

In this week's *Parashah*, Aharon passes away. R' Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin z"l ("Netziv"; 1816-1893; rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Volozhin, Belarus) writes: Our Sages teach that Moshe and Aharon were equal. Nevertheless, Moshe merited to be the "Father of all Prophets" because that was the mission given to his particular *Neshamah* / soul. Aharon's *Neshamah* made him fit to be the father of all *Kohanim*. (Similarly, King David's *Neshamah* made him suitable to be the father of all kings.) The fact that these *Tzaddikim* had different missions does not indicate that one was greater or lesser than the other, only that their respective *Neshamot* had different "roots" in Heaven.

Netziv continues: Aharon's task included offering sacrifices, in the merit of which *Bnei Yisrael* received their sustenance. In Egypt, *Netziv* says, *Bnei Yisrael* received their sustenance from Pharaoh as long as they were slaves. However, as Pharaoh gradually lost his hold over them, he stopped sustaining them and they were sustained only in the merit of Aharon's prayer. This, writes *Netziv* is why the Torah places Aharon first in the verse (*Shmot* 6:26), "This was Aharon and Moshe to whom *Hashem* said, "Take *Bnei Yisrael* out of Egypt according to their legions." At the time of the Exodus, it was Aharon's prayer that sustained *Bnei Yisrael* more than Moshe's activities. (In contrast, the next verse says, "They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to take *Bnei Yisrael* out of the land of Egypt; this was Moshe and Aharon." When it came to standing up to Pharaoh, Moshe comes first.)

Consistent with the above, notes *Netziv*, a *Midrash* records that Moshe eulogized Aharon as the "Pillar of Prayer." (*Birkat Ha'Netziv Al Mechilta: Bo - Hakdamah*)

Shabbat

The *Gemara* (*Beitzah* 16a) teaches: "All of a person's sustenance is determined between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, except for his expenditures for *Shabbat*, *Yom Tov*, and teaching his children Torah. For these items, if he spends less, Heaven will give him less, and if he spends more, Heaven will give him more." *Rashi z"l* comments: Heaven will give him the money when he needs it or after the fact. (*Rashi* appears to be saying that this *Gemara* is not guaranteeing that a person will have the money to pay these expenditures when he needs it; one may need to go into debt to pay these bills. However, the *Gemara* is promising that a person who has these expenses will receive more from Heaven than he would have received if he did not incur these expenses.)

R' Eliyahu z"l (1720-1797; the *Vilna Gaon*) writes that the *Gemara* is not speaking only of physical sustenance, but also of the soul's sustenance. This means that, on *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov*, a person can attain higher spiritual levels than would have been expected of him based on his spiritual standing during the preceding High Holidays.

R' Reuven Schlossberg *shlita* (*Rosh Kollel* in the Ramat Shlomo neighborhood of Yerushalayim) writes that the *Vilna Gaon's* comment includes two lessons: (1) that the judgment on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* addresses a person's spiritual future, not only his physical future; and (2) that that judgment does not cover the spiritual growth that a person will achieve on *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov* during the coming year.

- Continued in box inside -

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring

10815 Meadowhill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901 / 301-775-9623

Send e-mail to: TheTorahSpring@gmail.com

Back issues at: www.TheTorahSpring.org

Donations to *Hamaayan* are tax deductible.

Donate online: <https://www.paypal.com/US/fundraiser/charity/1234402>



Sponsored by Dr. and Mrs. Irving Katz

on the *yahrzeit* of his mother, Sarah bat Yitzchak Hakohen a"h

Nathan and Rikki Lewin

on the *yahrzeit* of his grandfather

Harav Aharon ben Harav Nossan Lewin z"l Hy"d (the Reisher Rav)

Mrs. Rochelle Dimont and family

on the *yahrzeit* of son, brother, father, and grandfather

Chayim ben Harav Avraham Mordechai a"h

“Hashem said to Moshe and to Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe in Me to sanctify Me in the eyes of *Bnei Yisrael*, therefore you will not bring this congregation to the Land that I have given them.’” (20:12)

In what way did Moshe and Aharon not believe in *Hashem*? R’ Yaakov Moshe Charlap z”l (1882-1951; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Mercaz Harav) explains: A fundamental tenet of *Emunah* / faith in *Hashem* is that He will keep His promises even if we are unworthy. Thus we read regarding Avraham (*Bereishit* 15:6), “And he believed in *Hashem*, and He reckoned it for him as righteousness”--*i.e.*, Avraham believed that *Hashem* would keep His promise that the Jewish People will be as numerous as the stars, even if we are unworthy.

Here, *Bnei Yisrael* were unworthy of receiving water miraculously, as is evident from Moshe’s rebuke (20:10), “Listen now, you rebels! Shall we bring forth water for you from this rock?” Even so, Moshe should have believed that *Hashem* would keep His promise that water would come out of the rock if Moshe spoke to it. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Mei Marom* p.106)

“For a fire has come forth from Cheshbon, a flame from the city of Sichon. It consumed Ar of Moav, the masters of Arnon’s *Bamot*/ heights.” (21:28)

R’ Meir Margulies z”l (1707-1790; rabbi of Ostrog, Ukraine; one of the earliest disciples of the *Ba’al Shem Tov*) writes: Our Sages speak of there being seven *Middot* / characteristics that could cause a person to feel pride: beauty, strength, wealth, honor, wisdom, old age, and children (see *Pirkei Avot* 6:7). Therefore, the Psalms and the Prophets warn us in various places not to feel proud--among the best known (*Yirmiyah* 9:22), “Let not the wise man laud himself for his wisdom, and let not the strong man laud himself for his strength, and let not the rich man laud himself for his wealth.”

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 5a) teaches, however, that a Torah scholar must feel “an eighth of an eighth” (*i.e.*, a little bit) of pride. [Until here from the *Gemara*]. R’ Margulies observes: The phrase “an eighth of an eighth” implies that pride can be spoken of as having 64 parts (*i.e.*, 8 x 8). And, since there are seven *Middot* that might lead to pride, there are a total of 448 (*i.e.*, 7 x 64) parts to pride--that number being the *Gematria* of the word “*Bamot*” (במות)/ “heights”--alluding to pride--in our verse. One must engage in a “*Cheshbon*”/ accounting with himself to eradicate this pride, our verse hints.

We read (*Tehilim* 45:5), “Ride over [your foes] for the sake of *Emet* / truth and righteous humility.” R’ Margulies notes that the *Gematria* of “*Emet*” (אמת) is 441, seven less than “*Bamot*.” If a Torah scholar is encouraged to have “an eighth of an eighth” of pride, then he should have 7/448 units of pride when all seven *Middot* are taken into account. This leaves 441 units (“*Emet*”) to be replaced by “righteous humility.” (*Yachin U’Boaz* ch.3)

“This is the decree of the Torah . . .” (19:1)

Midrash Rabbah teaches: *Hashem* said, “I have enacted enactments and decreed decrees. You may not transgress My decrees.” [Until here from the *Midrash*]

Why does the *Midrash* use seemingly repetitive language? R’ Nosson Lewin z”l (1857-1926; rabbi of Rzeszów, Poland) explains: Our Sages teach that *Hashem* “looked in the Torah and created the world,” *i.e.*, the Torah is the blueprint for the world much as an architect’s drawings serve as blueprints for a building. This means that everything in the world is somehow connected with a *Mitzvah* or a lesson of the Torah.

There are many things in the world that we do not understand, writes R’ Lewin (writing in approximately 1907)--for example, electricity and magnetism. Nevertheless, they are a reality, and we are bound by the natural forces that produce them. Likewise, we must recognize that we are bound by the *Mitzvot* whether we understand them or not. Just as we cannot “transgress” the decrees of nature, so we should not try to avoid the enactments of the Torah, whether we understand them or we do not understand them. (*Petach Ha’bayit to Shu”t Bet Yitzchak: C”M*)

“*Bnei Yisrael*, the whole assembly, arrived at the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people settled in Kadesh. Miriam died there, and she was buried there. There was no water for the assembly, and they gathered against Moshe and Aharon. The people quarreled with Moshe and spoke up saying, ‘. . . And why did you bring us up from Egypt to bring us to this evil place? [It is] not a place of seed, or fig, or grape, or pomegranate; and there is no water to drink!’” (20:1-5)

Why did the lack of water suddenly cause *Bnei Yisrael* to complain that they had no figs, grapes, or pomegranates? R’ Aharon Lewin z”l *Hy”d* (the *Reisher Rav*; killed in the Holocaust; his *yahrzeit* is this week) explains:

Midrash Shir Ha’shirim asks: From where did *Bnei Yisrael* get wine to accompany their *Korbanot* during the forty years in the desert? The *Midrash* answers: From the “Well of Miriam,” which produced grasses, vegetables, and trees. [Until here from the *Midrash*.] It follows, writes R’ Lewin, that when Miriam died and the well dried up, *Bnei Yisrael*’s source of fresh fruits disappeared as well; therefore they complained. (*Ha’drash Ve’ha’iyun*)

– Continued from back page –

This means, writes R’ Schlossberg, that there is no limit to what a person can accomplish spiritually on *Shabbat*--through his Torah study, through his prayers, and through his pleasure at connecting with *Hashem*. A thinking person will use these days wisely! he adds.

(*Da’at Ha’Shabbat* p.3)