

מגדל אור

It is with great praise and gratitude to HaShem Yisbarach that I reach this issue, completing nine full years of Migdal Ohr.
Bil'a'dai -- it is not my strengths, but the unending chesed of HaKadosh Boruch Hu which enables me to publish this each week. Kain Yirbu!

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:09 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:27 - שקיעה
- 8:52 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:28 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:14 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:28 - שקיעה
- 5:10 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:40 - צאת 72

Sunday 6:38:03 PM - מולד טבת

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and EzrasTorah.org

אנוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

There is a minhag to give children Chanukah Gelt. The Steipler Gaon practiced this minhag specifically on the fifth night of Chanukah because the fifth day of Chanukah is the only day that cannot fall out on Shabbos.

Sefer Toldos Yaakov

For more bits of wisdom, and daily halachos, e-mail roko13@aol.com and join the daily halacha list.

A Time to Remember

Rule of thumb - If you forget Al HaNisim, you don't repeat Shemona Esrai. If you forget Tal u'matar, you do.

Al HaNisim – If you remember before “HaShem” of the bracha, go back to Al HaNisim. If not, conclude the bracha and say Al HaNisim before Elokei N'tzor.

Tal U'Matar – If you remember before the name of HaShem in the bracha, say v'sain tal u'matar l'vracha and continue u'vareich shnaseinu. If you finished the bracha, add v'sain tal u'matar in Shema Koleinu. If you already said R'tzai, go back three spaces to Bareich Aleinu. If you said y'hiyu l'ratzon before stepping out of Shemona Esrai, you must repeat Shemona Esrai.

Thought of the week:

If you can see the invisible, you can do the impossible.

Spread the word! Distribute Migdal Ohr in YOUR shul!
Get it in PDF, just e-mail info@jewishspeechwriter.com

וירא יעקב כי יש שבר מצרים ויאמר יעקב לבניו למה תתראו (בראשית מב:א)

And Yaakov saw that there was grain in Egypt, so Yaakov said to his sons, “Why would you have everyone gazing at you?”

Rashi focuses on the fact that it says Yaakov “saw,” when in reality he only “heard.” While the Ibn Ezra says that since all the senses meet in one place (the mind) they can be used interchangeably, and the Haamek Davar says the words “he saw” are frequently used to refer to the vision of the intellect, Rashi feels it is important to quote the Midrash here that he “saw.”

Until now, the Torah referred to the grain Yosef had stored in Egypt as “bar,” grain, or “ochel,” food. Now the word “shever” is used, which the Midrash interprets as if it were pronounced “seiver,” meaning hope. Rashi says that Yaakov saw through a Holy lens that there was some hope in Egypt, though he didn't get a clear prophecy that would have told him Yosef was alive.

However, while others may have heard, Yaakov alone saw. As the Daas Zekainim writes, “Come and see – Yaakov was an old man, who sat at home, yet he saw what was in Egypt. His ten sons, however, came and went constantly, and didn't see.” At the end of the posuk, says the Haamek Davar, Yaakov berated his sons for not finding a solution to break the famine.

In essence, we find an important distinction here between Yaakov and his sons, and it correlates well to the use of the word referring to vision rather than hearing.

As the Ibn Ezra and Haamek Davar quoted above said, the senses combine in the mind and provide one with a mental picture of a situation. While it is not a physical sight, one can “see” things in his mind. He envisions the scenario he is faced with and can see how the various happenings are pieces of the puzzle falling into place.

In this case, Yaakov alone had that heightened vision and saw that their hope lay in Egypt. While others had undoubtedly heard of the Egyptian viceroy's taxation, Yaakov understood that it was for the ultimate purpose of feeding the hungry of other lands. He realized that his family was supposed to go there to buy food because all the signs pointed to it. The part he didn't “see” was that it would lead to his reunion with Yosef, but that was because HaShem didn't want him to know that until the right time.

So why did Yaakov see what others didn't? Because he had become great through Torah. The Torah he learned in the Yeshiva of Shem and Aiver opened his eyes and cast a brilliant light into his soul. The “ohr,” the “light” of the Torah, helped Yaakov to see the bigger picture and to understand how all the pieces came together. It lifted him up and gave him a better vantage point from whence to view the world around him. His sons, however, did not master all he had learned, which was why Yosef had been Yakov's favorite. He alone had acquired that Torah, and, with it, that higher perception necessary to lead.

On Chanuka, we celebrate the defeat of the wanton, willful sinners at the hands of those diligent in Torah study. This victory was only possible because of the light the Torah shone into their hearts and minds, and this is why the main miracle we discuss is how the little bit of oil in the Menorah (which represents Torah) cast its light for much longer than physically possible. May we use this holiday to “see” HaShem's salvation and goodness and praise Him for it, and merit seeing the light hidden away for the righteous in the time to come, speedily, and in our days.

During the Gulf War, when the threat of Scud missiles loomed large and people lived in terror, gas masks were issued to Israeli residents to help protect them. One Israeli gadol is reported to have calmly stated, “There will be no need for these masks.” When, miraculously, no missiles managed to spread their toxic poison, he was asked how he had known. It was not prophecy, he explained, but simple, clear, logic.

“The masks don't properly fit on men with beards. Jewish men have beards. Why should they deserve to die more than anyone else? Therefore, I knew there would be no need for the masks.”