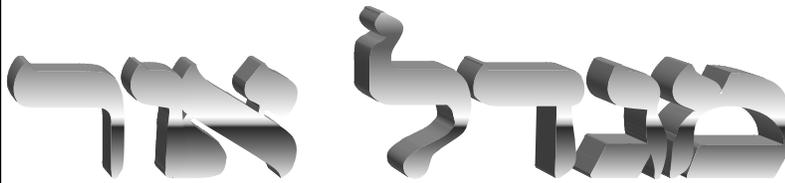


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

This week's issue sponsored in honor of
HaRav Abba Zalka Gewirtz
Shlit"za
on the occasion of his birthday and on being recognized by the Telshe Yeshiva for over Forty-Two years of dedicated service.

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:55 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:13 - שקיעה
- 9:20 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:56 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:58 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:15 - שקיעה
- 7:57 - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:27 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon - A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda,

An End to the Means

The one who trusts in HaShem as he works looks at his efforts as merely one way HaShem might give him success. He realizes full well that that may not be G-d's intention and that HaShem has myriad ways of sending one his parnasa. His working is merely a fulfillment of HaShem's directive to toil and be productive in the world.

The one who does not trust in HaShem, however, works in a particular field because he trusts in the particular avenue of parnasa that he pursues and believes that it brings him success or protects him from harm.

If these mediums bring him success, he praises them and his keen insight in choosing to be involved in them. (For example: "I have a knack for picking stocks," "Diamonds have been very good to me," or "I knew there was a market for monogrammed belt buckles.") He will not abandon these ways because he believes that his success is tied only to them.

If these enterprises fail, he blames them and will refuse to work in them any longer because he thinks that they are "worthless" and cannot bring him success. This is unlike the Baal HaBitachon who will continue pursuing an honest living through appropriate means even if he doesn't see success from this specific effort. He can continue because he knows his success will come only from HaShem, when He decrees it.

- To be continued

Thought of the week:
Why are trying so hard to fit in when you were born to stand out?

"וישא אהרן את ידו ויברכם... ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם" (ויקרא טז:כג)

"And Aharon lifted his hands to the people and blessed them... and Moshe and Aharon came into the Ohel Moed, exited, and they blessed the people."

The Torah tells us that Aharon blessed the people, which the Toras Kohanim says was the three-fold Birchas Kohanim we are familiar with, which begins with Yevarechecha, wishing that G-d shower us with blessing and shine His countenance upon us. In the very next posuk, it tells us that Moshe and Aharon went into the Ohel Moed, then came out and blessed the people.

We may wonder why Aharon felt the need to bless them again. What was different this time around? Rashi tells us that this time the bracha Moshe and Aharon gave the Jewish People was that HaShem should rest His presence on the work of their hands, the Mishkan and other endeavors. So what prompted Aharon to bless them a second time?

The main difference between the two blessings is that the first, the typical Priestly Blessing of Birchas Kohanim, is rather passive. It asks HaShem to be gracious to us and protect us, and to show us favor. It doesn't really ask anything of us.

The bracha Moshe and Aharon gave was that the work the Jews would do should be pleasing to HaShem and that He should show favor to our enterprises. It's not enough for us to sit back and be the receivers of HaShem's magnanimity; instead we must actively do that which He finds pleasing and worthy of blessing. The question remains, what moved Aharon to do this?

Rashi quotes a further Midrash from Toras Kohanim that Moshe and Aharon entered the Ohel Moed so that Moshe might show Aharon how to offer the ketores, the incense. The Ketores was a fabulously fragrant mixture of a number of ingredients, some which smelled quite good on their own, and others which were less pleasant. Chazal tell us that the Ketores represents Klal Yisrael, which is made up of a multitude of different personalities and abilities, and is only desirable when all are included.

When Aharon saw that, he wished to convey to the Jewish People that each of them would only find true blessing by finding the gifts and value that they brought to the nation, which no one else did. They each had to use their G-d-given abilities to bring glory to HaShem, and in that way they would be deserving of having His Divine favor and presence visited upon them.

This is alluded to by the fact that Moshe and Aharon together gave this blessing. Aharon as the Kohain and Moshe as the Levi, one symbolizing kindness, the other symbolizing might, together blessed the people with one bracha, showing that true blessing comes when each person contributes their own personal strengths to the whole.

This week is also Parshas Parah. Chazal tell us that the Red Heifer atoned for the sin of the Golden Calf saying, "Let the mother come and clean up the mess of the child." The same animal can create chaos or peace. So too, even a negative trait can be used in a positive manner, just as the foul-smelling naphtha completed the sweet aroma of the Ketores.

While the first time Aharon demanded nothing of the Jews, the second time, he blessed them that they find their own way of performing deeds on earth which would give HaShem the satisfaction He desired, so that He might rest His countenance among us.

A young boy went to a wedding and, as boys will, stood near the bandstand. He listened to the keyboardist and followed the tune. Then he concentrated on the horn player and realized that he was playing a different song! The drummer played a different rhythm as well. What a cacophony, it sounded terrible!

During a break he told the bandleader his conclusions. "You listened from up close," said the leader. "Go to the back of the hall and listen." The boy did as he was told and was shocked. Now the band's music sounded heavenly. He rushed back for an explanation. "Did you have them change their tunes?" he asked.

"Not at all," said the maestro. "They play different tunes on purpose, and the differences create a result more beautiful than if they all played alike. But, you have to hear them as a group to grasp its beauty."