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*A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah*

## Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

4:30 -	הדלקת נרות
4:48 -	שקיעה
9:06 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:42 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:30 -	סוף זמן תפילה
4:50 -	שקיעה
5:32 -	צאת הכוכבים
6:02 -	צאת 72

Thurs. 10:33:10 PM – מולד שבת – בט

**אוטען שבת!**

### Did you Know?

With Parshas Shmos, we enter a period called Shovavim, an acronym for Shmos, Va'era, Bo, Beshalach, Yisro and Mishpatim. During these weeks we relive the suffering and tribulation of our slavery in Egypt, and the subsequent freedom when we accepted the Torah at Har Sinai. The Ari z"l points out that these initials are not incidental. The word *shovavim* - from the verse "*Shuvu banim shovavim*" - means "Return, *wayward* sons". We have been wayward and are the ones to blame for our suffering, both as individuals and as a collective people. When we act in childish ways, wasting our potential by taking what is holy and profaning it, we give license to negative forces in the world to act against us. When we are trampled upon and suffer for no apparent reason, we should admit to ourselves that we are the cause of all that befalls us. We should use these days to elevate ourselves and grow in kedusha and tahara. Some righteous people have the custom to fast each Thursday during this time, and it is worthwhile for all to study and reflect on the laws of purity and ways to elevate our speech, thought, and actions.

### Thought of the week:

**There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.**

**Bonus Thought:** It takes no genius to observe that a one-man band never gets very big.

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**"ויירא משה ויאמר אכן נודע הדבר. וישמע פרעה את הדבר הזה ויבקש להרג את משה" (שמות ב:יד-טו)**

**"...Moshe was frightened, and he said, "So the matter is known." Pharaoh heard about this matter, and he planned to kill Moshe"**

The simple explanation of the story is that Moshe killed an Egyptian taskmaster, and when Pharaoh found out, he wished to kill Moshe. Rashi and countless other commentaries discuss the deeper meaning behind these pesukim.

When we look at the story in its simplest understanding, something jumps out at us. Moshe is a prince of Egypt, raised in the palace as Pharaoh's grandson. Now, simply because he killed an Egyptian guard would he be hunted and put to death? One who insulted a prince would likely be killed instantly and not a word would be said about it. Why now was there such interest in this? And if it was because he was protecting a Jew, Moshe could have claimed that the guard did something to harm or annoy him and that is why he killed him. Thus, we are left to wonder why he would be punished for what he did.

While we could say that his actions gave him away, that because he looked around and saw no one was looking, it proves he was doing something wrong, that is still an unsatisfying answer.

If we look at the deeper understandings, however, we find a very valid reason for Pharaoh to want Moshe dead. The Midrash says that "So the matter is known," refers to why the B'nai Yisrael had to suffer in the golus of Mitzrayim. As Rabbeinu Bachya and others explain, these people spoke Lashon Hara and fought with one another. Moshe understood that this was the reason behind their suffering. It was now clear that so long as this continued, Israel would be enslaved.

So what did Pharaoh hear? He heard Moshe's hypothesis and understood its ramifications. If the Israelites would cease speaking ill of each other and join together as one, then the slavery would have to cease as well! This meant that Moshe, with his understanding of how to end the exile, was the redeemer he had feared for so long. Therefore, just as he had decreed that the Jewish boys be thrown into the Nile to kill this redeemer, he now sent his henchmen to kill Moshe, who ultimately ran away.

The clear message here is that even Pharaoh understood the power of achdus in Klal Yisrael, and even Pharaoh realized that he would be powerless to cause harm if they stopped speaking ill of each other. If that is so, how careful must we be with what comes out of our mouths and how wary we must be of Lashon Hara? If Pharaoh feared the power of coming together and speaking only good things about each other, we must, on the contrary, embrace this behavior and thereby bring an end to our current exile.

*At a prison, a group of inmates had dug a tunnel and escaped to freedom. While they escaped, every other inmate managed to get out as well. All, that is, except for one prisoner. He decided that if he broke out it would be worse for him, and he imagined that he might be pardoned for not participating in the jailbreak.*

*When the warden came and saw what had transpired he was infuriated. Then he saw the lone inmate still in the jail. He began raining blows down upon the man's head.*

*"I don't understand," cried the prisoner. "I didn't run away, why are you hitting me?"*

*"Because you are such a fool!" exclaimed the enraged warden. "When you have an opportunity to save yourself and don't take it you deserve to be beaten senseless!"*

*Teshuva is our escape route. We know what we need to do to gain our release. If we don't, we are simply fools.*