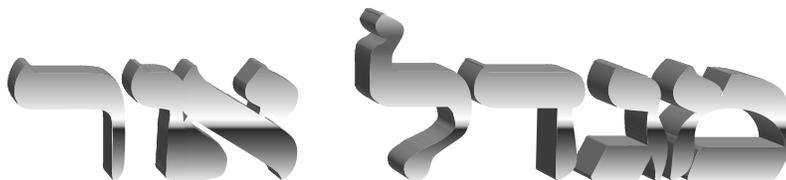


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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

5:34 -	הדלקת נרות
5:52 -	שקיעה
9:27 -	זק"ש מ"א
10:03 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:55 -	סוף זמן תפילה
5:52 -	שקיעה
6:34 -	צאת הכוכבים
7:04 -	צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

When one sees a rainbow a bracha should be made. However, one should be careful not to stare at a rainbow for too long (Shulchan Aruch 229:1). The Zohar writes that this is because one looking at a rainbow is as if he is looking at the Shechina (Parshas B'shalach 66b).

There is a debate amongst the poskim as to whether or not these halachos apply to rainbows caused by natural events (as opposed to those that appear in the sky out of nowhere) such as after a rainstorm or in water.

The Ben Ish Chai writes (Parshas Eikev: 17) that it would seem that one should not make a bracha on a rainbow that appears naturally; however, being that the general accepted minhag is to make a bracha on any rainbow, one should make a bracha on a rainbow that appears naturally.

It is written in the Mishna Brura (229:1), that when one sees a rainbow he should not inform a friend about it but rather make a bracha and keep it to himself.

While one contemplates the beauty of a rainbow, he should also reflect on the fact that if HaShem sends the rainbow as a sign that He remembers His covenant not to destroy the world with a flood, it means that mankind is behaving in a manner that makes it worthy of being destroyed. In keeping with this thought, Chazal teach that during the lifetimes of the truly righteous, rainbows were never seen.

Source: Revach.net and others

Thought of the week:
**Every accomplishment starts
with the decision to try.**

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"מן הארץ ההוא יצא אשור ויבן את נינוה... ואת רסן בין נינוה ובין כלח היא העיר הגדולה."

"Ashur departed that land, and he built Nineveh, Rehovos Ir and Kalach. [He also built] Resen between Nineveh and Kalach. This was the great city."

The reference here to "the great city" is confusing. We've just mentioned a number of cities, which one is "the great" one?

The Netziv suggests that Ashur built two cities, Nineveh and Kalach. When he built a third city between them, Resen, the three merged and became one large metropolis. He notes that he later saw this explanation in HaKsav V'haKabala.

Rashi, however, states simply that Nineveh is the great city referred to, as it says in Yonah, "Nineveh was a great city before the L-rd." In fact, other Rishonim also say that the phrase "this was the great city" refers back to Nineveh.

This description seems out of place here. While perhaps in the time of Yonah this was a great city, with one hundred and twenty thousand people in it, right now it could not have been that large. Further, it is referred to as "the great city" in the Book of Yonah, but the giving of the Torah in its entirety took place years before those events. How then could Rashi say that the Torah is using the same phrase to identify it as the city which would only later be described in a future book?

The answer to both these questions is that Nineveh was not considered a great city before G-d because of its population or physical size. Rather, Nineveh had a special significance from the beginning, which earned it the title of a great city even in the times of Yonah.

Rashi and other commentaries tell us that Ashur left the city of Bavel (Babylon) because he saw his children beginning to listen to and follow the heretical path of Nimrod. He understood it was better to move out to a desolate spot than to remain with people who would drive his family astray. The Netziv says that although he could not break away from Nimrod entirely, he at least made his point by doing whatever he could.

This sacrifice is what earned Nineveh the crown of greatness. It was founded with a higher ideal; with the intent of serving G-d. This gave it value in HaShem's eyes. Perhaps this is the merit through which the people of Nineveh managed to repent and be saved so many years later when the prophet came to warn them.

This would also be an appropriate reason to read the story of Yonah and Nineveh on Yom Kippur. When we look back to our sins and see that it looks very grim, we remember that one act of sacrifice for G-d's glory can lead to beneficence and forgiveness many generations later. When we have started a year off right, we can repent even at the very end. This lesson also echoes the story of Noach.

One person, willing to stand alone in the face of those who would mock him, steadfast in his faith and belief in HaShem, can achieve greatness that lasts a lifetime and goes down in history for all to see and learn from.

In her memoir, "All for the Boss," Ruchoma Shain remembers her father, R' Yaakov Yosef Herman z"l's unswerving dedication to HaShem in the spiritually barren landscape that was early 20th century America.

One Shabbos morning, he came home and told his wife that the guests should begin eating, because he had something to take care of. His daughter followed him as he strode to the Young Israel Synagogue. He stood for a moment in the back of the packed shul then ran up to the pulpit, banged on the table and called out, "There is a sign outside that says Young Israel Dance Tonight." The Torah prohibits mixed dancing. Either erase the word dance or the words Young Israel; both cannot exist on the same sign."

There was an uproar and two husky young men bodily escorted him out the door and into the street. His daughter asked whether he wasn't ashamed to have been thrown out of a shul.

"Not at all, Ruchoma," he said. "I don't know if they will heed my words, but I had to register my protest."