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*A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah*

## **Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 5:13 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:31 - שקיעה
- 8:53 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:29 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:23 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:33 - שקיעה
- 6:15 - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:45 - צאת 72

Shabbos 11:17:11 AM - מולד אדר -

### **אגוטען שבת!**

#### **Did you Know?**

Parshas Shekalim is always read the Shabbos before Adar begins (or Adar II in a leap year.) The next of the Arba Parshiyos, Parshas Zachor, which relates to remembering to wipe out Amalek, is not read until the Shabbos before Purim.

Why is the parsha of Shekalim read before the parsha of zechiras mechiyas Amalek if the mitzvah to wipe out Amalek was incumbent on Klal Yisroel before the bringing of the half-Shekel? It is so that the merit of bringing the half-shekel will help us merit to safely wipe out Amalek. Also, the Gemara in Megilla says that HaShem instituted the giving of the shekalim as a "cure before the illness," to precede the offer of Haman to give 10,000 shekalim to Achashveirosh, thus nullifying the power of this evil man's plan.

There are numerous reasons given why we do not give an entire shekel. The most basic is that we are to realize that we need each other and only through working together and treating each other properly can we atone for our sins. Haman's claim was that we are a spread-out nation. This lets us prove that we are united.

**Thought of the week:**  
People who fight fire with fire usually end up with ashes.

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## **"עין תחת עין שן תחת שן יד תחת יד רגל תחת רגל"** (שמות כא:כד)

**"[Compensation of] an eye for an eye, [of] a tooth for a tooth, [of] a hand for a hand, [of] a foot for a foot."**

Chazal teach us that the Torah means that one who blinds another should not actually have his eye put out, but rather should pay monetary damages. There are a number of ways of learning this out. One way the Gemara in Bava Kama (84a) learns it is that the posuk says, "a hand for a hand," which is explained to mean 'that which is passed from hand to hand,' meaning money.

However, it seems unusual that the Torah would give us so many identical examples: the eye, tooth, hand and foot. What is the difference between these four things?

The Ibn Ezra brings one explanation that a tooth is mentioned because sometimes such harm is less, for example if the tooth is knocked out of a young child who will grow another tooth. The hand is unique because most of one's work is done with the hand, while the leg is more egregious for one cannot walk with only one leg.

He then gives his own practical interpretation. He says that when one is fighting, he may hit his friend in four primary places. The first is the eye, which is when his friend stands before him. Or else, he may hit him in the mouth, and knock out a tooth. Alternatively, he may hit his comrade in the hand, which is used for fighting, or for protecting his face. Finally, he may hit the other fellow in the leg, as he is running away with his back turned.

While the Ibn Ezra's remarks make logical sense in describing why these body parts were chosen, it doesn't explain why the Torah felt the need to give so many examples. Perhaps, however, we can learn from here how evil it is to participate in machlokes and strife.

In hitting the other combatant in the eye, a person could excuse it by saying it was self-defense. Yet, he is obligated to pay. When he hit him in the mouth, knocking out a tooth, he could argue that he hit the mouth as a way of stopping the other without blinding him. He was thoughtful in his defense! He is still obligated to pay.

It could be argued that the hand was actually the impetus for the fight but the message is that it could just as easily have been utilized in self-defense. We begin to see that the one who injured the other may not be as innocent as he believed, and he is obligated to pay. Finally, the foot, which was injured while trying to run away, is clearly a case where it was not self-defense. It brings us to the realization that participation in fighting or unrest is never an acceptable act. One who wounds another likely does so out of anger, jealousy or pride, and it is not justifiable.

Therefore, by mentioning all four cases, we understand that none is more noble or acceptable than the others. One's only escape, therefore, is to avoid the fight altogether, and seek peace.

*When the Rambam's Moreh Nevuchim (Guide for the Perplexed) came out, it was considered so radical that many believed it a heretical text. It was burned publicly in many European cities and Rabbinic leaders forbade its study.*

*Although he was in Egypt, the Rambam had some disciples in Western Europe and when these attacks of their master took place, they attempted to protest in defense of their great teacher.*

*In a letter to one of them, the Rambam wrote as follows: "I am greatly disturbed that you have allowed this matter to upset you. I have heard that you made a bit of protest and stood up somewhat in defense of me. You should not do that."*

*"I completely forgive anyone who has done this based on his own folly. Here in Egypt, I am not harmed. And, if someone there is deriving some benefit [from maligning me, such as a Rabbi who receives honor for it] then it is 'zeh neheneh v'zeh lo chasar, one is benefitting and the other is not losing.' In such a case, we force one not to relive the wickedness of Sodom by stopping the one from benefitting when he is not harmed."*