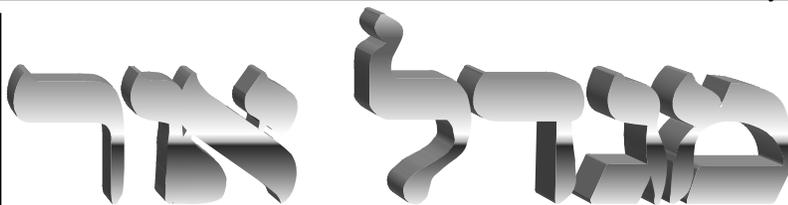


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

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 Aufruf and  
 Upcoming marriage of  
**Tzvi Menachem Weiss to  
 Rivki Rubinfeld.**  
 May you build a Bayis ne'eman  
 b'Yisrael l'sheim u'l'tiferes.

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:18 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:36 - שקיעה
- 9:04 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:40 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:26 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:38 - שקיעה
- 5:23\* - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:50 - צאת 72

\* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars  
 Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

**Did You Know?**

This coming Thursday is the fast of Asara B'Teves, the tenth of the Hebrew month of Teves, which commemorates the beginning of Nevuchadnetzar's siege of the first Bais HaMikdash which culminated in the Temple's destruction three years later on 9 Tammuz.

It also commemorates the tragedy of the Septuagint. The Egyptian-Greek king Ptolemy kidnapped 72 Jewish sages and locked them in separate rooms and ordered them to translate the Torah into Greek. Miraculously, all 72 of them came up with identical translations, even making the same changes to the text to avoid offending Ptolemy. (Megilla 9b)

Despite the open miracle, Chazal say this day was as bad for the Jews as the day the Golden Calf was made.

This translation opened the Torah to all comers, and being able to study the Written Torah without the inseparable Oral Torah led to its misuse and corruption.

It was now used as the basis for other religions, for persecution of the Jews, and led to such things as the Asara Harugei Malchus, the Ten Martyrs, killed "in lieu" of Yosef's brothers, the Inquisition, and the Holocaust.

Eliminating the necessity to study Torah from a teacher according to tradition, like from Ezra and Nechemia, sages who died on 9 Teves, was a deep, unfathomable tragedy, and so we fast.

**Thought of the week:**

There's no such thing as the "Meaning of Life." What's important is the meaning IN life.

**”ויגדו לו לאמר עוד יוסף חי וכי הוא משל בכל ארץ מצרים ויפג לבו כי לא האמין להם.”** (בר' מה:כו)  
**“And they told him ‘Yosef is still alive and he is ruler of all Egypt’ and [Yaakov’s] heart skipped a beat for he did not believe them.”**

The Midrash says that the punishment of liars is that even when they tell the truth, they are not believed. However, the commentaries in Parshas Vayeishev say that when the brothers threw Yosef in the pit, they knew weasels and other flesh-eating animals would likely devour him so they could honestly say, “a bad animal ate him.” This would imply that the brothers were careful to say the truth, much as Yaakov was exacting in his words when answering his father, Yitzchak, even when it was necessary to deceive him while following Rivka’s command.

If truth was such an integral part of the home of Yaakov Avinu, why would he not believe his sons, who were such great tzaddikim?

The answer is that he didn’t assume they were lying. Rather, his inability to believe them was rooted in his definition of life. Earlier, when Yehuda chose to “spare” Yosef’s life by selling him into slavery instead of murdering him, he may have been consigning Yosef to a fate worse than death. By being in a situation where he would be surrounded by debauchery and the glorification of sin, Yosef might have succumbed to temptation and become like one of the Egyptians. By sinning his life would have been considered death, as Chazal say, “Eildoers, even in their lifetimes, are considered dead.”

When the brothers told Yaakov that Yosef was still alive, he believed that Yosef might still eat, sleep, and breathe. What he didn’t believe was that Yosef had spent so many years in Egypt and was still a righteous tzaddik. That was not something he felt he could trust his sons to determine, especially based on Yehuda’s previous action, wherein he displayed an apathy towards this approach.

Yaakov’s heart was muted to the news because the joy Yaakov may have felt at hearing Yosef still lived was tempered by the fear that Yosef may have sinned. Only when Yosef proved that he was a righteous tzaddik who remembered and acted upon what his father taught him, did Yaakov feel the joy and his heart came to life again knowing that his son was truly “alive.” (For further explanation, see Klei Yakar on the words ‘Vayar es ha’agalos asher shalach Yosef.’)

The lesson we can take from this is that life is not about the pleasures and enjoyment we can take from it. Surely, we are supposed to enjoy the world the Creator gave us, but we must do so within the guidelines of the Torah. To do otherwise is nothing more than suffering a slow death. However, to really live, one must actively pursue Torah and Mitzvos and make efforts to live life as G-d commanded us.

*Mr. Hirsch\* dealt in livestock in Europe in the 1930’s. He had a gentile neighbor named Sefirak who each year would take two calves from him, and bring him back a full-grown cow. He kept the other calf as his payment for raising the animals.*

*When the Nazis י"ש were getting close to taking over their region, Sefirak approached Mr. Hirsch with an offer. “I will hide your son,” he said, “and he will live out the war.”*

*Mr. Hirsch was pained. “He cannot eat your food,” he said. “Will you be able to give him vegetables to eat?” Sefirak said that could be arranged. “Will you allow him not to work on Shabbos? And give him time to pray and put on Tefillin each day?” asked the worried father. At that, Sefirak vehemently shook his head. “I cannot do those things. It will be obvious that we are harboring a Jew and we will all be killed.”*

*“Then I’m sorry, Sefirak, I can’t take you up on your offer. To allow him to grow up without Judaism would not be saving his life, but condemning him to death.” Mr. Hirsch’s son did not stay with Sefirak. However, not only did he live out the war, but today he has a beautiful family of children and grandchildren who are devoted, G-d-fearing Jews. \*Names have been changed.*