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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:02 - הדלקת נרות
- 6:20 - שקיעה
- 9:17 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:53 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:49 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 6:20 - שקיעה
- 7:02 - צאת הכוכבים
- 7:32 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

אוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

After the flood, Noach offered a korban, and HaShem accepted upon Himself never to destroy mankind again. The reason He gives is, "for man's inclination is evil from his youth." The meforshim explain that man is born with a yetzer hara, driving him to do wrong, and only later gets his yetzer tov at the age of bas or bar mitzvah. The Ohr HaChaim explains that a person is born morally handicapped, and is like an ox that has been trained for battle and taught to gore. Therefore one cannot be blamed for his behavior at that point. However, he comments, a person will ultimately be punished for not rising above this base nature, because man is greater than animals in his ability to choose good and push away evil.

The important lesson, though, is that HaShem decided not to destroy man because He acknowledges that a person is born at a disadvantage and is handicapped in not being able to overcome his inborn instincts. Further, despite the fact that HaShem knows whether a person really had the strength but chose not to overcome it, He is willing to hold judgment in abeyance. How much more so must we, who have no idea what challenges a person faces, act with kindness to people who are petty, jealous, greedy, angry or exhibit other base traits. They are handicapped, and we must pity them rather than blame them.

Thought of the week:
**G-d prepares great men for
 great tasks by great trials.**

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"צהר תעשה לתבה ואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה ופתח התבה צדה תשים"
 (בראשית ה:טז)

"Make a skylight for the ark, and finish it to one cubit at the top. Place the opening of the ark in its side."

Noach received very specific instructions for building the Ark. He was told how large to make it, the placement of its decks, and now these details were given. The window had to be pointed on top so water would not enter, and the door was moved lower, to the side of the vessel for the same reason.

One might ask, however, why the window, which is a relatively small part, and would likely be constructed later, should be mentioned before the door, which was a larger undertaking and would be built first?

We know that HaShem did not wish to destroy the world, and was saddened to have to do so. He did it, however, not merely as punishment, but so that Noach and his descendents could bring redemption to the world by living properly and repopulate it, allowing it to exist. In other words, the destruction of the existing world was part of a greater plan for rebirth.

When HaShem told Noach about building the Ark, there were two openings mentioned. The door was the way Noach and the other passengers of the ark would leave this world behind, and it literally sealed the fate of the world. Mention of this opening could bring about negative feelings and depression.

The window (or precious stone), on the other hand, gave them light inside the ark, and helped them to see despite the storm raging outside. Ultimately, it was through the window that Noach sent the dove which came back with the olive sprig, bearing the glad tiding that the water had receded and the earth had begun to grow once more.

By mentioning it first, HaShem was reminding Noach that the more important item to focus on was the one that offered hope and the understanding that the turmoil was not to create an end, but rather to afford a new beginning to the world.

Indeed, Chazal tell us that only after Noach's time did the world begin to experience seasons. These seasons teach us the cycle of rebirth that the world experiences time and time again. Even after a Winter, when everything dies from the cold, a Spring will arrive when life with sprout forth again

People, too, go through changes. We sometimes get discouraged; we may feel overwhelmed by hardships and struggles. That's when we need the window of the ark to shed light on the truth, that HaShem doesn't send us problems to destroy us, but to wipe out the negative aspects of our lives, and hopefully, to initiate new fresh growth within us.

It is said that Henry Ford used to buy parts for his Model T from certain third-party suppliers. He insisted that the parts be sent in crates made to his very specific instructions, down to where to put the nails. Not wanting to give up such a lucrative account, the parts suppliers gladly had the crates made the way Ford wanted.

While they complied, the suppliers could not imagine what difference it made what kind of crate the parts came in as long as they got to their destination.

When the parts arrived, however, Ford's workers were instructed not to use crowbars to tear open the crates. The wooden crates were then disassembled and became the floorboards for the famed Model T, with holes for the screws already in the proper places! There was a plan behind his orders, and the seemingly random holes and cuts in the crates were all a part of it.