

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

SHELAH

Haftarah: Yehoshua 2:1-24

JULY 1-2, 2016 26 SIVAN 5776

**Rosh Hodesh Tamuz will be celebrated on Wednesday & Thursday, July 6 & 7.
DEDICATIONS: Happy Birthday Mariyah, Happy Birthday Abie, Happy Birthday Isaac**

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Editors Notes Remembering Entebbe

July 4, 2016 is this Monday. 240 years since the United States proclaimed their independence from the British Empire. It is also 40 years since the Entebbe rescue. I thought it important to write about it. I then saw this article from Arutz Sheva from 2009. We should all take the time to remember a miracle in our own lives.

It took Israeli commandos minutes to conduct one of the greatest and most daring rescue missions in modern history, in Entebbe, Uganda, on July 4, 1976.

During those brief fateful moments, good triumphed over evil; the innocent were saved and the terrorists who threatened them were routed.

It was 11:30 pm Saturday night. The seventh night that over 100 Israelis, non-Israeli Jews, and the twelve-member Air France crew were held in the Entebbe airport since the PFLP (Popular Front Liberation Palestine) terrorists and two West German supporters, members of the Baader Meinhof gang, hijacked a jet while on the ground in Athens. Supporting the terrorists and giving them cover was the Ugandan regime under Idi Amin Dada. In the prior decade, Uganda had received military and non-military aid from Israel prior to severing ties in 1967.

The plane was bound from Tel Aviv to Paris. It was diverted to Benghazi airport in Libya for refueling and then headed for Entebbe.

The final deadline to meet the hijackers' demands and release forty terrorists held in Israel and thirteen in West Germany, Switzerland, France and Kenya, was steadily approaching. Negotiations managed to postpone the approaching July 1 deadline for three days. On July 1, the non-Jewish passengers were released by the terrorists. The Air France crew chose to stay with the remaining hostages. On July 3,

French diplomats involved in the negotiations stated that there was no hope for an agreement.

Releasing the terrorists would embolden them to continue such operations. Not meeting the terrorists' demands could result in a massacre.

As international attention was focused upon the events, Israeli planes made their way to Uganda flying under radar over the Red Sea, in order to avoid detection by Egyptians and Saudis. They soon landed and the operation commenced.

That night, the weary hostages were sound asleep except for a group of five playing bridge. The hijackers were also within the complex. There were also about eighty Ugandan troops guarding the building.

At that moment, three Hercules personnel transports with Israel's elite Sayeret Matkal commandos, along with medical teams, had just landed at the well-lit Entebbe airport without suspicion.

The commandos drove toward the terminal in a Black Mercedes with Land Rover escorts, tricking Ugandan guards to believe that Idi Amin was visiting. Guards soon approached the vehicles and were shot, the ruse was now over. Time was of the essence. A few seconds delay could foil the entire operation. Taking a chance that the airport complex was not booby trapped, they headed toward the hostage compound. Nearby, seven parked Soviet-made MIGS were hastily destroyed, preventing pursuit of the Israeli aircraft after the operation. The commandos were just a few hundred yards away. They burst in, alerting the stunned hostages that they were Israelis and to keep low. Some shouted out the word nes, Hebrew for "miracle".

Over the next 45 seconds, there were bursts of gunfire, and then the firing ended. The hostages were quickly escorted on board the Hercules transports, which headed home to Israel via a brief stop in Nairobi, Kenya, for refueling and medical treatment for some of the wounded. The entire raid lasted fifty-three minutes.

It took fifty-three minutes to thwart the plans of the PFLP.

The operation was so daring, the Israeli cabinet repeatedly deliberated, and only decided to proceed at the last minute, within hours of the deadline. The mission's overall commander, Brigadier-General Dan Shomron, later described the daring and extreme difficulties of the rescue mission: "You had more than one hundred people sitting in a small room, surrounded by terrorists with their fingers on the trigger. They could fire in a fraction of a second. We had to fly seven hours land safely, drive to the terminal area where the hostages were being held, get inside, and eliminate the terrorists before any of them could fire."

The seven hijackers and approximately twenty Ugandan troops died. Three hostages were killed during the gunfire exchange. Israeli Commando Surin Hershko was paralyzed when he was shot while on a diversionary tactic. One passenger, Dora Bloch, a Jewish British citizen, who was hospitalized earlier for stomach pains, was murdered the next day by Ugandan soldiers.

The rescue operation, originally named Operation Thunderbolt, was renamed Operation Yonatan in honor of the operation's commander, Yonatan Netanyahu, 30, who was cut down by a Ugandan sentry as he was about to enter the compound. Netanyahu believed from the outset that the plan was doable and his confidence influenced government leaders and his fellow commandos. On that day, one of Israel's greatest soldiers had fallen.

That day, which also happened to be the American bicentennial, forces that threaten freedom were routed by courage and daring. In the UN General Assembly, some praised the mission, others condemned and criticized. No matter. All words aside, heroic actions spoke on that triumphant day.

Thirty three (FORTY) years later, as the threat of terrorism looms large, Entebbe stands as a model of victory and of how victory is achieved.

THE PHONELESS WEALTHY

By: Suri Stern

Can anyone forget the scene in The Sound of Music, when Fraulein Maria takes the Von Trapp children on a boat, and they are so excited to see their father, they all stand up at once and topple the boat over and fall into the water fully clothed and happy as can be.

I saw the same recently at Far Rockaway beach. There were two boats of Hispanic families rowing to the beach. The family in one of the boats was so happy to be together that as they were approaching the beach, the kids stood up and the boat toppled over spilling the content of the boat, namely the family, fully clothed into the water. The boats were on loan by the two men from a boat rental company for whom they work. One of their perks is that they get to use a boat on their days off. I joked with them, that I should work for the company as well, and they seriously responded that I wouldn't like to make \$8/hour.

They fooled around in the water and as the day was ending they [illegally] took out a little barbecue and were grilling dinner on the beach. I watched them for perhaps 2 hours. It dawned on me. I didn't hear one cell phone ring, nor did I see any cell phone amongst the six adults. I was at a carnival recently with many families whose adults made more than \$8/hour, and almost each one of them had a cell phone attached to hands and ears, with kids pulling at them, but eema, but abba, we want this or that, or this ride or that ride, or this toy or that toy, or this food or that food. I know it is hard to detach.

But the look of the children as they splashed their parents, and in return their father water tackled them. Not possible with a phone in hand.

Digging sand together, making sand castles. Not possible with a phone in hand. Staying in the present. No need to be the star of your Facebook friends.

Sure they wont have their pictures on Instagram before they leave the beach. They wont have a hundred selfies in a thousand poses, but in their minds, thoughts and feelings, this day is engraved as part of their inner photo portfolio, no not as their photo portfolio, their psycho emotional portfolio that allows them to feel secure that they have a family, that they spend time as a family, that they are prioritized over the Facebook pix.

The Phoneless Wealthy? Priceless.

Want to Raise Really Smart Kids? Science Says Do This

By Peter Economy - The Leadership Guy

Parents are always trying to find the next big trend in parenting--and for good reason, too. They want to know how to be better parents, how to raise healthier and more successful children, how to interact with their kids in this dynamic landscape of advanced technological discovery, and so on. But have you ever wondered what the real secret is for raising smarter children?

Turns out, the key is not praising them for being smart.

In fact, more than three decades of study have shown that, overall, the process is much more important for kids than end results, as reported in a piece in Scientific American. Intelligence, at its root, is actually built through making mistakes and learning from them. Thus, to improve one's intelligence, it's absolutely imperative to include the option of defeat.

Kids who believe they are already smart enough don't have room for growth. In the same study, kids who were more "mastery-oriented" felt that it was more important to develop intelligence through determination and hard work. They rarely found intelligence to be a stagnant quality, instead believing that it was malleable--that it can always grow.

Believing in self-improvement, it seems, is by far the most effective way to promote it. Apparently, if we believe we can grow, we often do.

Children who are taught that self-improvement is a desirable trait are more easily able to confront self-faults and deficiencies later in life. They are more adept at molding their reactions to unexpected things; they are skilled at confronting problems, for they see challenges as chances to better themselves rather than hindrances alone.

So, how do we teach children to love self-improvement?

Through proper praise. If we applaud the efforts of our children every time they get things right, they'll learn to grow discouraged too quickly when things don't. In fact, to raise children that appreciate their faults--and learn how to work with them--we should encourage their failures too. Push your child to take risks, to make mistakes, to not do everything perfectly all the time. They need to know that's OK if they don't--it'll just be amazing when they do.

Summary of the Parasha

There is an interesting story in this week's parasha which does not get discussed often. After Moshe tells Benei Israel the punishment that Benei Israel will spend 40yrs in the midbar for complaining about the land, Perek 14 , Pesookim 40-45 discuss how a group of people from Benei Israel woke up in the morning and decided they were wrong about the land and that they wanted to enter Eretz Israel. Moshe tells them not to attempt entering the land because Hashem is not with them and they will not succeed in defeating their enemies. The group does not listen. They defiantly ascend the mountain to enter the land and are wiped out by the Amalekim and Canaanim who dwelled on the mountain. I just thought this was interesting as we do not hear about this story very often.

Shelach - The parasha of the spies (year 2)

- 1- Spies are appointed to explore Eretz Israel before Benei Israel entered the land
- 2- The spies come back with a negative report. Benei Israel cries & complains
- 3- Hashem resolves to punish Benei Israel. Moshe fights to save them
- 4- Benei Israel are told they will spend 40yrs in the midbar. A group tries to enter Israel w/o permission
- 5- The parsha discusses the meal offering and libations that are brought with korbanot
- 6- The mitsva to separate challah, a kahal who sins with avoda zara by mistake
- 7- An individual who sins with avoda zara by mistake. The one who gathered wood on shabbat. The parasha of sinit.

FROM THE JERSEY SHORE NEWSLETTER

“And how is the land...are there trees in it or not?” (Bemidbar 13:20)

Moshe Rabenu allows the people to send spies to the land. In his explanation of the mission, he tells them to look for trees. Rashi explains: “see if there is among them a decent man who can protect them through his merit.”

The Satmar Rebbe zt”l (as quoted in Ha-Meir) asks, if the trees mentioned refer to a righteous man, what is the explanation of the rest of the words “and take from the fruit of the land,” since we are not talking about real trees? Furthermore, it is difficult to understand Moshe’s instructions. A true sadik is difficult to find, since it is a very private matter. Many times his inside is not like his outside. How is one to

know whether the man has the power to protect the people?

But, Moshe gave them a sign that will signal to them the true nature of the man. The essence of the man can be determined by looking at the behavior of his "fruits", his children and his students. If they walk a straight path in life, it's a sign that the man is a sadik. If they don't follow the path of Hashem, it's an indication that his interior is not like his exterior, he only appears like a sadik. Now we can understand the pasuk when it says "and take from the fruit of the land," it means go and see the behavior of his children and students and thus you will know that the man is a sadik. Rabbi Reuven Semah

"You shall not explore after your heart and after your eyes." (Bemidbar 15:39)

In the third chapter of the Shema, which is found at the end of this perashah, we read the commandment, "You shall not follow your heart and eyes." Indeed, this is one of the 613 misvot, and this commands us not to look at people who are exposed indecently, or pictures thereof. The interesting thing to note is that first it says not to follow our heart, and then our eyes, when in reality we would assume that we first see with our eyes, and then our hearts act upon it.

The Rabbis teach us that from here we see an amazing thing: the eye only sees what the heart wants it to see. If a person doesn't care what he looks at, meaning his heart has given him carte blanche to see whatever it desires, then his eyes will find many forbidden things to look at. If, however, his heart dictates that he shouldn't see immodesty, he will be able to watch his eyes from straying after those very things. He will be on guard not to let images which are suggestive of immorality come his way. So truth be told, his heart must come first, and then his eyes will follow the proper guidelines.

This is extremely important in this kind of weather, when the streets are full of people who are not dressed properly. If we put in our heart that we only want to see the proper things, our eyes will not stray where they should not, and Hashem will protect us in this very area. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

RABBI ELI MANSOUR
Visit DailyHalacha.com, DailyGemara.com,
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The Halachot of Crying

Parashat Shelah tells the tragic story of the Meragelim, the spies that Moshe sent to explore Eretz Yisrael in advance of the nation's entry into the land. The spies returned with a negative report, and

discouraged Beneh Yisrael from proceeding into the land. The night after the spies' return, the nation wept, lamenting the fate that awaited them. God punished Beneh Yisrael for their response to the spies. He had promised to bring them to a special land, and they should have thus rejected the spies' report, rather than accepting it and lamenting their imminent entry into the land. God therefore decreed that this generation would die in the wilderness, and not enter into Eretz Yisrael.

The Rabbis teach us that this tragic episode actually yielded even graver repercussions. This incident occurred on the night of Tisha B'Ab, which, as we know, is a day that has seen numerous catastrophes throughout Jewish history. After Beneh Yisrael spent the night of Tisha B'Ab weeping in response to the spies' report, God announced, "You cried for naught – I will now establish this night as an occasion of crying for all generations." Sure enough, Tisha B'Ab would later become the day on which both Bateh Mikdash were destroyed, and the day of numerous other tragedies in our history.

God's response to the people's weeping presents us with a critical lesson for life. It warns us against crying "for naught." God was angered because of the "Bechiya Shel Hinam," Beneh Yisrael's unwarranted weeping. They were receiving an unparalleled blessing, a priceless treasure – Eretz Yisrael – and yet they wept, they complained. When people cry "for naught," for no valid reason, God becomes angry, and says, "You're crying for no reason – I will give you something to cry about," Heaven forbid. If we – like the generation of the spies – reject the gifts God gives us, and cry and complain, then He may likely give us a valid reason to cry.

There are, of course, situations where crying is allowed and even appropriate. When a person loses a relative or close friend, Heaven forbid, crying over the loss is most certainly appropriate. A grieving relative should never be discouraged from crying. Certainly, on the opposite end, shedding tears of joy and gratitude is a perfectly acceptable expression of emotion. And when we pray for our children, we must never feel the need to hold back our tears. God treasures the tears we shed out of concern for the wellbeing of our children, and those tears are very precious.

But there are many other instances of crying that fall into the category of "Bechiya Shel Hinam" – unwarranted crying, when people cry over "problems" that are actually blessings, like Beneh Yisrael's weeping upon hearing the spies' report.

I was once summoned to settle a tense dispute between a husband and wife regarding their children's education. They couldn't agree over which school to choose for their child, as one spouse wanted a school with stricter religious standards and the other wanted a school with less strict standards. The husband and wife were literally driven to tears by this argument. The question of which school to choose is certainly a crucial and sensitive one, but it does not warrant crying. How many unmarried people, and childless couples, dream about having such an argument! How many parents are there with a gravely ill child, Heaven forbid, who wish they had the luxury of arguing over where to send him to school! Is this something to cry about? Baruch Hashem, this couple had happy, healthy children, and they had the ability to enroll their children in a variety of fine Torah institutions. It is a Beracha to be able to have such an argument! They should have felt blessed to have to make a decision between different Torah schools for their children, notwithstanding the challenge presented by the difference of opinion. Certainly, this is an important question that needs to be discussed and addressed with seriousness. But we have to be very careful what we cry about. If we cry about these "problems," we run the risk of confronting far more serious problems, God forbid.

On another occasion, I was asked to mediate between a husband and wife who were embroiled in a bitter argument over...a couch. The husband did not like the couch the wife chose for their living room. Again, the argument brought them to tears. Baruch Hashem, this couple was able to afford nice furniture. There is no need to cry or lament in this situation. This is a "Bechiya Shel Hinam" – weeping for no reason, bemoaning a situation that is actually a blessing and a gift.

Even with regard to mourning a loved one's passing, it may surprise some to know that there are Halachot governing crying. Halacha requires gradually decreasing the intensity of bereavement with time, and mourning is to end after the Sheloshim (the first month after the loved one's passing), or twelve months, in the case of a parent, Heaven forbid. If one continues grieving after this point, the Sages teach us, God becomes angry. It is natural – and obligatory – to cry and mourn for a personal loss, but at a certain point, one must accept God's decree and move on.

The message of Beneh Yisrael's "Bechiya Shel Hinam" is that even crying, our emotional response to situations, is governed by Halacha. Overreacting to adversity reflects a lack of appreciation for all we

have been given, for the many blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Life is full of challenges, and our job is to confront them to the best of our ability, without crying over or lamenting our condition. We should feel blessed and privileged to have challenges to confront, and must ensure to appreciate our blessings, and give thanks to the Almighty – rather than cry about them.

**VICTOR BIBI
SOD HAPARASHA**

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**Rabbi Wein
CAUSE AND EFFECT**

An article entitled: "What's wrong with Conservative Judaism?" appeared in a recent issue of the Jerusalem Report magazine. This article was authored by Myron M. Fenster, the Rabbi Emeritus of the Shelter Rock Jewish Center of Roslyn, New York, a leading Conservative congregation. As the title of the article indicates, the movement is in trouble due to a dramatic decrease in its number of synagogues and also in its general membership.

It is especially disturbing in light of the fact that in the middle of the last century the movement was supposed to be the vanguard and future of American Jewry and was so regarded then by all of the experts on the Jewish community. Orthodoxy was dead, and Reform was too assimilationist. Almost by default, the face of American Jewry would be defined by the Conservative movement.

Like many expert opinions in life, things didn't turn out as forecast. As the title of the article in the Jerusalem Report reflects, Rabbi Fenster attributes the troubles of the conservative movement to a lack of "conviction and fervor." I wholeheartedly agree with him on this point, even though my interpretation of "conviction and fervor" may not be exactly what he had in mind.

While making adjustments in synagogue ritual and placing the synagogue at the apex of Jewish life – even over Sabbath observance – the Conservative movement was meant to hold the line on Jewish traditions and observances and to create a sense of strong Jewish identity and self pride. Instead, it gave into becoming the lackey of Reform and devoting itself to general American social issues, which have Jewish roots and interests, but are not sufficient, by

themselves, to influence and inspire Jewish uniqueness and loyalty.

Conservative Judaism, which retreated from its own original tenets and traditions on every front – Sabbath observance, kosher food, the sanctity of marriage and the requirements of divorce, became engrossed in sloganeering and projects, none of which have resonated with the Jewish soul.

What is striking to me about the current Conservative mantra is that apparently nowhere does God appear to be in the picture. They are so busy fixing the world, helping the underdog, fighting discrimination and all of the other notable clauses being espoused by our progressive society, that the Creator of the world is almost always absent from the scene.

Judaism always espoused a connection of the individual human being to the eternal God. In the jumbled jigsaw puzzle of modern society, such a connection – or even the attempt to achieve such a connection – has been ignored and abandoned. All of the commandments of the Torah are meant to forge such a connection.

Kosher is not a tradition or a societal norm – it is a way to connect with the Creator. So is Sabbath observance, thrice daily prayer, modesty of dress, discipline of speech and the intense study of Torah. All of this as been pretty much abandoned by the Conservative movement though at one time in the not so distant past it championed all of these causes and claimed philosophical adherence to them. Rabbi Fenster himself points out: “As a result, they look at Conservative Judaism as desultory and standing for nothing.” And that is why the movement needs an infusion of “conviction and fervor.” In short, it needs to stand for traditional Jewish life and values.

The Orthodox Jewish community also suffers from the fact that even though it deals thoroughly with the minute details of Jewish law and ritual, and correctly does so, in many instances, it no longer emphasizes the necessary connection with God, which after all is the basic premise of Judaism and Jewish life.

This has been an ongoing struggle throughout Jewish history. Many movements, such as the Chasidic and Mussar movements, attempted to redress this failing over the past few centuries with varying degrees of success. Conviction and fervor are necessary throughout the Jewish world and in the Orthodox camp as well.

We concentrate a great deal on knowledge and scholastic achievement. Nevertheless, our souls

yearn for this spiritual connection to the Creator. Without this ingredient being present in traditional Jewish life, it would become routine, boring and eventually unattractive. In our current society, which believes so much in randomness, coincidence and the omnipotence of human beings and technology, God is pretty much written out of the picture. We only experience His presence on rare occasions, usually sad ones, in our lifetime. But with a little conviction and fervor on our part, God can certainly be introduced into our life and behavior.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks Two Kinds of Fear

One of the most powerful addresses I ever heard was given by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, on this week's parsha: the story of the spies. For me, it was nothing less than life-changing.

He asked the obvious questions. How could ten of the spies have come back with a demoralising, defeatist report? How could they say, we cannot win, the people are stronger than us, their cities are well fortified, they are giants and we are grasshoppers? They had seen with their own eyes how God had sent a series of plagues that brought Egypt, the strongest and longest-lived of all the empires of the ancient world, to its knees. They had seen the Egyptian army with its cutting-edge military technology, the horse-drawn chariot, drown in the Reed Sea while the Israelites passed through it on dry land. Egypt was far stronger than the Canaanites, Perrizites, Jebusites and other minor kingdoms that they would have to confront in conquering the land. Nor was this an ancient memory. It had happened not much more than a year before.

What is more, they already knew that, far from being giants confronting grasshoppers, the people of the land were terrified of the Israelites. They had said so themselves in the course of singing the Song at the Sea:

The peoples have heard; they tremble;
Pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.
Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed;
Trembling seizes the leaders of Moab;
All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.
Terror and dread fall upon them;
Because of the greatness of your arm, they are still
as a stone (Ex. 15:14-16)
The people of the land were afraid of the Israelites.
Why then were the spies afraid of them?

What is more, continued the Rebbe, the spies were not people plucked at random from among the population. The Torah states that they were "all of them men who were heads of the people of Israel." They were leaders. They were not people given lightly to fear.

The questions are straightforward, but the answer the Rebbe gave was utterly unexpected. The spies were not afraid of failure, he said. They were afraid of success.

What was their situation now? They were eating manna from heaven. They were drinking water from a miraculous well. They were surrounded by Clouds of Glory. They were camped around the Sanctuary. They were in continuous contact with the Shekhinah. Never had a people lived so close to God.

What would be their situation if they entered the land? They would have to fight battles, maintain an army, create an economy, farm the land, worry about whether there would be enough rain to produce a crop, and all the other thousand distractions that come from living in the world. What would happen to their closeness to God? They would be preoccupied with mundane and material pursuits. Here they could spend their entire lives learning Torah, lit by the radiance of the Divine. There they would be no more than one more nation in a world of nations, with the same kind of economic, social and political problems that every nation has to deal with.

The spies were not afraid of failure. They were afraid of success. Their mistake was the mistake of very holy men. They wanted to spend their lives in the closest possible proximity to God. What they did not understand was that God seeks, in the Hasidic phrase, "a dwelling in the lower worlds". One of the great differences between Judaism and other religions is that while others seek to lift people to heaven, Judaism seeks to bring heaven down to earth.

Much of Torah is about things not conventionally seen as religious at all: labour relations, agriculture, welfare provisions, loans and debts, land ownership and so on. It is not difficult to have an intense religious experience in the desert, or in a monastic retreat, or in an ashram. Most religions have holy places and holy people who live far removed from the stresses and strains of everyday life. There was one such Jewish sect in Qumran, known to us through the Dead Sea Scrolls, and there were certainly others. About this there is nothing unusual at all. But that is not the Jewish project, the Jewish mission. God wanted the Israelites to create a model society where human beings were not treated as slaves, where rulers were not worshipped as demigods,

where human dignity was respected, where law was impartially administered to rich and poor alike, where no one was destitute, no one was abandoned to isolation, no one was above the law and no realm of life was a morality-free zone. That requires a society, and a society needs a land. It requires an economy, an army, fields and flocks, labour and enterprise. All these, in Judaism, become ways of bringing the Shekhinah into the shared spaces of our collective life.

The spies feared success, not failure. It was the mistake of deeply religious men. But it was a mistake. That is the spiritual challenge of the greatest event in two thousand years of Jewish history: the return of Jews to the land and state of Israel. Perhaps never before and never since has there been a political movement accompanied by so many dreams as Zionism. For some it was the fulfillment of prophetic visions, for others the secular achievement of people who had decided to take history into their own hands. Some saw it as a Tolstoy-like reconnection with land and soil, others a Nietzschean assertion of will and power. Some saw it as a refuge from European antisemitism, others as the first flowering of messianic redemption. Every Zionist thinker had his or her version of utopia, and to a remarkable degree they all came to pass.

But Israel always was something simpler and more basic. Jews have known virtually every fate and circumstance between tragedy and triumph in the almost four thousand years of their history, and they have lived in almost every land on earth. But in all that time there only ever was one place where they could do what they were called on to do from the dawn of their history: to build their own society in accord with their highest ideals, a society that would be different from their neighbours and become a role model of how a society, an economy, an educational system and the administration of welfare could become vehicles for bringing the Divine presence down to earth.

It is not difficult to find God in the wilderness, if you do not eat from the labour of your hands and if you rely on God to fight your battles for you. Ten of the spies, according to the Rebbe, sought to live that way forever. But that, suggested the Rebbe, is not what God wants from us. He wants us to engage with the world. He wants us to heal the sick, feed the hungry, fight injustice with all the power of law, and combat ignorance with universal education. He wants us to show what it is to love the neighbour and the stranger, and say, with Rabbi Akiva, "Beloved is humanity because we are each created in God's image."

Jewish spirituality lives in the midst of life itself, the life of society and its institutions. To create it we have to battle with two kinds of fear: fear of failure, and fear of success. Fear of failure is common; fear of success is rarer but no less debilitating. Both come from the reluctance to take risks. Faith is the courage to take risks. It is not certainty; it is the ability to live with uncertainty. It is the ability to hear God saying to us as He said to Abraham, "Walk on ahead of Me" (Gen. 17:1).

The Rebbe lived what he taught. He sent emissaries out to virtually every place on earth where there were Jews. In so doing, he transformed Jewish life. He knew he was asking his followers to take risks, by going to places where the whole environment would be challenging in many ways, but he had faith in them and in God and in the Jewish mission whose place is in the public square where we share our faith with others and do so in deeply practical ways. It is challenging to leave the desert and go out into the world with all its trials and temptations, but that is where God wants us to be, bringing His spirit to the way we run an economy, a welfare system, a judiciary, a health service and an army, healing some of the wounds of the world and bringing, to places often shrouded in darkness, fragments of Divine light.

**AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL
"And you will see it and you will remember all
the Mitzvot of Hashem and you will do them"
(15:39)**

The Mitzvah of Sisit is a Commandment which is categorized as an 'Edut', Testimony. An Edut testifies to Historical events or great principles.

Since we can understand the Edut more easily, therefore they are more obligatory for us to do them. Principle: "Whatever is easier to do is more obligatory".

Some examples of Edut are:

Matzah – to recall being slaves in Egypt.

Sisit – to remember the Mitzvot.

Mezuzah – reminds us that this is a Holy home given to us by Hashem.

Teffilin – reminds us that Hashem took us out of Egypt. And that the words of Torah should be on our lips.

Pesach – Yetziat Mitzrayim.

Shabbat – that Hashem created the world from nothing (ex nihilo).

The verse says that when we look at the Sisit we should remember all of the (613) Mitzvot. This would

necessitate the knowledge of all the Mitzvot and include a special effort to perform. The Rabbis tell us, "If a person tries to do too much at one time he will not accomplish anything". Therefore, when we gather the 4 Sisit every morning during the Shema prayer, let's try to think and 'remember' at least the following 4 Mitzvot which will fulfill 4 Commandments from our Torah.

1. "To gain fear/awareness of Hashem" – think that Hashem is looking at you. "Et Hashem Elokecha Tira"
2. "To Love Hashem" – say, 'I Love You Hashem'. "Veahabta Et Hashem Elokecha Bechol Lebabecha"
3. "To Thank Hashem" – Thank Him for Everything. "Tob Lehodot LeHashem"
4. "To Love your fellow Jew & Jewish Nation" – "Veahabta L'reacha Kamocho"

We must listen to the testimony of the Edut as they were made in order to speak to us.

When you see 'Sisit', your neighbor's or your own, remind yourself of the Mitzvot.

By thinking into the Edut/Testimonies of our Torah you will produce a diamond and a collection of gems in your mind which will give you pleasure in this world and in the next world forever.

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