



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ב - ד אדר א תשפ"ב - תרומה - 5th February 2022 - Volume 14 - Issue 31

News This Week

מזל טוב

Hillel and Chavi Schijveschuurder invite the Kehilla to the engagement of Prina to Oriel Schwalbe this Sunday, 6th February 3pm-5pm at 99 Cavendish Rd.

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Zacky Graff for the Yahrtzeit of his father on Tues 7th Addar.

A Vision Thing

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Among the items that were to be included in the building of the Tabernacle was acacia wood. And though there is no acacia wood in the Sinai Desert, Rashi tells us that 210 years before the exodus, on the journey to Egypt, Yaakov (Jacob) brought acacia trees to be planted in Egypt. He knew that one day the Jews would be liberated and would need a sanctuary in their sojourn. So he prepared wood. Yaakov had not seen his son for 22 years, yet mind while going to see Yoseph, he brought the material needed for a structure, that was to be built years in the future! What prompted Yaakov to think that way? Was there nothing else to bring to Egypt? Why wasn't he worried with the needs of the present? After all, 70 souls were entering a new land and culture. I am sure there were more pertinent things to bring than wood.

On a visit to Congregation Toras Chaim of Hewlett, NY, Rabbi Paysach Krohn told a wonderful story. Ponovez Yeshiva in Bnai Beraq is one of the most distinguished Yeshivos in the world. A number of years ago, at the beginning of a semester, a young boy from Switzerland who applied there was denied entry. The Rosh Yeshiva (Dean) told him to come back in a few years, his level of study was not advanced enough for the Yeshiva, and he also was a bit too young.

The boy said he understood, but he wanted to speak to the Rebbitzin, the widow of the founder and late Rosh Yeshiva of Ponovez, Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Kahanamen, of blessed memory. The Yeshiva administration was a bit surprised: Rav Kahanamen had passed away a number of years prior, and the young man did not claim to know the Rebbitzin. More important, she had no role in the admission process. Nevertheless, the young man was shown the Rebbitzin's apartment. After a few moments, the boy emerged, and the Rebbitzin asked to speak with the Rosh Yeshiva. It took less than a few minutes, for the Rosh Yeshiva to emerge and motion the young student waiting outside of the Rebbitzin's apartment. "Welcome to Ponovezer Yeshiva," the Rosh Yeshiva heartily declared. "We have decided to accept you wholeheartedly." The boy smiled while many of the students and others who gathered outside the apartment were baffled. "What could have influenced the decision?" they wondered. The young man solved the mystery for the students who had gathered near the Rebbitzin's apartment. "When I was seven years old, one summer my mother and I vacationed at a Swiss mountain resort." Coincidentally, the Ponovezer Rav z'l was in Switzerland for the summer and checked in to the only kosher hotel in the area – the one we were at! The problem was, the only available room was on the upper floor, and it was hard for the Rav to walk up and down. My mother heard about the problem and immediately offered to switch our room on the first floor, with his. After thanking her profusely, the Rav called my mother and me into his new room. "I want to thank you, Mrs. Schwartz," he said. "I understand that when on vacation it is hard to move rooms, but more so I also want to express appreciation to your son. I'd like to buy him a toy in a gift shop. What would he like?" "I told the Rav that I did not want a toy, I did not want any prize. I did not even want a few coins. All I wanted is to become a student one day in the Ponovez Yeshiva. The Rav smiled and said that he would accept me whenever I felt I was ready. Immediately, the Rav took out a pen and paper and wrote the note that I handed to the Rebbitzin today. Frankly, I never even read it. All

I know is that the vision of my youth was fulfilled today."

Upon descending to Egypt, Yaakov Avinu knew that redemption would be a long way off. He also understood that one day there would be a Mishkan (Tabernacle) for his children. For without it, the exodus would be meaningless. Yaakov realized that a home for spirituality would be the key to Israel's survival. In Braishis (Genesis), after crossing a river, Yaakov worries about little things he left behind and returns to retrieve them. He worried about the small things that were dear to his children. He worried about the memories of the past. Here, Yaakov worries about what he needs to build the future.

There were flourishing Jewish communities in the early years of American Jewish immigration. The communities that had the vision to bring the wood to build a Mishkan – the home for Torah — are still vibrant and flourishing. For with the vision for spirituality the Jewish people will always have the spirituality for vision. Good Shabbos!

Once It's Your Money, It Is Hard to Part With It

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

On the pasuk "Speak to the Children of Israel that they may take for Me an offering..." (Shemos 25:2) the Yalkut Shimoni asks: How is it that the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who created and owns everything that exists in the universe, needs man to offer him anything? The Yalkut answers that He clearly does not need our gifts but rather the words here, "Speak to the Children of Israel (Daber el Bnei Yisrael) are similar to the words elsewhere in the famous Haftorah of Parshas Nachamu (Yeshaya 40:2). Dabru al Lev Yerushalayim v'Kir'u eileha – Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call upon her – which are words of appeasement. The connotation of Daber in our pasuk is not a stern commandment, but rather it implies appeasement—cajole them into giving money to the Mishkan.

Apparently, the expression Dibur can also imply piyus (appeasement). The striking fact about this Yalkut Shimoni is that after the Destruction of the Bais Hamikdash (the time period that the prophet Yeshaya addresses in that Haftorah), Klal Yisrael certainly needed to be spoken to in a soft and encouraging voice. They had just lost everything. The Beis HaMikdash was destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed and exiled. They were in galus and they were starving. They needed words of nechama. So, we understand Dabru al Lev Yerushalayim v'Kir'u eileha to be words of appeasement.

But over here in Parshas Teruma, why does the Medrash say that Moshe needed to speak to them softly, to mollify them and appease them? What is the comparison between merely asking people for money and offering them comfort after an unprecedented national tragedy?

The Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu shares the same concept. "Once Bnei Yisrael accepted

Davening Times

פרשת תרומה

Zman Shabbos	4.42pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	4.47pm
Hashkomo	7.25am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.04am
Mincha	1.30pm / 4.32pm
Motzei Shabbos	5.52pm
Ovos uBonim	6.52pm
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	4.50pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

the Dominion of Heaven with joy by saying 'All that Heaven speaks, we will do and we will listen' – the very next parsha is "Speak to the Children of Israel and take for Me an offering." Here too, one of the most glorious moments in the history of the Jewish people—their utterance of the famous pledge "Na'aseh v'Nishmah"—is seen as a trigger for the Almighty giving them yet a further opportunity to draw close to Him: Now that they are inspired and they are rearing to go – now is the opportune time to ask them that they should take for Me a Teruma offering. As if to say, "Strike while the iron is hot."

What is the interpretation in both of these teachings of Chazal?

The answer is that we see from here one of the great truths of life: It is very hard to get people to part with their money. This does not come as a surprise to anyone who has ever tried to raise money for anything. People like their money, and they don't want to part with it. Therefore, the short answer to this question is that the reason they needed appeasement (piyus) is because they were being asked for money. Likewise, the reason Moshe was told "chaf arayn" (e.g. — Act now! They just said Na'aseh v'Nishma, quickly go ask them now for money) is because if that mood of enthusiasm and spiritual elevation is allowed to dissipate, it will be much harder to get them to part with their gold and silver.

This nugget of wisdom is encapsulated by Shlomo HaMelech in Mishlei (19:22): "Longing for a person is his kindness (ta'avas adam chasdo), but a pauper is better than a (rich) man who deceives (v'tov rash m'ish kazav)." The commentaries explain this pasuk. Many times, we think that if we had tons of money, how generous would we be! Oh how much money would I give to every needy institution in the world!

Every once in a while, a Power Ball lottery reaches \$300,000,000 or \$350,000,000. Have you ever fantasized what you would do with that money? I have! I would not quit my job. I love my job. I would still work because there are certain things I like to do. But I would like a Learjet because I hate going through TSA and having to take my shoes off each time I board a commercial flight. Beyond the Learjet, I am not sure what I would want. Perhaps, an apartment in Eretz Yisrael, perhaps in a prime location in the Old City. Maybe a couple of other things, but that is basically it.

Let us take off \$20,000,000 for these few items. I am still left with \$330,000,000. What am I going to do with that? Everyone thinks, "I would build for every Mosad in town the kind of building they would like to have. I would pay all the Rebbeim fantastic salaries. I would give away huge sums of tzedaka. I would have my own gabbai tzedaka to distribute my wealth appropriately." Shlomo HaMelech says that the Ribono shel Olam knows that whenever someone has something in the abstract—the 350 million dollars that he is GOING TO WIN—then he is a great baal tzedaka. But when people actually have the 350 million dollars, something happens to them. This is what the pasuk testifies: ta'avas adam chasdo. Everyone pretends that his desires are to dispense chessed (if and when they had the wherewithal), but the Almighty says "I would rather have an honest poor man than a rich man who has hallucinated prior to obtaining his windfall." Once you get it, then it becomes YOURS and it becomes very hard to part with.

On the one hand, we could think – why would it be so hard for Klal Yisrael to part with their money? Did they earn it? Did they work for it? They received the silver and gold as presents. They all left Egypt with donkeys laden with gold and silver. They were fabulously wealthy from the spoils of Egypt and the spoils of the Yam Suf. Furthermore, for what did they need money? Their garments did not wear out. They did not need to buy clothes and they did not need to buy food. They didn't need to pay health insurance, rent or tuition. For what did they need the money?

The answer is that "It is my money now." Maybe it was just a gift from Hashem, but "It is my money now." Once it is YOUR money, it is hard to part with it.

This is an apocryphal story, but the story goes that Stalin, the dictator of the Soviet Union, was trying to inculcate his comrades into the concepts of Communism—everyone needs to share. He would ask them "If you had two cows, what would you do with the two cows?" They had to say "I would take one for myself and give one to Comrade Stalin." "If you had two houses, what would you do with them?" "One for myself and one for Comrade Stalin." "If you had two cars, what would you do with them?" "One for myself and one for Comrade Stalin." "And if you had two planes...?" "One for myself and one for Comrade Stalin."

Finally, he asked, "And if you had two chickens what would you do?" The response was "I would keep both chickens." Stalin asked, "You were willing to give me the cows, the houses, the cars, and the planes, but not the chicken not! Why is that?" The comrade answered: "True. Because I don't have a cow, a house, a car, or a plane, but I have two chickens!" If you have the two chickens, you don't want to part with the two chickens because you have it, and once you have it you can't part with it.

Someone once sent five hundred rubles in cash to the Yeshiva of the Chofetz Chaim in Radin. I assume that the Polish Postal Service was no more reliable than the United States Postal Service. A fellow put five hundred rubles into

the mail and sent it to the Chofetz Chaim. This was not a check, not a money order – CASH!

The Chofetz Chaim asked the secretary to find out what the story was behind this donation. The secretary investigated and contacted this donor based on his return address and asked him why he sent five hundred rubles through the mail. He said, "I was about to make a deal and I thought to myself, "If this deal goes through, I am going to give five hundred rubles to the Yeshiva in Radin." The deal went through, but it was already late in the evening when the deal went through. The banks were closed. I could not get a money order. I could not get a check. At first I figured I would wait until the next morning to send the money in the normal fashion. But then a little voice went off in my head: "And if you gave fifty rubles to the Chofetz Chaim's Yeshiva, they would not be happy?" I started thinking that fifty rubles is a lot of money. Why do I need to give five hundred? I saw myself weakening. I saw that if I waited until the next morning, it would not even be fifty rubles, it would be five rubles. So, I took the cash and put it all in an envelope and sent it."

He knew that if he waited any longer, he would not be able to part with his money because that is the way human beings are. It is hard to part with your money.

That is what the Medrash says: Speak to the Children of Israel—Lashon piyus, a language of appeasement and mollification, as it is written, "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem".

Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l once commented that (according to Chazal) the pasuk in Tehillim refers to those who observe Shmittah as Giborei Koach (Tehillim 103:20), mighty people. The Torah promises that if someone keeps Shmittah, then in the sixth year he will see a bountiful crop that will last him for the sixth year, the seventh year, and even the subsequent year. If he just had a major windfall in his sixth year's crop, why is it so hard to take off the seventh year, such that one who does so is called a mighty person?

Rav Aharon said that this is human nature. The farmer will say, "Yes I had a windfall last year – double and triple my normal income, but imagine if I work the seventh year also. How much larger an income will I have then?" It is very difficult to walk away from that. That is why the Shomrei Shevi'is are called Giborim.

This is what Shlomo HaMelech meant when he said those words "Ta'avas adam chasdo" – A person can talk big, but "v'tov rash m'ish kazav" – the Ribono shel Olam prefers the poor person, rather than the rich person who talks big, but when he writes the check, he suddenly becomes a deceitful man.



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