



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

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## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Yitzchok and Channa Brocho Steinhaus on the engagement of Michal to Benjy Mirwis. The engagement takes place on Sunday from 5-7 in the Shul Hall

### Rov's Hashkofo Va'ad

The Rov's Hashkofo va'ad restarts this Sunday night 9.20-10pm.

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Yanky Kahan for the Yahrtzeit of his mother this Wednesday, 24th Kislev

## Pride In Our Judaism

Rabbi J Rubinstein

When we kindle the Chanukah lights on the first night of Chanukah, we say the blessing שהחיינו, thanking Hashem for keeping us alive up to this day. Perhaps we can add another level of meaning to that blessing, through the following story, recorded by Yaffa Eliach in her book, Chasidic Tales Of the Holocaust.

On the eve of Chanukah in the concentration camp of Bergen Belsen, the Germans were deliberately particularly brutal and murderous to the Jewish prisoners. When evening fell, not far from the heaps of dead bodies, living skeletons gathered to participate in lighting a Chanukah Menorah made out of a shoe, strings pulled out of a uniform, and black camp shoe Polish. Rabbi Israel Shapiro the Rav of Bluzhov, chanted the first two blessings in his pleasant voice, then before reciting the third Blessing of שהחיינו, he turned his head and looked around as if searching for something. Then he turned back and said the שהחיינו blessing. Afterwards another Jewish person there said to the Rav "How could you say שהחיינו "Thank you Hashem for keeping us alive" after the day we have just endured?" The Rav replied, "I had exactly the same problem, but when I turned around and saw the group of people surrounded by heaps of bodies of dead relatives, and death looking from every corner, who still wanted to light the holy Menorah with faith and devotion, I felt a special obligation to recite the blessing of שהחיינו. So the Rav felt a special obligation to thank Hashem for keeping him alive, and enabling him to see people of such extraordinary faith. Perhaps when we kindle the lights, in addition to thanking Hashem for keeping us alive to be able to celebrate this festival of Chanukah, we should also thank him, for giving us the indescribable privilege of being part of a nation that has kept this Mitzvah with unwavering devotion and in all circumstances, for over two thousand years, and continues to do so all around the world.

We should have an unshakeable sense of pride in being Jewish. The idea of pride in our Jewishness, also applies in an individual personal way. In this week's Parshah, יוסף הצדיק, (Joseph) at the height of his physical strength, far away from any family, or any mentor, was repeatedly tempted by Potiphar's wife. But he said to himself, ואיך, "How can I do this great evil, and I will have sinned to Hashem" The key words were, "How can I do it" He had such a deep awareness of himself as a G-d fearing person, that he could not allow himself to do it. Rabbeinu Yona in his Sefer, שערי עבודה, invokes these words to emphasize the importance of every individual recognising his own good points and those of his ancestors. If a person tells himself, "I am not really so religious" that is opening the door to further deterioration. None of us are perfect, but although we

## The Rov's Gemoro Shiur will begin

מסכת חגיגה

on Thursday 2nd January after Maariv at 8.20pm - New participants welcome!

(Shiur takes place Monday, Wednesday and Thursday nights 8.20-9.15pm approximately)

must not be complacent and should constantly strive to improve, if we take pride in the Judaism we do observe, this will help us withstand any temptation to break the standards we do have, and will encourage us to progress further.

The Chashmonaim were fiercely proud of the Judaism of the Jewish people. יוסף הצדיק was immovably proud of his personal principles. We must be proud of our Judaism, nationally and personally, and therefore when kindling the Chanukah lights say with great feeling, שהחיינו "We thank Hashem for keeping us alive to this day."

## Sibling Rivalry

Richard Danziger

"ויבא יוסף את־דִבְתָם רָעָה אֶל־אֲבִיָּהֶם" "and Yosef brought evil tales about them to their father".

At a cursory glance Yosef's behaviour seems immature – he appears to be a tattletale running to tell his father all of his brothers' bad behaviour. However, there are deeper ideas running through this account of Yosef and his brothers.

The Me'am Lo'ez says that their disagreements ran deeply into fundamental concepts. He brings as an example that the brothers held that they were full Yidden b'halacha while Yosef disagreed. The nafka minah in this example is that when a Yid does a kosher shechita on an animal, he is allowed to eat from it even if the animal is still moving. However if a non-Jew or a Jewish child performs the shechita, even if perfectly, then if he eats from the animal when it's still moving it's considered eating eiver min ha'chai and that person is chayiv misa. This is the kind of story that Yosef would bring, as he held that the brothers were chayiv misa for eating eiver min ha'chai (whilst they held it was a kosher shechita completely) – hardly the immature tattling of a child.

The Nesivos Shalom asks several questions on this whole episode. Seemingly the whole story of the sale of Yosef and subsequent Golus

## Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	3.35pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.40pm
15 Minute Parsha Shiur	Following
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.14am
Mincha	1.30pm / 3.31pm
Seuda Shlishis	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	4.51pm
Ovos uBonim/Bonos	5.51pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Wed Bank Holiday	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Thurs / Friday חנוכה	7.00am / 8.00am / 9.30am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

Mitzrayim came out from Yaakov's preferential treatment of Yosef. How really could Yaakov act in such a manner? Why did Yosef feel the need to tell his brothers about his dreams not just once, but twice? He knew in advance they weren't overly fond of him and each time he came to tell him about his dreams it just served to increase their hatred towards him.

He answers according to an idea brought by the Divrei Shmuel. Whenever a Yid holds back and controls his physical taavos, HaShem responds by kveyochol saying "שימו לחם" – give him bread. That is, in a sense, that all the shefa beracha that a person receives in this world depends on his control of his taavos. This applies especially to a person's mida of yesod – physical intimacy – and the more a person is me'taher himself in this area, the more shefa beracha he receives. This mida was especially concentrated in Yosef who is called הצדיק יסוד עולם, and consequently there was a great shefa beracha emanating from Yosef. The shefa beracha received was both gashmiyusdik in the form of food and wealth, but also ruchniyus in their success in limud haTorah and avodah.

This was the intention of Yaakov in favouring Yosef over the other brothers. His desire was that the brothers should come to love and come close to Yosef in order to be zocheh the shefa beracha that came down because of the הצדיק יסוד עולם. This was the intention of giving Yosef the kesones passim, which was a garment indicative of high position – to show the brothers that Yosef was designated as the leader and they were expected in some sense to subjugate themselves to him. This was Yosef's intention in telling his dreams to his brothers. The dreams expressed his great quality in bringing down shefa beracha. The first dream expressed the gashmiyus in that it was shown in sheaves of wheat. The second dream expressed the ruchniyus in that it was shown in heavenly bodies. He told his dreams to his brothers in order that they should understand his unique koach and be mishubad themselves to him.

However this was not the plan of HaShem. The ratzon HaShem was that Yosef should go down to Mitzrayim in order that Yaakov descend into golus in honour and not in chains. Yosef would prepare for them to survive the years of intense famine and the intense kedusha of his midah of yesod would allow them to survive in the country that was called ערות הארץ in order that their descent into the 49 levels of tumah in Mitzrayim would not cause them to be lost completely. All had to be orchestrated to ensure our survival in Golus Mitzrayim. Hence the brothers came to hate Yosef despite the intentions of Yaakov, all so that he could prepare the way and their survival in the intense golus of Mitzrayim.

## זכר ליציאת מצרים

Michael Black

Last time we ended off with a question; How is Shabbos a Zecher liytziat mitzraim?

I have seen three explanations, Tosafos, Rambam and Ramban. Tosafos in Pesachim 117B writes that in Mitzraim we worked בפרך. בפרך using the AT BASH system becomes וגל (vov gimel lamed) which is 39, i.e. the 39 Melochos. In Mitzraim we were forced to work very hard, forced to do the 39 Melochos. On Shabbos we are commanded not to do the 39 Melochos, which reminds us of coming out of Mitzraim and being free from the 39 Melochos.

The Ramban in 5,16 ואתחנן on the Aseres Hadibros quotes the Rambam. He says that in Mitzraim we were forced to work very hard without rest, whereas now on Shabbos, Hashem commands us to rest. This is similar to Tosafos. When we are told to rest from Melochos for an entire day, we think back to the time when we were forced to work very hard and we remember Hashem's kindness when He took us out of from servitude to freedom.

The Ramban himself explains very differently. If one were to have doubts about Shabbos and its proclamation that Hashem created the world in six days, one should recall what we saw at יציאת מצרים as a proof of Hashem's power. Shabbos is a reminder of יציאת מצרים and יציאת מצרים is a reminder of Shabbos because they both show the unlimited power of Hashem as we saw with the ten Makkos how Hashem was in complete control of our world and as took place in the six days when Hashem created the entire world from nothing, all at His will.

When we say in Kiddush on Friday night זכר ליציאת מצרים, we have an understanding of the words as per Tosafos, Rambam and Ramban.

## Tainted Intent

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

The story of Yoseph's discord with his brothers' waxes as a factual, albeit eternal, analogy to feuding Jews. There are dreams and fantasies, jealousies and misconceptions. Unfortunately, the saga never seems to end, as even today it seems that there are those of our brethren who would sell out their kin – all for the sake of Heaven. The Torah relates: Yoseph's brothers go to Shechem to tend the flock of their father, Yaakov. Yoseph is sent by Yaakov to find out what they are up to. As he approaches them they declare, "Behold, the dreamer approaches." At first they plot to kill him but Reuven and Yehuda intervene, one suggesting he be cast into a pit, and the other convincing the brothers to sell him to passing merchants.

Were the plans to rid themselves of their younger sibling premeditated, or was the sale an impromptu action based on sighting Yoseph as he approached them?

Let us analyze the story and the commentaries.

Yaakov asked his children to tend his sheep. The verse tells us that, "Now, his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem." In the Hebrew language, a prefix "es" is often used in conjunction with a noun. Here it is used in conjunction with the word sheep. Es is a word usually placed to allude to something additional. (e.g. the famous command, "In the command, "Honor your father and your mother" the Torah adds an es before the words father and mother, "Honor es your father and es your mother." The extra word es is there to include elder siblings, stepparents and the like, all who must be afforded honor.) In this case the word es in conjunction with the sheep is not only extra, it also has dots above it. Those dots intone, says Rashi, in the name of the Midrash, that the brothers did not set out to tend only the sheep, thus solely for the purpose of honoring their father, rather they were intent on tending to themselves. They were interested in a self-serving outing, one that involved eating and drinking, without the service of their father in mind.

The question is simple. How does the Medrash know that from the extra word es and the dots above it? Maybe the extra word and the dots imply that they had an extra mission to fulfill? Maybe it implies sheep and other cattle, thus the extra es. Where does it imply that they were not fulfilling their fathers's will. rather they were fulfilling their own agenda? The Gemara (Bava Kama 50a) relates that once there lived a man known as Nechunia the Well Digger. Nechunia selflessly dug wells to provide water for the pilgrims, who traveled to Jerusalem for the three pilgrimage festivals, Pesach, Sukkos and Shavuos.

It happened once that Nechunia's daughter fell into a deep well that he had dug. People ran to the great tzadik, Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa, who was known for his miraculous ability to intercede on behalf of those in distress, and asked him to pray for the child.

It seemed that he was not the least bit concerned. During the first hour he said to them, "Don't worry, she will be all right." An hour later, when there was still no sign of the girl, Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa still seemed unperturbed. "She still is fine," he said.

During the third hour, he told those who had come to him "do not worry, she has come out of the well already." When they asked the girl, "Who brought you up?" she replied, "A ram materialized, and an old man was leading it." After hearing this, the people asked Rabbi Chanina Ben Dosa, "What made you so sure that she would be saved? Are you a prophet?" Rabbi Chanina Ben Dosa replied, "I am not a prophet, nor am I the student of a prophet. But I said to myself, it is impossible that a deep well, one that the tzadik Nechunia the Well Digger took so much pain to dig in order to quench the thirst of travelers, would be a pitfall for one of his children! I felt it would be impossible for his child to be harmed by his good deed. Therefore I knew she would be safe." The Midrash used simple logic. If the brothers' intent was solely to honor and service their father by tending his sheep, then that mission could never have produced the consequences that brought Yaakov misery for 22 years. How is it possible that an exercise in parental honor would turn into an activity that would cause such parental grief and anguish? Therefore, those two dots that hover over the extra word contain a powerful message. Tainted acts cause tainted results. If the mission is pure, so are the results, and when we see sullied circumstances then we must assume tainted intent. However, when brothers act out of purity of purpose and with a non-tainted mission, then their intent will only bring honor to Heaven.