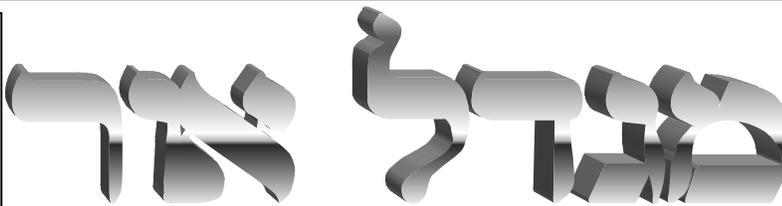


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Mazel Tov to
Zalmy and Elisheva Feuer
 of Lakewood, NJ
 on the occasion of
Eliezer's Bar Mitzvah.
*May you have much Yiddishe
 Nachas from your entire family.*

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:14 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 8:18 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:13 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:28 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:33 - שקיעה
- 9:24* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:45 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

In the Sefer Torah, certain sections are broken up by blank spaces that are either small or large. In the chumash, a small break is indicated by the letter פ, while the larger ones are indicated by a פ.

Last week's Parsha, Parshas Balak, had no breaks until the very end when it recounts the act of Pinchas, and the Chofetz Chaim explains why.

He quotes Rashi in Vayikra (1:10) who says that these spaces were pauses given to allow Moshe Rabbeinu time to internalize the teachings he was receiving. Likewise, these breaks are conveyed throughout history for all students of Torah to have time for contemplation as well.

Therefore, says the Chofetz Chaim, when HaShem spoke to Bilaam, who was merely a conduit through whom HaShem's word flowed, but who would not actually reflect on what he was being told nor integrate it into himself, He did not give these moments of pause.

In this week's Parsha, right at the beginning, we find an unusual break in the middle of a verse. It says, "And it was after the plague [large break] and HaShem spoke to Moshe and Aharon the Kohain saying:"

Perhaps we can follow the Chofetz Chaim's reasoning that time was given for consideration of what HaShem said, and say that in this case the time was given to consider the plague that befell the Jews.

In other words, when bad things happen we should pause and reflect on what they mean and what messages they hold for us. They, like the Torah, are meant to become part of our being and change us.

Thought of the week:

A thousand words will not leave as deep an impression as one deed.

פנחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן השיב את חמתי מעל בני ישראל בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם" (במדבר כה"א)
"Pinchas, son of Elazar, son of Aharon HaKohain, turned My wrath from the Children of Israel when he was zealous for me in their midst..." (Numbers 25:11)

Upon seeing Zimri ben Solu of the Tribe of Shimon publicly sinning with a Moabite woman, Pinchas alone stood up for HaShem's honor. In a gory show of retribution, he took a spear or javelin and stabbed them both to death, impaling them through their private parts with the same weapon. By killing them in such a grisly manner he revealed the depraved nature of their sin for all to see and HaShem's wrath was averted.

The Torah states that one of the key factors here was that it was 'b'socham,' in the midst of the Children of Israel. The commentaries offer various explanations for this. The basic message is that though he was in a dangerous situation, surrounded by Zimri's family members who might choose to retaliate, Pinchas nevertheless ignored his own safety to stand up for the honor of HaShem. This total devotion to HaShem with no thought for himself earned him the right to become a Kohain whose primary mission in life is to perform the Avoda, the ritual ceremonies and sacrifices in the Mishkan and Bais HaMikdash, and help others serve G-d as well.

The Targum Yonason ben Uziel explains that the word teaches us that Pinchas eradicated the evil that was inside the Jewish People by killing the flagrant sinners. It therefore refers not to the location of Pinchas, but to the location of the sinners.

Perhaps we can suggest another approach to the word 'b'socham,' in their midst, that will offer a deeper insight into why Pinchas was chosen to be a Kohain, a spiritual leader for the Jews.

When we read accounts of events in the newspaper, or hear them from someone else, they make an impression, but it is not as strong as if we had seen a picture. When we see a picture, it makes an impression on us, but is not the same as if we had witnessed it ourselves. Even when we witness things ourselves, the more shocking and emotionally-charged they are, the more effect they will have on us.

When the Jews around Zimri saw what Pinchas did, and witnessed the horrific death the sinners suffered, they were deeply affected. They empathized with Zimri and could almost feel the spear piercing their own bodies. They also felt the guilt and shame that he should have felt.

Pinchas's act, done without diplomacy or attempts to pacify people, laid bare the simple facts of the case that this atrocity was an affront to the holiness of G-d and of the Jewish People. It touched people to the core and created the impression that the Al-mighty might otherwise have had to make with death and destruction. The point was made, and the plague of death ceased.

If this is the reward for one who reaches people's hearts in conveying the seriousness of sin, imagine how much greater must be the reward for one who inspires others to do good and serve G-d out of love! Pinchas's lineage is traced to Aharon HaKohain because that is precisely what his grandfather did – he loved people and brought them closer to Torah.

We may not all be Kohanim, but we can all follow in Aharon's footsteps, and earn the reward of HaShem's peace for ourselves and our families.

R' Moshe Feinstein, z"l, was once ill and his family members encouraged him to rest. That evening they had a simcha and asked a young man to stay with R' Moshe and attend to his needs. At one point the young man answered the phone. R' Moshe asked who had called and the bochur related that it was a talmid chacham who was caught in a difficult predicament with several people who were harassing him, and had requested that R' Moshe try to influence these people.

R' Moshe immediately arose and began dealing with the situation with great energy. Soon after, his family members returned from the simcha, and expressed dismay that R' Moshe was not resting.

R' Moshe stood up, and, like a faithful soldier to his Father in Shomayim, said with great vigor, "What did we come to this world for, if not to extend a little chesed to a downtrodden Jew?"