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Harry Gruenspecht ob"m

לע"ז  
צבי בן דוד ז"ל  
By his loving family

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

## Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:16 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:34 - שקיעה
- 9:03 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:39 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:25 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:36 - שקיעה
- 5:18 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:48 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

אוטען שבת!

### Did You Know?

As was exhibited in our story, R' Aharon Kotler z"l had a determination and clarity of purpose that enabled him to believe he could achieve anything for the sake of Heaven, and he often did so, to the amazement of others.

Once, a young Rabbi from New Jersey came to him to ask whether he should enlist in the U.S. Army in World War II. R' Aharon's reply was quick: "If you can help save Jewish lives, you should do it."

So how did R' Aharon wind up in America? The story goes that HaShem gave him this mission and he accepted the challenge.

As the Holocaust ended, R' Aharon was ready to leave Shanghai. He was unsure whether to travel to Eretz Yisrael which had an established Jewish Community, or whether to go to America where R' Moshe Feinstein z"l was already laying the groundwork for Judaism in the spiritual desert of America.

R' Aharon used the "Goral HaGra," a lottery attributed to the Vilna Gaon, to decide where he was needed. It brought him to a posuk in this week's parsha: 'God told Aharon, "Go meet Moshe in the midbar (desert)."' (Shmos 4:27)

He understood that he was needed in America, along with R' Moshe Feinstein, to transform it into an oasis of Torah. Undaunted, he set sail for America, and changed its landscape forever.

### Thought of the week:

**Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.**

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"ויהי כי יראו המילדת את האלקים ויעש להם בתים" (שמות א:כא)

**"And it was, because the midwives feared G-d, He gave them houses."**

Rashi says that these were the houses of Kehuna, Leviya (which came from Yocheved) and Malchus (which came from Miriam.) Not physical homes, these spiritual "houses" of the priesthood and kingship were theirs as a result of their fear of Heaven. This explanation raises several questions.

First, the previous pesukim say that they feared HaShem and helped the children live. As reward for this, HaShem was good to them, and the B'nai Yisrael multiplied, thus giving support to the story they told Pharaoh that the Jewish women were able to give birth without their help. If that was their reward, then what is this verse telling us? Secondly, the wording implies that this was a further continuation of their Yiras Shomayim. What more did they exhibit? Finally, Chazal tell us that the word "ויהי" is only used to denote sorrow or stricture. What difficulty is referred to here when we are told of the tremendous eternal reward Yocheved and Miriam received in the form of children who would be leaders?

The Rashbam and Daas Zekainim Mi'Baalei HaTosfos both say that the "he" who gave the houses refers to Pharaoh. They explain that he built them houses near his own servants' quarters so they could be watched to ensure they did not help the Jewish women or save the children. It is interesting to note that the authors of both of these commentaries were Rashi's grandchildren. Why would they differ so drastically from their grandfather's words?

Perhaps the answer is that even Rashi understood that Pharaoh built houses for the midwives in order to watch them and prevent them from assisting the Jewish women and saving the future of Klal Yisrael. In fact, as the Rashbam and Daas Zekainim write, after Pharaoh saw that the Jews were multiplying he built houses to watch Yocheved and Shifra. This was the difficulty referred to in our posuk as implied in the word "ויהי."

However, they remained unafraid of Pharaoh even in the face of this further scrutiny and maintained their fear of heaven. It was for this further determination that HaShem rewarded them with the spiritual houses of Kehuna, Leviya and Malchus as related by Rashi.

The question remains: How did Pharaoh know that they didn't follow his instructions if the explosive population growth bore out their words? It is because Pharaoh recognized that this growth intensified greatly after they used this excuse, but not before. He therefore understood that G-d was helping them. They were righteous women who feared G-d, and that was why He did their will.

It is as the posuk in Ki Savo (25:10) states, "And the nations of the world will see that G-d's name is called upon you and they will fear you." Why? Explains the Rashbam on that posuk: For G-d fulfills the will of those who show they stand with Him.

When Pharaoh realized this, he knew they would stop at nothing to help save the lives he meant to erase, and so he wanted to at least prevent them from attending births – hence the houses he built for them. But it was no use. When one puts body and soul into fearing only HaShem, there is nothing that can keep him from achieving his goals.

*In 1945, a plan was hatched to ransom Jews from concentration camps. R' Aharon Kotler z"l, met with Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the Secretary of the Treasury under Roosevelt. Through a translator (Irving Bunim) Morgenthau explained that the United States had a policy not to pay ransom. R' Aharon was enraged and directed Bunim to tell him that "if he cannot help his Jewish brothers then he is worth nothing, and his position is worth nothing, because a single Jewish life is worth more than all the positions in Washington!"*

*Bunim conveyed the Rosh Yeshiva's words in a calm and diplomatic fashion. When he saw Morgenthau react calmly, R' Aharon was incensed. He turned to Bunim and cried, "Translate exactly what I said!"*

*Bunim did so and Morgenthau was shaken. He sat quietly for a long moment then told Bunim to translate. "Tell the Rabbi that I am a Jew," Morgenthau said with great dignity and emotion. "Tell him that I'm willing to give up my life - not just my position - for my people. I will help you."*

*R' Aharon showed us the power of one who fears only G-d Al-mighty.*