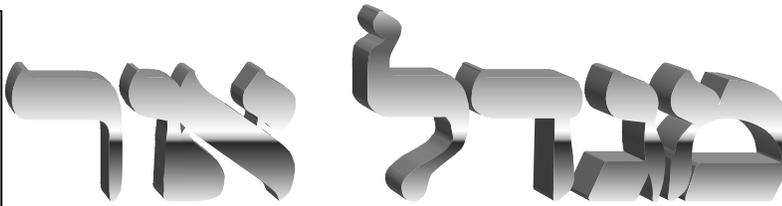


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:22 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:40 - שקיעה
- 8:57 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:41 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:28 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:42 - שקיעה
- 5:27* - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:54 - צאת 72

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

Did You Know?

In discussing the plague of Darkness, the Torah tells us: "A man did not see his brother, nor did a man rise from his [low] place."

The darkness was impenetrable. Even the air was heavier so their voices did not carry and they could not converse with one another.

Chacham Dovid Zoued z"l of Aram Soba writes that this teaches us about the troubles many of us experience. When we find ourselves in low places, unable to rise above our challenges, it is because previously, "A man did not see his brother."

Because we fail to look at the needs of others, we are brought low and find ourselves stuck in a rut.

Were we concerned about our fellow Jews, however, we would be able to rise above it all as HaShem would lift us up.

Similarly, the Vilna Gaon explains why we found favor in the eyes of the Egyptians when we wanted to borrow the gold and silver items.

The Torah says, "borrow a man from his friend, and a woman from her friend." Would we call the Egyptians friends?

No, explains R' Eliyahu. But the only way to find favor in the eyes of the Gentiles is to treat each other right, considering each Jew as our friend, our brother, and our sister.

-Based on a shiur by R' Moshe Meir Weiss Shlit"א

Thought of the week:

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step — but it must be in the right direction.

...וישא את הארבה ויתקעהו ימה סוף לא נשאר ארבה אחד בכל גבול מצרים" (שמות י"ט)

"...and [the strong wind] lifted the locusts and carried them to the Reed Sea; not a single locust remained within the borders of Egypt." (Exodus 10:19)

Unlike by the other plagues, where remnants of them remained, or the Torah doesn't specify what happened to them, here the Torah specifically tells us that the locusts were entirely removed. Rashi comments that even the ones the Egyptians had pickled and preserved with the intention of eating disappeared.

Why should this be so? Just as the frogs were removed from the ovens, people, and homes, yet remained in the Nile, why did HaShem not leave some locust in Egypt to remind them of the plague they had suffered?

The Midrash Rabbah (13:7) relates that when the Egyptians saw the locusts arrive, they were very happy. They said, "Let us gather and salt them (for food.)" HaShem said, "Wicked ones! In the very plague that I brought upon you are you rejoicing? Immediately, HaShem sent a strong wind to carry the locusts away. When it says, "Not a single one remained," that includes the ones they had preserved in barrels and pots to be eaten. Those, too, were taken away.

In our striving to be positive people who are able to see the good in all HaShem sends our way, would looking on the bright side and seeing the nutritional benefit of the plague not be an appropriate response? Why was HaShem angered?

The answer is that though we are supposed to understand that everything HaShem does for us is good, sometimes the good is that we get the message. All the plagues G-d sent to Egypt were precisely created measure for measure to repay the Egyptians for their evil behavior to the Jewish People.

Had they recognized the underlying message of the locusts, that they stole the Israelite crops, so now their crops were destroyed, they may well have THEN been allowed to use them as a source of food. However, because they completely missed the lesson inherent in the plague, and merely saw it as a good thing, HaShem was angered by their refusal to face the truth so He took away their provisions.

Perhaps this is why the next plague was *choshech*, impenetrable darkness. Being unable to see, speak, or move, there was only one thing left to do: THINK. The plague of darkness forced people to be alone with their thoughts.

It's a strong lesson for us too. We must make time to think about and review our actions. Finding out where we went wrong is one of the greatest gifts we can get and that is the good the Egyptians missed.

Once, a decree of equality was passed which gave the Jews many more rights than they had before. While most Jews celebrated, the Chasam Sofer began to cry. The community leaders asked him why he was not happy about the new laws. He explained with a parable:

"A king was once angry with his son and sent him off to live in a ramshackle hut in far off land. One day, carpenters and workmen arrived to build the prince a palace there. His staff was thrilled, but he was inconsolable.

When asked why, he explained, 'So long as I lived in poverty, I knew my father would bring me home one day. Now that he has sent people to make me comfortable in my exile, I understand that it will be a long while before I can come home to him.'"

Only the great Chasam Sofer saw the rebuke that the "joyous" decrees truly conveyed.