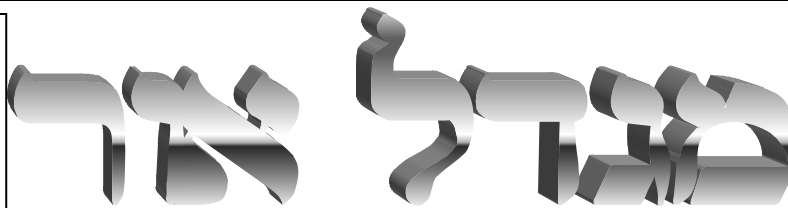


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יארצייט כ"ח טבת

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:30 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:48 - שקיעה
- 8:58 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:42 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:30 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:50 - שקיעה
- 5:35* - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:02 - צאת 72

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

Did You Know?

The two parshiyos of Vaera and Bo contain the story of the ten plagues which G-d unleashed on Pharaoh and his people both as a means to force them to send the Jews out, and to repay them in kind for the torment they meted out to the Jewish slaves under their dominion.

We all know there are ten plagues, but how do we remember how many are recounted in each Parsha?

The Hebrew alphabet contains numerical equivalents for each letter, and this 'gematria' is a part of the Mesorah, the tradition we have from Moshe at Sinai and handed down through the ages.

The first two letters of the word, "va'era," are the Hebrew letters vuv and aleph. Vuv's numerical equivalent is 6, and aleph, the first letter of the Aleph Bais, has a numerical value of 1, for a total of 7.

The first two (and only) letters of the next Parsha's name, Bo, are Bais – 2, and Aleph – 1, for a total of 3.

If you count them, you will find seven plagues in Parshas Va'era, which has a numerical component of 7, and three in Bo, with a numerical value of 3.

The perfection of this mnemonic, as well as other reputable "Bible Codes," teaches us that everything in Creation was made with a purpose and plan, just as everything in history happened (and will happen) as the result of careful planning on the part of HaShem Yisbarach.

We just have to trust Him that He knows what He's doing.

(Special thanks to D.C. of Chicago.)

Thought of the week:

If only I could love the greatest tzaddik like G-d loves the greatest sinner.

– R' Yisrael Baal Shem Tov

"לכן אמר לבני ישראל אני ה'..." (שמות ו:)

"Therefore, tell the Children of Israel that I am HaShem (name of mercy)..." (Exodus 6:6)

G-d is known to Man through His attributes and what we can observe of His behavior. The Parsha begins with HaShem telling Moshe that He appeared to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov with the attribute of precision, being the One who directed the exact dimensions of the world and all of Creation. The name HaShem, which is the attribute of mercy was not known to them, but now G-d is revealing Himself in this manner to the Children of Israel, the descendants of these holy patriarchs.

The Sipurno says that "Therefore" means, "Because of these three reasons, tell them that I am He who made everything exist and I can change the laws of nature to bring an end to their slavery." But where do we find three reasons?

HaShem says, "Also, I will uphold my promise to the Avos, and also I have heard the cries of the Children of Israel from their enslavement." That's two. The thing that precedes them is simply the statement, "I appeared to the patriarchs with one name, but not the other." Should that be a reason to take the Jews out of Egypt? Further, why *didn't* HaShem show them that name of mercy?

We often say that the actions of our forefathers put certain strengths into our spiritual DNA, and the fact that Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov each faced their share of tribulations without questioning or complaining to G-d is not only a tremendous merit, but put into our souls the ability to act the same way.

In Egypt, we suffered tremendously, and we cried out to G-d because of the severity of the hardship, and we were answered. HaShem told Moshe, "I appeared to the Avos but did not reveal to them the name of Mercy because I didn't need to. They had sufficient faith in me to accept that whatever I did was for their own good, even if they couldn't see how."

Now, however, the Jews were subdued and downtrodden because of their tribulations and they cried out. They had reached the end of their ropes and now HaShem was "forced" to reveal His attribute of mercy. He told Moshe to assure the Jews that this was always part of G-d's makeup and that they would yet witness it themselves with the Exodus from Egypt.

There is an important corollary to the belief of the patriarchs in HaShem. They believed that G-d was inherently good and they were patient enough to trust Him, even though it took many years to see it. Avraham believed and taught people about G-d for over seventy years before G-d appeared to him. Yaakov was separated from his parents and his son for decades.

The reciprocal aspect of this is that HaShem, Himself, believes in our goodness as well. Though we may stray, sin, or rebel, HaShem trusts us to come around and realize our mistakes. He patiently waits and gives us more time, more life, and more sustenance, waiting for us to repent, even if it's not until the final day of our lives.

If He has that much faith in us, shouldn't we have the same faith in ourselves and each other?

A man came to his Rabbi to complain. "No matter how hard I work or pray," he said, "I never have enough parnasa to meet my needs."

The Rov opened a chumash to Devarim 8:10, and asked the man to tell him what it said. It says, "ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ה'", You shall eat, be satisfied, and bless HaShem," the man read. "That is not correct," said the Rov. "There is a pause that you are not reading correctly."

"You shall eat, and you shall be satisfied – pause – and [then] you shall bless HaShem. When you are satisfied with whatever HaShem gives you to eat, then He will bestow greater blessing on you. After that, you will truly be able to bless HaShem for His kindness."

על במדבר וכו', תורה תמימה אות קמ"ב