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Sponsored in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of **Jordan Kurtz - יוחנן אהרן גי'**  
 Silver Spring, MD  
 May you and your siblings be a source of Yiddishe nachas to the Ribono Shel Olam and your family.

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*A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah*

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:52 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:10 - שקיעה
- 9:02 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:38 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:29 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:13 - שקיעה
- 5:55 - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:15 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

**Did You Know?**

R' Yaakov Kaminetzky z"l points out the incredible loyalty that the B'nai Yisrael showed to the mitzvos on the night of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

As the Egyptians in every home were dying in the plague of Makas Bechoros, Pharaoh came running and began screaming that everyone should leave Mitzrayim immediately. He had a track record of changing his mind after the plagues passed, and perhaps this time would be no different.

Who knows what would happen if they didn't leave right away and waited until the morning? Maybe he would again have a change of heart and they would miss the opportunity?

However, HaShem commanded them not to leave their homes until morning (lest the scoffers say that HaShem was not powerful enough to take them out in broad daylight) and they did not. This caused a great Kiddush HaShem, which was all part of the Almighty's plan.

This is a lesson for the last generation, says R' Yaakov. When the big moment of Moshiach's arrival finally comes, if it entails committing a single sin, (as determined by G-d, not Man) then it is better that the Redemption be postponed. We must not, under any circumstances, transgress HaShem's will, no matter the repercussions or our rationalizations. [The same rule applies to our behavior in the meantime.]

**Thought of the week:**

**Too many people overvalue what they are not and undervalue what they are.**

**"והיה הדם לכם לאת על הבתים אשר אתם שם וראיתי את הדם ופסחתי עלכם..." (יב:א)**

**"The blood will be a sign for you upon the houses where you are; and I will see the blood and skip over you; there will not be a plague among you..."**

A cursory glance of the posuk would lead one to believe that the blood on the house identified it as a home containing Jews and thus the home would be skipped over by the Angel of Death when he was given free reign to destroy in Egypt. As Rashi explains, HaShem does not need signs or clues to help Him differentiate between Jew and Egyptian. All is revealed before Him.

In fact, the blood was not put on the outside of the doors at all. As Rashi also teaches, it was on the inside. When HaShem said that He would "see" the blood, He referred to seeing the Jews busy themselves with following His commandments.

We may wonder: If HaShem didn't actually look at the blood, why call it a sign which would precipitate Jewish lives being spared? Also they were already involved in mitzvos as they ate the *korban Pesach*, which required a tremendous level of self-sacrifice as the Egyptians worshiped the sheep and would want to kill them. Why then require this seemingly superfluous act of putting blood on the inside of the door, which would not be seen by the neighbors?

Finally, the Baal HaTurim says that "*lachen*" has the same numerical value as "*ha'mila*" referring to the fact that on that night they circumcised themselves. This, too, is a mitzvah which requires self-sacrifice, so why focus on the relatively easy mitzvah of blood on the door?

The answer can be gleaned from another phrase in Rashi. He says that HaShem will not look to see the physical blood, but that "you are *asukim*," busying yourselves, with My mitzvos." The word *asukim* can also refer to one's business or occupation.

Yes, they had taken the lamb, and yes they circumcised themselves. But did this really identify them as people "involved" in G-d's commandments? Those were unusual acts in unusual times. Perhaps in other times the Jews would falter and not serve HaShem?

Therefore, HaShem had them take the blood and put it on the inside of their doors as a sign for *themselves*, to remind them that they had it within them, in their very blood, to serve Him and come close to him. Much as a shopkeeper hangs merchandise in his window to let others know what merchandise he deals in, the Jews painted the inside of the door with blood to show themselves that doing mitzvos was their occupation and their source of life. They were not bricklayers or plumbers or contractors or doctors or accountants, but servants of HaShem. Only when they did mitzvos were they "in business."

Often we may get discouraged and feel that it is too hard to be a good Jew. We may lose sight of the joys of fulfilling the mitzvos or tell ourselves that learning Torah and doing mitzvos is for other, more observant people. This is incorrect, for each and every one of us is capable of great things; of treating service of HaShem as our primary trade and occupation and succeeding. Parshas Bo includes another reminder - the tefillin. We bind one sign outward, on our heads which is seen by the nations around us who will fear us for it, but first there is the hidden sign on our arms, towards the heart, reminding us first and foremost of who we are, and only after we realize it will the world see it too.

*Upon his visit to New York in the 1920's, R' Boruch Ber Leibowitz z"l was presented with the Key to the City by New York Mayor Jimmy Walker.*

*At the public ceremony, Mayor Walker said: "Rabbi Leibowitz, you and I both wear crowns of leadership. I wear the crown of the greatest city in the world, New York City, while you wear the crown of the greatest people in the world, the Jewish People."*

*"The difference between us," he concluded, "is that I wear my crown upon my head, while you wear your crown in your head."*