

Sanctified and Safeguarded: Parshat Shelach

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles
Summary by Channie Koplowitz-Stein

When Moshe appoints the spies to reconnoiter the land of Israel, the *Torah* names the spies that represent each tribe. Then Moshe changes the name of *Hosheah* to *Yehoshua*. Rashi comments that adding the two letters of God's name was a prayer that Yehoshua not succumb to the persuasion of his fellow spies.

Names are important and somewhat prophetic. Every letter is essential. How then, asks the Tallelei Chaim, was Moshe able to change the name of *Hosheah* unilaterally, and where did the "yud" that he added come from? The Midrash explains that when Avraham's name was changed so was Sarai's to Sarah. The yud, whose numerical equivalent is 10, was then split in two. A "heh", equal to five, replaced the Yud in Sarai's original name, and the other "heh" was added to Avram's name. The yud who felt slighted at being removed from such a righteous person's name found a new home in the name Yehoshua.

Letters have mystical symbolic properties as well, continues the Shvilei Pinchas. The physical world was created through the letter heh while the spiritual world was created through the letter yud. Hashem wants *Bnei Yisroel* to integrate these two worlds and thereby elevate the physical world to the spiritual world. In fact, Hashem created the physical body of Man before his spiritual soul. The integration of the two was necessary for *Bnei Yisroel* to enter the Land and live there productively. However, the spies erred in this area. They were great men who were on such a high spiritual plane that they could not conceive moving from their spiritual cocoon in the desert to a physical existence in *Eretz Yisrael*. Therefore, they wanted to remain in the desert.

The spies wanted to isolate the spiritual from the physical. Moshe's message was that the

two needed to be integrated. The Tallelei Chaim notes that Knesset Yisroel needed to include both worlds, the spiritual, concealed world represented by our Matriarch Leah, and the revealed world of our Matriarch Rachel, a world we can relate to. Avraham and Sarah should have been the Patriarch and Matriarch of all twelve tribes, but they were on too high a spiritual level to effectively raise the twelve children to become the twelve tribes in a world not yet ready for such spirituality. Instead, the power of the yud was divided between Leah who would incorporate the concealed world into the nature of Bnei Yisroel and Rachel who would bring the power of the revealed world to the nation.

Of the twelve spies, two remained untainted, Caleb ben Yefuneh of the Tribe of Yehudah, descendent of Leah, and Yehoshuah bin Nun of the tribe of Ephraim, descendent of Rachel. Each inherited the great aspect of his Matriarch, but Moshe now combined the two aspects in *Hosheah* by adding the yud to the heh, thereby integrating the physical with the spiritual so that Yehoshuah would have the tools to be an effective leader. So, while the spies wanted to remain in that ethereal world, a possibility that was destroyed with the sin of the golden calf, Moshe prepared the scenario for entry into a physical existence in *Eretz Yisroel*. In fact, Yehoshuah's first act upon entering *Eretz Yisroel* was seeing to it that all males would be circumcised, since no *brit milah* was performed during the travels in the desert.

Sarah lived in a mini *mishkan*, writes the Lemachar Aatir. Hers was still the yud dimension which she imparted to Leah and her descendants including Moshe. *Hosheah* before his name change is described as involved in the physical aspects of the beit medrash, of arranging for adequate seating and other such matters, a legacy of his ancestress Rachel. Now, by adding the yud to

his name, Moshe bestowed upon him the revealed, completely spiritual aspect of Leah so that there would be an awakening of the forces from above to join the forces from below to enable him to be an effective leader.

The Mishchat Shemen notes that grammatically a yud as a suffix connotes either "I" (verb) or "my" (noun). Our Matriarch's name Sarai implied that she had full control over herself. Only then could she reach a higher level and rule over others. After that, Hashem changed her name to Sarah with the all-encompassing heh. Moshe's lesson to Yehoshuah was to first gain complete control over himself before he could try to control the nation. The spies, writes Rabbi Kofman z"l, never got control of their egos and were unable to extricate themselves from their personal agendas. As the Sichot Mussar, states, the fear of losing their leadership when they would enter the land, their desire for honor, blinded them into speaking negatively about the land.

People who constantly seek honor condemn themselves, writes the *Leovdecha B'Emes*. Today, the trap of trying to keep up with the Joneses, of maintaining appearances, can readily compromise one's integrity and cause one's downfall (and the downfall of others). That's the yud Moshe blessed Yehoshuah with, the blessing of self-awareness to withstand the pressure of society.

A good leader must be strong in his own identity, and willing and able to withstand public pressure. A leader of *Bnei Yisroel* must also love the land of *Eretz Yisroel* and understand that his personal gifts of leadership and the land are gifts Hashem has given us to enhance our relationship with Him through our service to Him. All this and so much more Moshe imparted to Yehoshuah by adding the yud from Sarah Imenu to his name.

Mesilat Yesharim: First Steps-Part I

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen

The Mesilat Yesharim concludes his introduction by emphasizing that this world is only an entranceway to the next world. Man was not created only for this world but for a higher purpose. Chazal say, "Mi shetarach b'Shabbat yochal b'Shabbat, one who prepares before Shabbat will eat on Shabbat." This world is compared to the time before Shabbat and the next world to Shabbat itself, the everlasting world. Our life on this world is only temporary and a preparation for the world to come. Life is filled with suffering, hardship, physical ailments, and challenges. How can a person think he was born only to go through agony and pain, with the end goal being death? If we believe this, then animals are better off than us. They don't need to face all the grief humans go through. Taking this into account,

man must realize that he is here for a purpose and this world is not his final goal.

In the Gemara, Rav Zeira says, man can only fill up something empty, but Hashem works differently. If a person contains within him spiritually, he can he add to it. If he is completely empty, his life remains empty. The body-soul dichotomy is compared to a peasant who desires to marry a princess and take her back to his hut in the village. She refuses and rightly so as she is used to the royal life in the palace. The soul is a part of the divine presence. Why would Hashem create man with a soul so precious that it is greater than the angels, and put him in a world that is only fleeting? The Midrash in Kohelet says the soul will never be satisfied with this world, just as the princess will never be satisfied living as

a commoner in the village. The more a person involves himself in *Torah* and *mitzvot*, the more he will sense the presence of his soul yearning to come closer to Hashem.

The *Mesilat Yesharim* tells us that our purpose in this world is to fulfill *mitzvot* and to withstand the tests Hashem sends us. Avraham was tested ten times. The Mishna in Avot tells us there were ten generations between Noah and Avraham and then the Mishna tells us Avraham Avinu endured ten tests. The Tosfos Yom Tov says he wasn't just a historical figure. He was *avinu*, our forefather. He taught us how to relate to tests. And just as he passed all the challenges Hashem gave him, so too did he endow us with the strength to overcome all our tests.

Kavod Shabbat and Candle Lighting: Part I

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson

The Gemara discusses a famous disagreement between Shammai and Hillel. Shammai would eat all week in honor of *Shabbat*. Whenever he found a delicacy he would put it away for *Shabbat*. But if he found something tastier he would eat the delicacy he already had and put away the new delicacy for *Shabbat*. He was always focused on *Shabbat*. Hillel conducted all of his actions for the sake of heaven. If he found a tasty piece of meat on Monday he would eat it that day with trust in Hashem that he would find a nicer piece later on in the week. The Mishna Berura notes that although we rule like Hillel it's also correct to conduct oneself like Shammai.

The Rambam cites the *middah* of Shammai. When we focus on Shabbat all week we fulfill the *mitzvah* of *kavod* (honoring) *Shabbat*. There's a build up of intensity in the idea of *kavod Shabbos* beginning on Wednesday. The Gemara teaches that if one needs to get on a boat to begin a journey on Wednesday one may only do so for a *mitzvah* but not for pleasure. Some Rishonim say it takes three

days to get over sea sickness and getting on a boat so close to *Shabbat* could disturb one's *oneg* (deriving pleasure) *Shabbat*. The Baal Hameor says when one is traveling on the high seas, the captain is desecrating *Shabbat* for the sake of the passengers. It follows that one may not put oneself in a situation of danger so close to *Shabbat* and this begins on Wednesday.

The Shulchan Aruch says one should wake up early on Friday to prepare for *Shabbat*. The Mishna Berura notes that it's better to buy what one needs on Friday rather than on Thursday so that it's clear one is buying in honor of *Shabbat*. While shopping for food and other things one should say *l'kavod Shabbat*. This puts one in the proper frame of mind and is a way of honoring *Shabbat*. The Shulchan Aruch writes that even if a person has many servants, he should involve himself in preparing for *Shabbat*. He cites the Gemara which details how the Amoraim would personally prepare for *Shabbat* to honor the day.

The Netziv explains that there are two different types of *hechsher mitzvah* 1. A standard *hechsher*, a prerequisite to a *mitzvah*, but not the *mitzvah* itself such as buying a lulav 2. A *hechsher mitzvah* that the Torah explicitly tells us to do and that rises to the level of the *mitzvah* itself such as preparing for Shabbat, building a sukkah, or making *tzizit*. This explains why the Amoraim were so vigilant to personally prepare for *Shabbat* as it is considered a *hechsher mitzvah* clearly found in the *Torah*.

The Rambam considers the *mitzvah* of *hadlakat neiros* (lighting Shabbat candles) as an obligation for both men and women. Even if one is poor and has no food he must go begging in order to be able to purchase a candle for *Shabbat*. The Rambam categorizes the *mitzvah* as both a form of *kavod* and *oneg Shabbat*. By lighting the candles in preparation for *Shabbat*, one performs *kavod Shabbos*; by leaving the candles to continue to burn into *Shabbos*, illuminating the room, one fulfills *oneg Shabbat*.