



Ohr Yerushalayim News

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מלבה מלכה Melava Malka

A reminder to participants of the Ovos Uvonim programme that the Melava Malka will take place this Motzei Shabbos, an hour and a quarter after Shabbos for approximately 45 minutes.

Kiddush This Week

There will be a Kiddush this week to celebrate the latest building news – see back page for more information.

Once in 28 Years Opportunity

Every 28 years we have the opportunity to say **ברכת החמה**. Rabbi Stanton will be giving a series of two shiurim on 22nd and 29th March at 8.00pm in the Beis HaMedrash. All are welcome to attend. (See advert on page 2)

מגילת אסתר Shiurim

The first in a series of four shiurim by Rabbi Kupetz **שליט"א** on the subject of **מגילת אסתר** will take place this Sunday from 8.00-9.00pm in the Shul. There will be a Minyan for Maariv at 7.45pm. Men and Ladies are welcome to attend.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Sealed & Delivered

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

This parsha is called Mishpatim. Simply translated it means ordinances. The portion entails laws that deal with various torts and property damages. It discusses laws of damages, of servitude, of lenders and borrowers, employers and laborers, laws of lost items and the responsibilities of the finder. Many of these mitzvos that are discussed in the section of Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat. But there are quite a few mitzvos mentioned that engage the purely spiritual quality of the Jew. Some of them deal with kosher restrictions, others with our relationship with the Almighty.

One verse that deals with the requirement of shechita (ritual slaughter) begins with a prelude regarding holiness. "People of holiness shall you be to Me; you shall not eat flesh of an animal that was torn in the field; to the dog shall you throw it (Exodus 22:30). The question is simple. There are many esoteric mitzvos whose only justifiable reason is spiritual. Why does the Torah connect the fact that Jews should be holy with their prohibition of eating meat that was torn as opposed to ritually slaughtered? There are myriad mitzvos that require self-control and abstinence. Can there be another intonation to the holiness prelude?

(I heard this amazing story a number of years ago from a reliable source; I saved it until I was able to use it as an appropriate parable to answer a scriptural difficulty. I hope that this is it!)

Dovid, a serious yeshiva student, boarded the last flight out of Los Angeles on his way back to his Yeshiva in New York. He was glad that they were going to serve food as he had left his home in a rush and did not get a chance to eat supper. Sitting next to him on the airplane,

was a southern fellow who knew little about Judaism, and considered Dovid a curiosity. As the plane flew eastward, he bantered with Dovid about Jews, religion and the Bible, in a poor attempt to display his little bits of knowledge. Hungry and tired Dovid humored him with pleasantries and not much talking. He was pleased when his kosher meal was finally served. The kosher deli sandwich came wrapped in a plastic tray, and was sealed with a multiple array of stickers and labels testifying to its kosher integrity. His new-found neighbor was amused as Dovid struggled to break the myriad seals and reveal the sandwich, which unbelievably looked just as appetizing as the non-kosher deli sandwich the airline had served him.

"Hey," he drawled, "your kosher stuff doesn't look too bad after all!" Dovid smiled and was about to take his first bite into the sandwich when he realized that he had to wash his hands for the bread. He walked to the back of the plane to find a sink. It took a little while to wash his hands properly, but soon enough he returned to his seat. His sandwich was still on his tray, nestled in its ripped-open wrapping, unscathed.

And then it dawned upon him. There is a rabbinic ordinance that if unmarked or unsealed meat is left unattended in a gentile environment, it is prohibited to be eaten by a Jew. The Rabbis were worried that someone may have switched the kosher meat for non-kosher.

Dovid felt that in the enclosed atmosphere of an airplane cabin, nothing could have happened. After all, no one is selling meat five miles above earth, and would have reason to switch the meat, but a halacha is halacha, the rule is a rule, and Dovid did not want to take the authority to overrule the age-old Halacha.

Pensively he sat down, made a blessing on the bread and careful

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת משפטים	פרשת שקלים
Candle Lighting	No later than 5.14pm
Mincha	5.19pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.48am
Mincha 1 st / 2 nd Minyan	1.30pm / 5.16 pm
Rov's Mishnayos Shiur	5.46pm
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	6.21pm
Ovos Uvonim	7.36pm
Sunday 1 st / 2 nd Minyan	7.20am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday ראש חודש	7.00am
Friday	7.20am
Mincha & Maariv All Week	5.25pm
Shabbos Next Week	5.28pm

not to eat the meat, he took a small bite of the bread. Then he put the sandwich down and let his hunger wrestle with his conscience. "Hey pardner," cried his neighbor, "what's wrong with the sandwich?"

Dovid was embarrassed but figured; if he couldn't eat he would talk. He explained the Rabbinic law prohibiting unattended meat and then added with a self-effacing laugh, "and though I'm sure no one touched my food, in my religion, rules are rules."

His neighbor turned white. "Praise the L-rd, the Rabbis, and all of you Jewish folk!" Dovid looked at him quizzically.

"When you were back there doin' your thing, I says to myself, "I never had any kosher deli meat in my life. I thought I'd try to see if it was as good as my New York friends say it is!"

Well I snuck a piece of pastrami. But when I saw how skimpy I left your sandwich, I replaced your meat with a piece of mine! Someone up there is watching a holy fellow such as yourself!"

The Pardes Yosef explains the correlation of the first half of the verse to the second with a quote from the Tractate Yevamos . The Torah is telling us more than an ordinance. It is relating a fact. "If you will act as a People of holiness then you shall not eat flesh of an animal that was torn in the field; to the dog shall you throw it. The purity of action prevents the mishaps of transgressions. Simple as that. Keep holy and you will be watched to ensure your purity. Sealed and delivered.

A Holy Man

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

...be to Me men of holiness... (Shemos 23:30)

About this verse the Kotzker Rebbe emphasized the notion that The Almighty has plenty of holy angels, and we are asked to be holy men. What is that peculiar task of being a holy person?

At a lecture for beginners on Jewish philosophy a brilliant Rabbi - professor was wowing his audience with his erudition. Everyone was amazed by the depth and clarity of his logic and the sophistication of his language. In the middle of his presentation someone approached the lecturer from the side and placed a glass of water there for him. He paused and acknowledged with a "thank you" before making a blessing and drinking. A certain individual admitted to being so impressed with what he had heard that he was willing to commit himself to take a great step forward in observance. When quizzed about what in particular he found so convincing, he said that what had struck him was the "thank you" he offered at the height of his highly intellectual diatribe. He hadn't forgotten the common touch of respect and decency.

Rabbi Mordechai Schwab ztl. told me that in Europe he visited Telshe where his older brother Shimon was learning in Yeshiva. He said that they were sitting one evening together at an inn and there were glasses of hot tea on the table. Clumsily he knocked his boiling tea onto the lap of the fellow seated next him. He said and demonstrated how that fellow was rubbing his leg to ease the pain and was calling out to the waiter repeatedly, "Please bring my friend another tea!" When he saw how developed the character of this young man was that he was more concerned about replacing the tea of the fellow that had just accidentally burnt his leg rather than being angry, he realized that he too had better venture to learn in Yeshiva.

Simcha Raz writes about Reb Aryeh Levin ztl. that when he passed away it was Friday and he needed to be buried that day since as a rule no lifeless body should be left overnight in Jerusalem. Friday morning the family asked the members of the burial society to hurry please with the digging of the grave so the burial could be completed in the hours before noon, leaving enough time for the multitude of friends and admirers who lived outside Jerusalem to return home before the Holy Shabbos! The burial society wished to delay the funeral for several hours so they would have enough time to dig the grave since the ground was hard and stony.

"As they stood at the entrance of the cemetery debating the matter, the watchman of the graveyard came over, to tell a strange tale: A few years earlier Reb Aryeh came to him in privacy and asked him to prepare a grave next to the burial plot of his wife, to dig up the earth and turn it over, so that it would be all broken up and soft, "Why

would you want me to do a peculiar thing like that?" the watchman asked him. And the good Rabbi had replied, "Who ever knows the time table of a man's life? Perhaps I may depart the world on a Friday, and they will find difficulty in digging the grave, since the ground is so rocky and stony; and the people attending the funeral will be unable to reach their homes before the Shabbos has begun. I pray you: do me this favor, and dig the grave as I have asked you... Let it be ready..." Discreetly, without letting anyone catch sight of it, the watchman had fulfilled the good Rabbi's request."



Don't Get Mad, Get Glad

Rabbi Yaakov Menken (Torah.org)

"... And he shall surely heal him." [21:19]

The Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Mayer Kagan, uses this short phrase -- "and he [who injured his fellow man] shall surely heal him" -- to help us develop an entirely new outlook on interpersonal relations, on our coexistence with others in this world.

In the Talmud [Bava Kamma 88a], our Sages say, "From here (we learn that) permission is given to the doctor to heal." Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, adds there, "and we do not say that 'G-d made him sick; He will make him well.'" One who caused an injury must pay the doctor as necessary to heal the victim, but Rashi begins by accepting as a given that in reality, G-d was the one who caused the injury, not the human being.

The Chofetz Chaim helps us to look at what Rashi is saying. We see here that all pain or injury that a person suffers comes directly from G-d. This is true even when one person hits another! A person cannot hit someone else unless G-d deems it appropriate for the second person to be hit. Reuven cannot hit Shimon unless, in the opinion of G-d himself, Shimon "has it coming." Reuven is involved only because, in the words of our Sages, "bad things come by way of a deficient person." [The Hebrew idiom is perhaps lost in translation, but the intent is clear.]

The Torah is telling us that if someone injures me, I will just be wasting time and energy if I get angry at him. Obviously he is a "deficient person," and I should consider avoiding him in the future -- but what he did is his problem. Rather than taking revenge, I have to take stock of my own actions: why was it appropriate that I be hit?

Forgive me if I insinuate that you, like I, most likely do not live your life this way. I would be amazed to learn that among the tens of thousands of readers, more than one or two managed to avoid anger at a person who wronged him or her. But the evidence is that the Chofetz Chaim did indeed live life this way.

The Chofetz Chaim was called once to testify in court, and the lawyer wanted to explain to the court what an honest man the Rabbi was. He said that once the Chofetz Chaim caught a thief

stealing property from his small home. He pursued the thief, shouting "it's yours! I forgive you!"

The judge looked at the lawyer and asked if he truly believed this amazing tale. "I'm not certain, your Honor," said the lawyer, "but I do know that they do not tell such stories about you and me."

Another story is told of a yeshiva student who misbehaved on several occasions, until the Rosh Yeshiva, decided that he would have to expel him. On his way out, the student decided to take his last parting shots - so he stood on the front steps, and while waiting for his ride home explained in a loud voice exactly what he thought of the yeshiva and the Dean who stood at its helm.

A few observers noticed that the Rosh Yeshiva himself was standing by a second story window, not trying to stop the student, but rather listening carefully. After the student had left, one of these observers asked why he did not have someone rebuke the student. "Because," he responded, "I knew that some of what he said might be true. I was listening to see what I might learn." [I have seen this story recorded in a number of places, but unfortunately do not recall which yeshiva and which dean were involved.]

Obviously, this is a very high standard of behavior, one which cannot be reached overnight. Few of us have come close to this level. Nonetheless, it certainly doesn't hurt to set such a high goal!

To The Letter Of The Law

Rabbi Raymond Beyda (Torah.org)

You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan. If you dare cause him pain...! - For if he shall cry out to Me I shall surely hear his outcry. My wrath shall blaze... (Shemot 22:21-24)

The portion of Mishpatim is a collection of many different laws. Many of the commandments are those that stress sensitivity to the feelings of others especially the downtrodden. Treatment of the poor, the sick and of orphans and widows is of primary importance to the Torah Jew.

Rabbi Naftali Amsterdam zt'l was a student of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter zt'l. He once told Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian zt'l that he had noticed that his mentor Rabbi Salanter changed his daily routine and was not coming to the Study Hall and the Synagogue as early as he had done in the past. When asked Rabbi Salanter explained, "My wife has brought in a live in helper, who happens to be a widow. I do not want to leave early because she might feel obligated to disturb her sleep in order to lock up behind me. I must be careful not to violate the commandment "Do not cause pain to any widow".

"By the way", added Rabbi Salanter, "One should not suggest that I find a nice and honorable way to release her from our employ and then I could go back to my previous routine. That can't be an option because one who heard that would conclude that one should never hire a widow. That - of course - is wrong!"

That is how our greats lived according to the precepts of the Torah.

In contrast there is a story about a young married student who was very particular to fulfill every mitzvah with all its stringencies. In his first year of marriage his wife requested that they spend the Succot holiday with her mother in Yerushalayim. He agreed and they made the trip arriving just a few hours before the holiday. When he saw the sukkah that his mother-in-law had adjacent to her home he noticed that it did not comply with one of the Rabbinical stringencies required by the great of the generation the Hazon Ish. He knew he could not get back to his home town before the holiday nor did he have time to rebuild the Sukkah to conform to the opinion of the Gedol haDor. Instead, he went to eat and sleep in a neighbor's sukkah.

What was the widow's reaction? She cried all night long. And so did his wife.

A Rabbi who heard about the incident commented, "He keeps the Rabbinical law of the Hazon Ish and violates the Torah commandment not to disturb an orphan or a widow!"

Very often we call a Rabbi because we need a ruling on a Halakhic issue. We cooked some meat with dairy pots, or some other situation

which we know may be a problem but we are not sure what to do. How come we don't make a ruling for ourselves? "I am not a posek (one qualified to rule on Halakhic issues)" would be our quick response. Well, we should all be aware that our treatment of others is also halakhah and we are not qualified to rule on issues of Lashon HaRa, or monetary law and certainly on our treatment of others

The solution is twofold. Choose a highly qualified Rabbi to be your mentor and the one you go to for clarification of Torah law. Second, study laws and also ethics (mussar) so that you will sense that your behavior or situation is one that requires a ruling from one other than yourself. Try and live to the letter of the law not merely as you understand it but also in the manner in which Hashem intended. "Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all of its paths are Peace."

All For One

Rabbi Raymond Beyda (Torah.org)

"This they shall give...one half a shekel...a donation to Hashem" (Shemot 30:13)

The first of four special additional readings in the public recitation of the Torah on Shabbat is called Shekalim. Jews worldwide read from parashah Ki Tisa the command for each Jew to bring a half shekel for a census taken by Moshe Rabenu.

Our sages teach that 3 half shekels were collected from each eligible individual to be used for different holy communal purposes. The Rabbis ask, "How come a half was given and not a whole?"

The great Rabbi of Sefat in 500 years ago, Maharam Moshe Alshekh zt'l said that Hashem wanted to teach our people that when a Jew stands alone he is not complete and that only when he joins together with others can he fulfill his full potential. Even one who feels he is insignificant is valuable to the community. For example, 9 adult males who need a tenth for a minyan in order to add the holiest portions to public prayer are complete as a special unit of ten as soon as the tenth man participates. The tenth man's wealth, strength or intelligence are not a factor. He makes it happen by joining the group. He makes it complete.

Unity is a primary factor in the success and power of our people. The Midrash tells of a man who was weak and sick and approaching death. He called his sons to his bedside for last instructions from the head of the family. He gave each son a straw and asked them to break the brittle weed in half. They did. Then he gave each one a straw and asked that they pass them all to one son.

He then requested that the young man break the bundle in half but he was not able to comply. The patriarch of the family then asked that each of the other boys take a turn and try to crack the bundle in half. None of the healthy bunch was able to do the simple task. "My sons", he said, "when you are united no one can hurt you. Please stay together in all that you do".

He also pointed out that when numbers are lined up in a row each new addition to the line increases the total value by so much. But when numbers are written one on top of the other there is no gain to each adjacent numeral.

The season leading to Purim and Pesah begins with the reading of Parashat Shekalim. Our salvation from trouble and exile is contingent on our unity.

The Torah was not given to an individual - only to a nation. The verses that narrate that famous event point out that it was only after the Jews were united like one man with one heart did Hashem gift us with His greatest possession the Torah.

The lesson is as important today as it was then. We want salvation. The prompt to Heaven is unity. May we all learn the lesson and put it into action and behavior and bring the final redemption speedily in our days Amen.



We are delighted to announce that ב"ה we have been granted planning permission for the new shul.

This considerable progress and achievement has been a long time in coming and has involved many months of negotiation with the council. We now have the go ahead to proceed.

Plans have been submitted to tender and we expect to receive quotes by middle of March. A decision to appoint a contractor will then be made and building work to commence shortly thereafter.

May we take this opportunity to thank the considerable number of members who have already paid their full or part contribution to this project and remind those not yet paid that monthly standing orders can be setup.

A reminder to anyone who pledged money at the Shabbaton Melava Malka to kindly settle their dues.



Where will you be sitting?

