



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Rochelle & Dan Smith, and Lez and Sara Issler on Josh's Aufruf this Shabbos and his forthcoming wedding to Rikki on Monday. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in Beis Menachem hall. The Chupa takes place on Monday at 4.45pm and Simchas Choson v'Kalloh is at 10.30pm, both at The Hilton Deansgate.

Chaim Aruchim

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

- Shabbos, 13th Kislev - Rebbetzen Cohen for her father
- Weds, 17th Kislev - Chaya Bolel for her father
- Fri, 19th Kislev - Howard Sacho for his father

Advocates On High

Rabbi J Rubinstein

There is a classic statement of Jewish belief expressed in פרקי אבות with the words, "העושה מצוה אחת קונה לו פרקליט אחד" - "He who does one Mitzvah acquires for himself one advocate on high". Nearly two weeks ago, there passed away in Israel, a woman who practiced and taught the full meaning of this Mishna. She was Rebbetzin Basyah Barg daughter of Yehuda Leib and Beilah Meislik, author of the book, "Voices In The Silence". Although I never met her, this book has become such a part of my life and my family's life that I felt a deep sense of sadness at the news of her passing.

The book tells how her parents remained observant Jews through the last years of the Czar's rule, and through decades of persecution by the Communists. At different times they operated a secret Yeshiva disguised as a school for carpentry, ran their own Mikvah, at all times were hospitable and supportive to other Jews, and fulfilled all the Mitzvos with unbelievable determination and self-sacrifice. Rebbetzin Barg herself, as a girl, attended school for seven years on Shabbos but never did any writing. Every week was a new challenge to find an excuse not to write, but she persisted and succeeded. I always felt the book should be compulsory reading for every Jew.

This week I came across an obituary whose author said he had been told by the head of his Yeshiva, to read the book during his vacation. He did read it and was so impressed by it that when he became a teacher in Lakewood, U.S.A. he used to regularly read instalments of the book to his pupils. Two years ago he discovered she was alive and well in Jerusalem, and he obtained her phone number. He called her from his classroom putting the phone on to a loudspeaker, so that all the pupils could listen as they conversed. Among other things she told them a story which is not in the book. When she was a child there was very little food, she would dream of being surrounded by mountains of bread! One day a non-Jewish friend offered her a bread sandwich with butter and Treif meat in it. It smelt delicious, but she declined the offer. When she got home, she told her mother what had happened. Her mother hugged her and said "Imagine the angels you created on high with that Mitzvah!" On the phone, the teacher asked her, "It is so easy for us. We can do all the Mitzvos we want. What can you tell these boys?" She raised her voice, "Tell the children to count the angels. Every time you do a Mitzvah you create an angel. Every day count the angels you created" I can only add, that on this week's Parshah the Medrash (Tanch. 3) says, יעקב אבינו (the patriarch Jacob) made a mistake in reaching out

עשו. He should have relied on the angels who were protecting him. We know about the angels from the famous dream in which he saw angels who had accompanied him in Israel climbing up the ladder to Heaven, and new angels coming down to accompany him outside Israel (Chap. 28 ;12) This was repeated in reverse when he returned to Israel (Chap. 32;49). The Sefer Maayon Hashovuah says these angels were created on the basis of the principle of "He who does one Mitzvah acquires for himself one advocate on high" Rebbetzin Barg had no children, the least we can do is to learn from her example and teachings, and treasure every Mitzva. After all who does not need advocates on high. This will also add to the number of good advocates on high who will greet her!

Why Did the Brothers Wait Until Parshas Vayeshev to Become Jealous of Yosef?

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

The pasuk says, "Yaakov raised his eyes and saw, and behold, Eisav was coming, and with him, four hundred men – so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two handmaids. He put the handmaids and their children first, and Leah and her children later, and Rachel and Yosef last." (Bereshis 33:1-2). Eisav is approaching Yaakov. Yaakov splits the camps. He positions the handmaidens and their sons first, followed by Leah and her children, followed in the rear by Rochel and Yosef. It would seem that the most expendable members of his entourage were placed first and the most cherished were placed in the back.

The Vilna Maggid asks the following question: Next week's parsha contains the famous story of Yaakov showing favoritism towards Yosef by giving him a kesones passim. This led to Yosef's brothers becoming jealous of him, and it ultimately led to the entire Galus Mitzrayim. The Gemara learns out from this incident that a father should never show favoritism towards any of his children.

The Vilna Maggid asked, why were the brothers jealous when Yosef received his kesones passim but they were apparently not jealous when he was placed last in the family configuration to best protect him from Eisav and his approaching army? No one said, "Hey, what am I – chopped liver?" "What am I – cannon fodder?" We don't see them objecting to this here. This would appear to be a much bigger deal. A person can live just fine without a kesones passim. However, the configuration when they met Eisav was potentially a matter of life and death!

Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	3.34pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.39pm
15 Minute Parsha Shiur	Following
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.10am
Mincha	1.30pm / 3.28pm
Seuda Shlishis	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	4.48pm
Ovos uBonim/Bonos	5.48pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.35pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

The Vilna Maggid gives three answers to this question. For my purposes today, I am only going to mention one of these answers: The brothers understood that since Rochel, the prime wife of Yaakov, only had one child, it was necessary to afford maximum protection to an "only son." Similarly, in the Israeli Army today, an "only son" is not placed in a combat unit. This is a long-practiced and well-understood plan of action. The brothers were not going to protest Yaakov's urge to protect an "only son."

However, the situation "next week" in Parshas Vayeshev is a different story. There was no excuse for Yaakov to single out Yosef and dress him in a special garment that he felt that only this son and not his other sons deserved to wear. This is the answer of the Vilna Maggid. I saw that theseferMe'Orei Ohr raises the same question and offers a different answer. He says as follows: Yaakov Avinu had just come back from Lavan, where he had his eleven children. He knew that the environment in the house of Lavan was spiritually toxic. Yaakov did everything in his power to make sure that his children would not be influenced by Lavan's home. That was his goal in life – to create the "Shivtei K-ah" (Tribes of the Almighty) – and he would do everything under the sun to inoculate them not to be influenced by their grandfather, Lavan.

Now Yaakov meets Eisav with his four hundred men. Yaakov does not know what is going to happen. He does not know whether Eisav is going to insist that they stay together. Yaakov realized that his children were all facing potential danger because he was going from a toxic environment to another environment that was also hostile to them. He feared that the twenty years he invested in creating the "Shivtei K-ah" and protecting them may all go down the drain.

At this point, the other shvatim were already older children. However, Yosef was still a little child, perhaps four or five years old. Most of Yaakov's sons were already teenagers, who already knew how to take care of themselves. Yosef was a little kid. "What is going to be with my poor little Yossele? Yossele doesn't know any better. He is a kindergarten baby."

That is why Yaakov put Yosef last – to protect him. He was not being protected from being killed. Regarding the physical danger, Yaakov relied on his promise from Hashem that "I will be with You wherever you go." (Bereshis 25:21). However, regarding "ruchniyus" (spirituality), Hashem does not make any promises. "All is in the hands of Heaven – except for fear of Heaven" (Berachos 33b). Ruchniyus is up to us. Yaakov felt that he needed to protect his little Yosef from the spiritual dangers that contact with Eisav and his army might present. As a little child, Yosef was most vulnerable to being spiritually contaminated by outside influences. Therefore, the other shevatim had no problem with their youngest brother being placed at the back of the camp.

Brothers in Arms

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

And Yaakov said to his brothers, 'Gather stones!'... (31:46)

After spending twenty years in Charan, Yaakov flees with his family to Eretz Yisroel. Lavan pursues Yaakov with the intention of killing him. However, Hashem intervenes and warns Lavan not to harm Yaakov. When he confronts Yaakov, Lavan proposes a treaty. Among the terms of the treaty a landmark is designated on the border between Canaan and Aram which both parties agree not to cross with hostile intentions. The verse records "Yaakov said to his brothers 'Gather stones!' So they gathered stones for a mound upon which they ate a meal." The commentaries disagree as to who the "brothers" of Yaakov are and what eating upon this mound signifies. The Ramban understands that the brothers are Lavan's companions and the meal is part of the covenant, signaling mutual acceptance of the pact. However, Rashi maintains that the brothers are, in fact, Yaakov's children, and that they are referred to as "brothers" because they stand by Yaakov in battle and times of distress. The meal, therefore, signifies Yaakov staking his claim to the area past the Aramean border.

The bond between children and parents is even closer than that between siblings. How does the Torah's referring to Yaakov's children as his "brothers" reflect their commitment to their father in battle? What insight into the parent-child relationship is the Torah offering? Commensurate to the responsibility a parent expects his child to assume, is the independence which the parent must be willing

to allow his child to acquire. Parents must allow their children the freedom to stand on their own. Not given this freedom, a child will perceive himself as completely subordinate in his position vis-à-vis his parents, for they have always been his caretakers and providers. Consequently, he will never be in the proper state of mind to assume the mantle of responsibility required by his parents.

Rashi is explaining that Yaakov does not call his children "brothers" because they go to battle with him, rather, to assure that they would be able to go to battle with him. A child has a greater commitment to his parent than to his sibling. However, this does not ensure that he will be more effective in performing the task required. A child who views his parents as his protectors, will be ineffective in their defense. By Yaakov giving his children a sense of equality, he brings forth from within them a new level of responsibility which would be required in dire straits.

זכר ליציאת מצרים

Michael Black

1. What is the Mitzvah?

2. How is Shabbos זכר ליציאת מצרים?

We have a Mitzvah to mention יציאת מצרים every morning and every evening, Shemos 13,3 ומצרים ממצרים אשר יצאתם ממצרים וזכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים למען תזכור את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים Devorim 16,3. We mention the Posuk from Devorim in the Hagodo on Pesach. We fulfil this mitzvah by saying at the very end of Shema, א-לוקים אשר הוצאתני, אתכם. We then have an additional mitzvah on Seder night, לספר ביציאת מצרים, Shemos 13,8 והגדת לבנך. There are different opinions about this. Some say that on every night of the year, the Mitzvah is to merely mention יציאת מצרים whereas on Seder night the special Mitzvah is to elaborate with more explanation. For example, Rabbon Gamliel said "Whoever does not mention Pesach, Matzoh and Maror, לא יצא ידי חובתו. It appears from Rambam, Hilchos Chometz 7,5, that he understands this to mean that one has not done the mitzvah of סיפור יציאת מצרים because this special mitzvah requires the extra explanation, as opposed to every other night of the year, where a mere mention suffices.

We then have a mitzvah of mentioning יציאת מצרים in Kiddush on Friday night, Gemoro Pesochim 117B. The first Beur Halocho on 271 explains that on every night we may mention יציאת מצרים at any point during the night whereas on Friday nights we must make that mention during Kiddush. He understands that this is a requirement מן התורה. The Mogen Avrohom says that when we daven on Friday night, we have done the mitzvah of Kiddush מן התורה. This is either by saying ושמרו אתה קדשת in Shemone Esrei or by saying ושמרו before Shemone Esrei. We then make Kiddush at home and that is מדרבנן. The Beur Halocho asks that there is no mention of יציאת מצרים in the Kiddush in davening so how can the Mogen Avrohom say that one has done the Mitzvah מן התורה? He suggests that maybe mentioning יציאת מצרים at the end of Shema is close enough to the Kiddush in davening or maybe the Mogen Avrohom holds that the requirement to say יציאת מצרים in Kiddush is only מדרבנן.

So what is the mitzvah? There are three parts. 1. To mention it every day and every night 2. the סיפור with detail on seder night, and 3. mentioning it in Kiddush every Friday night.

Some further reading. I looked in the Sefer Hachinuch for the basic Mitzvah of mentioning it every day and every night from Shemos 13,3 & Devorim 16,3 and to my surprise this Mitzvah is not in the list of 613. I then saw in the ArtScroll Mishnayos in the introduction to Berachos that the Rambam doesn't list this Mitzvah in his 613 either. The ArtScroll writes that this Mitzvah is undoubtedly מן התורה. The Pri Megodim in his introduction to Hilchos Krias Shema writes that even according to the Rambam, the Mitzvah is מן התורה, but not one of the 613. This idea is an interesting discussion in itself. The Rambam in Pirush Hamishnayos in his introduction to Berachos writes that Rabbi commenced the Masechta with the Mitzvah of Shema because it is the only Mitzvah incumbent on every man, every day. This is fascinating. Tefilin is not on Shabbos. Tzitzis is only if one has a four cornered garment. Shema is every day.

But isn't mentioning יציאת מצרים every day too? Does this suggest that the Rambam holds it is only מדרבנן? Or is it מן התורה but not one of the 613, as the Pri Megodim suggests?

How Shabbos is זכר ליציאת מצרים, we will leave for another week.