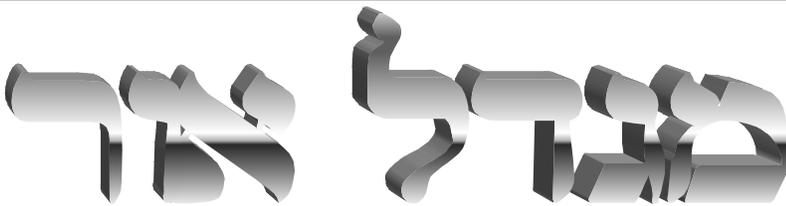


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:04 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:22 - שקיעה
- 8:46 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:22 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:36 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:22 - שקיעה
- 9:10\* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:34 - צאת 72

\*Based on Emergence of 3 stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

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

**Don't Lose Your Grip**

Having elucidated all the things related to the Gate of Bitachon as well as we are able, it is appropriate now to identify the things which will cause a person to lose his Bitachon, that sense of serenity he has in knowing that HaShem controls the world.

All the things mentioned in previous Gates, relating to HaShem's oneness, differentiation, and service of G-d, as causing a loss of those attributes, apply as well to driving away Man's faith.

(Some of those items are attributing power to other beings or entities, pursuing "happiness" in the form of pleasure in this world of vanity to the point that one has no time for reflection or introspection, taking the kindnesses of HaShem for granted, and feeling that things that befall him are not "fair.")

Another thing which causes a loss of Bitachon is a lack of understanding in HaShem's limitless power; how He conducts the world with kindness and mercy, and controls every aspect of life. One who does not recognize this cannot have peace of mind from worry and he will not rely on HaShem's guidance and care.

A further thing which prevents Man from having confidence in HaShem is his lack of understanding in the Creator's mitzvos, in which Man is warned to rely on HaShem and depend on Him. This is as it is written (Malachi 3:10) "Bring your tithes to the Temple... and please test Me... for I shall surely open the windows of Heaven and shower blessings upon you until you can almost not bear it." - To be continued

**Thought of the week:**

**Success is not to be pursued; it is to be attracted by the person you become.**

**"והבקר נשה ושלישים אלף ומכסס לה' שנים ושבעים." (במדבר לא:לח)**

**"And the cattle were thirty-six thousand, and HaShem's tribute was seventy-two."**

When the conquering armies returned, the spoils of war were split in half. Half was divided amongst the soldiers and half amongst those who remained in the Israelite camp. A portion of each had to be given to G-d; 1/500th of the soldiers' share, and 1/50th of the nation's share.

Several things are interesting about how the Torah relates the counts. First of all, although the soldiers and the Jews who did not go out to war received equal shares, the Torah counts each half individually. Just as it says the cattle in the soldiers' half were thirty-six thousand, so does it say that the cattle in the nation's half were thirty-six thousand. It does not merely say that each group had that number of animals.

Secondly, when enumerating the spoils of the soldiers, the posuk includes how much of that number was dedicated to HaShem, while when the nation's portions are listed, the tribute is a mentioned in a separate verse in each case.

The tribute of the soldiers was handed over to Elazar, the Kohain, while the tribute from everyone else went to the Levi'im. (The proportionate difference of a fiftieth and a five-hundredth is easily explained because the soldiers actually risked their lives, and so were entitled to benefit more from their efforts.) With all these differences, there must be an underlying reason.

Perhaps we can explain as follows. The Ohr HaChaim points out that the numbers were given to us to show that the five-hundredth was given from within, not without. That is to say, the Jews did not count five hundred animals for themselves, and then take the next one for G-d. Rather, they counted to 499 and the 500th animal was reserved for HaShem.

When the soldiers went to war, and captured the spoils, they were keenly aware of the miraculous hand of HaShem in their success. Their victory was His victory, and HaShem "deserved" a share of any spoils they captured. That is why the posuk tells us how much was considered a tribute in the self-same posuk. It is to highlight their understanding that it was not their might which won the battles.

The portion of the rest of the nation, however, was not earned the same way. Someone else waged a war and they benefited. They didn't feel the hand of HaShem as acutely as the soldiers. For them, the tribute was something separate from the victory.

That is why the two halves, though equal in number, could not be listed at one time. They were so far apart in their spiritual depth that they might as well have been two different amounts. This may also explain the different beneficiaries of the tributes.

Being a Levi was something that came automatically to the people born to that Shevet, not because of anything they themselves did. They received the tribute of the nation who received the spoils without effort. The soldiers, though, merited that their tribute went to Elazar, who was chosen to be a Kohain because his father Aharon, and Aharon's children, were unique in their character. It was not passive, but active greatness.

If we wish to be like the soldiers, reaching higher and achieving more, we must see the hand of HaShem in all we do, and recognize that it is His victory and His actions affecting the world, and we are just along for the ride. With that vision we become worthy of greater reward than those who merely take everything for granted.

*A fellow was collecting for an important tzedaka, and came to a man who had given generously in the past. "I wish I could give you as much as I used to," said the man, "but I had a large downturn in my fortunes. What can I do? HaShem gives and HaShem takes away."*

*Impressed by the man's obvious faith, the collector mentioned it to a colleague.*

*"I know that fellow," remarked the second man, "and it's funny. In all the years he was successful, he never mentioned HaShem."*