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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:34 - פלג המנחה
- 7:44 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:02 - שקיעה
- 8:55 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:31 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:41 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:01 - שקיעה
- 8:43 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:13 - צאת 72

Monday 3:41:17 PM - מולד אלול

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

אנוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

Some butchers once slaughtered seven animals and placed the entrails off to the side. They inspected the lungs and found them to be complete, so the animals were presumed Kosher. It was only later, after looking at some of the entrails that it was found out that one of the animals had a hole in its stomach, and was therefore a treifa. Four and a half animals remained in the shop, while two and a half of the animals had been sold. The Talmudic rule of "Kol k'vua k'mechtza al mechtza dami, Every case where there is an established issur is considered 50-50," meant that the animals still in the butcher shop were forbidden. The other rule, "Kol d'parush, m'rubo parush, Anything that leaves the group came from the majority," meant that the two and a half animals which had already been sold came from the majority and were therefore Kosher. There was a great disagreement amongst the rabbis at the time regarding the animal of which half had been sold. Did the permitted half prove that the half in the store was also Kosher, or did the half in the store prove that the sold half was treif? The psak was that each half retained its status and it is no contradiction. Who said that you cannot eat an animal with a hole in its stomach? HaShem. That is the same HaShem who taught the law in each of those rules. Half of the animal is kosher and half not, because that is what HaShem's Torah tells us.

Thought of the week:

It's only a true sacrifice when the choice isn't ours alone to make.

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לא תוכל לאכל בשעריך מעשר דגנך... וכל נדריך אשר תדר ונדבתיך ותרומת ידך" (דברים יב:ז)

"You are not permitted to eat in your cities the tithe of your grain and your wine and your olive oil, and the first-born of your cattle and your flocks, and all your pledges that you pledge, and your donations and the terumah-separation of your hand."

Time and time again in our Parsha, the Torah says, "You shall take it to the place HaShem chooses to rest His countenance," "You shall bring it there," "Lest you offer your sacrifices where you see fit," all dictating that HaShem is to be served in the place that He chooses, not where we would necessarily choose.

Rashi on our verse quotes the Pirkei d'R' Eliezer addressing the use of the words לא תוכל which generally mean 'you are unable.' 'R' Yehoshua ben Karcha says, 'You are able, but you are not permitted to do so.' This is similar to the verse that states, 'And as for the Yevusi, the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, the children of Yehudah could not drive them out,' for they could have been driven out if they were not prohibited from doing so by the covenant that Avraham established when he bought the cave of Machpela."

While the commentaries give different explanations for why there should be a central place to serve HaShem, Rashi seems to comment on a different aspect.

These pesukim refer multiple times to the sacrifices we offer as part of serving HaShem. What should our focus be when we are offering sacrifices? That we bring glory to our G-d? That we give up from what we have to Him? That we spend our money for His honor?

Of course not. The root of the word korban is 'karov,' meaning close. The purpose of korbanos is to bring us close to HaKadosh Boruch Hu. When we bring offerings, be they tithes or pledges, we need to remember that, as we read last week, it is HaShem who gives us the power to achieve things, and it is He who gave us all our possessions. He doesn't need us to "give him back" anything. What He "needs," as it were, is for us to listen to Him and follow His directions.

If we choose the location of our korban, then we are ultimately serving our own will instead of serving HaShem. If we are fine with every other requirement, but are not willing to bring the korbanos to HaShem's chosen place, then we are showing that it was our choice to follow what we did, and thus, we haven't followed HaShem's directives at all, but our own.

Rather, when HaShem tells us what, when, how, or where to do something, we must feel that we physically cannot do anything other than that. We should feel that to do anything else is beyond our ability. That is how strongly we must feel the decree of HaKadosh Boruch Hu. Yiras Shomayim which refers to fear of Heaven can also mean "seeing Heaven." If we see G-d as a concrete part of our lives everyday, then we will never wish to be anywhere, or in any situation, other than that which He chooses for us.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, z'l, was once going to a wedding and had to daven Mincha before leaving. He was under a bit of pressure because, due to his busy schedule and multiple obligations, he was running late. However, when he finished Shemona Esrai, instead of leaving right away, he stood frozen in place, despite the urgent gesturing of his driver.

Afterwards, the driver asked why the Rosh Yeshiva hadn't hurried to leave, especially since they were running late. R' Moshe replied that there was someone still davening, and the only path out was in front of this person. As halacha prohibits walking within four amos in front of someone who is praying Shemona Esrai, he couldn't leave.

"There is a brick blocking my way," he explained. "Just as you can't walk through a solid wall, you cannot walk through the four amos in front of someone praying Shemona Esrai."