



שבת

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Shabbat-B'Shabbato – Parshat Korach 30 Sivan 5770 (12 June 2010)

INSIGHTS FOR THE SHABBAT TABLE

by Bar-on Dasberg

What Did Datan and Aviram Claim?

We know why Korach argued against Moshe, but what did Datan and Aviram want? Why, when Moshe calls them, do they begin and end their response with the words "we will not rise up" [Bamidbar 16:12,14] and not simply say, "we will not come"? What is the meaning of the unclear phrase, "Even if you take out the eyes of those men" [16:14]?

Evidently "those men" is a reference to the scouts who appeared in the previous Torah portion and slandered Eretz Yisrael, and it seems that this unfortunate affair is not yet over. Datan and Aviram are furious about their punishment, "to put us to death in the desert" [16:13]. Even after this punishment, Datan and Aviram claim, the point of view of the scouts still exists, and the eyes of those who saw the bad side of the land cannot be ignored. And Datan and Aviram therefore declare, "We will not rise up" – to the land. This is in contrast with Kalev's resounding call, "Let us surely rise up" [13:30]. And that is why they then add, "And you did not even bring us to a land flowing with milk and honey" [16:14].

Is G-d Openly within Us?

It is very tempting to think like Korach, that "The entire community... has G-d among them" [Bamidbar 16:3]. However, this ignores the possibility that "I will hide My face from them" [Devarim 32:20].

Korach's sons oppose their father's outlook and praise the Almighty for His help, but they realize that there are times when "You have ignored and abandoned us, and You will not go out in our army" [Tehillim 44:10].

Bar Kochba went to the other extreme, he transformed the preceding verse into an ideal. What he demanded from G-d was, "Master of the World: Do not provide for us... – Did You, G-d, not abandon us? Do not join us in our army" [Yerushalmi, Taanit 68].

Both men (Korach and Bar Kochba) went to an erroneous extreme in that they saw G-d's appearance as a privilege which can be utilized or ignored however we see fit. On the other hand, the descendents of Korach see this dilemma as a challenge of faith, and even in their most difficult hour they say, "All of this has happened to us but we have not forgotten You, and we have not denied Your covenant" [Tehillim 44:18].

Did the Tribe of Levy have Enough?

On the average, every tribe received somewhat less than one-twelfth of the total agricultural produce of the nation of Yisrael. The tribe of

Levy, on the other hand, which received maaser rishon and teruma, received slightly more than a tenth of the total produced. Why, then, are the people of Levy constantly portrayed as poor people who are in need of support? "... And the Levy at your gates, because he does not have a portion and a heritage among you" [Devarim 12:12].

The answer is based on three principles. First, "A man prefers his own measure of produce to nine measures that belong to his friend" [Bava Metzia 38a]. All the farmers receive their own produce, and only the Levy was forced to depend on others. Second, there might well have been those who held back in donating their taxes (in this case, maaser). These people are the ones who are warned in the verse quoted above, and they were scolded by the prophets Amos and Malachi. Third, the people of Levy received a tenth only of plants. They received a much smaller amount of animal products, which at various times in history were far more significant than vegetable products. Perhaps this is the reason that Moshe emphasizes, "I did not take one donkey from them" [Bamidbar 16:15].

POINT OF VIEW

And on the Sea they Afflicted themselves with Two Hundred and Fifty Blows - by Rabbi Yisrael Rozen, Dean of the Zomet Institute

The Glory of Self Affliction

The title of this article should remind the readers of the Hagadda of Pesach, where the most prominent of the Tana'im – Rabbi Yossi Hagelili, Rabbi Eliezer, and Rabbi Akiva - compete to add to the number of blows that the Egyptians suffered at the Red Sea. Was it fifty, two hundred, or two hundred and fifty? This argument crossed my mind when I saw the outspoken competition between the "masters of public opinion" who tried to outdo each other in describing the trip of the Flotilla bound for Azza (at least the first one – meanwhile, a second trip has ended without violence). All the radio and television broadcasts, the printed media, and the news reports and opinion columns in the internet gathered commentators and opinion setters who fought against each other about who could criticize the disaster that occurred to the Israeli elite forces in the strongest tones. Who could paint the results of the IDF takeover of the violent boats in the darkest colors? Who could use this as a basis for the direst predictions of what the results would be in the eyes of the modern world (the worse the predictions, the better the masters of the media considered them).

"We have lost the war, and Azza will soon be freed of its bonds." This, pretty much, is the summary of the chatter that washed over the media. A wave that was just as murky was spouted by politicians from the center to the left, who also began a competition that can be labeled "They were struck at the sea," all for the glory of self affliction. And this reminded me of the Sabra and Shatilla pogrom of 1982, when Christians massacred Moslems in Lebanon, which was

under our control. Because of the powerful self inflicted blows at the time, we eventually lost the war in Lebanon.

"Organizations" instead of Nations

There is a mission that the State of Israel must take on itself: To teach the "world" how to fight terrorism even when the wolf masquerades as a sheep or a dove. Israel has a well deserved reputation from a generation ago for teaching the "world" not to give up when airplanes are hijacked, and instead to initiate active intervention in order to free the hostages. The armies of the world studied the actions of the IDF elite troops, and those of the Israeli Mossad. The response to the present attack against Israel on the high seas is a new chapter in this saga, and the war must be fought on this front just as it is fought on the battlefield – with determination and not so much sensitivity.

There are two concepts that I want to discuss in relation to this battle ground.

The Era of the Countries is Over

First of all: Anybody who looks at the world with a clear view will see that the value of international treaties that were signed by sovereign nations, those with flags and governments, has greatly decreased. The current wars in the world are being fought against organizations, movements, terrorists, and anarchists. These groups gather together citizens from many different countries for their warfare, and the role of "formal" countries has lost much of its meaning in these actual battles. What is the point of having an international treaty about the use of atomic weapons, for example, when "freedom movements" are trying to obtain such weapons? What is the point of having a Red Cross international agreement when captives are held by terror organizations, outside of the "family of nations?"

There is another aspect of this battlefield: Some nations have "joined the bandwagon" – they support terrorism by using masquerades and trickery. For example, they operate through independent organizations, as it were, and hide behind their backs. That is how the Al-Kaida organization and its offshoots operate throughout the world. And now Turkey has joined this mode of operation, specifically in the "freedom flotilla." According to this line, Turkey "is not part of the controversy," it simply wants to "protect its citizens, who were attacked." Aggressive Israeli advocacy is needed to tear off this mask and show how intimately connected Turkey is with the octopus of terrorism, both directly and indirectly. The propaganda warfare must concentrate not only on the countries involved but also on the various global "rights organizations," which both knowingly and unknowingly serve international terrorism and crime, giving them protection and a "cover story."

Join Them

We have proposed in the past that Israel can also support the warfare of "radical civil organizations" for which the country will not be directly responsible. In this spirit, I would not necessarily have been surprised to hear a warning broadcast by the fanatic "Divers of the Temple Mount" that a bomb had been planted in the lead ship of the flotilla, and that it could be activated from a safe distance.

Today I want to add that the front of "hasbarah" – advocacy – should be opened to "organizations" and unofficial spokesmen who can afford to speak in language that is less diplomatic than the official

tones, in a way that will be better understood by the hypocrites of the world. For example, I would expect to hear all the broadcast media report an announcement by the semiofficial organization "Let us Live in the Middle East" outspokenly attacking the Prime Minister of Turkey, for example. Something like, "Our organization has clear proof that the Prime Minister of the radical and Islamic country Turkey is personally involved in encouraging the terrorist flotilla." This same idea can be extended in many ways.

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"Rabbi Yossi Hagelili says... So you see that in Egypt they were struck with ten plagues, and at the sea they were struck with fifty blows. Rabbi Eliezer says, how do we know that every plague that struck the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of four blows... Rabbi Akiva says, how do we know that every plague that struck the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of five blows... And on the sea they were struck with two hundred and fifty blows." [Mechilat D'Rebbi Yishmael, Beshalach].

The commentators of the Midrash and the Pesach Hagadda give many different explanations of this disagreement. Perhaps we can understand the entire passage as a way to enhance the spirit of redemption and Divine support using a technique of "competitive commentary" for educational purposes.

ONE ON ONE – Interview of the Week

For the Good of the Nation of Yisrael - by Nachum Avniel

Some of our readers will remember the name of Chananel Meged (Dayan), 25 years old, because of the incident when he refused to shake the hand of the IDF Commander in Chief. The result was that Chananel was discharged from the army. But what most people don't realize is that Chananel is most interested in dialogues and in arranging meetings. Four years after this event, after having lived in Arad and Tel Aviv, he does volunteer work for the community and he is planning to get an education in a field relevant to his work.

Chananel's mode of speech is calm but flowing. He tells his life story as if he grew up in the media, without hesitation or apology. "I was born in Pesagot," he says, "which is a truly amazing place. In high school I studied at the yeshiva in Yad Binyamin, and from there I went to the Hesder yeshiva in Arad, headed by Rabbi Yinon Ilani." He notes that this yeshiva was one of the most important influences on his life so far. "A yeshiva is a type of home, and even though I only spent four years there it will always remain a place that brings me back to the right track, something like a compass."

Q: What is the main message that you took from the yeshiva?

A: "To stand up for my principles without making any compromises, while maintaining a high level of respect for what surrounds me, especially places that are linked to the nation of Yisrael. For example, during the period of the 'Disengagement,' we went out to block roads. Even though our yeshiva was not made up of 'troublemakers' we wanted to show our principles."

Chananel learned this lesson well from the yeshiva, and after the events of the "Disengagement" (which he insists on calling "the expulsion"), which uprooted much of his extended family from their

homes in Gush Katif, he decided to extend his Hesder (army) service for an additional eight months.

Q: What was the point in extending the time?

A: "With all my anger at the army, which does exist, this is a place where it is possible to meet the nation of Yisrael. Here a constant dialogue is taking place. My discussions in the army were a fantastic experience for me. I met other people and I listened to them. This did not harm my religious feeling but rather opened up my horizons. I was almost the only religious soldier around, and I served in the armored corps, in the same company as Gilad Shalit, whom I knew personally. He was kidnapped a month after I left the Army."

In the IDF this soldier who had strong principles was appreciated, and it was decided to give him an award as an "exceptional soldier" and to send him to a ceremony at the house of the President of Israel. But there he met the Commander in Chief. He saluted, but he refused to shake his hand. The IDF was surprised and angry, and as a punishment it was decided that Chananel would be discharged.

Q: Do you feel that you were treated unjustly?

A: "Yes, but not so strongly that I feel I should turn to the courts. In any case, three weeks after I left the army the Second Lebanon War erupted, and I was back in the army."

After the war, Chananel returned to the yeshiva in Arad and studied there for two more years. And from there he moved to none other than the city of Tel Aviv!

Q: Why Tel Aviv?

A: "Tel Aviv is the good life," he replies with a laugh. "I recommend it to everybody. It leads to an open mind, and there is a lot that you can take away and learn from the city, especially on a social level. People spend a lot of time on social projects and on ecology, and they are not estranged, as they are reputed to be. In Jerusalem, if you do anything unusual a warning will immediately be posted about you on the walls, and there is a similar process in Tel Aviv. Pesagot, where I grew up, is an amazing place, but only during the two years that I spent in Tel Aviv did I begin to see that I had grown up in a hothouse. In Tel Aviv, there was a neighborhood station where addicts could trade in their dope, and the street had alcoholics on it. I began to understand that I had grown up in a type of Garden of Eden."

Three months ago he married Esti, and the young couple moved to Netivot. Chananel is continuing his studies in Bnei Berak in the field of sociology, and in addition to his work in a hostel for the mentally unstable and a school for distressed youth, he found himself two other landmark projects which occupy his time.

"There are many students who want to live in the big cities but find it difficult because of the high rents. At the same time, there are many elderly people who would be happy to have somebody living with them, who would wash the floor every week and buy them their medicines in the drugstore. This is a win-win situation, where each side can help the other one – a student gets a free place to live, and the elderly people gain some companionship. Since it is not often easy to find the right elderly people and the students, we opened a website called a 'bulletin board for shared living,' where it is possible

to look for hosts and tenants. The other issue with which I am involved is the subject of social consumerism."

Q: But isn't consumerism usually the enemy of the social organizations?

A: "There are many items that we regularly buy, and when we make a purchase we can support the weaker segments of the population. We can literally use the same money to do this. For example, the organization 'Tal Chaim' where I work makes liqueur, candies, gift packages, and gifts for workers committees and celebrations. The profits are used to help weak segments of the population. The government and the country as a whole do not have enough money to solve all of the problems in the world. It is our job to find the money and to connect it to the needs of the community and society." Chananel goes on excitedly: "What is interesting is how to educate people to want to volunteer. Tal Chaim has young people who work for them. The organization goes to the schools and prepares gift packages together with the children, and it also works with the people that receive support. Everybody donates three to four hours a week and in this way becomes a partner in the project. This does not have a high monetary value, but it transforms a needy person into one who has a job."

Q: What is your dream for the future?

A: "I want to be involved in the realm of the community and social initiatives – to try to link the community to financial factors. As far as I can see, many benefits can come from such a connection."

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A LESSON FOR THE CHILDREN

A Suspicion of Robbery - by Rabbi Yikhat Rozen, Director of the Or Etzion Institute – Publishing Torah Books of Quality

Many years ago, Petach Tikvah was not a big city but a small and young town. Among others, the inhabitants included a group of immigrants from the city of Lomza, in Poland. In their new home, they established the Lomza yeshiva.

One time Rabbi Yosef, a resident of Petach Tikvah, went to visit his family, which had remained in Lomza. Before he left on his long trip he went to see Rabbi Eliyahu Dushnitzer, the spiritual guide of the Lomza yeshiva, to take leave of him. Rabbi Yosef turned to Rabbi Eliyahu with an offer. "You lived in Lomza before you came here, and I am on my way there for a visit. Would you like me to do anything for you in the city? Can I give any message to your family? Do you want to give me something to bring them?"

Rabbi Eliyahu replied, "Yes, I will be very happy if you can do me a small favor. In Lomza there is a small store selling holy books. Many years ago I bought a book there. The woman in the store gave me a price, and I fear that for some reason the price she said to me was too low and I should have paid her more than I did. Please do me a favor. Go to the store, find out the correct price of the book, and pay the woman the difference. Of course, I will pay you back when you come home."

Rabbi Yosef was very surprised about Rabbi Eliyahu's great righteousness, in that he remembered such a small incident after

many years and was still upset by it. He promised that he would do what the rabbi asked.

Rabbi Yosef went on his way, and he arrived in Lomza. After he met his family and took care of his own affairs, he went to the bookstore with a wallet full of money.

He told the woman who owned the store that he had been sent by Rabbi Eliyahu Dushnitzer, and asked if she remembered him. "Rabbi Eliyahu?" she replied excitedly, "Of course I remember him! He is a great and righteous man. He often bought books here for his library. He would always pay what I asked, without any argument. And he always added blessings and best wishes. Did he ask you to buy a new book for him?"

"No, no," Rabbi Yosef replied, somewhat unsure of himself. "The truth is that he is quite upset. He says that he bought a book here many years ago and he still owes you money for it. He asked me to find out how much he owes and to pay you." Rabbi Yosef patted his wallet, and he was ready to give the woman whatever she wanted.

"Again?!" the woman cried out. "You are the third or fourth person that he has sent with this message in the last few years! Please tell him in my name that he doesn't owe me anything at all. He bought the book and paid for it in full. There is no problem of theft or any fear of possible theft. He can study from this book to his heart's content."

Only after the woman repeated again and again that the rabbi did not owe her any money and that she absolutely refused to take anything for the book, Rabbi Yosef agreed to leave the store.

And so we see how wary the great men of the past were out of the fear that they might have stolen something by mistake...

(Source: From the Introduction of the book "Nachalat Eliyahu")

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PEOPLE OF YISRAEL

The Holy One and the One that "He will Choose" - by Rabbi Uri Dasberg, the Zomet Institute

Shlomo Ben-Yosef was the first of a dozen people hanged by the British Mandate government in Eretz Yisrael. He was executed by the British on the thirtieth of Sivan 5698 (1938), after he was convicted of shooting at an Arab bus on the Rosh Pina – Tzefat road. He did this as revenge for the killing of five Jews by Arabs (including a young boy and two women who were brutally raped) about three months before the hanging and for the killing of three Haganna members about two months before, all in the same general area. The grenade that he and his colleagues threw at the bus did not explode, and a hiding place that they had found in a nearby cave (today known as the Cave of Shlomo Ben-Yosef) was discovered by Arab shepherds. Shlomo's last words were similar to the final words of the man for whom the Beitar movement was named, Yosef Trumpeldor. "I am going to die for our land," he said. About five years ago it was discovered that in one of the books in the library of the prison where he was kept, Shlomo Ben-Yosef wrote as follows: "I do not want anything for me – it is all for the nation – the nation

of Yisrael." He was buried at the age of twenty-five in the town where he had lived only for one year, Rosh Pina.

Eliahu Golomb lived more than twice as long (to the age of 52), but he died on the same date – the thirtieth of Sivan 5705 (1945). This is not the only similarity between the two of them. Golomb also became involved in security activities in the wake of the murder of two of his colleagues on the farm at Kinneret – Moshe Barsky and Yosef Zaltzman. This happened during the reign of the Turks, and it led Golomb to work for the establishment of a self defense organization. This served as the basis for the Haganna during the British Mandate and later for the IDF. The main difference between Golomb and Ben-Yosef is in the way they operated. Golomb made sure that his defense forces were under the control of the central institutions of the Jewish settlements, while Ben-Yosef felt that the time had come for independent action and individual initiatives. His activities were not even performed at first as a mission for his own organization, Beitar, under the leadership of Zeev Jabotinsky. It has been said that in the time of Golomb the Jewish settlement stayed alive because of "nissim" – miracles – and "gissim" – brothers-in-law. Everybody is familiar with the miracles. The brothers-in-law both graduated from the first class in the Herzelia Gymnasium in Tel Aviv – Golomb and Dov Haus married Moshe Sharet's sisters. Shlomo Ben-Yosef, on the other hand, left no surviving family behind.

Here is something else that Golomb and Ben-Yosef had in common: neither one had any formal leadership position (although Golomb was the "unofficial" head of the Haganna), but in spite of this they both served as outstanding figures for their own movements and for the nation and the country in general. Jabotinsky wrote the following about Ben-Yosef: "His disciples were the guides for an entire generation." And Ben-Gurion wrote the following about Golomb: "For two generations, his name was the symbol of the spirit of courage... His untimely death will sadden us until the end of our own time." Both of them have settlements, neighborhoods, and streets named for them all over the land: the town Nir Eliyahu and the neighborhood Yad Eliyahu in Tel Aviv; Shlomo Ben-Yosef Street, in the vicinity of other streets named for those who were hanged by the British, in Talpiot, Jerusalem, and also in other cities throughout Israel. Another thing they have in common is that both men were commemorated on Israeli stamps.

Words of Torah Related to our Subjects:

Unfortunately we do not have any Torah insights about this week's portion that were written by either one of our subjects. But we can quote something that has a lesson for us that is related to them. It is written, "And Korach took... And Datan and Aviram... and On Ben Pelet... And they stood up before Moshe" [Bamidbar 16:1-2]. Why does the verse begin in the singular ("Korach took") and then change to the plural ("they stood up")? Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Kalisher explained as follows: "When they stood up they were all partners, but when the time came to take – everyone took whatever they could, without letting anybody else share with them."

GUEST COLUMN

Let a New Light Shine on Zion – by Rabbi Yehiel Wasserman, Member of the Board at the World Zionist Organization and Head of the Center for Religious Affairs in the Diaspora

This Tuesday the Thirty-Sixth World Zionist Congress will open in Jerusalem. Seven hundred and fifty delegates and hundreds of guests from thirty-four countries will attend.

The Zionist movement was established based on several historical processes which came to maturity at the end of the nineteenth century, in Europe in general and among the Jewish people in particular. The trial of Dreyfus, the Jewish-French officer, was the catalyst that led Binyamin Zeev Herzl to write his essay "The Jewish State" and to organize the first Zionist Congress in Basel. At the end of the congress, the participants accepted the "Basel Plan," which included the following declaration: "Zionism aspires to achieve a safe haven for the Jewish nation in Eretz Yisrael." And indeed, with the help of The Rock of Yisrael and our Redeemer, fifty-one years later the Jewish nation was established – the State of Israel. In the first decade after the congress, various approaches were developed within the World Zionist Organization with respect actions that must take place in order to fulfill the Basel Plan. One of these approaches was that of religious Zionism, through the Mizrahi movement, which was established in 1902 by Rabbi Yitzchak Yaacov Reiness. Many religious people joined the Mizrahi because they saw the movement and its activities the fulfillment of the vision of the return to Zion for the third time.

Today many people feel that we are in the midst of a post-Zionist era. This stems, among other things, from the fact that Zionism was established in order to find a national solution to the problems of Judaism, and this has in fact taken place. As opposed to this approach, religious Zionism is not in a "post" era. It remains in the midst of the process of the return to Zion, rooted in events that took place thousands of years ago when the Almighty commanded our Patriarch Avraham, "Go for yourself away from your land and your birthplace to the land that I will show you" [Bereishit 12:1]. This has continued in the long history of the Jewish people, who maintained the dream of Eretz Yisrael in the mouth and the heart of every Jew no matter where he or she was.

Religious Zionism draws its roots from the great scholars of Yisrael and its spiritual leaders throughout the generations. These people never stopped saying, "Let our eyes see Your return to Zion, with mercy," and they constantly hoped no matter what the situation was that "You will return with mercy to Your city, Jerusalem." Religious Zionism is rooted in religion, based on the Divine promise to the father of the nation, "I give this land to your offspring" [Bereishit 15:18]. Now that the Jewish nation has come back to its birthplace and its home it is taking part in a long process, often difficult and painful, and we have not yet achieved peace and quiet.

It is not only the foundations of religious Zionism that are different from secular Zionism, its aspirations are also different. It is based on the belief that Eretz Yisrael belongs to the Jewish nation, and its ideal is for the nation to live in the land according to the Torah. The Jewish character of the land is an essential element of the viewpoint of religious Zionism. The movement is therefore a full partner in all the areas of creativity and accomplishment in the State of Israel – science, medicine, security, settlements, Aliyah, economics, law, art, and culture. It believes in combining Torah and science, and also religion and the state, and it is in constant search for the fragile balance that exists between the ancient and the modern worlds. We have a basic commitment to the fact that the Torah was given at Mount Sinai and we are committed to our traditions, which were handed down from one generation to the next. At the same time, the

outlook of religious Zionism requires full integration into the changing reality of the State of Israel.

In the hundred and eight years that the movement has existed, the representatives of the Mizrahi in the management of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization actively participated in the meetings of the Zionist Congress and in committees, and represented the Mizrahi with honor. The relationship between the Mizrahi and the Zionist movement has had its ups and downs, but in general it has been a very fruitful association. While there have often been disagreements and disputes, they were instrumental in leading to a "status quo" with respect to religion and the state which was put into effect when the country was established.

The Mizrahi is a movement with a clear ideological message and a clear objective – a combination of Torah and natural behavior that is not merely technical but consists of integration of the essence. In addition to political organization, what is mainly needed is to organize the concepts and to struggle against the many challenges that we face. We must look ahead to the future and transform the message of religious Zionism to a form that is suitable for the current millennium.

HALACHA FROM THE SOURCE

What is the Reason for the Mitzva of Tefillin? - by Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Rimon, Rabbi of Southern Alon Shevut and a teacher in Yeshivat Har Etzion

The Tefillin have four passages of the Torah: "Kadesh - Sanctify every firstborn for me" [Shemot 13:1-9], "Vehaya Ki Yevi'acha - And it will be when G-d brings you to the land" [13:10-16], "Shema – Hear, Yisrael" [Devarim 6:4-9], and "Vehaya Im Shamo'a - It will happen if you listen" [11:13-21].

The mitzva of Tefillin appears in each of the above passages, and the sages have taught us that they must be written down and put into the Tefillin (see: Lavush). In addition, the first two passages above involve the sanctity of Yisrael and accepting the yoke of heaven in the wake of the Exodus from Egypt. The other two passages involve the love for G-d and the acceptance of the yoke of heaven based on the understanding that G-d is our G-d and that He is one, and because of G-d's constant guidance of the world.

The Torah tells us that the Tefillin should be placed on the hand, "Because G-d took you out of Egypt with a powerful hand" [Shemot 13:9]. The hand is an expression of a man's strength. This carries with it a danger of giving a person the feeling that his success is due to "my strength and the power of my hand" [Devarim 8:17] and to his then breaking the link with G-d.

The Tefillin is a sign of the Divine Torah that exists within us. The fact that it is attached to our hand reminds us of the powerful hand of the Almighty, and that every single one of our manual actions every day stem in reality from the power of the Almighty.

The Tefillin on the head expresses the fact that all of our spiritual strength emanates from the Almighty (See the Sefer Hachinuch 421-422, and Shulchan Aruch, 25:5).

In the Tefillin for the hand, all the passages are written on a single piece of parchment. Each passage takes up seven lines. In the Tefillin

for the head, each passage is written on a separate parchment, and each one is put into a separate compartment, according to the sequence: Kadash; Vehaya Ki Yevi'acha; Vehaya Im Shamo; Shema.

Why is it Important to Know the Reason for Tefillin?

It is remarkable that in the Shulchan Aruch, which is a book of the laws and halacha, the author felt an unusual need to discuss the reason behind the mitzva (25:5). Why did he do so?

Evidently this is because the observance of the mitzva of Tefillin is directly affected by the reason for the mitzva. In other mitzvot, the need for proper intention refers to a basic element: It is only necessary to have in mind that the mitzva is being performed in G-d's name (Orach Chaim 60:4, in line with the accepted ruling that it is necessary to have the proper intention when performing a mitzva). If the action is performed in such a way that it is clearly meant as a mitzva, one gets credit for observing the mitzva (after the fact) even if he did not expressly note his intention (Mishna Berura 10). But with Tefillin the law is different. According to the BACH there are three mitzvot where additional explicit intention is required (see Mishna Berura 8:19), and it is also necessary to be aware of the reason for the mitzva. These are Tzitzit, Tefillin, and Succah. And in fact the Shulchan Aruch discusses the reasons for these three mitzvot. This is because the reasons appear explicitly in the Torah. With respect to Tefillin, it is written, "so that the Torah of G-d will be in your mouth, for G-d took you out of Egypt with a powerful hand" [Shemot 13:9]. (In the end, one who does not have this idea in mind receives credit for the mitzva anyway – see Pri Megadim, quoted in the Mishna Berura).

In line with what we have explained, the importance of having the proper intentions for wearing Tefillin can be understood. Tefillin is a symbol. A symbol is most significant when it is performed intentionally. Only in this way, with the proper intention, will we know how to turn all of our energy to the heavens, both spiritually and physically.

OR HACHAIM PEARLS

Based on the Yismach Moshe edition of the Commentary by Or Hachaim, as summarized by Boaz Ofan

"The G-d of the spirit for all flesh" [Bamidbar 16:22].

The above phrase is not common in the Torah, and it is not easy to explain. Why does Moshe use this expression in his request that G-d should not be angry with the whole nation because of the sins of an individual?

Most of the commentators feel that the meaning of this phrase is that G-d is aware of hidden feelings, like "He who knows the thoughts of man" [Tehillim 94:11] and "He who examines the kidneys and the heart" [Yirmiyahu 11:20]. Moshe therefore says that G-d should not punish the righteous people because of the sins of an individual.

Or Hachaim sees this phrase not only as a way of differentiating between righteous and evil people, but also as a request to forgive those who have sinned. After all, everybody who was present at these events and did not protest is also tainted with the sin, not only the person who actually did it. Thus, Or Hachaim explains that Moshe is hinting at the difference between those who are alive and those who

are dead, as if to say, "The dead people cannot praise G-d" [Tehillim 115:17].

There are four stages in praising G-d. The lowest level is that of the angels, who are not directly involved in this world at all. The souls which have not yet descended to the world are at a higher level. The souls that have already returned from the world are at a higher level still. And the highest level of all in praising G-d is that of the souls "which are still within the flesh, interfering with their ability to praise G-d, but they still gather the strength to love G-d and to praise Him." And this is what Moshe said: You are the G-d of the spirit for all flesh – if You put these people to death, You will be decreasing this highest level of praise.

צוותי מדע ותורה



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