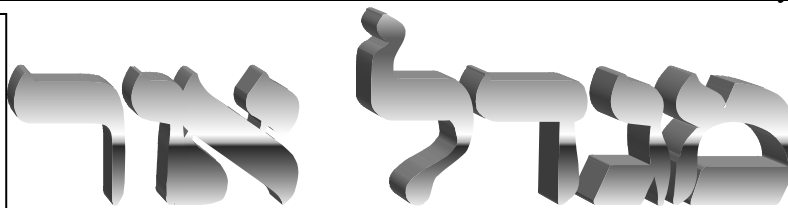


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Migdal Ohr with friends
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Roses are Red,
Violets are Blue,
I wish I could think of something witty
and intelligent to write here...
Come on, just hire a professional, and
let that be one less thing you have to
worry about for your simcha.
JewishSpeechWriter.com
(You know you want to.)

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:17 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:35 - שקיעה
- 8:55 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:39 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:26 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:37 - שקיעה
- 5:22* - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:49 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

The blessings of Yaakov to his children were not simply "wishes," nor were they always complimentary. Instead, Yaakov's final words to his children were intended to guide them in how to live so as to become successful.

Reuven was admonished to watch out for his natural impetuosity and the anger of Shimon and Levi was cursed. By controlling their natural inclinations, they would become successful.

Others were praised for their good inclinations, and their actions praised and encouraged. Yissachar was praised for his willingness to toil in Torah even when material success was easily attainable. Asher was praised for his willingness to be of service to others. By highlighting these good traits, Yaakov encouraged them to continue.

One blessing stands out not only for the son to whom it was given, but to all of us. Yehuda was blessed with "whiteness of teeth, from milk."

In the Gemara (Kesubos 11b) R' Yochanan learns from this posuk that one who "whitens his teeth to his friend (i.e. smiles at him) is greater than giving him milk to drink (a nourishing, and at that time expensive, beverage.)"

If we are looking for a secret to success in the blessings of Yaakov, we must all take this advice to heart. By being cheerful and friendly to others, we are making the best possible investment in not only their success, but our own.

Thought of the week:

It takes considerable knowledge to realize the extent of our own ignorance.

"ויאמר השבע לי וישבע לו..." (בראשית מז:לא)

"And [Yaakov] said, "Swear to me," and [Yosef] swore to him...." (Genesis 47:31)

When Yaakov asked Yosef to bury him in Canaan, in the burial plot he had prepared for himself, Yosef immediately declared that he would do as requested. Despite this, and the fact that Yosef was very trustworthy, Yaakov asked Yosef to solemnize his declaration with a pledge. Yosef did as his father requested and he swore.

All the commentaries explain that there were reasons for Yaakov requiring the pledge. The most universal reasons given are that the promise would make Yosef follow through even if it was difficult, teaching us how important it is to keep one's word, and that a person should feel bound by what he says he will do.

Also, by making an oath to his father, Yaakov preempted Pharaoh's attempts to make Yosef break his word to his father. Chazal tell us Yosef had made an oath not to reveal that Pharaoh did not know all seventy languages. When Pharaoh told Yosef to disregard his oath to Yaakov, Yosef asked, "So do oaths mean nothing to you?" Pharaoh realized that Yosef would reveal the secret, so he hastily told Yosef that he should keep his word.

One commentary states that Pharaoh wished to bury Yaakov in Egypt, thereby keeping the blessing of the tzaddik in the land. Since Yosef had sworn, however, it would be clear that doing so would run counter to the wishes of the righteous man, and the blessing would not remain. Perhaps, it might even have brought about a curse. Therefore, Pharaoh agreed to let Yaakov be buried in Canaan.

Regardless of the reason, we see something striking. Though Yosef might have felt bad by being asked to swear, perhaps embarrassed that his father didn't "trust" him, Yosef did not delay in acquiescing to Yaakov's request that he pledge (though he did not do so by placing his hand on a holy object.)

When his brothers came to him after Yaakov's death saying that their father had directed Yosef not to take revenge on them, Yosef was very hurt that they thought he might do something like that. And yet, when Yaakov asked for the oath, Yosef was not insulted.

The lesson to take from this is that no matter how wise Yosef was, no matter how powerful or influential, he understood that he didn't know everything. If Yaakov asked him to do something, he knew Yaakov had a reason, or at least an intuitive feeling, that this was the right thing to do, and he willingly agreed.

We, too, must learn to be open to the possibility that we don't know everything, and be ready to listen and understand that someone else may have a perspective on something that we don't. That is the case with anyone, and it is definitely so when the other person is a Rav, Talmid Chacham, or Gadol.

Of course, if this is how we must act with human beings, how much more so do we need to accept that there are things G-d, the Master of the Universe, knows and understands that we don't? Only He can know why He makes things happen as they do, and it is up to us, like Yosef, to know that our Father has His reasons, but He does not need to explain or justify them.

The Mashgiach, R' Dov Yaffe, tells a story about a father who wanted to pull his son out of Yeshiva. In a very innocent and honest way the father told the Rosh Yeshiva that if the Rebbe truly believes that his son will become a big Rosh Yeshiva one day he will gladly let him stay in learning and support him. However if not then he should leave Yeshiva and come to work.

The Rosh Yeshiva considered the concept and posed the following to the father. He said, I accept your thinking but why don't we turn the tables. If you are convinced that your son will become the next Reichmann, then by all means take him to work. But if not, you may as well let him stay here where he can learn Torah.