



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ב - יום כפור תשע"ב - 11th September 2021 - Volume 14 - Issue 11

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Henry and Fiona Brownson on the birth of a grandson to Yaakov and Shoshana Brownson
Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs YY Katz on the occasion of the Bar Mitzva this Shabbos of their grandson Yitzi Katz

Shabbos Shuva Droshe

R' Shaya will be giving a Shabbos Shuva Droshe following Shacharis on Shabbos morning and the Rov will give a Shabbos Shuva Droshe following the 7.19 Minyan for Mincha.

Keren Hashevi'is

With the support of the Rov and R' Shaya members are encouraged to donate generously to the Keren Hashevi'is appeal partnering with farmers in Israel to help them financially as they stop working their fields for the Shemitta year. Donations can be given to Avi Stern or Harrison Kauffman or online at <https://www.charityextra.com/kerenhashviis> and selecting our Shul's page.

The King And The Poet - A Persian Tale For Yom Kippur

Michal Naomi and Shraga Fabien Borocin

In one of the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire, there lived a man called Abba Ruchani, the king's official poet. There was a man who was bitterly jealous of the king's poet. The man went to see the king and said, "Your majesty, your poet, he goes around saying silly things. He says that he can build a house in the sky within 3 days!"

So the king summoned his poet and said, "My dear poet, I have heard that you say that you can build a house in the sky within 3 days! I would very much like a house in the sky. Please, go and make me such a house and if you do not finish it in 3 days you shall be banished from the kingdom." Knowing that the king was a wise and kind man, Abba Ruchani didn't say anything and left the room.

Early the next morning, Abba Ruchani went to the riverbank and gathered some bamboo sticks. Then, he took some long, thin paper and began to draw a life-sized door and massive windows.

On the second day, he finished his drawings and let the paper dry. After that, he wrapped the paper around the bamboo sticks to create a roofless house.

On the very last day, Abba Ruchani woke up early and attached the unusual house to one end of a strong, thin rope. Then, he tied the other end of the rope to a tree trunk and ran with the rope in his hand (this is probably one of the first written records of a kite). Now that he was done, he walked over to the king's palace. Being the king's poet, he was ushered in.

"Good morning your majesty!"

"Good morning, my dear poet."

"Have you slept well, your majesty?"

"Why yes, thank you. And you?"

"Yes, thank you very much. Have you been outside yet, your majesty?"

"Not yet" replied the king. He walked over to the window and saw a

house floating in the sky.

"Only, your majesty, I ran out of roof beams so I couldn't build the roof."

"Ah but that is fine my dear poet," the king began. "I shall send the royal porters to the Royal Warehouse to get some roof beams and take them to the house in the sky."

The Royal porters fetched the roof beams and Abba Ruchani led them to the tree trunk.

"How do we get up there?" the Royal porters asked.

"Step on the rope" Abba Ruchani replied calmly.

So, the porters went back to the King and complained.

"My dear poet" said the King, "my porters are not tightrope walkers. How do you expect them to walk on a long, thin rope with heavy beams on their shoulders?"

"Your majesty, how do you expect me to build a house in the sky?"...

And the King just smiled.

The tale is nice but it brings a few questions. One of them is: "Why would the poet be punished so harshly, to be banished from the

Davening Times

פרשת וילך

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos
Candle Lighting
Hashkomo
Shacharis
סוף זמן ק"ש
Mincha
Motzei Shabbos

שבת שובה

7.21pm
No later than 7.21pm
7.30am
9.30am
9.50am
2.00pm / 7.19pm
8.24pm

עשרת ימי תשובה

Sun 6.00am / 7.40am / 8.30am
Mon 6.00am / 6.30am / 7.45am
Tues 6.00am / 6.40am / 7.45am
Mincha & Maariv 7.15pm
Late Maariv 10.00pm

ערב יום כפור

Selichos 6.20am / 7.00am / 7.45am
Mincha 3.00pm

ליל יום כפור

Kabbolas Yom Tov 7.09pm
Candle Lighting No later than 7.09pm
Tefillas Zaka 7.09pm
Kol Nidrei 7.30pm

יום כפור

Shacharis 9.00am
Yizkor 12.15pm approximately
Mincha 5.11pm
Maariv & Motzei Yom Tov 8.11pm

Friday

6.40am / 7.15am / 7.55am

kingdom, if he would fail to do something not easily done and not that common?"

An answer is that it would have been a misuse of his talent. Being the king's poet laureate, his job was to make a nice song or poem explaining the new laws and say them to the people so that they would accept the new laws more easily. If he began saying silly things, the people would not listen to him anymore. He would have not only wasted his talents, he would have become useless to the king as a poet.

On Yom Kippur, we make a Cheshbon HaNefesh. We look at all that we have done properly and improperly, whether we have used correctly or incorrectly the talents, resources and opportunities that Hashem has given us.

Another question is: "What would have happened had the porters tried to go on the rope?"

Indeed, the rope would have let their feet get back to the floor, they would not have lost their balance and the floating house in the sky would have come down a little closer to Earth.

When we start from the Torah (the tree) and follow in the ways of Hashem (the rope), step by step, a little step at a time, Hashem gets closer to us... that is Teshuvah.

Have a good fast and a good year.

The Healer Is On-Call

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

"Seek out Hashem when He can be found..." (Yeshaya 55:6)

The ten days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are referred to by our Sages as the "Aseres Y'mei Teshuva" – "ten days of repentance". This concept is alluded to in the verses. The Rambam records that during this period Teshuva is more effective. The mitzva of Teshuva can be performed throughout the entire year; what is the significance of this time period that makes it more auspicious for repentance?

The Rambam, in his magnum opus, "Yad Hachazaka" records the principle of "bechira chofshis" – "free choice" in the Laws of Repentance. Free choice is the very basis of our relationship with Hashem. Without the ability to choose right over wrong there could not be a system of reward and punishment. Why then does the Rambam wait until the Laws of Repentance which are found at the end of the first section of the Yad Hachazaka to discuss free choice, and not include it in the chapter "Yesodei Hatorah" – "Fundamentals of the Torah" which is found at the beginning of the section?

Modern psychology eschews the belief that most negative behaviors are symptomatic of greater problems which lie embedded in a person's psyche. Therefore, psychologists deal with a patient's past experiences, in the attempt to expose the cause which precipitated the current behaviors or attitudes of the individual. For example, a person slandering and deprecating others could be indicative of his own low self-esteem, while an abusive personality could be manifest in one who himself was abused. It would seem that the law of repentance completely ignores this notion. The Rambam elaborates upon the definition of complete repentance, allotting ten chapters to the subject; the penitent is required to desist from the action, show remorse and verbally express that he has sinned before Hashem, committing never to do so again. His motivations and past experiences that are the underpinnings of his actions are never mentioned. If the psychological principle is well-founded, failing to address the underlying issues ensures that the behavior will be repeated. Why is the root of the problem not addressed? Do our Sages not agree with the entire concept of psychoanalysis?

The Talmud states that Shaul, who erred with one transgression, was sentenced to death by the Heavenly court and had the Monarchy removed from his family. David, who erred on two occasions, was given a reprieve, allowing the Monarchy to endure within his family. David was held accountable for having taken Bas Sheva away from her husband Uriah and for taking a head-count of Bnei Yisroel, which is prohibited by Law, and resulted in the death of seventy thousand

men.³ Both of these acts of commission appear to outweigh the sin of Shaul, who was overly compassionate, sparing the life of Agag the Amalakite king and the Amalakite livestock, an act of omission. The Maharsha questions why David was dealt with preferentially when his transgressions appear to be of greater severity than Shaul's.

After the sin of Bas Sheva, Nossan the prophet approached David, rebuking him for his transgression. David responded "chatai laHashem" – "I have sinned to Hashem". Shaul too, when rebuked by the prophet Shmuel, replied "chatai ki avarti es pi Hashem" – "I have sinned, violating Hashem's word". Although there appears to be no difference between the contrition of Shaul and that of David, the answer lies in Shaul's subsequent words, "ki yareisi es ha'am va'eshma b'kolam" – "for I was fearful of the nation, bowing to their demands". Whereas David simply stated "I have sinned", Shaul attempted to offer a reason for why he acted in the way that he did, claiming that it was due to the pressure of the people. By attempting to offer an excuse, Shaul was abrogating his responsibility for the transgression. The most important element of Teshuva is accepting complete responsibility for our actions and not attempting to shift the blame. David was therefore offered a reprieve, having repented completely, while Shaul was not, for his penitence was lacking.

Focusing upon past experiences and connecting them to present behaviors often leads to the abrogation of responsibility. The Torah wants us to focus only upon our actions when doing Teshuva, since we are expected to take complete responsibility for the transgressions we have perpetrated. Any attempt during the Teshuva process to identify the behavior as a manifestation of a past experience is, in actuality, an attempt to mitigate blame for our actions. Therefore, the Rambam includes the principle of free choice in the Laws of Teshuva, for it is the ability to choose right from wrong that holds us completely accountable for our choices. Having proclivities or propensities from past experiences does not affect our ability to choose the right course of action. Past experiences or personality traits only make it a greater challenge to do the right thing; a person does not have the right to say that he acts the way he does because that is who he is. Unless a person meets the Halachic criteria that renders him legally incompetent to make decisions, he must hold himself completely accountable for all his decisions.

Psychological analysis can be beneficial when used to determine a person's challenges and the way in which he should address them. But, when used to deflect responsibility, it is harmful, for the behavior becomes entrenched within the person and creates excuses for his actions.

The Talmud teaches that there are two forms of "refu'ah" – "healing", the healing of sickness and the healing that follows Teshuva, as is stated in the verse "veshav verafa lo" – "and he will repent and he will be healed". It is generally understood that this form of healing addresses the healing for the damage to our souls which is caused by the sins that we perform. However, this healing can also be understood as the healing that Hashem affords us after Teshuva, to remove those underlying forces which created our propensity to act in a sinful manner.

During the ten days of repentance, Hashem, who is our Healer, is closer to us and waiting for us to call upon Him. Therefore, during this time it is easier to remove the underlying causes of our malevolent behavior. Hashem will remove these causes, as long as we take complete responsibility for our actions

