

# whY I Matter

בשבילי נברא העולם (סנהדרין לז)

Edited by Yedidye Hirtenfeld

כט' תמוז - ו' אב ה'תשע"ז

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## Young Israel of Midwood

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## Devorim

### דברים

#### זמנים

Weekdays

Shachris	
Sunday	6:50 8 & 8:30
Weekdays	5:50, 6:50, 7:30 & 8:30
Weekday Rosh Chodesh	5:40, 6:40, 7:30 & 8:30
Sunday Rosh Chodesh	6:30, 8:00 & 8:30
Mincha	8:05
Maariv	after mincha & 9:15

#### תשעה באב

Mincha Erev Tisha B'Av	7 &, 8:00
Maariv Eicha	8:50
Shachris Tisha B'Av	6 & 8:30
Mincha	2 & 740
Maariv	8:45

#### שבת דברים - חזון

Light candles	7:56PM
Mincha	7 & 8:06PM
Shachris	7:30, 8:50 & 9:00 AM
Mincha	1:45, 6:30 & 7:50 PM
Maariv	9:00 PM
Shabos Ends	9:03 PM

THESE ZMANIM ARE DETERMINED BY THE GABBOIM AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THEIR DISCRETION

“Wake up! Wake up! For your light has come, rise up and shine. Awaken, awaken, utter a song; the glory of Hashem is revealed upon you.” (From Lecha Dodi recited on Friday night) **R’ Aryeh Finkel** z”l (1931-2016; rosh yeshiva of the Mir-Brachfeld Yeshiva; he passed away this week) writes: We all look forward to the coming of mashiach. When he does come, everyone will wake up from his spiritual slumber and believe in Hashem. But, says the author of Lecha Dodi, it is incumbent upon us to wake up now and to anticipate the coming light of redemption. Shabbat also, continues R’ Finkel, is a time to wake up from the spiritual slumber of the mundane workweek. The 13th century work Sefer Ha’chinuch explains that this is one of the purposes of the mitzvah of Kiddush: to awaken us to appreciate

the greatness of the Shabbat day. That is why we recite Kiddush over wine, for wine livens up the one who drinks it. (Yavo Shiloh p.55)

## Speedily in our days

“אחד עשר יום מחורב דרך הר שעייר עד קדש ברנע” - אילו זכו ישראל, לאחד עשר יום היו נכנסים לארץ ישראל, אלא מתוך שקלקלו מעשיהם, גלגל עליהם המקום לארבעים יום ועד לארבעים שנה... ר' יהודה אומר: אילו זכו ישראל, לשלשה ימים היו נכנסים לארץ, שנאמר “וארון ברית ד' נוסע לפניו דרך שלשת ימים לתור להם מנוחה...” ר' בנאה אומר: אילו זכו ישראל - ליום אחד היו נכנסים לארץ, שנאמר “היום אתם יוצאים...” אבא יוסי בן חנן אומר: אילו זכו ישראל - כיון שעלו פרסות רגליהם מן הים, היו נכנסים לארץ, שנאמר “עלה רש” - מיד...

[רפ"ט]

Why, asks **R’ Yeshayah Horowitz** z”l (the Shelah Ha’kadosh; rabbi of Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630), do we yearn for the end of the exile and the “good old days” of the Temple era? Are we not taught that we should accept with love any suffering that Hashem metes out to us? He explains: There are three potential benefits that can result from this yearning. First, when we focus on how great our loss has been and how significant the destruction was, and we realize that our sins are the cause of our continued exile, we will be inspired to repent. Second, our Sages teach that our oppression by other nations during the long exile is a substitute for being punished in Gehinnom. And, possibly, our sins have caused us to deserve a long “sentence” there. By focusing on the bitterness of the exile in a way that increases the pain that we feel, we reduce our need to be punished elsewhere. Lastly, the darker the night, the more one appreciates the light that follows. This is true of figurative “darkness” as well. Hashem’s plan is that the darkness of the exile will be followed by the great “light” of the redemption. The more we emphasize the darkness in which we find ourselves now, the more we will appreciate the light of the redemption that will follow. These three ideas are alluded to in the verses (Eichah 3:40-42), “Let us search and examine our ways and return to Hashem” in repentance. “Let us lift our hearts with our hands to G-d in heaven,” feeling as if the pain is tangible (in “our hands”). “We have transgressed and rebelled; You

לכבוד האי גברא ובי"ב הרוצים בעילום שמם על הסיוע שמושיטים לי בעין יפה להמשיך את הגליון עוד הפעם בשנה זו שהיה לזכותם ולזכות כל משפחתם הקב"ה יברך אותם בכל מילי דמיטב בעושר ואושר ואריכות ימים בבריאות מיט ידישע נחת בזה ובבא עבגצ"ב

have not forgiven”—rather, You force us to be refined in the blast furnace of the exile so that the ultimate “light” will shine purely. (Shnei Luchot Ha’brit: Masechet Ta’anit)

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל-כל-ישראל בעבר הירדן במדבר בערבה מול סוף בין-פארן ובין-תפל ולבן וחצרת ודי זהב

**These are the devarim / words that Moshe spoke to all Israel ...** The Midrash Tanchuma records that Bnei Yisrael asked Moshe: “Previously you said (Shmot 4:10), ‘I am not a man of devarim / words,’ and now you have so much to say?!” Bnei Yisrael were expressing their amazement: Forty-one years before, when Hashem had dispatched Moshe to Pharaoh, Moshe had objected, saying that he had a speech impediment and was not a suitable messenger. Now, before his death, Moshe’s speech difficulties disappeared. We learn from this, the midrash continues, that one who has difficulty speaking should speak words of Torah, as Moshe did throughout the 41 years, and he will eventually be cured. Thus we read in Yishayah (35:6), “Then the lame man will skip like a gazelle and the tongue of the mute will sing glad song; for water [a metaphor for Torah] will have broken out in the wilderness ...” The Midrash Rabbah records another answer to Bnei Yisrael’s question: “Previously you said, ‘I am not a man of words,’ and now you have so much to say?!” Moshe may be likened to a man who was selling silk and was calling out in the streets, “Silk for sale, silk for sale.” The king heard him and poked his head out the window. “What did you say?” the king inquired. “Nothing,” answered the peddler. “I’m sure I heard you say, ‘Silk for sale.’ Why do you say, ‘Nothing?’” “The silk that I have is not of high enough quality for you,” answered the peddler. “Therefore I said, ‘Nothing.’” Likewise, says the midrash, when Hashem told Moshe to be his messenger to Pharaoh, Moshe said, “Who am I to be the messenger of G-d. I cannot speak! I cannot do this job as well as You

could do it Yourself." However, in a different context, i.e., when it was time to teach those who knew less than he, Moshe had many words to say. One simply must know before whom he should have many words and before whom he should have few.

**On the other side of the Jordan, in the desert, in the Aravah / Wilderness, opposite the Sea of Reeds, between Paran and Tophel, and Lavan, and Chazerot, and Di-zahav (1:1) R' Chaim ben Attar z"l** (1696-1743; Italy and Eretz Yisrael) observes that the name each of these place may allude to a character trait that Moshe wanted to teach. For example, "the desert" alludes to the trait of humility, as our Sages have said, "A person should always behave like a desert" [i.e., humbly, in contrast to a majestic mountain or a mighty river]. However, R' ben Attar continues, humility should not be taken to an extreme. For example, a person must not say, "Who am I to give rebuke to others?" Rather, one must be like the Aravah. The root "ayin-resh-vet" means pleasant. One must behave in a way that is pleasing to society. Also, it alludes to "areivut" / "responsibility." One must feel a responsibility for, and to, others. (Ohr Ha'chaim)

**These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Yisrael (1:1) R' Shlomo Ephraim z"l** (rabbi of Prague; died 1619) asks: How was it possible for Moshe Rabbeinu to address all of the Jewish People? He answers: The word "Yisrael" does not have the same meaning as "Bnei Yisrael." The latter term refers to all of the Jewish People. In contrast, "Yisrael" refers to the leadership alone. Our Sages understand the opening verses of our parashah as a rebuke for various sins that Bnei Yisrael had committed during the 40 years in the desert. Because it would be incumbent on the leaders to rebuke their flocks after Moshe's passing, Moshe spoke to the leaders in verses 1-2 about the people's sins. However, he only alluded to the sins, rather than mentioning them directly, because he wanted to teach the leaders how to give rebuke. Rebuke must be subtle. A direct attack is never successful. In verse 3 we read: "It was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the

first of the month, when Moshe spoke to Bnei Yisrael, according to everything that Hashem commanded him to them." Here, Moshe begins to rebuke the nation at large. [Note that the verse does not say that he spoke to the entire nation at once. Perhaps he walked around the camp and spoke to small groups one at a time.] In light of the foregoing explanation we can understand why only verse 3 says that "It was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month." The timing of Moshe's address to the leaders is not mentioned. Our Sages learn from verse 3 that rebuke is most effective when offered shortly before the death of the one giving it. Otherwise, as time passes, the one who was rebuked may find fault with the actions of the one who gave rebuke and may disregard the original rebuke. This, says R' Shlomo Ephraim, is only a concern vis-a-vis rebuke given to the common person. Moshe did not have to worry about this when he addressed those in leadership positions. (Kli Yakar)

### All for the boss

"אלה הדברים" - אמר ר' יהודה בר' סימון  
בשם ר' לוי: אל תקרי "דברים" אלא  
"דבורים" - מה הדבורה הזאת כל מה שהיא  
מסוגלת, מסגלת לבעליה, כך כל מה שישראל  
מסגלים מצוות ומעשים טובים, הם מסגלים  
לאביהם שבשמים.  
(דברים דבה א', ה.)

ה' אלקי אבותכם יסף עליכם ככם אלף פעמים  
ויברך אתכם כאשר דבר לכם

**"May Hashem, the Elokim of your forefathers, add to you a thousand times yourselves, and bless you ka'asher deebair / as He has spoken regarding you."** (1:11) **R' Yosef Nechemiah Kornitzer z"l** (1880-1933; rabbi of Krakow, Poland) writes: Moshe Rabbeinu blessed Bnei Yisrael that Hashem should multiply them a thousand times over, as if to say: G-d willing, all will go well with you, the Jewish People. But, Moshe added: Remember that Hashem is blessing you even "ka'asher debair," which may be translated, "at a time when Hashem speaks harshly about you," i.e., a time of judgment. Even a decree that seems harsh is ultimately for our good. (Chiddushei Rabbeinu Yosef Nechemiah Al Ha'Torah)

**May the L-rd G-d of your fathers make you a thousand times as many as you are (1:11)** When will

this blessing be fulfilled? In the World to Come, when, as the Prophet Isaiah states, "The least one shall become a thousand, and the smallest a great nation." The Jewish people, the "least" and "smallest," will multiply one thousand times in number, in fulfillment of Moshe's blessing. (Binyan Ariel)

**May the L-rd G-d of your fathers make you a thousand times as many more than you are (1:11)** The famous Chozeh of Lublin was once sitting with his Chasidim when he began to berate himself very harshly for his "misdeeds." Immediately, the Chasidim were seized with panic: If the Chozeh was such a transgressor, what could be said for them? Seeing their fear, the Chozeh reassured them and gave them a blessing: "May G-d help that your grandchildren turn out no worse than me." Similarly, when Moshe rebuked the Jewish people and saw how their hearts were broken, he immediately offered them encouragement: May G-d increase the number of Jews just like yourselves in the generations to come. (MiMaayanos HaNetzach)

**May He make you so many more like you a thousand times, and may He bless you as He has promised you (1:11)** This prayer by Moshe asks Hashem to make future generations "like you" (i.e., following in the path of Torah paved by our ancestors). In order for this prayer to be realized, we must imbue our children with a link in the chain of tradition - Torah learning and every historical event, sad as well as joyous events, must be a part of our children's personal "experience". Today's blessing must coincide with the pattern of yesterday's values. (Peninim on the Torah)

איכה אשא לבדי טרחכם ומשאכם וריבכם  
**"Eichah / How can I alone carry your contentiousness, your burdens, and your quarrels?"**  
(1:12) **R' Naftali Hertz Herz Landau z"l** (1840-1900; rabbi of Strelisk, Galicia) suggests another reading of this verse based on a verse in this week's haftarah. We read in the haftarah (Yeshayah 1:3), "An ox knows his owner, and a donkey his master's trough; [in contrast,] Yisrael does not know, My People does not cause itself to understand / 'hitbonan'." Why, asks R' Landau,

does the verse use the reflexive form ("My People does not cause itself to understand") rather than say, "My People does not understand"? He answers: The prophet is bemoaning a time when the masses will sin because of unqualified leadership. The prophet means: Because Yisrael—a term that usually refers to the elite—does not know the Torah, My People—a reference to the masses—is not brought to understand what Hashem wants. The proof for this interpretation is that we read later in the haftarah (verse 26), "Then I will return your judges as in earliest times, and your counselors as at first, after which you shall be called City of Righteousness, Faithful City." The implication is that the fact that we are not now a "City of Righteousness, Faithful City" is due to the lack of suitable judges and counselors. This, writes R' Landau, is what Moshe bemoans in our verse as well: I cannot "carry" you alone. Therefore, I must appoint other leaders. And I know that a time will come when those leaders will cause you to be contentious and quarrelsome. R' Landau adds: There were three prophets who used the word "Eichah" in their prophecy. One is Moshe, in our verse. One is Yeshayah, in our haftarah. The third is Yirmiyah, the author of the book of Eichah. Not coincidentally, Yirmiyah bemoaned the same problem of unqualified leaders when he wrote (in last week's haftarah—Yirmiyah 2:8), "The Kohanim did not say, 'Where is Hashem?'; even those charged with teaching the Torah did not know Me." (Ahavat Tziyon)

**Eichah / How can I alone carry your contentiousness, your burdens, and your quarrels? (1:12)**

The Midrash notes that three prophets used the word "Eichah": The first was Moshe, in our verse. The second was Yishayah, who said (in today's haftarah, verse 21): "How has she become a harlot! - faithful city that was full of justice ..." The third was Yirmiyah, who said (in the first verse of the Book of Eichah, which we read on Tishah B'Av), "Alas, how she sits in solitude! The city that was great ..." The Midrash likens these three prophets to three servants who saw their mistress at different times. One saw her in tranquil times, one saw her when she

behaved irresponsibly, and the third saw her downfall. So, too, Moshe saw Bnei Yisrael in their glory ("Hashem, your G-d, has multiplied you and behold! You are like the stars of the heaven in abundance."), Yishayah saw them in their sinfulness, and Yirmiyah saw them at their downfall, the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash and the exile to Bavel. **R' Shlomo Harkavi z"l** (mashgiach of the Grodno Yeshiva; killed in the Holocaust) writes: The midrash is showing us that whatever state Bnei Yisrael find themselves in, they always take it to extremes. The word "eichah" means more than "how." "Eichah" expresses wonder and amazement. Moshe saw Bnei Yisrael at the height of Hashem's kindness to them, when they rebelled against Him but He continued to shower them with daily bread and with other miracles. Moshe therefore exclaimed, "Eichah / How can I alone carry your contentiousness, your burdens, and your quarrels?" I cannot, but Hashem can and does. Yishayahu saw Bnei Yisrael in their sinful state. Maharal (16th century) writes that it is the nature of Jews that when they fall, they fall very low. Yishayahu exclaimed in amazement, "Eichah / How are such sins possible from the people who live in Yerushalayim, the city of justice and charity?" Finally, Yirmiyah saw Bnei Yisrael's punishment, and he cried, "Eichah / How is such suffering possible?" In this light, says R' Harkavi, we can understand on a deeper level why the first chapter of Yishayahu was chosen as the haftarah for the Shabbat preceding Tishah B'Av.

ותרגנו באהליכם ותאמרו בשנאת ה' אתנו  
הוציאנו מארץ מצרים לתת אתנו ביד האמרי  
להשמידנו

**"You slandered in your tents and said, 'Because of Hashem's hatred for us He took us out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Emorites to destroy us.'"**

(1:27) Rashi z"l comments: Really, He loved you, but you hated Him. A common proverb says: What is in your own mind about your friend, you imagine is what is in his mind about you. **R' Shlomo Wolbe z"l** (1914-2005) elaborates: In the hearts of the Generation of the Desert there was a very subtle hatred of G-d. They would never have admitted it, for the

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simple reason that they were not aware of it. They truly believed that Hashem hated them, and this pained them a great deal. They believed that they loved Hashem with all their hearts, and they could not understand why He seemed not to return their love. But all of this pain and concern was wasted, for, in reality, Hashem loved them dearly. This illustrates how carefully one must shine a light deep in the

recesses of his heart to discover the areas in which he needs to improve. (AleI Shur)

**And you complained in your tents, and you said, because the Almighty hated us he took us out of Egypt to hand us over to the Emorites to destroy us (1:27)** Rashi comments that Hashem really loved the Jews but because they felt hatred towards Him, they mistakenly felt that He hated them. We all tend to project our feelings towards others onto them. If you think that everyone disapproves of you, you likely don't approve of others and/or yourself. Conversely, if you feel love and compassion for others, you will assume that others feel positive about you. (Growth Through Torah)

זולתי כלב בן-יפנה הוא יראנה ולו- אתן  
את-הארץ אשר דרך-בה ולבניו יען אשר מלא  
אחרי ה'

**"Except for Kalev ben Yefuneh—he shall see it, and to him I shall give the Land on which he walked, and to his children, because he followed Hashem wholeheartedly."** (1:36) Why isn't Yehoshua, who also did not participate in the evil report of the Spies, mentioned as well? **R' Aharon Lewin z"l Hy"d** (1879-1941; the Reisher Rav; killed in the Holocaust) explains: Kalev is promised in our verse not only that he will receive a share in the Land, but also that he will pass it on to his sons. But Yehoshua had no sons, only daughters. If a person has no sons, his daughters inherit his land. However, at the time of the incident of the Spies, that halachah had not yet been taught. Indeed, it couldn't have been taught just then (through a promise to Yehoshua) because the daughters of Tzelofchad deserved to be the agents through whom that law was taught (see Bava Batra 119a). (Ha'drash Ve'ha'iyun)

ותשבו ותבנו לפני ה' ולא-שמע ה' בקלכם ולא  
האזין אליכם

**But Hashem did not listen to your voice, nor did He hearken to you. So you dwelt in Kadesh many days, as many days as you dwelt** (1:45-46) Rashi explains: "Nineteen years, as it is written: 'as many days as you dwelt' in the other stations, and they were 38 years, 19 of them they spent in Kadesh, and 19 years wandering." Our Sages taught (Vayikro Rabboh 10:5): "Prayer accomplishes half." B'nei Yisroel who prayed and cried to Hashem, even though their prayers did not

help in removing from them the decree of wandering in the desert, they, nevertheless, were successful halfway - i.e., half of the time decreed upon them to wander, they lived in Kadesh. However, "Hashem did not listen to your voice" - to totally eliminate from you the evil decree, nevertheless, "you dwelt in Kadesh many days, as many days as you dwelt" in the other stations. Out of the 38 years decreed upon you to wander, you dwelt for 19 years in Kadesh. Behold! Your prayer was literally successful halfway. Consequently we derive a lesson for the Jewish nation in subsequent generations, not to give up on prayer. Even if the goals of our prayers are not fully achieved, nevertheless, we are never turned away empty-handed, and our prayers are always effective. (Netziv of Volozhin)

This letter was written by **R' David ben Shlomo ibn Zimra z"l** ("Radvaz"; 1479-1573), Chief Rabbi of Egypt and a prolific author. You have asked me, my beloved friend, what will be in the time of techiyat ha'meim / the resurrection of the dead, for you have received a tradition from your ancestors that the techiyah will occur just prior to the seventh millennium, when the world will enter its Shabbat-like state of complete tranquility. You find this difficult because it means that the tzaddikim and extremely pious individuals who gave their lives for the sanctification of Hashem's Name during the exile will not experience the goodness that will come to the Jewish People and will not rejoice in their happiness [i.e., they will not experience the epoch of mashiach]. Answer: This always bothered me, as well, until I saw the words of the Ritva z"l [**R' Yom Tov ben Avraham Asevilli** (Spain; 1260s-1320s)], who writes in the name of his teachers that there will be two techiyot / resurrections. The first will be for individual tzaddikim who died during the exile. This will occur close to the time when mashiach comes, and they will merit to experience the epoch of mashiach in both body and soul. They will see the goodness that will come to the Jewish People and the building of the Bet Hamikdash as a reward for their Divine service. There also will be a general techiyah close to the beginning of "Shabbat" [i.e., the seventh millennium of history, after the epoch of mashiach]. That is what we refer to as "Olam Ha'techiyah" / "The World of the Resurrection." Later, I realized that everyone must agree that there will be two techiyot. Regarding the first, the prophet Zechariah ben Berachyahu said (Zechariah 8:4), "Old men and old women will once again sit in the streets of Yerushalayim, each with

his cane in his hand because of advanced age." Our Sages understand that this verse speaks of a time after the Redemption. From the fact that the verse refers to "old men and old women" and "advanced age," it would seem to be referring to a time after the first techiyah, because after the second techiyah there will be no old age. Rather, we will immediately enter "Shabbat," which is completely restful—a time of eternal life. Remember this always, because it is a great consolation to those who suffer the pain of the exile and the yoke of the nations that subjugate us. They will yet see Tziyon as a tranquil dwelling and the holy service performed according to law soon in our days. I have written what appears to me to be correct. (She'eilot U'teshuvot Ha'Radvaz)

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**יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי ואלקי  
אבותי שתשלח מהרה רפואה  
שלמה מן השמים רפואת הנפש  
ורפואת הגוף לחולים**

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אברהם פנחס בן שרה עטל  
ישראל יוסף בן יוכבד  
דוד בן טובשין  
חיים משה בן שרה  
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אלטע שרה גיטל בת חי  
בתי בת שרה  
בריינדל בת פעשא לאה  
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