



From the desk of
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Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

עיר התורה שקרובה אליך

Religious Court of Elad * Batei Hora'ah * Religious Services * Marriage Licensing * Kashrut * Mikvaot * Eiruvim

TORAT

Parashat R'ei

HAMELECH

See Straight

Take a good look! I am placing before you today an opportunity to achieve blessing or the opposite thereof. A person is composed of body and soul. He is controlled by two opposing forces. The body tells him to pursue physical pleasures. The soul yearns for spiritual fulfillment.

In this week's *parshah*, the Torah tells us to look and think. We should look not with our eyes but with our hearts (as in Kohelet 1:16). Mesillat Yesharim (chap. 2) speaks of a person who lives without considering if the path he has taken is good or not. Such a person is like a blind man strolling on the riverside. He is quite likely to get wet and who knows if he'll get out of the river alive.

Continues the Ramchal: This is one of the key devices of the yetzer horah. He places upon a person a heavy workload, leaving him no time to consider if the road he has taken is really sensible. Were people to really start paying attention to their lives, they would begin to regret a number of their actions and eventually abandon sin altogether.

In Chapter 3, he adds: *Olam Hazeh* is compared to the darkness of nighttime. Darkness can cause two major types of mistakes: a) It could blind a person to the extent that he cannot see at all. b) It could make things hazy and he'll be confused. He'll see a person and think that it is a telephone pole, or vice versa. This second type of error is worse than the first. When it's so dark that you simply can't see, at least you know that you can't see, so you'll proceed with caution. But if you

think you're seeing straight when you're really not, you'll be so convinced that you're right that you'll end up making major mistakes with major repercussions.

What Should I Look at?

A wise man has his eyes in his head. Fools walk in the dark. (Kohelet 2:14) What does it mean to have eyes in your head? To think from the outset what will be the result of your actions. A fool does not think about the future. He acts on impulse.

The *navi* tells us: Raise your eyes heavenwards and see who created all of these (Yeshaya 40:25). Look at the world and see wonders. Discover the wisdom of the Creator.

Yirmiya (5:21) tells us to pay attention to how the sand stops the sea from flooding the land. Waves rise and crash, but do not pass the line set for them.

Look at Creation. See how Hashem renews all of existence every moment, the sun, moon and stars.

From My Own Flesh

What did Iyov say? "From my own flesh I see Hashem" (19:26). Every limb was created with so much wisdom. A person can sit and think about himself, limb by limb, and come up with so many aspects of Hashem's profound wisdom.

People who know how to see deeper see even more. Great *tzaddikim* can look at people's foreheads and understand a whole lot about them and what they have done with their lives.



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Rav Shach once met with the Head of the Cardiac Department of a well-known hospital. This professor had studied the heart for decades.

"Tell me, doctor," said Rav Shach, "if you could create a heart, how would you do it any differently from the heart which each baby is born with?"

Surprised by the question, the professor responded, "I would not change a thing! I would leave everything exactly the same."

There is a reason why we say the Brachah of Asher Yatzar several times a day. We should take a few moments to appreciate life and some of the details of Hashem's ongoing benevolence.

Hashem Knows Best

I once met a genetical expert. He had been experimenting for years. I told him that the Torah says, in this week's parshah, that only four animals have just one *siman taharah*. Then I asked him how long it would take science to create a mutant which would allow for a fifth being to enter this category. He admitted that it could not be done.

A certain political figure had all sorts of ideologies and party lines. Once he assumed office, he acted quite differently from his slogans. When questioned about this inconsistency, he replied, "What you see from here, you cannot see from there."

Apparently, he meant that once one is in a seat of higher authority, he has more information and more considerations and there are factors which impact his decisions, factors which he could not have fathomed beforehand.

On a much greater scale, we must acknowledge that our capabilities are severely limited and we know that HaKadosh Baruch Hu makes decisions taking everything into consideration. And all that He does is good.

Something to Think About

A person should really take time out to think about life and what it is all about. No time better than now, as Ellul arrives and we prepare for the new year. Why were we created? Why does man suffer so in this world if Hashem really cares about us and has our best interests in mind?

This world is testing grounds for the neshamah. This is the big "R'ei" – see, look, think things through. Realize that life and everything that comes with it is to lead a person down one of two paths: One leads to blessing and the other to ... (I don't want to say!)

Some people lead lives of Torah and mitzvot. Others lead more permissive lifestyles, but here and there, they meet up with soul-stirring confrontations, such as death of a loved one, and then they begin to think of mortality and of eternity. They say *kadish* and give *tzedakah l'iluy nishmat*. They feel the reality that the soul lives on and they understood that it needs *zechuyot* in order to enjoy a good afterlife.

Listen. Hashem made the world and Hashem made man. We ought to use that which Hashem made according to the manufacturer's guidebook.

**Shabbat Shalom and Chodesh Tov,
Mordechai Malka**