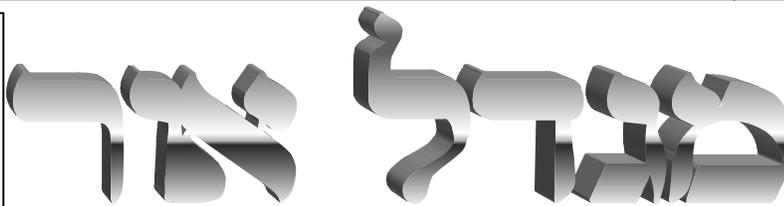


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:14 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 8:37 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:13 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:29 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:33 - שקיעה
- 9:24* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:45 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

Moshe's downfall came from hitting the rock and bringing forth water. In doing so, he somehow failed to make a Kiddush HaShem, showing the Jews how great, powerful and noble HaShem is. He spent forty years leading the Jews in the desert but died there because of this sin.

It is said that Rabi Akiva, the famed Tanna whose students continued the transmission of all the Torah we have today, was a gilgul, a reincarnation, of Moshe Rabbeinu.

Rabi Akiva's first forty years were spent in a spiritual desert, hating Torah Scholars, feeling that they acted "superior" to the rest of us. He felt Torah was beyond him.

Then one day he saw a rock with a hole in it. He noted that the hole had come from water dripping onto the rock, which slowly wore away at it. He said, "If water which is soft can penetrate a rock which is so hard, surely words of Torah which are so hard can penetrate my soft heart." He began to learn and became one of the greatest people we ever had.

While Moshe struck the rock and brought forth water, making it look like "Moshe" had wrought a miracle, Rabi Akiva noted the soundless miracle of HaShem's hand in the world, visible if we are willing to recognize it.

Rabi Akiva's realization of the power of softness brought about the Kiddush HaShem that Moshe failed to cause in his lifetime. Miracles occur, says the prophet, as we read Shabbos Chanuka and Behaaloscha, "Not with might and not with strength, but with My spirit – says the L-rd of Hosts." (Zech. 4:6)

– Based on a thought by R' Dovid Lewin Shlit"l

Thought of the week:

**Power doesn't corrupt people,
people corrupt power. We often
confuse it with greatness.**

"ולא היה מים לעדה ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן." (במדבר כ"ב)

"And there was not water for the nation and they assembled upon Moshe and upon Aharon. (Numbers 20:2)"

These fateful words introduce us to one of the great tragedies of the Jewish People. Once again, the Jews are without water, this time upon the passing of Miriam, in whose merit a well had supported them all these years, and they complain to Moshe and Aharon with words eerily similar to those said thirty-eight years before, which is recounted in Parshas Beshalach.

The Jews asked why they were taken from Egypt to a barren desert, and Moshe angrily defended G-d. HaShem commanded Moshe to take the stick with which he performed the plagues and the splitting of the sea and go speak to a rock to give forth water. Moshe hit the rock twice and it gave enough water for the people. HaShem announced that because Moshe and Aharon had failed to sanctify HaShem's name, they would not enter the land of Israel.

Unlike last time, when the Jews had some water, but it was running out, here they were thirsty and therefore they had a legitimate claim. However, the way they went about it was wrong. Instead of davening or asking HaShem for water, they demanded it from Moshe.

Moshe's response did not meet with approval from HaShem and he was punished. There are countless explanations given for what Moshe's actual sin was. The commentaries offer suggestions, refute other suggestions, and posit various nuances of the sin.

Perhaps it was hitting the rock instead of speaking to it, perhaps it was the way he spoke to the Children of Israel, or maybe the imprecise words he used. Perhaps it was that he didn't allow HaShem's miracle to be manifest in the purest way possible. The one thing we know was that it was NOT the same sin for which the rest of the generation of the Exodus died, and this distinction was a special request of Moshe's, lest people group him with those sinners.

It would seem that there is a common thread to all of this. Nearly all these different concepts and ideas are related to speech. More than that, they are related to speaking nicely, respectfully, and without brazenness.

Had the Jews simply asked or prayed for water, they would have been answered. By complaining and indignantly demanding it, they sinned. Moshe's response was biting, not warm or loving. He may even have been a bit sarcastic. Perhaps had he spoken softly, he could have changed their hearts.

Had he spoken to the rock instead of hitting it, especially since he was commanded to bring with him the staff which brought the plagues, he would have taught the Jews that one need not use force, and sweetness is more powerful than anything. He could have shown them that HaShem loved them so much they didn't need to demand or claim. By taking action and striking the rock, this diminished the miracle and the impact that could have been made on Klal Yisrael.

We often feel that we must be forceful, stand up for ourselves, or prove our point. This is childish and wrong. The lesson the Jews missed was that HaShem loves us and wants to take care of us. He doesn't need to be "forced" – He only desires our recognition of His care for us, and that we use our speech, the special human gift, to ask Him for what we need, confident that the loving response will be forthcoming after the soft request.

A couple had their first child and the proud grandfather asked what name they were giving. The parents mentioned that they had chosen a beautiful Hebrew name, and were considering the English name they would give their new bundle of joy.

While sometimes grandparents get very emotional and demanding about their grandchildren's names, this clever fellow didn't. When they told him the names they had chosen, and he didn't like the middle name, he didn't complain or criticize. He just responded softly, "[NAME]... Oh..."

The child was given only a first name.