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**Parshat Shmot 5770**

College break is here!!! Welcome to all of the alumni coming in every day to rejoin the Yeshiva for a few precious weeks.

**Mezuzot for our new building, Beit Zahal**

With praise and gratitude to the A-mighty for all He has done and the good He continues to shower upon us, and to his angels Ira and Inge Rennert and family the pillars of our Yeshiva, it gives us great pleasure to announce that last night the mezuzot of our new Beit Zahal location



were set by Morenu v'Rabenu HaRav Avigdor Nebenzahl Shlit"a. This building will house classrooms, offices, and state-of-the-art dormitory facilities. B'ezrat Hashem we hope to complete renovations of the Beit Beitar location which will greatly increase our dormitory space.

*Aharon Bina*

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## Snapshot



*The Annual Emunah Seminar this past Monday*



*HaRav Nebenzahl affixing the Mezuzah*

### Monday:

- The Annual Emunah Seminar, featuring speeches from Rav Bina, Rav Amos Luban, Rav Yaakov Thaler, Dr Gerald Shroeder, Rabbi Lawrence Kelleman, and Rabbi David Orlofsky

### Wednesday Night:

- Over 20 visiting alumni had a get-together at the home of Director of student life Elisha Porath.
- Mezuzot were affixed in our new building, Beit Zahal.

## Privilege and Purpose: Emunah Seminar 5770 by Gabe Felder, Shana Alef - RAMAZ

Emunah Day was devoted to discovering and strengthening our relationship with G-d. The all-day seminar began with the Rosh Yeshiva Rav Bina and Rav Amos speaking to the students in the Beit Midrash. Mincha and lunch were followed by making our way to MaTan for the remaining speakers. The speakers focused on how to strengthen our emunah. Rav Amos defined emunah and how integral it is to a Jew's everyday life. Rav Thaler showed the immortality of the Jewish people along with the infallibility of the Torah that governs our lives. Dr. Schroeder used relativity and universal expansion to resolve the "contradictions" between the 6 day creation and the 15 billion year universe. Finally, Rav Kellerman legitimized the Jewish faith as well as pointing out the frail backbone of all other faiths and religions through logic and probability. With all this information emunah seems pretty easy, right?



In theory, yes. However information is only cold hard evidence. That fact is emunah (translated as belief in English, but it is not that simple), as Rav Bina mentioned in his introductory remarks is much more personal than cold hard facts. The fact is, no matter how much information we cram into your head, if there's no feeling behind this information, the information is a mute point.

This in fact was the topic of the day's final speaker, Rav Dovid Orlofsky, in his talk entitled: "Why should I want to be Jewish?" Classically, as Rav Orlofsky

elaborated, people answer in order that the deaths of our ancestors *al Kiddush Hashem* not be in vain. As noble as this may be, but what drove people to be Jewish prior to being sentenced to the gas chambers? Simply following in the ways of their grandparents does not make a people immortal, what then is our secret?

He answered this with a second question which could be phrased in one of two ways: Firstly - "why get out of bed in the morning?" If anyone is having difficulty answering that question then let us rephrase the question: "When the Jewish people were staring death in the face, what kept them going? What was their motivation to keep their traditions alive?". In Rav Orlofsky's words: "Tell me why you are ready to walk into a gas chamber and based on your answer I will tell you what kind of a person you are." The answer is one simple word - purpose.

Life is a gift from Hashem - He wants us to be alive and He desires that we remain Jewish. Each of our lives can be viewed as a partnership with Hashem. If Hashem was not interested in this partnership, then to put it bluntly - we would be dead. Serving Hashem is our fulfillment of the obligations Hashem gave us the potential to fulfill. Each of us was born Jewish because Hashem chose us as worthy of performing these obligations. Rejoice in your promotion but remember it is a promotion not to be wasted.

Whenever introduced to something as lofty as this topic I refer back to a comment Rav Amos often makes: "This is a lot to think about." So that's what I did. I sat and thought.

Rav Orlofsky's talk was followed by a kumsitz whose intensity was beyond anything I had ever seen. The entire student body of Netiv Aryeh rejoiced at their uniqueness by singing - the auditorium shook and the power of the voices rang true to anyone there. Their faces were intense, focused on every word they sung. At one point the singing lulled and focus was turned to the kumsitz leader Rav Eitan Katz. Rav Eitan explained the motivation of a nigun he wrote revolving around the words "Blessed is G-d the One Who created us in His honor, and separated us from the strayers, gave us His Torah of truth and implanted eternal life within us." He explained how these words came to him one night after a particularly hard counseling session with a family. He realized at that point how fortunate he was to be blessed with Hashem's Torah and mitzvoth, with Shabbos and Tefillin and everything else that is holy.

Before continuing, I have a confession to make - I myself find the idea of Emunah very difficult to grapple with. Many of us have unfortunately grown up learning how to think practically, making it very difficult to reach the transcendental required for true belief. Given that, I normally would have screamed out in protest "This is what he appreciates more than his family, more than his sons and daughters, his loving wife, the stability he's been blessed with?"

But that's what Emunah Day taught me - more than any of the cool factual support, G-d blesses many of us with stability. With His help we should appreciate how fortunate we are to have this, how fortunate we are to be Jewish at this particular point in history.

The Jewish people make up a mere quarter of one percent of the people in this world. Clearly being born to this special group carries with it certain responsibilities and privileges. For that reason we praise G-d for separating us from the rest of the world, for being part of this anomaly. The statistical odds are against being born Jewish - but you were. Love the obligations it carries, because

it is our privilege to be blessed with them. This thought, normally a passing flicker, hardly given the observation it deserves, was the theme of the entire day. So, sitting there, watching this man embrace his relationship, truly impressed me.

Capture that moment and ask yourself at the end of each day: did I truly accomplish all that I could have? Make that reminiscence worthwhile and live everyday like it is your second chance.

While davening Ma'ariv that evening, I tried my hardest to concentrate on what it is G-d wishes me to do every day, reading every word of the tefilla with careful trepidation. Was it truly meaningful? In the grand scheme things I cannot say, but the important thing is I tried to appreciate just what it is G-d wants from me.

Years from now when I look back, will I be able to say that I gave it my all? How will each of you see the sum of the years of his life many years down the road? G-d has given you the tools, the choice is all yours...

### HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Shmot

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

#### "How to Achieve True Love of Hashem"

"It happened in those days that Moshe grew up and went out to his brethren and observed their burdens" (Shmot 2:11). In what way did Moshe observe their burdens? "He focused his eyes and heart to be distressed over them" (Rashi). Moshe Rabenu did not simply observe the suffering of his brothers. He took their suffering to heart. Why did it bother him so much that his fellow Jews were suffering? Moshe after all was a prince in Pharaoh's palace, there was no chance he would be enlisted into slavery alongside them. Moshe Rabenu could not ignore the plight of others, when he saw suffering he would take it upon his heart and also upon his shoulders - "he would take their burden upon his shoulders and assist each and every one of them" (Shmot Rabba 1:27). Here was a prince who was not concerned with any affront to his dignity, if necessary he would carry heavy objects in order to lighten their burden in any way possible. The Mishna tells us that one of the forty eight ways in which the Torah is acquired is through "sharing his fellow's yoke" (Avot 6:6). This adage is not limited to sympathizing with another's suffering, but requires one to offer actual physical assistance whenever possible. If one cannot offer assistance, then he should at least feel the pain of the other. If a person can help and he does not, but simply says "I really feel for you", not only is he offering no physical assistance, but his "feeling is not genuine and he is not lending any moral support either.



Moshe Rabenu did not only carry the burden of his fellow Jews emotionally but in the physical sense as well. When "he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, of his brethren" (Shmot 2:11), he was unable to stand idly by, he had to immediately react: "he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand" (ibid. 12). The next few psukim tell us quite clearly that Moshe's actions were at a risk to his own life (when Pharaoh found out what had happened, he wished to kill Moshe - see Shmot 2:15). Moshe did take precautions - "he turned this way and that and saw that there was no man" (ibid. 12). (Rashi explains the text to mean that Moshe saw with his Ruach HaKodesh "that there was no man destined to descend from the Egyptian who would convert", yet the simple understanding of the pasuk is that he looked around to see if any Egyptians were watching). We can

infer from Moshe's precautions that had he spotted observers, he would not have endangered his life. The Egyptian had had no intention of killing the Jew, rather he was working him hard - "he was striking him and intimidating him throughout the day" (Rashi Shmot 2:11). Because his life had not been in danger there was no justification for Moshe to endanger his own life.

The fact is that there would have been no justification for Moshe's endangering his life, even if the Jew's life had been in danger. Just as Chazal tell us "what do you see to assume that your blood is redder than that of your victim" (Pesachim 25b - rationalizing why one must give up his own life rather than kill a fellow Jew), the opposite also holds true - why should you assume that the other's blood is redder than yours (in which case Moshe would not have been permitted to endanger his own life in order to save another). Perhaps if there had been a remote chance of danger, there may have been no obligation to take that chance, but it would have been permitted to take a minimal risk in order to save another's life (see Sm"a to Choshen Mishpat 426:2 and Aruch HaShulchan). It is for this reason that Moshe looked here and there to see if anyone was watching - had there been an imminent danger (i.e. perhaps an Egyptian was watching), he would not have taken the risk.

The following day, Moshe again observes an injustice and cannot remain complacent and apathetic - "He went out the next day and behold! two Hebrew men were fighting. He said to the wicked one 'why would you strike your fellow'" (Shmot 2:13). Moshe is unable to ignore such an act, he is forced to protest. Furthermore, not only can he not remain silent in the face of crimes against his fellow Jews, but his sensitivity extends to non-Jews as well. Upon arrival in Midian, Moshe observed that the shepherds were exploiting Yitro's daughters, we then read: "Moshe got up and saved them and watered their sheep" (ibid. 17). Why must he get involved? "Who appointed you as a dignitary, a ruler and a judge over us" (ibid. 14). Is it Moshe's responsibility to fight every injustice that takes place on this earth?

Moshe had such a love for justice that he was unable to watch injustices being perpetrated without reacting. The pasuk states: "You love righteousness and hate wickedness, therefore has Hashem, your G-d, anointed you, with oil of joy from among your peers" (Tehillim 45:8). Chazal relate this pasuk to Avraham Avinu (see Bereishit Rabba 49:9), yet I would like to add that from our Parsha it is quite clear that the same statement may be made regarding Moshe Rabenu. We hear nothing special about Moshe prior to Hashem's having revealed Himself to Moshe at the burning bush. Why was Moshe chosen as Hashem's emissary to redeem the Jewish nation from Egypt? All we know of him is of his being pained by the suffering of his fellow Jews from the Egyptian bondage and being unable to react. He cannot watch an Egyptian hitting a Jew and not react.

He cannot view two Jews fighting and remain silent. He even feels the pain of non-Jews such as Yitro's daughters, when others are mistreating them. He had such a love of justice that he had to speak out. Chazal tell us that Moshe's treatment of his flock shows us that his sympathy for the plight of others extended to the animal world as well. The Midrash records an incident in which a goat wandered off and Moshe saw that it was in too much pain to walk back on its own. Moshe had such mercy on this goat that he carried it himself and returned it to the other animals (see Shmot Rabba 2:2).

Moshe's characteristic of responding to every injustice, stems not only from love for his fellow man but from love for Hashem as well. The A-Imighty is a

"Compassionate and Gracious G-d" (Shmot 34:6), He is a "King Who loves righteousness and judgment" (from the weekday Shmone Esrei). Moshe's love for Hashem requires him to do what he can to insure that Hashem's world be free of injustice - that righteousness and justice rule. Because our Creator is Compassionate and Gracious, our love for Him obligates us to be so as well - towards non-Jews, for they too were created in His image, and towards our fellow Jews out of love for Klal Yisrael. In the case of the two Jews fighting, there is a double obligation of love for Klal Yisrael - to save the victim from harm and to save the perpetrator from sin. Love for our fellow man means saving him not only from physical danger but from spiritual danger as well. This latter chesed is even greater than the former, for the victim will suffer for a short time, while the perpetrator risks giving up his share of the World to Come and will thereby suffer for eternity. (The problem here was that the perpetrator was an evil man and had no interest in being saved by Moshe Rabenu, he even rebuffed Moshe's attempts in a very arrogant manner).

Moshe's love for the Jewish nation, like his love for justice, is not rooted only in his love for his fellow man, but stems from love for Hashem. The Sefer HaChinuch explains the Mitzvah of "You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart" (Devarim 6:5). This requires not only a person's heart to be channeled towards Hashem, but to the exclusion of all other objects of our love. How can this be? Are we not commanded: "you shall love your fellow as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18)? Are we not told that we must love the Torah and the Land of Israel as well? How then are we expected to fulfill these words of the Sefer HaChinuch?

We are obligated to love other objects as well, but they are part and parcel of our love for Hashem. Let us take the example of love for our fellow Jews: Because we love Hashem, we therefore love His children too (we often find this in human relationships as well, when we love another person that extends to love for their children as well). We love the Torah because it is Hashem's Torah that He imparted to us. We love the Land of Israel because Hashem gave it to us as a place to serve Him and carry out His Will. This was the sin of the spies, they spoke loshon hara about the Land of Israel - they were thereby guilty of not showing their love for the Land Hashem gave us. Speaking in such a manner about Hashem's Land, indicates something lacking in their love for the A-lmighty Himself. Anytime the Torah commanded us to love something - it is not for its own sake, but it is derived from our love for Hashem. There are, therefore, no other values in this world outside of loving Hashem and serving Him.

It appears to me that this was the objection HaGaon HaRav Elchanan Wasserman zt"l raised toward the term "national religious". How can one be national and religious? If being a nationalist is part of Avodat Hashem, then being religious includes being a nationalist. There is no need to explicitly mention it. Would one specify that one is a "religious Shabbat observer", a "religious man who gives tzedakah", or "religious and keeping the laws of kashrut"? Are all of these not obvious when we label someone religious? If serving Hashem means being nationalistic then there is no need to explicitly state it. If serving Hashem precludes being nationalistic, then there is no room for the classification "national religious", for that implies that there are values outside of our religion! Hashem wants us only to follow His dictates. Loving the Jewish people, if that is what being nationalistic means is an intrinsic part of our love for Hashem and our desire to follow His dictates. There is therefore no room for the classification "national religious".

The Gemara tells us that there is a Mitzvah for a man to marry his sister's

daughter (see Sanhedrin 76b). Today this and all other intra-family marriages are discouraged out of medical concerns. Why does the Gemara deem this a Mitzvah? Because such a bond carries with it a greater guarantee that the relationship between husband and wife will be a proper one. If a man loves his sister, then he will love her daughter too, and be less likely to quarrel with her. Chazal saw in a man's love for his sister such a strong bond, that they feared that should the niece/wife act in a manner inappropriate for a married woman, he may try to protect her and not reveal her actions. They therefore enacted a special decree to prevent this from happening (see Gittin 17a). If a man's love for his sister's children is so strong, how much more so must his love for Hashem's children be. The love for our fellow man is not a separate commandment, it stems from our love for Hashem and from our desire to observe His Torah.

The Chafetz Chaim relates a story that took place during the days of the Spanish Inquisition in the year 5252. The evil Spaniards slaughtered two boys before the eyes of their grieving mother. On witnessing this atrocity, the woman cried out: "Creator of the Universe, I confess that so long as my sons were alive my love for You was not a complete one. There was a small corner of my heart that was reserved only for my children. Now that my sons have died, all my love can be channeled to You, and it is only now that I can properly fulfill: 'you shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul' (Devarim 6:5)" (see Tnuat HaMussar volume 4, chapter 5). Obviously these words testify to greatness of this woman, yet there is something lacking in her approach. She saw her love for her children as being in addition to her love of Hashem. A Jew's love of his children is an outgrowth of love for Hashem, it is not "at the expense" of the love for Hashem. Hashem commands us to love our wives, our children, and the entire nation. We love these people as part of our love for Hashem, not as something separate.

The love of justice we mentioned must also be a result of our love for Hashem, and not a separate value. Every day we declare Hashem to be "the King Who loves righteousness and judgment". When the Torah commands us "you go in His ways" [19] (Devarim 28:9) (see the Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot Mitzvat Asei 8, and see Hilchot Deot 1:5-6), we are given a positive commandment to love justice. Love of justice is therefore not a separate value, but is part of our love for Hashem and our following in His ways. There is a positive commandment to love the Jewish people (see Sefer HaMitzvot Mitzvat Asei 206) - here too it is not an independent Mitzvah, but should stem from our love of Hashem. The same applies to all the Mitzvot of the Torah that must be fulfilled through love and fear, in other words part of our love and fear of Hashem includes observing these Mitzvot. We love the Torah because it is His wisdom, what greater good could He have bestowed upon us than "that He gave us the Torah of truth and implanted eternal life within us."

Our love for Hashem also means that we must serve Him "lishma", for its own sake, and not for the sake of being rewarded. The Mishna tells us: "Antigonus Ish Socho ... used to say 'Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward'" (Pirke Avot 1:3). Two of his students, Tzaddok and Baitus, did not follow this adage, interpreting the words of their teacher as to mean that the reason we must not serve for the sake of a reward is because there IS NO reward, G-d forbid (see Rashbam Baba Batra 115b in the name of Avot DeR' Natan chapter 5). They were, as we know, mistaken, for one of the principles of our faith is a belief in reward and punishment. The intention of the Mishna is to clarify that this must not be what motivates us to serve Him. The Rambam elaborates: "the only ones who serve Hashem in this way are the ignorant, the women and the children" (Rambam Hilchot Tshuva 10:1).

They are initially educated to serve Hashem "until they will gain more understanding and serve with love" (ibid.). What must motivate us to serve Hashem? "No reason in the world, not for fear of retribution and not for want of anything good. We must do what is true simply because it is truth" (ibid. halacha 2).

When the Chazon Ish died, one of the eulogizers claimed that from the age of thirteen the Chazon Ish he had reached the level of studying Torah purely "lishma". Upon hearing this R' Yechezkel Levinstein rose and said that this was impossible! even a person as great as the Chazon Ish perhaps reached this level at the latter stage of his life, nobody can study Torah purely "lishma" at the age of thirteen, even the Chazon Ish. Far be it for me to decide who among these great sages is right, I cannot judge the words of my Rebbe HaRav Yechezkel Levinstein zt"l and certainly not those of the Chazon Ish zt"l. What we can derive from this interaction that our goal must be to learn Torah "lishma" and not for the sake of a reward.

The Mishna we have just quoted poses a difficulty. If we are told: "Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward", why do we daven daily: "May it be Your will, Hashem, our G-d, and the G-d of our forefathers, that we observe Your decrees in This World, and merit that we live and see and inherit goodness and blessing in the years of Messianic times and for the life of the World to Come". Are we not asking for a reward? I would be able to understand this tefilla if I were the only one reciting it, for I am yet to reach the level where I can claim that I only learn Torah lishma. But this prayer was also recited by the Chazon Ish and other Gedolim. How are we then to understand this tefilla? Is this not an explicit request for a reward for all that we have done?

Perhaps we can explain that those reciting the prayer are not asking for rewards for themselves, but rather for their fellow Jews. I serve Hashem without the goal of being rewarded, yet I am davening that my fellow Jews who follow Hashem's command "inherit goodness and blessing in the years of Messianic times and for the life of the World to Come". It would be wonderful, if alongside them I merit too, but this is not the intent of my prayer. I am praying for others - it is not that I am expecting a reward from Hashem, but I love my fellow Jews so much that I only want good for them. Just as I pray for my friend's physical well being, that "may Hashem give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth" (Bereishit 27:28), I pray that Hashem give him that which is truly good - the days of the Moshiach and life in the World to Come.

I am not convinced that this is the intent of the prayer, and I would therefore like to suggest an alternative approach. Tosafot (Avoda Zara 19a "al menat"), tell us that the prohibition against serving Hashem with the intent of being rewarded only exists if this condition can be classified as a "tnai kaful" - a two sided condition. In other words, one is only prohibited from stating "if I am rewarded then all is well and good, and if I am not rewarded then I regret having observed any Mitzvot". A one-sided condition - one that states a desire for a reward, yet does not demonstrate regret for past performance of Mitzvot if the reward does not arrive, does not fall under the prohibition of "Be not like servants who serve their master ("al menat lekabel pras") for the sake of receiving a reward". (Tosafot here are concurring with the view of the Rambam (Hilchot Ishut 6:17) who claims that a conditional statement with the words "al menat" implies a "tnai kaful". For example if a man were to tell a woman "you are sanctified to me on condition ("al menat") that I give you 200 zuz". According to the view of the Rambam, this

statement would mean that should he not fulfill the dictates of his conditional statement, if he does not give her the money, then the marriage does not take effect. This is the source, therefore, for the claim of Tosafot, that when the Mishna tells us serving Hashem "al menat lekabel pras", only precludes a two-sided condition). With this understanding, we can say that when we daven to Hashem that we "merit that we live and see and inherit goodness and blessing in the years of Messianic times and for the life of the World to Come", there is no flip side, we are not saying that should Hashem not reward us we will regret ever having served Him, G-d forbid, this tefilla is therefore not in violation of the dictates of the Mishna.

Not only is there nothing wrong with asking for this reward, it is the ideal approach. Would not a lack of interest in the World to Come, be an insult to Hashem's precious gift? Is life in the Next World really of no interest to us? The spies were severely punished for not desiring the Land of Israel - that special Land that Hashem wished to give us. If it is Hashem's desire to provide us with life in the Next World, we must not scoff at His gifts, we must desire them greatly.

We can view this in a slightly different manner. If one wishes to give me a gift, there are two ways I can approach receiving it. Either I am happy at the prospect because he wishes to give me something I have always wanted - a good book, clothing, etc. This desiring for gifts is not appropriate for people on a higher spiritual level for "one who hates gifts will live" (Mishle 15:27). There can be, however, another motive for accepting the gift of another. It is not myself so much who is happy to receive this gift, as much as the giver is happy at my having accepted it. For my part, I have no need for what he is giving me, but how can I not accept it after seeing the joy my receiving it has brought him? The Gemara (see Megilla 28a) cites several examples of Amoraim who were invited to dine with the Reish Galuta (the head of the Diaspora in Bavel). Some refused because "one who hates gifts will live", while others accepted because they saw that the Reish Galuta would be honored by their presence.

It is Hashem's desire to provide for His creations. The greatest good that He can bestow upon us is the gift of life in the World to Come - eternal life, closeness to Hashem. We in this world have no concept of how good that world is - "no eye has ever seen a god - except for You - that acted for those who trust in Him" (Yeshayahu 64:3). Hashem created us in order to provide us with that which is eternally good. It is true that He provides for our needs in this world as well, but the true purpose of the creation is not for what He gives us in this world, but so that we can bask in the glory of the Shchina (see Messilat Yesharim chapter 1), the best place to accomplish this is in the Next World.

We may get a glimpse in this world of the meaning of basking in the Shchina - by the joy of observing Shabbat and Yom Tov, by the immense pleasure we get from learning a page of Gemara. All of this together cannot compare to the brightness of the Shchina in the Next World. Shabbat may be one sixtieth of the Next World (see Brachot 57b), but in the final analysis the Next World is sixty times Shabbat. Hashem created us in order to provide us with eternal good. When we daven that we merit the days of the Moshiach and life in the World to come, we are asking that His will be fulfilled - His will is to provide for us. One who davens for these rewards is asking Hashem that the purpose of the Creation be realized. This prayer, therefore, is not asking Hashem to reward us, but is just one of the ways in which we serve Him. One who prays to Hashem "I desire life in the World to Come because this world is full of troubles - acts of terrorism, illnesses, income tax, etc." is praying for his own welfare. When, however, his focus is "I desire the

Next World because that would mean a fulfillment of the Creation", then he is serving Hashem out of love - not as one who serves His Master for the sake of receiving a reward, but as one who asks for the reward as a tool to better serve His Master. Just as a human being can accept a gift in order to please the giver, our love for Him prompts us to desire His reward.

How do we attain a true love of Hashem? There are several ways this can be accomplished. Whatever method we choose, it must be both intellectual as well as emotional. We must understand with our minds that Hashem provides for all, and we must feel good in our hearts that Hashem does so much for us. The Rambam tells us (Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 2:2) that the way to acquire a love for Hashem is to stand and marvel at the wonders of the creation. When we view this tremendous world that Hashem has created for us - from the upper worlds of the angels down to the smallest insect, we cannot help but love the One Who Created this. Rashi, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the way to acquire a love for Hashem is through Torah study - "'You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart' (Devarim 6:5) ... and what is the love? 'and these words shall be upon your heart' (ibid. 6), for as a result of this, you become aware of the Holy One Blessed is He and attach yourself to His ways" (Rashi Devarim 6:5). (The psukim can be explained from the opposite angle as well - not only does learning Torah result in a greater love for Hashem, but our love for Hashem motivates us to learn Torah. This must be the case, for how much love can one have for another if they have no interest in listening to what their beloved has to say? When we love another, we find everything they say of interest. We can therefore explain that from "you shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart" (Devarim 6:5), we can arrive at "and these matters that I command you today shall be upon your heart, you shall teach them thoroughly to your children" (Devarim 6:6-7). What we have just said in the name of Rashi is based on the Sifri).

Rashi's claim that the way to love Hashem is to learn more Torah emphasizes the intellectual, while the Rambam's approach places greater emphasis on the emotional - the heart. David was alluding to each of these two approaches, when he said: "the heavens declare the glory of Hashem" (Tehillim 19:2), and "the Torah of Hashem is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of Hashem is trustworthy, making the simple one wise" (ibid. 8). David is declaring - go outside, look at the sun, the moon, and the other marvels of creation, through this you will recognize "the glory of Hashem". There is however, says David HaMelech, another way to come to that recognition and that is by studying the Torah. These are two parallel paths one can tread on in his quest to serve Hashem - they each lead to the same destination. A non-Jew who does not learn Torah, has no choice but to choose the emotional path of viewing Hashem's creation. We, thank G-d, have the Torah - we can attain a love for Hashem by learning. These two paths are in a sense one and the same. Hashem, so to speak, "looked at the Torah and created the world" (Zohar Shmot 161:2). Hashem created the world based on the dictates of the Torah - whatever is in the Creation can be found in the Torah, and whatever we find in the Torah we can find in the Creation. Marveling at the creation - the emotional approach, and learning the Torah - the intellectual approach, will achieve the same result.

Based on this we can point out something quite interesting. The Torah begins with "In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and the earth" (Bereishit 1:1). Rashi begins his commentary of the Torah with: "R' Yitzchak said, the Torah should rather have begun with 'this month shall be for you' (Shmot 12:2)". The Ten commandments, on the other hand, begin by stating "I am Hashem, your G-d, Who took you out of the land of Egypt" (Shmot 20:2). The Kuzari (see article

1:25, and the Ramban as well) wonders why Hashem presented Himself as the One Who took us out of the land of Egypt rather than the One Who Created the heavens and the earth. Rav Amiel z"l explained that each of these Rishonim are being consistent with their views. Rashi, who feels that the best way to love Hashem is to learn Torah, wonders why the Torah did not begin with the details of the Mitzvot themselves. By so doing, claims Rashi, not only can we better know Hashem, but the better to love Him as well. We, therefore, need the reasons provided by R' Yitzchak to explain why the Torah began with the stories of the creation.

The Rambam, however, who states that the way to arrive at a true love for Hashem is to contemplate the wonders of the creation, is not very bothered by R' Yitzchak's questions. The Kuzari agrees and it is for this reason that he does not understand why the Ten Commandments do not begin by stating that Hashem created the world, is this not the ultimate and eternal proof for "I am Hashem, your G-d" (Shmot 20:2) - the first of the Commandments?

In truth, both are necessary - the Torah must tell us that Hashem created the Heavens and the earth. In fact the Mitzvah of Shabbat is a testimony to the world having been created in six days. Knowing that Hashem created the world is one of the foundations of our belief. Many in fact find Rashi's opening question very difficult. How can we begin to understand the Torah without knowing what preceded it? The introductory sentence of the first Mitzvah of "this month shall be for you" is "and Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt saying" (Shmot 12:1). Who is Hashem? "This month shall be for YOU" - who is this "you" referring to - is it Moshe and Aharon? This section continues with "and I shall pass through Egypt on this night, and I shall strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt" (ibid. 12). What did they do to deserve such a cruel punishment? We are then told that Hashem will bring us "to the land about which I swore to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov" (Shmot 35:1). Who are they? I have never heard of them! We need those passages of the Torah that precede this Mitzvah in order to understand it and that which follows.

What then does Rashi mean when he claims that the Torah should have begun with the Mitzvot and skipped the creation and all that followed? One explanation offered, is that of course we must know that Hashem created the heavens and the earth, and that this creation took six days. If not, how are we to understand the Mitzvah of Shabbat? We must know who our forefathers were and that it is in their merit that we have been given the Land of Israel and have become the people of Israel. We must know who the Egyptians were, what they did, and what they did to deserve the Ten Plagues that were wrought upon them. We could have left all that to the Oral Torah. Rashi is asking why it had to be written in the Torah, for the Written Torah could have begun with "this month shall be for you". To this question we have the well known answer: "The strength of His deeds He declared to His people" (Tehillim 111:6-7). It is because the non-Jews do not learn the Oral Torah that all the events prior to the giving of this first Mitzvah had to be written down. Should they claim that we stole their land, we can respond by showing them the Torah - "if the nations of the world will say to Israel, you are bandits, for you conquered the lands of the seven nations, Israel will say to them 'the whole earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed is He, He created it and He gave it to the one who is proper in His eyes, by His wish He gave it to them, and by His wish He took it from them and gave it to us" (Rashi Bereishit 1:1). It never dawned on Rashi that the entire book of Bereishit and the beginning of Shmot are superfluous. As we have mentioned Rashi felt that the principle way to arrive at a love for Hashem is by learning Torah, and the Rambam feels that the ideal way to

accomplish that is to contemplate the wonders of the creation. We must realize that "both are words of a living G-d" (Eruvin 13b). We must speak to our soul through our minds as well as through our hearts.

The Mitzvah to don Tefillin alludes to these two paths as well. Hashem commanded us to lay Tefillin on our head, as well as on our arm - adjacent to our heart. One cannot do one without the other. Shabbat, as well, is a testimony to the Creation of the World (as is stated in the first set of Commandments), as well as testimony to Hashem having taken us out of Egypt (as is written in the second set of Commandments). Here too, we find two ways to achieve a love for Hashem. Speedily in our day, when we see a fulfillment of "from Zion will the Torah come forth and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem" (Yeshayahu 2:3), we will also see a fulfillment of "the heavens will be glad and the earth will rejoice" (Tehillim 96:11). May we merit a total fulfillment and perfection of the Torah as well as the Creation together, speedily in our day. Amen.

### Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Rafi Roness

"She saw that he was good and she hid him for three months" (Shmot 2:2).

This incredible *pasuk* is teaching us that concealing Moshe and hiding him in the reeds was not a given. The scheme was carried out only because "he was good", had it not been so, Yocheved would not have taken the risk of endangering herself.



One may ask, how did Yocheved know that "he was good"? Rashi claims that there was a supernatural light that lit up the house after the birth of Moshe. Perceiving a sign of unique greatness, Yocheved goes all out to save him.

Perhaps one could explain differently. Possibly Yocheved did not notice anything unique about her newborn. Rather what the Torah is stressing is that Yocheved realized that her newborn - like all newborns - was good. Every child has unique and special qualities making him worthy of being saved from death through unlimited efforts even at the expense of risking one's life. What we are being taught is "she saw" - were it not for this realization of the greatness and importance of a Jewish baby, the plan would not have been conceived and *Am Yisrael* would have lost Moshe Rabenu.

It is in this light every parent should see his children and similarly every Rebbe should perceive his *talmidim*. With such an outlook we will succeed with Hashem's help in bringing up and educating the leaders of future generations.

Shabbat Shalom

## Student Dvar Torah

by Boris Tuman, Shana Alef - Fuchs Mizrachi, Cleveland

Parshat Shmot contains one of the most famous Jewish Biblical images, second perhaps only to Matan Torah at Har Sinai. I am referring to the burning shrub which Hashem used to speak to Moshe. Rashi points out something very interesting - the species of bush that burned, even at full growth remained low to the ground. Many may wonder whether it is really important that we know whether the bush was short or tall, fat or thin. An analysis of Rashi's writings teaches us an important lesson which can be derived not only from the *parasha* but from Moshe Rabbenu's entire life and personality.



Rashi is teaching us that the fact that the bush was low lying is of great significance, perhaps as significant as its being fiery. One of the ways that many of the commentators see the burning bush is as a metaphorical representative for Bnei Yisroel in Egypt - burned by the fire of Egyptian bondage but not consumed. Rashi is adding another element - the bush remained low to the ground - we were in a low (helpless) state and Hashem promised to remove us from there. This idea of coming to the aid of the helpless is alluded to all over the *parasha*.

The first incident after Bnei Yisroel have settled in Egypt is the story of the midwives. They defied Pharaoh's word and helped the women in labor and their newborn children (is there anything more helpless than a newborn baby?). We then read of Moshe's birth and his being placed in the river. The first example of reaching out to others was Yocheved attempting to hide Moshe (this may have been simple motherly instincts, but remember: "*chessed* begins at home"). This is followed by the Miriam's scouting the little boat's journey as it approaches Bat Pharaoh's swimming area. When Bat Pharaoh (proving the papyrus leaf can fall far from the stalk) spots the boat, she opens it to discover a baby. The Torah describes her action as "*vatachemol alav*" - she had compassion for him. Malbim explains that the reason the Torah described her action as *Tachemol* rather than *Terachem* is because *Tachemol* implies aiding a helpless individual.

The Torah describes Moshe's growing up and leaving the palace as: "*Vayetzeh el achav, **vayarh** besivlotam*" (we will return to the bolded word in due time). This is the first in the chain of events leading to his killing an Egyptian for assaulting a helpless Jew. He then rebukes the man about to strike his fellow Jew and, after fleeing Egypt, drives away the shepherds from the well to allow Reuel's daughters to water their sheep.

Four verbs are used to describe Hashem's coming to the aid of the Jewish people: *vayishma*, *vayizkor*, *vayarh*, and *vayeida*. To understand the essential meaning of a word, we must begin by analyzing other uses of the word. The word *vayarh* (He saw), mentioned above (see boldface), described Moshe's compassion for his fellow Jew. Why did the Torah state that Hashem saw, isn't hearing enough? Rashi explains that *vayare* (both with Hashem and Moshe) means to see with eyes and heart - to feel - not just to witness visually.

The Torah then writes *Vayeidah Elokim*. What does it mean that Hashem knew their pain? Clearly the word implies more than simple "knowledge". A more accurate translation is to have an intimate, internalizing connection with (as is clear from the first two occurrences in the Torah of words with this root (*da'at*). *Vayeihta* means Hashem took our suffering "to heart", He "felt" our pain, it was

"part of Him". This ultimate empathy leads to the ultimate *chessed*.

Certainly Hashem is all-*chessed*. In addition, the Torah describes Moshe Rabenu's acts of *chessed*. We mentioned Moshe's going out and seeing his fellow Jews suffering and responding to it. This is not only the source of acting with kindness, it typifies Moshe Rabenu's character throughout his life. Moshe then went to Pharaoh to ask him to alleviate the suffering of the Jewish people, Pharaoh responded with an order making the bondage more difficult - Moshe was devastated. Moshe then went to Hashem asking: "Why did you do this to your people? Why did you send me?" Hashem responded: "I will send them out with a mighty hand"

Hashem's response does not appear to answer either of Moshe's questions. Rashi explains that Moshe is waiting for Hashem to respond something the likes of: "why do you care?" Moshe's second question is therefore a response to Hashem's response: "I care because I am here sent by You, if You are not going to help the nation then why did You send me here?" When Hashem saw how much Moshe truly cared about the people and that his question was one filled with *chessed*, Hashem revealed to Moshe His plan for Egypt with an assurance it would happen.

There is so much relating to *chessed* we can learn in this week's parasha. The question is how we choose to learn it and from what do we choose to learn. Many analyze the individual psukim and commentaries. Another way to learn what it means to live a life of *chessed* is from the example set by Moshe Rabenu, beginning with his first act after leaving Pharaoh's house and for the rest of his life.

### Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Announcements from the Yeshiva

#### Photo Galleries



[Emunah Seminar 5770](#)



[Affixing Mezuzot in Beit Zahal](#)

#### Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- [Gideon](#) (5762-63) and Esther Bannett on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Neil](#) (5752) and Debra Taub on the birth of a baby girl.
- [Adam](#) Azoulay (5767-68) on his [engagement](#) to Arielle Forecast.

## **Baruch Dayan Emet**

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh regrets to inform you of the passing of:

- Gerald Elbaum, father of [Shaan](#) (5755-57) and [Judah](#) (5758-59).

## **Visitors**

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Jeremy Chubak (5769)
- Ephraim (5761) and Sara Gervis
- Avraham (Avi) Rovinsky (5766-67)
- Joel Minsky (5766-67)
- Chaim Aaron (5768-69)
- Jacob Decter (5769)
- Matthew Faigen (5767-68)
- Chaim Frankel (5768-69)
- Ben McIntosh (5768-69)
- Daniel Parilis (5769)
- Michael Oppenheimer (5767-68)
- Adam Steinmetz (5765)
- David Rifkin (5767)
- Joseph Harary (5765)
- Yehuda Schild (5767-68)
- Gary Slochowsky (5768-69)
- Michael Attar (5768-69)
- Adam Kirshner (5766-67)
- Alex Mehl (5767-68)
- Moses Sutton (5768)
- Josh Balkin (5767)
- Sam Bienenfeld (5767-68)
- Moshe Blackstein (5768-69)
- Noam Casper (5767-68)
- Bradley Goldstoft (5767-68)
- Samuel Kollander (5767)
- Jonathan Gomberg (5767-68)
- Avri Szafranski (5768-69)
- Gregory Albert (5767-68)
- Lawrence Albert (5767-68)
- Ariel Goldberg (5758-59)
- Matthew Beller (5769)
- Joseph Gillers (5766, 68)
- Jeffrey Koppel (5767-68)
- Eli Snyder (5766-67)
- Jonathan (Yoni) Kushner (5767-68)
- Jacob Decter (5769)
- Jason Kushner (5769)
- Oren Feder (5768)
- Jeremy Shapiro (5768-69)

## **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
- 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
- Chaya Malka bat Rachel Braindel
- Elnatan Meir ben Devorah Ze'eva
- Yahel Liam Gittel bat Rachel
- Shifra Sheulah bat Chana Sarah
- Dovid Chaim ben Brina
- Natan Zelig ben Leah
- Refoel Chaim Simcha Binyamin ben Devorah Aliza
- Menachem Mendal Halevi ben Tova
- Akiva ben Gittel
- Aharon Dovid ben Elke Shprintza Machla
- Eitan Meir ben Rivka Ora
- Shimona Chaya bat Shintamar
- Yaacov ben Ester
- Sharona Charna bat Nechama Zvia
- Shaul ben Sulcha
- Ariel Avraham ben Chana
- Chaya Zeesil bat Tzivia Leah
- Batyah Leah bat Sarah
- Ariel Avraham Ben Chana
- Moshe Aharon Yitzchak ben Tova Rachel

[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,**

Rav Bina, Netiv Aryeh  
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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