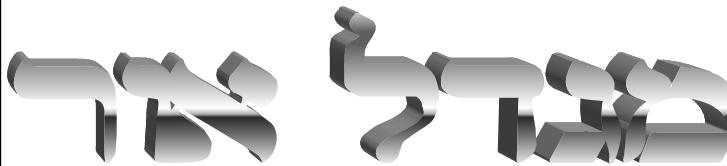


Mazel Tov on the completion of another year of Migdal Ohr!

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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

Zmanim will return!

Now You Know!

We begin saying "Mashiv HaRuach U'Morid HaGesheim" at Mussaf of Shmini Atzeres. The Gemara explains that we would not want to begin saying it on Sukkos itself, as rain during the holiday is a sign of Hashem's displeasure.

Customs vary. Some places announce "Mashiv HaRuach!" before Mussaf, so people would begin to say it in their silent Shemona Esrai. Other places do not announce it and the tzibbur doesn't begin to say it until Mincha, after Tefilas Gesheim has been recited publicly.

One who is davening alone does not recite Tefilas Gesheim nor is there an announcement.

If one is praying after the Tzibbur has presumably said Gesheim he cannot omit Mashiv HaRuach, though very early, before the Tzibbur has said Gesheim, he might not have to say it. The best practice, therefore, would seem to be, to say "Morid HaTal" in one's Shemona Esrai so he has fulfilled both opinions.

The Netziv, in Harchev Davar, says that on Sukkos, all the nations of the world would gather in Jerusalem to celebrate the festival and pray for the rains.

They did this in the days of Dovid and Shlomo and will do so again when Moshiach is here. The nations were also there when Shlomo spoke his words of Koheles, and it is for this reason that the name of G-d, "Elokim," is used exclusively in it, for they do not know more of Him.

Only Klal Yisrael merits knowing G-d's name of mercy, His attribute of "Hashem."

Thought of the week:

If you see what needs repairing and how to repair it, then you have found a piece of the world G-d left for you to complete.

But if you only see what is wrong and what is ugly in the world, then it is you, yourself that needs repairing.

– R' Menachem Mendel Schneerson z"l

”ואכלת לפני ה'... למען תלמד ליראה את ה' אלקיך כל הימים.” (דברים יד:כג)

“You shall eat [maaser sheini] before Hashem, your G-d, in the place where He chooses to place His name... so that you learn to fear Hashem, your G-d, all the days.” (Vayikra 23:34)

Read on the eighth day of Pesach, second day of Shavuos, and Shmini Atzeres, this parsha only begins with Aser Taaser when those days of Pesach of Shavuos fall on Shabbos, but on Shmini Atzeres we begin here regardless. It starts with the idea that we bring our second tithe, Maaser Sheini, to Yerushalayim and eat it there. The Torah is quick to provide a reason for this.

We are to bring it and consume it in Yerushalayim so we will learn to fear Hashem “all the days.” Simply understood, being at the Bais HaMikdash, surrounded by the Kohanim and Sanhedrin, we will have many good teachers to guide us in living our lives according to Torah and Mitzvos. That is one explanation of, ‘Ima’an tilmad,’ so you should learn.

The other explanation, preferred by the Ibn Ezra and others, is that you become habituated to fear/see Hashem all the days. This takes the experience to another level. Not just learning intellectually, hearing discourses and lectures from rabbis and scholars, but becoming immersed in the experience of being surrounded by Hashem and those who serve Him.

A person who regularly experiences the company of good, righteous, and holy people, will become influenced to become more like them. It will happen almost “by osmosis,” without conscious thought or effort. It will also become a subconscious part of who they are. They will automatically gravitate towards goodness, proper behavior, and connection to Hashem.

By visiting Yerushalayim over and over, and spending more and more time with the tzaddikim and good people there, a person will slowly become one who is more aware and connected to Hashem. Thus, he will behave that way “all the days,” meaning even when he is not with them, but has returned to his home territory. (All the days also means eternal existence, referring to the mitzvos and good behavior which will last beyond a person's lifetime on this earth.)

This message reflecting the benefit of good and positive company is even more appropriate on Shmini Atzeres, when Hashem requests that Klal Yisrael remain with Him an extra day, after everyone else has gone home from the Sukkos holiday. He wants to connect with us and give us the one-on-one attention that will influence us even more through the long winter months ahead, and warm our souls with the ambiance of sanctity and Torah. Wherever we go, we will be able to see and feel Hashem's presence, and that will go a long, long way.

A Rabbi told his congregation that whoever says the words of “Ana Hashem” with all his heart and soul, will have all his wishes granted. The people were excited, but came back to ask him whether it was the phrase, “Ana Hashem hoshia na – Please, Hashem, save us” or “Ana Hashem hatzlicha na – grant us success”?

The rabbi smiled and said, “I was referring to “Ana Hashem ki ani avdecha – Please, Hashem, for I am Your servant!”

The Bais HaMikdash was located in the territory of Binyamin, alluded to by the phrase, “it dwells between his shoulders.” The shoulders are where the yoke of an ox is placed, enabling it to do meaningful work and harness its power in the most efficient way possible.

So, too, does the yoke of Torah enable a person to maximize their strengths in the service of Hashem in the most painless and effective manner.