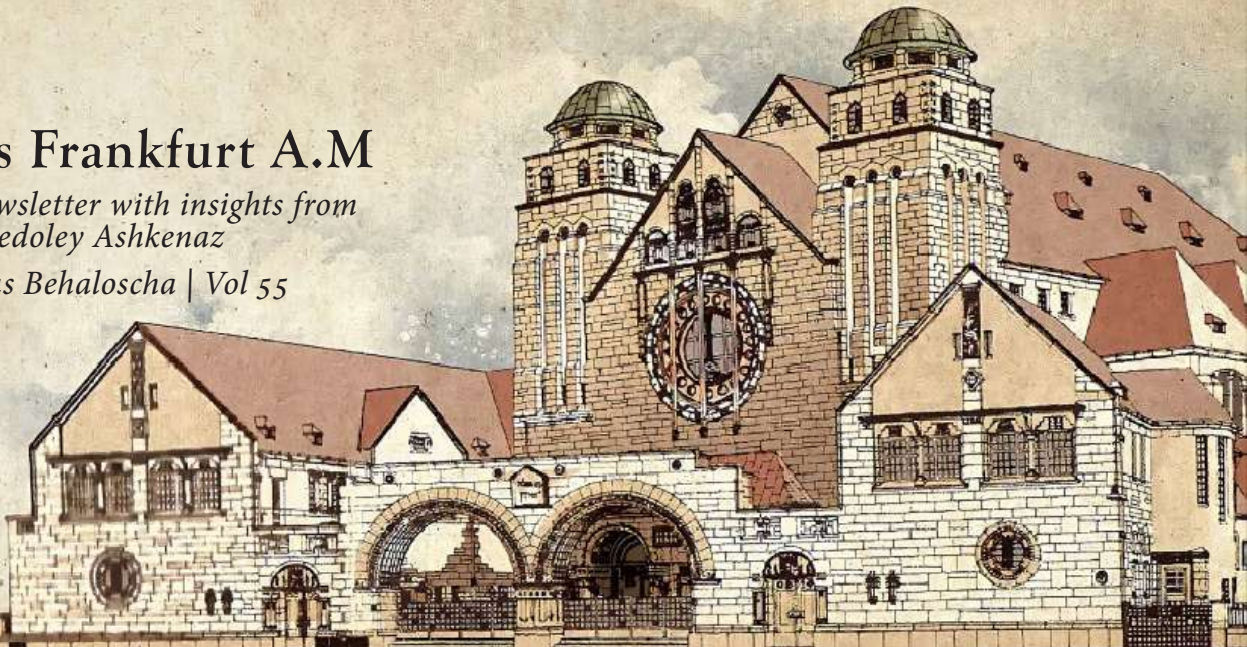


Yeshivas Frankfurt A.M

A weekly newsletter with insights from
Gedoley Ashkenaz

Parshas Behaloscha | Vol 55



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The Fire and The Glow

Based on the Torah commentary of Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch - Rabbi Yisroel Kahn (Queens,NY)

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר: שלח לך אנשים ויבחנו את ארץ כנען אשר אני נתן לבני ישראל... ולא תתרו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם אשר אתם זנים אחר ריבכם.....

And Hashem spoke to Moshe saying: Send out men for you that they may explore the land of Canaan which I have given to the Children of Israel...

...And that you shall not pursue after your own heart, and own eyes, going after what you become unfaithful to Me. Shelach 13:1-2, 15:39

Question

The מרגלים were all men of great spiritual stature, yet they strayed from their mission to such an extent that they openly defected from Hashem and dragged Klal Yisrael along with them. How did this happen?

Understanding

The mitzvah of tzitzis at the end of our parsha, which forms a conclusion to the episode of the מרגלים, gives a clear and simple explanation for their error:

And that you shall not pursue after your own heart, and own eyes, going after what you become unfaithful to Me.

The מרגלים were sent to explore the land which Hashem was giving them, a land Hashem had already told them was good (Rashi, Shelach 13:2). Given this, their mission was not to see whether the land was good, but how the land was good and perfectly suited for them and their life task- serving Hashem. Everything Hashem gives us is by definition good; and precisely what we need to accomplish our life tasks. We just have to recognize this.

The מרגלים lost sight of this guiding truth, and consequently strayed so far from their true mission they openly rebelled against Hashem. Their viewpoint while exploring the land, and the conclusions they drew should have been ה' – motivated by the knowledge that everything Hashem says is good is good, and everywhere we are led is Hashem's doing for our good.

The מרגלים were guided, אחרי לבבכם, after their heart's desires and feelings, and אחרי עיניכם, what appeared to their eyes as a hindrance or aid to achieve their desires. Using their hearts and eyes as guides caused them to forget that they were not the ones determining a course of action, or whether something was "good" or "bad". When one sees

Rav Schwab on this week's Parsha

Yaakov de Wolff, London

“וְהָיָה לָכֵם לְצִיצֵת וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹת ה' וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא-תִתְּוֹרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם זֵנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהֵייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם:”

“They will be tzitzis for you, and when you see them you will remember all Hashem's mitzvot, and you will perform them. You will not follow your heart and your eyes into unfaithfulness. This is in order that you will remember and perform all my mitzvot, and be holy for your G'd” (Bamidbar 15:39-40).

Rav Schwab זצ"ל notes a difference between the two pesukim. In the first one, seeing the tzitzis makes one remember all the mitzvot, and the importance of performing “them” (without “all”). In the second posuk, both the remembering and the performing is referred to with the word all (כָּל).

He explains that it is impossible for a single person to keep every single one of the mitzvot. For instance, some of them only apply to a king, a Kouhein, or a judge. Nevertheless, with regards to learning Torah, we are still expected to learn the details of these mitzvot. The first posuk reflects this reality: we are required to learn (וּזְכַרְתֶּם) all the mitzvot, but the performance (וְעִשִׂיתֶם) only applies to the ones in which we are מחוייבים.

The second posuk the acts of “remembering and performing” (תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם) are used in reference of the specific mitzvah of “לא-תִתְּוֹרוּ”. This mitzvah has no exceptions, and it is everyone's duty to learn the details of this mitzvah and to perform it as well.

the world in such a manner, namely, that it is I who understands, sees, and decides, then one can despite spiritual greatness and closeness to Hashem, shrink in their mind to the size and vulnerability of a grasshopper. And a human foe, despite their moral depravity, can grow to gigantic proportions seemingly impossible to conquer.

This is what the mitzvah of tzitzis constantly reminds and warns us against:

And they shall be to you for fringes that you may look on them and remember all the commandments of Hashem and fulfill them, and that you shall not pursue after your own heart, and own eyes, going after what you become unfaithful to Me. So that you remember and do all My commandments and become holy to your G-d. I Hashem am your G-d who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your G-d, I, Hashem, your G-d.

The only perspective through which we are to see ourselves and surroundings is, that every occurrence in our lives is brought to us by Hashem to serve Him better. And the only yardstick by which we are to measure our chances of success or failure is if we are worthy or not of the support of Hashem.

MAY THIS TORAH SERVE AS A MERIT TO ALL THOSE ILL IN KLAL YISROEL AND TO THE CONTINUED HEALTH OF ALL OF KLAL YISRAEL

Ashkenaz Briefs

Events in Ashkenaz History and Yahrzeits of Chachmei Ashkenaz

by R' Mordechai Perlman, Ramot, Yerusholayim

Sivan 27

This day is the 278th Yahrzeit [5504/1744] of Moreinu HaRav Meir b"r Yitzchok Eisenstadt zt"l, known as MaHaram Asch. He was a disciple of the Mogen Avrohom and the Nish'al Dovid. Ten years after he got married, he became the Rav of Shidlovits (Poland). Because his many rabbinical responsibilities did not leave him enough time to learn, he left Shidlovits and became the Rosh Yeshiva in Worms (Germany). Then he became the Rav of Prossnitz (Moravia) where he raised Moreinu HaRav Y'honasan Eibeschutz zt"l, after the latter became an orphan. In 5477/1717 he became the Rav of Eisenstadt and the Seven Kehillos [which eventually grew to twelve kehillos]. There he instituted a halachic ordinance forbidding the playing of cards except on Chanukah, Purim and in the house of a Yoledes. In 5483/1723 he had to leave the city because witnesses testified in court that he was involved in larceny. After two years on the witnesses admitted that the Rav had noting to do with the matter and he was able to return home. Upon his return, he instituted a special Y'hi Ratzon to be recited every Monday & Thursday after the Reading of the Torah for salvation from המזיקים את ישראל בלשונם והמהרסים מעמדי ומצבי הקהילות. He authored the Responsa Ponim M'iros and other S'forim.

Sivan 28

455 years ago [5327/1567], the Jews were expelled from Genoa, Italy.

This day is the 100th Yahrzeit [5682/1922] of Walter Rathenau, the Jewish foreign minister of the Weimar Republic of Germany. He was assassinated השם ינקום דמו. Although he was not religious, he would come to Schul in Berlin on Yom Kippur to say Yizkor for his father Emil.

Sivan 29

This day is the 184th Yahrzeit [5598/1838] of our GrosVater Moreinu HaRav Yaakov Yehuda Leib b"r Yehoshua Falk zt"l. He was the Rav of Dyhernfurth am Oder (Prussia) and Breslau (Silesia). There is a letter of approbation from him to a Moreinu HaRav Wolf of Vilna for his work on P'sikta D'Rav Kahana. He was the great-grandson of the P'nei Yehoshua (and the great-great-grandfather of our Opa).

Sivan 30

83 years ago [5699/1939], after more than one month at sea, the MS St. Louis docked at Antwerp (Belgium) with more 900 Jewish refugees on board. Its return to Europe caused the death of 254 of its occupants in the Nazi inferno השם ינקום דמם.

This day is the 305th Yahrzeit [5477/1717] of Moreinu HaRav Avrohom b"r Shaul Broda zt"l. His father sent him to Cracow to learn by Moreinu HaRav Yitzchok Charif zt"l in order to withdraw him from the evil influences of Shabbethaism that were then spreading throughout Bohemia. After receiving Semicha, he returned to his hometown of Prague. He then moved to Jungbunzlau to help his father-in-law with his Yeshiva there. His first rabbinical position was in Lichtenstadt (Czechoslovakia), and his wife passed away there. He became Rav in Raudnitz. There he issued an approbation to the Mogen Avrohom and Taz that were printed in the margins of the Shulchon Oruch in Dyhernfurth am Oder and to the Responsa Ponim M'iros. There he opened his first Yeshiva, and remarried. In 5450/1690 he became Chief Rabbi of Bohemia and Rosh Yeshiva in Prague. Because of a halachic matter that was based on a medical situation that could not be clarified at the time, HaRav Broda ruled stringently because of medical doubt. This

decision pitted him against the Sh'vus Yaakov, the Elya Rabba, and the Chacham Zvi. Because of the controversy, he accepted the rabbinical position in Metz (France). There he opened a large Yeshiva. Oftentimes, the Rav of Prague, Moreinu HaRav Yehonasan Eibeschutz zt"l, had to clarify that controversial halachic matter. Although he ruled leniently, he agreed with the medical opinion of HaRav Broda and presented his medical analysis to the local university and received their agreement. Whereupon HaRav Eibeschutz wrote to Moreinu HaRav Akiva Eger zt"l, "HaShem does not allow the righteous to stumble. Fortunate is HaRav Broda! If these are his decisions in case of doubts, how much more definitive are his rulings when he is certain!" In 5473/1713, Moreinu HaRav Naftoli HaKohen Katz zt"l was forced to leave Frankfurt am Main and HaRav Broda was called to fill that rabbinical post. He opened a Yeshiva there, larger than any of his previous Yeshivos, and the students flocked there to learn from him. In 5475/1715, he issued a code of rules, containing 40 ordinances, relating to conduct at festive occasions in his Kehillah, so as not to arouse jealousy on the part of the local gentile population. Among them were prohibitions against serving expensive foods, wearing silk clothing or clothing with gold or silver buttons and wearing shoes in any colour other than black. His contemporaries called him RashK'B'Hag and he was the teacher of many of the Rabbis of the next generation. He wrote a number of S'forim contains his novellae on Shas. Many famous people have traced their lineage to him, among them our very own Rabbi Binyomin Shlomo Hamburger.

Tammuz 01

926 years ago [4856/1096], troops of the 1st Crusade י"ש attacked the Jewish quarter in Eller (Germany) and engaged in a two-day massacre ה"ד. Three Jews out of 300 survived.

This day is the 240th Yahrzeit [5542/1782] of Moreinu HaRav Noson Nota b"r Leib Frankfurter zt"l. He was a disciple of Moreinu HaRav Leib Strassover zt"l of Rechnitz, and of Maran HaRav Akiva Eger zt"l of Posen who raised him as a son. When his father, the Rav of Mattersdorf (Burgenland) passed away, his son, then only thirteen years of age, was accepted as the Rav in his place.

Tammuz 02

926 years ago [4856/1096], troops of the 1st Crusade י"ש attacked the Jews of Werlinghofen (Germany). Jews had sought refuge there after massacres in Cologne. Many of the Jews committed suicide so as not to be subjected to torture to force them to be baptized ה"ד.

On the same day, the Crusaders י"ש arrived at the

city of Weltzk (Germany), assembled all the Jews, and led them to their deaths ה"ד.

On the same day, the Crusaders י"ש arrived at the village of Neuss (Germany). They killed R' Shmuel b"r Asher and his two sons. After killing them, they dragged their bodies and trampled them in the mud. Then they hanged the two sons in front of the door to their home ה"ד.

762 years ago [5020/1260], the gentiles attacked the Jews of Pforzheim (Germany) with intent to baptize them by force. Three Rishonim committed suicide to avoid being subjected to torture. After their death, their bodies were mutilated. They were: Rabbeinu Shmuel b"r Yakar HaLevi z"l, Rabbeinu Yitzchok b"r Eliezer z"l, and Rabbeinu Avraham b"r Gershon z"l ה"ד.

Tammuz 03

926 years ago [4856/1096], troops of the 1st Crusade י"ש attacked the Jews of Wevelinghofen (Germany). R' Levi b"r Shmuel, his wife and children and the rest of the family, the old Mrs. Rachel (the wife of R' Shlomo HaKohen), and the rest of his group, men, women, and children, brides and grooms, the elderly, stretched out their necks and slaughtered themselves to prevent their being baptized. And there was in that place a Rishon, Rabbeinu Shmuel b"r Yechiel z"l, who escaped temporarily with his only son. His son stretched his neck out before his father. His father made the blessing of slaughtering, his son said 'Omein' and all the assembled said aloud 'Shma Yisroel etc.' After his son died, his father asked a bochur named Menachem to slaughter him, whereupon Menachem slaughtered him and fell upon the sword and died there too. ה"ד.

On the same day, the pious people of Altenahr (Germany) were killed and only precious few survived. There was one pious man there, R' Yitzchok HaLevi z"l, who was viciously tortured. Due to his severe wounds, he was unconscious when he was forcibly baptized. When he recovered, he travelled to his hometown of Cologne, went to his house and rested for a hour. Then he went to the Rhine River and drowned. ה"ד.

333 years ago [5449/1689], there was a terrible fire in the Jewish quarter of Prague (Bohemia). Eleven Botei HaKneses and Botei Midrash were destroyed, together with their Sifrei Torah and other S'forim, the property of the Jews of Prague, as well as the manuscripts of the great Sages that lived there at the time. In this dreadful fire, the Dayan of Prague, Moreinu HaRav Zalman zt"l and his wife Rebbetzin Miriam bas R' Yaakov o"h were killed. The Dayan's body was found burned in the Mikva. It is estimated that he saw that the entire street was enveloped in flames and there was no way to escape. Therefore, he ran to the Mikva to purify himself there before dying, and the building collapsed on top of him