

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT SHELACH

28ST SIVAN 5780

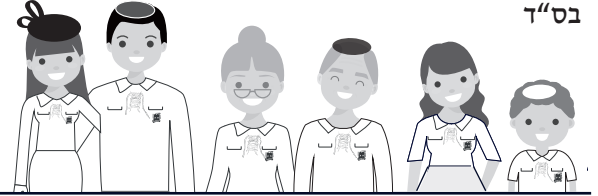
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בס"ד



A VISIBLE REMINDER JOEL UCKO SHEVET MORASHA

This week parasha, Shelach Lecha, is perhaps one of the most action filled weekly Torah portions we lein. From the fascinating story of the *Meraglim* (spies), to the idea of Challah, through to the awful behaviours of the *Mekoshesh Etzim* (the Shabbat desecrator) and then ending off on tzitzit where we read the third paragraph of the Shema, 'Vayomer' which is what I want to focus on in this article. על כנפי בגדיהם לדרתם ונתנו על ציצת הכנף פתיל תכלת: והיה לכם לציצת - "on the corners of the garments throughout their generations and they are to place upon the tzitzit a blue thread called t'chelet and it shall constitute for you tzitzit." (Bamidbar 15:38-39)

The Gemara in Menachot is rather puzzled by the fact that Hashem commanded blue threads to be placed among the white threads of tzitzit. Rabbi Meir asks, "what is so significant about the colour blue?" The Gemara answers, "because blue resembles the sea, the sea resembles the sky and the sky resembles the presence of Hashem".

To put it simply, this Gemara is saying that the blue thread in tzitzit signifies the deepness of Hashem, - through the tzitzit in order to help us understand Hashem's permanent existence in this world and at this time. The white threads connote the purity of God's existence. But why didn't Rabbi Meir simply say that the blue tchelet reminds us of God's throne? What is so significant about the reference to the ocean and the sky?

The answer is a simple and profound one. Rabbi Meir is alluding to the intimate connections between our behaviours and religious actions. Our relationships with Hashem is meant to be built

off a relationship with the earth that surrounds us. The ocean, the sky and the richness of the beautiful lives that we are living. It is serving as a lesson to us that when we hold our tzitzit we should appreciate the privilege that we have of the amazing world that Hashem created for us. We need to fully embrace the depths of the ocean to the heights of the sky and the vastness of the earth we live on.

However, there is more to it than just our relationship with Hashem and appreciating the world we live in. Are we really meant to just contemplate the world we are living in? Surely there is a case to suggest that we should play our part? Following on from Rabbi Meir's comments, the Gemara then asks why we are told to look at tzitzit and remember Hashem's commandments? The Gemara offers a simple yet remarkable answer of "seeing leads to remembering, and remembering leads to doing."

Reading about tzitzit is a notification for us to act. The rationale behind the blue of the sky and ocean is therefore instructing us to not only care, but also to make choices and make the right decisions to sustain the world we live in. The Ramban suggests that the blue strings are therefore called tchelet as its spelling is very close to the word *tachlit*, which means a purpose or goal.

The relationship between the two words is therefore informing us that the purpose of tchelet is to truly see, engage and make a difference in this world. Whether it's through saving lives, interacting with a diverse range of people or doing charity. The deeper lesson of tchelet is to appreciate the world we live in and make it our duty to make it an even better place.

Shabbat Shalom.

JOEL WAS A TECHNICAL MADRICH ON BET CHALUTZI MACHANE 5778.

London	In: 21:02 Out: 22:33	Oxford	In: 21:05 Out: 22:40	Leeds	In: 21:19 Out: 23:04
Manchester	In: 21:20 Out: 23:03	Bristol	In: 21:09 Out: 22:43	Liverpool	In: 21:22 Out: 23:05
Cambridge	In: 21:02 Out: 22:39	Birmingham	In: 21:12 Out: 22:50	Jerusalem	In: 19:10 Out: 20:28

SHELACH 5780: A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

RABBANIT SARAH KENIGSBERG | RABBANIT SHLICHA



It almost seems as if the spies were set up to fail.

12 leaders of Bnei Yisrael were sent to scout out the land. They were told that their mission was to

“see what [kind of] land it is, and the people who inhabit it; are they strong or weak... And the land they inhabit, Is it good or bad?” (Bamidbar 13:18-19)

And that is precisely what they did. The spies returned with a detailed account of all they had seen. They observed that the people who lived there were mighty, that their cities were fortified, and that the land was one which “consumes its inhabitants”. Yet rather than being rewarded for their sterling reconnaissance, ten of those spies met an untimely death as punishment for their report. But isn’t that what they were asked to do? Were they expected to lie or not report back that which they had seen? And if not then why were they sent in the first place?

There’s an anecdote from the world of marketing that might help us to understand. The story is told of two salesmen who were sent to a foreign country to investigate the market for selling shoes. The first returned in despair. “Forget about it,” he said. “Nobody there wears shoes.” The second man sent back a different message. “It’s a gold mine waiting to happen!” he exclaimed. “Nobody here wears shoes!”

Two people went to the exact same place, yet they emerged with opposite conclusions. What they saw may have been identical but it was their perspectives that caused them to

view it so differently.

Several times throughout the parasha, Rashi points out that things are not always as they seem. Fortified cities were not really a show of strength, but a show of weakness by those who had to hide behind barriers. A land that “consumes its inhabitants”, where people were dying all around, was not something to be afraid of, but rather a temporary kindness done so that the people should be occupied burying their dead rather than notice the strangers scouting out their land. (Rashi on Bamidbar 13:32)

The tragedy of the spies lay not in the fact that they saw the strength of the inhabitants of the land. Rather it was the leap in logic that led them to conclude that “we are unable to go up against them”. Their mission was to observe and to report, not to dishearten. Of course there was nothing wrong with what they saw. It was only their perspective that led to their

disastrous demise.

This message has probably never been more relevant than in today’s age of social media. As we view our lives and other’s through the lens of the perfect image or post, it’s worth remembering that things aren’t always as they appear. We need to learn to look beyond the surface and develop a healthy perspective regarding all that surrounds us.

Calev and Yehoshua proved that there was more than one way to view the situation. Every day we are faced with the same choice of how to view the world around us. The perspective that we choose is what makes all the difference.

Shabbat Shalom!

**WE NEED TO LEARN
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A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVES

HADRACHA CHOVERET SIVAN 5756 - JUNE 1996

"And the the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept all night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and the whole congregation said unto them: Would that we had died in the Land of Egypt or would we had died in the wilderness. And why does Hashem bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones are prey, isn't it better for us to return to Egypt? And they said to one another: let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt." Bamidbar (14:1-4)

These sentences show why the people as well as the spies were punished with the decree of Hashem. Not only did they reject the Promised Land and all the goodness it stored for them, but they also rejected the God that had given them life, freedom, food and a hope for the future. They stood at the threshold of a new era, took one look, saw the difficulties and challenges that would face them and decided not only to ignore the chance but to reverse the whole process. What greater insult to Hashem could the Jews have chosen than "let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt"?

In His wisdom and mercy Hashem decreed that those who believed in the report of the ten spies and rejected His gift should suffer the following punishment:

"As I live, says Hashem, as you have spoken in My ears, so will I do to you: your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all of you that are aged twenty or older, who have murmured against Me, shall by no means come into the Land." (Bamidbar 14:28-30)

Each year on Shabbat Parashat Shelach Lecha, I stop and ask myself the same question. Would I have listened and had faith in Yehoshua bin Nun and Calev ben Yefuneh, that Hashem would help us enter Israel, or would I have sided with the majority and been sentenced by Hashem to die in the wilderness, never seeing the Promised Land?

I conclude every year that had I been there to witness Yetziat Mitzrayim, the coming out of Egypt, and all the miracles that it entailed, then I would certainly have had faith and followed

the report of the two spies, relying on Hashem who, alone, had brought us this far. But despite my yearly conclusion, there always remains a niggling question that asks: why would you have chosen to remain faithful when so many did not? Each year it is impossible to answer this question and I am left merely hoping that my faith would have stayed strong under such circumstances.

So, what might we learn from all of this? There are many examples in tefilla when we talk about having faith in Hashem, trusting Him to cast His protective wing and shadow over all of us. In the face of adversity and challenge human nature tells us to run away, to seek refuge amongst easier tasks. But when faced with a challenge, we should remember that we never stand alone. In the belief that Hashem is kind, merciful and ever-protective of the Jewish nation, we also surely believe that He is on hand to aid us when there is a need.

The Bnei Yisrael forgot this despite the constant reminders they received of His presence while in the desert. They forgot and abandoned their faith in Him by calling for a return to Egypt. Unable to answer my nagging question each year, I decided to present myself with a challenge. This is the challenge of faith, asking myself realistically, to what stage, up to what point will my faith and trust in Hashem's help exist, and when would I turn my back on Him and not continue in the face of a challenge?

We can never truly answer the questions raised by the *Meraglim* and the Bnei Yisrael's reaction to their report, but we can ask ourselves daily: until what point would our faith in Hashem endure?

THIS EXCERPT FROM THE MONTHLY HADRACHA CHOVERET WAS WRITTEN BY JAMES FRANKS, CHINUCH WORKER 5756.

WE ARE CURRENTLY DIGITISING OUR HISTORICAL RECORDS AND CHINUCH MATERIALS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING OUR ARCHIVE PLEASE CONTACT ADAM AT OPERATIONS@BAUK.ORG.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Student Bet Midrash** continues TONIGHT Thursday 18th June! Join us at **7.00pm** for a choice of chaburot by **Gidon Schwartz** and **Daniella Wieder**, followed by a thought from Lilmod Ul'amed participant **Sarah Murgraff** a shiur from **Luis Herszaft**. Email Chana at **chinuch@bauk.org** for more details or if you have any questions. Zoom links will be posted on the Student Bet Midrash Facebook page.

- Join us for a Shiur from **Ilana Gottlieb (Director of Midreshet AMIT)** on **Wednesday 24th June at 6pm** in the Bnei Akiva Zoom Room. This is followed by a **Q&A for prospective students** with Alumni!

- **Bonim Atid**: join together with Bnei Akiva from around the world on Sundays at 3.30pm for a series of **Hadracha talks** organised by World Bnei Akiva's Chinuch department! Topics include: **"History of Zionism" (21st June)**; **"The ABC of Bnei Akiva" (28th June)** and **"The Difference Between Modern Orthodoxy and Religious Zionism" (5th July)**. Further information at **worldbneiakiva.org/bonim-atid**.

- Help us reach 100 **Acts of Kindness!** By (anonymously) sharing your deeds you will inspire others to give their time, and let them know where and how they can! Fill in the form at **tinyurl.com/BA-100AOK**.

- **Sichot B'Ivrit**, our Ivrit ulpan taught by the Bnot Sherut continues on **Sunday at 5pm**. To sign up head to **bit.ly/ba-ivrit**. For more information contact Eli at **israel@bauk.org**.

- 20th June is **World Refugee Day**. Bnei Akiva is supporting the Olam event: **Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers - Update for Jewish Youth Movements**, which takes place on **Tuesday 23rd June at 6pm**. To register, head to the Olam Facebook page.

- **Year 13s**: are you uncertain about what's happening with your post-high school plans? Considering taking a gap year? Both our amazing **Hachshara** programmes are scheduled to go ahead as usual. If you're considering a gap year and would like more information, please email Eli at **israel@bauk.org** ASAP!

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to stay informed of our online content!

- To receive weekly copies of **Shabbat Lashem** and our **Choveret Chinuchit** activity pack, sign up for our mailing list at **bauk.org/contact**.

- Visit **bauk.org/feedback** for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why did Moshe care if there were trees in Eretz Yisrael? (See Rashi on 13:20)

2. What protection was removed from the Canaanite nations? (See Rabbeinu Bachya on 14:9)

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!



JOIN US ON ZOOM AND FACEBOOK LIVE FOR A

BNEI AKIVA MIFKAD & KABBALAT SHABBAT

Led by Northern Shaliach Matan
With a short thought before
Tefila from Rav Joel Kenigsberg

Be ready for Shabbat, there will
be photos! Wear your Chultzot!

18:45 - Mifkad
18:55 - Dvar Torah
19:00 - Kabbalat Shabbat
(up to the end of Lecha Dodi)



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