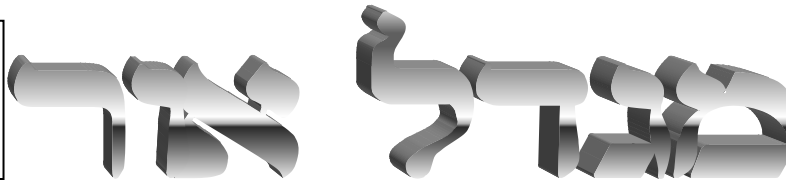


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Wishing all our readers a sweet,
successful, New Year.
*May HaShem inscribe us all in the
Book of Life and bless us with a
year of success in spiritual as well
as material matters.*

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

ר"ה ושבט Zmanim for

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:59 - הדלקת נרות ער"ה
- 7:17 - שקיעה
- 9:05 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:41 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:45 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 12:53 - חצות
- 7:16 - שקיעה
- After 7:59 - הדלקת נרות ר"ה ב'
- 6:56 - הדלקת נרות עש"ק
- 7:13 - שקיעה יום השבת
- 7:55 - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:25 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

*A Bit of Bitachon - A weekly infusion of security from
Chovos HaLeAvos by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda.*

Honor Bound

Since those who seek honor by running after wealth (instead of finding honor through acting honorably according to the Torah) are making one foolish mistake, by utilizing the wrong means to attain honor, the Creator brings them to an additionally folly, and they take to using inappropriate methods for attaining wealth.

Thus, they spend all their days expending great effort and toil to achieve wealth, and hoping to receive honor through it, and meanwhile they ignore their obligations to seek out means of fulfilling the responsibilities HaShem has placed on them. They also fail to acknowledge and praise HaShem for the good He does with them.

Ironically, these ignored items are much more likely to have brought them more of the honor they desired with much less effort, as the posuk says, "Length of days are in [the Torah's] left hand, wealth and honor in her right," and as it says, "Wealth and honor lie before You." - *To be continued*

Thought of the week:

We judge others by their behavior. We judge ourselves by our intentions.

In Shir HaShirim, the Jews are compared to the apple tree. The Midrash states that an apple tree puts forth the nub of its fruit even before its protective leaves grow. This symbolizes our agreeing to the mitzvos before commanded, when we said Na'aseh V'nishma. This is one reason to specifically have apples and honey on Rosh HaShana, and recall this merit before judgment.

"על אשר מעלתם בי בתוך בני ישראל במי מריבת קדש... אשר לא קדשתם אותי..." (דברים לב:נא)

"For you trespassed against Me in the midst of the Children of Israel at the waters of Merivas-Kadesh; for you did not sanctify Me in the midst of the Children of Israel."

It's the final day of Moshe's life. He has just exhorted the Jewish People to follow G-d and Yehoshua and to keep the Torah. Now HaShem reminds him his time is up. Does HaShem really have to rehash Moshe's sin and remind him of it again?

However, what seems like rubbing it in to us is really a kindness from HaShem. In Bamidbar, Rashi tells us that Moshe was afraid that people would think he took part in the complaints against HaShem for which his generation was doomed to die in the desert. Therefore, HaShem agreed to constantly repeat Moshe's sin so people would know he was not party to the sin of the complainers, but rather had his own reason for being denied entry into Eretz Yisrael.

This does not explain, though, why HaShem had to mention it in Moshe's final hours when He was speaking to Moshe alone. True, we read about the conversation in the Torah, but couldn't HaShem have given him a break and not reminded him of his failure?

Haazinu is always read just after Rosh HaShana. One of the highlights of the Rosh HaShana davening is the moving tefila of U'nesaneh Tokef. It was written by R' Amnon of Mainz who was asked by the local nobleman to convert to Christianity. He asked for three days to consider the matter. At the end of the three days, he appeared before the nobleman and said, "I will not convert, and I will decree my own punishment. My tongue should be cut out for saying that I would even consider it." Instead, the nobleman cut off R' Amnon's feet for not coming back to him and several other limbs for similar reasons. A bloodied and maimed R' Amnon was returned to the Jewish community in a basket just before Rosh HaShana.

R' Amnon asked to address the congregation before Kedusha on Rosh HaShana and recited the prayer U'nesaneh Tokef, which he had composed. As he finished, his soul left this world.

In this special prayer, we say that all mankind comes before HaShem in judgment on this day, "as a shepherd examines his flock." So how does a shepherd examine his flock? Is it any different than when a regular person inspects a flock?

To an outsider, each sheep looks nearly identical to its neighbor. Maybe this one is a little bigger, or this one has spots, but that's it. To the shepherd, however, it's quite different. He knows each of his sheep individually. They each have abilities, nuances, likes, dislikes, and so on. When Moshe Rabbeinu famously carried the tired lamb on his shoulders after chasing it to a spring, showing compassion and understanding for what made the sheep run away, he earned the right to be the shepherd of Israel.

When we come before the Ribono Shel Olam on Rosh HaShana, it's not as just another Jew, but as the individual we are, with all of our strengths, weaknesses, foibles, and life experiences. R' Amnon was teaching us that just as he was judged according to his actions, so does HaShem look at each of us and consider every facet and detail. This is the greatness of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and a great comfort for us as Jews.

This is what HaShem reminded Moshe on his final day. "Do not fear Moshe. You will not be condemned for the sins of others. You will be judged on your own merits and shortfalls, but with the intimate knowledge and love for you that only I, as Your Shepherd, have." May we each merit a sweet new year individually, and the Geula Shelaima collectively.

A young boy went into the clothing store to buy his mother a gift. The sales clerk asked what size the boy's mother was. Unsure, the boy imagined his mother in his mind, and then replied, "I'd say she is perfect." The clerk gave the boy a size 6 blouse, figuring it a pretty decent guess.

A few days later, the woman came in to exchange the item. She went home with a size 24W. To the son she loved, and who loved her dearly, she was indeed "perfect."