

Do as I say...

and as I do.

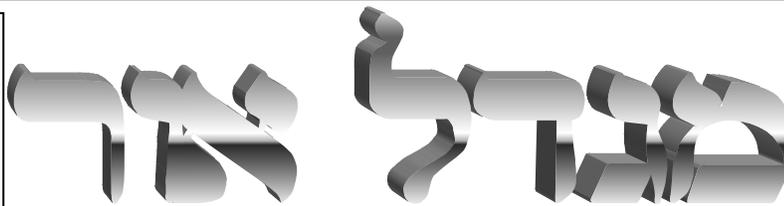
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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:04 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:22 - שקיעה
- 8:58 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:41 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:45 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:21 - שקיעה
- 8:03* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:33 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars
Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

The first section of our parsha discusses the beautiful war bride, who is captured by a Jewish soldier.

The Torah permits him to marry her only after she has gone through an extensive procedure designed to make her unattractive in his eyes.

Her alluring clothing is swapped for plain, unadorned clothes. Her long hair is cut, her nails trimmed, her makeup removed and she is made to live in his home for a month, during which time she will cry for her parents (the man's wife will make sure of that!)

It is expected that by the time all this has been done, the man will wonder what he saw in her and send her away.

The Torah says that she is not to be sold "since you have pained her." Normally we understand the pain to be the rigors of this process but R' Zalman Sorotzkin z"l in Ozneyim LaTorah says: "This woman has lived in a Jewish home for a month. She sees how the children honor the parents, how husband and wife respect each other; she sees the beauty of Shabbos and a home built on Torah. She wishes to be part of it but we cast her out. THAT is painful."

To expand on this concept, the posuk says that when you do not want her, "and you send her on her own," that is when you cannot sell her.

Not just a war bride, but anyone who is made to feel alone, extraneous to the Jewish People, and "on his own," has been caused pain. We must take care not to do this to our fellow Jews.

Thought of the week:

Children are natural mimics who act like their parents despite every effort to teach them good manners.

"והיה ביום הנחילו את בניו את אשר יהיה לו לא יוכל לבכר בן האהובה על פני בן השנואה הבכר."

"And it shall be, on the day he causes his sons to inherit whatever will be his, he cannot give the right of the firstborn to the son of the beloved one, ahead of the son of the hated one, the first-born." (Deut. 21:15)

The Torah speaks of one who has two wives who have each borne him a child. One wife he loves and one wife he hates. It is prohibited for him to choose to pass over the eldest, simply because his mother is despised, and give the first-born's portion to the other son.

This seems to be quite an outlandish case, where a father would punish his children because he doesn't love their mother. Besides this, why would he try to disrupt the order of inheritance and go against the Torah?

The Gemara in Kiddushin (68a) asks how these women are categorized. Is there such a thing before G-d as a wife who is loved or despised? The Gemara explains that the phrasing of the "hated" wife was not about the wife, but about the marriage. It explains that the man took a wife who was prohibited to him, but even so, the marriage is effected by the Kiddushin the man makes. In such a case, we can understand that a man might wish to cover up what he'd done by taking the focus off of that side of the family. It is not to hurt them, but rather because of his own pride.

The scary part is that we're talking about when the man is thinking about inheritances. It's the end of his life, time to make an accounting for what he's done and to repent. Instead, this man chooses to ignore what he's done and get away without admitting it.

To this man, the Torah says, "It will not work." No matter how he tries to camouflage or gloss over his past, it comes back into play, publicly no less, and a fellow must realize this. How sad is this person who, even when he may be on his deathbed, refuses to acknowledge the truth of his failures and gives up the chance to rectify them through Teshuva and sincere repentance.

The next section is about the Ben Sorer u'Moreh, the wayward son who is on track to be so evil that he is put to death out of mercy, to prevent him growing into a monster. [Note: Only G-d can decide to be "merciful" and order someone's death. In actuality this case never came to pass.] What is the connection between the two cases?

Some say that the hated wife was a 'yefas to'ar,' the beautiful war bride that a man was allowed to marry if he could not resist the temptation. Ultimately he would come to hate her and the child born of the union built on superficiality would be defective.

We may also say that this man, who goes through life pretending to be something he is not and refusing to acknowledge his mistakes, is precisely teaching his son to act the way he does, taking what he wants unapologetically. If even in his final moments the man can't come clean, then that's a very powerful message to his children.

What a poignant message as we reach the end of the year -- that our only hope is to come clean, acknowledge our mistakes, and do the right thing.

A boy was caught cheating on a test in Yeshiva. He was suspended and when his father came home that evening, he sat the boy down for a long talk on honesty. The father berated the boy over and over; telling him that not only is it a sin to cheat and lie, but it undermines his word and his status as a man. The son, face to the ground, nodded solemnly and acknowledged that he understood. As he walked away, the telephone rang.

"It's that organization you told to call back," called the woman of the house. "Oy," said the man, "I'm not in the mood. Tell them I'm not home." -- The son got that message too.