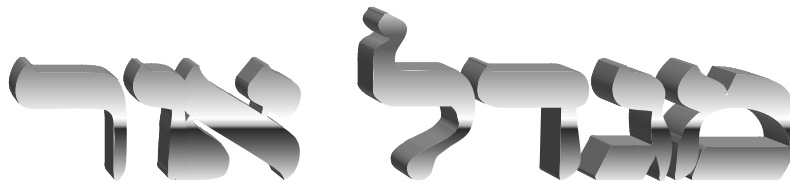


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY	
4:49 -	הדלקת נרות
5:07 -	שקיעה
9:03 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:39 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:29 -	סוף זמן תפילה
5:10 -	שקיעה
5:53* -	צאת הכוכבים
6:22 -	צאת 72

* Based on the emergence of 3 stars

Thurs. 11:16:06 AM - מולד אדר א'
Rosh Chodesh is Friday and Shabbos.
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.*

Do You Get What You Pay For?

As we have explained, good deeds aren't
enough to earn a person reward in Olam
HaBa.

If G-d were to demand from people, with
calculating exactitude and precision, praise
and acknowledgment equal to what He has
given them, then all their actions would be
nothing and naught vis-à-vis even the
smallest kindness HaShem grants us.

It therefore comes out that the reward
HaShem gives a person is not due to him
because of his actions, but is purely given
as an act of kindness on G-d's part.

However, the punishment for sins which
one receives in this world and the next are
indeed due to him by virtue of his
transgressions.

Still, HaShem acts with kindness in this
area as well, by postponing punishment in
this world so one has time to repent.

This kindness is continued and manifest in
the next world when G-d chooses not to
punish someone for his sins because he
has done Teshuva and repented, as it says
in Tehillim (and we say each night at
Maariv,) 'And He is merciful; He shall atone
for sin and not destroy.'

- To be continued

Thought of the week:

Nothing great will ever be
achieved without great men,
and men are great only if they
are determined to be so.

”ויאמר ה' אל משה עלה לי ההרה והיה שם ואתנה לך את לוחת האבן והתורה...” (שמות כד:יב)

“And G-d said to Moshe, come up to Me on the mountain, and be there, and I will give you the tablets of stone and the Torah and the Mitzvos...”

Moshe was to ascend Mount Sinai and remain there for forty days. In that time, he was to acquire the entire Torah. As the Gemara in Brachos (5a) teaches, this verse references both the written and oral laws: the Chumash, Nevi'im and Kesuvim, Mishna and Gemara.

In Parshas Ki Sisa, Rashi tells us that the Torah was given to Moshe as a gift because it is impossible to grasp the entire Torah in such a short time as forty days. The Gemara in Nedarim (38a) relates that Moshe kept learning and forgetting, learning and forgetting, until it was finally given to him as a gift. If the Torah had to be given to him, why not just give it as a gift from the outset? The Chiddushei HaRim explains that Torah can only be understood with HaShem's help, but first the person must do his utmost to master it on his own (with proper teachers and sources, of course.)

The key to this concept is alluded to in our posuk, which referred to the very first time Moshe was called up to the mountain, before any sin damaged Klal Yisrael. HaShem told Moshe to come up to the mountain where he would be 'given,' the entire Torah. Clearly, it had to be a gift, as it would be impossible to master all of Torah in such a short time.

The verse adds an extra phrase, however, which is very illuminating. Moshe is told to ascend the mountain, and to, 'be there.' If he were to go up, of course he would 'be' there. What are these words adding?

Firstly, we learn the concept that one must be in the moment, fully focused on the acquisition of Torah, not just half-heartedly involved in it or thinking of other things. When you ascend the mountain, Moshe, all of you must be there – your mind, body, and soul.

Secondly, HaShem didn't say it would be forty days. He just said, 'be there.' It could have been one day or a thousand days. In order to deserve the gift that Torah would ultimately have to be, Moshe had to be willing to do whatever it took. He didn't know what would be necessary, but he was ready to do whatever it is.

This same trait was seen in Yehoshua, his disciple and the next link in the chain of tradition. When Moshe ascended, he pitched his tent at the base of the mountain and didn't budge until Moshe returned. He, too, was determined to do whatever it took.

It was that dedication to the cause - the appreciation of the magnitude of Torah and the willingness to work hard at acquiring it - which made Moshe deserving of the Divine gift of Torah.

That has not changed. For us to acquire our own Torah, we must be dedicated and willing to work, and then we too will be blessed with Divine assistance and receive the greatest gift Man can ever hope for – wisdom and understanding in Torah.

The General had to choose a single soldier to be the operative on a very special mission. A group of potential candidates was chosen. The person needed very specific skills but one soldier insisted that though he might not be the best in all those areas, he should be the choice overall.

“There are others more qualified than you,” said the General to the young man. “Give me one reason I should choose you over them.”

“The only reason I can give, sir,” said the soldier, with a determined look in his eyes, “is that all those other men were drafted -- I enlisted.” He got the job.