

Congregation



*** 2108 Ocean Parkway Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223 ***

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

*Parashat **Shelah Lecha***

25th Sivan 5785

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

*Maqam Hijaz Haftarat **Vayishlah Yehoshua***

Issue #1122

June 21st 2025

*Candle Lighting **8:12pm** * Shekiah **8:30pm** * Shir Hashirim **6:45pm** followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat **8:15am** * Minha Shabbat **7:55pm** * Shabbat Ends **9:12pm** & Rabbenu Tam **9:42pm***

*Time for Talit **3:59am** * Seasonal Hour **87** * Alot Hashahar **3:42am** * Netz Hachama **5:26am***

*Weekday Minha **7:00pm** * Earliest Time for Arbit **7:18pm** * Tzet Hacoachavim **9:07pm** * Chatzot **12:57***

*Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema **8:01am** * Latest Time for Morning Amidah **9:28am***

*Summer Minyan Shaharit every weekday morning in Beth Yosef at **6:45am***

*Those who wish to contact Rabbi Aharon Farhi can call **(646) 552-3412***

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Parashat Shelach expresses a focus on the importance of being careful with the sin of Lashon Hara. The episode of the Spies as well as the episode of Miriam are both written in the Torah next to each other to stress the severity of the sin. The Spies should have learned this lesson from Miriam, but they did not. Why not? Perhaps they thought that land, made up of materials such as stone, earth, and wood, should be viewed differently than people, and therefore are not subjected to the harm of Lashon Hara. However, Parashat Mishpatim already revealed to us that one should not disregard the respect of even stone, as it warns against proper conduct relating to the Mizbeah, the holy Altar in the Mishkan. Even though stone and other materials do not have feelings or emotions, nonetheless one is required to be careful with their honor and never cause shame to them. The Spies did not learn this lesson, and therefore ventured out to speak ill of the holy land of Israel, calculating that the stone and earth would not be harmed emotionally. From here they then deduced that speaking Lashon Hara about a person who does not care and would not be hurt emotionally is therefore permitted. However, such an action is completely forbidden, as it does not depend on a person's feelings or

emotions. Why? A person has a holy soul that is a portion of Hashem. If a person forgives his own honor, can he forgive the honor of Hashem? A person must never forget the respect he must conduct himself with, or be treated with, for the important reason that he is a portion of Hashem. While Rabi Akiva warned his students not to do unto others what you would not like done unto you, Ben Azai takes this lesson a step further: it does not depend on what you personally like or dislike, approve or disapprove in treatment, but rather you must treat others as well as yourself with the respect that is demanded because of the portion of Hashem that is within each and every one of us. Embarrassing or disgracing a person is like doing so heaven forbid to Hashem! Why did the Spies make such a mistake and speak negatively about the holy land of Israel? The Zohar explains: While in the desert they were considered princes, but in the holy land of Israel they believed they would lose their lofty status and only be considered as regular members of the nation. If they could prevent the change by not entering Israel and instead stay in the desert, then they would continue to enjoy honor as princes. The desire for fame and honor caused them to sin and speak Lashon Hara. This is all

connected: What causes one to chase after honor and fame? The need to feel valued and respected. One who recognizes the value of his soul, which is a portion of Hashem within himself, will never have the need to chase honor and fame. Alas, what more honor can he experience than being a portion of Hashem – all else is meaningless in comparison. One who chases after honor will never experience honor, because he is shaming the true honor within himself. This was their mistake. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

1 – *They cut from there a vine... of the pomegranates and of the figs.* The Spies first brought from the grapes and then from the pomegranates and figs, because the grapes were not yet completely ripe. The plan of the Spies was to make believe, and fool the people into believing, that these fruits were actually as ripe as they could become, especially since their size was so large, and therefore the land was not good because the fruit does not ripen enough to be edible. They wanted the people to believe that the fruit would always remain in this unfinished and dangerous to eat stage. They also commented about the strength of the natives of the land to explain that only someone of such strength could eat such unripe fruits, unlike their nation. (*Midbar Kodesh*)

History in Brief

200 years after the Hurban, calendar year 270. The father of Shmuel, known as ‘Avuha D’Shmuel’, was a Chassid. One time he was entrusted with money of orphans, and he hid it for safekeeping in his mill. When he passed away, the orphans came to his son Shmuel to collect their money. They searched but could not find the money. They went to the cemetery to ask his father. He told his son to go to the mill and there he would find their money, sandwiched between his money. He purposely put half of his money on top so that if anyone

would come to steal, they would take his money first, and he put the other half of his money on bottom so that if the ground causes damage to the money, it would be his money first to be ruined, and in all cases the money of the orphans would be protected in the middle, much more than even his own. During his lifetime, there lived a great Sage named Rebi Natan HaBabli, a descendant of King David. His father was the Reish Galuta in Babel. In his youth he moved from Babel to Israel. Because of his involvement in removing Rebi Shimon Ben Gamliel from his position as Nasi, Rebi Meir when he would quote a Halacha from him, he would not say his name, but rather just *Yesh Omrim, some say*. Eliyahu Hanavi would come visit him, and advised him to eat only a third of his fill in order to maintain good health. When Rebbe disagreed in Halacha, the Gemara would say the Halacha follows Rebi Natan because he was his Rabbi. When the congregation wanted to recite the *Ten Commandments* instead of *Vayosha...Az Yashir Moshe* in the morning in Shaharit, Rebi Natan disagreed, so that the uneducated should not say that those ten are the only commandments from Hashem, while everything else was just from Moshe.

Health and Recovery

Adam was instructed to eat vegetation, herbs, and fruits, from that which grows forth from the ground. Due to generational decline and sins, after the Great Flood man was instructed to also eat meat from animals, with many laws and guidelines. Because of the food that man eats, many sicknesses develop as a result. It is in our power and is therefore our responsibility to heal our bodies naturally, and we must do so according to our abilities. The body in essence does not need external supplements in order to heal itself, it is designed to do so naturally. What we need to learn is how not to do things that prevent the body from naturally healing itself, and not to directly damage the body. We are the ones that cause the damage

and prevent our own healing. A broken bone can heal by itself through rest and the proper care. The body knows how to heal wounds caused by external factors. Hashem created the body to be self-sufficient. We need to learn how not to damage the body, and not to get in the way of the healing process and allow the body to do what it knows how to do naturally.

Mussar

1 – One is forbidden to become angry. One who gets angry is considered to have worshipped idolatry, as the Torah commands: one should not create *for* himself an idol image to worship. We can read the Pasuk to mean that he should also not create an idol *out of* himself, for through anger one can lose his soul's holiness and acquire instead a terrible impurity.

2 – One is forbidden to test Hashem, to see if he will have good results from acting properly. The only way a person is allowed to test the results of his good deeds is through giving Ma'aser, tithes from his earnings, since Hashem promises wealth to those who give.

3 – One is forbidden to hate a person. One who hates another and does not speak to him for three days because of his hatred has transgressed. However, if you rebuke a wrongdoer and he does not listen to you, then you may hate him, as he is hated by Hashem for his actions.

4 – One may not take revenge, i.e. he didn't help me so I won't help him either. Also, one may not say to another *'even though you did not help me I won't be like you and will help anyway – I am better than you'*. Rather, forget and forgive, and help without saying anything negative.

5 – Do not speak or accept Lashon Hara. However, if one tells you Lashon Hara that someone intends to harm you, then you may use the information to be careful even though you do not necessarily accept the information as truth.

6 – Don't hold yourself in your eyes believing that you are a Tzaddik. Even if you are very successful, believe that it is in merit of your ancestors. Worry that perhaps you are using up your merits in this world. Therefore, perform Mitzvot in order to earn more and more merit.

Rishon LeSion:

Maran Hacham Ovadia Yossef 1921-2013

When Hacham Ovadia was only fourteen years old, he had a strong desire to learn Torah, day and night. He would sit by his Gemara throughout the night as if it was in middle of the day, despite his parents' concern for his health. What did he do? He would go to bed at the same time as his siblings, but he would not be able to actually fall asleep. When everyone was sound asleep, he would wear his clothing on top of his pajamas, go outside in the darkness of night, unlock the door to the nearby Bet Midrash "Beer Sheva" (the Gabai entrusted him with a key), and he would sit in the dark learning for three hours. He would then return home, go to sleep, and wake up with everyone on time for Shaharit, as if nothing happened. His brother Hacham Avraham realized a few times, but didn't know what to do. Should he tell his parents, who sincerely cared about his health? On the other hand, his brother wasn't doing anything bad, he was learning Torah! His soul desired Torah so much, even at such a young age, that he was willing to give up his sleep! He decided to just remain silent and not tell his parents, who only found out at a later time.

Story

The businessman told over his story to Chaim Lev: the governor of the city and the owner of the hotel, Mr. Steven, agreed to lease the hotel to him for a set price so that he would be able to financially support his family through his work. This man would throw lavish parties every week with no regard for debt. He was a man who owed a lot of money, and therefore needed a big cash flow, especially if he wished to keep up such a lifestyle for his social circles. The first step in his plan was to put more pressure on the Jews and have them pay the difference. The Poritz's men came with new decrees and demands for taxes and fees. The lease was tripled, and the Jewish businessman feared this would destroy his balance sheet. When he couldn't keep up with the high payments in a timely manner, he was threatened with imprisonment, to be thrown into

a dirty pit without sustenance, where he would rot for the rest of his days, cold and hungry.

Laws

1 – If you forgot to recite a blessing on you Talit, you can do so all the while that you are still wearing it.

2 – You cannot speak at all between reciting the blessing and wearing the Talit. If you did speak anything not related to the Mitzvah of wearing the Talit, then you must recite another blessing.

3 – Eating any amount of food, no matter how small, requires a blessing beforehand.

4 – If you are only tasting in order to see if it needs more salt or any other adjustment while cooking, then you do not need to recite a blessing.

5 – Anything harmful, such a drinking raw olive oil, does not require a blessing

6 – You cannot recite a blessing on eating anything forbidden, and others cannot answer Amen.

7 – If you have something stuck in your throat and are drinking only in order to clear it out, or if you are drinking before a fast only so that you will not be thirsty during the fast, or if you are drinking only because you are taking medicine and need to wash it down, for all these scenarios you do not recite a blessing beforehand.

8 – If you forgot to recite a blessing before eating or drinking, you can do so all the while that you are still eating or drinking. If you are no longer eating or drinking, then you can no longer recite a blessing.

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