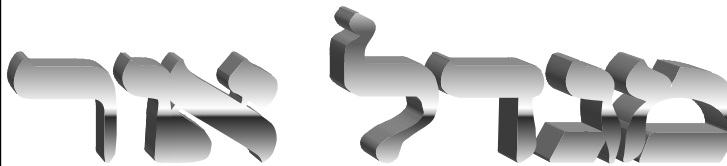


The Chosen People? Find out WHY they are chosen.

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

This week's Migdal Ohr is dedicated to
my amazing wife **Esther Toby**.

She is the source of all the bracha in my
life and without her none of it would be
possible. May Hashem shower her and
all of us with good health, happiness,
bracha, hatzlacha, menuchas hanefesh,
and a very sweet new year.

Zmanim for שבת וי"ט

Wesley Hills, NY

12:52 -	חצות ער"ה
6:54 -	הדלקת נרות
7:12 -	שקיעה
9:01 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:42 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:46 -	סוף זמן תפילה
12:52 -	חצות
7:10 -	שקיעה
After 7:52 -	הדלקת נרות ב'
7:08 -	שקיעה יום ב'
7:50 -	צאת הכוכבים
8:21 -	צאת 72

אכתיבה וחתימה טובה!

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Now You Know!

Several weeks ago, we read of the Ben Sorer U'moreh, the wayward son. He was put to death before he had a chance to commit all the sins the Torah testifies will be his future.

A boy can only become a 'wayward son' in the first three months after his Bar Mitzvah, because that's the beginning of his life and will set the tone for the rest of it. Were he good then and only later begin his decline, his ignoble end would not be as sure.

This is why we are so careful at the beginning of the year, with special behavior and stringencies from Rosh HaShana through Yom Kippur.

If, at the start, we behave in a manner which is loftier than normal, we can set the tone for the year ahead and move it to a much higher trajectory.

When dipping apple in honey, we say, "May you renew 'aleinu' a sweet new year." Instead of 'lanu' for us, we say 'aleinu' upon us.

Everything Hashem does is good, but we may not recognize it. Therefore, we ask that the year ahead, and all it brings, be sweet, acceptable and pleasant for us, even if it might be challenging.

Thought of the week:

When you say "It's impossible," are you really saying, "I'm not that good?" Don't worry about it. Hashem IS that good!

”וה'פקד את שרה כאשר אמר, ויעשה' לשרה כאשר דבר.” (בראשית כא:א)

“And the L-rd remembered Sarah as He had said, and did for Sarah as He had spoken.” (Beraishis 21:1)

On Rosh HaShana, we read of the miraculous birth of Yitzchak, to aged parents, Avraham and Sarah. Here, the Torah tells us Hashem carried out His promise of descendants from the union of Avraham and Sarah. Rashi recognizes the potential confusion and explains where and when the “speaking” and “saying” took place.

When Hashem told Avraham to circumcise himself, and then to circumcise his offspring at eight days old, it was to establish a covenant for all time with Avraham's descendants. When Hashem told him Sarah would give birth to his child, Avraham fell upon his face and replied that he was unworthy of such a great gift. It would be sufficient to have Yishmael live and create progeny. To this, Hashem answered and said, “BUT, Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son whom you shall name Yitzchak.” This, says Rashi, was the “saying” to which our verse refers.

The “speaking” goes even further back, to when, shortly after the war of the four kings and five kings, which Avraham won, Hashem told him that he would be great and prosper. Avraham asked, “but I am childless, and all this wealth will go to my servant Eliezer.” There, before he could finish getting the words out of his mouth, explains the Ramban, Hashem told Avraham he would have children of his own. This was the “dvar Hashem” which led to Hashem enabling Sarah to give birth, the “speaking” referred to in our posuk.

We find two striking messages here which apply to all of us on Rosh Hashana. First of all, Hashem doesn't forget us. The word “pakad,” which is used to mean remember, also has the root of the word “pikadon,” a deposit; something which is guarded. The good Hashem intends for us is never forgotten by Him, even if we forget about it, or are unsure He still remembers. When it happens, we realize it was in Hashem's plan all along.

Then, we find the idea of the response to our problems. When Avraham lamented that he had no children or heirs, Hashem instantly corrected him, declaring that Eliezer was not going to be his heir, but rather, a child of his own loins would inherit him. Hashem didn't decide to give Avraham a child because he asked for it. He intended to give him Yitzchak all along, but waited to reveal this until Avraham reached out.

On Rosh HaShana, we stand before Hashem asking for a new year. We consider where we have fallen short, but also the things in our lives we feel we are missing. We want to do better, yet we also wonder what the point is, when we are still lacking many things we feel will help us be complete. Therefore, we begin the day with this Torah passage.

It reminds us of the good Hashem already has planned for us; simply waiting for us to reach out. We are not answered and granted life because we ask, but because we understand from Whom we are to request it. That recognition of Hashem's Kingship, and mastery over everything in Creation, is the catalyst for the salvation we hope for every day.

The Bluzhober Rebbe z"l retold the miraculous story of a terrible game the Nazis enjoyed. They forced the Jewish concentration camp inmates to dig a pit twenty feet across. They then had to jump to the other side. If any of them made it, they could live for another day. The ones that fell into the pit were shot and buried there.

Many took running jumps; a futile effort. The Bluzhober Rebbe walked up to the edge of the pit with a few of his Chasidim, closed his eyes and proclaimed, “We are jumping!” When he opened his eyes, he found himself on the other side of the pit. Next to him, he saw one of his closest Chasidim. Amazed, the Rebbe said to him, “I know how I made it across. I was holding onto the kapoteh (cloak) of my saintly father and grandfathers. Their holy merit carried me. But how did you make it across?” The disciple replied with simple faith – “Rebbe, I held on to YOUR kapoteh!”