



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"א סיון תש"פ - בהעלתך - 13th June 2020 - Volume 12 - Issue 44

## News This Week

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Laurence Ross Chaim Aruchim for the Yahrzeit of his father on Sunday 22nd Sivan.

### Beha'aloscha

Boruch Mordechai Michaels

...והאיש משה עניו מאד

"Now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the face of the earth." (במדבר יב ג)

Rashi explains that Miriam had been told by Tziporah (Moshe's wife) in passing that Moshe was not living with her. Miriam and Aharon had a discussion about this. They were confused because even though they were prophets, they had not separated from their spouses. Why did Moshe think that he was on so much of a higher level that he would not live with his wife? Miriam and Aharon were mistaken because as the next Posukim explain:

...פֶּה אֶל פֶּה אֲדַבֵּר בּוֹ

"With him (Moshe) I speak mouth to mouth; in a clear vision and not in riddles, and at the image of Hashem does he gaze."

There is a clear difference between Moshe and his siblings. Moshe was on a higher level than any other prophet in history. Moshe could not live with his wife because he had to be ritually pure at all times to receive the word of Hashem at any time.

So why didn't Moshe defend himself? Why didn't Moshe respond? He was doing nothing wrong.

The answer "Moshe was humble so he didn't respond" superficially seems misguided. Some people have a warped definition of 'humble'. Being humble doesn't mean someone who does not assert his authority, stays in the background, lives as a hermit and does not speak up in an argument. We see in the Torah multiple times that Moshe stood up for the Jews in Egypt against Pharaoh before and after every plague, he was upset with the people when they misbehaved and he was angry (וַיִּקְצַף) with Aharon and his sons when Moshe thought they had made a mistake concerning eating an offering (וַיִּקְרָא:).

So why didn't Moshe respond to their criticism especially as he was the Jewish people's leader?

It can be suggested that the reason Moshe did not respond may be because he did not know about their criticism; after all it was a conversation between Aharon and Miriam. This is why he did not respond. One way of understanding the story is that Miriam and Aharon discussed it between themselves and had not raised it with Moshe. Technically this was a Halachic problem; Shalom Bayis between man and wife. If they had a legitimate concern then instead of talking about it behind his back the correct approach would be to openly raise it with him.

In addition, it can be suggested that even if Moshe had known about it, this conversation certainly was not public knowledge at the time. Therefore Moshe may have thought there was no need to answer the criticism if there was no public knowledge about it.

Finally, the Chofetz Chaim comments: The obligation of a person is according to his ability. Moshe didn't think he was better than other people even though he had received the Torah. He was just doing his job according to his ability, which in his case was an extremely high one. Ibn Ezra says that Moshe did not view himself as being more important than his brother Aharon or any other prophet. Ramban elucidates the Ibn Ezra and says that Moshe did not ask for greatness from any person, and he would not boast/be proud of his virtue at all (ולא יתגאה במעלתו כלל).

What I think Ramban is insinuating is that Moshe did not reply to his sibling's

## "את מקדשי תיראו"

שליט"א The Rov

The Rambam in the laws of עבודה זרה writes that it is forbidden to plant trees in the בית המקדש (see דברים ט"ז כ"ו) extending the prohibition even to the courtyards of the temple not only next to the מזבח with a penalty of מלקות for the transgressor.

Rabbi Akiva Eiger (או"ח ק" טע א) in his commentary on the שולחן ערוך on the basis that our Shuls are called מקדש מעט states that the above הלכה applies even in our Shuls. A number of other European גדולים of the late 18th and 19th centuries support this ruling to try to counteract the incursions of the Reform who, as stated previously, sought to emulate their non-Jewish places of worship, to the extent of demanding that trees already planted should be cut down.

However the נצי"ב (author of העמק דבר on the תורה) disagrees with this view stating that we do not have the Halachic power to introduce new degrees, and notably, his opinion was endorsed by ר חיים הלוי the Brisker Rov.

false criticism of him because he did not want to sound like he was boasting to his siblings that he was required to separate from his partner and they weren't. Moshe didn't believe that he was on a higher level as the Chofetz Chaim has said.

In the end, due to Moshe's humility, Hashem had to intervene and explain to Miriam and Aharon why Moshe was not living with his wife.

Miriam and Aharon spoke against Moshe regarding the Cushite woman he had married... (Bamidbar 12:1)

My next webinar, "Rules of Reincarnation," is scheduled to start June 2, b"H. Write to pinchasw@thirtysix.org for details.

### To the Side of Merit

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

AT THE END of this week's parsha, Miriam and Aharon consult about their brother's marital relationship. Apparently Tziporah, their sister-in-law, had let slip a complaint about being married to a prophet of G-d, and they thought that maybe they should try to bring Moshe back down to earth a little, for the sake of his family.

In the end, it turned out that they had been in the wrong, and G-d told them so. Miriam ended upon with tzara'as, and according to the Talmud, Aharon as well. Apparently they had spoken loshon hara about Moshe, and even though it had been for all the right reasons, G-d still took them to task for it.

## Davening Times

### פרשת בהעלתך

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.53pm-8.00pm
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	8.54am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.52pm
Motzei Shabbos	10.57pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.50pm

At the heart of the matter is a separate mitzvah, the obligation to judge another to the side of merit. If Miriam and Aharon had assumed that Moshe Rabbeinu had good reason for his actions, their loshon hara would never have occurred, and neither would the tzara'as that came as a result.

The Talmud, when discussing this seemingly very important mitzvah also provides examples of the extent to which it goes (Shabbos 127b). The first example is of a wealthy man who could not pay his worker what he owed him. The worker asked for his money, and when his employer said that he had none, the worker then asked for other things of value, just to get paid before returning home to his family. He did not wish to come home to his family empty-handed.

No such luck. To each request the employer said no, each time saying he was unable to comply but never giving a reason why. When the worker figured he had run out of options, he threw his sack over his shoulder and headed home disheartened. But never once did he ask his employer for an explanation, or accuse him of lying and trying to shortchange him. He just accepted the answers and his fate and went on his non-merry way.

Shortly after the holiday, the employer loaded up his donkeys with food, drink, and money. Then he headed off for his employee's home. After feasting with him and paying him his due, he asked his worker, "When I told you I had no money, possessions, produce, etc.," what did you suspect?

For each thing, the employee gave a reason that absolved his employer of any wrongdoing. Each time, though he could have easily suspected his employer of no-good, the worker instead assumed that some unforeseen circumstance had come up, that had prevented his employer from making good on his debt. As heartbroken as he had been to have worked so hard and not bring anything home to his family to show for it, he never allowed himself to turn against his employer. He always judged his boss to the side of merit.

Then came the punchline: "Everything you assumed in my merit was exactly what had happened. As you have judged me to the side of merit, may G-d always judge you to the side of merit."

The story gets at least two "Wows." The first "wow" is for the employee who had the wherewithal to judge his employer to the side of merit to such an extreme. I think that most people would have started with the accusations and arguing much earlier, especially while making their humble request on such a wealthy estate. I know my yetzer hara has a difficult time believing in the honesty of others, especially in situations similar to this one.

The second "wow" is for how every weird situation the employee had imagined, had actually been the weird truth. To be right about one or two of them would have been something. But ALL of them? It seems a little much, yet the Talmud reports that's the way it was.

The truth is that in everyday life we've all seen how our negative assumptions about people or situations can end up being wrong, as logical as they seemed at the time. A lot of the time there IS a good reason for what doesn't work out the way WE plan. The "eggs" ends up on our face, not on the face of the assumed guilty party. The point of the Talmud therefore should be well-taken.

The only problem with the stories from the Talmud (there are two) is the language used. When the employer later questions his worker about his assumptions, and the rebi, his students about his behavior, they don't ask, "What did you think..." or "What was your assumption." They instead say, "What did you SUSPECT me of?" THEY suspect that the other side has SUSPECTED them, who could have asked in turn, "What did YOU suspect ME of suspecting YOU?"

There is a phrase, "kabdayhu v'chashdahu—honor and suspect." It means that even when you suspect someone of no good against you, still show them respect while keeping an eye out for what they might do. Had Gedaliah ben Achikam approached his "guest" this way, perhaps he would not have been assassinated by him, and the Babylonian exile would not have been so total.

On the other hand, perhaps Gedaliah was trying for something loftier. Maybe he was saying, "Even though I have great reason to suspect my guest as someone dangerous to me, I will fight off that urge and judge him to the side of merit anyhow!" Perhaps his approach to suspicion is the one the Talmud is trying to teach us.

The employer knew full well that all the evidence was against his claims, and that his employee had every right to suspect him of fraud. Though he may have "honored" him by not yelling, "Liar! How can you possibly have no money to pay me when you are surrounded by your own wealth!" he had to have at least harbored such feelings in his heart, and justifiably so.

The "chiddush" was that the employee didn't even think such accusations to himself. Instead, as the Talmud later reveals, he devised all kinds of answers to the circumstances that left his employer innocent and honorable. And not only had he been right, thanks to Divine Providence that wanted to MAKE him right, but he was rewarded for it, in this world and the next one.

The moral of the Talmud: Great is the person who can suspect and honor someone who seems to be suspicious. Even greater is the person who not only honors them, but doesn't suspect them at all, finding legitimate reasons for what appears to everyone else as transgressions.

The only question is about Gedaliah. He was neither rewarded in this world or the next one for his complete turning of the other cheek. On the contrary, it cost him his life, and cost the Jewish people the only thread of independence that they had left after Nebuchadnetzar had destroyed the Temple and exiled the rest of the nation. What was the difference?

What was the difference? We must keep in mind the person you are dealing with. If someone's reputation of deceit precedes them, meaning they have indeed been proven to be dangerous on some level, then it becomes one's halachic obligation to keep an eye on them. The mitzvah to guard one's health alone dictates this. In some instances, you may not even have to honor them at all.

But if the person under suspicion has no previous record of guilt, or just the opposite, if they have been known for their honesty, then you should ONLY honor them, and not suspect them. Not only will they not pose a threat to you, but if for some reason, they have changed their ways, G-d will see to it that they will not harm you.

Surely Moshe Rabbeinu fit that bill. As G-d tells Moshe's well-meaning siblings, "You're talking about the great Moshe Rabbeinu, humblest man on the face of the earth, completely trusted in My house, and the greatest prophet that will have even lived! There was nothing to suspect him of...AT ALL!"

It is ironic that G-d inflicted them with tzara'as. As Rashi points out back in Parashas Tazria, tzara'as means having to go into quarantine. This is because people, through their loshon hara, end up distancing people from one another, like a husband and a wife, for example. In this case, Miriam and Aharon had spoken as they had to in order to devise a way to bring husband and wife closer!

There is another lesson for the person who does not judge a "good" person to the side of merit. Your suspicions about them, even with the best of intentions, will only backfire, accomplishing the opposite of what might have been intended for good. It may not be the main point of the parsha, but it is certainly a crucial one.

## Q&A

### Kids

- 1) How many lamps were on the Menorah in the Mishkan?
- 2) Who worked in the Mishkan before the Leviim and Cohanim?
- 3) How old were the Leviim when they started serving?
- 4) How many times did the Jews bring a Korban Pesach in the desert?
- 5) Why did Hashem tell Moshe to make silver trumpets?

### Adults

- 1) What is the reason that the section speaking about the Menorah comes here in the Torah?
- 2) Why does the Torah repeat that the specification of the Menorah, it was already mentioned in Shemos?
- 3) Why is the word והנפת and wave, mentioned three times in the section regarding the appointment of the Leviim?
- 4) Why were the Leviim counted from the age of 30 when they were told to begin serving from the age of 25?

(1) As in last weeks sedra, every tribes leader was given a role when the Mishkan was designated, however Aaron and his tribe were missed out. However, Hashem comforted Aaron by telling Aaron that he had the job of preparing and lighting the Menorah. (Rashi) (2) It teaches us that if it is impossible to make a gold Menorah one may use another material, when the Chashmanyim recreated the Beis Hamikdash they made a temporary wooden Menora (Ramban, Sifre) (3) This alludes to the three families of Leviim and their different tasks in carrying the Mishkan, (Rashi) (4) According to the Ramban these years were 5 years of apprenticeship, however once 30 the Levi is given a specific task.

### Adults

(1) 7 (2) The firstborns. (3) 25 (4) Once (5) To call all the Jews together, or to tell the Jews that they were about to continue journeying.

### Kids