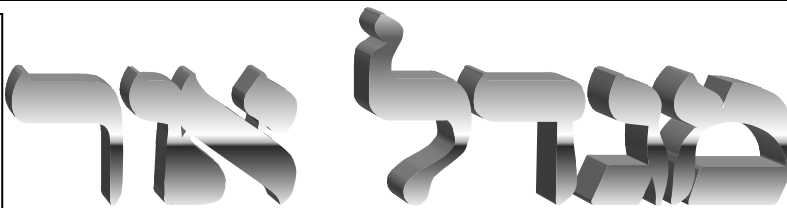


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:01 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:19 - שקיעה
- 9:14 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:50 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:53 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:21 - שקיעה
- 8:03* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:33 - צאת 72

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

Did You Know?

The Bais Yosef (OC 430:1) quotes the Midrash, explaining why the Shabbos before Pesach is called Shabbos HaGadol.

On Shabbos, the 10th of Nisan, the B'nai Yisrael tied the sheep that they were to use for korban Pesach to their beds and the Egyptians could do nothing about it.

The Midrash relates that when they prepared their sheep, the firstborn of the nations of the world and asked why they did so.

The Jews responded, "This is a sacrifice for G-d Who will kill all the Egyptian first-born.

The concerned first-born sons went to their parents and Pharaoh to beg that the Jews be released, but they met resistance. The first-borns began to fight, killing many people, as it is written in Tehillim (and said every Shabbos), "To the One who afflicted the Egyptians 'with their first-born.'"

As to why it is celebrated on the Shabbos before Pesach and not the 10th of Nisan, some say it is because Miriam died on the 10th of Nisan.

The Bach, quoting R' Moshe Charif, writes that since the Jews crossed the Jordan river into Eretz Yisrael on the 10th of Nisan, people might mistakenly think that this is what we are remembering. Since people know that we didn't enter the land on Shabbos, we highlight it as Shabbos HaGadol so people remember the miracle of when we took the sheep in Egypt.

Thought of the week:

The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance -- it is the illusion of knowledge.

"על חלת לחם חמץ יקריב קרבנו על זבח תודת שלמינו." (ויקרא 23:17)

"With cakes of leavened bread he shall present his offering with the sacrifice of his peace-offerings for thanksgiving."

Great emphasis is placed on the fact that the Toda, the Thanksgiving offering, is offered with bread which is chometz, leavened, unlike nearly every other korban. Not only is it permitted, but the commentaries point out that it is a focal point of the offering and that's why they are referred to as "Thanksgiving loaves," as opposed to the wafers which are also offered at the same time.

What makes this even more unusual is that at the end of Parshas Vayikra last week, we read that yeast was forbidden as part of any korban. The basic explanation given is that yeast represents the Yetzer Hara, the Evil Inclination, which causes people to become arrogant, puffed up with nothing, like the bread which is full of air holes, and such a thing is an abomination to HaShem. How then can a person bring a Toda which contains chometz?

The answer is that the fear of becoming arrogant is when a person can believe that his successes are of his own doing. A person who brings a korban Toda is not going to fall into this trap. The word Toda can mean thanks, but it can also mean ho'daah, admission. One who is saved from disaster and must bring a Thanks offering is admitting that he could not help himself, and it was HaShem Who saved him.

When we recognize that we are not the source of our greatness, but rather it is HaShem to Whom all the credit belongs, we will not become arrogant. At that point, there is even a greater reason to bring leaven into the mixture.

When one bakes a loaf of bread and the yeast makes it rise, he knows that without this agent the bread would have remained flat and lifeless. By bringing a korban Toda, an offering for giving thanks, made of leaven, we are reminded that we exist not because of ourselves, but because there is another force, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, behind our growth and successes.

By focusing on this concept precisely when we are celebrating our salvation, we are ingraining in our psyches the idea that there is an external force behind our victories, and that is HaShem. By focusing on all that HaShem does for us and articulating just how involved He is in every aspect of our lives, we will become even more grateful and even more humble.

In days gone by, kids were not taught the Mah Nishtana in school. Rather it was up to the child to notice strange things going on at the Seder and start asking on his own.

One Seder night when the Imrei Emes was a little boy, his father, the Sfas Emes of Gur, started his Seder and waited expectantly for his young son to start inquiring about odd happenings. However, the boy sat quietly without the slightest hint of a puzzled look on his face. The Sfas Emes did all sorts of strange things in order to get the boy to ask, but to no avail. He began to move things on and off the table and perform other wild antics to break the boy's calm demeanor, but nothing made the young Avraham Mordechai flinch.

Finally the Sfas Emes asked his son if he noticed anything different about that night's meal. Avraham Mordechai said that of course he did. "Then why," asked the concerned Sfas Emes, "did you not seem alarmed and ask any questions?"

The little boy answered with pure innocence, "Because I know my father is a smart man and whatever he does he has a very good reason for doing. Why should I be the slightest bit disturbed?"