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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

שבת Zmanim

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:56 - פלג המנחה
- 8:11 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:29 - שקיעה
- 8:41 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:17 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:32 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:30 - שקיעה
- 9:12 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:42 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

During the period of the Three Weeks, we mourn the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash. That does not mean this should be a time of despondency. On the contrary, this is a time to take action and purify ourselves so that through our actions we rebuild the resting place of HaShem in this world. We should immerse ourselves in spiritual pursuits, rub away the stains, and remove the "junk" from our lives. This is in line with our next melacha:

13 - Melabain - Whitening (bleaching)

The sheared wool needed for the Mishkan was washed in a river. The Melacha of Melabein, literally "whitening," is expressed through three categories of activity: Shriyah, or soaking, Shifshuf, or scrubbing, and Sechita, or squeezing. More commonly, melabein is the act of cleaning on Shabbos, which is prohibited. Here are some halachos that explains what is forbidden in each one of those categories:

- 1) Soaking - One may not pour anything (that includes, water, seltzer, etc.) or spray anything on a stain to loosen it or erase it from one's clothes completely. Remember that when you spill something on yourself at lunch. Everyone's knee-jerk reaction, of course, is to reach for the seltzer.
- 2) Scrubbing - This prohibition includes folding over part of one's clothing to rub it against the stained spot in order to remove the stain. It also includes scratching out a dried stain from one's clothes with one's fingernail.
- 3) Squeezing - This category includes wringing out one's clothes on Shabbos. The good news, though, is that the prohibition of squeezing things out does not apply to sprinkling one's hair with water to hold down 'the frizz.' But, just watch yourselves. A sprinkle is OK, not a shower!

Source: TorahTots.com / The 39 Melachos, by Rabbi David Ribiat

Thought of the week:

The best leadership is born of understanding the needs of those who would be affected by it.

"וידבר משה אל ה' לאמר" (במדבר כ"א)

"And Moshe spoke to HaShem, saying: "Let HaShem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the community, who will go forth before them, and who will come back before them, and who would lead them out and bring them in, so that the community of HaShem shall not be like sheep that have no shepherd."

This posuk is unique. Throughout the Torah, we find that "HaShem spoke to Moshe, saying." Here is the only time we find it reversed: "Moshe spoke to HaShem saying." There are several powerful lessons involved in this.

Rabbeinu Bachya says that HaShem wanted the Torah to bear witness that Moshe strove to constantly emulate his teacher, the Ribono Shel Olam. HaShem said, just as all the time 'I spoke to you, saying,' Moshe, so shall 'you speak to Me, saying.'

The Ohr HaChaim mentions that we always know the word 'vayedaber,' and he spoke, to be 'lashon kashos,' harsh language, and that it is unseemly for Moshe to have used such language in speaking to G-d. He answers that Moshe was doing so not for his own needs, for the benefit of the Jewish People, and therefore it was not only justified, but proper.

Rashi quotes the Sifri that this teaches us the praise of tzaddikim. When they leave this world, they put aside their own needs and focus on the needs of the community. Simply understood, this means that instead of using this time to pray for himself, Moshe davened for the Jewish People. It would be understandable that a person who served the community his entire life might say, "Soon I will pass on and I must be selfish a little and focus on myself, so that I have something waiting for me in the next world." Not so tzaddikim. They worry about others until the end. But there may be more.

As the Ohr HaChaim says, Moshe "spoke," using a harsher form of communication. He did this because he felt it was necessary to demand a suitable leader for his flock in this manner. This language would never be held against them. Rather, responsibility for it would lay firmly on his shoulders. Despite this, he ignored his own needs, and the consequences he might suffer, in order to serve the needs of Klal Yisrael. This further illuminates the Sifri's praise of tzaddikim.

Did HaShem get angry? Not at all. Why not? Because Moshe did what he did for the sake of the Jewish People, HaShem's people. By throwing caution to the wind and doing what he felt he had to for Klal Yisrael, Moshe became even more like the ultimate Giver, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who needs nothing from us but gives us so much blessing constantly, even when we don't deserve it. He continues to give despite the fact that this abundance might cause people to question His very existence when they see evil people succeeding.

When Moshe acted in kind, forgoing his own existence for that of the Holy Nation, he emulated HaShem. Therefore HaShem said, "Just as I always 'spoke to you, saying,' so shall you Moshe be recorded for posterity as having spoken to Me the same way." This is what makes someone a true leader. He acts for his people and not for himself.

My grandfather, R' Abba Zalka Gewirtz, Shlit"a, was a rabbi in Bradley Beach, NJ during World War II. Seeing the decimation of his brethren in Europe he felt he could not sit idly by. He approached R' Aharon Kotler z"l to ask whether he should enlist in the US Army. He felt he could help save Jews.

"If you can save Jews, what is your hesitation?" asked R' Aharon. "I am afraid that I may have to eat non-Kosher food in the Army, or perhaps desecrate Shabbos, chas v'shalom," replied the young Rav. "You should enlist," answered the sage. "It is worthwhile to bear a bit of purgatory for [the benefit of] Klal Yisrael." (S'iz k'dai tzu leiden a bisseleh gehinnom fahr Klal Yisrael.)