



Ohr Yerushalayim News

בס"ד | אור ירושלים – קדושים – 7th May 2022 - Volume 14 - Issue 43

News This Week

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Jonny Berkowitz who has Yahrtzeit for his father this Weds, 10th Iyyar

Ovos uBonim

The summer program of Ovos u'Vonim starts this Shabbos at 5pm with nash for all kids that attend.

Hakomas Matzeivo

The Hakomas Matzeivo for the late Mrs Myra Levinson, mother of Tony Levinson, will take place on Sunday 8th May 12.45 at Glenduffhill Cemetery, Glasgow, G33 4RU

Burden of Reproof

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

This week, the Torah not only teaches us the basics of getting along with one's neighbor, it also codifies the elementary rules of behavior that set a moral standard for social etiquette. You shall not be a gossipmonger; you shall not stand idly by your brother's blood; you shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall not take revenge. (Leviticus 19:16-18). In one matter, however, the Torah also exhorts us to act in a way that many may believe would lead our neighbors to distance themselves from us. The Torah tells us to reprove our fellow-Jew. Obviously, the concept of "live and let live" is foreign to Judaism. In fact, the mitzvah of reproof is put right next to the verse, "you shall not stand idly by your brother's blood." Spiritual distress in the Torah's view is equivalent to physical distress. Just as we cannot stand idly by when someone is drowning, so, too, when someone is drowning spiritually we must also act. But the Torah does more than just tell us to admonish – it tells us how.

"You shall not hate your brother in your heart; reprove you shall surely reprove him and do not bear a sin upon him." The last part of the charge is difficult to understand. What does the Torah mean, "and do not bear a sin upon him"? Rashi explains that the Torah does not want you to sin while reproofing your fellow – "do not embarrass him publicly."

The actual text, however, seems to read to not bear a sin upon him, the sinner. How can we understand that?

As the Chofetz Chaim traveled around Poland and Russia to sell his works, he entered an inn in Vilna and beheld a disturbing sight. A burly young man was about to devour a hen that lay on his plate roasted and stuffed. A tall stein stood next to the succulent fowl, its rim flowing with cold brew. All of a sudden the man picked up the entire hen and stuffed it into his mouth. He washed down his meal with a giant gulp of beer, leaving the stein nearly empty. The Chofetz Chaim had never seen a Jewish person eat like that, let alone with out a bracha (blessing before food)!

He turned to the innkeeper and inquired, "Tell me a little about this man, I'd like to talk to him."

"Oh!" smirked the host while waving his hand in disgust. "There's nobody to talk to. This young man never learned a day in his life. The cantonists captured him when he was eleven and he served in the Russian army for 15 years. He hardly observes any mitzvos. It's amazing that he even eats kosher!" Then he smiled. "But I'm sure I can count on him for a three-course meal every Thursday night!"

The Chofetz Chaim was neither shocked nor amused. He simply walked over to the former soldier and shook his greasy hand warmly. After a warm greeting the Chofetz Chaim introduced himself and spoke. "I heard that you actually survived the cruel Russian army of Czar Nikolai and you never were raised amongst your people. I am sure that many times the terrible officers tried to convert you or at least force you to eat non-kosher. Yet you remained

a steadfast Jew!" Tears welled in the Chofetz Chaim's eyes as he continued talking.

"I only wish that I that I would be guaranteed a place in the World-to-Come as you will be. What strength! What fortitude! You have withstood harsher tests than sages of old."

The soldier looked up from his plate and tears welled in his eyes too. He leaned over and kissed the hand of the elderly sage. Then the Chofetz Chaim continued. "I am sure that if you get yourself a teacher and continue your life as a true Torah-observant Jew, there will be no one in this world who is as fortunate as you!"

According to the biographer of the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi M. M. Yasher, the soldier became a pupil of the Chofetz Chaim, and eventually became an outstanding tzadik (righteous Jew).

Perhaps with the words, "do not bear on him the sin," the verse is telling us much more. It tells us not to focus on the action of sin alone when admonishing someone. The Torah wants us to find a positive aspect that will raise the holy soul from murky depths.

It is easy to enumerate your friend's misdeeds – and perhaps even easier to tell him off. But, that is not the goal.

The Book of Mishlei tells us: "He who acclaims evildoers as righteous, will be cursed. But those who admonish will be blessed." (Proverbs:24:24-25) Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz (c.1505 – c.1584) of Sefad explains that the two verses work in tandem. They teach us that though false flattery is abhorrent, when used to admonish by finding the good in those who have strayed, it is to be commended. The Torah wants us to build a person, and elevate him instead of thrusting the burden of his sins upon him. In that manner, you won't bully him, you will build him.

For when finding faults in others, we bear a great responsibility. Not only do we bear the difficult and sensitive burden of proof, we bear an equally difficult and sensitive burden of reproof.

Or Does it Explode?

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

...and you should love your neighbor as yourself... (Vayikra 19:18)

Few words are more universally recognized and ring more true! However, what does it mean and how is it to be fulfilled exactly? That is a bigger subject but not necessarily more complex.

A Russian peasant farmer who had never left the small and parochial surroundings of his town had occasion to come to the big city of Moscow.

Davening Times

פרשת קדושים

1st Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	6.50pm
Candle Lighting	Not before 7.12pm
2nd Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.35pm
Candle Lighting	7.48pm - 8.05pm
Hashkomo	7.25am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.14pm
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm - 6.00pm
Mincha	2.00pm / 6.00pm / 8.46pm
Motzei Shabbos	9.51pm
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	10.00pm

He arrived at the elegant hotel with mud on his boots and overalls, looking completely disheveled. The man at the desk assigned him to a room on the top floor and treated him as any other paying customer. With key in hand and he started the long climb to the hotel room.

On the first landing there was a full-length mirror. The man, who had never seen himself before, was suddenly startled and frightened by the imposing image before him. He growled and barked to scare him away only to find that the image in the mirror threatened and shouted back the same. He ran to the next floor and confronted the fearsome giant, again exchanging harsh looks, and almost coming to blows. On the third floor they stood nose to nose and exchanged simultaneous insults as a deepening war-like attitude was taking root in 'both of them'.

Realizing that he could not escape this ugly beast-like fellow who was aggressively stalking him in the hotel, he ran quickly back to the lobby and the front desk to file a complaint. After having been given a detailed description of the perpetrator, the man at the desk understood that he had met the enemy and it was the man in the mirror. So as to save the face of his guest and to disengage the hostility he offered simple advice. "The fellow whom you confronted is here to protect people. He is really quite harmless. Trust me. If you will show him a harsh and angry countenance he will do the same. However if when you see him you just smile pleasantly and continue on your way he will nod and smile at you as well. Enjoy the rest of your stay." That's what he did and perhaps not so remarkably it worked.

It may be the very same idea of the wisest man, King Solomon, "Like the reflection of a face to a face in water so is the heart of one man to another."

An idea occurred to me that has broad and practical implications, and it may just explain loads of human phenomena on open display today. The Commandment - "Love your neighbor as yourself!" is not only a mandate to do but a simple fact of life. You can only love another to the extent you love yourself. If you witness a person, or a segment of society, or an entire culture destroying and afflicting willful harm, it is a grand projection of a profound lack of self-love, and perhaps even a deep self-loathing. After all, life is self-portrait! Learning to appreciate ourselves therefore, is a primary responsibility we have not just for ourselves but for the benefit of others as well.

A clever Rabbi said, "If someone does not love themselves, then I don't want them to love me!" I asked a famous psychologist why people who have been abused have a perverse tendency to abuse in turn. He quoted a phrase, "Hurt people hurt people!" What is the biggest hurt of all? Sometimes it is a self-afflicted wound of passivity and early resignation. The whole gauntlet of the world was created to avoid what the Zohar calls the "Bread of Shame". A person should receive even the ultra-delights of the Next World for nothing! Earning with legitimate effort is the sweetest fruit. Nothing beats living out our positive purpose on the planet. Taking with no hope to return is the ultimate corruption of the soul and the biggest hurt. The first obligation in loving a neighbor therefore is to love your- self! To love our self is to be active and effortful in developing your G-d given potential and enjoying the sweet feeling of real accomplishment.

When potential is unused does it soundly sleep or turn on the world with hostility? The poet Langston Hughes writes, "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore- And then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over- like a syrupy sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode?"

More Power To You Rabbi Pinchas Avruc (Torah.org)

"Speak to the entire assembly of the Children of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for holy am I, G-d your Lord." (Vayikra/Leviticus 15:2) Ramban (Nachmanides, Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman; 1194-1270; native of Gerona, Spain, he was one of the leading scholars of the Middle Ages and successfully defended Judaism at the famed debate in Barcelona in 1263) expounds that after the Torah had completed the commandments prohibiting illicit relationships and forbidden consumptions, but allowed marital relationships and consumption of meat and wine, the lustful individual is left to indulge in unbridled pleasure. Whether this pursuit manifests itself in his relationship with his wife or he is gluttonous with wine and meat, such an unrestrained quest simply because these actions were never forbidden by the Torah causes one to become a degenerate within the realm of the Torah. Therefore, the above verse comes and demands restraint and control when those permitted pleasures are enjoyed. We are to approach marital relationships and wine consumption with a sense of holiness and appreciate the sacred roles these endeavors possess, and remember the evils associated with these activities in the Torah with Noah and Lot.

Initially it would appear that Ramban is simply encouraging, within the framework of our pursuit of adding spirituality and holiness - a G-d consciousness - to our lives, the need to avoid excesses in the mundane

pleasures of this world. But if the Torah's point here is the positive pursuit of holiness and growth, then why does Ramban need to close with the negative reminder of the sinful drunken episodes of Noah (see Beraishis/Genesis 9:20-23, and Rashi on v. 22) and Lot (see Beraishis/Genesis 19:30-36, and Rashi on v. 31 and 33) and the personal indiscretions that resulted?

Rabbi Alter Henach Leibowitz (Rosh Yeshiva/Dean of Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim of Kew Gardens Hills, New York) elucidates that the Torah's primary message is, indeed, that the quest for physical gratification is empty and loathsome, and should be avoided even without any threat of transgression or sin. But Ramban is reminding us that the pursuit of pleasure DOES lead to sin and that knowledge offers us an extra incentive to shun these indulgences and follow the path of purity. We are, after all, human beings with physical needs and, at times, the goal of holiness is not sufficient to motivate us to put our desires in check. But by looking at the travails of Noah and Lot, by understanding the slippery slope we step onto by engaging in these behaviors, we gain a new perspective and, with it, new fortitude.

Yet a deeper understanding of the actual events surrounding Noah and Lot renews the confusion. They were not simply men who became drunk and sinned in their intoxicated state. In different ways, each of them was taken advantage of by his children. And both incidents took place after significant miraculous events: the wholesale destruction of civilizations that resulted in the annihilation of thousands of sinners and the alteration of the course of humanity. The circumstances were so unique and strange as to be beyond comparison to anything in our paradigm. From where do we draw inspiration?

Rabbi Leibowitz concludes that as exclusive as were the stressful circumstances surrounding Noah and Lot, equally exclusive is the honor and regard given to the moral standards that Noah and Lot's extremely abhorrent indiscretions violated. The holy and pure neshama (soul) we possess is more elevated than the angels themselves, and we are loath to allow it to become sullied. As such, even the slightest chance of misdeed - as Noah and Lot both actually did, their G-d fearing abhorrence thereof notwithstanding - serves to present us with the fresh perspective and strength to succeed in our quest for holiness.

Our Sages compare the revelation at Sinai, with the Jewish nation's choosing to accept the Torah, to a marriage between G-d and the Children of Israel. The weeks prior to every wedding are occupied with addressing the countless details, with the goal of assuring that everything at the momentous event is perfect. In our quest for perfection prior to our renewal of our acceptance of our Divine commitment on Shavuot, our challenge is great. Fortunately, so, too, is our potential.



LAUNCHING IN MANCHESTER

KOLLEL OHR SHMUEL

Starting MONDAY, MAY 9

אור ירושלים	Kollel 6:30 am
470 Bury New Road	Shachris - 7:10 am/ 7:20 am
Salford M7 4NU	

For more information contact:
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