



This issue sponsored in honor of the anniversary of **Miriam and Larry Kramer**. May you see many more years of health, happiness, and nachas from your family.

Sponsor an issue of the Migdal Ohr for only \$36. E-mail info@JewishSpeechWriter.com

©2008 - J. Gewirtz

A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:58 - פלג המנחה
- 8:14 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 8:39 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:15 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:30 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 9:22 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:44 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

According to the Sefer Yetzirah, each month of the Jewish year corresponds to a letter of the Aleph Bais, a zodiac sign, one of the twelve tribes of Israel, a sense, and a limb of the body.

Tamuz corresponds to *Sartan*, — also called Cancer / the Crab - to Reuven, (whose name comes from the word "see" and the root meaning "build") and to the faculty of Sight.

Just as the crab hides, so we should refrain from the distractions of this summer month and direct our sights toward spiritual pursuits.

This sense of Sight must be utilized both internally and externally. The summer is a time where guarding what the eyes see externally is of utmost importance, as summer is commonly a time of inappropriate dress. Sight must also be used internally, to see the good in others and to see the good in our lives so we may appreciate them and it.

By guarding and focusing our eyesight correctly, we can rectify this faculty and build upon it.

By refusing to follow after our eyes and by appreciating others, we can correct the deficiencies in our souls which led to the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash on Tisha B'Av, at the end of the three week period which begins in Tamuz.

Thought of the week:

If you follow reason far enough it always leads to conclusions that are contrary to reason.

Get Migdal Ohr via e-mail to share with others by writing to: info@JewishSpeechWriter.com

”וידבר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן לאמר: זאת חקת התורה אשר צוה ה' לאמר” (במדבר יט:א-ב)

“HaShem spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying: This is the statute of the Torah which HaShem commanded, saying...”

A simple reading of the first two pesukim seems to contain some redundancy and some strange sentence structure. The word “saying” is repeated, seemingly for no purpose, and the phrase “HaShem commanded” is IN third person and past tense. If HaShem wanted to indicate it was a command, He would have said, “which I am commanding you.”

As numerous meforshim point out, this mitzvah of the red heifer is a “*chok*,” a command given without a reason, and we have no right to second-guess it. The Kli Yakar says that because there is no logical reason for the Parah Aduma procedure, it will become the subject of ridicule amongst the nations and they will use it as a springboard to disparage the entire Torah. Therefore, the Torah says “saying” twice to teach us that when they try to mock this mitzvah as having no basis, we are supposed to tell them that we do it because it is G-d’s will. It is we who have something to say, as commanded by HaKadosh Boruch Hu.

The Ohr HaChaim echoes this point, that when the nations ridicule Parah Aduma we are supposed to tell them that we do it because HaShem commanded it, and we do not second-guess Him. However, he explains that just as all the mitzvos for which we have some reasonable understandings also have secret reasons and significance which were known to Moshe Rabbeinu and to certain worthy people, so does Parah Aduma have reasons which were known to Moshe.

The Ohr HaChaim continues to say that Moshe was permitted to transmit these meanings to a select few, like Aharon, who are fitting to receive this knowledge. In fact, in each generation there are those who know the reasons for it, but the general population is to accept it as a command without reason. It is also possible, he says, that Moshe was permitted to pass along the reasons, but when the nations would scoff, we are only allowed to answer, “We do this because it is the command of HaShem.”

That being said, it may very well be that one of the reasons the Parah Aduma is so unusual is to elicit the mockery of others to see whether we can be strong enough in our faith to know that G-d has His reasons even if we don’t know what they are, and be proud of our obedience. While we can and should seek to understand the mitzvos by asking questions, we should not question whether the mitzvos make sense. There are deep reasons for everything, even if they’re not readily apparent.

As Napoleon won battle after battle and captured more and more of Europe, he visited newly-acquired Eastern European areas and asked to meet with the town leaders, including religious leaders. In one city, only priests were invited, but the Emperor ordered that the Rabbi be summoned.

Frightened, the Rabbi explained that he was not well-versed in the ways of praising the emperor as was customary in an audience. Napoleon replied, “I do not want your praise. I wish to hear your Torah’s perspective on my phenomenal success.”

“You know the story of Joseph explaining the dream of the wine steward in Egypt,” began the Rabbi, “but there is something out of place. Joseph told him that ‘In three days you will be reinstated... for you shall remember me to Pharaoh.”

“He should have said, “Please, remember me,” but he said, ‘for you shall remember me’ to explain that the only reason the steward would be reinstated was for the purpose of saving Joseph.”

“So too, your Majesty, you have been granted success from Heaven so you may see the plight of the downtrodden Jews and rescue them from the pit.” The Rabbi’s words struck a chord with Napoleon and he became a lifelong champion of equal rights for the Jews in his empire.