



Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 58

**ShelachLecha** | Eating With Sanctity



# MESILLOT

*Pathways to the Soul*

Illuminating Torah teachings of  
HaTzaddik Rabbeinu **Yoram Michael Abargel** zt"l

Based on the lectures of his son  
HaRav HaGaon Rabbeinu **Israel Abargel** shlita

# ...**PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL**...

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### Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets

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## Parashat Shelach Lecha

### Words Hurt

**There** once lived a lumberjack who worked all day in the forest. One day, while cutting down a tree, he noticed a lion approaching him. The fear paralyzed him, but to his surprise, the lion didn't see him as prey. On the contrary, he laid under his arm and stared at the lumberjack with his yellow eyes...

**Cold** sweat covered the man's body as he was afraid to move. To his amazement, the lion opened his mouth and spoke! "Don't be afraid," he said, "Continue working!"

**The** lumberjack mustered up the courage and continued to cut down the tree. The lion then continued talking, "The forest is my territory, and I give you permission to cut down any tree you want!" The man thanked him and then bundled the logs on his shoulder to sell them at the local market.

**The** next day, before he left his home, he decided to bring a piece

of meat for the lion who he had met yesterday in the forest. When he reached the lion, he gave him the piece of meat, and the lion thanked him and suggested that he take the rope he had to bundle the logs and tie one end to the tree trunk and the other end around his waist. Trembling with fear to actually touch the lion, he did so. The lion then leaped forward and, with all his might, uprooted the tree...

**Over** the years, a strange friendship developed between the lumberjack and the lion. When the lumberjack got tired of his work, he would lie down and fall asleep, and the lion would guard him against the forest animals. When the lion got tired of hunting, he would put his head on the man's knees and close his eyes for a nap.

**One** day, the lion approached the man, put his head on his knees, and fell asleep. In his sleep, he burped loudly... The stench caused the man to recoil in disgust.

“Eww,” he said nauseously,  
“What a nasty smell!”

**His** reaction woke up the lion, and he heard the insult. He got up and turned to the man and said, “My head hurts.”

**The** man didn’t know what to answer.

**The** lion then looked at him and said, “I know a remedy for a headache. Strike my head with the dull side of your ax!”

**The** man hesitated...

**The** lion continued, “It’s the only way to soothe my pain!”

**Seeing** that his friend was still hesitant, he roared, “Hurry! If the pain increases, I don’t know if I’ll be able to control my actions! If you don’t strike me, I’ll lose it, and I may eat you!”

**The** lion laid his head at the man’s feet, waiting for him to do as he instructed. The man then raised his ax and struck it on the lion’s head with all his might. The huge lion tremored and then fainted. The man then hurried to bundle up his logs and carry them back to the town!

**The** next day when the lumberjack entered the forest, the lion was nowhere to be found...

**A** few days passed, and the lion returned with a sad look in his eyes. The lion approached the man, laid down next to him, and said, “You hit me very hard...”

**The** man apologized, “I didn’t want to, but you forced me.”

**The** lion looked at the man sadly, “You’re right, but the blow left a wound on my head. Can you see it?”

**The** man held out his hand and gently skimmed the lion’s mane, “Yeah, I found it, but it’s already healed.”

**“Correct,”** replied the lion sadly, “The wound on my head has healed, and soon there’ll be no trace of it. But your insult will never be forgotten from my heart... I ask that you leave the forest and never return. I don’t want my anger to overcome me, and I do something I’ll regret! I was a faithful friend, but in return, you weren’t. Let’s say goodbye, for there’s no forgiveness for your offending words!”<sup>1</sup>

## The Fat Jew

**All** his life, Rebbe Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezeritch, would convey to others the great levels of *avodat Hashem* which he was privileged to see his rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov, achieve.

**“How** did I get so lucky that I merited what none of the other disciples of the Baal Shem Tov merited,” the Maggid would say. “Whenever the Baal Shem Tov would eat or drink, I would see with my own eyes how he would elevate the food to its spiritual source !”

**Once**, the Maggid asked his disciple, Rebbe Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the author of the Tanya, to do him a favor. In return, he assured him that he would answer any question he had, no matter how difficult.

**After** Rebbe Shneur Zalman fulfilled the request, the Maggid told him, “Well! Ask your question !”

**Rebbe** Shneur Zalman thought for a short while and then asked,

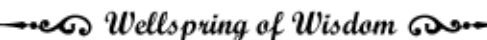
“What was the greatest virtue of the Baal Shem Tov ?”

**“That’s** a difficult question !” the Maggid replied, “However, I promised and must keep it ! The Baal Shem Tov, even if he were to live in the days of the *Tannaim* or the prophets, he would have been a marvel and an inspiration to the entire generation. Even if he were to be born in the days of the Avot, he would have been known by everyone and a prominent figure !

**After** the Maggid had finished explaining to his disciple the levels the Baal Shem Tov had reached, Rebbe Shneur Zalman was so astonished that he asked, “Is it possible that he was mortal ? !”

**“Yes !”** the Maggid answered, “Even though he was mortal, he achieved those levels !”<sup>2</sup>...

**Once**, the Baal Shem Tov wanted to know who would be next to him in *Gan Eden*. He then prayed to Hashem to



1. **Mayaan** HaShavuah (Devarim, p. 434).  
2. **Nahar** Yotzei M’Eden (p. 74).

## Parashat Shelach Lecha - The Fat Jew

reveal to him who it would be. Within seconds, a messenger from heaven appeared to him and said, “I was sent to reveal to you the name of the person who will reside alongside you in Gan Eden.”

**The** Baal Shem Tov then called his wagon driver and instructed him, “We’re leaving...”

**After** a couple of hours of being on the road, they finally entered a small town and located the man’s house. They knocked on the door, and it was opened by a strange obese man

**The** Baal Shem Tov turned to him and asked, “Can we stay with you a few days?”

**Without** thinking twice, the man replied cheerfully, “Of course!”

**The** Baal Shem Tov entered the home and began to shadow the man’s every move... and after a few days of surveillance, he concluded to himself, “This man does nothing but eat! His every meal looks like it’s enough to feed

an army! He’ll be the one sitting next to me in *Gan Eden*?!”

**The** Baal Shem Tov then decided to talk to the man and, not long after, already led the conversation in the direction he wanted. The man then started to tell...

**I** was a little boy when one day, the Cossacks invaded our town... They built a large cross in the town’s center, seized my father, and forced him to kiss it...

**My** father refused and shouted, “I’m a Jew! I’ll never give in to idol worship!”

**They** informed him that if he didn’t kiss the cross, they would hang him... My father still didn’t give in, and they started dragging him to the gallows. He was such a weak man that he already died before they could hang him and couldn’t perform *Kiddush Hashem* through his death.

**When** I saw that, I decided that I would eat so much so that if I’ll one day have to stand in the same situation, I’ll have the strength to complete what my father couldn’t.

**During** every meal I eat, I imagine the Cossacks entering the town, how they place me before the cross, and how I refuse to kiss it...

**They** then begin to cut my flesh, and for every cut, I shout, “*Shema Israel, Hashem Elokenu, Hashem Echad!*” I then imagine the immense joy that I’ll feel that I was able to eat a lot so that they’ll have a lot to cut, and I’ll be able to keep praising Hashem!

**Tears** of emotion glistened from the eyes of the Baal Shem Tov as he parted ways from his “neighbor” in *Gan Eden*...<sup>3</sup>

### The Eating Habits Of Rav Chisda

**Rav** Chisda was one of the greatest *Amoraim* of his generation.

**The** *Gemara* tells<sup>4</sup> that because of his great righteousness, he would be sent quail from heaven for food (like the quail that descended for Am Israel in the desert), and

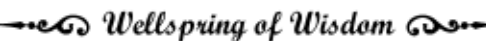
**Our** parasha deals with several topics, but it seems that its main interest is to teach us how to use our mouths. Our mouths have two uses, speaking and eating.

**The** beginning of the parasha deals with the affair of the spies, and from it, we learn a lesson for generations on how we should use our ability to speak.

**Later** in the parasha, we learn about the mitzvah of *Hafrashat Challah*, which teaches us the proper way which we should eat.

it would land straight in his backyard.

**He** lived for ninety-two years, and during his life, he merited attending sixty weddings of his children and grandchildren. In addition, he was also blessed with immense wealth.<sup>5</sup>



3. **Beit** Tzaddikim YeAmod (Vol. 2, p. 170).

4. Yoma 75b.

5. **The** *Gemara* (Mo’ed Katan 28a) says in the name of Rava, “Life, children, and

sustenance don’t depend on one’s merit, but rather on ones *mazal*.” The concept of *mazal* isn’t as simple as everyone thinks. It’s actually a very deep topic. For an

Parashat Shelach Lecha - The Eating Habits Of Rav Chisda

**But**, all this was in the second half of his life. In the first half, he was very poor<sup>6</sup> and suffered greatly.

**The Gemara**<sup>7</sup> tells how Rav Chisda talked about his eating habits at the end of his life and said, “When I was poor, I didn’t eat vegetables because they stimulate your appetite, and I didn’t have enough food, so I

only ate other things. Yet, when I became wealthy, I also didn’t eat vegetables because I thought to myself, instead of eating vegetables, I’ll eat meat and fish...”

**The Arizal** explains that within these words are hidden deep secrets.<sup>8</sup> We’ll bring an idea from his words, but as usual, we’ll open with a question...

—*~* Wellspring of Wisdom *~*—

understanding of the subject see Michtav Me’Eliyahu (Vol. 2, pg. 158), (Vol. 4, pg. 98).

**Rava** brings proof to his statement by saying that Rabba and Rav Chisda were both *tzaddikim*. Rabba didn’t have *mazal*, and therefore went through many hardships. While, on the other hand, Rav Chisda had *mazal*, and therefore merited long life, wealth, and many children.

**We** stated the *Gemara* (Shabbat 140b), that at the beginning of his life, Rav Chisda was very poor. This is seemingly difficult according to what Rava said that the *mazal* of Rav Chisda was one of fortune? The next footnote will answer that question...

**6. The Zohar** (Parashat Bo 38b) explains that it isn’t good to live in a city that doesn’t have *talmidei chachamim* and children learning Torah, for someone who lives in such a city causes themselves suffering and distress.

**Rav Chisda**, at the beginning of his, life lived in the city of

Kaputkiya, a city filled with black markets...

**The** entire time that he lived there, troubles, misery, and illnesses pursued him with no mercy...

**One** day, the cause of his suffering was revealed to Rav Chisda. He immediately got up and moved to the city of Tzipori, which was a city full of *talmidei chachamim*. Since then, his *mazal* elevated and he merited lots of wealth, many children, and a lot of Torah...

**Rav Chisda** gathered his friends and said to them, “From the time I came to live among those who please Hashem, my fortune turned around!”

**From** here we learn how important it is to live in a city with *avrechim* and *Talmudei Torah* where children can learn.

7. Shabbat 140b.

8. **Shaar HaMitzvot** (Parashat Ekev).



If vegetables stimulate the appetite, wouldn't it have been better for Rav Chisda to eat them in his

wealthy years so that he would have more room to eat meat and fish?

**But** before we answer...

## Running Away From Home

**Yaakov** Avinu was born in the year 2108 since the creation of the world. From that very moment, Yaakov clung to spirituality and the holiness of the Torah, learning with extreme diligence and never wasting a second. Sixty-three years passed by...

**One** day Itzchak Avinu wakes up and asks Esav to prepare him a hearty meal and promises him that after he eats, he will bless him.

**The** rest of the story is known. Yaakov received the blessing, and Esav decided to kill him...

**Itzchak** Avinu then commands Yaakov, "Go to Charan and take a wife from there."

**Yaakov** leaves his father's home and decides to go straight to the *Beit Midrash* of Shem and Ever.<sup>9</sup> Once there, he increases his diligence, intensifies his closeness to Hashem, and begins to ascend to unknown heights...

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### Wellspring of Wisdom

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**9. When** someone has enemies who want to harm them, the best advice is to increase in Torah study, because the Torah protects the person learning it...

**The** Maharsha studied Torah day and night. Because he feared that he might fall asleep while learning, he grew out his hair and tied it to the ceiling so that when his head dropped from tiredness, his hair would get pulled and wake him up...

**Throughout** the entire year, all his nights were spent learning, except for one night,

the night of the 25th of December, in which he wouldn't learn Torah but would calculate his income to know how much *maasrot* he should set aside for the poor.

**One** malicious and evil man from the inhabitants of Ostroh held a grudge against the Maharsha and decided to inform the monarchy that he disgraced and blasphemed the Christians. As proof, he told them about the custom of the Maharsha of not learning Torah on the 25th of December because it's an impure night...

**Fourteen** years later, when Yaakov was seventy-seven years old, he left Shem and Ever and traveled towards Charan.

**On** his way, Yaakov Avinu arrived at Beit El. There, he stood and prayed before Hashem. After he finished praying, he asked to continue on his way, but Hashem prevented him from doing so because He wanted to reveal Himself to Yaakov. He then commanded the sun to set, and darkness covered the earth...

**Yaakov** Avinu rested the night... “And he dreamed... a ladder set on the ground and its top reached

the heavens... angels of Hashem were ascending and descending upon it... Hashem was standing over him, and He said...” (Bereshit 28:12-13).

**We** have to understand... Hashem reveals Himself to Yaakov and promises him that He’ll protect him when he goes to Charan. If so, what was the point of the ladder ?

**Rebbe** Menachem Mendel Pannet writes<sup>10</sup> that Yaakov Avinu engaged in Torah for seventy-seven years, all through sleep deprivation and isolation from the world. He thought that this was the only way of serving Hashem...

~~~~~ *Wellspring of Wisdom* ~~~~~

**The** Maharsha, who didn’t know about the informer, sat as usual that night at the table calculating his income. All of a sudden, a book fell out of his bookshelf.

**The** Maharsha hurriedly got up, picked up the book, kissed it, and put it in its place. A few minutes passed, and the same book fell again from its place. The Maharsha then hurried to pick it up again. When this happened for the third time, the Maharsha was dumbfounded. He went over and opened the book and started to read it. That same moment, the door was kicked in.

Police charged into his home to take him into custody.

**One** problem though. To their surprise, the Maharsha stood before them learning Torah peacefully with a book in his hand...

**They** drew back and apologized to the Maharsha for the disturbance...

**From** outside, the screams of the police chief at the informer were heard throughout the whole neighborhood...

- He Sichati (Vol. 2, p. 1165).

**10. Maagalei** Tzedek (Toldot).

**Suddenly**, he's commanded, "Leave the *Beit Midrash*, go to Charan, and get married!"

**This** was extremely difficult for Yaakov... "How can I leave the holiness of the *Beit Midrash* and depart from Eretz Israel to places where there's no trace of holiness?!"

**With** a heart full of sorrow, he dragged his feet and walked step by step toward Charan... We don't know how long it took him to walk from the *Beit Midrash* of Shem and Ever to Beit El, but when he reached Beit El, he felt that his heart could no longer contain the pain. Burning tears filled his eyes... He stood before Hashem in Beit El and began to unload his heart from all the sorrow he was carrying...

**He** then fell asleep, and in his dream, he saw the appearance of a

ladder... Then Yaakov understood. The purpose of serving Hashem is to connect the lower world, the world of doing, with the upper world...

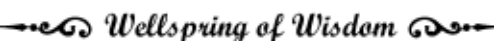
**This** is the meaning of the verse, "Yaakov awoke from his sleep and said... Hashem is in this place (במקום) and I didn't know" (Bereshit 28:16)...<sup>11</sup> Yaakov awake and understood, "I always thought that only through learning Torah in a *Beit Midrash* (also known as מקום) is it possible to cleave to Hashem. But now I understood that even outside, while engaging in the affairs of this world, can you still merit such, and I didn't know..."

**This** is the revelation that Yaakov had in the vision of the ladder, and it became a cornerstone for the *avodat Hashem* of every Jew...

## The Eternal Cry Of Eliyahu HaNavi

**Achav**, the King of Israel, at the height of his reign... The economy of his country is excellent, and the

lives of his citizens are peaceful... But, their spiritual state is worse than ever. Achav's evil wife took it



11. The original Hebrew –

”וַיִּקְוֶץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁנֵתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אָכֵן יֵשׁ ה' בְּמִקְוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֲנֹכִי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי”

upon herself to ensure that every city be succumbed to idol worship.

**Her** evil deeds intensified, and in a military operation, she murdered all the true prophets... Immediately afterward, she opened a “school” for false prophets... Sadly, the false prophets managed to induce Am Israel to stray after idols and leave their service of Hashem. Jews served idols in every corner... “There isn’t a furrow in the Land of Israel that hasn’t been subjected to idol worship.”<sup>12</sup>

**One** day Achav met with Eliyahu HaNavi and conversed with him. During the conversation, he spoke disrespectfully towards Hashem and His prophets.

**His** punishment wasn’t delayed. Eliyahu HaNavi stood before Achav and prophecized, “There shall not be dew or rain these years, but according to my word” (Melachim I 17:1).

**And** as he prophesied, so it was. For three years, not a single

drop of rain fell in all of Israel !...

**Three** bitter years ended as Eliyahu revealed himself to Achav and told him, “You’re guilty !”

**Eliyahu** HaNavi summons all of Am Israel to Har Carmel, and everyone arrives. Eliyahu HaNavi looks at the dreadful situation. He sees the point to where the people have gotten but feels that there’s still hope... We can’t just give up... Although Am Israel strayed after idolatry, they truly didn’t do so wholeheartedly. In the depths of their souls, they’re pained by their actions. Thoughts of regret are constantly running through their minds, “Maybe we’re doing something wrong. Maybe Eliyahu HaNavi is right...”

**Eliyahu** looked at them with eyes full of mercy and then cried out from the depths of his heart a cry that penetrated, “How long will you keep wavering between two thoughts ? If Hashem is G-d, follow Him, and if the Ba’al, follow him !” (Melachim 18:21).

**How** long will you be in doubt between true faith in Hashem and idol worship? Let's gather all the prophets of the Ba'al to Har Carmel. I'll stand before them and arrange a trial. We'll build two altars. Whoever sends fire from heaven on his altar, he's the true G-d.

**The** end of the story is already known... The prophets of the Ba'al weren't able to bring down fire from heaven, while, of course, Eliyahu HaNavi succeeded, and Hashem heard his prayers...

**Am** Israel began to truly believe in Hashem again - "And all the people saw and fell on their faces, and said, "Hashem is *Elokim!* Hashem is *Elokim!*" (Melachim 18:39).

**Many** years have passed since then. The first Temple was destroyed, and so was the second, and Am Israel were scattered to the four corners of the world, and yet,

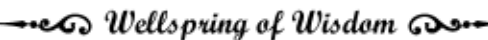
the words of Hashem were fulfilled, "But despite all this, while they are in the land of their enemies, I won't despise them nor will I reject them to destroy them, thereby breaking My covenant with them, for I am Hashem their G-d" (Vayikra 26:44).<sup>13</sup>

**The** *Gemara* says (Megillah 11a) that the words "I won't despise them" relate to the days of the Chaldeans, when Hashem appointed Am Israel Daniel, Chananiah, Mishael, and Azariah as leaders.

**"Nor** will I reject them" relates to the days of the Greeks, when Hashem appointed them Shimon HaTzaddik, Chashmonai and his sons, and Matitiah Kohen Gadol.

**"To** destroy them" relates to the days of Haman, when Hashem appointed them Mordechai and Esther.

**"Thereby** breaking My covenant with them" relates to the days of the Romans, when Hashem appointed them the sages of the



13. The original Hebrew –

”וְאִם גַּם זֶה בְּיַד עֲדֵיבָיָם לֹא מֵאֲסִתִּים וְלֹא גְעֻלָּתִים לְכַלְתָּם לְהַפֵּר בְּרִיתִי אִתָּם  
כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם”

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house of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and the sages of other generations.<sup>14</sup>

**And** so it was at every place they were exiled...

**Wherever** they were exiled, Torah scholars were there with them who taught them. Until HaRav Yosef Caro wrote the *Shulchan Aruch*, and Rabbi Moshe Isserles wrote his commentary on it. Since then, all of Am Israel have been following their Halachic decisions.

**The** years passed by...

**Rebbe** Meshulam Zusha of Anipoli said<sup>15</sup> that the words of Eliyahu HaNavi, “How long will you keep wavering between two thoughts?” is an eternal cry. It is a cry that demands every Jew to break out of their confinement and once and for all draw close to Hashem...

**Know Him In All Your Ways**

**The** *Shulchan Aruch* states<sup>17</sup> that if you can't study without

**In** every generation, there is a new interpretation of his cry...

**This** is how I interpret it... There are two sections in the *Shulchan Aruch* that are the soul of the Torah. They are the first section that opens the *Shulchan Aruch* in the Rama's commentary, “I have placed Hashem before me constantly.<sup>16</sup> This is a major principle in the Torah and amongst the virtues of the *tzaddikim* who walk before Hashem...

**And** the section in *Siman* 231... With anything pleasant in this world, your intent shouldn't be for your own pleasure but rather for the service of Hashem, as it's written, “In all of your ways, know Him” (Mishlei 3:6)...

**Eliyahu** HaNavi screams out, “You serve Hashem and keep the *Shulchan Aruch*, but why do you skip these two sections ? !”

sleeping in the afternoon, you should sleep but not for too long.

...*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*...

**14.** The part of the verse, 'כי אני ה' אלהיהם, will be in the future, when no nation or people of a foreign tongue will be able to subjugate Am Israel further.

**15.** HaGaot MaHaratzah (36).

**16.** Tehillim 16:8 –

”שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד”

**17.** Orach Chaim Siman 231.

So too, your intent shouldn't be for pleasure but to strengthen yourself for the service of Hashem. Likewise, with anything pleasant in this world, your intent shouldn't be for pleasure but for the service of the Hashem, as it's written, "In all of your ways, know Him" (Mishlei 3:6).

**HaRav** Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l<sup>18</sup> explained the words of the *Shulchan Aruch* as follows...

**Our** lives are divided into two dimensions. The first dimension is when we're immersed in spirituality, and the second is when we're preoccupied with materiality.

**It** isn't enough for a Jew to serve Hashem only while they're studying Torah or praying. We must realize that we're also serving Hashem while we're engaged in matters such as eating, drinking, sleeping, work, etc. However, we must also learn how to serve Hashem while engaged in such matters. For example, when you eat or drink, you should

do so that your body will be healthy and have the strength and energy to serve Hashem, and not just because food is tasty.

**Likewise**, when you go to sleep, you should have the intention that by doing so, you'll be re-energized and be able to concentrate and think more clearly while learning Torah or praying.

**Also**, you should work so that you'll have an income and therefore peace of mind in your *avodat Hashem* as well as the ability to give a lot of *tzedakah*.

**When** you merit that all your deeds are truly for the sake of heaven, it's considered as if you're serving Hashem at every single moment.

**This** is the real meaning of the verse, "In all of your ways, know Him" (Mishlei 3:6). Not only when we're dealing with *mitzvot* should we remember that Hashem exists and that we're serving Him, but "in all our ways" should we remember

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that we're serving him. Even when dealing with the most materialistic

and worldly matters, remember that you're still standing before Hashem.<sup>19</sup>

...*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*...

**19. Rabbi** Itzhak Zilberstein shlita told the following story...

**"Maybe** you can explain your intention?" Rabbi Eliyahu asked.

**Rabbi** Eliyahu Lopian zt"l, the *mashgiach* of the Kfar Chassidim Yeshiva, once encountered two people carrying large barrels of tar on the street. Next to them, a small fire was burning, and it was obvious that they had lit it.

**The** Temani replied, "Rabbi, this road serves as a transit for many people during all hours of the day, including old people and mothers walking with their baby strollers. I've seen mothers getting stuck with their strollers in the dirt, and sometimes an old man passes by who is simply unable to continue his way from the difficulty... He just stops and cries. Seriously cries!"

**These** days, this sight isn't so surprising. Everyone understands that they're engaged in paving the road (even though nowadays this is done by sophisticated machines).

**Now** Hashem granted me the gift that the town council chose me to pave the road so that walking would be much easier! Tell me Rabbi, is this not *chesed*?... Baruch Hashem that I'm privileged to do *chesed* all day long!"

**But** in those days, the work of paving wasn't so common, and Rabbi Eliyahu didn't know what these two were doing and why they were laboring for hours.

**Rabbi** Eliyahu was truly moved by his words. When he entered the *Beit Midrash* of the Kfar Chasidim yeshiva, he turned to the *bachurim* and said, "I have a riddle for you guys. How is it possible for two people to do the same thing, and yet one deals with something eternal, while the other with something momentary?"

**Rabbi** Eliyahu stood and watched them. One of the two was a religious Temani Jew, while the other was a Jew who was evidently not observant of Torah and mitzvot.

**Rabbi** Eliyahu approached the non-observant Jew and asked him what he was doing.

**"You** don't know what I'm doing?!" he replied, "I'm making money! I work for the town council by paving the roads and get paid a lot!"

**Rabbi** Eliyahu then described to the *bachurim* what he had just witnessed...

**Rabbi** Eliyahu then turned to the Temani Jew and asked him what his occupation was. Humbly, he answered, "I do *chesed*."

**The** Temani who works to help the many people pass by is constantly engaged in eternal life because he's truly fulfilling a big mitzvah.



**This** is why when *chazal* were asked,<sup>20</sup> “What verse are all the fundamental principles of Torah dependent on?” they answered, “In all your ways, know Him.” This verse is meant to encompass every area of our lives, and someone who fulfills it is considered that they truly serve Hashem 24/7, without any interruptions or breaks.

**Moreover**, just as through the study of Torah and prayer you connect to Hashem, so too through your material efforts, if you do them with real intention to serve Hashem, you’ll be able to connect to Him in the entire sense of “In all your ways, know Him.”<sup>21</sup>

**The** Baal Shem Tov explains<sup>22</sup> “In all your ways, know Him,”

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**However**, the person who doesn’t preoccupy himself with the same intentions but rather paves the road solely to make money is engaged entirely in something momentary and temporal.

“**The** moral of the story,” said Rabbi Eliyahu, “is how much everything depends on intention! The exact same act, and see how much the entire picture changes just by the difference in intention!”

**Rabbi** Itzhak Zilberstein then concluded his remarks...

**We** should remind ourselves of this story throughout our entire day so that we can increase our merits and strengthen our good deeds. When we have the same intentions in our actions as the Temani in Kfar Chasidim, we can accumulate for ourselves, in one day, an infinite amount of merits and good deeds. Our intentions turn all our actions from something temporary to something eternal!

**This** lesson is especially important, as there are many acts that we do in any case, and by

doing them with proper intent, they too will be counted among the rest of our merits.

**For** example, we sometimes have to get up at night for our children who are crying. If we do this only for our own interests, to silence them so that we can go back to sleep, we haven’t gained much.

**However**, if we put the pacifier into our baby’s mouth and intend that we want to help our children because of the mitzvah of *chesed* or to help our spouses so that they can continue sleeping and have strength for the next day, this action is completely *kodesh*...

- Barchi Nafshi (Vayikra, p. 612).

**20.** Brachot 63a.

**21.** “**Know**” in Hebrew (דעת) means attachment and connection (See Tanya Ch. 3;42).

**22.** **Baal** Shem Tov Al HaTorah (Bereshit, 182).

**Parashat Shelach Lecha - In The Merit Of Yearning...**

that in everything you do, even material pursuits, intend to unify *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and His *Shechina*. In all your ways and in all your deeds “know” and connect (יְדַעַת – as mentioned above) the letter ה׳ (for the *Shechina*) and the letter ו׳ (for *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*) in the name of Hashem (יהו״ה).

**The** kabbalist, Rabbi Menachem Azariah, writes in his book<sup>23</sup> that Chanoch ben Yered (Noach’s great grandfather) was a shoemaker, and on every stitch he sewed, he would say, בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, while having the intention of unifying *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and His *Shechina*. Through this, he merited entering *Gan Eden* alive and turned into an angel, as

the Zohar says,<sup>24</sup> “He’s the angel (It isn’t allowed to say his name out loud) ‘Metatron,’ the Interior Minister.”

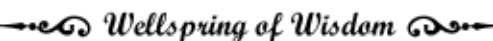
**This** is implied by the very verse that Chanoch was accustomed to say when he sewed the shoes, בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, which the acronym of it is (בשכמל״ו) which is the gematria of (don’t say out loud) חנוך מטטרון (398)...

**The** vision of the ladder ended, and Yaakov Avinu finally reached Charan. Yaakov Avinu lived in Lavan’s home for twenty years, and yet his *avodat Hashem* intensified day by day. But despite all the attainments he achieved during that time, a flame of longing burned in his heart...

**In The Merit Of Yearning...**

“I cried out to You, Hashem; I said, You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.”  
(Tehillim 142:6).

**The** *Midrash*<sup>25</sup> states that this *pasuk* sums up the twenty years Yaakov Avinu was exiled in Charan.



23. **Eser** Maamarot - Maamar Em Kol Chai, (Vol. 3, Siman 22).

24. **Tikkunei** HaZohar (Tikkun 70, 119b).

25. **Bereshit** Rabbah 74:1; Yalkut Shimoni (Tehillim, 888).

**Parashat Shelach Lecha - We Miss The Food In Egypt**

**“I** cried out to You, Hashem”  
- At the beginning of his exile, when Yaakov Avinu had to leave Eretz Israel, he felt an immense sorrow and had to force himself to go abroad. When he was on his way and reached Beit El, he started to plead and beg Hashem, “Be with me” (Bereshit 28:8).

**“I** said, You are my refuge” - This was how Yaakov Avinu felt when he received the promise from Hashem, “I am with you, and I will guard you wherever you go” (Bereshit 28:15).

**“My** portion in the land of the living” - This was the yearning and prayer of Yaakov Avinu throughout all those years that he was outside of Eretz Israel.

**But**, in the merit of his yearning, Hashem allowed him to return to the Eretz Israel !

**And** since Yaakov received permission, he got up and settled in Eretz Israel, as described at length at the end of parashat Vayishlach.

**However**, we’ll jump ahead to parashat Beshalach...

**We Miss The Food In Egypt...**

**Am** Israel left Egypt on Thursday, the fifteenth of Nisan, 2448...

**And** the journey to Eretz Israel began !

**Sukkot**, *Etam, Pei Hachirut, Mara, Alima, Yam Suf* (some of the stops of Am Israel on their way)...

**On** the fifteenth of Iyar, which fell on Shabbat, Am Israel arrived at *Midbar Sin*, and on this day, the last of their bread had been consumed.

**The** children approached their parents and asked, “Father, Mother, give us food...”

**Am** Israel began to worry and immediately approached Moshe and Aharon and complained, “If only we had died by the hand of Hashem in the land of Egypt when we sat by pots of meat, and ate bread until we were full; For you have brought us out into this desert, to starve us all to death !”  
(Shemot 16:3).

**Parashat Shelach Lecha - We Miss The Food In Egypt**

**“We** wish we would have died in Egypt ! It’s better to die by sword than to die of starvation ! If we had only died in Egypt, we wouldn’t have experienced the feeling of hunger, for there we ate until we were full ! Why did you, Moshe and Aharon, bring us out into this desert ? To starve us all ? !”

**Before** we continue, we want to open with the words of the Zohar...<sup>26</sup>

**“There’s** never been a generation so superior as the generation of Am Israel in the desert, and there won’t be until Mashiach comes !

**There’s** never been a generation like the generation of Am Israel in the desert, and the reason for that is that Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam lived in that generation.

**There’s** never been a generation that Hakadosh Baruch Hu listened to them and did miracles for them like the generation of Moshe.

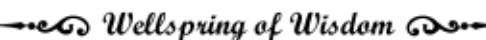
**There** won’t be, and there was no generation like that of the generation of Am Israel in the desert, who “saw” Hashem face to face, “Face to face Hashem spoke to you on the mountain within the fire” (Devarim 5:4).”

**After** this introduction, we have two questions...

**1.** Did Am Israel really eat meat in Egypt ? ! In Egypt, they ate only *matzot*, and because of this, we eat *matzot* on Pesach to remember the bread of our ancestors.

**2.** How does such a superior generation complain about something so trivial as not having meat to eat when they have the mann which tasted like whatever they wanted ? !

**Rabbi** Moshe Sofer zt”l answers these questions by saying<sup>27</sup> that one of the tasks imposed on Am Israel in Egypt was to cook the Egyptians food. Since they were the ones cooking, they could have tasted the food when preparing it;



**26.** See Otzar HaZohar (Vol. 2, p. 411).

**27.** Ohrot HaChatam Sofer (Shemot, p. 211).

however, they abstained and didn't taste it (already in Egypt, before the giving of the Torah, Am Israel made restrictions for themselves not to mix with the Egyptians, and so, they didn't eat their unkosher food), and on that time Am Israel referred when they said, "When we sat by pots of meat."

**The** reason they wished that they could go back to that time was because of the tremendous amount of light they felt in their souls. When they were busy cooking, they overcame all their desires to eat from the food in order to do Hashem's will, and the ability to sacrifice their wants and complete Hashem's will is what they missed !

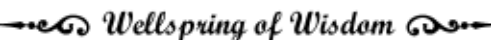
**The** *Gemara* says<sup>28</sup> that someone who merely abstains from doing a sin receives a reward as if they did a mitzvah," and since Am Israel abstained from eating the unkosher food, it's considered as if they fulfilled a mitzvah ! And this is the meaning of the verse, "If only we had died by the hand of Hashem in the land of Egypt when we sat by pots of meat." Am Israel was willing to die on *Kiddush Hashem* and not eat from the food of the Egyptians, even though they were extremely tempted. However, now that they didn't face this temptation anymore, they felt lacking and unfulfilled in their *avodat Hashem*, and if so, they preferred to die...

### **Mann - Spiritual Bread**

**"But** the multitude among them began to have strong cravings. Then even the children of Israel once again began to cry, and they said, 'Who will feed us meat ? We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, the cucumbers, the watermelons, the

leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now, our souls are dried out, for there is nothing but the *mann* to look at" (Bamidbar 11:4-6)...

**Rabbi** Shimon Bar Abba and Rabbi Shimon ben Manasiya disagreed on who the multitude was<sup>29</sup>. One of them said that they



28. Kiddushin 39b.

29. **Bamidbar** Rabbah 15:24.

were the converts (*erev rav*) that left Egypt with Am Israel and one of them said that they were the *Sanhedrin*.



**It's** easy to understand the opinion that states that the multitude was the *erev rav* (who are known for being the cause of many problems for Am Israel). However, to say that the *Sanhedrin* were the ones complaining, who would think such a thing?! What did the *Sanhedrin* have nothing better to do but to miss eating garlic?!

**However**, according to what we explained above, it's possible to say that they missed the *avodah* of 'בְּכָל דְרָכָיךָ יִדְעָהוּ' (In all of your ways, know him). It upset them that they couldn't also perform *avodat Hashem* in worldly matters.

**What** they meant was... “We remember the vegetables that we had to eat in Egypt, the *avodat Hashem* that we were able to accomplish by not eating the food of the Egyptians and instead having to eat onions and garlic. But now, ‘our souls are dried out.’ There’s nothing but the *mann* to look at. We have no more *avodah* with worldly matters, and our souls (not bodies) are dry, and we have no opportunity to make the *gashmiut* (worldly matters) *kadosh*.”

**But** we still have to understand, after all, Am Israel ate *mann*. If so, they could still fulfill many mitzvot while eating the *mann*, such as *netilat yedayim*, blessings before and after eating,<sup>30</sup> and many more mitzvot. If so, why did Am Israel complain about the one mitzvah that they were missing?

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**30. In** one of his books, Rabbi Ben-Tzion Lopes recounts a story that took place with someone who was far from the path of Torah and mitzvot who worked as a bank manager...

**One** day this bank manager received an awakening to return to his Jewish roots of Torah and Mitzvot.

**He** quickly took on many mitzvot, and before he would leave to work in the morning, he had already prayed, put on tefillin, and blessed all the necessary blessings on the food he ate.

**The** main problem awaited him at his workplace, where he was served a cup of coffee and a piece of cake every day.

**Parashat Shelach Lecha - Mann - Spiritual Bread**

**He** sat on his chair but was full of embarrassment. On the one hand, he didn't want to taste anything without a blessing, and on the other hand, he wasn't wearing a kippah on his head, and how could he bless without a kippah? And to wear a kippah at work... No way was he ready to take that leap in front of his employees!

**Shame** covered his face, and he was afraid that all of his coworkers would laugh at him. He looked longingly at the cake and the cup of coffee and felt that the experience was unbearable for him.

**While** sitting there and debating between himself what the right thing to do was, suddenly one of the city's richest individuals entered the bank holding a sack full of gold coins, which he wanted to deposit into his account.

**Unexpectedly**, the sack tore, and hundreds of coins rolled and scattered in all directions.

**Within** a few moments, with the manager's command, the bank doors were locked, and the rich man and the clerks began collecting the coins.

**The** manager watched the rich man and noticed him crawling on the floor, going under the tables and benches, and vigorously collecting every coin.

**He** paid no attention to his expensive clothes nor to his status or dignity. The bank workers didn't laugh at him but sympathized with him and warmly wished him to find all the coins he had lost.

**The** manager stood and pondered: Why are they not laughing at him? Why are they not mocking him for humiliating himself over money?

**He** concluded to himself that since, in their eyes, they place a great value on money, they understand that there is no point in being ashamed for trying to collect all the coins. Why then must I, who wants to recite a blessing, treat the blessing which is so dear to me in a way less than money? Why should I be ashamed when I stand and do what is precious and important to me?

**Instantly** he made the decision to wear a kippah and to bless on the coffee and cake despite the puzzlement that may arise as a result of the unusual act in front of his coworkers.

**He** took the drink in his hand, covered his head, and blessed out loud, "*SheHakol Nehiya Bidvaro.*"

**At** first, the other workers were puzzled, and some even chuckled a little, but a day or two later, his blessings had already become routine, and no one even paid attention anymore.

**This** story has great advice for anyone who wants to accomplish their *avodat Hashem* and refrain from all embarrassment. They must remind themselves that the value and worth of the mitzvot are not less than the value of gold and silver. Rather, the completion of Torah and mitzvot is worth a lot more than gold and silver.

**Parashat Shelach Lecha - Eating In Order To Fix Middot**

**Rebbe** Menachem Mendel Pannet explains<sup>31</sup> that because the *mann* was completely spiritual, they didn't need to make any blessing on it before or after eating, and since they couldn't complete the mitzvah of בְּכַל־דְּרָכָיִךָ דְּעָהוּ, since they had no

connection with worldly matters, they complained...

**But**, Hashem then turned to them and said, "Soon you'll enter Eretz Israel, and there you'll have real food. Then you'll be able to complete the mitzvah of בְּכַל־דְּרָכָיִךָ דְּעָהוּ".

### Eating In Order To Fix Middot

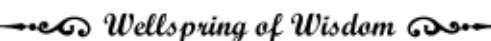
**HaRav** Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l said...<sup>32</sup>

**Normally** when we arrive at parasha Shelach Lecha, we're accustomed to speak about the story of the spies, which undoubtedly takes up a large part of the parasha. Despite this, many other portions of the parasha are overlooked. This time, for a change, we chose to occupy ourselves with one of them...

**In** our parasha, it's said, "When you eat from the bread of the land, you shall separate *terumah* for Hashem" (Bamidbar 15:19).

According to the simple meaning of the verse, the Torah is commanding us that when we knead dough to make bread, we must first separate *terumah* to Hashem, also known as *hafrashat challah* (the separation of *challah*). However, in addition to the simple meaning, this verse also has a wonderful allusion to our *avodat Hashem*.

**In** *lashon hakodesh*,<sup>33</sup> each meal, no matter what is eaten, is called bread, for example, "Yaakov then offered a sacrifice on the mountain and called his friends to eat bread" (Bereshit 31:54). Rashi on the verse states, "Every



**31. Maagalei Tzedek** (Parashat Shelach).

**32. Imrei Noam** (Parashat Shlach Lecha, Maamar 7).

**33. Ancient Hebrew** - The language that the Torah is written in.



food is called bread.” The reason for this is because the main basis of each meal, and the primary reason for satiation, is bread.

**According** to this, what’s said in our parasha, “When you eat from the bread of the land, you shall separate *terumah* for Hashem,” implies that when we eat a meal, we should eat it with great sanctity; and by doing so, we can raise it up (*terumah*’ from the root “raise” in Hebrew) to Hashem, and turn something so worldly and materialistic into something spiritual and holy.

**On** a fundamental level, all food receives its life force from the side of the *klippah* (the evil side), and when a Jew eats with holiness, they refine and separate the *klippah* from the food and uplift and raise the good parts of the food to the side of holiness.

**Refinement** and separation of the bad parts of food are done first and foremost by reciting a blessing with concentration and intention. On every food, the correct blessing which *chazal* affixed.

**Though** that isn’t enough. We must also eat with great sanctity. The reason being that your Judaism shouldn’t be obvious only when you’re studying Torah and praying but also when engaged in worldly matters such as eating and sleeping.

**When** a Jew eats calmly, in moderation, and not by devouring and overeating like Esav, it’s evident to everyone that a Jew is eating here and not someone promiscuous.

**It’s** important to know that eating has a significant impact on all the rest of your *avodat Hashem*. When you eat or drink, blood is created, and that blood flows through your veins, giving life force to your entire body, “For the blood is the lifeforce” (Devarim 12:23) and “For the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Vayikra 17:11). In other words, the life force of a person depends on the blood that flows through their body.

**When** you eat in holiness, and by doing so refining and separating the bad parts of the food, and your body becomes nourished only by the good parts

of the food, refined blood is formed in your body; and when your body receives its life force from refined blood, its material tendencies, wants, and desires are very few, and instead has a great inclination to spiritual matters.

**On** the other hand, when someone eats irreverently and not in holiness, the bad portion remains part of the food, and as a result, unrefined coarse blood is formed in the body with the bad parts a part of it. When the body receives its life force from this coarse blood, its desire for materialistic wants grows, and its desire for spiritual wants diminishes.

**When** you eat *b'kedusha*, your eating brings you renewed strength for *avodat Hashem*. On the other hand, when you eat not *b'kedusha* and fill your stomach without limit, not only will your eating not give you any strength for *avodat Hashem*, but it will also cause you great fatigue and terrible heaviness. Anyone who notices that their

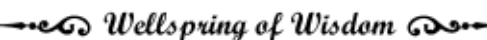
eating causes them to become sleepy, that's a clear sign that they don't eat enough *b'kedusha*.

**For** us to more deeply understand the implications that our eating has on our *avodat Hashem*, we'll first need to preface...

**The Rambam** wrote in his book *Mishneh Torah*<sup>34</sup>, "And know that every body and creation in our world consists of four elements: fire, wind, water, and earth..."

**Even** though the *Rambam* described only physical creations, we found that Rabbi Chaim Vital elucidated even more<sup>35</sup> and clarified that even spiritual souls are composed of four spiritual elements, and from these elements come all of one's *middot* (character traits).

**From** this we learn how important it is that each one of us contemplate the purpose of our soul's descent into this world and exactly what element of our *middot* we must emphasize on fixing and truly work hard to fix them...



**34. Halachot** Yesodei HaTorah 4:2.

**35. Shaarei** Kedusha (Vol. 1, Shaar 2).

**Let's** start by explaining the *middot* that develop in the soul, originating from the element of fire...

**In** every person, the element of fire is found. When the element of fire isn't balanced, bad *middot* and haughtiness develop and strengthen within them, causing them to elevate themselves over others (much like fire does even though it's lighter than other elements).

**Anger** is also a byproduct of the element of fire (the main reason being that anger is an outcome of arrogance and pride). Anger generally develops when someone believes that they are better than others and everyone else must give in to their every wish, and when that doesn't happen, they erupt in terrible anger.

**Also**, if someone doesn't treat them with the amount of respect or honor they believe they deserve, they immediately become angry and will even hold a grudge for a long time without forgiving.

**However**, if the same person was humble and modest and didn't

hold themselves as better than others, they consequently wouldn't have any reason to become angry...

**When** it comes to the fixing of our *middot*, first and foremost, our main focus must be within our homes, like what is written in the *gemara* about R. Zeira, "My entire life I've never gotten angry within my home."<sup>36</sup>

**While** at work or in kollel, many people act pleasantly and patiently with everyone around them. Yet, when they get home, they suddenly change completely. For some reason, they believe that their wife and kids must obey their every will without any objection, and if someone dares to object, they break into a fury of anger and rage.

**It's** told about a *chassid* that came before his rebbe and told him that whenever he comes home, he suddenly breaks down into a rage and can't stand his wife and kids... The rebbe heard everything he had to say and asked him to wait a couple of minutes outside his room.

## Parashat Shelach Lecha - Eating In Order To Fix Middot

**In** the meantime, the rebbe called his assistant and ordered him to prepare a scolding cup of coffee and to “accidentally” spill it on that *chassid*. Like any good assistant, he didn’t ask any questions and just did as the rebbe had ordered him. He prepared a scolding hot cup of coffee, walked slowly past the *chassid*, and “accidentally” tripped over a chair while spilling the cup of coffee all over the *chassid*.

**There’s** no need to detail the pain that the *chassid* felt when the coffee landed on him... However, to the surprise of the assistant, the *chassid* didn’t even become a little bit angry... Instead, he quickly calmed the assistant by saying that it was an accident and that it could have happened to anyone and that there’s nothing to worry about...

**Of** course, the *chassid* also didn’t forget to add that there’s nothing in the world that doesn’t happen without the *hashgacha* (guidance) of Hashem, and since that’s the case, there’s no reason to get mad, and instead to just accept it with joy...

**After** a couple of minutes, the *chassid* was called to return

to the rebbe’s room, and this is what his rebbe told him...

**I** was very impressed with the amount of patience and calmness you had when my assistant spilled his coffee on you. Despite what happened, you managed not to get even a little bit angry and even explained why there’s no real reason to get angry. All that’s left for me to tell you is to stop acting that way only in front of others. Instead, internalize your own words and start acting that way with your family!

**Accordingly**, anyone who notices the trait of arrogance and anger within themselves must immediately work to uproot it from its source before it destroys their family and home.

**Many** good women abandoned their husbands because they treated them disrespectfully and were always angry when at home. Likewise, many children strayed from the path of Torah and mitzvot because their parents acted toward them angrily and with a lack of love...

**Now** let’s move on to the next element... wind.

**Every** person also possesses the element of wind within them. When this element isn't maintained in the right proportion within them, it causes them to become overly lazy and occupy themselves with things that have no purpose.

**When** someone constantly talks about things that have no purpose, after a while, they also begin to speak about things that are prohibited, such as lies, gossip, and slander. Then, for every word that comes out of their mouth, they'll have to pay dearly, sometimes with their livelihood, sometimes with the peace of their home, sometimes with their health, and sometimes even with their life, *Hashem yatzileinu...*

**The** third element is water.

**With** this element comes the desire to chase after luxuries and needless things. When someone puts time and effort into unnecessary desires, every path they take looks "kosher" in their eyes.

**The** fourth and last element is earth.

**From** this element comes depression and everything that follows it... When someone isn't happy with what they have, they can never recognize all the favors and kindness that Hashem bestowed and bestows on them every second<sup>37</sup>. Instead of being happy with everything they have, they fill their hearts with grief and sadness for what they don't have.

**When** someone sinks into depression, they inevitably also

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**37. Rabbi** Nissim Moyal zt"l was born on the 3rd of Nissan 1539 in the city of Yilir, Morocco, to his father Rabbi Shlomo zt"l and his mother, Rachel.

**On** one occasion, Rabbi Nissim Moyal told how he received from his father the habit of saying "Thank you" to Hashem on everything that he received while blessing *birkat hamazon*.

**His** son, Rabbi Natanel, said, "Many times my father would interrupt during the Shabbat dinner with the family and ask... Why do we have food? Why do we have a house to sleep in? There are people out there who have nothing! Hashem took pity on us and gave us mercy, so remember now and at all times to thank Hashem..."

## Parashat Shelach Lecha - Eating In Order To Fix Middot

become lazy and careless in all of their *avodat Hashem*, forgetting *tefilla*, *limud Torah*, and other mitzvot...

**We** must always remember that the world was created for us to recognize the constant goodness that Hashem does with us every day and that we thank and praise Him for them.

**For** example... Someone just had a daughter born to them *b'mazal tov*. Now, they can choose not to arrange a feast and celebrate this birth, saying since there's no "*brit mila*" there's no point... But that's a huge mistake.

**When** we look at the dangers and complications that can occur during childbirth, both to the mother and to the child, we realize that it isn't something simple at all. The very fact that the mother and her fetus entered the birth process *b'shalom* and also left it *b'shalom* demands a special feast to say thank you to Hashem for the great *chessed* that He has done with us.

**It's** tried and true that every daughter who was happily welcomed when she was born and her parents held a dignified feast

in her honor merited remaining humble and modest throughout her life. On the other hand, a daughter who wasn't happily accepted (such as when the parents wanted a boy) and her parents didn't make any feast in her honor; later in life, she faces many desires to stray from the path of Judaism.

**Don't** make the mistake of others. After every birth of a daughter, you must hold a "*zevad habat*" feast in her honor.

**If** you ever get to the point that you notice that you aren't succeeding in what you want, despite all your efforts, your best advice is to thank Hashem from the bottom of your heart for all the good that He's done for you from the day that you were born until today...

**As** stated above, in each and every one of us, one of these four elements is more dominant than the others, and it's up to us to identify that element and correct it as much as possible.

**But** it's important to remember that the correction of these elements is strongly influenced by the *kedusha* of how you eat.

Parashat Shelach Lecha - Shabbat Shalom !

**When** someone eats not *b'kedusha*, the blood that is formed from this eating causes the bad *middot* that are already within them to intensify. However, if they start eating *b'kedusha*, this causes the bad *middot* to diminish, allowing them to work on attaining good *middot*.

**It** turns out that a significant part of your *avodat Hashem* depends heavily on the sanctity of your eating, and this is implied in what *chazal* said,<sup>38</sup> “There’s no *kiddush* except in a meal.” That is, the main achievement of sanctity depends on the measure of your sanctification at the time that you eat.

**Shabbat Shalom !**

*The Pathway...*

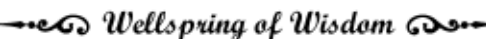
1. In our parasha, it’s said, “When you eat from the bread of the land, you shall separate *terumah* for Hashem” (Bamidbar 15:19). According to the simple meaning of the verse, the Torah is commanding us that when we knead dough to make bread, we must first separate *terumah* to Hashem, also known as *hafrashat challah* (the separation of *challah*). However, in addition to the simple meaning, this verse also has a wonderful allusion to our *avodat Hashem*.

2. Our parasha deals with several topics, but it seems that its main interest is to teach us how to use our mouths. Our mouths have two uses, speaking and eating. The beginning of the parasha deals with the affair of the

spies, and from it, we learn a lesson for generations on how we should use our ability to speak. Later in the parasha, we learn about the mitzvah of *Hafrashat Challah*, which teaches us the proper way which we should eat.

3. “When you eat from the bread of the land, you shall separate *terumah* for Hashem,” implies that when we eat a meal, we should eat it with great sanctity; and by doing so, we can raise it up (*terumah*’ from the root “raise” in Hebrew) to Hashem, and turn something so worldly and materialistic into something spiritual and holy.

4. On a fundamental level, all food receives its life force from the side of the



38. Pesachim 101b.

*The Pathway...*

*klippah* (the evil side), and when a Jew eats with holiness, they refine and separate the *klippah* from the food and uplift and raise the good parts of the food to the side of holiness. Refinement and separation of the bad parts of food are done first and foremost by reciting a blessing with concentration and intention. We must also eat with great sanctity. The reason being that your Judaism shouldn't be obvious only when you're studying Torah and praying but also when engaged in worldly matters such as eating and sleeping.

5. When you eat in holiness, and by doing so refining and separating the bad parts of the food, and your body becomes nourished only by the good parts of the food, refined blood is formed in your body; and when your body receives its life force from refined blood, its material tendencies, wants, and desires are very few, and instead has a great inclination to spiritual matters. When you eat *b'kedusha*, your eating brings you renewed strength for *avodat Hashem*. Anyone who notices that their eating causes them to become sleepy, that's a clear sign that they don't eat enough *b'kedusha*.

6. Our lives are divided into two dimensions. The first dimension is when we're immersed in spirituality, and the second is when we're preoccupied with materiality. It isn't

enough for a Jew to serve Hashem only while they're studying Torah or praying. We must realize that we're also serving Hashem while we're engaged in matters such as eating, drinking, sleeping, work, etc. For example, when you eat or drink, you should do so that your body will be healthy and have the strength and energy to serve Hashem, and not just because food is tasty. Likewise, when you go to sleep, you should have the intention that by doing so, you'll be re-energized and be able to concentrate and think more clearly while learning Torah or praying. Also, you should work so that you'll have an income and therefore peace of mind in your *avodat Hashem* as well as the ability to give a lot of *tzedakah*.

7. This is the real meaning of the verse, "In all of your ways, know Him" (Mishlei 3:6). Not only when we're dealing with *mitzvot* should we remember that Hashem exists and that we're serving Him, but "in all our ways" should we remember that we're serving him. Even when dealing with the most materialistic and worldly matters, remember that you're still standing before Hashem. When you merit that all your deeds are truly for the sake of heaven, it's considered as if you're serving Hashem at every single moment.



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# Shabbat Times ShelachLecha



19<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, 5782

| City             | Candle Lighting | Shabbat Ends | Rabbeinu Tam |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Be'er Sheva      | 7:27 pm         | 8:17 pm      | 9:12 pm      |
| Tel Aviv         | 7:29 pm         | 8:19 pm      | 9:15 pm      |
| Haifa            | 7:30 pm         | 8:20 pm      | 9:16 pm      |
| Eilat            | 7:24 pm         | 8:15 pm      | 9:10 pm      |
| Jerusalem        | 7:32 pm         | 8:22 pm      | 9:18 pm      |
| Jerusalem 40 min | 7:12 pm         |              |              |

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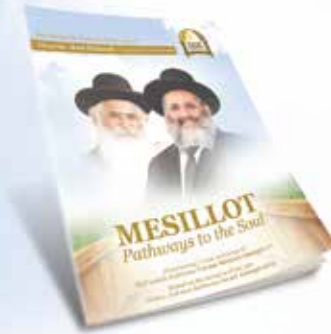
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