

לעילוי נשמת  
מרת עקא עדנה  
צפורה ע"ה  
בת משה מנחם הלוי ז"ל



# עַדְתָּהּ אֶרֶץ

Weekly Torah Insights and inspiration on the Parsha from the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"za of Gur

## Maintaining Proper Focus

כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן לְבֹא לְרִשֵּׁת אֶת הָאָרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם, וּיְרִשְׁתֶּם אֹתָהּ וַיִּשְׁבְּ-  
תִּם בָּהּ

*For you are crossing the Yarden to come and possess the land that Hashem, your G-d, gives you; you shall possess it and you shall settle in it.* (Devarim 11:31)

To us Yidden, Eretz Yisrael is not just a place to live; we are soul-bound to it and deeply connected to its kedushah as the *paltarin shel Melech*

Rashi comments, based on Sifri: "The miracles that will occur at the Yarden will serve as a sign to you that you will inherit the land."

This is hard to understand. Was there any need for a sign? After all,

Hashem swore to the Avos,<sup>1</sup> לְזַרְעֲךָ – *To your offspring I will give this land.* In Mitzrayim, as well, Hashem promised Bnei Yisrael that He would bring them to inherit a land of milk and honey.<sup>2</sup> Although the generation that left Mitzrayim did not live to see it, that was only due to their sins. Certainly their children would merit seeing it.

Perhaps Rashi means that the miracles at the Yarden would demonstrate that Hashem could act miraculously and thus give them Eretz Yisrael? Miracles were hardly news to Bnei Yisrael; they had experienced the wondrous events of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* followed by a forty-year-long string of miracles in the wilderness. And they knew all along that the point of it all was to come to Eretz Yisrael and inherit it. So what new message was there in the miracles of the Yarden?

Let us explore what miracles occurred at the Yarden. The pasuk

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## Holding Strong

אֲחֲרֵי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם תִּלְכּוּ וְגו' וְבו תִּדְבְּקוּן  
*You shall follow Hashem, your G-d... and to Him you shall cleave.* (Devarim 13:5)

The *mefarshim* wonder about the phrasing of this pasuk. Chazal say<sup>7</sup> that the word אֲחֲרֵי denotes following from a distance, whereas אֶחָד denotes a near following. Certainly, we must strive to minimize the distance between us and Hashem, so wouldn't it be more proper to say אֶחָד ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם תִּלְכּוּ?

The Sfas Emes explains<sup>8</sup> that to the extent one views himself as still distant from Hashem, as expressed by אֲחֲרֵי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם – תִּלְכּוּ – he can achieve וְבו תִּדְבְּקוּן, *deveikus* and closeness to Hashem.

This idea, too, is the message of Elul, which will begin next week. The Chiddushei HaRim showed<sup>9</sup> an allusion to Elul in the pasuk (Tehillim 100:3), הוּא עָשָׂנוּ וְלו אֶנְחֵנו עִמּו וְצִאן מִרְעִיתו, – *He made us and we are His, His people and the sheep of His pasture.* The word וְלו is written as וְלו, with an *alef*, meaning, *He made us and we did not.* The words וְלו and לו together spell אלוּל. The Chiddushei HaRim explained that the more we internalize וְלו אֶנְחֵנו – that we have no existence or distinction independent of Hashem – we have achieved וְלו אֶנְחֵנו, coming close and belonging solely to Hashem.

Another beautiful explanation is given by *Kol Yaakov*.<sup>10</sup> *Sefarim Hakedoshim*<sup>11</sup> provide

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7 Bereishis Rabbah 44:5; see Rashi 11:30

8 See *Likutei Yehudah*

9 See *Likutei HaRim*, Elul s.v. *Remez*

10 By R. Yaakov Tzvi Yalish, author of *Melo Haro'im* and a *talmid* of the Chozeh of Lublin

11 See *Baal Shem Tov*, Bereishis 6:9

1 Bereishis 12:7 and other places

2 Shemos 3:17, 6:8

# Maintaining Proper Focus

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says (Yehoshua 3:9), וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, גִּשּׁוּ הַנָּה וּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת דְּבַרֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם – Yehoshua said to Bnei Yisrael, “Come here and hear the words of Hashem, your G-d.” Rashi writes that Yehoshua gathered all of Bnei Yisrael between the poles of the Aron Hakodesh to hear the word of Hashem. Rashi notes that this is one of the places where a minimal space contained something large. The next pasuk continues: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, בְּזֹאת תֵּדָעוּן כִּי קָל חַי בְּקִרְבְּכֶם – Yehoshua said, “Through this you will know that the Living G-d is in your midst.” The Midrash<sup>3</sup> explains, “Yehoshua told them, ‘From the fact that the two poles of the Aron contain all of you, I know that the Shechinah is among you.’ The same was true of the Beis Hamikdash; all of Klal Yisrael stood in it pressed tightly together yet had ample room to bow down.”

How was the Shechinah's presence among Bnei Yisrael signified by their gathering between the poles of the Aron? We must understand, as well, how this indicated that they were fit to inherit Eretz Yisrael, as the pasuk continues, וְהוֹרֵשׁ יוֹרִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם אֶת הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהוֹרֵשׁ יוֹרִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם אֶת הַכְּנַעֲנִי – and He will surely drive away from before you the Canaani and the Chitti...

The answer is that this *nes* served as a sign for how Eretz Yisrael must be divided. Some *shevatim* would get larger parcels of land, and some smaller; some, land of higher quality, and some, of lesser quality.<sup>4</sup> When the people would arrive at Eretz Yisrael, they might feel the need to try for the largest territory possible. For this reason, Hashem performed a miracle for them, whereby a small space – the *badei haAron* – held a vast mass of people. This miracle proclaimed that it is not the physical size of a space that matters, but the *kedushah* of the space – that the Living G-d is in your midst. Indeed, there was room for everybody in Eretz Yisrael, since in its holiness it stretches to make room for its Jewish inhabitants<sup>5</sup> – but that is not the point. Bnei Yisrael were made to understand that they shouldn't be looking at the size or capacity of the potential lots; they should be seeking a holy part of Eretz Yisrael, since that is all that matters.

In fact, the special attributes of Eretz Yisrael are only effective when Bnei Yisrael are connected to Hashem. The pasuk says (Yirmiyahu 9:11-12), עַל מָה אָבְדָה הָאָרֶץ וְגו' עַל עֲזָבְכֶם אֶת תּוֹרַתִי – for what reason did the land perish... because of their forsaking of My Torah.

*Pri Megadim* explains<sup>6</sup> that this refers to the loss of Eretz Yisrael's capacity to stretch to fit Bnei Yisrael. Eretz Yisrael could only do this when the *Shechinah* was brought to rest in it through the study of Torah *lishmah*. Once this was lost and people began learning Torah for their own purposes, without keeping in mind the Giver of Torah – because of their forsaking of My Torah, Eretz Yisrael lost this supernatural attribute.

This is the meaning of Rashi's statement: “The miracles that will occur at the Yarden will serve as a sign to you that you will inherit the land.” The miracle of ‘the small containing the large’ would demonstrate how Bnei Yisrael were to inherit and settle the land. To us *Yidden*, Eretz Yisrael is not just a place to live; we are soul-bound to it and deeply connected to its *kedushah* as the *paltarin shel Melech*, the palace of the King: כִּי קָל חַי בְּקִרְבְּכֶם.

(ראה תש"פ – ס"ג מאמר א)

3 Vayikra Rabbah 10:9

4 The Gemara in Bava Basra (perek Yesh Nochalin) discusses the details of how the Land was divided, including how those who got inferior land were compensated.

5 Gittin 57a

6 O.C. 47, *Mishbetzos Zahav* 1, based on a statement of *Bach*

# Holding Strong

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a *mashal* of a father teaching his small child to walk. The father sits on the floor close to his child, and invites the child into his open arms. As the child takes his first unsteady steps, the father scoots back, hoping his child will take several more steps to catch up with him. Each time the child moves forward, his father moves backward. Seeing this, the child gets frustrated; *Father, why are you moving away as I try to come close to you? The further you move, the more likely I am to fall!* But this is only because he is a child and cannot understand his father's motives. The father is doing this for his child's own good, so that he will learn to walk and to progress.

We must understand that He is only training us to walk, bringing out the *ahavas Hashem* that would have otherwise remained hidden in our hearts

*Kol Yaakov* explains that this is what the pasuk means with *אֲחֲרַי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם תִּלְכוּ*, *You shall follow* (from a distance) *Hashem, your G-d*. Sometimes Hashem sets a distance between Him and us, placing obstacles in the path of our *avodas Hashem*. We must understand that He is only training us to walk, bringing out the *ahavas Hashem* that would have otherwise remained hidden in our hearts. He is waiting to see how we will follow Him, approaching across a distance.

In fact, this explanation fits very nicely into the larger context of our pesukim. Several pesukim earlier, the Torah discusses the halachah of the *navi sheker*: *כִּי יָקוּם בְּקִרְבְּךָ נְבִיא או חֹלֵם חֲלוֹם וְנָתַן אֵלָיךָ אוֹת או מוֹפֵת. וְבָא הָאוֹת וְנָבִיא או חֹלֵם חֲלוֹם וְנָתַן אֵלָיךָ אוֹת או מוֹפֵת. וְאָשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיךָ – 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 or the wonder comes about...* (13:2-3) The false prophet demands that the people worship *avodah zarah*, and performs a miracle (according to one interpretation; see below) to prove his qualification. It is very difficult for someone who sees this to dismiss what his eyes perceive as proof, and remain loyal to Hashem – as the pasuk continues, *אֲחֲרַי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם תִּלְכוּ*. He must be aware that *כִּי תִבְחַן ה' מִנְסָה ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם אֶתְכֶם – for Hashem, your G-d, is testing you* (13:4); that the perceived distance and difficulty Hashem has placed before him is only a test, teaching him to progress in *ahavas Hashem*.

Actually, there is a difference of opinion in Chazal<sup>12</sup> how to interpret the events described by the pesukim of *navi sheker*. R. Yosi HaGelili explains as above: the *navi sheker* marshals a miracle to bolster his call to *avodah zarah*. *– The Torah reaches to the depth of the mind of avodah zarah,*” and therefore commands that even if a *navi sheker* stops the sun at the height of the sky, we must pay him no heed. R. Akiva says, *“Chas v’shalom* that Hashem would stop the sun for those who transgress His will!”; rather, the pasuk refers to one who had previously performed a miracle as a true *navi*, and then became a false *navi* and demands that people worship *avodah zarah*.

Why is R. Akiva concerned only with the idea of a *navi sheker* stopping the sun? What about a more minor miracle; could a *navi sheker* perform that? As the pasuk says, the rise of a *navi sheker* is a test from Hashem; if Hashem permits his deception, what difference is there in the size of his miracle?

The pasuk says (Bereishis 48:19), *וְיָרְעוּ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁמְעוּן וְלֹא יֵאָכְלוּן וְלֹא יִרְיִחוּן – and [the fame of] his offspring will fill the nations*. Rashi cites Chazal that when Yehoshua would stop the sun in Givon, the whole world would fill with the name of Yehoshua and his narrative. Holding the sun's position affects the day/night cycle and the time process of the entire world. Perhaps Hashem does not enable *resha'im* to make a miracle of this magnitude.

We may suggest a further explanation. The pasuk says (Devarim 30:19), *הַעֲדַתִּי בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ – I call today heaven and earth to bear witness against you*. Rashi explains, citing Chazal: “Gaze upward at the heavens that I created to serve you; did they ever alter their regularity? Did the sun ever fail to rise in the east and illuminate the world? If these bodies never changed their pace, how much more must you, who will be rewarded or punished for your actions, keep Hashem's word.” Since the constancy of the heavenly movements, specifically, stands witness for Hashem against us, surely Hashem would not grant *resha'im* the ability to disturb this by holding up the sun.

Nonetheless, R. Yosi HaGelili maintains that a *navi sheker* could conceivably stop the sun; “The Torah reaches to the depth of the mind of *avodah zarah*.” But this dictum is difficult to understand. The pasuk says (4:28), *אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִרְאוּן וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּן וְלֹא יֵאָכְלוּן וְלֹא יִרְיִחוּן – which do not see, and do not hear, and do not eat, and do not smell; certainly, avodah zarah has no mind at all, either*.

The answer is that R. Yosi HaGelili is interpreting the pasuk as teaching the extent of our obligation to follow Hashem in the face of adversity. The Torah reaches to the depth of the *nisayon* which *avodah zarah* can pose: even if a *navi sheker* would have such great abilities as to stop the sun, Bnei Yisrael would need to hold strong and know that “Hashem, your G-d, is testing you.” They would need to continue following Hashem and cleaving to Him.

At times a person finds himself so overwhelmed with the *nisayon* his *yetzer hara* places before him that he feels ready to give up; *I just can't do it*. He must know that he *can* do it; he has the ability to overcome any *nisayon* he is served, because Hashem only tests a person to the degree that he is capable of withstanding it.

(ראה – אדר"ח אלול תשפ"ב, ס"ג מאמר א)

# A Lawless Attitude

הַשְּׁמִיר לָךְ כִּן יִהְיֶה דְבָר עִם לִבְךָ בְּלִיעַל לֵאמֹר,  
קִרְבָּה שְׁנַת הַשְּׁבַע שְׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה, וְרָעָה עֵינֶךָ בְּאֶחָיָה  
הָאֲבִיוֹן וְלֹא תִתֵּן לוֹ, וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ אֵל ה', וְהָיָה בְּךָ הַטָּא

*Beware lest there be a lawless thought in your heart, saying, "The seventh year approaches, the Shemittah year," and you will look negatively upon your destitute brother and refuse to give him – then he may appeal against you to Hashem, and it will be a sin upon you. (Devarim 15:9)*

The Mishnah (Shevi'is 10:3) states that Hillel observed that people were refraining from lending money before *Shemittah*, transgressing this Torah prohibition of הַשְּׁמִיר, and so he instituted the *pruzbul*, a halachic document which allows one to collect his debts after *Shemittah*. It is clear from the Gemara (Gittin 36a, according to one opinion) that a *pruzbul* is effective only when *Shevi'is* is Rabbinically mandated, but when it is in effect *mid'Oraisa* a *pruzbul* does not help. If so, Hillel's concern for people violating הַשְּׁמִיר was in regard to *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan*.

The *Acharonim*<sup>13</sup> wonder about this: The power of the *Chachamim* to institute a Rabbinical *Shemittah* was in keeping with *hefker beis din hefker*, the authority of *beis din* to appropriate money and reassign it. It follows, then, that there is no actual state of *Shemittah d'Rabbanan*, only that we are forbidden to collect our debts because the funds have been given to the borrower. If so, how could there be a prohibition of הַשְּׁמִיר against refraining to lend before *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan*?

Maharil Diskin answers that just as the *Chachamim* instituted a Rabbinical *Shemittah*, they instituted a Rabbinical

prohibition as well against refraining to lend beforehand. However, *Yad David* points to the Mishnah's wording: Hillel instituted the *pruzbul* because he saw that people were transgressing "מה שכתוב בתורה השמיר" – that which the Torah writes "הַשְּׁמִיר." If Hillel's innovation was meant to combat a Rabbinic prohibition, how could the Mishnah refer to it as מה שכתוב בתורה? We might suggest that the Mishnah simply means that the Rabbinical prohibition against refusing to lend before *Shevi'is* is based on the *issur d'Oraisa* of הַשְּׁמִיר.

However, the *Chinuch's* wording clearly implies that one who refrains from lending before *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan* transgresses the *issur d'Oraisa* of הַשְּׁמִיר. How can this be? *Minchas Shlomo*<sup>14</sup> explains that ultimately, this person is refraining from lending because he fears it will cause him a loss – and that is essentially the prohibition of הַשְּׁמִיר.

This answer, however, is problematic. Indeed, there are authorities who maintain that the *issur* of הַשְּׁמִיר pertains to refraining from lending because of a general fear of loss, not necessarily due to *Shemittah*. But it is obvious that the above question is not applicable to those opinions, since fear of loss due to *Shemittah d'Rabbanan* is no different than any other fear of loss. The question is only according to the opinion that the *issur* applies exclusively to fear of loss due to *Shemittah* – how could the *issur d'Oraisa* of הַשְּׁמִיר apply in a case of *Shemittah d'Rabbanan*?

The *Acharonim*<sup>15</sup> discuss whether the Torah's promise of *berachah* to those who observe *Shemittah* (וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בְּשָׁנָה הַזֹּאת)

שְׁשִׁית – *I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, Vayikra 25:21*) applies to *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan*. *Chiddushei HaRim*<sup>16</sup> proves that it does: The Mishnah says that one who refrains from lending before *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan* transgresses the *issur d'Oraisa* of הַשְּׁמִיר. If the Torah's blessing does not apply to *Shevi'is d'Rabbanan*, why would he transgress this *issur*?

How do we understand this? Clearly, in the *Chiddushei HaRim's* understanding, failing to trust in the promise of וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי and thus refraining from lending before *Shemittah*, even when the *Shemittah* and its accompanying promise of blessing are only Rabbinical, constitutes a transgression of הַשְּׁמִיר.

If so, the above question of the *Acharonim* is resolved: The *issur d'Oraisa* of הַשְּׁמִיר applies to *Shemittah d'Rabbanan* because it, too, carries the promise of וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי, and one who does not trust in this promise and thus refrains from lending has transgressed the *issur*.

*Minchas Shlomo*<sup>17</sup> wonders whether one who is asked for a ten-year loan – which will certainly be cancelled by *Shevi'is* (according to one opinion) – may refuse. Perhaps it is like asking him for a gift? According to the above opinion of the *Chiddushei HaRim*, the answer is clear. Hashem's promise of *berachah* to those who observe *Shevi'is* certainly has no limitation; Hashem can ensure that a lender of a ten-year loan, too, will be paid back, either by the borrower or in another fashion.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the *issur* of הַשְּׁמִיר would apply to this case as well.

(בנאות דשא – ראה, שבת מברכים אלו"ל תש"פ)

13 *Yad David* on *Shevi'is*, *ibid*; *Sefer Ohalim* of Maharil Diskin, *Gittin*, *ibid*; *Chiddushei HaRim*, *Gittin*, *ibid*

14 Vol. 1, 47:1

15 See *S'ma*, C.M. 67:2 and *Mabit* vol. 3, 45

16 *Ibid*

17 *Ibid* no. 2

18 See *Panim Yafos*, *Devarim* 15:4