



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

ד אלול תשע"ד – פרשת שופטים – 30th August 2014 - Volume 7 - Issue 8

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

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to the Rov & Rebbetzen on the Bar Mitzva of their grandson in Glasgow this Shabbos.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Daniel Harris on the Bar Mitzva this Shabbos of their son, Avi. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in Stenecourt.

Mazel Tov to Dr & Mrs Michael Wilks on the Bar Mitzva of their grandson, Meir Tzvi.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Henry Brownson on the Aufruf this Shabbos of their son Yos taking place in Vine Street.

Mr & Mrs Joel Ross invite the Kehilla to a Kiddush this Shabbos at 11 Vernon Road to mark the recent birth of their daughter, Soroh Bayla - Mazel Tov.

### Keep Up To Date

If you have recently moved house, please email your new address to [office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk](mailto:office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk) so we can update the Shul records.

### Hilchos Shmitta Shiurim

Rabbi Aryeh Silkin will be giving a series of three Shiurim on the Dinim of Shmitta in Chutz La'Aretz on Shabbos afternoons starting on Parshas Ki Seitze - see back page for further details.

### Yom Tov Newsletter

As previously we are looking to produce a bumper edition of the newsletter for Rosh HaShana to include Divrei Torah from members. Please put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) and email to [dansmithpm@gmail.com](mailto:dansmithpm@gmail.com) no later than Sunday 21st September.

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

### One Corrupt Judge May Blind Two Wise and Righteous Judges

Rabbi Yissochor Frand (Torah.org)

The beginning of the parsha contains the positive commandment: "Judges and officers shall you appoint in all your cities – which Hashem, your G-d gives you – for your tribes; and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment." [Devarim 16:18]. The positive commandment to appoint judges is immediately followed by the negative commandments associated with perverting judgment, showing favoritism to one of the disputants in a court case, and taking bribes. The Torah warns that bribery has the ability to blind a person and render his judgments subjective, unfair, and illegal.

I saw an insight quoted in the name of a disciple of Rav Chaim Vital (himself a disciple of the Ari z"l). The disciple questions the grammatical structure of the Torah's prohibition against taking bribes: "...And you

shall not take a bribe (which is written in the singular) for the bribe will blind the eyes of the wise (Chachamim - plural) and pervert the words of the righteous (Tzadikim – also plural). [Devarim 16:19] Rav Chaim Vital asks why the pasuk switches in mid-sentence from the singular form to the plural form.

Typically, in the Jewish system of justice, a court case will have more than a single judge. Either there will be 3 judges (e.g. – in most monetary cases) or there will be 23 judges (e.g. -- in capital cases) or there will be a full Sanhedrin of 71 judges (See Mishna Sanhedrin 1:1 for examples). We would rarely have a case involving just one judge. Given this judicial structure, if one judge takes a bribe, we really should not need to worry about corruption, because he will in any case be over-ruled by at least two other judges who have not been tainted by receiving a payoff. The principle of "majority rules" should provide a fail-safe system to protect us from individual corrupt judges!

The Torah is teaching us that this is not the case. The power of subjectivity is such that this one partial judge, who is so bent on throwing the case on behalf of the person who paid him off, will use his powers of persuasion to influence the other judges as well. The Torah is telling us: "You shall not take a bribe lest your corrosive influence will blind the eyes and pervert the words of your fellow judges, who may themselves be wise and righteous." This explains why the prohibition to take a bribe is formulated in the singular while the phrase "for the bribe will blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous" is expressed in the plural.

### Words of the Holy Ari Which Need No Further Elucidation

Having just quoted an insight from a second generation disciple of the Ari z"l, I would now like to share an idea from the Ari Hakadosh himself.

A pasuk in our parsha teaches: "If a matter of judgment will be hidden from you, between blood and blood, between verdict and verdict, or between affliction and affliction, matters of dispute in your cities – then

### The Week Ahead

פרשת שופטים	
Mincha 1 / Candle Lighting	6.20pm / Not before 6.40pm
Mincha 2 / Candle Lighting	7.30pm / Not after 7.51pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.41am
Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha	6.00pm / 7.51pm
Mishnayos Shiur	following
Motzei Shabbos	8.56pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	6.10pm / 7.30pm

you shall rise and ascend to the place that Hashem, your G-d shall choose." [Devarim 17:8] On a straight-forward level, this pasuk is teaching that when a court is confronted with a matter – whether of ritual or civil or criminal nature – that is beyond their ability and judicial competence to resolve, they should take it to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish High Court, which resides in proximity to the Temple in Jerusalem.

This is the simple interpretation ("p'shuto shel Mikra"). But, as we all know, Torah can be interpreted and studied on many different levels. The Ari z"l, in his Likutei Torah on Parshas Shoftim, says there is an allusion ("remez") in this pasuk as well. He quotes an idea found in the Zohar.

The Heavenly Angels asked the Almighty at the time of the Destruction of the Temple, "Master of the Universe, You wrote in Your Torah (in connection with the slaughter of a kosher wild animal or bird) 'And you shall spill his blood and cover it with dirt' [Vayikra 17:13]. How is it that You were so compassionate even regarding the blood of a slaughtered chicken, insisting that it must be covered, whereas here (regarding the Temple destruction) Your people are being slaughtered with no compassion as it is written 'Their blood was spilled like water around Jerusalem and there was no one to bury.' [Tehillim 79:3]?"

I recently heard a story of someone who took his mother back to Hungary. As they were crossing a bridge, he saw his mother begin to shake. He asked her what was wrong. She said she was reminded that the Nazis, may their name be blotted out, used to want to save on bullets. They would tie people together, put them on the bank of the river, and shoot one or two of them, causing them all to drown. The mother told her son she remembered how the river – at exactly the point they were now crossing – had turned red from the blood of the Jews.

This is the question the Heavenly Angels asked the Almighty: You are particular about the blood of a chicken and so (apparently) callous when it comes to the blood of Your people. Why is that?

The Zohar continues with the Angels' queries to the Almighty: "You have written in Your Torah 'An ox or lamb and its offspring you shall not slaughter in a single day' [Vayikra 22:28]. You are so compassionate that you prohibit the slaughter of a mother and its offspring on the same day and yet at the time of the Destruction (Churban) mothers and children were slaughtered together!

You have written in your Torah "...and they shall empty out the house..." [Vayikra 14:36]. You were so particular for the loss of Jewish property that You commanded that the Kohen instruct that the house be emptied of valuables before proclaiming the house and its contents to be impure as a result of a 'Nega' on the walls of the house, and yet look at the loss of Jewish property at the time of the Churban! How could You, who were so worried about the blood of a chicken, the feelings of an animal, and the loss of Jewish property in the situation of 'Negaim' on houses be so callous regarding these same matters at the time of the Destruction? How could You let this happen?

The Master of the World answered: "You question why all these things are happening? It is because there is no peace and if people do not live at peace with one another, there is nothing."

The Ari z"l writes that this whole dialog is hinted at in this very pasuk [Devarim 17:8]: When you are perplexed by a matter of judgment, when you don't understand the distinction between one blood (that of a chicken which must be covered) and another (that of the Jewish people which is flowing like water); between one judgment (that of the 'mother and its offspring' when it comes to livestock) and another judgment (against the Jewish people where mother and children are slaughtered together on the same day); between one house which has a 'nega' (where we save as much property as possible) and another house with a 'nega' (the Beis HaMikdash which had to be totally destroyed), to find the answer to these perplexing questions – writes the Ari z"l – go to the end of the pasuk which explains it all: "matters of dispute in your cities". It is because of the disputes and lack of peace that exists in your society that all these punishments and apparent lack of Divine compassion has come upon you.

The remedy is – as the pasuk continues – "to go up to the place that Hashem your G-d shall choose." Jerusalem, the place of G-d's choice, will ideally be the city of peace and unity, as it is written "The built-up Jerusalem is like a city that is united together." [Tehillim 122:3]. In the built-up Jerusalem, writes Ari z"l, all Jews will be united in comradeship. Through Torah they will become unified, and peace will reign amongst them.

These words of the Holy Ari need no further elucidation.

## Whats In Your Treasure Chest?

Yehuda Katz (Shortvort.com)

.....HE (king) shall write for himself a copy of this law....(17:18)

Rashi quotes Sanhedrin 21, that a king had two Torah Scrolls, one which is placed in his treasury and one which is constantly with the king.

A question can be asked, why is it so important for the king to have a Torah scroll placed in the treasury? When the king places the Torah Scroll in the treasury, it reinforces the value the king places on the Torah. Psychologically speaking, a person is being mentally drawn to his or her most precious possessions, especially those found in the treasure trove.

By physically having a Torah scroll in the treasury, it makes the Jewish king think and consider well what is really important in life. We can, B'ezrat Hashem, learn a very important lesson from the king.

Where do we place the Torah in our lives? Is the Torah in our own personal treasury? If we make the Torah precious, it will be precious. The decision is ours to make. King Solomon understood this concept especially well.

In Proverbs 2:4-5 (written by King Solomon) it is stated, "If you seek it (Torah) like silver, and search for it as a hidden treasure...then you will understand the fear of Hashem, and find the knowledge of G-d". WE must constantly reevaluate the value we personally place on the Torah. Perhaps a whole new world of spiritual delights and treasures will be revealed to us.

We are essentially where our priorities are.

**Ohr Yerushalayim**  
invite to you to  
a series of three Shiurim  
by Rabbi Aryeh Silkin שליט"א

**דיני שמיטה בחוץ לארץ**  
taking place between  
**Mincha & Maariv on Shabbos**  
(Mincha an hour and 5 mins before nacht)  
starting on **ש"פ כ"ו תצ"א**