand in hand.

The quality of observance which we are speaking of is consistency. Many commandments are meant to be performed daily. Nevertheless, many people have ebbs and flows. Sometimes we give it our best, and other times we backslide. Even though that might be very "human" - it is not the preferred way to be.

The Chofetz Chaim has a parable to illustrate this point. Reuven meets Shimon. "Greetings, Shimon. How are you?" Oh, Reuven, I don't wish it on you. I'm quite ill. "But Shimon, to look at you is to see a man who looks in the best of health." "Indeed, I feel well today, Reuven, but I'm suffering from a chronic fever. Today I may feel well, but I could wake up with a high fever tomorrow. I've been suffering with this for quite some time now. So you see, I really am a very sick man."

So it is with the way we run our lives. If we are not consistent in important matters, it is a reflection on our entire performance - even at the times we do work consistently. G-d wants our performance of His commandments to be done with consistent effort, enthusiasm, and forethought. If not, it is a statement about the entirety of our devotion to G-d and His commandments.

I believe there is another important point to emphasize here. The topic of the passage is conveying loyalty to G-d to children who were not in

the wilderness experiencing G-d's miracles and salvation. It's not something which can be done in one day with a good speech, or an inspiring seminar. It's a process. We convey it to our children daily. They see what we consider important. What do we do enthusiastically on a daily basis? Well, of course, we never forget to come to the dinner table. Many people would say that a day is not a day without watching one's favorite show, or "chatting" on the internet. This is what we are conveying to those who emulate us. The things we do every day "religiously" are the things which are most important to us. By examining what we think is really important, we may find that we would alter some things we often do. We might even place a new emphasis on some things we would like to do, especially knowing that generations may emulate our qualities.

Before Yom Kippur, it is customary to introspect. Let us ask ourselves if the example we set is one which we would be proud to see in the next generation. What should we continue doing? What should we eliminate? What is the approach to take to self-improve? "In order that they will hear and learn...all of the days."

Every Nanosecond

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

And he met "the place" and he slept there because the sun (suddenly) set, and he took from the stones of "the place" and he arranged them around his head, and he lay down to sleep in that place. (Breishis 28:11)

He arranged them around his head: In a circular shape because he was afraid of wild animals... (Rashi)

And he said to them, "The day is yet great, it's not time to gather in the flock, give them water to drink and go shepherd." (Breishis 29:7)

It would sure be amazing to meet someone like Yaakov Avinu! That would undoubtedly be the experience of a lifetime. What could be more exhilarating?! That's not a rhetorical question! He we have in Chumash chosen snippets, windows- into the actions and words that define the essence of Yaakov and the other Patriarchs as well. These

The Week Ahead

פרשת ויצא

Candle Lighting	4.08pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	4.13pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.37am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur	3.24pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	3.54pm
Motzei Shabbos	5.14pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	4.05pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	4.01pm (Shabbos 3.56pm)

words, these selective accounts are authored by none other than The Almighty. What an opportunity we have to gain a crystal clear composite picture of the greatest people that have ever walked on the planet.

Here we have just two incidents of many. One describes simply how Yaakov went to sleep for the first time in many-many years. The other narrates a confrontational episode with the citizens of the place that would become his new home. Both accounts are inviting us to take a closer look.

As incredible as it may sound, our sages tell us that Yaakov did not sleep for the fourteen years while he was busy studying Torah at the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever. After that time he left to follow through on the instructions of his parents to continue to Charan, and find a wife.

Not having slept for so many years can make a man pretty tired. Yaakov's head should have hit the proverbial pillow like a led balloon but we are treated to a few details that indicate that he had a competing concern. He first arranged a protective circle of stones to guard his head first. (Don't ask me how this works) If he was merely fearful of wild beasts, then why did he set them up around only around his head?

I believe the answer is that Yaakov's effort was to guard his mind and even while he slept. King Solomon had told us similarly, "From all the things you watch, protect your mind, because from it founts life". How much more so should someone guard his intellect, his thoughts with ultra-caution especially when awake!

Then we find Yaakov engaging the shepherds, he presumes, are taking a siesta at midday. He feels compelled to rebuke and remind them that the day is yet long and there is plenty of work to be done. The Mishne in Pirke Avos however states, "The day is short and the work is much..." How can Yaakov portray, "the day is yet great"?

I once heard the following brief explanation on that Mishne, "When is the day short? When the work is much!" When, then, is the day long, boring, and painfully protracted? When do we tend to push the clock in our minds? When one perceives that the work is little or already done. Alternately, given his work ethic, Yaakov may be speaking of the actual weightiness of the day. "The day is yet great!" In any case, he must have been pained by what he saw on display, to approach total strangers and tell them off in such a bold manner.

Yaakov Avinu couldn't stand to see time being wasted. Imagine people shoveling perfectly good food or hundred dollar bills into a furnace. It would be hard for us to witness this and sit still. The famous poem of the Ibn Ezra reads nicer in Hebrew rhyme but still makes perfect sense in translation: A man worries about the loss of his money (momav) but he doesn't worry about waste of his days (yomav). His money ultimately doesn't help (ozrim) and his days are not returning (chozrim)!

It's hard to make a whole garment out of these few threads of info about Yaakov our Father but we see an important pattern emerging. If he were alive today and visiting our lives, would he feel entirely comfortable with the time we spend on our computers or would he be repulsed by the enormous waste of time and alarmed about the profound moral dangers that are lurking there every nana second!

It's Good For You

Rabbi Moshe Peretz Gilden (Torah.org)

After twenty years of living in the household of his evil father-in-law, Lavan (Laban), Yaakov (Jacob) received Divine instructions to depart. In relaying these instructions to his wives, he added, "I have noticed your father's disposition is not toward me as in earlier days...Now you have known that it was with my might that I served your father, yet your father mocked me and changed my wage a hundred times..." (Beraishis/Genesis 35:5-7) After accepting a long list of their father's breaches of trust, they responded, "Have we then still a share and an inheritance in our father's house? Are we not considered by him as strangers?...So now, whatever G-d has said to you, do." (ibid. 11-13)

Why did Yaakov feel compelled to explain his feelings toward Lavan? Did it not suffice that G-d had directed them to leave? Similarly, Rachel and Leah seem to be willing to follow the Divine will only because they do not have much to lose; is that a precondition to listening to G-d's command?

Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian notes our forbearers' demonstration of true service of G-d. One who approaches His service with an attitude that

"for G-d's sake I must endure hardships" is mistaken. We are to appreciate that beyond the reward waiting for us in the Afterlife, there is benefit in this world in fulfilling G-d's charge. In fact, continues the Lev Eliyahu, these people who find the benefit in following G-d's will have a greater enjoyment of the pleasures of this world than do those who pursue pleasure for "pleasure's sake". Hedonism does not create a true sense of satisfaction.

The conversation of Yaakov with Rachel and Leah is straightforward. Accepting the word of G-d, the first reaction of each of them was to identify the direct benefit of following His command. Although the benefits were obvious, the Torah - which does not record so much as an extra letter - records all of the benefits to teach this essential lesson.

While we are not privy to prophecy through which we would receive personalized instruction, the Torah gives us mitzvos (Divine commands) as an opportunity to do His bidding. We are not doing G-d any favors by adhering to His will; quite the contrary, it is we who benefit in their fulfillment. Many times we appreciate the benefit. But even in those times we do not, we remember that a child, who cannot fathom all of the kindnesses performed for him by his parents, remains confident that all they do for him is with his best interests in mind. How much more confident can we be that the infinite, omnipotent, Creator of the Universe, Who gives us every moment's breath as a reflexive gift, would only present us with situations and actions that ultimately benefit us.

Maaser: Give Me a Tenth!

Rabbi Osher Chaim Levene (Torah.org)

The Mitzvah: There is a mitzvah of giving a tenth of one's produce as maaser, tithes to the Levite (Numbers 18:21-32).

On route to Lavan's house, Yaakov fell asleep on the Temple Mount. He dreamed of a ladder and experienced a prophecy where G-d promised to guard him. When he awoke from his sleep, he vowed that if G-d would provide for him, then he would apportion a tenth of his possessions as maaser in the service of G-d (Bereishis 28:22).

Yaakov was following in the footsteps of Avraham who tithed all the property of Sedom recaptured from the Four kings which he gave to Malki-Tzedek (Bereishis 14:20).

Maaser typically refers to the first tithing of the farmer's produce that was given to the Levi - consisting of a tenth part. Another application of these laws was maaser beheimah, "animal tithes" where the tenth animal was consecrated. The animals were gathered into a pen, with a narrow passage which only allowed one animal to leave at a time. The owner then marked every tenth animal that exited as consecrated as maaser and brought up to the Temple in Jerusalem. Additionally, there is also the time-honored activity of maaser kesafim, the tithing of one's money to charity.

That one-tenth of all produce was designated to the Levites was in recognition of their loyal dedication insofar as they fully devoting their lives in the sacred service of G-d. This tribe did not pursue any activity other than divine worship singing and operating in the Temple. To this end, they were not the beneficiaries for a separate tribal portion in the Holy Land. Instead, maaser was considered to be their heritage (See Bamidbar 18:23-24).

The specific designation of a "tenth" is not lost. Ten is the number best synonymous with holiness. Take, to give two examples, that ten male members are necessary to make-up a quorum, in whose presence the Kedusha prayer and the saying of Kaddish can be recited. The dimensions of the inner sanctum, within which were housed the Holy Ark with the chamber appropriately 10 cubits by 10 cubits.

So too, the apportionment of a tenth to this tribe alludes to how within every one of our endeavors there has to an associated level of sanctity. That goes to the heart of Yaakov's approach to life. He corresponds to the third blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei which deals with holiness. His name can be read "Yud", the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, "ekev", the heel, which is the lowest part of the body. That means to say, Yaakov was the one to draw holiness down to the lowest levels in this world.

And the giving of maaser testifies to the Jew never losing sight how every one of our possessions in a gift from G-d. We are mere custodians of our assets to spiritualize them. And we need to pay our dues.