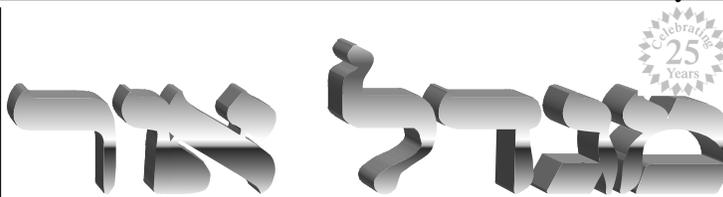


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Mrs. Molly Shipper a"h
Yahrtzeit 10 Nisan, and
Tziona bas Yekusiel
Mrs. Tziona Lichtenstein a"h
Yahrtzeit 20 Nisan

A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:06 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:24 - שקיעה
- 9:03 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:45 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:50 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:25 - שקיעה
- 8:08* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:38 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Now You Know!

Parshas Vayikra usually falls out about two weeks before Pesach, or just before Purim (in a leap year.) These are both times that we are especially involved in tzedakah, charity.

We help others financially, not out of the goodness of our own hearts, but because we understand that we have been granted prosperity in order to give it to those who need it, as the messengers of Hashem.

By emulating Hashem, Who feeds the hungry and clothes the naked, we become close to Him.

The word karov, meaning close, is the root of korban, sacrifice or offering, things intended to bring us closer to Hashem as well.

This Parsha also includes the mitzvah to put salt on korbanos. Salt, as we know, is a preservative. So how do we preserve the closeness we have to Hashem? By trying to be more like Him every day.

You've probably heard the phrase, "Salt your money away," which people understand as storing it for a rainy day. But that isn't the case. The origin is a phrase said in ancient Jerusalem, "Melach Mamon Chaseir," meaning "the salt of money is 'chaseir,' having less because you gave it to others.

By giving tzedakah and being kind, we protect our prosperity and will be able to continue to do good things.

Thought of the week:

People are impressed by talent. G-d is impressed by character.

"ונפש כי תקריב קרבן מנחה לה' סלת יהיה קרבנו ויצק עליה שמן ונתן עליה לבנה." (ויקרא ב:א)

"If a soul shall offer a mincha offering to Hashem, his offering shall be fine flour, and he shall pour oil and put frankincense upon it." (Shmos 2:1)

This is the only time where the person bringing a sacrifice is referred to as, "nefesh," a soul. Other places it speaks of a person, a man or a woman, etc. Here, however, it is different.

Rashi quotes the Gemara in Menachos (104b) where R' Yitzchak says, "Why does the Torah change the terminology to "soul"? For the Holy One Blessed Be He says, "Who brings a voluntary offering of flour? A poor man. I will consider it as if he has sacrificed to Me his soul."

Elsewhere, the Torah speaks of not withholding wages, and paying on time, because the worker risks his life for his money, and it uses the word "nefesh." (Devarim 24:15) Again, the poor man exchanges his life for money, so when he gives of his possessions to Hashem, Hashem considers that as if he has offered his very soul. But perhaps there is a caveat.

When this man brings his offering, the Torah says it must be fine flour. The coarse grain must be ground and sifted to produce a refined product. It must have aromatic oil and spices. So too, must the person refine himself and beautify his actions before Hashem.

The Netziv in Haamek Davar relates that the grain offerings atone for poor character traits. (He also discusses how moods play a role in one's behavior.) Based on this understanding, it is logical that the offering should be something that was coarse and became refined, because that is what we are to do with ourselves.

When a person makes an offering to Hashem, he must do it wholeheartedly. A grudging or cynical approach is counterproductive. Often, a person who is poor feels put upon, or unloved, by Hashem. He brings an offering, but if it's less perfect, he feels that should be accepted and appreciated just as much as a much better offering. Remember Kayin, who offered mediocre produce as a korban and Hashem dismissed it? That is the same message, that if we wish to offer to Hashem, it must be the best possible under the circumstances.

It's not sufficient to give and say, "I gave." Rather, one must do everything he can to make it pleasing and fine. Then, Hashem will look at it and say, "This person has offered to Me his very soul."

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the home-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his family. The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house. The carpenter's heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.

When the carpenter finished his work and the boss came to inspect the house, the contractor handed the front-door key to the carpenter with a big smile. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you."

What a shock! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, the carpenter would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home he had built none too well. So it is with us. We build our lives in a distracted way, reacting rather than acting, willing to put up less than the best. Then with a shock we look at the situation we have created and find that we are now living in the house we have built. If we had realized, we would have done it differently.