



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ז מרחשון תשפ"ד - חיי שרה - 11th November 2023 - Volume 16 - Issue 18

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Simcha Green and his parents, Rafi and Naomi, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos. The Kehillah is invited to a Kiddush after Davening in the Shul hall.

New Ovos u'Bonim Season

This past Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayeira fathers and sons came together to kick-off the start of the winter season of Ovos U'Bonim.

There were over 50 boys with their fathers in attendance with nash and a raffle held at the end of the session.

Beautiful bookmarks made by Cute Gifts with both the Ohr Yerushalayim and Ovos u'Bonim logos printed on were handed out as an opening night gift to all attendees

Chaim Aruchim

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

Shabbos, 27th Cheshvan - Charles Khan for his father

Tues, 1st Kislev - Robert Berman for his father

Weds, 2nd Kislev - 2nd Aryeh Balkind for his mother

Change Your Nature

Rabbi J Rubinstein

Sometimes one hears people say things like, "I know I lose my temper frequently, but I cannot help it, that is my nature, that is the way I was born"; or alternatively, "I am very lazy, but what can I do, it is in my DNA, that is the way I am made", and other similar sentiments. In this week's Parshah, we find an example of a person who showed that this attitude is based on a mistake.

The Medrash Rabah (59;12) states that a national characteristic of the descendants of Canaan was the quality of deceitfulness, and Eliezer the servant of אברהם אבינו, who was descended from Canaan, had inherited that quality. Nevertheless, Eliezer carried out אברהם אבינו instructions to find a wife for יצחק with absolute honesty and integrity. This was particularly remarkable, because Eliezer himself had a daughter whom he wanted to become the wife of יצחק. It would have been so easy for Eliezer, with a small degree of dishonesty, to find an excuse for failing to find a suitable wife for יצחק, in the hope that his daughter would then be chosen. But on the contrary, he overcame the trait of deceitfulness which was part of his national character, and also overcame his personal natural bias towards finding problems in his quest for a wife for יצחק. Instead he positively took the initiative in praying, that he would find the girl for יצחק, with all the qualities that אברהם אבינו wanted her to have, as expeditiously as possible. He behaved with absolute integrity. The Medrash testifies, through this accomplishment of self-improvement, Eliezer rose from being included in the general appellation of ארור - "cursed", which is applied to the nation of Canaan generally, and became ברוך - Blessed. That is why the Torah records after this episode, Eliezer was welcomed in to the house of Lavan with the words, ה'בא ברוך ה' - "Come, (the one who is) blessed by Hashem".

The Chumash describes this episode in great detail to teach us, it is possible to overcome natural weaknesses which we may have, and become better people. Animals are born with instincts and natural qualities which they cannot change. But as human beings we can recognise where we need to improve, and we can control, and train, ourselves to do so.

There is a story told of the Rav, (I have read it, written of different personalities,) who had a debate with non-Jewish people regarding whether animals can change their characteristics. Some time later a mouse ran across the Sefer the Rav was learning. He put it in a small box

which he left in his pocket. Shortly afterwards, the people with whom he had held the debate, came to invite him to a banquet. To the astonishment of all present, cats were fulfilling the role of waiters, serving the food on trays etc. The people said to the Rav "You see animals can be trained!" The Rav then remembered what he had in his pocket, and let the mouse free. Immediately the cats let the trays crash to the ground, and dived after the mouse, proving the Rav to be correct.

It is an amusing story, illustrating that animals do not have the free will to change their nature. But we do, and where appropriate we must strive to do so, thereby following the example of Eliezer.

The Strength Of The Son Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

"Yitzchak went out to pray in the field towards evening..."(24:63)

Rashi translates "lasu'ach" which generally means "to speak", as "to pray". This follows the Talmudic tradition that Yitzchak established Tefilas Mincha, the afternoon prayer. However, the Ba'alei Hatosafos point out an apparent contradiction. The Talmud in Tractate Yoma refers to the afternoon prayer as "Tsilusa D'Avraham" - "the prayer of Avraham" which begins "when the walls cast shadows upon the ground". If Yitzchak established the Mincha prayer, why is it referred to as "the prayer of Avraham"?

In Hilchos Melachim, the Rambam states that Yitzchak was the patriarch who established the notion of praying "lifnos hayom" - "towards the end of the day". The Torah records that Yitzchak prayed "lifnos erev" - "towards evening". What message is the Rambam conveying by changing the language of the verse?

In Hilchos Tefilah, the Rambam records that the Sages established the Tefilah for Mincha, "bein ha'arbayim" - "in the afternoon", corresponding with the daily afternoon offering in the Temple. The daily afternoon offering was brought nine and one-half hours into the day. On Erev Pesach this offering was brought six and one-half hours into the day to accommodate the bringing of the Korban Pesach. These two time periods are known, respectively, as "Mincha Gedola" - "the larger Mincha" (because the greater portion of the day remained) beginning six and one-half hours into the day, and "Mincha Ketana" - "the smaller Mincha" (because the smaller portion of the day remained) beginning nine and one-half hours into the day. The Rambam rules that although the preferred time for Mincha is Mincha Ketana, one may begin praying Mincha when Mincha Gedola commences. The Rambam cites a custom which dates back to the period of the Ga'onim (7-9th Century) of praying both at Mincha Gedola and Mincha Ketana. What is the basis for this custom? Furthermore, whether the offering was brought six and one-half hours or nine and one-half hours into the day, should it not be viewed as one long period. Why do the Sages divide the time for praying Mincha into two periods?

The Talmud identifies the time to begin Avraham's prayer as "when the walls cast shadows upon the ground". This is immediately after noon,

Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	4.05pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	4.10pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.39am
Rov's Shiur	3.22pm
Mincha	1.30pm / 3.52pm
Motzei Shabbos	5.12pm
Ovos uBonim/Bonos	6.12pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues חודש ראש	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	4.00pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

Mincha towards the evening. The Rambam states that this was specifically at the end of the day, for Yitzchak was establishing the opportune time for Mincha as Mincha Ketana. Although the parameters of the daily prayer times were set based upon the daily offering in the Temple, the channels of service were opened by our Patriarchs. Avraham was responsible for establishing the morning service for his progeny. His afternoon prayer was not intended to serve as a beacon for future generations. This undertaking he left to his son, Yitzchak. Yitzchak established the prayer of Mincha at a different time period than previously performed by his father. Although Yitzchak is the Patriarch responsible for instituting the prayer of Mincha, Avraham's personal prayer was effective in broadening the time period for which the channel of the afternoon service would be open.

Avraham Earned His Days

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read the parsha of Chayai Sarah: "And the life of Sarah was one hundred and twenty seven years.[23:1]" The parsha begins with Sarah's death and Avrohom's subsequent acquisition of Ma'aras Hamachpelah for her burial.

Immediately afterwards, the Torah tells of Avrohom sending his servant, Eliezer, to find the proper wife for his son, Yitzchok. Avrohom wanted to ensure an appropriate partner with whom Yitzchok could continue the world-shaping path that he had begun. He therefore had his servant, Eliezer, swear not to take a Canaanite girl as a wife for Yitzchok. "Rather, to my land and birthplace you shall go.[24:4]"

Juxtaposed between these two episodes is the following passuk: "And Avrohom was old, 'ba ba'yamim' {having come in days}, and Hashem had blessed Avrohom with 'kol' {all}].[24:1]"

The Ramban explains that this passuk supplies the reason why Avrohom felt compelled to have Eliezer swear. He saw himself advancing in years and he was concerned that he might leave this world before Eliezer would return. He therefore had Eliezer swear in order to 'lock in' his choice of Yitzchok's future wife's nationality.

However, this term of 'ba ba'yamim', meaning, having come or advanced in days seems a bit strange. The passuk had already said that Avrohom was old. Isn't every old person 'ba ba'yamim'? Furthermore, we only find this expression by Avrohom. Although it says that Yitzchok became old, it doesn't say that he was 'ba ba'yamim'.

What is the meaning and significance of this term as it relates specifically to Avrohom?

We know that the attribute which Avrohom exemplified and perfected was that of chessed. The Shla"h writes that a Jew must perform at least one act of chessed each day in order for it to be considered a day. Without at least one chessed, it's as if that day didn't exist.

With that, the Nesivos Sholom explains, we can understand why specifically Avrohom was 'ba ba'yamim', advanced in days. He, with his incredible devotion to chessed, had every day standing proudly behind him as he approached his old age. He literally came with his days. Not a single one was absent.

However, we need to understand why only chessed, as opposed to any other commandment, is the deciding factor if a day is to be considered existent and worthwhile.

The Nesivos Sholom explains that it was Hashem's chessed which brought Him to create the world. Hashem needed nothing but wanted to share His goodness with others. Furthermore, the world, having been created 'yesh ma'ayin' {something from nothing} is in the constant, perilous state of being unable to continue to exist on its own. It is only through a constant re-creation, every single second of time, through which Hashem's chessed enables this world to continue to exist.

Dovid HaMelech refers to Hashem as our shadow [T'hilim121:5]. The Baal Shem Tov explains that a person's actions can be discerned by watching his shadow. So too, Hashem's actions and dealings mirror our own. When we treat each other with chessed, Hashem in turn showers chessed down upon us.

Being that the entire world is based on chessed and only continues to

exist through Hashem's constant chessed, we can only 'earn' our day if our actions of chessed prompt and stimulate Hashem to give forth His chessed. If we do our part, we have earned that day. It exists and is worthwhile as something which we had a hand in. Otherwise, in the absence of any chessed-provoking chessed on our part, the day was a 'free-bee'. A gift which we played no part in. Not something that can be considered ours and not something which will stand behind us as we reach our old age.

All of our actions result from many different motives—some lofty and some a bit less lofty. Most of our mitzvot {fulfillment of commandments} are tainted by some of the less than lofty motives. Where the mitzvah is focused onto ourselves, inconsistencies within ourselves will tarnish the mitzvah. Chessed, however, is very different. Since the focus is outward and the other person has in fact received the act of kindness intended for him, it will therefore not be sullied by less than altruistic motives.

Avrohom was 'ba ba'yamim'. He had earned every one of his days. As a result of that, as the passuk continues, "Hashem had blessed Avrohom with 'kol' {all}."

We know that what we work hard at and earn has a special place in our hearts.

When my wife and I first moved to Israel we were shocked to find that the apartment had no closets whatsoever. For weeks we were living out of suitcases until our lift finally arrived. At that point we began to live out of suitcases and boxes until I was able to build some sort of an 'aron' from the lift wood. Proving to my wife that I now could and would be painfully 'punny' in two languages, I proudly told her that we now have something that we can call 'aron' (closet in Hebrew, pronounced 'our own'-sorry). The morning after I built it, I woke up early and ran to the kitchen to make sure that it was still standing. It was an incredibly amateur job but it was functional and being the first thing that I had ever built, I was fiercely proud of it.

Everything that Hashem blessed Avrohom with came as a result of Hashem mirroring Avrohom's actions. They were his actions. His days. His chessed. His. He had everything. "Hashem had blessed Avrohom with 'kol' {all}." May we, the descendants of Avrohom, continue in his way.

OJ Shabbos group is back!

Kids age 0-8

Davening, songs, games and more!

10.45-11.15

See you in the Sem portacabin, behind Shul

Start of new Ovos u'Bonois program

This past Motzei Shabbos the Kehillah launched it's first Ovos u'Bonois Programme of the season in the Ezras Noshim parallel to the Ovos u'Bonim Program in the main Shul

Open to girls until the age of 9, this creates an opportunity to complete their Kodesh homework, Chazara and Kriah practice in a Shul environment together with weekly raffles, prizes and treats.

With a great attendance of over twenty girls and their dads, the first week was launched with a special personalized gift handed out to each participant and two gift vouchers to the popular Glida Ice cream parlour were raffled at the end of the session. We look forward to a wonderful winter season ahead ו"א.

