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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:13 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:31 - שקיעה
- 8:42 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:18 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:06 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:32 - שקיעה
- 5:14 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:44 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

אגוטען שבת!

Did You Know?

R' Asher of Stolin offered the following homiletic interpretation of our posuk:

When one is thankful and constantly praises G-d for his lot, G-d responds generously. Therefore, when one is asked how he is or how his business is doing, he should respond positively for then HaShem will cause it to be so.

When a child brags about how wonderful his father is, the father will not say, "It isn't true, I'm really an awful person." Instead, he will do everything in his power to justify his child's claims.

This is implied in our posuk. If you say, "היטב, He is good (e.g. Boruch HaShem, things are great)," then HaShem responds by saying, "איטיב, I will surely be good to you."

Based on The Torah Treasury by R' M. Lieber - Artscroll/Mesorah

Thought of the week:

The ideal of faith is to have deliberate confidence in the character of G-d, Whose ways you may not understand at the time.

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הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו כי ירא אנכי אתו... ואתה אמרת היטב איטיב עמד (בראשית לביב)

"Rescue me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Eisav, for I fear him... and You have said, 'I will surely be good to you...'"

When one makes a promise, the understanding is that he or she will keep it. When the one making the promise is HaKadosh Boruch Hu, it goes without saying that the promise will be kept. Why did Yaakov feel the need here to "remind" HaShem of His promise?

The simple understanding is that Yaakov was afraid because he felt he had diminished his merits and might not be worthy of being saved. Therefore, explains the Ramban, Yaakov's plea to HaShem was that he should be saved regardless of his own merits or sins. He said, "You have done great acts of kindness for me, for which I have not been worthy. How much more so should You perform this kind act for me now, because You have promised to do it." It was not a reminder, but the basis for performing it. HaShem did much kindness without promising to do so. When He promises, surely it shall come to pass.

The Malbim adds another dimension to this exchange. He says that Yaakov prayed, "I am fearful from my brother Eisav, and afraid that he will harm my family. The fact that I am afraid despite Your promise to be with me and make my children numerous shows that I have fallen in my faith and am from the "ketanei ha'emunah," ones of little faith. Despite this, pray, save me."

The Malbim agrees that Yaakov felt unworthy of the salvation, yet believed that HaShem would do so in spite of this. As the Ramban explained, the fact that HaShem promised was reason enough to do it, no matter what Yaakov did or didn't deserve.

However, there may be one reason that Yaakov did deserve to be saved, and it is alluded to in the words of both these commentaries. The letter "vov" before a word can mean "and," thus including and continuing what was said before. It can also mean "but" or "or," differentiating and saying that what follows is unlike what preceded it. Perhaps here the latter use was intended.

Yaakov expressed his corporeal fear of Eisav that he might physically harm him and his family. "However," continued Yaakov, "You have promised to be continually good to me and mine, and that is reason enough for me to be saved."

Despite his normal human fears, Yaakov maintained his conviction that salvation lay in the hands of HaKadosh Boruch Hu. He knew that HaShem had promised to protect him and that was what he counted on. Although he implemented them, he knew it was not military tactics or diplomatic strategy that would save the day, but the Word of the Al-mighty, and that's where he placed his hopes.

It was true then; it is true today. In G-d we trust. You can bank on that.

A man was caught outside the gates of the city late one night which was considered suspicious. Normally, he would be hauled off to jail immediately but the man protested, "Unhand me! I belong to the household of the King." Not wanting to bear the wrath of the King but unwilling to take the man at his word, he was detained in comfortable quarters until he could be presented to the King the next morning.

The King said, "I have never seen you before! How dare you claim to be from my household?"

"Your majesty," pleaded the man. "I have neither family nor friends in this city but I have heard that you are a just and merciful ruler. I said what I did because I trust that you will not let me down and will protect an unworthy person such as me simply because of your compassion. I am at your mercy."

When the King heard this he proclaimed, "Leave the man unharmed and give him some money to help him on his way. If he has so much faith in me, I certainly cannot disappoint him."