

The World Was Created for The Righteous

"They brought forth to the Children of Israel an evil report on the Land that they had spied out" (Bamidbar 13:32)

The commentary of the holy Zohar on this parsha (Shelach Lecha 158:2) brings the following dialogue: Rabbi Yehuda asked Rabbi Abba: Since Hashem knew that Adam would sin and He would decree that he die, why did He create him? And furthermore, why did Hashem create man to live in this world? In the end everybody dies and follows the same path; both those who toiled in Torah and those who did not. This shows that Torah does not save from death, so why was man created? Rabbi Abba answered him, it is not for you to concern yourself with understanding Hashem's ways and decrees. Where you have permission to know and observe – ask, and where you don't have permission, don't ask. Because the ways of Hashem are hidden and concealed, as it says (Devarim 29:28) "The hidden are for Hashem, our G-d" and you should not inquire and delve into them.

It seems interesting that Rabbi Yehuda's questioning the purpose of creating man, is brought here in Parshat Shelach Lecha. It would seem more in place to ask this question at the beginning of Sefer Bereishit, where the Torah talks about creating man?

With siyata dishmaya, I would like to suggest an answer according to the following Chazal (Yoma 53b): "There was a stone in the Kodosh Hakodashim next to the Aron of the Covenant of Hashem, from which the world emanated, and this follows the opinion that the world was created from Tzion. We learnt in a breitha that Rabbi Eliezer says it was created from the middle. I would like to explain according to drush, that the Even Hashtiya hints to drinking from the waters of the holy Torah, for Torah is compared to water as it says (Yeshaya 55:1): "Ho, everyone who is thirsty, go to the water", and from the Even Hashtiya the world was established. This means that the world was created on the foundations of the holy Torah, as Chazal say (Pesachim 68b): "If not for Torah heaven and earth would not be created", as it says "If My covenant with the night and with the day would not be; had I not set up the laws of heaven and earth" (Yirmiyahu 33:25).

The spies returned and gave a bad report about the Land, and through this they inserted cowardice into the hearts of the nation, in order to dissuade them from entering the Promised Land. Their bad report on the holy Land automatically implies a negative statement against the Even Hashtiya from which the world was established. The spies scorned and belittled everything that they saw in Eretz Yisrael, which includes the Even Hashtiya. And one who speaks falsehood about this even which hints to drinking from the waters of Torah – his sin is too great to bear for he has mocked and denied the Holy Torah.

In addition, there are many mitzvot that are only possible to fulfill in Eretz Yisrael, for example the mitzvot of shemitta, yovel, orlah, terumah and ma'aser and sacrifices. This being the case, Eretz Yisrael, due to its great number of relevant mitzvot becomes a spiritual land and is considered as a Torah article for all purposes. So speaking detrimentally about the land and mocking it is considered as if the spies were speaking against the Torah. And one who speaks against the Torah and makes light of it, it is as if he has spoken against the King of the world, r"l, for all the letters of the Torah are in fact Names of Hashem.

This is the extremely low level to which the spies fell, which explains why specially in this parsha the holy Zohar brings Rabbi Yehuda's question – was it worth creating such wicked men? Everything is revealed before Hashem; He knew that the spies would anger Him with their deeds and speak negatively about the Land. And through this they will blemish the Holy Torah and show disrespect to the King of the world. Their bad deeds were also the cause of the destruction of both Batei Hamikdashot, which Hashem considered as the apple of His eye. If so it is certainly in place to ask why Hashem created them and why the world was created for them? In answer to this question Rabbi Abba says "the hidden are for Hashem, our G-d".

Chazal tell us (Chulin 92a): "In the merit of forty-five righteous ones the world exists." The Sifri in parshat Eikev (47) also writes, "Just as heaven and earth exist forever, so too do the righteous for whom the world was created". I saw that the Midrash Agadah (Bereishit 49:1) brings the following: "When Hashem sees that a generation will be wicked, He seeks even one tzaddik that He can hang the world on his merit. For one tzaddik sets the whole world on its foundations". These references show us that the world exists in the merit of those tzaddikim who occupy themselves with Torah day and night and show self-sacrifice in performing Hashem's will. The wicked who exist in the world enjoy its pleasures without being worthy, in the merit of these righteous ones.

The verse says (Yeshaya 29:22) "Therefore, thus said Hashem, Who redeemed Avraham, to the House of Ya'akov" and the holy Zohar questions (Vayikra 57:1): Was Ya'akov the one who redeemed Avraham? Was it not Hashem who redeemed him from all his troubles?

The holy Zohar answers, that indeed it was so. Ya'akov did redeem Avraham, for when Avraham was thrown into the burning furnace his sentence came before Hashem. The angels asked in which merit will he be saved since he does not possess z'chut avot? When Hashem saw that Ya'akov Avinu a"h will be his descendant and he will occupy himself with the holy Torah – He decided to save him and redeem him from the furnace. So indeed it was Ya'akov who saved Avraham.

There is a most important foundation that this teaches us. Even though Avraham avinu a"h was "the man of kindness", this merit was not enough for him. Even the merit of his son Yitzchak "who is girded with might" and was prepared to give up his life on the mizbeach for the sake of Hashem – was not enough to save Avraham from the furnace. Only the merit of Ya'akov Avinu who was the one connected to Torah, "Ya'akov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents", was able to protect his grandfather Avraham Avinu and save him from death. This is the enormous power of the holy Torah which grants life in this world to those who study it, and through which he merits unending abundance in the world that is entirely good.

May it be Hashem's will that the holy Torah stand in our stead as a protection for us and may we not desert it forever, Amen.

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Hilula

26 Sivan, Rabbi Yonathan ben Uziel

27 Sivan, Rabbi Chanina ben Tradion

28 Sivan, Rabbi Israel Zeev Gustman, Rosh Yeshiva Netsach Israel

28 Sivan, Rabbi Shlomo Dana

30 Sivan, Rabbi Yom-Tov Yedid Halevi

1st Tamouz, Yosef Hatzaddik

2 Tamouz, Rabbi Yosef Benualid



Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v' Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Seeing the Light

When I was receiving people in the institution Yad Avraham, in New York, I was approached by a man who was in need of eye surgery. This man was most scrupulous in Torah observance and set aside time each morning to learn the Daf Hayomi, a practice he never missed. He asked for a blessing that the operation be successful.

I replied, "One who uses his eyes to learn Gemara every day, prays as he should, and fulfills mitzvot cannot possibly lose his power of sight. He needs his vision to serve Hashem properly." I placed my hands over his eyes and told him he had nothing to be afraid of.

A few months passed, and I met the man again. He asked if I remembered his situation.

I answered yes, and he continued, "Does the Rav remember placing his hands over my eyes?"

Again, I replied yes. Then he related, with evident excitement, "Immediately before the surgery, the doctor checked me again. To my utter surprise, he notified me that my eyes are completely healthy, and there was no need for an operation. The doctor was in a state of shock and asked how I cured myself."

This man's words moved me. I said to him, "It was not my hands which delivered your salvation, but the pages of Gemara which you cherish and learn consistently. Hashem alone healed your eyes. I, too, like the doctor, have no rational explanation for what occurred. I have no doubt that the holy Torah is what brought about your complete recovery."

The Haftarah

"Yehoshua son of Nun dispatched" (Yehoshua 2)

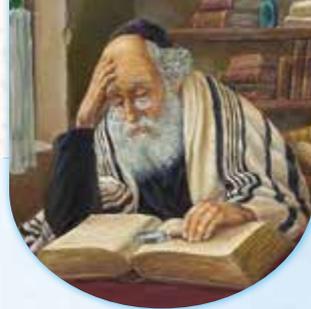
The connection to the parsha: The haftarah speaks about the two spies that Yehoshua Bin Nun sent to spy out the Promised Land, which is the same topic as the parsha where we are told about the spies that Moshe Rabbeinu a"h sent to spy out the Land.



Guard Your Tongue

Praising a Righteous Person

If a person wishes to praise a person who is well known to all as a righteous and upright person who has no flaws – one may praise him even in front of his enemy or one who is jealous of him, for this person will not be able to say anything negative about him, and even if he does, it will be clear to everyone that he is speaking falsely.



Words of our Sages

How Do You Awaken A Child In The Morning?

"They shall make for themselves tzitzis on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations"
(Bamidbar 15:38)

There were once two brothers, one of whom asked his brother to wake him each morning when he gets up for his studies. His brother complied and every morning tried to wake his sleeping brother. But as the days went by he saw that the task was too hard for him. He was spending too long every morning trying to wake his brother. He racked his brains until he came up with a novel idea. The next morning, he took the strings of his tzitzit and tickled his sleeping brother in his ear. In an instant his brother was wide awake!

One day the father entered the room just as his son was waking his brother with his usual method. The father pointed out that this might involve a halachic prohibition. Since the tzitzit are a mitzva article, it could be that one is forbidden to use its strings for anything else.

Rabbi Ben Zion Pelman zt"l, writes about this in his sefer 'Shlamim M'Tzion'. He says that it is an explicit halacha in Shulchan Aruch (siman 21:1) that one is forbidden to use the tzitzit strings, since the tzitzit are a mitzvah article, therefore to use the strings for a different purpose is considered as disgracing the mitzvah. So according to this it seems that one should not use tzitzit to wake a person.

"However", Harav Pelman points out, "I heard that HaGaon HaTzaddik Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian zt"l, during the time when he was Mashgiach in the Kefar Chassidim yeshiva, would go into his student's rooms before shacharit in order to wake them up. When he saw that a student was still sleeping, he would use his tzitzit to wake him up. He would gently insert the tzitzit into the talmid's ear, and this would cause him to awaken immediately."

It is interesting that in the foreword to the sefer 'Lev Eliyahu' where this morning routine is written about in detail, the editor writes: I too heard about this from one of the students who studied in the yeshiva at that time. He pointed to his ear and said, "this ear merited feeling the tzitzit of Rav Eliyahu Lopian..."

So according to this, it seems that it is permissible to wake a person using tzitzit, for it is considered as using them for a mitzvah purpose, and one is permitted to use the strings for a mitzvah.



Pearls of the Parshah

An Upside Down World

"Every one a leader among them" (Bamidbar 13:2)

The word 'נשיא' contains the letters of the words 'יש' (there is) and 'אין' (there is not).

The 'Degel Machaneh Ephraim' points out that this serves as a hint as to the type of person who is considered a true leader. A leader who does not attach importance to himself, who considers himself as someone who is 'אין' – he is considered a true leader and as someone with 'יש'. On the other hand, a leader who attaches significance to himself, to his 'יש', is considered as a leader who has nothing in him – he is a leader with 'אין'.

The Turquoise Thread is Relevant for a Limited Time

"They shall make for themselves tzitzis on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations. And they shall place upon the tzitzit of each corner a thread of turquoise wool" (Bamidbar 15:38)

The mitzva of the turquoise thread in the tzitzit is waiting for Eliyahu HaTishbi to reveal to us the correct way of performing this mitzvah.

Up until today there are conflicting opinions about the turquoise thread. Some Rabbis are of the opinion that the tzitzit must contain a turquoise thread, while others hold that they should not. The Chatam Sofer writes that this verse serves as a hint that the white threads of the tzitzit will remain forever whereas the turquoise one's will not.

In reference to the tzitzit themselves, the white threads, it says: "throughout the generations", but in the continuation of the verse, where it mentions the obligation to put "a thread of turquoise wool", there it does not add "throughout their generations", to teach us that the turquoise thread will not remain forever.

Regarding One's Friend

"It shall constitute tzitzit for you, that you may see it and remember all the commandments of Hashem and perform them" (Bamidbar 15:39)

The sefer 'Olam Shel Abba' brings an interesting explanation in the name of the tzaddik of Liska, on the words of the Gemarah (Berachot 9:2): "From what time can one read the morning shema? ...others say: From when one can recognize one's friend from a distance of four amot."

In kriyat shema it says "that you may see it and remember all the commandments of Hashem and perform them". In order that we should not mistakenly think that a Jew is permitted to pay attention only to the mitzvot between man and G-d and can ignore the mitzvot that are relevant between man and his fellow, Chazal stress that only once one has fulfilled the mitzvot between man and his fellow – 'from when one can recognize one's friend', (implying recognizing his value) can one accept the yoke of heaven upon oneself and with that remember all Hashem's mitzvot and perform them.

The Gates of Heaven Are Open

"And not explore after your heart and after your eyes" (Bamidbar 15:39)

Harav HaKadosh Rabbi Ahron Ratta zya"a, author of 'Shomer Emunim' says:

When a person walks through the streets and is suddenly faced with a forbidden sight, yet he overcomes his inclination and closes his eyes so that he shouldn't set his eyes on something improper, this is an auspicious time for him in heaven. He should use the opportunity to pray and request from Hashem and it is a segulah that his prayers will be accepted willingly.

Treasures

*Based on the teachings of
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In the Company of Our Holy Forefathers

We are told about Calev ben Yefuneh "because a different spirit was with him" (Bamidbar 14:24). Rashi writes on this – "Two spirits- one in his mouth and one in his heart; to the spies he said; I agree with your advice, yet in his heart he told himself the truth, and in this way he had the power to silence them. As it says, (ibid 13:30) "Calev silenced the people towards Moshe". Rashi writes, "He silenced all of them, 'towards Moshe' - to hear what Moshe had to say. He screamed and said, is this all that Ben Amram did for us?!" On hearing these words one could get the impression that he intended to speak negatively about Moshe and since they were against Moshe because of the spies' report – they were all quiet in anticipation of hearing Moshe's discredit. Calev said, did he not split the sea for us and bring down the manna and the slav?!"

From where did Calev find the strength of spirit and wisdom to stand firm against the rebellious spies and rebuke the people?

The first and last letters of the words 'רוח אחרת' (a different spirit), have the same numerical value (plus one which is often added in gematriyot) as the word 'חברת' (company).

This implies that Calev seemingly went along in the company of the spies, but he himself connected himself with complete submission to those who were buried in Chevron. Therefore, when he silenced the Bnei Yisrael, all of them thought that he wished to speak against Moshe, but once they were quiet, he revealed his true opinion to them, that he is deeply connected to the company of our holy Avot.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil'

In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

"With strength she girds her loins, and invigorates her arms"

Many fine young ladies in our generation wish to marry a Ben Torah who will sit and devote himself to Torah study. They are blessed with a deep appreciation of the value of Torah and the great reward which is hidden away for those who support the Tree of Life. With admirable fortitude they do their utmost to assist with the family's parnassah, in order to enable their husbands to grow in Torah to their heart's desire, without any distractions. They endure all the challenges and difficulties with joy and happiness in being a true partner to Torah.

On the other hand, there are those who wish to enjoy both worlds – "Torah and wealth at one table". Their wish is to marry a husband who is a talmid chacham but also one of means. Both a matmid (diligent Torah scholar) and one who knows how to enjoy life. Sometimes we find that this formula does not work for them, and they are left with neither. On the contrary, one who girds herself with patience merits seeing the fulfillment of the words of Chazal "Whoever fulfills the Torah despite poverty, will ultimately fulfill it in wealth". There are those who have merited material wealth, and there are those who have merited spiritual wealth and have been blessed with a generation of upright children which affords them indescribable pleasure and joy.

We can take, for example, the portrait of the saintly Rabbanit Marat Margalit Yosef a"h, the wife of Maran Rabbeinu Ovadiah Yosef zt"l. The verse "With strength she girds her loins, and invigorates her arms" is a most fitting praise for this righteous Rabbanit. Her efforts and self-sacrifice to live a life of poverty and extreme shortage, mainly at the beginning of their married life, in order that her husband could devote himself to Torah without any other preoccupations, deserves recognition. She took upon herself the entire responsibility for the running of their home and raising their children, so that her husband would be unrestricted in his wish to dedicate himself to Torah study. Throughout her life she readily relinquished pleasure and enjoyment, so that he would be free to devote himself to writing his sefarim which lit up the Torah world.

Maran zt"l constantly expressed his appreciation to his wife for her dedication, and remained indebted to her even after her petirah, as we see from the foreword to one of his holy sefarim: "Dedicated l'ilui nishmat my wife, the esteemed Rabbanit, eishet chayil, crown of her husband, Marat Margalit bat Zechiya a"h. It is through her great devotion and care for me, and by raising and educating our children whom Hashem blessed us with, that I have achieved this." He described her devotion in

his hesped for her: "The Rabbanit a"h took responsibility for whatever had to be done in the home. She raised our sons to Torah. Many times I knew nothing of what was going on. A child could be sick and I had no idea. She took him herself, when she was in the advanced stage of pregnancy, she carried the sick child in her arms and took him to the hospital. She would not dream of bothering me by asking 'please take the child', no. And I didn't even know that he was sick. Someone came and asked me, how is your son? What is wrong with him? He tells me that he saw him in the hospital. I knew nothing about it. Where can you find a woman like this? This was her devotion, so as not to distract me from my learning, not to disrupt my learning."

The Operation Was Successful

The Rabbanit Elyashiv a"h understood the value of uninterrupted learning, and averted any concerns from her husband so that he shouldn't have to disrupt his learning. One of the family members told over that besides taking care of all the needs of the home, which often involved no small degree of challenge, while giving up her basic needs many times, she also showed great self-sacrifice not to disturb her husband's diligence. Many times she would pick up the children and hold them so that they shouldn't cry, so that their cries shouldn't reach her husband's ears which would disturb his learning.

Once when one of her children were sick and required an operation, the Rabbanit felt that it would be appropriate to share the decision with her husband. She made her way from the hospital straight to the Beit Midrash 'Ohel Sarah' – Rav Elyashiv's fixed place for learning.

But as she approached the Beit Midrash and the sweet sing song of her husband's learning reached her ears, she found herself unable to disturb his learning and retraced her steps.

The Rabbanit started walking back to the hospital to be at her son's side during the operation, but once again she decided that it would be better if she could hear her husband's opinion on the operation and go forth with his agreement. Once again she turned around and started walking towards the Beit Midrash.

She came within a short distance of 'Ohel Sarah' and again heard the sweet notes of her husband's learning. She deliberated, how can I tell him about the operation? How can I interrupt his learning? But what can I do? It is a matter of utmost importance, danger of life, an operation... I can't make this decision on my own... Three times she retraced her steps, yet not even once did she interrupt his learning. In the end she decided that she would return alone to the hospital and give her consent to the operation. With the entire responsibility resting on her shoulders, her child was operated on.

Late at night, when her husband returned home from the Beit Midrash and the operation was already over, she told her husband that the operation had been successful and that their son was now recuperating in the hospital.