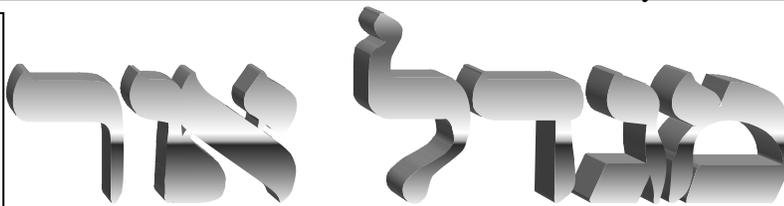


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

This week's issue is dedicated
in appreciation of all those who give
of themselves for others, especially
the "average Joes" who are making
the effort to help the people in areas
hit hardest by Hurricane Sandy in
whatever capacity they can.
You are FAR from average.

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

4:24 -	הדלקת נרות
4:42 -	שקיעה
8:27 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:09 -	זק"ש גר"א
9:59 -	סוף זמן תפילה
4:42 -	שקיעה
5:25* -	צאת הכוכבים
5:54 -	צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

מולד כסלו - Wed. 3:25:10 AM

Rosh Chodesh is Thursday

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and
EzrasTorah.org

Did You Know?

The Kli Yakar says that there were four names to the place Sarah died. It was called Mamrei, Eshkol, Kiryas Arba, and Chevron. He says this was a burial place, and the names allude to the four reasons people die.

Mamrei refers to people who die because they have sinned, similar to the posuk, "Mamrim heyisem im HaShem," you were rebellious against G-d.

Eshkol means to weigh, and this refers to those who die because of someone else's sins, like young children who die because of their parents' wrongdoing, who must then weigh why this happened to their family.

Some people, says the Kli Yakar, simply die because their bodies, made up of the four basic elements (earth, air, fire, water) naturally weaken, and those four elements break apart. This is why it is called Kiryas Arba, the place of the four.

Then there is Misas Neshika, the Divine "kiss" of death, in which the person's soul becomes connected to the upper world and doesn't come down again. Chevron comes from the word chibur, or connection.

He adds that in Sarah's case, because sin was not part of her death, only the last two are mentioned, that her body naturally aged, and her lofty spirit clung to HaShem, so she left this world.

Thought of the week:

Self-pity can easily become the most destructive of all narcotics.

"ותמת שרה בקרית ארבע היא חברון ויבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולביתה" (בראשית כגב)

"And Sarah died in Kiryas Arba, that is Chevron, and Avraham came to eulogize Sarah and cry over her." (Genesis 23:2)

Upon returning from the Akeida, where he almost sacrificed his son, Avraham found that his wife of so many years, Sarah, has passed away. Rashi quotes the Midrash that it was the news of this event that caused her soul to ascend to Heaven. Immediately, Avraham began attending to her funeral.

He had to negotiate with Efron, owner of the special place Avraham wished to bury Sarah, the place where Adam and Chava are buried, and he paid a fortune for it. This posuk teaches us Avraham's motivation in all that he did at this critical juncture.

As soon as Sarah died, the Torah teaches that Avraham came to eulogize her, and to cry over her. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (47a) tells us that a eulogy is said for the honor of the one who has passed away, not for the honor of the living. The crying that came afterwards was for Avraham's own loss, and the wording is similar to when the Yefas To'ar, (beautiful war bride) "cries for her father and mother."

Despite having just passed an enormous test in the willingness to kill his beloved son, Avraham didn't get a break. Immediately he had to deal with Sarah's funeral and the loss of his life's partner. We could have expected him to feel sorry for himself, or perhaps even questioning, "Is this the reward for my dedicated service?" He could have thought, "What will I do without Sarah who has been by my side for so long?"

But those thoughts didn't come to the fore. In his mind, the first thing he had to do was worry about Sarah. Her honor was paramount and he wanted everyone to know just how special she was. She was the one who had suffered a loss, and he was entirely focused on her needs, just as he had been when she was alive. Only afterwards did Avraham cry, and even then, the small letter 'kof' indicates that he didn't cry much because he knew she was a tzadekes, and he had been fortunate to have her in his life.

From Avraham's actions, we can learn much about dealing with adversity. First, we must worry about others. When a loved one is sick, we must be focused on their needs, not how it affects us. While caregivers must care for themselves as well, that doesn't include feeling sorry for one's self. When other people need assistance, we must focus on lending a hand, not whether they would do it for us if the situation were reversed or what discomfort it may cause us.

Secondly, when we do feel bad about our own situations, it must be with a measure of restraint, recognizing the good that we were fortunate to receive when things were pleasant and appreciating it. Then, like Avraham, we must immediately rise above the pain and move on with our lives.

With natural disasters, rocket fire, and so many other tribulations befalling our people, it behooves us to put aside our own desires and reach out to help. Focus on others, see what they need, even if it's just a kind word or listening ear, and recognize that you need not wallow in self-pity. The greatest of us don't.

The Avnei Nezer, R' Avrohom Borenstein, was married to the daughter of the Kotzker Rebbe. They lived in dire poverty, yet he never seemed to be concerned with his plight. One day his frustrated wife asked him, "Why is it that our poverty does not concern you at all?" The Avnei Nezer answered, "I worry as much as everyone else, but there is a big difference.

Your great father took me as a son-in-law because of my brilliant mind. What takes others an entire day to think about, I can think through in a few moments. So while other poor people spend their entire day worrying and consumed with their predicament, I spend a few moments every morning thinking everything they can possibly think of the entire day. Then I can get on with the other things on my daily agenda."