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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

4:31 -	הדלקת נרות
4:49 -	שקיעה
8:29 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:05 -	זק"ש גר"א
9:56 -	סוף זמן תפילה
4:49 -	שקיעה
5:31 -	צאת הכוכבים
6:01 -	צאת 72

! אגוטען שבת

Did you Know?

Now that we've changed the clock, it's very easy to miss the proper times for davening in the morning. There are basically five zmanim for krias Shema –

1. B'dieved – after alos amud ha-shachar, generally defined by the poskim as 72 minutes before sunrise. Under extenuating circumstances this time is OK l'chatchillah.
2. Correct Time - Once it is light enough "to be able to recognize an acquaintance." Different opinions range from 60 minutes to 35-40 minutes before sunrise.
3. Preferred - Since the preferred time to recite Shemoneh Esrai is immediately after sunrise, the preferred time to recite Shema is immediately before sunrise so that one can lead into Shemoneh Esrai without interruption. This is known as tefillas vasikin.
4. Customary - If one recites Shema after sunrise, or at any time before three hours of the day have elapsed, he has performed mitzvas Krias Shema properly. Though many argue that this is only b'dieved, it has become commonly accepted even by those who are meticulous in mitzvah observance.
5. Too Late - After three hours of the day have elapsed. Most authorities rule leniently that the three hours begin at sunrise. Although one cannot fulfill the mitzvah of Krias Shema after three hours have elapsed, one should still say Shema at the time he says birchos Krias Shema and Shemoneh Esrai.

To avoid missing the zman, one should be careful to say Shema before davening if he will be getting to Krias Shema after three hours, even if Shemoneh Esrai will be at the proper time, before four hours of the day.

Thought of the week:

Mistakes fail in their mission of teaching the person who blames them on someone else.

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”...מה זאת עשית לי למה לא הגדת לי כי אשתך הוא. למה אמרת אחותי הוא...” (בראשית יג:ט)

“[Pharaoh said to Avram] What have you done to me?! Why didn't you tell me that she was your wife? Why did you tell me she was your sister?”

When Pharaoh took Sarai to his palace, he and his household were struck with disease. He now takes Avram to task for allowing it to get to this point. He asks two questions: First, why didn't you tell me she was your wife, second, why did you say she was your sister.

This line of questioning seems unusual. He should have asked Avram why he stated that she was his sister, because this was more misleading than the simple omission of the fact that Sarai was his wife. The question of Avram's silence is now moot.

The Netziv in Haamek Davar explains that Pharaoh had two different claims on Avram. First, when I took her to my palace and was alone with her, you didn't stop me by saying she was your wife. Secondly, based on your statement that she was your sister I chose to marry her, since it is an honor to be related to someone of such wisdom and greatness. When he asked these two questions, Avram didn't have an answer.

If we look at this explanation, however, we see the underlying flaw in Pharaoh's reasoning. To him it made perfect sense but to the sensibilities of a nation that has been exposed to Torah, the argument is faulty.

As the Netziv explains, Pharaoh's claim against Avram stems from the fact that when he took Sarai into his palace, Avram didn't object. In essence, Pharaoh relinquished responsibility for his own actions and placed the burden on Avram to correct him.

Had Pharaoh truly been concerned with acting properly, he would have inquired and investigated on his own about Sarai's marital status. If, at that point, Avram had misled him, then he would have had a valid complaint. However, so long as he did not do this, it is his own fault that he ended up in the situation in which he found himself.

Often we, too, look to relieve ourselves of the obligation to do right by using the excuse, “Nobody told me it was wrong.” We prefer to sin unwittingly, rather than to study and remain righteous by abstaining from a prohibited act. We prefer to bury our heads in the sand and only react when someone else admonishes us. Even then, it will likely be accompanied by loud criticisms of the person correcting us for not correcting us sooner, and protestations of our innocence for prior wrongdoings.

We can try to make those arguments, but then we are no better than Pharaoh, and deserve whatever we get.

When the Chofetz Chaim z"l wrote his sefer on Shmiras HaLashon, outlining the numerous laws and circumstances of lashon hara and rechilus, some people complained. “What have you done to us?” someone is reported to have said to him, “Now we won't be able to speak!”

“On the contrary,” replied the sage. “Before you couldn't speak because you might have transgressed this dangerous sin. Now you will finally be able to speak freely, once you know the halacha and what pitfalls you must avoid.”

The story is told that R' Yisrael Salanter z"l was so meticulous in mitzvos that one day he missed the (earlier) Magen Avraham's time for saying Krias Shema and was so upset that passed out.

When R' Aharon Kotler z"l heard this story he said, “Impossible, it never happened.” Someone asked him, “Don't you think R' Yisrael could have been so upset that he would pass out?”

“That part I can believe,” replied R' Aharon, “but he was such a great person I don't believe he would ever allow himself to miss the Magen Avraham's zman.”