



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ שבט תשפ"ב - בשלח - 22nd January 2022 - Volume 14 - Issue 29

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the Rov and Rebbezen on the occasion of the Bar Mitzva this Shabbos in London of their grandson, Elchonon Yehuda Moller.
Mazel Tov to Michael and Anne Wilks on the birth of a granddaughter to Rabbi Avrohom and Rivka Zeidman in Edgware and a great granddaughter to Yehudah Zev and Soro Saperia in Israel
Mazel Tov to Yehuda and Bernice Issler on the wedding on Wednesday of Devori to Avrumi Rabinowitz from Yerushalayim.

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:
Thurs, 25th Shevat - Charles Bursk for his father
Fri, 26th Shevat - Michael Wilks for his father

Rov's Gemoro Shiur

The Rov's thrice weekly Gemoro Shiur will **בס"ד** be commencing Gemoro **כתובות** on Monday 24th Jan - **כ"ט שבט**. New and old members are welcome: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, after Ma'ariv from 8.20-9.20 approximately.

Children's Toys

There are bags of toys left in the men's cloakroom and in the kitchen upstairs since Rosh HaShana. Please collect before they are disposed of to a good cause!

Man over Moses

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

Parshas Yisro begins by relating how impressed its namesake, Yisro, (Jethro) is upon hearing the amazing events that transpired to the nation led by his son-in-law, Moshe. He decides to convert to Judaism. Yisro sends word to Moshe that he will soon be arriving at the Israelite camp. Yisro wants Moshe to leave his post and greet him in the desert before he arrives at the Israelite camp. The Torah tells us that Moshe did go out to greet Yisro: "the man bowed and kissed him and asked the peace of his dear one." (Exodus 18:8) Rashi is bothered by the ambiguity. "Who bowed to whom? Who kissed whom? Who was the one to make the gesture? Was it Yisro, the father-in-law, who kissed Moshe, or did Moshe, the son-in-law, leader of millions of people, run to greet his father in-law a Midianite priest, and bow and kiss him?"

Rashi quotes the Mechilta which refers us to Bamidbar (Numbers 12:3) where Moshe is called "the man Moshe" obviously the words, "the man bowed and kissed him" in our portion must mean that same man – Moshe.

Why, however, did the Torah choose a seemingly convoluted way to tell us that Moshe prostrated himself before his father-in-law? Would it not have been easier to tell us that "Moshe man bowed and kissed him and asked the peace of his dear one"? Why did the Torah use the words "the man" and send us to the Book of Numbers to learn who "the man" was?

Last year my brother, Rabbi Zvi Kamenetzky of Chicago, tried to contact a friend who was vacationing at Schechter's Caribbean Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida. After about 15 rings, the hotel operator, an elderly, southern black woman, who worked at the hotel for three decades politely informed my brother that the man was not in the room. "Would you like to leave a message?" she inquired.

"Sure," responded Reb Zvi, "tell him that Rabbi Kamenetzky, called."

The woman at the other end gasped. "Raabbi Kaamenetzky?" she drawled. "Did you say you were Raabbi Kaamenetzky?" She knew the name! It sounded as if she was about to follow up with a weighty question, and my brother responded in kind. "Yes." He did not know what would follow. "Why do you ask?"

"Are you," asked the operator, "by any chance, related to the famous Rabbi Kamenetzky?"

There was silence in Chicago. My brother could not imagine that this woman had an inkling of who his grandfather, the great sage. Dean of Mesivta Torah Voda'ath to whom thousands had flocked for advice and counsel, was. She continued. "You know, he passed away about ten years ago at the end of the wintah?" She definitely had her man, thought Reb Zvi. Still in shock, he offered a subdued, "Yes, I'm a grandson."

"YOOOU ARE?" she exclaimed, "well I'm sure glad to talk to ya! Cause your grandpa — he was a real good friend of mine!"

My brother pulled the receiver from his ear and stared at the mouthpiece. He composed himself and slowly began to repeat her words, quizzically. "You say that Rabbi Kamenetzky was a good friend of yours?"

"Sure! Every mornin' Raabbi Kaaamenetzky would come to this here hotel to teach some sorta Bible class (It was the Daf-Yomi.) Now my desk is about ten yards from the main entrance of the hotel. But every mornin' he made sure to come my way, nod his head, and say good mornin' to me. On his way out, he would always stop by my desk and say good-bye. Oh! Yes! He was a great Rabbi but he was even a greater man. He was a wonderful man. He was a real good friend of mine!"

The Torah could have told us the narrative an easier way. It could have told us that Moshe bowed before, and kissed Yisro. It does more. It tells us that it was a man who kissed Yisro. True, it was Moshe that performed those actions. But they were not the actions of a Moses, they were the actions of a mentch!

Often we attribute acts of kindness, compassion, and extra care to super-human attributes of our sages and leaders. The Torah tells us that it is the simple mentch that performs them. Inside every great leader lies "the man." Little wonder that the words "and the man Moses" that Rashi quotes from the Book of Numbers begin a verse that fits our explanation quite well. The verse reads "and the man Moses was the exceedingly humble, more than any one on the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3) It was the man Moses, who was exceedingly humble, more than any one on the face of the earth.

First Hand Experience

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week's parsha, Yisro, contains the most earth-shattering event that mankind has ever experienced. That event is what sets Judaism far apart from other religions.

Most religions claim that G-d revealed Himself either to one or to a number of individuals. They then went and spread the word of G-d (and the role that they would play in that word of G-d) to all those who believed their claim

Davening Times

פרשת יתרו

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| Zman Shabbos | 4.15pm |
| Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos | 4.20pm |
| Hashkomo | 7.25am |
| Shacharis | 9.15am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 10.15am |
| Mincha | 1.30pm / 4.08pm |
| Motzei Shabbos | 5.28pm |
| Ovos uBonim | 6.28pm |
| 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 | 4.25pm |
| Late Maariv | 8.00pm |

to such a revelation.

The revelation at Har Sinai (Mount Sinai) was witnessed by the entire nation, numbering over six hundred thousand males aged between twenty and sixty. That puts the number of the entire nation at about two million. Not hearsay. Not believing that G-d appeared to someone else. First hand experience.

One might not have heard about an individual's revelation. One could be informed of it decades later. However, any attempt at introducing a claim of a public revelation of such magnitude would be met with ridicule and be rejected offhand. How can you claim that such an event happened to my grandparents without my ever having heard of it?

Such a claim can only be made with the presence of one very crucial factor... That it is true.

The Talmud [Shabbos 68B] reveals the heavenly deliberation which preceded Hashem's revelation and subsequent giving of the Torah to Moshe.

Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi taught: When Moshe ascended to the heavens (to receive the Torah) the ministering angels asked Hashem: What is a human being doing here amongst us?

Hashem answered: He has come to receive the Torah.

The angels responded: Are you going to give to flesh and blood the precious treasure that's been hidden away since the time before creation? What is man that he should be considered? Hashem, your glory should remain here in the heavens!

Rav Moshe Schwab zt"l explains the claim made by the angels. What is man? They felt that the very fact that man is a free-willed creature should invalidate his being considered to receive the Torah. They were not just rejecting a person who actively chooses to do bad. Such a person would be rejected, not because he is 'man' but, rather, because he is a 'rasha (sinner).' The angels were rejecting even a person who constantly chooses to do good.

On what basis were they rejecting him? A free-will decision by definition means that there are two distinct possibilities. The angels felt that even a consideration to perform evil constitutes an affront to the honor of Hashem. Man, they therefore felt, should not receive the Torah.

Imagine a person who comes to stay at your house. You feed him, clothe him, shelter him and carefully cater to his every need. After years of benefiting from your graciousness, you, on a whim, make him an incredible offer. There were certain acts that were necessary for him to perform in order to maintain his health. Yet, incredibly, this person would often neglect to perform those acts. You offer to reward him with a check of one million dollars if he'll perform those acts. "Hmm... I'll think about and then get back to you," he responds. Even if he'll ultimately decide that he'll take you up on the offer, you'd consider him to be a fool for even having to consider the proposal.

That is how the angels viewed us. What a bunch of clowns! These people actually deliberate if they should follow the directives Hashem gave them for their own benefit and for which they'll receive incredible reward. What are they thinking about? What's the decision? Even if they ultimately decide to follow Hashem's will, they are clowns for having to give it thought. What is man that he should be considered? He doesn't deserve the Torah, the angels argued.

Hashem said to Moshe: Respond to them.

Hashem told Moshe, it's up to you. You must show them that giving the Torah to man will honor Hashem's name and not constitute a chilul Hashem. This applied on a national level and still applies on a personal level. The degree to which we utilize this world to create a kiddush Hashem is the degree to which we personally 'receive' the Torah.

Moshe said to Hashem: I'm afraid that I'll be burnt by the fire of their mouths! Hashem told Moshe to hold onto the 'kisay hakavod.'

The 'kisay hakavod' is translated as the throne of Hashem. It literally means the seat of His honor. The purpose of a seat is to uphold. When we say the 'kisay hakavod' is comprised of the souls of the righteous, we refer to the role the righteous play in upholding the honor of Hashem. It seems that Hashem was guiding to Moshe to the response that he must give the angels. Hold onto the 'kisay hakavod.' Show them the unique role that you and your nation serve in honoring me.

And Moshe said: Master of the Universe, what is written in this Torah that you are giving me? "I am Hashem your Elokim who took you out of Mitzrayim." Turning to the angels, Moshe said: Did you descend into Mitzrayim? Were you enslaved to Paroah? What is the Torah to you?

Moshe's answer seems so basic; we are left wondering how the angels even considered their receiving the Torah. However, the Torah applies to all of the worlds, from the most spiritual ones down to the most physical one that we inhabit. The same holy letters take on a different meaning depending on the setting in which they apply.

If so, what was Moshe's response? Those letters which refer to our Mitzrayim also refer to a matter applicable to the realm of the angels.

Moshe's response to the angels was that the Torah in the physical world

elevates and transforms a person. It takes him out of his own Mitzrayim and brings him to the foot of Har Sinai. That is the greatest honor that can be given to Hashem. Angels are called 'standers.' Their level is static. Man is called a 'walker.' He has the ability to change. To improve. The Jewish day begins with night and then day. We have the constant ability to transform night into day. Darkness into light. Even with our silly deliberations, the transformation we go through by choosing good is the greatest honor that can be given to Hashem.

Immediately Hashem agreed with Moshe and each of the angels, including the Angel of Death, gave Moshe a gift.

The entire creation yearns to give honor to Hashem. Once it became clear that man 'was the man' to do that, they each sought to contribute and to participate in that endeavor.

May we each find our role in this incredible, cosmic symphony of 'kavod shamayim'.

Earning The Celestial Academy Award

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Students first embarking on their studies in yeshiva are often surprised to discover that their aspirations to master the tools of independent Torah must embrace a parallel goal, one of equally profound importance. That is discovering the Torah's path to personal growth and character refinement, and attaining the skills involved in ultimately becoming a superb husband and father.

Students soon discover that the day-to-day life in the yeshiva offers innumerable opportunities to practice skills in interpersonal relationships. Learning to accommodate their roommate's needs, assuming some of the communal responsibilities in the yeshiva, and learning to communicate with students from vastly different backgrounds all enhance their ability to become model Torah citizens.

I often tell students that the first step to becoming a real mensch is to appreciate and embrace who we are, and our purpose in this world. This idea is underscored in this week's Torah portion, in which we read the Ten Commandments that were revealed to the Jewish people by Hashem at Sinai. The Ten Commandments form the cornerstone and bedrock of the Jewish nation's marriage contract with Hashem. The last and final commandment is "lo sachmod," "thou shalt not covet. The Torah enumerates for us in detail what precisely we are forbidden to covet: "Thou shalt not covet your friend's wife, manservant, maidservant, ox, donkey, nor anything that belongs to your friend."

How can Hashem command us not to be jealous of our friend's possessions? After all, we are all human and prone to the natural instincts of jealousy. Furthermore, why go to the trouble of spelling out all the possible possessions that might inspire jealousy, only to embrace them all collectively with the words "and all that belongs to your friend"?

A popular Hollywood actor was approached by a leading production company to take a starring role in an expensive movie production. After reading the script, he called back the agent and told him that although it was a lucrative proposition, he wished to decline the role. "Why won't you do it?" the agent asked. "It's the most important role in the play."

"Don't you get it?" said the actor. "The fellow you want me to play is a dumb fool who is pretty poor too. I can't stand anyone seeing me that way." "But sir," protested the agent, "it's only the part that you're playing, it's not you!"

Of course, no actor would decline a good proposal based on his dislike of the character he's being asked to play. Actors are not judged by how wealthy or poor, wise or foolish the character they are playing happens to be. They are only judged by one criterion; how well they play their part.

My good friend Rabbi Benzion Shafier used this analogy to describe our mission in life. We are each given a specific set of life circumstances and abilities. Our circumstances are the backdrop and the stage settings, and our abilities are the tools with which we will play our role. We are simply actors on the stage of life with designated roles and a precise set of circumstances perfectly tailored to the role we need to play.

Someone else's house, wife, money, honor, talent and possessions are the stage settings needed by that particular person. This is alluded to the final words of the Ten Commandments, "and everything that belongs to your friend," My fellow Jew's possessions were given to him to fulfill his role, and have absolutely nothing to do with me or anyone else!

This vital perspective of embracing our individual and particular role is one of the most important steps in our spiritual and personal growth. Only when we determine who we are and what our life role is can we focus on employing the tools we were given to actualize our deepest potential.

May we each be inspired to embrace our individual mission in life, realizing our unique destiny and ultimately earning our celestial 'academy award' for the excellent performance of our role during our life journey.