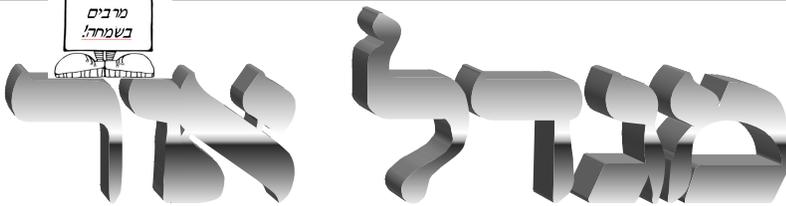




לע"ל ליבא בת ר' ישראל ניסן ע"ה
 ויבדלח"ט לזכות רפואה שלימה למרים בת רחל
 ורוחמה עליה שרה תנה בת אסתר ליבא

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Happy 15th Anniversary
 to my lovely wife
Esther Toby Gewirtz.
 I have you to thank for my
 happiness. - *Thank you!*

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 5:30 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:48 - שקיעה
- 8:41 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:17 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:14 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:51 - שקיעה
- 6:31* - צאת הכוכבים
- 7:03 - צאת 72

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

Did You Know?

The B'nai Yisaschar makes an interesting contrast between the Dreidel we spin on Chanuka, and the Gragger (noisemaker) we twirl on Purim.

He says that if you notice, we spin the dreidel from the top while we spin the gragger from the bottom.

The reason, he explains, is that the catalyst for the miracle was different on the two holidays.

On Chanuka, many Jews had become Hellenized, and the Chashmonaim were only a small group. The Jews didn't deserve the miracle, but HaShem had mercy on us and saved us. The salvation came from above, so the dreidel is spun from the top.

On Purim, though, all the Jews repented and prayed to HaShem. Through this, we merited salvation, so it came from below, hence we hold the gragger from the bottom. So says the B'nai Yisaschar.

One other point is that on Chanuka we were not united, while on Purim we were (see main Dvar Torah.) Because we were united as a people, we were able to effect miraculous benefit and be saved from the plot of Haman in just a few days.

Finally, the dreidel is silent. We don't take pride in the fact that we had to be saved by mercy. The gragger, though, is a clarion call to say, "Look what we achieved! Look what we merited!" And it all came through unity.

Thought(s) of the week:
People who fight fire with fire usually end up with ashes.

"ושמת את שתי האבנים... ונשא אהרן את שמותם לפני ה' על שתי כתפיו לזכרון." (שמות כח:יב)

"And you shall place the two [engraved] stones on the shoulders of the Ephod... and Aharon shall bear their names before HaShem on his two shoulders, as a memorial."

Two precious stones were engraved, each with the names of six tribes on them, and these two stones were set into the shoulders of the Ephod, the apron that the Kohain Gadol wore. Our posuk tells us that in this way, he could carry the names of the Jewish People before HaShem as a remembrance.

Interestingly, there is very similar language used a few verses later, referring to the Choshen, the breastplate Aharon wore. Its stones, too, were engraved with the names of the Tribes, which the posuk says would enable Aharon to 'bear the names of the Children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he entered the holy place, as a remembrance before HaShem constantly.'

If both items had the names of the Jews upon them, why was there a need for them both to be utilized as a remembrance? Further, why does the Torah tell us that the remembrance of the Choshen was before G-d "constantly?"

The Sforno comments on each of these pesukim. Regarding the shoulder stones, in verse 12, he says "they were on his two shoulders as a remembrance: to win mercy for the Jews in the merit [of the holy founders of the Tribes, the twelve sons of Yaakov]."

In verse 29, regarding the Choshen, he says, "As a remembrance before HaShem constantly: so HaShem should remember their merit and bless their children with peace in their merit." In one case it was a permanent remembrance, in one case it was not. In one case they required mercy, in the other they merited peace. What is the difference?

Perhaps the difference is simple. The names on the shoulders were divided. There was a rift between them. Therefore, it required HaShem's mercy to protect them. On the choshen, however, they were united, each one in his role. Such unity is in itself a source of blessing, and therefore HaShem granted them peace, the one utensil which can hold and preserve blessing.

When divided, the Jews cannot always ask G-d for His mercy. It is only accepted at certain times, and this is why it says it was a remembrance when he went into the Holy. However, when unified, there is never a "bad time," to ask HaShem for more bracha. When His children get along, like any parent, HaShem is willing to overlook their individual flaws as He enjoys that they are caring for each other and not fighting. That's why the choshen, which unified the Jews on the Kohain's heart, was a constant remembrance for HaShem.

When the Jews in Persia went to the feast of Achashveirosh, they didn't listen to Mordechai. They factionalized, taking sides about whether he was right to tell them not to go or not. This put us in a precarious position and Haman's plan was allowed to progress.

However, when they all realized they were in danger, and they fasted to protect Esther in her perilous mission, they exhibited a unity that was unbeatable, and was able to work miracles. But it's not miraculous – this is how the world works. When we are divided, we are imperiled. When we are united, nothing can stand in our way.

A well-known Chassidic Rebbe went to visit another Rebbe. While they met, they discussed words of Torah and drank a l'chaim together. Afterwards, one of his Chasidim approached the Rebbe who had made the visit and said, "Rebbe, your father had such a violent disagreement with the other Rebbe for many years! They didn't speak to each other, yet you sit down and drink a l'chaim with him?!"

"You know," smiled the Rebbe. "I don't have my saintly father's Torah. I don't have his Tefila or his righteousness. Should I then have his machlokes?"