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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

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**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 5:41 - פלג המנחה
- 6:39 - הדלקת נרות
- 6:57 - שקיעה
- 9:09 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:45 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:46 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 6:56 - שקיעה
- 7:38 - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:08 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

**Did You Know?**

There are two ways to thank HaShem, as we see from the Avos and Imahos. Yaakov Avinu acknowledged the kindnesses of HaShem and then asked HaShem to save him from Eisav. This request was honored and he received further Divine protection. Leah, when she gave birth to Yehuda, praised and thanked HaShem, and she ceased to bear children. If she appreciated it and thanked HaShem, why did HaShem not continue to bless her with offspring?

Says R' Moshe Bernstein z"l, in the name of R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev: When you thank HaShem, you must also ask that He continue to help you. If someone asks you how your job is, don't just say, "Boruch HaShem, fine." That is the response of Leah, who then ceased to give birth. Rather, you should respond, "Boruch HaShem, may HaShem continue to grant me success." This is the lesson of Yaakov, and may HaShem continue to help us all, and bless us with a healthy, happy, new year of life and success.

**Thought of the week:**  
**Good cheer is more than faith in the future; it is gratitude for the past and joy in the present.**

Get Migdal Ohr via e-mail to share with others by writing to: [info@jewishspeechwriter.com](mailto:info@jewishspeechwriter.com)

ולקחת מראשית כל פרי האדמה אשר תביא מאצרך אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך... (דברים כ"ב)

**"You shall take of the first of all the fruits of the soil that you bring from your land, that HaShem, your G-d, is giving you, and place [it] in a basket"**

Many meforshim explain that the words "first of the fruits" refer not only to the fruits that actually grew first, but also to the quality of these fruits. A person was obligated to bring not only the first, but the best. The Ramban comments that there is no specific measurement given. Rather, one fig or cluster of grapes can fulfill the obligation for an entire field.

It is clear from the procedure as well as the declaration that a person is expressing his gratitude to HaShem. Why then would Bikkurim be brought on Shavuos, when not everything had grown yet, instead of waiting until Sukkos when the entire harvest can be seen and one can truly be thankful for the bounty of the Ribono Shel Olam?

We can learn from this that being thankful is not something that only happens at the end of a cycle, when we see all that we have received. Rather, from the outset, one must see the blessings he has been given until now and praise and thank HaShem for them. By doing so, he merits continued bracha and experiences happiness on a constant basis.

This is seen from the entire Bikkurim procedure. When a person sees the first fruits growing, he does not say, "It looks like it will be a good year, I will wait and see." Instead, he immediately thanks HaShem and ties a string around it, earmarking it to be brought to the Bais HaMikdash. He gladly gives up these first fruits because he is confident that HaShem will send more blessing down and his crops will continue to produce.

Not only that, but the determination of what is the "best," is left up to him. He chooses the fruits he feels are best. One who looks with a jaundiced eye and wishes to save the best for himself will not experience the same blessing as one who eagerly gives the best he has (*à la Cain and Abel*.) For this reason, too, there is no specific amount which must be used, as it is left up to the discretion and appreciation of the farmer. The more he appreciates and is sure of HaShem's continued blessing, the more generous he will be.

Perhaps, though, the real reason there can be no specific ratio of offering to produce is that the more a person brings to show his appreciation, the greater bracha he will have and his crops will multiply and miraculously produce much more than normal. This may also be why the present tense is used, that "HaShem is giving to you," to underscore that we are constant recipients of G-d's bounty.

As we approach Rosh HaShana and ask HaShem to give us a new year of life and happiness, it behooves us to stop and thank Him for all that he has done until now. Then we can make our request knowing that our prayers will be answered with abundance.

*The town was in an uproar. A young man had been abducted on the day of his wedding to be conscripted in the Czar's army for 25 years! Only a huge ransom of 5,000 rubles would free him.*

*R' Schneur Zalman of Liadi accompanied R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev to collect the necessary funds. When they came to the home of a well-known miser, he gave them a moldy copper penny, a far cry from the hundreds of rubles he could easily afford. While R' Levi Yitzchak was annoyed, R' Schneur Zalman graciously thanked the man for his donation and wished him the opportunity to do more mitzvos.*

*As they left, the man called them back and gave them more money, apologizing for his earlier stinginess. Again, R' Schneur Zalman thanked him profusely for his generosity. This happened several more times until they had the complete 5,000-ruble sum.*

*The man explained, "I once offered someone that copper coin but he threw it in my face! I vowed that that would be my donation whenever I was asked for money. Until today, no one ever accepted it and thanked me for what I had given them. Now that you thanked me and appreciated my gift, I felt that I wished to give you more and more."*