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From: **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** [ryfrand@torah.org]

Sent: June 22, 2006 11:21 PM

Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Sh'lach

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Sh'lach

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 509, Ain Ma'averin Al Hamitzvos.

Yehoshua Was Tempted Like The Other Spies But For The Opposite Reason

We learn in this week's parsha of one of the most tragic incidents in all of the Torah – the incident of the Meraglim [Spies]. Every Tisha B'Av, when we mourn the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, we commemorate the anniversary of the sin precipitated by the mission of the Meraglim – "You cried a cry that was unnecessary on that night; I will establish for you a justified reason for crying on this night for all generations. [Ta'anis 29a]"

This is not only a tragic incident, but also a very difficult incident to understand. The Torah uses the expression "anashim" [people of distinction] to describe the spies. They were the leaders and heroes of the nation! This makes it all the more difficult to understand how such people – the cream of the crop – of a generation that witnessed the Splitting of the Red Sea and the Revelation of Sinai could sin so gravely by speaking disparagingly about Eretz Yisrael.

The Zohar explains that these people realized that their positions of leadership, that they enjoyed in the Wilderness, would be jeopardized by entry into the Promised Land. A "new order" would arise for the generation that entered Eretz Yisrael to build a totally different society than that which existed in the Wilderness. Thus, they each realized that entry into Eretz Yisrael would have a negative personal effect on them.

This is how we human beings function, unfortunately. We are influenced by personal motivation. "For bribes will blind the eyes of the wise and corrupt the words of the righteous." [Shmos 23:8] Normally,

we associate bribes with monetary payoffs. A bribe does not necessarily have to be money. There can also be "bribes" that distort our vision based on potential loss of authority or importance. Everything that each of them saw was colored with dark-colored glasses as a result of the subconscious feeling "I will go into Eretz Yisrael, and this will be the end of my day in the sun". As a result, they came to speak negatively of Eretz Yisrael.

Rav Yakov Moshe Kulefsky, zt"l, once told me the following insight in the name of one of the Chassideshe Rebbeim. The Targum Yonsasan ben Uziel comments on the pasuk [verse] "And Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun, Yehoshua" [Bamidbar 13:16] as follows: When Moshe saw the great humility of Yehoshua, he wanted to make sure Yehoshua would not be ensnared in the plans of the Spies. Therefore, Moshe blessed Yehoshua, "May the Almighty ('Kah') save you (yoshiacha) from the plans of the spies." Where did Moshe see this special degree of humility in his disciple Yehoshua?

Chazal say that it was Yehoshua who responded to the report that "Eldad and Meidad were offering prophecies in the camp" with the words "my master, Moshe, arrest them (kelaem)." [Bamidbar 11:27-28] What so offended Yehoshua by their prophecies? After all, Moshe Rabbeinu himself said, "if only all of the nation of G-d would be prophets..."

Chazal say, that the prophecy that Eldad and Meidad publicized was "Moshe will die and Yehoshua will lead us into the Land." The last thing that Yehoshua wanted for himself was to become the future leader. Yehoshua was the quintessential disciple. He was the quintessential servant of Moshe. As opposed to our "leaders" who are consumed with personal ambition and lusting for power, Yehoshua was not interested in becoming the next leader. He wanted Moshe to remain in power indefinitely. Therefore, when he heard that Moshe will die and he would lead, he was terribly offended. He demanded that those who publicized this 'blasphemy' be incarcerated.

When Moshe saw this great humility in his disciple, he realized Yehoshua would need an added blessing to stand up to the schemes of the Spies. Yehoshua would be subject to the same "bribe of personal motivation" that the other spies were subject to, albeit for the very opposite reason.

The other spies did not want to go into Eretz Yisrael because they were afraid that would cause them to lose power. They were afraid the mantle of tribal leadership would pass on to a younger generation. Yehoshua's personal instinct would also be to not want to go into Eretz Yisrael because — based on the prophecy of Eldad and Meidad — he was afraid that he would be given power and leadership!

The scary thing about this Chazal — and this is something that should cause every individual to tremble — is the following: If Yehoshua can be influenced by personal motivating factors and the other great individuals who were sent on this mission could be so influenced by their personal motivating factors — what can we say about ourselves?

This is why everyone needs a Rebbe, everyone needs a counselor, everyone needs a spouse, and everyone needs a companion — someone to give him an outside perspective. We all face decisions in life. All too often there are all sorts of personal motivating factors at play. We are aware of some motivating factors and unaware of others. We all make the statement "I know I am a 'nogeah' [personally affected] BUT...". We claim that "I can overcome my personal involvement in the matter." It is not true. If one knows he is personally affected, he CANNOT trust his instincts. "For bribes will blind the eyes of the wise."

Since we do not always realize when we are personally affected, each of us must "Make for yourself a Rav [teacher], acquire for yourself a Chaver [friend]." One needs a "help-mate opposite him," not a yes-man who will always reinforce what he is saying, but a person who will sometimes be "opposite him." Without such help, how will we be saved

from all the personal motivations and agendas that so often crop up in the vital decisions that we all need to make?

Taking Spiritual Growth One Step At A Time

The pasuk says regarding Tzitzis, "And you shall remember all the commandments of Hashem." The Talmud says, "Rabbi Meir used to say: How is Techeles [blue color used in Tzitzis] different from all other colors? The Techeles looks like the sea, and the sea looks like the sky and the sky looks like a sapphire stone and the sapphire stone looks like the Throne of Honor (of the Almighty)." [Chullin 89a]

What is the need for all the intermediate allusions? Cut out the middle-man! Let Rabbi Meir simply say that the color of Techeles is like that of the Throne of Honor!

An important answer that I saw is that in the service of G-d, one must go one step at a time. We must grow spiritually, but gradually. We cannot "grab it all at once." Unfortunately, we see all too many times that people gets into something new and go overboard. It is not well thought out. It is not well grounded. It is a 'fad'. One who bites off more than he can chew is left with nothing.

Chazal say to go slowly. Small steps. "Techeles is like the sea." This we can relate to right away. Later we will be able to absorb the meaning of "the sea is like the sky." Then we can compare the sky to sapphire. Ultimately, we will then hopefully make the connection that sapphire is like the Throne of Honor."

The Rabbeinu Tam writes in the Sefer HaYashar: If one wants to get into some type of good activity, he should not make it too difficult in the beginning. One should take upon himself the 'yoke of mitzvos' bit by bit, based on what he is able to handle.

This is the same idea mentioned before. If one assumes too much at once, he will remain with nothing. We put on the Tallis before the Tefillin, even though the Tefillin are holier than the Tallis. The operating principle is "we ascend in levels of holiness (we do not drop down)." We should not rush straight to put on the Tefillin. We need to build up to that level of holiness by first donning the Tallis, a less sanctified item.

Proceeding gradually and in an orderly fashion allows for great and lasting conquests. One who tries to jump to the top of the mountain, without taking the middle steps, winds up crashing.

The Techeles looks like the sea. The sea looks like the sky. The sky looks like sapphire stone. Sapphire stone looks like the Holy Throne. Take things one step at a time.

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from: Ozer Alport <oalport@optonline.net> date: Thu, May 30, 2013 at 4:36 PM subject: Parsha Potpourri - Parshas Shelach
Parshas Shelach - Vol. 8, Issue 34

Compiled by **Rabbi Oizer Alport**

Vayishlach osam Moshe mi'midbar Paran al pi Hashem kulam anashim roshei B'nei Yisroel heimah (13:3)

In relating that Moshe sent spies to scout out the land of Israel, the Torah refers to the spies using the expression anashim. Rashi notes that this is difficult to understand, as the term anashim is normally used to describe important men of stature. Why is this word used in conjunction with the spies, who incited the Jewish people to rebel against the Divine

plan for them to enter and conquer the land of Israel? Rashi explains that this term is used to teach that at the time the spies were sent, they were still righteous and had no plans to sin by speaking negatively about the land of Israel. However, he seems to emphasize that the spies were righteous for one hour, a claim for which there is no apparent source or proof. Why does Rashi use this peculiar expression? When Rav Eizel Charif was eight years old, he was asked to explain Rashi's intention and responded with a brilliant derivation for this assertion. Hashem later decreed (14:34) that as a result of the sin of the spies, the Jewish people would be required to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, corresponding to the 40 days that the spies sinned when scouting out the land. If each day – which contains 24 hours – was punished with an additional year – which is made up of 12 months – of wandering, it comes out that for each hour of the spies' expedition, the Jews were punished with an additional half of a month in the wilderness. The Jews left Egypt on 15 Nissan, the first day of Pesach. They entered the land of Israel on 10 Nissan (Yehoshua 4:19), which is five days short of the requisite 40-year decree. Further, Rashi writes (Devorim 1:2) that even had the Jews merited to immediately traverse the desert and enter the land of Israel, the journey would have taken eleven days. This period of time cannot be included in the calculation of the additional time they were forced to wander as a result of the sin of the spies. In light of these considerations, it comes out that one half of a month is missing from the 40-year period to which they were sentenced. In order to resolve this difficulty, Rashi concluded that the spies had proper intentions for the first hour of their mission, and it was therefore fitting that half of a month should be reduced from their punishment.

Vayomer Hashem el Moshe ad anah yena'atzuni ha'am ha'zeh v'ad anah lo ya'aminu bee (14:11)

Parshas Shelach revolves around the sin of the spies who were sent by Moshe to scout the land of Israel. They returned with a negative report about their findings which discouraged the rest of the Jewish people from wanting to enter the land. Although their actual sin - speaking negatively about Eretz Yisroel - is explicitly spelled out in the Torah, the deeper underlying root of their actions is not so clear. What was it that caused them, and the rest of the nation who accepted their scurrilous report as fact, to stumble so badly? Rav Avrohom Yaakov Pam points out that there seems to be a contradiction regarding the fundamental nature of the spies' sin. At first glance, it appears that their actions were rooted in a lack of emunah and bitachon (faith and trust in Hashem), as Hashem said to Moshe, "How long will this nation provoke me, and how long will they not have faith in me?" Similarly, Moshe later rebuked the people regarding this episode (Devorim 1:32), "In this matter you do not believe in Hashem your G-d." On the other hand, Rashi writes (28:64) that the decree against those who accepted the negative report of the spies did not apply to the women, as they loved Eretz Yisroel and expressed their desire to live there. This implies that the sin of the spies was rooted not in a lack of trust in Hashem, but in a lack of appreciation for the land of Israel, and there are verses which clearly support Rashi's explanation. Hashem decreed (14:31), "They (your children) shall know the land that you despised," and Dovid writes in Tehillim (106:24), "They (the spies) despised the desirable land; they had no faith in His word," mentioning both sins, but listing their rejection of the land first, indicating that it was the primary sin. In what way did the spies despise the land, and how was that sin related to the very real concerns that they expressed about their ability to militarily defeat the oversized inhabitants of the land? The Gemora in Bava Basra (142b) rules that if a person attempts to transfer legal ownership of an object to an unborn fetus, his actions are legally meaningless, with one exception. If he is giving ownership to his own unborn child, his actions take effect. What is the reason for this distinction? Rav Pam explains that there are a number of concerns about a fetus - if it will be born alive, and even if it is born, whether it will be physically and mentally healthy. As a result, a person

can never decide with absolute certainty that he is ready to transfer legal ownership to a fetus. If so, why is his own child any different? A person is so full of love for his child that he doesn't even contemplate the inherent risks and dangers. His love overwhelms his rational fears and causes him to view his child as innately complete and healthy, in which case there are no obstacles to his commitment to give an item to his own child. The lesson of this Gemora is that when a person's love for something is strong enough, he doesn't allow himself to see any potential pitfalls or dangers. Although the sin of the spies outwardly manifested itself as a lack of faith and trust in Hashem, the underlying root of their sin was an inadequate love of Eretz Yisroel. Had they possessed the love of the land that the Jewish women did, they wouldn't have been able to concern themselves with the risks involved in conquering a land full of giants. With this understanding, we can better appreciate why the response of Calev and Yehoshua to the spies' report was to tell the Jewish people (14:7) that the land of Israel is very, very good. In what way did that address the spies' concern that they wouldn't be able to defeat the inhabitants of the land? Rav Pam explains that Yehoshua and Calev understood that these fears were rooted in their opinion that the land of Israel was merely a good land, unremarkable in any way. Therefore, they responded that if the people changed their mindsets and internalized the belief that Eretz Yisroel is truly exceptional, their ensuing love of the land would overpower any feelings of anxiety and gloom. Rav Pam adds that there are often students in yeshiva who express a desire to grow and become great Torah scholars, yet they despair of ever doing so due to their acknowledgement that remaining in yeshiva for the period of time necessary to do so isn't financially viable. Because of concerns about being able to support a family and eventually find a satisfying teaching position, they conclude that they have no choice but to pursue other professional options. In reality, these concerns and fears are rooted not in a savvy understanding of economic pressures, but rather in an insufficient love of Torah study. Just like the father giving a gift to his unborn child, and just like the women in the wilderness who refused to accept the negative report of the spies, a yeshiva student who loves to learn Torah with every fiber of his being will be unable to concern himself with these issues, as his entire heart will be filled with such a love of Torah that it will become his sole focus. As the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed on Tisha B'Av as a result of the sin of the spies and because of a lack of proper appreciation of Torah study (Bava Metzia 85b), let us strengthen ourselves in our emotional connections to the tremendous gifts of Eretz Yisroel and our Holy Torah.

Answers to the weekly Points to Ponder are now available! To receive the full version with answers email the author at oalport@optonline.net. Parsha Points to Ponder (and sources which discuss them):

1) Prior to sending the spies, Moshe changed Hoshea's name to Yehoshua (13:16). The Gemora in Sotah (34b) interprets this as a blessing and prayer that Hashem should save him from the evil plan of the other spies. Why did he specifically bless Yehoshua more than Calev or any of the other spies? (Gur Aryeh, Kehillas Yitzchok, Chofetz Chaim)

2) Why is Yehoshua referred to (13:16) as bin Nun— the son of Nun — and not the more standard ben Nun? (Ramban Shemos 33:11, Toras Moshe, Tosefes Beracha, Tal'lei Oros)

3) Moshe instructed the spies (13:20) to bring back fruits from the land of Israel. As the fruits didn't belong to them, why wasn't it considered stealing from the non-Jewish inhabitants and forbidden to do so? (Ayeles HaShachar, K'Motzei Shalal Rav, M'rafsin Igri)

4) Did the mitzvah of separating challah (15:19) apply to the Manna that the Jews ate in the wilderness? (Shu"t Noda BiYehudah Orach Chaim 1:38, Chavatzelos HaSharon Shemos 16:15)

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from: **Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald** <ezbuchwald@njop.org> via njop.ccsend.com reply-to: ezbuchwald@njop.org to: internetparshasheet@gmail.com date: Mon, May 27, 2013 at 10:08 AM subject: Weekly Torah Message from Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald
Shelach 5773-2013

"Tzitzit: The Unpretentious Mitzvah"

by Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald

At the conclusion of this week's parasha, parashat Shelach, we learn of the mitzvah of Tzitzit, the fringes that are worn by Jewish men on the corners of four-cornered garments. (See Shelach 5760-2000 for additional commentary.)

In Numbers 15:38, G-d speaks to Moses and says to him, "Dah'behr ehl B'nay Yisrael v'ah'mar'tah ah'lay'hem, v'ah'soo lah'hem tzee'zeet ahl kahn'fay vig'day'hem l'doh'roh'tahm, v'naht'noo ahl tzee'zeet ha'kah'nahf p'teel t'chay'let." Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, that they shall make for themselves Tzitzit, on the corners of their garments throughout the generations. The Torah then instructs that a blue thread of T'chaylet, be placed on each fringe.

The Torah states that Tzitzit are intended to aid the Jew to recall all the commandments of G-d, so that those who wear them will perform the commandments of G-d and not stray after their hearts and after their eyes, which they are wont to stray. Parashat Shelach concludes with a reminder that Jews must remember and perform all the commandments of G-d and be holy to G-d, because it was G-d who took the people out of Egypt. He is our G-d.

The Code of Jewish Law records that any four-cornered garment that is large enough to cover most of the body of a child who is old enough to walk alone in the street should have fringes, Tzitziot. The T'chaylet, the blue thread, which the Torah mentions, is made from a dye that comes from a mollusk called the Hillazon. The identity of the Hillazon had been lost for many centuries, but in the past century, attempts have been made to identify it. The Rabbi of Radzin, Poland, claimed that he had found the Hillazon, and had fringes produced with the blue thread for his followers. Even more recently, scientists in Israel claim to have identified the Hillazon and the blue dye, resulting in a rapid increase in the popularity of Tzitzit with the blue thread (Click here for more information).

Since the Bible states, "And you shall see them [the tzitziot] and remember all the commandments of G-d," the mitzvah of Tzitzit is required only during the day, when they can be seen. Since the wearing of tzitzit is a positive mitzvah that depends upon time, women are exempted from performing this mitzvah.

One of my High School teachers tried to instill the fear of G-d in his students by warning them to wear Tzitziot at all times, not just during the daylight hours, lest, G-d forbid, an accident occur, and our bodies were found without Tzitziot. So much for positive reinforcement!

The mitzvah of Tzitzit is regarded as being of great importance in Judaism. In fact, the rabbis equate the mitzvah of tzitzit as being equal in value to all 613 mitzvot of the Torah. The reason for its exalted status may be because the Torah itself states, "That you shall see it and remember all the commandments of G-d." The rabbis also underscore that the numerical value of the Hebrew word Tzitzit is equal to six hundred. Six hundred together with eight strings and five knots, equals 613.

Many of the classical commentaries emphasize that the blue thread is intended to remind one of the blue of the sea, which, in turn, recalls the blue of the sky and the Heavens. This series of linked reminders serve as a most effective way of raising one's consciousness to all the commandments.

The Kli Yakar also suggests that by recalling the waters of the ocean, which must stay within certain defined bounds, the Tzitziot emphasize that the Jew must live within a defined structure. Without this religious structure, the consequences would be tragic.

The Ibn Ezra interestingly emphasizes that it is more important for a person to wear the Tzitzit garment during the day, than to wear it during prayer. It is during one's daily activities that a person is more in need of a reminder to perform all the commandments of G-d.

The Or HaChaim states that the four corners of the garment remind one that the Omnipotent G-d is the Ruler over all four corners of the earth and universe.

The Alshich states that wearing the fringes are a signal, like tying a string around one's finger. However, only if one places meaning into the cue, does it serve as an effective reminder to act faithfully with G-d.

The Abarbanel suggests that by wearing Tzitzit one's garments, it is hoped that one would think of the mitzvot at all times. Tzitziot are thus a vehicle to train the Jew to be constantly conscious of mitzvot, and to perform mitzvot naturally without the need to be reminded.

The origin of the Hebrew word Tzitzit is somewhat obscure and challenging. Some relate the word Tzitzit to the verse found in Song of Songs 2:9. There, the

beautiful maiden declares that her beloved is like a gazelle or a young hart. Behold, says the maiden, he stands behind our wall, looking in through the windows, and peering through the lattice work. The Hebrew words “May’tzeetz min ha’chah’rah’keem,” are translated as peers or peaks through the lattice work. The implication of this interpretation is that through the mitzvah of Tzitzit, G-d peeks at His people, constantly keeping an eye on them, watching out for their benefit and well-being, reminding them to be faithful and good. Perhaps another subliminal message is that a Jew is expected to look and dress as a Jew. No matter what the contemporary or current fashions are, a Jew should always identify proudly, and have the ability to withstand the social pressures that lead to immodest dress and improper behavior.

Perhaps that is why the rabbis considered the mitzvah of Tzitzit to be equal to all 613 mitzvot.

Once again, with the mitzvah of Tzitzit, we encounter what seems to be a rather unpretentious mitzvah, that has major implications for Jewish life and Jewish practice.

May you be blessed.

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Beyond the Fringe

Our sedra ends with one of the great commands of Judaism - tsitsit, the fringes we wear on the corner of our garments as a perennial reminder of our identity as Jews and our obligation to keep the Torah's commands: God spoke to Moses, telling him to speak to the Israelites and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments for all generations. Let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe: look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them, so that you do not stray after your heart and eyes which in the past have led you to immorality. You will thus remember and keep all my commandments and be holy to your God.

So central is this command, that it became the third paragraph of the Shema, the supreme declaration of Jewish faith. I once heard the following commentary from my teacher, Rabbi Dr Nahum Rabinovitch. He began by pointing out some of the strange features of the command. On the one hand the sages said that the command of tsitsit is equal to all the other commands together, as it is said: “Look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them.” It is thus of fundamental significance.

On the other hand, it is not absolutely obligatory. It is possible to avoid the command of fringes altogether by never wearing a garment of four or more corners. Maimonides rules: “Even though one is not obligated to acquire a [four-cornered] robe and wrap oneself in it in order to [fulfil the command of] tsitsit, it is not fitting for a pious individual to exempt himself from this command” (Laws of Tsitsit, 3: 11). It is important and praiseworthy but not categorical. It is conditional: if you have such a garment, then you must put fringes on it. Why so? Surely it should be obligatory, in the way that tefillin (phylacteries) are.

There is another unusual phenomenon. In the course of time, the custom has evolved to fulfil the command in two quite different ways: the first, in the form of a tallit (robe, shawl) which is worn over our other clothes, specifically while we pray; the second in the form of an undergarment, worn beneath our outer clothing throughout the day.

Not only do we keep the one command in two different ways. We also make different blessings over the two forms. Over the tallit, we say: “who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to wrap ourselves in a fringed garment.” Over the undergarment, we say, “who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us

concerning the precept of the fringed garment.” Why is one command split into two in this way?

He gave this answer: there are two kinds of clothing. There are the clothes we wear to project an image. A king, a judge, a soldier, all wear clothing that conceals the individual and instead proclaims a role, an office, a rank. As such, clothes, especially uniforms, can be misleading. A king dressed as a beggar will not (or would not, before television) be recognised as royalty. A beggar dressed as a king may find himself honoured. A policeman dressed as a policeman carries with him a certain authority, an aura of power, even though he may feel nervous and insecure. Clothes disguise. They are like a mask. They hide the person beneath. Such are the clothes we wear in public when we want to create a certain impression.

But there are other clothes we wear when we are alone, that may convey more powerfully than anything else the kind of person we really are: the artist in his studio, the writer at his desk, the gardener tending the roses. They do not dress to create an impression. To the contrary: they dress as they do because of what they are, not because of what they wish to seem. The two kinds of tsitsit represent these different forms of dress. When we engage in prayer, we sense in our heart how unworthy we may be of the high demands God has made of us. We feel the need to come before God as something more than just ourselves. We wrap ourselves in the robe, the tallit, the great symbol of the Jewish people at prayer. We conceal our individuality – in the language of the blessing over the tallit, we “wrap ourselves in a fringed garment.” It is as if we were saying to God: I may only be a beggar, but I am wearing a royal robe, the robe of your people Israel who prayed to You throughout the centuries, to whom You showed a special love and took as Your own. The tallit hides the person we are and represents the person we would like to be, because in prayer we ask God to judge us, not for what we are, but for what we wish to be. The deeper symbolism of tsitsit, however, is that it represents the commandments as a whole (“look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord”) – and these becomes part of what and who we are only when we accept them without coercion, of our own free will. That is why the command of tsitsit is not categorical. We do not have to keep it. We are not obligated to buy a four-cornered garment. When we do so, it is because we chose to do so. We obligate ourselves. That is why opting to wear tsitsit symbolises the free acceptance of all the duties of Jewish life. This is the most inward, intimate, intensely personal aspect of faith whereby in our innermost soul we dedicate ourselves to God and His commands. There is nothing public about this. It is not for outer show. It is who we are when we are alone, not trying to impress anyone, not wishing to seem what we are not. This is the command of tsitsit as undergarment, beneath, not on top of, our clothing. Over this we make a different blessing. We do not talk about “wrapping ourselves in a fringed garment” – because this form of fringes is not for outward show. We are not trying to hide ourselves beneath a uniform. Instead, we are expressing our innermost commitment to God's word and call to us. Over this we say the blessing, “who has commanded us concerning the precept of tsitsit” because what matters is not the mask but the reality, not what we wish to seem but what we really are.

In this striking way tsitsit represent the dual nature of Judaism. On the one hand it is a way of life that is public, communal, shared with others across the world and through the ages. We keep Shabbat, celebrate the festivals, observe the dietary laws and the laws of family purity in a way that has hardly varied for many centuries. That is the public face of Judaism – the tallit we wear, the cloak woven out of the 613 threads, each a command.

But there is also our inner life as people of faith. There are things we can say to God that we can say to no one else. He knows our thoughts, hopes, fears, better than we know them ourselves. We speak to Him in the privacy of the soul, and He listens. That internal conversation – the opening of our heart to Him who brought us into existence in love – is

not for public show. Like the fringed undergarment, it stays hidden. But it is no less real an aspect of Jewish spirituality. The two types of fringed garment represent the two dimensions of the life of faith – the outer persona and the inner person, the image we present to the world and the face we show only to God.

To read more writings and teachings from the Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, please visit www.chief Rabbi.org.

Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items:

from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>
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subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

In My Opinion :: Rabbi Berel Wein
Jewish Revenge

More than seventy years have passed since the onset of the Holocaust and the destruction of most of the Jews of Europe. Any objective observer will have to agree that almost all of the perpetrators, planners and collaborators who participated in that heinous stain on the civilization and culture of the Western world were never punished for their behavior and crimes. Even those who were tried were soon rewarded with commuted sentences, shortened prison terms, and eventually full rehabilitation and participation in regular civil life. That generation of criminals mostly died in their beds without ever having to truly account for their crimes to the families of their victims or to the judgment and conscience of the world at large. Except for the Nuremberg Ten, Adolf Eichmann and a few hundred top Nazis who fell into Soviet hands, there were very few revengeful reprisals against the murderers who continued to live normal lives after the end of the war. Simon Wiesenthal as an individual person, and later recognized by the organization named after him, continued, and still continues, to pursue the murderers living amongst us. But, in the main, their pursuit remains futile relative to the number of criminals and the crimes that were committed. Jews are apparently not that good at playing revenge games, as revenge is popularly defined in our violent culture. Israel has managed a number of times to exact revenge upon terrorists and murderers but the list is long and the day is short. And in the clucking, politically correct, even-handed culture that currently dominates Western intellectual thought and political action, retribution is frowned upon. Where there is no morality present, there really is no crime present either, for everything is understandable and even justifiable.

And, anyway, victims must bear most of the guilt for the fate visited on them. For otherwise how can one explain the presence of this type of evil in a rational and mentally well-balanced world?

So Jewish vengeance must perforce take on a different definition and be seen in a far more focused and illuminating light than ordinary acts of retribution. Last week the family of the Belzer rebbe – the Rokeachs – celebrated the wedding of the rebbe’s grandson. The wedding ceremony took place in the courtyard of the great and magnificent Belz synagogue and the festive meal took place later in the International Conference Center – Binyanei Haumah – in bustling, traffic-choked Jerusalem. Over fifteen thousand people attended the wedding.

The previous Belzer rebbe escaped from Hungary in 1944 just weeks before the German invasion and takeover of the country. He arrived in the Land of Israel, broken in body and alone in spirit, with almost all of his family and chasidim on the way to Auschwitz. He barely was able to muster up a minyan – a quorum of ten men – to start up his court once

again. But somehow Belz, like the Jewish people itself, rejuvenated and revitalized the future generations that were miraculously born to it. Today, the grand Belz synagogue dominates parts of the Jerusalem view and once again, as in Eastern Europe, Belzer adherents flock to the court of the rebbe for advice, sustenance, prayer and spirit. Thus, last week, caught in a taxi on a Jerusalem street in the midst of a colossal traffic jam occasioned by the wedding procession, I thought to myself: “This wedding and all that it entails and represents is our true revenge against Hitler and his cohorts. I thank the Lord that I have lived to witness it.” In effect, the existence of the Jewish people and especially of the State of Israel is itself the true revenge against all those criminals who attempted to destroy and uproot us just a few decades ago. The Holocaust was a terrible event in our history – an event without human explanation or even seeming theological justification. Yet the aftermath of the Holocaust, the revival of the Jewish people in all facets of human life, culture, technology, medicine and politics, the creation and continued flourishing of the State of Israel, the salvation of Russian Jewry, and the immense growth of Torah and tradition in Jewish society, are all nothing short of being truly miraculous.

This is the ultimate revenge against those who sought to destroy us – if you will have it, the ultimate revenge against history itself. The prophet taught us: “Not by might nor by strength but by My spirit!” We cannot kill all of our enemies nor punish all of those who rise against us. But in our existence and continued intellectual, physical and spiritual development do we refute all of their hateful, false accusations and nefarious plans. Being Jewish in practice and perspective is itself sufficient to allow one to be part of the ongoing pattern of Jewish revenge.

Shabat shalom

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Weekly Parsha :: Rabbi Berel Wein
Shlach

This week’s parsha raises the age-old issue of human behavior – altruism over personal interest and gain. While we all pay lip service to the concept and ideal of altruism when dealing with public affairs and the general good, we all remain human beings and the Talmud long ago posited that “a human being is first and foremost closest and prejudiced to one’s own self and interests.”

The conflict between the general good of many and the private benefit to the few or even to one individual is the stuff of politics, government, power and influence. It is the basic motif in all human existence and history. Our sense of rectitude and conscience is constantly buffeted by self-interest and personal factors and reckonings. We are born as selfish grasping individuals and the challenges in life that follow all revolve about our ability to recognize and modify this basic human instinct. One may say that all of the commandments and laws of the Torah come to enable us to counter this instinct that is part of us from the moment of our birth. This is what the rabbis meant when they taught us that the “evil instinct” – the innate selfishness and purely self-interested nature of humans – is with us from our first breath on this earth. The struggle to include others – family, community, fellow Jews and human beings generally – into our worldview is the story of our lives and existence. The Torah attributes to Avraham victory in this struggle and it is he, above all others, who is seen as our father and role model, the founder of God’s people.

One of the explanations offered by the commentators to the negative behavior and damning report regarding the Land of Israel is that the

spies – who were the leaders of their tribes – were aware that when the Jews entered the Land of Israel, new leaders were to be chosen and they, the Jews, were in jeopardy of losing their titles and positions of power and influence. This awareness preyed upon their minds and prejudiced their view of the Land of Israel.

Their perceived personal gain and position overwhelmed the general good of the people they were supposed to serve. This has always been a plague of communal leadership, when hubris and self-service dominate the sight of the leadership so that one is unable to distinguish between public good and one's private interests.

Even worse, many times the private interest of the leader is disguised as being the public good. Dictators have always stated that "I am the state!" The great prophet Shmuel is characterized in the same category as Moshe and Aharon because of his selflessness in leading the Jewish people. The tragedy of the spies, and of the Jewish people of that generation generally, is this inability to rise over personal interests and view the general picture of Jewish destiny and accomplishment.

Like many a leader blinded by one's own agenda of ideas and events, the spies soon descended into falsehoods and slander to make their case. The tragedy in cases such as this is that the people often follow this flawed leadership, bringing calamity upon one and all. We should always be wary of the true motives of those who profess to lead us for the alleged public good.

Shabat shalom

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Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Shlach
For the week ending 1 June 2013 / 22 Sivan 5773
by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com

Insights
Tourist Trap

"And they cut from there a vine with one cluster of grapes, and bore it on a double pole, and of the pomegranates and of the figs..." (13:23)

It always struck me as somewhat bizarre that the Israeli Ministry of Tourism should have chosen as its symbol the Spies carrying a massive cluster of grapes. True, it's a powerful and recognizable symbol, but the spies' entire agenda was to denigrate the land of Israel. One would think that a tourist board whose whole raison d'être is to market the land would find the image rather inappropriate.

Maybe the early Zionists saw the spies as forerunners of their chalu'tzim, the early Zionist settlers. At any rate, they would have done well to have read the Torah a little bit more closely; something not particularly evident in most of their propaganda and activities.

Thank G-d we have more ways of repairing the damage of the spies' evil words than mere marketing. The mitzvah of Bikkurim — the bringing of the first fruits up to Yerushalayim — was given to us as atonement for the spies. The spies showed revulsion for the land, and in the times of the Holy Temple, the mitzvah of the First Fruits gave us the opportunity to show our love of the land. It was for this reason that the mitzvah of the First Fruits was only applicable to the seven species for which the land is praised: wheat, barley, grapes, dates, figs, olives and pomegranates.

The Mishna explains the mitzvah of Bikkurim thus: "A person going down to his field and seeing the first fig or the first grapes or the first pomegranate ties a reed around the fruit and says 'These are Bikkurim'."

It's interesting that out of the seven species for which the land is praised, only three are mentioned in the Mishna. It's not by coincidence. For it was just those three species that the spies brought back with them from the land: grapes, pomegranates and figs.

Those very fruits that the spies used for their smear campaign against the land became the subject of a mitzvah whose whole purpose was to show the dearness of the land.

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to: Peninim <peninim@shemaisrael.com>
subject: Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum
Parshas Shelach

And how is the land in which it dwells - is it good or is it bad? (13:19)

Prior to their departure for their ill-fated trip to reconnoiter Eretz Yisrael, Moshe Rabbeinu gave the spies a "shopping list" of things they should investigate. One of these questions for which Moshe sought an answer was: Is it a good land or not? It is almost impossible to pass over this pasuk without wondering how our quintessential leader could ask such a question. If Hashem had promised that He was taking us into eretz tovah u'rechavah, "A land that was good and spacious" (Shemos 3:8), then what need is there for investigation? Did anyone doubt Hashem's word? The mere fact that Hashem declared that it was good, makes it good. No proof is necessary. Even if to the human eye it does not appear as "good," it is good - because Hashem said so! The Rikanti asks this question and adds that he has no answer other than b'derech sod, by applying Kabbalistic knowledge which opens up the secrets of Torah.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, turns to Yaakov Avinu's fear that, shema yigrom ha'cheit, "perhaps he had not reached his spiritual potential or his not being home to honor his parents," would serve as a censure against him. True, Hashem had promised to protect him, but that was before his transgressions. Maybe his indiscretions had negated Hashem's protection.

Similarly, Moshe feared the effects of the chet ha'eigel, sin of the Golden Calf. Eretz Yisrael is sustained by a special shefa, spiritual flow, that emanates from Hashem. The Almighty provides this gift out of His deep love for His People. What if they egregiously sin against Him, however, in such a manner that provokes Him to remove that shefa? This worried Moshe, prompting him to ask the spies to investigate the land.

To better explain this fear, we suggest the following: Yaakov felt unworthy of Hashem's protection because, by being away from home, he had not honored his parents properly. Clearly, this is an issue relative to the Patriarch's lofty spiritual level. Parents protect their children - even if their children are unworthy of this sense of security. Parents are always there. Yaakov felt that, since he did not hold up his part of the "bargain," Hashem might be "exempted" from protecting him. Likewise, the spiritual flow which protects Eretz Yisrael is special and a unique gift from the Creator. What if we reject Him; what if the nation revels around a man-made molten calf and declares, "There are your gods, O' Yisrael!?" Are we then still deserving of this Divine gift, or has our mutinous behavior gone too far? This troubled Moshe.

We seek segulos, good omens, and perform various good deeds and behaviors in order to receive Hashem's favor in our time of need. We forget, however, that it is the "simple" and "ordinary" behaviors, like davening, studying Torah, giving tzedakah, charity that we must maintain. All the extras are great, but if one is missing the basics, he is missing the essential.

Calev silenced the people. (13:30)

How did Calev get the attention of the people? How was he able to halt the rebellion momentarily, so that he could get a word in edgewise? Rashi explains that Calev intimated that he, too, was about to disparage Moshe. How did he indicate this? The Sifsei Chachamim quotes the Mizrachi, that when Calev referred to Moshe Rabbeinu as Ben Amram, the son of Amram, the people thought that he was on their side. After all, he had referred to Moshe by something other than his given name. This constituted disrespect. Obviously, he did not esteem Moshe as a leader. Once he got their attention, however, he was able to attempt to reason with them.

Horav Mordechai Ilan, zl, comments that calling someone by a name denoting his relationship to his father, rather than by his given name, is derogatory. It implies that his legitimacy is connected with his pedigree. He is not worthy in his own right. The z'chus avos, merit of his fathers, plays a critical role in his distinctiveness. This concept is reiterated in Scripture and Talmud. David Hamelech laments ad meh levodi lichlimah, which is interpreted as, "Until when will you be calling me Ben Yishai, which is shameful for me?" David was implying, "I have my own name. I should not be referred to by my father's name." In Shmuel I, II, the Navi refers to Shaul Hamelech as Ben Kish. In Shmuel 20:23, David is referred to as Ben Yishai. "Why did Ben Yishai not come to eat bread?" The Talmud Shabbos 85, quotes the despotic prince of the Tribe of Shimon, who, as he was about to commit a hedonistic act with a Moavite woman, humiliated Moshe by calling him ben Amram. Likewise, when Moshe struck the rock, the people complained about him, employing the name ben Amram as a means for denigrating their leader. Likewise, in his commentary to Pirkei Avos, the Tosfos Yom Tov explains that Ben Bag Bag and Bein Heih Heih did not merit to be called

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by their own names. In the Talmud Sanhedrin 41, the revered Tanna, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai, was referred to as Ben Zakai, because he was learning Torah for himself. Yet, when he taught Torah to others, his full name was used. Rav Ilan explains that this might be the reason for the prayer we say at a Bris, V'yikarei shemo b'Yisrael. The emphasis of shemo, his name, is our way of saying that we hope that the baby will not only be called by a name connecting him to his father. We would like him to have his own name, i.e., that he make a name for himself in his own right. This idea is underscored by the blessing we confer upon the rach ha'nimol, recently circumcised infant: zeh ha'katan gadol yiheyeh, "May this small one (child) become a gadol adult/great." We pray that this child manifest signs of growth in his own right, rather than rely on his father's merit. Z'chus avos, ancestral merit, is a wonderful bonus but, if it is all that one possesses, it is far from complimentary.

In this wilderness shall your carcass drop. (14:29)

During their forty-year trek through the wilderness, Klal Yisrael breached their relationship with Hashem, as they committed a number of transgressions. Yet, the Almighty punished the actual perpetrator and forgave the rest of the populace. These were not simple sins. The chet ha'eigal, sin of the Golden Calf, was no simple transgression. Shortly after they left Egypt, Klal Yisrael committed a sin of grave proportions, as they turned their backs on Hashem, Who had done so much for them. They were scared; their leader, Moshe Rabbeinu, was late in descending the mountain, so they sinned. This was no excuse. Yet, Hashem forgave them. Klal Yisrael sinned when they were misonein, complained about the "conditions" to which they were subjected: no meat; Heavenly bread; let us go back to Egypt where we can have fish and melons. These were dreams, but if the dreams gave them reason to complain, they would use them. Such ingratitude, such lies - yet, Hashem forgave them. While the actual sinners paid with their lives, the rest of the nation received another demerit, but they were forgiven.

How can we forget the machlokes Korach, the debacle initiated by an individual who just was not happy with all of his wealth and prestige? He wanted more. He had his followers, but then all such despots present themselves as the hero of the oppressed, the man who caters to everyone's needs - not just to that of an elite few. Once again, lies and more lies. The perpetrators were punished by being swallowed alive into the earth. The rest of the people? Forgiven. In every sin, the immediate people were punished. Everyone else received a slap on the hands, and their teshuvah, repentance, was accepted.

What happened with the meraglim, spies? Until this very day, we continue to experience the aftershocks of that sin. It took place on Tishah B'Av, which became our national day of mourning, as we grieve for the two Batei Mikdash, Temples, which were destroyed then, as well. The decree went out, and every adult male between the ages of forty to sixty was going to perish in the wilderness. Essentially, the generation that left Egypt was told that it - in its entirety—would not enter the Promised Land. No one was forgiven. How was this sin different from all of the others? A sin is a sin - is it not?

Obviously, with a question of such a compelling nature, the commentators, each in his own manner, render their understanding of the sin of the meraglim and its collective impact on Klal Yisrael. Horav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector, zl, offers a profound explanation - one that goes to the very crux of the attitude manifest by many of our co-religionists - both observant and non-observant. The rav derives from here that all aveiros, sins, are forgivable. Hashem embraces those who sin and allows them back into the "family" of Klal Yisrael, as long as they repent with sincerity. Hashem does not distinguish between those sins that are bein adam laMakom, perpetrated against G-d, and those which are bein adam l'chaveiro, sins against one's fellow man. A sin is a sin - and teshuvah is mechaper, atones. Thus, the sins of the Golden Calf, the misonenim, the complainers, who complained to Hashem, were forgiven, as well as the sins bein adam l'chaveiro of Korach and his henchmen. There is, however, one type of sin that is not forgivable: ben adam l'atzmo, sins against oneself. There is absolutely no excuse, and hence, no room for forgiveness, when a person sins against himself. Klal Yisrael cried in a manner which Chazal term a b'chayah shel chinam, unwarranted weeping. They had nothing to worry about, yet, they cried. This is unwarranted and represents a sin against oneself. One who acts with shortsightedness, whose actions reflect simpleminded obtuseness, does not warrant forgiveness. The nation that sinned on that fateful night was not ready to enter Eretz Yisrael.

The concept of sinning against oneself has many ramifications, and, because I feel it is of critical importance, I use my writer's license to expound on the subject. There are those who deprive themselves of their G-d-given ability to live. Anecdotaly, a middle-aged man collapsed in his office and succumbed. His physician, who had known him well for many years, confided to a mutual friend, "Jim sacrificed for his beliefs." "What beliefs did he cherish?" the friend queried.

"Jim believed," the physician replied, "that he could live a thirty-five-year old life in a fifty-year-old body."

It is what one would call a bitter gelechter, bitter joke. Are we honest with ourselves? We are driven to succeed, run to achieve, go out of our way to acquire and amass more and more. For what purpose and at whose expense? Do we spend enough time with our children and our spouses, or are we too busy making money? There is another form of sinning against ourselves. People make mistakes. This is a fact of life. It is how we react to these mistakes that determines our character. One should learn from his mistakes, so that he does not repeat them; in this way, he becomes a better person. There are, regrettably, those who ruminate over their past, becoming fixated on the errors of the past, to the point that they cannot go forward. Such a person loses his initiative to grow, to be productive, since he is constantly burdened with remorse. This does not mean that remorse is not a good thing. It is a vital component of the teshuvah process, but there is a difference between sincere regret and obsessive remorse. The essence of spirituality is to fill one's mission in life with positive activity, Torah study and maasim tovim, good deeds. When one is in a state of inaction due to his morbid approach to his past, he becomes paralyzed by depression and achieves nothing in life - other than making everyone around him miserable.

No one is perfect. The experts in emotional and mental health urge us to accept ourselves. While we may not necessarily approve of everything about ourselves - be it our origins, character, acumen or physical appearance - it is who we are, who Hashem created. Unless one comes to terms with "himself," he courts disaster. Indeed, Hashem only expects us to be "ourselves" - not someone else.

In a novel about Yeshiva life during World War II, a noted observant author relates the story of yeshiva students from different yeshivos who developed a relationship. As they began talking about their origins, one student said that he was an aveil, in mourning, for his mother who was murdered by the Nazis. The other student confessed, "I, too, am an orphan." Later in the story, this same student admitted that actually both of his parents were still alive: "But do not be disturbed that I told you I was an orphan. I was not lying. I meant that I am an orphan in a special way. Do you understand? I am an orphan - from myself."

Many of us do not realize that we have made ourselves into orphans by disregarding who we really are. We do not know ourselves. We underestimate our potential. We refuse to go that extra mile of achievement, as we eschew accepting new responsibilities for fear that we will not execute them appropriately. We shirk challenge, run away from responsibility; indeed, we deprive ourselves of the chance for success out of fear that we will not make it. One cannot win the race if he does not enter it. We have so little confidence in our G-d-given abilities. Is there a greater sin than this? In the event that, under pressure, we discover that we have risen to the challenge and excelled, our reaction is: "I did not know I had it in me." Is there anyone but ourselves who we could blame? We are compared to that yeshiva student who commented, "I am an orphan from myself." He was superior to us in that he was, at least, honest enough with himself to concede to the truth. We spend our lives hiding from the truth, blaming the entire world - but not ourselves.

I believe it was the Kotzker Rebbe, zl, who said, "The Almighty cannot be deceived, your neighbor must not be deceived; and one who deceives himself remains a fool." He also said, "Not only is one who hates another soul called wicked - but he who hates himself is also called wicked. This brings us to the last and quite possibly, the most egregious of sins, because of its impact upon everyone around us: self-loathing. An eighteenth century secular lawyer once said, "More of us than we care to admit live in self-made dungeons behind bars erected by our own resentment."

Self-hate is perhaps the most destructive form of hatred, since it is rarely identified and almost never placated. As a result of malignant self-hatred, one is plagued with self-imposed demons, and must take out his loathing on others. This is especially true in the area of religion, where we find the most radical usurpers of Torah Judaism are nothing more than demoralized individuals seeking to justify their own inadequacies and lack of faith by slandering those who are observant, undermining the religion.

A noted secular psychotherapist writes about his decades of dealing with troubled individuals, "I have dealt with maladjusted and troubled individuals... If I were to search for the central core of difficulty in people as I have come to know them, it is that in the great majority of cases they despise themselves, regard themselves as worthless and unlovable." The cruelty we inflict upon others is matched only by the cruelty we inflict upon ourselves. Old transgressions - real and imagined - are kept stored away in our mind, as if by keeping them fresh and bristling, we will succeed in exacting atonement by harsh self-condemnation. What we fail to realize is that atonement is achieved by positive change - not by self-flagellation. All we achieve by our self-hate is to create a miserable life for ourselves and all those who have the

misfortune of being connected to us. Only someone who believes in himself and has a positive outlook can believe in others. One who himself is an emotional wreck inevitably inflicts his own failings on others.

It shall constitute Tzitzis for you, that you may see it and remember all the commandments of Hashem. (15:38)

What is it about the mitzvah of Tzitzis that the Torah, more so than for any other mitzvah, emphasizes that it will engender within us the remembrance of all of the other mitzvos? The commentators render explanations, ranging from the simple p'shat, to the homiletic and even to the esoteric. Perhaps, we might suggest the following: Tzitzis, unlike any other mitzvah, also comprises the Jew's uniform. A Tallis katan is worn all day. The Tallis gadol is worn during davening, and some righteous Jews even sit in their Tallis and Tefillin throughout the day. In any event, the Tallis is the Jew's uniform, which he wears with pride. When a person speaks with Hashem during his moments of prayer, the Tallis ensconces him. When a person leaves this world, the Tallis covers his mortal remains. In other words, what greater witness to a person's avodas Hashem, service to the Almighty, is there than the Tallis/Tzitzis which he wears constantly? What does this have to do with remembering all of the mitzvos? Simply, he needs the support of his Tzitzis when he stands before the Almighty. One does not "mess around" in front of his most critical witness. Therefore, the Tzitzis reinforces his commitment to all of the other mitzvos.

Horav Aharon Rokeach, zl, the Belzer Rebbe, would encourage Bar-Mitzvah boys, as they entered the mitzvah of Tefillin, to accept upon themselves never to speak divrei chullin, mundane matters, while wearing the Tefillin. Understandably, this is a powerful commitment to accept and even more difficult to maintain. One of the special young men, who with great resolution succeeded in keeping with the Rebbe's adjuration, became a chassan. On the day of his wedding, he appeared before the Rebbe to ask for his blessing. The Rebbe asked, "Are you prepared to accept upon yourself never to speak mundane matters while you are wearing your Tallis - as you accepted with regard to your Tefillin?" The chassan replied in the affirmative.

The Rebbe then explained the reason for his request. "After one hundred and twenty years, when you will come before the Heavenly Tribunal, you will be judged for your actions in your mortal life. The eimas ha'din, fear/awe of judgment, will be compelling. You will stand there entirely overwhelmed. You will have one support, however, one merit in your behalf: you are standing wrapped in your Tallis, the Tallis that you wore all of your adult life. This Tallis will attest to the fact that you never spoke mundane speech the entire time that you wore your Tallis. You will say to the Tribunal: During my mortal years, I spoke nothing but words of Torah while I was wearing my Tallis. This time should be no different. Let us talk Torah!"

The Taz left over in his will that, should he die, he insists that he be buried in his old Tallis, because it would testify before Hashem that its wearer never had inappropriate thoughts during the Shemoneh Esrai prayer. Therefore, the Tzitzis garment, with the accompanying Tallis, spent the "day" with its wearer - a phenomenon not unknown to the wearer. He is acutely aware that the Tzitzis are with him for the duration of his physical journey - even serving as his "chaperone" and life witness as his soul stands before the Heavenly Tribunal. Thus, the Tzitzis is a perfect reminder of his religious affiliation and concomitant responsibilities. One expects a witness to testify to the truth. In order to facilitate this, it is necessary to provide the witness with positive activity, so that his testimony will be in his behalf - not to his detriment.

Horav Yosef Berger, Shlita, relates a well-known story, which also, in an earlier edition, found its way into Peninim. It is one well-worth repeating for the lesson it imparts concerning the significance of the garments one wears in the performance of a mitzvah. In a small town, it was discovered that an individual whose reputation as a tzaddik, righteous person, preceded him, had been buried without the traditional tachrichim, shrouds, and Tallis. Instead, this saintly Jew had been buried wearing the vestments of a priest. After research into this anomaly, it was discovered that it was at the tzaddik's behest that he had been buried in such a strange uniform. The reason was based on an incident which had occurred during his life.

Apparently, aside from his spiritual devotion, this man was also very devoted to the poor of his community, seeing to it that those who had unfortunately been unable to put bread on the table would have the means to do so. He reached out to widows and orphans, young men and women who stood at the threshold of matrimony, without a cent to their name. He found ways to help them all. Not being a wealthy man himself, this meant dedicating a number of hours each day to knocking on doors, raising money for those in need. Over the years, he became the address for all those who were down and out.

One day, during his house-to-house collections, he chanced upon a group of men who were having what they perceived as a good time. The cards were out, and the whiskey was flowing. In the midst of this revelry, there was a knock on the door and a solemn-faced rabbi stands there asking for alms to marry off a poor orphan girl. These men were perhaps fine people in an inebriated state. Now, they were into having some "fun." "We will give you what you want. In fact, we will pay for the wedding, if you don a priest's vestments and walk through the city - all day." This was a pretty heavy request, but the tzaddik was unfazed. He went to the local monastery and borrowed a uniform of the church. He walked throughout the town all day, to the jeers and banter of all who beheld his strange costume. At the end of the day, he appeared at the house of "fun" and asked the men to pay up. Having sobered up a bit, they realized what they had promised, but they were true to their word and paid for the wedding.

Prior to his passing, the tzaddik asked the members of the chevra kaddisha, Jewish Burial Society, to bury him in the priestly vestments, which he had saved: "They will be my protection before the Heavenly Tribunal. The shame which I sustained on behalf of a poor orphan girl will confirm my entrance into Gan Eden."

Va'ani Tefillah

Hashem Echad - Hashem is One.

We note that the daled at the end of the word Echad is written in a larger "font" than the rest of the letters. This is done to insure that it not be misread as a reish, which would form the word acheir, other (gods). Likewise, in the word acheir of the pasuk, lo sishtachaveh l'eil acheir, "Do not prostrate yourselves to an alien god" (Shemos 34:14), the reish is written in a large font, to avoid the error of reading the reish as a daled, which would form the word echad. This would imply that a Jew should not bow down to the True One G-d.

In his commentary to Sefer Devarim 6:4, Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, comments, the reish of the polytheistic thought is accommodatingly rounded, while the daled which expresses the Jewish truth is sharply angular. This intimates that, with the loss of a little sharpness/acuity, the echad, one, becomes acheir, alien. The message is quite clear and concise: Hashem Echad is a sharply defined concept. There are no "grays," no other possibilities. It is this way - and only this way. Sponsored by The Klahr Family (New York) In loving memory of our grandparents Phillip and Lillian Finger who were long-time friends and family of the Hebrew Academy. li"n R' Zalman Fishel ben Chananya Halevi a"h, Maras Ettl Leah bas R' Yeshaya Halevi a"h, t.n.tz.v.h.

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Rabbi Weinreb's Parsha Column, Parshat Shelach

Sponsored in memory of Nathan and Louise Schwartz a"h

"Of Grasshoppers and Jewish Pride"

Just as there were six million victims, so were there at least six million stories. One of those stories seems to have occurred many times, because I've heard it told by quite a few survivors. It is the story of two or more Jews, witnessing the sadistic and murderous scenes around them, but momentarily spared from being victims themselves.

In the midst of that horror, one Jew turns to the other and says, "Yankel, you are always urging us to be thankful to God for what we have. What do we have to thank Him for now? Our brothers and sisters and children are being tortured and butchered in front of our eyes, and, in all likelihood, these Nazis will come after us next!"

To which Yankel replies, "We can be thankful that we are Jews and not Nazis. Not only can we be thankful, but we can be proud. We can be proud that we are Jews and have retained our humanity, and not become the beasts that these Nazis have become. We can be proud that we can still claim to have been created b'tzelem Elokim, in the image of God. Our tormentors have forever relinquished that claim." There are numerous other stories told with similar motifs, indicating that Jews were able to retain their Jewish pride even in the unspeakably horrible conditions of the Holocaust.

Thankfully, Jewish pride has also been amply manifested in much happier circumstances. The encouraging cheers which echoed across the world as Jews from behind the Iron Curtain heroically struggled for their freedom, and the celebratory cheers which resounded when they finally achieved that freedom,

expressed that pride dramatically. “Am Yisrael Chai, the Jewish nation lives,” were the words chosen to express that pride.

Jewish pride is sometimes even evidenced in American culture, such as in the boasting one hears about the Hank Greenbergs and Sandy Koufaxes whose Jewish identities were apparent even to the baseball fans of yesteryear.

In more significant areas of human accomplishment, have we not all occasionally gloated over the disproportionately numerous Jewish Nobel Prize winners in science and literature? Do not the lifesaving medical discoveries of generations of Jewish physicians stir Jewish pride in our hearts?

Most important, of course, are the contributions that Jewish leaders have made, from the times of Abraham to this very day, to human religious development and to the advancement of ethics and morality for all mankind.

In is sad, therefore, and some would say tragic, that Jewish pride seems to be on the decline in recent times. The consequences of such a decline are poignantly illustrated in this week’s Torah portion, Parshat Shelach (Numbers 13:1-15:41).

We read this week of the adventures, better misadventures, of the spies. They spent forty days scouting out the Promised Land and discovered much that was very good. But in their report back to “Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community,” they chose to emphasize that “the people who inhabit the country are powerful and the cities are fortified and very large.”

When Caleb, the very embodiment of Jewish pride, confidently assured the people that “we shall surely overcome it,” they shouted words of rebuttal, culminating in this assertion: “...we saw giants there, and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them.” (Numbers 13:33).

Grasshoppers! No more, no less.

An individual with such a puny self image is doomed to a life of mediocrity, if not failure and frustration. A nation which perceives itself as grasshoppers, which lacks proper pride in itself, has already fallen victim to God’s curse: “And I will break your proud glory...” (Leviticus 26:19) Such a nation cannot live up to its mission.

There are those who would object and insist that the Almighty wants us to be humble and that pride is a negative value. To those, we must object that just as there is a “false pride,” which is really nothing but arrogance, there is also “false humility,” which leads one to shirk responsibility and to eschew greatness.

I have at least once before referred in this column to some of my classmates in high school and college and yeshiva who were voted “most likely to succeed” but who by no means succeeded. Many of them suffered from this very “false humility,” and it resulted in their failure to use the talents and skills with which they were blessed in a properly prideful manner. That was their loss, and a loss to the world.

The Jewish people, as a nation, can easily fall prey to this “false humility.” As a nation, despite our faults and shortcomings, we have much to be proud of. We have much to teach the world spiritually because of our rich biblical and rabbinic heritage. And we continue to contribute to mankind’s material welfare in countless ways.

We would do well to heed the pithy counsel of an early 20th century Chassidic sage, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch, who said, “Man must be proud, but he must grow higher and higher, and not wider and wider.” What he meant to say is that if we use our pride to grow wider, we are bound to infringe upon another person’s space. That is selfish arrogance, and not proper pride.

But if our pride motivates us not to grow wider, but to grow ever higher and higher, we displace no one. Instead, we draw closer to the Almighty and do what He demands of us.

Jewish pride takes us higher and higher. Am Yisrael Chai.

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Rabbi Hershel Schachter
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The Real Klal Yisroel

While the halacha that a kiddush Hashem b'rabim must take place in the presence of an "edah" is derived from a possuk in Emor (Vayikra 22:32), the definition of the term "edah" is established by the Gemara (Megillah 23B) based on a possuk in this week's parsha (Bamidbar 14:27). Of the twelve meraglim, only Yehoshua and Kalev conveyed a proper report while the other ten sinned and delivered a terrible report. When complaining about the ten sinners, Hakodosh Boruch Hu refers to them as an "edah ha'ra'ah", and we thereby understand the halacha that kiddush Hashem b'rabim must be in the presence of ten Jews. This passage in the Gemara

seems so strange - we establish the concept of a minyan based on the fact that there were ten evil meraglim!

Perhaps what the chachomim had in mind with this derivation was the following: The Rambam writes[1] that we have halochos that are based on the premise that only the Jewish people who live in Eretz Yisroel constitute Klal Yisroel; all of the millions of Jews who live in chutz la'aretz are considered to be yichidim - individuals (Ta'anis 14B.) (Those who live in chutz la'aretz but view Eretz Yisroel as their national homeland are also considered, to a lesser degree, part of Klal Yisroel.) The din of kiddush Hashem b'rabim really should have required the presence of all of Klal Yisroel, but, as we said above, we derive from this week's parsha that wherever there is a minyan of Jews they represent Klal Yisroel[2] and the Shechinah is present there. Perhaps the chachomim could only derive this principle from the meraglim since after yetzias Mitzrayim they were the only Jews who had stepped foot in Eretz Yisroel.

[1] In his commentary to Mishnayos B'choros (29) and in Sefer Hamitzvos, Mitzvos Aseh 153

[2] Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, Divrei Hogus V'ha'aracha, pp.114 - 116.
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Subject Weekly Halacha

by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt (dneustadt@cordetroit.com)

Weekly Halacha **by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt**

Dairy after Meat: How long a wait?

According to Torah Law it is forbidden to eat meat and dairy foods that were cooked together. According to Rabbinic Law, it is also forbidden to eat meat and milk at the same time even if they were not cooked together. Our Sages, who were always concerned lest prohibitions be transgressed inadvertently, protected us by establishing “fences” (seyagim) around various prohibitions. In this case, our Sages prohibited eating dairy foods even after eating meat. It is well-known that the taste of meat lingers in one’s mouth long after it has been consumed, since a film of fatty residue remains in the throat and on the palate long after the meat has been swallowed.1 In addition, actual pieces of meat can be stuck between the teeth after meat has been eaten.2 For these two reasons, our Sages ordained that two things must happen before dairy can be eaten after meat: 1) Birkas ha-Mazon [or a berachah acharonah] must be recited over the meat meal.3 2) A substantial amount of time must elapse.

Question: How much time must elapse before dairy can be eaten after meat?

Discussion: Almost universally, the custom is to wait six hours before eating dairy after meat.4 Although there are a few communities which follow other, more lenient customs—Dutch Jews wait one hour; German Jews wait three hours—these customs apply only to those who are born into the tradition. One who abandons his custom to adopt a more lenient one is described by the poskim as a poreitz geder,6 a “fence-breaker,” and as one who transgresses the exhortation, “Al titosh Toras imecha7—Do not forsake the teachings of your mother.8”

In the opinion of most halachic authorities, “six hours” means six full hours.9 This is the custom practiced by most people. Some poskim are reported to have ruled, however, that five-and-a-half hours is sufficient.10 Other poskim permit this leniency only after eating fowl, but not after eating meat.11

There is a view that states that the six hours are measured from Birkas ha-Mazon of the meat meal—even if no meat was consumed towards the end of the meal, until the beginning of the dairy meal—even if no dairy will be eaten at the beginning of the meal.12 The custom, however, does not follow this opinion; the six hours are measured from the cessation of eating meat—not from the end of the meal, until the actual consumption of dairy—not the beginning of the dairy meal.13

If one is in doubt whether or not six hours elapsed since he ate meat, he is permitted to eat dairy.14

One who finds strands of meat still lodged between his teeth after six hours must remove them and rinse his mouth before eating dairy.15 One need not, however, wait six hours from the time meat was found lodged between his teeth before eating dairy.16

Question: Does one need to wait six hours after tasting—but not swallowing—meat or chicken soup before eating dairy?

Discussion: It depends on what, exactly, took place:

Tasting: Merely tasting—and not swallowing or chewing—solid or liquid meaty foods does not render one “meaty.”¹⁷ As long as one cleans and rinses his mouth he may eat dairy food immediately.¹⁸ “Cleaning” the mouth is accomplished by eating a bulky pareve food and chewing it thoroughly. “Rinsing” the mouth means washing out the mouth with water or taking a drink of water or any other beverage.¹⁹

Chewing: One who chewed meat or chicken but did not swallow any, should clean and rinse his mouth and teeth, and wait at least one hour before eating dairy.²⁰

Swallowing: One who swallowed—even without chewing—any solid or liquid meaty food, should wait six hours before partaking of dairy foods.²¹

Question: Is the requirement to wait six hours before eating dairy after eating meat relaxed for health reasons?

Discussion: A weak or sick person, a pregnant woman, a nursing mother or a child between the ages of three and nine who need dairy food for strength or nourishment²² are not required to wait six hours between meat and dairy.²³ It is required, however, to recite Birkas ha-Mazon (or a berachah acharonah) over the meat meal, brush and clean one’s mouth and hands, and wait one hour²⁴ before eating dairy.²⁵

Infants till age three do not need to wait at all between meat and dairy.²⁶ Healthy children over the age of nine [or ten if they are physically underdeveloped] should wait six hours between meat and dairy.²⁷

Question: Is one required to wait six hours after eating parve food cooked together with meat in the same pot?

Discussion: Parve food that was cooked together with meat, such as a potato cooked in a meaty cholent or rice cooked in a pot together with chicken, is considered like meat; six hours must elapse before dairy (or parve food cooked in the same pot together with dairy) may be eaten.²⁸

But there is no need to wait six hours after eating parve food that was cooked in a meaty pot but which contained no meat in the pot (such as fish cooked in a meat pot) or cut with a meat knife.²⁹ The halachah remains the same even if the food cooked in the meat pot was cooked with onions (or other sharp foods) or if the meaty knife was used to dice onions (or other sharp foods).³⁰ [Note that this applies only to dairy food eaten after parve food, not together with it.]

Note: Although one need not wait between eating sharp parve foods that were cooked or cut with a meaty pot or knife and eating dairy, according to some poskim, one does have to wait six hours³¹ between eating meat and eating sharp parve foods that were diced with a dairy knife or cooked in a dairy pot.³² Other poskim, however, disagree and hold that one need not wait between eating meat and eating sharp dairy foods.³³

1 This is the reason given by Rashi (Chulin 105a, quoted in Tur, Y.D. 89) in explanation of this halachah.

2 This is the reason given by Rambam (Ma’achalos Assuros 9:28, quoted in Tur, Y.D. 89) in explanation of this halachah.

3 Shach, Y.D. 89:5; Rav Akiva Eiger, quoting Magen Avraham, O.C. 196:1.

4 Sephardic Jews are required to wait six hours between meat and dairy; for them it is not a matter of custom.

5 See Chayei Adam 127:10 who quotes a custom of those who wait only “several hours.”

6 Aruch ha-Shulchan, Y.D. 89:7. See Koheles 10:8 and Rashi.

7 Mishlei 1:8. See Rashi.

8 Chochmas Adam 40:13. If, mistakenly, one recited a blessing over a dairy item within six hours of eating meat, he should avoid a berachah l’vatalah by eating a miniscule amount of the dairy food; Yechaveh Da’as 4:41; Badei ha-Shulchan 89:1, s.v. v’yeish.

9 See Darchei Teshuvah 89:6 quoting Gan ha-Melech and Chamudei Daniel. Many poskim also refer to this time period as a “quarter of the day and night” (see Shiyurei Berachah 89:4), which means that six hours is exact.

10 Ruling of Rav A. Kotler, as reported by his family and disciples. Nishmas Avraham, Y.D. 89:1 quotes some poskim who required a wait of a little more than five hours. Ha-Kashruth 10, note 76, quotes Rav Y.S. Elyashiv as ruling that a little more than five hours is required according to the basic halachah. Practical Guide to Halachah, vol. 2, pg. 133, quotes Rav M. Feinstein as ruling that “in an emergency, maybe fifteen minutes before six hours, but not earlier.”

11 Yabia Omer, Y.D. 1:4-13.

12 Aruch ha-Shulchan 89:4.

13 Badei ha-Shulchan 89:7; Pischei Halachah, The Laws of Kashrus, pg. 201.

14 Darchei Teshuvah 89:5; Badei ha-Shulchan 89:9.

15 Rama 89:1. Some poskim require cleaning the mouth as well, in addition to rinsing it; see Chochmas Adam 40:12 and Aruch ha-Shulchan 89:5.

16 Shach 89:2 and all poskim.

17 Darchei Teshuvah 89:22, quoting Rav S. Kluger.

18 Badei ha-Shulchan 89:16.

19 Y.D. 89:2. Brushing the teeth well is the equivalent of both rinsing and cleaning; Debreciner Rav, Pischei Halachah, pg. 112.

20 Rav Akiva Eiger, Y.D. 89:1; Yad Yehudah 89:1; Darchei Teshuvah 89:22; Badei ha-Shulchan 89:38. Other poskim are more stringent and require a six-hour wait in this case; see Pischei Teshuvah, Y.D. 89:1, quoting Peri Megadim 89:1.

21 Badei ha-Shulchan 89:17, based on Igros Moshe, Y.D. 2:26. But it is permitted to eat or drink dairy immediately after swallowing or chewing a meat vitamin; ibid.

22 Even if meat food is available but the person does not like it or is not in the mood for it; Chelkas Yaakov 2:88; Badei ha-Shulchan 89:37.

23 See Chochmas Adam 40:13; Aruch ha-Shulchan 89:7; Salmas Chayim 2:4; Chelkas Yaakov 2:88; Yechaveh Da’as 3:58; Badei ha-Shulchan 89:36, 37.

24 In an urgent case, waiting a full hour is not required; see Badei ha-Shulchan 89:36.

25 Hataras nedarim is not required in this case; see Dagul Mi-Revavah, Y.D. 214, and Mishnah Berurah 581:19 and Sha’ar ha-Tziyun 33. See Nishmas Avraham, Y.D. 89:1 quoting Rav S.Z. Auerbach.

26 Obviously, if there is no reason at all to feed the child dairy after meat, it should be avoided, since it is forbidden to feed prohibited items to anyone, even to an infant; Mishnah Berurah 343:3.

27 Chelkas Yaakov 2:88; Yechaveh Da’as 3:58 (who is lenient with children until a year before they are bar/bas mitzvah); Badei ha-Shulchan 89:37.

28 Rama, Y.D. 89:3, Rav Akiva Eiger and Kaf ha-Chayim 57.

29 Rama 89:3. Sometimes, if a meat pot or knife is not scrubbed clean, a fatty residue of meat will remain on the pot or knife. Most poskim (Shach 89:19, Chochmas Adam 40:13, Aruch ha-Shulchan 89:13, Darchei Teshuvah 89:42) do not require a six hour wait after eating parve foods cooked in such a pot or cut with such a knife, especially if the parve food was sixty times greater in quantity than the fatty residue of meat on the pot.

30 Rama 89:3, as explained by Rav Akiva Eiger and Beis Meir.

31 Or however many hours it is his custom to wait.

32 Peri Megadim, O.C. 494:6, quoted in Badei ha-Shulchan 89:90.

33 See Darchei Teshuvah, Y.D. 89:42, who quotes several poskim who are lenient, particularly if the knife was not used for hot dairy within the previous twenty-four hours. Rav Y.S. Elyashiv is quoted (ha-Kashrus 10, note 320) as ruling leniently on this issue.

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