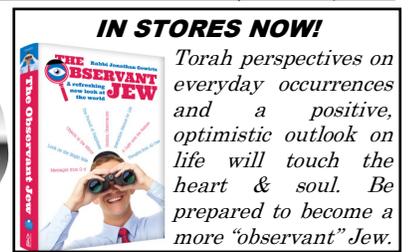
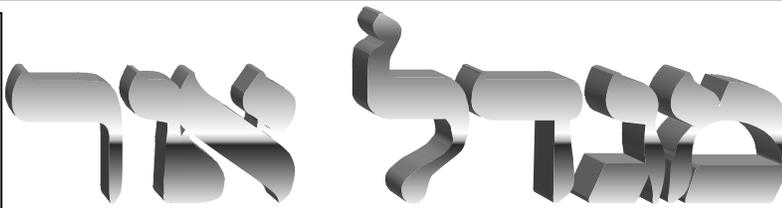


**Want to be a leader?**  
Print, e-mail, and share Migdal Ohr with others. You'll be glad you did. E-mail 'Subscribe' to info@JewishSpeechWriter.com



©2014 - J. Gewirtz A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

### Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:14 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 8:17 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:12 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:28 - 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?

The paradigm of the chok, a statute for which we do not know a reason, is the Para Aduma, the red cow.

This animal had to be completely red and it was burned until it became ashes. Its ashes were mixed with water and sprinkled on someone who was ritually impure. It made him pure again.

This quizzical mixture made the impure pure, but a pure fellow who touched it for no reason became impure!

Why did the Torah choose to make such an important need, becoming pure, tied to such an enigmatic ritual? Could the Torah not have instituted a chok for something less pivotal?

Perhaps this is precisely why the Para Aduma works to effect this spiritual change in a person.

The world was created using Torah as a blueprint. When we sin, like becoming impure, we are corrupting the purity of the world and our behavior is not going according to plan.

The remedy for that is the realization that all of our human intelligence (on loan from G-d) is not even miniscule compared to HaShem's omniscience.

If we wish to be purified, we must be willing to recognize that G-d knows better than we do. By accepting the 'unknowable' statute of the Para Aduma, we subjugate ourselves to Him and remove the source of nearly all impurity - our own arrogance.

### Thought of the week:

**It's amazing what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit.**

-(It was said by Pres. Harry S Truman, but does it really matter who said it?)

”ותמתת שם מרים ותקבר שם. ולא היה מים לעדה...” (במדבר כ"א:ב)

**“...and Miriam died there, and was buried there. And there was no water for the nation...”** (Num. 20:1-2)

Rashi famously comments that from here we see that for the entire forty years the Jews were in the desert up until that point, they had water from the spring in the merit of Miriam. (It was actually a rock that rolled along with them as they traveled and spouted sufficient water for the millions of Jews who were there.)

It's mind-boggling to think that this miraculous occurrence took place, in which a rock produced water flow rivaling Niagara Falls, providing a much-needed resource in the desert, and nobody stood up and said, "It's because of Miriam." Only after the fact does the Torah tell us it was in her merit.

While one could argue that they merely felt it was HaShem providing for them, they saw that the Manna had a merit scale, in which it fell closer to one's door the closer he or she was to G-d. They undoubtedly realized that the water, too, came in someone's merit, but no one came forward to take credit for it. This is part of the greatness of Miriam.

Chazal tell us that, like Aharon, Miriam died "misan neshika," death by a Divine kiss, but it is not written explicitly. Rather, we learn it from the use of the same word in describing that both Miriam and Aharon died "there." This is also part of Miriam's greatness.

Finally, when HaShem split the Reed Sea, it was Miriam who led the Jewish women in song. Tambourine in hand, she called to the women, "Sing to HaShem who is most exalted, horse and rider did He cast into the sea." Contrast this to Moshe and the men when Moshe said, "I will sing to HaShem who is most exalted."

Moshe included himself in the praise of G-d, while Miriam was content to urge the others to do so and not proclaim that she was including herself in the song. Once again, this is a signal for us to learn Miriam's secret.

The Haftorah for Parshas Balak (next week) comes from Micha, wherein the prophet condenses the Torah to three main principles: Doing justice, loving kindness, and walking modestly with G-d. These three correspond to the three leaders we had in the desert, Moshe (justice), Aharon (kindness) and Miriam (modesty.)

The Malbim explains that walking modestly with G-d means that one performs the mitzvos quietly, without intention to draw attention to himself. It is between him and His Maker. This is what we see from Miriam.

Though she had numerous opportunities and sufficient reason to earn praise for her actions, she chose to remain silent. She didn't praise herself at the Yam Suf, was pleased that the lofty manner of her death would be obscured, and was content to go to her grave without seeking acknowledgement that it was her merit which kept the entire Jewish nation alive for forty years. How much we can learn from Miriam!

*As was customary at the end of every term, the students of the Chasam Sofer came in to speak with the Rosh Yeshiva "in learning." One young man came in and began relating a complex piece of Torah thought and analysis that seemed familiar to the Rosh Yeshiva's son, the Ksav Sofer, who also sat in on these meetings. The Ksav Sofer realized that this boy had seen the notes of this 'shtikel Torah' sitting on the Rosh Yeshiva's desk, and now the impudent child had the gall to attempt to pass it off as his own work.*

*When the boy left, the Ksav Sofer exclaimed, "Father, how could you let him get away with saying that your Torah was his own?!"*

*"My son," smiled the Chasam Sofer, "I don't mind if he says my Torah and claims it is his, so long as he doesn't say his own Torah and claim that it's mine!"*