



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ט תשרי תשפ"ד - בראשית - 14th October 2023 - Volume 16 - Issue 14

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the Rov and Rebbetzen on the birth of a great-grandson to Mr and Mrs Yehuda Tugendhaft in Afula. Mazel Tov also on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Yaakov Chaim Cohen, this Shabbos in Gateshead
Mazel Tov to Shaya Levine and his parents, David and Deborah Levine, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos. Mazel Tov also to grandparents Miles and Linda Levine. The Kehillah is invited to a Kiddush after davening in Stenecourt new hall.
Mazel Tov to Shua and Freyda Chaya Dansky on Avrumi's engagement to Sara Reichman
Mazel Tov to Meir and Ruth Possenheimer on the engagement of their granddaughter Shira Possenheimer to Yehuda Steinberg

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Mark Shapiro who has Yahrtzeit for his mother on Sunday, 30th Tishrei

Shalosh Seudas

This week we restart Shalosh Seudas after the second Mincha. Please try and assist with the cost of the סעודה by sponsoring or jointly sponsoring a week by putting your name against a Sedra on the list on the notice wall in the foyer.

Every Life Is Precious

Rabbi J Rubinstein

קול דמי אחיך צועקים אלי מן האדמה - "The sound of the bloods of your brother, cry out to me from the ground". (Chap. 4 Verse 10). If one may adopt the words of the Chumash in this week's Parshah; at this time, the sounds of the bloods of our brothers cry out to us, and are constantly ringing in our minds. We must all intensify, our performance of Mitzvos and study of Torah, and pray that Hashem will have mercy on the Jewish people, and help us in the coming hours, days and weeks.

Perhaps it is appropriate, to dwell on a thought from this week's Parshah about the importance of every single life, and how it must be well used. The Mishna says, that in the beginning Hashem created only one human being, so that every individual should say to himself "The whole world was created for me" (Sanh. Chap. 4 Mishna 5). Furthermore the Medrash says, when Hashem created the first man, He took him around all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him "See all my works, how beautiful and praiseworthy they are, and everything which I created, I created for you. Put your mind to it, that you do not damage and destroy my world" (Medrash Koheles 7. 28). In other words, as the Mesillas Yeshorim explains, if a person uses the world for doing good things, he uplifts the world; if he uses it for bad purposes, he (wastes and) destroys the world.

Rav Yakov Galinsky was a brilliant orator, who travelled the breadth and length of Israel, giving speeches to strengthen observance of Judaism. On one occasion, the Sefardi leader Rav Toldano, asked Rav Yaakov to accompany him to a Moshav in the south of Israel, to persuade the people there, to build a Mikvah. There were many immigrants from Meknes in Morrocco living in the Moshav, but the founders of the Moshav were Ashkenazim. Rav Toledano thought

that if he, a Sefardi speaker, and Rav Yaakov an Ashkenazi speaker, would go together, perhaps they would succeed in convincing the people in the Moshav to build a Mikva. When they arrived at the Shul where they were supposed to speak, they found one man only, waiting to hear them. After some time had passed and nobody else had appeared, they began to fear that the single man would also leave. Rav Toledano whispered to Rav Yakov "Rav Yakov, an ambulance is called even for just one person". Rav Yakov got up and gave an impassioned speech, as if he was addressing a vast crowd. When he had finished, there was still only one man there listening to him.

However unbeknown to the two speakers, the wife of the one man, had been listening unseen, in the ladies section of the Shul. She said to her husband, "If it is such an important Mitzvah, let's give them half of our reparations money". In fact that money, came to two-thirds of what they needed. They went straight to the head of the regional council, and he agreed to provide the remaining third. The Moshav got a Mikva!

But I get the greatest inspiration from the whisper of Rav Toledano, and Rav Galinsky's response of an impassioned speech - to one person. We pray that every single life is precious, then we must make sure, that each of our lives is put to the best possible use.

Reality Check

Rabbi Pinchas Avruch (Torah.org)

Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden with but one command to follow: do not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad. When the snake came to entice Chava (Eve) to eat from it, he steered the focus to the one forbidden tree by inquiring if G-d had forbidden eating from ALL of the trees. "The woman said to the snake, 'Of the fruit of any tree of the garden we may eat. Of the fruit of the tree in the center of the garden G-d has said, "You shall neither eat of it nor touch it, lest you die."'" (Beraishis/Genesis 3:2-3) Indeed, G-d had never said anything about touching it. Rashi explains that the snake pushed Chava against the tree and she suffered no harm, to which the snake responded, "Just as you did not die when you touched the tree, nothing will happen when you eat from it." Rashi notes that her effort to embellish G-d's command led to its diminishment.

But why did her coerced contact with the fruit convince her that eating was without risk? After all, G-d does not hold people accountable for violations of the Divine will caused by outside

Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	6.02pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	6.07pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.14am
Mincha	1.30pm / 5.45pm
Motzei Shabbos	7.05pm
ראש חודש Sun	7.00am / 8.00am / 9.30am
ראש חודש Mon	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	5.55pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

forces. Sifsai Chachamim (supercommentary on Rashi by Rabbi Shabsai Bass, 1641-1718) clarifies that Chava, in her effort to understand the punishing power of the fruit, rationalized that the fruit was toxic, from which she assumed that the toxins killed by any contact, internal or external. She was so invested in this rationale, concludes Sifsai Chachamim, that when touching the fruit caused no harm, she concluded that there must be no poison – G-d must not have been forthright in his warning, just as the snake told her – and, therefore, nothing would come of eating it.

How could Chava make such an egregious error? She knew that G-d said nothing about toxins, that it was her own assumption, contrived to make sense of the situation, and that she further invented the danger of any – even accidental – contact. When she saw that she did not die, she should simply have realized that her hypotheses were WRONG. How did she suppose that G-d was not truthful in His warning such that she felt free to eat without fear of consequence?

Rabbi Alter Henach Leibowitz (Rosh Yeshiva/Dean of Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim in Kew Gardens Hills, New York) observes the destructive power of haughtiness and unbridled self assuredness. Chava was so confident in her comprehension of the tree's power that the undoing of her assessment discredited the ENTIRE warning, to the point she lost faith in the basic Divine caveat to refrain from eating. So great is the challenge of recognizing and admitting one's own failings that the normal human reaction is cognitive dissonance, the unwitting manufacture of a preposterous fact pattern in the simple effort to lend credence to – and avoid retraction of – one's original assumptions. Chava could believe G-d was less than truthful, eat from the tree, and introduce death to the world, but she could not be wrong.

True humility is difficult to attain, but the Mishna (Eduyos 5,6) advises that it is better for one to be called a fool by his peers for his entire life than be construed as evil by G-d for one moment. Orchos Tzadikim clarifies the corrosive nature of pride. G-d Himself warned us (Devarim/ Deuteronomy 8,14) that haughtiness causes such self overconfidence that one eventually forgets G-d and His role in guiding our daily affairs. With this comes dereliction to mitzvos (Divine commandments) and laziness toward chesed (kindness) opportunities, because his primary focus is himself. Conversely, continues Orchos Tzadikim, humility is the root of Divine service, because it is the recognition that our strengths and weaknesses, our successes and failures, are all ours as gifts from the Orchestrator of the Universe. Humility does not mean denying our talents. It means accepting that we are not the true source of those talents; accepting that the true source gave us those talents so we may fulfill a mission; and accepting that with those talents came a number of flaws, too.

Life is about choices. One of G-d's greatest gifts to us is our freedom to choose...and one of our most important choices is: Whose will do I serve? Whose mission plan do I follow? Who is really "number one"? G-d or I?

Starting Over

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we begin the Torah with the reading of Breishis. "Breishis barah Elokim {In the beginning of G-d's creation}.[1:1]" The beginning of a new world. A blank slate with the chance to impact significantly.

Into that setting Adom Harishon {Adam, the first man} was placed. Adom had that fresh start. The opportunity to make real decisions which would affect the entire world. We, on the other hand, we're set in our ways. Hardened by habit. Molded by the environment. If only we had the opportunity that Adom had...

The Torah continues: "And the world was in an astonishing state of void, emptiness and darkness...[1:2]"

Huh? Sound familiar? Read the papers recently? Perhaps things haven't changed all that much. Perhaps we too have the incredibly powerful opportunity that Adom had. Perhaps that is what Chaza"l {the Sages} meant when they taught that every person is obligated

to feel "the world was created for me." Not pride, not haughtiness. Opportunities. Responsibilities. To fill that void and emptiness and allow those that follow us to begin their odyssey, their opportunities and their responsibilities in a somewhat less dark world.

But we feel so far removed from the world's early years, we're so many generations later. What can be expected from us? Adom's sons, now, they must have had that clarity of mission...

Adom and Chava had two sons, Kayin and Hevel. Kayin worked the earth as a farmer while Hevel was a shepherd. "And it was miketz yamim {at the end of days}, Kayin brought an offering to Hashem from the produce of the land (pishtan-flax). Hevel also brought (an offering) from the first-born of his flock. Hashem willingly accepted (by consuming it with a fire from heaven) the offering of Hevel but not the offering of Kayin. And it was when they were in the field, Kayin rose up against Hevel his brother and killed him.[4:3-5,8]"

The passukim don't reveal at the end of which days this episode took place nor do they reveal what was at the root of their dispute. The Kli Yakar explains that Kayin and Hevel were at philosophical odds as to what was the essence of man and life. Kayin believed that there was no olam habah – success in this world was the sole measuring stick of man. He chose to work the earth as that tangible reality was all that was available to man. Hevel, on the other hand, believed that there was a world to come where man would reach his true essence and potential. He chose to be a shepherd, affording himself the solitude necessary for introspection and personal growth.

A deeper understanding in their choices of profession is revealed in the Medrash. Kayin chose land, Hevel chose moveable objects. The pleasures of this world are compared to land. While you're there you can enjoy it but it isn't going anywhere with you. It can be compared to one who travels to a foreign land to attend an auction. There he buys houses. While in that foreign land he can enjoy his purchases but once it is time to return, he must leave his accumulated assets for others. He can't bring them with him. That was the lifestyle of Kayin.

Hevel chose moveable objects. Fulfilling the will of Hashem while developing himself. Those 'moveable objects' which would accompany him from one world to the next, providing the 'building-blocks' of his eternal abode.

Kayin, true to his philosophy of life, had great difficulty spending his assets on spiritual pursuits. The party of life was still going on. But, as he grew older and began to slow down, as he realized that his assets were non-transferable, he began to grow jealous of what his brother Hevel had spent his life accumulating. "And it was miketz yamim," as he was nearing the end of the days of his life, "Kayin brought an offering to Hashem."

But, even at this point, what did he bring? He was only able to summon the inner strength to bring from the cheaper, lowlier produce of the land—he brought pishtan (flax).

Hevel brought from the first-born of his flock. The best of what he had, was brought as a korbon to Hashem. Kayin was barely willing to pass up the tail-end.

When we pronounce the name of a letter we find that there is the revealed letter and then there are hidden letters. The letter 'koof' has a revealed 'koof' and a hidden 'vuv' and 'pay.' The Kli Yakar explains that the last letter of each of the letters of the word korbon—sacrifice ('koof's last letter is 'pay', 'reish' is 'shin', 'beit' is 'tuf' and 'nune' is 'nune') spells pishtan—flax. Even at the soul-searching point of 'the end of his days,' Kayin was only willing to give from the bottom of the barrel.

Hashem accepted Hevel and his offering, the culmination of his life-long efforts. Kayin and his offering were not accepted. Too little, too late.

Overcome with jealousy and I'd imagine a tremendous sense of frustration, Kayin stoops to the level of murdering his brother, Hevel. Every person, every generation has their difficulties and their tests. Breishis—a time for us to begin again.