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Shlach | Tzitzit - Protection, Holiness, and Education

MESILOT

Pathways to the Soul

Illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly Parsha
of **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel Zt"l**

From the weekly lessons of his son
Rabbi Yisrael Abargel Shlita

פרשת שלח לך | אנגלית

...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

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Parshat Shlach

An Unshakable Trust

Rabbi Mordechai Gerlitz recounted the following:¹

The holy Rabbi Yechiel Michel, the Maggid of Zlotchov, sat before his disciples and those who listened to his teachings. They delved into the trait of trust in G-d and began discussing: How can a person cultivate for himself this exalted trait, and to what extent can he ascend its levels?

One of the disciples answered and said:

"I have toiled much in my life over this sublime trait, and it seems to me that I have acquired a significant portion and a high level of it. My trust in the Creator of the World is firm and robust, like a solid rock."

His teacher, the righteous Rabbi from Zlotchov, smiled at him and replied:

"If you truly seek to know of a lofty level of trust - let me send you to a specific place, where you can learn a lesson and receive some idea on the matter. It will be worth your while, even if only for you to know, that you have not yet reached even the ankle of this exalted trait."

The disciple answered and said:

"With all my heart and soul, I desire to learn this trait thoroughly, and I am ready, for this purpose, to drag my feet on a long and arduous journey, even to the ends of the heavens."

The righteous Rabbi nodded his head and gestured for him to wait until the end of the lesson and study, when the congregation would leave his presence.

When the disciples left their rabbi, that disciple entered the private study to hear from the master on these matters.

The righteous Rabbi conveyed to him the precise name of a city and of a certain wealthy man residing within it, and instructed him:

"Go to that wealthy man, stay a few days under his roof, and do not move from there until you have thoroughly investigated the roots of his level of trust in G-d, for it is great."

Immediately, the disciple took leave and set out on the roads, aiming to reach the place his rabbi had told him about.

In the wealthy man's residence, there was constant commotion and going about. Apart from one small wing which served as his private residence, the mansion was essentially a public domain, serving as a thoroughfare for a multitude of comers and goers.

From it, his business connections were conducted, and

from there, unceasing streams of charity flowed, and in it, many guests, travelers, and wanderers found rest for their weary feet.

Thus, the mansion teemed with life throughout all hours of the day: merchants coming, merchants going. Secretaries and servants oversaw the work: going over transactions, leading and bringing, weighing and signing.

In the midst of this all - the landlord of the house roamed, walking among the wings, agreeing, disputing, and concluding matters. Indicating an opinion here, deciding a stance there, establishing facts, sealing deals, and after his final decisions, there was nothing more to discuss.

At this same time, trudging along, the poor, beggars, and charity collectors of all sorts made their way straight to the chamber of the rich man.

This they did with heads held high, as if they too were among the traders coming to offer the master of the house lucrative and profitable deals.

They were indeed justified, for the light upon the rich man's face with which he received them, afforded them a bit of pride and to feel and understand that they were many times more important to him than the multitude of merchants crowding his home.

The many guests, who knocked on the door as though it was the door of a roadside inn, found their natural place there without any difficulty. Spacious guest rooms, filled with every comfort, were found within the mansion, where the guests filled all their heart's desires, and where the landlord would also be found, and would never withhold his hand from assisting his impoverished brothers.

The disciple from Zlotchov, was also received with a bright and welcoming face, so much so that he felt like a family member of the place. He presented himself as a guest intending to stay for a while, and a place of honor was allocated for him, and every possible service that could be offered to a guest was presented to him with great kindness.

For more than a week, the guest from Zlotchov stayed in his lodging room in the wealthy man's house, and he took at once to follow every step and movement of the master of the house.

Before his eyes was revealed the divine and majestic conduct of unparalleled hospitality and charitableness, in a measure that could hardly be believed.

Yet, from all these, the guest did not find even a single teachable lesson related to the trait of trust in G-d for which he had exerted all his effort and dragged his feet to come this far.

"Indeed," he concluded to himself after the days of his stay, "great and wonderful deeds I saw here, and lengthy chapters of learning were taught here in the subject of charity and kindness. However, I am surprised, for I did not see even one small lesson related to the trait of trust in G-d. For what purpose, then, did my holy rabbi send me on such a long journey, being that I have not learned anything of what my heart so desired?"

Parshat Shlach - An Unshakable Trust

"Moreover," he continued to weave his thoughts, "all those exemplary behaviors, which I witnessed in the realms of charity and kindness, are life instructions and lessons, but are not realistic for me. For in order to apply the homeowner's ways to myself, I must first become wealthy, and accumulate endless treasures of money, so that I too can distribute money generously and without an account, as this homeowner does."

"Apparently, I was not worthy," he cast upon himself with a broken heart, "therefore, the vision was sealed from me. I was not worthy to learn what my holy rabbi wished to teach me - and therefore, my eyes were unable to see what pertains to me."

Thus, with this unhappy conclusion, the guest arose, packed his belongings, and prepared to leave and return to his journey.

Before leaving, the guest entered the master's chamber to bid farewell to his host and to thank him for all the goodness he had provided under his roof.

"Well?" - the wealthy host, with fatherly concern, inquired about the guest's state - "Were you able to arrange all your affairs in the city, as was in your intention? Did you achieve all your needs, or perhaps you still need my assistance?"

"Ah... yes... no... I mean..." - the guest stammered, careful not to utter a falsehood.

With great swiftness, the host arose from his place, approached and locked the room's door, and returned to sit down at the table, inviting the guest to sit opposite him.

"I have a complaint against you." - the host began with a piercing tone - "You've been staying in my house for several days, yet you did not find it proper to share with me to assist in your distress. Is that fair?"

I had thought, things were arranged for you properly, and that you did not wish others to poke their noses into your affairs. I therefore thought to myself that I'd

leave you alone, as our sages state:
'To fulfill a man's will is his honor.'

But now, as you're departing without having achieved what you sought - I can no longer allow you to do so. You must open up and reveal what weighs on your heart - and perhaps, by G-d's great mercy, I will be a good messenger to assist you."

The warm and sincere words of the host moved the guest and touched the depths of his heart, and he could not refuse the request of his benefactor and man of kindness.

His heart's seal was suddenly opened, and he began to recount to the host exactly as things were.

"I shall not hide from my master," - the guest began to unload his secret from his heart - "I am a disciple of the holy Maggid of Zlotchov, and by his command, I came here, to learn from you a lesson in the trait of trust in G-d."

"Certainly, I was privileged to see many great and wonderful virtues of yours, yet to my great sorrow, that which I sought - I did not manage to witness."

For a moment, the wealthy man lowered his eyes in modesty and bowed his head in a hint of embarrassment. However, he immediately composed himself, straightened up in his seat, and began to reply calmly and thoughtfully:

"If these words came from that righteous and holy man, then without a doubt, they were known to him through divine inspiration. Therefore, if it was correct before him to reveal my secret to you - it is implied that such is the will of the blessed Creator. What right do I have, then, to act contrary to the will of Heaven ?

Let me reveal to you things as according to the will of that righteous Rabbi, but under the condition that you do not reveal my secret to anyone."

He rose from his seat, and invited the guest to follow him.

"This room," - the host whispered in the guest's ear as he led him to a locked iron door at the end of the mansion - "is known to all my household, clerks, and

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servants as my treasure room. The keys to this room are held only by me. None of the household members, even the closest ones, have yet entered its walls."

The guest's heart pounded with excitement.

The key's grating was followed by the creaking of hinges, as the heavy iron door swung open. The host beckoned with his hand and invited the guest to step inside after him.

Inside the room, there stood a small table, and near it - a chair. On the table lay a thick ledger, next to it - a pen and an inkwell.

"You are invited to conduct a thorough search here in the room," the host turned to the astonished guest, "and see if you can find the treasures hidden within."

The guest looked around at the four bare walls, which revealed nothing, and tried to find a door, a crevice, or any entrance whatsoever, leading to a hidden and concealed treasury room - but in vain.

"Enough," the host dismissed him with a concealed smile, "do not

bother searching, for you will find nothing. These objects, which your eyes see - this table, the chair, the ledger, and the writing utensils - they are all the contents of the room. These are all my treasures - I have not hidden anything from you."

The guest was left completely bewildered. He stared at his host with his mouth open, waiting for a burst of laughter, which would reveal the intention of jest behind the words. But it did not come.

"No. I am not deceiving you at all." - the host reiterated to his conversation partner, "I am not a man of jests and tricks. These are my treasures, and from here stems all of my wealth... Now, sit down, and I will reveal to you the secret."

The guest sat down on the only chair in the room, while the host, remaining standing, began to reveal his secret:

"So, this is the order of how things are here:

I never keep even a single extra penny in my house. All my earnings throughout the day, I distribute for purposes of charity

Parshat Shlach - An Unshakable Trust

and kindness, without leaving even a single penny for tomorrow.

On the other hand, I am not afraid of any business proposal presented to me during the day, no matter how great and what huge sums are involved. My heart is confident and assured, without any doubt whatsoever, even the slightest, that exactly at the right moment, the Holy One, blessed be He, will provide me with the full amount I need, from His full, open, and generous hand.

This trust has never failed and will never fail, forever and ever."

"I sign on giant deals, of tens of thousands of rubles, with the greatest of princes and dignitaries, all without a shadow of fear and without a hint of worry. I commit myself to payments on different dates, I write debt notes on them, and I am sure, without doubt and without reservation, that exactly when the payment date comes, the Al-mighty, blessed be His name, will send me the full required sum, not a penny will be missing.

"With this courageous trust, I distribute to charity, with a light

heart and generously, all my daily earnings, without leaving, as said, even a single penny for tomorrow's needs. Why should I burden myself with tomorrow's worries, when the great G-d, to whom all silver and gold belongs, stands by my side and sustains me in His goodness, day by day?"

"And when a merchant, or a messenger from one of the counts with whom I have dealings, comes forward and presents me with a debt note whose time has come for payment, I enter this room calmly, lock it from the inside, sit down at this table, lift my eyes to the heavens, and say:

'Compassionate Father. I need to pay such and such an amount.'

"Not long will pass before salvation appears from somewhere, and I will have in my hand the full amount to pay the claimant. Thus, never have I turned away a claimant empty-handed."

"My household members and the clerks managing my affairs assume that in this room, I accumulate and bury my

treasures, and they don't suspect that I have given away the last penny left in my house to charity before going to bed."

"This ledger, which your eyes see," - the host concluded his fascinating explanation - "is nothing but a regular account book, in which I record my debts, so that I can verify the authenticity of the notes that come to me for payment. I need nothing more than that."

The guest sat transfixed, as if nailed in place, his tongue stuck to his cheek, unable to even utter a moan from his mouth.

"I understand," - the host said to him - "that you find it hard to digest these words by hearing alone, and that you also need to see this as it manifests. Please, therefore, stay here a bit longer, until you can see with your own eyes how things actually unfold."

The guest nodded silently, and agreed to the proposal with a willing heart. The host invited him to join him in his chamber, in order to closely observe the conduct of his affairs.

A regally dressed messenger, entered the rich man's chamber, introduced himself as the envoy of a certain count and placed a debt note on the master's table, indicating that its payment was due.

"How much does it involve?" - the rich man inquired calmly, as he donned his glasses and examined the note.

"Five thousand rubles." - the messenger replied.

"Very well," - the host concluded, "please wait a moment, while I verify this note against my records. You may refresh yourself in the adjoining guest lounge in the meantime."

The messenger thanked him for the generous hospitality and retired to the nearby lounge. The host rose, took the note in hand, and proceeded to his 'treasury'.

At that moment, the disciple was left alone in the host's chamber, filled with wonder and astonishment, pondering from where would the host procure such a substantial sum of five thousand rubles.

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While he wondered, a high-ranking general adorned in a distinguished military uniform indicating his high status, entered the chamber, inquiring after the host. Learning from the guest that the host would return shortly, the general took a seat to wait, barely concealing his impatience.

Soon afterward, the host returned to his chamber. He quickly greeted the general courteously and was informed of the latter's wish to discuss a business matter. Introducing his Jewish guest - the disciple from Zlotchov - as his 'business partner', he assured the nobleman that he could speak freely in his presence.

"In short," - the general began, as time pressed him greatly - "I am a naval officer. I have just received a royal command to sail with my ship on a military mission to a very distant maritime location."

"I have a sum of ten thousand rubles in cash. As I do not trust my relatives, I fear leaving this money at home under their care. Conversely, I am equally concerned about transporting such

a large sum over such a long distance. Having previously heard from my acquaintances about your integrity and honesty, I have decided to entrust this money to your custody and responsibility - and you are free to use it as you see fit in the meantime - until my return. For your trouble, I am willing to pay you ten percent of the sum."

Within half an hour, the deal was signed and sealed. The general left the chamber with a debt note for nine thousand rubles, visibly satisfied with the arrangement.

The count's envoy, who had been waiting in the guest lounge, had not yet managed to get comfortable in his luxurious surroundings when he was summoned at once to the host's chamber to receive the payment that was due to his master.

"You have just seen with your own eyes," - the rich man concluded to his guest from Zlotchov - "and now, presumably, you have indeed learned the lesson thoroughly."

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"Go in peace, and may the L-rd be with you, and may you succeed in applying the lesson properly."

The guest stood up solemnly, extended his hand in farewell, and began walking towards the door.

On the threshold, he hesitatingly turned back.

"What else?" - the host wondered aloud.

"To be honest," - the guest mumbled in embarrassment - "my pocket is empty, and I don't even have the money for the expenses of the journey."

"Alas!" - the rich man clapped his hands in disappointment - "You have already failed. And here I was, thinking you had learned something about trust in G-d in the time we had here..."

"Well, it is what it is" - the rich man waved his hand in resignation, as he pulled out his wallet and counted out two hundred rubles into the guest's hand - "What's done is done. Now here, take this meager gift of mine, but I do hope that henceforth you will be careful not to make this visit ordered by your rabbi to be in vain, G-d forbid, and make sure that the effort was not for naught."

The Maggid of Zlotchov welcomed his disciple back from his journey: "From now on, you will surely understand what true trust in the Creator is."

"Know this," the righteous Rabbi added, "that this kind of trust was what Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, the Holy Master, meant when he said:²

...*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*...

2. To quote Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polonne (Toldot Yaakov Yosef, Parshat Mishpatim):

"**Behold**, I heard from my teacher (the Baal Shem Tov) that when above they wish to exact punishment upon one who is deserving of punishment, they take away from him his trust in G-d, it is therefore

befitting for one to pray before Him, blessed be He, that He strengthen his trust in Him"

As Rabbi Natan of Breslov wrote (Likutei Halachot, Ribbit 3:1):

"**If** a person had very strong trust in G-d, he would not need to do any effort for his sustenance, because the whole reason that

Parshat Shlach - G-d Made One Opposite the Other

'With true trust in G-d, a person can be saved even from a punishment decreed upon him, heaven forbid.

Because no person is punished by heaven until his trust in G-d is first removed from him, being that whenever one has trust in G-d, no evil in the world can have sway over him.

Therefore, one who truly trusts, and who clings to trust without letting go, come what may, is saved through this from

all trouble and distress and from any evil decree that may come.'

A person of true trust, like that wealthy man you saw," - the tzaddik concluded - "will never be shaken or falter forever and ever."

This story stirs yearnings and longings, 'When will I too merit to see and experience the presence of G-d.'

But despite our great distance from this lofty level, perhaps we have a gateway of access to it; we shall discuss this in our talk below.

G-d Made One Opposite the Other

"**G-d** has made one as well as the other" (Ecclesiastes 7:14) is one of the key phrases that accurately describes the lowly worldly reality that confronts us.

The verse's explanation:

Thus was His blessed will, to create a world in which there would be two parallel systems, one of holiness and the other of impurity.

After creating these two systems, He created a unique creature, unlike any other in all of creation, and gave it the power of choice. This creature would have the ability to decide whether it wants to cling to the system of holiness or to the system of impurity. And when it would choose holiness, it would bring satisfaction to the Creator - 'It

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

we need to do some trivial thing at all for sustenance is to make a conduit and vessel to receive the flow of abundance descending from above. But if one would have had

strong trust, he would make the vessel and conduit through the means of the trust itself, because through trust in G-d one creates vessels to receive the divine abundance.

brings a satisfaction before me that I said and my will was done' (Rashi Exodus 29:18), and thereby merits the life of the world to come.

In a discourse delivered by Rabbi Yerucham of Mir (in 5694/1934), he said:³

“In studying the creation of these two systems, a person must envision two paths leading to two different towns, one town whose inhabitants are all Jews, and another town whose inhabitants are entirely all non-Jews.

Let's take, for example, two towns in the Land of Israel.

Take a town like Bnei Brak, which doesn't have any non-Jews, and imagine that all its inhabitants were righteous like the Chafetz Chaim, and that it was made up entirely of prophets. Indeed, you would not even think to ask a man therein who he is and his whereabouts, for they are all prophets and sons of prophets, holy and righteous

men, and you could be certain of this without any need to look further.

In contrast, take another town, like Shechem and Bethlehem, towns entirely void of even a single Jew, wherever you turn there, you know in advance that they are Arabs, and that you will not meet a Jew there. You therefore will not ask about its people if they are Jews, for there are no such people there.

The entire town is the opposite of the first, you will not find a Jew there.

Such an example emphasizes to us the two polar extremes of holiness and impurity.

Holiness and impurity are opposites, two different chariots, two different 'towns', on the side of holiness you will not find even a hint of impurity, and vice versa on the side of impurity, it would be in vain to look for even a hint of holiness there, they are 'towns'

completely separated one from another.

One is 'a town entirely of Jews', Torah, fear of G-d, good traits, and holiness and purity. While the other is the opposite, entirely abomination and detestable, entirely violence and corruption, in

it there is no scent of holiness, no Torah, no fear of G-d, no good and proper traits, 'a non-Jewish town' to the utmost extreme.

It was following the forming of these two parallel systems that on the sixth day of creation, Man was created.

Adam Gazed and Fell

The Torah reveals to us how man was created: "And the L-rd G-d formed Man of dust from the ground" (Genesis 2:7).

Although the simple meaning of the verse suggests that man's body was created from one place, our holy Sages reveal to us (Sanhedrin 38b) that man was created from various places throughout the world:

His head was created from the dust of the Land of Israel, his body (including the heart and other vital organs) was created from the dust of Babylon, his posterior was created

from a place called Akra DeAgma, and his hands and feet were created from the rest of the lands.⁴

After the Holy One, blessed be He, drew in the earth the form of man's body (the shape of a head, stomach, hands, and feet), He inserted within him water and fire, as it is said: "And a mist went up from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:6).

Then He blew into his nostrils the breath of life (the element of wind), as it is stated: "And He breathed into his nostrils the

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

4. In the words of the Talmud (Sanhedrin 38a): Rav Oshaya said in the name of Rav, "The body of Adam was from Babylon,

his head from the land of Israel, and his limbs from other lands. His posterior - Rav Acha said, was from Akra DeAgma."

breath of life; and man became a living soul" (ibid, verse 7).

It is said in the holy Zohar,⁵ that Adam was created at a very high level - called 'Nishmat Chayim'.

Since his holy soul shone within him, his heart was complete with G-d.

Within his heart, he grasped 'the point', the essence of reality - "For the L-rd, He is G-d; there is none else beside Him" (Deuteronomy 4:35).

Adam was always cognizant of the existence of the L-rd, without interruption, and not even for a moment, did he forget Him, he knew with all his heart, with all his feelings, down to the finest detail, as if standing before Him.

Adam was entirely found within the system of holiness, yet he was tempted to peek into the system of impurity - to see what was happening there.

This is what Rabbi Shlomo Eliyashiv once said:⁶

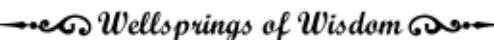
'It is explained in the holy Zohar that the depth of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge was the entering to look and contemplate the matters of the impure powers and the evil in all their reality and strength, to recognize and to know them, and to enter into their inner aspects of what they are and how they are from their beginning to their end. And Adam looked and contemplated all their deeds, actions and uses.'

This peeking into the forces of impurity caused him to connect with them, and from there the path to his downfall was very short indeed...

Since he had scattered his gaze, the brightness of heart that he had was forgotten from him.

As it is said in the holy Zohar (Chadash - Genesis 22b):

"And He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7) - the Torah laments over the man, see what this man has done, the Holy



5. Zohar Chadash (Genesis, page 22b).

6. 'Leshem Shevo Vachlamah - Sefer Hade'ah' (Part 2, 20:1).

Parshat Shlach - Vain Questions

One, blessed be He, gave him a holy soul - a soul so intensely bright that it attained divinity. And he, through his sins, did not follow after the soul but was drawn after the animalistic.

This caused him to fall from his level and lose his brightness. As it is said: 'and man became a living (animalistic) soul' - it does not

say in the verse 'and G-d made the man a living soul', but rather it is said 'and man became', because he himself reverted to his animalistic force derived and carved from the earth, and abandoned the force of the soul "the breath of life" that is apportioned from above and gives life to its possessor.

Vain Questions

From that time, the clarity disappeared, and a process of forgetting the Divine began, and in the year 266 to the creation of the world, people began to worship idols.

This is how it happened:

At the age of 130, Adam fathered Seth, and when Seth was 105 years old, he fathered Enosh.

Enosh grew up and developed, and when he reached the age of 31, the people of his generation approached him and said to him:⁷

You know, Enosh, we have confusions, and therefore we want to ask you a few questions.

Enosh said to them: Please, go ahead!

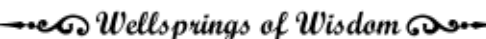
'What is your father's name?' He told them: 'Seth is his name'.

'And your grandfather's name?' He told them: 'Adam'.

'And what was the name of Adam's father?'

He told them: 'He had no father, but the Holy One, blessed be He, created him from the earth and breathed into him the breath of life'.

They continued to ask him vain questions, and their 'conclusions' from all of their conversation was to start and worship idols.



7. See 'Paneach Raza' (Genesis 6:3), and the commentary of Rabbeinu Asher (Genesis 4:26).

Parshat Shlach - The Appearance of Illuminating Lights

The confusion grew and deepened with each generation, the generation of Enosh, the

generation of the Flood, the generation of the Dispersion, the generation of Sodom...

The Appearance of Illuminating Lights

As aforementioned, following the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the clarity disappeared, and the impure powers began to extend their tentacles, and from them spread mountains of darkness and hills of obscurity.

For hundreds of years, humans walked with mixed feelings, uncertainty, scattered thoughts, and a loss of the senses.

The Holy One, blessed be He, said:⁸ How long will the world be conducted in darkness? Let there be light. Therefore, He sent to the world the soul of our father Abraham, a soul that grasped 'the point of truth' the essential point of reality. "For the L-rd, He is G-d; there is none else beside Him" (Deuteronomy 4:35).

As the Torah testified about him: "And you named him

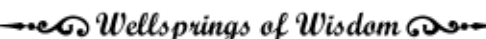
Abraham, and you found his heart faithful before You" (Nehemiah 9:8).

Abraham's service was out of true love for the Creator. And as it is written in the prophet: "Abraham my friend" (Isaiah 41:8), and from the strength of his wonderful love, yearnings of the heart, and longings of the soul, he publicized G-d's divinity, blessed be He, in the world.

After him, his son Isaac our forefather served the Creator with great fear and a clear heart.

He was permeated with the recognition that G-d is the essence and life force of all worlds and everything before Him, blessed be He, is truly nothing.

This is what the verse states: "And G-d, the fear of Isaac" (Genesis 31:42). In the year 2108 to the creation of the world, Jacob our father was born. He began to serve the L-rd with the attribute



Parshat Shlach - Redeem My Soul

of Beauty - Tiferet, which includes both the attribute of love and the attribute of fear.

As it is said: "Jacob was a pious man, dwelling in tents" (Genesis 25:27) - 'dwelling in tents' - two tents, serving his Creator with two attributes, fear and love.

Jacob achieved the highest level, he merited the aspect of the Supreme 'Ain' - 'Nothingness', to be truly a chariot for the Infinite.

Jacob our father was blessed with twelve sons, holy and pure, and in their hearts too, faith was revealed in wonderful clarity. As they testified about themselves at the time of Jacob their father's death...⁹

However, after they returned from the burial of Jacob, the impure powers again began to extend their arms, and the clarity of heart disappeared.

As our sages expounded on the verse: "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years" (Genesis 47:28).

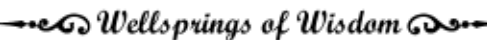
Rashi says: 'Why does this section begin 'closed' in the Torah, without any preceding space? Because as soon as Jacob our father passed away, the eyes and hearts of Israel were closed from the misery of the bondage that began to enslave them.'

Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Sher writes in his book "Hegyon Lev" (page 50): The eyes and heart of Israel are their spiritual stature and the divine influence that descends upon them as they serve G-d. The passing of Jacob our father created a division between the children of Israel and the Divine, and the spiritual stature of the people of Israel then dimmed.

Redeem My Soul

Slowly, the Egyptian impurity began to penetrate and seep into

the hearts of the people of Israel. Sparks of heresy and doubts about



9. At the time of Jacob's passing, his sons said to him: "Hear, O Israel, the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is One" (Deuteronomy

6:4) - "just as there is only the unity of G-d in your heart, so too is in our hearts (Pesachim 56).

Parshat Shlach - Redeem My Soul

the Holy One, blessed be He, in the world - began to be heard, from here, the path to the lowest depths was quite brief.

As written in the holy Zohar (Zohar Chadash - Yitro 39a):

When the people of Israel were in Egypt, they defiled and contaminated themselves with all kinds of impurities, until they dwelled and resided under the forty-nine forces of impurity.

Since they distanced themselves from the source of faith, consequently the Holy One, blessed be He, hid His face from them, and the Egyptian nation was given permission to enslave them.

This is the meaning of the verse: "And the Egyptians were evil unto us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us difficult bondage" (Deuteronomy 26:6).

'And the Egyptians were evil unto us' - the Egyptians managed to turn us to be evil ourselves, dragging us into impurity, to an abominable and detestable place, that is all violence and corruption, where there is no scent of holiness,

no Torah or fear of G-d, and no good or proper trait; and through this, they made sinners out of us .

Once this happened, permission was given to the destroyer - 'and they afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage', with deceit and terrible cruelty.

There are no words to describe all those years of suffering and distress that the people of Israel endured in Egypt, beatings and tortures were routine, and crushing of the body and bloodshed were commonplace.

This was not a short period at all. This harsh bondage lasted continuously for 116 years.

All this time, we don't find that the people of Israel turned to the Holy One, blessed be He, and asked Him to redeem them from all the troubles, nor did they lift up their eyes upwards, to the Holy One, blessed be He, in supplication and cry.

The reason for this, as aforementioned, is that in the Egyptian exile, the inner point, the Jewish spark, was hidden and

Parshat Shlach - Redeem My Soul

covered within the children of Israel by the troubles of the bondage (as Rashi says in Genesis 47:28: 'the eyes and heart of Israel were closed because of the misery of their bondage'), and this caused them a complete disconnection from the Divine.¹⁰

Toward the end of this period of bondage - Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was struck with a severe leprosy from his head to his toe, and his cursed and wicked sorcerers, advised him a 'sorcerous remedy' - to bathe twice a day in a bath full of the blood of infants.

Pharaoh, without hesitation, slaughtered 150 Jewish infants every morning and evening, and bathed in their blood.

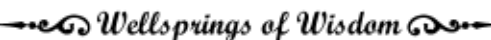
It was then, when the Jewish people had reached their lowest point and the most dreadful of situations and were afflicted with this terrible decree - that they began groaning and moaning, and asked for mercy from before their Creator and Rock.

It was then, following this cry, that the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to Moses.

By the redemption from Egypt, G-d took the people of Israel out of Egypt, which, in the inner meaning of things, means that He brought out the Jewish essence and spark from within their being, from a state of limitations - 'Mitzrayim' (Egypt) - and servitude, to freedom, both physically and spiritually, to become G-d's people.

This is what is meant by "And He brought out Israel from within them" - that is, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed and illuminated the Jewish essence, which had been covered within their inner being, and He redeemed them.

So too will it be in the redemption that is soon to come, when the Holy One, blessed be He will bring out the hidden light within every Jew, and reveal the



10. The Passover Haggadah - 'Shalshet Hazahav' (Tzadikim of Rozhin - Sadigura, page 348).

Parshat Shlach - The Splitting of The Sea

eternal Jewish spark hidden within their heart - to emerge and be present, and awaken and inspire the members of the Jewish nation, who will be called the 'generation of knowledge'.

A week after the exodus from Egypt, on the night of the 21st of Nissan, in the year 2448 to the creation of the world, the people of Israel stood at the edge of the Red Sea.

The Splitting of The Sea

In a discourse delivered by Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, of blessed memory, he shared:¹¹

"In the Passover Haggadah we say: 'And the Egyptians treated us badly'.

Egypt, led by Pharaoh, humiliated the people of Israel and destroyed the foundations of their faith. They enslaved not only their bodies but also sought to conquer their spirits and souls.

For four generations, the Egyptians indoctrinated Israel into idol worship, claiming Pharaoh was a deity, and that they must worship despicable idols of wood and clay.

Moreover, they mocked the faith of Israel: "Who is the L-rd

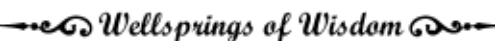
that I should obey his voice?"
(Exodus 5:2).

It was the later plagues in Egypt that rectified this damaged perception.

Each plague taught the people of Israel anew the foundational beliefs: "That you may know that I am the L-rd in the midst of the earth" (Exodus 8:22).

Although the people of Israel had left Egypt, fear and dread of the Egyptians, and a sense of pervasive slavery, remained in their souls, and was expressed when the people of Israel saw the Egyptians pursuing them to the Red Sea.

The splitting of the Red Sea elevated the people of Israel. They saw G-d's hand delivering them



11. The Passover Haggadah - 'Avihem Shel Yisrael' (Page 140).

Parshat Shlach - The Splitting of The Sea

directly from their oppressors, who drowned in the sea's depths, and the people of Israel sang and gave thanks: "This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him" (Exodus 15:2).

Our Sages say:¹² "A maidservant saw at the sea what Ezekiel the son of Buzi did not see." The people of Israel were elevated in holiness.

The Jewish people then reached a faith and a palpable awareness of the Creator of the Universe, that He is the creator of everything, and that there was no need to fear any man, but only the L-rd, blessed be His name and exalted. No one in the world can harm our people, unless we do so to ourselves.

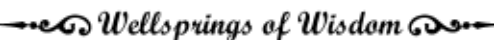
The righteous Rabbis of Ruzhin-Sadigura explained,¹³ that this is the meaning of the verse: "And He led Israel through the sea, for His mercy endures forever" (Psalms 136:14) -

In the exodus from Egypt, the Holy One, blessed be He,

animated the Jewish spirit within them and kindled their internal Jewish essence, and by this, they merited to leave Egypt.

At the moment of the splitting of the Red Sea, their spark and the essence blazed even more intensely until their entire being was filled with this illumination, and they came to true faith, as testified by the holy Torah: "And they believed in the L-rd and in His servant Moses" (Exodus 14:31).

This is what is written: 'And He led Israel through it', meaning that the Jewish essence that began to shine in them at the moment of the exodus from Egypt, was 'led through it', grew and was inflamed within them at the moment of the splitting of the Red Sea to such a great extent that their entire being was filled with the recognition of the L-rd, - "and Israel saw the great hand that the L-rd had used against the Egyptians, and the nation feared the L-rd" (Exodus) -



12. Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael (Beshalach, Masechta d'Shirah - Parshah 3).

13. The Passover Haggadah - 'Shalshet Hazahav' (Tzadikim of Ruzhin - Sadigura, page 349).

Parshat Shlach - "You Are All Divine"

their entire being was filled with the fear of the L-rd and the glory of His majesty.

It was following this great experience, 43 days later, that the Jews received the Torah.

"You Are All Divine"

At the time of the giving of the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Israel the ability to see and grasp all existing reality. As it is said: "You were shown to know that the L-rd is G-d; there is none else besides Him" (Deuteronomy 4:35).

Rashi explains: when the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the Torah, He opened up the seven heavens to them, and just as He tore open the upper realms, so too He opened the lower ones, and they were able to see that He is one and unique, and for this reason it is said: 'You were shown to know'.

At that moment, when all the upper realms were torn open, the two systems - the system of holiness and the system of impurity - were revealed to the eyes of the children of Israel.

The people of Israel stood in the same trial that Adam faced, whether to peek into the forces of impurity or not.

They withstood the trial, and by doing so, rectified the sin of Adam.

The people of Israel were surrounded by spiritual lights, and from the highest heavens descended light and radiance, grace, and purity. The supreme delight, the longed-for divine light, throbbed and shone within their hearts, and they grasped 'the point.' The essence of reality. 'For the L-rd is G-d; there is none else besides Him.'

In their hearts, pure and utmost faith was revealed with wonderful clarity.

Regarding that moment it is said: "I have said, 'You are angelic, and all of you are children of the Most High'" (Psalms 82:6).

However, eventually, they sinned with the Golden Calf, and once again lost a part of their clarity.

For almost a year, they stayed at the foot of Mount Sinai, where they repented, and where they

Parshat Shlach - The Spies Lead Astray

were commanded to make the Tabernacle, and where - on the 1st of Nissan - they inaugurated the Tabernacle.

Finally, on the 20th of Iyar, they set out from Mount Sinai toward the Land of Israel.

The Spies Lead Astray

On the 29th of the month of Sivan in the year 2449 to the creation of the world, the children of Israel approached Moses and said to him: 'Send for us men that may explore the land for us,' and Moses indeed sent them.

Above them shone the open skies in their purity.¹⁴ Their lungs breathed new clean and refreshing air. It was remarkably different indeed from the air they had breathed until now in Egypt.

The spies arrived in the land and before them unfolded a marvelous reality of life - beauty and splendor captivating to the heart:

Before them, the unique and immense 'quality of life' in the land was reflected in the giant men, and the spies felt 'like grasshoppers' in comparison.

Palm trees heavy with clusters of dates dripping honey, expanse fields adorned with awe-inspiring vegetation, flocks of sheep grazing in tranquility and abundance, their milk flowing. The honey of the dates and the milk of the sheep merged together into a long winding luscious stream of 'milk and honey.'

The scouting mission began, without knowledge of the language of the land, wandering for tens of days in the land, G-d performed miracles and wonders for them, and they ultimately returned safely from their reconnaissance.

Around them gathered whole the nation, eagerly and attentively

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

14. In the Talmud (Berakhot 59a), Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: 'One who sees the sky in its purity - says: 'Blessed is He who makes the works of creation'. Raffram bar Papa disagrees, for Raffram bar Papa

said in the name of Rabbi Chisda: Since the destruction of the Temple, the sky has not been seen in its purity, as it is stated: "I will clothe the heavens in darkness and make their covering sackcloth" (Isaiah 50:3).

Parshat Shlach - Tzitzit - A Focused Perspective

waiting to hear, and they opened their mouths and recounted about the land. They shared everything, without omitting any detail, but exactly the opposite, lying boldly.

Our sages reveal to us that at the moment the spies were sent on their mission, the Satan himself stood before them, and tested them with the trial of Adam.

The palaces of impurity were opened before them, and they could not overcome themselves, and peeked inside, into the unholy matters of the impure powers.

This gaze caused them to connect with the evil powers, and the path downward from there was very short indeed.¹⁵

Since they glanced aside and set their gaze upon foreign and impure matters, the whole concept of the holiness of the Land of Israel was forgotten from them.

When they returned from their mission, they blinded the eyes of Israel as well, and that entire generation did not merit to enter the Land of Israel together with them.

Tzitzit - A Focused Perspective

G-d, the Merciful One, in his great compassion, bestowed upon his people the commandment of tzitzit - through which the people of Israel receive the strength to direct their gaze towards holiness.

As Rabbi Yerucham of Mir, of blessed memory, discussed above:¹⁶

G-d commanded Moses to urge the children of Israel to be diligent in directing their gaze and their intent, so that they would

...*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*...

15. Rabbi Yitzchak Huberman, the Tzaddik of Ra'anana wrote (Ben L'Ashrei, Part 1 - Page 100):

All the sins of Adam were caused by what the Satan caused him to gaze at the outer worlds of the Sitra Achra - the evil

forces, and through this he damaged his eyes, may the Merciful One save us.

This was also the sin of the spies who gazed at the local giants of Canaan and said, "For it is mightier than we" (Numbers 13:31).

16. Da'at Torah (Bamidbar - Page 132, 139).

Parshat Shlach - Tzitzit - A Focused Perspective

place their dwelling and enter into 'the Jewish town', through the path of the Divine chariot, and there they would surely be safe, for they would not stray nor deviate to 'a non-Jewish town'.

This was illustrated earlier in the story by Rabbi Gerlitz:

The righteous Jewish businessman merited and in his heart the existence of the Divine was revealed and palpable in a lofty and clear manner, and being that it was so, he trusted in Him utterly.

Every Jew who is diligent in the commandment of tzitzit will merit this as well, and the Divine presence will shine in his heart tangibly.

One must know that in the merit of the observance of the commandment of tzitzit a person is afforded protection from sin, transgression, and undesirable thoughts.

As told by our sages (Menachot 44a) about a man who was overwhelmed by his inclination to commit a sin, and he went to great lengths to actualize this, but at the last moment, his four tzitzit corners slapped him on his face

and he withdrew from the sin. This man merited this because he was very diligent in the commandment of tzitzit.

A reason for this can be explained according to the words of 'Rabbeinu Bachya' (Numbers 15:38), that the corners of the tzitzit correspond to the Divine Chariot, and just as in the Divine Chariot there are four holy living beings that carry the chariot, and the number of their wings total 256, so too in the tzitzit there are four corners, each with eight threads, and each thread itself is made up of eight fine threads, and the total of all these threads is 256.

Therefore, when a person wears tzitzit, he illuminates his soul with the light of the Divine Chariot, and the immense holiness of this light protects and saves him from anything that might impair his holiness.

The Torah portion of Tzitzit is written next to the portion of the spies who slandered the land of Israel and discouraged the people from following the Creator's will in faith and innocence. This comes

Parshat Shlach - Tzitzit - A Focused Perspective

to hint to every person that by being duly diligent in the commandment of tzitzit, to make it beautiful and splendid and to wear it at all times, no such mishap like that which happened to the spies will occur to him, since the merit of the commandment of tzitzit will stand for him as a guardian from every sin and sinful thought, and he will remain complete and whole with his G-d.

Accordingly, the words of the Arizal can be understood¹⁷ that the tzitzit is capable of removing anger, and this is hinted by the numerical value of 'corner' (כַּנֵּף) which equals 'anger' (אֵרָא) in gematria.

This is because the tzitzit instills the attribute of mercy in the heart of the person wearing it, and these mercies that enter one's heart calm his anger, and he will be patient even towards those who have angered him.

The same aspect of protection and holiness that men achieve through the commandment of tzitzit, women achieve through maintaining the standards of modesty as are appropriate for a daughter of Israel, and the more one is meticulous about this, so is her virtue great and her merit large before the Holy One, blessed be He.



Summary and Practical Applications

1. The commandment of tzitzit (fringes on a four-cornered garment) is equivalent to all of the commandments of the Torah, since it surrounds the person, protecting them from every transgression and harm. Additionally, it leads to a revelation of faith within their heart, a faith that brings a complete sense of security and trust in G-d.

2. The four corners of the tzitzit correspond to the four supports of the Divine Chariot.

Just as the Divine Chariot is carried by four holy creatures, with a total of 256 wings, so too, the tzitzit has four corners, each with eight strands, and each strand is made up of eight thin threads, totaling 256 threads.

Thus, when a person wears tzitzit, they illuminate their soul with the light of the Divine Chariot, and its immense holiness protects and saves them from anything that could harm their sanctity.

3. Everyone should strive to fulfill this precious commandment by wearing tzitzit at all times.

Children should be educated from the age of three to wear tzitzit and not take them off, thus being protected from all harm, both physically and spiritually.

If a regression in a child's behavior or academic success is noticed, it's advisable to check their tzitzit for a broken thread, which might have invalidated it and removed its sanctity, causing their downturn. Immediately upon wearing a proper and beautiful tzitzit, their spirit will be renewed and purity will enter their heart.

4. Another benefit of wearing tzitzit is to instill the trait of mercy in the wearer's heart and remove anger. This is hinted at by the numerical value of "corner" (כנף) being equal to the numerical value of "anger" (אכזב).

Since tzitzit instills mercy in one's heart, this mercy calms a person's anger, making them more patient even towards those who have angered them.

5. Women also have a connection to the commandment of tzitzit,

although they are exempt from wearing them. They wash their husband's and sons' tzitzit to keep them clean, and separate and check the threads to ensure that they are intact and that the tzitzit is kosher. In this way, they too receive the reward for this commandment, and the merit of tzitzit protects them.

6. Those who are diligent in the mitzvah of tzitzit will merit and receive the Divine Presence in the future.

7. The tzitzit worn on one's body attracts life and holiness to every limb and sinew, which are a total of 613, which correspond to the commandments in the Torah.

8. One sign that a person is casting off the yoke of heaven, G-d forbid, is when they stop wearing tzitzit. This is especially true with children, and ceasing to wear tzitzit is a sure sign that their inner system is beginning to unravel, putting them on the

fringe of sanctity. Therefore, it's crucial to be very careful about this without compromise.

9. The reward for being careful with tzitzit is limitless. Words cannot describe the regard in heaven for a person who always wears tzitzit.

Many afflictions that come upon a person in areas of livelihood, household harmony, relationships with neighbors, etc., are either because they do not wear tzitzit or because the tzitzit they wear is not kosher.

A person who wears proper tzitzit will have all their enemies fall before them, and no one in the world can harm them.

Therefore, no matter what happens, one should always strive to keep the tzitzit on at all times, day and night, for the tzitzit draws down the Divine Presence upon them, and it is the vessel that receives this Divine abundance to a person.

Shabbat Shalom !

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Book of Psalms

aloud with enthusiasm

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one comes to true joy of the commandments"

(Chelev Ha'aretz).



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23rd of Sivan, 5784



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|-------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| New York | 8:13 pm | 9:21 pm | 9:43 pm |
| Miami | 7:58 pm | 8:55 pm | 9:28 pm |
| Los Angeles | 7:51 pm | 8:53 pm | 9:21 pm |
| Montreal | 8:29 pm | 9:45 pm | 9:59 pm |
| Toronto | 8:45 pm | 9:57 pm | 10:15 pm |
| London | 9:03 pm | 10:35 pm | 10:33 pm |
| Jerusalem | 7:34 pm | 8:24 pm | 9:20 pm |
| Tel Aviv | 7:31 pm | 8:21 pm | 9:16 pm |
| Haifa | 7:32 pm | 8:22 pm | 9:18 pm |
| Be'er Sheva | 7:29 pm | 8:19 pm | 9:14 pm |

Pathways to the Heart

From the Words of

HaRav Yoran Abargel zt"l

I was taught by my father, of blessed memory, what alacrity truly is. Despite his advanced age, father would regularly walk great distances to a nearby Moshav.

On the way he would pass through an area filled with thorns and infested with snakes and other dangerous creatures, but he entirely disregarded them.

When stray dogs would approach him, he would silence them and wouldn't have any fear, to the contrary, they would fear him.

Father would do this in the hot summer months as well as throughout the cold and wet winter months, regardless of the fact that the paths were full of puddles and mud.

He made this great effort, all to help complete a Minyan and read to them from the Torah.



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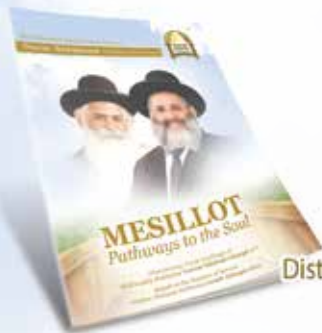
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