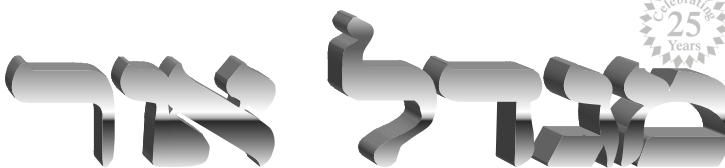


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Mazel Tov to
**Chaikel Schwimmer and
Rena Hanan** on your marriage!
*May Hashem shower you with
bracha and fill your home with the
best He has to offer as you fill it
with Torah, mitzvos, and joy.*

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

| | |
|---------|---------------|
| 7:29 - | הדלקת נרות |
| 7:47 - | שקיעה |
| 8:42 - | זק"ש מ"א |
| 9:27 - | זק"ש גר"א |
| 10:36 - | סוף זמן תפילה |
| 7:48 - | שקיעה |
| 8:33* - | צאת הכוכבים |
| 9:01 - | צאת 72 |

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

מולד אייר 8:30:02 PM

Rosh Chodesh is Monday and Tuesday
Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com and hebc.com

Now You Know!

In Parshas Shmini, Hashem directs us on the laws of Kashrus. We may eat only certain animals, ones that have very specific signs.

Though we don't know the full reasons for any mitzvos, we are able to gain some insight by way of 'ta'amim' (lit.: tastes), understandings which give us a bit of the flavor of the commandment.

For example, we don't eat animals that are hunters or predators. We, as human beings, are not supposed to oppress those weaker than us. We don't revel in their failures, nor attempt to tear them apart.

There is a bird called a 'chasida,' which the Torah tells us is kind to its species. It is forbidden. Why? Only Hashem knows, but we do know that this bird limits its kindness to those that are like it, and not to those who are different. This is not a Jewish trait.

The fins and scales of a fish represent the desire to "get ahead" as fins propel the fish, but also integrity, as the scales protect the fish from outside forces. We are to avoid being influenced by society, but also positively impact it.

You are what you eat, says the Torah, and we could all stand to eat a little better, so we can be better. It may not be the whole reason, but it's enough of one to love what Kosher represents – that Hashem thinks highly of us and wants to see us succeed and live up to the hype.

Thought of the week:
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. So are problems, solutions, and hope.

”דברו אל בני ישראל לאמר זאת החיה אשר תאכלו מכל הבהמה אשר על הארץ.” (ויקרא יא:ב)

“They shall speak to the Children of Israel saying, “These are the creatures you may eat from among all the land animals.”” (Vayikra 11:2)

When it came to most mitzvos, Moshe would teach them to Aharon alone. Then Aharon's children would enter, and Moshe would teach it to them as Aharon listened. Then the elders would enter and Moshe would teach it again, and Aharon and his sons listened. Finally, he would teach the mitzva to all the Jews, as Aharon, his sons, and the elders listened. Each of them would then teach the mitzva to the successive groups until they'd each learned it four times.

Here, though, Moshe was to tell it to Aharon. Aharon would tell it to his children, and they would pass it on. What changed here, and why does it make a difference? Rashi tells us that this time, Hashem made them all equal messengers to teach the laws of Kashrus to the Jewish People because they had all equally remained silent when Nadav and Avihu died. More than that, says Rashi, they all equally accepted Hashem's decree with love.

When Nadav and Avihu, Aharon's two older sons died, it was a huge shock. They were great tzaddikim, who excelled in their Torah knowledge, and yet, in an instant, everything was gone because they did something Hashem did not approve of. There were many questions swirling around in everyone's heads. “How could this happen?” “What could they possibly have done that was so bad they needed to die?” “Isn't Hashem supposed to be merciful?” The praise of Aharon and his sons was that they didn't give voice to any of these questions. Instead, they reminded themselves that Hashem loves us and knows what He is doing. All we can do is watch, and hopefully, learn.

When it comes to Judaism, many people sadly think of it as a religion that restricts its adherents. You can't do this, and you can't do that. They find it difficult to “give up” so many things. “Look at all the people eating whatever they want and enjoying themselves, why is it OK for them but not for us?” [The Midrash Tanchuma, also quoted by Rashi, answers that question.] “Maybe a pious ascetic could follow these draconian rules, but how are normal people like me supposed to do it?”

Therefore, Hashem directed Moshe, and Aharon, and Elazar and Isamar, to teach the laws of Kashrus. These were people who realized Hashem sees more of the picture than we do and knows what is harmful for us. Not only Moshe, nor Aharon, were able to do this, but Aharon's remaining sons as well. They learned by watching their father, and they set the example for others.

Instead of seeing a limitation or deprivation, they viewed themselves as having been saved from mistakes. Just as a nutritionist will tell someone that certain foods will hurt their bodies, and others will keep them healthy, Hashem provided us with guidelines for what we can eat if we hope to remain spiritually thriving. We don't exactly understand the mechanism (see sidebar) but we trust that Hashem has our best interests in mind, and that these strategies are just what the doctor ordered.

A man had two sons, an optimist and a pessimist. He gave the pessimist the gift of a remote-control car, with all the bells and whistles. The boy was gloomy and morose. “It's probably going to break before the week is out.”

To the other son, the father presented a large pile of manure. The boy began jumping up and down with excitement. “Oh, thank you Daddy!” he squealed. “I just KNOW there's a pony here, somewhere!”