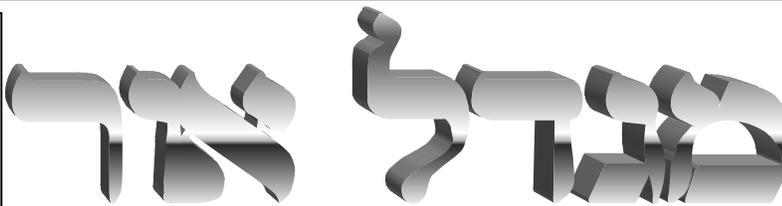


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לע"נ
ליבא ר' ארי' זאב ע"ה
Mrs. Libby Gewirtz ob"m
Who left this world to stand once again at
the side of her 'lebens bagleitern'
R' Abba Zalka z"l
כ"אסיון תשע"ג תנצב"ה

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:03 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:21 - שקיעה
- 8:16 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:10 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:24 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:23 - שקיעה
- 9:13* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:35 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Next MotS"K 8:33:17 pm - מולד תמוז

Rosh Chodesh is Shabbos and Sunday

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and

EzrasTorah.org

Did You Know?

Color by Numbers

The mitzvah of Tzitzis, the blue strings placed on four-cornered garments is one that has many numbers involved.

The word Tzitzis itself has the numerical value of 600. Add the eight strings plus five knots and it equals 613, the same as the amount of mitzvos in the Torah.

That's one way for the tzitzis to remind us of all the mitzvos we are to do and follow.

The reason it is limited to four-cornered garments is because there were four phrases of redemption used to describe the salvation of the Exodus.

It was at that time we became HaShem's faithful servants and were given all the mitzvos.

The color blue is like the late evening sky when the first-born Egyptians died, and the eight strings correspond to the eight days between Erev Pesach when the korban Pesach was offered, and the seventh day of Pesach, when the Jews sang Az Yashir, the musical praise of HaShem at the Reed Sea.

The fact that the Jews were unable to sing until over a week later teaches us that we are often unable to recognize the greatness of HaShem's kindnesses at that moment. It is only upon reflection and review that we can see how good it really is.

Thought of the week:

The most pathetic person in the world is he who has sight, but no vision.

– Helen Keller

”וראיתם אתו וזכרתם כל מצות ה'... ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם”
(במדבר טו:ל"ט)

“And you shall see [the blue thread] and recall all G-d's commandments, and do them, and not spy after your hearts and after your eyes...” (Numbers 15:39)

The idea of taking to heart what you see resounds in this parsha. It begins with the spies that Moshe sent to the land of Israel. In the very first posuk, Rashi comments that the portion of the spies (told out of chronological order) was placed after the story of Miriam's getting leprosy for speaking poorly of her brother Moshe because they saw what happened to her and did not take a lesson from it. They went and spread ill will and negativity from which we are still suffering 3300 years later.

The parsha ends with vision as well, as it describes the mitzvah of tzitzis, the strings worn on a four-cornered garment, which we are to look at and see as a reminder to keep all of HaShem's commandments.

The key lesson is that when we see the strings, the blue color, say Chazal, should remind us of the sea, which reminds us of the heavens, which reminds us of G-d's Heavenly throne. In other words, we don't take things at face value, but reflect on them and think deeply into what we are seeing and why.

The spies saw Miriam punished and it did nothing to them. They saw only someone else being punished, with no corollary to themselves. This was the fatal flaw which led to their sin, and to the long, brutal exile we are still enduring.

There is another aspect to vision which is highlighted in the posuk regarding tzitzis. We are commanded to see the blue thread and [through that] remember all G-d's mitzvos and perform them. The sight is supposed to drive us to see what G-d wants of us.

Contrast that to the end of the posuk, which says, “and don't spy after your hearts and your eyes.” It should say the eyes first, because it is the eyes that see, and then the heart which desires what we have seen.

However, the Torah is teaching us that this pitfall is even more dangerous than others, precisely because of the insidious nature of the evil inclination. The heart is mentioned first because our eyes, like spies, seek out what our hearts already lust after.

We should acknowledge and recognize that when we follow our own eyes, we are often not seeing the truth, but merely the truth as we wish it to be. Our personal biases and desires push us in a certain direction and everything we see is distorted by that prism. They say that if you only have a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. So too, if you want something to be a certain way, you will see signs that point to it everywhere, as the spies saw the dying of the Canaanite giants not as an opportunity but as an evil omen.

This posuk reminds us to see the world as G-d sees it, and wants us to see it as well. Forget what you have in mind, look objectively at the world, and see if you can recognize what HaShem wants, as He has expressed it in the Torah He so graciously gave us.

R' Chatzkel Abramsky, z"l, was once riding in an Israeli cab and the driver told him a story.

“After our IDF military service was over,” said the cabbie, “some friends and I went on a hiking and camping trip. In the middle of the night, we heard shouts and awoke to find a large snake wrapped around one of my friends. It was squeezing him so hard he could not breathe.”

“We didn't know what to do, as it slowly killed him, and one of my friends said, “You're going to die, say ‘Shema Yisrael!’” As he did, the snake uncoiled and slithered away. He was so moved that he became a baal Teshuva, studied Torah, and is completely religious today.”

R' Chatzkel asked him, “And what about you? Did you become more religious?” “Me?” replied the taxi driver, “Why should I have become more religious? The snake wasn't wrapped around me!”