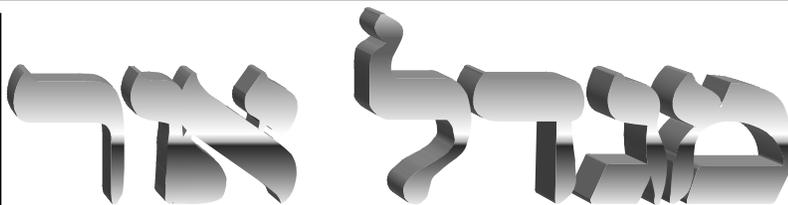


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

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 לע"נ
 הרב אבא זלקא בן יונה
 געווייץ זצ"ל
 In memory of Rabbi
 Abba Zalka Gewirtz z"l

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:48 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:06 - שקיעה
- 9:04 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:40 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:30 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:08 - שקיעה
- 5:51* - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:20 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

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:

Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones. A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you.

"והיה כי יאמרו אליכם בניכם מה העבודה... ואמרתם זבח פסח לה'... ויקד העם ישתחוו" (שמות יב:כז-כח)
"And when your children ask you, 'What is this service to you?' and you will say, 'It is a festival to G-d who passed over our homes in Egypt,'" and the nation bowed and prostrated themselves.

Rashi says that the Jews were thanking HaShem for three pieces of good news: that they would be redeemed from Egypt, that they would be given the land of Israel, and that they would have children, as implied in the mention of their children asking them about the Pesach service.

If the Jews had been childless, it makes sense that they would be excited over the prospect of having children. But they weren't. In fact, they had been giving birth to sextuplets with each pregnancy and there were millions of Jews. Saying that the children would not be murdered by the Egyptians is also not a satisfying answer because those tortures ended when the plagues began nearly a year before. Clearly they were not extolling G-d merely for living progeny.

The true source of the Jews' joy was that their children would be interested in Torah and in carrying on the legacy of dedication to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Moshe told Klal Yisrael that they would be taken out of Egypt and they were happy. He said they would be given a homeland and they were even happier. But what made them happiest of all was that they would be able to pass on their beliefs and faith in HaShem to the next generation.

They were ecstatic that Moshe promised them their children would ask about the Pesach sacrifice, and so they bowed. But wait! If we look in the Hagada, we find that this phrase, "What is this service to you?" is the one spoken by the Rasha, the evil son. Is this something they should praise HaShem for? That they will have evil sons?

The answer is that as long as the child is interested enough to question, there is still hope of getting through to them. When there is dialogue and conversation, it can lead to clearer understanding and appreciation of our Jewish heritage. Once the child is indifferent, it is often too late. Therefore, when the Jews heard that their children would ask about the Mitzvos, even in a derogatory tone, they were grateful to HaShem and hopeful that they would be able to pass on their legacy of the joy of having a close relationship with the Al-mighty.

In 1898, R' Yonah was planning to go to America. Before he left, he approached R' Chatzkele Shinover z"l, famed son of R' Chaim Sanzer z"l, for a bracha. R' Chatzkeleh was brusque and said, "You're going to America to make money?! Feh! (Though it was the 'Golden Land,' America then was known as a spiritual wasteland, and not worth the risk in many people's opinion.) What kind of a bracha should I give you?"

R' Yonah, whose grandfather had been the 12th generation Rav in the city of Dembitz, said, "I am going to America, where even the stones are 'treif' (impure). I want a blessing that the children should not be lost [to Yiddishkeit]."

Upon hearing that, R' Chatzkele smiled broadly and embraced R' Yonah. "Indeed, THAT bracha I will give to you. And the Rabbanus (rabbinic line) will come back to the family." And so it was. R' Yonah Gewirtz z"l left a legacy of rabbis, scholars, and teachers.

R' Yonah's youngest son, R' Abba Zalka Gewirtz z"l, was a rabbi in Bradley Beach, NJ and Waterbury, CT. One day, a congregant came to him to discuss schooling for her children. They were getting older and the local day school couldn't accommodate them. He advised her to send them away to Yeshiva.

"Rabbi," she cried, "I can't send them away. I'll lose them!" "Shirley," responded R' Abba Zalka with sincere emotion, "If you send them to Yeshiva they will give you nachas for the rest of your life. But if you DON'T send them away you will lose them!" Shirley didn't listen.

Years later she came back. "Rabbi Gewirtz," she sobbed. "You were right. I didn't send them away... they didn't go to Yeshiva to study Torah... and now I've lost them."