



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

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## T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Bernard Levey on the birth of a granddaughter in Israel to Mr & Mrs Dovid Manson.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Lenny Horwitz on the recent birth of a grand daughter to Mr & Mrs Dubi Horwitz.

Mr & Mrs Joseph Rosenhead invite the Kehilla to a Kiddush on occasion of recent birth of their daughter, Shuli, at 77 Park Road.

Families Gershon & Stern are delighted to invite the Kehilla to the engagement of Esther Stern and Chaim Gershon this Sunday 8 December at Beis Menachem 3.30pm till 5.30pm.

### Parshas HaShavua Shiur

The Parshas HaShavua Shiur continues on Friday night straight after Davenning for 15 minutes in the Shiur rooms.

### Asoroh B'Teves

On Friday next week, Asoroh B'Teves, we will be Davenning Mincha at the earlier time of 3.29pm, not as stated on the winter timetable.

### Chanuka Funday

Last Sunday, the Shul held its annual Chanuka Fun Day. The activities were creative and enjoyed by all. The Wheels in the bus went round and round, the kids on the bus went up and down. The socks got transformed into exciting puppets and elastic bands made into bracelets and necklaces. The doughnuts and other foods was avidly consumed.

After Mincha, Dr Bernstein addressed the children on the story and message of Chanuka. The questions he posed were answered enthusiastically by his audience highlighting their knowledge. This was followed by his lighting of the Menorah and the distribution of the customary chocolate Chanuka gelt by the Rov and Rebbetzen.

Thanks to the organisers, all the helpers and participants for making this such a fantastic success. See the pack page for pictures.

## T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### Walls - and Worlds - Apart

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

In this week's Torah portion, we read of Yosef's self-revelation to his brothers followed by Yaakov Avinu's descent to Egypt with his extended family of 70 souls, the core of the future Jewish nation. Yaakov was understandably anxious about entering Egypt and the impending golus. Hashem appeared to him in a dream, however, and gave him Divine assurances of protection. "I will go down with you to Egypt and I will surely bring you up from this place," Yaakov was told.

One of the interesting points in the parsha is the Torah's detailed account of who precisely accompanied Yaakov to Egypt. The full count is one short of the 70 listed in the pasuk. Our sages teach us the 70th

## עשרה בטבת

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

person was Yocheved who was "born at the actual entranceway into Egypt." In the words of the sages, she was born "between the walls."

As a child, I used to wonder about this interesting expression of the sages. I would picture the large caravan carrying Yaakov and his family suddenly halting midway through Egypt's mighty imposing walls, while the paramedics and ambulance services busily attended to Yocheved's mother. How mysterious and bizarre. Why focus on the circumstances of her birth as if the exact location carried special significance in the grand scheme of events?

With time, I came to realize that perhaps the sages are not referring to the specific geographic location of Yocheved's birth but to the concept that Yocheved had the distinction of being born between two worlds-and was thus a member of both. Her descent to Egypt with Yaakov's entourage exposed her to Egypt's influences but, unlike the rest of her brothers and sisters who became physically and emotionally enslaved in Egypt, Yocheved was "between the imposing walls"-never locked up behind them.

Yocheved was able to look beyond the walls at her rich and free spiritual past, with one foot inside engaging the reality of her people's situation. This outlook on life personified her very essence. The Torah tells us that she was the "midwife" of the entire nation. Assisted by her daughter, Miriam, she ensured the survival of the Jewish people at its

## The Week Ahead

<b>פרשת ויגש</b>	
Candle Lighting	3.35pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.40pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
<b>סוף זמן ק"ש</b>	10.04am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur	2.59pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	3.29pm
Motzei Shabbos	4.49pm
Ovos uBonim	6.04pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.10am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday	6.30am / 7.00am
<b>עשרה בטבת</b>	<b>See above</b>
Mincha & Maariv	3.35pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

## שמונה עשרה - אבות: תפילה

טובים

that are good

חסדים

kindnesses

גומל

He performs

This is a bit of a mind-bender. What exactly does "kindnesses that are good" mean? Are there any other kinds of kindnesses? Could one perform nasty acts of kindness? Slightly irritating acts of kindness? Surely if the act is kind, it is inherently good?

Rav Dovid Gottlieb has a very simple yet profound *moshol* that he uses to explain this rather enigmatic phrase.

Most people have experienced a trip to the doctor to receive an injection for one reason or another. For many years now, parents have had to suffer the agony of taking their precious little darlings to the doctor to receive an injection containing a vaccine of one form or another.

How the poor little mites squirm, squeal and suffer during the injection. How the poor parent has to suffer as they watch their child sobbing their little eyes out.

So, is this act – injecting the child – a good act or an evil one? No sane person would argue that it is an unnecessary act, but the question is whether the injection is inherently evil or not.

On the one hand, if it is necessary, how can it be evil or cruel? Yes, the patient suffers in the process, but how much greater would their suffering be if they did not have the injection? This is the argument of the "end justifying the means", in that the motivation or the results determine whether or not the means were cruel or evil.

On the other hand, what happens when a new vaccine comes along that can be delivered as a tablet, instead of an injection? Do we continue to use the injection, or do we switch to the tablet?

All things being equal, of course we switch to the tablet! Why cause anyone pain or upset if we don't have to?

This switch, says Rav Gottlieb, indicates that the injection actually was inherently cruel or evil, but because we had no other choice we were able to justify it. Now that we have a tablet, that cruelty or evil is no longer justifiable, and so we drop it.

We can extend this idea further. Even when we perform an act that we assume we have done with pure intentions, there are no guarantees that it will be free of self-interest or even a tinge of annoyance on someone else's part.

Imagine the following scenario. It was an icy morning and you were scraping the frozen frost off your windscreen, and the thought came to you: "My neighbour also has an icy windscreen. I will clear it for him, so that he will be really pleased when he comes out to his car; I think it will make a nice start to his day".

Well, your neighbour is a real tzadik, and when he comes out he puts a brave smile on his face and thanks you heartily and tells you that you made his day. Inside, though, he is seething – why did this meshuggene touch my car? What would happen if he scratched my windscreen? The cost of labour alone for replacing my Lamborghini windscreen (we can all live in hope) is more than his rust-bucket of a car is worth, let alone the windscreen itself! Imagine if he had scratched the paintwork!

So here we have a kindness that really ruined the poor recipient's day, despite the best of intentions on the part of the donor.

With Hashem, though, He is not confined by circumstances to decide whether or not to dispense an evil or cruel act which will be justified by the outcome. Neither does He have to worry about the outcomes of His kindnesses possibly back-firing in some unintended direction. Hashem is capable of creating acts of kindness that are unequivocally and inherently kind through-and-through, which explains why we say: **טובים חסדים** - *kindnesses that are good*.

This is not to say that everything He does is inherently and unequivocally kind, but that's a discussion for another day.

bleakest chapter. The Torah refers to her as "Shifrah," for she would be "meshaper; " she would beautify and nurture each newborn child-cooing and singing as she did so-to ensure that the child had a healthy and positive start in life.

She never succumbed to the despair of those who felt doomed in Egypt's decadent and spiritually corrosive lifestyle. Yocheved imbued her children with this inspired and independent mindset, and Moshe, her son, would go on to instill it in the Jewish people whom he led out of Egypt.

A political dissident was brutally thrown into a prison dungeon by the regime. His cell was populated by lowly criminals, petty thieves, murderers and all kinds of unsavory characters. A thin shaft of light shot into the cell from a small window positioned high up on the wall. Covered with soot and heavy metal bars, the window was the only source of faint sunlight that filtered into the dank, dark, prison cell. The dissident walked over to the window and positioned himself underneath it. He refused to move from that spot. His fellow prisoners wondered about his bizarre behavior. "Why don't you come to this side?" shouted one of the prisoners. The stove is over here and it is far warmer. Why do you always insist on sitting at the window?" "While I am near the window, I can look outside and see that there is a bright sky beyond the prison walls," the fellow explained. "If I leave the window, I too, will be resigning myself to my incarceration. As long as I envision the outside world and a better tomorrow, there is hope for a brighter future."

In our own lives, we too, often feel "sandwiched" between walls. Life appears to be an endless stream of pressures and challenges that imprison us. We feel hemmed in by responsibilities we cannot escape. If we can adopt Yocheved's mindset, however, we can learn how to engage our responsibilities appropriately without letting them enslave and "own" us. While carrying out our obligations, we must always keep one eye focused on our rich heritage and a promising future, seeing Hashem's bountiful blessings that hover just above the clouds.

Then, when the clouds finally break and the sun shines through, we will be able to capture the gifts that are meant for those who had the fortitude and passion to keep their torch aflame, and to pass it along to the next generation.

