



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Yitzchok Steinhaus on the occasion of the Bar Mitzva of their son, Zevi, this Shabbos. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in the hall.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Michael Epstein on the engagement of their son, Eli.

Parshas HaShavua Shiur

Note that due to the Taanis, the Friday night Shiur is not taking place this week.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Now or in the future?

Yitzchok Steinhaus (Cute-gifts.co.uk)

In this weeks Parsha we find Yaakov Avinu insisting that Yosef swear he will not bury Yaakov in Mitzrayim.

We wonder why Yaakov Avinu made Yosef swear that he would be sure to bury him in Meoras Hamachpeilah. Was Yosef's word not sufficient guarantee that he would carry out his father's last wish? It is not as if Yosef had a history of breaking his word. He was a thoroughly righteous person. Keeping one's word is part of human decency.

Rav Yaakov Weinberg Ztzl in his sefer "Forever His Students", explains that while Yaakov certainly trusted Yosef, he feared that "excuses" - even valid ones- would interfere with his word's fruition.

Yosef's word was gold; his commitment solid. There was, however, an area of concern: there might be a legitimate reason for Yosef's inability to fulfill his word. There were good reasons why Yosef might be hampered in carrying out Yaakov's wish. Pharaoh would surely not agree.

Pharaoh may say such a famous personality as Yaakov buried in Egypt would be very good for the country. He would designate a large section of land for a tomb - perhaps even a park or museum. Pharaoh would never go along with Yosef's desire to bury his father outside of Egypt.

Yaakov was concerned that possibly Pharaoh would be able to persuade Yosef to allow Yaakov to be buried in Mitzrayim "temporarily" and eventually be moved to Erez Canan just as if nothing had ever happened, by which fulfilling the request of Yaakov.

However, once Pharaoh would hear that Yosef committed himself through an oath; it would be an altogether different perspective as even Pharaoh would have to honor Yaakov's request knowing that Yosef would never go back on his oath.

Sometimes it's easy to be swayed by a rosy present when the outcome at the end is the same regardless of which direction you go. Yaakov wanted to ensure this did not happen and that he would not be buried in Egypt at all.

An American businessman was standing at the pier of a small

עשרה בטבת

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|---------------------------|---------------|
| Taanis Starts | 6.19am |
| Shacharis | 6.30 / 7.00am |
| Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos | 3.29pm |
| Sof Taanis | 4.41pm |

coastal Mexican village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. The American complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish.

"How long did it take you to catch them?" the American asked.

"Only a little while" the Mexican replied.

"Why don't you stay out longer and catch more fish?" the American then asked.

"I have enough to support my family's immediate needs" the Mexican said.

"But" the American then asked, "What do you do with the rest of your time?"

The Mexican fisherman said: "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take a siesta, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos. I have a full and busy life, senior."

The American scoffed: "I am a Harvard MBA and could help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds you could buy a bigger boat and, with the proceeds from the bigger boat, you could buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a

The Week Ahead

פרשת ויחי

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Candle Lighting | 3.34pm |
| Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos | 3.29pm |
| Seder HaLimud | 8.40am |
| Shacharis | 9.00am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 10.10am |
| Mincha 1st Minyan | 1.30pm |
| Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur | 2.58pm |
| Mincha 2nd Minyan | 3.28pm |
| Motzei Shabbos | 4.48pm |
| Ovos uBonim | 6.03pm |
| Sunday | 7.15am / 8.20am |
| Monday / Thursday | 6.45am / 7.10am |
| Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday | 6.45am / 7.20am |
| Mincha & Maariv | 3.35pm |
| Late Maariv | 8.00pm |
| Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos | 3.40pm (Shabbos 3.35pm) |

middleman, you would sell directly to the consumers, eventually opening your own can factory. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You would need to leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually NYC where you will run your expanding enterprise."

The Mexican fisherman asked: "But senior, how long will this all take?"

To which the American replied: "15-20 years."

"But what then, senior?"

The American laughed and said: "That's the best part. When the time is right, you would announce an IPO - an Initial Public Offering - and sell your company stock to the public and become very rich. You would make millions."

"Millions, senior? Then what?"

The American said slowly: "Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a siesta, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos..."

Two Special Attributes of Yehudah

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

In reference to the blessings that Yaakov gave his sons, the pasuk says: "Yehudah, you your brothers will praise (ata yoducha achecha) Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down before you..." [Bereshis 49:8]. There are many interpretations for the phrase "Yehudah, ata yoducha achecha". Both the Targum Yonasan ben Uziel as well as a Medrash we will quote shortly say this expression refers specifically to the incident of Tamar. The expression is translated (at least homiletically) as "Yehudah, you admitted in the incident with Tamar."

Yehudah had a daughter-in-law named Tamar. His previous two sons had died. Tamar was not supposed to marry outside of the family. Tamar disguised herself and tricked Yehudah into performing a form of levirate marriage with her. She became pregnant. Yehudah, who did not realize that she had been impregnated by him, suspected her of being like the daughter of a priest who committed adultery and sentenced her to death. As she was about to be burned alive, she picked up the deposit Yehudah had left her when he visited her thinking she was a harlot and showed it to him. He admitted "she is more righteous than I".

This pasuk in Vayechi referring to Yehudah's admission relates back to that incident. The Medrash generalizes that this pasuk is referring to righteous people who conquer their evil inclinations and they admit when they are wrong. "For everyone who confesses his (improper) deeds merits the world to come." The Medrash describes the Almighty telling Yehudah: "You saved Tamar and her two sons (she was pregnant with twins) from being burnt by fire, by My Life I will save your sons as well."

Let's recast this scenario. Everyone thinks Tamar is guilty. Yehudah, who occupied a position of power announced, "This woman has to be put to death". She is taken out to the stake and the fires are lit. Yehudah is standing there in front of everybody. Tamar announces she is pregnant from the person who gave her the tokens she presents. Yehudah admits that she is more righteous than he. The Medrash says for this he merits the world to come and a great many blessings.

But let us remember that three people's lives were on the line here. Would we not have expected any moral person to do exactly what Yehudah did? What is so noble about his confession, which saved him from having the unjust killing of three individuals on his conscience? Wouldn't any of us have done the same thing?

The answer to this question is a resounding 'NO!' We would not have done the same thing. Let us examine the other side of the coin. Look at all the rationalizations that Yehudah could have gone through. "If I admit that I was the one who did this, it could be a catastrophic desecration

of G-d's Name!" For Yehudah, the pride of the Tribes, to admit that he had promiscuous relations with this apparent prostitute would be a tremendous Chilul Hashem. Not only that, but "If I admit that I did this, it will be so devastating to my father that he is not going to survive. My father has suffered so much already. If I cause a Chilul Hashem now, who knows what this could do to him! Therefore it is 'Pikuach Nefoshos' (a matter involving saving of life) NOT TO ADMIT! It is a Chilul Hashem TO ADMIT. Everything argues in favor of "DON'T ADMIT!" All of these rationalizations went through Yehudah's mind.

But were these really moral options? Would he allow 3 people die? Did he have no decency or conscience?

The answer is that Yehudah really had another option: He could have suddenly announced "New evidence has been uncovered. We need to halt the execution and start a new investigation." He could have dragged out the investigation for six months or a year. In the meantime, Tamar and her children would be saved, and ultimately people would forget about the tumult and he would never need to incriminate himself. This is what most of us, if not all of us would have done.

To have the strength of character to admit the truth and let the chips fall where they may, took rare moral courage. This is what Yehudah did. About this Yaakov said in his blessing: Yehudah ata yoducha achecha.

But this is only part of the greatness of Yehudah, because Chazal say another thing: "Yehudah admitted and he was not ashamed." Let us continue the scenario. Yehudah admits: "I did it." What would happen to most people? For most people, such an experience would break them. They would never recover from it. They would be so humiliated they would crawl into a hole and live out the rest of their life in anonymity. "How can I ever show my face again?"

But what did Yehudah do? He did not crawl into a hole. He dusted himself off, got up, and went on with his life. He became the patriarch of the King of Israel. The Sefas Emes writes a beautiful comment. The pasuk refers to Yehudah as a lion who lies down and crouches. The Sefas Emes writes that the greatness of Yehudah is that even in his moments of "lowness" -- when he is crouching down as it were, even when he has suffered defeat, even when he is humiliated, he still retains the dignity of a lion.

The pasuk refers to Yehudah not as a "lion who roars" but as a "lion who crouches", the lion who is sitting down. Yehudah remains a lion despite the terrible fall and humiliation he suffered. He remains strong and majestic. Anyone who has ever seen a picture of a lion knows that when a lion sits, it still looks like a lion. It still has the majesty of a lion. It is still the king of the jungle even when at rest.

This is a lesson that all of us need to learn. In the course of a lifetime, we all have our setbacks, whether they are financial or personal or family related. There is an inclination to say "I can never recover from this. I can't show my face. How can I go on?" This is not the attitude of Yehudah and this should not be the attitude of any Jew.

The Sefas Emes concludes by explaining that all the Children of Israel are called Yehudim (tracing themselves to their ancestor Yehudah), because this attribute is the strength of the Jewish people. No matter what defeats they have suffered, they go on. If one thinks of the defeats that we have experienced as a nation on the national level, they are staggering. Nevertheless, we have persevered. This is not only a quality that applies to us as a people; it applies to each of us as individuals as well. Each and every one of us is called Yehudah. Each of us has this capacity of Yehudah that despite the terrible, terrible incident, he survived and remained a lion. He was crouching, he was in a state of lowness, he was down -- but he remained a lion.

These were the two strengths of Yehudah: The ability to recognize and admit the unvarnished unadulterated truth, rather than rationalize and fabricate self-serving justifications and excuses; and the capacity that no matter how devastating the setback one has suffered, the ability to brush oneself off and go on with life.