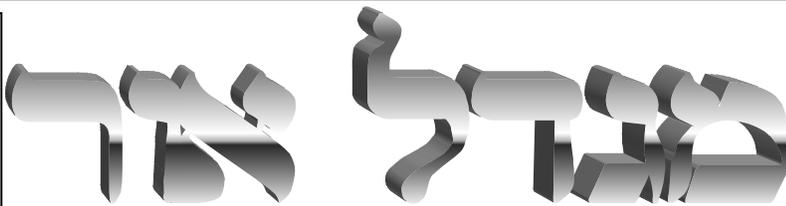


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**Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
I wish I could think of something witty
and intelligent to write here...
Come on, just hire a professional and
let that be one less thing you have to
worry about for your simcha.
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(You know you want to.)**

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:06 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:24 - שקיעה
- 8:30 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:21 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:35 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:24 - שקיעה
- 9:13* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:36 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

More is Less

We are told not to add to the mitzvos, nor to subtract from them. The Kli Yakar addresses this by saying that no one would ever think they could "remove" a mitzvah. [Ed. Note – In those days at least.] Why then is such a command necessary?

He explains that by adding to a Mitzvah, one is necessarily subtracting somehow. It is similar to Moshe's act which is related just before this. He was commanded to speak to the rock. By adding to this and striking it, he lessened the faith of the people, and was therefore punished.

In our world, we can understand that when one chooses to add to a mitzvah, or perhaps take on a mitzvah that was not given to him, such as a non-Kohain so 'overflowing with love' for his fellow Jews that he ascends the "duchen" to recite the Priestly Blessing, what he is saying is that G-d's mitzvos are not properly thought-out.

In essence, we are saying that G-d made a mistake by not making me a Kohain, or by telling me that I am commanded to do or not do something that goes against my natural instincts. He clearly doesn't understand our souls. These 'additions' signify an urgent reduction in our faith in HaShem. The sadly ironic thing is that we think we're doing it to come closer to Him but what we're really doing is pushing Him away.

Thought of the week:

The one thing G-d doesn't do well is "second-best." If it could be better, it would be better.

”וּמְשַׁלֵּם לְשִׁנְאוֹ אֶל פְּנֵי הַאֲבִידוֹ וְלֹא יֵאָחַר לְשִׁנְאוֹ אֶל פְּנֵי יוֹשֵׁלֵם לוֹ.” (דברים ז:י)

“And He repays [each of] those who hate Him to his face, to make him perish; He will not delay for the one who hates Him, to his face He will repay him.” (Deut. 7:10)

This posuk seems to be repetitive. The expression “to his face” means that HaShem acts quickly and doesn't delay repaying the one who hates Him. What is the difference between the two parts of the verse which seem to be saying the same thing?

The commentaries offer different explanations for what kind of repayment we are talking about. Rashi, for example, explains that HaShem will repay a sinner for any good he has done in this world, so as to destroy him in the next world, and he will have no reward there.

The Ohr HaChaim says it depends what kind of children this person will have. If his descendants will be like him, then HaShem will destroy him entirely so that his evil does not continue. If he will have righteous and worthy children, then HaShem will allow them to live and will punish the man quickly not for the purpose of destroying him, but in order to stop him from sinning further. In fact, this can be understood from the phrasing of the posuk. The first half says HaShem will repay him 'l'ha'avid,' to destroy him. The second half says, 'yeshalem lo,' He will repay to him, or, alternatively, “for” him.

A complete sinner from whom no good will come is wiped out, therefore he is paid back now for any good he has done in this world. However, the one who will leave behind good children or grandchildren will be paid for his evil in this world, either through suffering or death, so he is able to reap the rewards of his descendants' goodness later for eternity. In this way, the punishment comes swiftly for his benefit.

By using the vague references of “repaying him to his face,” we learn that the consequences of their actions may not appear similar to what we would expect. While one person is experiencing good fortune, it may really be a sign that he is so far beyond hope that G-d is repaying him now. In contrast, someone experiencing misfortune, or even death, may in fact be receiving a reward or favor from G-d, by stopping him from doing further harm to his soul.

Parshas VaEschanan is always read after Tisha B'Av. One looking at the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash, the murder of millions of Jews, and the exile of our people across the world simply through the prism of human experience might see it as a horrible punishment, perhaps even outpacing our sins. On the one hand that means that we have much to learn about the gravity of sin, but it also means that we haven't applied the lesson of this posuk.

By taking His wrath out on the wood and stones of the Temple, by killing people who might have continued to sin, and by dispersing the groups that convened for evil, HaShem saved the remnant of our people, the future generations, as alluded to in our verse. When viewed properly, we can understand that the devastation was not an eradication, but a salvation.

A man visited an insane asylum and, in one room, found an inmate staring blankly at the wall and moaning, “Nechama'le, Nechama'le, how could you do this to me Nechama'le?” He asked the nurse for an explanation. “At one time,” she said, “This fellow dated a woman named Nechama'le. He really wanted to marry her but she left him and married someone else. He lost it, and has been doing this ever since.”

A bit down the hall, they came to another room. Here too, a man was moaning, “Nechama'le, Nechama'le, how could you do this to me Nechama'le?” Taken aback at this woman's impact, the visitor asked, “What happened, did she dump him too?”

“No,” replied the nurse. “That's the guy she married.”