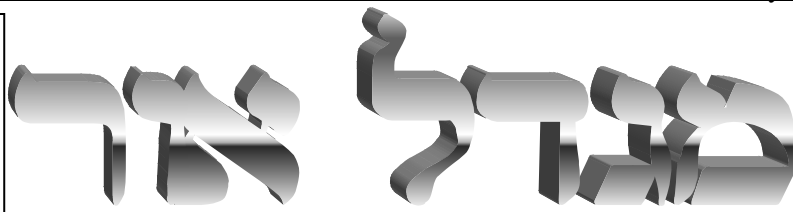


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This issue sponsored I'llui nishmas Mr. Edwin Pasternak ob"m. נפטר ר' כסלותשע"ה א quiet man who found joy in giving to others.
Also sponsored as a Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Dovid Winiarz on the birth of a new granddaughter. May you have much nachas from your entire family!

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת
Wesley Hills, NY

4:11 -	הדלקת נרות
4:32 -	שקיעה
8:38 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:22 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:09 -	סוף זמן תפילה
4:29 -	שקיעה
5:14* -	צאת הכוכבים
5:41 -	צאת 72

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

Did You Know?

The Ohr HaChaim says that the words 'Hinei hee Leah - Behold it was Leah' reference a Chazal that the women ululating (that Sefardic style of high-pitched noises used at weddings to show approval and "cheer on" the bride and groom) were actually trying to let Yaakov know the truth.

In their noisemaking, what they were really saying was, "Leah hee, it is Leah." However, Yaakov didn't get the message and he proceeded with the wedding.

Clearly, it was divinely ordained, but how could Yaakov have missed it?

The answer is that despite his expectation that Lavan would try something like this, Yaakov was so focused on his life with Rachel that he didn't hear the clues he was given.

He ignored the signs around him because he never imagined that Leah would bear half of his twelve tribes.

Many of us go through life with self-imposed blinders on, trying to see things as we want them to be instead of as they are.

We can't fathom that HaShem may have other plans for us, as he did for Yaakov and Leah.

If we keep ourselves open to all possibilities and realize that we may not know what's best for us, we can hopefully hear the warning messages when they come and see the truth.

If not, we are simply fooling ourselves.

Thought of the week:
I want to be a non-conformist like everybody else.

"ויאמר לבן לא יעשה כן במקמנו לתת הצעירה לפני הבכירה." (בראשית כט:כז)

"Lavan said, 'It is not done in our place, to give the younger before the older.'" (Ber. 29:26)
After working seven years for the hand of Rachel, Lavan's younger daughter, Yaakov asks for his promised wife. Lavan makes a lavish wedding, and gives Yaakov... his older daughter Leah. Veiled until after the marriage, the secret is kept and Yaakov is very upset at Lavan's deception. He asks how Lavan could do this and the response is lacking.

Simply put, Lavan blames others. Some commentaries say that the townspeople refused to let Lavan marry off his younger daughter before the older, while some explain that it was the prevailing custom which Lavan chose to follow. Either way, Lavan said, "The matter was out of my hands," thereby relinquishing any responsibility for his actions.

This answer is also lacking because it doesn't explain why Lavan could not have told Yaakov in advance that he was following the custom and Rachel could not marry before Leah. He could have asked if Yaakov wanted to go forward with a wedding or wait until Leah was married. Saying, "We do not marry the younger daughter first," just doesn't cut it.

The Ksav Sofer points out that when Lavan agreed to marry Rachel, he worded it in such a way that it could be understood that Leah had to be married first. Lavan's skillful use of words enabled him to trick others while remaining blameless.

Therein lay Lavan's weakness. He was loathe to go up against others. He sought to be in with the in-crowd and fit in with those around him. His name, Lavan, implies that he white-washed everything by covering up his wickedness. White is a neutral color that stays in the background and blends in. This is what Lavan sought to do, and that is how he managed to fool Yaakov. To Lavan, being in step with the people around him was more important than having principles that dictated his behavior. In fact, he blamed Yaakov for not realizing that this was the custom, and put the onus on him for not asking whether it was Leah or not!

Yaakov, on the other hand, knew the importance of standing up for what you believe in. He came from the house of Avraham Ha'Ivri, the one who stood firm on one side of the scale with the whole world of idolatry on the other. Despite the fact that "everyone is doing it," Yaakov could not imagine that someone would be so bound by his need to be popular that he would abandon truth and integrity.

Lavan's answer revealed the truth, and it did answer Yaakov's question. He didn't reveal the secret until it was too late because he sought approval from society and to him that was the source of his "morality." Unfortunately, the world we live in today has much of its morality dictated by the fickle whims of humanity. We must remember that we come from different stock. We, too, are the heirs to the strength of Avraham, and the truth of Yaakov.

A childless couple came to their Rebbe in tears. They had been married for many years and wanted a child desperately. The Rebbe heard their pleas, and felt very bad for them, but told them, "I'm sorry, but I can't help you. I see you are not destined to have children."

The husband, a devout follower of the Rebbe, was crushed, but accepted his lot with faith. Not so his wife. Incensed, she said, "Let's get out of here. We don't need a Rebbe who tells us we can't have children. We will go daven to HaShem on our own and we'll see that He will answer us!"

Indeed, the couple was answered just a few months later when they found out the woman was expecting a child. The Rebbe was right when he said he could not help them, because it was not the Rebbe's prayers they needed, but their own.