



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ב - 11th December 2021 - Volume 14 - Issue 23

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Rafi and Yael Black on the birth of a boy. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 118 Neville Road

Mazel Tov to Michael and Anne Wilks on the birth of a great granddaughter to Kalmi and Sheva Saperia.

Mazel Tov to Mordechai Cohen on his wedding this week to Ruchoma Bernstein. The Aufruf takes place this Shabbos, followed by Kiddush at 6 Mildred Avenue. Mazel tov to his parents and also to the grandparents, the Rov and Rebbetzen.

Mazel Tov to Noach Fletcher on the occasion of his 40th birthday.

Rov's Shabbos Afternoon Shiur

There will be no Shiur this week.

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:

Shabbos, 7th Teves - Ilana Shapiro for her mother

Fri, 13th Teves - Daniel Dresner for his mother

Heartspeak

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

In one of the most dramatic episodes of the Torah, this week's portion tells us how Yoseph breaks the news that he is not just the viceroy of Egypt, but also that he is their brother. "He then kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; afterwards, his brothers conversed with him: The news was heard in Pharaoh's palace saying, "Yoseph's brothers have come!" And it was pleasing in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants. Pharaoh said to Yoseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this — load up your animals and go directly to the land of Canaan. Bring your father and your households and come to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land'" Then Yoseph told his brothers, "Hurry — go up to my father and say to him, 'So said your son Yoseph — "G-d has made me master of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not delay. You will reside in the land of Goshen and you will be near to me — you, your sons, your grandchildren, your flock and your cattle, and all that is yours. I will provide for you there — for there will be five more years of famine — so you do not become destitute, you, your household, and all that is yours."

Yoseph concludes his entreaty by showing his sincerity. "Behold! Your eyes see as do the eyes of my brother Binyamin that it is my mouth that is speaking to you. (see Genesis Chap. 45)

What does Yoseph mean, "it is my mouth that is speaking to you"? Of course it is his mouth!

Yosef realized that the brothers would be skeptical. Rashi explains he spoke in Lashon Hakodesh, the Hebrew language, as proof of his true heritage. The Ramban, however, feels that speaking Hebrew would not prove anything. Egypt was close to Canaan, and leaders were fluent in many languages. Surely they knew Hebrew, the language of a neighboring country.

Perhaps the inclusion of Binyamin and the words my mouth can shed some light on the matter.

During the beginnings of détente in the 1970s, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev held a summit with President Richard Nixon. At the time,

many organizations which were active in the struggle to free Soviet Jews planned a massive rally in Washington against the Russian Government. A long-time policy of Agudath Israel was not to join in unrestricted protests, as they did not want to be associated with many violent and inappropriate comments that those demonstrations often induced. In addition, the Agudah leadership worked behind the scenes to help their imprisoned brothers, using a stratagem of continued quiet diplomacy as leverage.

There was much pressure to participate in the Washington rally, which would be a clear show of Jewish resolve to be seen by Russia's top official. But it was a very delicate time in the United States for Soviet-US relations, and an ugly showing against the USSR could have a negative impact.

The President of Agudath Israel, Rabbi Moshe Sherer, ob"m, brought the question to my grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, ob"m, a senior member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah, the Agudah's Council of Torah Sages which guided every aspect of Agudah policy. His response was, "This protest in front of the Washington Monument is in the heart of the capitol of the country that has been the kind host to Torah Judaism during our sojourn here. Do you know if the Nixon Administration wants to see a big protest against the Soviet Government during these delicate negotiations?"

Rabbi Sherer, who had a relationship with the State Department, responded, "the officials said that they did not want to see protestors." My grandfather turned to Rabbi Sherer and re-stated his question. "Your job is not to find out what they said. I know what they said. Now your job is to find out what they want!"

Yoseph, in seconds, transformed from a vicious Prime Minister willing to imprison an old man's youngest son, to a once-scorned brother who is filled with love and compassion. He invites the rest of the family he just threatened moments ago to join him in Egypt. He promises to provide for them and treat them royally.

Was this a trick? Was it a ploy to get more members of Yaakov's family snarled in the net he carefully laid for the eleven who presently stood

Davening Times

פרשת ויגש

Zman Shabbos	3.34pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.39pm
Hashkomo	7.25am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.08am
Mincha	1.30pm / 3.28pm
Motzei Shabbos	4.48pm
Ovos uBonim	5.48pm
Sun	7.00am / 8.00am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues עשרה בטבת	6.30am / 7.00am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.25pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm
Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

in front of him? Was Yosef acting as a spokesman for the regime of the Pharaoh who ruled the powerful land of Egypt?

Yosef responds by linking the affinity for his brother Binyamin together with his generous assurances that it is my mouth that is speaking to you. "It is my mouth," says Yosef, not the mouth of Pharaoh. I am no spokesman for a regime. I speak with the wholesome sincerity of a blood-brother, who, unlike a bureaucrat, is wholly honest in his commitment.

When listening for the opinions of others, or even offering our own advice, we must be sure of who is really speaking and where the words are coming from. Are they our words or just words for the hour?

First Things First

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Pure euphoria is a transcendent feeling that passes, and then it is time to get practical. When Jacob discovered, after twenty-two years of ceaseless grieving, that his son Joseph was still alive, he was ecstatic. The Torah tells us that "his spirit was revived." He literally came back to life. But now it was time to make plans for the reunion.

In the intervening years, Joseph had risen to the position of viceroy in the ancient Kingdom of Egypt, the second most powerful position in the most powerful state on earth at that time. Because of the continuing famine throughout the region, Jacob and his entire family would join Joseph in Egypt and settle in for the duration.

The migration of such a large clan, with numerous possessions and livestock, must have been a major logistical undertaking, but Jacob's first thought was to send Judah ahead to Egypt to establish a house of study in the land of Goshen.

Why was this necessary? Granted that a house of study is an essential component of a vibrant Jewish community, but would it not have been sufficient to give this matter first priority upon their arrival in Goshen? Couldn't the house of study been established while they were unpacking?

The commentators explain that Egypt was such a den of iniquity, such a morass of promiscuity, corruption and outright evil, that Jacob was reluctant to bring his family down for even a single day without a place of refuge. He knew that it was possible for his family to survive and even flourish in such an environment, but only if they had an impregnable sanctuary to which they could always withdraw to reinvigorate themselves spiritually.

Therefore, even if they gave the construction of a house of study the highest priority, there would still be an interim, albeit brief, during which the family would be exposed to the contamination of Egyptian society without an available antidote.

This, too, was an unacceptable risk. Who can know what longlasting damage can be caused by a brief exposure to immorality without the proper fortification? Who can measure the insidious effects of a momentary lapse of spiritual defenses?

This is why Jacob decided it was critical to send Judah ahead to prepare a house of study for his family. In this way, from the moment they stepped off the wagons, his family would always have the opportunity to withdraw into their own private island of purity and spirituality and thereby be fortified against the influence of Egyptian society. They would always have a place where they could reaffirm their own unique identities before going out to take on the outside world.

The king of a large tropical nation, whose population was concentrated along the seashore, was eager to open the jungle-covered interior to exploration and development. He decided to clear a certain large area deep in the jungle and build a modern city.

The project director assembled a huge convoy of construction equipment and vehicles. On the day they were ready, thousands of people came out to see them off.

When the convoy passed the royal palace, the king came out to wish them farewell.

"Have you thought of everything?" the king asked the director.

"Indeed, I have, your majesty," he replied. "We even brought along

food to last us two months."

"Very good. And what will you drink?"

"That will be no problem. There are several rivers in the area."

"My dear fellow," said the king, "you are going into a jungle. Did it ever occur to you that the water may be malarial? Before you bring all these workers and equipment out there, make sure you send your engineers to dig wells and set up a water purifying system. Otherwise, you will not survive even a single day."

In our own lives, we find ourselves in a society which is probably not much less insidious than the Egypt of ancient times. The age-old evils and immoralities clothe themselves anew in attractive garb and beckon to us seductively from every direction. Media, books, Internet, billboards. All these things can be forces for the good, but they undeniably send period blasts of immorality at us and our children. How do we protect ourselves and our families? By creating a small sanctuary in our private lives which will act as a spiritual shield. By setting aside family time each day for Torah study and introspection, we can fortify and reinvigorate ourselves so that we can take on the world around us.

Feel My Pain

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, the verse records that the brothers were unable to answer him due to an overwhelming sense of embarrassment. The Midrash teaches that from the brothers' reaction, it is clear that Yosef was giving them *tochacha*, -"reproof" for having sold him. This interpretation is further strengthened by the fact that on several occasions the brothers mentioned that Yaakov was alive; thus, Yosef's question must have had other implications.

Many of the commentaries discuss how the words "Does my father still live" imply rebuke. Some understand that Yosef was really saying to them, "How did you expect my father to survive after all the grief and suffering you forced him to endure?" The Bais Halevi takes this interpretation a step further. He understands that Yosef was chiding Yehuda, saying, "You asked me to have mercy on your father and release

Binyamin; why is it that you yourselves did not show him mercy when you sold me?" The purpose of reproof is not to belittle or embarrass a person, rather to show him that he has erred and that he should correct his ways. If we directly attack the wrongdoer, there is a good chance that we will be met with a reaction which is the opposite of what we want. Very often, when a person is confronted concerning a transgression which he has committed, he raises his defenses and continues to display the malevolent behavior, in order to enforce the fact that he does not consider such behavior to be wrong. Therefore, effective rebuke cannot be achieved by directly challenging and attempting to belittle the perpetrator. Accordingly, how is it possible that Yosef would choose to reprimand them in such a manner? Another question that can be asked is: If the rebuke relates to their lack of sensitivity towards their own father, why did Yosef ask whether "my father" is still alive, rather than whether "our father" or "your father" is still alive?

Perhaps the following explanation can be offered: One form of effective reproof is focusing on the victim's pain rather than on the wrongdoing of the transgressor. By not directly challenging the perpetrator, he is not forced to raise his defenses. When he sees the suffering that has been caused by his actions, he comes to the understanding that he has behaved inappropriately.

The fact that "Does my father still live" was the first question that Yosef asked his brothers, indicates that what most concerned him for the previous twenty-two years was being distant from his father. His query should be interpreted as an outpouring of his own personal grief over being in a position where it is impossible to maintain a loving relationship with his father. The brothers were filled with shame, not because Yosef directly chastised them, rather as a result of understanding the grief that their actions had caused. This makes the reason why Yosef focused on my father rather than your father clear. He was expressing his grief over the loss of his personal relationship with his father.