



Ohr Yerushalayim News

24th September 2016 - Volume 9 - Issue 9 - כי תבוא - כ"א אלול תשע"ו

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Rafi Eljarrat on the Bar Mitzvah this Shabbis of Gavi. Kiddush takes place after Davening in the Shul hall.

Mazel Tov to Dr & Mrs Howard Sacho on the recent birth of a grandson to Mr and Mrs Refoel Sacho.

Stone Setting

The Stone setting for Shelley Gordon, late mother of Daniel Gordon will take place at 12:30pm on Sunday 25th at Whitefield Beis Olam (Phillips Park).

Rov's Yomim Tovim Collection

The Rov has commenced his pre-Yomim Tovim collection for local needy families. Please donate generously directly to the Rov. Vouchers can be made payable to Ahavas Chessed.

Yomim Noraim Seating

As in previous years, to ensure that everyone is allocated with a specific seat it would be appreciated if you confirm whether or not you or any of your family will be davening with us over ראש השנה and/or יום כפור. Please contact us via email office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk or text 07779 681 354 no later than Sunday 25th September.

Lost Property

All lost property left in the building will be available to collect from the foyer till Erev Parshas Nitzovim, after which they will be disposed of.

Getting Real With Reality Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

If you do not obey G-d, your G-d . . . that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. (Devarim 28:15)

One week until Rosh Hashanah, ב"ה. Are you ready? "Ready for what?" you may ask. "All that time in shul? All that cooking? All those guests?" Well, not exactly. I'm asking more about being ready for what is supposed to happen on those days, Above and below. In essence, I'm really asking if you are yet real with the holiday itself.

Real with the holiday? What's that supposed to mean?

What does it mean to be real with anything? It means that you understand the opportunity a situation offers you at any given moment in time, to the point of not missing it. A person has limited time and resources, and a huge part of life is about wasting neither. You have to know when and where to use both of them.

The Talmud says:

The righteous, even in death are called "living" . . . Evil people, even while alive are called "dead." (Brochos 18a)

"Living" in this sense is obviously about more than properly functioning body organs. The "living" here are those people who correctly use the opportunity of life, and the "dead" are those who waste it. They squander their time on earth and misuse their resources until they are part of the "living dead."

Why, though, are the righteous called "living" if they are actually dead? When a person uses the opportunity of life correctly, it still serves him

after he has passed from this world, as if he is still alive. He leaves a positive legacy based upon his past good deeds, deeds that still impact the world after he has died.

This is what we are judged for on Rosh Hashanah, how real we were, are, with life. The Talmud says:

Three books are opened on Rosh HaShanah, one for completely wicked people, one for completely righteous people, and one for those in the middle. The completely righteous people are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. The completely wicked people are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those in the middle have their judgment suspended until Yom Kippur. If they merit it, they are written for life, and if not, they are written for death. (Rosh Hashanah 16b)

This statement can be seen as a line that stretches between two points. To the extreme left of the line, the "home" of the completely evil, is the category, "Not Real," as in not real with life. At the other end, where the completely righteous "live" is "Real." The rest of mankind can be found at billions of different points along this line, depending upon how real each person is with life.

It is a struggle. It is the struggle of life. It is actually the battle between the yetzer tov, man's good inclination, and the yetzer hara, his evil inclination. The yetzer hara is the partier, the one who wants life to be a blast. Fun catches his attention and energizes him to act. Just watch how many people, even as adults, literally run to have fun.

The yetzer tov is real with life. It not only knows about the concept of death, physical and spiritual, it takes them seriously. It is not one to throw caution to the wind, to sacrifice long term gain for short term pleasure. It knows that the temporal is only meant to be a means to the eternal.

The yetzer hara was the author of, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Though it was literal during the French Revolution, it is certainly symbolic at all other times. This is why we are born completely selfish, since we do not receive a yetzer tov until later. Maturity is mostly a function of selflessness. A large part of growing up is learning how to wait for pleasures in life, how to curb the need

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת כי תבוא

1st Mincha / Candle Lighting	5.40pm / Not before 5.49pm
2nd Mincha / Candle Lighting	6.49pm / No later than 6.49pm
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.54am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	6.41pm
Rov's Shiur Hilchos Ellul / Y.N.	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	7.51pm
Sun	6.00am / 7.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.00am / 6.45am / 7.45am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.00am / 6.55am / 7.45am
Mincha & Maariv	6.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

for instant gratification in pursuit of nobler goals.

Enter this week's parshah. Blessings and curses. Ninety-eight threats. Some more gruesome than others. The parshah is so scary that some congregations used to omit it out of fear. Once upon a time, Jews took its threats seriously, probably because they witnessed their actualization firsthand.

Make no mistake about it: G-d does not enjoy punishing His people. He makes this clear by beginning with a whole list of blessings and promises of good. He starts with this because He wants us to know that this is the way it ought to be, the way He wants it to be.

However, the Torah says, the good is not free, nor should it be. It is the result of living a Torah lifestyle. It is the product of working on living up to your spiritual potential to the best of your personal ability. It is the spoils of war when we defeat the yetzer hara and its drive for temporal pleasures. None of it is to be taken for granted.

To drive the point home, the Torah then launches into the many curses for doing exactly this. The Torah is not saying that G-d is vindictive. The Torah is saying, "Understand what it means to stray from Torah, to your spiritual health and to the health of the world.

It's like a doctor who tells his patient, "If you watch what you eat and take care of yourself, you can live a long, healthy life. If you don't, your health will not take care of itself. On the contrary, it will deteriorate rapidly. You will get weaker faster, sicker more often. You might even get cancer, G-d forbid. Let me take you and show you patients who did exactly that, and how sick they became. It is truly tragic."

Physical health is one of those things for which there is no automatic status quo. It has to be maintained, or it worsens. Creation is the same way. It was founded on chaos, and if man does not actively work on keeping chaos at bay, it keeps coming back and wreaking havoc.

All the countless wars throughout history? Chaos. All the plagues that have killed countless people? Chaos. All the insanity that has intellectually infected society? Chaos again, the result of man not making enough of an effort to control it.

We were give free will to do exactly this. It is our most important distinguishing ability. It is what earns us reward in the World-to-Come. Yet, how many people actually pay attention to it? How many people keep track of just how many REAL free will choices they make on a daily basis?

What IS a real free will choice? It is not choosing between vanilla or chocolate ice cream. It is desiring to do something the Torah forbids, and choosing not to do it instead. Or, it is not feeling like doing that which the Torah commands, and choosing to do it anyhow. It is choosing not to "eat" that spiritually unhealthy thing when almost every molecule in your body is pushing you to "consume" it.

Once there used to be only two categories with respect to the illness of Diabetes: "Diabetes" and "No Diabetes." Since people did not recognize in time when they were transitioning from the latter to the former, the Medical Profession created a new category called "Pre-Diabetes," to act as a warning buffer for people moving in the wrong direction.

Does it work? Does it help people stop eating too much sugar in time to avoid becoming diabetic? It all depends upon the person. If he is real with how close he is to becoming diabetic, and more importantly, the consequences of becoming so, then it works. If not, then the person eats sugary foods thinking that he is safe when he really is not.

One of the greatest obstacles to becoming real with life today is hester panim, G-d's "hidden face." Evil exists and is even rampant. People get away with so much. They break the Torah with impunity, or so it seems. Although the Holocaust was less than 100 years earlier, Torah consequences have no teeth today.

Even the Holocaust is not necessarily viewed as Divine retribution for straying from Torah. Religious and secular alike suffered equally, even righteous people as well. The Holocaust is a complicated topic, and many prefer to not discuss it in terms of religious implications.

Thus, becoming real with life and free will is really up to the individual.

Each person has to take the time to understand that G-d is not only here today, He's as actively involved in our lives as ever before. The rules of Creation still apply, even if we can't see them in action.

The 10 days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are a tremendous gift that no other nation has. It's like attending a 10-day seminar on the reality of existence and how to work with it to maximize the opportunity of life. It only works, though, if you "attend" it. The more seriously you take the Ten Days of Repentance, the more life becomes real to you.

Physical Reward

D Fine (Shortvort.com)

Every time reward (and punishment) appears in the Torah, they are always stated in physical form. For example, if we are good then the Torah promises rain in its correct time, good crops, etc.

Why does the Torah not speak about the real reward for keeping mitzvos; Olam Haba?

The Kli Yakar (Vayikra 26:12) has a great piece summarising seven approaches to this question found in the Rishonim.

We shall briefly mention them all.

a) The physical rewards here are the 'expenses account.' HaShem tells us that if we perform his mitzvos then He will take care of our financial situation so we will be able to devote more time to Torah and mitzvos (Rambam hilchos Teshuva 9:1)

b) HaShem hid the real reward because we would not understand it with our physical and material constructs (Ibn Ezra Devarim 32:39)

c) The Torah does hint at the spiritual rewards via the opposite scenarios (e.g. kareis for certain sins) (Ramban and Rabeinu Bachayei)

d) These physical rewards are mentioned in the Torah to show HaShem's hashgacha (complete supervision and control) in this world - that HaShem responds to our actions and deals with us accordingly (Kuzari 1:104-106, Ran)

e) Before the Torah was given, there used to be certain forms of idolatry which promised to bring rain and further the development of crops. So when HaShem banned idolatry, He promised rain, etc. for keeping the Torah instead. But the Torah never needed to mention anything about the reward in the Next World (Rav Sa'adya Ga'on and Moreh Nevuchim)

f) The Torah hints to spiritual rewards via the fact that HaShem rested His Shechinah in the Mishkan. If HaShem shows His Presence to some degree in this physical world, how much more so will we enjoy the pleasure of His Presence in the Next World (Kuzari, Ran)

g) Reward in this world is based on the majority - if most people perform mitzvos then there will be ample rain, and this is what the Torah details. But reward in the Next World is calculated on an individual basis (Sefer Halkrim, Ramban Devarim 11:13)

First's Fruits

Ben First (Shortvort.com)

This weeks Parsha starts with the mitzvah of Bikurim (the obligation to take the first fruits up to Yerushalayim). In Breishis Rabbah it says that it was for Bikkurim that the world was created. The Nesivos Sholom asks what is so significant about the mitzvah of Bikkurim as opposed to other mitzvos that the world should be created for it?

He answers that the concept is emphasised in many sources (Midrash and Zohar) that Hashem most desires when man in the lower world serves him. Thus all the other worlds were created in the merit of man.

What happens when a person does the mitzvah of Bikkurim? He has toiled all year on the field by the sweat of his brow to produce this fruit. The culmination of hours of time and effort, he has finally reached the time when he can enjoy the results of his labour, the moment he has been waiting for all year and of course he has a tremendous desire to pick it and swallow it there and then.

What is the first thing he does? He immediatly designates it to G-d. Even though this fruit does not have much intrinsic worth since it is highly valued in the eyes of man G-d wants us to give it to him.

This is the ultimate in self- sacrifice and the greatest elevation of the lower world and that is why in the merit of Bikurim the world was created.