



Ohr Yerushalayim News

פרשת ראה – 3rd August 2013 - Volume 6 - Issue 6 – כ"ז מנחם אב תשע"ג

F NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the Mr & Mrs Jonathan Berkovitz on the Aufruf this Shabbos of their son Aaron and the wedding on Sunday to Tehilla Massarano. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush from 11.30am in the Shul Hall.

Early Minyan Restarts Next Week

The early Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos restarts next week, with the option of a 6.55pm or 7.30pm Mincha.

F NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

There Must Be an Anochi in Here Somewhere!

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

See I place before you today blessing and curse. The blessing that you listen to the commandments of HASHEM your G-d that I command you today, and the curse if you do not listen to the commandments of HASHEM your G-d and you turn away from the path that I command you today to go after other gods that you did not know. (Devarim 11:26-2)

Here are the keys to the game of life in these first few words! "See!" We are told to see! Ok! See what? See that "I" - Anochi/HASHEM is placing before you a world of choices/challenges. HASHEM is placing in the present tense. It's not a "still life" picture but an active river of real life and specially designed tests flowing your way! If we can see the Anochi-HASHEM behind and within every scene then we can begin to see what can be seen.

Here's a scenario I heard about from a very clever individual: Imagine that you are sitting in a reception area in a fancy office on the 77th floor of the Empire State Building. Suddenly the elevator opens and a gentleman with a disheveled appearance walks over to the window which he throws wide open. He backs up like he's readying himself to take a running leap and before he does so you are able to halt him temporarily.

You ask him, "Why are you about to do such a crazy and foolish thing?" He shows you a piece of paper with a list of 49 items that he begins to recite aloud; 1) Lost my job 2) Wife left me 3) Broke 4) Hungry 5) Dog died 6) Chronic incurable diseases 7) Homeless etc. That's just the beginning of the list and any single item would be enough to drive the average man over the top. He's got the worst situation you ever heard of or imagined. You're ready to agree with his morbid conclusion. What can you say to him?

Of course, you acknowledge his pain but you might challenge him with the following question: What if on top of all the 49 things there was also a 50th and that is that you were also completely blind? Today you tapped your way over, pressed the 77th floor button, before tapping your way to the window and as you are about to

leap, lo and behold the lights go on and you are granted vision. You can see! Would you choose to jump at that moment?

For sure the fellow will say, "NO!" "Why not!?" You would have to challenge him. He would probably answer, "I'd go around and check it all out!" So then you tell him, "You aren't blind! You can see! Use those eyes to find goodness!"

A family had twin boys whose only resemblance to each other was their looks. They were opposite in every other way. One was an eternal optimist, and the other boy was a gloom pessimist. Just to see what would happen, on the boys' birthday their father packed the pessimist's room with lots of games and gadgets. The optimist's room he loaded with horse dung.

That night the father passed by the pessimist's room and found him sitting amid his new gifts with a sorrow face. "Why are you sad?" the father asked. "Because my friends will be jealous and I'll have to read all these instructions before I can do anything with this stuff. I'll constantly need batteries, and my toys will eventually get broken." answered the pessimist.

Passing the optimist twin's room, the father found him dancing for joy in the heaps of manure. "What are you so happy about?" he asked. To which his optimist replied, "There must to be a pony in here somewhere! Thanks for the gift father!"

There must be an Anochi in here somewhere!

The Tree of Knowledge

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

Since the dawn of human history, mankind has faced, in one guise or another, the same temptations that confronted the very first man and woman, Adam and Chava. After giving us the details of their creation, the Torah describes the challenge they faced in the blissful spiritual existence Hashem provided for them in the Garden of

The Week Ahead

פרשת ראה

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos

Candle Lighting

Seder HaLimud

Shacharis

סוף זמן ק"ש

Mincha 1st Minyan

Mincha 2nd Minyan

Followed by a Shiur by Dovid Nissenbaum

Motzei Shabbos

Sunday

Monday / Thursday

Tuesday / Wednesday ראש חודש

Friday

Mincha & Maariv

Late Maariv

Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos

שבת מברכין אלול

7.15pm

7.26pm - 7.40pm

8.40am

9.00am

9.20am

6.00pm

8.58pm

10.03pm

7.15am / 8.20am

6.45am / 7.10am

6.30am / 7.00am

6.45am / 7.20am

7.45pm

10.00pm

6.55 / 7.30pm

שמנה עשרה – אבות: תפילה

Translation:

אברהם	אלוקי		
Avrohom	G-d of		
יעקב	ואלוקי	יצחק	אלוקי
Yaakov	and G-d of	Yitzchok	G-d of

Why does each one of the – אבות forefathers – merit a separate mention of the word – אלוּקִי G-d of ? Why don't we just say אלוּקִי אברהם יצחק ויעקב?

Why does יעקב merit a letter "ו" before his name when in fact no "ו" is needed at all?

This is in fact a theme that is mentioned in various different places in our תפילות, and its source appears to be in שמות ג' ט"ו:

וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אֱלֹהִים אֵל מִשֶּׁה כֹּה תֹאמַר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

Harking back to the theme of what the Rov שליט"א spoke about on שבועות, these individual mentions are there to remind us that every one of our – אבות – forefathers – had a unique and individualistic approach to Hashem, which we need to emulate as well.

It is no good simple idling along doing whatever everyone else is doing, or whatever Dad did. If it was good enough for Dad, it does not follow that it is good enough for you. Each one of us needs to find our own path, our own individual way of approaching and serving Hashem, in a way that suits our temperament and challenges our individual compulsions, passions and habits, just like our forefathers did.

Now, if we actually do that, we can approach Hashem and say: "G-d of our ancestors, that אברהם chose and served in his way, יצחק chose and served in his way, and that יעקב chose and served in his way..."

And יעקב? He gets a special mention, being the only one with a "ו", because he was the only one whom ה' declared Himself the "G-d of" whilst he was still alive and in full health, which was not the case with Avrohom, who died by that point, or יצחק who was blind.

and fear G-d. If we only 'see and fear' our Creator a single time, we will be naturally inclined towards continuing our pathway towards spiritual growth. We will be primed and ready to see the blessing in living a spiritual life.

Once we experience the sublime joy of 'seeing' Hashem and having a heart-to-heart dialogue with Him; once we taste the pleasure of a true Shabbat; once we absorb the self-fulfillment that overtakes every fiber of our being as we extend ourselves to the less fortunate, we will encounter His precious blessings. The allure of tree of knowledge's artificial stimulants will no longer exert their magnetic draw. At that point, the distinction between the blessing and the curse will be abundantly clear.

This then, is perhaps what Moshe meant at the beginning of our Torah portion. Re'eh, 'see' that I present you today with a blessing and a curse. Only after we have seen and experienced the light and delight of a spiritual life pathway will we be able to make a crystal clear distinction in our life choice. How true the maxim that "a little light banishes a great deal of darkness." By infusing our homes with a joyous life in the presence of Hashem, we will ensure that we will always delight in the kosher fruits of our Garden of Eden.

Eden. They were expressly prohibited to eat from the eitz hadaas, the tree of knowledge, yet its delightful fruit proved irresistible to Eve. The Torah describes the nature of the temptation. "It was desirable to be eaten and beautiful to behold"! The challenge Adam and Chava faced echoes and re-echoes as each and every generation confronts its unique 'eitz hadaas' in an ever-changing and often bewildering variation of guises.

Our generation has its own enticing 'tree of knowledge' that glistens alluringly, urging us to sample its illicit fruits. Its appeal has tragically proven irresistible to so many of our youth. Can they be blamed for surrendering to the tantalizing attraction? Religious rules seem so onerous, rigid and inhibiting to a generation that has been nurtured with an inherent sense of personal entitlement. Don't we deserve it, and don't we deserve it now? Freedom of expression and freedom of choice have been elevated to the highest status in society's scale of values.

How then are we to protect both ourselves and our children from the shimmering 'tree of knowledge' whose fruits appear 'so good to eat and so delightful to the eye'?

In the first verse of this week's Torah portion, Moshe Rabbeinu in his parting message to the Jewish people provides them with an eternal answer. "Behold! I have placed before you today the blessing and the curse. The blessing is that you shall listen to the words of Hashem your G-d, and the curse is when you do not hearken to His voice".

Living in our Creator's embrace and following His dictates is defined as a life of blessing. Living outside its pale is defined as a life of curse. Herein Moshe Rabbeinu frames the arena of life and articulates the challenge that we mortals in every age and in every society are forced to grapple with.

But how can we imbibe this important message when all our senses and feelings experience and see just the opposite?

Perhaps we can explain this with a verse in last week's Torah portion. (Chapter 10 verse 12): "And now, Israel, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you? Only to see/fear Him, to walk in all His ways, to love Him and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul". The Talmud questions the word "only"; is this long list such a simple request? Isn't it disingenuous to request from us the relatively simple assignment of seeing and thus fearing Hashem, immediately followed by a string of complex and challenging spiritual demands?

A doting father and mother were tearfully watching their sick son's vitality drain from him as he lay in bed. His temperature continued to soar. His burning fever robbed him of his appetite; he steadfastly refused the delicious food they put before him as well as all medicine. All their exhortations and pleas were futile. They begged a specialist to come to their home to treat their beloved son. The specialist came and saw that the child's prognosis was very serious. He extracted a strong medicine from his briefcase and told the child that he will only ask him to swallow the medicine a single time. Hearing that this was only a one-time request, the child acquiesced and reluctantly sipped a measure of the life giving elixir. As the doctor walked towards the door, the child's mother burst out crying. "Dr." she exclaimed, "he has only agreed to take it this one time, what will we do tonight when you're gone?"

"Don't worry," the doctor reassured her. "Now that he has drunk from this medicine, his appetite will be restored. Once he begins ingesting food, he will regain his appreciation for its taste. Before long you can be assured that he will be willing to take the necessary medicine every day until he is fully recovered".

With this parable, the Dubna Maggid explains the meaning of our verse about the Torah's expectation: We are asked "only" to "see"