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Wishing you and yours a very happy, meaningful Purim.

It's a day when all who ask are to be given.

**Daven well for what you need
 - HaShem is generous and willing to give.**

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

5:25 -	הדלקת נרות
5:43 -	שקיעה
8:45 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:21 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:17 -	סוף זמן תפילה
5:45 -	שקיעה
6:27 -	צאת הכוכבים
6:57 -	צאת זמן

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon

A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos, a classic Jewish work written by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda nearly a thousand years ago.

Continued from last week –

We all think we wouldn't have anything to worry about if we were rich. R' Bachya is now outlining ten advantages of the Baal Bitachon over an alchemist who can turn lead into copper and silver into gold.

5. The Alchemist is fearful of all, from the greatest to the smallest of people, for he is worried that they might report his actions to the government.

Not so the Baal HaBitachon. On the contrary, everyone, including great and honored people, are in awe of *him*, and even animals and stones seek to do his bidding.

6. Despite his wealth, the alchemist has no faith that he will not succumb to illness or to other calamities which will prevent him from enjoying his wealth.

The Baal HaBitachon, however, is sure that no such illnesses or pains will befall him, unless they come for the purpose of purifying him from sin or earning him greater reward in the World to Come.

[It is for this reason that the Baal HaBitachon can take whatever comes his way with aplomb, because he knows that it is intrinsically good. He therefore can enjoy life, as it says, "A good heart [enjoys] a constant feast."]

- To be continued

Thought of the week:

Two things are bad for the heart - running up stairs and running down people.

”ועשית חשן משפט מעשה חשב...” (שמות כח:טו)

“And you shall make a breastplate of judgment of craftsman’s work...”

Of all the vessels mentioned, only the Choshen is given a distinct name. Moshe was told to make an ephod, to make rings, to make a golden menorah, but also a “breastplate of judgment.” Further it says the Urim v’Tumim, a special parchment with a Divine name upon it, was placed into the “breastplate of judgment.” It seems that Choshen Mishpat was a proper name, not just a description.

Rashi points out that the Choshen atoned for miscarriages of justice. Alternatively, it decided questions for the Jews when they asked questions of the Al-mighty through the Urim v’Tumim. This may be why it is referred to as the breastplate of “judgment,” but the Netziv doesn’t believe so.

He points out that other vestments had similar purposes, such as the Tzitz, which atoned for brazenness, yet this was merely an alluded-to benefit, not the primary purpose of fashioning the headplate. Therefore, the Choshen had to have a different purpose. The Netziv suggests its main purpose was to exact retribution from the enemies of Klal Yisrael, as mentioned in Melachim א, 8:49.

There, King Shlomo, upon completion of the Bais HaMikdash, davens that it should be a place where the tefilos of the Jews be accepted. He then gives several scenarios in which they will be listened to by HaShem, and answered. In the posuk mentioned it says that HaShem will do what is ‘justice’ for Klal Yisrael, and the Targum says, “to repay for their mistreatment.”

It is interesting, though, that the Netziv picks this posuk to highlight. In fact, the identical verbiage is used just four pesukim earlier. However, there is a great difference between the two. The first posuk is part of a group of verses that describe the Jews going to war against an enemy. There it says HaShem in Heaven will hear the prayers of Israel and repay the enemy for their evil. In the second set of verses, though, it talks about a different enemy.

It says that when the Jews sin, as there is no one who does not, and they shall be placed before their enemies and be captured; then they shall turn inwards to their hearts and reflect, and they shall return to You, saying, “We have sinned.” Then they will repent and return to HaShem with all their hearts and direct these heartfelt prayers towards the site of the Bais HaMikdash from the midst of their captivity in foreign lands. At THAT time, HaShem will hearken from His heavenly abode and do justice for them.

The Radak explains there (Mel. 1, 8:49) that not only will HaShem repay the Jew’s enemies, but also He will grant them favor in the eyes of their captors, who will allow them to return to Eretz Yisrael, as did Cyrus of Persia. Not coincidentally, When Cyrus allowed the rebuilding of the Bais HaMikdash, he found the hidden treasure of Nevuchadnezzar, including the Temple vessels which his successor Achashveirosh defiled for his feast.

This feast led to Haman’s plot to kill the Jews, (and Esther’s ascension to the throne upon Vashti’s demise,) and ultimately to the true repentance and redemption of the Jews, (uncannily similar to verse 8:49,) which is the basis of our Purim celebration. This “judgment” came from the Jews turning inwards and redirecting their hearts to their father in Heaven. The breastplate, worn on the heart, symbolized the power of Teshuva from love. Such a return to HaShem has tremendous effect, and can lead directly to our salvation. This is why the Choshen Mishpat is a proper name, to teach us that all these thoughts (maaseh chosheiv) went into the creation of this vestment, and must, as well, enter the heart of each and every Jew.

Three times during the year, there is a custom to eat kreplach, triangular pieces of dough with meat inside (similar to a wonton.) These days, Erev Yom Kippur, Hoshana Rabba, and Purim, are feast days, yet work is permitted. Since the Yom Tov is “hidden,” the meat with which we celebrate is hidden as well, pocketed inside the dough. (Geulas Yisrael cited by Taamei haMinhagim – quoted by dailyhalacha@aol.com)

As a youth, R’ Yonason Eybschutz was elected “Purim Rosh Yeshiva.” One of the boys asked him how one may eat kreplach, since they are ‘basar she’nisalem min ha’ayin,’ (lit. hidden meat, referring to meat which was not carefully watched and may not be eaten for fear it was exchanged with non-Kosher meat.)

“The Gemara,” he replied, “says that if one has a sign on the meat, he may eat it. For example, says the Gemara, if it was cut in a triangle. Therefore, kreplach may be eaten, as they too are triangular!”