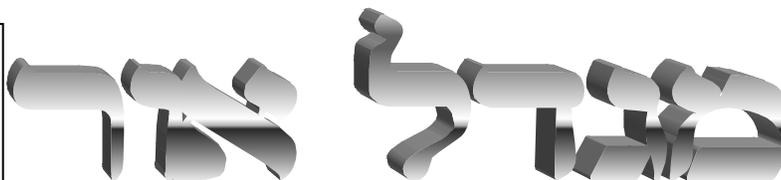


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:19 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:37 - שקיעה
- 9:01 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:37 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:44 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:36 - שקיעה
- 8:18* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:48 - צאת 72

*Based on Emergence of 3 stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon - A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda.

No Thanks Necessary

The third common pitfall for the one who employs others is that when he gives them their livelihood as decreed by HaShem Yisbarach, he reminds them of the "favours" he has done for them and seeks to be thanked and praised for it.

He feels he has done tremendous chesed for them by employing them and becomes haughty and arrogant because of it.

He does not acknowledge and thank HaShem for allowing him the merit of being the agent to be good to others, and he feels that were it not for him and his generosity, these people would have nothing, and the wealth would remain in his hands.

This fool is truly to be pitied for he toils futilely in this world to accumulate wealth to feed others and in the process he loses his reward in the Next World.

However, the intelligent man who behaves appropriately in these three regards (dealing honestly, giving money to those who deserve it and not being haughty about it,) who fulfills his obligations and recognizes that he doesn't know whether the money was given to him for his own needs or those of others, such a man will find honor in this world and great reward in the Next.

- To be continued

Thought of the week:

It is better to be able to appreciate things you cannot have, than to have things you are not able to appreciate.

"ושמחת בכל הטוב אשר נתן לך ה' אלקיך ולביתך אתה והלוי והגר אשר בקרבך" (דברים כו:א)

"And you shall rejoice in all the good HaShem, your G-d, gave to you and your household; you and the Levi and the ger who are in your midst."

One of the key components of the mitzvah of Bikkurim, the first fruits, was the declaration that went along with it. There was a very specific formula used by all the farmers who brought this korban. It speaks about HaShem taking us out of Egypt, bringing us to Eretz Yisrael, giving us the land and the bountiful fruits we now offer.

This special declaration did not always accompany the offering though. We learn from this posuk that it was only said between Shavuos and Sukkos, when people were happy because they were harvesting their produce. At other times, the declaration was not made. Why should the season make a difference in this mitzvah? Why can't it be said later?

Further in the parsha, we find the tochacha, the rebuke which consists of a litany of horrible things which will befall us if we do not heed HaShem's word. This is supposed to be the flip side of the blessings mentioned just before the rebuke, yet the Torah seems to go into much greater detail about the curses and suffering than about the blessing. Why do the calamities so far outweigh the good things?

The answer to both these questions lies in the Tochacha itself, which states that these things will happen "because you didn't serve HaShem with happiness and a good heart when you had an abundance of everything."

When things are bad, we naturally come closer to HaShem. We realize that we are powerless to change things and we rely on Him to help. At the very least, if we don't recognize HaShem as the solution to our problems, we blame Him as the source of them. Regardless of our approach, we see His involvement when things are tough.

When things are good, however, we tend to forget Who is really to thank for all of it. We see our success as the result of our own efforts and we underestimate HaShem's involvement. That is why we only say the declaration until Sukkos. Before the harvest is over, when the sun is still shining brightly and the days are filled with growth and prosperity, we need that reminder to check ourselves and put things into perspective. We need to state all the details of what HaShem did to lead us to this day because otherwise we will overlook them. This is also why the rebuke is so much more detailed than the brachos.

When we experience difficulties, each minute problem becomes magnified and each pain is felt acutely. When these things befall us, we notice every one, unlike the good times in which it becomes easy to miss what we're really enjoying and we fail to acknowledge HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

So what is the answer? This posuk tells us. When can you truly rejoice in all that HaShem has given you and your family; so much so, in fact, that you feel moved to share your good fortune with those around you?

Only after you declare out loud that you owe it all to HaShem and you begin to recount all the kindnesses He has done for you. Only then can you appreciate what you have, and serve HaShem with joy and a good heart not despite your success, but because of it.

"Lenny" was having it rough. His business was giving him a lot of aggravation lately. Problems popped up and it seemed like he would be swallowed up by the sheer overwhelming nature of how things were going. But Lenny is a thinker. He's honest with himself and he knows where his successes and failures emanate from.

He looked heavenward and said, "HaShem – I'm sorry I made You do this to me."