

**The Shul**  
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August 15, 2020

Re'eh — Shabbat M'vorchim

25 Av, 5780

## The Spin

These days you can't read an article, listen to a radio report, or watch a news broadcast without wondering what's the spin.

Who was responsible for turning a point of interest in a particular direction, and how was it done are also questions that come to mind.

Lastly, we ask if someone was specially hired - a spin doctor - to turn an event or news item toward a particular path.

Spinning isn't new; in fact, it's as old as the Torah itself.

We spin and turn the Torah scroll each time we read it, rolling the parchment from one stick to the other. This action serves as a reminder that a Torah spin is constant and eternal.

The Torah Sage, Ben Bag Bag said, "Turn it and turn it [the Torah], for everything is within it. Look deeply inside it; grow old and gray with it, and do not stir from it, for there is nothing more edifying than it for you."

In this week's "Ethics of the Fathers," Ben Bag Bag, enjoins us to turn and turn the Torah, to sift through it as one would sift through sand in which precious gems are buried. And then, to use the wisdom gained to understand events big or small through a Torah spin.

Without exaggeration, everything is in the Torah.

Stories abound of Torah scholars who were proficient in every area of the arts and sciences, solely through their expertise in Torah.

Rabbi Irving Bunim writes in his commentary on this verse, "Invariably, our great sages and scholars, nurtured on Torah alone, did not find their understanding faulty or their knowledge incomplete because they did not attend a university.

"In the time of the Sages, a philosopher in Rome fortuitously discovered, by empirical means, the gestation period of the serpent.

"On a visit of some Sages to Rome, he asked them tauntingly how long this period was. Rabban Gamliel, the head of the delegation, could make no reply, and his face grew ashen with shame.

"When Rabbi Joshua (who was absent at the conversation) met him, he yet looked ill, and Rabbi Joshua immediately asked the reason.

"Once told, Rabbi Joshua showed Rabban Gamliel how the answer could be inferred from the Almighty's words to the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

"That very evening, Rabban Gamliel went and gave Rabbi Joshua's answer to the philosopher, who thereupon began beating his head against the wall. 'All that I struggled for seven years to discover,' he cried, 'this man comes and casually dangles before me at the end of a reed!' " (Ethics From Sinai)

Like a diamond, the Torah has many facets.

A cursory glance at a diamond reveals nothing more than a piece of glass. But when we turn and turn a diamond, we begin to appreciate its full beauty.

Secular wisdom, esoteric teachings, medical advice, good eating habits, stress management, meditation techniques, social etiquette, obligations toward G-d, the secrets of the universe.

These and more are contained within the Torah.

Turn and turn the Torah. Look deeply into it. Even if you have studied Torah for many years, continue to study and grow old and gray with it. For everything is within it.

(from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

## Forgetfulness

Our parashah opens: "See, I present before you today a blessing and a curse." R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv z"l (1910-2012; Yerushalayim) asks: Why does the verse say "today"?

He explains: If a person remembered everything that ever happened to him and all of Hashem's kindness to him, he would stop at nothing to be able to devote all of his energies to serving Hashem with all his heart. However, man's nature is that, although when he is first saved from danger he thanks Hashem profusely, he soon returns to his routine and forgets Hashem's kindness.

This, writes R' Elyashiv, is the meaning of the verse (Devarim 32:18), "The Rock gave birth to you, forgetful one, and you forgot Kel Who brought you forth." G-d gave man the ability to forget as an act of kindness; otherwise, life would be unbearable. Without forgetfulness, man would remember at every moment every terrifying experience he had ever had and every mistake he had ever made. Who could bear such a burden? Forgetfulness allows man to put those thoughts behind him. For the same reason, G-d decreed that one's memory of the deceased would diminish with time.

Yet, instead of seeing forgetfulness in this way, man uses that power to forget Hashem. That is why our verse says "today." At all times, one must remember that Hashem has placed before him a choice between receiving a blessing or a curse. Man must remember "today" and every day so that he chooses properly.

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***"Re'eh / See, Anochi / I present before you today a blessing and a curse." (11:26)***

R' Avigdor Tzarfati z"l (France; 13th century) writes: "Re'eh" can mean "understand," as in the verse (Kohelet 1:16), "My mind 'ra'ah' / has seen much wisdom and knowledge." The verse is saying: "Understand [what is at stake, i.e., a blessing or a curse]! Then you will choose the Torah, which includes the commandment: 'Anochi Hashem'."

Another explanation: Moshe said, "See what I ('anochi') have chosen and what resulted," referring to the rays of light that emanated from Moshe's countenance. "This happened to me because of the Torah." (Peirushim U'pesakim Le'rabbeinu Avigdor Tzarfati)

*(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at [www.torah.org](http://www.torah.org))*

<b>Yahrzeits This Week:</b>			
Rabbi Fred Lewin	25 Av - Friday night / Shabbat	for father	Shmuel ben Yoel
Chayai Statman	25 Av - Friday night / Shabbat	for mother	Nechumah bas Harav Yaakov Aryeh

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<b>DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>Friday 8/14 — 24 Av</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Candles — 7:43 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.  <b>Shabbat, 8/15 — 25 Av</b> Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:43 a.m. Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 6:30 p.m. Minchah — 7:30 p.m. Ma'ariv — 8:44 p.m.  <b>Sunday, 8/16 — 26 Av</b> Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.  <b>Monday, 8/17 — 27 Av</b> Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.	<b>Tuesday, 8/18 — 28 Av</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.  <b>Wednesday, 8/19 — 29 Av</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.  <b>Thursday — Rosh Chodesh Elul, 8/20 — 30 Av</b> Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.  <b>Friday — Rosh Chodesh Elul, 8/21 — 1 Elul</b> Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Candles — 7:34 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.