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Sponsored P'llui nishmas
Harry Gruenspecht ob"m
 לע"נ
צבי בן דוד ז"ל
 By his loving family
 יארצייט כ"ג טבת

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:35 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:53 - שקיעה
- 9:06 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:42 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:30 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:55 - שקיעה
- 5:37 - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:07 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

The Torah tells us that the Jewish midwives, Yocheved and Miriam, were known by the names "Shifra" and "Pu'ah." Rashi explains that these names were based on their actions. Shifra comes from the word "shapir," or straight since she used to straighten out the limbs of the babies and make them look nice before going to their mothers. Pu'ah is an onomatopoeic, referring to the sounds she made while cooing to the babies to comfort them.

They were saving lives almost single-handedly, by keeping the children alive. What is so important of the small details of how they treated the children and how they looked to the mothers? Isn't it enough that they saved the lives of these infants?

We see from here the importance of giving our all to ensure that a task is done in the best possible way, down to the smallest detail.

The greatness of Shifra and Pu'ah lay not in the fact that they risked their lives to defy the king of Egypt and keep the babies alive, but that in the high-pressure situation of doing something that could get them killed, they did not lose sight of the importance of comforting and caring for a fellow Jew.

Thought of the week:

In scattering seeds of kindness, do it by hand and not by machine.

Get Migdal Ohr via e-mail to share with others by e-mailing info@jewishspeechwriter.com with "subscribe" in the subject.

"ונתתי את חן העם הזה בעיני מחצרים והיה כי תלכו לאתלכו ריקם" (נכח)

"I will give this people grace in the eyes of the Egyptians; and when you go, you will not leave empty-handed."

HaShem had promised Avraham Avinu that his children would be slaves, but afterwards they would go out with great wealth. Part of that wealth came from what they collected from the drowned Egyptians at the Reed Sea, and part came from all the items they "borrowed:" gold and silver vessels and clothing, as described in this parsha.

Why was it necessary for G-d to give the Jews favor in the eyes of the Egyptians? Who cares how they got the money as long as they did? Let the Egyptians be scared of them and pay them to leave or give it to them by some other means. Why did HaShem specifically choose to have the Egyptians give this bounty to the Jews out of favor for them?

The Ibn Ezra explains that this was more than the Jews simply finding favor in the Egyptians' eyes. In fact, the word "and they lent them," found later in Parshas Beshalach (12:36) tells us that the Egyptians wanted to give their possessions to the Jews so much that they were trying to appease and convince the Jews to take from them! This, of course, is miraculous in its own right since it is contrary to human nature.

The Kli Yakar notes that it seems distasteful that the Torah says they borrowed items and then walked away with no intent to repay them. He therefore says that the word used here doesn't mean borrow, but rather ask, as in "ask and ye shall receive." The Jews would ask their neighbors, and receive these things as gifts. He also concurs with the Ibn Ezra and says that the Egyptians had so much esteem for the Jews that they were pressing them to accept gifts from them. The question remains, however, why was this necessary?

The answer lies in a basic fact of human nature, mentioned in several places by Chazal. Man naturally prefers to earn his money than to be given a gift. He is less beholden to the giver, he values his money more and is less inclined to squander it, and there is even a metaphysical aspect in that Man is created in the image of G-d, Who is the ultimate giver, and not a taker.

Had the Egyptians given the Jews their money out of fear, or simply lent their items because they were on good terms, the Jews might have felt self-conscious and uneasy about taking the money. Now that the Egyptians were begging them to accept it, however, the Jews were doing them a favor by taking it. The Gemara speaks of "Pruta d'R' Yosef," wherein a woman can be betrothed with the pleasure she has from her gift to an important person being accepted. By taking it, he gives her pleasure and this has a tangible value. This way, the Jews did not feel they were taking, but they were almost giving.

This shows the extreme kindness of HaKadosh Boruch Hu. Not only did he ensure that the Jews had the money He promised, but He orchestrated it so they would feel happy and comfortable in the way they received it. When we do favors for others, we must also try to make sure that we make them as comfortable as possible, instead of *chas v'shalom* feeling bad that they are receiving. This is the nature of Divine kindness.

The Midrash tells of a woman who attended R' Meir's lecture one Friday night. She returned very late and her irate husband demanded to know where she had been. He angrily swore that she would not be allowed to enter the house until she'd spat in the face of R' Meir. As she left the house, Eliyahu Hanavi appeared to R' Meir and told him that on his account, a woman was banished from her home.

R' Meir went and sat in the Bais Hamidrash. When he saw the woman approach, he acted as if he had a serious eye problem. In order to "cure" it, he asked her to spit in his eye seven times. The dazed and astonished woman did as she was asked. R' Meir then said to her: "go and tell your husband that he told you to spit once but you spat seven times!"

R' Meir explained to his shocked students: "HaShem tells us to erase His name in Sotah water to restore peace between a couple. Should the honor of Meir be greater than the honor of Hashem?!"