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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:08 - פלג המנחה
- 7:13 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:31 - שקיעה
- 9:03 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:39 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:44 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:30 - שקיעה
- 8:12 - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:42 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

אוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

The Parsha includes a curse for "one who does not uphold the words of this Torah." ChaZaL (Yer. Sotah 7:4) say this includes the person who lifts the Sefer Torah after laining (*Magbiha*) and does not allow the tzibbur to view the words. Therefore, one who receives this honor should be careful to open the Torah wide enough and turn it around enough so that everyone in shul can view it. The Zohar says that viewing the words of the Sefer Torah during *hagbah* enlightens the eyes, and the Ari z"l was carefully to look closely until he could read the words. The *Magbiha* should follow the Torah back to the Aron Kodesh and the *Gollel* (who rolls and ties the Torah closed) should ideally do the same. It is customary that the tzibbur also follows the Torah back to its repository, and children are brought to kiss the Torah to train and instill in them a love of mitzvos. The tzibbur is not permitted to leave the shul until the Sefer Torah has been returned to the Aron, though the ReM"a says that individuals may leave, as long as the majority remain.

Thought of the week:

I would rather be able to appreciate things I cannot have than to have things I am not able to appreciate.

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"וענית ואמרת לפני ה' אלקיך ארמי אבד אבי" (דברים כוה)

"And you shall speak up and say before HaShem your G-d, "An Arami (Lavan) tried to kill my father (Yaakov)...""

When the Jewish farmer brought the first fruits of the season to the Bais HaMikdash, there was a prescribed ceremony for offering these Bikurim. One major facet of this was the "hagada," the proclamation of all that HaShem did for Klal Yisrael and for him in particular. It began with these words, and Chazal tell us that they must be said in a loud voice.

Further on the parsha tells us, regarding maaser ani, that the farmer declares he has followed all the requirements incumbent upon him and lists several specifics. This declaration was said in a low voice. This is alluded to by the fact that our posuk says, "And you shall speak up and say," while the posuk regarding maaser only states, "And you shall say before G-d."

R' Shimon Bar Yochai (Sotah 32b) says that from here we learn that one should relate his own praises softly, but should proclaim his troubles out loud. This is also learned from the fact that a Metzora had to cry out, "Tamei, tamei! (impure, impure)." That way, the public will have mercy on him and pray to Heaven to have mercy on him. So too, anyone going through a difficult time should tell others of his troubles so they might beg for mercy on his behalf.

One lesson that is understood as a given in the Gemara, but should be highlighted here, is that one who hears about the troubles of another should try to feel his pain, and pray for him. It is the tendency nowadays to mind our own business, or else to simply note someone else's suffering without trying to intercede.

From the fact that one is directed to share his troubles with others, we infer that if we hear of pain that someone else is going through, it's not enough to cluck sympathetically. Rather, we must bear some of his burden and daven. We must be focused not on ourselves, but on others.

Similarly, we can learn another important lesson about what we should talk about out loud, and what we should keep quiet about. The hagadas Bikurim constantly refers to what HaKadosh Boruch Hu has done for us. He heard our cries and He saw our suffering. He took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and miracles. He brought us to this land and it was He who gave me these fruits. In that way, one will rejoice in all the good he has been given.

On the other hand, when a man discusses what he has done, he should acknowledge it but not crow about it. What he has done has only been possible through the gifts of G-d, and his actions pale in comparison to those of HaShem.

So, too, when dealing with others, one should focus on all the good he has received, instead of recounting what favors he has done for them. This is the (not-so) secret to true happiness: focus on appreciating what you've gotten, and downplaying what you've given.

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 appreciated what I had given them. That is why I wished to give you more and more, because you appreciated it."