

24<sup>th</sup> of Av 5776 (July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016) – Netzach Yisrael Yeshivah, Yerushalayim

# **Battling the Giants and Guarding the Torah, the Land, and the People of Israel**

Monthly English Broadcast

## 1. DAVID AND GOLIATH: ORIGINS

Today we'll talk about David and Goliath. One of the most fascinating stories in the Bible. As we studied in the last few classes, King David is the great grandson of Ruth and according to the way Hashem runs the world, according to Divine Providence, the beginning of David's rise to fame, ultimately making him the king of Israel, was his fight with Goliath. Goliath was the son of Orpah, Ruth's sister-in-law. The two, Ruth and Orpah were both princesses, daughters of King Eglon of Moab. Ruth was married to Machalon and Orpah was married to Kilayon. When the two brothers passed away, the two sisters wanted to return with Naomi to the land of Israel. But, Naomi was very wise and insightful, and she saw that Ruth was entirely sincere and should be encouraged to enter and be embraced by the Jewish people, while her sister in law, Orpah wasn't. We talked about this in the past 2 months.

After Orpah returned to Moab, she moved to the Philistine land, which later became known as Palestine by the Romans. There she took on an immodest undertaking, and became the mother of several giants, the greatest of whom was Goliath. So the two descendants met and the good had to overcome the evil.

## 2. RETURN OF THE GIANT

Every chapter in the book of Samuel is a story in itself. The longest chapter which has 58 verses (much longer than any other chapter) tells the story of their battle. Thus, both in quantity and quality, the Bible dedicates and gives tremendous weight to all the details of this story. Everything that happens in history, especially the chronicles of the Jewish people has relevance to the future, in the form of reenactments of the same story. It also has a precedent. The precedent is in the story of Og the king of the Bashan, who lived in the times of Moshe Rabbeinu. Goliath was not a king of the Philistines, but Og was. He was a much greater giant than all others. There are only two giants whose size is described in the Bible. Goliath was six and a half cubits high. A cubit is about half a meter, 50 centimeters, so he was approximately 325 cm., or about 10.5 feet tall. This is stated explicitly,

the first thing told about him. A cubit in Hebrew is an amah, from the middle finger to the elbow, and a half a cubit is a *zeret*. Moshe Rabbeinu fought Og at the end of his life (while David fought Goliath at the beginning of his career). About Og, the description is that his bed was 9 cubits long and 4 cubits wide. According to the sages, these are not normal cubits, but measured by Og's own cubits, so it was much greater than the normal cubit. But, according to the Ibn Ezra these are regular cubits, so his size was about 15 feet tall. When the two holy figures combine, Moshe Rabbeinu and David, they form the Mashiach: the body is David's and the soul is Moshe Rabbeinu's.

### 3. THE FUTURE BATTLE AGAINST THE GIANT

When thinking about when this story repeats itself after it actually occurred, we have to turn to the *Arizal*. He writes that the Mashiach will have an archenemy, an individual, a giant, that he will have to fight. It will be such a dangerous battle, that it's not even clear who will win. If that giant kills the Mashiach, then that Mashiach figure will only be Mashiach ben Yosef, not the complete Messiah. Afterwards there will have to be another Messianic figure, who will be Mashiach ben David. But, says the *Arizal*, we should pray three times a day (in the 14<sup>th</sup> prayer of the *Amidah* for the speedy reestablishment of the throne of David) that Mashiach ben Yosef is not killed by this giant. This giant is named in the *Targum Yonatan* (2 times in the Bible) and it's quoted a number of times in the Midrash: Armilus, the wicked Armilus (ארמילוס רשיעא). Yonatan mentions this name in Isaiah 11, in the famous verses that describe Mashiach. וברוח שפתיו ימית רשע, "and with the spirit of his breath of his lips he will kill the evil one". On these words, that Mashiach will kill the wicked one not with a sword or gun, but only with the breath of his lips, Targum Yonatan specifies the evil one by name – Armilus.

There is one other time that Yonatan mentions this individual by name. The second time is in the Torah, just before Moshe Rabbeinu passes away. Hashem showed him the entire future of mankind, all that will happen in all generations. He showed him, says Yonatan, the battle between Mashiach and Armilus. So this was the very last thing that Moshe saw before passing away at the age of 120.

So we have here a triple replay of this battle. We mentioned two months ago (in relation to the relationship between Tamar and Judah) that every process has three stages. So here the first stage is between Moshe Rabbeinu and Og, the second is between David and Goliath, and the third is the battle whose outcome we do not yet know, between Mashiach and Armilus. And again, the *Arizal* says that we

should pray every day that the Mashiach win; even if he doesn't then another Messianic figure will have to come and win this battle.

The *Arizal*, when he taught this to his disciples, was very serious. In fact, he was then referring to himself, that he not be killed, because he was the potential Mashiach of his generation. Unfortunately, he did not win his own battle, and from then on, in every generation, there is one figure who is fighting the battle against Armilus.

#### 4. WAR OF THE WORDS: THE POWER OF PRAYER

The first thing we see here is that the Mashiach does not use physical ammunition. His weapons are the spirit of his lips, which refers to prayer, the power of prayer (which is why the *Arizal* said that we have to join the Mashiach in his own prayer, and together we may be able to give the Mashiach enough strength to win the battle). In many Chassidic sources, it says that the Mashiach's power is in his prayer. This is also one of the reasons why it is written that righteous women (who are more connected to prayer, men are more connected to Torah) have a great role in bringing the redemption. So, we need to learn how to pray powerfully.

For this reason, let's explain more about this power of prayer, the power that is in the lips of the Mashiach. We learn from the Tanya that when you look at the physical world, we see that there are many plants that grow wild, without human intervention. These are called *sefichim* (ספִיחִים) in Hebrew. But, when a plant grows as a result of human cultivation—the human being plows and sows and waters and finally in the end harvests the produce—the quality of the produce is much better than when it grows wild, even though the natural growth is all from God, all by Divine Providence. But, when we are involved the result is much better. This is an important meditation for understanding why our prayers are needed. God could make everything happen all by Himself, in fact that's what He does. Every breath we take, every day we live through, is a miracle, whether we recognize it or not. It's all from God. But, if we are involved, then it's not just Divine Providence, but our prayers are involved. By praying we are like cultivating the plants in the field, and the results are far better than if God were to do it without us. When God acts it is called arousal from above, when we act it is known as arousal from below. When the two come together (both Divine Providence from above and our actions from below, together with our prayers) it is like a marriage: A marriage between the soul below and God above. The result is an offspring that is infinitely greater than something that is born by itself.

Let's understand this a little deeper. The world cannot exist even for a second without God's involvement, as the world is recreated from nothing at every moment. Divine Providence directs our lives, every one of our lives, does goodness and miracles for us that we are not even aware of. People who are very consciousness of Divine Providence, when they wake up in the morning, they might say, I would like to see Divine Providence in my life and in the lives of those around me. If a person is attentive, he will pick up a lot of Divine Providence. There is infinite Divine Providence at every moment. That is what the Ba'al Shem Tov teaches us.

## 5. BETWEEN EXILE AND REDEMPTION

Now, what is the difference between exile and redemption? The fact that we continue to exist while we are in exile is the greatest miracle. The fact that the little lamb (the Jewish people) is not consumed by the seventy wolves (the nations of the world) that want to devour it. There is no greater Divine Providence than that. If you look for it, you will see it. Seeing Divine Providence is seeing God's revelation (גילוי אלקות), seeing that He is here. What can be greater than that, with the coming of Mashiach? The coming of Mashiach is when we learn how to pray, to communicate directly with God, and then the Divine Providence we see is at a completely different level, infinitely more and deeper. The produce is better. The revelation of Divinity is infinitely more when we participate. To pray, one has to have faith, a feminine principle, as it says in the Zohar, "He is truth, she is faith" (איהו אמת איהי אמונה). Truth is the Torah and faith is the foundation of prayer; prayer is a manifestation of faith. In exile then there is Divine Providence all around us, but we don't always see that our prayers are answered. We pray for redemption—but we have not seen it happen yet. Redemption is when we begin to see our prayers being answered and thus the Divine revelation is infinitely greater than it is now—up to the present moment. All this we said in order to explain what the spirit of the breath of the lips of Mashiach is, and how it relates to prayer.

David killed Goliath with a slingshot, a topic we'll go into in more depth later. Moshe Rabbeinu killed Og with a sword. Moshe was also tall, but even when leaping up, he could only reach Og's ankle, according to the sages who say that he was much taller than 15 feet. King David had no sword. He came to Goliath with just a stick and stones. Goliath scorned him, "Do you think that I am a dog that you come to fight me with a stick and stones." The *Arizal* explains that "dog" alludes to *Amalek*. So Goliath was saying, don't think that I am an Amalekite. The battle took place in a circle inscribed in the earth. They were both within this circle

and at the critical moment, David ran and shot the stone on Goliath and hit his forehead. Goliath fell and David took his giant sword and cut off his head. This is a bloody war, both for Moshe Rabbeinu and for King David. But, in our generation, this will not be a bloody battle. It will be the spirit of the lips of Mashiach (וברוח שפתיו ימית רשע) with which he will fight.

## 6. THREE BATTLES, THREE PRAYERS

The young David took five stones from the river bed. He chose five smooth stones (חלוקי נחל) and placed them in his sling. Miraculously, the five stones became a single stone and with this stone he hit Goliath on his forehead. The *Arizal* explains that Goliath's forehead is actually the additional half cubit mentioned when his height is noted as being six cubits and a half. This is very interesting, that the Bible describes him with such detail. The six cubits are up to his eyes, and the extra *zeret*, the extra half-cubit is the height of his forehead, and that is where David struck him. The forehead represents audacity, *chutzpah*. Goliath had the audacity to come out every morning and evening, at the time that the Jewish soldiers were saying the *Shema*, the declaration of our faith that God is one. In order to deny and desecrate the Name of God Goliath came out and cast his fear in all the soldiers in order to challenge the *Shema*. The *Zohar* says that the five stones that David chose and placed in his sling are spiritually the first five words of the *Shema*, "Hear O' Israel, *Havayah* is our God, *Havayah* [is one]" (שמע ישראל הוי' אלקינו הוי'). If you look in the Torah, you will see that after the first five words, there is a *psik ta'ama*, a line that indicates a stop in the middle of the verse; this is one of the cantillation marks. The *Zohar* explains that this *psik ta'ama* after the first five words symbolizes the sling that David used and into which he placed the five stones he had collected. In the sling the five stones became one. This is the secret of the final word of the *Shema* – "one." David's power to kill Goliath was the *Shema* itself. Before the *Amidah*, before praying, we first declare our faith with the *Shema*. So according to Kabbalah, the battle between David and Goliath was about faith in God being one. But, after the *Shema* we reach the *Amidah*, which as we said is already the battle that Mashiach will have with Armilus. Once again, the battle against Goliath who came out twice a day is with the *Shema*. After the *Shema* comes the *Amidah* which is where we pray three times a day that God grant Mashiach the power to kill Armilus. It would then follow that Moshe Rabbeinu's battle with Og is even earlier in the prayer service. Perhaps it is the Song of the Sea which Moshe Rabbeinu sang with the Israelites, even though in practice it was sung forty years before he battled

with Og. But, it could be that the power for his victory in the battle with Og came from the Song of the Sea. So altogether we have,

Song of the Sea	Moshe Rabbeinu and Og
<i>Shema</i>	David and Goliath
<i>Amidah</i>	Mashiach and Armilus

Once again, if our prayer is potent, that itself is the coming of Mashiach. Mashiach comes to give potency to our prayers and thus allowing him to kill Armilus.

## 7. THE GIANTS CHALLENGE THE WHOLENESS OF TORAH, LAND, AND PEOPLE

There is another way to understand these three battles based on a very fundamental teaching from the Lubavitcher Rebbe regarding our obligation to be devoted to three states of perfection. We must believe that perfection is possible and devote our lives to it. Perfection manifests in three different ways in our Jewish lives: the perfection of the Torah, the perfection of the land of Israel, and the perfection of the Jewish people.

The Torah is perfect in the sense that the Torah must be complete. Every letter represents a soul from the Jewish people and we must take great care to never belittle even a single letter. Every letter also inter-cludes all the other letters. Halachically, if a single letter is missing from a Torah, the Torah scroll is no longer kosher.

The second perfection is that of the land of Israel. Obviously this is a very pertinent topic in our generation, especially since a great number of Jews have merited to return to the land of Israel. Who does the land belong to? Does it belong to the Jewish people or to the Philistines? After Joshua conquered the land of Israel and vanquished the seven Canaanite nations (more or less) that lived there, there remained only a single nation that continued to contest our Divine claim to the land. They were a large population that continued to live and grow there. They were the Philistines, after whom the Romans called the land Palestine. The Philistines claimed ownership over our land of Israel. According to the sages, Goliath was denying our faith in one God, and David killed him with the *Shema*—the five stones becoming one. But, the literal sense of the story as it is told in the Book of Samuel is that Goliath was contesting our ownership of the land. Goliath said, I am but one soldier. You Jews, choose a single soldier and I will fight him. Whoever wins, his people will possess the land and the other's people will become their servants and slaves. That's what the battle was all about: who the land of

Israel belongs to. So the battle between David and Goliath was about the perfection of the land of Israel.

The final battle between Mashiach and Armilus will be about assimilation. In the Torah there is a verse that says that when a person builds a new house, he has to construct a fence around the roof so that people don't fall off. The verse's literal wording is, "the faller falls from it [the roof]" (כי יפול הגופל ממנו). The person who might fall off the roof is called a "faller," meaning that he is already destined to fall. Even though the *Targum Yonatan* in this particular place does not say that the faller is Armilus, the sages say that he is. The next verse continues, "Do not plant in your vineyard a mixture of different groves, of different vegetation," that is forbidden. What is the inner meaning of this prohibition called *Kilayim* (כלאים). Vineyard is an idiom often used in the Bible to refer to the Jewish people, for instance, "the Vineyard of the God of Hosts."<sup>1</sup> To plant a mixture in the vineyard is therefore an explicit symbol for assimilation. So since the first verse tells us about the faller, and that faller is Armilus, and the next verse talks about the prohibition to plant a mixture, from these two adjacent verses, we learn that the negative energy of Armilus is assimilation. He is the one who is responsible for assimilation—mixing the vineyard, the Jewish people.

## 6. ASSIMILATION: OUR GENERATION'S HOLOCAUST

What we are saying is that the holocaust of our generation is assimilation. Many people say this and it is obviously the truth. The giant who is responsible for assimilation is Armilus. When Mashiach, who at first is Mashiach ben Yosef fights against him and wins, he becomes Mashiach ben David.<sup>2</sup> The Mashiach is thus fighting for the perfection of the Jewish people.

Moshe Rabbeinu's battle represents the fight for the perfection of Torah, because Moshe is Torah. Og then is a force that is against the perfection and eternity of the Torah. He is known as the king of the Bashan, a word that is cognate with change. He believes that things change with time. But, the Torah is eternal. Og is a spiritual power that fights against the eternity and perfection of Torah.

The battle between David and Goliath is the battle for the perfection, for the wholeness of the land of Israel. You might think that this is the most relevant battle

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<sup>1</sup>. Isaiah 5:7.

<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, Maimonides speaks only of a single individual who is Mashiach, not two different people. But, Maimonides explains that this individual first has to fight God's wars and after he has completed this task successfully, he becomes the definitive Mashiach, akin to Mashiach ben David.

we have today. But, even though both of the first two perfections are relevant for our generation, we are now learning that there is actually another battle that is even more relevant and pertinent in the present moment. It is even more pertinent whether this land belongs to the Jewish people and not to the Philistines. This is the battle for the integrity, the wholeness of the Jewish people, whether it be here in the land of Israel, or whether it is outside the land, in America or wherever else—the fight against assimilation.

## 8. GOLIATH'S WEAKNESS

Now let's look at how the *Arizal* explains Goliath's height of 6 cubits and one *zeret* (one half cubit). In the Scroll of Ruth it says that Bo'az measured for Ruth six grains of barley. A very enigmatic statement. According to the *Arizal*, Orpah and Ruth—Goliath's mother and David's great grandmother—were a replay of what is known as the First Eve and Second Eve. In Kabbalah we learn that there were actually two Eve's created in Genesis.<sup>3</sup> The First Eve turned into a demon while the Second Eve is the good Eve who became the mother of all life, she gave birth to humanity. Those two figures, which also correspond to thought versus speech, come back as Leah and Rachel. Leah was originally supposed to marry Esau and be the reincarnation of the First Eve. But, with her tears, with her prayers, she metamorphosed and became the mother of Mashiach (since Mashiach is a descendant of Judah, Leah's son). Orpah, spiritually had the potential, had she been as sincere as Ruth to also transform herself. But, she didn't and therefore ended up reincarnating the First Eve. We once again have a three stage process: the first pair are the First and Second Eve, the second were Leah and Rachel, and finally, Orpah and Ruth. These souls are entangled, just like nowadays we speak of quantum entanglement, something we mentioned last month. Orpah turned her back on Naomi and went back to Moab and eventually the Philistines. Still, she had good potential (which she neglected to actualize) and that good potential had six levels from wisdom to beauty. These six were given by Boaz to Ruth. Ruth received the six good potential levels that Orpah had but lost. Ruth too was a Moabite princess and she had one small negative energy in herself. But, when she gave herself over to Naomi, she severed (like a spiritual operation) that negative quality from herself and it was given to Orpah and that became the *zeret*, the half-cubit of Goliath's forehead. Indeed, the value of *zeret* (זרת) is 607, which is the value

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<sup>3</sup>. A beautiful allusion to the First and Second Eve is that the name "Eve" appears only twice in Genesis and it is never repeated again in the entire Bible.

of Ruth (רות), 606, with an additional inclusive 1. Orpah was left with six bad parts and her six potentially good parts were given to Ruth, and in addition Orpah received one half of a bad part from Ruth. Since the two souls were entangled, when David and Goliath battled, the half cubit that Orpah received from Ruth is what drew the stone shot by David and killed Goliath.

This is all just a taste of how deep the story of David and Goliath is and how important every detail is. To conclude, let us say that all three giants are the anti, like an anti-particle, of the positive figures of Moshe, David, and Mashiach.

There is another concept that we don't have time to explain in length right now, but let us say that the power to overcome all these giants actually comes from Abraham, who is referred to as, "the man, the greatest of giants" (האדם הגדול בענקים). The power to overcome all the giants comes from the first Jew, Abraham who was also the first convert.

## 9. PORNOGRAPHY: THE SOURCE OF ASSIMILATION

One final point. What is the source of assimilation? This is a very delicate matter. It says in the *midrash* that this Armilus that we have to kill was born in a very peculiar way. His father was a man called "a wicked man" (איש בליעל). But, his mother was not a real woman at all. She was a beautiful picture of a woman engraved on a marble stone. His father just by looking and lusting after this beautiful figure on the marble stone gave birth to the wicked Armilus, which again is the origin of assimilation in our times. What this means is that assimilation is the result, the son, the offspring of pornography. Just looking at this figure—a wicked but beautiful woman engraved on a marble stone—gave birth to assimilation. This is a very clear and straightforward image. The simple conclusion from this is that we have to be very careful with the Internet. You have to use the internet wisely. Like everything else, the Internet was created to be used in a positive way, to spread Torah in the world, but it can just as well become a source of very negative things. So it could be that this giant Armilus is part of the Internet. May the Mashiach, speedily in our days, overcome him and we should merit the true and complete redemption.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

[Why is prayer a feminine power?](#)

The power of the woman is like a concave vessel. The greatest prayer is when a person recognizes that everything that he has is a free gift from God. A woman is

a receiver and therefore realizes this more naturally than a man. A man though also has a feminine aspect, which when he experiences can give him the power to pray even more than he usually can. God falls in love with a true receiver who does whatever he is asked to do.

[How can we be more attentive of Divine Providence to see it more?](#)

Before we pray, we should meditate – also a form of prayer – asking Hashem in our hearts that He open my heart so that I can see His providence. There are prayers of the lips that are audible, but there are also the prayers of the heart. It says that the craving of a person who is humble (which also means to be a concave receptacle) He will grant. When a person is walks in life with the feeling that he is a receiver from God, that he has nothing of his own, then his prayers are answered.

[Is it easier to see Divine Providence in Israel than it is in LA?](#)

Yesterday we read that God's eyes are on the land of Israel. Meaning that the providence first appears in Israel and then spreads out to the rest of the world.

[How can one learn Kabbalah if they don't know Hebrew?](#)

The advice is to learn Hebrew as fast as you can. But, it doesn't mean that you can't know any Kabbalah if you know no Hebrew, but certainly to understand in depth you have to know Hebrew.

[Moshe killed Og up close, David from a bit far away, what about the Mashiach?](#)

Indeed, Armilus will be killed in a non-local manner, which is both very far away and very close at the same time.

[What about the size consideration?](#)

Sometimes a little animal can beat a much bigger animal, as explained by the sages. Moshe feared only that Og had served Abraham so many years ago. So even though Moshe was small compared to Og he was able to kill him. A small person can kill a big person.

[What are the dangers of looking at pornography?](#)

The dangers are what we just said. Pornography is the mother of assimilation. Last time, someone asked about touching before marriage. We say of course don't do it. The same here. Don't go into forbidden sites on the net. It's a very difficult trial, but if God gives it to us, then we can certainly overcome it.

Was the battle of David and Goliath over the faith of the *Shema* or over the possession of the land of Israel?

We gave two different models to explain the three battles. The first was the power of the Song of the Sea, the second was the power of the *Shema* and the third was the power of the *Amidah*. The second model was regarding the three types of perfection and completion in the world: the Torah by Moshe, the land by David, and the people by Mashiach. Again, the literal reading of the book of Samuel notes that Goliath came out to fight over the land of Israel.

The Mashiach is also referred to as one who falls, how would the two verses be explained in this context?

Indeed, Mashiach is described by the sages as a child who is miscarried and comes back to life, בר נפלא א. This is a beautiful example of the same concept being both positive and negative. In reference to Armilus, there is a gematria that is brought in Kabbalah. Armilus comes from the first murderer, Cain, whose name also equals "the faller," נפל, 160. Would we apply this to Mashiach it is Mashiach that prevents the *kilayim*, the assimilation.

What about teaching the Noachide laws to non-Jews?

Last month we said that one of every two people with whom Jews have assimilated have the potential to convert. To do this we have to spread Torah to the non-Jewish world. Even after the mixture has happened, we should not lose hope. And perhaps this is the part of the Divine Providence that we cannot understand, because it is so deep.

Many Jews are concerned with their own status and spiritual growth, and are not concerned about others, especially not non-Jews?

To think only about yourself, that is not a chassid. Without devoting ourselves to others, which in our generation includes the spreading of the light of the Torah to the non-Jewish world, we cannot bring the Mashiach.

Should women leave home to teach others?

Definitely. The topic you teach can be about the home and about prayer. First you learn and then you teach others. I bless every woman who does this.

How does one find and buy one's portion in land in the land of Israel?

Even though we believe in non-locality, to do this you should first come here. Once you are here, Hashem will help you find where you belong. Sometimes, you have a mission already where you live in Chutz La'aretz, and the Rebbe would not say that everyone should just automatically move to Israel. For instance, if you are fighting assimilation where you are, you should continue fighting where you are. But, if you have no special mission there, you should definitely come to the land of Israel.