



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ שבט תש"פ - יתרו - 15th February 2020 - Volume 12 - Issue 29

News This Week

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a kiddush after davening sponsored by Leivy and Dassy Goldman in honour of the yahtzeit next week of their daughter, Sara. On behalf of the Kehilla we wish them Chaim Aruchim

חיים ארוכים

Rafi Eljarrat and Mrs Debbie Ross are sitting shiva at 16 Hardman Avenue for their late brother, Rabbi Michael Yaakov (Mikey) Eljarrat till Wednesday morning. Shacharis 7.30, Sunday 8.00, Mincha/Maariv 5.05, Mincha Friday 1.30, Maariv Motzei Shabbos 10 mins after nacht. No visitors please between 1 - 2.30, 6.30 - 7.30 and after 10pm. Simchas.

שובי"ם Series

Taharas Hamishpacha Refresher and Shalom Bayis series for men by R' Shaya. The final Shiur takes place this Thursday night, 20th February, from 8.15 - 8.50.

Who's watching you?

Dr Zev Davis

It says in this week's Parsha:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲנִי תַחַךְ יִתְרוֹ בֵּא אֵלַיךְ, וְאַשְׁתְּךָ וּשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ עִמָּהּ. וַיֵּחַ וְ

And Yisro said to Moshe (via a messenger): I, your father in law Yisro am coming to you, and also your wife and her two sons.

רש"י: אֲנִי תַחַךְ יִתְרוֹ וְגו'. אִם אֵין אַתָּה יוֹצֵא בְּגִין אַשְׁתְּךָ, וְאִם אֵין אַתָּה יוֹצֵא בְּגִין אַשְׁתְּךָ צֵא בְּגִין שְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ

Rashi explains that Yisro sent Moshe Rabenu the following message:

If you will not come out (to welcome me) for my sake, come out for the sake of your wife. And if not for her sake, come out for the sake of your two children.

I heard the following explanation of this from Rav Myer Rosenbaum in a drosha about chinuch (education):

Yisro was sending a very important message in the area of chinuch to Moshe Rabenu his son in law. The message was, that even if you feel that, strictly speaking, there is no necessity to come out for my sake, and maybe not even for the sake of your wife, please consider what the children think when they see this, and come out for their sake i.e. to demonstrate the correct mode of conduct in this situation. Otherwise they will learn the wrong message. Therefore I beg of you, for the sake of the children at least, so they will learn the right message of affording honour to a father-in-law and a wife, that you come out to greet us all.

As well as being a very important lesson in educating children correctly, it's an education for all of us in all situations. Whilst at all times we strive to do the right thing solely because it's the right thing to do, we also need to be aware that we are all noticed by those around us, who we hope will be inspired by what we do, and not the opposite. Therefore we need to be aware that we have a responsibility towards everyone who sees us.

In this connection, I recently heard an amazing story told over by Rabbi Paysach Krohn, concerning Rabbi Aryeh Rodin, Rav of Ohev Shalom Shul in North Dallas. This shul started with humble beginnings, in the Rabbi's house.

One day a man called Leonard Froman turned up at his house. He explained that he just returned from a group trip to Israel. He wasn't frum, but would like to learn about Yiddishkeit. They got on very well and Leonard was so happy that he donated \$3,000 towards a new shul, and roped in his friends who also became involved and also donated money. With time, Leonard became a baal teshuva.

He never married and had no children, and unfortunately when he was 48 years old he suffered a massive heart attack and died.

At the levaya his mother thank the Rabbi for bringing her son back to the fold.

In appreciation, she said she wanted to donate an equivalent amount to all the previous donations and promptly wrote out a check for \$50,000 for the shul.

At Leonard's shloshim, the Rabbi told over the following:

He had asked Leonard what made him come to his house, rather than one of the other better established shuls in the area.

He answered, that on that group trip to Israel, they were taken to the Kosel. He recounted: "I wanted to pray but I didn't know how. I saw that people wrote something on a piece of paper and shoved it into a crack in the Wall, so I did the same. I found myself next to a very pious looking man who was davening with great sincerity and clearly had a very strong connection with Hashem. I wanted that for myself, but just didn't know how. So when I got back home, I went into the kosher bakery store and told the frum baker about the pious man at the Wall. I asked him: if that man was to come here, which Shul would you send him to? He told me Rabbi Rodin, so here I am."

Rabbi Rodin continued with the following thought. Just imagine when that man at the Kosel who had inspired Leonard, goes after 120 years to Shomayim. They will say to him: Reb Yid, you have to your credit a building of a shul in Dallas! Plus a share in all the Torah and Tefilos that take place there. He will respond: I've never heard of Dallas, only dollars. (Rabbi Krohn's joke). His sincere davening inspired someone else so much that he got incredible zechusim as a result. This is a powerful story says Rabbi Krohn, that we need to take to heart, and it places an enormous responsibility on every one of us. Who knows who else will notice how we daven, and when we come to davening, how we conduct ourselves in shul and how we conduct ourselves in everything in everyday life; and that I can have an impact on someone else. We learn from Yisro that this is a primary way of educating our children, and we learn from this story that it's a primary responsibility that we have to everybody who may see us.

I read a similar story sometime ago about an irreligious young man in Israel who was largely preoccupied with following his passions. On one such occasion when he was walking along the road to go to an undesirable place, he noticed a charedi young man ahead of him, who looked away from that place (shemiras enayim - guarding his eyes). He himself couldn't understand why anybody would want to look away from there, and he concluded that this man must have something even better that he's going to, and doesn't want to spoil it. So he decided to follow the charedi man to find out what could be so great. Before long he followed him... right into a Beis Hamesrash!

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת יתרו

Candle Lighting	No later than 5.01pm
Mincha	5.06pm
Rov's Shiur	8.45am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.56am
Children's Group	10.45am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	4.49pm
Shalosh Seudos	Following
Motzei Shabbos	6.09pm
Ovos uBonim	7.09pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	5.10pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

When he entered, he was mesmerised at what he saw and it made an immediate impact on him. As they say, the rest is history and he became a prominent rosh yeshiva. I heard that Rav Matisyohu Salomon shlita commented that when that young man who looked away goes after 120 years to shomayim, he will be shown that he has the merit of that rosh yeshiva and his children and his grandchildren till the end of all generations, and likewise all that rosh yeshiva's talmidim! Yet, he had no idea of any of this, he was just guarding his eyes.

So we do need to be extra careful to always do the right thing, not only because it's the right thing to do, but you never know who might be watching...

Torah & Mindfulness

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

Moshe ascended to G-d, and G-d called to him from the mountain, saying, "You shall say to the house of Ya'akov and tell the sons of Israel... (Shemos 19:3)

On a recent trip to the United States, a book cover caught my eye in an airport store. It was a pocketbook with a white cover that had "Mindfulness" written in caps. It was simple but elegant, and I picked it up primarily with the idea of doing something similar with a future book of my own. However, I bought it because the topic of mindfulness has interested me for some time now. I'm always interested in ways of improving brain usage and quality of life. From the cover, it seemed to be something that could help with this.

I began reading the book on the plane, but was quickly disappointed to find out that there wasn't much new for me. After pointing out that "Mindfulness" is a buzzword today, it spent most of the time explaining how it has been used to greatly increase productivity in the workplace, and in life in general. Much of the information I already knew, or just found obvious. So, after just skimming the rest of the book, I put it away.

Then something occurred to me. The reason why so much of the material was familiar, was because I already lived a life based upon mindfulness. It's built in, from the moment I wake up in the morning and start with "Modeh Ani Lefanecha..." and go to sleep at the end of a day after "Krias Shema al HaMittah."

Then there are the myriad of mitzvos that I get to perform in-between those two times. I'll have to doven three times a day, and make a brochah after using the bathroom each time. I'll have three meals, and a couple of snacks, and all of them will require blessings before and after them.

And all of those mitzvos will take place against a backdrop of six constant mitzvos, like love and fear of G-d, incumbent on every Jew every waking moment of everyday of their lives. They're supposed to inspire me to act my G-dliest at every moment, to make sure that when I do my mitzvos, I am MINDFUL of them, and what they need from me to do their job.

Of course, there is always the danger of performing mitzvos mindLESSly, or what they call "by rote." The person knows they have an obligation, and they would not think of not performing it. They just don't think about what they are doing while doing it, performing the mitzvah on auto-pilot instead.

The number one problem? Distraction. We're easily distracted, and life is very distracting. There's always something going on around a person to shlepp their attention away from the mitzvah at hand, especially at the last moment. Dovid HaMelech only died because he became distracted away from his learning just long enough to fall and fatally hurt himself.

In fact, Amalek's chief method of attacking a Jew is distraction. When we left Egypt, he attacked us as a nation. Since then, the reality of Amalek has attacked us in many different ways, but always with the same purpose. He just wants to stop a Jew from living a meaningful and mindful Torah life.

Hence, Amalek was the first nation to attack the Jewish people, and he did so right before we arrived at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. He knows that HIS existence depends upon a weak connection between a Jew and Torah. This is why the name of the place of his first attack was "Refidim," which means "weak in the hands." He was able to attack the Jewish people because Torah was weak in their hands.

Therefore, if the Torah was given to the Jewish people to promote mindFULness, then it is Amalek's sole purpose to promote just the opposite, mindLESSness. It could be something as simple—but terribly wasteful—as a person losing their focus at precisely the time they need to have intention for a mitzvah. Or it can be something far more profoundly damaging such as subscribing to a mistaken idea. Either way, a person will miss out on moments of reality.

Because that is what it is all about, being in the moment, ALL OF YOU. Life is a VERRRRY long string of moments, each with its own potential to impart to its user additional life. Time moves so fast that we barely ever notice it, unless something happens to make us take note. Before we know it, a lifetime has passed, and we can barely remember most of it.

What we do remember best and quickest are the events that demanded the most from us. Whether it was a traumatic experience, or one that we wished would never end, we "invested" in it. We were intellectually AND emotionally there, and that seemed to engrave the experience deeper into our memory. This is why so many people are prepared to take tremendous risks just to have "fun," or spend so much money just to do things like having an amazing eating experience. The more exciting something is, the more of us it pulls into the moment. The more moments we become mindful of, the more ALIVE we feel.

Movie producers know this and take full advantage of it to get people to pay good money to watch their films. This is what makes "good" entertainment so, well, entertaining. It has the ability to draw our intellect and emotions in, leaving us with the sense of life we live to experience, even if only two hours at a time.

When it comes to Torah, few people think about it as being entertaining. On the contrary, for many, Torah is very unentertaining. Some even have a difficult time paying a small fee just to access it, feeling that it should be free since they are making the supreme "sacrifice" of looking at it.

Others, albeit a small minority, know differently. They know that Torah is the MOST entertaining of all, not in the secular sense of the term, but in the ULTIMATE sense of the term. They are drawn to Torah and have a very difficult time parting from it.

Hence the Torah says: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, so that you and your offspring will live... (Devarim 30:19)

Choose life? Would a healthy person choose anything else? Yes, if they did not fully understand what living means. Yes, if they thought that it is better to give in to the body and sleep in, than listen to the soul and get up on time for minyan. Yes, if they thought that it is more enjoyable to space out while praying than working hard to concentrate and FEEL the words of prayer.

Funny how when it comes to making money or becoming famous people accept this. They make great sacrifices and focus intensely on what they are doing. Their success requires it, and if they want one they know that they have to accept the other, and all the many "rituals" that come with it.

But not when it comes to religion, and especially the 613 mitzvos of Torah. They don't buy what the rabbis have written:

The Tablets are the handiwork of G-d, and the script was G-d's script engraved—charus—on the Tablets. Do not read "charus," but "cheirus"—freedom. For you can have no freer person than one who engages in Torah study. (Pirkei Avos 6:2)

But that's because they do not understand TRUE freedom. There is freedom and then there is freedom. There is the freedom to do whatever you feel like doing, which is usually a yetzer hara thing. Then there is the freedom to be the very best you can be, a yetzer tov thing, and what the Torah speaks to.

In short, Torah focuses a person on the greatest part of being human, and provides the most effective path to achieve it. It demands that a person be mindful of their time and opportunity of life. It defines what is good and what is bad, so that a person will know what is worth their attention and what should be ignored. Torah encourages and inspires the one who lives by it to live up to their full potential.

Can there anything more liberating than that?

Q&A

Kids

1. Who was יתרו?
2. How many names did yisro have?
3. How many qualities did the new judges yisro suggested have?

Adults

1. What were the two possible times when yisro came to join the jews?
2. What were yisros names?
3. Why did יתרו take צפרה?
4. What was the day before Moshe sat to judge the people?

4. Yom Kippur (Rashi)

reunited. (Rashi)
number? Now that יתרו heard about the miracles he realised that the family could be

3. As Moshe took his entire family with him to Egypt but Aaron urged him to send them

2. (ש"ר): לא יאמר יתרו אומר יתרו אומר

Torah had been given and was convinced due to the ten commandments.

1. Some say it was before the Torah was given as the news of the splitting of the sea and the amalekites attacking him to join. Alternatively, he came after the

Adults

Kids

Answers

1. The father in law of Moshe. He was also a former advisor to paroh. 2. 7. 3. 4