



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ד' אלול תשפ"ד - שפטים - 7th September 2024 - Volume 17 - Issue 7

News This Week

Kiddush

There is a Kiddush this Shabbos following davening sponsored by Yosaif Bernhardt in honour of the recent Yahrtzeit of his father, Chaim Aruchim

Chaim Aruchim

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

Sun, 5th Elul - David Jacobs for his mother

Weds, 8th Elul - Chavi Schijveschurder for her father

Thurs, 9th Elul - Helen Braunold for her father

Fri, 10th Elul - Helen Braunold for her mother

The Opportunity Of Elul

Rabbi Shaya Klyne

I was visiting Crakow a few months ago and while we were at the kever of the Tosfos Yom Tov we said the famous tefilla of the Tosfos Yom Tov that we say in shul every Shabbos Mevrachin. The tefilla is a yehi rotzon – giving brachos for siyata dishmaya for those who are careful not to speak during davening.

While we were by the kever, some Chasidim who were nearby joined us in saying tehilim, and shared how their own lives had changed since being makabel upon themselves to refrain from talking in davening.

When I returned to Manchester I came across an article about a man from USA called Mordechai Hager. Mordechai related that before visiting Eretz Yisroel he was asked by the wife of his friend to ask R' Chaim Kanievsky for a bracha for one of his friends who was ill and was in need of a yeshua.

R' Chaim asked him "do they talk during davening in your shul". Mordechai told him that people did talk but the situation had improved. R' Chaim asked again "do they are don't they?". "They do", he admitted. R' Chaim quoted the Shulchan Auch who says of people who talk during davening that "their sin is too great to bear". This is the only time that such an expression is used in Shulchan Aruch.

R' Chaim then turns to his son R' Shlomo and says "Shlomeleh, bring me a Mishna Berura". R' Chaim opened the Sefer and read where it says that shuls are destroyed because of people talking in shul. He turns to Mordechai and says "this doesn't mean the actual roof caves in, it is referring chas vshalom to the people who daven in the shul. One member may have a problem with parnassa, with health etc"

He told Mordechai to go back to USA and tell the members of the shul to stop talking. Mordechai turned to R' Chaim and jokingly said "It's not enough for me to tell them that the Shulchan Aruch and Mishna Berura say that, I need to tell them that R' Chaim said it. It's like what is said in the name of the Kotzker, that it's unfortunate that Rav Yehuda Hachasid didn't write the aseres hadibros because people would be so much more careful with them if he did". R' Chaim gave permission to say it in his name.

When Mordechai returned he felt awkward to tell his chevra to stop talking and he was delaying giving over the message. A week

Urgent Appeal From The Rov

תשובה תפילה וצדקה מעבירין את רוע הגזרה

With the approach of the ימים נוראים I request from each and every member who is able to support my annual collection for funds to help those of our Kehilla who require a "top up" for י"ט expenses.

All donations are gratefully accepted with a ברכה for a שנה טובה ומתוקה and a שנה טובה ומתוקה.

Donations can be made in either of the following

1. Directly to myself (in Shul or at home) either cash, cheque or voucher payable to ZY Gemach (charity no. 1153306)

2. By bank transfer to

A/c Name : ZY Gemach Sort Code: 77-19-09 A/c No. 2935 0768 Reference: RHC 85. Thank you in advance for your generous response to this Mitzva.

later, the doorbell rang. It was the wife of the man who he asked R' Chaim a bracha for. She came to say that her husband was now 100% better.

Mordechai realised that R' Chaim had kept to his side of the agreement and it was now time for Mordechai to do his part. He decided he would write out his entire conversation with R' Chaim and hand it out in shul. He did so and then went immediately to London for Shabbos.

By the time Mordechai had returned the letter had gone viral. People got a tremendous chizuk from the story. Thousands of people have stopped talking because of his letter. They have changed their tefilos and provided a shemira for their kehilos.

This week, on 6th Elul is the yahrtzeit of the Tosfos Yom Tov, the yahrtzeit of the Tzadik in whose zchus, tens of thousands of Jews have taken it upon himself to upgrade their standard of tefilla.

The Tosfos Yom Tov's yehi ritzon is for those who do not talk during davening. Some people have gone further and taken upon themselves to make sure their phones are turned off during davening and others have gone even further and no longer bring their phones into shul.

Everyone has the ability to upgrade their tefilla in some way. There are so many ways of upgrading in the realm of aseil tov –joining in the singing of the shul, coming a bit earlier, saying the words of tefilla out loud, learning the pirush hamilos, learning the halachos of davening. The list goes on.

As we begin Chodesh Elul, the corridor into yamim noraim, we have a tremendous opportunity for growth. This Chodesh is decreed

Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	6.45pm
זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	6.54pm - 7.10pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.47am
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
Mincha	6.00pm / 7.29pm
Rov's Shiur	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	8.34pm
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	7.25pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm

in Likkutei Torah by the Alter Rebbe as the time of Hamelech basodeh – the King is in the field and is more approachable than when He is in the palace. It is the time of Ani Ldodi Vdodi Li – where Hashem tells us He more accessible than other times.

Tefila is the time of our day where we approach Hashem and make the move to come close to Him. Bizchus us putting extra effort into our tefilla, both for ourselves and for our shuls we should be zoiche to feel Hashem's closeness and love in this month and be zoiche to a kesiva vchasim tova and a gut gebeneded yohr.

It Starts With Oneself

Rabbi J Rubinstein

Rav Yaakov Edelstein used to tell the following story, which he had heard from his father. One Yom Kippur, when his father was a child, he observed somebody praying with great devotion. Then it came to "Neila", the last prayer and the climax of the day. During the day, between the prayers, the people had spread straw on the floor so that they could rest. In the course of the "Neila" service a boy absentmindedly pushed some straw towards the man who was praying with such devotion. When the man took three steps back after his prayers, he slipped on the straw. He started screaming at the boy, and did not calm down until he had slapped the boy. He had been praying all day about Hashem being King over the whole world. But he had not learnt to apply this to himself, and that he had to control his own emotions in the way that Hashem would want; in other words, that Hashem was king over him too.

On Erev Yom Kippur Rav Edelstein used to tell the story of the Yeshivah student who asked the Chazon Ish for a blessing that he should not have an evil inclination. The Chazon Ish said, "Do you want to be a corpse? A living person is someone who has an evil inclination but trains himself to overcome it, and through this earns infinite reward. Hashem created us with an evil inclination so that we should overcome it, and with His help we will overcome it, and we will do it with joy"

All the ideas conveyed by the above stories, are included in the words which we say every day at the beginning of Davvening; וּבְנֵלוֹי ג-ד יִרָא שְׂמִימִם בְּסֵתֵר וּבְנֵלוֹי "A person should always be G-d fearing in private, and in public". Perhaps this is also part of the symbolism of the Mitzvah which a Jewish king had, to write two Sifrei Tora (Chap 17 Verse 18). One which he took with him wherever he went, and one which he kept in his hidden treasure house. A Jewish king was the most public figure it was possible to be. If he fulfilled his role properly, he was a model and example for the whole nation, and inspired them all, as indeed some Jewish kings did. Therefore, it made sense, that he should take a Sefer Torah with him wherever he went, thereby showing the people that all his steps were according to the teachings of the Torah. But that was not enough, he also had to have a private Sefer Torah which meant, in his private life, when nobody at all knew what he was doing, his behaviour was also by the Torah.

In the world generally, we often find there are people who engage in wonderful activities on behalf of the public, but whose private behaviour leaves much to be desired. But the real "heroes" of Jewish history are not like that. To give but one more recent example, Rav Elchonon Wasserman said about the Chafetz Chaim, the more he got to know him the more he respected him.

Rabbi Yisroel Salanter used to say, when a person says in the "Shema", that Hashem is אחד – "One", he declares that Hashem is the king over the whole world, but he leaves out himself! As we turn to approach Rosh Hashanah, perhaps the message of the king writing two Sifrei Torah, and the example of people like the Chafetz Chaim, will help us avoid making that mistake

Branches Of The Judiciary

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Juxtapositions. The Talmud analyzes them and expounds upon them. After all, every word of the Torah is as important as the next, and the positioning of each law in the Heavenly ordained book bears a great symbolism if not halachic (legal) implication. Perhaps that is the reason that our sages expounded upon a very

interesting juxtaposition in this week's portion.

This week's parsha is named Shoftim – Judges. That is exactly what it begins dealing with. It commands us to appoint judges. They should be honest, upright and unwavering. It prohibits taking any form of bribery as it attests that even the most brilliant and pious of souls will be blinded and perverted by bribes. Conspicuously placed next to those laws is the prohibition of the planting of the asheira tree. The asheira tree appeared as any other tree, but it had another purpose. It was worshipped as an idol.

Those two sections adjoin. The sages comment that there is a stark comparison. "Anyone who appoints an unworthy justice is as if he planted the asheirah tree in his midst."

The obvious question is: though both acts are terribly wrong, there must be a greater reason other than the fact that they both are wrong and immoral. What is the connection?

There was a period in the 1970's when a group of rogues were smuggling valuables in Tefillin and other religious articles that would usually evade inspection; thus the thieves assumed their scheme would be successful. Often they would send these religious articles with unsuspecting pious Jews and asked to deliver them to certain locations near their final destinations.

When United States customs officials got wind of this scheme they asked a few observant agents to help crack the ring. In addition to preserving the sanctity of the religious items, the customs authority felt that Jewish religious agents would best be able to mete out knowing accomplices from unsuspecting participants who had been duped into thinking they were actually performing a mitzvah.

The Jewish custom agent in charge of the operation decided to confer with my grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky on this matter. Though his advice on how to break the ring remains confidential, he told me how he explained how the severity of the crime was compounded by its use of religious items.

"Smuggling diamonds in Tefillin," he explained, "is equivalent to raising a white flag, approaching the enemy lines as if to surrender and then lobbing a grenade. That soldier has not only perpetrated a fraud on his battalion and the enemy; he has betrayed a symbol of civilization.

With one devious act, he has destroyed a trusted symbol for eternity – forever endangering the lives of countless soldiers for years to come.

"These thieves, by taking a sacrosanct symbol and using it as a vehicle for a crime have destroyed the eternal sanctity and symbolism of a sacred object. Their evil actions may cause irreparable damage to countless honest religious people. Those rogues must be stopped, by any means possible," he exclaimed.

Rabbi Chaim Soleveitchik explained the comparison of the asheirah tree to the corrupt judge. An asheirah tree is a very deceiving object. It is as beautiful as any other tree in the world. However, man has turned its aesthetic beauty into a vehicle for blasphemy. "A judge," Rabbi Chaim Soleveitchik explains, "has all those attributes. He may have an honest appearance, even a regal demeanor. In fact, he could have a long kapote and a flowing beard. His very image exudes traits that personify honesty, integrity, and morality. However if he is inherently dishonest he no better than a lovely tree whose sole purpose is to promote a heretical ritual of idolatry."

They both may look pretty and could be used as a vehicle to promote G-d's glory but in this case, they are not. In fact, quite the opposite. Those formerly beautiful objects now bring disgrace to the Creator.

And so, the Torah tells us this week that trees may have outer beauty, but cannot be classified unequivocally as being an ever-sounding testimony to Hashem's glory. Likewise a judge whose demeanor may be noble, may be a source of deception who will bring disgrace on an entire nation. After all, as the saying almost goes, "you cannot book a judge by his cover!"