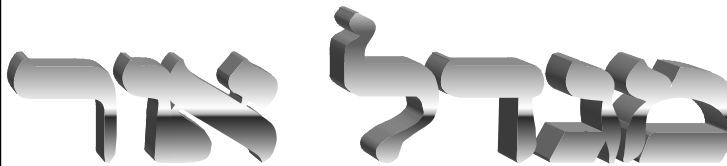


**Show people what
real beauty and
inspiration is.**

Print, e-mail, and share Migdal Ohr
with others. You'll be glad you did.

E-mail 'Subscribe' to
info@JewishSpeechWriter.com

©2025 – J. Gewirtz



A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

This issue sponsored
I'llui nishmas

Dr. Howard Nimchinsky z"l
ר' אלחנן פייוול בן דוב זאב ז"ל

By his loving family.

Yahrtzeit 28 Menachem Av

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

7:47 -	הדלקת נרות
8:05 -	שקיעה
8:42 -	זק"ש מ"א
9:30 -	זק"ש גר"א
10:40 -	סוף זמן תפילה
8:04 -	שקיעה
8:50* -	צאת הכוכבים
9:17 -	צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Thursday 8:15:00 AM מולד אלול

Rosh Chodesh is Thursday and Friday
Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and Chabad.org

Now You Know!

When a person sins, Hashem wishes for them to repent, and gives them time to do so. When a capital case is judged by Bais Din, a Rabbinical Court, even if the verdict is ultimately death, the initial perspective is to seek an acquittal.

The judges are directed to find whatever merits they can for the person, and if they do believe he is guilty, they need to sleep on the decision before they pronounce him so.

Even after a guilty verdict, if any loophole can be found for him, it is attempted and we will reopen the case. But there is an exception.

As it says this week, one who seeks to convince others to worship a god other than Hashem, is condemned soundly. We do not argue on his behalf or go out of our way to protect him.

What he has done is more nefarious than murder. A murderer only removes someone from this world, while a *ma'is* removes them from the next world; from the eternal existence.

Often people think they cannot keep the Torah because they have to live their lives; by working on Shabbos, or eating and enjoying prohibited foods; etc. **They are missing the boat.** The eternal Torah should not be abandoned for a temporary existence, and this parsha reinforces that for us.

Thought of the week:

Christianity is a religion created by Man, to define G-d. Judaism is a religion created by G-d, to define Man. – R' Samson Raphael Hirsch

"אבד תאבדון את כל המקומות ... על ההרים הרמים ועל הגבעות ותחת כל עץ רענן." (דברים יב:ב)

***"Eradicate the places where the nations you are inheriting served their gods, on the high mountains, upon the hills, and under every leafy tree."* (Devarim 12: 2)**

The Jews were commanded by Moshe that upon their advent to Eretz Yisrael, they were to uproot any remnant of idolatry from the previous inhabitants. While they didn't need to flatten the mountains or hills, even if they had been worshiped, and they only needed to cut down trees that had been served as foreign gods, this verse is talking about getting rid of the idolatry that was placed in these locations.

In fact, in the Mishna in Avoda Zara, Rabbi Akiva uses this verse as a sign to indicate to the Jews where to find the avoda zara they were to uproot. These were settings where the Amorites would typically establish their idols for worship. The commentaries explain that these were places people were naturally drawn to for their beauty or majesty, or perhaps for their shade and calm. They would therefore place shrines and idols there, so people would serve them while visiting.

Unlike them, we are not to offer sacrifices to Hashem in all these places, but rather, we are to seek out and come to the place Hashem will have chosen to rest His name, referring to either the Mishkan at Shilo or the Bais HaMikdash in Jerusalem. In this distinction, we find a difference between how the priests of the other nations would act, and how we are to act.

The people who established these places of worship sought out inspiring locales, which would naturally send people's minds and hearts soaring. The majesty of nature would be conflated with the idol, and they would be in a mindset to worship them. This is why churches and cathedrals are most often tall, imposing structures with vaulted ceilings, so one's feelings of grandeur are stirred artificially, and then that feeling is superimposed on a deity or god they are supposed to worship.

As Jews, we do not do this. While our shuls and study halls should be nice, the sole source of inspiration is to be Hashem. He doesn't need cosmetic assistance for His majesty to shine through. Simply reflecting on all we see of Him, from nature to miracles to Divine Providence for every living creature, should be sufficient to lift our souls.

The nations recruit others to their cause, and converts are considered valuable gains who strengthen that god and gives him/it a more concrete existence. Those "gods" need outside help to make them real and viable.

Not so Hashem. He stands on His own and remains the sole power in the Universe regardless of what people think or know of Him. We don't have to "help" him by establishing a temple of the finest materials on the highest peak. Mount Sinai was the holiest place in the universe when Hashem's presence was there, though it wasn't the tallest mountain. Once His presence left, it was just a plain mountain. If we reflect on what this means, we will naturally be drawn to His holiness, and come home to Jerusalem.

A boy was walking home one day when he heard his little brother screaming. As he quickened his pace, he made out the word "Help!" and broke into a run. Rounding the corner of their house, he saw his brother being pawed by the hugest dog he had ever seen.

Without thinking twice, he hurled himself at the dog, batting it in the nose and wrestling it into submission. The noise brought out the neighbor who owned the dog. As he led the whimpering beast to his cage, the neighbor said to the lad "I had no idea you could wrestle like that!"

"Neither did I," the boy softly replied, "but until today, I never had to."