



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ד'תשע"ג - סוכות תשע"ד - 14th September 2013 - Volume 6 - Issue 12

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

גמר חתימה טובה

We wish the Kehilla a **גמר חתימה טובה** and welcome to this bumper edition newsletter which due to timings of Yom Tov, covers us through to Parshas Bereishis!!

Remember Eruv Tavshilin

A reminder to make an Eruv Tavshilin on Erev Succos and once again before Shmini Atzeres

Parking Warning

Please be considerate with where you park, both within the Shul car park and outside. Bear in mind that over Succos there will be buggies trying to get into Shul and hence please do not block the path at either side of the Shul building.

Welcome Back Bochorim!

We welcome the Bochorim returning for Bein Hazmanim. We invite you to use the facilities of the Shul which is open from early morning to late at night.

Book Your Hoshanos

The Hoshanos list will be available on the notice wall for those wishing to order via the Shul.

שמחת בית השאיבה

The Shul will be holding a **שמחת בית השאיבה** on Motzei Shabbos Chol HaMoed from 9.30pm onwards in the Rov's Succa, 48 Waterpark Road. All are invited to attend.

Simchas Torah Lunch

The Shul will be having a luncheon on Simchas Torah, at 12.30pm following Davening, to which the all members are invited. Please confirm your attendance including the number of adults and children sending a text to 07779 681 354 or by emailing office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk no later than Monday September 16th.

THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Perfect Mitzvos

Rabbi Yaakov Menken (Torah.org)

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a day of unlimited potential. More than any other time of the year, each of us is offered the opportunity to "clean the slate" and start anew. "If your sins are scarlet red, they will be white as snow; if they are red as crimson, they will be [white as] wool." [Isaiah 1:18]

If a person takes advantage of this tremendous opportunity, the possibilities are endless. The Talmud says that a sincere penitent who truly reforms himself is even greater than a person who was completely righteous all along (Talmud Brachos 34).

The Dubner Maggid explained how this can be, with one of his classic parables:

A very scholarly young man, from a poor family living in a small village, was engaged to marry the daughter of a wealthy family living in a large city. The father of the bride willingly covered all of the wedding expenses, asking the father of the groom only to dress his son in a fine suit which a city-dweller might wear to his wedding. The second father did his absolute best to satisfy his soon-to-be "mechutan" [Hebrew for a person's child's spouse's father], commissioning the best tailor in the village and asking him to use the best material. The results were excellent.

Nonetheless, the groom was not destined to wear that suit; while traveling to the wedding, burglars made off with their luggage. His father and he arrived in the city wearing only their dusty overalls from the village. The father of the bride, given that there was no choice, immediately called in one of the city's finest tailors, and commissioned a rush order for new clothing for both father and son. These would arrive with time to spare, allowing the wedding to proceed without further incident.

The groom recognized, however, that his father was upset to the point of depression about the suit which he had ordered back in the village, the one item of value which the burglars had stolen. So this brilliant young man consoled his father as follows: "you know, it seems more appropriate that you should be delighted that my suit was stolen, rather than so upset. I am certain that even with all the effort that you made, my bride's father would never have been completely satisfied with a suit tailored in our small village. Even if he never said anything, I am sure he would have found defects. Now, however, our outfits will be entirely to his taste, created by a truly expert tailor! He'll be as happy as could be, and we'll both have new suits!"

Even the most righteous person remains human, and cannot perform a mitzvah in the most perfect way. Slipping concentration and delays are

The Week Ahead	
ערב יום כפור	
Selichos	6.00am / 7.00am
Mincha	3.00pm
Candle Lighting	No later than 7.15am
תפילת זכה	7.15pm
כל נדרי	7.40pm
יום כפור	
Shacharis	9.00am
Yizkor	Approximately 12.15pm
Mincha	5.15pm
Motzei Shabbos & Yom Tov	8.17pm
Sunday Shacharis	7.10am / 8.15am
Monday Shacharis	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday Shacharis	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	7.10pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Continued inside	

only a few of the "defects" which detract from our deeds. But concerning a sincere penitent who, through love of G-d, abandons his or her bad deeds and turns to good, Reish Lakish says in the Talmud (Yuma 86b), "his deliberate crimes are reversed to merits" -- as if he had performed mitzvos! And those mitzvos, of course, are designed by G-d Himself, inserted into the record in place of the crimes committed. Something done by G-d, of course, is perfect!

Who would not like to have "perfect mitzvos," made by G-d Himself, on the boards? Only the truly repentant person has this opportunity.

As Reish Lakish explains there, different sorts of repentance have different effects -- one classic distinction being between a person who repents only because of fear of G-d, or even just fear of punishment, vs. the one who repents because he or she now recognizes the greatness of G-d and His Torah, loves G-d, and wants to behave in a godly way.

Rabbi Boruch Epstein says that this is the reason that this day is actually called "Yom Kippurim", "Atonements" in the plural. There are different sorts of atonement, for different sorts of repentance. Every one of us can, of course, aim for the highest!

Identical Deeds

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

The days which stretch from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur are known as the 'Aseres Y'may Tshuv'---the Ten Days of Repentance. As difficult as it is to shake ourselves from the stupor of our set patterns and ways, we need to try to find some concrete way of improving ourselves during these crucial days.

Thankfully, Chaza"l discuss a beautiful concept--one that can be worked into our daily dealings--and teach that it has the capacity to cause Hashem to 'pass by' our sins and shortcomings. The Siftei Chaim explains it in the following way.

The Talmud [Rosh Hashana 17A] teaches: Rava said: One who is maavir {passes by} his middos, his sins are also 'passed by.'

Rav Dessler explains that this concept of 'maavir' is analogous to a road being almost totally blocked but one can still pass by. One who hasn't completely eradicated a bad middah but has minimized it to the degree that he can get past it. Anger is the usual response when wronged. If that anger totally fills the person he will be unable to get past it--to understand the other side and give the benefit of the doubt. If, however, he is able to hold that anger in check and minimize it to the degree that he can get past it, he will be able to understand the other side and forgive the perpetrator.

When one treats others in such a fashion, Hashem's attribute of middah k'negged middah dictates that His judgment will also be minimized. Hashem will 'get past' that person's sins and will judge with chessed.

This will not only affect a person's station in the World to Come but will even nullify harsh decrees aimed at a person in this world. The Talmud there relates that Rav Huna was so ill he was on the verge of death. After he had fought off death and was once again well, he related what he had experienced. "The heavenly court had decreed death but Hashem intervened arguing that since I had been maavir on my middos, the court must also look past some of my actions."

A person actually has the capacity to dictate how he'll be judged by the heavens. Two people can perform identical deeds and yet be judged totally differently. One who was maavir and found the good in others will have his sins mitigated and his merits magnified. The second, who refused to cut others some slack, will have his actions meticulously scrutinized and unceremoniously rejected unless they were completely pure. This is not necessarily a punishment. It is simply a reflection of the person himself.

With this, the Chofetz Chaim explains a seemingly difficult passage in the 'Avinu Malkainu' prayers that are recited during these days. We implore our Father and King to inscribe us in the Book of Merits. Why do we need to ask Hashem to do this? If we have merits then we should automatically be inscribed. If we don't have such merits, then even asking to be inscribed in that book should be considered quite audacious!

The Week Ahead

ליל א דסוכות

Mincha & Kabbolas Yom Tov
Nacht

Remember Eruv Tavshilin

7.02pm
8.00pm

יום א דסוכות

Shacharis
Mincha followed by a Shiur by
R' Dovid Nissenbaum

9.00am
7.00pm

ליל ב דסוכות

Maariv
Candle Lighting

8.04pm
Not before 8.04pm

יום ב דסוכות

Shacharis
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos
Candle Lighting

9.00am
6.57pm
No later than 6.57pm

שבת חול המועד

Seder HaLimud
Shacharis
Mincha followed by a Shiur by
Rabbi M Santhouse
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos

8.40am
9.00am
6.50pm
7.59pm

חול המועד

Shacharis Sunday - Tuesday
Mincha & Maariv
Late Maariv

7.00am / 8.30am / 9.30am
6.55pm
10.00pm

הושענא רבה

Shacharis

6.30am / 8.30am

ליל שמיני עצרת

Mincha & Kabbolas Yom Tov

Remember Eruv Tavshilin
6.45pm

שמיני עצרת

Shacharis
Yizkor
Mincha followed by a Shiur by
Rabbi A Y Goldman

9.00am
Approximately 10.30am
6.45pm

ליל שמחת תורה

Maariv
Candle Lighting

7.47pm
Not before 7.47pm

שמחת תורה

Shacharis
Candle Lighting
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos

8.30am
No later than 6.40pm
6.40pm

שבת בראשית

Seder HaLimud
Shacharis
Mincha followed by a Shiur
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos

8.40am
9.00am
6.32pm
7.42pm

Sunday
Monday / Thursday
Tuesday / Wednesday

7.15am / 8.20am
6.45am / 7.10am
6.45am / 7.20am

ראש חודש

Mincha & Maariv
Late Maariv

6.30am / 7.00am
6.35pm
8.00pm

שבת פרשת נח

Candle Lighting
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos

6.23pm
6.28pm

He explains that every person has performed some good deeds and as such has merits. However, close scrutiny of these deeds may leave nothing more than a bare skeleton of the original act. We might have donated charity to a needy cause but our feelings of pride, guilt and honor might not leave much of a balance. It might no longer deserve to be inscribed in that heavenly Book of Merits. As such, we implore Hashem not to dissect our actions too thoroughly. If we did a good deed, inscribe it in the Book of Merits.

The way that we can push that decision to go in our favor is, of course, through middah k'negged middah. If we accept the good that others do for us at face value without overly analyzing it, if we are willing to get past the less savory aspects of other's deeds, then middah k'negged middah will dictate that we and our deeds will be inscribed in the Book of Merits.

It all depends on how we look at things...

The great Chassidic leader, Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, once witnessed a seemingly boorish sight. A simple wagon-driver, in the midst of his prayers, began greasing the axle of his wagon. Other shocked bystanders couldn't help but commenting on the crudeness they had witnessed. "Imagine a person greasing an axle while praying!" they cried out in dismay.

Rav Levi Yitzchak, whose love for Israel seeped out of his every pore, had a totally different slant on the situation. "Imagine such a Jew!" he excitedly exclaimed. "He even prays when he greases his axle!"

Growing Through the Holidays: Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Succos

Rabbi Pinchas Winston

(Torah.org)

This is the blessing Moshe, the Man of God, blessed the Children of Israel before his death. (Devarim 33:1)

What's new? It's a simple question that asked at this time of year takes on added meaning. Even in the gentile world, a new year represents potential for positive change, and many people make resolutions to that effect. That is certainly a major part of the Aseres Yemai Teshuvah, and Succos that follows, as well.

Rosh Hashanah is a teacher. If taken seriously and the opportunity is used meaningfully, then it usually allows us to reach new heights of awareness and spiritual consciousness. It has the ability to reflect ourselves back to us, like a spiritual mirror, allowing us to better understand where we go wrong, and what we have to do to go right.

Yom Kippur, on the other hand, is about integration. It is about taking the self-knowledge gained on Rosh Hashanah and pushing it from the level of the mind to the level of the heart. Hence, Yom Kippur is the level of binah—understanding—something associated with the heart.

Thus, though physically the brain is higher on the body than the heart, spiritually, having a knowing heart is a higher level of living than having only a knowing mind. It makes reaching for new spiritual heights a labor of love, and not just the right thing to do.

Succos is the time when we activate our new knowledge. It is the transition between the world to which we ascended on Rosh Hashanah and the one to which we must return after the holiday. For 22 days we spiritually streamlined, pushing the overbearing world of everyday life aside so that we could realign ourselves with truth, the Ultimate Truth, with God Himself.

To return to the everyday world is to be bombarded with a contrary message. In our generation, more than any other before it, nature has greatly intruded into our daily consciousness via all the technology we have created and mastered. For centuries science has been demystifying life, becoming like a religion in its own right along the way, and recent technology has greatly accelerated its pace.

In truth, the process started a lot earlier. In fact, when Adam ate from the Tree of Knowledge against the will of God, he distanced himself from his Creator. Kabbalah explains that this did not mean that God stopped doing things for him, but rather, that God introduced additional angels into the system to do them on His behalf.

The impact was dramatic, and remains so. Whereas once it was clear

that everything was from God, since then we get the impression that God is not involved in making every last aspect of Creation and life work. This causes many to empower nature, even when, in principle, they still believe in God. They end up talking out of two sides of their mouths, so-to-speak, giving God credit for everything, while often acting as if He's involved in just about nothing.

It's not like in a large business that has many employees, many of whom represent management. They are bosses who make things happen, and who have the power to make decisions that the average employee cannot, at least when it comes to that which affects the welfare of the company.

Rarely, however, does the average employee forget for a moment that above all of his bosses is just one, the CEO of the company with whom the buck stops, because ultimately, it is his buck. No matter how much power his managers try to exercise over those lower down on the totem pole of power, no one ever confuses any of them for the real boss.

It is not so easy to be that clear about God in everyday life. To be sure, He is the CEO of all of Creation, but since nature's presence is so pronounced, and His is so hidden, it is not uncommon for 'employees' to confuse the 'manager' with the 'CEO,' at least in everyday practice.

The solution to this problem is in the first two words of this week's parshah, Zos HaBrochah. On a Pshat level, they simply allude to the blessings Moshe Rabbeinu imparted to the Jewish people prior to his death. On a deeper level, however, they indicate to us what we have to focus on constantly to see God as He ought to be seen, in spite of all the veils and misinformation.

Regarding these first two words of the parshah, it says:

V'zos HaBrochah has the gematria of "this is the Torah," because in the merit of Torah he blessed them. (Ba'al HaTurim, Devarim 33:1)

What does the Ba'al HaTurim mean, besides the obvious? Every child who has ever gone to Cheder has been told that the Torah is source of all of our blessing. That is what they were trained to believe, from the beginning, with the hope that someday, when they would be older, they would really believe it. The survival of the Jewish people depends upon this.

For children, who are all play and no work, it is a tough sell. They prefer a life without mitzvos, not one encumbered by 613 of them. They love adventure stories, not technical details about how best to serve God. For children, the best we can hope for is successful indoctrination, and only pray that by the time they become adults, they will be able to self-indoctrinate themselves with the same message and mean it.

However, there is a big difference between being told what to believe by another person and being told the same thing by yourself. Even when we con ourselves into doing something, it is usually for our own benefit, something that we don't always believe about another who tries to tell us what to think.

Unless, of course, he is not just A man of God, but an Ish Elokim —THE "Man of God." Those are the two words that change everything because they mean that the message is definitely for our own good, even though someone else is teaching. Though the average teacher merely indoctrinates, hopefully for the good of the student, and the person himself indoctrinates himself, hopefully for the right reasons, a Man of God teaches only truth, one that is always and completely good for the student.

These two words are the threshold between two worlds, one that leads nowhere meaningful, and one that leads to the ultimate pleasures of Creation. They unlock the blessing in life because they unlock our hearts and skepticism about Torah from Sinai, and all that it comes to help us to achieve. To believe in Moshe as a teacher of truth is to be open to the eternal life that is embodied in the Torah that he taught us.

Thus, when we dance with eternal joy on Simchas Torah with a Sefer Torah, we dance with Moshe Rabbeinu as well, each and every one of us who relates to the blessing of Torah. We connect our hearts to his heart, our minds to his mind, and through him we feel the reality of

Torah like we never have before. It changes us, and greatly increases our spiritual capacity.

It changes our vision as well. We see things differently, as if angels have been removed from the long chain of command between us and God, so that we can more readily see His hand in everything, and behind everything, making all of it work, and giving all of it life.

This process starts on Rosh Hashanah, opening our minds to the truth of God and His Torah. It reaches a crescendo on Yom Kippur as it enters our heart and elevates us to the level of the angels. With Succos, we have a chance to experience this higher level in 'everyday life,' but it is on Simchas Torah that we celebrate the awareness, and the blessing of having it. Zos HaBrochah.

This way, when we start the Torah again with Parashas Bereishis, we don't just begin another cycle of weekly Torah readings. We enter the realm of Torah on a whole different level of awareness, on a whole different level of blessing, and like an eager guide, the Torah motions for us to follow it to even higher levels of knowledge, understanding, and appreciation.

This is the real new, the true good, the essential blessing of life. It is also what the Man of God, Moshe Rabbeinu, gave to us before moving on to the next world.

A Final Solution

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

If we could go back in time and prevent the first murder of history what a contribution that would be. Even if we could go back and learn the lesson of the first murder of history what a gift that would be for humanity. How is it that someone could commit such a heinous act? What was Cain's motivation? What was his mistake?

Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin (The Netziv) in his commentary on Torah makes a profound observation. After Hevel's offering was given greater Divine applause than that of his brother Cain, Cain reacted by becoming angry and depressed. Our sages tell us that the question of a wise person is already half the answer. If the A-Imighty asks a question, for sure there 's a great insight buried within. The A-Imighty asked Cain two questions, "Why are you angry and why are you depressed.?"

The Netziv points out that the word "why" was employed twice in the sentence. It seems that he was not being asked why he was in a bad mood, both angry and depressed, but how can you be both angry and depressed.

The Netziv analyzes that what draws out the energy of anger are situations when the power of our will is thwarted. Let's say that you're hurrying to an appointment and suddenly the traffic backs up, frustration builds to an angry state. We feel that things should be going our way and they are not.

This is a bit foolish because we don't have control over the traffic and the truth is that the traffic doesn't really care. If someone in your house violates a serious rule of the house, endangering others, there may be room to express anger because this is a transgression within the sphere of our influence.

Why should Cain be angry with Hevel? Did Hevel violate any known principle by being successful and gaining favor in the eyes of his Maker? Is it Cain's job to control his brother's actions?

"Why are you angry?" The A-Imighty asks. What frustration do you suffer from when your brother performs well? Let him be! He's not your prime business. You are your prime business.

On the other hand, the opposite of anger is depression. That comes when we feel no hope of success. When we have no empowerment we are compelled to drop our hands and wait for the grievous result. We are depressed when we have no ball in our court, no court, and no racket even if a ball and court should miraculously appear. Who was Cain depressed about? Himself! Over whom should he have control? Himself! He gave up on himself and the energy of empowerment he focused on Hevel.

The Netziv points out that Cain was told by The A-Imighty that his emotions are normal and correct only his wires are crossed. He should be outraged at his own laziness and foolishness. That's where his

power could be effective and should be focused. If his brother's accomplishments cause him to feel inferior, then it's the shadow of his own potential that haunts him.

Therefore, the A-Imighty gave him a pep-talk: "If you want to improve you can also be recognized and if you don't then you should know that there's a force that waits by the door ready to destroy you, but you can rule over him if you want." (Bereishis 4:8)

In the very next verse, something important seems to be missing. "And Cain said to his brother Hevel and it happened when they were in the field that Cain rose up and killed his brother Hevel." What did Cain say to Hevel?

The Malbim points out that Cain suffered from terminal superficiality. He says that when the Almighty said that "there's a force by the door that's ready to destroy you but you can rule over him!" Cain said to himself that that was in reference to his brother Hevel.

How was he to eliminate the chronic pain, the constant attack on his self-esteem that his brother represented? There are only three choices; 1) To live with continuous hurt 2) To improve 3) To eliminate the external stimulus.

Instead of lifting himself up, and using his jealous rage as a tool to reach his own potential, he sought to tear his brother down. (This is one of the prime motives for evil gossip-which is also tantamount to murder) Rather than working on improving himself, which was the toughest option, he decided to find for himself and his brother what he thought would be a final solution.

Where are You?

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Creation. After 5774 years it still mystifies us. Where did the world begin, and where will it end. We often forget to ask a question which is much more pertinent than how many stars are in the Milky Way. We forget to ask what are we doing on this world and where do we fit into the great picture of creation. This week we are reminded of that question by no one less than the Creator Himself.

After Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit from the Garden of Eden, they were gripped with shame. They covered themselves with fig leaves and hid from the wrath of G-d. G-d, about to interrogate them, appears as if he is searching the Garden for them as if they would be fugitives from justice. Then seemingly in mock frustration, He asks a question quite unbecoming the Omnipotent, "Where are you?" I was always bothered. Why the shtick. He knew good and well exactly where they were, precisely what they had done, and why they were hiding. Why then the question, "Where are you?"

Perhaps there is a great lesson for us to learn from this. Even after we commit what we may think is the greatest sin and we wish that we would disappear, we tend to lose self-confidence and self interest. Hashem doesn't lose interest in us. He still asks for us. He wants to know where we are. He also wants us to know where we are.

In the town of Chelm, there was a man who was quite absent-minded. Upon going to the bathhouse he was worried that without clothes he would forget who he was. He tied a red string around his big toe in order to make sure he would not lose his identity.

Unfortunately the string slipped off his toe and wound itself on the toe of a fellow bather. Shocked by seeing the string on his neighbor's foot, he exclaimed, "I know who you are, but who am I?"

We often are occupied in asking "where is G-d?" or "who is G-d?" Sometimes our questions are placed in the present, "where is G-d?" Sometimes they are asked about the past, "where was G-d?" We are so caught up in the search for the unknown and the unseen that we often forget to search for ourselves. It is possible that G-d's first question of man is an unremitting query that reverberates from time immemorial, "where are you?"

Maybe we ought to ask ourselves constantly, "where are we?" We should it ask it as we analyze our standing in every aspect of life. After all, if G-d wants to know where we are shouldn't we want to know too?