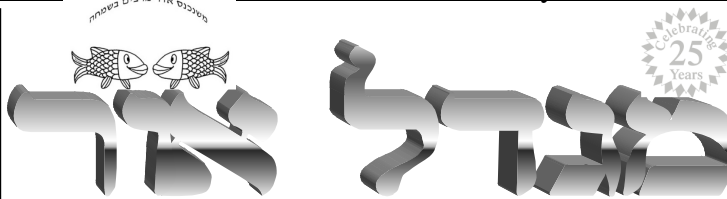


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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

6:51 - הדלקת נרות
7:09 - שקיעה
זק"ש מ"א
9:18 - זק"ש גר"א
9:59 -
11:00 - סוף זמן תפילה
7:10 - שקיעה
7:52* - צאת הכוכבים
8:23 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Now You Know!

There are few Rashis in Parshas Vayakhel, but at the end, Rashi makes a lengthy comment, quoting the Midrash Tanchuma, about the copper used to make the kiyor, the laver.

The kiyor was a large copper basin with spouts from which the Kohanim would wash their hands and feet before performing the service in the Mishkan or Bais HaMikdash.

This procedure was so crucial that failure to wash would make the Kohain liable for death.

Rashi tells us the materials to make this laver came from the copper mirrors the Jewish women used to beautify themselves, and how Moshe thought they should be rejected, but Hashem found them very precious.

It was through these mirrors that the women in Egypt ensured the continuity of the Jewish People by having children. This showed their faith in Hashem and a brighter future.

In fact, no measurement is given for the kiyor, because it had to include whatever mirrors would be brought!

The kiyor strengthened Shalom Bayis, and it was from its water that a Sota would be given to drink.

Perhaps the message of the mirrors for Shalom Bayis was that we must look at fixing up ourselves, not others, and similarly, the Kohanim were to take a hard look in the mirror to be sure they were worthy of serving as Hashem's emissaries.

Thought of the week:

Living a Torah life is more about the journey than the destination. (Discuss!)

"ויצו משה ויעבירו קול במחנה לאמר איש ואשה אל יעשו עוד... ויכלא העם מהביא." (שמות לז:ו)

"Moshe commanded, and they proclaimed in the camp, saying, 'Man and woman shall not do more work... and the nation ceased from bringing.'" (Exodus 36:6)

Hashem's request that the people donate to the construction of an abode for His presence in the Wilderness was met with unprecedented enthusiasm. This greatest building campaign in history saw people running to contribute, and it was complete in record time.

As people had been working very hard and diligently, when Moshe heard that they had more than enough to construct the Mishkan, he wanted to make sure no one would be dejected that they worked for nothing. Instead of telling people not to bring any more items, he said, "Don't make anything else." The people understood on their own that their items were not needed and they stayed away.

And therein lies a great praise of the Jewish People. The nation stopped bringing their items. But what about the efforts they had expended? Should all that time, effort, and money go to waste? It didn't go to waste - and that's what we are learning about the Jews in this posuk.

The alacrity with which the Jews responded to the chance to donate to the Mishkan was impressive. However, one could not be sure of the donors' motives. Maybe they wanted to bask in the reflected glory by pointing to some fixture and saying, "I made that!" Maybe they wanted to feel they had done something for Hashem, thereby reducing their debt to Him ever-so-slightly. And maybe they were purely altruistic.

From the way they responded, we know their intentions were purely motivated by their desire to do Hashem's will. He described the building He wanted, and when that was accomplished, they were happy. No one felt the need to include his or her last item, because it wasn't about them, it was about fulfilling Hashem's word.

The effort expended in preparing items was the fulfillment of Hashem's will by itself. The items didn't need to be used for the Jews to have dedicated themselves to building the Mishkan. One who sits and studies trying to understand a difficult piece of Torah has succeeded even without clarity, because he's invested his time in connecting to Hashem. That is how they looked at it, and they knew their efforts were not in vain.

A braisa is taught (Pesachim 22b, Kiddushin 57a and elsewhere) that Shimon Ha'amsuni explained every 'es' in the Torah to include something else. However, when he reached the posuk, "Es Hashem Elokecha Tirah," which says: "(es) the L-rd your G-d shall you revere," he retracted this approach, saying there was nothing that could be considered adjunct to Hashem or included in the mitzva to revere Him; one could not fear anyone as he did the Al-mighty.

His students asked, "Our Master! What will become of all the previous explanations you rendered?" He responded, "As I have received reward for expounding them, I will receive reward from separating myself from an untrue approach."

It remained this way until R' Akiva came along and said the 'es' included Talmidei Chachamim, Torah scholars. Perhaps he felt that Shimon Ha'amsuni's behavior proved that all he did and said was not for his own glory, but to fulfill the will of Hashem. In that way, he WAS a part of G-d, and so too are Torah Scholars who seek only to understand Hashem and perform His will.