

Kinder Torah®

Parashas Shelach

בס"ד

The Sprout of Salvation

"Look at the flowerpot, Abba! The seed that we planted last week has sprouted a stem and leaves!"

"It is beautiful, Avi; one of the wonders of creation. Let's just think for a minute. Perhaps there is something more subtle going on here. Did you ever see a plant growing in front of your eyes?"

"No, Abba. They grow too slowly.

When I come back to the plant after a day or two, I can see development.

However, from minute to minute, the changes are too small to perceive."

"That phenomena is called 'sprouting' Avi. The same word is used to describe the process of the coming of Moshiach. We say it every day in the fifteenth blessing of the Amidah prayers. 'The sprout (tsemach) of Dovid, Your servant, speedily cause to flourish.'"

"What is the connection, Abba?"

"The Medrash Shochar Tov¹ explains by asking the following question. 'Why does the geula (redemption) of this nation (Klal Yisrael) not come all at once, rather little by little?' The Medrash answers that the nation has many tsaros (troubles). If the geula came in one massive moment, along with the tsaros, the nation could not withstand it. It would be like the sun rising quickly and abruptly in the morning. All of the night animals would be trapped. Therefore, like the sunrise, the geula comes little by little (like a sprouting plant) growing slowly."

"That is fascinating, Abba."

"Tsemach' has another meaning in this prayer. It is the name of Moshiach ben Dovid, as the verse states, 'Behold there is a man, his name is Tsemach, and he will flourish in his place; he will build the Sanctuary of Hashem' (Zechariah 6:12).

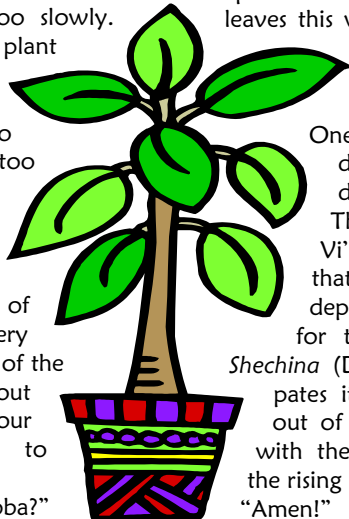
"The source of the fifteenth blessing of the Amidah dates back to the Krias Yom Suf. After the Mitzrim drowned, the Bnei Yisrael sang Shira. Upon hearing this, the melachim (angels) said, 'Blessed are You Hashem, Who causes the power of salvation to sprout.' The Elders placed this blessing after 'Boneh Yerushalayim' because after the return to Yerushalayim, Dovid will come. This is stated in the verse, 'Afterward the Children of Israel will return and seek out Hashem their G-

d and Dovid their king, and they will tremble for Hashem and His goodness in the end of days' (Hoshea 3:5)."²

"I am waiting for the yeshua every day, Abba!"

"Fortunate are you, Avi! The blessing expresses this very point. 'For Your deliverance we hope all day.' The Arizal³ explains that when saying these words, one should have kavannah (intention) to anticipate the yeshua. Why? After one leaves this world, he comes to his day of judgment. He will then be asked, 'Did you look forward to the yeshua?'

One who prays three times a day with this kavannah, can definitely answer, 'Yes I did!' Therefore, the sefer Yesod Vi'shoreh Ho'avodah declares that one should feel from the depths of his heart that he waits for the salvation of the Holy Shechina (Divine Presence) and anticipates it every day. May It come out of golus now and redeem us with the coming of Moshiach and the rising of the Monarch of Dovid." "Amen!"



Kinderlach . . .

We are in golus, together with the Shechina. How many tsaros we suffer because of this! How we hope for the geula! How we wait for it every day! Hashem is making it happen little by little, like the sprouting of a plant. This is a great act of kindness, for if the geula would come all at once, it would be too much for us to stand. Along these lines, there is an additional kavannah that we can have when we say the words, "For Your deliverance we hope all day." The Mahari Tsemach² relates, "I also have kavannah to anticipate the salvation of Hashem, for He saves us from several unfortunate events every day, and every minute. I have found this to be very productive in times of trouble." Kinderlach, we need Hashem's salvation every day, both from the daily troubles, and from the golus of Klal Yisrael and the Shechina. Pray for it! Anticipate it! "For Your salvation do I long, O Hashem."⁴

Eye Spy

"Avi, it looks like you have a really good pair of binoculars."

"I do, Chaim. I received them as a birthday gift."

"Mazel tov. What are you looking at?"

"That village off in the distance."

"That is really far away. Can you see it clearly?"

"Yes. Here, take a look."

"Thank you. Wow! It looks so close and clear. You can see everything. You can be a real spy with these binoculars."

"Spy? How can I be a spy, Chaim? A spy is someone who gathers information and secrets for the enemy. I would be seeing secret things for myself, not for any enemy."

"Don't be so sure about that, Avi."

"What do you mean, Chaim?"

"You may see something destructive. It burns a visual image into your memory. Later, when you are trying to learn Torah, you cannot get that sight out of your mind. It ruins your whole day."

"That is terrible. But who is the enemy?"

"He is none other than . . . the Yetzer Hora (Evil Inclination). He tries to get you to look at things you should not see, in order to drag you down to the spiritual depths."

"Oy vey. What shall I do?"

"The Torah states at the end of this week's parasha, 'Do not explore after your heart and after your eyes which you stray.' (Bamidbar 15:39). The Talmud Yerushalmi (Berachos) explains that the heart and the eyes are two agents of aveyra (sin). They draw the person towards aveiros. However, they can also draw the person towards good. If they are agents of the Yetzer Hatov, all is well. They seek out mitzvos and good deeds for the person to perform. However, if they are agents of the Yetzer Hora, oy va voy."

"I see. I really am a spy. A secret agent of my Yetzer. May Hashem help that it should be the Yetzer Hatov."

"Amen."

Kinderlach . . .

A person is happy when he uses Hashem's gifts for the purpose that they were intended. He gave us a wondrous creation - two eyes that see. If we use them to look upon holy things - sefarim (holy books), mitzvos, and tsaddikim, then they will stay pure, and draw us toward mitzvos. However, one who does not guard his eyes is led down the path of spiritual destruction. Set your eyes on the right path, kinderlach. Be an eye spy for the Yetzer Hatov.

¹ Tehillim 18 at the end

² Levush

³ Cited by Shaarei Teshuva on Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 118)

⁴ Bereshis 49:18