



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ה - כ"ח ניסן תשפ"ה - שמיני - 26th April 2025 - Volume 17 - Issue 36

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Yitzchok and Channa Brocha Steinhaus on the birth of a granddaughter to Zevi and Shana Steinhaus in Israel

Mazel Tov to Dean and Susan Kaye on the birth of a granddaughter to Yaakov and Sarah Hibbert

Mazel Tov to Yehuda Zev First and his parents, Ben and Shoshana, on his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbos

Mazel Tov to David and Eunice Wolfson on the engagement of their grandson Bezalel Wacks (Gateshead) to Esti Mendelson (Manchester)

Mazel Tov to Avrohom Dov and Leah Lehmann on Chaviva's wedding to Ronny Wolf on Sunday. The Chupa takes place at 3.15 followed by reception, Simchas Chosson v'Kalloh 10.30pm at Beis Yaakov Hall

Mazel Tov to Anna Shields on her wedding to Dovid Halpern on Sunday

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeits in the following week:

Thurs, 3rd Iyyar - Daniel Harris for his father and Jenny Lewin for her father

Fri, 4th Iyyar - Mark Shapiro for his father

Lost Property

A reminder that personal property left on the Shul premises will be disposed of every Rosh Chodesh

Learning How Not To Behave

Rabbi J Rubinstein

Sometimes we have to learn from the world around us, and particularly from the political world, what not to do in our personal lives. Every new government, of whichever political persuasion, always blames the previous government for anything which goes wrong. Similarly, within every government, when anything goes awry, the Prime Minister or the relevant minister, seeks to apportion blame elsewhere. It has become known as the "Blame game"

In this week's Parshah, we find precisely the opposite. The Jewish people were approaching the pinnacle of their journey from Egypt, after the Torah had been given. This was the construction of a sanctuary, in the middle of their camp, where the שכינה - The Divine presence" would rest. For seven days they had put it up and taken it down. ויהי ביום השמיני - "And it was on the eighth day" which was the first of Nissan, they put it up expecting it to remain up and the שכינה to make itself apparent. Rashi tells us in his commentary on Chapter 10 Verse 23, they performed all the services but there was still no sign of the שכינה. Immediately, Aaron said, "I know Hashem was angry with me (because of my part in the making of the Golden Calf) and because of me the שכינה has not descended to the people of Israel" Rashi also tells us that earlier, after the seven days, when the שכינה had not appeared, the Jewish people were embarrassed, and said to Moshe, "We have done all this work so that the שכינה will be amongst us and we will know that the sin of the Golden calf has been atoned" apparently they assumed it was their fault the שכינה had not appeared. That was when Moshe told the people, he would ask Aaron to offer the sacrifices saying, "He is worthy and more important than me, through his sacrifices and services the שכינה will rest amongst you". After the services had been completed, when the שכינה still did not appear, Moshe and Aaron went in to the sanctuary and prayed, then they came out, blessed the people "And the honour of Hashem appeared to all the people". A fire went out from before Hashem and consumed the

sacrifices.

Rav Chaim Mintz explains, that it was precisely because each of them did not blame the other, but rather thought of their own deficiencies, that the שכינה came. The sanctuary was the ultimate symbol of peace and harmony. The sockets on which the whole structure stood were made out of the gift from every Jew of one half a Shekel. The communal sacrifices which were brought in it, were also paid for by another collection of half a shekel from every Jew which took place each year. Thus, it was appropriate that it would fulfil its function as a dwelling place for the Divine presence, when the Jewish people behaved with perfect harmony. This was achieved by all the people avoiding the "Blame game" and seeking to rectify failings within themselves. The Malbim says that even today, the western wall, which is a remnant of the sanctuary in Jerusalem, is a unifying feature for the Jewish people, because Jewish people, wherever they are, turn towards it when they pray.

The same principle applies within our marriages and our families and our communities. By avoiding the "Blame game" and being honest with ourselves, we can create "mini sanctuaries" for ourselves. This is always beneficial to ourselves and to the whole of the Jewish people.

Inner Peace

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

At the most important time in the history of a fledgling nation, tragedy strikes. On the eighth day of the inaugural ceremonies for the Mishkan, in a terribly marring scenario, the Torah tells us that "the sons of Aaron, Nadav and Avihu, each took his fire pan, they put fire in them and placed incense upon it; and they brought before Hashem an alien fire that He had not commanded them to bring." Immediately, "a fire came forth from before Hashem and consumed them, and they died before Hashem" (Leviticus 10:1-2).

In the next verse, Moshe consoled his brother with words that may not have appeased lesser mortals, "of this did Hashem speak, saying 'I will be sanctified through those who are nearest Me, thus I will be honored before the entire people.'" Ahron understood the true meaning, implications, and essence of the message; and the Torah tells us "vayidon Ahron," "and Ahron was silent." The Torah uses words more powerful than Ahron was quieted. It tells us he was. The Hebrew word dohme has the same association as dohmain, an inanimate object. That is how Ahron is described after hearing Moshe's words: totally subdued and content. Rashi tells us that in the merit of Ahron's subjugation and total subservience to Hashem's decree, he merited to hear a Kohanic law, alone, directly from the Almighty, a route that normally precluded him or at best had him included as secondary to Moshe. The law bestowed on Ahron concerned the prohibition of kohanim in drinking intoxicating

Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.25pm
Candle Lighting	7.31pm-7.50pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.25am
Mincha	6.00pm / 8.22pm
Motzei Shabbos	9.27pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Tues ראש חודש	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.30pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm

beverages before serving in the sanctuary. The Torah tells us, "Do not drink intoxicating wine, you and your sons with you, when you come to the Tent of Meeting, that you not die – this is an eternal decree for your generations" (Leviticus 10:9). Torah principles usually correlate the reward with the act that merited it. What, then, is the connection between Ahron's silence in response to tragedy and his being the sole student of the Heavenly ordinance against Divine service under the influence? Why did the meritorious acceptance of the Almighty decree prompt a private transmission of the laws against priestly intoxication? Bill, and his friend were having too much to drink, when they collapsed in a stupor. Bill managed to fall on dry ground, while his friend had collapsed in the mud.

When Bill awoke and saw his friend he thought that he, too, suffered the same filthy fate. Leaving his friend asleep in the grime, he stumbled toward town, looking for a bucket of water to wash himself. In the dark of night he found a bucket, brimming with liquid and sitting in front of the local hardware store.

Bill thought it was filled with water. It was not. It was filled with whitewash.

Intending to wash himself with it, he poured the contents over his body, and scrubbed thoroughly. Satisfied, Bill drifted toward a grocery for something more to drink.

Upon seeing the awful spectacle, the proprietor gasped, "Why, Bill, what in Heaven's name is the matter?"

To which Bill proudly proclaimed, "You should have seen me before I washed myself!"

In order to understand the correlation between the prohibition of drunken service and Ahron's stoic acceptance of Hashem's decree, one must appreciate that a Kohen would, in his mind, drink to elevate his spirit, albeit artificially, and thus his service. As one who accepts Hashem's decree, with no cry or outside manipulation, Ahron HaKohen showed that he understood that there is no artificial source for lifting spirits or understanding G-d. Peace and strength come from within the soul and spirit of those who service Him. When one is content with his perfect relation with Hashem, when he realizes that though he may have fallen he has the innate capacity to rebound, he needs no stimuli. Acceptance of a decree with no complaints is a recognition that the spirit, form, and embodiment, of a mortal being is completely subservient to the force of Hashem, content with his total situation with no need for outside dispensation, compensation, declarations, or mollifications. He is one with his Creator and His will.

When one looks for outside stimulants, even in the service of Hashem, he looks for more than is necessary to fulfill his mission. He is bathing himself in what he thinks is cleanser, but it is not. It will unnecessarily alter the perfect facilities that Hashem gave him, and that is no benefit, it is rather even harmful. When entering the perfect service of Hashem, one must be perfect with one's self. Those who can accept Hashem's decrees in perfect harmony and live with whatever Hashem has bestowed upon them need no stimulants. Outside intoxicants don't clean the mind; they add confusion. And those who live in holy partnership of their pure selves and the joy of the Almighty, are worthy of carrying the banner of understanding, silence, solitude, and perfect unadulterated serenity. Good Shabbos

The Chasida – Fowl Play Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann (Torah.org)

Parshas Shemini contains a description of the laws of kashrus – the animals we may and may not eat. One of the types of prohibited birds is called the Chasida – the righteous bird, thus called, says Rashi, because this bird deals kindly with her peers (chavrose'ha), and helps them sustain themselves with food.

One would assume that an animal's kashrus or lack thereof would have some connection with the behaviour and characteristics of the animal. Yet if so, why is the aptly-named chasida counted among the fowl of which we may not partake?

The Chidushei Ha-Rim, R' Yitzchak Meir of Gur zt"l, explains that the chasida's fault is that she performs kindness only with chavrose'ha – her friends, to the exclusion of others. Do you remember the kid on the block who generously shared with everyone else – except you? The birthday party from which you were left out? Would you have counted these "friends" among the great "doers of kindness?" Exclusive kindness and peer-favouritism does not a righteous-bird make.

The Ibn Ezra explains that the chasida only appears during certain months of the year. Likewise, there are individuals who, when it suits

them, will drop everything and do anything they can to help a friend. But at other times they don't even bother to ask. Being a ba'al chessed (doer of kindness) means consistent concern about the wellbeing of others, not impulsive binges of extreme kindness followed by thoughtlessness and blissful ignorance.

(This doesn't mean that even the most seasoned and dedicated ba'al chessed doesn't ever deserve a break. But treating others kindly and taking care of friends and family is not something to be done on impulsive whims; it should be a constant matter of concern.)

Consider this: Two sons and an elderly mother. One son is a wealthy doctor with a busy practice and a very respectable golf-handicap who hobnobs with high-echelon acquaintances. The other son is a tailor; he ekes out a meagre living, but is happy and content with his life.

Once a month, the wealthy son makes his pilgrimage (up to the 14th floor) to pay his respects to his aging matriarch. Seeing as how he has, once again, forgotten to call her in the interim, he stops by the local mall and stocks up on some expensive goodies to appease her. Then, he makes a hasty trip to the grocery store and stacks up his cart with all kinds of foods and snacks – "after all, mom needs to eat, doesn't she?"

(Brings to mind the following story: Phone rings. "Hi mom, how are you?" "(Heavy Yiddish accent) Terrible." "Why, mom – what's the matter?" "I haven't eaten for 26 days. I'm starving." "Mom, that's awful! Why haven't you eaten for so long?" "Because I didn't want to have food in my mouth when you called me!")

Laden with bags and boxes, he hastily enters his mother's spotless apartment and dumps his presents and groceries on the floor. "Hi mom! Brought you some stuff – I figured you might need some groceries."

Gracious mother that she is, she thanks her son, eyeing the pile of bags and parcels, most of which she thinks she will have to give away (what on earth is she going to do with a Game Boy?). Just as they sit down to a glass of tea and begin catching-up, the son's Palm Pilot starts beeping, and he apologetically makes a hasty retreat, mumbling something about a very important meeting.

The tailor calls mom every day before leaving work. "Anything you need, mom?" More often than not, there is. One day he picks up carrots, another a bag of sugar, and when there's nothing to get, he just stops by to spend some time. He's there when the window needs fixing ("I can't stand the draft"), and he's there for her when she needs help getting to the doctor. Which son is the ba'al chessed?

The defining characteristic of chessed – says the Ibn Ezra – is consistency and dedication. And it is in this measure that the chasida fails.

Rav Sternbuch Shlita (Ta'am Ve-Da'as) explains the fault of the chasida as follows: Each person is born with a natural inclination to be kind and righteous towards others in given circumstances. While this is good, it must be moulded. We need to attune our natural sensitivity towards others to the laws and guidance of the Torah, and not rely on what our heart tells us is good or kind.

For example, when dealing with our children, our love for them would dictate that we spoil them with unrelenting kindness, overlooking their faults and forgiving all their wrongdoings. "Spare the rod, and you hate your child," says Shlomo HaMelech. I.e. there are times when the "kind" and "righteous" thing to do is not what feels kind and right in our hearts. Sometimes the opposite can be true. There are times when it may feel right to us to not be kind, yet the Torah demands we do so. A child having to deal with a difficult parent goes through this. Some people have a hard time giving away money ("teach a man to fish... but I'm not going to encourage this lazy good-for-nothing to keep on begging"), yet to give tzedakah is a positive, obligatory commandment. The chasida is thus named because she performs kindness with her friends according to her natural tendencies, which for a bird is okay. But a Jew has to know that the Torah has its own definition of chessed, and we have to be careful not to let our natural inclination interfere with the demands and guidelines of the Torah. To drive home this point, the Torah disallowed the chasida's consumption.

To be or not to be... In the case of the chasida, we learn how not to be. Interesting that a non-kosher animal can have such a beautiful and inspiring name. Perhaps that's precisely because her beauty is only on the outside; from within she's a treifah animal, no more kosher than a pig or horse. Understanding and observing the Torah is not something given to superficiality and cosmetic veneer; it is a deep process of study and discovery which must reach to the very root of all issues.