



Ohr Yerushalayim News

30th March 2019 - Volume 11 - Issue 38 – שמיני – כ"ג אדר ב תשע"ט

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Daniel & Reuvena Dresner on Yehuda's engagement to Rachel Fhima in Israel.

Mazel Tov to Yehuda and Bernice Issler on the recent wedding of Shuli to Dudi Breuer in New York. Mazel Tov also to grandparents David and Vera Issler.

חיים ארוכים

We regret to inform of the petira in London of Mr Boruch Menachem Warmberg the late father of Mrs Chani Steinberg. Simchas

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Kiddush after Davening jointly sponsored by Benji Harris and Benji Lachs.

Don't Forget The Clocks

A reminder that the clocks go forward one hour this Motzei Shabbos.

מעוֹת חֵטִין

Donations should be made to the Rov for מעוֹת חֵטִין for distribution to needy local families to cover Pesach expenses.

Sale of חמץ

The actual sale of חמץ takes place in the בית דין before midday. However, those people who are going out of town for the whole of פסח or whose premises will be completely closed, may avail themselves of a מכירה arranged by the בית דין on the 13th ניסן, and may thus obviate the need for בדיקת חמץ. Both of the above sales may be arranged through the Rov at his home at any time by prior arrangement, or in Shul after Davening.

Pre-Pesach Shiur

There will be a Pre-Pesach Shiur for the ladies this Tuesday April 2nd at 9pm given by R' Shaya at his house, 14 East Meade, Prestwich

Biennial Election

The date for the Biennial General Meeting and Elections and BGM has been set for Tuesday May 14th. Full details will be sent out with the Pesach mailing and will be emailed or mailed to members depending on their preferred method of correspondence.

Don't Argue Down The Barrel Of My Gun

Dani Epstein

On previous occasions I have alluded to the following incident without really dealing with it in any depth, so it's about time that this was corrected.

On the eighth day of the inauguration of the mishkon, a very auspicious day, Moshe gave Aharon a comprehensive list of tasks he was to carry out, all involving various korbonos and the services pertaining to them. Aharon carries them all out faithfully, until he comes up against a hiccup of sorts.

Moshe, presumably having returned from elsewhere, looks around for the goat-chatos and lo and behold it is nowhere to be found and discovers it had been burned. Moshe becomes incensed and turns angrily to Elozor and Isomor, sons of Aharon, and yells: "Why didn't you eat the chatos in the holy area? It is kodshai kodshim, and was given to you to remove the guilt of the community! You should have eaten it as I told you to."

Aharon appears to reply on their behalf and says something very cryptic: "הן הן – היום הקריבו את חטאתם ואת עלתם לפני ה' – ותקראנה אתי כאֵלָה, ונתקראנה אתי כאֵלָה, ונתקראנה אתי כאֵלָה – look what happened to me, וְאֶכְלֵתִי חֲטָאת הַיּוֹם הַיֵּיטֵב בְּעֵינַי ה', had I eaten the chatos today would this have been approved by Hashem?"

Moshe's question is quite understandable; after all, orders are orders. But

Q&A

Children

1. Which month was it when The torah says ביום השמיני יויהי?
2. Who were the two sons of Aaron?
3. According to Rashi why did the sons of Aaron die?
4. Who was Aaron's uncle?
5. What colour is mentioned in this weeks Maftir?

Adults

1. What animals did the העם קרבן contain?
2. What three conditions are necessary for the פרה אדומה?
3. According to Rashi how many hairs disqualify the פרה אדומה?
4. We learn in מגילה דף י' that whenever the Torah uses the word ויהי it means that something sad is going to happen. What is sad about the dedication of the mishkan?
5. What animal is the בעת היענה?

Children
1. Nissan 2. Nadav and Avihu 3. A) They didn't ask moshe about the halacha before they did it. B) They entered the Mishkan whilst they were drunk. 4. Uzzel 5. Red (for the אדומה).
Adults
1. A he goat, a calf within its first year and a sheep 2. It has to be completely red, have no injuries/blemishes, a yakel cannot have been placed on it.
3. 4. Before the sin of the golden calf all the Jews individually were able to be in contact with the shechifa, however now they had sinned they could not be therefor it is sad. (Sforno) 5. The ostrich (Chizkuni)

what is Aharon answering? Weirder yet, Moshe agrees with Aharon. So, let's pull this apart a little.

First of all, earlier in the day two sons of Aharon, Nodov and Avihu, died after offering up unauthorised ketores. This meant that Aharon was now in mourning, an ovel, and was therefore ineligible to perform the avodah under normal circumstances. Since this day was something unique, however, Moshe had received a special order from Hashem that the regular rules of engagement would be lifted on this single occasion and Aharon was to officiate, ovel status notwithstanding.

This meant that Aharon was to perform the entire service as was originally planned. In fact, Aharon was to be the only one officiating that day; not Moshe nor Aharon's sons.

So why did Moshe shout at Elozor and Isomor? Why were they at fault? They were not involved in the avodah at all!

Rashi notes that even in his anger, Moshe was respectful to his older brother

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת שמיני

זמן שבת
Mincha
Rov's Shiur
Shacharis
סוף זמן ק"ש
Children's Group
1st Mincha
2nd Mincha
Seuda Shlishis
Motzei Shabbos
Sun
Mon / Thurs
Tues / Wed / Fri
Mincha & Maariv
Late Maariv

מברכין ניסן, פרשת פרה

6.23pm
6.28pm
8.45am - 9.10am
9.15am
9.01am
10.45am
1.30pm
6.10pm
Following
7.30pm
7.15am / 8.20am
6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
7.30pm
10.00pm

and directed his anger towards his nephews, rather than tell off Aharon.

We still have to understand Aharon's answer, though. "Had I eaten the chatos today would this have been approved by Hashem?"

What Aharon was arguing was that all the korbonos he brought on this day were unique to that day – with one exception, the goat chatos. That was to become a standard korbon for future generations. Aharon therefore felt that although he was to perform the special order of the day as per the original instructions, the goat chatos on the other hand would not have the special rule applied and therefore could not be eaten by him or his sons, and had to be burned.

Moshe found that to be an excellent explanation and agreed.

With all this groundwork behind us we need to consider the entire story in a bit more depth.

First of all, the obvious question. If Moshe issued an order, who on the good Lord's earth was Aharon to question the order? After all, the only source for Torah and therefore Halocho was Moshe – what rationale could be employed to begin to question anything he said?

We have an analogous situation with Korach. He had issues with Moshe's leadership because he claimed that Moshe was "rolling his own". If a cloak (we call them tallesim these days, by the way) can be made kosher with a few strands of techeiles, surely a cloak made entirely of techeiles needs no techeiles at all, right? Moshe, no idea what you are smoking, but you are way off base. Of course we all know that it was Korach who ended up smoking, and he definitely wasn't chillin' with a beer and a spliff.

How does Korach questioning the Great Leader differ at all than Aharon doing something far worse, actively fiddling with the orders he was given? Worse yet, how could Moshe agree to an argument from his brother when it was he – Moshe – who received the orders from Hashem? Maybe Moshe was in fact doing something far worse than Aharon or Korach, since he should know better?

There are two more cases of people arguing Halocho with Moshe: Bezalel and the daughters of Tzelofchod. They offered arguments against Moshe, and in fact they all prevailed. This is a dichotomy worth speculating on.

In fact, from this point forward that's all I'm doing: speculating. It's purely my own take on the matter. To paraphrase the late Paul Daniels, you might like this, not a lot, but you might like this.

The first thing to deal with is, in my oh-so-considered-and-terribly-humble-opinion, the very fact anyone even entertained the idea of asking questions, let alone arguing.

Consider Mao Zedong, a lovely fellow who ran China for a while. He was the brilliant architect of the Great Leap Forward which – rather like the Holy Roman Empire which was neither Holy, Roman nor an Empire – failed to be Great, Leap anywhere and certainly did not go forward. In fact, it killed millions of people. When General Peng Dehuai pointed out this salient fact he and his followers were purged. Anyone who reported even a whisper of famine to Mao was purged. Eventually millions were purged and punished. Purging can be bad for your health.

Now that's going back a year or two, so let's look at our dear friend in Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Jong Ding Dong or whatever he's called. Uncle Jang Song-thaek (they name their children by dropping cutlery on the floor and using the sound) turned out to be a "traitor" so good old Kimmy-san had him killed. And his wife, sisters, children, grandchildren and the gardener.

You get the picture. Argue with the great leader and no-one needs to guess what follows. So where did anyone get the idea that arguing with Moshe would end well? He was not simply the Great Leader, he had the imprimatur of Hashem himself! It was quite literally playing with fire.

The truth is like this. If a novi turns up and says "The Halocho is x", then the halocho is x. There is no arguing with that. If, however, the same novi pointed at a freshly slaughtered cow and said "I pasken through nevuoh that this Beis Din is wrong and this cow is kosher" we take him out to the back alley and feed him some terminal velocity lead.

What is the difference between both scenarios? For this we have to understand the structure of Halocho and how it pertains to neviim.

How do we know a novi is in fact a novi? There are two possibilities:

- 1) He/she was given "smicha" by an existing novi
- 2) He/she proved that he/she was a novi through physically impossible miracles or predictions that are statistically impossible.

In either case, says the Rambam (הלכות יסודי התורה: ח):

כמו שצוננו להתיר הדבר על פי שנים עדים ואף על פי שאין אנו יודעין אם העידו אמת אם שקר, כה מצוה לשמע מזה הנביא אף על פי שאין אנו

יודעים אם האות אמת או בכשוף ונל

"In the same way we are required to decide the matter through [examined] witnesses even if we do not know if their testimony is true or false, so are we commanded to obey this prophet even though we do not know if the sign is true or is magic and incantations."

The upshot of this is that we assume that a novi is the real McCoy, but we are not absolutely certain. This is an astonishing concept. The mitzvoh lies in the assumption and consequential obeying, not a fact we accept as absolute and true.

So, if a novi introduces a new halocho through nevuoh and - this bit is important - the new halocho does not contradict the corpus of existing Halocho, then we have a mitzvoh to assume – yes, assume – that this halocho is genuine, otherwise if it's clearly some dodgy stuff he's trying to peddle we are back in the alley with both barrels loaded for bear.

There is one exception to this rule, however, and that exception was Moshe. As the Rambam writes:

"משה רבנו לא האמינו בו ישראל מפני האותות שעשה" – Moshe was not believed by the Bnei Yisroel because of the miracles he performed. "ובמה האמינו בו? במעמד הר סיני שענינו ראו ולא זר ואזנינו שמעו ולא אחר – So what caused them to believe in him? The Sinaitic Revelation where our eyes saw and not a stranger's and our ears heard and not an other's."

So, no arguing with that then. Anything and everything Moshe claimed to be Divine was absolutely Divine. No ifs or buts.

This still does not explain the difference between Korach's and the other arguments.

The key, I believe, lies in what the argument was about. Korach challenged the very foundation of the law itself. He denied that the laws Moshe was promulgating, or at least some of them, were of Divine origin. In the case of Aharon, Betzalel and the Bnos Tzelofchod however they were arguing over interpretation. None of them argued that Moshe had somehow mangled the message; far from it. They accepted the law absolutely. What they argued was that if the message was q, then surely it should be interpreted as x.

Now here is the fun part.

Moshe should have pulled rank and said "I am quite literally the law. All interpretations are mine, and mine only because I heard the Message from Hashem, and you did not. Argue, and you will be shot." Yet he did not do this. Why?

This reveals yet another brilliant facet of the sheer infinite genius that is the Torah system.

Built right into the entire complex legal structure is a set of rules that we today have coded in the mesechta of Horiyos. When an individual feels that the Sanhedrin (or its equivalent) have made a mistake, then they are required to challenge the Sanhedrin. This is a mitzvoh in the same way as keeping Shabbos, eating kosher and believing in a novi is. You can't just hunker down and hope it will go away of its own accord. This rule applies to everyone and anyone and any stage in time, even when the head of the Sanhedrin is Moshe (which he was, by the way).

When Bezalel et. al. challenged Moshe, they were invoking the Horiyos clause. Moshe got the message OK, no-one doubts that, but they felt he misinterpreted the practical application thereof, or was not aware of the ramifications of the message.

So when Aharon pointed out his argument, Moshe had no choice but to agree, since it was quite clear that Aharon was correct, Moshe was wrong and they did not need to consult Hashem to decide the argument one way or another.

The importance of this story cannot be over-emphasised. First of all, no-one is infallible; we leave that to the pope. Secondly, if even Moshe could be successfully challenged then anyone else can be, however great their persona or the public's perception of them.

Lastly, and this is equally important, we see how the greatest novi that walked the earth, who got a hechsher from Hashem Himself could get righteously angry, and yet control himself enough to treat his older brother with the respect due to him, and that even in the midst of that anger could back down hey-presto-pronto when he realised he was wrong.

The most amazing thing about all this is that they were all aware of the Horiyos clause, because it was Moshe himself who taught it to everyone. And despite being who he was, when confronted with his very own teachings and mistakes he did not attempt to save face or finesse the situation, he simply admitted he was wrong and that was that. That is the absolute and unequivocal gold standard of leadership. That is the sheer genius that is the Torah. of leadership. That is the sheer genius that is the Torah.