



Lag B'Omer is coming which means aufrufs and sheva brachos. Make sure your words hit the target at your simcha. JewishSpeechWriter.com Your Thoughts - The Perfect Words

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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:36 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:54 - שקיעה
- 8:46 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:22 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:32 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:56 - שקיעה
- 8:38 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:08 - צאת 72

מועד אייר - Monday 10:18:08 AM

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and EzrasTorah.org

אנוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

The posuk says, "you shall not stand on your brother's blood." Rashi, quoting the Toras Kohanim, says that this means "to see him die, and you are able to save him. For example, if he is drowning in the river, and wild animals or bandits are closing in upon him."

Some commentaries explain this to teach the extent to which one must exert himself for another. Even if the fellow is drowning AND subject to attack by animals or thugs, the person who sees this must attempt to save him, even at some degree of risk to himself.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe z"l, noted something interesting about the wording of this Rashi. Rashi does not say, "if he is able to save him," but "and he is able to save him."

The Baal Shem Tov taught that a person does not see something amiss unless he has the power to correct it.

Accordingly, says R' Schneerson, if one sees someone drowning or under attack, HaShem has shown that to him because he is able to save him. The same applies if one sees his fellow Jew drowning in the emptiness of this world. He has the ability and obligation to reach out to him and bring him back to the safety of Torah and Yiddishkeit.

Thought of the week:

He who thinks he is building a mound may only in reality be digging a pit.

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"ולא תשבעו בשמי לשקר וחללת את שם אלקיך אני ה'... לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך"

ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה' (ויקרא יב-יח)

"You shall not swear falsely by My Name, profaning the Name of your G-d, I am HaShem... You shall not take revenge or bear a grudge against the children of your people. You shall love your fellow [Jew] as yourself, I am HaShem."

The Torah here gives us a number of directives in compound verses, some of which seem to be one, and some of which seem to be distinct, yet connected into a single verse. In truth, if we look carefully at them, we will find that they are each really a single topic, and the latter mentions illuminate the former.

We are warned not to swear falsely as it would profane the name of G-d. The Torah did not prohibit lying because it is wrong, rather lying is wrong because the Torah forbade it.

Judges are adjured to judge righteously according to the halacha, and not to favor one party over the other, even if it would be charitable to do so. From here we learn that our insight is limited, but the Ribono Shel Olam's laws are created to effect perfect justice.

Talebearing is prohibited, as is standing idly by while someone drowns or is torn apart by wild animals. This teaches us that while sticks and stones may break our bones, words can hurt much more, despite our impression that we didn't do anything. Speaking ill of someone is tantamount to killing them, or at least playing a role in their death.

When commanded to chastise someone, we might feel that the purpose is to torment them and drive the evil out of them. Therefore we are cautioned not to embarrass them when doing so. In fact, the purpose is not to drive away the evil inside someone, but to bring the good to the surface, where it may overcome the baser urges.

Finally, we are told that we must not take revenge against our people, and we should love others as ourselves. Why? Because HaShem is G-d. We might mistakenly believe that the purpose of life is to love everyone, and turn the other cheek when we are harmed. That is not so. The purpose of life is to emulate HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and be like Him.

As the Kli Yakar explains: the Torah here used the phrase "of your people," which implies both righteous and evil Jews because vengefulness is such a negative and destructive trait that it is not worth having it within us whether we were harmed physically or financially. Seeking revenge can do more harm to us internally than any external force. However, this rule does not apply to non-Jews who would seek to drive us away from fulfilling the mitzvos of HaShem. In such an instance, vengeance is well-founded and righteous.

In essence, all these verses teach us one thing. Our vision is narrow and what we think would be the underlying reason to do or refrain from doing something is rarely the reality. The only way to navigate this world is by following the Torah's laws and deferring to them. Perhaps that is why in Pirkei Avos we are told not to be as those who serve HaShem for the prize, but like those who serve not for the reward. If we "keep our eye on the prize," we may one day find out that the prize we thought we wanted is far from rewarding.

The story is told of a king who had a boyhood friend who always saw everything as positive. One day, they were hunting and the king's gun malfunctioned, blowing off his thumb. After the hand was bandaged, the friend commented, "It's for the best." Infuriated at his insensitivity, the king had him thrown in jail.

About a year later, the king was hunting in an area inhabited by cannibals. They prepared to eat him but noticed his missing digit. Superstitious not to eat anyone who was not whole, they let him go. He now realized his friend was right and freed him.

"I'm so sorry I jailed you," said the king. "It was terrible." "It was for the best," replied his friend. "What?!" asked the king incredulously, "how can it be good that I locked you up for a year?"

"Well, if you hadn't," replied his optimistic friend, "I would have been caught by the cannibals with you!"