

PHILOTORAH

לה"ו

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתְּשַׁלַּח מְהֵרָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם,
 רְפוּאָת הַנַּפְשׁ וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף לְפְצוּעֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה, וְלִנְפֻעֵי מַעֲשֵׂי טְרוּר וְאֲנִטֵּי שְׂמִיּוֹת
 בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל – וּבְכֹל מְקוֹם שֶׁהֵם, עִם שְׂאֵר חוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. אָמֵן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers and the hostages; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel, and may He end this war with success and peace for Klal Yisrael.



YERUSHALAYIM in/out times for Parshat **SH'LACH (m)**

Shabbat - June 28-29, '24 • כ"ג סיון ה'תשפ"ד

 **7:14PM** PLAG (earliest) **6:20PM** •  **8:31PM** R' Tam **9:07PM**

For other locales, click on the Z'MANIM link

PhiloTorah (205shl) - 1 - all@once file

Almost the 7th

The Rabbinically required fast days on our calendar are Shiva Asar b'Tamuz, Tish'a b'Av, Tzom Gedaliya, Asara b'Tevet, and Taanit Esther.

There was almost one more...

KAF SIVAN

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 of killing the gentile child to obtain blood for producing matza.

After locking his captives in a tower, the despot 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'SHABEI'ACH LA'ADON HAKOL...

As a commemoration of the sacrifice of

Shabbat M'vorchim

This Shabbat (Parshat Sh'lach) we bench Rosh Chodesh Tamuz, which will be on the following Shabbat (Parshat Korach) and its following day, Sunday (July 6,7).

ראש חודש תמוז יהיה ביום שבת קודש
ולמחרתו ביום ראשון
הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה:

Note: ULMOCHOROTO is used only for a Shabbat-Sunday Rosh Chodesh, not other two day Rosh Chodeshes.

The molad of Tamuz is on Shabbat (Korach) 13 hours, 9 minutes, 10 chalakim

המולד יהיה ביום שבת הבא, תשע דקות
ועשרה חלקים אחרי אחת בצהריים.

This is how it should be announced anywhere in the world without adjusting for locale or DST.

This time corresponds to 1:53pm Israel Summer Time, and can be adjusted for locale. This time is not announced at M'vorchim; it is for informational purposes.

The molad in Rambam notation - ז' יט:קעב

The actual molad (astronomical New Moon) is 1:58am on Shabbat, July 6th. This time is also for informational purposes only.

these great Jews and as a day of t'shuva, Rabbeinu Tam and the other gedolei Baalei Tosafot of France declared the 20th of Sivan a fast day. Special slichot and piyutim were composed to memorialize the incident.

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 at the hands of Chmielnitzky, the Ukrainian National Hero. The massacres are referred to as G'ZEIROT TACH V'TAT, which refer to the years of 5408 and 5409, 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 20th of Sivan was chosen to remember TACH V'TAT because the Jewish community of Nemirov, Ukraine, which was populated by many thousands of Jews, was destroyed by the Cossacks, who rampaged through the town, murdering thousands of Jews. The shul was destroyed and all the Sifrei Torah were torn to pieces and trampled. Their parchment was used for shoes and clothing.

During the night between the 10th and 11th of June, 1982 (the 20th of Sivan), the IDF fought Syrian forces in the Battle of Sultan Yacoub, in Lebanon's Bekaa

Valley. Considered one of Israel's worst failures and most costly battles in the First Lebanon War, 30 Israeli soldiers were killed and another five went missing - Yehuda Katz, Tzvi Feldman, Zachary Baumel, Ariel Lieberman, and Hezi Shai. Eyewitnesses testified that three Israeli soldiers were paraded through Damascus several days after the battle. Zachary Baumel's remains were return home in 2019, 37 years after capture (and probable murder), and 10 years after his father passed away following 27 years of tireless and agonizing efforts to bring his son home.

The 20th of Sivan almost became a public fast day on our calendar. It didn't, for various reasons. But it is a day that marks extreme tragedies that occurred in different times in Jewish History. It is a sad day - sadly, one of many - and it should not go by without discussion, reflection, and our prayers to HKBH for an end to tragedy and heartbreak and for the Geula Sh'leima.

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 Bamidbar

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.

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 3 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. Nonetheless, it is interesting that Efrayim is juxtaposed to a different Yosef even though he is 'distanced' from his own father's name.)

And Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun, Yehoshua.

SDT: Rashi says that by adding a YUD to Hoshea'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.

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, 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 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

LASHEM. 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.

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.

Furthermore... 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 for the aftermath of the Meraglim. 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 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.

Challah 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. Foithe-

more, 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 offer-

ings 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.)

[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. Our Sages changed it into a MITZVA CHYUVIT.

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 subse-

quently 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.)

Sh'lach - 24 p'sukim - Yehoshua 2:1-24

A Lesson to Remember

The haftara for our parashat Sh'lach relates the story of those men sent by Yehoshua to spy Eretz Canaan before Israel's impending invasion of that land. This episode closely parallels the story of Moshe's spies that which we read in the parasha, who, likewise, were sent into Cana'an some 39 years earlier, also before Israel's impending invasion of that land. Over the years, we have compared and contrasted these similar stories. This year, however, I was struck by yet another difference between the stories, one that, I believe, contributes significantly to our understanding of the entire event.

The Torah retells the meraglim affair in detail - even including the names of each of the twelve spies, their fathers, their respective tribes. The story we read in our haftara never identifies the spies by name, by parentage nor by tribe; it,

never names the King of Yericho nor any of his men who traveled with him. The ONLY name we find in the entire episode (except that of Yehoshua who sent the spies) was that of Rachav. And, although it would not have been surprising had she been identified as "a woman from Yericho", the text refers to her by name - something they did not do when referring to the spies.

It is troubling, however, that the author chose to identify of Rachav as a ZONA - a rather demeaning designation that could have been easily omitted without changing the sense of story itself. Even more difficult to understand, suggests Rav Moshe Lichtestain, is the text's introduction to Rachav as ISHA ZONA, and only then adding her name, USHMAH RACHAV. Doing so, i.e., by first identifying Rachav through her "employment" rather than through her name, further belittles this central character even before we learn anything about her! Why does the text do so?

Rav Lichtenstein takes us on a fascinating journey in explaining to us why the text does not disparage Rachav but does, actually, the precise opposite!

The fact that Rachav was a harlot meant that she was part of the fringes of society - detached from the powerful, the nobility or the wealthy. Poverty stricken, she was part of the lowest class of the population - who else, after all, would be forced into such a livelihood? It is for that reason that we

are informed how she dwelled inside the outer wall of the city - distanced, cast off and discarded.

Given these truths, she would be the last person who would dare lie to the King, mislead his army or take the risk of hiding two spies from an enemy camp. Yet, she did. She should have been the last with courage enough to demand safety for her family from the spies of an approaching invader. But she had the courage. And she should have been least expected to turn her back on all she knew and change her life by joining another nation (Yehoshua 6:25). But she did.

We might regard both spy stories as focusing on two heroes: Kalev and Yehoshua in the Torah and the two unnamed spies in Sefer Yehoshua. However, we would be wrong. The seemingly "unnecessary" mention of Rachav as a ZONA was in order to teach us that the brave unknown men who went off on the dangerous mission to protect their own nation, were not the only heroes of the story. There was also the well-known woman, Rachav, who, more than once, courageously risked her life to protect another's nation.

And this is certainly a lesson we best remember! ✨

The fun way to go over the weekly sedra with your children, grandchildren, Shabbat guests


B'HA-ALO-T'CHA

<> plus 1 Unexplained

The Russian vowel pronounced like ee in the word see, is a backwards N. Two of them in the ParshaPix represent the backwards NUNs that bracket the 2-pasuk parsha, VAYHI BINSO'A HAARON... UVNUCHO YOMAR.

SH'LACH



A classic and very busy ParshaPix  Mad Magazine's Spy vs. Spy, which we can apply to the 10 black Meraglim vs. the 2

white ones.  The author of Spy vs. Spy signed his name in Morse code. Here we have Klev's call in Morse - ALO NA'ALEH and the 10 meraglim saying: NO WAY  6 and the i need to be read in Hebrew and English respectively - SHEISH-AI, one of the Y'LIDEI ANAK who lived in Hevron  The grapes refer to the timing: "...And the days were the days of the ripening of the grapes."  the logo of the IDF's NACHAL unit - with the grapes is for NACHAL ESHKOL  See if the Land has trees, IM AYIN, or not. Switch the initial ALEFs of IM AYIN to AYINs and the question becomes: Is there a tree with an eye?  Emblems of the Ministry of Tourism  the logo of Carmel-Mizrachi Wines  Flour (flower), Olive Oyl, and wine (R' Wein) are for the MENACHOT and N'SACHIM presented in the sedra  Challah stands for the mitzva of CHALLAH  Tzitzit with T'cheilet  Murex Trunculus, most likely the source of T'cheilet...  Betty White a"h represents the white strings of Tzitzit  window with red ribbon hanging from it is the sign for Yehoshua's army to spare the lives of Rachav and her family (from the haftara)  Emblem of Hebrew Scouts (Be Prepared), sort of a description of the Meraglim...  The letter i inside another i stands for AYIN B'AYIN  Steam shovel is a play on LACHPOR HAARETZ, to "dig" the land, also to scout it out (as in the haftara)  SF, the logo of the San Francisco Giants. The meraglim reported that they had seen giants in the Land 

So too the logo of the New York Giants football team 🍇 The large YUD is from the word YIGDAL in Bamidbar 14:17 🍇 Laurel and Hardy, known in Hebrew as HASHAMEIN V'HARAZEH, the fat and the thin - part of Moshe's instructions 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 represents 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 final parsha of the sedra (which is the third passage of the Sh'ma) is followed by PEI-PEI-PEI (indicating that the next sedra, Korach, begins with a Parsha P'tucha. In the siddur, the parsha in question is followed by the word EMET, which can be calculated by subtracting 79 from the first PEI (which = 80) to give ALEF=1, dividing PEI by 2 to give MEM=40, and multiplying the third PEI by 5 to give TAV=400 🍇 the zero and the FS, which is Hebrew for zero, are for that word in

the report of the 10 meraglim 🍇 in the upper-left corner of the PP is the emblem of the NACHAL brigade of the IDF. Combined with the cluster of grapes to its right, gives us NACHAL ESHKOL

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

What Made Yehoshua and Kalev Different?

Sh'lach

The twelve men sent by Moshe to explore the land of Israel came back with a wholly misleading report. They said:

"We cannot go up against those people, for they are stronger than us... The land which we have journeyed through and scouted is a land that consumes its inhabitants; and all the people we saw were tall and broad to a man" (Bamidbar 13:31-32).

In fact, as we later discover in the book of Yehoshua, the inhabitants of the land were terrified of the Israelites. When Yehoshua sent spies to Yericho, Rahav told them "A great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you." When the people heard what God had done for the Israelites, "our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you" (2:9-11).

The spies should have known this. They themselves had sung at the Red Sea:

"The people of Canaan melted away; terror and dread fell upon them" (Sh'mot 15:15-16).

The spies were guilty of an attribution error, assuming that others felt as they did. They said, "We were like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and so we were in their eyes" (Bamidbar 13:33). But as the Kotzker Rebbe noted, they were entitled to make the first claim. Just not the second. They knew how they themselves felt, but they had no idea how the people of the land felt. They were terrified of the Canaanites and failed to see that the Canaanites were terrified of them.

Now there are two obvious questions: First, why did ten spies make this mistake? Second, why did two of them, Yehoshua and Kalev, not make it?

Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck has written a fascinating book, **MINDSET**, on why some people fulfil their potential, while others do not. Her interest, she says, was aroused when she observed the behaviour of 10-year-old children when given puzzles to solve. Some, when the puzzles became difficult, thrived. They relished the challenge, even when it proved too hard for them. Others became anxious. When the puzzles became hard, they were easily discouraged and quick to give up.

She wanted to understand why. What makes the difference between people who enjoy being tested and those who don't? What makes some people grow through adversity while others become demoralised? Her research drove her to the conclusion that it is a matter of mindset. Some see their abilities as given and unalterable. We just are gifted or ordinary, and there is not much we can do about it. She calls this the "fixed mindset". Others believe that we grow through our efforts. Where they do not succeed, they don't define this as failure but as a learning experience. She calls this the "growth mindset".

Those with a fixed mindset tend to avoid difficult challenges because they fear failure. They think it will expose them as inadequate. So they are reluctant to take risks. They play it safe. When do people with the fixed mindset thrive? "When things are safely within their grasp. If things get too challenging... they lose interest."

People with the growth mindset react differently. "They don't just seek challenge, they thrive on it. The bigger the challenge, the more they stretch."

Parents can do great damage, Dweck says, when they tell their children they are gifted, clever, talented. This encourages the child to believe that he or she has a fixed quantum of ability. This in turn discourages them from risking failure. Such children often grow

up to say things like, "I feel that my parents won't value me if I'm not as successful as they would like."

Parents who want to help their children should, she says, praise them not for their ability but for their effort, their willingness to try hard even if they fail. A great basketball coach used to say to his players, "You may be outscored, but you will never lose." If they gave of their best, they might lose the game but they would gain and grow. They would be winners in the long run.

The person with a fixed mindset lives with the constant fear of failure. Those with a growth mindset don't think in terms of failing at all.

Apply this logic to the spies and we see something fascinating. The Torah describes them in these words:

"All were all leading men among the Israelites" (Bamidbar 13:3).

They were people with reputations to guard. Others had high expectations of them. They were princes, leaders, men of renown. If Dweck is right, people laden with expectations tend to be risk-averse. They do not want to be seen to fail. That may be why they came back and said, in effect: We cannot win against the Canaanites. Therefore, we should not even try.

There were two exceptions, Kalev and Yehoshua. Kalev came from the tribe of Yehuda, and Yehuda, we learn in the

book of B'reishit, was the first BA'AL T'SHUVA. Early in life he had been the one who proposed selling Yosef into slavery. But he matured. He was taught a lesson by his daughter-in-law, Tamar. He confessed, "She is more righteous than I am." That experience seems to have changed his life. Later, when the Viceroy of Egypt (Yosef, but not yet recognised by the brothers) threatens to hold Binyamin as a prisoner, Yehuda offers to spend his life as a slave so that his brother can go free. Yehuda is the clearest example in B'reishit of someone who takes adversity as a learning experience rather than as failure. In Dweck's terminology, he had a growth mindset. Evidently he handed on this trait to his descendants, Kalev among them.

As for Yehoshua, the text tells us specifically in the story of the spies that Moshe had changed his name. Originally he was called Hoshei'a, but Moshe added a letter to his name (see Bamidbar 13:16). A change of name always implies a change of character or calling. Avram became Avraham. Yaakov became Yisrael. When our name changes, says the Rambam, it is as if we or someone else were saying "You are not the same person as you were before" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 2:4).

Anyone who has experienced a name-change has been inducted into a growth mindset.

People with the growth mindset do not

fear failure. They relish challenges. They know that if they fail, they will try again until they succeed. It cannot be coincidence that the two people among the spies who had the growth mindset were also the two who were unafraid of the risks and trials of conquering the land. Nor can it be accidental that the ten others, all of whom carried the burden of people's expectations (as leaders, princes, men of high rank) were reluctant to do so.

If this analysis is correct, the story of the spies holds a significant message for us. God does not ask us never to fail. He asks of us that we give of our best. He lifts us when we fall and forgives us when we fail. It is this that gives us the courage to take risks. That is what Yehoshua and Kalev knew, one through his name change, the other through the experience of his ancestor Yehuda.

Hence, the paradoxical but deeply liberating truth: Fear of failure causes us to fail. It is the willingness to fail that allows us to succeed.

Around the Shabbat Table:

- (1) **Do you think Moses had a fixed mindset or a growth mindset?**
- (2) **If your name were to be changed to reflect or encourage growth, what would your new name be?**
- (3) **Should we fear a fear of failure?**

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Message from the Parsha

Rabbi Katriel (Kenneth) Brander

Stolen Objects & Robotic Mitzvot: The Need to Own our Observance

A mitzva may not be performed with 'dirty hands'. In other words, when we are engaged in the fulfillment of the Torah's commands, it would be antithetical to the whole enterprise, and hence prohibited, to do so by means of stolen objects or other forbidden materials. This is how the Talmud understands the words in our parsha: VA'ASU LAHEM TZIZIT (Bamidbar 15:38). "And they shall make for them tzitzit of their own, to exclude the use of stolen ritual fringes" (Tractate Sukka 9a).

The Talmud in multiple locations warns us against a MITZVA HABA'A BA'AVERA, a mitzva ensconced in a transgression. If we have stolen assets, how dare we use them to purchase a lulav, or a sukka, or even make a charitable contribution to a worthy cause? The Torah refuses to assign holiness to objects that have come into our hands through forbidden means.

Yet perhaps there is another paradigm of stealing to which we also must be sensitive.

Allow me to explain what I believe to lie at the core of this issue with a story. Two

American sailors had shore leave in Amsterdam and decided to visit a church. Knowing neither the language nor the liturgy, and fearing being out of step, they selected one well-dressed young gentleman and decided they would do whatever he did. All went well for a while until at one point the gentleman stood, so the sailors stood, and pandemonium broke loose. Much later the sailors discovered that they had happened upon a baptism and the pastor had just asked the father of the child to rise.

It is easy to understand why stolen ritual objects disqualify mitzva performance. But perhaps the mitzva may also be disqualified when it has become robotic, “stolen” from a previous time in which the performance was still meaningful. When we perform a mitzva - whether it be wearing tefillin, davening, celebrating Shabbat - but do so by rote, failing to imbue the act with meaning, passion, and relevance, it becomes a “stolen act”, a mitzva that is not truly our own.

One of the most moving aspects of this war has been witnessing the reinfusion of mitzvot with meaning, passion and relevance - not only amongst observant Israelis but also by those who might not identify as traditionally religious. Soldiers preparing for battle and putting on tzitzit for the first time; soldiers previously unfamiliar with the blessing of HaGomel – recited when one is saved from a dangerous situation - reciting the

blessing after battle; groups of soldiers in Gaza going to great lengths to ensure that they wrap tefillin everyday despite the difficult conditions of war. Women participating in challah-baking events to feed the soldiers and support them spiritually, or lighting additional Shabbat candles on Friday evenings for the sake of the hostages in Gaza. These thriving religious practices are emerging naturally in response to the trauma and serve as a beautiful example of what religious practice looks like when it is claimed, owned and imbued with meaning - and not a robotic, “stolen” act of past habit.

Along similar lines, perhaps a productive way to understand some Israeli movements seeking an alternative to the state rabbinate for events like weddings or conversions, as well as the promotion of halachic prenuptial agreements and affording women more pronounced roles in the halachic religious life is to see these as a desire to make Judaism and mitzvot more relevant for the current generation.

It serves to remind us that if a mitzva is not yet truly our own, then our Avodat Hashem remains incomplete. It is our responsibility to take ownership of our mitzvot and religious experience. We must find meaning and relevance within the mitzvot we perform, and to use them to foster deeper relationships with God, with ourselves and with the spiritual community around us.



PhiloTorah D'var Torah

Takes a Licking and Keeps on Ticking

78 p'sukim of Parshat Sh'lach's 119 p'sukim (around 2/3 of the sedra) deal with CHEIT HAMERAGLIM - the Sin of the Spies - from G-d's 'suggestion' that Moshe send the Meraglim, if he (Moshe) so chooses, to their names and status in the nation, to their 'assignment', to their 40-day 'tour' of the Land, to their report to Moshe and Aharon and all the People, to their attempt (successful, sadly) to discourage the people from journeying to the Promised Land, to Kalev's brave and inspiring words (which were not heeded, sadly), to the bitter crying of the adult male population, to their demanding new leaders who would take them back to Egypt, to G-d's 'anger' and intention to destroy the nation, to Moshe's 'convincing' G-d to relent on that plan, to the decree to wander in the Midbar for a total of 40 years, during which the adult male population would die out, to the Divine 'execution' of the Ten Meraglim, to the failed attempt to 'repent' and go to the land, against G-d's and Moshe's objection.

(That was a run-on sentence by which my eighth grade English teacher, Mrs. Ruth Silver, would have been appalled - but, that's how the 78 p'sukim read.)

The title of this PTDT is from the old Timex watch commercials, extolling the durability of their watches.

It came to mind as I reviewed Parshat Sh'lach, because the Sin of the Spies certainly resulted in a licking, by the immediate deaths of the 10 Meraglim, by the decree against the generation of the Wilderness - DOR HAMIDBAR, and by G-d's praise of Yehoshua and Kalev for their faithfulness to His Promises.

It is not for us to judge that generation - the Mishna in Sanhedrin (10:3) gives us a machloket (disagreement) between Rabi Akiva, who says that Dor HaMidbar has no share in the World to Come, and Rabi Eliezer who says they were righteous people who entered into the Covenant with G-d at Sinai. Not our place to judge them and pick sides in this machloket.

But we can look around in our own time and see that - very sadly - the Sin of the Spies - KEEPS ON TICKING.

Commentaries suggest that the ten meraglim, men of high standing in Israel, preferred to remain in the Midbar where their physical needs - water, food, clothing, protection from the elements - were met by G-d's miracles, freeing the people to live Torah lives in a pristine environment without the toil that would ensue upon entering the Land.

The multitude wanted to return to the 'good life' in Egypt.

We see both these attitudes alive and

well in our own time.

Ever hear a fellow Jew say: We have everything we need for a full Jewish life here in (fill in your choice of a wonderful Jewish community in Chutz LaAretz)?

That is CHEIT HAMERAGLIM alive and well over three thousand years since the first Meraglim and the people who were panicked by them.

Ever hear a prominent rabbi boast of his contribution to Torah and its adherence as a justification of his remaining in the Midbar (GALUT)?

A Jew who knows in his heart - and actually says so out loud - that he belongs in Eretz Yisrael, as all Jews do - BUT -

That BUT can be the serious issues of parnassa (livelihood), of the perceived abandonment of elderly parents, or children and grandchildren they do not want to leave behind... I hear that. I would not categorize such fellow Jews as modern-day meraglim.

Nor would I criticize others for whatever reason - good or not so good - for not coming on Aliya or at least planning it for their future.

My criticism is directed at those who told me that I was crazy to come on Aliya. To the ones who say - Israel isn't for every Jew. Israel isn't for me.

Cheit HaMeraglim - alive and well.

If that is so, then it is also so that the call

of Kalev and the words of Kalev and Yehoshua are alive and well today.

"Kalev silenced the people to [hear about] Moshe, and he said, 'We can surely go up and take possession of it, for we can indeed overcome it.' ... They (Yehoshua and Kalv) spoke to the entire congregation of the children of Israel, saying, 'The land we passed through to scout is an exceedingly good land. If HaShem desires us, He will bring us to this land and give it to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.'" (Bamidbar 13:30, 14:7-8)

That's what they said so long ago. Do you side with them? Do you echo their words? Do you, who live here already, share their sentiments with your family and friends who are not yet here?

If so, there can finally be kapara, atonement for Cheit HaMeraglim; it isn't too late. **PTDT**

P.S. I want to be clear that even those with various reasons that they don't live in Israel, should at least feel that they are missing something vital in their Torah life. I don't criticize those who are not here (yet), only those who don't consider living in Eretz Yisrael as a significant aspect of Torah Life.

P.P.S. Here's a quote attributed to Margaret Mead: "It may be necessary temporarily to accept a lesser evil (or a less ideal situation - ed.), but one must never label a necessary evil as good (as ideal - ed.)."

Walk through the Parsha

with **Rabbi David Walk**



One Rule for All

Sh'lach

In the wake of the Sin of the Spies and the anguish it engendered for those destined to die in the desert, the Torah initiates a few fascinating Mitzvot. These Mitzvot are directly connected to living in Eretz Yisrael. There is no irony intended. These precepts are, instead, a promise that Jews will indeed live in the Holy Land. Even though this generation won't enter the Land, their progeny will fulfill these holy precepts. So, the chapter right after the story of the sin and the punishment, begins: When you enter the Land which I am giving you to settle in... (Bamidbar 15:2). Let's investigate one of the fascinating details in one of these laws.

The next section begins: And when a sojourner (Prof. Robert Alter, but Kaplan renders it 'proselyte', JPS 'stranger') joins you, or lives among you in future generations, and this person prepares a fire offering of pleasant fragrance; it must be done in the exact same manner in which you do it' (15:14). Two verses later this concept is reinforced: There shall thus be one Torah and one Law for you and the sojourner (convert?) who joins you.

Throughout Jewish history many fascinating conclusions have been drawn

from these statements. The most famous is best expressed by the late Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks: The second dimension, equally radical, and essentially tied to Israel's experience of exile, is concern for the rights and welfare of the stranger. The Mosaic books never tire of this theme - the rabbis pointed out that whereas the Torah in one place commands love of the neighbor, in no fewer than thirty-six places it urges love of the stranger... This is the second revolution of the Exodus, and part of Israel's moral struggle against tribalism and its modern successor, xenophobic nationalism. Strangers, too, have rights and make a legitimate claim on our humanity, for we are all strangers to someone else.

I find the conclusion of the Netziv to be equally fascinating: The teachings that the sages of each generation add are called "law" ("Torah"). And a commandment matter which is not explicit in the Torah is a just "ordinance" (MISHPAT) based on the intellect. And see that Scripture calls commandments that are explicit in the Torah "statute", even if they do have a reason. In any case, even where the reason is missing, the commandment stands its ground. For once they are explicit in the Torah, they are statutes which the Heavens and the Earth stand upon. However, the teachings of the Sages of the generation go along with the reasoning, so as soon as the reason changes, the rule changes.

The Netziv was expressing the tradi-

tional Rabbinic position that rabbinic rules and customs are by their very nature conditional on the circumstances which initiated them. However, Jews over the ages have difficulty shedding any enactment or custom. It's a shame because the wise scholars who instituted these customs often had very different circumstances than those under which we live. Black hats and jackets make a lot of sense when the temperature is in the high 30s (C), right?

The great Italian-Jewish scholar Shmuel David Luzatto (1800-1865) saw another salient issue in our verses. He believed strongly that our verses were demanding the uniform use of the central cultic center of the nation (initially at Shiloh and, later, at Yerushalayim). His concern was twofold: (1) For if the entire people had one sanctuary, they would all gather together in one place, their hearts would be bound in brotherhood; and (2) It is also possible (if everyone had his own BAMA, high place or altar) that the sacrificial service would be undermined by a family or a tribe and they would alter its provisions. And little by little they would adopt the statutes of the nations and customs that are detestable to the Blessed One, to the point of sacrificing their own sons and daughters.

But the biggest takeaways from our couple of verses have to do with converts. Perhaps the greatest of those is from the Talmud: Rav Acha bar Ya'akov said, 'The verse, 'When (in the future) a GER will dwell with you' informs

us that we will always accept GERIM into the future (Keritut 9a).

Maybe the most famous use of these verses, though, was by the Rambam. He was sent a query by Rav Ovadia the Proselyte (b. Johannes of Oppido, 1070). This famous and pious convert wanted to know if he could recite all the prayers just like those who were born Jewish. His problem was: How could he say, 'Our God and God of our Ancestors', if he isn't an ancestor of the Patriarchs?

The Rambam, beside quoting our verses, powerfully declared: Rather, you shall bless and pray in the same way that every natural-born Jew blesses and prays, whether as an individual or when leading the congregation. The principle of this matter is that our patriarch Avraham taught all the people, and brought them knowledge of true faith and God's singularity. He rejected idolatry and abolished its worship; he brought many under the wings of the Divine Presence, and he ordered his sons and the members of his household to keep the ways of God, as it is written: "For I have known him, that he will command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of God..." (B'reishit 18:19). Thus, anyone throughout history who converts, and anyone who declares the unity of God's name as the Torah states, is a disciple of our patriarch Avraham and a member of his household.

I wish that we had scholars with just a

fraction of his bravery and clarity in our difficult times.

More recently, Rav Joseph Dov Soloveitchik also weighed in on the significance of our verses on the issue of converts. The Rav expanded the ideas about proselytes to teach each of us crucial ideas: A gentile who wishes to join the nation must take upon himself both covenants. He places himself in the ambit of Jewish fate and sanctifies himself for the acceptance of the Jewish destiny. The act of conversion involves associating oneself as a member of the people of the Covenants of Egypt and of Sinai. Keep this important principle in mind: there is no such thing as partial conversion. One cannot omit one iota of either of these two Covenants. Total devotion to the Jewish people - as a nation that God took to Himself in Egypt, with all its tribulations, suffering, responsibilities, and actions; and as a holy people that is itself consecrated, heart and soul, to the God of Israel and His halachic and moral demands - is the absolute foundation of Judaism and hence is also the basis of conversion. (Kol Dodi Dofek: Listen - My Beloved Knocks, 75).

In the wake of one of the greatest disasters in Jewish history, God informs Moshe Rabbeinu and us that there will be a great future for the Jewish people. This great destiny requires a commitment to certain basic ideas about ritual, community and our peoplehood that will bind us eternally to God and Israel.

These difficult days we must remember that adversity throughout Jewish history must be seen as a catalyst for unity and commitment. May we find the strength to emerge from our present adversity stronger and more unified! 🙏

Rav Kook Torah

by Rabbi

Chanan Morrison • www.ravkooktorah.com



Holiness of Earth and Air

It is probably the most commonly asked question about the account of the Twelve Spies: how could the leaders of the Israelite tribes, who knew God had promised to bring the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, fail so spectacularly in their mission? Why did they return with an evil report of the Land and frighten the people?

Furthermore, do the sections that follow – the Temple wine libations and the mitzva of Tzitzit – have any connection to the story of the Spies?

The Land's Physical and Spiritual Powers

The Psalmist writes that, since the Israelites rejected the Land of Israel, they were punished with exile and dispersion to other lands:

“They rejected the desirable land, and put no faith in His promise. They grumbled in their tents and disobeyed God. So He raised His hand in oath to

make them fall in the wilderness, to disperse their descendants among the nations and scatter them throughout the lands.” (T'hilim 106:24-27)

Why is the Land of Israel so special? Does it not say that “the whole earth is filled with His glory” (Yeshayahu 6:3)?

According to Rabbi Yochanan, the Flood in the time of No'ach did not reach the Land of Israel (Zevachim 113a). The Land of Israel was not damaged by the waters of the Flood, but retained its pristine powers from the time of the world's creation. Thus the spies encountered the ancient Nefilim, still roaming the Land.

Eretz Yisrael also retained its original spiritual qualities. It is thus the land of prophecy (Kuzari 2:14). The Talmud teaches that Yechezkeil could only prophesy in Babylonia because he had already begun that prophecy in the Land of Israel (Moed Katan 25a).

God's glory fills the entire universe, but He restricted His Sh'chinah to Jerusalem and the Holy of Holies. God similarly chose one people out of all the nations. There is a parallel between the special sanctity of the Land of Israel and that of the Jewish people. Just as the Jewish people are the 'heart' of all peoples, so, too, the Land of Israel is the 'soul' of all lands.

Kuzari 2:36. “The metaphor of the heart and body stresses the centrality of the Jewish people in the cosmic plan. However, it equally emphasizes an organic, holistic view of the world... the heart itself

would be rendered meaningless without its constant interaction with the other organs, despite its functional importance” (Prof. Shalom Rosenberg, ‘In the Footsteps of the Kuzari’)

Holiness of Earth and Air

The Sages ruled that all lands outside the Land of Israel are ritually impure. At first they ruled that the earth from other lands is impure. Then they ruled that even the air is impure (Shabbat 15).

The Land of Israel, by contrast, is blessed with two qualities of holiness: holiness of its earth, and holiness of its air. What does this mean?

The Land's “holiness of earth” is revealed in the special mitzvot that can only be performed in the Land of Israel: tithes of agricultural produce, first-fruits, the Sabbatical year, and so on. This is a holiness that manifests itself with practical acts in the physical realm.

“Holiness of the air”, on the other hand, refers to the Land's special capacity for Divine inspiration, prophecy, and the Sh'chinah's presence in the Mikdash.

Moshe sought to gain both aspects of holiness. He was the greatest of all prophets, but he still pleaded with God to be allowed to enter the Land and experience the holiness of its mitzvot. “Let me cross over and see the good land” (D'vaarim 3:25). The Spies, on the other hand, thought that “holiness of air” is sufficient for the nation; this holiness is more spiritual and can

accompany the Jewish people in any location. They sinned by rejecting the importance of the Land's practical mitzvot – its “earth-holiness”.

After the sin of the Spies, God accepted Moshe's prayers. “I have forgiven as you asked. However,” God added, “as I live, God's glory will fill all the world” (Bamidbar 14:20-21). Since you have rejected the concentration of holiness in the Land of Israel and the Jewish people, God's glory will spread throughout the world. The Jewish people will be scattered to other lands; and due to their dispersion, “many peoples will attach themselves to God” (Zechariya 2:15). As the Sages taught, the function of exile is to enable converts to join the Jewish people (Pesachim 87b).

However, as Zechariya's prophecy continues – “He will choose Jerusalem once more” (2:16). The Jewish people and those who join them will witness God's selection of Jerusalem. They will reconnect with the Land of Israel and its special holiness. The sin of the Spies will be forgiven, and the exile of Israel will come to an end.

Combining Both Forms of Holiness

We can identify these two aspects of holiness in the mitzvot mentioned in the sections that follow. The Temple offerings are called “My bread” (Bamidbar 28:2). They are the staple, the tangible part of the offerings, corresponding to the “earth-holiness” of the Land.

But that is not enough. The Torah commands that wine libations (N'SACHIM) must accompany the offerings, adding an additional level of holiness, one of joy and higher spirit. The libations correspond to the Land's “air-holiness”. Our Temple offerings must include both aspects of holiness.

The mitzva of Tzitzit also has two parts. There are white strings, corresponding to the “earth-holiness” of the Land. And there is a string of T'chelet-blue, corresponding to the holiness of the air and the sky. We are commanded to combine both forms of holiness in our lives, the practical and the atmospheric: “They shall include a twist of sky-blue wool in the corner tassels” (15:38).

Adapted from Shemu'ot HaRe'iyah II, pp. 199-202

Parsha Story

Stories and Parables from
the famed Maggid of Dubno

by Rabbi Chanan Morrison

Rejecting the Good Land

Sh'lach

God described the Land of Israel as a good land; and this was what the spies reported back. Yet the people complained, saying, “God brought us out of Egypt because He hates us” (D'varim 1:27). Why didn't they trust God's judgment?

The Gloomy Groom

A very pious man, completely immersed in spiritual matters and removed from worldly ones, heard of a suitable match for his son. This being his only son, the father did not want to rely on the matchmaker's report. He decided to make the journey in order meet the girl and her family.

The father set off and met the family. Highly satisfied with the match, he signed on the financial arrangements for the wedding with them. He returned home and related to his family and close friends what he had seen: the piety and Torah scholarship of the father, the modesty and fine character traits of the mother.

"And what about the bride herself?" one perceptive friend inquired.

Hearing this question, the pious man's wife also came close to hear what her husband would say.

"Regarding the bride, I don't have a lot to say", replied the father. "She is certainly a good catch. Her worth is beyond pearls."

When the son heard his father's words, he began to cry out of anguish.

"Why are you crying?" asked the mother. "Didn't you hear your father praise the girl?"

The son grimaced. "My father's praise - that made it even worse! Did he praise her grace, her beauty, her social skills? I

know that father, pious man that he is, does not consider these qualities important. On the contrary, if she had any of them, father would probably consider them to be defects. 'Grace is false and beauty is vain.'"

"If father liked her", the young man concluded, "then she is probably ugly and simple, given over to constant fasts and prayers..."

The Qualities of Eretz Yisrael

The Israelites who left Egypt assumed that if God praised the Land of Israel, this must be for its spiritual qualities. But regarding its physical traits? It is probably a harsh, barren land, where one must live simply in order eke out a meager living. As the Sages counseled, "This is the path of Torah: you will eat bread with salt, and drink water in small measure, and sleep on the ground" (Pirkei Avot 6:4). A harsh environment will ensure that the people will live a life of simplicity and deprivation, undistracted by material pleasures.

This is why the Israelites grumbled and complained about the Land, fearing the worse.

In fact, besides its unique spiritual qualities for holiness and prophecy, it is also a "land flowing with milk and honey". Eretz Yisrael is like a bride who is pious and a "woman of valor", but also blessed with beauty and charm.

Adapted from Mishlei Yaakov, pp. 338-339

Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher z”l

TZITZIT - A Tikun for the Sin of the Spies

Parshat Shlach begins with the Sin of the Spies and ends with the Mitzva of TZITZIT. Is there a link between the two? To answer this question we must ask another.

What was the sin of the Spies? It cannot be that the sin was the very fact that they were sent. On the contrary, we find the use of spies against the enemy camp in many places. For example, it says, “Moshe sent out men to spy on Ya’azer” (Bamidbar 21:32). Likewise, Yehoshua sent out two spies to see the Land and Yericho. Regarding Gid'on, we find that G-d sent him to spy on the Midianite camp to hear what the Midianites were saying so as to be in a stronger position to attack them (Shoftim 7:11).

Therefore, Ramban (Bamidbar 13:2) does not view the actual sending of the spies as the sin. On the contrary, he writes: “This is reasonable counsel for all occupying forces. The Torah does not advise relying on miracles in all that one does. Rather, it commands that soldiers, once dispatched, cautiously lay in ambush for the right moment to attack.”

If the sin was not in the spies being sent, then what was it? Ramban further refines the question. Seemingly the spies spoke the truth and the report

they issued was appropriate to what they had been instructed to find out. They had been asked to see if the soil was rich or weak (13:20) and they answered that it was rich, and that it was a land flowing with milk and honey. To the question of whether the Land had trees or not, they responded by displaying its fruit, as Moshe had commanded that they do. What then was the sin of the Spies?

Ramban answers that the Spies had been commanded to provide information about the Land, and their sin was that they added their own opinion that the Conquest of the Land would be absolutely impossible to carry out. The Spies conducted themselves like some of our media personalities whose job it is to provide the public with facts and information, and who instead take advantage of the tool in their hands to weave in their own commentary, assessments and opinions. This was the sin of the Spies.

Chatam Sofer in Torat Moshe likewise holds that sending out the spies was appropriate in accordance with wartime practices, because we mustn't rely on miracles, but should conduct ourselves according to the laws of nature. He adds that the spies did not provide false information. Rather, the information they provided should have been given exclusively to Moshe, who had sent them (13:3). It was for Moshe alone to decide how to use their information. Yet they

did not do this. Rather, immediately on the Spies return, "...they brought their report to Moshe, Aharon and the entire Israelite community" (13:26). They did this with the intention of demoralizing and weakening the Jewish People, like some of the "Spies" of today (Peace Now and J Street).

T'hilim long ago revealed to us that lack of faith and an absence of love of the Land of Israel are the root cause of the sin of the Spies: "They despised the precious land, they did not believe His word" (106:24). Therefore, the answer to the confusion and doubt amongst our generation regarding Eretz Yisrael is increased education towards love of the Land, People and Torah of Israel.

That education is to be found at the end of the Parsha of the Spies, which deals with the Mitzva of Tzitzit. Rav Soloveitchik explains that the blue T'chelet of Tzitzit is a symbol to view world events more deeply than the deep blue sky. The Talmud in Menachot states that the blue thread of Tzitzit reminds us to look up at the blue heavens and to admire the incredible, vast expanse of endless space leading to its source, the Ein Sof - G-d. As T'hilim 19:2 states, "The Heavens tell the glory of G-d."

Also, the Parsha of Tzitzit states, "Do not follow your own 'spies' of your hearts and your eyes" - to be misled into sin (Bamidbar 15:39). The Torah concludes the Parsha of the Spies with, "and you shall see Him" meaning to see G-d in

everything in nature (15:40). Thus the GEMATRIYA (numerical value) of the word nature in Hebrew HATEVA equals that of ELOKIM (G-d). We must teach ourselves to view world events as they really are, as the Torah views them, and not to be deceived by superficial appearances.

This idea applies especially to the Land of Israel. Eretz Yisrael is a land overflowing with beauty and sanctity. Some of its beautiful qualities are revealed, and others are hidden beneath the surface. In a similar sense, the righteous one among the Spies, Kalev ben Yefuneh, saw only the good in Eretz Yisrael, unlike his colleagues, who were deceived by the superficial problems they saw here. Thus, he was called KALEV, the same root as the word KELEV (dog), because a dog is always digging beneath the surface to find the buried treasure.

So too, a Jew in the Land of Israel has to plumb the depths to discover the hidden treasure, beauty and sanctity, concealed in Eretz Yisrael. -**ESP**

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

CHIZUK & IDUD

*Divrei Torah from the weekly sedra
with a focus on living in Eretz Yisrael
Chizuk for Olim & Idud for not-yet-Olim*

by Rabbi Yerachmiel Roness
Ramat Shiloh, Beit Shemesh

Sh'lach 2017

Once again we are forced to confront the enigma of the spies' rejection of Eretz Yisrael; a sin whose repercussions continue unabated throughout the entirety of Jewish history. The spies turn their back on the Land and the verse in T'hilim (106:24-27) tells us: "They despised the desirable Land, they had no faith in His word." By slandering the Land and stating that the land devours its inhabitants they displayed lack of faith, and as a result "they are cast down in the wilderness, and their descendants are cast down and scattered among the lands." In other words, the exile of the Jewish People throughout the world is a direct consequence of the sin of the spies.

Although many suggestions have been put forth in order to understand the puzzling source of the spies behavior, I would like to focus upon one interesting suggestion found in the Ishbitzer's Sefer MEI HASHILO'ACH. The Ishbitzer entertains the peculiar notion that the key to the matter lies in the difficult and dangerous concept of AVEIRA LISHMA - a sin which one does knowingly albeit with good intentions. Regarding the case at hand, he imagines the following

picture: The ten spies knew that Moshe would die prior to the peoples' entry into Eretz Yisrael. Fearing Am Yisrael's inability to stay a straight course without having benefited first from Moshe's leadership and wisdom for an extended period of time, they acted in a way designed to bring about a prolonged postponement. This was their AVEIRA LISHMA. Was this scheme helpful in any way? Most certainly not, as they all died during the intervening years... The lesson to be derived is that we must do all that we are called upon to do, and rely upon G-d to help us solve any difficulties which might arise. A possible analogous situation today would be those who clearly state their understanding that making Aliyah is a mitzva, however, they nonetheless muster different reasons to explain why they must stay behind...

Another suggestion put forth by the Ishbitzer is that the spies did not truly appreciate the inner qualities of Eretz Yisrael, regarding it as one might any other Land. This is akin to Rav Soloveitchik's explanation of the connection between the incident of the spies and the sad story of Miriam speaking Lashon Hara against Moshe which immediately precedes it: Just as Miriam's actions stemmed from a lack of appreciation of Moshe's unique qualities, so too, the spies did not appreciate the singular qualities of Eretz Yisrael - Eretz Segula. The Rav pointed out that in Hebrew word SEGULA connotes an exceptional and unique quality. Just as the Land of

Israel is exceptional, so too was Moshe Rabbeinu - B'CHIR HAN'VI'IM - qualitatively different from all other N'vi'im.

Most troubling, though, is the fact that the spies were KULAM ANASHIM, RASHEI B'NEI YISRAEL HEIMA - they were all upstanding tzadikim; how then could they turned so suddenly? How could they have caused such calamity? The Zohar tells us that the spies realized that their position as leaders was only temporary. They understood that once the People entered the land new leaders would be chosen. The Midrash says it thus: "It is easy to step up to the Bima, it is hard to step down..." Realizing this, the question is turned on its head, and we are left wondering: How were Yehoshua and Kalev safeguarded from this danger? What enabled them to remain true to their mission when all the others fell to the wayside?

Yehoshua was an utterly dedicated disciple to Moshe. When Hashem told Moshe to lay his hand on Yehoshua, Moshe did more - he lay both his hands as a sign of transference of Torah leadership to Yehoshua. If Yehoshua represents Torah learning, filling the role of the disseminator of Torah, Kalev ben Yefuneh represents a second trait - following the Patriarch's fealty to the Land of Israel. Upon entering the Land, Kalev immediately went to Chevron (Bamidbar 13:22) in order to pray at the gravesites of our Patriarchs in Maarat HaMachpela and receive inspiration from the Avot.

[Rabbeinu Bechayei quotes the Midrash on the words VAYAVO AD CHEVRON - saying that these words do not refer to Kalev but rather to Hashem who came to Chevron in order to notify the Avot that the time had arrived for His oath to the Avot to be fulfilled, for the Jewish People to come into the land].

Thus the successful partnership of Yehoshua and Kalev signifies the necessity of Torah learning being joined together with settling the Land.

MAASEI AVOT SIMAN L'VANIM. Which of the actions of the twelve spies will be a Siman for us? Will we fall into the same trap that brought us down so many times throughout history, or will we rise to the occasion following Kalev's courageous lead, and echo his timeless proclamation: ALO NA'ALEH V'YARASH-NU OTAH KI YACHOL NUCHAL LAH - We should go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it! 🏠👉

These weekly words of Torah wisdom can be found in my recently published book "Eretz Yisrael and Aliyah in the weekly Parsha". It can be ordered by calling 052-336-0553 or by ordering it on Amazon



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Fulfilling a Mitzva without Intention

Question: Does one fulfill the mitzva of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael (inhabiting the Land of Israel) if he lives (t)here without kavana (intention to fulfill the mitzva)?

Answer: The gemara discusses the question of whether MITZVOT TZ'RICHOT KAVANA (a mitzva is valid only if performed with the intention to fulfill it) with regard to a number of mitzvot, including reading Kri'at Shema¹ and blowing shofar.² The Shulchan Aruch³ rules that kavana is required, but there is significant discussion about whether this applies to mitzvot that are only Rabbinically mandated.⁴ Thus, one could conjecture that the possibility of fulfilling the mitzva of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael without having kavana depends on whether the mitzva is from the Torah (Ramban⁵) or is Rabbinic (simple under-

standing of the Rambam⁶).

There are several opinions, however, that the issue of mitzvot tzrichot kavana does not apply to all mitzvot. The Ran⁷ writes that even the opinions that usually require kavana do not necessarily require it for mitzvot that involve the physical enjoyment of eating, such as eating matza. This distinction is rooted in the gemara's statement that the exemption from bringing a korban for an unintentional sin does not apply to sins from which physical enjoyment is derived⁸; a significant act has been performed, regardless of intent. Yishuv Eretz Yisrael apparently does not fit into this category, as the mitzva is fulfilled by living in the Land, not by receiving physical enjoyment. However, others⁹ understand that one is not required to have kavana for any mitzva that is done via a classic physical action (including the mitzva of lulav¹⁰), as opposed to a mitzva fulfilled by speech (e.g. Kri'at Sh'ma) or hearing (e.g. shofar blowing). According to this distinction, perhaps one would not need kavana to fulfill Yishuv Eretz Yisrael, which calls for the presence of one's body, not speaking or hearing.

1. Berachot 13a.

2. Rosh Hashana 28b.

3. Orach Chayim 60:4.

4. See Mishna Berura 60:10.

5. Ramban's comments on the Rambam's *Sefer HaMitzvot*, Omitted Positive Mitzva #4.

6. See discussion in *Amud HaYemini* 22.

7. Rosh Hashana 7b in Rif's pages.

8. See *Kritot* 19b.

9. See *Sdei Chemed*, vol. IV, p. 305.

10. *Ibid.* p. 306.

A similar distinction is found in Kovetz Shiurim,¹¹ in which Rav Elchanan Wasserman argues that one fulfills mitzvot that are conceptually result-oriented even without intention; the important thing is that the result was achieved. Examples he gives include repaying debts and P'RU UR'VU (procreation). Yishuv Eretz Yisrael is tricky from this perspective. On the one hand, one does not reach a result due to which he can say the mitzva is complete. However, the mitzva is apparently to be in the state of living in the Land (the parameters are beyond our present scope). Thus, it is a mitzva of a result, but it is an ongoing state/result. Accordingly, yishuv Eretz Yisrael would not require kavana.

Rav Asher Weiss¹² explains this distinction as follows. The requirement of kavana applies to mitzvot that are significant only when done as service to HaShem. If, however, the result of the mitzva is intrinsically significant, the mitzva obligation is satisfied even if that result was reached without intent for the mitzva. Having children, for example, is significant even when it does not result from overt intent for service of HaShem, and the same is presumably true of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael.

Despite the above, it is important to note that there are two elements in fulfilling a mitzva: (1) technical fulfill-

ment, the greatest ramification of which is that it exempts one from repeating an action for the mitzva; and (2) the reward one receives for its fulfillment. The various halachic discussions focus on the first element – the operative question of whether the mitzva needs to be repeated. But what happens regarding reward if one “performed” the mitzva without intent?

There is no way for human beings to determine HaShem’s reward system, but it is clear that HaShem will not give the same reward to one who accidentally performed a mitzva or did it solely for an extraneous reason as He will give to one who did it for the right reasons.¹³ The *Imrei Bina*¹⁴ cites the formulation of the author of the *Chochmat Adam*: Even if and when one is credited with fulfillment of a specific mitzva without kavana, he nevertheless fails to perform the general mitzva “to serve Him with all your heart.”¹⁵ With regard to living in Eretz Yisrael, there are different reasons that one might not have kavana to fulfill the mitzva, including a lack of belief in HaShem, a Satmar ideology, not knowing there is a mitzva, or not thinking about it specifically, even though he is aware that it is a good thing to do. These possibilities and many other variables impact on a person’s virtue and thus on his reward for the mitzva.

¹¹. II:23.

¹². Heard in a public lecture.

¹³. See a parallel idea in *Nazir* 23a.

¹⁴. *Orach Chayim* 4.

¹⁵. *Devarim* 11:13.

Regarding what was mentioned above that the element of fulfillment exempts one from repeating the mitzva action, the question here is totally moot. One never completes the mitzva of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael. Whether or not one fulfilled the mitzva yesterday, the mitzva exists today and will exist tomorrow. And as the mitzva continues, it is certainly better to do it with kavana. Note that kavana is not needed during every moment of the performance of the mitzva. If one reflects on the mitzva at some point and nothing arises to change that or if it is clear from his behavior that he is doing the action because of the mitzva, then this is considered basic kavana.¹⁶

Ed. note: Required or not, it is a good idea for those living in Eretz Yisrael, to - every so often - pause from what you are doing, take a deep breath of AVIRA D'YISRAEL, the air of Israel, and say to one's self - or to others in earshot - L'SHEIM MITZVAT YISHUV ERETZ YISRAEL. A thank you to G-d for the zechut to live here is a good thing to add.



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

TAKE A GOOD LOOK

Twice in the sidra we find UR-ITEM, "You shall look".

The first is when the twelve spies are charged with looking at the Land of Israel and bringing back a report.

The second is when the people are commanded to put fringes on the corners of their garments, look at them and be reminded of God's mitzvot.

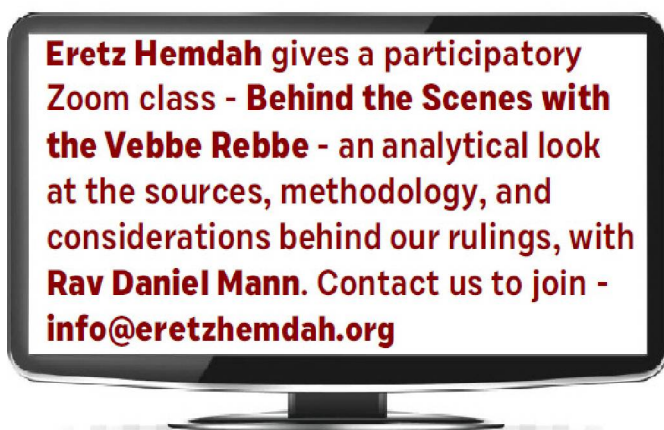
The first exercise in looking was to make sure the right conclusions were reached.

Ten of the twelve spies looked cursorily and were frightened off. Only Yehoshua and Kalev looked carefully and concluded that it was possible for the Israelites to enter the Land and handle its challenges.

The same observation can be made in relation to the fringes, the "tzitzit".

It was always possible for the people to look at the fringes and see merely an odd group of strings, curiosities with no significance.

It was also possible to see the fringes as gateways to Heaven, reminders that there was a God whose ways would make the world beautiful.



¹⁶. Mishna Berura 60:10.

The point is made in a Midrash on the Akeida (B'reishit 22).

Avraham and Yitzchak and their manservants approached the mountain and the servants saw only an impressive hill; Avraham and Yitzchak saw a majestic sight with clouds entwined around the top of the mountain amid the joining of heaven and earth.

Avraham said to the servants, "You stay here with the donkey: you and the donkey have no spiritual perception. I and the boy - Yitzchak - will ascend yonder."

A sukka is a humble hut if you don't see any poetry in it; tefillin are peculiar leather straps; Shabbat is a boring day without the fast and furious pursuit of fun.

That is, until you see what Shakespeare calls sermons in stones and what Judaism describes as SIMCHA SHEL MITZVA, the exhilaration of the Divine commands.

PASS THE BUCK

I was told as a cadet officer, "Find someone of lower rank to whom you can pass the buck!"

This is not quite the same as the opening command of the Torah portion in which Moses is told, SH'LACH L'CHA ANASHIM, "send men" to carry out a reconnaissance of the Land.

"Pass the buck" means "Save yourself

some effort: get someone else to do the job".

SH'LACH L'CHA ANASHIM contains a little word, L'CHA, "for your benefit".

There are times when you are not the expert but somebody else is. It is to your advantage to consult the other person and secure their assistance and support.

Moshe was not qualified to carry out a survey of the terrain and its features, but each tribe would have had at least one man competent to perform the task.

It is not that Moshe was lazy or lacking in energy - on the contrary, even at the end of his 120 years his "natural force" was still strong (D'varim 34). But he needed a good team around him, as every successful leader does. -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

Sh'lach

You shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes (15:39).

The word LATUR (to spy out) is unique to this Parasha. It occurs at the beginning, with the account of the Spies: "Send for yourselves men and they shall spy out (V,YATURU) the Land of Canaan" (13:2), and at the end: "You shall not stray (TATURU) after your heart and after your eyes". Both the Cheit HaMeraglim (sin of

the Spies) and Tzitzit, center on that word, LATUR.

Ha'amek Davar focuses on the use of this word, and makes a fundamental connection between them. He relates to the word much as the English-speaking reader might, understanding LATUR as meaning 'to tour'. For example a serious tourist who writes for travel is visiting the region for a purpose: he or she wants to immerse in a new country or region: scenery, architecture, culture, art, music, literature, and dance stemming from within that unfamiliar location. Possibly also, to take a position about the place and even make a memorable impact there.

But, as every serious and seasoned tourists knows, some investigative tours do not work out as planned, but pose serious doubts and challenges on the way. Then, the investigative tourists themselves may make serious errors with the locals, and desire to give up and sulk off home, instead of carrying out the purpose that they visited that area in the first place: to get to know about the place and interact with the place.

To that end, "You shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes..." The Chozeh of Lublin explains that these two different things, Straying, - or 'touring' - after your heart: you saw something and immediately took a dislike to it. To which one might add, you failed to investigate it, see it for what it is, and reflect on it carefully: you quickly jumped to

conclusions. As did the spies. In short, the heart's 'gut reaction' just didn't like it! And straying, or - touring - after your eyes: to give up after you've internalized what you've already seen. You had a fall; you let yourself continue to fall by wanting to run away ("Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt, 14:4), failing to get up again and move on and re-adapt to the situation.

All people face challenges and disappointments. Even the greatest tzadikim among us, and of yore. What distinguishes a tzadik is the capacity to look at a situation after falling and still carry on with hope, effort, and faith. As Shlomo HaMelech puts it: "For the tzadik will fall seven times, but he will get up. But the wicked in their evil will fail" (Mishlei 24:16).

This, then, is a deeper meaning of V'LO TATURU ACHAREI L'VAVCHEM V'ACHAREI EINEICHEM... As things turn up in your life, don't look at them unnecessarily negatively, or as people say, with an evil eye. And even if you did look at them unnecessarily negatively, don't abandon your effort, your hope, and your faith. Put that behind you, as a 'bad day'. Just get up and move forward, with your effort, your hope, and your faith. 🌿📖



What is often unheard when discussing the famous rebellion of the Meraglim is that the motives they had for refusing to go up to the Land of Israel were not from fear of the residents of Eretz Yisrael, but more so from a position of great spiritual heights. After all, were not the Meraglim hand-chosen leaders among the people (Bamidbar 13:3)?

Following the Chassidic world (Likutei Torah, Sh'lach), we might want to argue that these spies did not intrinsically want to disobey the will of G-d. On the contrary, they wanted better to serve Him. For in the desert the people had all they needed materially, provided by Hashem. Even the clothes they wore never wore out. The people were thus able to spend their time in keeping mitzvot and in learning, to borrow today's parlance.

Why then go up to Eretz Yisrael and spend time earning a living, in cultivating land and looking after livestock? Why get involved in the nitty-gritty of material sustenance, which would detract from spiritual growth?

We know, however, that the Torah was designed for us to bring K'dusha into the

mundane world and to elevate it - and particularly in Eretz Yisrael, the land of our forefathers, the land concerning which the Ramban remarks, is the only land where we can fully actualize our religious lives. In Galut, mitzvot are but TZIYUNIM, signposts to remind us of how to live our lives fully in the Land. Unfortunately, we have our "spies" today who still believe that the wilderness of Galut is superior to Israel. Ultimately, we have to believe that Eretz Yisrael is where Hashem brought us and where we are bound to fulfil our spiritual and national destinies. **MP**

The Daily Portion - Sivan Rahav Meir

When those around us despair

Translation by Yehoshua Siskin

How do we remain optimistic when those around us despair?

In this week's Torah portion, only two of the twelve spies – Yehoshua and Kalev – did not despair after their 40-day tour of the land of Canaan. Ten spies saw the land and panicked, feeling threatened by the giants who lived there. They abandoned their dream, believing it would be a grave mistake to settle in the land of Israel. Only Yehoshua and Kalev dared to oppose their thinking and declared: "The land is very, very good."

Today we recognize their foresight and courage.

What empowers an optimistic minority to stand firmly against a pessimistic majority? Rashi's commentary provides insights, guiding us to look both to the past and to the future for strength.

Regarding the past, Rashi explains that Kalev visited the graves of the Patriarchs and the Matriarchs in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron. He prayed that he would not be influenced by the negative report of the ten spies. Kalev's faith in God's promise to his nation was unwavering, and this conviction guided his actions. In the moment of crisis, he ignored the prevailing opinions, and instead sought inspiration from the Avot, and prostrated himself on the graves of Avraham and Sarah.

Regarding the future, the second spy in the minority was originally named Hoshei'a until Moshe Rabbeinu added a YUD to his name, and changing it to Yehoshua, meaning "God will save." Rashi points out that Moshe prayed for God to save Yehoshua from the counsel of the ten spies. From Yehoshua's resilience, we learn the profound impact of a tzadik's prayer. Thus, while Kalev drew strength from the past, Yehoshua was saved through Moshe's prayer for the future.

When faced with uncertainty, confusion, or disillusionment due to current challenges, turning our thoughts

positively towards the past and the future can empower us with perspective and inner strength. Our collective story is far more enduring than the immediate events may suggest.

To receive Sivan Rahav-Meir's daily WhatsApp: tiny.cc/DailyPortion

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 for adding 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 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 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 from all our enemies. 🚧

The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

Sh'lach

This week, I share a wonderful essay about Israel as it relates to the Parsha. The piece is adapted from Simcha Raz's Melachim Kivnei Adam, pp. 227-28,230 by Rabbi Chanan Morrison.

"And [the spies] began to speak badly about the land that they had explored" (Bamidbar 13:32). A dispirited discussion took place at Beit HaRav, Rav Kook's house in Jerusalem, not long after the end of World War II. The Chief Rabbi had passed away ten years earlier; now it

was his son, Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook, who sat at the head of the table. One participant at the Shabbat table had brought up a disturbing topic: the phenomenon of visitors touring Eretz Yisrael and then criticizing the country after returning to their homes. "These visitors complain about everything: the heat, the poverty, the backwardness, the political situation - and discourage other Jews from moving here", he lamented. Rav Tzvi Yehuda responded by telling over the following parable, one he had heard in the name of Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever, the rabbi of Bialystok, and one of the renown pioneers of Religious Zionism.

There was once a wealthy man who sought the hand of a certain young lady. She was the most beautiful girl in town and was blessed with many talents and a truly refined character. Her family was not well-off, so they were eager about a possible match with the prosperous fellow. The young woman, however, was not interested in the match. Rich or not, the prospective suitor was known to be coarse and ill-mannered. She refused to meet with him. The father asked her to at least meet with the young man in their home, so as not to embarrass him. "After all, one meeting doesn't obligate you to marry him!" To please her father, the young woman agreed.

The following Shabbat afternoon, the fellow arrived at the house as arranged, and was warmly received by the father.

Shortly afterwards, his daughter made her entrance. But her hair was uncombed, and she wore a faded, crumpled dress and shabby house slippers. Appalled at her disheveled appearance, it did not take long before the young man excused himself and made a hurried exit. "What everyone says about this girl - it's not true", exclaimed the astonished young man to his friends. "She's hideous!" Rav Tzvi Yehuda stopped briefly, surveying the guests seated around the table. "Superficially, it would appear that the brash young fellow had rejected the young woman. But in fact, it was she who had rejected him."

"The same is true regarding the Land of Israel", the rabbi explained. "Eretz Yisrael is a special land, only ready to accept those who are receptive to its unique spiritual qualities. The Land does not reveal its inner beauty to all who visit. Not everyone is worthy to perceive its special holiness." "It may appear as if the dissatisfied visitors are the ones who reject the Land of Israel", he concluded. "But in fact, it is the Land that rejects them!" A thoughtful silence pervaded the room. Those present were stunned by the parable and the rabbi's impassioned delivery. Then one of the guests observed, "Reb Tzvi Yehuda, your words are suitable for a son of your eminent father, may his memory be a blessing!"

Rav Tzvi Yehuda's response was indeed

appropriate for Rav Kook's son. When visitors from outside the country would approach the Chief Rabbi for a blessing, Rav Kook would quote from T'hilim, "May God bless you from Zion" (128:5). Then he would ask: What exactly is this "blessing from Zion"? In fact, the content of the blessing is described in the continuation of the verse: "May you see the goodness of Jerusalem." The rabbi would explain: "The verse does not say that one should merit seeing Jerusalem; but that one should merit seeing 'the goodness of Jerusalem'. Many people visit Jerusalem. But how many of them merit seeing the inner goodness hidden in the holy city?" "And that", he concluded, "is God's special blessing from Zion."

My own postscript:

In Rav Soloveitchik's Kol Dodi Dofek (pp.43-46), he makes this incredible observation. On the verse, "I shall lay desolate the Land" (Vayikra 26:32), Rashi, quoting the Midrash, states: "This is a boon to Israel, that its enemies will not find tranquility in its Land when it shall be bereft of its true inhabitants." The Land of Israel cannot - and has not - been built and cultivated by any other nation or people. Like a magnet, the Land attracted many nations - both Christians and Muslims, but they did not succeed in properly settling the Land. In the Rav's own words: "Only the Jewish people have it within their power to settle the Land and make its desolation

blossom. The Land of Israel did not betray the Jewish People. It was loyal to them, awaiting [its] redemption [by them] throughout the years."

When, in the wake of the sin of the Spies, the People were denied entry into the Land, they spent the next 39 years internalizing the message that indeed, "[the Land] ... is an exceedingly good Land" (14:7). If we are worthy - "If HaShem desires us ..." - then the Land will yield its bounty, both material and spiritual. It happened once; it is, B"H, happening now; and may we merit in our lifetime the witnessing and experiencing of the final fruition of this magnificent and wondrous blessing. 🙌

Afterthoughts

- Yocheved Bienenfeld

HASAM G'VULEICH SHALOM...

He brings peace to your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat (T'hilim 147:14).

Anyone who has traveled to the south since October 7th, has certainly witnessed the devastation, the sheer senseless destruction that was done to the communities there. Included in the destruction was much farm land. Acres of fields that produced food. And of the fields that survived, those who worked them were gone. We are all aware of the fact that the owners of these fields are

in dire need of help to run their farms and to fill in for the workers who are gone. Volunteers continue to donate their time and effort to assist as much as they can. Even cowboys from Montana came there to help in the horse therapy farm.

I know there is hope and I know all of this land will recover and reproduce because T'hilim (above) tells us this. There will yet be peace and we will benefit from the fat of the grain. I remember feeling this way when, in 2018, our "cousins" started using incendiary balloons that set fire to many fields, destroying much produce. I have to trust in these words of Dovid HaMelech because a promise is a promise. ✨

Insights into Halacha

- Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

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(PhiloTorah editor's notes in green)

The Great Cholent Challenge

Cholent is its Name...

Ahh! Nothing is more geshmak than the awesomely redolent aroma emanating from the kitchen and wafting throughout the house on a Shabbat morning. If you are like most of us, you just can't wait until you sink your teeth into that piping hot, special for Shabbat, delicacy, Cholent. This exceptional meat and potato, barley and bean (and whatever else you decide to throw in) concoction

of a stew has been around for a very long time. In fact, the eminent Ohr Zarua, Rav Yitzchak of Vienna, in the mid-1200s, already mentioned Cholent by name!

Etymologists have a difficult time figuring out where the name comes from. There are several hypotheses regarding it, including the Hebrew / Aramaic SHELAN (food that rested overnight), SHALUK (thoroughly cooked), from the German SHUL ENDE, referring to a food for after shul, and a combination of the French words CHAUD ("hot") and LENT ("slow"). However, most Sefardim stick to the name given to a hot Shabbat food by the Mishna, CHAMIN.

The origins of this humble dish lie in the words of the renowned Ba'al HaMa'or, Rav Zerachiah HaLevi of Gerona, who lived in the mid-1100s. He writes that it is a Takanat Chachamim (Rabbinic decree) to enjoy the Shabbat with a hot dish. He adds that whoever does not do so is suspect of being a 'MIN' (heretic; a.k.a Apikores)!

The reason is that the heterodox Kara'im (Karaites), who denied the Rabbinic Mesorah, prohibited eating any hot food on Shabbat, due to their rejection of Torah SheB'al Peh (the Oral Law) coupled with their literal interpretation of the pasuk, LO T'VA'ARU AISH B'CHOL MOSHVOTEICHEM B'YOM HASHABBAT, You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbat day" (Sh'mot 35:3). The Ba'al HaMa'or explains that

one who refuses to eat a hot dish on Shabbat (cooked before Shabbat, as per the Oral Law) is suspect of following their heretical interpretation of the Torah and not those of our Chachmei HaDorot.

On the other hand, the Ba'al HaMa'or affirms that whoever makes sure to cook, heat up (before Shabbat), and eat a hot dish on Shabbat will merit seeing 'the end of days'. Quite a large reward just for eating Cholent! And this is not just a minority opinion; his words are codified in halacha by the Rema as a 'Mitzva' and eating Cholent on Shabbat is considered 'Minhag Yisrael' by the Mishna B'rura. In fact, I know of a certain well-known rabbi who, although not enamored of Cholent, nonetheless makes sure to "eat one bean every Shabbat", and that way fulfill "Mitzvat Cholent".

Serving Up

However, getting the Cholent from a bubbling pot on a blech (a plain sheet of metal placed on the gas burners) onto our plates presents several halachic challenges, as, in our zeal to fulfill this gastronomical Mitzva, we certainly do not want to unintentionally desecrate the Biblical prohibition of BISHUL, cooking on Shabbat. Aside from the issues of SHEHIYA, placing a food on the fire before Shabbat until the time it is being served on Shabbat, and the more stringent CHAZARA, returning food to the (covered) flame on Shabbat, there is

also a separate issue of MEIGIS, stirring, which one might possibly violate by doing the simple innocuous action of lifting the lid off of the simmering Cholent pot and replacing it, or just ladling out some Friday night TO'AMEHA Cholent.

There is an inyan of tasting Shabbat food on Erev Shabbat LICHVOD SHABBAT, to ensure that it is properly cooked. This is referred to as TO'AMEHA.

Therefore, in order to serve our 'Mitzva Cholent' properly, without Chas V'Shalom unwittingly transgressing any Shabbat prohibitions, authorities have come up with a five-point plan, which enables us to serve a steaming, savory Cholent, and allows us to return it to the blech for seconds. (more Mitzvot!)

Note: This follows the widespread Ashkenazic practice that one must first remove the pot from the fire in order to serve.

Here are the five steps:

The pot of Cholent must be sitting on a covered flame, as a reminder that we cannot adjust the flame on Shabbat.

Several extensive footnotes add much to the discussion presented here - see the website...

In Mishnaic and Talmudic terms this is referred to as GARUF V'KATUM, meaning the coals in the ovens were pushed to the side and /or covered up. There is a famous machloket Rishonim whether the key reason for doing this is so there will

be a reminder that it is prohibited to stoke the coals and make the food cook faster and better, or whether it is meant to actually lessen the cooking heat. Making sure the flame is covered is a prerequisite for committing CHAZARA on Shabbat in a permitted manner. A blech on the stovetop is the most commonly known example of this.

Regarding the Shabbat hot plate (plata), another common method to keep food warm on Shabbat, most contemporary authorities, including Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rav Ovadiah Hadaya, the Debreciner Rav, Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer, Rav Yitzchak Zilber, Rav Eliezer Yehuda Waldman, Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, Rav Shmuel HaLevi Wosner, Rav Ovadia Yosef, and Rav Yitzchak Yosef, maintain that it has the halachic status of a blech, since its temperature cannot be changed, and it is only meant to keep food warm, and not actually cook. However, it should be noted that several of these poskim maintain that this halachic dispensation only applies if one is actually unable to cook on the plata. Other authorities feel that even if one can actually cook on said hot plate, the din still applies as it is not the derech to cook on a hot plate, and therefore no issue of MECHEZI K'MEVASHEL arises. Several authorities, on the other hand, including the Chazon Ish, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, and Rav Nissim Karelitz, are stringent that a plata does not constitute a true covered flame, due to a LO PLUG. Rav Moshe Sternbuch rules that only B'SHAAT HAD'CHAK may one be lenient to perform CHAZARA onto a plata. Due to this

debate, several authorities maintain that it is preferable to place a layer of thick aluminum foil on the plata before Shabbos, in order to satisfy all opinions.

The Cholent must be fully cooked.

It must still be hot or at least warm.

One must take it off the fire in order to serve it.

If one wants to keep it hot for later (Fleishig Shalosh Seudot, anyone?) he must have in mind when taking the pot off the fire to serve that he is planning on returning it to the fire.

One must have his hand on it the whole time.

However, in extenuating circumstances, even if one was not planning to return it to the flame, as long as his hand was still on it, he may nevertheless do so. Similarly, if he placed it on the counter (i.e. in order to serve the Cholent), but still intended to return it to the fire, according to the majority consensus, he is permitted to return it to the blech.

Sefardic Style

Common Sefardic practice follows the opinion of the Shulchan Aruch, based on his understanding of the Rambam, that once the Cholent is fully cooked, scooping out from the pot no longer constitutes MEIGIS. Accordingly, one may scoop out and serve Cholent directly from the pot after it is fully cooked, even while it is still on top of the blech.

However, it should be noted that the Ben Ish Chai and, later, Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, qualified this leniency, explaining that one should only rely on this L'TZORECH MITZVA; otherwise, they maintain that one must take the pot off of the fire before ladling out. Interestingly, the Tzitz Eliezer maintains that Yeshiva bochurim raiding the Cholent pot on a Friday night in order to learn qualifies as TZORECH MITZVA. Rav Ovadiah Yosef added that if the bochurim in question were trying to save time in order to hurry back to their learning, then certainly even the Ben Ish Chai would agree that it is considered L'TZORECH MITZVA to allow serving off the fire.

When in Bnei Brak...

A third opinion is that of the Chazon Ish. His was a dissenting opinion regarding the permissibility of relying on using a blech, explaining that since a blech does not sufficiently lessen the fire's heat level, as well as merely acting as a cover for the fire, it is not considered a true covered flame. Therefore, he held that one may not put the pot back on a blech on Shabbat. Consequently, he maintained that in order to keep Cholent hot after serving, it is permissible to scoop out Cholent while the pot was still on the fire, provided that the Cholent was fully cooked and one took care not to actively stir the pot. His brother-in-law, the Steipler Gaon, followed this as well. According to this ruling, once the

Cholent is fully cooked, one need not take the pot off the fire in order to serve.

Although, as mentioned previously, most contemporary Ashkenazic authorities did not allow one L'CHATCHILA to scoop out of a hot pot while still on a blech, there is one scenario on which many contemporary authorities rule leniently (relying on the Chazon Ish's shita): if the pot is too heavy to move off of the fire. A prime example of this would be the giant Cholent pot found in many a yeshiva kitchen.

Many decisors, including the Minchas Yitzchak, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, Rav Shmuel Halevi Wosner, and Rav Moshe Sternbuch, allow one to scoop and serve the Cholent without taking the pot off the blech if it is too heavy to move off the flame. However, it should be noted that Rav Moshe Feinstein was not inclined to rule leniently in scooping out Cholent from a pot on the fire, even if the pot was too heavy to move.[21] Rather, he mandated that several people move it together in order to properly serve the Cholent from off of the fire.

Quite fascinatingly, it turns out that concerning the simple-sounding, yet quite complicated halachic topic of serving Cholent on Shabbat, the perceived MEIKEL, Rav Moshe Feinstein, who allows CHAZARA onto a blech, is actually the most MACHMIR, as even regarding an industrial-sized Cholent pot, he only allows the Cholent to be served off of the fire. On the other hand, the perceived MACHMIR, the Chazon Ish, who in practice

forbids CHAZARA on Shabbat nowadays, is practically more MEIKEL, as I'maaseh, once the Cholent is fully cooked, he allows it to be scooped out and served from the pot while still on the fire.

Although these procedures and nuances may seem complicated, they are but a small sampling of the numerous intricate halachot that pertain to the prohibition of cooking on Shabbat. It behooves us all to make sure that we are serving our Cholent in the proper halachic way, as, aside for the earthly reward of eating Cholent on Shabbat, the taste of its Mitzva is eternal.

See website for all the footnotes and sources.

Rabbi Spitz's footnotes are very extensive. The ones I decide to include are few among the many. If you want more than this PhiloTorah column provides, click on the website, find the topic and do some more reading.

For any questions, comments or for the full Mareh Mekomot / sources, please email the author: yspitz@ohr.edu

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ohr.edu/this_week/insights_into_halacha/

Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz's English halacha sefer, "Food:

A Halachic Analysis" (Mosaica/ Feldheim) containing over 500 pages featuring over 30 comprehensive chapters discussing the myriad halachic issues pertaining to food, is now available online and in bookstores everywhere.

SH'LACH

Check out the whole GMS file for other GMs from this sedra. Don't just look at the SH'LACH pages; search for the sedra name, which might show up elsewhere.

GM Bamidbar 15:38 from the TZITZIT parsha at the end of Parshat Sh'lach, contains the command to tie tzitzit on the corners of our four-cornered garments -

דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם
וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל-כַּנְּפֵי בְגֵדֵיהֶם
לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל-צִיצִית הַכָּנָף פִּתְיֵל
תְּכֵלֶת:

Speak to the children of Israel and you shall say to them that they shall make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations, and they shall affix a thread of sky blue [wool] on the fringe of each corner.

Gimatriya of the pasuk is 6335. This pasuk is the only one in Tanach with that gimatriya (not surprising because of the high number). So no regular GM. But the AT-BASH gimatriya of the pasuk is 4488, which is the regular gimatriya of five p'sukim in Tanach, including B'reishit 36:12 (Parshat Vayishlach) -

who resides in your midst.

וּתְמִנָּה | הִיְתָה פִּלְגֶשֶׁת לְאֵלִיָּפֹז
בְּיַעֲשׂוֹ וַתֵּלֶד לְאֵלִיָּפֹז אֶת־עַמְלֵק
אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי עֲדָה אִשְׁתּוֹ עֲשׂוֹ:

And Timna was a concubine to Elifaz, son of Eisav, and she bore to Elifaz, Amalek. These are the sons of Adah, the wife of Eisav.

Might we suggest that TALIT & TZITZIT are part of our armor against the attacks of the Amaleks of the world. It fits as a Regular Gimatriya and its AT-BASH (opposites).

GM Here's a weird Gimatriya Match. Let's start with Bamidbar 15:16 from Parshat Sh'lach -

תּוֹרָה אִוֹת וּבִשְׁפָט אִוֹד יִהְיֶה לָכֶם
וְלֹאֵר הָאֵר אֶתְכֶם:

There shall be one law and one ordinance for you and the convert who resides [with you].

Gimatriya of the pasuk is 2496. The pasuk is talking about the Menachot and Nesachim that accompany korbanot. It isn't talking about Korban Pesach, but a similar pasuk that is referring to Korban Pesach is found in Parshat Bo, Sh'mot 12:49 -

תּוֹרָה אִוֹת יִהְיֶה לְאִזְרָו וְלֹאֵר הָאֵר
בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger (convert)

This pasuk's gimatriya is irrelevant because it doesn't match anything of interest in this current search. But this pasuk does relate to the mitzva of eating the Korban Pesach, as we mentioned above. So look at Sh'mot 12:8, in Parshat Bo -

וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־הַבָּשָׂר בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
צֹלֵי־אֵשׁ וּבִמְצוֹת עַל־בִּרְרִים יֹאכְלֶהוּ:

And on this night (eve of the 15th of Nisan, first night of Pesach), they shall eat the flesh, roasted over the fire, and unleavened cakes; with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

The gimatriya of this pasuk is 2700. Which just happens to be the AT-BASH gimatriya of the pasuk above from Parshat Sh'lach. Not exactly the kind of matches we've been finding and writing about, but noteworthy, nonetheless.

RED ALERT!

Sh'lach

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

DIVREI TORAH

- The purpose of the spy mission is a matter of interpretation. Some commentators felt that is a military mission, to assess the military strength of the Canaanite people. This is questionable, considering that the conquest of Yericho was supposed to be the model of the divinely orchestrated conquest of Canaan. The sin of Achan in that first “victorious” endeavor changed the game plan. From then on, the Jewish people had to fight the battles, and Hashem would assist, but no longer would Hashem do it by Himself. According to the original game plan, this spy mission could not have been military. The entry into Canaan was a real life changer. In the desert, Hashem did miracle after miracle in supplying two and half million people with food, water, shelter, and clothing. They would now need to plow, seed, harvest, build, mend, sew, ... No wonder these spies did not look forward to this change of life.

- The tribe of Levi was not represented in the spy mission, for obvious reasons. Levi were the spiritual leaders, teachers of Torah, and led the people religiously. They did not need to know how good the fruit was or what the Canaanite people

looked like. They did not receive a heritage of land in the country. Yes, there were 24 cities of Kohanim and 48 cities of Leviyim, but these cities were spread out in the country. When the census was taken, Levi was counted separately, making the point that they were not part of the standing military army. These spies were sent to see the country, where the land was more suited for cultivation. And where the hills and valleys were, where the sources of water were. Endless useful data could be collected and used for the future home of Bnei Yisrael.

- Much is written on the use of the Hebrew verbs for spying: LATOUR is the verb used to describe this spy mission. The Ibn Ezra felt that the word LATOUR is related to the French word La Tour, from which the English word Tourist is derived. I do not necessarily favor the Ibn Ezra’s point, but the verb LATOUR does mean to tour with no specific purpose in mind. The same verb appears in the last passage of this Parsha, in the portion of Tzitzit, where the Torah says V’LO TATURU: you should not explore after your heart... (15:39). Again the verb there means to look with no specific purpose. The other Biblical verb for spying is L’RAGEIL, which means to spy with the mission of assessing what’s good and what is bad. In the Haftora when Yehoshua sends spies to Yericho, a third verb is used: LACHPOR, to search out. (Hebrew is such a rich language.)

- In 13:20, when Moshe was charging the spies with their mission, he says to them to see if there is a tree there. Rashi on this verse comments that the word EITZ, which normally is a tree, here means a righteous person who could guard the Canaanite people when attacked. We must ask why Rashi veers from the simple rendition of a tree. The answer is quite simple. The end of that verse asking about an EITZ states that the days of the mission were the days of the season of the first ripe grapes. So obviously there were trees! Rashi is raising an issue that we have seen before. When Hashem is determined to annihilate Sodom, Avraham argues for the saving of the evil cities of Sodom if there are some righteous residents in the area which could thwart Hashem's decree. We see the powers of having some righteous people in a city.

- The spies brought back three specific fruits to show the richness of the Land: Grapes, Pomegranates, and Figs. The Mishna in Bikurim (3:1) describes how a farmer would designate a fruit in his field as one of the First Fruits that he is called upon to bring to Yerushalayim and present to a Kohen, fulfilling the Mitzva of Bikurim. The Mishna describes the designating of a Grape, Pomegranate, and Fig. There are other fruit to be selected as First Fruits, but why does the Mishna choose just these three. The Ar"i (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, 1534-1572, Tz'fat) wrote that this pointed out that the Mitzva of Bikurim was to correct the

sin of the spies. The spies were correct in choosing these fruit as examples of the richness and high quality of the fruit of Eretz Yisrael. [RED's note: There is a Mishna which states that the fruit of Eretz Yisrael in the days of the Holy Temple were so much more delicious and delectable than the best fruit we have now!]

- Why did Hashem shorten the trip of the spies? The Midrash states that Hashem miraculously shortened the distance between cities purposefully because He knew that the mission would end disastrously, and He knew that the punishment would be to stay in the desert for the duration of time equaling one year for each day of the spies' trip. There seems to be plenty of indications that both Hashem and Moshe knew beforehand that the mission would end poorly. Some of the indications were: that Menashe's name would be mentioned next to Yosef's because both spoke Lashon HaRa. Moshe added a letter YUD to his assistant's name, naming him Yehoshua. This was a request that Hashem should save Yehoshua from the evil spies. Yet Hashem allowed it to happen, giving them Free Will at every turn of events.

- Rav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector (1817-1896, Kovna) pointed out that Hashem was continuously forgiving the people of their terrible sins. The people worshiped a Golden Calf, and Hashem forgave them. The people complained of

the lack of meat, and Hashem forgave them. Korach led a rebellion against Moshe and Hashem, and Hashem forgave them. But after the failed spy mission, even after the people repented fully for their sin, Hashem refused to forgive them. For sins between man and Hashem and for sins between man and his fellow man, Hashem will forgive us. But for a sin between man and his nation, there will not be forgiveness even if the person repented fully. No matter how sincere the Teshuva is, Hashem will not forgive us for this type of grave sin.

- **MIDRASH.** On the second verse of this Parsha, it specifically states that this land of Canaan is being given to Bnei Yisrael (13:2). The Midrash identifies the recipient as Bnei Yisrael and not Bnei Avraham and not Bnei Yitzchak. If Hashem would mention Avraham, people will say that that includes Yishmael. If Hashem would mention Yitzchak, people will say that that will include Eisav. This is a gift only to Bnei Yaakov, and to no one else. [RED's note: This means that the Midrash is clearly stating that Israel belongs only to Jews, and not to Moslems and Christians!]

Questions by RED

From the Text

1. Whose idea was it to send a spy mission into Canaan? (D'varim 1:22)
2. What three verbs in Hebrew mean “to

spy”?

3. What three fruits did the spies bring back to Bnei Yisrael? (13:23)
4. What was Hashem's initial response to the evil report of the spies? (14:12)
5. What happened to the ten spies who brought the evil report? (14:36)

From Rashi

6. Why was Menashe's name linked to Yosef and not Efrayim? (Rashi in Pardes)
7. Why did Moshe add the letter YUD to Hoshea's name to rename him Yehoshua? (13:16)
8. How old were the people who died over the next 40 years in the desert? (14:33)
9. The person who was gathering wood on Shabbat was to be executed. So what did they need to know from Hashem? (15:34)
10. What does the word Tzitzit really mean? (15:38)

From the Rabbis

11. Why did the spies mention Amalek in their report? Amalek was not in Canaan. (RED)
12. Why did Hashem not accept the people's repentance as He had those people who now tried to to enter the Land die. (Or HaChayim)
13. Why is the story of the spies followed by the law of meal offerings which would

not apply until 39 years later? (Ramban)

From the Midrash

14. In the future, who would hold the staff that Aharon used and almond blossomed upon it?

From the Haftara (Yehoshua)

15. Where did Rachav hide the 2 Jewish spies in Yericho?

Relationships

- a) Miriam - Otniel ben Kenaz
- b) Nachshon - Boaz
- c) Aharon - Chur
- d) No'ach - Canaan
- e) Yehoshua - Rachav

ANSWERS

1. The idea came from the people.
2. LATUR, L'RAGEIL, LACHPOR.
3. Grapes, Pomegranates, and Figs.
4. Hashem will annihilate Bnei Yisrael and start a new nation from Moshe.
5. They died immediately in a plague.
6. Menashe was more like Yosef; they both spoke Lashon HaRa.
7. To offer him a prayer that Hashem should save him from the other spies.
8. Every person lived at least 60 years before he died in the desert.
9. By which method of execution.

10. To "look" at them intently, in order to remember the commandments.

11. The mention of Amalek was to incite Bnei Yisrael. The veiled threat here is that neighboring nations would come to help the Canaanites against these invaders.

12. The penitence was not motivated by regret. It came about because they realized they were not going to enter Canaan.

13. Hashem wanted to assure them that Bnei Yisrael will enter and conquer Canaan.

14. Every king until the Holy Temple was destroyed. Then it was hidden until the Mashiach will come and hold it.

15. Atop the roof, among stalks of flax.

Relationships:

- a) Sister-in-law & brother-in-law
- b) Grandfather & grandson
- c) Uncle & nephew
- d) Grandfather & grandson
- e) Husband & wife

PhiloTorah This 'n That

THU, 15 Iyar, May 23rd On the occasion of PhiloTorah #200, I decided to begin a feature that I will add to from time to time. Each entry will be dated, so that if you come back to this file, you will be able to find your place and skip over that which you have already read.

PhiloTorah is the successor to the website I maintained over many years - Ttidbits.com - which paralleled the printed version of Torah Tidbits.

Back in June of 1992, the then director of the OU/NCSY Israel Center (that's what it was called back then), Shai Solomon, asked me to print up a schedule of activities of the Center to be distributed in shuls with English-speakers. The idea did not sit well with me for about five minutes. Then I had an idea. How about the schedule of Center activities on one side of a sheet of paper and a D'var Torah on the other? Shai went for the idea, and Torah Tidbits was born.

Actually, it was reborn in a new form. Its real beginning was back in 1971, when I used the term Torah Tidbits to describe short Divrei Torah and Halachic review points, which I presented at NCSY Shabbatonim. At the time, I sensed that a minute to a minute and a half 'tidbit' would go over better than a 20 minute D'var Torah. Torah Tidbits began in an oral form.

Back to the early '90s. before the first

issue of TT in June of '92 for Parshat Sh'lach, there were two other Torah pages that carried the name Torah Tidbits.

When the Israel Center was at 10 Straus, there were two long tilted shelves near the entrance on which we placed flyers for the many activities taking place at the Center. People would come, peruse the dozen or so flyers and take copies of what interested them.

I came up with the idea of having a one page D'var Torah available to be taken along with the flyers. That page was named Torah Tidbits.

So too, we had a project headquartered at the Center called NITZOTZ. It was geared to English-speaking students at yeshivot, seminaries, and university, to offer volunteering and chesed opportunities to supplement and enrich their year (or more) in Israel. One of the Nitzotz projects was TOCHNIT NISAN. Kids who were staying in Israel over the Pesach-time break in their studies would go with us to Gush Katif for a work-study-enjoy program. David Katz, the director of Nitzotz (now longtime director of MMY) asked me for a printed D'var Torah to be put in the lunch boxes each day, to supplement the sandwich, fruit, and piece of cake contained therein. Torah Tidbits to Go was an A4 sheet of paper folded twice into a small A6 sized 4-pager.

These were the first three forms of Torah Tidbits.

Which brings the story back to June '92. First two weeks, TT was a single sheet of A4 paper printed on both sides. 60 copies were made and distributed 30 copies in each of two shuls - Beth Jacob in Ramot Eshkol and a shul in Nayot.

From there, things took off. Calls like: I was at my brother-in-law's for Shabbat and I saw Torah Tidbits; do you think I can get some for my shul?

The format and the number of copies and the number of shuls and other locations that received TT grew and grew and grew.

Personally, I started TT, edited it for 28 years, until my retirement in September of 2019. I continued to contribute to TT to help things along for about an additional seven months and then I was asked to stop, to allow the new editor to spread his wings (as the saying goes).

On the day that I ended my involvement with Torah Tidbits (having become its Editor Emeritus), I acquired the website that went through a couple of name changes and soon became philotorah.co - which means 'Lover of Torah' (which I am and which I hope my readers are).

PhiloTorah is website only - no printed version (except what individual readers decide to print up for themselves, their families, or their shuls).

Sometime ago, I put a counter on the website which counts unique visitors. It stands at this moment at 11,600. (Someone who accesses the site many

times is only counted once.) Torah Tidbits had always been a labor of love for me, as is PhiloTorah. Part of loving Torah is sharing it with others.

I think that's it for now. More to come - IYH/BN.

THU, 14 Sivan, June 20th To keep readers of PhiloTorah in the loop. For the past two weeks, I have been experiencing a problem with updating the website. It is not a fatal problem, just a bit crippling. GoDaddy, the company from which I bought the domain philotorah.co - and their cPanel (I don't know what to call it) which hosts (is that the right word) the website, had made a change, which they called migration of the website. That's when the problem started. I estimate that I have spent a solid 10-12 hours on the phone and chats with tech people, and have gotten nowhere in solving the problem.

Basically, it's like this:

I have a file manager on cPanel to which I upload all the files for the website. I also have an index.html file to which I make changes in order to update the website to show the new files. The final step of the process of taking an edited article from my DavkaWriter file and it being accessible on PhiloTorah is to refresh the website to reflect the changes made to the index.html file. This works only sometimes. But not always. It comes and goes.

Which is weird because a computer problem should result in something not working at all. Whether this final step - which I always implemented multiple times every day, works or not, seems to be a matter of time.

After several hours of not trying to refresh the webpage, a new attempt will succeed. After that, it repeatedly fails, until leaving it alone for a number of hours, when it will then work as it is supposed to.

Don't know if this was of interest to anyone else, but that's the story.

The problem has not stopped the website from working - it just slows things down from my end.

MON, 18 Sivan, June 24th Thanks to a suggestion by Ellis Cohen, I now can update the website whenever something new is added or changed. It requires clicking on CLEAR CHACHE, not on my browser but on my page at GoDaddy, the host of philotorah.co

WED, 20 Sivan, June 26th

Once upon a time, a long time ago...

32 years ago, to be specific, June '92, the then director of the Israel Center was Shai Solomon. I was his associate director and educational director. At the time, our activities were listed weekly in the Jerusalem Post or the In Jerusalem.

Shai ask me to print up a weekly schedule of activities to be distributed in shuls with English speakers, some of whom don't read the Post. I didn't like the idea of giving out a weekday schedule in shul on Shabbat, so I suggested putting a D'var Torah on one side of a sheet of paper with the schedule on the other side. "Go for it", was Shai's reply.

[We had previously used the name Torah Tidbits on a few weekly Divrei Torah that shared a shelf at 10 Straus with flyers for our activities. They were not distributed, just picked up at the old Israel Center building (which was formerly, the San Remo Hotel), our first home. We also packed Torah Tidbits to Go with lunchboxes for Nitzotz kids in Gush Katif for Project Nissan. That small 4-pager contained divrei Torah on the Hagada.]

We made 60 two-sided A4 photocopies of the new Torah Tidbits. 30 went to our shul in Ramot Eshkol and 30 went to Shai's father's shul in Nayot.

The left side of the front of the first TT dealt with the details and stats of Israel and Chutz LaAretz getting out of sync with Parshat HaShavua, as happened that year.

On the flip side, as we called it, we had upcoming events at the Center.

The main part of the front page was a d'var Torah from Maayana shel Torah.

Here is the gist of the first Torah Tidbit:

The ARI Z"l says that the mitzva of BIKURIM is a TIKUN for the sin of the spies. BIKURIM is not just one of the many Mitzvot HaT'luyot BaAretz, the mitzvot that are connected and dependent upon the Land of Israel - it is the perfect counterpoint to the devastating sin that we read about in Parshat Sh'lach. The Meraglim took fruits from the Land - the Bikurim bringer takes fruits from the Land. The Meraglim opened their mouths and poisoned a generation against going into Eretz Yisrael with their scare-tactics and negative comments. The Bikurim-bringer opens his mouth in thanks and praise to HaShem for His having brought us to this place. The Meraglim said, "It's a beautiful country but we don't want to live there; we won't survive there. The Bikurim-bringer is thrilled and delighted to have actualized the purpose of our existence as a Nation and as Jews. He recites about our ancestors going down into Egypt, what happened there, how G-d took us out, and how He brought us to Eretz Yisrael.

G-d says that He is taking us out of Egypt in order to give us the Torah and bring us to the place He promised to the Avot and to us. The Meraglim said - no! The Bikurim-bringer says, YES!

Rav Menachem Zamba HY"D (of the Warsaw ghetto) beautifully points out that the three fruits that the Meraglim brought back with them - grapes, figs, and pomegranates are exactly the three

fruits that the Mishna (Bikurim 3:1) uses as examples for Bikurim - driving home the point that Bikurim is a kapara for Cheit HaMeraglim.

Torah Tidbits has continued since Parshat Eikev of 5780 (2020), without my input. Since then, a new website, in the style of ttidbits.com (which was discontinued by OU Israel Center) has been appearing on the internet weekly, with many features - including some that were dropped from Torah Tidbits.

That website is the one you are reading from - PhiloTorah.