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## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Shelach

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### Enabling A Subversive Force Of Action

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1. The Jews asked to send spies to scout out the land.
2. G-d said: I've told them that it is a good land, if they wish to send spies they can; Moshe acceded.
3. Midrash: The Jews understood they could not reveal their true intent to Moshe that they lacked in faith.
4. They said they were concerned G-d's name should not be desecrated.
5. G-d said we will find houses filled with wealth; the Canaanites will surely bury their wealth.
6. Why wouldn't Moshe have been concerned had they presented their real intent?
7. Torah: You will eat to be sated in the Sabbatical year.
8. Midrash: You will eat a miniscule amount & be sated.
9. Torah: "If you will ask what will we eat if we don't plant etc. I will command my blessing: the 6th year will have a 3 year yield."
10. Seforno: "If you have faith, the less will be equivalent of the more. If you don't, you will have a 3 year yield."
11. If Jews have faith, the word of G-d will come to fruition; if not, you must locate the wealth to avert a desecration of G-d's name.

### Securing Leadership Through Augmentation

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1. Moshe adds the letter Yud to Yehoshua's name.
2. Yud connotes a supplication that Yehoshua be saved from the machinations of the spies.
3. There were 12 spies; 10 were evil and 2 were devoutly righteous.
4. Why did Moshe not pray for Caleb?
5. Ethics Of Our Father's: Moshe transmitted the Torah to Yehoshua.
6. Yehoshua was responsible to transmit the Torah in its perfect form as it was given at Sinai to Moshe.
7. Rashi: Yehoshua was the dedicated student of Moshe who never departed from the Tent.
8. Eldad and Meidad prophesized Yehoshua would be his successor: Moshe therefore prayed that he should not be influenced.

# WHEN SEEING IS NOT believing

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## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Shelach

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### Engendering A Metamorphosis Through One's Alignment

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1. The spies chosen were initially devoutly righteous.
2. They only became evil when returning with ominous reports.
3. Ten of the twelve spies said they could not go because it is a land that devours its inhabitants.
4. The spy mission lasted 40 days from the time they embarked until they returned.
5. When they returned, the Torah states they went and they returned.
6. Midrash: they returned as they went.
7. As when they returned it was with an evil intent they went with an evil intent.
8. The two verses are contradictory.
9. Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh: When one assumes the position as agent one is linked to the one he represents.
10. If the one represented has a lack of faith it will impact on the agent negatively.
11. Since the Jewish People had a lack of faith they impacted negatively on their representatives, the spies.
12. When they initially were chosen, they represented nobody.
13. Upon departure, were they linked to the Jewish People.

### When A Test Is Not A Test

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. The Jews asked to send spies to scout out the land.
2. G-d said: I've told them that it is a good land; there is no need to send spies...
3. When they send spies, I will give them a setting for them to err and they will not inherit the land.
4. They were only authorized to send spies to fail to understand why they are not worthy to enter into the land.
5. Conventionally, a test is to determine one's ability..
6. If it is beyond one's ability, it is not a test but a definite failure.
7. Regarding the spies: There never was a consideration they would succeed due to their lack of faith.
8. It was only for them to understand they were unworthy.

## Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Shelach



### The Dynamic of the Father-Child Relationship

Torah: The Jewish people began to complain to Moshe, “Who will feed us meat?...We have nothing to anticipate but the manna.” Having already addressed their untenable issues in the desert many times, Moshe was overwhelmed and said to G-d, “Why have you done evil to Your servant; why have I not found favor in Your eyes, that You place the burden of this entire people upon me? Did I conceive this entire people or did I give birth to it...”

Sforno: “How is a father able to guide his children and have them follow his directive if each child has his own perspective?”

Mishna in Tractate Sanhedrin: Although all mankind originate from the same antecedents (Adam and Eve), each human being has a different face. No two faces are identical. The Mishna explains that from this we

learn that just as each person has a different face, so too does each one have a different perspective.

Sforno: “A father is able to direct his children, because each child knows with absolute certainty that the father will do to his best on their behalf because of his love for his children. The child understands that everything that the father does and wants for the child is in his best interest. Moshe was saying to G-d that he had lost the trust of a father to his children, the Jewish people. He had thus become an ineffective leader.

They were no longer willing to submit to his dictate and direction. Therefore, Moshe asked G-d to appoint others to assist him in leading the Jewish people. G-d thus said to Moshe, ‘Gather to Me seventy men...’ In conjunction with the seventy elders, Moshe would be able to guide the Jewish people because of the trust that they will also have in the others that will assist him.”

Torah: Yaakov openly treated Yosef differently than his brothers by giving him the special tunic. Although it was a grave mistake for Yaakov to have done so, it nevertheless did not diminish to any degree his children's understanding of his love and dedication to them. The brothers had believed that Yosef attempted to undermine their relationship with their father.

When one recites the Shema, he declares his belief in the Unity of G-d and accepts upon himself the yoke of heaven. At that moment he is completely negated to the Will of G-d and is prepared to do anything for His sake, including giving his life.

Blessing that precedes Shema: "With abundant love have You loved us, Hashem our G-d; with exceedingly great pity have You pitied us..." We acknowledge and (attempt to) internalize the great love that G-d has for us before declaring our belief in Him and accepting His Yoke. It is because only after one understands and appreciates the unlimited love that G-d has for the Jewish people, will one submit and negate himself through the declaration of the Shema.

Just as children with multiple perspectives accept the will of their father because of his uncompromising love for them, understanding that his interest is only to benefit them, so too it is regarding one's submitting to G-d. When one appreciates and understands the concern and the love that G-d has for us, one will naturally reciprocate to G-d with a similar degree of love. As it states in the Shema, "You shall love Hashem, your G-d with all your soul..."

Torah: Moshe had said to the Jewish people, "As a father disciplines a child so too will G-d discipline you." When G-d punishes the Jewish people it is no different that a father punishing his children for their sake. It is only for the good of the child to set him upon the proper path. If the child appreciates the intent of the father, he will not resent the father, but rather will love him even more. As King Solomon says in Proverbs, "Rebuke a wise man and he will love you." If in order to save the life of the child, the father must do something that is extremely painful and the child will understand that it is in his best interest, he will appreciate the unconditional love of his father. This understanding is pertinent and crucial for the service of G-d.

Gemara: G-d says, "Whoever honors his father it is as if he honors Me." This is because all the aspects of a child's love for his parent and his willingness to

follow his directive and guidance is an actualization of the understanding that the parent is doing what is in his best interest. This allows one to internalize the understanding of the love of G-d towards the Jewish people as that of a father to a child.

## **The Resiliency of the Jewish Soul**

Torah: The spies who were sent to scout out the Land returned with slanderous reports. They said, "It is a Land that devours its inhabitants." Rather than trusting G-d, and perceiving it in a positive context, they said to Moshe, "We will not go in." As a result of the sin of the spies, G-d decreed that the generation that was between the ages of 20 and 60 should perish in the desert over a 40-year period.

After the incident of the spies, the Torah states, "Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, '...When you will bring a fire-offering to Hashem – an elevation offering or a feast offering...or a free-will offering, or on your festivals, to produce a satisfying aroma to Hashem...the one who brings the offering must bring a meal offering...and wine for a libation...' After the sin of the spies, if one were to bring an offering (communal or personal) it needed to be accompanied with a meal offering and a wine libation. Why does the Torah choose to mention these aspects of the sacrifice at this particular time?

Sforno: "Until the sin of the golden calf, it was sufficient to bring the animal alone to be a burnt offering, without the need for a meal offering or wine libations. The animal alone was sufficient to bring about the full effect of the sacrifice."

Ramban: An offering is referred to by the Torah as "korban (derived from the word 'l'karev' – to bring close)" because an offering activates and coalesces various spiritual forces to bring about a specific spiritual result. Prior to the sin of the golden calf, the Jewish people were at a spiritual level that bringing the animal alone as a sacrifice was sufficient to bring about the desired spiritual result. However, after the sin, the Jewish people regressed and became spiritually deficient, thus causing to need to supplement the burnt offering with a meal offering and wine libations in order to bring about the same result.

Sforno: "Where do we find that bringing the animal alone was sufficient? We see this regarding the sacrifices of

Abel, Noah, and Avraham. They had brought burnt offerings without the need to be accompanied with anything else. At the time of the giving of the Torah at Sinai, the youths also brought burnt offerings that were not accompanied with a meal offering and libations. However, as a result of the spiritual diminishment of the Jewish people that was caused by the sin of the golden calf, when a communal offering was brought it was no longer sufficient for it to be brought by itself. It needed to be supplemented with the meal offering and libations. As the Jewish people regressed to a further degree as a result of the sin of the spies, even when one brought a personal offering, it needed to be supplemented with a meal offering and libations. It was no longer sufficient to bring the meat offering by itself.”

Gemara in Tractate Sanhedrin: If a non-Jew violates any of the seven Noahide laws, he is liable for the death penalty. If the non-Jew steals he is liable for the death penalty; however, if the Jew steals although it is considered to be a transgression of a negative commandment, he does not need to be put to death to be atoned. If the sin of stealing is so grave that one must die to be atoned, why does the Jew not require the death penalty to bring about atonement. When one sins, it causes a diminishment in one’s spirituality. One then needs to be spiritually rehabilitated. Punishment is a manner of atonement that brings about this result. The degree of spiritual diminishment to the individual caused by the sin will determine the degree of atonement that is needed to rehabilitate one’s spirituality.

The spiritual make up of a Jew and non-Jew are not alike. The spirituality of the non-Jew is less viable than that of the Jew who possesses a more advanced dimension of spirituality, thus causing him to be more resilient to the affect of sin. If a non-Jew violates any one of the seven Noahide laws, the damage to his spirituality is so severe that only death can bring about sufficient atonement to restore that individual’s spirituality. This is not so regarding the Jew, because his dimension of spirituality is more advanced. Before the sin of the golden calf the spirituality of the Jew was at its most advanced and viable level. Thus, if a Jew would bring an offering, it was sufficient to only bring the animal for the burnt offering in order to be effective.

However, after the sin of the golden calf, the level of spirituality of the Jew was diminished and became less resilient. In order to bring about atonement, the communal offering needed to be supplemented with

the meal offering and libations. After the sin of the spies, their spirituality was further reduced and thus needed an even greater degree of initiative to be rehabilitated. Even the personal offering needed to be supplemented with a meal offering and libations.

Gemara in Tractate Megillah: If a prophet were to communicate a law that was not communicated to the Jewish people by Moshe, he is deemed to be a false prophet. When Moshe passed away, the transmission of Torah to the Jewish people came to an end. Throughout the life of Moshe the laws of the Torah evolved based on the spiritual status and needs of the Jewish people, such as the sacrifices (whether or not they needed to be supplemented). After Moshe passed away the evolution of Torah came to an end and whatever is contained in the Torah is sufficient to maintain and advance the spirituality of the Jewish people.

Chazal: If G-d had not taken out the Jewish people from Egypt at the exact moment that He had, they would have been gone into the spiritual oblivion because they had fallen to the forty-ninth level of impurity. However after receiving the Torah at Sinai and being taken as G-d’s people, the spirituality of the Jew became eternal.

Gemara Kiddushin: “A Jew who sins (even if he had become an apostate) is still considered to be a Jew.” Once Moshe passed away, whatever was needed to rehabilitate and maintain the spirituality of the Jewish people that was recorded in the Torah will be sufficient until the end of time.

## **Seeing G-d in One’s Life**

Torah: Moshe sent twelve spies to scout out the Land of Canaan. Ten of the spies returned with slanderous reports while Yehoshua and Calev, recounted that they had seen the goodness of the Land and the Kindness of G-d.. The spies with the slanderous report said, “...the people that dwell in the Land are powerful, the cities are greatly fortified...we also saw there the offspring of giants...” Calev silenced the people and said, “We shall surely ascend and conquer it...” The spies said, “It is a Land that devours its inhabitants.” Yehoshua and Calev said, “...The Land is very good! ...a Land that flows with milk and honey...You should not fear the people of the Land for they are like bread (that can be eaten)...Their protection has departed from them; Hashem is with us...”

Yehoshua and Calev, perception was that were no obstacles to conquer the Land that G-d had promised to the Jewish people. However, the other ten spies reported that the conquest of the Land was an impossibility and was the equivalent of a death trap.

How could two groups of people witness the same thing and have perspectives that are diametrically opposed? The entire Jewish people had witnessed the ten plagues of Egypt and the splitting of the Sea. They had experienced the revelation of G-d at Sinai when they received His Torah. They were continuously beneficiaries of G-d's unending Kindness as a result of revealed miracles in the desert (manna, wellspring, and clouds of glory).

After understanding that G-d is the Omnipotent Being who dominates every aspect of existence, how could giants be an obstacle to conquering the Land that G-d had promised would be theirs? How could fortified cities even be a consideration for entering into the Land of Canaan, if Egypt, the most powerful civilization in the world was decimated on their behalf? What is the differentiating factor that causes the perspectives to be positive or negative?

The Chofetz Chaim z'tl was devoutly righteous and a leading Torah sage. His level of clarity was unique. He was once asked about his belief in G-d in existence. He answered, "Believing in G-d is not difficult. His presence is obvious and cannot be denied in existence. Just as I see that the sun is shining, so too is G-d's Presence obvious to me. The way I see my five fingers before my eyes, I see G-d." The average person who does not have the level of devoutness, purity, and Torah knowledge as the Chofetz Chaim does not see G-d's Presence in existence as being obvious. Even if the average person were to study Torah and have belief in G-d, the knowledge of G-d's Presence would be abstract. It is not something that is internalized to the degree that it is sensed.

The spies witnessed the Canaanites burying their dead wherever they went and saw that only the giants were able to survive. They thus concluded "It is a Land that devours its inhabitants." However, Yehoshua and Calev did not see it in this vein. They had perceived the same events differently. The plague that had decimated the inhabitants of Canaan was a kindness of G-d to eliminate any resistance to the Jewish people entering into the Land.

The spies, who did not have sufficient trust in G-d, interpreted everything in a negative manner. They believed that the only way that one could conquer the

Land was if G-d intervened and performed miracles. They however felt that the Jewish people were not worthy of such miracles. In contrast, Yehoshua and Calev who had absolute trust in G-d saw the events in Canaan as miracles being performed on their behalf in the Land. They thus understood that just as G-d performed these miracles, He would perform others to assist the Jewish people in conquering the Land unopposed.

Prayer of thanks (Modim) in the Amidah (Silent Prayer): "We gratefully thank You...for Your miracles that are with us every day; and for Your wonders..." Although this prayer is recited three times a day, most people who do believe do not perceive throughout their daily life that G-d performed miracles on their behalf. They attribute many successes that they may have achieved, to their own skills and abilities. They do not see G-d's continuous intervention in their lives. One who is truly humble will perceive what is natural as being miraculous because he feels unworthy of G-d's Kindness.

He thus expresses his thanks and praise to Him wholeheartedly. The humble individual continuously sees the Hand of G-d in every aspect of his life. The one who feels entitled does not witness miracles unless they are truly revealed. He perceives everything as ordinary and usual.

Torah: Yaakov, our Patriarch said, "I have everything..." He was satisfied with whatever G-d had bestowed upon him. Because of his humility, he had no sense of entitlement. Because of his humility, Yaakov perceived everything through the eyes of the Torah as it states, "He is the perfect man who dwells in the tent (of Torah)." In contrast Esav said, "I have much..." Meaning, that regardless of what he had, it would never be enough. If one is able to see the ongoing miracles of G-d in his daily life, he is perceiving life correctly. If on the other hand one does not sense G-d's continuous intervention, he must introspect and ask himself "why not?"

## **Potential, Determined by One's Linkage**

Torah: The Jewish people requested that Moshe send spies to scout out the Land of Canaan. The Torah states regarding the spies, "...they were all distinguished men (anashim) ...they were all princes." The Torah identifies the scouts that were chosen by G-d to be men of acclaim.

Rashi citing Chazal: "All the men that were chosen were proper Jews."

Midrash: "All the men that were chosen to scout out the Land were devoutly righteous before they set out on their mission." Initially when the spies had been chosen, although they were righteous they later became corrupted and evil. If they were of such exceptional spiritual standing, how could they return with slanderous reports of the Land that were against G-d to the degree of bordering on blasphemy?

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: The incident of the spies relates to the principle of agency. The Gemara draws from many sources in the Torah that if one appoints an agent to perform a mitzvah or carry out any other act on his behalf, the result of the agent's actions is attributed to the one who had commissioned him. The agent is only effective and can function in his capacity because of his linkage to the one who he represents.

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: Based on this principle, if the agent should represent individuals who lack faith or who are corrupted in their spirituality, the linkage between the two will affect the agent negatively. Although the spies were initially devoutly righteous and men of special spiritual status, because they were the agents of the Jewish people to scout out the Land who lacked faith, they were affected negatively. The clarity that they initially had before becoming the agents of the Jewish people was lost. This caused them to see what they had witnessed in a negative context rather than in a positive context. Although they still had the ability to chose correctly (otherwise they would not have been faulted for their behavior); however, they did not choose to make the proper choice because they had lost their clarity.

The Jewish people had demonstrated many times from the time that they had left Egypt a lack of faith in G-d. When the Jewish people were caught between the Sea and the approaching Egyptian army the Torah states, "They said to Moshe, 'Were there no graves in Egypt that you took us to die in the desert? What is this that you have done to us to take us out of Egypt?'" After the Splitting of the Sea, the Jewish people traveled and arrived at a location called Marah. It was an oasis where the waters were bitter. They complained to Moshe, "What shall we drink?"

Despite the fact that G-d had promised to take them to a Land that was flowing with milk and honey, they lacked faith and requested spies to scout out the Land to see if the Land of Canaan would be beneficial to them. The spies that were chosen to scout out the

Land, were thus negatively impacted and impaired through the agency of the Jewish people.

Although Yehoshua and Calev were also agents of the Jewish people, because of their unique dimension of spirituality were able to perceive what they had seen properly. In addition, Moshe added the letter "yud" to Yehoshua's name (which represents one of the names of G-d) to indicate that G-d should come to his aid. Moshe prayed that he should not fall prey to the machinations of the spies. Calev, the prince of the tribe of Yehudah, when he felt that he was being affected by the other spies, went to Chevron to prostrate himself on the graves of the Patriarchs to pray so that he should not succumb to their influence.

Just as the linkage between the agent and the one who appointed him can have a negative affect on the agent, identically if one is linked to a positive source, then that agent will draw ability that is beyond his own capacity as a result of the linkage. If one represents an individual who is worthy of great Divine Assistance, the agent will be worthy of that assistance. He will be able to overcome and surpass situations that would not have been possible on his own.

Torah: Regarding the building of the Mishkan, G-d commanded Moshe to build the Mishkan and subsequently delegated all the tasks of its building to the Jewish people. If in fact the building of the Mishkan was done by the Jewish people, why did G-d command Moshe himself to build it?

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: G-d wanted Moshe to be the beneficiary of every aspect of the Mishkan. By delegating the building of the Mishkan to the Jewish people, they were his agents representing him. Thus, everything that they had done, accrued to Moshe based on the laws of agency.

However based on the words of the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh regarding the spies, we can understand the building of the Mishkan differently. G-d wanted the Jewish people to be the agents of Moshe so that they should merit the Divine Assistance that they personally were not worthy of. As Moshe's agents their level of accomplishment in the physical and spiritual realm would be the equivalent of Moshe's dimension of person.

The spiritual capacity to contain G-d's Presence would be enhanced to a greater degree. The Jewish people

merited special Divine Assistance to be able to build the Mishkan and infuse it with all its needed intent. This was only possible because they were the agents of Moshe. Chazal refer to the Mishkan as “the Mishkan of Moshe” because the dimension of holiness of the Mishkan was a reflection of Moshe’s own holiness. Had they not been linked to Moshe as his agents, the Mishkan would have had a limited capacity.

### **The Innate Value of a Jew (from Beha’aloscha)**

Torah: The Levites were chosen by G-d to replace the firstborn (bechorim) to be His officiants. The Torah states, “Then I assigned the Levites to be presented to Aaron and his sons from among the Children of Israel to perform the service of the Children of Israel in the Tent of the Meeting and to provide atonement for the Children of Israel, so that there will not be a plague among the Children of Israel when the Children of Israel approach the Sanctuary.”

Rashi citing Chazal: “The term ‘Children of Israel’ is mentioned five times in the verse. What is the reason for this? To make known His love for them.” When one refers to his beloved child he does so by name, because every time the parent mentions the name of the child it evokes a sense of love for him. Similarly, when G-d referred to the Jewish people He did not refer to them as “them” but rather as “Children of Israel” in order to reveal His love.

Midrash: “The term ‘Children of Israel’ is repeated in the verse five times to correspond to the five books of the Torah.” Seemingly, the number five is special because the Torah itself is divided into five parts. Thus, the Jewish people being referred to as “Children of Israel” five times also indicates that there are special.

However, this is an incorrect understanding. Rather, the number five being applied to the Jewish people is to indicate that their special status and G-d’s exceptional love for them because only they have relevance to the five books of the Torah. The ability for the Jewish people to stand at Sinai and declare, “Naaseh v’Nishma – we will do and we will listen” was a result of descending from the Holy Patriarchs. By descending from such holy antecedents, it gave them the capacity to appreciate G-d and understand one’s spiritual purpose, which is doing His Will.

Torah: “Bereishis bara Elokim (In the beginning G-d created )...”

Chazal: The opening words of the Torah allude to the purpose of Creation. G-d created existence for the sake of the Torah, which is “reishis (choicest).” In addition, G-d created heaven and earth and for the sake of the Jewish people who are also classified as “reishis (chosen).” Since the Jewish people are the only nation who have relevance to the fulfillment of the Torah, G-d has special love for them. It is only through them that the objective of Creation can be achieved.

The Levites were chosen by G-d to represent the Jewish people, who are His chosen people, to do His service. They were qualified to represent the people whom G-d has special love for. Thus, Levites are considered to be more special than the rest of the Jewish people. They did not receive a share in the Land of Israel, as the other tribes, because “G-d is their portion.” Their focus must be completely on spirituality to accommodate the spiritual needs of the Jewish people. If the basis for G-d’s special love for the Jewish people is their relevance to Torah, the Levites who are fully occupied with its dissemination and G-d’s service, then not having a share in the Land is the greatest privileged. This is a confirmation of their dimension of spirituality.

Gemara in Tractate Megillah: The study of Torah has greater value than the saving of a life. Mordechai was pivotal in bringing about the miracle of Purim. He galvanized the Jewish people to repent until the decree of total annihilation was annulled by G-d. Had Mordechai not intervened, the decree of Haman the evil one would have brought about the total destruction of the Jewish people.

After the miracle of Purim, Mordechai was appointed by the Persian emperor to be viceroy. He had many governmental responsibilities and thus had less time to study Torah. The Megillah tells us that because he was involved to this degree in political matters, he was only accepted by a majority of his colleagues and not by all of them as before. Losing favor among the minority of his colleagues indicates that studying Torah is more valuable than saving a life.

If the objective and value of Creation is to live by the Torah and study it, evidently human life is only a means to an end which is the Torah. Although Mordechai through his initiative saved the Jewish people and continued to be their advocate; he nevertheless was preoccupied with the means and not fully occupied

in the end, which is the Torah itself. Thus, the Gemara extrapolates from the words Megillah that the study of Torah is more valuable than saving a life.

G-d's special love for the Jewish people is only because of their relevance to the Torah. This is clearly communicated by the repetition of the term "Children of Israel" five times in one verse to correspond to the five books of the Torah. Everything outside of the Torah is only to facilitate one's study and observance of the Torah. The Levites, since their involvement is solely the study of Torah and the service of G-d, they are truly His beloved.

Gemara: Regarding the Kohen, that he officiates as G-d's agent. Based on the affect of the linkage, which comes about as a result of agency, one's intent, will determine the dimension of the mitzvah. If one truly performs a mitzvah for the sake of G-d and is acting as His agent, the ability to produce something in the spiritual realm will surpass anything that he could have accomplished in his own right.



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