



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

י"א סיון תשפ"א – נשא – 22nd May 2021 - Volume 13 - Issue 44

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to David and Vera Issler and David and Chani Steinberg on the birth of a great grandson to Chaim and Temima Issler in Israel.

Mazel Tov to Akiva and Nechama Stern on the birth of a girl.

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:

Weds, 15th Sivan - Malcolm Fagleman for his father

Weds, 15th Sivan - David Steinberg for his father

Thurs, 16th Sivan - Angela Addleman for her mother

## What Is The Kohanim Blessing Of Peace Jonathan Grosskopf

Call of the Torah notes that the final words of the priestly blessing are one of peace. This blessing applies not only to peace for the individual but also to the peace within family, within nation and even to universal peace. In our daily prayers (and Kaddish) we praise Hashem for establishing peace not only now and forever in this world but also in the heavens. Hashem established peace among the stars above and also among those confirmed adversaries, the elements of fire and water. Each day we look heavenward and stand in awe of that harmony. Since the time of the first sin when peace and harmony of Paradise were disrupted, men have a permanent mission: to devote the best in themselves to restoring the original splendor of peace and harmony. Peace endures as the great universal ideal, the realisation of which depends on man's will and G-D's blessing!

Midrash Lekach Tov posits that this Kohanic blessing of peace includes peace from wild animals and the spiritual "Mazikim."

Midrash Aggadah and the Ibn Ezra comment on Posuk 15, Perek 15 in Parshas Lech Lecha that Hashem blessed Avraham: "As for you, you will go to your ancestors in peace.." a euphemism for death: you will go the way of all flesh in dignity.

Artscroll Chumash quotes Rashi and the Sifra on Posuk 6, Perek 26 in Parshat Bechukosai to explain that the blessing of peace is equivalent to all the other blessings combined. In fact, the blessing of peace will be so pervasive that armies will not even attempt to use Eretz Yisroel en route to battle in some other country: the downfall of King Yoshiah!

Ta'am Voda'as posits that the blessing of peace refers to the evil inclination since sin disturbs the equilibrium of the spiritual world. Only true peace and performing Hashem's commandments and this will help to re-establish the ideal of Hashem's creation.

Rashi comments on Posuk 18, Perek 33 in Parshas Vayishlach, to say that Yaakov came "complete - in peace" to Shechem to mean, that he had been cured from his limp inflicted on him by Esav's angel; his wealth had been restored even after the largesse sent to Esav and his Torah learning and observation were complete even after 20 years of living with Lavan.

In Mishna 3, Perek 12, in Ukzim, Rabbi Shimon Ben Chalafta explains that "peace" is a spiritual vessel to enable all other blessings to continue. As peace means in this context that a person is at peace with himself: stress free and so can appreciate all the blessings that Hashem has granted him. Pinchos Kehati observes on this Mishna that without true peace all the other divine blessings will be for naught since a person will not appreciate Hashem's blessings: akin to the reprimand of the curses in Posuk 47, Perek 28 in Parshas Ki Savo.

Finally, Pinchos was divinely "awarded" the covenant of peace (Posuk

12, Perek 25, Parshas Pinchos): longevity and the ability as a Kohein to bless Bnei Yisroel with the blessing of peace.

May you all be blessed with peace at this auspicious time of Chag Shavuos!

## Possessive Nouns

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

There is a seemingly mysterious, if not cryptic, set of verses in this week's portion. "And every portion from any of the holies that the Children of Israel bring to the Kohen shall be his. A man's holies shall be his, and what a man gives to the Kohen shall be his". (Numbers 5:9-10)

The posuk prompts so many homiletic and Midrashic interpretations. Even after Rashi, the Master of Torah explanation, clarifies a simple meaning to the verse, he affirms that "there are varying interpretation from Midrashic sources." Obviously Rashi foreshadows a need for deeper interpretation.

To that end I will lend my take. What does the Torah mean that "a man's holies shall be his"? How are holies, his? And what are holies anyway?

After all, when one dedicates items to the Temple, they are no longer his holies, they belong to the Temple. A plaque may afford recognition, but it surely is not a certificate of title. If the verse is referring to holy items owned by an individual, then it seems redundant as well. A man's possessions are of course his!

About five years ago, we had the honor of having Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware deliver a commencement address at our Yeshiva's graduation. The senator, who was at the time Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, was a guest of his good friend and well-known philanthropist, Joel Boyarsky, a member of our local community and dear friend of our school.

After the ceremony, I had the privilege of riding together with the Senator in Mr. Boyarsky's stretch limousine, a fully apportioned vehicle that was truly befitting its prestigious passengers, among them many dignitaries and businessmen, who frequented its inner chambers.

As we rode for a while, discussing everything from politics to Israel, and issues surrounding Jewish education, something in the back corner of the limousine caught the corner of my eye.

There was a tefillin zeckel, a velvet case that hold sacred Jewish phylacteries tucked away in the corner of the back windshield. Protruding from the corner of the purple-velvet case were the retzuos, the sacred straps that bind a people to their rituals.

I was both amazed and perplexed at the same time. Mr. Boyarsky, as I

## Davening Times

### פרשת נשא

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.20pm
Candle Lighting	7.32pm-7.45pm
Shacharis - Hashkomo	7.30am
2nd Shacharis	9.30am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.01am
Mincha	2.00pm / 6.00pm / 9.18pm
Motzei Shabbos	10.23pm
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	10.25pm

knew him, was not a very observant Jew. I was not even sure if he kept kosher. Yet the tefillin were right there, almost displayed in open view, in the same limousine in which he closed multi-million dollar deals with prominent businessmen, and discussed sensitive issues with the most prominent statesman.

A few weeks later, I visited Mr. Boyarsky in his office. It was there that I popped the question.

"I don't get it. As far as I understand, you are not observant, and your car is hardly a home to Rabbis. But yet you keep your tefillin in your car, in open view for everyone to see? Why?"

His terse answer remains with me until today. "When I travel I take my things. Those tefillin are my things."

The Torah issues a profound decree that defines not only what we have, but who we are. Those of us who understand that life as fulfilling as it may appear, how succulent the courses that it serves may taste, is but a fleeting moment in the grand scale of endless eternity. Who are we and what do we have.

I saw a bumper sticker that seemed to have survived the NASDAQ plunge the other week, "The guy with the most toys at the end wins." Wins what? What are the toys?

The Torah tells us that after all the innings are pitched and the crowd walks from the packed stadium, we only have one thing. We have our holies. They are ours. Cars break. Computers crash. Satellites explode. Fortunes diminish and fame is as good as yesterday's newspaper.

Only the holy things that we do, only our acts of spirituality, whether manifested in relationships with our fellow man or with our Creator, remain. Those holies are ours! They will always belong to us. That is what we travel with and that is what we take along. In this world and the next.

## Authentic Shalom

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

HASHEM spoke to Moshe saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying: This is how you shall bless the children of Israel, saying to them: "May HASHEM bless you and watch over you. May HASHEM cause His countenance to shine to you and favor you. May HASHEM raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace." (Bamidbar 6:22-27)

This blessing is scripted by HASHEM for the Kohanim to shower upon the Jewish People on special occasions and in some places daily. Parents too, employ the same words to bless their children every Friday night. It's rich with wishes for everything good, including the blessing of wealth, security, and basking in the favorable light of The Almighty. What can be better? Oh, there's one giant ingredient. The finale and the crown of all this abundant goodness is something called SHALOM! Why is that so valuable and necessary after so much has been granted. What is Shalom and what it does it add to the equation of life?

This question is actually asked by Rashi earlier in Chumash. Before the barrage of rebuke is launched in Bechukosai, the Torah promises material wealth with the mental tranquility of living securely in the land. Then the Torah says, "And I will give you Shalom..." Rashi on the spot says, "Maybe your going to say, 'We have food and drink' but if there is no peace then there is nothing! ...From here we learn that Shalom is equal to everything!" So we see that Shalom has a high value, and that's an understatement. How does it work?

The Jerusalem Talmud and the Midrash in Parshas Nasso both say, "Ain Kli Machzik Brocha Ella Shalom" - "No vessel can hold blessing like Shalom". How can we conceptualize this. Imagine walking through a giant grocery store. Pick your favorite, Evergreen, Pomegranate, Seasons, you name it. You fill up your cart with goodies for Shabbos. You are hungry and tired and you can't wait to get home and to eat a nice filling dinner and begin to creatively prepare for Shabbos. After checking out by the cash register and with ease happily paying the cashier you are told that you have to bring your own bags. You have a giant cart load of groceries and no way to hold them. You pile them in your arms dropping some and trying to hold onto what you have while bending to pick up up what has fallen. Things are breaking and melting and ripping and most of what you have paid for is lost before you get home, leaving a trail of groceries along the way. You are now extremely frustrated and aggravated. You can't even enjoy a bite of food. What a night mare. But so it is to have everything and to be lacking in Shalom. Shalom is the vessel that holds, preserves, and carries whatever Brochos flow our way.

The Mishne in Pirke' Avos invites us to be from the students of Aaron, "Love peace (Shalom), pursue peace (Shalom), love people and bring

them close to Torah." Why must one love Shalom first and then pursue it? Because not only can you not effectively sell what you don't have, but you don't want to. Once you experience it then automatically you become a naturally enthusiastic advocate. Did you ever read a book or hear a song that excited and inspired you to the point where you could not wait to share it with others!? We have all experienced that. Shalom is not an abstract idea, it's experiential and to achieve it requires many life and social skills.

Shalom is harmonizing all the elements in our lives, so that that not only are they not at war with each other but they compliment each other, like instruments of various sizes and sounds blending symphonically into one orchestra. This requires discipline, a musical score, (a plan), patience, a conductor, (a Rebbe), and self knowledge. A person with Shalom may possess nothing and yet have everything, and someone can have loads of stuff and still have nothing, because whatever he has complicates and destabilizes his life and it gives him no peace. The art of achieving and practicing peace is an almost natural fulfillment of living a Torah life, because "All it's ways are pleasantness and all its paths are peace!" It could be that the biggest ambition and the richest reward we can hope to attain in life is authentic Shalom!

## Sorry Doesn't Help

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

"they shall confess the sin that they committed..." (5:7)

The Torah describes the process of atonement for an individual who unlawfully withholds money which belongs to another and then compounds his iniquity by swearing falsely. A crucial element of his atonement is known as "viduy" - "confession". The Rambam cites this verse as the source for the general commandment of repentance. The Rambam concludes with the words, "kol hamarbeh lehisvados haray zeh meshubach" - "anyone who confesses exceedingly is worthy of praise". The secular notion of confession conjures up images involving admission of guilt and expiation, a person psychologically beating and berating himself for his unworthiness. It is difficult to consider a person who indulges in this type of behavior as one who is worthy of praise. On the contrary, such behavior usually encourages a person to violate the same prohibition again; he either views the self-flagellation as atonement for his actions and would be willing to endure this type of atonement if tempted again by the same actions, or he reaches a point where his opinion of himself is so low that he feels justified in committing the violation again for he feels he is worthy of nothing more. What, then, is the Jewish definition of confession?

On one other occasion the Rambam uses a similar expression; concerning the mitzva of recounting the exodus from Mitzrayim on Pesach night the Rambam states "kol hamarich bedevaram haray zeh meshubach" - "anyone who recites exceedingly is worthy of praise". The recitation of the Haggadah on Pesach night is a fulfillment of this precept. The passage describing the bringing of the first fruits which contains a brief sketch of Jewish history forms a major part of the Pesach Haggadah. The Talmud refers to this passage as "viduy bikkurim". In the entire passage there is no mention of guilt or confession. Why would Chazal describe this recitation as a viduy?

The term "viduy" has the same root as the word "todah" - "thanks". This comparison is emphasized through the following Midrash: When Adam repented for his sin, he composed the Psalm "Tov Lehodos" - "It Is Good To Give Thanks". The Midrash relates that "lehodos" should be read as "lehisvados" - "to confess". What is the connection between giving thanks and confession?

When a person offers gratitude for a positive action which has been performed for him, he acknowledges the benefit which he has received. The word "todah" stems from the word "modeh" - "acknowledge". Confession forces a person to verbalize his acknowledgement of the benefits which Hashem has granted him and to show that he realizes that transgressing one of Hashem's mitzvos is, in essence, self-destructive, for adhering to the mitzvos is beneficial to him. Therefore, it is praiseworthy to continuously acknowledge the benefit Hashem has bestowed upon us for this will ensure that our commitment to adhere to the precepts is strengthened. Similarly, on Pesach night we recount the multitude of miracles that Hashem has performed on our behalf throughout history and express our gratitude for His kindness. There is no limit that can be placed upon acknowledging our obligations toward Hashem because of the great kindness He has shown