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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:34 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:52 - שקיעה
- 8:47 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:23 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:33 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:53 - שקיעה
- 8:37 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:07 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon

A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos written by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda nearly a thousand years ago.

No Pain... No Pain.

Bitachon enables a person to avoid pain their entire lives. Not because difficulties don't occur to him, but because he doesn't perceive them as painful.

Whether he has a setback in business, or he cannot collect his loan, or he becomes ill, he does not feel pain because he knows that HaShem is choosing this for him. He recognizes that HaShem knows what is good for him better than he himself, as Dovid HaMelech said in Tehillim, "My soul is silent before G-d, and my hope lies with Him.

Not only that, but rather than simply not suffering with difficulties, the Baal HaBitachon is happy with everything that befalls him in life because he knows it is coming from a loving parent.

Lucky Sevens

R' Bachya now begins to explain seven aspects of Bitachon. The first is: What is Bitachon?

Simply put, Bitachon is enjoying peace of mind by trusting completely in the one in whom you put your trust.

The primary factor, without which Bitachon is unreachable, is the firm belief that the one in whom you put your trust will keep his word to do what he promised, and will also do other good for you out of kindness and generosity.

- To be continued

Thought of the week:
Make your life a mission - not an intermission.

וקדשתו את לחם אלקיך הוא מקריב קדש יהיה לך קדוש אני ה' מקדשכם. (ויקרא כא:ח)

"You shall sanctify him, for he offers the food of your G-d; he shall be holy to you for holy am I, G-d, Who sanctifies you."

In Parshas Emor, the Kohanim are instructed to remain pure by avoiding contact with corpses and by restrictions in who they may marry. This verse tells us that if a Kohain has married a woman that is forbidden to him, we must force him to divorce her.

The Gemara in Gitin (59b) learns from this posuk that we must give the Kohain preferential treatment. He is to be given the first aliya to the Torah, he is to be given preference for the honor of making hamotzi and leading bentsching, and he is assigned to take the best portion at a meal.

The Torah Temima points out that the Rambam and other count this mitzvah of honoring the kohanim as one of the 248 positive commandments of the Torah. Others, such as Tosfos in Chullin (87a) say it is not a Mitzvah d'oraysa, but rather a Rabbinic mitzvah with an allusion in the Torah. The reason may be, suggests the Torah Temima, that because the posuk already teaches us that we force him to divorce his wife, it cannot teach us the second law of honoring him. He offers a solution to the contradiction that the Gemara learns the law of honoring the Kohain from the end of the verse which states, "He shall be holy to you." This is actually supported by the comments of Rashi both here and in the Gemara.

The question is, why did the Torah have to teach us these two laws from the same posuk, thereby causing confusion? The Torah could have stated them as two separate verses and avoided the apparent contradiction. Further, what is the intent of the last part of the posuk, because HaShem, Who sanctifies us, is holy? How does that fit in?

Perhaps, HaShem specifically put these two together to show us that these mitzvos are intertwined. If we see a Kohain who has disgraced his station of holiness, and has profaned himself by being involved in an inappropriate relationship, we must stop the abomination and help him alter his course of behavior. How?

Yes, the Jewish courts may use force, but the Torah hints to us that there is a more effective way. As Aharon HaKohain used to bring others close to Torah through love, so is that the way to redirect the Kohain. He may not understand why he cannot marry anyone he wishes. He may not feel different than anyone else; why is he singled out as a Kohain?

Therefore, we accord him honor. We give him precedence not for anything he personally has done, but for the role which G-d has given him. Even if he sins, he remains holy because that is what HaShem decided. That is why the verse ends by reminding us that our inherent kedusha comes from Him. We are not holy because we choose it, but because G-d wants us to emulate Him. This means that by misbehaving we do not destroy our holiness, but merely obscure it.

Like the Kohain, we, as members of the Jewish People, have been placed on a pedestal by the Almighty. We, too, have responsibilities that are greater than those of others in the world around us. Though we may not get the respect from others that we truly deserve as HaShem's chosen nation, we must force ourselves to recognize our own inherent greatness and rise above human nature, our whims, and our desires to be the holy people we can be.

In the DP camps after World War II, the echoes of the Holocaust hung heavily over Europe. Many of the survivors had lost their faith, their souls, and their desire to go on living or believing in a greater purpose. Like many rabbis, the Klausenberger Rebbe, R' Yekusiel Yehuda Halberstam z"l reached out to offer them comfort and support. He rallied the surviving Jews to serve HaShem and helped them begin again.

Once, he saw a young man whose soul was nearly completely separated from his body. He no longer believed in G-d or in anything. When he saw the Rebbe approaching, he explained that he didn't want to talk. "I understand," replied the Rebbe, with love in his voice, "but please, always remember who you are."

Years later, that man, looking around at his children and grandchildren - generations of Torah-true Jews - would remark that the Rebbe had said the one thing that could get through to him -- that he still mattered.