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Parshat Shlach

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The Year Ends

Monday was the final day of the academic year. Look for video and pictures from the Gala Siyum in the Golan in next week's newsletter! For now, enjoy this video of a private shiur (Hebrew) given to the Yeshiva by Rebbe David Abuchatzeira. Every student was able to get a private bracha following the shiur.

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All alumni are invited to:

Shabbat with HaRav Yoel Rackovsky In memory of Mrs. Lucy Lowenstein a"h

When: Shabbat Parshat Shlach (16 Sivan) **THIS SHABBAT!**

What: Oneg Shabbat and Seudah Shlishit

Where: At the home of Moshe and Aliza Pilevsky
318 Kirby St., Woodmere, NY

Oneg Shabbat - 9:30 PM

Seudat Shlishit - 6:30 PM followed by Ma'ariv at the Pilevsky home.

*The Young Israel of Woodmere has an early Mincha at 2:00 PM and 5:30 PM

*Please send all RSVP's to ryoelshbbs@gmail.com.



We ask that everyone please respond via e-mail if you are going to join. We ask that everyone please respond via e-mail if you are going to join. Even if you live in the community, please R.S.V.P. so that we can order the correct amount of food! Please let us know if you will be coming Friday night and/or Seudat Shlishit.

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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Shlach

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon.

Printer Friendly Sicha



"The Incident of Miriam and the Sin of the Spies"

AN INTERESTING JUXTAPOSITION

Chazal tell us: "Why is the section of the spies adjoined to the section of Miriam? Because she had been punished for evil talk, which she had spoken against her brother, and these wicked people saw and did not learn a lesson" (Rashi Bamidbar 13:2). Although chronologically the episode of Miriam did precede the affair of the spies, we know that "The Torah's events were not recorded in chronological order" (Pesachim 6b). In last week's Parsha, for example, the section discussing the Ark's journey: "Vayehi binsoa haaron" (Bamidbar 10:35), is not written in its proper location. Chazal tell us that this section is surrounded by inverted "nuns" because "The Torah made signs for this passage, in front of it and after, to say that this is not its place. But why was it written here? In order to make an interruption between one trouble and another" (Rashi Bamidbar 10:35 citing the Gemara in Shabbat 116a).

Accordingly if the Torah chose this juxtaposition of the incident with the spies together with that of Miriam there must be an additional reason for it. Chazal therefore explain that the Torah is criticizing the spies for not having derived a lesson from what happened to Miriam.

Superficially, this is very difficult to understand. What moral can we expect the spies to have learned from Miriam? Had the case been that Miriam spoke loshon hara against sticks and stones and was punished for it, we could have derived by means of a kal vachomer that if it is forbidden to speak loshon hara about sticks and stones then certainly we may not speak this way of a fellow Jew, how much more so a Talmid Chacham, and even more so of the greatest sage and prophet that ever lived! How does the fact that Miriam spoke loshon hara against the greatest sage and prophet teach us that we are forbidden to speak negatively about sticks and stones? What type of a kal vachomer is this? There are countless flaws in such logic! What then is the meaning of this criticism against the spies for not having learned a lesson from what happened to Miriam?

A further difficulty lies in the fact that the Torah commands us: "beware of a tzoraat affliction ... Remember what Hashem, your G-d, did to Miriam on the way, when you were leaving Egypt" (Devarim 24:8-9) - "if you wish to take care that you not be stricken with tzoraat do not speak loshon hara, remember what was done to Miriam who spoke against her brother Moshe and was stricken with afflictions of tzoraat" (Rashi Devarim 24:9). This implies that not only should the spies have learned a lesson, but we too must realize the severity of speaking loshon hara from what happened to Miriam. (According to the Ramban "beware of a tzoraat affliction ..." is a positive commandment: "we are commanded to verbally remember to take to heart

what Hashem did to Miriam when she spoke of her brother, despite her being a prophetess, as a means of distancing ourselves from speaking loshon hara" (Ramban's appendix to the Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot - Mitzvat Asei 7). How can we learn from Miriam who spoke loshon hara against Moshe Rabenu that it is even forbidden to speak loshon hara against an ordinary Jew? Perhaps there is nothing wrong with speaking loshon hara against someone who is not on such a high level?

We can explain as follows: What does the A-Imighty say to Miriam and Aharon when He rebukes them? "... My servant Moshe; in My entire house he is trusted. Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a vision and not in riddles, and at the image of Hashem does he gaze" (Bamidbar 12:6-8). You should have understood that if I chose Moshe to be My messenger to take Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt, to give them the Torah, and to carry out the myriad other great things that he did, then it was obviously not for no reason but due to his special virtues (even if you do not know what they are). In that case "why did you not fear to speak against My servant Moshe" (ibid.).

The spies should have applied similar reasoning (following the incident of Miriam) - if this is the Land Hashem chose as the residing place of His Divine Presence to reside, if it was this Land He elected to give to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, and to bring Klal Yisrael to, then there must be something special about this Land that we do not find elsewhere. We may not be able to discern precisely what these advantages are, but we should at least believe that they exist and not slander the Chosen Land as if it were some terrible place, G-d forbid.

EVERY JEW IS A GREAT STAR

The same applies to every Jew. Each Jew is a member of the Chosen people and he therefore must have virtues, because Hashem did not choose Am Yisrael as His nation for no reason. Hashem said to Avraham: "gaze now toward the Heavens and count the stars if you are able to count them ... so shall your offspring be" (Bereishit 15:5). The stars may appear to be miniscule but in truth they are vast. The same applies to Hashem's children, even when they appear small and insignificant they are in fact enormous. We must therefore take great care not to speak loshon hara against any Jew, even if we are unable to discern it, he is in fact very great, just as we are unable to discern the vastness of a star.

WHY DID THE CLOUD DEPART?

The Torah tells us that when Hashem was about to punish Miriam for having spoken loshon hara: "The cloud had departed from atop the Tent, and behold! Miriam was afflicted with tzoraat" (Bamidbar 12:10). Rashi comments that the cloud departed because Hashem did not wish to punish Miriam as long as His Divine Presence was still present: "this can be compared to a king who said to (his son's) teacher, 'punish my son harshly but do not punish him harshly until I leave you, for I have pity on him'". Hashem therefore removed His Divine Presence from the tent, and only later on was Miriam punished.

Another reason offered is that the cloud is the embodiment of the Glory of the Shchina. Miriam was about to be afflicted with tzoraat which would render her impure, and it would be inappropriate for one who is tamei to enter a location in which the Shchina is present. The cloud therefore had to depart in order that Miriam be punished with tzoraat. We find a similar idea with our matriarch Sarah. The angel asked Avraham "where is Sarah your wife?" (Bereishit 18:9), to which Avraham's response was "'behold! - in the tent'" (ibid.). The Torah immediately tells us: "Now Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent" (ibid. 10). Why was Sarah first "in the tent" and a moment later she was "at the entrance of the tent"? One explanation given is that Avraham Avinu's tent was the camp of the Shchina - "a cloud would be stationed over the tent" (Rashi Bereishit 24:67). Given that at that point "Sarah had begun menstruating for the course of younger women returned to her on that day" (Rashi Bereishit 18:8), she was forced to exit the tent and stand at its entrance. By the same token, because Miriam was about to become afflicted with the tumah of tzoraat, the cloud had to depart so that Miriam would not find herself under the cloud in a state of impurity.

Another explanation offered for the departure of the cloud is that the halacha forbids inspection of "negaim" on a cloudy day (see Mishna Negaim, perek 2, Mishna 2), because it is impossible to truly distinguish whether the spots fall under one of the four categories of sighting that would render one tamei. The fact is that in the case of Miriam there was no need for such a determination for Hashem Himself had already decreed "let her be quarantined outside the camp" (Bamidbar 12:14), as Chazal tell us that "the Holy One Blessed is He accorded great honor to Miriam at that time by saying: 'I am a Kohen, I am confining her, I am

confirming her, and I will release her" (Zevachim 102a). Hashem, however, acted in accordance with the Torah laws He had handed down to us. If the Torah forbids confirming a "negah" on a cloudy day, then Hashem also does not confirm a "negah" on a cloudy day, therefore the cloud had to depart for Hashem to "determine", so to speak, that Miriam's "negah" required being quarantined.

Perhaps we can offer an additional explanation for the cloud departing. What happened during Miriam's quarantine? "Miriam was quarantined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not journey until Miriam was brought in" (Bamidbar 12:15). Why did the people not journey during Miriam's confinement? "The Omnipresent accorded her this honor, because of one hour that she lingered for Moshe when he was cast in the river, as it says 'and his sister stationed herself at a distance' (Shmot 2:4)" (Rashi Bamidbar 12:15). As reward for that

one hour that Miriam waited alone for Moshe at the edge of the river when she was a young child, six hundred thousand Jewish men in addition to the many women and children waited not one hour, but seven days, for her return to the camp! The only way to stress the reason for the delay was to remove the cloud. So long as the cloud remained above the tent, it was not clear that the reason the people were not proceeding was because they were awaiting Miriam's return. As the Torah teaches previously "in accordance with the lifting of the cloud from atop the Tent, afterwards the Children of Israel would journey, and in the place where the cloud would rest, there the Children of Israel would encamp. According to the word of Hashem would the Children of Israel journey, and according to the word of Hashem would they encamp; all the days that the cloud would rest upon the Tabernacle they would encamp. When the cloud lingered upon the Tabernacle many days, the Children of Israel would maintain the charge of Hashem and would not journey" (Bamidbar 9:17-19). One could perhaps think that the reason that Bnei Yisrael were not proceeding with their journey was not because they were waiting for Miriam but because the cloud had not risen. Therefore before Miriam became afflicted with tzoraat the cloud was lifted from above the tent in order to make it clear that the Jewish people were delaying their journey not because the cloud still rested, but in Miriam's honor.

We can ask the following question: for decades Hashem did not reward Miriam for having waited that one hour for Moshe when he was sent into the river, and she would certainly be duly rewarded in the Next World for this and for all the other countless good deeds she had performed during her lifetime. Why specifically now, just when she was being punished for having spoken loshon hara, is it suddenly "remembered" that she had never been properly compensated for having waited for Moshe?

IN THE PLACE OF A PERSON'S JUDGMENT THERE THEY MENTION HIS RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

We can explain as follows: R' Yisrael M'Salant zt"l once went to a particular Talmid Chacham in order to give him a sum of money that belonged to him. His followers asked why the Rav had to trouble himself rather than sending the money via a messenger, R' Yisrael replied that he felt that he had to rebuke the Talmid Chacham regarding a particular issue in which R' Yisrael sensed that he did not act appropriately. Therefore at the same time that he was coming to reprove him he was delivering the money himself as a means of honoring the Talmid Chacham for his Torah. They then asked: why must you honor someone specifically when you are about to rebuke him? He showed them the following discussion in the Gemara: "There was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year" (Shmuel II 21:1), David asked Hashem why they were being so afflicted. "Hashem said: 'the famine is for Shaul and for the House of Blood, for his having killed the Givonim'" (ibid.). The Gemara elaborates: "'for Shaul' - that Shaul was not properly eulogized, 'and for the House of Blood' - for his having killed the Givonim and the Jewish people did not protest" (Yevamot 78b). The Gemara then asks "G-d demanded retribution for the honor of Shaul because he was not properly eulogized and at the same time He demanded retribution for that which Shaul sinned in having killed the Givonim?" (ibid.). How can it be that on the one hand the A-lmighty is reprimanding the Jewish people for not having protested Shaul's improper behavior, while at the same time they are being reprimanded for not having properly eulogized him? The

Gemara responds: "'Seek Hashem all you humble of the land, who have fulfilled (paalu) His law (mishpato)' (Tzefania 2:3) - in the place of a person's judgment (mishpato) there they mention his righteous deeds (paalo)" (Yevamot 78b). In other words "when a person is being judged, it is there that we make mention of his righteous acts" (Rashi Yevamot 78b). Therefore, precisely when Hashem decided to punish Shaul for the sin he committed, He was demanding from the Jewish people the honor due to Shaul - "Bechir Hashem" - "the chosen one of G-d"

(Shmuel II 21:6) which they had not afforded him. Explained R' Yisrael M'Salant: There is Mitzvah to follow in the ways of Hashem, and I too, when needing to rebuke this Talmid Chacham, thought it appropriate to

accord him honor for those things that he deserves to be honored for (see Or Yisrael page 116).

This appears to be the case with Miriam as well - it is when Hashem judges her for the loshon hara she spoke about Moshe "there they mention her righteous deeds". This is the time to reward her for that one hour she waited for Moshe at the edge of the river.

WHY WAS YOSEPH TAKEN DOWN TO EGYPT IN A CARAVAN OF SPICES?

There is another place in the Torah in which we find such a concept. Yoseph was taken down to Egypt by "a caravan of Yishmaelim was coming from Gilad, their camels bearing spices, balsam and lotus - on their way to bring them down to Egypt" (Bereishit 37:25). Chazal point out: "why did the verse publicize what their burden contained? To make known the reward of the righteous - for it is not the way of Arabs to carry anything but petroleum and resin whose odor is foul, but for this one - Yoseph, it happened that spices were the cargo of the caravan so that he should not be harmed by the foul odor" (Rashi there). To prevent Yoseph being subject to a bad smell, would it not have sufficed to have the caravan carrying a load with no scent at all such as grain and barley? If the fragrances in this caravan were in order to reward him for his righteousness (as appears from the beginning of Rashi's words), what is so urgent that Hashem had to reward Yoseph precisely at this juncture when he is being brought down to Egypt?

It appears we can explain this as well using the principle of "in the place of a person's judgment there they mention his righteous deeds". At this point Hashem was judging Yoseph for what he did to his holy brothers - "Yoseph would bring evil reports of them to their father" (Bereishit 37:2). If so, this was also the time to give him a partial reward for his righteousness - in the guise of the aroma of spices. The fact that Hashem's Attribute of Justice required him to be cast into a pit and sold into slavery, eventually ending up in jail is one thing. Accompanying the judgment, however, must be mention of his good deeds. Therefore it would not have sufficed for the merchants to carry a load which was odorless, rather he was transported on a caravan carrying merchants with a load containing spices, balsam and lotus.

Why does the Torah specifically choose these two incidents - those involving Miriam and Yoseph - to teach us this principle of "in the place of a person's judgment there they mention his righteous deeds"? If Hashem acts in this manner, then He certainly must have dealt with other tzaddikim in this manner when they acted out of line. Why does the Torah not stress this when speaking of these other tzaddikim as well?

The answer to this question can be found by analyzing further the sins of Yoseph and Miriam. Each was guilty (according to their level) of speaking loshon hara. Yoseph spoke negatively of his brothers and Miriam of her brother Moshe. Hashem wishes to teach us the principle of "in the place of a person's judgment there they mention his righteous deeds" particularly in connection with the prohibition against speaking loshon hara, in order to teach us (at least one of the reasons) why it is forbidden to speak loshon hara. The whole idea of loshon hara being forbidden is a difficult one to comprehend. I can understand what is wrong with speaking falsehoods about another person, but what is wrong with "loshon hara" which is in fact all true?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH LOSHON HARA?

The problem with loshon hara is that a human being cannot perceive comprehensively the entire personality of another. You see a negative point in his behavior, did you find all of his positive traits too? Presumably not, for only Hashem can know the entire makeup of a person - both the positive as well as negative points - the "judgment" as well as "the deeds". Because we cannot perceive all that there is of another person, we may not pass judgment on him or speak of his negative points. This is what is alluded to in the incidents of Yoseph and Miriam - Hashem is hinting to us - you may not speak loshon hara because you are not aware of the entire makeup of this person.

Our Sages teach us "do not judge your fellow man until you find yourself in his place, his situation" (Pirke Avot 2:4) and "judge every man in a favorable, meritorious light" (Pirke Avot 1:6) (this does not apply to evil people of whom the Rishonim have written that we need not judge them favorably (see Rambam and Rabenu Yonah's commentary to this Mishna)). It seems to me that these two adages of Chazal only apply to cases when we are forced to judge our fellow man. For example, if a suggestion is made that we hire a particular person for work, we must determine whether he will be compatible as a co-worker or not. When a "shidduch" is suggested, we must decide whether it is worthwhile being involved with that person. In cases like these Chazal teach us that we should judge the other favorably and try to place ourselves in their situation. If, however, there is no need to judge the other person then "it is preferable to sit and refrain"

(Eruvin 100a). Don't judge him at all! Let the "Judge of all the earth" (Bereishit 18:25) impose justice, for you cannot know and understand the other person in his entirety - only Hashem has the ability to do so and therefore only He should judge. This is one of the lessons that we must learn from the incident involving Miriam (and Yoseph).

THE MAAPILIM - SIN OF THE SPIES REPEATED

The spies fail by giving negative reports about Eretz Yisrael, on their heels come the "maapilim" with an attempt to rectify the sin of the spies: The spies, did not wish to make the ascent to Eretz Yisrael - we will go and this time with even greater self-sacrifice than was demanded of us earlier! If yesterday we did not desire to go to Eretz Yisrael even though the Aron of Hashem and Moshe Rabenu were with us, today we will travel onward to Eretz Yisrael even without the benefit of being accompanied by Moshe Rabenu and the Aron. Is this not the most reasonable way to rectify the sin - to go to the other extreme as the Rambam advises regarding negative character traits? (Hilchot Deot 2:2) The "maapilim" thus go to the other extreme. At first glance it would appear that we are dealing with great tzaddikim, as it says: "In the place where 'baalei tshuva' stand, the completely righteous do not stand" (Brachot 34b). Moshe, however, is not impressed with this form of tshuva and rebukes them in the Name of Hashem.

Why was Hashem angry with the "maapilim"? Why are they not considered as tzaddikim and baalei tshuva?

In my humble opinion, not only did they not rectify the sin of the spies but they in fact repeated it! What after all was the spies' sin? They did not understand that if Hashem chose Eretz Yisrael and it was His desire to bring Bnei Yisrael there, then this proves that it is indeed a Land flowing with milk and honey and that it is possible to enter it.

What did the "maapilim" do at this point? They are also guilty of the same sin, but this time from the other side! They wish to make the journey to Eretz Yisrael when Hashem tells them not to go. If Hashem commands them not to go, there is no reason to go to Eretz Yisrael. The only advantage Eretz Yisrael has over other lands is that Hashem commanded us to go there. The moment the A-lmighty says not to go, there is no advantage to being there. The fact that they went on in spite of being commanded not to means that they have attached importance to something other than the word of Hashem. They did not understand that only the word of Hashem has any significance. Just as "not by bread alone does man live, rather by everything that emanates from the mouth of G-d does man live" (Devarim 8:3) - bread on its own has no value, its value stems from the fact that it is the will of Hashem that it nourish us. The "maapilim", therefore not only do not correct the sin of the spies they repeat it. The spies did not value Eretz Yisrael sufficiently and did not believe that it was possible to conquer it, in spite of knowing that it was Hashem's will that Bnei Yisrael be there. The "maapilim" were guilty of the opposite - they attributed independent value to Eretz Yisrael when they knew that Hashem did not wish for them to go there at this point in time. This is the reason for Hashem's great anger at them.

What we have said about Eretz Yisrael applies to the Mikdash as well. The Mikdash has no independent power of its own. The Torah tells us: "My Sabbaths shall you observe and My Sanctuary shall you revere" (Vayikra 26:2). The Gemara comments: "One would have thought that a person have fear of the Sanctuary, thus the pasuk states 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and revere My Sanctuary', the expression 'keep' was used in relation to the Shabbat, and in the same verse that of 'reverence' in relation to the Sanctuary, in order that the following comparison may be made: as in the case of 'keeping' used in the observance of the Shabbat, so in the case of 'reverence' used in relation to the Sanctuary, one is not to revere the Sanctuary but He who gave the commandment concerning the Sanctuary" (Yevamot 6a). Only when the will of Hashem is in the Mikdash, does the Mikdash have any effect. When the will of Hashem is missing, when you violate the precepts of the Torah, the Mikdash will not help you and Nebuchadnezzar will come and destroy it.

THINGS ARE DETERMINED BY THE WILL OF HASHEM

Chazal tell us that the wicked Tarnus Rufus asked R' Akiva regarding the Shabbat: "In what way is this day, different from other days?" (Sanhedrin 65b) - why do you honor the Shabbat more than the other days? What could R' Akiva answer him? He could have said that Shabbat is the day of the creation of the world, the day the Torah was given to the Jewish people, that the Shabbat is a taste of the Next World, there is so much to say regarding the Shabbat, yet R' Akiva does not give any of these answers. R' Akiva answers him with a question "in what way is this man different from other men?" (ibid.) - why do you deserve to be honored more than anyone else. Tarnus Rufus answers "Because my master desires it" (ibid.) (this is

what the king wants, he appointed me his representative in the territory of Yehuda). R' Akiva responds "Shabbat too, because my Master desires it" (ibid.). Hashem commanded us to honor the Shabbat, had Hashem wished for us to honor Tuesdays, we would have done so. The A-Imighty, however, commanded us to honor the Seventh Day so that is what we do. Why did Hashem choose the Seventh Day? "For in a six day period Hashem made heaven and earth, and on the Seventh day He rested and was refreshed" (Shmot 31:17). But for us the fact that Hashem wishes for us to honor the Shabbat is sufficient. We do not attribute any independent significance of its own to the Shabbat, we honor it only because Hashem commanded us to.

Eretz Yisrael, the Mikdash, the Shabbat - none of these have any significance of their own. Only when Hashem commands us to observe and honor them do they have any value. When Hashem does not command us regarding them, they have no value.

DO NOT MAKE SORCERY OUT OF YOUR SACRIFICES

Shaul fights against Amalek but is guilty of leaving some of the animals alive. The prophet Shmuel says to him "and what is this sound of the sheep in my ears" (Shmuel I 15:14), Shaul responds: "I have brought them from the Amalekite, for the people took pity on the best of the sheep and cattle in order to bring them offerings to Hashem, your G-d" (ibid. 15). This appears to be a very noble intention. Shmuel, however, is not impressed with this answer at all. He says to Shaul: "does Hashem delight in elevation-offerings and feast-offerings as in obedience to the voice of Hashem? Behold - to obey is better than a choice offering, to be attentive than the fat of rams" (ibid. 22).

Shmuel goes even further, adding: "for rebelliousness is like the sin of sorcery, and verbosity is like the iniquity of idolatry" (ibid. 23). In other words, you are guilty of an infraction as severe as the sin of sorcery and the iniquity of idolatry.

Why does Shmuel choose to compare Shaul's sin to the sin of sorcery and to the iniquity of idolatry? Are there no other severe prohibitions in the Torah? Why does he not say that what Shaul did was the equivalent of desecrating the Shabbat or cursing one's father and mother?

It appears to me that we can explain this based on the point we have just discussed. People generally act according to the laws of nature. A person plants his field when he is expecting rain so that the wheat will grow. He then harvests it when the wheat appears sufficiently ripe and it is possible to cut it. From the perspective of nature this seems to be very logical. There are, however, two categories of people who do not act by logic alone. The first is the sorcerer. To him it is not the weather or the seasons that determine his actions, but rather whether a black cat or a white cat just passed before him or whether the stick he is holding is green or red.

Who is the other person who does not act in a purely logical manner? "Lehavdil alfei havdalot" the Jew who follows the dictates of the Torah! He plants six days of the week, Shabbat arrives and he ceases his work, even if it is perfect weather for planting! Along comes the Shmitta year - here too he does not plant, even if it is planting weather. Even if crops grow without his planting, he will not harvest them, for the Torah commands us "the aftergrowth of your harvest you shall not reap" (Vayikra 25:5). How does such a Jew protect his house? More importantly than purchasing a good solid lock, he buys a piece of calf skin called a "mezuza" and places it upon the doorpost!

What then is the difference between a sorcerer and one who observes Mitzvot? The sorcerer believes in the object itself - he believes that the cat and the stick have the power to influence events. The Jew, on the other hand, believes that objects themselves possess no power whatsoever! The mezuza itself has no power. What works in this world is only the will of Hashem. If I follow the will of Hashem, then I can hope that Hashem will guard my possessions as well as my life. If, however, I do not follow Hashem's will, then there is nothing to hope for. An object has no significance, it is only the will of Hashem contained within it that has any effect.

Shmuel is telling Shaul: Hashem commanded you to kill the animals you brought from Amalek! He is not interested in you offering them as sacrifices! If in spite of this you offer them, then this shows that you believe that it is not the will of Hashem in the offering that is important, but the offering itself. You have thus made sorcery out of the offering. This is not an offering to Hashem but some form of witchcraft! - "for rebelliousness is like the sin of sorcery".

ISRAEL'S ONLY WEAPON - THE WILL OF HASHEM

The pasuk states "five of you will pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you will pursue ten thousand" (Vayikra 26:8). Chazal ask "is this the correct calculation? Should it not have rather said, 'and a hundred from among you will pursue two thousand?', but you cannot compare a few who perform the commandments of the Torah to many who perform the commandments of the Torah" (Rashi there). The will of Hashem is responsible for victory in battle, not the size of the army.

Bnei Yisrael waged war on the enemy during the days of Otniel and during the days of Ehud ben Geira (see Shoftim 3). Presumably they fought with all their military prowess. When Barak came along, he was told not to go out with the entire army but with only ten thousand soldiers (see Shoftim 4:6). Why? Because if after the previous military victories, the Jewish people still did not leave their sinful ways, then it is now necessary to fight with less soldiers. A victory in such circumstances will surely prevent Klal Yisrael from thinking that it came about through: "My strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth" (Devarim 8:17). They will attribute the salvation to Hashem. When a smaller army does not succeed in attaining this recognition and the people continue to sin, Gideon is told that ten thousand soldiers is too great a number (see Shoftim 7:3-4) - "the people that are with you are too numerous for Me to deliver Midian into their hand, lest Israel aggrandize itself over Me, saying, 'My own strength has saved me!'" (Shoftim 7:2). Gideon is therefore commanded to wage war with a mere three hundred soldiers (see ibid. 7). When this too does not succeed in bringing the people back to serving Hashem, Shimshon is sent to fight the Plishtim on his own without any reinforcements. Am Yisrael witness with their own eyes that it all depends on Shimshon's nezirut. The moment his hair is cut off he falls into the hands of the Plishtim. When his hair begins to grow even slightly, he managed to bring down the entire building on the heads of the Plishtim making "the dead whom he killed at his own death (were) more than he had killed in his lifetime" (Shoftim 16:30). This comes to teach that it is not the physical strength that makes a difference, but only the word of Hashem.

All this is to no avail, and the Jewish nation continue in their sinful ways. At a later stage Shmuel does not employ any military strategy. He goes out to war against the Plishtim without any physical preparation. How does he prepare for war? He rounds up the entire nation and "they gathered at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before Hashem" (Shmuel I 7:6) - "as a sign of subjugation: 'here we are before you as this water that is being spilled'" (Rashi). Scripture then relates how Shmuel "took a suckling lamb and offered it up entirely as an elevation-offering to Hashem; Shmuel cried out to Hashem on behalf of Israel and Hashem answered him. Shmuel was offering up the elevation-offering when the Plishtim approached for the battle with Israel. Hashem then thundered with a great noise on that day against the Plishtim and confounded them" (ibid. 9-10). The Jewish people, however, are not happy with this type of leadership. They are not interested in miraculous victories involving a suckling lamb, for who knows if they will always have sufficient merits to be saved in this fashion? They therefore ask for a king, one who will guide them in a more natural manner: "our king will judge us, and go forth before us, and fight our wars" (Shmuel I 8:20).

HISTHADLUT VERSUS BITACHON

In subsequent generations too we find arguments between the prophets and the kings as to just how much natural "hishtadlut" - efforts one should employ in war. Chanani the Seer rebukes Assa king of Yehuda for having bribed the king of Aram to help him (see Divrei HaYamim II 16:2-9). The prophet then rebukes his son Yehoshafat for having joined forces with the king of Israel (see Divrei HaYamim II 19:2). Amatzia hires troops from the people of Ephraim and the prophet instructs him to send them back claiming that he will lose if accompanied by these soldiers, and he will have more success if he comes without them (see Divrei HaYamim II 25:5-8). The kings of Israel were rebuked for turning to the Egyptians for help as later on were the kings of Yehuda. We find many instances of this dispute in which the prophets instruct the kings not to employ too much personal effort but to have more confidence in Hashem.

"For I do not trust in my bow, nor does my sword save me" (Tehillim 44:7) - "not through sword and spear does Hashem grant salvation" (Shmuel I 17:47). The army has no power of its own, nor does anything else - only the will of Hashem will prevail. This is the great lesson we must learn from the incident of the "maapilim" who "reconstructed" the sin of the spies but in the opposite manner, as we have explained. For this reason they lost the war (see Bamidbar 14:44-45).

"WHOEVER CREDITS SOMETHING TO ITS AUTHOR BRINGS DELIVERANCE TO THE WORLD"

Our Sages teach us "whoever conveys something in the name of its author, brings deliverance to the world

as it is written: 'and Esther informed the king in Mordechai's name' (Esther 2:22)" (Pirke Avot 6:6). Why does attributing something to its author bring deliverance to the world? The Maharal explains that if redemption would come about through someone who is not so careful to give credit where it is due, he will not attribute the redemption to Hashem, but will rather credit his own strength and wisdom for having delivered Am Yisrael! Only one who is humble and who sufficiently negates himself to credit the author with what he has said, understands that the redemption too must be attributed to the One Who has brought it about and not himself. Who brought Salvation to Am Yisrael the first time? One who negated his own existence asking: "who am I" (Shmot 3:11) when Hashem first appeared to him. Later again he asked "for what are we?" (Shmot 16:8). Only such a person can bring redemption to the world, for he attributes nothing to himself - I did not do anything, only the A-lmighty determines things.

"EIN OD MILVADO"

This is the purpose of the creation, to enable us to reach a clear understanding that "Ein Od Milvado" "there is none beside Him" (Devarim 4:35). To human eyes it may appear to the contrary that there are other forces working in the world - here it is Obama, there it is the IDF, here it is Abbas, etc. The truth, however is "there is none beside Him". We must recognize beyond any doubt that "He alone made, makes, and will make everything".

The spies were sent to scout out the Land and they failed in their mission, why? Moshe instructed them to see the Land, but not to follow what their eyes see: "do not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (Bamidbar 15:39). Of course we need our eyes, but the ultimate "posek", the one issuing the ruling must be one's intellect. We must understand that "Cities great and fortified to the heavens" (Devarim 1:28) pale in comparison to the Creator of the Universe, we must be aware that the world is guided by Hashem alone. If we do so, we will certainly merit the redemption of the Jewish people, speedily in our day. Amen!

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yitzchak Korn

Bad Projections

Antigones (In Avos 1:3) teaches that we shouldn't be like slaves who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward, rather we should be like servants who serve their master without such a condition.



Rambam begins by interpreting this Mishna as coming to teach us what it means to serve Hashem out of love, but then goes on to explain what can happen if this teaching is taken out of context.

Rambam tells the story of two disciples, Tzadok and Baitus, who heard this teaching and put forth their own warped interpretation. They understood that the Mishna is teaching us that if the ideal Avodat Hashem is not for the sake of reward, then it must be that there is no system of Sechar V'Onesh (a system of reward and punishment).

Tzadok and Baitus went on to form two seceding factions called the Tzedukim and Baitusim. They would have gladly rejected the entire Torah (chas v'sholom), but that wouldn't fly. Instead, they were able to promulgate the rejection of our Mesorah, the oral law.

In truth Baitus and Tzadok were simply looking for an excuse to drop Torah and Mitzvot. They began with a dishonest starting point which justified their (mis)interpretation of the Mishna. It began with a single Mishna and spread to the entire Torah. This wasn't a matter of intellectualism of ideals, rather this was a matter of rationalizing an escape from responsibility.

The Gemara in Makot - which the Yeshiva as a whole was recently completed - teaches us that HaKadosh Baruch Hu leads people down the path that they seek to follow. This is based on Bil'am, who we will read about next week. He opens up doors to lead everyone in the direction that they want to go. Tzadok and Baitus were trying to find an excuse - and that door was opened for them.

Perhaps we can suggest that this dishonest projection lead to the downfall of the Meraglim as well. What happened with the Meraglim? How was it possible that Kalev and Yehoshua saw one thing and the rest of the Meraglim walked away with a completely different impression? The answer is that their report was influenced by their perspective. They were looking at the land with a slant that lead to their downfall.

The Zohar, as explained by Rav Goldvicht, ZT"L writes that the Nesi'im/Meraglim didn't want to lose their positions as leaders of Am Yisrael. Every generation is given the leaders that it needs. The generation of the desert was completely spiritual, constant Torah and Ruchaniut. Going into Eretz Yisrael would mean that the role of the people - and automatically their leaders - would change. Their fears of entering Eretz Yisrael which were completely personal, were projected on to the Land itself - intellectually justifying something that was simply not true.

Our role, as taught in the Parsha of Zitzit, is to follow the right path, without the subjective (mis)interpretations that our heart and eyes are wont to lead us astray.

Petuchei Chotam on Parshat Shlach



Rav Chanan Bina will be teaching a passage from the sefer Petuchei Chotam each week on the parshat hashavua. The sefer was written by HaRav Yaakov Abuchatzera zt"l.

Click [here](#) to listen.

Talk about talking (in shul)

Given that the subject of talking in Shul is a subject which is very close to the heart of our Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a, we have decided to bring you excerpts of our rendered translation to the Sefer "Morah Mikdash". The Sefer is a collection of citations on the subject from many sefarim including the Zohar and Shulchan Aruch first printed in the year 5542 (229 years ago) and reprinted in 5743 (28 years ago).



#24

The following is an excerpt from Sefer Vavei HaAmudim: The Rambam writes that although being physically present in shul is in and of itself fulfillment of a mitzvah, the sin of engaging in idle conversation extinguishes the mitzvah. Idle conversation in shul is forbidden even not during times of davening, how much more so during davening. I feel that any community in which the word of Hashem has reached should appoint guards to spot those who are speaking in shul and even publicly embarrass them. This will enhance Hashem's glory on earth, and "the entire nation shall listen and fear, and they shall not act willfully any

more" (Devarim 17:13).

Anyone with a "stick and staff" concerned for the honor of his Creator should not make any exceptions - no favor should be shown to anyone and no special honor shall be given to those of stature. Those who are careful and try to help others desist from this practice shall merit "beholding the sweetness of Hashem and contemplating in His Sanctuary" (Tehillim 27:4), and bringing about a situation in which "in His Temple all will proclaim 'Glory' (Tehillim 29:9) - Amen *ken yehi ratzon*.

Dedications, Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Visitors

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Joseph Dweck (5769)
- Isaac Levy (5768)
- Sam Yusupov (5768,70)
- Elliot Young (5769-70)
- Immanuel Hass (5769-70)



Mazal tov's

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh would like to wish a mazal tov to:

- [Dina](#) and Rabbi Yerachmiel Roness on the birth of a grandson.
- [Eddie](#) Rahmey (5765-66) on his engagement to Esther Malka.
- [Paul](#) (5739) and Sharon Kreditor on the birth of a granddaughter to their daughter, Rina.
- [HaRav](#) Aharon and Rabbanit Malke Bina, and to Moshe and Dr Rina Bina on the Bar Mitzva of their grandson/son Uri.
- [Josh](#) (5759-60) and Karen Goldman on the birth of a baby girl.
- [Yoni](#) Illouz (5765-66) on his marriage to Leora Petashnick.
- [Daniel](#) (5756-57, 63) and Shira Edelstein on the birth of a baby girl, Naomi. Mazel Tov to the grandparents, Chaim and Shlomit Edelstein.

Baruch Dayan Emet

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh regrets to inform you of the loss of:

- The paternal grandfather of [Sammy](#) Salamon (5769-70).
- The maternal grandfather of [Keith](#) (Shmuel) Dumont (5768-71) on the loss of his maternal grandmother.

● Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ● Michoel Pinchas ben Frachah | ● Matityahu Yaakov ben Gittel Rivka |
| ● Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah | ● Ada Bat Miriam |
| ● Rachel bat Chana | ● Reuven ben Tova Chaya |
| ● Yehuda Pinchas ben Asna | ● Aharon ben Simah |
| ● Sagit bat Esther | ● Shayna bat Chava |
| ● Fruma bat Ita | ● Zev eliezer ben Chaya Shaindel |
| ● Chaya bat Grunia | ● Avram Gershon ben Tzippa |
| ● Tamara Nechama bat Karmela | ● Freydil Tzivya Bas Rochel |
| ● Ester bat Chaya | ● Ari ben Rivka |
| ● Binyamin Yonatan ben Leikah | ● Yosef ben Golda |
| ● Chaya Chana bat Alta Rivkah | ● Esther bat Brana |
| ● Yosef ben Hilda | ● Miriam bat Shulamit |

- Maron ben Hadas Esther
- Chaya Meira Mindel bat Chava Golda
- Chinoam Rina bat Avital Hoday-ya
- Ditzza bat Vardit Tali bat Devorah Bina
- Akiva ben Gittel
- Marcel Ben Pninah
- Evelyn Bat Dina
- Avraham Elizar ben Chana Pesha
- Mordechai Eliezer Hacoheh ben Esther Miria
- Yaakov Dov ben Blima Chana
- Rivka Chava bat Rachel
- Margalit Chaya bat Rachel
- David ben Leah
- Elizabeth bat Annette
- Edmund Ben Nazira
- Shmuel Chai Ben Hadassa
- Alyza Sarah Bat Yehudit
- Inbal bat Nelya
- Yitzchak Shraga ben Chava



And of course we are always davening for the safe release of Gilad Shalit (Gilad ben Aviva) and Jonathan Pollard (Yehonatan ben Malka Pollard)



[Submit Names](#) to the list.

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. **Are you visiting Israel?**- [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rav Bina,
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh