

Can I trust you with a

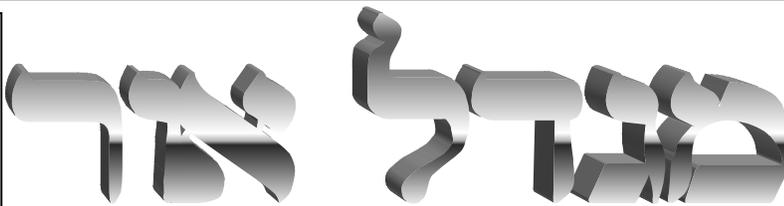
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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:43 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:01 - שקיעה
- 8:29 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:18 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:29 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:03 - שקיעה
- 8:50 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:15 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars
Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

Just as in the seventh year the land was to lie fallow, upon completing seven cycles of seven, the following year, the 50th, was treated like a Shemitta year. It was called Yovel, Jubilee.

During this time, not only did the land get a rest, but any ancestral lands that had been sold, even decades earlier, were returned to their rightful owners. Slaves went free and liberty was proclaimed throughout the land.

The Torah then says, (25:18) "When you do My statutes, and you guard my judgments and do them, and you will dwell in the land in confidence."

Most commentaries say that by keeping the laws of Shemitta and Yovel we earn the right not to be expelled from the land, so we will dwell there in confidence. R' Saadia Gaon, though, says that's not enough.

On the words, "you will dwell on the land in confidence," he explains that this is still part of what we need to do. He comments, "You will trust in Me."

In other words, HaShem says, "Not only do I want you to fulfill the laws of Shemitta and Yovel, which show tremendous sacrifice, but you must also be calm and confident in My protection while doing so."

It is precisely the reliance on HaShem that earns us His blessing, so we must work on constantly seeing HaShem's hand in our lives so when the time comes, we will be completely at peace, confident that G-d will continue to take care of us.

Thought of the week:

Sure, you believe in G-d.

But can you point and say,

"That was Him!?"

"...כי תבאו אל הארץ אשר אני נתן לכם ושבתה הארץ שבת לה." (ויקרא כה:ב)

"...when you come into the land that I am giving you, the land shall rest a Sabbath for HaShem." (Leviticus 25:2)

This parsha elaborates on the laws of Shemitta, the sabbatical year that occurs every seven years when the land is to be left fallow and unworked. Rashi famously quotes the Toras Kohanim's question, "What is the purpose of juxtaposing Shemitta and Sinai?" They answer, just as all the laws of Shemitta were given at Har Sinai, so, too, were all the details of all the mitzvos given at this time.

This gives rise to the question why Shemitta was chosen as the mitzvah used for this comparison and not any of the other mitzvos that were taught earlier or later.

Another curious thing is that the Torah begins by saying, "When you come into the land I am giving you, [then] the land will have its rest. That's not what happened though, because Shemitta is the seventh year. It should therefore have said, "When you come into the land, you shall work for six years, and in the seventh year the land shall have its rest." What is the Torah telling us by this seemingly out of order directive?

Perhaps the Torah is teaching us an amazing insight into the mechanics of the world. It is common for people to look at maser or tzedaka as the price they have to pay for earning money. Shemitta, too, is the price we have to pay for getting to work the land for six years. We can have it as long as we give G-d His share, the seventh year.

This is quite untrue. The Torah here teaches us that when you come into Eretz Yisrael, [the land that HaShem "is giving" us, because it's not a one-time thing but an ongoing process to merit having the land,] you shall let it rest. Why? Because that is the focus of going into the land. Not to eat its fruits, but to fulfill its mitzvos.

Therefore the Torah says, "When you come in, the land will have its rest, a rest for G-d." The purpose is to fulfill this mitzvah. How do you do it? First you work for six years, and in the seventh year you desist. It's not that you get to work six years if you let it rest on the seventh, but on the contrary, in order to properly perform the Shemitta year, you must work for six years.

This is why Shemitta is singled out to be juxtaposed to Sinai. It teaches us that the mitzvos are our priority and the prosperity is secondary. In other words, our primary goal in life should be to fulfill all the mitzvos in the Torah not because they are a means for us to merit a good, pleasant, successful life, but on the contrary, we live our lives in order to be able to fulfill the mitzvos.

A man once visited R' Aharon Karliner. The Gabbai brought a bowl of apples to the table from which both the Rebbe and the visitor partook. R' Aharon recited the bracha with great concentration and then took a bite. The visitor, too, made a bracha and began eating. R' Aharon looked at him and said knowingly "You believe we are the same. You say to yourself: 'The Rebbe eats an apple, and I also eat an apple, what is the difference?'"

"There is indeed a great difference," said the sage. "When I arise in the morning and see the Ribono shel Olam's Creation, I am inspired. I see the trees with fruit and reflect on the processes involved when the seed grows into a tree, and then provides fruit. I think of the wonders of Nature and then of the wonders of my own body. I am filled with a longing to praise the Creator and I don't know how to express myself other than to bless Him. But, I cannot recite a bracha unless I have the fruit to eat.

You, on the other hand, arise and see the fruit, which looks good to eat. You grasp the shiny apple in your hand and just as you are about to bite into it, you think from whence it came, and you remember to make a bracha so you can eat it. Though we may appear the same, and we say the same words and do the same thing, you make the bracha to eat the apple, while I eat the apple to make the bracha."