



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

Early Morning Daf Hayomi Chabura

Would you like to join a daily half hour Daf Hayomi Shiur and have the opportunity to give the Shiur once a week (if you would like)

The Shiur will be followed by Chazara or Shacharis.

As Klal Yisroel begin Brochos Daf Beis this Monday we are beginning a Daf Hayomi Chabura in Ohr Yerushalayim:

Mon - Friday 6.15 am, Shabbos - 8.40, Sunday - 7.45

Speak to R' Shaya for more details or just come on Monday morning with your Gemara Brochos ready to begin Shas!!

Dedication Opportunities

We are looking at taking advantage of the 30% offer on the compact size Artscroll English Gemoro and add it to the Shul library. We currently have 14 volumes and a further 10 already sponsored, each volume cost £27 after the sale discount. If you would like to sponsor one or more volumes in memory of a loved one or in honour of a special occasion please be in touch with Avi Stern.

Hachnosas Orchim

We are currently updating our records with regard to people who would be happy to be asked to host individuals that require Shabbos/Yom Tov meals. If you would be happy to host and are not already on the list then please inform either David Jacobs on 07779132157 or Ben First on 07519882812.

Josh Shields Memorial Shiurim

This month's Shiur will take place Monday 6th January @ 9.15pm in the back Beis Hamedrash by Rabbi Nissen Wilson

הקמת מצבה

The Matsevah for the late Mrs Rina Newman mother of David Newman will take place IY"R Friday Jan 10th at 11am in the Eretz HaChaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh. Simchas

My Brother, My King

Dani Epstein

Alfred Hitchcock was famous for his pithy sense of humour. One of his finer lines concerned the performers he hired. "When an actor comes to me and wants to discuss his character, I say, 'It's in the script.' If he says, 'But what's my motivation?', I say, 'Your salary.'

We have actors a-plenty this week, but boy do we have motivation. Yosef's motivation, to be precise. Let's set the stage. In fact, let's roll things back to last week so we can get a clearer perspective of the whole story. As is my wont, we will be relying on the Abravanel to clear the path, along with some freestyle surfing on my part.

The second most powerful man in the superpower of the region is sitting resplendently on his throne, surrounded by ministers and palace flunkies, as a long line of petitioners stretch out from the throne room to the street. Famed for his brilliance and absolute control over every aspect of Egypt's economy, Yosef is interviewing every individual who has arrived in the kingdom seeking to purchase food. All of a sudden he spies a small group of very striking men and to his shock realises his brothers have arrived; now the drama begins.

Hang on, hang on. Just a moment – hold your horses. Here is a man whose very word is quite literally life and death, why is he serving behind the counter? He should be running the store from the managers office, not working the till! And look how he treats his brothers. The first thing he does, having not seen them for twenty two years, is go on the attack; he throws them into prison, gets them out of prison, wines and dines them then plays mind games with them

עשרה בטבת Tuesday

Ta'anis Starts	6.27am
Shacharis	6.30am /7.00am /8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Ta'anis Ends	4.58pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

and gives his father even more grief than he already had on his plate to start with by demanding Binyomin's appearance in the Royal Court.

Did he want revenge? Was he trying to teach them a lesson? Why didn't he simply haul them into a private room and give them a right proper yelling, instead of running them through such a gauntlet? What, in essence, was Yosef's motivation?

If we look at this from a different angle, what on earth went through the minds of the brothers? How come they didn't twig that the screaming, bipolar Grand Panjandrum was in fact their brother? Why didn't they get suspicious when everyone simply handed over their cash and got their goods whilst they were subjected to raving accusations, treated like criminals and then invited to break bread with said potentate then made further meshugge? At some point they should have started asking questions. Some questions. Any questions. Yet we see nothing of the kind.

Now let us blow away the mists of this riddle, wrapped in a mystery inside a shawarma.

First of all, let's deal with Yosef at the food counter. This was an unusual situation, but the times were pretty unusual as well. As food became scarce the Mitzriim turned to Pharaoh demanding and begging for sustenance. He in turn directed them towards Yosef, who he knew was a pretty shrewd operator. Having foretold of a ravaging famine, Yosef had prepared for seven years to literally corner the market for the entire region and make an absolute killing.

Like Noach before him who floated a company when everyone else went into liquidation, Yosef laid the grounds to enrich his king beyond anyone's wildest imagination. When the point came that the only source of food was controlled by Yosef, even Pharaoh himself had little say other than "go to Yosef". Yosef in turn understood that the task he had been entrusted to by Pharaoh was so important that he had to deal with the matter himself; so he tied the apron

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת יגש

Candle Lighting	No later than 3.46pm
Mincha	3.51pm
Rov's Shiur	8.45am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.17am
Children's Group	10.45am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	3.42pm
Shalosh Seudos	Following
Motzei Shabbos	5.02pm
Ovos uBonim	6.02pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Wed / Thurs / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.55pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

around his waist and rang the till בכבודו ובעצמו.

Now, in all likelihood he was not dealing with the hoi polloi, but with wholesalers. This I deduce from the fact that Yaakov had instructed his sons to go down to Mitzrayim to buy food. Why did he do this? Were they short of money, or food? Clearly the answer to this has to be an emphatic no, since on their second journey Yaakov told his sons to take a fruit platter with them for the king's right hand man, so food they had. As for the money, Yaakov and his sons were, not to put too fine a point on it, absolutely loaded to the gills.

So why the shopping trip? There were two reasons for this. One was, they were actually short on wheat. Presumably they had been selling their stock early on as the market prices were beginning to skyrocket. They had no idea how long the famine was going to last but probably assumed it was just a brief interlude until the great harvests they otherwise enjoyed would return; so when they finally ran out of produce as the famine drew on they simply bought from the local traders who had imported it from Mitzrayim at a heavy cost and Yaakov & Co. purchased from them at extortionate prices because they could afford to.

Yaakov realised that everyone around them was subsisting on whatever they could scrounge whilst he and his family simply bought whatever they wanted money no object and that this would put them at odds with their neighbours. In order to avoid any friction or jealousy he instructed his sons to go to Egypt and buy wholesale, mitigating in this way any bad feelings that might otherwise have arisen. So when the brothers turned up to the palace, they were looking to buy in quantity, not a week's supply of food. If that was the case, then they had to deal with the wholesaler himself. This now makes perfect sense. Yosef was handling bulk orders and they were bulk buyers.

When they turned up to make an order and Yosef spies them in the queue he knew he was in trouble and had to think fast, since his position was a lot more precarious than one would initially realise.

When the Arnold "the Governor" Schwarzenegger reached the height of his popularity as Governor of California there were calls for him to run for President. There was a minor problem of course, in that he was not born in the good ol' USA, which ruled him out as a potential candidate; the constitution requires the president to have been born on American soil for obvious reasons, such as ensuring he has a genuine loyalty to the flag.

In much the same way, everyone knew something of Yosef's origins, that he had been a foreign slave who had risen to fortune pretty sharpish. However, there was always a nagging feeling in the back of their mind as to where his loyalties truly lay. Thus far he had proved himself to be absolutely loyal to the king, having no ties outside of the kingdom. But now all of a sudden when his brothers turned up Yosef realised that they could out him, so to speak, and get him into seriously hot water.

In fact from the very day he arose to power this was something that had Yosef very concerned, and therefore he guarded his story very, very carefully. So much so that no-one actually knew anything about him beyond the sketchiest of details and therefore he did not even contact his father - even in secret - in case someone slipped up and revealed his origins, which could cost him his life.

Now, however, that his brothers were standing there in the queue he had to think fast, because for all he knew they were prepared to try to kill him again given the chance. The first thing he needed to do was protect his identity. First he called over an interpreter to stand by his side and spoke only in Egyptian, not Loshon Hakodesh. Then he possibly shielded his face with his crown as the Ramban suggests, perhaps a fan or something equally effective but not suspicious looking. My feeling is that given the archaeological evidence that has been unearthed in the past two centuries, Yosef's appearance was drastically altered, in that he looked like any Pharaoh did; funny beard greased and tied with ribbons, heavy makeup around his eyes and clothing designed to make him look formidable and god-like. Given as well that he had been a teenager last time his brothers saw him and now he was a strapping figure, Yosef was simply unrecognizable.

His master stroke, however, was the psychological warfare he was about to engage in.

The moment his brothers approached the throne, he went on to the offensive. He yelled at them accusing them of being spies, which immediately put them into a state of shock and scrambling for a defence.

"Where have you come from?" Not 'where are you from', but 'where have you come from'. Essentially, he was asking them for their motivation for coming to Egypt, where had they been previously that brought them here. They replied in all simplicity that they had come from Canaan to secure provisions. He reiterates his claims of them being spies, and they in turn pleaded their case again, but fleshing out their claim with more details, as people do when attempting to buttress their case. Yosef persists in calling them spies.

What was going on was that Yosef accused them of being professional spies

engaged on yet another mission, and they answered him with two arguments. Firstly, they said, even if you assume that we our profession is espionage, right now we are clearly not engaging in anything shady. After all, we came here with far more transport and storage than a cover story would require; clearly we are here to do business.

Secondly, we are the sons of one man, which explains why so many of us turned up to conduct one deal. Just look at us. We are clearly merchants of standing; spies tend to be less salubrious than us. As it is, if we were professional spies on a mission, why would our father risk all of us on one mission?

Yosef replies that he simply could not care about their previous engagements; right now they were clearly on a mission, and as to their story of being brothers that was pretty far fetched that one man would have ten sons. They tried to explain that their father had four wives, but Yosef pretended that he was not buying it.

In this way he ensured that in the battle they were engaging in, the brother were always on their back foot, second-guessing Yosef and had no time to think of anything else, such as who this tyrant really was.

At this point the game was firmly in Yosef's court, but he had to think as to how to deal with them and things could go two ways. On the one hand, they deserved to be punished. Not physically, but mentally. After all, they did not physically harm him in the end. They badmouthed him because they thought he was a tattle tale, they imprisoned him in a pit and eventually sold him as a slave. So in all fairness, for this they ought to suffer some kind of mental anguish, middoh kneged middoh. Hashem had put him into a position of power, and perhaps part of that was to mete justice out to his tormentors.

On the other hand, Yosef was in a quandary as to how to sort things out with them on a permanent basis. If he actually punished them they might eventually figure out who he was and spill the beans. Or perhaps now that Canaanite buyers were wandering around the palace one of them might recognise him and out him. That what would result in terrible optics for Yosef, with strangers revealing his attachments to a potentially hostile country, who as a person is so horrible he imprisoned his own brothers for some childhood spat. Not revealing himself on the other hand would prolong his father's agony, a man who had mourned his son for so many years.

He could have simply revealed himself then and there, forgiven them with a full heart and treated his brothers to a right royal slap-up, loaded them with provisions and cash and sent them back home. This was equally fraught with danger since if a war were to break out with Canaan the masses would start whispering that he was sending the King's money to the enemy and perhaps spying for them as well.

The third option was to bring his father and family down to Mitzrayim and take care of them in his palace. This was equally problematic since his brothers might conspire to murder him again. Or perhaps they would turn on one another for mocking Yosef and mistreating him, blaming each other for the incident and then the chattering classes would gloat over the ignominy of watching Yosef's family tearing themselves apart.

Given all these issues, he created a plan that would deal with all these issues in one go. First he decided to test them and see whether in the intervening twenty two years they had grown and changed or whether they had remained the same troublesome lot they were when he was a teenager.

This was the reason for the accusation of being spies and all the other shenanigans he got up to. When he put them under duress, he wanted to see how they would behave. When he heard them say: "אבל אשמים אנחנו" - we are sinners" he observed how they had matured and grown. Instead of blaming each other or anyone else for their misfortune, they concluded as a group that they were getting their just desserts. From this one reaction Yosef was able to determine that they no longer harboured any animosity towards him and they took responsibility for having mistreated him so horribly. It also meant that once he would reveal himself they would treat him with the respect due to a man of his high position.

With this information in place Yosef felt confident enough to roll out the rest of his plan. First, he would reveal his origin story to the masses himself. In this way he could spin the story to his advantage and prevent the great chatterati from, um, chattering. Secondly, he would be able to bring his family down to the region and provide for them there without having to worry about his brothers trying to take him down.

In the end he settled them in Goshen which was a master stroke. Instead of having them hang around the palace which might result in either his father asking awkward questions or his brothers getting too heimish, he put them in a luxury development half an hour's drive away. Near enough that it did not look like he was rejecting them, far enough that they weren't popping down every five minutes and his father wouldn't start any uncomfortable conversations regarding how he became to be גושה למלך.