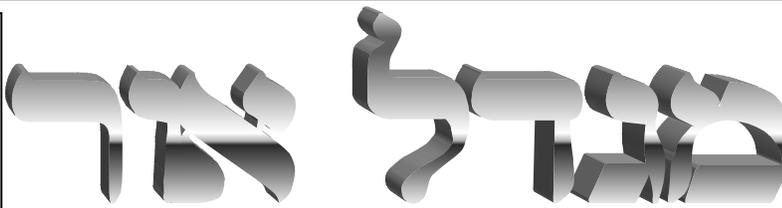


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

## Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:30 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:48 - שקיעה
- 8:41 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:26 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:35 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:50 - שקיעה
- 8:34\* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:02 - צאת 72

\* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

### Did You Know?

This Sunday is Lag B'Omer (33<sup>rd</sup> day of the Omer) when the restrictions of Sefira such as marrying, listening to music and cutting hair are lifted. A number of special things happened on this day.

On this day, the students of R' Akiva ceased dying in an epidemic that claimed 24,000 lives. (This was the primary reason for the restrictions imposed during this period of mourning.) Another of his students, R' Shimon Bar Yochai, passed away on this day years later, and the Zohar, his pre-eminent work on Kabbalah, Jewish Mysticism, was revealed on this day as well. This is also the day that the Mon began to fall for the Jews in the desert when they left Egypt.

A common thread can be found in all these ideas. Chazal tells us the students of R' Akiva died because they did not give each other due honor. R' Shimon, the Gemara relates, came out of the cave in which he had been hiding and saw a fellow working his field. Shocked that someone could give up eternal life for this temporal one, he gazed upon the man who turned to ashes. G-d sent him back into the cave.

When the Mon fell, it landed closer to a person's home the more righteous he was, and further away the less righteous he was. This teaches us to leave judging others to G-d, for only He can say whether they are fulfilling their purpose in this world. Similarly, the Zohar reveals hidden meanings and messages in the world that we would not ordinarily see.

By realizing that we can't truly value people with our own scales, we will appreciate them for being who they are intended to be.

**Thought of the week:**  
**If I'm not me, who will be?**

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

**“And you shall sanctify him, for the bread of your G-d does he offer, he shall be holy to you for I am G-d who sanctifies you.”**

The Gemara teaches that from this posuk we learn that the Kohain is to be honored by others. He is to be called to the Torah first, allowed to speak first at events, and to recite the Birkas Hamazon, to lead the Grace after Meals.

The simple meaning of “and you shall sanctify him,” however, is discussed by Rashi and other here. It refers to a Kohain who chooses not to act as he is supposed to. For example, if he marries a divorcee, something forbidden to a Kohain, he is forced to divorce her, even if he doesn't want to do it. It is the responsibility of the Bais Din and the populace to ensure that he lives as he is intended to live.

Today, people call this *kefia datit*, religious coercion. Modern society's idea of democracy and self-determination states that we can do what we want, when we want, however we want. This concept is imminently disproved by this posuk. In truth, we are all part of an intricate plan, all interconnected, and each important in our respective roles.

The Ohr HaChaim here shares a striking insight. Previously, all references to the Kohanim were in the plural. “They shall not make a bald spot on their heads (in mourning) nor cut their flesh (in sorrow.) They shall be holy and not desecrate the name of their G-d.” Now, though, the Kohain is referred to in the singular, “and you shall make HIM holy.”

He continues: The verse says we are to force him to divorce his forbidden wife ‘for he offers the bread of your G-d,’ in other words, he performs the sacrifices in the Bais HaMikdash. We might therefore assume that if there are other Kohanim who can do the *avoda*, the sacrificial service, we do not need to force him to get rid of the wife.

Our assumption would be that he is not needed by the community, so we can let him be free to do as he pleases. This, says the Ohr HaChaim, is untrue. The posuk is written in singular to say that even on a single one of them we are to insist that he follows the law.

The underlying message in this is that every Jew is important, and each has his or her role to fulfill. Like the parable of the man drilling a hole in the bottom of a boat and saying, “I'm only drilling under MY seat,” the rest of us realize that if he continues, we will all go down together. Conversely, we can all rise together as well.

Not only is this message intended for us to realize that we should respect and honor others, but it is directed at each and every one of us as well. We may feel that we don't matter to the rest of the group or that our actions don't have consequences for anyone but ourselves. That is untrue, because we are all connected and everything we each do is crucial and has an impact on others. That is why we must force this kohain to divorce his wife, because if he does not, he is harming himself unwittingly, by not fulfilling his role in Creation, and all of us, for the very same reason.

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*When R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv z"l, the great sage and posek, recovered from one of his last surgeries, well into his 90's, he commented to a Rabbi that he felt a tremendous debt of gratitude to the entire Jewish People.*

*“I know that it is because of their prayers that I merited a successful operation, and I need to repay them somehow. But how can I repay everyone?” The Rav nodded sympathetically.*

*“What I can do,” continued the gadol, with determination in his voice, “is get up earlier to learn Torah, for when one learns Torah, that helps everyone!”*