



Ohr Yerushalayim News

פ - ד מרחשון תש"פ - נח - 2nd November 2019 - Volume 12 - Issue 14

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Michael and Anne Wilks on the birth in Israel, of a granddaughter to Gershon and Chana Wilks and a grandson to Oshi and Judy Wilks

Shalosh Seudas

From this Shabbos, we will be having a Shalosh Seudas each week between Mincha and Maariv on Shabbos afternoon. Please do try and assist with the cost of the סעודה by sponsoring or jointly sponsoring a week. Please put your name against a Sedra on the list on the notice wall in the foyer – weekly cost is £65.

Ovos uBonim

The winter programme of Ovos uBonim resumes this week an hour after Motzei Shabbos.

Kiddushim

On the subject of sponsorship we all enjoy a good Kiddush, so why not give back and either sponsor or part sponsor one. Speak to Avi Stern or Binyomin Dunner for more details

Josh Shields memorial Shiurim

This month's Shiur will take place this Sunday 3rd November @ 9.15pm in the back Beis Hamedrash by R' Dada Ziskind.

Friday night Shiurim

The Friday night Parsha Shiurim resume this Shabbos in the back Beis Hamedrash following davening.

Farewell

Farewell and Hatzlocho to family Nizovskiy on their upcoming Aliya this week. Wishing them all the best with their move!

השבת אבידה

Various coats have been left in the cloakrooms over a period of time mainly childrens coats! A last chance now to reclaim anything that's yours before it is disposed of after Shabbos.

How to save the world and influence people

Aaron Gouldman

A growing trend among sensitive environmentalists is to make the bold decision not to have any children. This is apparently because studies have shown that have one fewer child in the western world is nearly 20 times more beneficial to the environment than adopting a series of eco-friendly practices for one's entire lifetime. At first glance this seems incredibly altruistic, however it may well prove to be counter-productive once these eco-warriors pass on without leaving anyone any heirs to take this message to the next generation! Irony aside, there is certainly truth to the notion that our actions impact on the well-being of the physical world. The beginning of Parashas Noach teaches us however, that it is ultimately our moral decisions that have the most tangible effect on the environment. "וירא אלקים את הארץ והנה נשחתה כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ" Bereishis 6:12

This passuk informs us that the depravity of the Dor Hamabul was such that it actually infected the physical world, to the point that

even the free-will lacking animals got involved in reprehensible acts (see Sanhedrin 108a).

To understand the mechanics of this, the Beis HaLevi in his first piece on Parshas Noach explains that just as a person's nature is influenced by their actions, whether positive or negative, so too every moral decision that a person makes has influence on other people's tendencies towards good and bad, as well as the entire physical world. To bring out the point, he quotes the gemara in Taanis 11a which states that the stones and beams of one's house will testify about a person at the time of judgement. They are able to do so since they have absorbed the fragrance (and/or odour) of every single moral action that a person makes in the privacy of their own home!

The Beis HaLevi posits that the moral 'ripple effect' that we are all familiar with, happens even when no-one observes our actions, and even affects the physical fabric of the world. We are all therefore givers and takers of these 'moral ripples'.

For our own good deeds, we are credited with a share in everyone else's, since in some small way we influenced them, and vice versa. This is how it works for most people. However, for some extraordinary people, one is so full of goodness, or chas v'shalom the opposite, that they can only give and do not have the capacity to be influenced by others.

Parentetically, when I first came across this piece three years ago, I was learning Seder Zera'im as part of Mishna Yomis (highly recommended), and came across a Mishna that seemed to present the same idea, in a completely different context.

The Mishna in Terumos 10:7 describes what happens when regular olives are pickled together with Teruma olives. If the regular olives are lacking in wholeness, then they will absorb flavour from the Teruma olives and therefore be forbidden to non-Kohanim. If the olives are whole (שלם) then they will not absorb flavour and will remain permitted. We see from here that according to halacha, 'wholesomeness' does not absorb from its surroundings.

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת נח

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| Candle Lighting | No later than 4.22pm |
| Mincha | 4.27pm |
| Rov's Shiur | 8.45am |
| Shacharis | 9.15am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 9.30am |
| Children's Group | 10.45am |
| 1st Mincha | 1.30pm |
| 2nd Mincha | 4.07pm |
| Motzei Shabbos | 5.27pm |
| Ovos uBonim | 6.27pm |
| Sun | 7.15am / 8.20am |
| Mon / Thurs | 6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am |
| Tues / Wed / Fri | 6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am |
| Mincha & Maariv | 4.15pm |
| Late Maariv | 8.00pm |

Noach, and ten generations later Avraham, are described in the Torah as 'Tamim'. In the gemara quoted above (Sanhedrin 108a) R' Yochanan and Reish Lakish famously discuss whether Noach would amount to anything if he were present in the generation of Avraham. According to many, the distinction between these two tzadikim boils down to the influence they had on their respective generation. According to the Beis HaLevi's presentation, the apparent lacking of Noach was completely due to the wickedness of the Dor Hamabul, who were also 'wholesome', but in the negative sense, thus beyond being influenced. All Noach could do was to follow Hashem's instruction and save himself in order to ensure the continuity of mankind. In this vein the Midrash in Bereishis Rabba 32:1 attributes the passuk we say every day to Noach's entering the ark: ואני ברוב חסדך אבוא ביתך (Tehillim 5:8). Avraham Avinu, the ultimate giver, had the opportunity to live in a generation that had the capacity to be influenced for the good, and he took full advantage.

The take-away messages from this discussion are quite far-reaching. Firstly, we need to know that all of our deeds reverberate across the entire world and will one day testify about us. Secondly, we can positively influence others simply by doing the right thing, even when no-one is watching. Finally, the attribute of 'temimus' is what ensures that we don't sink into the swirling currents of negative deeds.

If it Hurts, Scream!

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read Parshas Noach. Ten generations after the creation of Adam Harishon, the first man, the world has been corrupted. "Vatishaches ha'aretz lifnei HaElokim (6:11)" – and the world was in a (spiritually) destroyed state before Hashem. Rashi explains that the term 'vatishaches' refers specifically to immorality and idol worship. "Vatimalay ha'aretz chamas" – and the land was filled with thievery. Hashem decides to flood the world, saving only Noach and his family, the only righteous individuals. Through them, the new world will be built.

"Vayomer Elokim l'Noach, ketz kol bassar ba l'fanoi" – And Hashem said to Noach, the (time for the) end of all flesh has come before me – "ki mal'ah ha'aretz chamas (6:13)" – because the land has been filled with thievery. Interestingly, with all of the major sins being performed, the decree was sealed due to thievery!

The Ohr Gedalyahu explains that thievery is at the very core of every sin. Every person is allotted a certain amount of time and energy on this earth. This is given to allow the individual to build a relationship with his Creator by spiritually adding to this world that which only he can add. Every moment is measured and precious. When a person takes this gift and abuses it. When one's energy is used to perform an act that distances him from his Creator by spiritually polluting the world, that constitutes thievery in its most basic sense. Stealing the power granted to us by Hashem to help eternally help ourselves by using it to infinitely hurt ourselves. When the earth is filled with such acts, that is the time for the end of all flesh.

The Kli Yakar writes that the term 'ketz kol bassar', the end of all flesh, is referring to the 'yom ha'missah', the day of death. "Ba l'fanoi!" Hashem tells Noach that it has come before Him. It is complaining! No one thinks of me! Their lives are so long, no one feels threatened by the consequences of their actions. They rob and plunder without realizing that the 'yom hamissah' will take it away from them. As the Chovos Halevovos writes, a person can spend his whole life amassing a fortune that his wife will enjoy with her second husband. "V'hinnei mashchisom" – I will destroy them.

In the face of all of this stands Noach, a righteous and complete individual. Only he and his family didn't join the depravity of the society. Only they were saved. Yet, the prophet Yeshaya (54:9) refers to the floodwaters as "mei Noach", the waters of Noach. We are accustomed to Noach's name being used in regard to the miracle of

his survival. Noach's Ark, etc. But, in what way was Noach held responsible for the destruction that the flood was called by his name?

Chaza"l explain that the floodwaters were called by his name because he didn't pray for his generation to be saved! Why, in fact, didn't Noach pray?

In order to understand this we need to have some background information. A bit later on in Breishis we'll learn that Hashem, while planning to destroy the cities of Sdom and Amora, reveals his intention to Avraham Avinu. Avraham begins to plead with Hashem to save the cities if they will find there fifty righteous individuals. When Hashem agreed, Avraham continued to plead to save the cities for the sake of an even lesser number of righteous people. This continues until Hashem agrees not to destroy for the sake of even ten tzaddikim. At that point, Avraham stops praying. Chaza"l explain that Avraham had learned this from the generation of Noach. Noach had less than ten tzaddikim and their merit was not able to save the world.

At first glance this might seem to explain why Noach didn't pray. However, with further thought, it clearly doesn't suffice. As Rav Chaim Shmuelovitz asks, if Noach also understood that ten wouldn't save the world and that was the reason why he didn't pray, why was he held accountable? Why were the floodwaters labeled 'the waters of Noach'?

He explains based on another chaza"l. In the beginning of Shmos, when Paroah was deciding how to deal with his Jewish problem, he called upon three advisors, Bilaam, Yisro and Iyov. Bilaam spoke out against the Jews which is what Paroah had wanted to hear. Yisro spoke out in defense of the Jews and had to flee the wrath of Paroah. Iyov remained silent.

Hashem responds to our actions using 'midah k'neged midah'. This means that the response fits our act. Not simply a punishment but rather a means of revealing mistakes and rewarding proper acts. Let's see how this concept works through with the three advisors.

The ultimate end of Bilaam, who advised that the Jews should be killed, was that he was killed by the Jews. A clear example of midah k'neged midah. Yisro, who defended the Jews, ran for his life and settled in Midyan. There he met Moshe as he was fleeing from Paroah. Moshe married Yisro's daughter Tziporah, connecting Yisro to Klal Yisroel in a most intimate way. Once again, we see a very clear example of midah k'neged midah – the one who defended the Jews became part of the Jewish nation. However, when we come to the third advisor, Iyov, the connection is more difficult to understand. Iyov, who remained silent, suffered excruciating pain. How did that response fit his act?

Let's understand Iyov. He really had wanted to defend the Jews but, seeing the fate of Yisro, realized that his words would fall upon deaf ears. With nothing to gain by speaking, he remained silent. In order to reveal his error to him, Hashem sent 'yisurim', terrible pain. What does one do when experiencing intense pain? He screams! Even though the screams do nothing in terms of alleviating the pain, if it hurts, you scream. Hashem was teaching him that remaining silent showed that it didn't really bother him. Had Paroah's planned destruction of the Jews bothered him, he would have defended them.

With this, Rav Chaim explains our original difficulty. Why were the floodwaters called the 'the waters of Noach'? Because he didn't pray. Because he didn't scream. If the destruction of the world would have really bothered him he would have pleaded with Hashem, even knowing that less than ten tzaddikim wouldn't be able to save the world. If it hurts, you scream.

We must share in the pain of others, even when the ability to alleviate that pain might be out of our grasp.