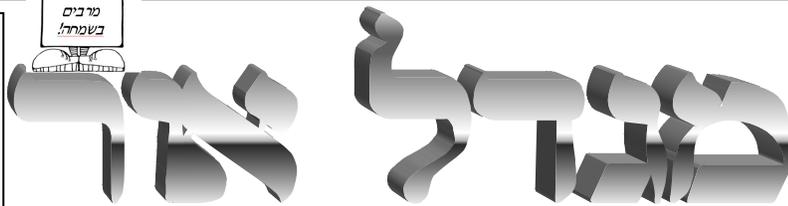




לע"ג ליבא בת ר' ישראל ניסן ע"ה  
 ויבדלח"ט לזכות רפואה שלימה למורים בת רחל  
 יצחק אייזיק בן לאה ורבקה בריין בת בריינדל

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*A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah*

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 5:21 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:30 - שקיעה
- 8:44 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:25 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:20 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:40 - שקיעה
- 6:22\* - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:53 - צאת 72

\* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars  
 Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

**Did You Know?**

One of the most powerful messages of the Megilla is that of mida k'neged mida, that HaShem runs the world with a perfect balance, and rewards or punishes a person measure for measure with their own actions.

When Vashti was to be punished for disobeying Achashveirosh, the King asked the Jewish Sages for advice (knowing they would know how to acquit her and save her life.) They demurred, saying that they were not allowed to judge capital cases since the Bais HaMikdash had been destroyed. Whose idea was it to stop the rebuilding of the Bais HaMikdash? Vashti herself!

The Jews ate at the feast of Achashveiros in direct violation of Mordechai's command. As a result, they had to fast for three days (including Seder night!) at his direction.

The Midrash states that all the women who were torn away from their families and placed into Achashveirosh's harem, to remain spinsters for the rest of their lives, were punished this way because they used to degrade and disdain the Jewish women.

Therefore, we must be extra careful to treat the Jewish People, Chachomim, and the Torah properly and with respect, and we will be properly rewarded, measure for measure.

Ed. Note – The Choshen and Ephod are connected, as we said in the main Dvar Torah. When we decide what others "deserve" financially or physically, HaShem judges what we "deserve," and the results are usually not what we would hope for. It's better to wish the best for others, and HaShem will bless us with the best.

**Thought of the week:**

**The wisest of men is he who feels he knows nothing at all.**

"ויכרסו את החשן מטבעתו אל טבעת האפוד בפתיל תכלת... ולא יזח החשן מעל האפוד" (שמות כח: 28)

**"They shall attach the breastplate from its rings to the rings of the Ephod with a turquoise woolen cord... and the breastplate will not be loosened from upon the Ephod."**  
 (Exodus 28:28)

The idea of keeping two items in the Mishkan attached is not new. For example, the rods of the Aron (Holy Ark) were not to be removed from the rings into which they were placed. In this case, the Choshen Mishpat, the Breastplate upon which were twelve precious gems inscribed with the names of the twelve Tribes, had golden rings upon it which would be connected by a woolen cord of techeiles, a special bluish color, to the corresponding golden rings upon the Ephod, an apron-like piece of clothing. The Choshen was not to be removed from the Ephod.

The question arises: if the Choshen was intended to remain connected, why not sew it directly to the Ephod with stitches, or connect the rings directly to each other? What is the purpose of having two sets of rings connected by a thread?

To help answer this, we must identify some of the underlying meaning of the special garments of the Kohain. Everything represented something which would be brought before HaShem when the Kohain served.

The Choshen Mishpat represents judgment: that of the nations who have oppressed or attacked the Jews and deserved Divine retribution, as well as the remembrance of the Jews' merits, so that they might be judged favorably and granted salvation.

The Ephod, notes the Netziv in Haamek Davar, represents material success and well-being, an integral part of enabling a Jew to serve HaShem properly. These two concepts go hand-in-hand so the two Priestly vestments were to be connected. However, they were not connected in a permanent and solid way, but rather through a thread of Techeiles, bluish wool.

There is a definite correlation between doing the Mitzvos and being promised physical reward. As we say in Shema twice a day, "It will be if you listen to My mitzvos... I will give the rain for your land in its time." This idea is mentioned numerous other places too.

This correlation, though, is not absolute. That is why we see a righteous person suffer and a wicked person prosper. It's one of the oldest and most confounding questions in the world. But that doesn't mean the connection has been broken.

Rather, the connection between these two is comprised of a techeiles thread. The thread of techeiles in the tzitzis reminds us of the sea, which reminds us of the sky, which reminds us of HaShem's Heavenly Throne. Here, too, the connection between what one "deserves" (Choshen Mishpat) and what he gets (Ephod,) is a blue thread, representing HaShem's input in guiding this connection. A tzaddik may suffer poverty, but G-d alone knows that it is for his benefit, such as to atone for some sin he has committed. A wicked man may prosper, but HaShem has His reasons for that as well.

In Shushan, the Jews felt they should attend the King's banquet as a means to prosperity. Political strategists advocated getting on the King's "good side." Mordechai warned them that it was against G-d's will, and that they should not go. Their failure to heed his words did not lead them to success, but to near-destruction. The only true way to prosper is to follow the judgments of the Torah, and then unquestioningly let HaShem be the arbiter and decider of how that prosperity is manifested in our lives.

*R' Naftoli Ropshitzer was known for his incisive wit and brilliant mind. He is reported to have said, "Nearly every tefila, every prayer, every Shemona Esrai, can be distilled down to a common thing – a kopek. All we ask HaShem for is money."*

*"But," he continued. "If you crack open that kopek, you will find Torah, chesed, and avodas HaShem. We don't want the money for ourselves; we want it to be able to serve our Creator."*