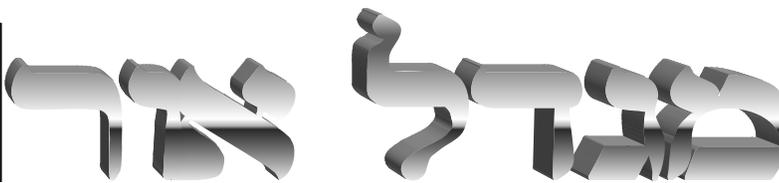


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

### Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:12 - הדלקת נרות  
8:30 - שקיעה  
8:41 - זק"ש מ"א  
9:17 - זק"ש גר"א  
10:31 - סוף זמן תפילה  
8:31 - שקיעה  
9:20\* - צאת הכוכבים  
9:43 - צאת 72

מולד אב - Sunday 6:07:07 PM

\*Based on Emergence of 3 stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com and  
EzrasTorah.org

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

#### I Don't Do Windows

Having said that a person must work for a living, let us be clear that a person needn't pursue each type of opportunity that presents itself. Rather, he should seek out the work best suited for him.

There are myriad ways to earn a living. Some are easy and require little exertion, such as working in a shop, or certain trades like weaving or calligraphy or hiring out others as workers.

Then there are other jobs which require much exertion, like being a porter or miner or working skins into leather, or farming. Some require constant travel which is wearying to the body.

A fellow, who is strong of body but weak of intellect, should choose physical labors which utilize his physical attributes.

One who is weaker of body, but has a good head, should gravitate towards occupations which do not tax his body, so that he may engage in it his whole life.

Further, each person is attracted to one type of craft or job more than others, because HaShem gave him an affinity for it.

The same holds true for animals, which each have a unique instinct. Some hunt birds, some insects, some eat grasses and still others eat meat. HaShem does this so each animal will find its parnasa. To aid them, He gave them special attributes. For example, a bird that eats fish may have long legs and a long beak which he uses to fish. The lion which relies on puncturing its prey has powerful, sharp, claws and teeth, while herbivores have no means of hunting.

- To be continued

#### Thought of the week:

Kind words may be short...  
but their echoes are endless.

**"נקם נקמת בני ישראל מאת המדינים אחר תאסף אל עמידך." (במדבר לא:ב)**

**"[And HaShem spoke to Moshe saying:] Take the revenge of the Jewish people on the Midianites, then you will be gathered unto your nation (i.e. die.)"**

The commentaries discuss that this final command to Moshe was connected to his death. Despite knowing this would be his last act on earth, he did HaShem's will happily and with alacrity. And yet, this is not the only curious thing about this command.

This is a continuation from previous chapters, when the Midianites and Moabites approached Bila'am asking him to curse the Jews, then seduced the Jews into sin. They were to be hounded and attacked in order to avenge the honor of the holy Jewish Nation.

Interjected into the story are two concepts: the sacrificial offerings of the Jews, especially on the holidays, last week, and the subject of vows which begins the parsha this week. Why does the Torah only place the final command of Moshe after the section of vows?

The section of vows is intended to inculcate in us the power of words. A person can turn the permissible into the forbidden merely by declaring it so. This also ties into the discussion of the festivals. Regarding the festivals, too, HaShem stated that He gave the power to ordain the holy times to the Jewish People, who, through the setting of the new Moon and leap years determine when the festivals will occur. With our words we can turn the mundane into the holy.

So what does this have to do with Moshe and the final mitzvah to take revenge on the Midianites? When the people of Moav saw what Klal Yisrael had done to Pharaoh, they were scared. They approached the elders of Midian and asked how to combat Moshe, who had grown up there. They answered that Moshe's power lay in his mouth. This was why they had to hire Bilaam, whose power also lay in his mouth.

Rashi says that Moav was not included here because Rus and Naama would come from that people. Perhaps part of the reason that Midian was so vilified was because they recognized the Jewish power of the spoken word and they degraded it, using it as a weapon against the Jews.

Which leads us to Moshe's death. HaShem swore that Moshe would not enter Eretz Yisrael because he hit the rock. He had been commanded to speak to the rock but for whatever reason, he hit it to bring forth water. HaShem said, "You didn't trust me to sanctify My Name as much as it could have been." Had Moshe spoken to the rock the Jews would have learned a tremendous lesson. By hitting the rock, he lessened the good that could have come from his speech. The similarity to the Midianim is that he, too, degraded the power of speech.

Our words are powerful. They are what separate us from lower life forms. They are to be used as tools, not weapons. They are to be respected, not disgraced. We should learn from here never to underestimate words, but instead to use them to the fullest, as G-d intended.

*Decrees against the Jews were common throughout European history, but the latest rumors indicated that the next round would be harsher than those seen in many years. The Rabbi of the region requested and received an audience with Queen Maria Theresa.*

*Before he could begin his pleas, she stopped him. "Rabbi, I know why you have come. I have no great love for the Jews, but I have heard good things about you. I will grant any request you ask of me today - but on one condition. You may only speak one word!"*

*The Rav stood there, stunned, for but a moment. Then he looked meaningfully at the queen and said, "Silence." Maria Theresa smiled and the Rabbi knew he had acquitted himself well.*

*When the advisors came to the queen with the decrees they had drawn up and asked for her opinion, she remained stonily silent. They nervously began explaining their malicious intent against the hated Jews, and she said not a word. Taking her silence as a sign of disapproval, they tore up the papers and left. The Jews of that area were safe, if only for a short time, and all because of a well-chosen word.*