

לע"ז ר' שמואל בן יעקב מאיר ע"ה

Dr. Shmuel Tarter ob"m
Who always had a kind word of encouragement to say to everyone, and did not complain or question HaShem even throughout his long and painful final illness.

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:19 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:37 - שקיעה
- 8:59 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:35 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:42 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:39 - שקיעה
- 8:21 - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:51 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon

A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos, by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda.

Another benefit of Bitachon is that one is saved from exerting himself to travel far distances in pursuit of his parnasa.

STORY TIME

R' Bachya relates the story of a fellow who traveled to a distant land filled with savages who worshiped all sorts of deities. He laughingly derided them and said they were wasting their time. One of the savages approached him and said, "Whom then do YOU worship?"

The man replied, "I worship the One who Created Heaven and Earth and can do all. I worship He who sustains all life and provides for all beings."

"Your deeds contradict your words," said the idol-worshiper. "If your G-d is truly all-powerful and provides for all creatures, could He not have provided for you back at home? Why then did you have to exert yourself to travel so far away in search of your livelihood?"

The fellow was shaken, jarred by the truth of the pagan's words. He immediately returned home and became a 'parush,' (separate, usually related to an ascetic,) never again chasing after his livelihood.

It is noteworthy that R' Bachya did not say the man became a 'parush' and lived in a cave without thought to material well-being.

Instead, the man continued to live a normal life, enjoying and participating in business. The only difference was that he was no longer running after the money, for he knew that HaShem would provide wherever he was.

- To be continued

Thought of the week:
Everything works out at the end. So if it didn't work out — it isn't the end!

(As seen on revach.net)

ובמלאת ימי טהרה לבן או לבת תביא כבש בן שנתו לעלה ובן יונה או תר לחטאת (ויקרא י"ז)

"And when the days of her purification are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering..."

Though Parshas Tazria begins with the topic of childbirth, it only occupies eight pesukim. All the rest deal with the Metzora, the spiritual leper, which concept continues in Parshas Metzora. Upon giving birth, a woman goes through a phase of impurity, followed by two obligatory offerings. What connection is there between this topic and the Metzora?

The two sacrifices in which she becomes obligated are an olah and a chatas, an elevation-offering and a sin-offering. The Ibn Ezra explains that these atone for any negative or resentful thoughts she had against her husband or G-d while in the throes of labor pain. The olah is for thoughts, the chatas for those thoughts that were verbalized. The Gemara in Nidda (31b) states that in her suffering she may have made a vow never to cohabit with her husband again and this is why she brings the chatas.

These korbanos seem secondary to what is going on in her life. She just finished nine months of incubating a child, feeling this new life grow within her. She has had a child and is no doubt thrilled and wishes to express her thanks to the Al-mighty. Why are we focused on what she may have thought or said in the relatively few hours of labor? Should she not instead offer a korban Toda or Shelamim, thanking G-d for her good fortune?

Perhaps we are to learn an important lesson from this. She knew for months that this was going to happen. She knew there would be difficulty, but that later there would be great joy. Yet, in the midst of it, she was unable to focus on anything but the pain. Her sin is being short-sighted.

The offerings are timed specifically so that she can look back, either forty or eighty days later, and realize that her hostility then was unfounded. Now that she has time to reflect, she recognizes how hasty and foolishly she reacted.

The affliction of tza'raas most often was the result of lashon hara, speaking derogatorily or damagingly of others. When does one speak this way about another? When they don't value that person or arrogantly feel superior to them. But this is short-sighted.

If a person is on the planet, then HaShem has a plan for them. There is a reason that He is constantly giving them life and allowing them to exist. If He can find good in them, why should one's ignorance allow him to belittle them? He doesn't see the big picture, he is short-sighted. This was the error of R' Akiva's talmidim. They treated each other lightly, not recognizing their colleague's true worth. (R' Avigdor Miller z"l notes that the word 'klala,' meaning curse, comes from the same root as 'kal,' – light. When one takes another lightly, he is easily able to curse and defame him.)

We must take the lesson from Tazria-Metzora that life is a growth-process. We experience times of joy and times of challenge, but they are all for a purpose and we should not regret these experiences or blame G-d. Instead, we should be grateful and thankful for every day, and even for the difficulties. This accepting and appreciative attitude can be more pleasing to HaShem than any sacrifice.

With the discovery in the late 1800's of the Cairo Geniza, the storage/burial place for old holy materials at the Ben Ezra synagogue in Old Cairo, the writings of R' Menachem Meiri, who lived in the 13th century, finally came to light. Although there was no dispute about their authenticity, and his thoughts are widely studied, the Chazon Ish did not use it as the basis for halachic rulings.

He explained, "The Meiri is great, but the Ribono Shel Olam decided that his words should not be seen at the time when the Shulchan Aruch was being compiled. I don't know why that was, but I understand that HaShem had a reason, and so I cannot apply his Torah to my halachic rulings."