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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Re-eh

Kollel Dvar Torah by Rav Asaf Zoldan

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**Newsletter *LITE*:
Parshat Re-eh 5769**

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Elul is coming, please join us!

Friday August 21 at 8:00 AM
Rosh Chodesh Elul Davening "Netiv" style!
Followed by breakfast and a shiur by Rav Tzvi Bina.
(Chanan will be there too!)

At the home of Marcia and David (5743) Kreinberg,
and their son Yitzy (5769).
443 Winthrop Rd
Teaneck, NJ
[RSVP here](#)



Rav Bina at the YNA Reunion at Camp HASC

NOTE ABOUT YAMIM NORAIM:

In order to adequately accommodate all of the alumni who plan to stay at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh for the Yamim Noraim, please register with Dina by clicking [here](#).

Please inform us as to the length of your stay, dates of arrival and departure, whether you will need a bed at the dorm and how many seats to save for davening (in case family is visiting).

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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Re-eh

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

Printer Friendly Sicha

FOLLOWING FALSE PROPHETS IS FOLLOWING YOUR EYES



SIGN OR NO SIGN

We read in *Parshat Re-eh* about the prohibition against listening to a false prophet:

"if there should stand up in your midst a prophet or a dreamer of a dream, and he will produce to you a sign or a wonder, and the sign and wonder comes about, of which he spoke to you saying: 'let us follow gods of others that you did not know and we shall worship them.'" (*Devarim* 13:2-3).

The Torah then commands us:

"Do not hearken to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of a dream, for Hashem, your G-d, is testing you to know whether you love Hashem, your

G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul" (ibid. 4).

The prophet may have been able to produce a sign or a wonder nevertheless we may not listen to him if we sense that he is attempting to persuade us to violate the dictates of the Torah and deny the prophecy of Moshe Rabenu. In addition to violating the specific prohibition against following this false prophet, one who follows this prophet has also violated "*velo taturu acharei levavchem ve-acharei eineichem*" "do not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (*Bamidbar* 15:39). This can prove to be a very difficult challenge indeed.

The Torah is filled with examples of people who followed their eyes and their hearts rather than their intellect. Let us take the example of Korach and his assembly.

The men Korach gathered were not ordinary people. They were the heads of the Sanhedrin: "leaders of the assembly, those summoned for meeting, men of renown" (*Bamidbar* 16:2), "people who had a name throughout the world" (*Sanhedrin* 110a). Each one felt he was worthy of being the Kohen Gadol. This means that for each person who claimed to be the one appropriate for the

position, there were two hundred and forty-nine other great people who disagreed and felt that there was someone else more worthy. Why did not at least one of them negate his own opinion of himself in the face of the other two hundred and forty-nine? Each person was convinced that all the others were *noge-a badavar* and that is why they wished to disqualify him. Did anyone stop to think of himself as being *noge-a badavar*? The answer would be, yes, I am *noge-a*, but I am not prejudiced by this bias. Imagine, two hundred and forty-nine *gedolim* can be prejudiced but you cannot. Me, biased? Impossible! It is like the Jew who once said: "Everyone in the world only thinks of himself, it is I alone who thinks of me!"

DO YOU THINK OR DO YOU WANT IT TO BE SO

When one "thinks" something, he can be convinced that he is wrong by being shown a Gemara, Rashi, or Rambam that disproves his thesis. On the other hand, when one "wants" something all the Rashi's in the world will not convince him. He will accuse Rashi of having personal reasons for explaining as he did. If I love potatoes, how can you prove me wrong based on the fact that Rashi loved carrots? No questions can be asked on the opinion of one who "wants" a particular approach, one who "thinks" cognitively can be convinced otherwise. The Torah warned us against this: "and do not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (*Bamidbar* 15:39), the heart and the eyes are filled with bias - only the mind can rule.

The Gemara (*Pesachim* 52b) relates how Rav Safra once went to *chutz la'aretz* and remembered that he had wine from the *shmitta* year. The Gemara cites a dispute between R' Shimon ben Elazar and the Rabbanan whether one in such a situation is required to return to *Eretz Yisrael* in order to dispose of the *shmitta* product. Two students of R' Avahu had accompanied him on his voyage and he inquired as to which opinion their Rav followed. One of them said that R' Avahu had ruled like R' Shimon ben Elazar and one claimed that he followed the opinion of the Rabbanan. Rav Safra said that he was going to rely on the testimony of the student who claimed that R' Avahu was lenient, for he generally gave a more accurate transmission of R' Avahu's ruling. When Rav Yoseph heard this, he used the following *pasuk* to describe Rav Safra: "my people asks of its wood, and its rod relates to it" (*Hoshea* 4:12), "its rod", "*maklo*" can be reread as "*mekel lo*" - is lenient for himself. Rav Yoseph accused Rav Safra (we of course are not worthy of making such an accusation), of relying on the testimony of one student over the other in a desire to follow the more lenient opinion, rather than due to his general accuracy. He claimed that if the other person was the one who would have offered a more lenient opinion, he would have found some reason to follow that opinion. Even one on the level of Rav Safra was accused of ruling based on *negiot*.

THE MERAGLIM WANTED

When we think based only on what "I want", we can reach mind-boggling conclusions. The spies returned from *Eretz Yisrael* with their report. The Jewish people reacted: "because of Hashem's hatred for us did He take us out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorite to destroy us" (*Devarim* 1:27). Is that why Hashem smote the Egyptians and showed us all these miracles and signs? In order to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites? Is this why Hashem sent ten plagues to the Egyptians, more at sea, gave us the manna - according to one opinion (*Yoma* 75b) this was bread that only angels were privileged to eat. Is this why Hashem gave us a double portion on *Erev Shabbat*, made us victorious in the war with Amalek, and gave us the Torah? "Has a people ever heard the voice of G-d speaking from the midst of the fire as you have heard, and survived?"

(*Devarim* 4:33). It took far less for Manoach's wife to realize: "Had Hashem wanted to put us to death, He would not have accepted from our hand an elevation-offering and a meal-offering, nor would He have shown us all this, nor would He let us hear such tidings at this time" (*Shoftim* 12:23). How could it be that the "generation of knowledge", the generation that received the Torah, the generation that merited reaching the incredible level of prophecy at the Great Gathering at Har Sinai, could make such a ridiculous accusation? This is beyond comprehension!

When there are *negiot*, there is no logic. Once the people decide not to proceed onward to Israel, all of Manoach's wife's intuition is to no avail. Moshe attempts using logic: "yet in this matter you do not believe in Hashem, your G-d. Who goes before you on the way to seek out for you a place for you to encamp with fire by night to show you the road that you should travel and with a cloud by day" (*Devarim* 1:32-33). Would Hashem have escorted them with a cloud of fire in order to destroy them? It was the Egyptians who were destroyed by means of the fire and clouds (see Rashi *Shmot* 14:24). Do they not realize that Hashem only does what is good for His people? Did Moshe, the greatest man of all time, not instruct them to proceed towards the Land. The *yetzer hara*, however, is not searching for logic, it is searching for what it wants to search for. "One who removes himself to court lust, will be exposed in every Torah conclave" (*Mishle* 18:1). One who has "wants" and "desires" removes himself from everything.

HOW DO WE USE OUR MINDS? USE YOUR MIND!

How do we remedy this situation? We must work on making greater use of our minds and intellects. Immediately following the description of the sin of the spies, the Torah warns "and not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray" (*Bamidbar* 15:39). The spies were sent to scout out the Land. It is true that they must use their eyes, their eyes however cannot be the *poskim*. It is the mind that must make the ultimate decision. We must understand that "Cities great and fortified to the heavens" (*Devarim* 1:28)) pale in comparison to the Creator of the Universe, we must be aware that the world is guided by Hashem alone. We must train ourselves - to attempt to follow the dictates of our intellect and logic. We must strengthen our *yirat Shamayim* and understand what it means that Gehinom is open before us. We must not only fear retribution for sin, but understand the reward for performance of a mitzvah as well. If we ever elect not to learn one day, we must realize what is lost by not learning and what could have been gained by learning: "weigh the loss incurred by a commandment against its reward, and the reward gained from a transgression against the loss it entails" (*Avot* 2:1), remember "and the study of Torah is equivalent to them all" (*Shabbat* 127a).

In addition to Talmud Torah, we must involve ourselves in acts of *chesed* as well. We must realize what we stand to lose by wasting an opportunity to perform any mitzvah, and what we stand to gain by having performed the mitzvah. Once we understand this, our *negiot* will change, we will have a *negiah* to learn more, to involve ourselves in more acts of *chesed*. If we were to *daven* a shorter *Shmoneh Esrei*, we would manage to reach the end *Oseh Sholom* a moment sooner. So what? What have we gained? On the other hand, if we *daven* with more *kavana*, more heart, our prayer will be as it should. We must realize when we *daven* that we are given an incredible opportunity to have a private audience with the King of kings. With that in mind, we will view each extra minute spent in prayer as a gain. It is very difficult to gain audience with a king of flesh and blood. We have a private counsel with the King of kings free of charge! If we weigh the potential loss

at not having performed a mitzvah against anything we may stand to gain instead, we will always opt for performing the mitzvah. With this in mind we will merit being blessed with goodness and with blessings and we will merit the days of the Moshiach and life in the Next World.

Kollel Dvar Torah
by Rav Asaf Zoldan

"YOU SHALL SEEK OUT HIS PRESENCE"

Parshat Re'eh speaks of a period shortly before the passing of the greatest leader of all the generations. The people listen attentively to Moshe Rabenu's parting words and his instructions for future generations. In Parshat Re'eh Moshe Rabenu informs us how we can bring the Divine Presence into our lives:

"You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations that you are driving away worshiped their gods; on the high mountains and on the hills and under every leafy tree ... you shall not do this to Hashem your G-d." (Devarim 12:2,4).

The Ramban writes that according to Chazal "you shall not do this to Hashem your G-d" refers to the prohibition against erasing the Name of Hashem. Rashi, however, also citing Chazal, claims that the Torah here is forbidding us from acting in the manner of idol worshippers and erecting altars at any location we may desire. Offering upon private altars is not the way to serve Hashem.

Why is the notion of private altars considered an improper way to serve Hashem? What adds to this difficulty is that there were indeed periods of history in which private altars were permitted (although the types of offerings permitted on these altars were limited, certainly *nedarim unedavot* - voluntary donated offerings - were permitted to be offered on these altars), as the Mishna states:

"Prior to the erecting of the Mishkan one was permitted to bring his offerings on his own private altar (*bamot*) and the service was performed by the firstborn. Once the Mishkan was erected, these altars were forbidden and the service was carried out by the Kohanim ... they arrived at Gilgal and the *bamot* were once again permitted ... they arrived at Shilo and they were once again forbidden, in Shilo there was no ceiling, rather only stones underneath and the curtains above, this is referred to as 'the menucha - the resting place' (Devarim 12:9) ... they arrived at Nov and Givon and the *bamot* were once again permitted ... they arrived in Yerushalayim and the *bamot* were forbidden, they were no longer permitted, they had now arrived at the *nachala* - 'their heritage' (ibid.)" (Zevachim 112b).

The world was created with two opposing forces - the holy and the mundane, the body and the soul. Why did Hashem create such a world? The Ramchal, in his Derech Hashem suggests a beautiful explanation:

"The Supreme Wisdom decreed that man shall be comprised of two opposing forces - the soul which is spiritual and pure, and an earthly and impure body. Each element has its own natural characteristics - the body tends toward the physical while the soul relates to the spiritual - there is a constant tug of war between them, such that if the soul emerges victorious then it will rise and

raise the body with it - this person will have achieved the ultimate perfection. If a person allows the physical and the material to be the victor, then the body will descend and it will bring the soul down with it."

We can derive from his words that Hashem intentionally created the world with two opposing forces - body and soul, holy and mundane. This is in order to bring the world to a full *tikkun* in which the body and the mundane are enslaved to the soul and to sanctity. Given this, these two opposing forces must remain side by side, to leave man the choice between subjugating his life to his body or to his soul.

We can now understand why there needs to be a specific location for the Divine Presence to reside, and why it is not appropriate for a Jew to build his own altar. There will then be no place left for the mundane and our entire purpose in life is to raise and sanctify the mundane.

We can now explain the continuation of the pasuk:

"Rather, only at the place that Hashem, your G-d, will choose from among all your tribes to place His Name there shall you seek out His Presence and come there" (Devarim 12:5).

The Divine Presence can reside in only one location and it is our task to search and search until we discover the location of the Mikdash. The Torah is teaching us that anyone who is unaware where the Beit HaMikdash is located must enlist the help of others in finding it. Why does the Torah need to state such a seemingly minor and insignificant detail? Is it not obvious that whoever cannot find the place he is searching for should ask for assistance? Furthermore, is there a single Jew who is unaware of the location of the Beit HaMikdash? Is the Torah instructing us what to do in a situation which probably never has and never will take place?

The pasuk is clearly not referring only to a person who for whatever reason is unaware of the road to the Beit HaMikdash. The pasuk is speaking to every Jew throughout the generations - we must seek out the Divine Presence within us. A Jew who has not yet discovered the personal Mikdash of his soul must seek, search, and long for Hashem to reside within him - this is the meaning of "you shall seek out His Presence".

The Divine Presence remains with the Jewish people even during their exile and difficult times, as we find in the name of R' Natan:

"the Jewish people are dear for wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence was with them (Bamidbar Rabba Naso, perek 7).

At times, however, it is hidden - we must seek it out. The Ramban cites Yirmiyahu describing the Jewish nation's return to Zion following the Babylonian exile:

"In those days and at that time - the word of Hashem - the Children of Israel will come, they together with the Children of Judah; they will walk along crying, they will seek out Hashem, their G-d. They will ask about Zion; their faces will be turned toward it; and they will say, Come, be joined to Hashem with an eternal covenant, never to be forgotten" (Yirmiyahu 50:4-5).

This Shabbat is Shabbat Mevorchim HaChodesh Elul, a month which the Torah sages throughout the generations welcomed with great excitement, the month

where we begin to "seek Hashem where He can be found" (Yeshayahu 55:6). The commandment to seek Hashem is found in Parshat Re'eh - "you shall seek out His Presence". This message is very pertinent to our lives - in the midst of our hectic daily schedule we must yearn for purity, we must seek out the Divine Presence within us and may we then merit its light and radiance.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List Announcements from the Yeshiva

Rav Tzvi Bina will be in the US August 3-26.
Call his Israeli cell (011-972-52-355-4747) or email him at tzvibina@gmail.com.

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- [Daniel](#) (5753) and Serena Hartstein on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Aaron](#) (5760-61) and Emily Hershtal on the birth of a baby girl.
- [Jonny](#) Skolnick (5761-62, 67) on making Aliyah.
- [Joel](#) Pottesman (5765-66) on his engagement to Sarah Greenberg.
- [Dani](#) Kohn (5764-65) on his marriage to Chani Shlomit Kirschenbaum.
- [Joshua](#) Miller (5767-68) on making Aliyah.
- [Shane](#) (5757-58) and Sara Hopkovitz on the birth of a baby girl.
- Rabbi [Elly](#) (5747-48) and Yocheved Krinsky on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Ely](#) Shicker (5766-67, 69) on his marriage to Naomi Lichtenstein.
- Dr. [Alan](#) (5739) and Rozy Nevies on the Bar Mitzva of their son.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Yehudis Sara bas Esther
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis

- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlommo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa
- Temima Adina bat Keren Ronit
- Avraham ben Meela
- Bracha Sara bat Rivka Zelda
- Ita Blima bat Malka Fraidel
- Eliyahu ben Victoria

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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