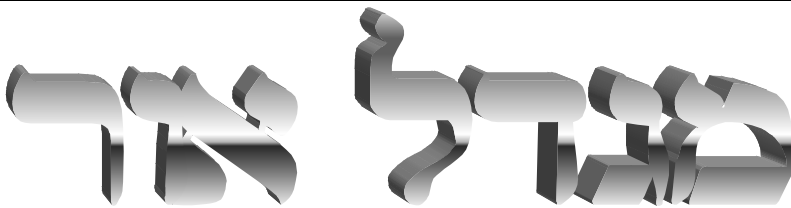


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Mazel Tov to

Fruma Landa of Lakewood, NJ on becoming a Bas Mitzvah. You already give us so much Yiddishe Nachas. Love, Mommy and Tatty

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:41 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:59 - שקיעה
- 8:45 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:32 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:40 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:58 - שקיעה
- 8:43* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:11 - צאת 72

*Based on Emergence of 3 stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon - A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos written by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda.

Now I Get It!

The general rule regarding Bitachon, it comes out, is that the more a person recognizes and understands HaShem and His nature, and the more he believes completely that HaShem guards and watches over him to an extreme degree in seeking his benefit, the greater will be his Bitachon and security in HaShem.

To bear this out, note that a child's trust, at the beginning of his life, lie solely in his mother's breast. As he gets older, and his intellect grows, he relies on his mother herself, because of her great concern and care for him.

As he gets older, and sees that his mother looks to his father for guidance and support, he turns his trust to his father, because of his ability to protect him more so than his mother's.

When his body develops, and he is able to support himself through labor or commerce, he begins to rely on his own abilities and efforts, for he has not realized all the kindnesses G-d has bestowed on him until now.

It is told about a certain pious man whose neighbor was a calligrapher and earned his living through his writing. One day, he asked the man how he was. The calligrapher answered, "I'm fine, as long as my hand is steady and strong."

On that very day, his hand was severed, and he was no longer able to write. This was his punishment from G-d for placing his trust in his hand.

- To be continued

Thought of the week:

No one ever listened himself out of a job.

"וידבר ה' אליכם מתוך האש קול דברים אתם שמעים ותמונה אינכם ראים זולתי קול" (דברים ד:ז)

"And G-d spoke to you from within the fire. You heard the sound of His words but saw no form, but only the voice."

One of the thirteen principles of the Jewish faith is that G-d has no physical form or dimensions. Any references to His "eyes," "arms," or any other physical attribute are merely a metaphor for His influences in the world, used to help us understand His ways. In this posuk, Moshe reiterates that they saw no form of HaShem, and they should not come to worship idols of physical form. The way it is worded, however, alludes to something we learn in Parshas Yisro.

The posuk there says that the entire nation saw the sounds and the lightning. Chazal explain that they were able to visually perceive the sounds of HaShem's words. The Ohr HaChaim on our posuk in Va'eschanan says that Moshe reminded them that the vision they saw was not HaShem, Himself, but only the words He spoke. Why is it so important that we did NOT see any form of G-d, and that we DID see some form of the sounds spoken to us?

One of the proofs that Judaism is the true religion, given by the Ramban, is that we have a general rule that a father doesn't lie to his child. The Torah has been transmitted generation to generation for thousands of years and so many people would not lie to their children to perpetuate something false. When G-d revealed Himself to millions at Sinai, this revelation was burned into the psyche of Klal Yisrael and the story was repeated from parent to child.

If we think about it, we see that Judaism is not based on seeing, but on believing what we hear. I was not there to witness the splitting of the Reed Sea or the thunderings at Sinai (though my soul was,) yet I know it to be true because it is what was told to me by parents and teachers.

When we read a posuk in the Torah, or witness some world event, we cannot think we understand it based on our own insight and empirical evidence. We need to hear an explanation from someone who was taught that verse by someone who learned it from another, stretching all the way back to Moshe Rabbeinu. We need to view the world through the prism of Torah, and understand that we cannot 'know' anything based on sight alone. Listening is a much more refined way of learning because we get not only information, but explanation.

Perhaps this is why it was so important to underscore that standing at Sinai was not an event focused on seeing, but on hearing. The fact that the Jews were able to 'see' the sounds just underscores the fact that listening is a concrete and proper method of learning, and the one we should follow. Hearing is just as solid as seeing in terms of proof, provided that we have an unbroken line of transmission originating with G-d, Himself.

We see so much in this world which is confusing. We see so much pain and suffering and it boggles our minds. We cannot comprehend why such things are happening. The way to deal with this is to seek guidance from our elders, the Torah scholars who have received communication from a straight line of trusted mentors. Seeing may be believing, but without listening, you just may be believing the wrong thing.

The Gemara speaks of a student, sitting before R' Yochanan, who heard him darshan as follows: "In future times, HaShem will carve precious stones, 30 amos by 30 amos (approximately 50 feet in diameter) and place them at the gates of Jerusalem." The student scoffed, saying that since a diamond the size of a chicken egg was unusual, 30 by 30 amos would be nearly impossible. R' Yochanan said nothing.

The student was sailing one day when he saw angels carving huge diamonds. When he asked what they were doing, they replied that they were carving the 30 by 30 stones to place at the gates of Jerusalem. The student excitedly returned to his Rebbi and exclaimed, "You darshaned well! It is true, for I have seen it with my own eyes."

R' Yochanan said to him, "And had you not seen it, would you not have believed?" R' Yochanan glared at the student and he turned to a pile of bones. The student was great enough to converse with angels but was too small to recognize the need to listen more than to see.