



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ז כסלו תשפ"ה - מנקץ - 28th December 2024 - Volume 17 - Issue 21

## News This Week

### To'ameho

There will be no To'ameho this week

### Kiddush

There will be a Kiddush this week in honour of Shabbos Channukah

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Linda Ross for the Yahrzeit of her father on Shabbos, 27th Kislev

### Ovos uBonim

Ovos uBonim will start at the later time of 1 1/4 hours after Shabbos for 45 mins

## How To Make It Your Torah

Rabbi J Rubinstein

The tale is told of two people who opened furniture stores in the same town. One of them was very successful and the other was not. Eventually the unsuccessful one asked the other storekeeper, "You are selling exactly the same product as I am selling, to the same market, why are you successful and I am failing?" His friend replied, "When I receive the furniture from the supplier, I polish it, tighten any fixtures which need tightening, and add little bits and pieces, to make the quality of the furniture even better. By the time I am finished, it really is my furniture that I am selling. When you receive the furniture from the supplier, you put it straight in to the showroom, so you are just selling the suppliers product".

This parable explains approximately, the passage of Talmud which comments on the first two verses of תהילים (the book of Psalms). It says there, *אשרי האיש.....כי אם בתורת ה' חפצו ובתורתו יהנה יומם ולילה*, "Happy is the man .....But his desire is in the Torah of Hashem and in his Torah he meditates by day and by night". The Talmud points out, the verse starts off by referring to the Torah as the "Torah of Hashem" but then continues by calling it, "And in his Torah" meaning the Torah of the person who is learning it. The reason is, when a person strives day and night to learn and understand the Torah, it is as if the Torah becomes his Torah. It is the extra effort and input which makes all the difference.

This is the underlying theme of Chanukah. The Sefer Beis Halevi says, the Maccabees could have solved the problem of only having enough oil to burn for one day by using extremely thin wicks, and then the oil would have lasted for much longer. But they did not do this, says the Beis Halevi, because they wanted the flames of the Menorah to be *מהודר*-as beautiful as possible. In keeping with this, there a discussion between the house of Hillel and the house of Shammai whether one should kindle a single light on the first night and add one more each successive night or kindle eight lights on the first night and one less each following night. But the truth is that according to the Shulchan Aruch, it is basically sufficient to kindle only one light each night. Varying the number of lights according to the number of days, is only a *מהדרין מן המהדרין*-an extra degree of beatifying the Mitzvah. Nevertheless, the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai had a whole discussion about it, because that is what Chanukah is all about, i.e. making the extra effort to do the Mitzvos in the best way possible. In a crucial description of the history of the story of Chanukah, the commentary on the Shulchan Aruch known as the Bach (written by Rav Yoel Sirkis) states, "With Chanukah, the evil decree fell upon

## The Rov's Gemoro Shiur will בס"ד begin

מסכת חגיגה

on Thursday 2nd January after Maariv at

8.20pm - New participants welcome!

(Shiur takes place Monday, Wednesday and Thursday nights 8.20-9.15pm approximately)

them because they became lax in the services of the Temple ...and when they repented and demonstrated self-sacrifice for the Temple services, Hashem saved them"

It was once said "Bad education, is when the information goes from the exercise book of the teacher to the exercise book of the pupil, without passing through the minds of either". Our study of Torah, and fulfilment of Mitzvos, must be done with exactly the opposite of that approach. We must endeavour to absorb them in to our very being, by striving to study Torah and do Mitzvos in the very best possible way, and thereby ensure that the light of Torah will continue to burn brightly.

## Chanuka 5785

Dani Epstein

Resplendent in burnished armour, the Greek officer stood tall next to the newly constructed altar in the small village of Modiin, and smiled arrogantly as he called out: "Who is your priest here?"

Matisyohu stepped forward. "I am," he said. "What do you want from us? Why have you brought this abomination into our village?"

"I am here by the order of Antiochus, your king. You will sacrifice this creature on the altar, which will elevate you from the rabble that you are to the more civilised culture that Hellenization will bring you," said the officer.

"I will do nothing of the kind," replied Matisyohu hotly. "Now take away your altar and animal, and be gone."

One of the bystanders, Menelaus, pulled Matisyohu by his sleeve and whispered to him urgently.

"Look, I know you are very religious and all, and you will willingly sacrifice your life, but think of the women and children. Do you think they want to die, or worse? Think about everyone else here. Did you ask them about their choice? Maybe most of us are not willing to die for some hypothetical notions? Anyway, isn't this *pikuach nefesh*?"

Matisyohu angrily tore his sleeve away.

"Are you out of your mind? No, I don't particularly want to die. However, there is one of him, and dozens of us, so as it happens this

## Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	3.40pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.45pm
15 Minute Parsha Shiur	Following
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.18am
Mincha	1.30pm / 3.35pm
Seuda Shlishis	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	4.55pm
Ovos uBonim	6.10pm
Sun - Thurs חנוכה	7.00am / 8.00am / 9.30am
Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.45pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

is not exactly pikuach nefesh, now that you are getting all from on me. Look at you – you dress like them, you talk like them and even have a Hellenic name. Don't lecture me about pikuach nefesh when it's convenient to you."

"Then," said the Menelaus loudly as he walked to the altar. "I will volunteer myself to sacrifice to the idol."

Matisyohu turned on Menelaus, shaking with fury.

"Do that, and I will strike you down. I am not exaggerating. Lift the knife, and you die."

"I warn you not to interfere," said the Greek officer, stepping forward.

"You are a foolish man if you think you scare me," replied Matisyohu.

Menelaus lifted the knife and pressed it to the throat of the sacrifice. In a swift movement, Matisyohu grabbed the knife out of his hand, and to everyone's shock, a few moments later, Menelaus and the Greek officer lay on the ground, dying from mortal wounds.

The next day, Matisyohu and his family had fled to the hills.

However, he was not content at leaving things as they were.

"Father, why are you so vexed?" Asked Elozor, some time later.

"My dear son, if you would venture beyond the realms of your fields and books, perhaps you would have heard what I did."

"Father, I could either spend time in idle chit-chat in the marketplace, or study Torah in that time. Which of the two would you prefer me to do?"

"Sometimes," growled Matisyohu, "One has to get out and smell the roses, my boy."

"Then tell me what annoys you, father."

"I'm not annoyed; I am horrified and livid. Do you have any idea what these Seleucid pagans are doing to the Beis Hamikdosh now?"

"I confess I do not, father. To be honest, I think this is something we simply have to ignore and move on. Simply surviving day-to-day is hard enough. Look at all the trouble we have to take just to carry out a bris, and we are hiding in caves."

Matisyohu trembled visibly in anger and shouted at him.

"Absolutely not! This has gone too far! How can we stand aside and allow them to profane the holiest place on earth with a filthy pagan altar? Do you know that they are sacrificing pigs on it? In the Beis Hamikdosh? And you want to sit there and ignore it?"

Elozor held out his hands beseechingly.

"Father, please do not vex yourself like this. Am I happy about the situation? Certainly not. But I also have to have a pragmatic approach to the current circumstances. There is little we can do. It's not as if we can fight them."

"That is exactly what we can do," replied his father. "We will go to war. There is no way we can just sit back and hope this too will pass. It's about time we did something about it."

Elozor looked very worried.

"Father, what you know about war is roughly what I know about the gods of these pagans. As it is, they have a pretty large and highly trained army. And an elephant cavalry, as well a large horse cavalry. Exactly how do you plan to fight them then?"

Just then his brother Yehudoh walked into the house. Elozor turned to him hopefully.

"Brother mine, perhaps you can explain this to father."

Yehudoh listened to his brother summarise the conversation, then shook his head.

"Elozor, father is not given to flights of fancy. No army is invincible." He turned to his father. "I'm sure you have a plan, but perhaps you are to share it with us?"

"I do. We cannot tackle them head on. Even if we raise an army, and that in itself is not a given, no matter our numbers we will always be at a disadvantage, so we have to fight them quite differently."

"Just a moment, please!" Cried Elozor. "Since when was our way to fight? Since when were we warriors? We are farmers, scholars – not fighters. We battle in the Beis HaMedrash, not the battlefield!"

Matisyohu frowned deeply.

"Elozor, the very books we study every day are replete with warriors, and they are all our ancestors, figuratively if not actually so. Recall Chana who begged Hashem for a child – but not any child. 'Zera anoshim' is what she asked for. And which anoshim – which men – did she have in mind? Shaul and Dovid (Berachos 31b). What praise did the women sing about Shaul and Dovid, do you recall? That Shaul

killed in the thousands, and Dovid in the tens of thousands."

He looked at his sons.

"From our very inception as a nation, we were warriors. Of course, when we first left Mitzrayim, that was not the case. We had just been freed as slaves and did not have the will, strength or state of mind to fight. But not long after, even our revered teacher Moshe, who brought the Luchos down Har Sinai, was in the thick of battle. He was the greatest novi who ever walked the earth, the only true source of absolute Halocho, and yet there he was swinging a sword and felling his enemies."

Matisyohu paused for a moment.

"There is a time for everything. Sometimes we work, sometimes we learn Torah, sometimes we relax over a fine meal on Shabbos or Chag. Now we have to fight."

Elozor was not entirely convinced, but that slowly changed as Matisyohu plotted.

A small group of men turned up in a cave a few days later, and Matisyohu and his sons were there as well.

"Chaverim," said Matisyohu. "Understand that what we are about to undertake is very perilous. We could all die in the process. So be exceedingly cautious who you speak to of this and understand that much has to be done before even a single Seleucid dies. We need men, and we need weapons. The pagans do not trust us and are watching us carefully. So, be wise, be cautious and above all be brave." Over the next few months, the clandestine army grew slowly. Weapons were stashed and training proceeded in great secrecy.

"Father, explain again what this is supposed to teach us?" Asked Elozor after having fallen off a log spanning a small brook for the umpteenth time.

"This is all about balance. We will be rushing in and out at great speed, since we cannot engage the enemy directly. For that, we have to be quick, nimble and able to move in all sorts of conditions without hesitation or falling."

The training was brutal and harsh, but everyone participated gladly. Every evening after a training session, Matisyohu would rally the men with rousing speeches, drawing on Tanach for inspiration and motivation.

"After all," he ended one of his speeches. "We strive to serve Hashem, nothing more, nothing less. How can we say that with a straight face when we cannot keep Shabbos and the Beis Hamikdosh is profaned by the vilest of profanities? We are not fighting for a more luxurious life, nor are we fighting for simple freedom. We are fighting for our essence. We can no longer be subjugated by these vile pagans."

It was only a few weeks later that they set out for their first action. Matisyohu spoke to the men before they set out.

"Now that I have read the parshah of the Kohen Moshuach laMilchomoh to you, let me add a few words. We might not see success tonight. This is the first time we fight together. We are not battle-hardened warriors like our enemy is. Do not let an initial loss discourage you. Win or lose, this is but our first fight. Winning the war is not about winning every battle."

They trekked in the light of the moon for about an hour until they came to a Seleucid barracks. Some were armed with swords the had stolen from their enemy, others with crudely fashioned spears. Matisyohu blew three blasts on a shofar, and the men surged forwards silently.

The soldiers in the barracks never stood a chance. Most of them were not woken by the shofar blasts, and by the time they realised they were being attacked, they were slaughtered in their beds. After a brief battle lasting a short time, over a hundred soldiers lay dead and the barracks was burning, whilst the small army melted back into the night, leaving behind chaos and confusion for the next day.

When they arrived back at their original meeting point, Matisyohu checked his men.

"Well, it seems Hashem has blessed us this night. This is our first blow, and what a deadly blow we struck. Everyone is accounted for – we have not lost a single fighter, Baruch Hashem. It will not always be thus, but as a start, this is a tremendous success."

The next attack was equally successful, and the following series of night raids emboldened them further. More importantly, the news of Matisyohu's army spread, and ranks rapidly grew.

Sitting around the table was a council of war, consisting of Matisyohu

and his sons. At this point they had grown from a rag-tag guerilla group to a small army of some thousands of people.

"Understand this," said Matisyohu. "We have had our successes, and we have had our losses. However, if we consider exactly what we have been up against, it is astonishing we have progressed this far. Do you now how many miracles we have witnessed without realising? How many times have we engaged the enemy and come away with but a few casualties? We cannot expect to wage war without losing soldiers. This is the nature of war. We are not the generation of Yehoshua and I am not a novi, and yet even Yehoshua lost soldiers in battle, as did Dovid HaMelech."

He looked around the table.

"Since we are fighting for the sake of Hashem we have to understand that He certainly has had His hand in our victories, and the minimal losses we have suffered so far. So tomorrow we will do battle against the pagans in Beis Zur."

The next day dawned, and the Seleucid army was attacked in a series of hit-and-run raids that left them bloodied and confused, not knowing which direction the next attack was coming from. Wave after wave of Jewish soldiers swept in, wreaked carnage and then ran off. The news came of the death of Antiochus IV and the Seleucids retreated.

The Jews were elated and marched into Yerushalayim triumphantly. When they arrived at the Beis Hamikdosh, they were horrified to see how far the defilement had gone.

"Father, what are we to do? They have turned the whole House of Hashem into a pagan temple!"

"Calm down. We have a few days work, but nothing we cannot handle. There are more than enough men to help. We start here at the gate and work our way inwards until everything pagan has been destroyed. Then we will repair the damage we will cause in the process."

"How long do you expect this to take?"

"Just over a week, I would imagine. We have to proceed cautiously, and bear in mind that this is the Mokom Hamikdosh – we can't simply rush around dragging things about."

A few hours later a soldier came rushing towards him, carrying an earthenware amphora.

"Is this what I think it is?" He asked breathlessly.

"Where did you find it," asked Matisyohu.

"Under a loose slab. It must have rolled there, or perhaps someone stashed it there. It's quite greasy and look – it's still sealed!"

He slowly handed it over to Matisyohu, who examined it closely.

"Hmm. This is definitely a jug of oil. The seal is fully intact. Excellent! Tonight we will light a menorah!"

The young soldier looked rather uncomfortable, and Matisyohu noticed it.

"Out with it, boy. If you have a question, I will try to answer it. Don't be so nervous!"

"There is no menorah to light. And as it is, even if there was one, we would make the oil to may if we poured it into a lamp or something."

"Excellent question. Let me deal with your questions in reverse. Since we are all to may meis, this is not an issue. True, under the circumstances we are not required to light a menorah, however I consider this a sign from Hashem. The fact that we have one undefiled jug of oil is quite astonishing, given the carnage those pagans wreaked here."

Matisyohu wrapped the jug delicately in his cloak, and placed it under his arm.

"Regarding your first question, use your initiative and built a menorah out of whatever we have."

"We do not have gold."

"That's fine, anything will do. Iron, wood, whatever you can scrounge up, and get some of the men to help you assemble it."

"But what will do tomorrow night?"

"Build a menorah that will last more than a day, is my suggestion."

"No, I don't mean that. We have only one jug of oil. That will last at best one night."

"And that, my boy, is fine. We are not trying to light the menorah of the mitzvah, this is a symbolic gesture at best; but a very important one. The whole point of our war was to free ourselves from the pagan influence and restore the Beis Hamikdosh. We have achieved both. So, with this menorah, we indicate that whilst we cannot fulfil the

mitzvah correctly, we will accept this gift from Hashem and use it to demonstrate exactly why we have gone through all this horror. If we find no more oil, then so be it. In a few days, we will have some more oil as it is."

The soldier looked a bit surprised, and Matisyohu continued.

"This is my opinion. But if you ask my Elozor, he is a talmid chochom, and he will answer your questions quite differently. I spoke to him earlier, and he was quite insistent that there are several reasons why we should attempt to light a menorah, from a Halachic standpoint. And so, one way or another, a menorah we will light tonight."

Of course a menorah was lit. And its lighting became a beacon of light for Klal Yisroel forever afterwards. So, when the descendants of these valiant fighters entered Gaza two millennia later, they cleared a square in the middle of a city, built a mound several meters high and lit a huge menorah as a symbol of the endurance of Am Yisroel.

May Hashem give the IDF the opportunity to rescue to hostages very, very soon.

## Take Care

Dov Brysh

Close your eyes. Imagine the prison Yosef was in. What do you visualise? Nope, you're wrong. Well, almost certainly wrong anyway. I would hazard a guess that you might have imagined something a bit like a medieval dungeon, or, if you're slightly more historically aware, at the very best something like a bronze-age fortress. Wrong and wrong. Archaeologists have discovered a fair few Middle Kingdom Ancient Egyptian prisons, and they were little more than holes in the ground lined with sun-baked mudbricks. That's it. Generally, they appear (or so the papyri that have been translated thus far indicate) to have been used as holding areas for political criminals before execution – think of the baker in last week's parsha for example. Yosef was in one for 2 years. 2 years. That's 2 years in a hole in the ground in a desert country with minimal food and drink, no way to clean himself, and almost no human contact.

If it was you, if you had just spent 2 years in a pit, and then the palace guards coming calling and saying "listen mate, you're coming out and you're off to see the king" what do you think would happen? There would be jubilant shouts of "liiiiim'm outta here!" and dust-trails, that's what. And when you get to Pharaoh in all likelihood your head would be spinning – the sheer speed and size of the change would be just so incredibly overwhelming. And Yosef, what does he do? Well, shall we have a look at the פסוק?

וישך פרעה ויקרא את-יוסף וירצהו מן-הבור ויגלח ויחלף שמלתיו ויבא אל- (פרעה) (מאיד)

We have been conditioned by our primary school teachers to essentially misunderstand what's happening here as simply Yosef being completely passive, getting dragged out of the pit and taken to Pharaoh. Wrong (goodness, this is becoming a habit...). Let's translate phrase by phrase:

וישך פרעה - And Pharaoh sent

ויקרא את-יוסף - and he called for Yosef

וירצהו מן-הבור - and THEY hurried him from the pit

ויגלח - and HE shaved/cut his hair

ויחלף שמלתיו - and HE changed HIS clothes

ויבא אל-פרעה - and HE came to Pharaoh

So, to start with Pharaoh does some royal proclaiming, and THEY, that is the guards, try to hurry Yosef to come out of the pit and get a shuffy on to Pharaoh – can't keep the king waiting, especially when he's in distress. But then, we are told HE does some things. Who is the HE? It's clear from the end of the פסוק that it's Yosef – "HE came to Pharaoh". Yosef does not want to be rushed – before he comes out of the pit he has to shave, cut his hair, change his clothes. In short, he has to make himself presentable. And then does he run to Pharaoh? No, he simply "comes" – he walks, calmly and confidently, with his smart haircut and trim-cut beard, dressed in his clean, fresh clothes, looking like a mentsch.

Now, let's imagine for a second that you're Pharaoh (because why would you want to imagine that for more than a second). You're a little worked up, what with having had The Craaaaziest Dreams™ last night and all, your so-called wisemen and expert dream interpreters haven't got a scooby what the dreams mean and your butler who, let's face it, doesn't have the best of track-records has recommended some Hebrew kid he met once 2 years ago in a hole

in the ground. You figure, why not? What've you got to lose? Worst case the Hebrew fellow also won't know what's going on and you can have the butler executed, which frankly you probably should have done years ago, and the kid will be chucked back down the shaft to be forgotten about and left for future archaeologists to discover in 3500 years' time. You send out the henchmen to schlepp the kid from the pit, fully expecting to see a bedraggled, flustered young man stumble forcibly into the throne room before humming and hawing out a few words vaguely connected to cows and grain and rivers. Instead, a clean, well-kept gentleman comes striding confidently in; back straight, chin up. He looks you in the eye and dissects each part of your dream, addressing each item on its own terms and also how it links to everything else. He talks in specifics, not vagaries. And, to top it all off, he gives you practical and relevant advice on how to prepare for the outcome of the dream.

Is it any wonder then that Pharaoh does not react by calling Yosef simply a חכם, a clever person, but more than that, an איש אשר רוח (מא;ל7) - someone who possessed the spirit of Godliness; a person for whom every detail was important, from his own bearing and disposition to the minutiae of dream details. A person who when freed from a literal hellhole had the presence of mind and dignity to make himself presentable, who gave careful and thoughtful deliberation to every word said to him, who could analyse this immediately after probably the most drastic change in circumstance possible, and who then had a fully formulated workable solution ready to roll. Yeah, I'd give him the top job too regardless of his background.

And the תורה makes a point of telling us this. The mere fact that it's written shows us that there is something for us to learn, after all the story would work just as well without being told these details – let's be honest it has worked perfectly well for your entire lives until now. So you're probably asking: could it really be that "cleanliness is next to Godliness" is the whole lesson? That being a mensch, that taking care in how you look and how you listen and how you speak and how you think is the big kneitch? The answer, according to Rav Hirsch, is "Yes. Yes it is." And so, whatever you do next, take care.

### Yosef's Dreams

Jonathan Grosskopf

Why was Joseph so horrible to his brothers? Surely, he knew how what it was to feel hated and unloved. Why not just forgive them and be done with it?

The Abarbanel contends that Joseph's sole aim was to bring out his brothers' feelings of remorse and lead them to repent. Although he now had an opportunity for revenge, he revealed his spiritual greatness and showed humanity. He put his brothers to the test. He repressed his natural feelings until he was convinced of their reverence for their father, their love for Benjamin, and their heartfelt contrition of having acted criminally towards him. At that point, he forgave them without reservation and with all his love.

According to Rashi, Joseph remembered his dreams, the first of which had been fulfilled, as the brothers who had opposed him now bowed to him.

Ramban disagrees and says that when Joseph saw his brothers bowing down to him, he recalled his dreams and realised they had not entirely fulfilled. He knew the first dream required all eleven brothers to bow down to him.

Later, this was followed by his father paying him homage, as indicated in the second dream.

Hamek Dovor opines that Joseph perceived the dreams as prophecies, and for him not to labour towards their fulfilment would be tantamount to withholding prophecy.

The Ramban offers another explanation. Joseph remembered his brothers' violent reaction to his dreams that showed him to be king over them. How much more malevolent could their attitude now be when he was really a king over them?

He had to show them that despite his enormous power, he would use it only to benefit them without rancour or revenge. Then, they would realise that their resentment and jealousy of him had been baseless. He could then reveal himself to them, confident that the ill will on both sides had been removed, and the result was that the family would be united, and Joseph would be restored as Jacob's son and his sibling's brother.

# WINTER YARCHEI KALLA CONTRACTS IN REAL ESTATE

& VARIOUS OTHER LEGAL AGREEMENTS



Wednesday

1 January | יום ד' דחנוכה

10:30am – 12:15pm

Opening Shiur: **Rabbi Yitzi Fulda**

**Seder** (bring along a chavrusa or come learn with your son)

Main Shiur: **Rabbi Shmuel Livshin**

In Ohr Yerushalayim, Bury New Road



Kollel L'Dayanus is dedicated to bringing Choshen Mishpot to Kehillos across the UK, through Shiurim, Events and Interactive Activities.

# CHANUKAH PARTY

Sunday 29th December

1.45pm - 3.40pm

Followed by Mincha, speaker and chocolate coins

Cost: £5 kid /£20 family

