

not complete on his own. Nine men, no matter how illustrious, do not comprise a *minyan*. Yet even the poorest or simplest Jew can complete the quorum and turn the most important group of nine men into a *minyan*.

The secret is to stay all together. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Exceeding Expectations

Yaakov Hopfer could hardly control his excitement. He had looked forward to learning in *Eress Yisrael* for as long as he could remember, and more specifically learning in the Mir, his father's alma mater. As a young man, his father, Shmuel, had learned in the Mir together with some of the current *Roshei Yeshivah* and so before Yaakov set out for *Eress Yisrael* his father's *havrutah*, Reb Moshe Gurwitz, handed him a photograph. Reb Moshe was a childhood friend of Rav Chaim Shmulevitz and thought that the *Rosh Yeshivah* would enjoy seeing the picture. It was a photograph of Rav Chaim when he was a 14-year-old boy. Yaakov's father wanted his son to develop a relationship with Rav Chaim, and bringing him this photo would be a wonderful opportunity for Yaakov to present himself to the *Rosh Yeshivah*.

Yaakov's trip to Israel was uneventful, and when he arrived at the Mir, he waited for the right moment to approach Rav Chaim. Finally, when he felt the time was right, he went over to Rav Chaim and introduced himself. Rav Chaim was a broad-shouldered man with a thick voice. While all his *shiurim* were filled with brilliant insights into the Gemara, it was his famed *musar* lectures that were his crowning achievement. The lectures were anchored in the ability to look at something and to understand – almost like reading between the lines – the profound lesson to be learned.

Yaakov approached Rav Chaim and introduced himself as the son of Reb Shmuel Hopfer. Rav Chaim's eyes lit up. He remembered Reb Shmuel well and was overjoyed to now meet his son. Yaakov reached into his pocket and took out the picture Reb Moshe had given him. Yaakov was excited that he would now be able to share it with the *Rosh Yeshivah*. But when Rav Chaim looked at the picture the expression on his face grew serious. He excused himself and stepped into the corner of the room. Suddenly, Yaakov noticed that Rav Chaim had started to cry bitterly.

What could have happened? What went wrong? Yaakov was hoping to awaken a touch of nostalgia and now it appeared that his idea had backfired.

Rav Chaim turned toward the apprehensive young American and burst out crying, "What have I done with my life?"

Rav Chaim had reminded himself of his aspirations as a young man. The picture had reminded him of the dreams of his youth – of becoming a great *talmid Hacham* – and in his humility he felt that he had fallen dreadfully short.

This poignant memory would remain with Yaakov Hopfer long after he stopped learning together with Rav Chaim.

Never stop setting goals – never be satisfied – no matter how great you become. (One Shining Moment)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִי"ה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT SHELAH ☆ שַׁבַּת שְׁלֹחַ

Haftarah: Yehoshua 2:1-24

JUNE 19-20, 2020 28 SIVAN 5780

Candlelighting: **8:11 pm**

Morning Shema by: **8:14 am**

Evening Shema after: **9:09 pm**

Shabbat ends: **9:09 pm (R"Y 9:41 pm)**

Watch for an email for full Shabbat schedule of minyanim

This bulletin is dedicated by Mitchell & Robin Antar

in memory of Joseph Tawil

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת יוֹסֵף בֶּן אֶסְתֵּר

in memory of Danielle Antar

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת אֶסְתֵּר בֵּת דִּינָה

in memory of Murad Antar

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת מֶרְדִּי אֶסְתֵּר

Rosh Hodesh Tamuz will be celebrated on Monday & Tuesday, June 22 & 23.

A Message from our Rabbi

"וְלֹא תִתּוֹרוּ אַחֲרָי לְבַבְכֶּם וְאַחֲרָי עֵינֵיכֶם"

"And you shall not spy after your heart and after your eyes." (Bamidbar 15:39)

The *perashah* contains the last paragraph of *Shema* that we say every day. The Torah commands that we must be careful and guard our eyes from seeing improper things. A true story is related by Rabbi Yitzchok Hisiger.

Rabbi David Trenk zt"l would visit an office every once in a while. The receptionist at this company was a non-Jewish woman named Maria. Each time Rav Trenk visited the office, he would, with his characteristic exuberance and energy, greet Maria. If anyone has mastered the art of greeting people with a nice smile, it was Rav Trenk, who greets others – Jew and Gentile, it makes no difference – with excitement and genuine concern. And so, upon arriving, Rav Trenk would bellow, "Good Morning, Maria! So nice to see you! How's everything?"

During one visit, Rav Trenk entered the office and expressed his greeting to Maria as he always did. After he concluded, the boss, who was present in the room, approached Rav Trenk.

"Rabbi, what are you doing?" he asked.

"What do you mean? I'm saying 'Good morning' to the secretary."

"Well, Rabbi, Maria is not here today. Who are you greeting?"

Rav Trenk proceeded to take his eyeglasses out of his pocket and put them on. Now able to see, he observed that, indeed, the receptionist was not there. He had been speaking to an empty chair.

The boss was bewildered. Rav Trenk explained that he felt that it was correct conduct to greet the receptionist properly each time he visited, but he didn't want the way she dressed, especially during the summer, to affect his *neshamah* negatively. "I take off my glasses before entering. Then I greet Maria and only put on my glasses once I am in the next room. I therefore had no idea that the receptionist was not there."

Like Rav Trenk, we practice the *halachah* of guarding our eyes. However, we must learn from Rav Trenk never to look down upon the people; he never did.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

No Regrets

(Bemidbar 14:40) "הֲנֵנוּ וְעַלְנֵנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר יְהוָה כִּי חָטָאנוּ"

[After G-d decreed that the generation of the Exodus would perish in the desert because they accepted the account of the spies and did not have faith in G-d, the Israelites at first grieved and then they said,] "We are ready to go up to the place which G-d has said, for we have sinned"

The Israelites' attempt to enter Canaan after G-d had decreed their punishment ended in a disastrous defeat. Inasmuch as they appeared to have admitted they were wrong saying, "We have sinned," and were ready to enter the land, why were they not forgiven? Was this not adequate *teshubah*?

The *Ba'al Shem Tob* answers this by punctuating the verse cited so that it also implies another meaning: "We are ready to go up to the place, for G-d has said that we have sinned." In other words, in spite of the severe Divine reprimand, the Israelites were essentially self-righteous and did not concede that they had done wrong. All they were willing to accept was that G-d said they had done wrong. Even if their manifest words might have been considered an admission, the *Ba'al Shem Tob* states that they were far from regretful. Their statement was one of defiance rather than remorse.

Doing wrong is bad enough, but refusing to acknowledge that one was wrong is far worse. Indeed, the prophet exhorts that although the Israelites had committed grievous sins, the reason that G-d would judge them harshly was because "you said 'I have not sinned'" (Yirmiyahu 2:35).

Admission that one has erred or sinned should come about at the earliest possible moment following one's awareness of the event. Once denial of wrongdoing sets in, it tends to reinforce itself, and the person becomes defensive and obstinate in self-righteousness. This recalcitrance may so dominate the personality that only a major upheaval can shake the individual out of defiance. This is as true of the nation as a whole as it is of an individual. The Talmud states that the exhortation to *teshubah* of forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses could not accomplish what was achieved when Haman was given a free hand to do with the Jews as he wished (*Megillah* 4a). The generation of the Purim episode was prodded into *teshubah* only by the fear of imminent annihilation.

Neither the individual nor the nation should require a crisis to make them aware of dereliction in observance of the Divine will. Such dire consequences can be avoided if one develops a mind-set that will facilitate acknowledging such a misdeed. Prompt admission of having done wrong is much easier than later overcoming an elaborate system of self-justification and rationalization once it has been permitted to take hold. (Living Each Week)

Search and Destroy

The land of Israel was just over the horizon, the Promised Land of their forefathers. As they were about to enter the land, the Jewish People approached Moshe and asked to first scout out the land to see if it was safe and viable, so that they could be properly prepared to enter. The nation chose to take this precaution, not trusting that G-d — who had performed miracle after miracle for them in the Exodus from Egypt, in the desert, and at Mount Sinai — would settle them safely in the Promised Land. This lack of trust ultimately led their chosen scouts to view the land in a negative light, and return with an alarming report.

As a consequence of their distrust, the generation of the Exodus would remain in the desert for forty years, and only their children would merit to settle in the land. The language used to describe the mission of these scouts is "*Vayaturu Et Eress Canaan*" — and they will explore the land of Canaan.

This same expression is found at the end of the Torah portion, with the description of G-d's Commandment to wear *Sisit*, strings attached to all four cornered garments. The reason for this Commandment, the Torah explains, is to wear a reminder of G-d's Commandments, and thereby *not* seek to explore, "*Lo Taturu*," following the desires of our hearts and eyes.

The desire to explore the new land, or to follow desires that reach beyond the guidance of the Torah, share the same theme. The scouts were sent due to a lack of trust in G-d's assurance of a safe and bountiful land, while our heart and eyes send us out to search beyond the confines of G-d commandments and guidance for life. G-d asks us to trust that He has provided for us all that we need to lead a productive and meaningful life, to experience the serenity of His care. We should already know that there's no need to pine for something better, because there *is* nothing better.

While this directive concerns the principles of the Torah, it also offers us guidance for life. Hours of window shopping, website browsing, and channel surfing are spent in the search for something better than what we have now. If we have a particular need, that is one thing... but sometimes we are looking for something we want, creating a need we did not have at the outset. In those cases, the exploring usually ends with little gain to justify the lost time and money. The lesson is to seek satisfaction in our present. Trust that everything we need is already available to us; it's just waiting for us to appreciate it. (Rabbi Mordechai Dixler)

All Together

Zev was getting on in years and his health was failing. One day, he called in his sons and gave each one a rod to hold. "Try to break your rod into two pieces," he directed them. Each of his sons succeeded in breaking the stick that he held. Then the father handed out small bundles of rods. "Now try to break the bundle in half," he commanded. Each man tried, and each man failed to break the bundle.

"I want you all to learn that if you are separate, you are vulnerable, and if you are together, you are indestructible," the old man taught. "In unity there is strength, because not only does the addition of more pieces make the group physically stronger, but the fact that Hashem is happy when He sees His children getting along brings a special protection to His people."

The Jews in the desert were commanded to bring a half-*shekel* coin for the census being conducted by Moshe. The commentators ask, "How come they brought a half *shekel* rather than a whole one?" The answer is that Hashem wanted to teach us that even the biggest and most important person — politically, socially, or academically — is