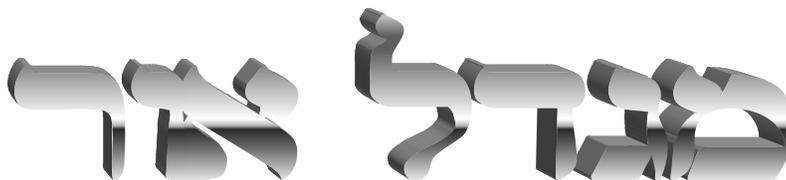


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

6:43 -	הדלקת נרות
7:01 -	שקיעה
9:31 -	זק"ש מ"א
10:07 -	זק"ש גר"א
11:06 -	סוף זמן תפילה
7:02 -	שקיעה
7:44 -	צאת הכוכבים
8:14 -	צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

The Chofetz Chaim heard that a bocher was caught smoking on Shabbos and asked to speak to him. The boy was afraid of what the Chofetz Chaim would say to him, and he was prepared for a lengthy rebuke with a lot of angry yelling. Nobody heard what the Chofetz Chaim said to him, but that boy was never mechalleh Shabbos again.

Years later, he revealed what took place. "I was prepared to be yelled at, but that didn't happen. Instead, the Chofetz Chaim sat me next to him at his table. He grasped my hands in his and held them firmly and said one word, "Shabbos." He repeated that word again and again as tears began streaming down his face. "Shabbos!" he sighed, "Shabbos."

"Had I tried to remove my hands I would not have been able to for I felt paralyzed. One of his holy tears fell onto my hand and I could feel the searing heat of the tzaddik's concern for me and the Holy Shabbos."

Absent-mindedly rubbing his hand, the man continued, "I can still feel the burning of that tear on my hand. It was at that moment I vowed never again to hurt this tzaddik by desecrating the Shabbos. It is too holy, and apparently, the sage of Radin felt that I was too holy as well."

He had truly had a new beginning.

Thought of the week:

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

"ואל בני ישראל תדבר לאמר שמן משחת קדש יהיה זה לי לדורותיכם." (שמות ל"א)

"Speak to the B'nai Yisrael, saying: "This shall be sacred anointing oil to Me for all your generations."

The Gemara in Horayos (11b) quotes R' Yehuda as saying that many miracles took place with the anointing oil. It was mixed with various herbs to give it a fragrant aroma, yet the herbs didn't absorb the oil. It was used to anoint Aharon and the kohanim, the Mishkan and its vessels, and at the end, all twelve *login* (about six quarts or three two liter bottles) remained. This is alluded to in the posuk because the word *zeh* as the numerical value of twelve, indicating that all twelve units of oil would remain forever.

This statement begs the question: Why were all these miracles necessary? Why could they not simply prepare more oil? To answer that, we must understand the purpose of the oil. The Netziv in Haamek Davar explains that this was called "oil of the holy anointing" because it carried with it the promise of HaShem that it would have the spiritual power to sanctify the things anointed with it. If the oil had such a holy infusion, it makes sense that miracles would happen with it and there was no need to make more.

So where did this power come from and how did it get into the oil? The Haamek Davar also sheds some light on this. The posuk states, "You shall make it oil of the holy anointing." Says the Netziv, "At the time you make it, this shall be the purpose. This is as we have explained that the initial intent for a spiritual outcome accomplishes much in actually achieving that outcome."

What we learn, therefore, is that this oil had the power to sanctify things as they were about to be put into service because it had also been infused at its inception with the spiritual focus and intent of Moshe that it be used for holiness. When things are started for a sacred purpose and continued that way, there is no degradation and the whole amount can remain.

This message teaches us how important beginnings are. Whether it is a child's youth, and the earliest messages they receive, or the first time someone enters a new situation such as a school, job, or neighborhood, if that beginning is infused with holiness they will find a lasting peace and success. If it is not, then the opposite is true.

So what constitutes a beginning? Is it too late for those of us who are in mid-life, in mid-experience? Have we lost our opportunity? No. We have not.

The Gemara in Chullin (139b) asks "Where do we find a reference to Mordechai in the Torah?" The answer is from the anointing oil. The first spice used in its preparation is Mor Dror (pure myrrh) which the Targum renders as Meira Dachia. Presumably, the similarity to the name Mordechai is implied, but there must be more of a connection. Rashi in Chullin says that Mordechai was the "primary spice of the tzadikim and Anshei Knesses HaGedola."

Perhaps we can understand that Mordechai represented something integral to both the anointing oil and tzadikim. The power of the oil came from a good beginning. But what if you didn't have a good beginning, like the Jews in Shushan, who had sinned and disregarded the guidance of Mordechai? It's not too late.

When the Jews repented in the time of Mordechai, they achieved a new beginning. That beginning in holiness and their reacceptance of the Torah was given even higher standing in the eyes of Chazal than the original acceptance of the Torah at Sinai. Therefore, we understand that Mordechai represents the ability in all of us to make a fresh start, and make today the beginning of the rest of our lives. If we decide from the outset to be spiritual and servants of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, we will find success.

This is also why Mordechai is considered the "head of the tzadikim." "A righteous man falls seven times and arises again." After failure, what could inspire someone to rise and try again? The knowledge that the past is behind us but tomorrow is still unwritten.