

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

SHELAH

Haftarah: Yehoshua 2:1-24

JUNE 9, 2018 26 SIVAN 5778

**DEDICATION: In memory of uncle Charles Sutton – 24 Sivan
And Rabbanit Sarah Maslaton who passed away in June 1975
She was the wife of Hakham Murad and daughter of Hakham David Cohen.**

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EDITORS NOTES

Tonight, our youngest child Mariyah B'H, will be graduating from High School. It's certainly a milestone. For many Americans, graduation from high school is when the child moves out. I have heard over the years clients speak about a new freedom of sending their child off to college and off to work and life and hopefully never to return. It reminded me of the Yiddish custom to dance the mizinke tanz or what has become known as the "broom dance" at the wedding of the last child to marry. I wonder if they truly feel they are cleaning house.

I thought of an article on the origins of the dance written by Rabbi Reuven Becker. He writes: "I asked my relatives in Tel Aviv, a couple of Polish descent, about the custom. (He was a Holocaust survivor from the city of Ruzhan.) Yes, they had both seen the dance at religious weddings in Israel. But she was indignant. "I find it repulsive . . . Can you imagine, a dance to symbolize the sweeping of the children out of the house? I welcome my children into my house with open arms." The custom had not been practiced in Ruzhan, a vibrant town of Mitnagdlim and Chassidim before the war.

When I hear American colleagues' excitement at their child graduating and moving on and out, I pretty much think the same thoughts as this Tel Aviv couple. When our children come home, it fills us with joy and excitement.

Still it's a milestone. Among Yeshiva parents there has to be tremendous relief in writing that last Yeshiva tuition check. Yes I know that there's still seminary to come and college for Mariyah and we still have Moses going to Medical school and beyond, but after 28 years of sending checks to Bella Reis, there's a sense of accomplishment we feel.

And when we pause at moments like these, there is a sense of time rushing by so quickly and wondering where it went. It was only yesterday that Jonah at the time a high school senior, Aryana, Mikhayla, Moses and Mariyah who was beginning first grade piled into a tiny Lexus SC 430 convertible with its miniscule backseat for the trip to school each morning. How did we get six people in that car each day? I can still hear the laughter, the sly comments and the warnings to duck as we passed the police car at the bridge toll, ringing in my ears. (I feel I should add a note warning you not to repeat this, six people in a car should have six seats. Today I know better.)

But as we go from the stage of parent to grandparent, there is also a change in perspective. I don't recall skipping work very often to pick up any of my kids, but for some reason find it more palatable to interrupt my 14 hour day on Wednesdays this spring to pick up my granddaughter at Ramaz, cross the park to the West Side, take her to an after school program, stop by the toy store when it's done and then come back across the park bringing her back to her mother and siblings in their apartment. Perhaps I wonder if not now, when? I also wonder if she at four years old will look back and remember these days. I certainly recall some events with my own grandparents that resonate still.

As we age, we come to understand more clearly that much of life is not in what is, but in what we see it being. Many of us were recently exposed to the Yanny or Laurel test. One word played and two people hear two different things. How can that be? Much of life is like that, but as we age and mature, hopefully our perspective or better yet our ability to control that perspective and shift our paradigm improves.

Last child graduating can be an end or a new beginning. Last child marrying can be a clean sweep or an open door? It's all in how we see it.

I thought this might be a way of introducing what is possibly the central theme of this week's portion and that is perspective. What ten see as the ultimate land of horrors, two see as the ultimate land of good. They all see the same, but its perspective that is different. I wondered if I wrote about this in the past and I

searched and found the article below, so I'll leave you with that and close with one of the most powerful stories on perception I ever heard from Steven Covey.

"I remember a mini-paradigm shift I experienced one Sunday morning on a subway in New York. People were sitting quietly – some reading newspapers, some lost in thought, some resting with their eyes closed. It was a calm, peaceful scene.

Then suddenly, a man and his children entered the subway car. The children were so loud and rambunctious that instantly the whole climate changed.

The man sat down next to me and closed his eyes, apparently oblivious to the situation. The children were yelling back and forth, throwing things, even grabbing people's papers. It was very disturbing. And yet, the man sitting next to me did nothing. It was difficult not to feel irritated. I could not believe that he could be so insensitive as to let his children run wild like that and do nothing about it, taking no responsibility at all. It was easy to see that everyone else on the subway felt irritated, too. So finally, with what I felt like was unusual patience and restraint, I turned to him and said, "Sir, your children are really disturbing a lot of people. I wonder if you couldn't control them a little more?"

The man lifted his gaze as if to come to a consciousness of the situation for the first time and said softly, "Oh, you're right. I guess I should do something about it. We just came from the hospital where their mother died about an hour ago. I don't know what do think, and I guess they don't know who to handle it either."

Can you imagine what I felt at that moment? My paradigm shifted. Suddenly I saw things differently, and because I saw differently, I thought differently, I felt differently, I behaved differently. My irritation vanished. I didn't have to worry about controlling my attitude or my behavior; my heart was filled with the man's pain. Feelings of sympathy and compassion flowed freely. "Your wife just died? Oh I'm so sorry! Can you tell me about it? What can I do to help?" Everything changed in an instant."

One of the positive mitzvot in the Torah is "be'Sedek tishpoht et amitecha." Many hold that this verse is the source of the obligation to judge people favorably, as the mishna in Pirkey Avot tells us, "dan le'kaf zechut." The trait of judging favorably - dan le'kaf zechut is not merely about avoiding premature judgment of others. It is much more than that. In a positive sense, the trait

of dan le'kaf zechut holds the key to success in many spheres of life. It is the commandment to oversee our paradigm.

DOUBLE VISION – 5774

When two witnesses give the same testimony verbatim, we expect that foul play is afoot. Any good investigator will tell us that in virtually every case they handle, witnesses seldom agree on every detail. A detective always expects truthful, reliable eyewitnesses to disagree along the way. Two people can see the same events unfold and later on tell remarkably different stories.

We see this in the portion of Shelach which we read this week. Twelve men, all respectable and of stature, tour the land of Israel together for forty days. They witness the same events, the same citizens, the same products and the same country, but they return with two very different reports. One focuses on the dangers, the irregularities and fear while the other tells of the good, the beauty and the possibilities.

Hashem created and blessed us with two eyes. With our two eyes, instead of seeing the world as flat and two dimensional, a three dimensional world comes into view. Our binocular vision gives us depth perception. It allows us to see a little deeper.

The image seen by all twelve chosen to tour the land was the same, yet the perception and depth of vision differs drastically.

As a child I recall a teacher explaining the concept of "dan lechaf zechut" - judging all in a meritorious way - and telling us that we were blessed with two eyes so that at all times one eye can see the good while another sees the bad and it's up to us to decide which vision we want to take away with us. Life always allows two paths. This is our freedom of choice.

The theme of "two" seems dominant in the portion. We read "ish echad, ish echad", ...one man one man from each tribe should be sent. When the spies return and give their report, Joshua and Caleb repeat the word meod, telling the people that the land is really very, very good. They continue repeating do not fear..... Do not fear. When Caleb counters the words of the others, he again repeats, "we will go up, we will go up and ... He (Hashem) can do it (conquer the land), He can do it."

When Hashem responds this theme of doubling seems to continue. He vows, they will not see (the land)... they will not see it. The punishment

pronounced is that for every one of the forty days that the spies were in Israel, we would have to wander in the desert for one year. Again we see the doubling.... "a day for a year; a day for a year".

As you go through the portion, you will notice that there are many more "doubles" all the way to the very end of the Perasha where we read the paragraph of Sisit which we say twice each day in Shema. Again we see a doubling culminating with the final verse stating, "I am Hashem their God... I am Hashem their God." The mefarshim explain these doubles. Yet on the simplest level it's almost as if G-d is telling us that it's up to us to decide between the two in perceiving how we see Him and his world.

We know that as a result of the people's tear filled reaction to the report of the ten spies, that night of crying became a night where we've cried for thousands of years, the night of Tisha BeAv. It didn't have to be this way. Hashem wanted to give us the land. But we insisted in seeing with our own eyes forgetting how deceiving those eyes can be.

In the past we discussed that as human beings with limitation we typically don't see things as they are; we see things as we are.

We choose the way we see land. We choose the way we see everything in life. We decide which glasses to put on, the glass, half full or half empty. We all know people who dwell on the negative and others who dwell on the positive. We are told that beauty may be in the eye of the beholder. But isn't everything? Can't we choose to despair or have hope?

We all know individuals who seem pre-disposed to see the hand of Hashem in events; people in the midst of crisis, who can sense God's presence and maintain faith and optimism. We know others, who view ours as a material world that offers few signs of hope. These are the Murphy people who live by the creed that if something can go wrong, it will. And for them it usually does.

If there is not a G-d gene that plays a role in a positive versus negative attitude; if it's not nature, it must be nurture. That's what's so sad about the incident of the spies. Faith and Optimism should be part of our nurturing if not built in to our nature as the descendants of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel and Leah.

When we look at the words Shelach Lecha - Send for yourself - we can imagine removing the Shin and seeing Lech Lecha. This was G-d's initial command to Abraham sending Abraham to the land.

Contrast Abraham and the spies. Abraham comes from the north heading south towards Egypt while the spies come up from the desert towards the north. Opposite directions yield opposing attitudes. Abraham certainly sees the physical properties, the people, the produce and the land. But he also has vision of a future and faith in that future although Hashem has told him it is 400 years away.

The Torah often described Abraham as lifting up his eyes and seeing. He looks towards the stars, to the endless possibilities Hashem promises. Contrast this with the spies who saw themselves as grasshoppers in the eyes of the Canaanites.

Two people may experience the same scene, but each can choose what he sees and one chooses the interpretation and his reaction.

One of the most amazing books one can read is Man's Quest for Meaning by Viktor Frankl. He was a holocaust survivor and psychotherapist who suffered horrors at Auschwitz beyond one's ability to imagine. He writes, "Everything can be taken from a man or woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms, to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances."

Whether nature or nurture, we are raised on the stories of our ancestors, of rabbis like Nachum ish Gamzu who taught us gam zu letovah- also this is for the good - that we should attempt to view everything that occurs to us as something positive from G-d. Stories about Rabbi Akiba his student who taught that even when we can't see the good we should know that's all that G-d does is for the good. Joshua and Caleb saw the same things that the others saw. Yet they saw the good.

Perhaps this portion which is so focused on two possibilities, two ways of seeing things and two attitudes that we can walk away with, ends with the paragraph of sisit ,to drive home the point. The paragraph really focuses on seeing. "You shall see it and you shall remember all the commandments." It's a message vision. When you see something, you have a choice in what you walk away with. But try to remember and consider what would my father Abraham have seen? What would he walk away with?

Two witnesses never see the exact same thing. When we look, what will we see?

Shabbat Shalom, David Bibi

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has an amazing article 'Seeing What Isn't There'

PS ... I recently heard a reform rabbi give a speech and was amazed at how he quoted chazal and even my Rabbi's teacher, Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik. The amazement became shock as I heard the conclusions. I said to my son Moses that the rabbis teach us when you quote Torah in someone's name, their lips move even in the grave. I thought at this point the great teacher was not moving his lips but turning in his grave at the thought that his words could be interpreted in such a way.

My friend Rabbi Pesach Lerner posted the following this week. Its simply shocking A NEW LOW: Reform College Commencement Speaker Slams Jews Marrying Jews, Intermarriage "The Source Of All Human Greatness"

The Coalition for Jewish Values would like to share with you this report on the recent graduation speech hosted by the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College (HUC). The speaker was a well-known anti-Israel activist, who used the opportunity to not only demonize Israel's self-defense, but even to oppose Jewish endogamy, Jews marrying Jews. The Interim President of the HUC, Rabbi David Ellenson, both welcomed the speaker and reaffirmed the decision to host him afterwards.

On May 14 at the Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles, California, the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion held its annual graduation and ordination ceremony. The invited speaker was Michael Chabon, a known anti-Israel activist and author.

Chabon's hostility towards Israel and its self-defense is well-known, especially due to his collaboration with "Breaking the Silence" (BtS), an anti-Israel organization that claims a domestic mission, "to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories," but receives two-thirds of its funding from European governments and the New Israel Fund, and refuses to share evidence with the IDF for critical examination.

Chabon and his wife, Ayelet Waldman, met with BtS members before compiling an anthology called "Kingdom of Olives and Ash: Writers Confront the Occupation." The book claimed to offer true accounts, although the spokesman for Breaking the Silence, Dean Issacharoff, was denounced by members of his platoon, including his commander, on

video stating that he had lied about incidents in which he claimed to have participated and followed orders.

Chabon led a tour of Judea together with BtS, during which he called the occupation "the most grievous injustice I have ever seen in my life." Regarding the Cave of the Patriarchs, "where supposedly Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Rebecca and Leah are all buried" per his distorted account, he said: "to see that place being dishonored and made less sacred and less holy by the presence of this incredibly cruel and unjust machinery, some literal machinery and figurative machinery of oppression, it offends me." He would have preferred to see Hebron with no "machinery" there to prevent a repeat murder of its Jewish visitors and residents. He claimed the Jews of Hebron see Arabs as "less truly human."

After all of the above, HUC Interim President Rabbi David Ellenson introduced Chabon as a "moral voice," emphasizing his book dealing with "fifty years of Israeli occupation in Palestine" — the aforementioned work inspired by BtS — and pointing out the current relevance of the book due to the relocation of the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

Taking to the stage, Chabon wasted no time condemning Israel's security barrier, built to prevent further atrocities such as the Dolphinarium, Sbarro and Park Hotel suicide bombings. "Anywhere you look, it is and has always been a hand of power drawing the boundaries, putting up the separation barriers and propagandizing hatred and fear of the people on the other side of the wall. Security for some means imprisonment for all."

He then went on to say that intermarriage is "the source of all human greatness," while "endogamous marriage is a ghetto of two." He condemned Judaism in particular by saying that "any religion that relies on compulsory endogamy to survive has, in my view, ceased to make the case for its continued validity in the everyday lives of human beings."

At least one graduate, Morin Zaray, left in protest. In an op-ed in the LA Jewish Journal, Zaray wrote: "I know that the same wall he said he despised enabled me to live a normal life and to use the bus as a young girl... It was as if horrific terror attacks have never occurred against these Jews — this 'sorriest' and most 'riotous' group of 'convicts' Chabon has ever seen. Maybe he hasn't seen the virulent Jew-hatred that permeates Palestinian society.

"I turned back to look at my brother, who served in a combat unit in the Israel Defense Forces. He looked

sick to his stomach. I got up from my seat and approached my family... I asked my mother if not seeing me graduate would disappoint her. She responded that she would feel ashamed to see me walk on that stage after what had been said. We stood up and left the sanctuary. Standing outside, I was nearly brought to tears as I heard the crowd of Jews give Chabon a thunderous applause.

"For someone who presents himself as an intellectual — steeped in nuance — Michael Chabon has a remarkable ability to present a one-dimensional reality in which the Jews are evil oppressors and the Palestinians are powerless victims, with no agency, no responsibility and no blame. Such a careless disregard for depth and complexity dishonors an institution of higher learning — particularly a Jewish one — particularly on a graduation day."

Ellenson responded: "it does not occur to us at HUC-JIR to quash or vilify political criticism of Israel out of a preemptive fear of controversy." He even claimed that Zaray's tearful essay, bemoaning how Ellenson and Chabon "ambushed" and ruined her graduation, was testament to the diversity of opinion at HUC-JIR.

These are the people demanding Israel bow to its wishes concerning Israel's security, the peace process, the Western Wall and matters of Jewish status.

**Only One Did Not Faint
Today 24 Sivan is the Yahrzeit of Rabbi
Mordechai Eliyahu - who was Rishon L'Zion,
Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel,**

One of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu's early predecessors as Rishon L'Zion, Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, was Rabbi Yitzchak Nissim, who had a special appreciation and admiration for the CHIDA (Rabbi Chaim-Yosef-David Azulai - see below). One of Rabbi Nissim's friends was Dr. Shlomo Umberto Nachon, a native of Livorno (Leghorn), where the Chida lived the end of his life and was buried.

In the late 1950s, Dr. Nachon learned that the Italian authorities wished to build a highway through the Jewish cemetery of Livorno. He quickly informed Chief Rabbi Nissim and, understanding the urgency of the situation, they decided it was time to move the Chida to Eretz Yisrael. Dr. Nachon made the arrangements with the authorities in Livorno, and in 1960 Rav Nissim commissioned, after much coaxing, the then 31-year-old Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, who was known to be intimately familiar with the Chida's writings, to head a team of esteemed Sephardic rabbis (which included Rabbi Yisrael Abuhitzeira, the

Baba Sali, and his brother the Baba Haki, Rabbi Yitzchak Abuhitzeira, chief rabbi in the city of Ramle, who was an expert in Jewish burials in his native Morocco) for the reintering of the bones of the Chida in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Eliyahu related that when he arrived at Lod Airport with the other rabbis, he met with the agency representative who had brought the bones of the Chida in a small wooden coffin. When the Rav saw it, he was appalled "What is this?" he asked. "The bones of the Chida are rolling around in a miniature coffin? How can such a thing be?"

He asked that a larger coffin be brought, so that the bones could be transferred to it and be laid out properly for an honorable burial. Then he requested that the Baba Haki's driver go with his driver, and that they immerse in a mikva [ritual bath], and afterwards buy a Phillips screwdriver to open the coffin.

When they returned, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu made a large hole in the bottom of the new large coffin so that there would be no barrier between the bones and the soil upon burial, but temporarily closed the hole with a stopper. Then the small coffin was inserted into the larger one.

Rabbi Eliyahu had the small coffin opened, whereupon he put his hand in to arrange the bones. But after a few moments he trembled and closed his eyes. Saying in a broken voice that he had no power to do it, he asked pleadingly that the Chida himself put his own bones in order!

Immediately a powerful, almost explosive sound was heard, the coffin began to shake, and a rattling sound -- made by the Chida's remains striking the coffin's walls -- was heard. All the other rabbis fainted on the spot. Rav Mordechai did not faint, explaining afterwards that his absorption in the mitzva helped him remain conscious.

It was beyond belief! The banging and shaking continued until, bone by bone, until the entire skeleton was arranged perfectly -- in the merit of the holy rabbi, the Chida!

"G-d will grant you special Providence, and bring my remains out of this place." [Gen. 50:25]

"He said to me, 'Can these bones live?'...As I prophesied, there was a roaring sound, and the bones came together and joined one another.... 'I am going to open your graves; I will take you out of your graves, My People, and bring you to the Land of Israel.'" [Ezek. 37:3, 7, 12]

Thousands accompanied the funeral procession from the Jerusalem neighborhood of Sanhedria to the cemetery at Har HaMenuchos. At the burial, Rav Eliyahu described the events that had taken place as "Nisei nissim--absolute miracles."

At a later date Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu announced that whoever needs personal salvation can go to pray at the grave of the Chida (just like at other great holy sites -ed.).

It is no wonder that when Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu passed on to his heavenly great reward fifty years later that he was buried near the Chida on Har HaMenuchos!

Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from [//heichalhanegina.blogspot.com/2010/06/rav-mordechai-eliyahu-ztvkl-and-chida.html](http://heichalhanegina.blogspot.com/2010/06/rav-mordechai-eliyahu-ztvkl-and-chida.html) .

Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading:

1st Aliya: Moshe sends the Spies on their mission.

2nd Aliya: The Spies return carrying the massive fruits of the land. They deliver their negative report and the nation loses its faith in G-d and Moshe.

3rd Aliya: Moshe successfully argues for the life of the nation, and Hashem issues the 40 year decree of wandering and dying.

4th Aliya: The Spies die, and the nation is informed of their own punishment.

5th Aliya: The laws of the Mincha - meal offering are stated.

6th Aliya: The laws of separating Challah - the dough offering, and the communal sin offering are stated.

7th Aliya: The individual sin offering; the incident with the man who transgressed Shabbos by gathering sticks; his punishment; and the Mitzvah of Tzitzit, conclude the Parsha.

Yehoshua 2:1 - This week's Haftorah relates the story of Yehoshua sending Kalev and Pinchas to spy out Yericho, their encounter with Rachav, and their report confirming the fear of Yericho's inhabitants. The connection to our Parsha is obvious, however the outcome of this "second mission" was far different than the first one 38 years earlier. The year was 2488 -1273 b.c.e.

FROM THE RABBIS OF THE JERSEY SHORE "And how is the land in which it dwells; is it good or bad?" (Bemidbar 13:19)

How could Moshe Rabenu entertain the possibility that the land of Israel could be bad in any way. Rabbi M. Kormornick quotes the Kotzer Rebbe, that Moshe did not really consider the land could be bad in any way. However, he knew that the spies may not be capable of perceiving everything that they saw in a positive light. Therefore, Moshe wanted them to report to him first and tell him their impression of what they saw, and then he would show them how in reality, everything that they experienced was actually very good, and not as they initially perceived it.

The greatness of our Torah leaders is their ability to see beyond the field of vision that we are capable of. The following story, which took place in 1939, demonstrates this point very well.

In 1939, as Germany invaded Poland, Rabbi Yitzchak Guirzman fled with many other Jews to Lemberg, which was under Russian control. Once in Lemberg, the Jewish refugees had to decide whether they should accept the Russian citizenship that they were immediately offered, or to reject it. No one knew what to do. Should they accept in order not to offend their new hosts, or remain in a state of limbo waiting to see how the war would end? They asked the Rabbi and he advised that citizenship should not be taken up. Most listened to the Rabbi; some didn't.

On the 20th of Sivan the following year, the KGB stormed into Lemberg and arrested all the Jews who had refused citizenship and sent them to Siberia. There was anger and depression in the air, and many people voiced their rage against the Rabbi. However, the words of the Rabbi proved to be lifesaving. Soon after their deportation the Germans invaded Lemberg and killed almost all of the remaining Jewish population there. Those in Siberia were far out of reach of the German army and were saved from certain death. In addition, their refusal to accept Russian citizenship meant that after the war, they were free to leave Russia, unlike those surviving Jews who had sworn allegiance to mother Russia. Rabbi Reuven Semah

"We were like grasshoppers in our eyes, and so we were in their eyes." (Bemidbar 13:33)

The spies, upon returning from their mission, said that they saw giants in Eretz Yisrael. The giants were so tall that we, regular-size humans, were as small as grasshoppers compared to them. The Kotzker Rebbe says that in their words we can detect a critical fault in their character. "We were like grasshoppers in our eyes and so we were in their eyes," shows a concern about how others viewed

them, which affected how they saw themselves. The giants viewed them as small so they also felt small, and this led to their downfall. They lost the confidence to go and conquer the land.

A true story is told about a shoemaker who managed to acquire great wealth. As a result of his new status, he was able to marry off his daughter to a very prominent member of the community. At the wedding, one extremely jealous individual walked over to the former shoemaker with a pair of shoes and asked him if he could repair them. The shoemaker fainted away from embarrassment.

Rav Yisrael Salanter witnessed this incident, and was inspired to start the mussar movement. Mussar is to teach oneself discipline and good character. However, Rav Yisrael was not motivated by the act of the jealous troublemaker, but it was the reaction of the former shoemaker that so inspired Rav Yisrael Salanter. Here he was at the height of success. Not only had he gone from his simple background to great wealth, but he was considered one of the most important members of the community. Yet a nasty comment and a pair of shoes managed to make him feel so low that he fainted. It was to train the coming generations not to react that way that Rav Yisrael established the mussar movement.

Each one of us is great in his or her own way. We all have our own personal features and character traits that make us special and unique. We should not let our image in the eyes of others stand in the way of what we are hoping to do. We can accomplish great things if we maintain our focus and keep the end goal in sight. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

Ugly Picture

Most of us don't like to lose our temper. Our egos always prefer to preside over a situation with cool control. Unfortunately, subduing the demon of anger is more easily said than done.

Our Sages suggest many different practical approaches to assist a person during a bout with temper. The Orchos Sadikim (chapter 12) suggests silence. When you start to boil, keep your mouth closed. Silence is to anger what water is to fire.

Orchos Sadikim also advises that if you can't keep the lid on, try speaking in a low tone. This should have a calming effect on you. The sefer also recommends that you avoid looking straight into the face of the person who is upsetting you, because this can increase your anger.

Another effective cure is to look in a mirror. Anger is ugly. You definitely look better with a smile on your face. When you are about to lose your temper, look in the mirror of your mind and kill the ire before it takes over your entire being.

The moments you spend using these techniques will save you hours of aggravation and add years to your life. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

The Brain's Erasure

"Hashem has also done us a great kindness by giving us the gift of forgetting. Imagine a man who goes to sleep at night with great worries. In the morning he gets up and feels refreshed. He hasn't forgotten all the problems of last night, but he has forgotten his fears. He can go about his business and live normally.

We should thank Hashem for erasing certain files of the brain each night, for us to tackle each day as a new opportunity. (Norman D. Levy, Based on Rabbi Miller's Duties of the Mind)

RABBI ELI MANSOUR Yehoshua and Kaleb

Parashat Shelah tells the tragic story of the Meragelim, the scouts sent to Eretz Yisrael who came back with a discouraging report and urged the nation not to proceed into the land. Two the twelve scouts – Yehoshua and Kaleb – dissented and presented a favorable report about the land and the prospects of its conquest. Unfortunately, the majority prevailed, and the people were persuaded not to proceed.

When the Torah lists the names of the twelve scouts, it refers to Yehoshua – who was the closest disciple of Moshe Rabbeinu – by the name "Hoshea." Rashi explains that this was Yehoshua's original name, but Moshe added the letters "Yod" and "Heh" to form the name "Yehoshua." These letters, which spell a Name of Hashem ("Y-ah"), were added as a prayer to G-d that "Y-ah Yoshi'acha Me'asat Ha'meragelim" – "G-d shall save you from the plot of the scouts." Moshe knew through prophetic insight that the scouts would plot to dissuade the people from entering the land, and he thus prayed that his dear student would be protected from their influence and have the fortitude to oppose them.

The second dissenter, Kaleb, also received the strength to oppose the majority through the power of prayer. As Rashi tells later in the Parasha, when Kaleb arrived in Eretz Yisrael he temporarily separated from the other spies and went to Hebron, to the site of Me'arat Ha'machpela, where the patriarchs are buried. He went there in order to pray for assistance in resisting the influence of the scouts.

Yehoshua and Kaleb were outstanding Sadikim, and yet they needed special prayers for protection from the influence of their peers. Moshe was concerned about his closest and most outstanding disciple, and Kaleb did not feel confident in his ability to withstand the pressure without reciting a special prayer at a holy site. The power of peer influence is so strong that even the greatest Sadikim are vulnerable to its force, and can get thrown off course by their surroundings. As great as Yehoshua and Kaleb were, they needed special divine protection to be able to withstand the pressure exerted by the other ten scouts.

This message assumes special importance in contemporary times, when we live in a society that has, unfortunately, plummeted to such depths of immorality. We are bombarded on a daily basis by messages that run in direct contrast to the Torah values which we hold dear. We are far from the level of Yehoshua and Kaleb, and yet we are exposed to unrelenting - sinful influences constantly. If Yehoshua and Kaleb needed special prayers to protect them, then we can only imagine what kind of lengths we must go to in order to protect ourselves and our children from the negative influences exerted upon us. In every generation, but especially in ours, we must work vigorously to shield ourselves from the influences around us, through prayers, Torah learning and education, and by surrounding ourselves with like-minded devoted Jews so we come under their positive Torah influence instead of being exposed to the negative influences of contemporary society.

**VICTOR BIBI
SOD HAPARASHA**

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**Rabbi Wein
LOST LUGGAGE**

There are many discomfiting and even unpleasant experiences that await those of us who travel by airplane in our current world. Air travel was once considered a luxury experience, apart from one's final destination. Well, the combination of terrorism, enhanced security measures, crowded planes, narrow seats, somewhat surly service and other sundry annoyances have turned air travel into a chore at best. But perhaps the most dreaded of mishaps, when the plane does arrive at its destination, is the sinking feeling that one has at the

baggage carousel when somehow one's baggage does not appear.

The airlines claim that almost all luggage eventually does appear and is delivered to its intended destination and recipient. They also claim that their record of luggage being correctly placed on the carousel at the end of the flight is 95%. Though this may be so, it is of little comfort to the 5% who stand patiently and forlornly at the carousel waiting for luggage that may have been shipped halfway around the world.

The realization that one's luggage has been lost is one of the most frustrating emotions. I recall that once I arrived at my daughter's home in the United States and she was not home, so I left my luggage on the front porch and circled around to the back entrance to see if I could gain entry there. When I could not, I returned to the front porch and to my horror my luggage was gone. I was beside myself. Eventually, however, the cleaning woman noticed me on the front porch and upon being let into the house, I saw that she had efficiently brought my luggage inside when I was in the back of the house. My feelings of relief matched those of the frustration that I had experienced just a few short moments earlier.

This experience, long stored away in my memory bank, surfaces every so often when I think about the current situation of the Jewish people, especially as it relates to those of us that live in Israel. The Jewish people have returned from being almost annihilated by the events of the past century. Jews in the Diaspora have, in the main, become successful and prosperous. Here in Israel we have built a first-world state and society, offering a home for all Jews. Yet, undoubtedly not all our luggage has arrived.

For many Jews any sense of tradition or Jewish history has been misplaced or lost entirely. For many, if not most of the Jewish people, family traditions and long held value systems have been eroded by secularism, assimilation and the pressure of modern society. But somehow in the hearts and minds of many of these Jews, they still stand at the side of the baggage carousel waiting for their 'lost luggage' to appear even if they would be hard-pressed to be able to identify it if it somehow came tumbling down the chute of history and society.

Jews who have lived without tradition and without an attachment to Torah and to the Jewish people, sense within themselves that something is missing. But, few are willing to search for their 'lost luggage.' But, if it does appear, they are drawn to it and there is an

inner sense that this is something that should be claimed.

There is a real awakening in the search for tradition and Jewish values in parts of the Jewish community, certainly here in Israel and even in some of the Diaspora as well. This past century has been a very long and tiresome trip and we are severely jetlagged from the difficult journey. It is understandable that some of our luggage, long treasured and valued, was lost on the way.

But we should never despair, for there are many signs of change in much of Israeli society in its attitude towards tradition, Jewish values and even certain observances and customs. I have no doubt that this will continue in the future as well and that just as the prophet's prediction regarding the ingathering of the exiles has been fulfilled, so too our values, traditions, hopes and aspirations will continue to be revived. None of our luggage will be lost.

Rabbi Yosef Farhi THE MITZVAH TO BE YOURSELF

At least twice a day, we recite the words וְלֹא-תִתּוֹרוּ וְאִתְּחַלְּמוּ אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם. And you shall not wander after your hearts and after your eyes, that you are straying after them.

The Netziv brings to our attention a deeper meaning of this Passuk. Why does the Passuk use the word וְרוּת, which comes from the root word spying, looking for something new, or wandering? It would be more appropriate to say, instead, כַּבֵּב לִירַח וְלֹת אֱלֹ, And don't go after your hearts...?!?

Our Rabbis wanted to bury King Solomon's Kohelet, for it seemed to contradict the Torah, until they reconciled each apparently conflicting verse. (Vayikra Rabah 28a). Rabbi Yishmael asks if there may be a contradiction to these words of Shema, "not to wander after your heart", in the words of Kohelet, Rejoice lad, in your youth, and go in the way of your heart (Kohelet 11). But Rabbi Yishmael reconciled the difference by focusing on the precision of the words. Go after your heart, but don't וְרוּת, or wander after your heart.

What is the difference between going after your heart or wandering after your heart? "Going after your heart" would mean following what you connect to, looking inward. וְרוּת, wandering after your heart, would mean looking outward, at what everyone else is doing. אִיהֵא לַךְ מִדָּאָה וְלֹ רֹבִישׁ הַרְשִׁי כִּרְדִּי וְהִיא רְמוּא יִבֵּר. The most beautiful you is when you are following what you really

connect to, something internal, or מִדָּאָה וְנָם (Harchev Davar/ Netziv). The Torah is telling us, in the words, וְרוּת, to be yourself. Be original. Life is limited. Don't waste time trying to be someone else.

The Netziv expounds on why this concept of being yourself is mentioned next to the laws of Tzitzit strings. Tzitzit strings are the reminder to the 613 mitzvot, and each person has a mitzvah that he connects to. The Talmud brings a list of Rabbis, where each Rabbi mentioned that his Olam Haba would come from a specific Mitzvah that he connected to and took very seriously. Tzitzit, Shabbat, etc. (Shabbat 118b) The Ritva writes that each Talmid Chacham should choose one Mitzvah to observe with extra-special care. And, even one Mitzvah that you do whole heartedly can be your winning ticket to Olam Haba (Sefer Charedim Perek Chivat EY; Rambam end of Mishnayot Makkot).

In learning, as well, connecting is extremely important. Rav said, מִקָּמָה אֵלֵא הַרְוֵת דְּמִוּל מִדָּא וְיָא, A person learns only what his heart desires, as we see in the Passuk וְרוּת, אֵי תִרְוּבָהּ מֵאֵיכָּא. (Avodah Zarah 19a) One of the greatest causes for people to leave learning, to lose its sweetness, is that for too long, they learnt only parts of Torah that they did not connect to. This is because they never looked inward at what speaks to them, but only outward, to what everyone else was learning.

Let us take this to a drone's eye view. There are three areas in religion. White. Black. And Grey. White is the area of the things that you are commanded to do. Black is the area of things that you are commanded not to do. They are both הַבּוּחַ, mandatory. The grey area, the area of וְרוּת, optional, is the area where all of our spiritual dilemmas are found. Black and white are so easy. Open up the Torah, and there it is. But the grey area is just not clear. How long to pray? How long to learn? How much Hishtadlut and how much Eemunah? How much time to spend on any specific Mitzvah? How much Chessed should I do, for whom and in which way? What is the right balance, in so many areas of life? How far beyond the letter of the law should I take my Torah observance? What should I focus on in my learning? Halacha? Aggadah/Mussar/Character refinement?

Most people solve grey questions by looking around and seeing what other people are doing. But this is a huge mistake. The Chassid Ya'avatz says something that can blow your mind. The hardest question for the Faithful Jew to answer is Tzaddik v'ra lo, rasha v'tov lo – "Why do good things happen to bad people, and why do bad things happen to good people?" There

are many answers to this question; each one has its time and place. But the Chassid Yaavatz says that the answer, most of the time, is that a person is judged according to what he could do. You can have a Tzaddik who is suffering, because he can do much more than he is doing. And you can have a Rasha who is rewarded greatly, because, for who he is, that is all he can do!!! (See תמאב רדבעל R Dov Yaffeh zt"l, page הלש)

ירחא רחא ללה and מכבבל ירחא ורותת אל are telling us the biggest lesson in life. Go inward, go toward your C3. Focus on what you Connect to. Gauge yourself by what you Can do. And invest in your unique Character strengths, something we learn from Navot.

Navot HaYizraeli had a beautiful vineyard next to King Achab's palace. King Achab coveted Navot's vineyard and asked Navot if he could buy it for a heavy price; or, he would barter it for a much better vineyard, somewhere else. But Navot refused, saying that this vineyard was a family inheritance and he did not want to part with something that was so dear to his family, no matter the price. King Achab came home very upset, and his wife, Queen Izebel, asked what was wrong. He answered her, telling her how Navot had turned down his offer. Izebel then framed Navot, saying that he cursed King Achab and the Name of G-d. She hired false witnesses, had Navot killed, and took his vineyard for her husband. (Melachim א 21;2)

Our Rabbis ask, why was Navot HaYizraeli punished in this way? Because he had a beautiful voice. He would go up to the Beit Hamikdash for the Holidays and sing in G-d's honor. This had become such an attraction that many people made the pilgrimage, just in his merit. One year, though, Navot stayed home, out of fear that while he was gone, someone would loot his vineyard. His punishment was death, and that his field be taken from him

Why was Navot punished so severely for not singing in the Beit Hamikdash? Shlomo Hamelech taught אֶת־יְקוֹקֶךָ מֵהוֹנֶךָ Honor Hashem from your wealth. (Mishlei 3;9) What does that mean to honor Hashem "from your wealth"? Our Rabbis learn, רְנוּמָה יִרְקַת לֹא, Don't read this passuk to mean to honor Hashem with your money. Learn it to mean that you are to honor G-d with what He graced you with (See Rashi ibid.). If He has given you a pleasant voice, honor Him with that (see Pesikta Rabti 25; see Kaf HaChaim 54).

This sheds light on understanding our Tafkid, our unique mission in this world, our calling. Focusing on others' strengths leaves us feeling weak. Focusing on

our own strengths is what makes us strong. One of the greatest regrets in life is realizing that you lived a life that others wanted you to be, rather than being yourself. And one of the greatest joys in life is the joy of celebrating your uniqueness, the original and authentic you. שְׂמֵחַ בְּהוֹרֵי בְיָלְדוּתֵיךָ. Our Rabbis teach that the saving grace for Kohelet is how King Solomon ends the statement. וְיָדַע כִּי עַל־קֶל־אֵלֶּה יִבְיָאֵךְ. Know that whatever you do in life, you will have to answer up to Heaven that you have done your best, and you have used G-d's gifts to serve Him (Vayikra Rabba 28a).

Never forget these words of King Solomon. You were born an original. Don't die a copy

Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks 'Seeing What Isn't There'

In Philadelphia there lives a gentle, gracious, grey-haired man, by now in his late-90s, whom Elaine and I have had the pleasure of meeting several times and who is one of the most lovely people we have ever known. Many people have reason to be thankful to him, because his work has transformed many lives, rescuing people from depression and other debilitating psychological states.

His name is Aaron T. Beck and he is the founder of one of the most effective forms of psychotherapy yet devised: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. He discovered it through his work at the depression research clinic he founded in the University of Pennsylvania. He began to detect a pattern among his patients. It had to do with the way they interpreted events. They did so in negative ways that were damaging to their self-respect, and fatalistic. It was as if they had thought themselves into a condition that one of Beck's most brilliant disciples, Martin Seligman, was later to call "learned helplessness." Essentially they kept telling themselves, "I am a failure. Nothing I try ever succeeds. I am useless. Things will never change."

They had these thoughts automatically. They were their default reaction to anything that went wrong in their lives. But Beck found that if they became conscious of these thoughts, saw how unjustified they were, and developed different and more realistic thought patterns, they could, in effect, cure themselves. This also turns out to be a revelatory way of understanding the key episode of our parsha, namely the story of the spies.

Recall what happened. Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land. The men were leaders, princes of their tribes, people of distinction. Yet ten of them

came back with a demoralising report. The land, they said, is indeed good. It does flow with milk and honey. But the people are strong. The cities are large and well fortified. Caleb tried to calm the people. "We can do it." But the ten said that it could not be done. The people are stronger than we are. They are giants. We are grasshoppers.

And so the terrible event happened. The people lost heart. "If only," they said, "we had died in Egypt. Let us choose a leader and go back." God became angry. Moses pleaded for mercy. God relented, but insisted that none of that generation, with the sole exceptions of the two dissenting spies, Caleb and Joshua, would live to enter the land. The people would stay in the wilderness for forty years, and there they would die. Their children would eventually inherit what might have been theirs had they only had faith.

Essential to understanding this passage is the fact that the report of the ten spies was utterly unfounded. Only much later, in the book of Joshua, when Joshua himself sent spies, did they learn from the woman who sheltered them, Rahab, what actually happened when the inhabitants of the land heard that the Israelites were coming:

"I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before you ... As soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no courage left in any of us because of you." (Josh. 2:9-11)

The spies were terrified of the Canaanites, and entirely failed to realise that the Canaanites were terrified of them. How could they make such a profound mistake? For this we turn to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and to some of the types of distorted thinking identified by Beck's student, David Burns.

One is all-or-nothing thinking. Everything is either black or white, good or bad, easy or impossible. That was the spies' verdict on the possibility of conquest. It couldn't be done. There was no room for shading, nuance, complexity. They could have said, "It will be difficult, we will need courage and skill, but with God's help we will prevail." But they did not. Their thinking was a polarised either/or.

Another is negative filtering. We discount the positives as being insignificant, and focus almost exclusively on the negatives. The spies began by noting the positives: "The land is good. Look at its fruit." Then came the "but": the long string of negatives, drowning out the good news and leaving an overwhelmingly negative impression.

A third is catastrophising, expecting disaster to strike, no matter what. That is what the people did when they said, "Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us die by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder."

A fourth is mind-reading. We assume we know what other people are thinking, when usually we are completely wrong because we are jumping to conclusions about them based on our own feelings, not theirs. That is what the spies did when they said, "We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and so we seemed to them." They had no way of knowing how they appeared to the people of the land, but they attributed to them, mistakenly, a sentiment based on their own subjective fears.

A fifth is inability to disconfirm. You reject any evidence or argument that might contradict your negative thoughts. The spies heard the counter-argument of Caleb but dismissed it. They had decided that any attempt to conquer the land would fail, and they were simply not open to any other interpretation of the facts.

A sixth is emotional reasoning: letting your feelings, rather than careful deliberation, dictate your thinking. A key example is the interpretation the spies placed on the fact that the cities were "fortified and very large" (Num. 13:28), or "with walls up to the sky" (Deut. 1:28). They did not stop to think that people who need high city walls to protect them are in fact fearful. Had they stopped to think, they might have realised that the Canaanites were not confident, not giants, not invulnerable. But they let their emotions substitute for thought.

A seventh is blame. We accuse someone else of being responsible for our predicament instead of accepting responsibility ourselves. This is what the people did in the wake of the spies' report. "They grumbled against Moses and Aaron" (Num. 14:1), as if to say, "It is all your fault. If only you had let us stay in Egypt!" People who blame others have already begun down the road to "learned helplessness." They see themselves as powerless to change. They are the passive victims of forces beyond their control.

Applying cognitive behavioural therapy to the story of the spies lets us see how that ancient event might be relevant to us, here, now. It is very easy to fall into these and other forms of cognitive distortion, and the result can be depression and despair – dangerous states of mind that need immediate medical or therapeutic attention.

What I find profoundly moving is the therapy the Torah itself prescribes. I have pointed out elsewhere that the end of the parsha – the paragraph dealing with tzitzit – is connected to the episode of the spies by two keywords, ure-item, “you shall see” (Num. 13:18; 15:39), and the verb latur, (Num. 13:2, 16, 17, 25, 32; 15:39). The key sentence is the one that says about the thread of blue in the tzitzit, that “when you see it, you will remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes” (Num. 15:39).

Note the strange order of the parts of the body. Normally we would expect it to be the other way around: as Rashi says in his commentary to the verse, “The eye sees and the heart desires.” First we see, then we feel. But in fact the Torah reverses the order, thus anticipating the very point Cognitive Behavioural Therapy makes, which is that often our feelings distort our perception. We see what we fear – and often what we think we see is not there at all. Hence Roosevelt’s famous words in his first Inaugural Address – stunningly relevant to the story of the spies: “the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

The blue thread in the tzitzit, says the Talmud (Sotah 17a), is there to remind us of the sea, the sky, and God’s throne of glory. Techelet, the blue itself, was in the ancient world the mark of royalty. Thus the tzitzit as itself a form of cognitive behavioural therapy, saying: “Do not be afraid. God is with you. And do not give way to your emotions, because you are royalty: you are children of the King.”

Hence the life-changing idea: never let negative emotions distort your perceptions. You are not a grasshopper. Those who oppose you are not giants. To see the world as it is, not as you are afraid it might be, let faith banish fear.

Rav Kook on the Perasha Repairing the Sin of the Spies

One of the greatest tragedies in the long history of the Jewish people occurred when the spies sent by Moses returned with a frightening report about the Land of Israel. Their dire warnings of fierce giants and a “land that consumes its inhabitants” convinced the people that they would be better off returning to Egypt.

Unlike other incidents in which the Israelites rebelled against God, on this occasion, Moses was unable to annul God’s decree. The entire generation died in the

desert, never reaching the Promised Land. The best Moses was able to do was delay the punishment for forty years.

Rav Kook wrote that even today we still suffer the consequences of this catastrophic error. The root cause for the exiles and humiliations of the Jewish people, throughout the generations, is due to our failure to correct the sin of the spies.

How can we rectify the sin of the spies? To repair this national failure, a teshuvat hamishkal is needed, a penance commensurate with the sin which will “balance the scales.” The spies defamed the Land of Israel, as it says, “They despised the desirable land” (Psalms 106:24). We must do the opposite and show our unwavering love for the Land.

“[We must] declare to the entire world [the Land’s] magnificence and beauty, its holiness and grandeur. If only we could express (with what may appear to us to be greatly exaggerated) even a ten-thousandth of the desirability of the beloved Land, the splendid light of its Torah, and the superior light of its wisdom and prophecy!

The quality of wonderful holiness that Torah scholars seeking holiness may find in the Land of Israel does not exist at all outside the Land. I myself can attest to this unique quality, to a degree commensurate with my meager worth.” (Igrot HaRe’iyah, vol. I, pp. 112-113)

For Rav Kook, this recommendation on how to address the sin of the spies was not just a nice homily. Stories abound of his burning love for the Land of Israel and his indefatigable attempts to encourage fellow Jews to move to Eretz Yisrael.

Kissing the Rocks of Acre: The Talmud in Ketubot 112a records that Rabbi Abba would demonstrate his great love for the Land of Israel by kissing the rocks of Acre as he returned to Israel. What was so special about these rocks?

Rav Kook explained that if Rabbi Abba had bent down and kissed the soil of Eretz Yisrael, we would understand that his love for the Land was based on the special mitzvot that are fulfilled with its fruit — tithes, first fruits, the Sabbatical year, and so on. The soil, which produces fruit, signifies the importance and holiness of the Land through the mitzvot hateluyot ba’aretz.

But Rabbi Abba’s love for the Land was not dependent on any external factors — not even the Land’s special mitzvot (see Avot 5:16; Orot, p. 9).

Rabbi Abba cherished the intrinsic holiness of Eretz Yisrael. He recognized that the special qualities of the Land of Israel, such as its receptivity to prophecy and enlightenment, go far beyond those mitzvot connected to agriculture. Therefore, he made a point of kissing its barren rocks and stones.

'God Willing': During a 1924 fundraising mission in America, Rav Kook tried to convince a wealthy Jew to immigrate to Eretz Yisrael. The man gave various reasons why he could not yet leave America, but concluded, "God willing, I too will soon make Aliyah to Israel."

Rav Kook responded: "God is certainly willing. After all, settling Eretz Yisrael is one of His commandments. But you must also be willing..."

Without Calculations: Once, a Jewish tourist visited Rav Kook in Jerusalem, seeking advice as to the possibility of living in Eretz Yisrael. During the discussion, the visitor calculated the pros and cons of moving to Israel; and in the end, he decided that it was not worthwhile.

Rav Kook told the man: "Before the Israelites entered the Land in the time of Moses, they first needed to kill Sichon, the king of Heshbon. This teaches us that one should come to the Land of Israel bli heshbon — without making calculations."
(Sapphire from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Malachim Kivnei Adam, pp. 221, 222, 237.)

**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, lets 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" – Hashem created the world for Am Yisrael.
"Beni Bechori Yisrael".

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.