

לעילו נשמת: אריה ישראל בן מרדכי ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

Torah Wellsprings

Collected thoughts
from
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Shelach



לזכות רפואה שלמה מלכה בת רחל ומינאל בן שלי

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Parshas Shlash

Meforshim explain that the *meraglim* lacked *temimus*. There are several aspects of *temimus*, and every *mefarsh* explains what type of *temimus* the *meraglim* were lacking.

Temimus means to believe the life Hashem charted out for you is best for you. For example, for those who are struggling to make a living, *temimus* means to believe that Hashem wants them to have this struggle, and it is for their benefit.

The Shem MiShmuel (הרע"ז) elaborates:

“The definition of *temimus* is... If Hashem desires that he shouldn’t be able to plow, plant, and work, then this is certainly for the good. He shouldn’t feel like his hands are tied. He should think he simply doesn’t have any work to do and that this situation is good for him. If this situation continues, and he can never

work, this means that it is good for him that he shouldn’t ever work.

“*Temimus* is applicable to all matters and concerns that people are worried about... One should be a *tamim*, submissive to Hashem’s will. Whatever is good in Hashem’s eyes, it should be so, because there is nothing better than what Hashem chooses.”

In last week’s *parashah* the Jewish nation cried for meat. The Shem MiShmuel writes, “When they asked for meat, their sin was that they lacked *temimus*... They should have understood that, ‘If meat would be good for us, Hashem would give us meat... Hashem knows what’s best for us...’”

The Shem MiShmuel explains that the nation had lofty intentions when they asked for meat. It wasn’t simple *taavah* as appears at first glance from the *pesukim*. Nevertheless, they should have

acknowledged that if Hashem didn't give it to them, it means they didn't need it. There is always room for *tefillah*, but there is never room for complaining or for being upset, because Hashem leads us in the best way.

The *meraglim's* sin was that they lacked *temimus*. Hashem told the nation to go to Eretz Yisrael, and *temimus* would mean to trust that Hashem is leading them in the best way, and not to question it.

The Shem MiShmuel writes, “[After they complained for meat] Hashem brought them the test of the *meraglim*. If they had *temimus*...and if they would say, אין לנו אלא דברי בן עמרם, ‘we must listen to what Moshe tells us’... This would have corrected their sin of asking for meat. They would once again be called the דור דעה, nation with immense wisdom, עם תמימים, ‘a nation that has *temimus*.’” But they failed this test; they didn't trust that Hashem is leading

them in the best way. As Rashi writes at the beginning of the *parashah*, “I told them that the land is good! ... I swear I will give them a place to make an error... so they won't inherit the land.”

The Shem MiShmuel writes, “Yehoshua and Kalev told the nation (14:9) אך בה' לא תמרדו, ‘Just don't rebel against Hashem.’ They were telling the nation to have *temimus*...and they should submit their desires to Hashem's desires. Whatever Hashem wants should be good in their eyes... But the Jewish nation sinned. They didn't have *temimus*...”

“With Hashem; His portion”

Rashi (*Devarim* 18:13) on the *pasuk*, תמים תהיה עם ה' אלקיכם, writes, התהלך עמו בתמימות, “Go with Hashem with *temimus*, ולא ותצפה לו, and trust in Him. תחקור אחר העתידות, don't investigate what will be in the future. אלא כל מה שיבא עליך קבל, accept it with *temimus*. ואז תהיה whatever happens,

עמו ולחלקו, and then you will be with Hashem; His portion.”

When one has *temimus*, he becomes עמו ולחלקו, “With Hashem; His portion,” and when one is united with Hashem, he will have only good.

One of the amazing benefits of *temimus* is having Hashem with him, and thereby meriting Hashem’s kindness and miracles. This is the meaning of the *pasuk*, תמים תהיה, if you will have *temimus*, עם ה' אלקיך, you will be with Hashem.

The Shem MiShmuel writes, “Rashi (*Devarim*) teaches that if they hadn't sent *meraglim*, they would conquer Eretz Yisrael without weapons. The explanation is, if they didn't send *meraglim*, but have *temimus*, they would be עמו ולחלקו, 'With Hashem; His portion,' and then without any act of war...the nations would

have fallen dead before them... They would have fallen by their own swords, one person by the sword of his friend.”

The Shem MiShmuel writes that when one has *temimus*, “Thereby he becomes עמו ולחלקו, with Hashem; Hashem’s portion, and all problems go away....”

We wonder how the *meraglim* fell so drastically, and sinned so severely. They were originally *tzaddikim* and called אנשים (see *Rashi* 13:3).¹ So what happened that caused them to fall so greatly?

Rashi writes that when one has *temimus*, he becomes עמו ולחלקו, “With Hashem; His portion.” In contrast, we understand that when one doesn't have *temimus*, Hashem isn't with him. Without Hashem's aid, one is likely to sin, because Hashem isn't

1. Rashi writes, כל אנשים שבמקרא לשון חשיבות, ואותה שעה כשרים היו, When the Torah writes אנשים, this means they were important [worthy] people. And at that time, they were still kosher (*ehrllich*).

with him, to protect him from sin. The *meraglim* didn't have *temimus*, Hashem wasn't with them, and that is why they fell so drastically.

“Don't Investigate the Future”

A primary aspect of *temimus* is to believe in Hashem even when common sense would dictate differently. An example of this is to believe that Hashem can save you from your present predicament even when it doesn't seem rational or possible.

This is implied by Rashi (*Devarim* 18:13, quoted above), ולא תחקור אחר העתידות, “Don't investigate the future.” This means you don't have to figure out how Hashem will help you. As Rebbe Pinchas of Koritz *zt'l* teaches, “Hashem generally saves a person in a way he never imagined.”

Kalev calmed down the nation and told them (13:30), עלה נעלה, “We will go up to Eretz Yisrael and

we will inherit it. We are capable of doing so.”

How could such words calm the nation? They heard there were giants living in Eretz Canaan; Amalek lives there, and that the cities were fortified up to the heavens. To simply say, “Don't worry, we can win the war” doesn't seem to be a convincing argument, nor does it seem to be the proper response to their fears.

Furthermore, Rashi writes that Kalev told them, “Even if it is in heaven and Moshe tells us to make ladders to go up there, we will succeed with whatever he says.” This sounds even more improbable. Who can climb a ladder up to the heavens?

The Rebbe of Piasnescia *zt'l* answers that Kalev was telling the nation that they don't have to understand *how* Hashem will save them. They just have to have simple belief, *temimus*, that Hashem will certainly save them.

Kalev said, “We can win the war against the giants. We can even climb up to the heavens, if that's Hashem's decree. If you will ask me how that's possible, I admit, I also don't know. I agree it doesn't make sense. But we trust in Hashem, and in Moshe His servant. If Hashem tells us to conquer the land, we can do it.”

As we read the Piasnescia Rebbe's *hy'd zt'l* holy words, keep in mind that the Piasnescia Rebbe said this *drashah* in the Warsaw ghetto, when everyone was seeking a way to save themselves from the inferno. He teaches:

“A Yid must believe in Hashem's salvation, not solely when he understands how it

can happen. Even if he doesn't have any plan, and he doesn't see any possibility (within the rules of nature) he still believes and trusts in Hashem's salvation.

“During these times [the Holocaust], it is probably better that one doesn't seek rational solutions how to save himself, because he probably won't find, and then he might fall from his *emunah*.² And lacking *emunah* and *bitachon* may prevent the salvation from occurring, *chas veshalom*. Rather, one should say ‘Although...there doesn't seem to be a solution...nevertheless, I believe Hashem will save me beyond the rules of nature...’³”

2. If his *emunah* in his rescue is solely based on a logical plan, then when he doesn't find a rational strategy, he will lose hope and he won't have *emunah* and *bitachon*, which are vital for a salvation. Therefore, it is better to believe that Hashem will help without contemplating exactly how.

3. This lesson is also applicable for *parnassah*. Sometimes, a person has many expenses immediate or future and he doesn't see a solution. That shouldn't prevent him from having *emunah* and *bitachon* that everything will work out. He shouldn't be *חוקר אחר העתידות*, investigating about the future, seeking practical solutions how it could happen. He should

The sin of the generation of the *meraglim* was that they lacked this *temimus*. They wanted to understand *how* they'll win the war. And since they didn't find a rational explanation, they cried and panicked. But they cried for nothing,⁴ because Hashem has ways. We don't necessarily need to know how.

Hashems Endless Compassion

The Sifsei Tzaddikim, from Rebbe Pinchas of Dinavitz *zt'l*, says that not long before, the nation saw the ten *makos* and *kriyas Yam Suf*. They surely believed that Hashem could bring them into Eretz Yisrael, if He wants to. The problem was, after they sinned with the *egel* (Golden Calf) and with the *מתלוננים*, they thought

Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't want to perform any more miracles for them. That is the reason they were so worried.

Their fear was a fault in *temimus*. As we wrote above, *temimus* means to believe in Hashem even when logic and common sense dictates differently. Common sense indeed dictated that after they sinned, Hashem probably doesn't want to bring them into Eretz Yisrael, and He doesn't want to perform miracles for them (which were necessary to conquer the mighty nations who lived in the land). However, *temimus* means we believe in Hashem, even when it doesn't make sense intellectually. *Temimus* means to believe beyond logic

trust in Hashem without explanations and strategies, and then he will enjoy the salvation Hashem prepared for him.

4. It states (14:1), ותשא כל העדה ויתנו את קולם ויבכו העם בלילה ההוא, The entire nation raised their voices and cried that night. Chazal (*Taanis* 29.) say, That night was Tisha bAv. Hakadosh Baruch Hu, אתם בכיתם בכיה, You cried for nothing, I swear I will give you a reason to cry in every generation. And every year, on Tisha bAv we cry for the *churban* Beis HaMikdash.

that Hashem will conquer the land for them and bring them to Eretz Yisrael.

The Sifsei Tzaddikim explains that when the nation asked to send *meraglim*, Hakadosh Baruch He agreed because Hashem wanted them to know about the giants in Eretz Yisrael, and they should hear about the fortified cities, etc., so they would be aware of the miracles that Hashem will perform for them. Hashem

wanted them to know that despite their sins, Hashem's compassion doesn't have limits (similar to a father whose compassion never abandons his children). But the nation didn't have this *temimus*, they didn't believe Hashem would bring them into Eretz Yisrael.⁵

Temimus: Even *Yesurim* are for the Good

Temimus means to believe in Hashem, even when the mind

5. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we say that Hashem is הטוב ומטיב לטובים ולרעים, good and does kindness for the good people and for the bad people. One should never think he is too sinful to attain Hashem's compassion, because Hashem's compassion never ceases.

The Midrash (*Shochar Tov, Tehillim 25*) states: The police arrested a foreigner. The foreigner told them, Please! Don't hit me. I'm a member of the royal household.

The police accepted his plea and they didn't harm him. But they kept him under guard all night, and in the morning they brought him to the king. They said, We found someone from your household.

The king asked the foreigner, My son, do you know me?

No. I don't.

So why do you say you are from my household?

He replied, I beg you, I am not from your household, however, I trusted that you would help me

The king said to the police officers, Since he trusted in me, let him go.

This is what Dovid HaMelech said, אלקיך בך בטחתי, Hashem I trust in You. Therefore, אל יעלצו אויבי לי, the enemies shouldn't harm me.

and common sense say otherwise. An example is when someone is suffering *yesurim* (afflictions) *r'l*. One must believe with *temimus* that Hashem loves him even then, and he must know that the *yesurim* are best for him.

The Chofetz Chaim (*Shem Olam, Shaar Shemiras Shabbos* 3 (הגה"ה) writes, “A person’s mind and understanding are weak, and therefore, one shouldn’t ask question on the King of kings, Hakadosh Baruch Hu. One must have *temimus* and believe everything Hashem does is for the good... And then he will certainly see how even the hardships were solely goodness and kindness...”

The Michtav MeEliyahu (vol.1 p.84) writes the following in the name of his rebbe, Reb Tzvi Hirsh Broide *z't'l*:

If a person stood in a city square, taking off and putting on people’s shoes all day long,

he would be extremely embarrassed. Yet, in a shoe store you see the storeowner doing this, willingly. Before *yom tov*, when the store is filled with consumers, he puts on hundreds of pairs of shoes each day, and he is extremely happy about it. Where did his shame go to? The answer is, he is earning his *parnassah* from this, and so he is happy with each shoe he puts on.

The *nimshal* is, when one knows how much he is gaining from his *yesurim*, he can be happy with them.

The Rabbeinu Yonah (*Shaarei Teshuvah* 2:4) writes, “When one accepts Hashem’s affliction, and due to them he improves his ways, he should be glad that he received the *yesurim*... He should praise Hashem as he would praise Hashem for other successes... As Chazal say, when everything is tranquil for a person, his sins aren’t forgiven. But when he is

afflicted, he becomes desired by Hashem....”⁶

The Chazon Ish (*Igros* letter 201) writes, “*Yesurim* are Hashem’s messengers, because they do the service to unite the person to Hashem... and they distance him from the materialistic pulls of the human body... Fortunate is his portion.”

The Gemara (*Bava Basra* 16:) states, “A deer (אילה) has a narrow womb. When she crouches to give birth, Hashem sends a snake to bite her.” This opens her womb, and her offspring is born.

A *gadol* of our generation explains that the snake doesn’t bite the deer to help her. The deer and the snake are enemies. As the Chovas HaLevavoos (*Shaar HaBitachon* 3) states, a deer eats snakes. Also, the Midrash (*Shochar Tov, Tehillim* 22) states “In a house where there are snakes, one should take the horn of a deer and smoke it. The snakes will immediately run away.” The Midrash explains that Esther is called אילת deer, because she chased away the snake, Haman.

The snake and the deer aren’t friends. The snake bites her

6. The Gemara (*Taanis* 8.) states, Whoever is happy with his *yesurim* מביא ישועה לעולם, brings salvation to the world. What is the connection? Why should being happy with *yesurim* bring ישועה, a salvation? The Ben Yehoyada answers, I think, with Hashems help, that this is because naturally, one isnt able to be happy with *yesurim*. However, the *yesurim* is solely for a short time, and because of them one is saved many years of strife. When one thinks about that, he will be happy with *yesurim*. The Ben Yehoyada explains that *yesurim* are called וי, woe. When one realizes that the *yesurim* are for a short while, this is a combination of וי with שעה (woe with hour). וי and שעה spell ישועה, salvation. Therefore, Chazal say, when one is happy with his *yesurim* (which means he contemplates how the וי is solely for שעה), מביא ישועה לעולם, he brings ישועה, salvation, to the world.

because it wants to hurt her. from all those hardships,
 The snake doesn't realize that good emerges.
 he is giving the deer the
 ability to give birth.

This is a lesson for all with his *yesurim* receives life
 hardships one goes through. in this world and in the next
 One thinks they are bad, but world, without end.”⁷

7. A member of our *chaburah* who lives in Beis Shemesh traveled to America to collect funds for an upcoming wedding. He was using a driver (someone who drives *meshulachim* to the homes of *baalei tzedakah*). In the car there were other *meshulachim*. One of the men had a tough personality (or perhaps a more accurate term would be to say that he had *chutzpah*). He set a rule that whenever they come to the home of a wealthy person, or to a beis medresh, he goes in first, and the others are allowed to go in only after he exits. (Sometimes a wealthy person gives a lot of money to the first person he encounters, and afterwards gives less to the others. This person wanted to be the first person to speak with the wealthy person, so he could earn the most.)

They couldnt argue with this uncompromising individual, so they were *mevater*, and let him have his way.

The driver dropped them off at a beis medresh, and told them to collect money there. The tough man went in first. When he left, our friend from Beis Shemesh went in. Someone in the beis medresh gave him a check for \$1800!

When he had a quiet moment with the driver, he showed him the check. The driver was surprised. He knows the person signed on the check, and that person isnt particularly wealthy.

Out of curiosity, the driver talked with the person who gave the check, and asked him why he gave such an exorbitant sum. He replied, I recently earned a lot of money on a business deal. When I began the business venture, I promised myself that I would give a tenth of the profit to the first person who asks me for tzedakah.

Hashems Will

The Chidushei HaRim *zt'l* writes, "The *meraglim* intended for Klal Yisrael's benefit. They saw that the Yidden in the desert lived an ideal, spiritual life. They learned Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu, ate *manna*, always had clothing, and didn't have any disturbances. They were able to totally devote themselves to *avodas Hashem*. The *meraglim* thought it was a pity for them to go to Eretz Yisrael, because in Eretz Yisrael they would have to work hard and till the land, which would prevent them from *avodas Hashem*. They were *moser nefesh* for Klal Yisrael*...and they succeeded. The Yidden remained in the

desert for another forty years, and throughout all that time they had *parnassah* from heaven, and they devoted themselves to *avodas Hashem*. But this wasn't Hashem's will. It isn't good to offer opinions on how Hashem should lead us. Hashem leads us in the very best way..."

They shouldn't have gone against Hashem's will. Hashem wanted them to go to Eretz Yisrael, and they should have accepted that. In the *meraglim's* opinion, living in Eretz Yisrael wasn't the ideal *avodas Hashem*. What could be better than living on *manna* for forty years, learning Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu. But that wasn't Hashem's plan; it wasn't the *avodas Hashem*

The driver asked, But there was a person who came in before this man. Why didnt you give the big donation to him?

The man thought for a moment and then he remembered. I was in the restroom. I had just returned when I met him. When the chutzpadig person went around the beis medresh, that man wasnt there.

As it turned out, he earned more money because he went in second. This story is a reminder that one gets whatever is *bashert*. And what one thinks is a problem is the salvation.

8. It was *mesirus nefesh*, because they sinned for Klal Yisraels sake.

that Hashem chose. And it is a lack of *temimus* to choose the *avodas Hashem* that you think is important, while disregarding what Hashem chose for you.

The Chidushei HaRim's grandson, the Sifsei Tzaddik (*Shlach*) writes, "I heard from my grandfather *zt'l*, that the *meraglim* were great tzaddikim who were *moser nefesh* that Klal Yisrael shouldn't fall from the level they were on in the desert. They were successful in doing them a favor for forty years, because all that time they didn't have to carry the burden of this materialistic world on their shoulders. Their only occupation was Torah and *avodah*. Their sin was that they thought of this idea on their own. They should have had *temimus*, and trusted in Hashem's *hashgachah*."

The Chidushei HaRim gave the following analogy: There was once a wealthy father-in-law who supported

his son-in-law, a *talmid chacham*. As long as he supported him, the son-in-law was able to learn Torah without any disturbances. One day, the father-in-law told his son-in-law that he must stop supporting him, and he should seek a way to support himself. Someone heard about that and came to the father-in-law to convince him to continue supporting his son-in-law. He was concerned that without financial support his special son-in-law might learn less Torah.

That was the intention of the *meraglim*, to find a way for the Jewish nation to remain in Torah learning full time. But it was a sin, because that wasn't Hashem's will.

The Beis Avraham *zt'l* once said, "There are those who want to daven, and there are others who want to learn. But to want what Hashem wants, that's something else, entirely."

In the song *י"ה אכסוף* it states, *פתח להם נועם ורצון לפתוח שערי רצונך*. The Beis Avraham explained, "Give them the pleasure and desire to do *Your will*." Our goal should be to do what Hashem wants, and not what we think is best.⁹

Once, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk *zt'l* and Rebbe Zusha of Honipoli *zt'l* were in prison. There was a bucket in the cell, meant to be used as a chamber pot. Rebbe Elimelech was very upset about that, because that means they couldn't even daven and learn Torah in the cell (since it is forbidden to learn Torah in a room that has a stench, etc.).

His brother, Rebbe Zusha, told him, "Why are you upset? Our ambition is to serve Hashem.

By refraining from learning and by refraining from davening we are doing Hashem's will."

They began to dance. They were so happy they could do Hashem's will. The guard came in when he heard the singing, and was astonished to see the two brothers dancing around the disgusting bucket. He said, "I see you're happy about the bucket. I will take it away from you."

Their joy is a lesson for us: *Avodas Hashem* isn't about doing what we want; it is about doing what Hashem chooses — no matter what it is.

The Birchas Avraham *zt'l* lived in Teveria. One of his

9. It states in this weeks *parashah* (13:29), *עמלק יושב בארץ הנגב*, Amalek dwells in the south. The south represents wisdom. As Chazal (*Bava Basra* 25:) state, Whoever wants to be wise should pray towards the south. The Chidushei HaRim *zt'l* explains that Amalek dwelling in the south hints that Amalek uses wisdom, but in the wrong times and places.

One example of this principle is when one uses his intellect to determine what *avodas Hashem* is all about, and he doesn't want to accept with *temimus* the *avodas* that Hashem allotted him.

chassidim had to be in America for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and he wrote a letter to his Rebbe, the Birchas Avraham, complaining that he has to be so far from the Rebbe on the holy days.

The Rebbe wrote back, "Hashem sets up a ladder for every Yid, which he can climb up on to reach high levels. Yosef's ladder, for example, was perched in Mitzrayim. From that dark place he reached very high levels, until he is called Yosef HaTzaddik. Since you must be in America for the holy days, Hakadosh Baruch Hu certainly arranged a ladder for you there, which goes up to the heaven. Therefore, accept your fate with love." Because *temimus* means to accept the *avodas Hashem* that Hashem allots for you.

Their Rectification

Their punishment was (14:35,) במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימותו, "In this desert they will perish, and they will die there."

The Chasam Sofer ז"ל (תורת יתמו (משה ד"ה במדבר) explains that they hints that they would return to their *temimus*, and thereby their sins will be rectified.

He explains that in *sefer Devarim* (9:2) Moshe reiterates to the nation the great powerful nations that live in Eretz Canaan, but this time it didn't frighten them. Moshe told them, עם גדול ורם בני ענקים, "A large nation...the children of giants..." but they weren't frightened.

The Chasam Sofer explains, "Moshe wasn't concerned they would be frightened and that they won't want to go into Eretz Yisrael, because by that time Moshe was already their leader for forty years, which is when students perceive the lessons of their teacher (as Rashi writes *Devarim* 29:3). And when one understands Moshe's teachings, and understands the holiness of Eretz Yisrael and the holiness of each Yid's *neshamah*, he is *moser nefesh* and gives away

all his money even just to see Eretz Yisrael.

“The generation of the *meraglim* didn’t attain that perception yet. Therefore they said, *לו מתנו במצרים או במדבר הזה*, ‘If only we would die in Egypt, or in this desert.’ Dying in the desert wasn’t a punishment for them, because that is what they requested: *לו מתנו*, ‘If only we could die in the desert.’ Each person lived until he was sixty, and by that time they attained *temimus*. At that age, they perceived the holiness of Eretz Yisrael, and they had immense distress knowing that they would die in the desert and couldn’t go up to Eretz Yisrael. This is the meaning of the *pasuk*, *במדבר הזה יתמו*, you will live in this desert until you attain *temimus* and perceive the holiness of Eretz Yisrael, *ושם*, and after you attain *temimus*, *ימותו*, you will die, and you will be upset that you are dying [before going into Eretz

Yisrael]. That will be their punishment, and thereby they will merit Olam HaBa.”

A Year Per Day

It states (14:34), *במספר הימים אשר תרתם את הארץ, ארבעים יום יום לשנה*, “For the amount of days you spied the land — forty days — a day for a year, a day for a year.” The *meraglim* scouted Eretz Yisrael for forty days, therefore the nation was punished to remain in the desert for forty years. They were punished with being in the desert one year for each day they scouted Eretz Yisrael.

Somewhat similar, the Gemara (*Chagigah* 5:) states, “Whoever sins even just one day a year, it is as though he sinned the entire year.”

The Chasam Sofer *zt'l* teaches: Based on the principle that reward is 500 times greater than punishment,¹⁰ if one serves Hashem just one day a year, it is considered as though

10. Chazal say, *מדה טובה מרובה על מדת פרעניות חמש מאות פעמים*, Hashems

he served Hashem for five hundred years!

this large reward that is due for him.

The Gemara (*Pesachim* 94:) states that the distance between heaven and earth is a five-hundred-year walk.

When we think about these concepts, we grasp the preciousness of time. One can earn so much reward with one day of serving Hashem, and even a few hours.

With this information, the Chasam Sofer explains the *pasuk*, לִמְעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם... כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, עַל הָאָרֶץ, “So your life will increase... like heaven is above earth.” Because for serving Hashem even just one day, it will be like he served Hashem for five hundred years, the amount heaven is above earth.

Early one morning, the Rebbe of Radshitz *zt'l* said, "A special guest arrived today. It's his first visit. He won't be here again, so I want to honor him properly. The guest is Today. It came today, and it will never come back..." Time must be utilized properly, because time wasted is forever gone.

If he serves Hashem for another day, it will be as though he served Hashem one thousand years, and so on. The reward will definitely be in Olam HaBa, because the six thousand years of this world are too few to bestow

Someone was waiting for a train in a Swiss train station. The train arrived, but he didn't board it. His friend asked him, “Why don't you board the train?”

attribute to bestow kindness is five hundred times stronger than His attribute to punish.

The man replied, "This train isn't very comfortable, but the next train is luxurious. Every passenger gets his own table to eat on and a berth to sleep in... I'm waiting for that train."

"But that train won't be here for many hours..."

He replied, "That's o.k. It's worth it for me to wait."

The train finally arrived and he boarded it joyously. He enjoyed a good meal at the table. And then, exhausted (from waiting in the sun for so long) he lay down and slept for several hours. When he awoke, he realized he boarded the wrong train. He traveled in the wrong direction!

It was too late to seek a train to bring him home. It was almost Shabbos. He didn't even have Shabbos clothes to wear! He sought a place to stay for Shabbos.

This happened because he was so focused on attaining physical pleasures that he

forgot to take careful note of other essential matters, such as where the train was headed.

When a person's primary focus is to attain pleasures in this world, he will lose sight of the primary purpose we came to the world. He is interested in worldly pleasures and forgets to be careful with sparing time for Torah and mitzvos.

The Chofetz Chaim zt'l told the following *mashal*:

Once, there was a simple farmer who saved the king's life. To reward him, the king said the farmer can enter his treasury for one hour, and take out anything he desires.

When the day of the reward came the king was afraid that the farmer may grab too much. The king made some inquiries to find out the type of foods the farmer liked to eat, and the type of music he enjoyed listening to.

The king set up a food stand near the treasury, which

served the farmer's favorite food. A band was also there, playing the farmer's favorite music.

The farmer couldn't resist partaking from the food he loved, and he also spent some time watching the band play his favorite music. By the time he was ready to enter the treasury he shouted in agony, "Only a few minutes left!" The hour almost passed and he hadn't yet started collecting his reward.

Had he taken his reward first, he could have enjoyed the food and music afterwards. The *nimshal* is, people become occupied in their pursuit for worldly pleasures and they forget to take the immense reward that is available for them.

The Ben Ish Chai zt'l tells the following *mashal*:

There were two wealthy people who were always arguing about which one of

them was wealthier. It was important for them to know because whoever was wealthier had the final say in the city. They debated this matter for years, and they had many disputes.

One day they decided to test it, once and for all. They would both throw precious coins into the ocean, one coin at a time. Whoever stops first means that he has less money, since it is hard for him to lose so many coins. The one who is still throwing in coins is unquestionably wealthier.

After a while, one of them stopped. He didn't want to lose all his money. The other one was still throwing in coins. It seemed he had so much money, he didn't care to lose all those coins. Everyone was stunned by his immense wealth.

Later it was discovered that he threw counterfeit coins. That's the reason he didn't mind throwing them all into the sea.

The *nimshal* is, when one throws away time, it is a sign he considers time like counterfeit, and not valuable, and therefore he doesn't mind wasting it.

Reb Eliyahu Lopian *zt'l* compared time to a travel bag. If he packs his bag orderly, there is plenty of room for all his belongings. But if he throws in the items without folding them, and without an order, there isn't room for much else after a few items are put into the bag.

Time is similar. If one is cautious and orderly with his time, he will see that there is a lot of time in the day. But those who aren't careful with their time can't find time for anything.

A student asked Reb Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *zt'l* how to set up his schedule for learning Torah. Reb Shlomo Zalman advised him to set aside time each day to review everything he had studied until then. The student told Reb

Shlomo Zalman that he doesn't have time for that.

There was a bar-mitzvah present lying on Reb Shlomo Zalman's table. It was a wrapped *sefer*, bound with a rubber band. Reb Shlomo Zalman took off the rubber band and showed him how small it appeared in comparison to when it was stretched around the *sefer*. Reb Shlomo Zalman explained to him that this represents time. It seems short. But if one stretches it, one can find that he has a lot of time. Plenty of time to do everything he needs to.

Parashas Bechokosai states the rewards for keeping the mitzvos. One of the rewards is (*Vayikra* 26:9), וּפְנִיתִי אֵלֵיכֶם. Rashi explains, אַפְנֶה מְכַל עִסְקֵי, לְשֵׁלֵם שְׂכָרְכֶם, "I will finish off all my work so I can pay you your reward."

Rashi's explanation comes from *Toras Cohanim* which tells the following *meshal*:

A king was paying his workers. His loyal, devoted servant also showed up to receive his payment. The king told him, “First, I will pay all the other workers what I owe them. וכשאתפנה, when I finish with them, I will take all the time needed, to pay you your reward.”

The *nimshal* is, Bnei Yisrael came together with the nations of the world and asks for their reward. Hakadosh Baruch Hu said, “The nations of the world did only a few good deeds, so I will pay them a little reward in this passing world. But I have a very large reward for you, which I will give you at the End of Days in Olam HaBa — in the eternal world, and in the primary location for reward. The reward is enormous and eternal...”

Following this *mashal*, the *pasuk* is saying ופניתי אליכם, “I will finish my business with the nations of the world, and then I will take care of you, and I will give you all the reward you deserve.”

The Chidushei HaRim זt'l gave another explanation for the blessing and promise, ופניתי אליכם. He explains that ופניתי comes from the word פנאי, which means ample, extra time. The *brachah* is that the tzaddikim are granted ample time, so they can accomplish a lot in *avodas Hashem*.

The Chidushei HaRim would often say this translation, for it is indeed the greatest gift to have enough time to do everything he needs to, in *avodas Hashem*.

In the *tochachah* (curses) it also states (*Vayikra* 26:17), ונתתי פני בכם. According to the Chidushei HaRim's explanation, that פני means ample time, why does Hashem grant sinners ample time? The Beis Yisrael זt'l answers that having time is a blessing for those who use it well, and a curse for those who use time unwisely and for sin.

Some have a custom to give a gold watch as a gift to a *chasan*. This is to remind the

chasan that time is precious like gold.

The Lev Simchah *zy'a* added that the gold watch is only the wrapping of time. The wrapping is always less valuable than what it holds. If the wrapping is made of gold, it shows that time is far more valuable."¹¹

What Others Think

The *meraglim* told Klal Yisrael about the giants who lived in Eretz Canaan. They said (13:33), ונהי בעינינו כחגבים, "We felt like grasshoppers, וכן בעיניהם, and that is how they perceived us."

The Midrash states, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu forgave them for saying 'We felt like grasshoppers,' but Hashem didn't forgive them for saying וכן היינו בעיניהם, 'that's how they perceived us.' Hakadosh Baruch Hu told them, 'How do you know which impression I had them think of you? Perhaps they thought you are angels.'"

This is a very important lesson. Many people have a low self-image, and they think everyone is looking down at them. People's opinions are very important to them, and

11. Reb Zalman Brizel (of Yerushalayim) spent a night in Bnei Brak, at his son, Reb Notas, house. As always, Reb Zalman used his time well, studying Torah diligently.

"Father, it's late, Reb Nota told his father. You can finish your studies tomorrow."

Reb Zalman didnt respond. He just kept on learning.

The son raised this point a couple more times that night, but each time, Reb Zalman just continued learning. He finished learning around midnight. Reb Nota was then in the kitchen, eating a late supper. Reb Zalman said, "Reb Nota, it's late. You can finish your meal tomorrow."

The message was well taken. There are some things that one just doesnt push off for tomorrow.

when others think negatively of them it hurts them immensely. But one never knows what others are thinking. Perhaps Hashem put into the hearts of others to look up at you and to consider you special. Perhaps they even think you are like a *malach*. Why do you think so poorly of yourself?

Thinking good about yourself, and thinking that others respect you, is essential, because this will encourage you to act in a proper way. If you think lowly of yourself, and also think that others don't expect more from you, you are likely to fall to sin and bad *middos*.

The Chidushei HaRim *zt'l* explains that their negative image was their primary sin. Therefore, Moshe told the *meraglim*, והתחזקתם, “strengthen yourselves...” Moshe understood they have a negative self-esteem, and they

have to strengthen themselves and think better of themselves.

The Sfas Emes (תר"מ) asks that the Gemara (*Sotah* 35.) states that the *meraglim* heard the Canaanites say, “We see people, they look like ants, crawling in the vineyards.” It seems that it wasn't only the *meraglim's* imagination. They actually heard the Canaanites looking down at them, thinking of them like insects.

The Sfas Emes answers that the problem began with their negative self-perception. This influenced others to look at them. “Since they were small in their own eyes, and they consider themselves like grasshoppers, this caused others to see them that way. Because everything is dependent on man's service.”

Had they believed in themselves, then the Canaanites would have greater respect for them. Perhaps they would even consider them

like *malachim*. But they looked down at themselves, and this is how others perceive them, too.¹²

Yetzer Hara — an Illusion

Kalev and Yehoshua tried to encourage the nation. They said (14:7-9) "The land that we went through to scout is an extremely good land. **סר צלם מעליהם וה' אתנו אל תיראם**, "Their shadow has left them and Hashem is with us, don't fear them."

Rashi explains that **סר צלם**, "their shadow has left them"

means the tzaddik, whose merit was protecting them, has died.

Rashi writes, "The righteous people of the land – their protector and strength – died. This is referring to Iyov, whose merit protected them."

The Sfas Emes (5638) however explains **סר צלם** "Their shadow left them" is referring to the *yetzer hara*, because the *yetzer hara* is like a shadow, an imagination. It appears to be real, but there is nothing there, at all.

12. Rashi (*Bereishis* 32:6) writes, [Yaakov Avinu said] I lived with Lavan and I didnt learn from his bad ways." The next Rashi begins, **ויהי לי שור וחמור**, I had oxen and donkeys

Someone told the Brisker Rav the following *vort*. How did Yaakov live with Lavan for twenty years and not become influenced by his bad ways? Its because he thought of Lavan and of his friends as though they were **שור וחמור**, animals, and not people worth emulating.

The Brisker Rav praised the *vort*. He said that although this isnt Rashis intention, the idea is true and correct. When one is among bad influences, it helpful to recognize that with their bad ways, they are acting like animals, and not like human beings.

Reb Mordechai Chaim of Slonim *ztl* was walking through the city Tel Aviv, dressed in the Yerushalmi garb. Someone asked him, Arent you embarrassed to walk around the streets dressed like that?

He replied, And if I walk into a barn, should I dress up like a cow?

This is as the Rebbe of Kotzk *zt'l* called the *yetzer hara* a *dimyon*, an illusion. Another time, the Kotzker called the *yetzer hara* a lion but made of paper. Try ripping it up and you'll see. These descriptions of the *yetzer hara* – a paper lion, a shadow, an illusion – all bring forth the same point. The *yetzer hara* seems real, the fear that he portrays, and the *taavos* that he projects, are worth paying attention to. But when one is fortunate and sees beyond the charade, they discover that it is an illusion, a shadow, and has no substance.

Kalev and Yehoshua were saying they attained that realization, and they knew that there is nothing to fear. *סר צלם*, they uncovered that it is just a shadow, and nothing to take seriously.¹³

The Sfas Emes (5638)

elaborates, "The *yetzer hara's* strength is merely an illusion, like a shadow that has no substance. Someone who battles with the *yetzer hara* properly will see that it's nothing more than a mirage. The *meraglim's* test was certainly a great test, but when Yehoshua and Kalev uncovered that it was just a shadow, as they said *סר צלם*... the other *meraglim* should have believed them and strengthened themselves with trust in Hashem. But they remained with their first impression and they were therefore punished. Similarly, when we see *tzaddikim* overcoming the *yetzer hara*, we must [learn from them to] be strong and believe that the *yetzer hara* is just a shadow. With *emunah* and reliance on *tzaddikim* one can overcome the *yetzer hara*."¹⁴

13. One of the *malachim* in the *yetzer haras* camp is called *דומה*. The *Avnei Nezer zt'l* (*Even HaEzer*, 232:10) explains that it is called so, because the essence of the *yetzer hara* is *dimyon*, an illusion.

14. People carry heavy financial burdens, or other worries. The

Since the *yetzer hara* is a *dimyon*, an illusion, it's helpful to push off acting upon the *yetzer hara's* whims even if just for a short while, as the person might come to the realization that it's just an imagination and not worth pursuing.

Therefore, the Torah says (13:30) וַיְדַם כָּל־בָּרִיךְ אֶת־הָעָם, "Kalev silenced the nation" and he encouraged the nation to believe they have the ability to conquer Eretz Canaan.

It doesn't seem that Kalev accomplished anything at that time. The *meraglim* and the nation were still afraid. But the pause was important, because when one stops in the middle of pursuing his imagination, there's a possibility that he'll catch

himself and realize that it's all a mistake.

After Hashem decreed that this generation will die in the desert and won't enter Eretz Yisrael because of the sin from the *meraglim*, a group of people decided to go up to Eretz Yisrael regardless. As it states (14:44), וַיַּעֲבִילוּ לָעֹלוֹת אֶל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר, "With force and stubbornness, they went up to the top of the mountain."

They made themselves strong and stubborn, and decided that they would go up to Eretz Yisrael, with or without Hashem's permission.

Essentially, they were now sinning in reverse. When Hashem told them to go to Eretz Yisrael, they didn't want to go. And now, when Hashem said they can't go to

situation seems unbearable. But there are tzaddikim who see the truth; that it's all just a shadow, an illusion, and they strengthen themselves with *bitachon*, and trust that Hashem will help. We should emulate them and know that our fears aren't real; they are just there to test us. When we know that, we can overcome all challenges.

Eretz Yisrael, they went towards Eretz Yisrael, forcefully.

How can we explain this? How did they change their view so radically? Before, they were afraid of the mighty people in Eretz Canaan, and now they were being courageous and risking their lives.

Tzaddikim answer that this shows that the *yetzer hara* doesn't really have an opinion; its only opinion is to instigate people to go against Hashem's will. It's an imagination, a shadow, and when one recognizes that, it is easier to overcome him.

Teshuvah

Many explain that the *mafilim* (the people who went up to Eretz Canaan, without Hashem's permission) intended well. They said to Moshe, הנו, ועלינו אל המקום אשר אמר ה' כי המאנו, "We are ready, and we will go up to the place Hashem spoke to us about, because we sinned" (14:40). *Rashi* writes,

"We sinned when we said (14:3) 'It would be better to return to Mitzrayim.'" They recognized that they sinned and they wanted to correct their mistake and to go to Eretz Canaan with *mesirus nefesh*. This was a high level of *mesirus nefesh* indeed, as they were a small group, and they would have to face the great, powerful armies of Eretz Canaan. Moshe told them not to go, and clearly warned them that they would die, but they went anyway.

Despise their good intentions they sinned, because after Moshe explained to them that this wasn't Hashem's will, they should have accepted his counsel.

The Chasam Sofer *zt'l* however teaches that the *mafilim* were tzaddikim, and they were correct for trying to go to Eretz Yisrael. The Chasam Sofer proves this from the Gemara (*Shabbos* 96-97) which discusses how Tzelafchad died: Reb Akiva

says he was the מקושש עצים (mentioned in this week's *parashah* 15:32). This means that Tzelafchad either carried, cut, or gathered wood on Shabbos, as these are the three opinions stated in the Gemara. Therefore, he was punished with death.

Reb Yehudah ben Beseira said to Reb Akiva, "Akiva, regardless of whether you are correct or not, you will be punished for your explanation. If you are right — the Torah concealed his name (and didn't tell us who the *mekoshesh eitzim* was, to honor him) and you revealed his name. And if you are wrong, you are *motzi laz* (falsely slandering) this tzaddik."

So how did Tzefchad die? Reb Yehudah ben Beseira answers: "He was one of the *mafilim*." He was from the people who brazenly tried to go to Eretz Yisrael.

This Gemara clearly indicates that the *mafilim's* act wasn't a

sin. Otherwise, we can ask Reb Yehudah ben Beseira the very same questions he asked Reb Akiva: Why are you revealing Tzelafchad's sin, when the Torah concealed it? And if you are mistaken, you are slandering this tzaddik.

So, it is evident, that the *mafilim* didn't sin. On the contrary, they were doing a positive deed. They were trying to repent.

Though Moshe Rabbeinu told them they may not go, they weren't necessarily obligated to obey, since they wanted to do *teshuvah*, and no one can prevent someone from doing *teshuvah*.

The Chasam Sofer elaborates: The Gemara and *Shulchan Aruch* (170 *Magen Avraham* 10) teach, "A guest must obey everything his host (*baal habayis*) requests, except when the host asks him to leave." The Shlah HaKadosh teaches that this also applies to *avodas Hashem*. We must listen to everything Hashem

says (because He is the Baal HaBayis of the world) except for when Hashem tells the person to leave. This means, when Hashem tells a person it's too late to do *teshuvah*, he doesn't have to listen. He can come close to Hashem, even when Hashem tells him to leave.

Emunah

Rebbe Shlomke of Zvhil would often say: People claim they believe in Hashem, but the real test is when something doesn't go their way. Do they remember their *emunah* even then, or are they upset and distressed? This is when *emunah* is tested and it can be determined whether they truly have *emunah* or not.

Reb Yechiel Michel Feinstein's *zt'l* daughter suffered from a severe case of asthma. The family had three nebulizers in the house, so there would always be at least one available in case of an asthma attack.

One night, their daughter had

an attack, and the family was frantically looking for the nebulizers, but they couldn't find any of them. They called Hatzalah. By the time they came, she had already died. Only then they find the machines. All three of them were under her bed. They didn't think of looking there.

The family was inconsolable. They asked themselves, "Why weren't we wiser and store the machines in a place where we will always find them? And why didn't we think to look under her bed?"

Reb Yaakov Galinsky *zt'l* came to be *menachem avel*. He told the family, "My rebbes taught that the concept of *hishtadlus* is only about the future; not about the past. After something happened, one must believe that whatever occurred was exactly as Hashem planned it, and nothing could have been done to change it. The person who placed the breathing machines under the bed isn't guilty, and the family members who

didn't think of looking there aren't guilty either. This was Hashem's plan, and nothing people did or did not do could have changed it..."

Only after they heard these words, were they ready to receive condolences.

Approximately twenty years ago, a *bachur* from Yeshivas Chevron was murdered by Arabs, and Reb Nota Zehnwirth *zt'l* came to be *menachem avel* the father.

As soon as Reb Nota sat down, he asked the father, "Had Avraham Avinu slaughtered Yitzchok at the *akeidah*, would Avraham Avinu need to sit *shivah* for him?"

"Of course he would," the *aveil* replied. "Why shouldn't he?"

"I have my doubts," Reb Nota explained, "because the *akeidah* and the death were Hashem's will..."

The father replied, "Every death is Hashem's will. Whenever someone dies it is

Hashem's decree, and yet, there is an obligation to sit *shivah*."

Reb Nota Zehnwirth replied, "That is exactly what I wanted to hear." And then Reb Nota stood up, said the *brachah*, *המקום ירחם אתכם*... and left. His message was understood. As painful as it were, everything happens by Hashem's decree.

Reb Leibke Glauberman *zt'l* was one of the Yerushalayimer *tzaddikim*. (In his younger years, he was among the *chassidim* of the Yanuka *zy'a*, Rebbe Yisrael of Stolin *zy'a*). In his old age, his legs were ill, and the doctors in the hospital decided they must amputate them. Reb Leibke accepted Hashem's decree, and he was brought in for the operation, while his children waited outside the operating room. After the operation, a doctor told the children that they made a mistake; the operation wasn't really necessary. They could have saved his legs. "But it is too

late now," the doctor said, "What's done is done." Reb Leibka's children were angry with the doctors for making this terrible error.

When Reb Leibka woke up they told him that it was all a mistake. "Your legs didn't need amputation."

Reb Leibke replied, "I heard from my holy Rebbe, the Yanuka: וואלט איד. וואלט איד, to

say 'If only I would have done things differently...' is *apikorsus*. Everything is destined from heaven. The doctors may say that an illness such as I had didn't call for an amputation. But my foot needed to be amputated nonetheless, because that was decreed from Above. Fact is that this is what happened to me. It wouldn't have happened if it wasn't Hashem's will."

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