



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

פ - י ניסן תש"פ - צו - 4th April 2020 - Volume 12 - Issue 35

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to David and Vera Isslaer on the birth of a grandson to Nati and Brocho Enchine

Mazel Tov to Dean and Susan Kaye on Donny's engagement to Adina Baumann

Mazel tov to Rudy and Julie Sabba on the occasion of Hannah's Bas Mitzvah last week.

Mazel Tov to Moshe Simon on his recent engagement to Mikhaela Mann

### חיים ארוכים

Chaim Aruchim to Dan Smith on the recent petira of his father, Harold Smith, in London.

Chaim Aruchim to Adrian Rodrigues-Pereira on the recent petira of his father, Robert Rodrigues-Pereira.

### Pesach Newsletter

We will be bringing out a Pesach newsletter on Tuesday night with a range of Divrei Torah together with the full Pesach timetable.

## Grasp the Moment

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Not everyone has the privilege of saying "thank you" to the Creator by bringing a thanksgiving offering to the Holy Temple. The Talmud tells us that only people who were recently delivered from extreme danger – an ocean voyage, a desert journey, a serious illness, a term of imprisonment – can bring this special sacrifice. Why is this so? Why can't we express our gratitude for other momentous occasions in our lives by bringing this selfsame thanksgiving offering?

Furthermore, we find an anomaly in the laws of this sacrifice. The thanksgiving offering falls into the general category of shelamim, peace offerings. However, we read in this week's Torah portion that there is less time allowed for eating the meat of the sacrifice. The peace offering can be eaten for two days, but the thanksgiving offering for only one day. Why does the Torah reduce the eating time of this sacrifice?

The answers to these questions are rooted in the fundamental concepts of the sacrificial service. The purpose of the sacrifices is to foster closeness between the Creator and ourselves. When we bring a sacrifice to the altar we are symbolically offering ourselves up to Him, subsuming our hearts, our minds, our souls, our very lives in the universal embrace of the Divine Presence. Eating the meat of the sacrifice, the Talmud explains, is an extension of the sacrificial service. Through the act of ingesting the sanctified meat, we connect to the transcendent concepts and symbolism of the sacrifice not only through our intellectual and emotional faculties but through our purely physical ones as well. In this way, the experience becomes total and the connection is absolute.

When we bring a thanksgiving offering, we take advantage of moments of outstanding inspiration to forge a closer relationship with our Creator. Life is full of little inspirations and numerous opportunities to express our gratitude to Hashem. Most of these, however, do not move us to our core, and therefore, they are not powerful enough to warrant a sacrifice. But when a person is reprieved after staring death in the face, he is totally energized and exhilarated, and the words of thanksgiving and joy he directs heavenward emanate from the essence of his being. This sort of inspiration can be brought to the Temple and presented to Hashem in the form of a thanksgiving sacrifice. This sort of inspiration can be channeled to foster an everlasting closeness. But inspiration is an ephemeral thing. Like a flash of lightning, it illuminates our surroundings in painfully sharp clarity and then is gone, leaving only a memory that slowly fades away. During that moment, we gain a totally different and highly vivid perspective of what is important and what is trivial. During that

moment, we have the ability to find new direction and meaning for our daily existence. Later, it is too late. Therefore, the Torah limits the time period for eating the thanksgiving offering. Grasp the moment! If we wait, it will be gone.

A high-level royal minister was deeply involved in a national crisis situation. During this time, while the king and his ministers conferred daily to discuss developments, the king's birthday came and went without the customary celebration. The crisis eventually passed, and the conduct of government affairs returned to normal. Shortly thereafter, the minister purchased a beautiful birthday gift and sent it to the king. A few weeks later, the king and his minister were discussing the crisis and what could be done to prevent future recurrences. "We can't afford to go through something like this again," said the king with a wry smile. "Do you realize that I didn't even receive any birthday gifts this years because of the crisis?" "Your majesty, have you forgotten?" the minister protested. "I sent you a very beautiful gift. Didn't you receive it?" "Indeed, I did," said the king. "And I thank you. Had you given it to me on my birthday, I would have perceived it as an expression of your joyous celebration of such an important day in my life. But it was given several weeks later. It did not represent your sense of joy but rather your sense of obligation. Much as I appreciate it, I do not consider it a true birthday gift."

In our own lives, we are often profoundly inspired during times of great joy or, Heaven forbid, great distress. On these occasions, we are inclined to take stock of our existence and resolve to make important changes, either to improve our relationship with our Creator, to correct our flaws and shortcomings or simply to spend more time with our families. When this happens, it is important to translate our inspiration into action immediately, for if we wait until we get around to it, more often than not we never will.

## In Good Health

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

Command Aharon and his sons, saying, "This is the law of the burnt offering..." (Vayikra 6:2)

IT IS HARD to live constantly aware. It is very taxing and often quite overwhelming. We have a difficult enough time just consciously focusing on the really important matters in life, let alone the everyday ones as well. Thank G-d for the unconscious mind...which basically handles about 80-90 percent of a person's day!

That makes it sound as if most people are sleepwalking. Sometimes it really feels that way, as when you're walking down the road and you accidentally

## Davening Times

### שבת פרשת זו

שבת הגדול	שבת הגדול
Mincha	6.45pm
Candle Lighting	6.58pm - 7.10pm
Shacharis	9.15am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	7.37pm
Motzei Shabbos	8.42pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Wed - Erev Pesach	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Eat Chometz Until	10.17am
Burn Chometz Until	11.41am

bump into someone or something and it feels like you just woke up. I don't know if anyone has ever counted how many words there are in Shacharis, Mincha, or Ma'ariv, but I can tell you, unless I really make an effort, I am barely conscious of most of them.

That's why life becomes so much more exhilarating when we think we hear a suspicious noise at night, or we have a near car accident. People actually pay good money to be willingly terrified and call it "amusement"! It shouldn't be called an "Amusement Park." It should be called a "Welcome Back to Life Park." The incredible thing is that, if most people live mainly on autopilot in most generations, that makes most of history on auto-pilot. You have to wonder how G-d feels about that. You can bet that He didn't make all of Creation just for masses of people to float from moment to moment in a low state of consciousness.

Now, if you ask the average person who is not sleeping if they are awake, they will look at you funny and ask you, "Are you? Can't you see my eyes are open, and that I'm moving around doing stuff?"

Yet, if you were to ask them if they saw something that occurred right in front of their eyes, they would probably have to say no. There are experiments that make this point, much to the surprise and even shock of the participants.

I mean, I am constantly surprised how, within seconds of saying a blessing, I can't recall it. I remember thinking to myself, "I need to make a brochah," and then preparing to say it. And yet shortly after, I will be on the other side of the moment after I could have said it, but don't recall with certainty if I did. It is not so uncommon to be asked by someone else, "Did you hear me make my brochah?"

They used to ask the question, "If a tree falls in a forest and there is no one to hear it, does it make a noise?" I'd like to revise that for the purpose of this essay: If a person experiences something on an unconscious level, is it called a "life experience"? I guess it comes down to what a person calls "life." If life is merely having your most important bodily functions working, then who needs consciousness? But if "life" is defined by level of consciousness, then experiencing any of it on auto-pilot doesn't really count as a life experience. From that perspective, not too many people will have many of them compared to the amount of years they might live.

The Talmud kind of alludes to this idea when it says that a person only sins when a spirit of insanity enters them (Sotah 3a). After all, who in their right mind would anger the Master of the Universe and Source of their every breath? Only a "crazy" person! Okay, not actually crazy, but certainly someone out of touch with reality. In fact, how many times have we done something without much concern, only to learn of the consequences later and ask ourselves, "What was I thinking?" And those are only the times that we became conscious of the need to ask the question...

If it was something that we could not have known, we don't need to ask the question, just to learn from our "mistake." We only ask the question if it is something that we think we should have been aware of at the time, but for some reason, we were asleep and missed the opportunity of the moment.

In recent times, the world has awakened to this reality and has begun pushing the idea of mindfulness, which I have discussed in a previous essay. And I have explained how a Torah way of life is supposed to have built-in mindfulness...if a person follows the "instructions" and pays attention to what they are doing.

Easier said than done. When it comes to good traits, habits are hard to form. Bad traits, however, are hard to break. That's the yetzer hara of a person for you, making the spiritually productive a continuous challenge, and the spiritually unproductive the "normal" thing to do.

It says in Pirkei Avos: Rabbi Tarfon would say: The day is short, the work is much, the workers are lazy, the reward is great, and the Master is pressing. (Pirkei Avos 2:15) Is this true? One hundred percent. If so, then how does this fit with our world today? That's not for me to answer, because I have no idea whatsoever. It could be that G-d looks down upon us like little lost sheep, since we have had no prophets, and not much Ruach HaKodesh for a long time now. We are, so-to-speak, just "hanging in there."

Or maybe G-d thinks that we are a lot more capable than we're making out to be. Maybe He looks down on our relatively casual and material way of life...even upon those who are keeping many mitzvot and says, "This is NOT what I had in mind. Time for another reboot!" Maybe His expectations of us are greater than we have of ourselves.

This impacts the discussion currently taking place in many religious circles. The coronavirus has managed to wreak world-wide havoc in a very short period, with no end in sight and with possible long-term catastrophic impacts. Red lights are going off all over the place for different things at the same time. Are we being punished? If yes, what can we do to mitigate the situation? If not, then what does G-d want from us? It doesn't matter how the

authorities explain what happened, how it happened, and how they plan to deal with it. It is from G-d. It happened how it did and when it did because G-d determined that it should. It will last as long as it will, because G-d says it must. Even the person who discovers the cure, if they do, has already been determined by G-d, as well as who will benefit from it in time, and who will not. It's all for the sake of some purpose that has its origins in the very creation of the world itself, even if we only relate to the virus in the here-and-now. Or is it a combination of the two, punishment and...And WHAT? What else is there?

There is what this week's parsha speaks about: tikun. Mistakes get made, and they have to be fixed. A perfectionist is not someone who gets everything right all of the time. A perfectionist is someone who can't live with mistakes if they can rectify them. G-d is PERFECT, and He created the PERFECT world. And every time someone does something imperfect, they have an obligation to make right what they did wrong.

These parshios discuss this in terms of the various different sacrifices that were brought for various different reasons. But they all accomplished the same thing: higher levels of perfection as a result of levels of rectification. To the extent that a person followed the Divine "recipe" for each sacrifice, that is the extent to which they were able to contribute to the perfection of Creation.

We don't have a Temple today, therefore we don't have the opportunity to bring sacrifices. And even though our prayers are supposed to be in their place, that is provided we approach them with sufficient and the correct intention, which is not so easy for many to do. Today, we do not have very many ways to add to the perfection of Creation. If anything, we seem to be detracting from it. If perfection cannot come as a result of us, then it tends to come through us, through the events of our lives and history in general. Maybe we can see it, and maybe we can't, but one thing is certain. The situation is making us far more MINDFUL of life, of its opportunities. It is re-emphasizing the blessing of the myriad of things we took for granted, including one another. And the fact that all of this is happening specifically at this time of year, as Pesach approaches, is no coincidence either. We're not tired about talking about freedom, and then not really achieving it because, as far as we are concerned, we already have it. We think we can afford to pay lip service to such important sentiments. Yet there is no Temple; it's occupied by a foreign religion. The Shechinah still wanders, and the Jewish people are still scattered. That may not bother us, but it does G-d. It's the antithesis to the purpose of Creation. But apparently, not for much longer, b'H. If things continue to move in the direction they are currently going, the world is destined to achieve a much higher level of consciousness, and a greater quality of life. And THAT is precisely what restores perfection to G-d's perfect world. Chag Pesach Kasher v'Samayach. May we only hear good news, G-d willing, and may those who are healthy remain so, and those who are not recover fully and quickly. And may we all merit to greet Moshiach peacefully and with joy speedily in our day.

## Q&A

### Kids

1. What do the first two פרקים of this weeks sedra talk about?
2. What was the first part of the עבודה called in the בית המקדש?
3. What is the מדו בד referring to?
4. Can the כתונת be too long for the כהן?
5. Can the כהן wear any clothes between his skin and the clothes mentioned in the Torah?

### Adults

1. Why is the תורה repeating itself when the first two perakim of this weeks sedra were discussed in last weeks sedra?
2. Was there a negative commandment regarding extinguishing the flames on the מזבח?
3. Why is the word צו used at the beginning of the sedra rather than דבר or אמרת?

Kids  
1) It discusses the קרבנות of חטאת, עולה, and אשם  
2) וצו לומר - Removing the previous days ashes from the מזבח and then putting  
on logs to keep the fire burning.  
3) The linen tunica, otherwise known as the כתונת. (Rashi)  
4) No it has to be made to measure (Rashi)  
5) No the clothes mentioned in the Torah must be placed directly onto their flesh - על  
Adults  
1) Now it is instructing the Cohanim how to do the עבודה.  
2) Yes  
3) As the Cohanim are being urged to be extra careful when performing the עבודה.  
This was also a command not only for the Cohanim then, but also for future genera-  
tions (Sifra).