



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Boaz and Shirley Dinowitz on Adi's wedding this week to Uriel Abeles.

Mazel Tov to David and Eunice Wolfson on the engagement of their grandson in Gateshead.

Thank You

Thank you to all those who helped set up the tables and chairs in the marquee on Thursday evening.

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following on the occasion of Yahrzeit this week:

Shabbos, 16th Elul Petra Rodrigues-Pereira for her father

Thursday, 21st Elul Joy Berkowitz for her father

Thursday, 21st Elul Marilyn Sacho for her father

Thursday, 21st Elul Linda Levine for her mother

Minyanim

There will be parallel Minyanim Friday night, Shabbos morning at 9.30 and Maariv Motzei Shabbos in the marquee.

1st and 3rd Minyan Shacharis during the week will place in the main Shul and 2nd Minyan in the Marquee.

Yomim Noroim

All members have been emailed regarding davening arrangements for Yomim Noroim. It is imperative to respond no later than this Sunday, 6th September, to confirm whether or not they will be attending Minyanim. For those who have booked seats and only plan on coming one of the days of Yom Tov we would appreciate you letting us know so we can plan accordingly.

Yes We Can

Boruch Mordechai Michaels

(based on a shiur by Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Weinberg)

In the 1930s in London, HaRav HaDayan Yechezkel Abramsky used to give a weekly shiur to Jewish teenagers from non religious schools at his home on Friday nights. This week more than 90 years ago, he sat down to decide what he would teach them this week: Parshas Ki Tzeizei.

Now as we know, this weeks Parsha begins with the 'Aishes Yefas Toah': the non Jewish woman to whom a Jewish soldier is fatally attracted to in the midst of battle. The Halacha is that in this special instance a Jewish soldier may marry this woman through a specific process.

At first glance Dayan Abramsky was slightly worried about the impression that this holy piece of Torah would have on these boys. After all it would be pretty bad Chinuch if they came away with a warped understanding of the Torah especially over such a sensitive and seemingly perplexing piece.

Furthermore the words of Rashi don't seem at face value to help the situation. Rashi says the reason why the Torah allows a Jewish man to act in this manner is because: "The Torah is responding to the Yetzer Horah" ie: if we would not allow him to marry her, he would want to marry her nonetheless even if it was forbidden.

Dayan Ambramsky wanted to teach these boys about the importance of making good decisions. To not give in to their animalistic urges. The importance of making elevated choices in their lives. How does this piece fit into the general framework of Torah and Mitzvot which guides us in making

Pre-Yom Tov Collection

This fund is for top-ups to help members of our Kehilla with extra Yom Tov expenses. This year especially, with financial difficulties being experienced by many. Every donation is important, however small or large and will be gratefully accepted.

Bank transfers can be made to ZY Gemach, sort code 77-19-09, A/c 29350768 reference R.H.C.

Vouchers and cheques made payable to "ZY Gemach" and cash can be left in the office or give to the Rov in Shul or home.

Many thanks in advance, תזכו למצוות ולמעשים טובים.

elevated decisions in our lives?

That night Dayan Ambramsky sat down with the boys and before staring his Dvar Torah said: "I want you to know that what I am about to teach you about the section of the Aishes Yefas Toah will obligate you in the entire Torah." What did he mean by this?

The psychological and emotional pressure in the midst of battle is immense. There is not only the fear of death but also the pressure to kill other human beings who themselves are built in the image of Hashem. Hashem did not build Jewish soldiers as superhuman. One must be realistic in understanding the limits of a human being. Dayan Abramsky said that the challenge of a Jew on the battlefield in the presence of an Aishes Yefas Toah makes it impossible for him to act in the way he normally would. However, stressed the Dayan, in any other circumstance regarding sexual misconduct, there is no leeway.

The Torah has identified the only situation in Jewish life where it is permissible to do what is normally a forbidden act. This is the only situation where a Jew cannot convince his Yetzer Tov to conquer his Yetzer Horah. But in every other situation, the Dayan explained, it is not impossible to fulfill the edicts of the Torah.

What the Torah is teaching us in the piece should fill us with confidence. No matter how hard we think a specific mitzvah will be, the Torah knows that we can succeed. No Mitzvah besides that of the Aishes Yefas Toah is impossible the Dayan concluded.

May we enter the new year at Rosh Hashanah with confidence that we are

Davening Times

פרשת כי תבוא

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	6.45pm
Candle Lighting	6.58pm-7.10pm
Shacharis - Hashkomo	7.30am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.46am
2nd Shacharis	9.30am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	7.34pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Motzei Shabbos	8.39pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.30am / 9.30am
Mon / Thus	6.50am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.50am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.25pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm

able to grow in Torah, Mitzvot and Maasim Tovim.

Fine Print

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

There is nothing more disheartening than a curse. And this week the Torah singles out specific violations that are worthy of the epithet, “cursed is he who...” The Torah tells us that the nation was divided into two parts. Six tribes stood on Mount Grizim, and the rest stood on Mount Ebal. The Levites began to specify the sins that the Torah prefaced with the harsh warning, “accursed is one who,” and the nation would respond amen. Included among the terrible crimes are one who moves his neighbors’ boundary and one who misleads a blind man on the road. The curses also include carnal sins and striking a person covertly (Deuteronomy 27:12-25). In fact, almost each curse is directed toward a sin that entails some degree of surreptitiousness. All except the final curse, “Accursed is the one who does not uphold the words of the Torah to perform them” (Deuteronomy 27:26). Rashi explains the last admonition as a general warning to heed all the laws in the Torah lest one suffer the curses.

The Ramban, however, softens Rashi’s severe interpretation. He explains that the curse is not cast on one who actually commits a sin, but rather on those who scoff at the validity of the Torah’s laws.

Following his simple explanation, the Ramban writes something startling. “It appears to me that the words ‘accursed is the one who does not uphold the words of the Torah’ refers to one who is called upon to do the hagbah ceremony in the synagogue and does not stretch out the Torah wide enough for the congregation to see the words.”

For years I was terribly disturbed by that explanation. I could not fathom the sense of comparison. How can the Ramban equate one who does a poor hagbah with those who surreptitiously undermine the welfare of their neighbor or create clandestine instability within the family? How can we attribute the harsh words of accursed to one who does not have what it takes to do a proper hagbah?

On a whistle stop tour during his term in office Calvin Coolidge’s train stopped in St. Louis where a crowd of nearly 2,500 people gathered to hear him. He was sleeping in his rail car when the train stopped at the station and Colonel Starling, Coolidge’s personal assistant and agent-in-charge, nudged him awake.

“Mr. President,” he said while tapping him on the shoulder, “there are almost three thousand people who are waiting to hear you!”

The remarkably restrained Coolidge and the first lady stepped out onto the train’s observation platform. The crowd applauded wildly. Then the local master of ceremonies called for silence. “The President is about to speak now!”

The President stood silently with his wide smile. He straightened his jacket and smoothed his hair and appeared very presidential. The crowd waited anxiously for him to begin his speech. The President waited, too. Just then, there was a hiss of air as the brakes were released and the train began pulling away from the station. The President, still smiling, raised his hand, waved, and spoke. He said, “Goodbye.”

Perhaps the Ramban is telling us more. When one displays the parchment of the Torah but does not unfurl the columns, he deprives a congregation of seeing the true essence of Torah. He parades with a Torah scroll with the shiny handles and the traditional parchment. It looks beautiful, and majestic. It even looks very Jewish. And the crowd waits for the real context to be shown and seen. But if those columns are not unfurled for the congregation to read, the stark reality of G-d’s command is hidden behind the splendor of the moment. The one who does hagbah is in effect misleading the blind, sneaking a false border and making overt displays of honesty that are rife with deceit. For in reality a serious truth is being underhandedly hidden. And for that, the Ramban links him with the definitive consequences of those who morally deprave Torah ideals.

Obviously, one who proudly unfurls the truth and tells the story as it appears, is worthy of the greatest blessings offered in the Torah. For there is no greater blessing than the open honesty and true teaching of Hashem’s will. Lifting a Torah, unopened, in front of a waiting audience is nothing more than disappointing an excited crowd who are waiting for a substantive speech. You may be waving enthusiastically, but all you are saying is goodbye.

Spiritual Ups and Downs

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read the parsha of Ki Savo—when you will enter the Land of Israel—which begins with the commandment to bring the first fruits to the Temple in Yerushalayim. This is called the mitzvah of Bikurim. There is a passuk later on in the parsha, after Bikurim and a number of other commandments,

which really hits upon an issue that I think plagues all of us to varying degrees at one point or another.

“Ha’yome ha’zeh Hashem Elokecha m’tzav’cha la’a’sos es ha’chukim v’es ha’mishpatim {On this day Hashem, your G-d, is commanding you to do the laws and judgments}[26:16].”

Why does the passuk say that on this day Hashem is commanding? Hadn’t most mitzvos already been given at Sinai?

The Ramban explains that Moshe had now completed his task of teaching Bnei Yisroel all of the commandments. Therefore it was only from that day that Bnei Yisroel were commanded to do all of the laws and judgments.

Rashi, however, takes a different approach. Quoting the Medrash he explains: Every day they must be like new {k’chadashim} in our eyes, as if we had just been commanded.

Unbelievable. Imagine if Hashem would come forth and speak to us, giving us clear instructions as to what actions are in our best interests. Imagine the motivation and determination that we’d have to fulfill those instructions. According to Rashi, the passuk is exhorting us to feel that way every single day—k’chadashim {like new}.

But how can we maintain that freshness and excitement—that k’chadashim? We know that we human beings have a tremendous capacity to adjust to things.

On the first morning of camp, my wife and I were woken by the sounds of birds walking on our ceiling. They were inside the building and were having quite a time on the drop-ceiling of our room. The ceiling kept sagging under their weight and we were petrified that the birds would drop through the drop-ceiling with all of their droppings in tow! I thought to myself that if this is going to be a daily ‘Close Encounter of the Fou/wl Kind’ I’m never going to get a proper amount of sleep and I simply won’t survive the summer. However, on the second day I found it far less annoying. By the third day, even though they seemed to be having quite a party up there, I simply didn’t hear it. I had gotten used to it and it no longer moved me.

If that is the nature of man, how can we be commanded to feel as if the Torah was given today—that its words are k’chadashim? How can we feel freshness in our service to Hashem? We’ve already ‘been there done that’. On whatever level of observance we’re at, we’ve done what we do perhaps thousands of times already. How can we reach the level of k’chadashim?

Rav Volbe, in his Alay Shur, deals with the cycle of spiritual ups and downs that we are all subjected to. How at times it feels fresh and exciting and at times we feel like robots, mechanically going through the motions. How we can then begin to question ourselves: Is this really me? Where have the feelings gone? If I’m feeling (or not feeling) this way then maybe this really isn’t for me...

He quotes from the Sefer Hayashar that one must realize right from the start that this is part and parcel of spiritual growth. An intrinsic part of this growth process is the ups and downs—the swings between the feelings of intimacy and the feelings of detachment. Having these feelings is as clear an indication as one can have that this is where you belong. This is for you.

It would be like giving up baseball because you once got a strike while at bat. Well I guess baseball just isn’t for me... I’m clearly not cut out to be a basketball player because I missed a foul shot... It’s part of the process.

But if that is so, doesn’t the passuk become even harder to understand? If the ups and downs are inevitable and intrinsic parts of the spiritual growth process, how can I be commanded and expected to feel as if they are new? I’ve done it so many times already... I’m feeling distant and detached...

The Sefer Hayashar writes further that the factor which will determine if one is feeling intimate in his service to Hashem or detached from Him is chidush {newness}.

One can make sure that his service doesn’t become rote by constantly searching for new insights and understandings. Finding chidush in oneself and in one’s service. The chidush can make everything k’chadashim.

Perhaps, that is the explanation of the commandment that we began with. We seem to be commanded to view the Torah as newly given each day. How can one possibly do that and furthermore, how can we be commanded to do something that seems to be beyond our nature and grasp?

Perhaps the commandment is in fact a very tangible one. Work at finding and infusing freshness into your fulfillment of the mitzvos. Study. Search. Open your eyes. Open your hearts. You’ll thereby minimize the downs and maximize the ups—have short bouts of detachment surrounded by extended spells of intimacy.

Find chidush and you’ll find the mitzvos to be k’chadashim.