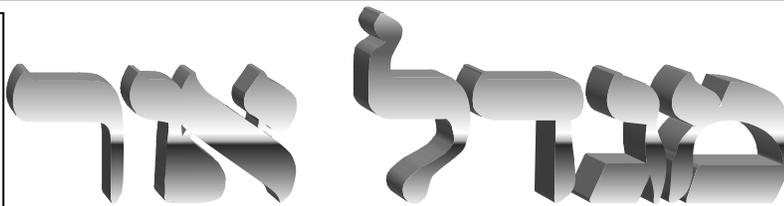


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Mazel Tov!
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healthy years together.

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:43 - הדלקת נרות
8:01 - שקיעה
8:55 - זק"ש מ"א
9:31 - זק"ש גר"א
10:41 - סוף זמן תפילה
8:09 - שקיעה
8:45* - צאת הכוכבים
9:12 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Friday 1:13:07 PM מולד אלול

Rosh Chodesh is next Shabbos and Sunday
Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and
EzrasTorah.org

Did You Know?

In Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 98, relating to having kavana (proper focus) during davening, the Rema rules that "it is forbidden for a person to kiss his small children in the synagogue in order to establish in his heart that there is no love as great as the love of Hashem."

R' Kook z"l ruled that this does not only apply to parents and little children but also to any outward display of physical affection for friends or relatives.

R' Ovadiah Yosef Shlit"z also cites these sources and is emphatic in stating that it is prohibited for anyone to show this display of love in the shul. However he writes that in promulgating this ruling it should be done in a relaxed and non-contentious manner.

The Sefardic custom of kissing the hand of parents or of the Rav is proper, he explains, because it is a sign of reverence and respect, which does not impinge on the boundaries of love reserved for HaShem.

It is said that R' Moshe Feinstein z"l was seen kissing a grandchild in shul. When asked about it, he responded that the prohibition only applied at the time of prayer but not at other times.

Thought of the week:
People see G-d every day.
They just don't recognize Him.

"זכר אל תשכח את אשר הקצפת ה' אלקיך במבדר..." (דברים טו:)

"Remember, do not forget that you provoked HaShem, your G-d, in the desert" (Deut. 9:7)

This is one of six things the Torah commands us to remember. It is so important to remember them that they are listed in the siddur and many people recite them daily. We are to remember: the Exodus from Egypt, what we witnessed at Sinai, how Amalek attacked us and why they are to be destroyed, the Golden Calf (referenced in this posuk), what HaShem did to Miriam (she got tza'raas for speaking about Moshe) and finally, we are to remember to make the Shabbos holy. What is unique about this commandment is that we are adjured to remember an embarrassing sin of the Jewish People.

The Ramban comments that the sins committed prior to the giving of the Torah at Sinai were not mentioned here, for once Klal Yisrael witnessed HaShem speaking to us and giving us the Torah, we were more obligated to listen to it and thus the sin of the Golden Calf is recalled. Normally, though, when a person has sinned and repented, we are forbidden from mentioning his embarrassing failure anymore. In this case, not only is it mentioned, but we are told to ensure that we remember it. Why should this be so?

Were it merely intended to embarrass or humble the Jews, perhaps it would not be mentioned. However, the sin of the Golden Calf, and how the Jews provoked G-d in the desert, conveys not just what happened, but WHY it happened. This is further illuminated by subsequent verses.

A few pesukim later, HaShem tells Moshe to descend the mountain because, "the People you took out of Egypt has become corrupt." Did Moshe truly take the Jews out of Egypt? It was HaShem Himself! The Haggada does not mention Moshe, in fact, because it was G-d's hand alone that drew us out. However, the mistaken perception among the people that it was Moshe who brought us out led to the construction of the calf and our downfall.

When Moshe went up to the mountain and the Jews thought he had died, they gave up hope. Moshe was the one helping them, guiding them, and providing for them, and now he was gone. What would they do? They turned to an idol as an intermediary to G-d. What they forgot was that the first two commandments were spoken by G-d, Himself, and it was only at our request that Moshe stood between us. Had we not been fearful, HaShem would have dealt with us directly, perhaps for the rest of the Ten Commandments, perhaps for more.

Because we didn't recognize HaShem's willingness to be close to us and His constant personal involvement in each moment of our lives, we felt afraid that without assistance, we would be utterly lost. We felt that Moshe took us out, not HaShem, and therefore when Moshe was not there, we fell into sin that nearly destroyed our nation.

When HaShem commands us to remember the sin of the Golden Calf, what He's really reminding us is how cherished each of us is. This mitzvah is not to cause guilt or pain that we sinned, but to feel regret that we didn't and still don't realize our own worth in HaKadosh Baruch Hu's eyes! If He spoke directly to us as Sinai, we should never be afraid to open our hearts and mouths and cry out to Him directly. That is something it would be a sin to forget.

A man came to his Rabbi distraught. His business had taken a turn for the worse, he wasn't happy, and he constantly felt things were going wrong around him. "Tell me," said the Rabbi, when you were a child and had a fight with your best friend, what would your father tell you?"

"Well, he would remind me that we were good friends and that if my friend did something wrong to me there was surely some reason or impetus for it. He would ask me to be patient and give my friend the benefit of the doubt, as we would likely be friendly again very soon. But Rabbi, I'm grown-up now, this isn't about toy soldiers, this is about real life."

"That is true," replied the Rabbi, "but G-d has been your friend longer than anyone, doesn't He deserve the same treatment?"