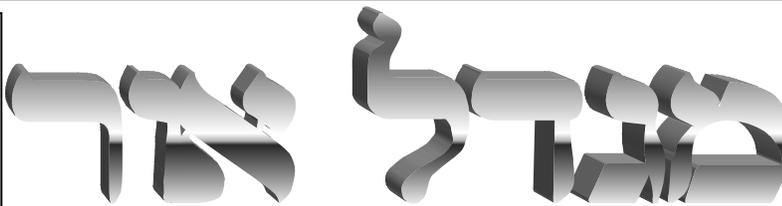


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:28 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:46 - שקיעה
- 8:42 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:27 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:36 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:48 - שקיעה
- 8:33* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:00 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Thursdays 4:38:10 PM - מולד אייר

Rosh Chodesh is Wednesday and Thursday

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Did You Know?

The Midrash Tanchuma relates that some non-believers asked R' Simlai about a posuk at the end of Sefer Yehoshua (24:19) in which Yehoshua tells the people that G-d is holy and a vengeful G-d Who will not bear their iniquities and sins.

The posuk says, "Elokim Kedoshim Hu," that G-d is holy. The heretics said, "If there were one god, it should have said "kadosh hu," but since it says, kedoshim, the plural of holy, it must mean that there are numerous gods, all of whom are holy.

R' Simlai retorted, "Fools that you are! If it said 'kedoshim haim,' THEY are holy, you would be correct. However, it says kedoshim HU, that HE is holy.

Why then does it use the plurality of the word kadosh? Because HaShem is holy in many ways.

He is holy in His speech, as it says, "diber b'kadosh." He spoke in His holiness. He is holy in his ways, as it says, "G-d, in Your holy ways...."

He is holy in His glory, as it says in Az Yashir, "Who is like You among the Mighty, O G-d, Who is like You glorious in praise? You see," he told them, "G-d is holy in all manner of holiness." (Tanchuma 4)

The lesson for us is to realize that as much as we grow and achieve in one area, we must seek to excel in all areas. We must strive to think, speak, act, and behave with holiness just as G-d does.

Thought of the week:

What a pity that more people don't want to be 'frum,' as much as they want to be 'frummer.' [than others.]

"לא תקלל חרש ולפני עור לא תתן מכשל ויראת מאלקיד אני ה'" (ויקרא ט"ז)

"You shall not curse a deaf person, nor place a stumbling block before a blind person, and you shall have fear of your G-d, I am HaShem." (Leviticus 19:14)

After the litany of sins that one is warned against, from lying to theft to withholding wages, this prohibition seems anticlimactic. One giving someone bad advice (the proverbial stumbling block before the blind person, though the simple explanation is also forbidden) is in line with these others, and perhaps can be worse since one can appear to have the other's interests at heart, even when he is misleading him. This is why he is commanded to fear G-d, Who knows what is truly in his heart.

To curse the deaf person, however, seems less serious since he can't hear it. In that case, what real harm was done? He wasn't hurt or insulted by it because he is deaf and is likely unaware that anything was said to him. If so, shouldn't this warning have come at the beginning and then the Torah could work its way through to the more severe sins?

Rashi quotes a cryptic Toras Kohanim which may shed some light on this for us. The posuk says not to curse a deaf man. How do we know one may not curse anyone? There is a different verse which prohibits it. It says, "you shall not curse [a leader] in your nation." By saying, "In your nation," we understand that it is prohibited to curse any Jew of your nation. Why then does it mention the deaf man here? Because just as the deaf man has the specific quality of being alive, so is the prohibition limited to living people and not the dead (though one may still not curse a dead parent.)

If the purpose was to show that the person had to be alive, why mention someone who is deaf? Why not clarify that you shall not curse a living person and be done with it? What is unique about the "life" in the deaf person?

Perhaps it is precisely because the deaf man cannot hear the curse that he is used for this lesson. One might think that by cursing such a person he has done no wrong because the person doesn't know the shame heaped upon him. It's a "victimless crime," so to speak. That is quite untrue.

When we are forbidden to do things it is not only because others will suffer, but because we, ourselves, change by sinning. One who allows himself to curse a deaf man because, "he can't hear it anyway," is negating the fact that the person is a living being, created in the image of HaShem. One who dehumanizes others will go from cursing a deaf man, which seems harmless, to tripping a blind man, which even the most callous of people would not do.

We are adjured to be holy people not merely because of how such behavior will affect others, but because of how it defines and molds our character. Therefore, one who curses the deaf man has harmed himself and now he will sink further. We are warned here that it is even more severe than lying or robbing others when one deceives and degrades himself.

The Chovos HaLevavos speaks of how one can free himself from the bonds of popular opinion through faith in HaShem. When he understands and feels that everything comes from HaShem, a person is able to ignore the slights of others because it was not they who hurt him, but G-d.

He relates the tale of a pious person in the 10th century who was traveling on a ship. Being poor, he stayed in the belly of the vessel, while the wealthy businessmen traveled up on deck in the fresh air. The pious fellow related his happiest moment. One day, one of the businessmen came below deck to relieve himself. Seeing the impoverished Jew lying on the floor, the haughty rich man ignored the chamber pot and laughingly urinated on the poor traveler!

The pious man was overjoyed that he felt no malice towards the man, nor did he get upset, as it came from HaShem. However, he did wonder to himself how a human being could sink to such a low level that he would do such a disgusting and degrading thing to another person.