



Sponsored in honor of the birth of
Chana Tova תחל, to
Sruly and Penina
(née Morgan) **Landa**
Brooklyn, NY / Hollywood, FL
Tizku l'gadla l'Torah, l'ben Torah,
l'chupa, u'l'maasim Tovim.
We wish you much nachas!

©2008 - J. Gewirtz

A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:28 - פלג המנחה
- 7:36 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:54 - שקיעה
- 8:57 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:33 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:42 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:53 - שקיעה
- 8:37 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:05 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

A number of joyous events happened over the years on Tu B'Av, which is this Shabbos.

- It was the day the Jews in the desert realized that the sin of the spies had been forgiven, in the year 2488.
- It was the day that the tribes were allowed to intermarry, including orphaned daughters (Bamidbar 36:8) once all those who conquered the Land had died.
- On the same day, the tribe of Binyamin were allowed to intermarry with other tribes, after the scandal of Pilegesh b'Giv'ah (Shoftim 19 - 21), around 2524.
- It was the day that King Hoshea ben Elah removed the blockades that the wicked King Yerav'am ben Nevat had placed on the roads, preventing the Jews from going up to Jerusalem for the Festivals about 75 years earlier, around the year 3040.
- It was the day the Romans allowed those massacred by the wicked Hadrian in Beitar to be buried. Miraculously, the bodies had not decomposed even many years later.
- It was the day they stopped chopping wood for the altar in the Bais HaMikdash every year, as it marks the end of "summer" (Rashi on Beraishis 8:22) and the start of the 2 months of "heat". The wood had to be worm-free to be used on the altar, and fully dried before the rainy season. This gave everybody more time for learning Torah - and therefore Tu B'Av is the Joyous Day of Increased Torah Learning.

Source: The Book of our Heritage, Vol 3 pages 307-313. See also Taanis 30b - 31a

Thought of the week:

Don't feel bad if you don't see the good in yourself or others - G-d does.

Get Migdal Ohr via e-mail to share with others by writing to:
info@jewishspeechwriter.com

"כי עם קדוש אתה לה' אלקיך... לא מרבכם... כי מאהבת ה' אתכם"
(דברים 10:16)

"For you are a holy people to HaShem, your G-d... Not because of your numerousness did HaShem choose you... Rather, out of HaShem's love for you..."

The Kli Yakar questions the suggestion of Klal Yisrael's being more numerous than the other nations as a reason for HaShem to have chosen us. How can we be called more numerous when the Jews have always been among the smallest nations on earth? Further, the posuk said HaShem desires us and chose us, two expressions. Finally, the reason for HaShem's unwavering love of us is given as: "because He loves us." The Kli Yakar explains that our merits are more numerous than the other nations, which might be a reason for HaShem to desire us. Alternatively, we might be attractive to Him because the amount of our sins is smaller. Neither of these is the case however.

Were it purely a popularity contest, the Jews might not have been chosen. We are a stiff-necked people and it is not our actions that HaShem necessarily loves, but our being. Something petty like being better or worse than others would not sway His decision. Rather, it is because He loves us that HaShem chose us.

As the Ramban explains, HaShem found Klal Yisrael worthy of being loved by Him, and there is no reason given for this love. His desire for us was increased by our worthy forefathers who merited G-d's promise that He would never forsake us, and this is why He redeemed us from Egypt to be His people. Even through our sins, we cannot become "un"-chosen.

We are a holy nation, chosen by G-d to be His special people. The word "kadosh," translated as holy, is a complex word with deep meaning. We think of holiness as something divorced from this world, and dwelling on a different plane. That is not the Jewish definition of kedusha though. Being "kadosh" to HaShem has the same use as "kiddushin," betrothed.

The word kadosh means sanctified or designated, and refers to an unbreakable direct link between two parties, in this case the Jews and HaShem. We are His partner and remain connected through thick and thin. We keep the mitzvos because it is what our beloved desires, and not for any other reason. From G-d's side, He will never divorce us no matter what we do, because we belong together. (Separation, unfortunately, is not out of the question.)

This parsha always falls out the week of Tu B'Av, the day when all the young women would go out to the vineyards and call to the young men to come choose a wife. (Taanis 26b, 30a) While to the outsider this might seem vulgar, we understand that the bond between a husband and wife mimics the bond between HaShem and Klal Yisrael and is holy. The similarity between the word for holy and pure and the word for marriage is no coincidence.

By working on our relationships on Earth, we gain a better understanding of the relationship we should have with the Al-mighty. Chazal say the mizbayach cries when a "zivug" divorces. This means that two people giving up a relationship is cause for sadness. If, however, the two were merely together for selfish or other reasons, this may not be the case as they didn't love each other for who they were. HaShem, though, loves us for who we are, and will never sever this bond. Truly, this message is cause for Tu B'Av to be a joyous day for Israel.

Two women on a bus were discussing all sorts of things: the weather, politics, fashion; and then the conversation turned to the daughter of an acquaintance that one of them had recently seen. They took turns laughing about her looks, her personality, her brains, her job, and so on. A woman seated near them came over and said, "You know, this girl was recently proposed as a shidduch for my son. I am so glad that I happened to hear you. Now I know that she is an awful match," and she returned to her seat.

The two women were dumbstruck. The harsh reality of what had just transpired hit them like a ton of bricks. They were just shmoozing. They didn't really know the woman that well, and her daughter even less. And now they had ruined a marriage opportunity for the poor girl. They sank into gloomy silence.

A few stops later, the other passenger leaned down to them as she headed off the bus. "You should know," she said, "that I'm not really the mother of a boy proposed for this girl -- but just think about this -- I might have been."