



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ד מרחשון תשפ"ב - חיי שרה - 30th October 2021 - Volume 14 - Issue 17

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the Rov and Rebbetzin on the occasion of the Bar Mitzva of their grandson, Srully Rubin, this Shabbos in Glasgow.

Mazel Tov to Moshe Stern and parents, Avi and Dena, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzva this Shabbos. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after davening in the Shul Hall.

Mazel Tov to Chizky and Avital Salomon on the birth of a granddaughter to Avrohom and Ayala Kahan

David and Carine Bondt invite the Kehilla to a Kiddush in their house, 17 Castle Hill Road, from 11.30 in honour of the recent birth of their daughter Ariella.

Chaim Aruchim

We regret to inform of the petira of Elena Grosskopf, late mother of Jonathon Grosskopf. Jonathon is sitting Shiva at 8 Old Hall Road until Tues morning. Shacharis 8am Mincha 1.30 (not Friday), Maariv 8pm.

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:

Shabbos, 24th Cheshvan - Linda Levine for her father

Tues, 27th Cheshvan - Charles Khan for his father

Fri, 1st Kislev - Robert Berman for his father

Weekday Mincha

From this week there will be a daily Minyan for Mincha, Sunday-Thursday, at 1.15pm

Clocks Change

Remember to put your clocks back one hour this Motzei Shabbos

The Rising Waters of Menschlichkeit

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Avraham sent his servant Eliezer on quite a difficult mission. Find a shidduch for not only the world's most eligible bachelor, but for its most spiritual. Yitzchak was designated by Hashem to be offered as a sacrifice. He never left the land that would one day become Israel. And he was raised by the founders of Judaism, Avraham and Sarah.

It isn't easy to find a match for such a special individual. Avraham made Eliezer promise that he would not bring back a Cannanite woman for his son. Instead, Eliezer was to search among Avraham's family in Charan and find a suitable maiden for the sacrosanct young man.

Laden with gifts, Eliezer left for Charan. As a selection criteria he devised a sure-fire approach. "Avraham," he thought, "is the epitome of kindness and hospitality. Surely Avraham would want those qualities prevalent in his daughter-in-law." He prayed to Hashem to guide him. "When I arrive in Charan, I will ask a maiden for water. The maiden," he thought, "who replies by saying, 'drink, and I shall even give your camels to drink, [and drawing water for camels who had just completed a long desert journey is no simple task] must be the one who is designated for Yitzchak.'" (Genesis 24:13-14)

The exact scenario that had been prayed for actually occurred. As Eliezer stood by the well in Charan, Rivka [Rebecca] walked toward it. The posuk tells us that as soon as Eliezer watched Rivka begin to draw water, he raced toward her and asked her the pre-determined questions. The gracious response led to our destiny.

The Medrash questions why Eliezer raced forward to greet Rivka. It answers that as Rivka went to draw water, Eliezer saw a miraculous

event. As she lowered her bucket, the waters in the well rose to greet her. Therefore Eliezer ran to greet this maiden, as this was a spiritual individual who must truly be Yitzchak's basher.

Yet, if such a miraculous event occurred, why did Eliezer continue with his pre-planned act? Why did he ask Rivka for water and wait until she responded by offering drinks to both him and his entourage? Also, when Eliezer discusses the entire scenario with Rivka's family and tells them why he decided upon Rivka, he repeats the story of Rivka's grace and hospitality. Yet Eliezer fails to mention of the miraculous incident of the rising waters.

In the Slobodka Yeshiva, nothing was as important as the study of Torah. Students who excelled in their diligence and ability were viewed in awe. But the greatest reverence was saved for the founder of the Yeshiva, Rabbi Nossan Zvi Finkel, the Alter of Slobodka (1849-1927). With his brilliance, humility and great character, he set the tone of the entire Yeshiva.

One day two students were discussing a new young man, Isaac Sher, who had just entered the Yeshiva. "Isaac is a true ilui," said one. "He knows the entire Shas and Shulchan Aruch, by heart."

After the other boy listened as the first extolled the intellectual virtues of Isaac Sher he added meekly, "I had a conversation with him the other day. He is truly a geshmahkeh mentch."

"Geshmahkeh mentch?" questioned the first student in a scoffing tone. "Is that all you can say about him? We are talking about the greatest mind ever to step foot in this Yeshiva and all you can say that he is a decent and kind fellow? I see you don't appreciate a person's true value."

With that the disgusted student began to walk away, but the towering presence of the Alter of Slobodka blocked his path.

"No," he said firmly as he motioned to the humiliated student. "That young man is correct. Reb Isaac's greatest quality is that he is a geshmahkeh mentch."

The Alter eventually took Reb Isaac Sher as his son-in-law.

Eliezer was emotionally impressed by the miraculous rising waters; however, he composed himself. Miracles were not the criteria needed to become Yitzchak's wife. He knew that character transcends any miracle or genius. In finding the wife of a patriarch and mother of a

Davening Times

פרשת חיי שרה

מברכין כסלו	
Candle Lighting	No later than 5.26pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	5.31pm
Hashkomo	7.30am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.28am
Mincha	1.30pm / 5.11pm
Motzei Shabbos	6.31pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Fri Rosh Chodesh	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Mincha	1.15pm
Mincha & Maariv	4.20pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

nation he did not look for Rivka the miracle worker. He looked, and found, the geshmahkeh mentch.

Being On Guard For the Satan Behind Us

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

Sarah is the only one of our Matriarchs whose age at the time of her passing is documented in the Torah. We are explicitly told the age of each Patriarch at the time of their death, but only Sarah has this distinction among the Matriarchs. The Torah tells us at the beginning of the Parsha that she died at the age of 127. What is the significance of this distinction?

Furthermore, the pasuk documenting Sarah's age strikes us as being redundant: "Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years; the years of Sarah's life." [Bereishis 23:1] The next pasuk goes on to say that "Avraham came to mourn for Sarah and to cry for her." According to ancient tradition, the letter chaf in the word Livkosa [to cry for her] is written small. The Baal HaTurim explains that the reason the letter is diminished in size is that since Sarah lived to such a ripe old age, Avraham Avinu minimized the amount of crying he did for her. According to the Baal HaTurim, it did not suffice for us to surmise on our own that since Sarah was 127 years old when she died, it was probably not such a tragic funeral that inspired a great deal of crying. For some reason, it was important for the Torah to explicitly make note of this fact (by use of the diminished letter chaf). Why is this so significant for us to know?

The Nesivos Shalom (the Slonimer Rebbe) writes the following idea in his sefer. Every night we say in the Mariv prayer: "Remove the Satan from in front of us and from behind us". It is obvious to all of us what the purpose of the "Satan in front of us" is. Many times, we are on the way to do something positive and we find it becomes very difficult to accomplish the task. This is due to the "Satan in front of us" who tries to prevent us from doing mitzvos. We do not have to search any further than last week's parsha (Vayera) for an example. Chazal tell us that the Satan wanted to get in the way of Avraham Avinu and not let him accomplish the Akeidah of Yitzchak.

But what is the significance of the prayer to remove the "Satan from behind us"? How can there be a "Satan behind us" if the mitzvah has already been completed? The Nesivos Shalom explains that sometimes after we have already completed a mitzvah, or passed a nisayon things don't work out the way we thought they would and we begin to "second guess" our righteous acts. We wonder whether or not we did the right thing. The Satan never gives up. He may lose battle after battle, but he does not give up the war so easily.

I have heard more than once cases of highly successful individuals who originally were not observant and decided to become Baalei Teshuva and fully Sabbath observant and then subsequently their business tanked. It creeps up in people's minds: Why is it that when the person was non-religious everything he touched turned to gold and now that he is religious, everything he touches turns to dust?

What does the person think? What do the people around him think? This is the idea of "Remove Satan from behind us." After the good deed is done, the Satan does not want you to be at peace with it. Even if the person was not contemplating going back to where he came from spiritually, nonetheless, it is no longer the same. It is with a regret and remorse that one decided to do the right thing and become religious. Our parshios, the Nesivos Shalom explains, contain a classic example of Avraham Avinu facing the Satan in front of him in Parshas Vayera and then confronting the Satan in back of him in Parshas Chayei Sarah. The Satan behind him is, as Rashi says (based on the Medrash), that Sarah died suddenly out of the shock of hearing that her son Yitzchak was almost slaughtered. This scenario was an act of the Satan. Sarah was supposed to die in any event, no matter what happened. But the Satan arranged that someone would come to her door and tell her about the Akeida and just at that moment, she would die. Everyone, including Avraham, could come to the false conclusion and say "This is what I get for the Akeida?"

The Satan knows that she would have died at that time regardless of whether or not the Akeida took place. It was not the news of the Akeida that killed her, it was G-d's having said that these are the days of her years. Her time was up. That is why, says the Slonimer Rebbe, the Torah

writes "one hundred years and twenty years and seven years." This is why the Torah spells out the age of her death – so that we should not for a minute think that she died prematurely because of the Akeidah. That is why the Torah reiterates "the years of the life of Sarah". When Sarah was born, she was given a certain amount of years and a certain amount of days and on a specific day and in a specific place and a specific time she was destined to die.

Many times we have an elderly parent living with one child and then they decide to move the parent to another child and then the parent dies. There are typically all sorts of guilty feelings. 'If this, if that', etc. No! Everyone has their time and place where they are going to die.

This is the way it was with Sarah. No one appreciated this more than Avraham Avinu. That is why the word Livkosa [to cry for her] has a small chaf. There was not a tremendous amount of crying because this was not the case of a tragic sudden unexpected death, which causes people to cry. The Torah wants to record for us that the crying was muted, because it was part of the natural life cycle destined for Sarah to die at this ripe old age of 127.

This teaches us that we must always be on guard, not only for the Satan in front of us, but for the Satan behind us as well.

Landing A Fair Deal

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

"...Land worth four hundred silver shekels; between me and you – what is it?" (23:15)

This week's parsha recounts the negotiations between Avraham and Ephron the Hittite concerning the Cave of Machpeilah. The Midrash states that the words "Bnei Cheis" are repeated ten times in connection to the sale, teaching us that a person who assists a Tzaddik with a transaction is credited with having fulfilled the entire Ten Commandments{1}. Where do our Sages see any relationship between the Avraham's purchase and the Ten Commandments?

Prior to engaging Ephron in negotiations, Avraham first approaches the Children of Cheis. He requests that they give him a burial plot for his wife. When they acquiesce to his request, he asks them to intercede on his behalf and convince Ephron to give him the Cave of Machpeilah. Finally, Avraham mentions that he wishes to pay the full cost for the land. When Ephron agrees to gift the land to Avraham, Avraham requests that Ephron accept full payment. Why does Avraham begin by asking for a gift, but insist upon paying for the land once his request is granted?

When he hears that Avraham wants to pay the full price for the land, Ephron comments: "eretz arba mei'os shekel kesef beini uveinecha mah hi" – "land worth four hundred silver shekels between me and you – what is it?{2}". Ephron is minimizing the expense involved. He appears to be telling Avraham that this amount of money is of no consequence to wealthy individuals such as the two of them. However, Rashi does not interpret Ephron's comments in this manner. Rather, Rashi explains Ephron's words to mean that this sum of money is of no consequence between friends. How does Rashi know that Ephron is referring to his friendship with Avraham?

The Rambam rules that if a person does not want to sell an item but is pressured into doing so by the amount of money that the buyer is willing to pay, the buyer has violated the last of the Ten Commandments, "lo sachmod" – "do not covet{3}". The only way for Avraham to guarantee that Ephron is not pressured into the transaction is if Ephron, as a gesture of friendship, is willing to give Avraham the land as a gift. However, once he sees that Ephron is willing to give him the land, Avraham, not wanting it as a gift, is comfortable offering him money for it.

Rabbeinu Bechaya comments that the number ten incorporates all the numbers which precede it. All nine commandments prior to "lo sachmod" are incorporated in this precept{4}. The Meiri explains that all of the negative traits found in the first nine stem from egocentricity, the basis for the sin of coveting{5}.

We are constantly placed in situations where we impose ourselves upon others and expect them to do something for us that they may not truly want to do. We learn from Avraham's actions the necessity to calculate whether others are doing things for us as an act of affinity or whether they are being pressured into helping us; if the latter situation is the case, taking advantage of it borders upon the prohibition of "lo sachmod".