



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Shlach

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

שְׁלַח-לְךָ אַנְשִׁים וַיִּתְרוּ אֶת-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן...
"Send men to scout out the land of Canaan..."

ON A SIMPLE LEVEL, the Meraglim were sent to Eretz Yisrael for the purpose of scouting out the physical aspects of the Land and evaluating what it would take to conquer it. However, Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchover reveals a deeper understanding. The holy Berditchover teaches that when a Jew performs a mitzvah such as Torah study, chess, or tefillah, tremendous amounts of spiritual energy are drawn down from heaven to surround him wherever he is. This spiritual energy which proliferates when a Jew performs a mitzvah with love and devotion manifests in blessing and vitality which have the ability to benefit the physical place the mitzvah is done. Had the mission of the Meraglim been to simply scout out the

land, they would not have needed to be such great tzaddikim. Rather, the Berditchover explains that the task of the Meraglim was to serve Hashem in the land of Eretz Yisrael by studying the newly received Torah. This awesome act of holiness would draw down tremendous holiness to the land and awaken the desire of Eretz Yisrael for the Jewish people. The tzaddik sees this idea hinted in the opening words of our parsha: "Shlach lecha anashim": In the context of Bas-Pharaoh's sending out her maidservant (or her hand, see Sotah 12b) to retrieve the basket which held Moshe Rabbeinu, the word "shlach" is used (Shemos 2:5). R' Levi Yitzchak says that just like in that context the sending out was only for the purpose of bringing the basket close, so too Hashem was telling Moshe "shelach lecha anashim": Bring the Meraglim "lecha", up to your great spiritual level. "v'yasuru": this word shares the same root letters as the word "Torah". Hashem is telling Moshe that after drawing these leaders up to his great level, they are to travel to the land of Eretz Yisrael and study Torah there in order to cause the Land to yearn for Klal Yisrael, making it easier to conquer the eternal homeland of the Jewish nation. 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🤴 Moshe sends twelve spies to the land of Canaan. They return forty days later carrying a colossal cluster of grapes, a pomegranate, and a fig, to demonstrate the bounty of the land. Ten of the spies warn that the inhabitants of the land are giants and warriors. Only Kalev and Yehoshua insist that the land is exceedingly good and can indeed be conquered as Hashem commanded.
- 🤴 After hearing the report of the spies, the people weep and say they would rather return to Egypt. As a result, Hashem decrees that the nation's entry into the Land be delayed forty years, enough time for the entire generation to die in the desert. Against Moshe's command, a group of remorseful Jews storm the mountain on the border of the Land and are crushed by Amalek and Canaan.
- 🤴 The laws of the menachos (meal, wine, and oil offerings) are given, as well as the mitzvah to consecrate challah, a portion of the dough, when making bread.
- 🤴 A man transgresses a Shabbos violation by gathering sticks and is put to death. The nation is commanded regarding the mitzvah of tzitzis.

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

REBBE MENACHEM NACHUM of Chernobyl, the holy Meor Einayim, often traveled to collect funds for pidyon shevuyim, redeeming Jewish prisoners. On one occasion, the tzaddik was traveling through the city of Zhitomir to raise funds when he was stopped by the authorities. Deeming his holy work a crime, they locked him up in the local prison. The tzaddik was understandably shaken and perturbed by this turn of events. But what bothered him most was the fact that this had occurred while he was involved in a mitzvah. What was the meaning of this obstacle? What of Chazal's teaching that no harm will befall a person involved in a mitzvah? Could this be a message this his mitzvah was not valued above?

As the tzaddik was thinking these discouraging thoughts in the darkness of his cell, an elderly woman wrapped in a shawl appeared in the corridor. She began to speak: "Hashem tested Avraham by instructing him: 'Go forth from your land, and from your birthplace, and from your father's house,' promising that this would ultimately benefit him. But what kind of benefit can come from leaving everything one has? I don't understand."

Rebbe Nachum realized that this woman wasn't an ordinary person and remained silent.

She continued, answering her own question: "Avraham excelled at helping travelers with lodging, food and drink. But because he had never experienced the distress of leaving the comforts of home or the turmoil of spending endless days on the road, he couldn't identify with the people he helped. Hashem told Avraham to travel because He wanted Avraham to gain a deeper appreciation for his work."

With these words, the woman disappeared.

When he was freed from the prison the following day due to the Jewish community's intervention, Rebbe Nachum related to Rabbi Zev Volf, the maggid of Zhitomir, that the woman he had seen was none other than Sarah Imeinu. She had been sent by Hashem to encourage him by letting him know that the reason he had been thrown into prison was so that he could better appreciate the value of raising funds to redeem prisoners.

Hashem desires that we understand the great value of our good deeds and appreciate them properly.

Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

HAVING OUTLINED THREE areas of the human experience which bring honor to Hashem, Torah and tefillah, mitzvos, and the sanctification of physical drives, the Chernovitzer Rav delineates various levels within the third level. In previous lessons, we learned that the Jewish soul is comprised of five elements: *Nefesh* (action), *Ruach* (speech), *Neshamah* (thoughts) and *Chayah* and *Yechidah*, the root of the soul which are not perceptibly manifest in the body, hovering above. The tzaddik teaches that each of these five elements contains all the others as well – the aspect of *Nefesh* itself contains the elements of *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah* and *Yechidah*. Because the sanctification of physical drives relates to the lowliest realm of human life, various degrees of sanctification enable a person to reveal the various elements of the soul included within the level of *Nefesh*. Throughout Chazal, we find that the word “*Nefesh*”, literally “soul,” connotes “*ratzon*,” desire. This connection teaches that the entry point for a person who wishes to ascend the ladder of spiritual growth is to sanctify his physical drives, the level of *Nefesh*. This sanctification is effected in three stages: 1] When a Jew holds back from gorging in a gluttonous manner, eating only to sustain the body, this reveals the level of *Nefesh* within *Nefesh*. 2] When a Jew sanctifies himself even in that which is permitted, eating minimally and with lofty intention, he reveals the levels of *Ruach* and *Neshama* within *Nefesh* and is considered “*kadosh*,” holy and separated from the world for Hashem. 3] When a Jew eats from a *seudas mitzvah* in a way of holiness and with the proper intention to serve Hashem, this causes the levels of *Chayah* and *Yechidah* to become revealed, unifying and activating all aspects of the collective *Nefesh*. On Shabbos, a Jew’s *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, and *Neshama* are completely activated and shining with tremendous spiritual energy: Eaten in a way of holiness and God-consciousness, the Shabbos meals (*seudas mitzvah*) activates all elements of the collective *Nefesh*. Studying Torah and originating Torah ideas on Shabbos activates the elements of the collective *Ruach*. Singing praises to Hashem with heightened awareness of His presence in every particle of physicality activates the elements of the collective *Neshama* within. By celebrating Shabbos with the proper sanctity, a Jew merits to engage and activate all elements of his spirit. 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

P’nimiyus Ha’Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

IF THREE PEOPLE eat together, they are obligated to make a *zimmun* before *bentching*. The text of the *zimmun* may be said in any language as the purpose is to introduce the *bentching* and join the group together to praise Hashem. The *Zohar HaKadosh* (*Balak* 186b) writes that it is important to precede *bentching* with the words “give us a cup to *bentch*” in Hebrew or Aramaic to introduce the *bentching*. This is quoted by the *Mishna Berurah* (192:2) who writes the minhag Ashkenaz was to say the *zimmun* in Yiddish - “*Rabbosai mir vellin bentchin*” (“My masters, we want to *bentch*.”) The obligation to make a *zimmun* is when three or more people eat together. Three conditions for the meal to be considered as having been eaten “together” are that those eating 1) eat while seated, 2) sit at one table, and 3) start or end the meal together. They are considered to have started together if they all start to eat the first *kezayis* of bread while the others are still eating that first *kezayis*. *Sefer Vezos HaBeracha* quotes Rav Sheinberg who ruled that if they went to wash at the same time it is like they started together. When making a *zimmun*, it is preferable to say *Birkas Hamazon* over a cup of wine. (*Mishna Berurah* 182:4) The person leading the *zimmun* should raise the cup (filled completely, minimum *revi’is*) a *tefach* above the table and look at it (some say at the wine inside) so as to strengthen his concentration.

In a glorious discourse (*Likutei Halachos, Birkas Hamazon* 4, 20-22) Reb Nossan of Breslov reveals the inner dimension of these *halachos*, illuminating them with the brilliant light of *p’nimiyus haTorah*.

The tzaddikim taught that Hashem takes great pride in the Jewish nation, as the verse states, “*Yisrael asher b’cha espa’eir*,” “The Jewish nation in whom I take pride.” This is further expressed in this that the Jewish nation descends from the sons of Yaakov Avinu, who embodies the *middah* of “*Tiferes*,” splendor and pride. But what exactly is it about our avodah that gives Hashem pride? Does Hashem need our mitzvos? Can we give Hashem something He doesn’t already have? Reb Nossan explains that the element of our avodah which bring Hashem pride is the desire and yearning to serve Him, to connect with

Him, and to communicate with Him that is expressed in our mitzvah observance. It is this desire (the extent of which the actual fulfillment of mitzvos serves to indicate) that brings Hashem the greatest pride. Indeed, even when a Jew is, for whatever reason, unable to complete the mitzvah itself, his expression of yearning and longing to fulfill the mitzvah is itself exceedingly precious in the eyes of Hashem. Reb Nossan writes that the pinnacle of Jewish hope and desire is the collective yearning to return to Eretz Yisrael. For two thousand years of exile, we daven three times a day to return to the land of our soul and to serve Hashem in the Beis HaMikdash, “and let our eyes behold Your return to Tzion with great mercy.” It is this undying hope in which Hashem takes the most pride of all. Based on these ideas, Reb Nossan explains the halachos of *zimmun* in his inimitable fashion.

The tzaddik writes that the minimum **three members** of a *zimmun* represent the pride of Hashem which is embodied by **Yaakov Avinu**, whose spiritual energy was a composite of the other two **Avos, Avraham** and **Yitzchak** before him. The greatest *hispa’arus*-pride that Hashem derives from our service is our desire to engage in avodas Hashem. Therefore, the leader of the *zimmun*, who represents Yaakov Avinu and the trait of *Tiferes-hispa’arus*, begins by saying, “*Rabbosai, mir vellin bentchen*”, “My masters, we want to *bentch*.” This illustrates the manner in which our **desire and yearning to do the mitzvos** brings Hashem great pride. As we learned, the primary yearning of the Jewish nation which Hashem cherishes so dearly is our collective desire to return to Eretz Yisrael, our eternal homeland. Therefore, the leader of the *zimmun* (*Yaakov Avinu-Tiferes*) looks into the cup of wine to simulate the manner in which Hashem gazes at Eretz Yisrael, as the verse states, “the eyes of Hashem your God are on it from the beginning of the year until the year’s end.” Seen through the lens of Chassidus, we see how the seemingly dry and technical laws of *zimmun* in fact embody an important and beautiful message about the manner in which our yearning for a relationship with Hashem is cherished in heaven and an object of Hashem’s infinite pride. 🕎