

Erev Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Shlach 5770

# D'ei Chochmah L'nafshechah

“Let your soul know wisdom”

Parshas Shlach

From the discourses of Moreinu v'Rabeinu  
the Gaon and Tzaddik Shlit'a

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**"YAM HACHOCHMAH"**  
PUBLISHING INSTITUTE  
P.O BOX 5245 JERUSALEM  
TEL: 057-3153884 FAX: 15325388242  
E-MAIL: [tc7@neto.bezeqint.net](mailto:tc7@neto.bezeqint.net)

### **Shalosh Seudos of Parshas Shlach 5768**

**”וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצֵת וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹת ה' וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם, וְלֹא-תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אֹתָם זָנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם.”**

**“And it shall be to you for a fringe, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of Hashem and do them; and that you go not about after your own heart and your own eyes after which you go astray.”<sup>1</sup>**

#### **The Secret of the *Techeiles***

Even though we do not have the actual original *techeiles* today, the inner meaning of the mitzvah still applies to our personal *avodah*, as the Arizal explained.<sup>2</sup> And when we invoke and arouse the building of the *Beis Hamikdash*, we also gain a grasp of the mitzvah of *techeiles* even now, because the mitzvah retains its spiritual quality and meaning even if its practical application cannot be manifest. There is the aspect of the *avodah* of the white *tzitzis*, as well as that of the *techeiles* which the catalyst of memory of all of the *mitzvos*. This is especially true of the mitzvah to guard one's eyes which is the only way that one can be freed of all of the lusts of this world and its various forms of idolatry. This is the sense of the continuation of the verse, “And you shall be holy to your G-d; I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt...”<sup>3</sup> This mitzvah has the power to release us from exile; just as He took us out of Egypt, so too will He take us out of this exile in the merit of the *tzitzis*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Bamidbar* 15:39

<sup>2</sup> *Pri Eitz Chaim, Sha'ar Hatzitzis* #5

<sup>3</sup> *Bamidbar* 15:41

We find in the verse, “As in the days of your leaving the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders.”<sup>4</sup> The sages taught, “Every one who cleaves to the mitzvah of *tzitzis* will merit to have 2800 servants.”<sup>5</sup> [This is based on the calculation that emerges from the promise in *Zechariah* 8:23: “In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men out of all the languages of the nations (10 x 70 = 700) shall take hold, shall even take hold of the corner (of the *tzitzis*; 700 x 4 = 2800) of him that is a Jew, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that Hashem is with you.”] The Arizal explains that the mitzvah of *tzitzis* is exceedingly lofty—it is associated with the angel *MaTaT* [“*Metatron*”] who is the *Sar Ha’pnim* on high. The *gematria* of this most lofty angel’s name [ מטטרון שר ] is 999—or אלוף minus one—and he is the one referred to in the verse, “If there be for him an angel, an intercessor, one among [literally, ‘one from’] a thousand, to vouch for a man’s uprightness...”<sup>6</sup> This “one from a thousand” is the angel *MaTaT*, *Sar Ha’pnim*.

The Arizal also taught that the *tzitzis* and the angel *MaTaT* parallel the Divine Name שדי, which also has the *gematria* of the name מטטרון. In addition, the Name שדי has five permutations that have a total value of 2800, as above. [First we have the thousand represented by the angel *MaTaT Sar Ha’pnim* himself, including the *kollel*. Then one multiplies the letter *shin* by six, with a resulting value of 1800. That is the complete 2800, since when one wears the *tzitzis* of *MaTaT* who is the highest ministering angel, one merits one’s own league of servants. What remains of the Name is the word די, with a value of fourteen. When this second part of the Name is also multiplied by six, we have a value of 84, which is the same as that of the name Chanoch (חנוך) whose great *dveikus* transformed him into the angel *MaTaT*.<sup>7</sup>]

The *avodah* of *MaTaT* is the highest that there is; it is called the “supernal shine.” Its practical application in our world is that of, “And you shall see My back, but

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<sup>4</sup> *Michah* 7:15

<sup>5</sup> *Shabbos* 32b; Rashi loc cit

<sup>6</sup> *Iyov* 33:23

<sup>7</sup> *Pri Eitz Chaim*, *Tzitzis* 6:20

My face will not be seen.”<sup>8</sup> This is the *Olam HaMalbush*, the “world of the garment,” or the “far side” of the *Malchus* of *Ein Sof*. The Shabbos additional prayer רצה והחליצנו also alludes to this dual aspect of the angel *MaTaT*. “May it please You to fortify us”—so that we can leave the lower aspect of *MaTaT* and rise to the higher and truer aspect of *MaTaT Sar Ha'pnim*, whose initials for the name Moshe. [מט"ט שר הפנים = משה] The sages hinted at this when they said, “Rabbi Meir found a pomegranate. He ate its innards and threw away its shell.”<sup>9</sup> The name מטטרון can be broken down into two segments: an inner ט"ט and an outer רמון. Rabbi Meir found a רמון—this is the *avodah* of ascension to higher realms—and he also kept hold of its “innards”—the ט"ט that is the *avodah* of holding strong and close to Hashem even when one descends.<sup>10</sup>

### A Chariot for the Three Worlds

Although these are lofty concepts, the main thing for us to know and understand is that the three main segments of the human frame parallel the three lower worlds of *Beriyah-Yetzirah-Asiyah*: the head, which is the area of the *mochin* of *CHaBaD*, is like the throne on which the higher consciousness, the “man,” actually sits; the torso, which is the area of *CHaGaT*; and the lower part of the body, which is the area of *N-H-Y*. Above it all is the essence of the person himself, paralleling the world of *Atzilus*, where Hashem's *Shechinah* rests. As we say in the bedtime *Shema*: “To my right, Michael; to my left, Gavriel; before me, Uriel; and after me, Rafael; and above my head, G-d's *Shechinah*.” The covering over the head represents the fear and awe of the *Shechinah* resting upon one's head. Above this is the aspect of, “not man,” which is the apex of *Adam Kadmon*.

The light of the *Shechinah* imbues the head of every person, and is expressed in several particular shades: white, black, red, and *techeiles*. [This is the light of the eyes, the shades within the eye: white of the sclera, black of the pupil, red of the blood

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<sup>8</sup> *Shemos* 33:23

<sup>9</sup> *Chagigah* 15b

<sup>10</sup> *Likutei Torah, Parshas Eikev*

vessels, and the hues of the iris symbolized by *techeiles*. Each of these parts and their colors represent the *sefiros* and each of the four worlds of *ABY" A*.] These are also the four colors that are within fire, and the function of the color of *techeilis* is that it binds the fire itself to *N-H-Y* [represented by the physical wick].

When we say that the *Shechinah* rests upon the head of every person, it really is a symbol for the absolute *bitul* that it is possible for him to reach, a state that transcends all reason and knowledge. When a person is that nullified before Hashem, all that happens to him physically or spiritually is irrelevant, because he is always bound to Hashem's simple light. This is the light that is above the head of every person, and it is called *tzniusa*, or that which is hidden. This high level of the hidden is impossible to really describe, it is of a piece with the deep mysteries of the *Safra D'tzniusah* [authored by Yaakov Avinu], which is called, "the head that is not known," that is by necessity unrevealed and unexplained. It is a state of such intense self-nullification, and such absolute cleaving to the light of Hashem, that nothing else exists for the person at all.

Yet just as one cannot appreciate the white light of the flame without the lower aspect of the *techeiles* anchoring it to a physical source of fuel, so too can one only reach the higher light by drawing it all the way down through the three segments of the body so that it becomes entirely a vehicle for Hashem. All of the Torah and its *mitzvos* [of which the *techeiles* reminds us] is a means or body to contain the highest light of *dveikus* with Hashem Himself, "I am Hashem your G-d."

#### ***CHaBaD, CHaGaT, N-H-Y, and Malchus***

The earlier sources speak of the *mochin* of *CHaBaD* as "thought," the *sefiros* of *CHaGaT* as "impression," the *sefiros* of *N-H-Y* as "sense," and *Malchus* as "image." [מושכל, מוטבע, מורגש, תמונה] How are these forms of *avodah* acted upon? When a person stands to pray *Shemonah Esrei*, he first contemplates that nothings exists but Hashem and he refines his thoughts and mind with every single word of prayer to be able to meditate on this fact. This is called the level of "thought." The true function of the mind, the *שכל*, is found in the state of *שפכי כמים לבך*, of pouring one's heart out in

prayer before Hashem. This is what it means to “place Hashem before me always,” by contemplating deeply that I am standing in the presence of the King, and nothing else exists but Him.

Yet this is not enough—the knowledge level of “thought” must be brought down to the level of *CHaGaT* and make its impression there. This is the level of the “hands” [of the torso] that represent the two tablets of the *Aseres HaDibros* [just as the two hands have a total of ten fingers], when one’s consciousness of Hashem penetrate into one’s actual Torah study and observance of *mitzvos*. This is what it means to really receive the Torah as it was given. Yet even this is incomplete, because the knowledge of Hashem must reach all the way down to the level of “sense,” the realm of eating and drinking and the rest of our physical preoccupations in the outer world of the senses. This lower place is the realm where the negative states of jealousy, lust, and pride take hold. At this level, it is very hard to always feel and sense Hashem presence because the negative attributes occlude it. Yet, when one’s thoughts are attached to Hashem during prayer, he must expend effort so that the awareness of Hashem that he gains will have enough force to penetrate down to the lower place, to *N-H-Y*, so that even if one has a momentary challenge or temptation, he is able to escape from it through accessing G-dly awareness from a higher place.

The *tzaddik* goes even further, however. He draws the revelation of Hashem’s presence all the way down to the level of *Malchus*, the place of “image,” the outer world that enclothes *N-H-Y*. At this level, it is all too easy to lose one’s G-dly awareness within the persuasive illusions of the physical world outside. The *tzaddik* is able to see all of the imagery of this world and still nullify it completely within his awareness of Hashem’s absolute oneness and existence. Like Yosef HaTzaddik, “he is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine by a fountain [literally, ‘above the eye’ since the word *עַיִן* means both fountain and eye].”<sup>11</sup> “Hashem’s eye is upon those who fear Him.”<sup>12</sup> The *tzaddik* fears Hashem, and so the “eye of Hashem” is upon him—he has an eye that constantly seeks

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<sup>11</sup> *Bereishis* 49:22

<sup>12</sup> *Tehillim* 33:18

to see Hashem even among the multiplicity of physical reality. When the awareness of Hashem is drawn down even to this level, the *techeiles* of the fire is said to be revealed above the person's head, and it allows him to draw down the higher whiteness of the flame. It is this absolute *bitul* that Hashem wants most of us—that we should always be aware that, “I am Hashem your G-d.”

This is what is meant when we say that it is only through the state of “return/descent” that one merits the “running/ascent.” It is only when one is able to bind one's entire self and experience of this world to one's awareness of Hashem's all-encompassing existence that he can later rise again to a renewed state of *bitul*. One can only reach the whiteness of the *tzitzis* if one also has the *techeiles*. [Without the *techeilis*, the *tzitzis* are incomplete.] One can only reach the higher level of Moshe/MaTaT Sar Ha'pnim through the lower level of ו"ט, of holding close to Hashem through the state of descent. Then, right away, he merits the higher hidden state of *tzniusa* and *bitul*, where nothing matters to him but nullifying himself to Hashem.

### The Level of Eretz Yisrael

Now we can better understand the significance of the juxtaposition of the *parshah* of *tzitzis* with that of the spies and the laws of *challah*. Before entering into the spiritual state of Eretz Yisrael which is complete *bitul* and faith, one must first have one's awareness of Hashem penetrate down to the place of the *raglin*—to *N-H-Y*. This is the inner meaning of the spies [*meraglin*] walking through the land—to seek out Hashem in all of the vision of the external world.

Rashi explained that the spies were originally worthy; they had the holy names of Hashem's tribes [שבטי ייה] upon them.<sup>13</sup> Yet when they entered Eretz Yisrael they had to do the very difficult work of drawing their knowledge of Hashem [expressed by the first two letters of the *Shem HaVaYaH*, the *yud* and the *hei*] all the way down. This lower area is always beset by challenge, since the *sitra achra* is always standing by

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<sup>13</sup> *Bamidbar* 13:3; Rashi loc cit

there to trip the person up. This is so very difficult—how were they to have succeeded? And how are we to succeed in our own application of this principle?

When a person imagines that the task is too great for him, he must bear in mind the way in which Moshe Rabbeinu gave Yehoshua strength to withstand the plotting of the spies: "י-ה יושיעך מעצת המרגלים"—"May *Y-H* save you from the plotting of the spies." If you see that you cannot draw the light of knowledge of Hashem all the way down to the *raglin*, then immediately rise up again to the higher place of ה"י, to the place of the *mochin*, and re-focus your mind on Hashem's absolute existence. If you cannot succeed to reach the place of *N-H-Y* safely, then return to the level of "thought."

The tribe of Levi has no portion in the land because it is not their mission to draw knowledge of Hashem until the place of external sense impressions. The tribe of Levi exists in the realm of the *mochin*. Reuven is associated with *Chessed*; Shimon with *Gevurah*; Levi with *Tiferes* and *dveikus* [especially in Torah]. If one cannot draw knowledge of G-dliness all the way down to the *raglin*, it is because his negative attributes are dominant. But if he returns to the higher place of thought, "*Y-H* will save you."

Now we can better understand why Yehoshua and Kalev rent their garments when they heard the plotting of the spies—they sought to break through the illusion of the outer garment of this world. And they were rewarded with a vision of Moshe Rabbeinu's face. This symbolized that they did indeed achieve a renewed binding with Hashem.

### **The Avodah of Prayer at the Graves of Tzaddikim**

The verse states, "But My servant Kalev, because he had a different spirit within him..."<sup>14</sup> Kalev had a different purpose—to rectify the realm of *raglin* altogether. The name כלב has the numerical value of 52, which is associated with *Malchus*. This is how he was able to be one of the *meraglin*, but in the way of holiness; he was a true spy

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 14:24

through the length and breadth of the land, and this bound him especially strongly to the true *tzaddikim* who are buried in its earth: the *Avos* who arouse heavenly mercy that extends throughout every bit of the external world.

This is the deeper meaning of the *avodah* of praying at the graves of *tzaddikim*. The matter is so very deep, because when we approach the gravesite we only see a marble stone with our physical eyes. There is no outer image or form to distinguish this holy place from any other place. Yet, when our eyes are illuminated by knowledge and *emunah*, we are able to get a sense of the greatness of the *tzaddik* who is buried there, and our faith overwhelms the evidence of our physical senses so that we are able to grasp the spiritual matter. The *Shechinah* dwells at the resting places of the *tzaddikim*, and our *emunah* allows us to see it. In truth, the *Shechinah* dwells everywhere, and when one's eyes and mind and heart have been elevated through seeing the *Shechinah* at *kivrei tzaddikim*, they are more readily able to perceive the *Shechinah* throughout all of the physical world.

As mentioned earlier, the *Shechinah* / *Malchus* enclothes, stands behind, and receives from the realm of *N-H-Y*, and this is why we find numerous praises of Kalev in the *parshah* that include the phrase, “after Me”: “And he fulfilled *after Me*,” “For they fulfilled *after Me*...”<sup>15</sup> Kalev repaired the realm of the “far side” [אחוריים] which is “image;” his prayer at the graves of the *tzaddikim* gave him the power to repair the realm of “sense.” And this is also our task, that we should come to see that Hashem's presence is actually everywhere. As Rav Yisrael of Ruzhin taught, each person's main *avodah* is to experience “the revelation of Eliyahu” on his own level. This means seeing Hashem absolutely everywhere, since the name Eliyahu [אליהו = ביען] has the same *gematria* as that of the permutation of the *Shem HaVaYaH* that indicates *Malchus*—52, as mentioned earlier. If a person feels that he has fallen away from this, he must go to *kivrei tzaddikim* to renew himself. As the Vilna Gaon taught in his commentary to *Tikkunei Zohar*, the main dwelling of the *Shechinah* during the exile is to be perceived

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 14:24, 32:12

at the graves of *tzaddikim*. And if he finds that he cannot go physically, then he must, as the Baal HaTanya taught, bind his mind to *emunah* that no place is devoid of Hashem and then even outside Eretz Yisrael, it is as though he is steeped in the holiness of the land.

Since this was Kalev's *avodah*, it is only fitting that he responded to the despair of the spies with a rousing, "We shall surely go up!" Certainly, every single Jew can merit to eat and enjoy the physical bounty of this world in holiness. Surely it is possible for us to be liberated from our negative character traits, even if right now it seems so hard. When we bind ourselves to our holy *Avos*, we enter into the state of *emunah* at the level of "image"/*Malchus*, and we are able to fulfill, "I place Hashem before me always."

### The Torah's Secrets

"Rabbi Meir would say: The punishment for one who neglects the mitzvah of the white *tzitzis* is greater than he who neglects the mitzvah of the *techeiles*."<sup>16</sup> [It is easier to acquire the un-dyed wool than the specially-dyed wool. One who fails to use that which is widely available is worse than one who fails to acquire the rare.] This represents the fact that the main *avodah* is that of *bitul* to the whiteness, to the light of *Ein Sof*. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught that the *Safra D'tzniusah* encompasses the wisdom of the entire Torah, because the inner purpose of the entire Torah is *bitul* and *dveikus* with Hashem—the  $\gamma\aleph$  that allows one to experience the  $\aleph$ , "I am Hashem your G-d." All the while that we fail to reach this, we are very far from the truth of the Torah's secrets.

This is why the laws of the *minchah* and *challah* offerings are juxtaposed with the sin of the spies—they represent that which rectifies their sin. Reb Nosson of Breslov explains that the *minchah* is the embodiment of the will, the world of *Arich*. And *challah* is associated with *Malchus* where it is bound up in the *Reisha D'lo Isyadah*, and

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<sup>16</sup> *Menachos* 43b

which can be reached only through *Arich Anpin* and *Atik*. [Through yearning and holding tightly to Hashem through the state of descent, one merits the higher light of the ascent.] Through the *techeiles* and white of the *tzitzis*, we are saved from the sin of the spies and merit to reach the higher state of *bitul*.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught that when a person learns the Torah piecemeal, by adding one detail to another, he is still far from the inner purpose of Torah study and *avodah*. He must seek the higher unity to be found with Hashem through the Torah, and not be lost in the multiplicity of details. For each and every detail in the Torah actually reveals another means through which one can draw down G-dliness from *CHaBaD* to *CHaGaT* to *N-H-Y* and then *Malchus*. To accomplish this, however, one must never lose sight of the main thing: *dveikus*.

May Hashem make us worthy of seeking out *dveikus* so that we can join together with Him through the pathways of running and returning, the pathways of the white and *techeiles* of the *tzitzis*. May Hashem reveal His *Malchus* in every single place, with the arrival of our righteous redeemer, speedily and in our days. Amen.

**Translated and Adapted by Rav Micha Golshevsky.**