



Ohr Yerushalayim News

י"ב סיון תשע"ח – נשא – 26th May 2018 - Volume 10 - Issue 43

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Rabbi & Mrs Johnny Goodman on the occasion of Chaim's Bar Mitzvah this week. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davening in the Shul hall.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi & Mrs YY Katz on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson in London, son of Mr & Mrs Yehuda Katz.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs David Newman on the birth of a grandson to Mr & Mrs Elchonon Newman in Israel.

JRCC Appeal

Further to the appeal by Alex Strom last Friday night, donations can be given to Chizky Salomon.

Hakomas Matzeivo

The Hakomas Matzeivo for the late Bernard Morris will take place this Sunday 27 May at UHC Geldersome Cemetery, 253 Gelderd Road, Leeds, LS12 6DJ at 11.30am.

Play It Again, Schloomiell

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Naso is the longest portion in the Torah. It did not have to be that way, but the Torah chose to include seventy verses that say the same thing — over and over again.

The end of the parsha discusses the dedication of the Mishkan. It describes the offerings that every Nasi brought in honor of the auspicious occasion. Each Nasi brought the same items.

Numbers 7:12: "On the first day, Nachshon the son of Aminadav brought his offering. It was (comprised of) one silver bowl that weighed a hundred and thirty shekels; one silver basin that weighed seventy shekels. Both were filled with fine flour and oil. One golden ladle filled with incense. A young bull, a ram, a sheep, and so on." The Torah uses six verses to expound, in precise detail, the exact measurements and components of the offering.

On the second day, Nesanel ben Tzuar of the tribe of Yissachar brought the exact same offering. On the third day Eliyav of Zevulun performed the same ceremony. Elitzoor ben Shdayoor of Reuvain repeated the same ritual on the fourth day, and on the fifth day of the dedication, Shimon's prince Schloomiell, repeated the same. This was repeated twelve separate days, by twelve different N'siim. And each day the Torah repeats verbatim the entire offering, changing only the name of the presenter and his tribe.

Normally, the Torah is concise and abbreviated. It leaves us to expound the hidden and to deduce the conclusions. In fact, the two Talmudic Tractates that explain the intricate laws of marriage and divorce are derived from only a handful of verses in Deuteronomy. Why, if all twelve brought the exact same gifts, is each and every Nasi's offering detailed over and over?

The Torah should simply say the following: the daily offering was brought on twelve consecutive days. It consisted of the following: "one silver bowl that weighed a hundred and thirty shekels one silver basin that weighed seventy shekels filled with fine flour and oil. One golden ladle filled with incense a young bull, a ram, a sheep, and so on."

Next, the Torah should list the names of the twelve princes who brought

לעלו נשמת דוב יצחק ב"ר אפרים אלחנן ז"ל

Intention (Kavahan) in Krias Shema

The accepted view is that ideally we should have an intention to do each mitzvah. So before saying Krias Shema, we should have the intention to fulfil the mitzva.

Additionally (as a minimum) we need to understand what we are saying in the first possuk in order to accept the yoke of Heaven and know that Hashem is one.

(This will apply when we are saying Krias Shema in the right time. In Summer, for many weeks, the time we say Krias Shema as part of the Shabbos morning prayers is too late to fulfil the mitzvah – we have to read it before davening. When davening Maariv before the stars come out, it is too early to fulfil the mitzvah and one has to read it again after the stars come out. But accepting the yoke of Heaven can be done at all times.)

the offerings. The first day... Nachshon of Yehudah; the second day... Nesanel of Yissachar; and so on. That way, seventy verses would be compacted into no more than ten or fifteen! And Parshas Naso would be fifty verses shorter.

A noted American Rabbi was invited to address two major cities in South Africa. Since the cities were hundreds of miles apart, he only prepared one speech for both events. It was a wonderful lecture. It encompassed a wide spectrum of Jewish ideas and was filled with Midrash and Jewish law. Informative, enlightening and entertaining, it was the best speech he had ever prepared.

The first night's audience attested to that. They sat with their mouths open, taking in every nuance and motion of the dramatic presentation. After the lecture a crowd gathered around the Rabbi to both praise him and hear variations on his poignant theme.

After such a wonderful reception, the Rabbi thought that the second evening on the other side of the country should be a breeze. As he walked up to the podium to deliver his magnum opus he looked at the crowd and froze. He spotted at least fifty faces of people he was sure had attended the previous night's speech.

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת נשא

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|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mincha | 7.30pm |
| Candle Lighting | 7.36pm - 7.55pm |
| Seder HaLimud | 8.40am |
| Shacharis | 9.00am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 8.59am |
| 1st Mincha | 2.00pm |
| 2nd Mincha | 6.00pm |
| 3rd Mincha | 9.25pm |
| Rov's Shiur | Following |
| Maariv & Motzei Shabbos | 10.30pm |
| Sun | 7.15am / 8.20am |
| Mon Bank Holiday | 7.10am / 8.10am |
| Tues / Wed / Fri | 6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am |
| Thurs | 6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am |
| Mincha & Maariv | 7.45pm |
| Late Maariv | 10.30pm |

Stunned, he quickly ruffled through the index cards of his mind. He pieced together parts of an old High Holy Day speech, added little from Chanuka, Purim, and the Hagadah. What resulted was a scattered array of varying thoughts. To say the least, it was not his best performance.

After the speech the same faces of the previous evening gathered once again around the Rabbi. "I'm sorry," he stammered to them, "I had originally planned to repeat last night's speech. Seeing your faces, I hastily arranged a piecemeal lecture based on some previous talks. Had I known you were coming, I would have prepared a totally new talk. I am sorry for my poor performance."

"But, Rabbi," they replied. "That is exactly why we came! Last night's talk was the most fascinating we had ever heard. We expected you to repeat it. We came all the way to hear it over again word for word!"

The Torah, in repeating the twelve offerings, and spending six verses on each one, leaves us with a message that is as powerful as it is pertinent. Many of our deeds are repeats of generations passed. Many are repeats from yesterday. They are all beloved and cherished. Day after day after day... Hashem wants to hear and see the exact same prayer, blessing charitable action over and over again. It is as dear as the first time.

Know Your Context **Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)**

Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: Should any man's wife go astray and deal treacherously with him . . . (Bamidbar 5:12)

HOW MANY TIMES have you seen someone do something in public and wonder to yourself, "Doesn't that person see what they look like?" The better and more embarrassing question might be, "How many times have I done something in public, oblivious to what it looks like to others?"

I know that there have been many times when I thought I was the only person somewhere, only to find someone else there. Without even thinking about what I might have done, I have immediately felt embarrassment as I had been caught in the act of doing something. Only after realizing that I had not done anything out of the ordinary did I finally start to feel "normal" again.

Other times it has not been as simple. Sometimes I would think I was alone for quite a while, only to see I wasn't. But by that time so much time had passed so I could not recall everything I did. Since I was not aware of my context until much later, I could not recall by then everything I MIGHT have done or said. In such cases, you almost want to ask the "other" person (or video camera you did not see until later) if you did anything you should feel embarrassed about.

Does this make me self-conscious? It certainly does, but for the most part, in a productive kind of way. I don't spend my time worrying about what others think about me, but I do make a point of TRYING not to give them something negative to think about me. I try to remain aware of my surroundings, and act appropriately, especially if I am a religious Jew among non-religious people. I am wary about creating a Chillul Hashem—Profanation of G-d's Name.

One really good piece of advice for avoiding embarrassment is, never ASSUME you are alone, KNOW you are not alone. How many people have been caught doing the funniest things on hidden cameras? How many "hysterical" videos have been posted over the years revealing the antics of people who thought they were free of the public eye, much to THEIR embarrassment? Some lenses can take pictures from a 275 miles away, not that you could be caught doing anything discernible from that distance.

Unless we're talking about G-d's lens. He can take "shots" from Heaven and they all come out crystal clear. He doesn't need to blow up any of His pictures, and even if He did they would not come out grainy at all. They are all high density resolution, so there's no mistaking who the subject is: You.

Unlike the CIA, FBI, KGB, etc., G-d doesn't mind us knowing that He has us in His frame. On the contrary, He PREFERS it. He wants us to be self-aware at all times before Him, telling ourselves, "G-d is watching what I am doing. Is this something I have worry about?" It's called, "Fear of G-d," and it is one of the most important traits to develop for going to the World-to-Come and avoiding Gehinom.

Fear of G-d therefore is THE weapon of choice against the yetzer hara. The yetzer hara works overtime at convincing a person that what they

are doing is not so bad after all. The person knows what they are doing is not right, but their desire to do it is so great that resisting it is "painful." The yetzer hara breaks the deadlock by telling a person that the sin they want to do isn't so bad, or maybe not a sin at all. In some cases it may even convince the person that it is a "mitzvah".

Getting caught in the act usually provides instant context. There are few things as telling as the face of child who gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar. The excuses, rationalizations, and justifications may flow from his mouth to save his life, but his face screams out, "GUILTY AS CHARGED." Facing his punishment, he will even ask himself, "Was it really worth it in the end?"

Within a human context, the answer can still come back "yes." Humans are not all-knowing, and some bank robbers have outsmarted even the most sophisticated security systems. Crime is so rampant, "Blue Collar" and "White Collar," because it can pay quite well, if and when you get away with it.

Within a Heavenly context, there is no such thing as crime paying. Heaven may take its time in exacting payment for a crime, perhaps even after a person has died. But pay they will, and ALWAYS in a way that will make the person ask, "What was I thinking when I did that? I must have been out of my mind when I thought it was worth it!"

Well, that's how the Talmud phrases it:

A person does not sin unless a spirit of insanity enters them. (Sotah 3a) Take a Sotah, for example, the suspected adulteress. A known adulteress did not go through the procedure discussed in this week's parsha. If there were witnesses to his sin, she and her accomplice were given capital punishment. If the sin was not witnessed in such a way as to make her culpable of death by Bais Din, then Heaven took care of it another way.

To become a Sotah, a woman had to be warned by her husband in front of witnesses to not be in seclusion with a particular man. If she was caught by witnesses in seclusion with that particular man for a specific period of time, but denied any wrongdoing, then she was brought up to the Temple to be tested as a Sotah. If guilty, she and her co-sinner died gruesome deaths. If innocent, then she was blessed instead.

The question often asked is, if the woman was innocent, why must she go through such a humiliating experience. The answer usually given is, she may have been innocent of adultery, but she should never have ended up in a situation of suspicion, especially once she was warned. It was her lack of "social context" that put her in a circumstance requiring her to not only clear her name, but erase Hashem's Name to do it. That is VERY serious.

Ultimately, there is a difference between a person who is just on the good boat "Life" for a pleasure cruise, and a person who is sailing through life with a mission. The first person is far less aware of himself or his context, focused more on what life can give to him than what he can give to life. It's the way that most people go through life, especially today, which is why the divorce rate soars.

The second person, like a spy on a mission, does just the opposite. They are very unfocused on the experience they could be having, and more focused on who they are, what they are doing, and what is happening around them. They know that the slightest distraction can cost them their life. They appreciate how the slightest indulgence can ruin their mission.

We are not spies, and we don't have to worry about our physical safety to such an extent. We can have fun. We can indulge a fair bit. But, like a spy, we can never lose track of context. We have to be aware of ourselves, and of what we are doing, not because a hostile enemy wants to take us down. It is because a loving G-d wants to raise us up. He WANTS us to succeed. He WANTS us to go to the World-to-Come, and wants to help us avoid the pitfalls created by our yetzer hara.

The best thing about this, besides the fact that we will live far more productive lives, is that G-d will have our backs. If He sees that we do the best we can to remain aware of actions in order to keep them true to Him, then G-d will watch out for us when we cannot in order to help us accomplish that goal. As the Talmud says, "If a person sanctifies himself a little, they will sanctify him a lot" (Yoma 38b).