



Ohr Yerushalayim News

דברים - 29th July 2017 - Volume 10 - Issue 3

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Raymond Blackston on the birth of a son. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 22 Fairway. The Bris will take place on Shabbos at 12.00pm at 22 Fairway.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Jeff Horwich on the engagement of Vidi to Sorole Saperia, daughter of R' Menashe and Miriam Saperia.

Mazel Tov to Dr & Mrs Michael Wilks on the engagement of their granddaughter Sorole Saperia to Vidi Horwich.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Henry Brownson on the engagement of Yaakov Gamliel to Shoshana Kayla Lister daughter of Rabbi & Rebbetzen David Lister from Edgware

Mazel Tov to Naftali Shapiro on being appointed head boy of Yavneh.

The G-d Experience

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

Parashas Devarim is always Shabbos Chazon, the Shabbos before Tisha B'Av. To begin with, it has the word "Eichah" in it, an allusion to "Eichah," or "Lamentations" that we read on Tisha B'Av. It is also a recounting of the sins of the Jewish people while wandering through the desert, and which led to their various different punishments.

Of course, it was the sin of the spies, as the Talmud states, that led to the destruction of both temples on Tisha B'Av, and a host of other national tragedies. It was THEIR "baseless crying," G-d said, that has resulted in the many reasons WE'VE had to cry since then.

Tisha B'Av is not an easy day for our generation. It is hard to relate to. We know why we observe it, at least intellectually. We don't know why we observe it, emotionally. The temples were destroyed long ago, and quite frankly, who today really misses them?

It is amazing how long a person can cry over something they really want, but can't have, or they lost and can't get back. It is remarkable what they will say to try and recover it, sometimes over and over again. Boredom is not even an issue.

The kinos which we say on Tisha B'Av, on the other hand, are another story. Aside from the fact that they are written in a way we no longer speak, or write, they are about history to which we no longer relate. Who today even went through the Holocaust? They are someone else's words written in a poetic manner to inspire us to feel something we have difficulty feeling, especially on an empty stomach.

For the last couple of months I have been working on a project called, "The G-d Experience." A hashgochahdik experience on a Motzei Shabbos compelled me to write a Perceptions on the topic, and that, over the weeks that followed, evolved into a book. When I published the book, I thought I was done.

I was wrong. Even as I wrote the last chapter it felt as if I was not finished. Having a G-d Experience is what life is all about. It is an ongoing thing that one should try to improve with each passing day. The potential for one is everywhere and at all times. There had to be more to say about it, and there was. It is resulted in "The G-d Experience, Part 2."

Even as I uploaded the file to Amazon to print, I already felt stirrings to publish a Part 3, and maybe a Part 4, etc. It's not that I already know what to write about. It's more like something inside me says, "The G-d Experience is not something finite you can put between two covers and then walk away. G-d is infinite, and any experience of Him should be

Tisha B'Av

Erev Tisha B'Av

Mincha	7.20pm
Ta'anis Starts	9.06pm
Maariv & Eicho	9.45pm

Tisha B'Av

Shacharis	8.30am
First Mincha	2.00pm
Tisha B'Av Programme	6.30pm
Mincha & Maariv	8.40pm
Ta'anis Ends	9.58pm

infinite as well."

But it's not for so many people. Even if they even have a G-d Experience it is limited to a couple of moments, maybe a day or so, like Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Beyond that, it's as if G-d moved on, so why don't they as well?

I once davened in a minyan in which many people did not spend all that much time in their Shemonah Esrai. Fine. Who says you have to? If you are optimally connecting to G-d through a shorter Shemonah Esrai, why extend it unnecessarily.

What I found fascinating though was how a couple of people who all year round, including on Yom Kippur, davened an average Shemonah Esrai, Motzei Yom Kippur all of a sudden took their time. While other davened "normally," these few people stayed well past the end of the minyan and extended their fast in prayer.

I get it. It is the first prayer after a serious day of repenting and atoning, and they want to show G-d their sincerity. Perhaps they want to show themselves as well. They had come closer to G-d that day, and they want to show that parting from G-d is such sweet sorrow, as it should be.

Then what about the rest of the year? A person may walk away and say, "Well, that was great and I hope G-d enjoyed it as well. But as for the rest of the year, it's just not my way . . ." G-d may, on the other hand, say, "Wait

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת דברים

Mincha	7.25pm
Candle Lighting	7.33pm-7.50pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.09am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.09pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	10.14pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thu	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.05pm

שבת חזון

a second. You just showed Me AND you how you can pray! What about the rest of the year?!"

Yeah, what about the rest of the year? That's just the point. That day was Yom Kippur. That prayer was on Motzei Yom Kippur. The rest of the year is, well, just that: the rest of the year. It's different, much less... Important?

Not at all. Inspiring? More like it.

It must have been what it was like when a person visited the Temple, at least the first one. A person didn't just KNOW that G-d was real. They FELT that G-d was real. The experience lifted and carried a person the entire time. Focusing on spirituality was the easiest thing in the world.

Then a person had to go home again. He could live a hundred miles away from Jerusalem, and it could be some time before they had a chance to return. Praying in his minyan back home was certainly nothing like praying at the Temple, or even close to it.

Even today, thousands of years after the destruction, praying at the Kosel is a different experience. Just knowing what once occurred on top of the Temple Mount is VERY inspiring. I find the Kosel to be one of the most distracting places to pray, even more than an airport, yet I have my best dovenings there. All I have to do is recall that Avraham bound Yitzchak just above me, and I am easily snapped into the proper intention.

I have come to realize that the Temple is only gone physically. Only? Isn't that everything? It is a tremendous amount, but no, it is not EVERYTHING. Granted, it was a whole different world and G-d Experience when the Temple existed. You didn't have to do very much to relate to G-d. You just had to plug into the G-d Experience that already existed. It was SO much easier.

Tisha B'Av does not only mourn the loss of the Temple. It also reminds us that we have to do the work to recreate it, first spiritually, and then physically. We have to put G-d back into reality. We have to create an emotional connection as well as a physical one. This will recreate the reality of a Bais HaMikdosh, and be the merit to finally receive the physical one as well. It should be so now, so that this Tisha B'Av will be turned into a day of rejoicing instead of one of mourning.

I Hate Criticism

Rabbi Ben Tzion Shafier (Torah.org)

When Moshe Rabbeinu was near the end of his life, he gathered the Klal Yisroel together to give them rebuke for the sins they committed in the forty years of wandering in the desert.

Rashi is bothered by why he waited. Why didn't he rebuke them years earlier when the events first took place? Rashi answers that Moshe learned from Yaakov Avinu. Yaakov didn't admonish his son Reuvin until he was close to death. "If you are wondering why I didn't admonish you all of these years," Yaakov told Reuvin, "it's because I was afraid that if I did, you would leave me and cling to my brother Aysav." Therefore, Yaakov waited until he was about to die and only then did he chastise Reuvin. Moshe learned from Yaakov, so he too didn't give rebuke to the Jewish nation until he was about to die.

This Rashi is very difficult to understand. Why would Yaakov be afraid that if he criticized Reuvin, it would cause him to leave and cling to Aysav? First off, it is difficult to imagine a relationship of love, mutual respect, and dedication that was greater than the one that Yaakov and his oldest son Reuvin shared. Aside from the natural sense of attachment of a son to his father, Reuvin accepted his father as his teacher, mentor, and spiritual guide. Surely, that should have allowed Reuvin to know that his father's rebuke was only for his good.

Furthermore, whenever Yaakov spoke to his son, it was with love and sensitivity. If a situation arose where Yaakov felt his son erred, a mature person like Reuvin would willingly accept words of guidance and correct his ways. Why should Yaakov have been afraid?

The answer to this question is based on the effect that criticism has upon a person. The Orchas Tzadikim (Shaar 12) explains that when you verbally attack me, it is a given that I will retaliate. It isn't much different than if you were physically assaulting me. I perceive your words as an attack against the essence of me, and it is almost within the category of self-defense for me to strike back at you. Every fiber of my being screams out to defend myself against the onslaught of your words.

Criticism is but one step below a verbal attack. It isn't quite as pointed, not quite as aggressive — but not that far off. When you criticize me, I am under attack. The essence of me, who I am, and what I stand for is being assaulted. You may not have intended it that way, but that is what I feel. There is a powerful sense of disapproval and condemnation that comes across, and I feel under attack. No one likes to be criticized, and

the easiest course is to avoid the pain by pulling away. The greater you are in my eyes, the greater the damage of your words, and the more they will drive a wedge between us.

This seems to be the answer as to why Yaakov was so afraid to criticize Reuvin. Despite the fact that Yaakov would only have intended it for his son's good, and despite the fact that Reuvin was looking for direction from his loving father, if Yaakov had rebuked Reuvin, he was afraid that it would have forced them apart, damaging the relationship, and perhaps even going so far as to drive Reuvin away. The sense of disapproval that Reuvin would have felt would have been so difficult to bear that Reuvin might well have run away to avoid it, even going so far as joining Aysav. This is a powerful illustration of the damage caused by rebuke. Even in a relationship based on mutual love and respect, criticism undoes the bond and causes a separation. Here we see it with a mature man whose priorities were straight, a man who lived his whole life for growth and recognized his father as the spiritual guide of the generation. Yet words of rebuke could have had the effect of separating and causing even such a man to go off the path.

If this concept is true for people as great as the Avos, how much more so for us? The reality is that we humans are very sensitive; we hunger for approval and despise rejection. When you criticize me, it may not be your intention, but I feel unwanted and unaccepted. I feel that you don't approve of me, so I am not respected in your eyes. That emotion is very difficult to bear. The easiest course is for me to run away — away from the situation, and away from you. For that reason, criticism is poison to all relationships. As a parent, it is one of the most noxious elements that can ruin an otherwise strong relationship. As a spouse, it can be the wedge that drives apart an otherwise happily married couple. And amongst friends, it can be the force that ends an otherwise nurturing relationship. For that reason, before a person sets out to criticize, he should remember the three cardinal rules of criticism. The first rule is: don't do it. The second rule is: don't do it. And the third rule is: don't do it. Don't do it because it hurts. Don't do it because it distances people. Most of all, don't do it because it doesn't work.

Even if your intentions are to help, and even if you only mean these words for the good of the recipient, criticism is a powerful separator that accomplishes no good, merely drives people apart, and should be avoided like the plague.



Ohr Yerushalayim Tisha B'Av Event

ט' באב

6.30 Rabbi Angel

7.00 Arik Hersh - A Survivors Story

8.00 Rabbi Marmorstein

8.35 Tefillin

8.40 Mincha followed by Maariv

Taking place at Ohr Yerushalayim, 470 Bury New Road
Men & Ladies welcome