



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Marcel and Bev Marks on Gavriel's wedding on Thursday to Yocheved Gild. The Aufruf takes place this Shabbos followed by Kiddush after Davening in the Shul hall.

Mazel Tov to Akiva Schwartz and his parents, Avi and Kimberley, on his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos in Shomrei Hadass. The Kehillah is invited to a Kiddush in their home, 65 Scholes Lane

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Laurence Ross on the Yahrtzeit for his father on Sunday, 22nd Sivan

It's the Real Thing

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

In this week's portion, there is a brief conversation that may get lost in the myriad activity of some of its more fascinating stories and commands. Moshe beseeches his father-in-law, Yisro, to continue travelling with the Jewish nation. "We are travelling to the place of which Hashem has said, 'I shall give to you.' Go with us, and we shall treat you well" (Numbers 10:29).

Yisro replies by saying that he would like to return to his land and family. Moshe implores Yisro by telling him that he must accompany the Jews. After all, he knows the encampments and would be eyes for the Jewish people.

Whether Yisro was influenced by his son-in-law's arguments is debated by the commentaries. The Torah does not refer to the outcome. What interests me, however, is that Moshe never tells Yisro where the Jews are going. He just tells him that "we are travelling to the place of which Hashem has said, 'I shall give to you.'"

It is reminiscent of Hashem commanding Avraham to travel to Canaan with the petition "go from your land and your birthplace to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). But Moshe is not the Almighty, and the entire nation knew of the land where they would be going. After all, the land of Canaan was the focal point of the Exodus.

Why, then, does Moshe describe it to Yisro in a mysterious manner, not by defining its location, longitude or latitude, but rather identifying it as "the land that Hashem has promised to give us"? Would it not have been easier for Moshe to tell Yisro, "We are travelling to the Land of Canaan and we want you to accompany us"?

New York Times columnist Ralph de Toledano had a different view of the world than that of his editors. Despite protestations of the editorial board of the Times would always capitalize the words Heaven and Hell in any context.

His editors called him to task citing that heaven is only capitalized when it is a alternative for the Deity as in "Heaven help us." Moreover they insisted hell never got a capital H. De Toledano, however, insisted that any reference of those two places be spelled with a capital first letter.

"You see," the conservative columnist explained, "Heaven and Hell must always be capitalized. I want my readers to understand that Heaven and Hell are real places just like Scarsdale!"

When describing the Land of Israel, Moshe does not take a topographical approach. He delves deeper. Moshe Rabbeinu does not refer to the land of Israel merely as the land of Canaan. In telling his father-in-law where the Jews would be going, he does not offer the longitude and latitude. He does not even describe Eretz Yisrael as the

land flowing with milk and honey. Moshe's only descriptive was, "the land that "Hashem told us, this I shall give to you."

That statement describes Eretz Yisrael in stronger terms than agricultural potential, natural beauty, or strategic location.

It tells us that Eretz Israel is the place that Hashem promised. Any other quality is temporal. Bounty withers, beauty erodes, and natural resources dry-up. But the promise of Hashem remains eternal. It makes us understand that like both extremes of the world-to come, the Land of Israel is real.

Encouragement!

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

HASHEM said to Moshe saying, "Speak to Aaron and say to him: When you "light-up" the lamps, toward the face of the Menorah shall the seven lamps cast light." Aaron did so- (Bamidbar 8:1-2)

Aaron did so: To tell the praise of Aaron that he did not change. (Rashi) What's so great that Aaron lit the lights? Anybody could do that! Why would he do differently than what he understood perfectly what HASHEM had instructed him to do? If any one of us understood with that level of clarity what it was that HASHEM wants us to do, would we, could we do otherwise?! So, what's the great praise about? He did what he was supposed to do!

Now it is occurring to me that it is not only we who are hearing about the praise of Aaron for not having deviated from HASHEM's instructions, but it is in order to praise Aaron for not changing, to tell the praise of Aaron to Aaron. Aaron is being praised for doing the right thing. How does that help? It helps a lot!

I was shown at a Shiva call just last night a moving video clip of my good friend Shimi who just passed away. There he is in a hospital room in Israel, hooked up to wires and looking frail. A troubadour of musicians with guitars are serenading him.

He's singing along and at one point he even stands up and with great effort begins dancing with them. Then he starts to tell them what a great thing they are doing by coming and performing for him.

"Doctors are prescribing all kinds of medicine that we hope will be effective, but this is the best medicine of all that you are doing here for me today." He continues to heap praise on them and thank them in multiple ways, and he tells them that he is having this little Chizuk session videoed so he can send it to their families so they can see how much good they are doing.

They were coming to give him courage and strength and he was feeding them. It was truly amazing! He was truly amazing!

He recognized that everybody needs encouragement, even people who know that what they are doing is the right thing. Why not!?

Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.55pm - 8.00pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ה'ק"ש	8.54am
Ovos uBonim	5.00-6.00pm
Mincha	2.00pm / 6.00pm / 9.48pm
Motzei Shabbos	10.53pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.45pm

The guy sweeping the floor needs encouragement. The gabbai of the Shul needs encouragement! Teachers need encouragement. Doctors need encouragement. Principals need encouragement. Husbands need encouragement. Wives need encouragement. Parents need encouragement. Kids need encouragement. The Rav of the community needs encouragement. Elderly people need encouragement. The mailman needs encouragement. The grocer needs encouragement. The Baal Koreh needs encouragement. The cab driver needs encouragement. Everybody needs encouragement! Even Aaron HaKohain needs encouragement.

He had been involved incidentally and tangentially in the Chet HaEgel and he was feeling embarrassed by all the pomp and pageantry involved with the inauguration of the Mishkan. He was assuming that he was excluded because of his association with that cosmic-national disaster.

When he was called upon to light the Menorah, which would be the crowning event, he felt woefully unworthy and he was ready to hide behind his deep sense of shame and excuse himself with good reason. "I am not worthy of such an honor." "And Aaron did so..." He did what he was commanded to do. It was not a small thing and HASHEM, Who reads the heart of men, let Aaron know that, it wasn't easy but he did the right thing. Even people who know they are doing the right thing need words of encouragement. Certainly, people who have doubts about themselves need encouragement.

I saw a phrase like this and I believe it describes all of us; "I can be both a masterpiece and a work in progress!" The "masterpiece" part of us is need of being recognized. We cannot demand that attention but since we recognize the need, we might as well identify it in others. The "work in progress" part of us is in constant need of encouragement. We cannot command it, but since we recognize the need, we might as well give as much as we can to others, encouragement!

It Was Not the Cucumbers and Onions!

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

The pasuk says: "We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic" (Bamidbar 11:5). The people were ostensibly crying over the food that they missed while they were in the Wilderness. Rashi quotes the teaching of Chazal that they were not really crying over the fish, cucumbers, garlic and onions, but rather they were crying over "family matters." They were bemoaning the fact that they recently became forbidden in the arayos prohibitions.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky shares a very basic idea over here (as he does in two other places in his Chumash commentary). He asks, how do Chazal know this? The simple reading of the pasuk is that they were crying over food deprivation. Chazal say that rather than crying over food, they were really crying over the newly-given arayos prohibitions. There is no indication of such in the pasuk, so how do Chazal put words into the mouths of the Jews in the Wilderness that appear nowhere in the p'shuto shel Mikra?

Rav Yaakov answers that there is a concept in Torah interpretation called "PaRDeS". PaRDeS is an acronym which represents the Torah being understood on several different levels—the level of Pshat (simple interpretation), Remez (hidden allusion), Drash (homiletic exposition), and Sod (mystical interpretation). So too, he says, human beings need to be understood on different levels. When a person says something, it needs to be analyzed at the level of Pshat, at the level of Remez, at the level of Drush, and at the level of Sod. Many times, people don't really understand their own words on the subconscious level.

Sometimes something much deeper is really going on than the face value of someone's words. People don't really cry about fish and cucumbers—especially when they have mann falling from Heaven on a daily basis. The mann was the best food in the world. According to Chazal, it could taste like whatever the person consuming it desired. So obviously, no one's taste buds were being deprived by a lack of garlic or onions. Either through Ruach HaKodesh or some other means, Chazal realized that something much deeper than onions was motivating them over here. This is what Rav Yaakov calls "Klayos v'Lev" (literally kidneys and heart), which is a Rabbinic idiom for what we call the subconscious. In other words, they were not even aware themselves of what was really bothering them.

This occurs all the time with interpersonal relations—with our children,

our spouses, our employees and our employers. Sometimes a person has a "fit" about something and we ask him, "Why are you having a fit about this? It is such a trivial issue (whatever it may be). Why are you having a fit about this?" Sometimes the answer is that something else is going on. It is not the onions. It is something else.

Rav Yaakov says the same thing in Parshas Lech Lecha. Lot said he wanted to separate from Avraham Avinu and go live in Sodom. Why did he say that he wanted to go live in Sodom? It was because "Sodom was a fertile lush valley" (Bereshis 13:10). Rashi there cites a Medrash Aggadah that Lot's real interest in moving to Sodom was because they were an immoral and licentious people. He desired to live in a region where the residents had an "everything goes" lifestyle.

Rav Yaakov asks the same question there: Why do Chazal attribute such amoral intentions to Lot? Where do Chazal see this motivation? Why not assume that Lot is going there to make a better living in the fertile region? Rav Yaakov explains the same idea: Lot was with Avraham Avinu. Not only was he with Avraham Avinu, which is a tremendous merit, but he made an economic fortune by virtue of having attached himself to Avraham. "Also, Lot, who went with Avram, had flocks, cattle, and tents." (Bereshis 13:5) So if he wanted to make a good living, he should have stayed with Avraham Avinu! Why then is Lot migrating to Sodom? The answer is that it is for some unverballed reason. It is not for parnassah!

There is an old quip: "We say the Hagaddah, but we want the Kneidlach." It was the same thing over here: We say "Parnassah, paranassah," but it is not really parnassah. Now, Lot may not have even realized this himself. That is the nature of the PaRDeS of human conversation—there is Pshat, Remez, Drash, and Sod behind each of man's comments. Lot may not have fully understood what he was saying, and neither do we fully understand everything we say.

Sometimes we get upset about something. We need to ask ourselves, "Why am I so upset?" Sometimes we don't even realize it. "Why should this bother me so much? It is such a minor issue!" We need to ask ourselves: "What is really bothering me?" We see this by the cucumbers and onions. We see this by Lot. We always need to ask the question: What is really motivating us?

The Ish Moshe Was More Humble Than Any Adam

The Torah testifies: "And the 'Ish' Moshe was extremely humble, more so than any 'Adam' on the face of the earth" (Bamidbar 12:3). In Lashon HaKodesh, the word "Ish" (literally – 'man') always connotes a distinguished individual, a person who has accomplished something important in his life. The word Adam (also meaning 'man') connotes any human being.

Rav Nissan Alpert, zt"l, points out that this pasuk apparently lacks symmetry. Rather than comparing the 'Ish' Moshe with any 'Adam', the pasuk should have used the plural of the word 'Ish' (Anashim) and state that the Ish Moshe was humbler than any Anashim on the face of the earth.

Rav Nissan Alpert explains that the pasuk is telling us that Moshe Rabbeinu was halsh Moshe—the most accomplished person in the world, an Ish haElokim. He had what to be haughty about! And yet, he was humbler than even the simplest unaccomplished Adam anywhere in the world!

The Gemara (Sotah 5a) says that a person should learn a lesson from his Creator. The Holy One Blessed be He abandoned all the higher peaks in the world and had His Presence descend onto a relatively lowly mountain upon which He gave His Torah (i.e. – Mt. Sinai).

The Ketzker Rebbe once asked, if the Almighty wanted to teach us humility, why didn't He give the Torah in a valley? The answer is that true humility occurs when someone has something to brag about and nevertheless remains humble. Hashem gave the Torah on a mountain. If someone is a nothing (e.g. – a valley) and does not act haughty about it, that is no big deal. However, when a person has what to be gayvedik about (for example, a mountain) and nevertheless remains humble, that is a big deal! Therefore, the Almighty gave the Torah on a mountain, but on a humble mountain.

Similarly, that is why there is a principle that the Divine spirit of prophecy descends upon people who are strong, wealthy, wise, and tall. What is the reason for that? It is because the Ribono shel Olam wants people to remain humble, despite having qualities that can legitimately cause them to be proud, or even haughty.