



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ג אייר תשע"ז - תזריע מצורע - 22nd April 2017 - Volume 9 - Issue 39

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the to Mr and Mrs Mark Jacobson on the occasion of Talia's Bas Mitzvah this week.

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush after Davenning this Shabbos sponsored partly by Mr & Mrs Daniel Harris (in honour of his father's Yahrzeit this Shabbos - Chaim Aruchim), and partly as a farewell to family Grant Pakter (who are moving to London - Hatzoloch Rabo!).

Mr & Mrs Avrohom Moishe Begal invite the Kehillo to a Kiddush after Davening at the home of Mr & Mrs Frenchie Freedman, 26 Moor Lane, to celebrate the recent birth of their daughter, Aviva Rochel.

Ovos uBonim

Ovos uBonim summer program restarts this Shabbos at 5.00pm

Kids Group Restarts

The kids group for years 4-6 restarts this Shabbos at 10.00am.

Bank Holiday Yom Iyun

We will be holding a Yom Iyun in conjunction with Manchester Mesivta this Monday on the Sugya of Sefiras HaOmer starting at 10.00am - see back page for further details.

Siyum Mishnayos

Once again we will have a Siyum the Shabbos after Shavuos of Mishnayos learned together as a Kehilla. This year we will be learning Sedorim Nezikin and Kodshin. Members are encouraged to learn Mishnayos individually or Bechavrusa, the list is on the notice wall in the foyer and there are still a few Mishnayos available.

Divine Chesed - With Difficulty

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein (Torah.org)

An affliction of tzora'as, when it will be in a man, he shall be brought to the kohen.

Be'er Mayim Chaim: Earlier, the Torah used the opposite word order, first mentioning the person, and only then the nega with which he was afflicted. ("If a man will have on the skin of his flesh a s'eis or a sapachas...") Surely we must seek a reason for the inversion in our pasuk.

Many have puzzled over a verse in Shemos. "Any of the diseases that I placed in Egypt, I will not bring upon you, for I am Hashem your healer." If Hashem pledges not to bring any disease upon them, they will not need His services as a Healer! He needn't heal any disease that isn't there! The proper explanation may involve some closer scrutiny of Hashem's self-imposed rules concerning the dispensing of Divine chesed. One of those rules requires that His chesed come at times only on the heels of Divinely ordained suffering and travail.

Here is why. In some cases, a show of His chesed must be triggered by some pressing, compassionate need. Once the chesed begins to flow, it keeps on going, overflowing beyond the original requirement for mercy.

Humans, lehavdil, often act in a comparable manner. There are

people who sometimes pledge only a small amount of assistance. In the process of delivering it, however, they find themselves delivering far more than they originally promised.

So it is with HKBH. Sometimes, an excuse, so to speak, must be found to allow Divine intervention. Once that excuse is accepted, His midah of chesed, now released, manifests itself in rich abundance.

Surely, you will ask, He has no need for excuses to shower anyone and anything with His chesed! You will be correct – but only for some people, and not all. The difference is in satisfying the demands of a system in which all Divine decisions are conducted similarly to the deliberations of a human court. In the heavenly court, there are prosecutors (calling for the execution of din) and defense attorneys, who promote the application of chesed. Most often, both "sides" to the deliberation must be satisfied by a proposed decision and course of action.

Sometimes, it is fairly easy to arrive at a decision that Hashem should intervene with a display of His chesed. This is appropriate for a person whose own conduct is saturated with acts of clear, unvarnished chesed that are manifest to everyone. Those actions justify a response of chesed by HKBH; the decision is made without any pushback or opposition.

Sometimes, however, a person's chesed is not so clear – or only exists in the potential. A person who wishes to do a mitzvah and is prevented from doing so by forces beyond his control is seen by Hashem as if he had performed that mitzvah nonetheless. Rewarding non-performance as if the good deed had actually occurred computes only because Hashem can see what others cannot. He can testify, as it were, that had the person been given the opportunity, he would have followed through on his good intention. Because no one else can guarantee that, however, there is resistance in the heavenly court – the system of competing demands of din and chesed. This resistance would hamper and constrain a Divine response of abundant chesed.

At other times, the merit is obscured for different reasons. Merit

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת תזריע מצורע

1st Mincha / Candle Lighting	6.40pm / Not before 7.01pm
2nd Mincha / Candle Lighting	7.25pm / 7.36-7.50pm
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.22am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	8.28pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	9.33pm
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	10.00pm

may come from a potential to do good in the future, or even in the good that a future descendant will perform. Many other instances of meritorious conduct exist in which the merit is somewhat murky and less than compelling. While Hashem may see past the cloudiness and recognize some pure kernel in the action, there is still resistance in the Heavenly court to richly rewarding conduct that is fraught.

Hashem designed a workaround for such situations. If a person's actions do not amount to an unambiguous case of merit, Hashem creates a different reason to treat that person with chesed. He visits yesurin shel ahavah – “afflictions of love” upon the person. When the recipient of such afflictions remains steadfast in his commitment to Hashem, there is cause for Divine intervention – compassion that goes unopposed in the heavenly courts. Once Hashem responds with chesed to cure a malady that He brought upon a person, the chesed continues to flow. It offers that person blessing, life and peace that he would not ordinarily see.

All of this is hinted at in the inversion in our pasuk. The Torah uses adam for person, rather than ish. Adam often alludes to a person of significance, relating to edameh le-elyon/ “I will imitate what is Above.” Our pasuk would then read as follows: “If a nega – some unexpected pain or affliction – should strike a person of significance, it might be so that he can be brought to the Kohen.” The Kohen here is Hashem's chesed. The nega triggers a Divine response of chesed that leads to a continuing flow of berachah.

The High Price of Oil Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein (Torah.org)

If everything has an allusion in the Torah, the place you would look for classic Jewish guilt would be the offerings of the cured metzora. Keep looking. The message to the metzora on the rebound is one of unvarnished optimism.

Very rarely does the Torah combine the three very different messages of olah, chatas, and asham. Most of the time, a person stands before Hashem in the mikdash with one of those themes in mind. In several situations, the Torah calls upon two different motifs, demanding that each should be given its due in a person's thoughts. For example, a woman after childbirth brings an olah and a chatas. Ready to bear the responsibility of motherhood, having spent mandatory periods or both tumah and taharah after delivery, these korbanos instruct her to train her sights on elevation (olah), as well as exercising caution in resisting what could compromise that elevation and reduce her spiritual stature (chatas).²

Only one other place does the Torah ask for all three kinds of offering. The nazir, whose attempt at elevation has gone awry (and has become tameh in contradiction to his vows) also brings all three. He, however, does so in a more muted manner: the olah and chatas requirements are satisfied by bringing birds. The recovering metzora does not get off that easily. He is required to bring animals, which make a more powerful visual statement. He also has little choice about which animals to bring. All three are lambs.

The lamb is the flock animal, whose life revolves around the care provided by an overseeing shepherd. The starting point in the new world of the metzora is recognizing the root of his social sins. Somewhere inside of him, he believed that he could go it alone, that he was dependent on neither Man nor G-d, but enjoyed enough self-sufficiency to assert his own independence. He needs to absorb the lesson that to reenter the community as a societal partner with all of its members, he must drop his ego a few notches, learn to be a follower, at least in part, and entrust his future to his Shepherd, rather than his own talents and devices.

Before his tzora'as, it likely never occurred to him that his behavior and attitudes were more than mildly dysfunctional. As part of his reeducation, we emphasize to him that his failings are complex and variegated. Addressing them requires all the help he can get. He therefore must direct his heart to the lessons that come with chatas, asham and olah.

Surprisingly, even his chatas and has asham require a minchas nesachim of flour, oil and wine. These symbolize his material sustenance, his

well-being, and the joy he finds in them. They never accompany a chatas or asham, but here they are required. Focused as he is on the requirements of social living, he must bear in mind that he has not been chastised for merely failing in small part of his civic duty, as if such duty were just another irritation in his busy life. Instead, he is told that all his future happiness and well-being depend on his living as a loyal, dutiful citizen within the community of Jews.

One more anomaly requires explanation. The metzora brings a measure of oil, apart from the oil that is mixed into his mincha/ flour-offering. We might think of this separate quantity of oil as functioning simply for the purpose of anointing the ear, thumb and toe of the metzora, as specified later on.³ Halacha, however, does not support this. The oil left over after the anointing is treated in much the same way as the residual oil of a mincha. Once the proper portions of the mincha have been directed towards the mizbe'ach, the kohanim eat the remaining oil in the courtyard of the mikdash. This would indicate independent significance of the oil, apart from its function in anointing the metzora. Several usages of the root ShMN in connection with the human body all suggest that it is used as an expression of fullness and robust health.⁴ The metzora has just rebounded from a sin-induced disease. The implication ought to be clear to him. He can prevent a relapse by avoiding the antisocial behavior that led to his malady. But we hold out for him to consider that by getting his internal house in order, he will do much more than avoid negative consequences. Within the healthier spiritual lifestyle we predict that he will find a more comfortable, enriched existence.

We often have to remind ourselves that privilege begets responsibility. When we fail to properly utilize the tools He gives us, He does not just take them away, leaving us in a neutral position. We travel from comfort to discomfort, not a midpoint. Here, the Torah holds the hand of the metzora and travels the same road in reverse. From the depressive nadir of his isolation, the Torah does not lead him back to the doorstep of his community, but to a hill from which he can see only beautiful vistas ahead.