

PHILOTORAH

לה"י

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואליהי אבותינו שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפצועי המלחמה, ולנפגעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות בישראל ובכל מקום שהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He end these wars with total success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.

YERUSHALAYIM

in/out times for

SH'LACH

כ"א סיון ה'תשפ"ו

June 5-6, '26

 7:07 PM

Plag 6:14 PM

 8:25 PM

R' Tam 8:54 PM

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B'ha-alo-t'cha
in Chutz LaAretz

20 Sivan

This coming Friday is the Twentieth of Sivan. It was established in Ashkenazi communities as a day of fasting and teshuva to remember two major tragedies of Jewish history.

The earlier catastrophe, which occurred in the 12th century, was recorded in a contemporary chronicle entitled Emek HaBacha, and also in a s'lichah entitled Emunei Sh'lumei Yisrael.

One night in the city of Blois, in central France, a Jew watering his horse happened upon a murder scene in which a gentile adult had drowned a gentile child. The murderer, not wanting to be executed for his crime, fled to the local ruler, telling him that he had just caught a Jew murdering a child!

The tyrant arrested 31 Jewish leaders, men and women, including some of the baalei Tosafot who were disciples of the Rashbam, Rashi's grandson. The tyrant accused his prisoners, several of whom are mentioned by name in Emunei Sh'lumei Yisrael, of killing the gentile child to obtain blood for producing matza.

After locking his captives in a tower, the despot insisted that they be baptized. He told them that if they accept baptism, he would forgive them, but if they refused, he would execute them in a painful way. None of them considered turning traitor to Hashem's Torah. On the 20th of Sivan 4931 (1171), they were tied up and placed on a pyre to be burned alive. At the fateful moment, the Jews sang in unison: ALEINU L'SHA- BEI'ACH LA'ADON HAKOL, "it is incumbent upon us to praise the Lord of all."

The fires did not consume them! The undeterred tyrant commanded his troops to beat them to death and then burn their bodies. However, the fires were still unable to consume their bodies, which remained intact!

This libel was a major factor in the banishing of Jews from France that occurred ten years later.

As a commemoration of the sacrifice of these great Jews and as a day of teshuva, Rabbeinu Tam and the other gedolei Baalei Tosafot of France declared the 20th of Sivan a fast day. Special selichot and piyutim were composed to memorialize the incident...

Since this tragedy took place during the general period of the Crusades, the 20th of Sivan was often viewed as the mourning day for the murders and other excesses that were committed

during that era, since each of the early Crusades resulted in the horrible destruction of hundreds of communities in central and western Europe and the killing of thousands of Jews.

The fast of the 20th of Sivan memorializes an additional Jewish calamity. Almost five hundred years later, most of the Jewish communities of eastern Europe suffered the unspeakable massacres that are referred to as the G'zeirot Tach v'Tat, which refer to the years of 5408 (Tach) and 5409 (Tat), corresponding to the secular years 1648 and 1649. Although this title implies that these excesses lasted for at most two years, the calamities of this period actually raged on, sporadically, for the next twelve years.

The Cossack hordes swarmed throughout Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, wreaking havoc in their path and putting entire Jewish communities to the sword. Hundreds of Jewish communities in Poland and Ukraine were destroyed by the massacres. The Cossacks murdered unknown thousands of Jews, including instances in which they buried people alive, cut them to pieces and perpetrated far more horrible cruelties. In sheer cruelty, many of their heinous deeds surpassed even those performed later by the Nazis.

After this tragic period passed and

the Jewish communities began the tremendous work of rebuilding, the Vaad Arba Ha'aratzot, which at the time was the halachic and legislative body of all Polish and Lithuanian Jewry... declared that the 20th of Sivan should be established forever as a fast day (Shaarei T'shuva 580:9). The fast was declared binding on all males over the age of 18 and females over the age of 15.

Why don't we observe this? "It is customary in the entire Kingdom of Poland to fast on the 20th of Sivan." These are the words of the Magen Avraham (580:9). I do not know when the custom to observe this fast ended, but the Mishna Berura quotes it as common practice in his day in Poland (580:16). Perhaps it was assumed that the custom was only required as long as there were communities in Poland, but that their descendants who moved elsewhere were not required to observe it.

In our time, the most costly battle of the Lebanon War ('82), - Sultan Yakub, took place on 20 Sivan. 30 deaths HY"D and famous, long-term MIAs.

Excerpted from an article on yeshiva.co

SH'LACH

37th of the 54 sedras;
4th of 10 in Bamidbar



Written on 198 lines, ranks 25th

10 Parshiyot; 7 open, 3 closed

119 p'sukim, ranks 21, 6th in Bamidbar

1540 words, ranks 27, 5th in Bamidbar

5820 letters, ranks 27, 4th in Bamid.

Sh'lach has shorter than average p'sukim, which explains the drop in rank for words and letters, yet the rise in rank within Bamidbar indicates that there are sedras in Bamidbar with even shorter p'sukim.

MITZVOT

3 mitzvot - 2 positives - Challah & Tzitzit, and 1 prohibition, not to follow the temptations of your heart and eyes.

As we point out often, the distribution of mitzvot in the Torah is very uneven. With only 3 mitzvot, there are 25 sedras with fewer mitzvot than Sh'lach and 26 with more. 3 is the median number of mitzvot per sedra in the Torah. T'ruma and Chukat also have 3 mitzvot each. 17 sedras have no mitzvot counted among the Torah's Taryag (613)

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P>] and [S>] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 13:1-20

[P> 13:1 (43)] G-d tells Moshe to send "people" to "scout out" the Land. ("People" is in quotes because commentaries point to the word ANASHIM and say that it means people of high calibre and repute - except that we know how it turns out...) The emphasis in the wording of the pasuk is on Moshe being the one sending the Meraglim, not at G-d's command nor by His "desire".

The representatives of each tribe are named and the Torah, further testifies to the high caliber of each man.

SDT: Back in Bamidbar, when the Tribal leaders were named, Efrayim and Menashe were identified as the sons of Yosef - within the same pasuk. Here, only Menashe is identified with Yosef, and Efrayim's scout, Yehoshua, is listed three

p'sukim earlier, without reference to his father. Commentaries note that Yosef had been involved in "negative reports" (against his brothers), as was the scout of Menashe involved in negative reports on the Land. Yehoshua remained clear of the taint of DIBA RA'A and is therefore not mentioned together with Yosef, in this context.

(It is interesting to note that the words immediately before 'for the tribe of Efrayim...' are BEN YOSEF, in this case, the father of Yig'al, the scout for Yissachar. Not Yosef the father of Efrayim. Nonetheless, it is interesting that Efrayim is juxtaposed to the name Yosef even though he is 'distanced' from his own father's name.)

And Moshe called Hoshei'a bin Nun, Yehoshua.

SDT: Rashi says that by adding a YUD to Hoshei'a's name, he was giving him a bracha that he should be saved from the group attitude of the other Meraglim. Question: MIMA NAFSHACH (whichever way you want to look at things) - Why did Moshe not "bless" the other scouts similarly? And why would Yehoshua need a bracha when Kalev apparently did not?

Whether a Scout will come back with the proper attitude or not was based on each individual's personality, perceptions, and conclusions. That

was up to each of the 12 individuals. That's not why Moshe gave a special bracha to Yehoshua. Moshe had a separate fear concerning Yehoshua. He could imagine Yehoshua joining the ten Meraglim in discouraging the People from entering the Land so that Moshe's life would be prolonged. Eldad and Meidad had prophesied that Moshe would die and Yehoshua would lead the people into the Land, Yehoshua heard that and was quite agitated. Moshe's bracha to Yehoshua was to keep Yehoshua honest, so to speak, so that he would not join the "evil advice" for any reason, even one to benefit Moshe himself.

Of course, this can only be in the realm of D'RASH since it assumes that Moshe knew in advance what was to happen. If so, why would he send the Meraglim in the first place. He wasn't commanded to do so; G-d said to him, if you (Moshe) want, then send them.

Moshe gives the scouts instructions and an itinerary, hoping that they will return with an encouraging report for Bnei Yisrael. It was the time of the ripening of the grapes, Y'mei Bikurei Anavim.

Levi - Second Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 13:21-14:7

The Torah describes the 40-day "tour" of the scouts. When they returned, they reported to the People about the

truly beautiful land to which they had been sent. They showed the samples of the fruits they brought back with them. They described the apparent strength of the inhabitants (in an attempt to scare the people). And they mentioned Amalek and other nations (knowing it would have a discouraging effect).

Kalev silenced the people and told them that they should go to the Land; "We can do it!" The other ten scouts objected and spoke further against the Land, causing wide-spread panic among the people. Moshe, Aharon, Kalev, and Yehoshua are greatly troubled by the words of the Meraglim and by the reaction of the people. Kalev and Yehoshua proclaim the goodness of the Land.

SDT: ...and we were in our eyes like grasshoppers (compared to the giants of Canaan) and so we appeared to them. The Kotzker Rebbe and others define two components of the Sin of the Spies from this part of the pasuk. First, that we saw ourselves as small and insignificant, compared with the nations in Eretz Yisrael. Second, that we were concerned about how others perceived us. With G-d obviously on our side (we knew what happened to Egypt and we witnessed so many miracles performed on our behalf), we should not have viewed ourselves that way. And, how others perceive us is their problem, not ours. (In fact, it should

often be an asset for us.) Sadly, each of these attitude problems exists in our own time.

- Notice how the first time the Meraglim spoke to the people, they did not say that we shouldn't go into Eretz Yisrael. They "just" described some of the difficulties we would face and apparently hoped that their report would scare off the people. After Kalev took the microphone, so to speak, and gave a brief but enthusiastic "Aliya pep-talk", the Meraglim dropped the subtle approach and spoke out openly against going into Eretz Yisrael. This is what the Torah described as DIBA AL HA'ARETZ, Lashon HaRa against the Land.

It might be said that people who tell other Jews about terror attacks and wars and other difficulties that we face in Israel are "guilty" of "first-stage" Meraglim-talk. Those who add "you gotta be crazy to live there" or words to that effect, are repeating and perpetuating what is maybe the greatest communal sin in the history of the Jewish People. The sin of the Meraglim created the blackest day on our calendar, Tish'a b'Av. The destructions of the two Batei Mikdash and the various causes of the CHURBAN were "merely" add-ons to Tish'a b'Av. When we totally repudiate - by action, not just by word - the Sin of the Spies, and embrace - by action, not just by word

- the righteous behavior of Kalev and Yehoshua, then we can hope for the fulfillment of the prophecy of Zecharya that will see Tish'a b'Av and the other three Churban-related fasts become Yamim Tovim.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 18 p'sukim - 14:8-25

"If G-d wants us to go there, then we will obviously be able to prevail. Just don't rebel against Him." The people wanted to stone Kalev and Yehoshua for those words.

And sadly, there are many Jews today who still don't hear - or want to hear the words of Yehoshua and Kalev.

[P> 14:11 (15)] G-d is "angered" by the people and "suggests" to Moshe that He will destroy them and build a new nation from him (Moshe). Moshe argues on behalf of the people. His argument (this time, he only uses this argument) is that other nations will say that G-d did not have the ability to bring Bnei Yisrael into K'na'an, so He killed them in the wilderness. This would be a Chilul HaShem. Moshe then invokes a modified version of the Divine Attributes and pleads for forgiveness for the people. (Part of Moshe's words at this point have been incorporated into our davening.) G-d agrees to Moshe's pleas. (G-d's response to Moshe also becomes part of the Yom Kippur davening.) G-d

declares that this is the tenth time that the People have "tested" His patience (so to speak). He promises that the men of this generation will not enter the Land - except Kalev (& Yehoshua).

The People are told that Amalek and the Canaanites occupy the valley and that they (the People of Israel) will have to divert towards the Midbar.

Compare & Learn - Towards the end of last week's sedra, we have the episode of Miriam's talking about Moshe and her punishment for her relatively mild transgression of LASHON HARA. Commentaries point out the juxtaposition of the episode of the spies.

There is more to this than "simply" two examples of Lashon HaRa, one about a person and one about Eretz Yisrael. There are important elements and details to be learned one from the other.

For example, it is not just the speaker of Lashon HaRa that transgresses. Those who listen to LH passively, without objecting, those who accept the LH as truth - they too transgress. The Sin of the Spies was not restricted to 10 people. Thousands of those who heard what was said and accepted it, and panicked because of it, they too were guilty. And they were punished, as we know.

Translate this into our time. It is not enough for one to refrain from bad-mouthing Eretz Yisrael, one

cannot stand by idly when others do it. Kalev jumped up as soon as he heard what the Meraglim said. He did his best to repudiate the words of the Meraglim and then made his own impassioned pitch for Aliya.

We must not "put down" Israel, its people, life here, etc. We must object when others do. And one should avoid saying something negative even in a joke. (Just as, "I was only joking" does not mitigate Lashon HaRa about another person.)

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 27 p'sukim - 14:26-15:7

[P> 14:26 (20)] The Torah elaborates upon the devastating pronouncement by G-d. The People shall roam in the Midbar for a number of years equal to the number of days of the spies' trip.

Clarification: The Sin of the Spies occurred on Tish'a b'Av 2449, more than a year out of Egypt. Total time in the Midbar from Exodus to entry into the Eretz Yisrael is 40 years, less five days. So the punishment is really for less than 39 years. But look at things this way: The Sin of the Spies was the culmination of the "angering" of G-d. We can say that it began back at the Sin of the Golden Calf (or even before that - we "complained" when we were hardly out of Egypt). We might say that the 40-year punishment is retro-active to include Cheit HaEigel (or even earlier).

The people deeply regret their behavior and NOW decide to enter the Land immediately. Moshe warns them not to, because G-d no longer wants them to do so (at this point). Some of the people went anyway - without the protection of the Aron, so to speak - and are defeated and repelled by Amalek and K'na'an.

[P> 15:1 (16)] The Torah next sets down the details of the flour and oil offering (MENACHOT) and libation of wine (NESECH) that are to accompany most korbanot.

It is important to note the context of these laws. Right after being told that the older generation (males) will not enter the Land, G-d comforts the people by teaching procedures that will apply in Eretz Yisrael, specifically mitzvot that are to be "pleasing to G-d" (and even though they are commanded elsewhere). It is as if G-d says, "Don't be too dismayed; your children will live in Eretz Yisrael and will serve Me in the Beit HaMikdash" in this special way.

Note also that the Aliya-break comes in mid-topic, leaving us, at the break, to ponder and savor the fact that we will yet bring about REI'ACH NICH'O'ACH LASH'EM. G-d's taking the next generation into Eretz Yisrael is not proof of G-d's forgiveness, per se. It could have been a 'reluctant' keeping of His promises to the Avot, and not much else. But His command concerning the Menachot and

Nesachim, on the other hand, do show His great love for His People. And the placement here is a loud message - especially, because the topic is repeated here and technically unnecessary to be found here.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 15:8-16

The details of the MINCHA & NESECH are completed in this portion, finishing with a reiteration and emphasis on the equality of Torah law for all Jews.

To reiterate: It seems obvious that this area of mitzva was purposely put here in the aftermath of the Sin of the Spies. There are at least two other places in the Torah where the topic is presented, where the mitzva is counted, and where it fits well in the context. It seems superfluous here except as a message in the context of the Meraglim fiasco. Note also, that it is not merely a mitzva that will apply in Eretz Yisrael, but one that is part of the Beit HaMikdash service.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 10 p'sukim - 15:17-26

[P> 15:17 (5)] Mitzva of Challa is presented [385, A133 15:20].

MITZVAnotes

Two major aspects of this precious mitzva are:

It is performed with THE essential food of humans - as in, Bread is the staff of life. This elevates the physical necessity of food to a spiritual level.

Which, by the way, fits the idea of "Man does not live by bread alone." This idea, presented in the beginning of Parshat Eikev, referred to the Manna as that which indicated to the People that it is "by the mouth of G-d, that man lives". That being so during the years of wandering in the Midbar, the concept continues in perpetuity via the mitzva of CHALLA and the other mitzvot associated with bringing bread to our tables, as well as washing for bread, HaMotzi, Birkat HaMazon... and more.

Secondly, the fact that we are to give Challa to a Kohen - specifically after most of the work has been done, meaning that we give Challa from ready-to-pop-into-the-oven dough and not only the raw produce, as with other gifts to the Kohen - indicates that it is not merely the gift that is significant, but the service to the Kohen that we perform that is important as well.

Challa is one of the mitzvot that our Sages have kept active by rabbinic decree since the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, so that its practice and lessons should not be lost to us. Foithemore, Challa is rabbinically required in Chutz LaAretz, although the Torah introduces the mitzva with,

"with your coming to the Land". This too helps keep TORAT CHALLA alive among the Jewish People and show us how very special this mitzva is.

[S> 15:22 (5)] Next the Torah presents the details of the Chatat (sin offering) of the community (in cases where the leaders of the community inadvertently misled the people (in Avoda Zara related matters.) Here again, it seems obvious that this topic is brought up here because of the Sin of the Spies. This mitzva is not counted here, but it certainly conveys G-d's attitude (so to speak) about Cheit HaMeraglim. We recognize that sometimes our leaders must bear the responsibility of leading us astray (but not always - often we must be accountable and not claim that we were just following orders). The ideas (and text) here are part of Yom Kippur davening.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 15 p'sukim - 15:27-41

[S> 15:27 (5)] On the other hand, many times each individual must be accountable for his own actions; we cannot always blame our leaders. [This fits, as we mentioned before, the culpability - albeit different - of the population in addition to the Meraglim themselves.] The Torah in this portion discusses the Chatat of the individual. These offerings are appropriate only for inadvertent violation; intentional violation (idolatry is implied) is punishable by

KAREIT (excision, being cut off...), and is atoneable by other methods.

Following Cheit HaMeraglim and preceding the episode of the wood-gatherer, the Torah presents us with both types of Chata'ot - communal and individual. These topics are dealt with (and counted among Taryag) elsewhere. Again, we are seeing (probably) an example of repeating something in a specific context or juxtaposition to a story in order to make a point and deliver an important message to us.

[P> 15:32 (3)] The Torah next tells us of the wood-gatherer (Tradition identifies him as Tz'lofchad) who was locked up pending details from G-d as to how a public desecrator of Shabbat is to be executed. (That it is a capital offense was already known.)

Even though what the M'kosheish Eitzim did is not subject to a Chatat, we should at least see it as a reminder of an individual's sinning - and what that conveys to us about the sin of the spies not being just a sin of the tribal leaders but for each and every individual (male 20 yrs and up).

[S> 15:35 (2)] G-d's command was to stone the violator. And so it was done.

[P> 15:37 (5)] The final portion of the sedra is the third passage of the Sh'ma - the portion of Tzitzit. It contains the mitzva to put Tzitzit on the corners of

a four-corner garment [386, A14 15:38] and that one of the strings of each corner should be dyed t'cheilet, the special blue dye. (Some say half a string, which becomes one of 8; some say one string, which becomes 2 of 8; and some say 2 of the 4 strings, which become 4 of 8 when tied.)

Our Sages went out of their way to involve us in the mitzva of Tzitzit - with Talit Gadol and Talit Katan - although we could technically not be required to fulfill this mitzva because our regular clothing (today) does not usually have four corners. Perhaps they did so because Tzitzit is not merely a mitzva that we "perform", it is a mitzva that we wear. It is an integral part of our everyday lives. It is part of our Jewish uniform (for males). What a shame to be without this inspirational mitzva because the style of clothing has changed and we no longer wear 4-cornered garments. Enter our Sages...

To clarify: If a man wears a four-cornered garment, he is required by Torah law to tie tzitzit on the corners - however, the Sages require us to wear a four-cornered garment in order to be obligated to fulfill the mitzva of Tzitzit. In other words, "officially", TZITZIT is a MITZVA KIYUMIT from the Torah's perspective. Our Sages, by rabbinic decree, changed it into a MITZVA CHIYUVIT.

Furthermore, the Torah links the mitzva of tzitzit with all the mitzvot of

the Torah; tzitzit (and/or the P'til T'cheilet) serve as a reminder of the Jew's all-encompassing commitment to G-d. This is followed by the warning not to follow the evil temptation of the eye (mind) or heart (emotion) [387, L47 15:39]. The Torah then reiterates the importance of belief in G-d in general, and in His having redeemed us from Egypt, in particular. Thus, the twice daily recitation of the Sh'ma constitutes the fulfillment of the mitzva to remember the Exodus "all the days of your life", in addition to its own mitzva, the saying of Sh'ma. It follows that when one recites the Sh'ma, one should have specific KAVANA at the end of the third passage to fulfill the mitzva to remember the Exodus all the days of our lives (which, if you remember the Mishna borrowed by the Hagada - or vice versa - KOL Y'MEI CHAYECHA teaches us that the mitzva applies in the daytime and at nighttime. The Hagada uses this Mishna to explain the fact that the mitzva of Hagada is at night. But the Mishna was discussing the third passage of Sh'ma and justifying its being recited at night too, even though Tzitzit is a day mitzva.) Parshat Tzitzit is reread as Maftir.

Haftara - 24 p'sukim - Yehoshua 2:1-24

Paralleling and contrasting with the sedra, the Haftara tells us of two other spies (Kalev and Pinchas, according to Tradition - they are not named in the

text) who were sent by Yehoshua into Yericho. Rachav, who had heard of the wonders that happened to the People of Israel, protects the spies from the men who are searching for them. In exchange for her protection, Rachav receives a promise that she and her family will be spared when the Israelite army attacks the city. Tradition tells us that Rachav subsequently became a sincere convert and the wife of Yehoshua. In one case, Spies were our undoing. In the other, they served a very positive function. How ironic.

Bringing the Prophets to Life

**Weekly insights into the Haftara
by Rabbi Nachman (Neil) Winkler**

Author of Bringing the Prophets to Life (Gefen Publ.)

The Lesson of Yericho

SH'LACH -

24 p'sukim - Yehoshua 2:1-24

The well-known story related to us in our haftara of Yehoshua's spies and the events that took place in Yericho even before its conquest, parallel the key story found in our parasha. Over the years, we have mentioned the differences between the two stories, primarily, that the sin of Moshe's spies caused the nation to remain in the desert for thirty-nine more years, while Yehoshua's successful "under-

cover" mission, paved the entry of B'nei Yisra'el into Eretz Yisrael. Yet, it is true that, just as the spies in the desert impacted the very history of Israel, so too, the account related by Yehoshua's spies cannot be regarded as an isolated incident, but as the first link of a chain of events. It is, in reality, a prelude to the conquest of Yericho, the resulting defeat at Ai and a lesson for the nation and their ensuing battles.

In discussing the conquest Yericho, I find myself reluctant to call the event as a "battle" - because it was anything but that! The text makes it clear that the Israelites did everything BUT fight. Upon Hashem's command, the army surrounded the city and, for seven days (led by the Aron and seven Kohanim blasting their shofarot), proceeded to march around the city. On the seventh day, they followed this same procedure seven times and, after the last circuit, the city's walls collapsed, killing the enemy, thereby allowing the troops to enter the city.

That was it! The army paraded around the city and sounded the shofarot - but they never even raised a sword throughout that time. For that reason, Hashem told the people that they were prohibited from taking any of the booty because the victory - and its spoils - belonged to G-d - and to Him alone. That was precisely the

lesson that Hashem wanted the people to learn. But they didn't. The subsequent p'rakim tell us how Achan ben Karmi DID take from the spoils—resulting in the defeat of Yehoshua's army in the next battle, a war against the city of Ai.

Rabbi Menachem Liebttag addresses the question as to why ALL of Israel was punished when only one man sinned and took from the spoils. Why does the text TWICE declare that "the people of Israel trespassed" when only one person did? Rabbi Liebttag's response is both illuminating and satisfying. He explains that, although the sin was committed by one, the collective attitude, shared by many, was that they, as victors, had earned the right to take from the spoils; in other words, that the victory was not of G-d's doing alone. And to prove that such an attitude was shared by many, Rabbi Liebttag points to what the officers advised Yehoshua before the next battle.

In preparation for the conquest of Ai, Yehoshua's agents reported that the city was small and relatively weak and, therefore, did not require to "exhaust the entire army". Rather, they suggested, send only 2-3000 troops to battle which would suffice to conquer the city... and Yehoshua accepted that suggestion. Now, Israel had yet to win even one battle! She did not even fight against the

residents of Yericho, yet they felt that they were powerful enough not to send the whole army? They could do it alone? Like Achan, they had not learned the lesson of Yericho. And, like Achan, they too were punished.

We are blessed to hear the words of the prophets on each Shabbat and Yom Tov. How important it is for us, therefore, to spend time understanding the haftara from its source and, by doing so, learning more of the messages that the prophets leave for us! Their words were not directed to one generation alone, for the words of our nevi'im speak to us today! ✨

to the Meraglim was to check out the land... 🍇 Levi Eshkol - Eshkol in the sedra refers to the cluster of grapes the Meraglim brought back with them and to the name of place they got it from 🍇 Rubeus Hagrid (from Harry Potter) is the son of a giant (on his mother's side) - he is one of the Y'LIDEI HAANAK 🍇 Heart with the letters KA on it - it is a syllable to be followed by the Hebrew for heart, making KALEV 🍇 Hisham Palace in Jericho (haftara) 🍇 Rimonim, as they took from the rimonim... 🍇 Hand holding pick up sticks is the M'KOSHEISH EITZIM 🍇 Menashe's scout was GADI (the goat) BEN (as in Uncle Ben's) SUSI (the chess piece knight is called SUS in Hebrew, with an E) 🍇 The three PEIs and the arithmetic instructions below them - In a Chumash, the parsha of Tzitzit ends the sedra and is followed by PEI-PEI-PEI. In davening, the third parsha of Sh'ma is followed by the word EMET, PEI - 79 = 1 (ALEF), PEI / 2 = 40 (MEM), PEI x 5 = 400 (TAV) 🍇 the zero is for EFES 🍇 so is the FS - the Meraglim began their negative talk about the Land with the word EFES - BUT!, HOWEVER! 🍇 the scout from Yissachar was YIG-AL ben Yosef. The scout from Naftali was NACHBI ben VOFSI - the fathers' names are anagrams 🍇 plus two Unexplained (maybe three)

לע"נ

הרב יעקב צבי ב"ר דוד אריה ז"ל
Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l

Beyond the Fringe

SH'LACH

Our Torah portion ends with one of the great commands of Judaism - tzitzit, the fringes worn on the corners of our garments as a perennial reminder of our identity as Jews and our obligation to keep the Torah's commands:

God said to Moshe: "Speak to the Israelites; tell them to make fringes on the corners of their garments throughout all the generations. To the fringe, on each corner, they should attach a blue cord. And this shall be your fringe: seeing it, you shall remember all God's commands and keep them. You will not then go astray, following the lusts of your heart or of your eyes. This is to remind you to keep all My commands, to remain holy to your God." (Bamidbar 15:37-40)

So central is this command, that it became the third passage of the Sh'ma, the supreme declaration of Jewish faith. I once heard the following commentary from my teacher, Rabbi Dr Nachum Rabino-vitch.

He began by pointing out some of the strange features of the command. On

the one hand, the Sages said that the command of tzitzit is equal to all the other commands together, as it is said: "Look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them." It is thus of fundamental significance.

On the other hand, it is not absolutely obligatory (from the Torah's viewpoint). It is possible to avoid the command of fringes altogether by never wearing a garment of four or more corners. Rambam rules: "Even though one is not obligated to acquire a [four-cornered] robe and wrap oneself in it in order to [fulfil the command of] tzitzit, it is not fitting for a pious individual to exempt himself from this command" (Laws of Tzitzit, 3:11). It is important and praiseworthy but not categorical. It is conditional: if you have such a garment, then you must put fringes on it. Why so? Surely it should be obligatory, in the way that tefillin are.

There is another unusual phenomenon. In the course of time, the custom has evolved to fulfil the command in two quite different ways: the first, in the form of a tallit (robe, shawl) which is worn over our other clothes, specifically while we pray; the second in the form of an undergarment, worn beneath our outer clothing throughout the day.

Not only do we keep the one command in two different ways. We

also make different blessings over the two forms. Over the tallit, we say, "who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to wrap ourselves in a fringed garment." Over the undergarment, we say, "who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the precept of the fringed garment." Why is one command split into two in this way?

Rabbi Rabinovitch gave this answer: there are two kinds of clothing. There are the clothes we wear to project an image. A king, a judge, and a soldier all wear clothing that conceals the individual and instead proclaims a role, an office, a rank. As such, clothes, especially uniforms, can be misleading. A king dressed as a beggar will not (or would not, before television) be recognised as royalty. A beggar dressed as a king may find himself honoured. A policeman dressed as a policeman carries with him a certain authority, an aura of power, even though he may feel nervous and insecure. Clothes disguise. They are like a mask, hiding the person beneath. Such are the clothes we wear in public when we want to create a certain impression.

But there are other clothes we wear when we are alone, that may convey more powerfully than anything else the kind of person we really are: the artist in his studio, the writer at his desk, the gardener tending the roses.

They do not dress to create an impression. To the contrary: they dress as they do because of what they are, not because of what they wish to seem.

The two kinds of tzitzit represent these different forms of dress. When we engage in prayer, we sense in our heart how unworthy we may be of the high demands God has made of us. We feel the need to come before God as something more than just ourselves. We cover ourselves in the robe, the tallit, the great symbol of the Jewish people at prayer. We conceal our individuality - in the language of the blessing over the tallit, we "wrap ourselves in a fringed garment." It is as if we were saying to God: I may only be a beggar, but I am wearing a royal robe, the robe of your people Israel who prayed to You throughout the centuries, to whom You showed a special love and took as Your own. The tallit hides the person we are and represents the person we would like to be, because in prayer we ask God to judge us not for what we are, but for what we wish to be.

The deeper symbolism of tzitzit, however, is that it represents the commandments as a whole ("look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord") - and these become part of what and who we are only when we accept them without coercion, of our own free will. That is why the

command of tzitzit is not categorical. We do not have to keep it. We are not obligated to buy a four-cornered garment. When we do so, it is because we choose to do so. We obligate ourselves. That is why opting to wear tzitzit symbolises the free acceptance of all the duties of Jewish life.

This is the most inward, intimate, intensely personal aspect of faith, whereby in our innermost soul we dedicate ourselves to God and His commands. There is nothing public about this. It is not for outer show. It is who we are when we are alone, not trying to impress anyone, not wishing to seem what we are not. This is the command of tzitzit as undergarments, beneath, not on top of, our clothing. Over this we make a different blessing. We do not talk about "wrapping ourselves in a fringed garment" - because this form of fringes is not for outward show. We are not trying to hide ourselves beneath a uniform. Instead, we are expressing our innermost commitment to God's word and call to us. Over this we say the blessing, "who has commanded us concerning the precept of tzitzit" because what matters is not the mask but the reality, not how we wish to appear, but what we really are.

In this striking way tzitzit represent the dual nature of Judaism. On the one hand it is a way of life that is

public, communal, shared with others across the world and through the ages. We keep Shabbat, celebrate the festivals, observe the dietary laws and the laws of family purity in a way that has hardly varied for many centuries. That is the public face of Judaism - the tallit we wear, the cloak woven out of the 613 threads, each one a command from God.

But there is also our inner life as people of faith. There are things we can say to God that we can say to no-one else. He knows our thoughts, hopes, fears, better than we know them ourselves. We speak to Him in the privacy of the soul, and He listens. That internal conversation - the opening of our heart to Him who brought us into existence in love - is not for public show. Like the fringed undergarment, it stays hidden. But it is no less real an aspect of Jewish spirituality. The two types of fringed garment represent the two dime

Around the Shabbat Table:

- (1) **Do you act differently when you know people are watching you?**
- (2) **Do you feel different when wearing a uniform (or dressed for shul, school, or work) rather than wearing your favourite clothes at home?**
- (3) **Why is it sometimes harder to do the right thing if no-one will ever know about it?**

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Message from the Haftara

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When Status Obscures Mission

SH'LACH

The obvious link between Parshat Sh'lach, in which Moshe sends men to scout out the Land, and its haftara, the story from the book of Yehoshua (ch. 2) of the spies sent to Yericho, is the shared theme of emissaries. But a closer look at the differences between these two missions reveals something far more significant than a surface parallel. Read together, these two stories expose the core moral failure of the desert generation, and the corrective embodied by those who came next.

A close reading of Parshat Sh'lach reveals that the twelve men dispatched by Moshe were never actually called *meraglim* (spies). Rather, they were charged to *LATUR ET HA'ARETZ*, to travel through the land. This was not a covert military intelligence operation; if it were, Moshe would not have sent prominent leaders from each tribe, a delegation large enough to attract attention wherever they went. Their mission was diplomatic in nature: to encounter the land, absorb its

character, and return as ambassadors, each man helping his own tribe envision what awaited them there. It was, in essence, an exercise in public vision-building, an attempt to unify a newly-freed, multitribal people around a shared destiny.

What went wrong was not tactical, but moral. These were not ordinary men; they were men of influence: tribal princes, public figures. Instead of elevating what they saw into a compelling national vision, they allowed their own personal anxieties and insecurities to shape the public narrative, fanning the people's fears and agitating against the very mission they had been entrusted to advance.

Now consider the spies in the haftara. Two men, unnamed, are sent by Yehoshua to scout Yericho. Their mission is explicitly strategic: to gather the tactical intelligence needed to capture the land. There is no ceremony, no tribal representation, no public mandate. They go quietly, operate discreetly, and return with actionable information. Their mission succeeds, in part because they themselves recede, without names, titles, or personal stakes in the outcome. And precisely because the story is not about them but about the people, they are free to rise above personal challenge and serve the objective.


This contrast in how the missions were undertaken is sharpened by a less obvious connection between Parshat Sh'lach and the haftara, one that runs through the figure of the M'KOSHEISH EITZIM, the wood gatherer who violates Shabbat and is put to death at the end of the parsha. Like the spies of Yericho, he remains unnamed. The Talmud (Shabbat 96b) records a striking debate on this point: Rabbi Akiva identifies him as Tz'lofchad, known to us from the later narrative of his daughters, who pressed for their inheritance rights. Rabbi Yehuda ben B'teira rebukes Rabbi Akiva sharply: if the Torah chose to conceal this man's identity, then revealing it undermines that choice. The story is not about the individual, but about the principle: the sanctity of Shabbat, and the boundaries it establishes, which empower our relationship with God.

Once a name enters the story, the focus shifts. Biography, personality, motives and weaknesses eclipse the idea itself.

This is precisely the dynamic that separates failure from success in the two narratives - the emissaries in the parsha and the spies in the haftara. When identity, status, or personal objectives take center stage, even a divinely inspired mission can fail. The 12 leaders in the parsha, defined by their prominence, cannot disentangle themselves from their own anxiety-

driven viewpoints. But the unnamed spies of Yericho carry no such baggage. They can disappear into the mission itself, without any self-interest, advancing the conquest of the land so that the Jewish people can live in their sacred space.

Together, these figures pose an important question about how we serve and live purposeful lives. In fact, commentators suggest (Targum Yonatan Bamidbar 15:32, Tosafot Bava Batra 119b, s.v. AFILU K'TANA) that the anonymous Shabbat-violating wood-collector acted with the intent of showing that even after the punishment of not entering the Land, the commandment of Shabbat remained binding.

Do we view ourselves as vehicles for something larger? Or do we allow our personal identities, anxieties, needs, and ambitions to shape or cloud the mission before us? In our everyday lives - and especially on a national level - these are important questions to ask. The haftara's answer insists that genuine service requires a form of self-effacement: not the erasure of the self, but the willingness to let the values speak more loudly than the name. When the mission matters more than the personality, when the vision speaks louder than the title, that is when a person can act with true clarity, courage and impact. 



PhiloTorah D'var Torah

Juxtapositional Mitzvot & Topics

Parshat Sh'lach has 119 p'sukim in three p'rakim (Bamidbar 13,14,15) of 33, 45, and 41 p'sukim respectively.

The first two p'rakim - 78 p'sukim, just about 2/3 of the sedra, consists of the devastating episode of the Meraglim. Included are the details of their instruction, the tour of the Land, their report to the People and the panic it incited, the insufficient attempt by Kaleb and Yehoshua to convince the People to have faith and confidence in G-d that what He is giving us is truly good AND doable. Then the deaths of the ten Meraglim and the decree that the adult male population was to die out during the 40 coming years (actually, it was less than 39 years from this point). And we also read about the failed attempt to go forward to the Land after having declared that they had sinned.

As often as one reads/hears/learns the two chapters of Sh'lach, one cannot help but be mortified each time by what happened and the long-term ramifications of the Meraglim fiasco.

And then comes perek 15. Forty-one

p'sukim. Including the three mitzvot counted from the sedra, a number of other mitzvot which are counted elsewhere, another "episode". The whole perek and its contents could possibly be studied on its own, but it seems pretty obvious that it is all to be understood in the shadow of the Cheit HaMeraglim.

Let's look at the topics of Bamidbar 15 one at a time.

First topic is the Menachot (flour and oil) and N'sachim (wine of libation) that were to accompany most Korbanot. Important to note that this topic is found elsewhere in the Torah and not counted among the Taryag mitzvot in Sh'lach. That entitles us to ask, why is it here.

The parsha begins with - When you will enter the Land of Israel... Take it as a message from G-d, that as angry as He was about Cheit HaMeraglim and as close as He got to destroying the people completely, and as serious as the consequences were for the sin of the spies - He still intends to bring us into Eretz Yisrael. The parsha continues - When you will offer korbanot in the Mikdash - Yes, says HaShem, you will come to the Land and I will still accept your offerings. Don't think that you will be entering the Land only because of promises I made to your Avot. It is you that will not only continue Temple service, but the M'nachot and N'sachim will be

REI'ACH NICH'O'ACH LASH'EM, a pleasing fragrance to HaShem. What a comforting message to a people that were utterly depressed after the decree of their dying out in the course of 40 years.

This is followed in the Torah by the mitzva of Challah. (Possible) message - true, the manna will cease when you enter the Land, but there will be many mitzvot that will help you spiritualize the physical necessity of eating.

Next comes a review of the korban Chatat for inadvertent sinning. Sometimes, it will be the errors of your leaders for which they will offer a Chatat on behalf of the whole community and sometimes each person will be liable on his own and have to bring a Chatat Yachid.

Nothing counted here - so what's it doing here? Perhaps it give us food for thought. He was faulted for the Sin of the Spies. The ten spies were struck dead in a plague. Maybe it was the leaders who panicked the people that are the guilty ones. But the whole adult male population was also punished. Makes you think.

Next we find the strange case of the Wood Gatherer. An individual who publicly violated Shabbat. And he was executed for it. Another reminder that there are communal sins and individual sins.

Finally, the sedra ends with what

became the third passage of Sh'ma. The mitzva of Tzitzit is presented.

Without going into too much detail, with Challah representing mitzvot that have to do with food, Tzitzit represents mitzvot related to clothes. Another human necessity that is elevated by the Jew with the mitzvot of Tzitzit, head covering, modesty in dress.

In this Tzitzit passage we also find the untimed, 24/7 prohibition of not following the negative temptations of heart and mind. This is definitely a stand-alone mitzva but it also can cause us to reflect about the meraglim of way back then as well as the same mindset that is sadly alive and well in our time.

The final pasuk of Parshat Sh'lach, when said in the Sh'ma and with focused kavana, is a fulfillment of the mitzva to remember the Exodus all the days of our lives. And not just the Exodus itself, but that it was HaShem who took us out.

Sh'lach gives us a lot to ponder and a lot to act and improve upon. **PTDT**



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Walk through the Parsha

with **Rabbi David Walk**



SH'LACH

The Tourists

In this week's Torah reading, the wheels really come off the bus! The grand march to the Promised Land comes to a grinding stop. The parade won't resume for 40 years. So, what caused the decades of detour?

I believe that the best way to arrive at the answer to this conundrum is to compare the two different versions of the story which appear in our Chumash, namely here and the first chapter of D'varim.

Although there are quite a few discrepancies between the two accounts, there are two which, I believe, help us to best understand the story, and its message for us.

The first is: What was the purpose of this expedition to the Holy Land? According to the version which appears this week they were sent to LATUR ET HA'ARETZ (the verb is used 13 times). This verb is variously translated as spy, scout, explore, search, reconnoiter, and check out. Actually, 'spy' is wrong, because the Hebrew word for that is RAGEL, which is used in the D'varim account.

So, this group was less a military spy

mission for the CIA, MI6 or KGB, and more a survey to convince the nation that this Land was a worthwhile destination. As opposed to the way the episode is reported in D'varim which uses the more military terminology. This week's account is more of a public relations job. This frames the entire story in a different perspective.

The second is: Who initiated the endeavor? Here it says: And God said to Moshe: Send men (ANASHIM, perhaps in this context 'agents') to TUR the Land of Canaan (Bamidbar 13:1-2).

This second question is indeed crucial to understanding the story. Our parsha is called The Sending, but who did that sending?

Rashi begins his analysis of the story by quoting God for us: According to your own judgment: I do not command you, but if you wish to do so, send them. Rashi explains that Moshe was being pressured by the Jews who basically demanded more information about the Promised Land. What exactly was this 'promise' we are expecting to receive?

On the other hand, the Netziv claims that the expression SH'LACH L'CHA is the classic format for a command or MITZVA from God. This was all logical and reasonable, but he has a very important question: Why didn't the Jews ask for a scouting mission

during the almost full year that the nation encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai (from Sivan 1 in year one until Iyar 20 in year two)?

His answer is disheartening. The Netziv explains: Now, when they stood at Chorev, they truly intended to enter Israel in this supernatural manner. But during these 3 journeys (in B'ha'alo-t'cha) they saw that it was difficult for them to continue in such a mode.

The series of troubles in the desert took the shine off the entire enterprise. The people had started to grumble and they weren't going to stop so quickly. God (and Moshe) saw that the hard facts about the Land were necessary for the now grumbling nation.

As Rav Yair Kahn noted: A careful reading of the parasha reveals an additional issue that is not purely theological. Following this initial expression of apostasy, the children of Israel begin to cry and complain... This reaction is not unique to the sin of the spies; it is characteristic of Yisrael's behavior from the time they were taken out of Egypt. However, we find that the volume of the complaint reaches new levels, as the people hysterically break into tears and reach the mutinous conclusion to overthrow Moshe and return to Egypt.

Clearly, the state of the people was a

PR disaster. How would the situation be saved? Well, by waiting an entire generation when the children would not be burdened by the same experiences and doubts.

We must look at the situation of this expedition to Eretz Yisrael as a genuine disaster, but why did such a distinguished group of individuals get their assignment so very wrong? There is an explanation by the Sheim MiShmuel (Rav Sh'muel Bornsztain, d. 1927) which I believe helps us to better understand the state of mind of the 10 spies who we see as getting it all so very wrong.

He claims that they understood the sanctity of being a SHALI'ACH (agent or emissary for another party). The problem was that they didn't see themselves as working for God or even Moshe. They saw themselves as agents of the Jewish people, who were already in crisis mode.

Why? Didn't Moshe send them with the authority of God? Well, yes, but they knew something Moshe didn't. They heard the prophecies of Eldad and Meidad (Bamidbar 11:26), which according to the Talmud was that Moshe wouldn't enter the Land of Israel, and that Yehoshua would lead them (Sanhedrin 17a).

These two men who stayed in the Camp (as opposed to the other 70 'appointed men') prophesied without

Moshe's power or support. As a result, Moshe didn't know the content of their prophecy.

So, the 10 spies acted in what they believed to be a responsible manner. They would act on behalf of the Jewish nation. It was a cool idea, but, sadly, misguided. The nation and the spies should have stayed loyal to Moshe and God.

This is a tragic tale! So much potential wasted under the desert sun. But these men chosen by Moshe Rabeinu were not evil or venal. They were misguided. When accepting an appointment, please, make sure that you are very clear as to who is your boss. And it's never a bad idea to answer to God. 🙏

Rav Kook Torah



by Rabbi Chanan Morrison -
www.ravkooktorah.com

Offering Wine and Flour

Summary: Just as the Temple service incorporated all aspects of creation, so too, our service of God should engage all of our powers and talents.

Bringing an offering in the Beit HaMikdash requires more than just a bull, goat, or sheep. In Bamidbar 15:1-16, the Torah commands that

korbanot be accompanied by wine libations, called n'sachim, and flour offerings, called m'nachot. What was the purpose of these additional offerings of wine and flour?

The answer to this question may be found in a Talmudic statement comparing the Temple service with our own daily service of prayer. Rabbi Yochanan taught:

Reciting the Sh'ma without t'fillin is like offering an Olah [a burnt-offering] without its flour offering, or a sacrifice without wine. (B'rachot 14b)

What is the connection between an incomplete Temple offering and reciting the Sh'ma while not wearing t'fillin?

Engaging All of Our Faculties

The Temple service, Rav Kook explained, was meant to encompass all aspects of creation. Every offering contained elements from each of the four basic realms of the universe: human, animal, vegetable, and mineral. The service involved the individual who brought the offering (human), the sacrifice (animal), the wine and flour offerings (vegetable), and the altar (which was filled with earth from the mineral realm). Without wine and flour, the offering would lack a component from the plant kingdom.

Including wine and flour is an important lesson in how we should serve God. We are blessed with higher faculties – our intellect and power of speech – as well as lower, physical powers. Just as the Temple service incorporated all aspects of the universe, so too, our service of God should engage all of our powers and talents. If we were to serve God only with our more elevated faculties, we would not grow spiritually in all aspects of our being.

What does this have to do with reciting the Sh'ma while wearing t'fillin? The Sh'ma proclaims God's unity and the obligation to love Him, "with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might" (D'varim 6:5). By saying these verses while wearing the t'fillin on our arm and head, we demonstrate that we are serving God with our entire being – with our physical powers, as represented by the arm, as well as our higher faculties, as represented by the head.

Now Rabbi Yochanan's comparison is clearer. Reciting the Sh'ma without t'fillin is like offering a korban without the wine and flour. Such a person only utilizes his more refined faculties – his mind and speech – in his service of God. This is like an offering that lacks an element from the lower level of life, from the vegetable realm.

Turn From Evil, Do Good

This explanation also clarifies a puzzling Halacha. The Talmud in Menachot 90b rules that some korbanot are not accompanied by wine and flour. Offerings brought to atone for sins – the chatat and asham – do not have n'sachim. Why not?

Our spiritual service may be divided into two components. There are our efforts to avoid evil, as we abstain from committing the acts delineated by the 365 prohibitions; and there are our strivings to draw closer to God through performance of the 248 positive mitzvot. The psalmist summarized this idea in four short words: SUR MEIRA ('shun evil') VAASEI TOV ('and do good') (T'hilim 34:15).

The idea that we should serve God with all aspects of our being, even our lower, physical powers, applies specifically to our positive efforts for spiritual growth. The Talmud in Nedarim 32b notes that, with the mitzva of Brit Mila, "God gave Avraham control over all of his 248 organs." The number 248 alludes to the 248 positive mitzvot. With Brit Mila, even his lowest, most physical nature was directed toward that which is good and holy.

With regard to avoiding evil, however, the situation is different. When we stumble and sin, it is our intellectual faculties that are at fault. Our lower

forces do not determine our moral choices; they are not rewarded or punished for their behavior. The body can digest forbidden food just as easily as kosher food. The service of shunning evil, only reflects how well our higher faculties are functioning.

Now we understand why sin offerings are not accompanied by wine and flour. These korbanot come to atone for our failure to avoid bad choices, and only our moral/intellectual side is at fault. But voluntary offerings such as the Olah and Sh'lamim are brought to attain a special closeness to God. They are a positive service of God – VAASEI TOV – and should be accompanied by flour and wine, demonstrating that this service should engage all levels of our being.

*Sapphire from the Land of Israel.
Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. I, p. 72*

Rav Kook on T'hilim

*from an unpublished work
by Rabbi Chanan Morrison*

T'hilim 24 - Climbing & Standing

Summary: If Torah study is how we 'climb God's mountain', then prayer is the way we 'stand in that holy place'. Through prayer, we internalize and reinforce our spiritual attainments.

MI YAALEH B'HAR HASHEM...

Who may climb God's mountain? Who may stand in His holy place? (T'hilim 24:3)

What is the significance of these two activities – climbing and standing - on God's mountain?

Ascending in Knowledge

We use our legs to advance forward, to walk and climb. We also use them to stand in one place. Each of these two functions, climbing and standing, is a metaphor for a specific form of Divine service.

“Climbing God's mountain” suggests a spiritual ascent, as we strive to gain greater enlightenment and refinement of character. Torah study in particular is associated with spiritual advance, by acquiring wisdom and ethical insight.

Therefore, the Sages call Torah study a *derech*. It is a path upon which we progress and advance. As Hillel taught, it is a never-ending journey of spiritual ascent: “One who does not add [to his Torah knowledge], ceases” (Avot 1:13).

Standing in Prayer

And which Divine service corresponds to “standing in His holy place”?

When we walk or climb, our legs are apart. We make progress, but our position is less secure and less stable.

When we stand, on the other hand, our legs are joined together. Standing indicates a state of stability and balance.

Spiritually, “to stand” is to absorb that which we have learned and grasped. This is a critical part of Divine service, when we reinforce our spiritual acquisitions. By ingraining these attainments in the soul, we ensure that we will retain them, despite life's trials and vicissitudes.

If Torah study is the way we climb God's mountain, then prayer is the way we stand in that holy place. In fact, the central prayer is called the *Amida* – “the standing prayer”. The function of prayer is to internalize our spiritual accomplishments, as we examine ourselves and reflect on our true goals and desires.

For this reason, the Sages taught that we should pray standing, with our legs together. When praying, we are like angels, who are described as having a single, straight leg: “their leg was a straight leg” (Yechezkel 1:7). Angels do not progress in holiness. Their very essence is one of maintaining their level of spiritual perfection. When we pray, we emulate the angel’s stance of unity and harmony, of being at one with our spiritual state.

In Torah study, we aspire to attain higher levels, to ascend God’s mountain. This requires exertion and effort, like a climber scaling a high mountain. Standing, on the other hand, indicates a more relaxed, natural position. This is the state of the angels, effortless in their inherent holiness. Through prayer, we seek to internalize our spiritual attainments, until they become natural and ingrained traits in the soul.

Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. 1, p. 61



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

SH'LACH

Grasshoppers

When the delegation of spies came back from investigating the Holy Land they made a remarkable comment – remarkable in a bad, not a good way.

They said, “We looked like grasshoppers in the eyes of the inhabitants, and that’s how we seemed to ourselves” (Bamidbar 13:33).

That’s the way persuasion works: people tell you bad things about yourself, and after a while you begin to believe the criticisms.

The modern world with its tragic recrudescence of antisemitism has its own version of the grasshopper allegation. The antisemites tell us we are flawed and inferior and (God forbid) some Jews think it might be true.

The opponents of Israel smear our State with words like “apartheid” and “racist” and (God forbid) we sometimes wonder if they might not have a point.

True, we’re not perfect and neither is Israel, but we have to be fair to ourselves.

A Lesson from Tzitzit

The end of the sidra is the origin of the verses (Bamidbar 15:37-41) that we call the third passage of the Sh'ma. Their subject is tzitzit - fringes on the corners of our garments.

The passage begins with a doubled verb, "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them". The commentators apply the doubled verb to the two generations that co-exist, you and your children. The adults have to tell the children about the mitzva.

One of the lessons we learn from tzitzit is that every aspect of our surroundings should remind us of God - cleanliness of our bodies, fringes on our garments, m'zuzot on the doors of our rooms and houses, and modesty in whatever we do.

In England Sir Christopher Wren said, "If you want a monument, look around you"; Judaism said, centuries before, "If you want dedication, enhance yourself and your surroundings". -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

SH'LACH

The Parasha opens with CHEIT HAMERAGLIM, the sin of the spies:

"Send men... and they shall spy out the Land of Canaan... and (addressing those chosen for the task) you shall see the Land for what it is" (13:2,18).

Two key words: V'YATURU - and they shall spy out, and UR-ITEM - you shall see.

The Parasha closes with the mitzva of tzitzit:

"You shall see it and remember G-d's mitzvot. You shall not stray after your own hearts and after your own eyes after which you go astray" (15:39).

Same two key words: V'LO TATURU, and the identical UR-ITEM.

It may be suggested that performing the mitzva of tzitzit contains a deeper meaning, which does connect us to CHEIT HAMERAGLIM. That helps us to not make the same mistake as the meraglim did in reporting on the Land, and in not going the way Am Yisrael behaved when they heard what the meraglim told them.

Let's first consider the mitzva of tzitzit. As an approach, the Gemara (Sotah 17a) offers the following insight into the t'cheilet (blue wool) in

Parashat Tzitzit. Each of the tzitziot on the four corners of the garment has four threads, tied and doubled. Three of the threads are lavan (white) and one - the longer one - is t'cheilet. Techeilet, the Gemara suggests, communicates the sea which, like the sky, spiritually connects with the KISEI HAKOVOD, G-d's celestial throne: the higher, the infinite, the beyond human perception, the beyond human understanding, and the unbound by time and space. We can also say that the lavan, in contrast to the techeilet, suggests clarity, purity, and accessibility.

The Torah tells us UR-ITEM OTO UZCHARTEM ET KOL MITZVOT HASHEM: you shall see it and remember all of G-d's mitzvot. 'It' is an entity that includes both the t'cheilet and the lavan threads. The lavan tells us to access the accessible: study Torah, practice the mitzvot, and keep what you learn clear in mind, incorporating it into your behaviour and mental operating system. The t'cheilet reminds us that there exists very much more than we can see, sense, or perceive, which we cannot access as we are only human. The limits of human understanding and human ingenuity do not extend to the infinite. This applies even to observable phenomena. For example, the simplest cell in a banana skin. Everything new we find out about cells opens another dozen questions

that until then were not even conceived.

Let's now turn to CHEIT HAMERAG-LIM. Moshe told the men UR-ITEM ET HA'ARETZ MA HI - see the land for what it is. Make a brief assessment about the practicalities of conquest. As Rashi explains, if the cities are walled they are likely to be weaker as their defence depends on their city fortifications. If they cities are unwalled and open, the inhabitants are likely to be stronger as they rely and trust on their own strength. But he did not tell them L'RAGEIL, to actually spy out the land as sleuths do, although elsewhere (D'varim 1:24), the Torah reports that's what they did.

It was one thing to see the land and work out the logistics of conquest following Moshe's guidelines. They would then UR-ITEM, see and obtain a general impression of the Land of Canaan which was possible in a reasonable time frame. Like the lavan of the tzitzit, learn what could be learnt by touring. That would be enough; G-d would take care of the rest when the time would come. But it was quite another thing to raise that to the level of espionage which, unbidden, the meraglim had done. They did not know Canaanite culture, their way of looking at things. For example, they thought that they were like mere grasshoppers in the eyes of

Canaan's giant inhabitants. Yet following Egyptian pursuers dying in the Red Sea only a year previously, they had all been singing out loud "The people heard, they trembled... the inhabitants of Canaan fairly melted" (Sh'mot 15:14-15).

As the t'cheilet symbolises, there was lots they didn't understand and couldn't have understood as they didn't grow up among them. The meraglim thus looked too hard and got it wrong instead of following Moshe's instructions. Instead of keeping in the region of the lavan which was represented by the samples of fruit they brought back, they "strayed after their own hearts and after their own eyes" into what they drew the wrong, panic-inducing conclusions. As the t'cheilet implies, a little supposed knowledge of what you don't understand, but are certain that you do, is dangerous...

It is the lavan that symbolizes our ideal day-to-day life. It is the t'cheilet that communicates G-d's Infinity that accommodates our aspirations. It is their combination that prompts us that things are not always as they seem, and that we often have to patient to give things time to unfold instead of immediately dismissing a challenge or rejecting a suggestion.



Reprinted from Living the Halachic Process by Rabbi Daniel Mann - Eretz Hemdah, with their permission [www.erezhemdah.org]

Does Birkat HaMazon cover cake that was eaten before the meal?

Question: If I have a piece of cake and then eat bread, will Birkat HaMazon cover the b'racha acharona for the cake?

Answer: If one knows that he is about to eat bread (which constitutes a meal), he should, in most circumstances, avoid eating right before the meal those foods that do not require a b'racha during the meal.¹ The reason is that one should not superfluously create a situation where he makes an extra b'racha. The exceptions to this rule are beyond our present scope.²

Your question, however, is about a case where one has already eaten food prior to the meal. Let us begin with some background information. Reciting Birkat HaMazon exempts one from reciting the b'racha acharona for food that is eaten in the midst of a meal that includes bread. Does Birkat HaMazon also work

¹ Mishna Berura 176: 2.

² See *ibid.*; *V'Zot HaBeracha*, beginning of ch. 9.

b'di'eved (after the fact) for foods eaten without bread? Rishonim infer from different gemarot that one who recited Birkat HaMazon on wine or dates has fulfilled his obligation b'di'eved because, since these foods are satiating foods, they constitute a meal of sorts.³ The Shulchan Aruch⁴ rules, though, that if one recited Birkat HaMazon for foods made from grains, he is not exempt and must say Al HaMichya. However, the Mishna Berura⁵ points out that many poskim take issue with the Shulchan Aruch, as foods made out of grain (including cake) are no less filling than dates and wine. This should also apply when one connected the eating of cake to an ensuing meal and made Birkat HaMazon with the cake in mind.

However, the question is regarding l'chatchila (the proper course of action) in a case where one ate cake before the meal and became obligated in Al HaMichya. Why should the subsequent Birkat HaMazon, which is appropriate only b'di'eved, suffice? Indeed, if one eats spaghetti before his meal, he should make an Al HaMichya before partaking of the bread and, if he failed to do so, then he should recite it during the meal.⁶

Only if he already made Birkat HaMazon would we say that he fulfilled his obligation and should not recite Al HaMichya. The Mishna Berura does cite a minority opinion that if one will be eating these same foods during the meal, then the eating of the food before and after the bread are combined into one eating experience subsumed under the meal, and Birkat HaMazon exempts l'chatchila. The Igrot Moshe⁷ reasons that the Mishna Berura's preferred opinion is to make a b'racha acharona before the meal, even in that case. However, it is best to make a reasonable break between the snack and the beginning the meal. Then, it is clearly correct to end the snack with a beracha acharona before starting the meal.⁸

The matter is more complicated in the case of cake. There is a category of baked, grain products known as PAT HABA'A B'KISNIN, for which one is required to make a b'racha when he eats it as a dessert.⁹ Usually, we do not make a b'racha on cakes eaten at dessert because it is unclear what PAT HABA'A B'KISNIN actually is. The Shulchan Aruch¹⁰ cites three

³ See *Beit Yosef, Orach Chayim* 208.

⁴ *Orach Chayim* 208:17.

⁵ Ad loc.:75.

⁶ *Mishna Berura* 176:2.

⁷ *Orach Chayim* III, 33.

⁸ *Piskei Teshuvot* 176:1.

⁹ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 168:8.

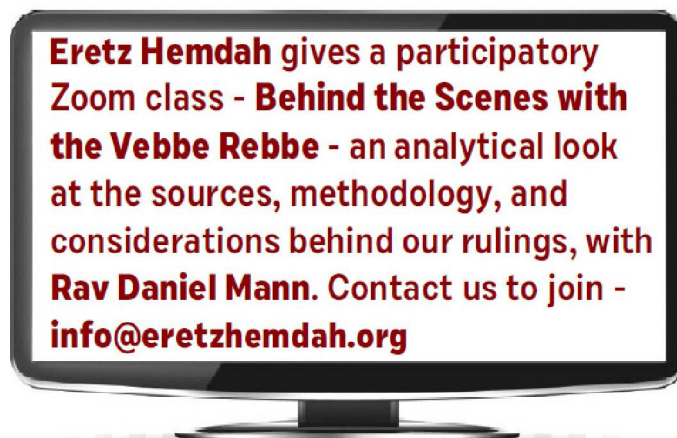
¹⁰ Ibid.:7.

opinions as to the defining character of PAT HABA'A B'KISNIN:

- 1) It contains a pocket of sweet filling;
- 2) Its dough is sweet (for S'fardim, slightly sweet; for Ashkenazim, very sweet);
- 3) It is thin and brittle like a cracker.

Most dessert-like baked goods have one or two of these characteristics but not all. In such a case, the Bi'ur Halacha¹¹ says that it is as a safek whether it is PAT HABA'A B'KISNIN or bread, and we do not make a b'racha because of the uncertainty. If an average piece of cake might be bread, then not only could one exempt himself b'di'eved from a b'racha acharona with Birkat HaMazon, but it is likely the proper thing to do. (See also opinions of S'fardic poskim on the matter in V'Zot HaBeracha, ch. 9 - the question was asked by an Ashkenazi).

Therefore, if one eats a standard piece of cake before the meal, the Mishna Berura¹² says not to make an Al HaMichya before the meal.¹³ When reciting Birkat HaMazon, it is preferable to have in mind specifically that it refers to the pre-meal cake as well.¹⁴



Dvar Torah by Rabbi Chanoch Yeres

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

Graciously shared with PhiloTorah

SH'LACH

What is the goal of a name? We are all given a name, we all use one, and however, is there a deeper purpose for having a specific name?

"And Moshe called Hoshei'a the son of Nun; Yehoshua" (Bamidbar 13:16).

We read in our Parsha how the twelve representatives of Israel are going to scout out the land. Specifically at this time, Moshe renames his loyal student from Hoshei'a to Yehoshua. Rashi explains the need to add a letter to his name at this particular moment since Moshe wanted to save him from evil advice from the other scouts whose intentions were already in question. Moshe had given equal

¹¹. To *Orach Chayim* 168:8.

¹². *Orach Chayim* 176:2.

¹³. See *Igrot Moshe* (ibid.) regarding what he considers pat haba'a b'kisnin.

¹⁴. Based on *Even HaOzer* 208:17.

instructions to all the Israelite scouts, yet Moshe was still very concerned with the outcome, so much so that he changed Hoshei'a's name. Why?

Perhaps one can explain that after all the scouts received the same instructions to evaluate personally the Land, the agriculture, the strongholds and the spirit of the people, this may lead to a certain tendency to believe in his own capabilities and the power of his evaluations, that one can even predict the future. Therefore, Moshe is telling Yehoshua that the Land of Israel and the History of the Israelites are unpredictable. By changing his name, Moshe is warning Yehoshua from attaining arrogance that allows one to make such predictions.

Moshe seems only to pick Yehoshua to change name because he is destined to be the next leader and successor to Moshe. The weight of leadership might frighten and scare. The fear can cause one to seek out counsel even if its evil counsel. In this dialogue between Moshe and Yehoshua, the message is given that a leader may hear the problems we face, the dangers, risks, and the obstacles involved in coming to live in the Land of Israel and have an adverse effect on him. Hearing all these setbacks and worries can cause one to fall into the mistake of the spies. Moshe is teaching Yehoshua not to diagnose these symptoms as

an untreatable terminal illness. Do not let these obstacles or difficulties bring upon despair. Rather, Yehoshua receives an extra letter to his name to be different and to seek out in these issues and opportunities to strengthen those around him and not to weaken.

This is the important idea that Yehoshua receives with his new name, as there is in the words of his partner, Kalev quoted in the Parsha (13:30) - "We will surely go up and take hold of this Land, because it is indeed within our grasp."

Kalev preaches this idea, that we will definitely fulfill the Divine promise in history in our time. Moshe implies this concept to Yehoshua in an important way. This way of thinking should become internal to you, incorporated in your name. We can succeed through our own actions and in our own time. Even now, when we see the numerous challenges facing us as a people, we should still look for the positive and rely on our belief that we hope all the G-d will continue to protect us and allow us to succeed in all our endeavors. 🏰

The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

SH'LACH 5786

Mistaken Repentance

In the wake of the calamitous sin of the spies, HaShem decrees that the people would have to wander in the desert for a total of 40 years, and the generation that left Egypt (all males above the age of 20) would die in the desert (14:28-34). Upon hearing this crushing news, the Torah relates (14:40) that on the morrow, the people “arose and ascended toward the mountaintop saying, ‘We are ready, and we shall ascend to the place of which HaShem has spoken, for we have sinned.’” Moshe forewarns them not to transgress the word of HaShem, “for they will not succeed”, but they defy the warning and are annihilated by Amalek and Canaan (14:41-45).

The question asked by many of our commentators is this: If, as the text states, the people confessed and declared KI CHATANU (We have sinned), why wasn't this confession accepted as a sign of their repentance and why didn't this result in reversing the severe punishment that had been pronounced upon them?

When we survey the various answers to this question, we arrive at a better understanding of what it means to

sincerely repent and why the people were deficient even with their apparent confession.

The first approach, suggested by R. Dovid Goldman, would have us read the above verse this way: “We shall go to the place, for HaShem has said that we have sinned.” In this atypical, repunctuation of the text, the people were actually not confessing at all. They were stating that it is Gd who claims we have sinned. They themselves were not admitting to anything. (Iturei Torah, Bamidbar, p. 89, s.v. HIN'NI)

When a person refuses to take responsibility for his own mistakes, there can be no teshuva. Hence, the people, by placing their admission of guilt in Gd's mouth, in effect, chose not to repent at all.

A second answer asserts that the people misunderstood exactly what their sin was. As explained by the Ramban, S'forno and Abarbanel (among others), the people assumed their sin was in listening to the report of the spies. Now, after the death of the spies and the HaShem's decree, they were prepared to do what they were commanded to do at the very outset and invade the Land. But it was too late.

HaShem had decided their fate otherwise. But why?

In their initial refusal to enter the

Land, they were convinced by the spies that it was futile, that it didn't make sense to them. Now, in the aftermath of the sin and Gd's punishment, conquering the Land made eminent sense to them. The point here – and it is fundamental – is that what was driving their behavior was their own assessment. What HaShem said was irrelevant. They would be the sole arbiters of what was the proper course of action. Therefore, when they said, “we sinned”, their confession failed not because Gd rejected their repentance, but because they completely misunderstood the root of their sin.

They mistakenly understood that any decision about what to do rested exclusively upon their judgment. Genuine teshuva means to submit and subjugate your own opinion to what Gd determines is correct. The people had asserted their own self-will to be the deciding factor, and in their intransigence, they rejected Gd's new command not to ascend.

In a word, because the people failed to grasp the essence of their sin, their teshuva was stillborn.

Compare the people's response here with their genuine confession when, in the wake of their ingratitude, they were punished with poisonous snakes. Their response in that episode was, "We have spoken against HaShem..."

(Bamidbar 21:7) That confession was accepted and the people were healed.

A third approach is that of the Netziv. He maintains that the teshuva of the people was actually sincere and the fact that they were willing to courageously conquer the Land spoke to their brave M'SIRAT NEFESH (uncommon sacrificial zeal). The reason why this repentance was insufficient was because of the nature and gravity of the sin itself. The Talmud states (Yoma 86a) and is so codified by Rambam (Hilchot Teshuva 1:4), that while teshuva and Yom Kippur can atone for most sins, there is one offense in particular that is so grave and severe that in addition to repentance, Yom Kippur and suffering (YISURIM), only death can provide the final penance. And that sin: to be guilty of Chilul HaShem, of desecrating the Name of HaShem in public.

When the spies publicly spurned HaShem's plan to quickly bring them to Israel, when they demonstrated an abysmal and indefensible ignorance of the Almighty's ability to ensure their success in conquering the Land, they perpetrated an unforgivable Chilul HaShem. Their behavior telegraphed to all the nations that Gd's chosen people had chosen to forsake the very Gd Who was responsible for their very existence. Such a grievous sin, argues the Netziv, could not be

cleansed by teshuva alone. A far harsher punishment would be necessary.

The Talmud contends (Yerushalmi Pe'ah 1:1,3a) that nothing can stand in the face of a penitent individual.

“The gift of teshuva has the paradoxical power of reversing a past transgression, and when motivated by love, can actually transform an intentional sin into a merit. (Yoma 86b). But for this to occur, certain prerequisites are required. In light of our discussion, we can list three.

First, take ownership of your mistake. Do not pass it off on another. Admit the blunder, regret having done it, and be utterly ashamed of yourself for having committed the sin in the first place.

Second, have complete clarity about the nature of your sin. At bottom, every transgression is an insult to Gd. Therefore, teshuva begins when you are ready to listen and accept that only what Gd says is right and proper. You must submit to His Will, be it in your observance of His mitzvot, or in your welcoming the reality of Gd's Presence in every aspect of your life. Morality must be driven not by the relative, changing morals of society, but rather by HaShem's absolute standard, one which can only be determined by the halacha. If you are going to return (the literal translation

of teshuva), then you have to know exactly what you have to return to, and that begins when you understand what HaShem wants of you.

And finally, understand that while your teshuva may elicit HaShem's pardon and forgiveness, often, on some level, there may be additional consequences to your misdeed. Yes, the ill-gotten money will have to be returned, apologies and appeasements will have to be made, but, depending upon the enormity of the sin, HaShem may have His own means of purging a person of his sinful behavior - what Chazal mean when they speak of YISURIM. To be able to patiently bear and suffer HaShem's inscrutable judgement is also a part of the teshuva process.

When we reflect upon the events in our Parsha, we wonder how the history of our people may have unfolded differently had they understood how to repent properly. But, at least, because of their mistakes, we can learn and hopefully avoid the pitfalls that once spelt such disaster for our people. 🙏



לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי
וְהִייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לַאֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

*You will thus remember and keep
all My commandments,
and be holy to your God."*

There is no stronger protection that B'nei Yisrael as a people and each of us as members of Klal Yisrael, can have than Torah and Mitzvot.

These two p'sukim share a gimatriya of 3707.

USFUNEI T'MUNEI CHOL is the title of my book of Gimatriya Matches - IY"H and BE"H. The title translates to Hidden in the Sand. That's how I feel about my Gimatriya searches. Like walking along the beach with a metal detector. Beep-beep-beep. Lean down and find something. Usually, nothing of note. But sometimes you find something special.

SH'LACH

GM The theme (if you can call it that) of several GMs that I have found over the years, deals with the threat from Bil'am (and Balak) and what we can call our antidote, vaccination, or words to that effect.

Here's one, connected to Parshat Tzitzit, from the end of Parshat Sh'lach. Let's start with the threat. Bamidbar 23:4 (in Parshat Balak) -

וַיִּקַּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־בִּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
אֶת־שִׁבְעַת הַמִּזְבֹּחוֹת עָרַכְתִּי
וְאָעַל כֹּר וְאֵיל בַּמִּזְבֵּחוֹ:

God appeared to Bil'am. 'I have set up seven altars,' said [Bil'am] to [God], 'and I have sacrificed a bull and ram as a burnt offering on each altar.'"

Bil'am and Balak did this more than once, with the goal of gaining God's okay for them to 'bless' the People of Israel.

What is our greatest protection for those who seek to harm us - physically or spiritually? Take a look at Bamidbar 15:40 in Sh'lach - a pasuk and concept which we are well acquainted.

RED ALERT!

SH'LACH

*by Rabbi Eddie Davis (RED)
of the Young Israel of Hollywood -
Ft. Lauderdale (Florida)*

DIVREI TORAH

- In Parshat D'varim, Moshe wrote that it was the people's idea to send a Spy Mission into the Promised Land. Here, in today's Parsha, it seems that it was Hashem's idea. Rashi points out that Hashem was not commanding Moshe to send the mission, but He agrees to it. He leaves the decision up to Moshe. By agreeing, Moshe was hoping that the people would abandon the request. If Moshe would say NO, the people would be wondering, "What is he trying to hide?" By agreeing he would hope that the people would conclude that Moshe had nothing to hide. It is up to the people. But it is risky. They, the people, could lose the right to settle in the Land. And that is what happened. Or maybe the tribal leaders who would be the spies were not interested in entering the Land. In the desert, they were prominent leaders. Once they entered the Land, Bnei Yisrael would be dispersed throughout the country and these men would lose their united sphere of influence.
- The list of the spies is given in the order of their personal greatness

(Ramban). This is intriguing because Kalev is mentioned third, and Yehoshua is mentioned fifth. That means that there were two spies who were greater than our two heroes. What is also interesting is that there was no ringleader. In the next story in the Torah, Korach was the evil leader of the rebellion. He was the ringleader; Datan and Aviram were next in line. In the Spy story, there is no individual villain. They were a unified group, albeit doomed to failure. But it leads us to conclude that the unified front means that the feeling of the insecure future of Klal Yisrael was felt uniformly among the people. The period of Hashem fighting for them, performing miracles as He did in Egypt, was a thing of the past. Now the people had to form an army (as they did in the beginning of Bamidbar) and were destined to fight for themselves. Maybe the people were truly not ready for the next step.

- Moshe calls Hoshei'a, Yehoshua. The Midrash says that when Sarai became Sarah, the YUD from her name was given to Yehoshua. The HEI that is added to Sarah indicates that Sarah belonged to a larger group. HEI represented universalism. The YUD indicates individuality and not belonging to a larger group. Yehoshua did not want to be part of the group of spies. Hence Moshe's B'racha was a correct one. Avraham had a HEI

added to his name as well, to indicate that he was the father of a larger group, for many nations (Rav Soloveitchik). A different idea was once presented by Rav Moshe Shapiro zt"l, in Eretz Yisrael when he developed the idea that the letter HEI meant the World to Come. Adding the letter HEI to both Avraham and Sarah placed them on a much higher level than the rest of the world.

- In the aftermath of the Spy Mission, Hashem rewards Kalev with his family heritage including Chevron and the patriarchal burial plots. And it was to be given to Kalev's descendants. "And his offspring shall possess it" (14:24). No reward is mentioned for Yehoshua. The Ramban states that the omission is not so noteworthy, since Yehoshua's ultimate reward was being Moshe's successor. Yehoshua will lead Bnei Yisrael in invading and conquering Canaan. The Torah Temima takes a contrary approach (in his Tosefet B'racha). He wrote that the Torah omits Yehoshua's blessing because Yehoshua did not have any children. With no offspring to possess any part of Eretz Yisrael, there is no reason to mention him and cause him more sadness. But simply put, the Torah rewards Kalev since he attempted to silence his colleagues. Seemingly Yehoshua did not. But the Talmud (Sotah 35a) records that Yehoshua did attempt to silence the spies. The spies refused

to listen to him since Yehoshua had no children and therefore had no vested interest in the conquest of Canaan. Actually the spies had good reason not to listen to either one of them. Yehoshua was Moshe's disciple; Kalev was Moshe's brother-in-law.

- The Mitzva of Challa is discussed here in the text. The Mitzva is called Challa, which is the same name we use to describe the loaf of bread that we eat on Shabbat. When making bread, we mix the ingredients together and form the dough. At this point, the first task is to take a portion of the dough and give it to a Kohen. Since kohanim today are Tamei (and until the Potion of the Para Aduma Ashes remain so), we burn the separated dough. I believe that we call the bread Challa as a reminder to observe this Mitzva. This is a tribute to the Jewish people, who observe this Mitzva at all times that we bake bread. In many homes, the only time we bake bread is to make Challa for Shabbat. In neighborhoods where kosher Challa is readily available and sold in the grocery stores, it is nice to see how many women take the time to make home-made Challa. May it be a Segula. (When we bake a cake, Challa is not taken because the batter is so loose. When we make cookies, Challa should be taken.)

- Right before the Torah gives us the Mitzva of Tzitzit, it describes a Jewish person who willfully desecrated the Shabbat and gathered wood. In judgment, he is stoned to death for his sin. Rashi says (from the Sifrei) that only one person desecrated the Shabbat out of the whole nation. According to the Vilna Gaon, there was a general laxity in the desert in obeying the Shabbat laws. Today it is estimated that less than 10% of the world Jewish population observes Shabbat.

- The verb “to see” is recorded in a similar verb form three times in the Torah. The first time is in Sh'mot (1:16), when Pharaoh is addressing the midwives and says to them, “When you deliver the Hebrew women, and you see (them) on the birthstone, if it is a son...” The second and third times are in this week’s Sidrah (13:18) , “See the Land, How is it?” and (15:39) “...you shall see it (the Tzitzit)” The verb “to see” means much more than physically seeing; it means comprehending and absorbing what you see. The first time “to see” is used it refers to understanding where we come from. The second “to see” applies to the Land, to see where you are going. And the third time “to see” is used, it applies to Tzitzit. Understand who you are at all times; in front of whom you are bound to stand in judgment. Your past, your present, and your future are extremely

important, a sense of awareness that we are required to have at all times in life. (Tosefet B'racha)

Questions by RED

From the text

1. How many spies did Moshe send? (13:2-14)
2. Why did the spies feel that Bnei Yisrael could not conquer the Promised Land? (13:31)
3. How did Bnei Yisrael respond to Yehoshua and Kalev’s statement that they can conquer the Promised Land filled with milk and honey? (14:10)
4. How did the evil spies die? (14:37)
5. What two countries killed the people who charged ahead to conquer Canaan? (14:45)

From Rashi

6. Why did the Torah tell the story of the Spies immediately after Miriam spoke Lashon HaRa about her brother? (13:2)
7. What reward did Kalev receive for not speaking Lashon HaRa about Eretz Yisrael? (13:22)
8. On what calendar date was the report of the Spies? (Rashi on Psalms 106:27)
9. What measurement is Rabbinically given for the Challa to be given to the Kohen from the bread dough? (15:20)

10. What is the source of the color blue/turquoise Techeilet? (15:33)

From the Rabbis

11. Why was Yosef's name mentioned only with Menashe and not with Efrayim?

12. Who is the leader who will replace Moshe, according to the Spies? (Sanhedrin 107a)

13. Why did Hashem give the law of the meal offering and libation right after the punishment from the Spy Mission? (Ramban)

Midrash

14. What land did Hashem give the Canaanites when they were forced out of the Jewish Promised Land?

Haftara - Yehoshua

15. What were the names of the two spies whom Yehoshua sent into Yericho?

Relationships

- a) Sheim - Eiver
- b) Dina - Sered
- c) Mitzrayim - Canaan
- d) Eldad - Meidad
- e) Michal - Yonatan

ANSWERS

1. Twelve. One from each tribe, but not Levi.

2. Because the Canaanites were stronger than Bnei Yisrael.

3. The people wanted to stone them.

4. In a plague.

5. Canaanites and Amalekites.

6. Miriam spoke Lashon HaRa and was punished. These people saw that and did not learn from Miriam's sin.

7. The city of Chevron

8. Tish'a b'Av

9. For the private home: 1/24 of the dough. For the professional baker: 1/48 of the dough.

10. An aquatic snail type animal

11. Because Yosef spoke Lashon HaRa and therefore is mentioned with Menashe. Efrayim's representative was Yehoshua who did not speak Lashon HaRa.

12. An idol

13. To assure the younger generation that they WILL enter the Promised Land.

14. Africa

15. Kalev and Pinchas

Relationships

a) Great-grandfather & Great-grandson

b) Aunt & Nephew

c) Brothers (sons of Cham)

d) Brothers (according to Targum Yonatan, and they were Moshe's half-brothers)

e) Siblings (King Saul's children)