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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

### Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:22 - פלג המנחה
- 7:30 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:48 - שקיעה
- 8:50 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:26 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:35 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:50 - שקיעה
- 8:32 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:02 - צאת 72

### אגוטען שבת!

#### Did You Know?

The Torah commands, "Mipnei Saiva Takum," that one give honor to any from Jew - man or woman - over the age of seventy, (or sixty, according to the Arizal) by rising to one's full height when the older person comes within four amos (approx. 6-8 feet), until the older person leaves the area of his four amos. Although the older person is not necessarily a learned or distinguished person, we still recognize and pay tribute to him, says the Sefer HaChinuch (257), "because in his great number of years, he has seen and recognized a bit of the workings of HaShem and His wonders, and he is thus worthy of honor." In certain cases, the requirement to fully rise does not apply. Instead, the mitzvah is merely to show some measure of respect, such as rising slightly from one's seat. Those are: When the "younger" person is also over seventy or is a greater talmid chacham than the older person, when the younger person is an employee and standing up will require wasting his employer's time, when the older person specifically forgoes the honor that is due to him, when the younger person is in the middle of davening and standing will disturb his kavanah, or when the younger person is ill or a mourner during shivah.

Source: Weekly Halacha by R' D. Neustadt

#### Thought of the week:

I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be.

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## "כאזרח מכם יהיה לכם הגר הגר אתכם ואהבת לו כמוך כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים

אני ה' אלקיכם" (ויקרא יט: לד)

**"As one of your native born he shall be considered by you, the proselyte who lives with you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt, I am HaShem, your G-d."**

The Torah here commands us to love the *ger* who dwells with us, and to not remind him of his past. The rationale for this is that we were strangers in a land ourselves once, and HaShem is not only our G-d, but the G-d of the *ger* as well.

On the reasoning given for this, that we were strangers in Egypt, Rashi says, "The deficiency which is in you, you do not say to your friend." The Gemara in Bava Metzia (59b) and Rashi there explain this concept as follows: a person who has a stain in his history or family cannot mention the topic to others, because it causes his own embarrassment to resurface.

For example, one whose family member was punished for a crime by hanging, can't say to someone, "Please hang this up for me," because of the unpleasant connotation that phrase has for him. In this case too, one should not discuss being out of place with the *ger* because we, too, were out of place at one time.

If this is the explanation, why does the Torah direct us to love the convert? This rationale seems to be a form of self-preservation, intended to protect us from embarrassment, and not done for the benefit of the *ger*. If so, what difference does it make how we feel about him?

The Ibn Ezra says this topic is written after the case of honoring an elder, to say that just as an elder may not have the strength that you do, so too, this convert may not have the same level of closeness to HaShem that you do or be at as high a level of Judaism as you. Yet, because you were strangers in Egypt, you must show compassion to him and love him. Still, the question remains why we should "love" him, simply because we were strangers in Egypt.

The answer is that when we see someone who is a stranger, out of place, perhaps not on our level, the natural instinct is to see him as inferior. There is a tendency to distance ourselves from someone who is different because we don't see him "fitting in."

That is when our experience in Egypt comes into play. We were a downtrodden people, the "untouchables" of that time. Yet we were able to rise to become the shining example of mankind, a light unto the nations. How is this possible?

It is because being considered low and actually being low are two different things. We were looked down upon because the Egyptians chose not to recognize us for who we were. Pharaoh behaved as if he had never heard of Yoseph and what he accomplished. Instead of kings, we were treated as slaves simply because that's how someone chose to look at us.

We are told that we should not antagonize the convert, and that we should love him like ourselves, because we were slaves in Egypt. Just as one can see the good in himself, even if others look down upon him, we are instructed to choose to find the good in the *ger*, which we might otherwise overlook. And if we feel, as the Ibn Ezra explains, that he is not on our level, the posuk concludes, "I am HaShem your G-d." I am the one Who knows the true nature of all people, not you. Don't judge them as you see them, but love them for the good that is clearly visible to Me.

*A man who took great pride in his lawn found himself with a large crop of dandelions. He tried every method he knew to get rid of them. Still they plagued him. Finally he wrote to the Department of Agriculture. He enumerated all the things he had tried and closed his letter with the question: "What shall I do now?"*

*In due course, the reply came: "We suggest you learn to love them."*