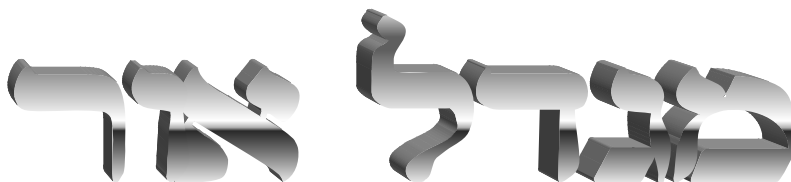


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת/וי"ט

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:27 - הדלקת נרות
- 6:45 - שקיעה
- 9:11 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:47 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:47 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 6:45 - שקיעה
- 7:27 - צאת הכוכבים
- 7:57 - צאת 72
- 12:46 - חצות ער"ה
- 6:22 - הדלקת נרות ר"ה I
- 6:40 - שקיעה
- 9:49 - זק"ש גר"א
- After 7:22 - II הדלקת נרות ר"ה
- 9:49 - זק"ש גר"א
- 6:38 - שקיעה
- 7:20 - צאת הכוכבים
- 7:50 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

HaShem created and destroyed many worlds (as many as 974 of them!) before He created this world and declared it "Very Good," 5768 years ago. G-d is perfect, so how could He "make mistakes"? The answer is that He wanted to show us that not reaching a goal is not considered a failure as long as you keep trying until you make it.

What do you Min? It is customary to eat apples and honey on Rosh HaShana, as well as other symbolic foods, such as the pomegranate. This can cause a problem regarding the order of the brachos. Since both apple and pomegranate are "borei pri ha'etz," but the pomegranate is one of the seven fruits with which Eretz Yisrael was blessed, the pomegranate is the one upon which you should make the blessing. Most people, however, wish to eat the apple and honey first, causing a problem. The Zohar attributes very lofty concepts to eating the apple so some say it is "chaviv," more dear, and one could make the bracha on that first. A simple solution is to have the apples on the table, but not to bring the pomegranates, dates, or any other of the 7 *minim* to the table until after the bracha is made on the apple.

Thought of the week:

Avoid the holiday rush — do Teshuva now!

"טפכם נשיכם וגרך אשר בקרב מחניך מחטב עציך עד שואב מימך" (דברים כ"ט)

"...your small children, your women, and your convert who is in your camp, from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water."

The Torah tells us that everyone in the camp of Israel, top to bottom, was there at one time so as to establish an eternal covenant with HaShem. The pesukim list groups and individuals, down to the lowest station – the woodchoppers and water drawers.

Rashi explains that these people were Canaanites who wished to convert but Moshe did not allow them to enter the Jewish nation. He instead appointed them to chop wood and draw water. Their covenant consisted of faithfully serving their masters.

The listing is extensive, but the wording is curious. All the different types of people are listed: leaders, men, women, children, and converts. Then the Torah says that everyone was there "from the woodchoppers to water drawers." If we are giving a range, why not say everyone was there "from the elders to the water carriers," to include everyone?

Both the woodchoppers and water carriers were people who were forbidden to join Klal Yisrael and were instead given menial work. They, more than anyone else, seem to be a single category so why use verbiage that implies great distance and distinction?

The Gemara in Yevamos (79a) and the Ramban here explain that these people chopped wood, and "drew water for the nation and the altar of HaShem." It would seem then, that those who drew the water had a special opportunity to serve HaShem, even if only for a brief time, when water libations were necessary.

Once they were forbidden to join the Jewish People, one would assume they would just give up and go home. And yet, they didn't. Even in the most menial of jobs, they looked for some way of being closer to HaShem and advancing in that connection. This was Hagar's feeling, that it was better to be a maidservant in the house of Avraham than a princess in the house of Pharaoh.

When we look back at the year that has passed, we might be tempted to give up. We didn't do all we thought we would; we didn't become tzaddikim. "What's the point?" we might wonder.

The message we can take is that no matter what your station in life, you can advance, even if only from a woodchopper to a water drawer. If you can't be a tzaddik, you can be a little more righteous than you were yesterday. That is how we make a connection to HaKadosh Boruch Hu – by trying to always improve our station in the service of our Father, our King.

People always feel doing Teshuva is very difficult. Chazal say it's not. It is often simply a matter of being regretful for what you have done. R' Schach z"l related the following story about the Vilna dybbuk. A dybbuk is a displaced soul which cannot enter Heaven, and cannot even enter Gehinnom for purification. It is doomed to roam the earth. In generations past, these souls sometimes planted themselves inside the body of a living person for some respite from the demons that constantly attacked them.

R' Schach relates: "I saw with my own eyes that this dybbuk would reveal the vilest sins of those it encountered. People suffered tremendous humiliation at that time as it had access to knowledge of people's innermost thoughts and deeds.

It was the epitome of filth and spouted a stream of vulgarities and foul language. Whenever it saw someone who was a sinner, the dybbuk was drawn to him as if by a magnet. He would run to him and hug him and kiss him for they too, like him, were tightly connected to the source of impurity. But then a strange thing happened.

As soon as he kissed them, they would become humiliated and begin having thoughts of repentance. At that moment, they became so holy that the dybbuk fled in terror as if from a raging fire. He could not stand to be near that holiness for an instant."

One can achieve this holiness with just the briefest moment of sincere regret. Isn't Teshuva easy?