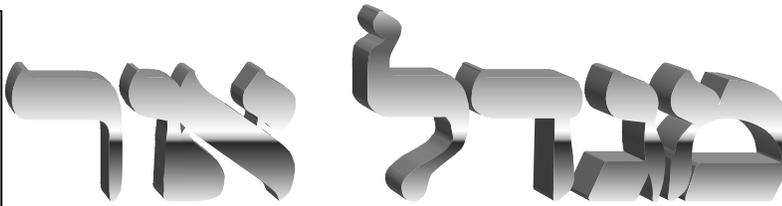


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:36 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:54 - שקיעה
- 8:47 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:33 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:42 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:54 - שקיעה
- 8:38* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:06 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

This week's parsha contains the Biblical commandment to recite Birkas HaMazon – Grace After Meals, more commonly known as bentsching. The posuk says, "V'achalta, v'sovata, u'veirachta es HaShem Elokecha," you shall eat, and be satisfied, and bless HaShem your G-d.

The Biblical requirement for bentsching is reaching satiety, [not "stuffed" but full enough that if one stopped at that point he would not be hungry] yet we recite Birkas HaMazon even after eating only a k'zayis, an olive-sized piece of bread.

This is referenced in a famous Gemara in Brachos 20b. R' Avira says that the angels asked G-d how He favors the Jews when the Torah says that G-d does not show favor. His response is, "I commanded the Jews to bless Me after eating until satiety but they are meticulous to bentsch after eating an olive's or an egg's worth of bread (the amount is the subject of a disagreement.) How can I not show favor to them when they show it to Me?"

If the law is to bentsch when one is satiated, how can the Jews add to the Torah and bless on a smaller amount?

The answer is that satiation is not limited to a physical sensation. Rather, it is a combination of the physical intake and the emotional desire to eat more or not to eat more.

By recognizing HaShem's kindness in providing us with our needs, we come to a level of satisfaction that leads us to be happy enough with the smaller amount that we wish to bless HaShem.

At that point, we are able to bless HaShem because we are truly satisfied with what we've enjoyed from His beneficence.

Thought of the week:

The main benefit of hindsight is being able to turn it into foresight for another occasion.

"וזכרת את כל הדרך אשר הוליכך ה' אלקיך זה ארבעים שנה במדבר למען ענתך לנסתך..."

"And you shall recall all the paths that HaShem your G-d led you on these forty years to trouble you - to test you..." (Deut. 8:2)

The entire book of Devarim is Moshe's revisiting the history of the Jewish People from their exodus from Egypt and through the forty years in the desert. He references their trials, tribulations, rebellions, and the miracles they experienced.

He urges them to look back and reflect on what has occurred. He reminds them of the despair they expressed in the throes of their anxiety over food, water, and hostile enemies.

He reminds them how HaShem stood up for them, performing miracles and bringing them through their troubles. Moshe explains that the difficulties they experienced were not to give G-d some sadistic pleasure, *chas v'shalom*, as some cynics would believe, but rather to test the Jews' mettle and prove, to themselves and the world around them, just what they are made of and how strong we truly are.

Moshe famously says, "And now O Israel, what does G-d want from you but to revere the L-rd your G-d, to go in His ways and to love Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul?" Chazal ask, "And is this a small thing?" They answer, "Yes, with/to Moshe it was a small thing."

Some explain this to mean that Moshe on his level felt it was a small thing but to others it is truly a large challenge. Others say that when one was in Moshe's presence, it had an effect on him that made it easy for him to serve G-d. However, the key here just may be a word which is somewhat overlooked.

Moshe begins this phrase with the word, "V'ata - And now." What is the intent of this word in relation to serving HaShem?

Perhaps the point Moshe was making was that perhaps at first they had reason to be afraid. They were nervous that they might not be worthy of being saved from calamity. They were worried that HaShem might choose to abandon them. They were apprehensive about natural circumstances that seemed to be aligned against them. Now it was different.

Those feelings might have been appropriate when they left Egypt, but now, looking back on forty years of HaShem's guidance through all the ups and downs of the Jews' relationship with HaShem, and seeing that He always came through for us, we should be able to approach life with a different viewpoint.

"Now, after all the years, seeing what transpired in your life," says Moshe, "you can calmly devote yourself solely to the service of HaShem, to loving Him and basking in the mitzvos, because you realize that all the other stuff is merely a façade. These aren't difficulties you have to conquer because HaShem will conquer them for you. All He asks is that you recognize the role He plays in your life and respond accordingly by channeling your energies towards Him."

One Friday found the Baal Shev Tov with no money and no food for Shabbos. With no other choice, he realized that he needed to come onto the assistance of another. He went to the home of a wealthy man, knocked almost imperceptibly, and whispered in a barely audible tone, "Ich darf af Shabbos – I'm in need for Shabbos." Then he turned and left.

Suddenly, the door opened and the rich man ran after the retreating figure. Handing the Baal Shem some money, he asked, "Why didn't you knock louder or wait for me to answer?" Said the Baal Shem: "I had to make my effort, and I did that. Everything else I left to HaShem, and as you can see, He came through."