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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:27 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:45 - שקיעה
- 9:06 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:42 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:29 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:47 - שקיעה
- 5:29 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:59 - צאת 72

Friday 1:43:11 PM - מולד שבט -

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com and
EzrasTorah.org

When HaShem appeared to Moshe instructing him to redeem the B'nai Yisrael, Moshe asked Him, "When they ask me for Your name, what shall I tell them?" He was asking which attribute of G-d would be exhibited at this time of the Exodus.

HaShem responded, "Eh-yeh asher Eh-yeh," literally "I shall be what I shall be." Rashi explains that HaShem was saying, "I shall be with the Jewish People during this trouble as I shall be with them in future times of subjugation to other kingdoms. Upon hearing this Moshe asked, "Ribono Shel Olam! Why should I mention another [future] trouble to them? This enslavement is enough for them!"

To that G-d responded, "You have spoken well. Say to them, "I will be," has sent me to you." The Maharsha (Brachos 9b) explains that though HaShem revealed the longer name to Moshe, it was His intention that only the shorter name be told to the Jews. Moshe's concern for them thus meshed with HaShem's will in this matter.

When someone is in pain, we must try to alleviate the suffering. Unfortunately, people often exacerbate the situation.

R' Paysach Krohn highlights this with an example of someone who broke her leg. One woman told her, "You'll be dancing at simchas in no time." Another said, "You're going to feel it every time it rains." The second woman made the injured one feel terrible by making even the present situation worse. Moshe tells us, "Why make someone worry about future sorrow? The present one is enough!" Let us seek to emulate this, and make people feel better, not worse.

Thought of the week:
If G-d thought as much about you as you think about Him, where would you be?

"וישמע פרעה את הדבר הזה ויבקו להרג את משה ויברח משה..." (שמות ב:15)

"Pharaoh heard about this matter and sought to kill Moshe so Moshe ran away..."

After witnessing an Egyptian taskmaster beating a Jew, Moshe pronounced a Divine name of HaShem and killed him. He then buried the Egyptian in the sand. Later, when he tried to break up a fight between Dasan and Aviram, they asked, "Will you kill us as you killed the Egyptian?" It was then that Pharaoh heard about it and wished to kill Moshe.

It is curious. Moshe was raised in the palace as Pharaoh's favorite grandchild. He was the heir apparent, a "golden child" who impressed all who saw him. Pharaoh was a murderer, who had very little value for human life. Why would he care if Moshe killed a lowly taskmaster? Surely it was his royal right to kill anyone for any reason – or no reason?

The answer, as Rashi teaches, is that Dasan and Aviram badmouthed him to Pharaoh. Not only did they inform Pharaoh of the matter, but they colored it with their own interpretation which resulted in Pharaoh's change of attitude towards Moshe.

They told Pharaoh that Moshe looked both ways to see if anyone was looking. Clearly, his intentions were suspect, and Moshe himself knew that what he was doing was wrong in the eyes of Pharaoh. Chazal, however, tell us that he was looking into the future of this Egyptian to see if any good or noble people would emerge from him. Seeing none, Moshe understood that killing him would not be bad in HaShem's eyes. Later, when HaShem told Moshe that he could return without fear for all those who sought to kill him had died, the Ibn Ezra says it refers to that Pharaoh and his men, but Rashi says this statement was made regarding Dasan and Aviram. Though they were alive, says Rashi, they had lost their wealth, and a pauper is considered like a dead man.

What does this statement mean in regard to this case? Dasan and Aviram had already done the damage of informing on Moshe years before, who cares what their status was now? Even if they were poor, they would still be able to remind Pharaoh what Moshe had done.

The answer teaches us an important lesson about human nature. When Pharaoh heard about Moshe's killing of the Egyptian, he could have reacted indifferently. However, Dasan and Aviram portrayed the event in such a way that what Moshe did was an affront to the king. This incensed Pharaoh and he tried to kill Moshe. The Midrash tells us that Moshe's neck turned hard as marble and the executioner's sword was unable to penetrate it.

Once Dasan and Aviram were poor, however, their influence was gone. Pharaoh only listened to them because they were rich. It wasn't truth; it was a personal influence which made Pharaoh seek to kill Moshe. When the façade was gone, he wasn't interested in killing Moshe any longer. Human nature is that we often are motivated not by truth, but by the perceptions of other people. When someone whose opinion we value, even for the wrong reasons, feels a certain way, our opinions are often colored by that person. This is wrong.

What we must do is what Moshe did. We must look around as if there is no other person, and decide what G-d would want us to do. Only in that way can we be objective and make the right decisions. The Jewish People are described as a stiff-necked people. This stubbornness is a tool if we use it to maintain our spirituality instead of following the crowd and succumbing to the peer pressure of the world around us, even from other Jews. Perhaps that is why Moshe's neck turned as hard as marble, to remind us that when we use this trait for good, we are invincible.

The author of a sefer once approached R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, z"l, to inquire about a source for a certain halacha but he responded that he was not familiar with the source. When the man was ready to print his sefer, he included this halacha, and wrote that he had asked R' Shlomo Zalman for the source, but he did not know it. His peers in kollel tried to convince him it would be disrespectful to publicize this.

He again approached R' Shlomo Zalman, and was told that whoever writes a sefer is regarded as the Gadol Hador on that topic, and if the author wasn't embarrassed to admit that he didn't know the source, why should he be? Instead, he should publicize in the sefer that he was not aware of the source, and perhaps a reader would be able to provide it. Sure enough, that's exactly what's happened, and after the sefer was published, someone wrote a letter to the mechaber with the source.