

QUESTIONS ON PARASHAT SHELACH

Q-1. (a) Why does the *Torah* tell the story of the *meraglim* (scouts) after *Miriam's tzara'at* (3 views)? **(b)** (1) Who initiated the idea to send the *meraglim* (2 views)? (2) Since *Hashem* already had told *Moshe* that the land is good (*Shemot* 3:8), why did *Moshe* want to send the *meraglim* (2 reasons)? (3) Since *Hashem* knew in advance that the *meraglim* would fail in their mission, why did He not ban them from travelling to *Eretz Yisrael* (2 views)? **(c)** (1) On what date did *Moshe* send the *meraglim*? (2) How do we know this (2 ways)? **(d)** Why does the order of the *shevatim* for the *meraglim* differ from that of the census (1:5-15), from that of the inauguration *korbanot* (7:12-83) and from that of the division of the land (34:17-29)? **(e)** Who (1) were *Calev's* 2 wives? (2) was his son? **(f)** (1) Why did *Moshe* believe that it was necessary to pray on behalf of *Yehoshua* (2 views)? (2) Why was *Yehoshua* called "*bin* (son of) *Nun*", not "*ben*" (2 views)? (*Bamidbar* 13:2-16)

A-1. (a) (1) After seeing *Miriam* punished for her *lashon hara* about *Moshe*, the *meraglim* failed to learn from it and spoke *lashon hara* about *Eretz Yisrael* (*Rashi*). (2) *Bnei Yisrael's* women, who had not joined in the *cheit ha'eigel*, did not question *Moshe's* leadership when the men complained about the lack of water and food, but the women stopped defending *Moshe* when they heard from *Miriam* about *Moshe's* separating from *Tzipora* (*Oznayim laTorah*). (3) *Moshe* did not send the *meraglim* until *Miriam's tzara'at* had ended; **(b)** (1) (i) *Hashem* told *Moshe* to send them ("*shelach lecha*"), but only if he wished to do it; (ii) *Bnei Yisrael* approached *Moshe* and asked him to send the *meraglim*, as stated in *Devarim* 1:22, and *Moshe* responded (1:23), "*vayitav ha-davar be'ayni*" (the idea was good in my [*Moshe's*] eyes) (*Rashi*). (2) *Moshe* wanted the *meraglim* to provide (i) an effective military strategy for conquering the land, i.e., which cities and regions to conquer first; (ii) eyewitness verification of the land's goodness for *Bnei Yisrael*, so they would rejoice and gain new vigor in conquering the land, by knowing that the land was worth fighting for (*Ramban*). (3) (i) If *Hashem* had refused to let the *meraglim* go, *Bnei Yisrael* might have assumed that the land was not as good as He promised, and the *chilul Hashem* of *Bnei Yisrael's* believing that He had deceived them was worse than the punishment that *Bnei Yisrael* received for the sin (*Alshich*). (ii) *Hashem* grants each person free choice – the *meraglim* had the opportunity to return with a good report and turn their mission into a success but chose not to (*Tiferet Zion*). **(c)** (1) 29 *Sivan* of the 2nd year in the *midbar*; (2) (i) *Bnei Yisrael* left *Har Sinai* on 20 *Iyar* of the 2nd year in the *midbar* (10:11), traveled 3 days (10:33 – until 23 *Iyar*), and camped at *Kivrot haTa'ava*, demanding meat. *Hashem* gave meat for a month (29 days – until 22 *Sivan*) (11:20), when they arrived in *Chatzeirot*. *Miriam* spoke *lashon hara* and had *tzara'at* for 7 days (12:15) until 29 *Sivan*, when *Moshe* sent the *meraglim*; (ii) the *meraglim* returned on 8 *Av* (the day before *Tisha B'av*) after 40 days in *Eretz Yisrael* (13:25), meaning that they had left on 29 *Sivan* (the 40 days included 29-30 *Sivan* – 2 days, plus 1-30 *Tamuz* – 30 days, plus 1-8 *Av* – 8 days, totaling 40 days) (*Taanit* 29a). **(d)** The *meraglim* here are listed in order of their stature before their sin – they had been great people before the sin – *Calev* was only the 3rd greatest and *Yehoshua* was only the 5th greatest (*Ramban*). **(e)** (1) (i) *Bitya*, *Pharaoh's* daughter (*Megila* 13a) and (ii) *Miriam*; (2) *Chur* (*Sifri*). **(f)** (1) *Moshe* feared that *Yehoshua* (i) was so modest about becoming a leader that he might join the *meraglim*, since he knew that *Moshe* would die before *Bnei Yisrael* would enter *Eretz Yisrael*, and he might agree to the *meraglim's* plan in order to prolong *Moshe's* life, which would defer the time when he would take over the leadership (*Targum Yonatan*). (ii) would be prone to speak *lashon hara*, since he was an offspring of *Yosef*, who had spoken *lashon hara* against his brothers, and this might be a tendency of *Sheivet Efrayim* of which *Yehoshua* was a member – *Moshe* prayed that *Yehoshua* overcome this predisposition (*Alshich*). (2) (i) "*Bin Nun*" sounds like "*bina*" (understanding), emphasizing *Yehoshua's* great *Torah* understanding (*Ramban*). (ii) When *Hashem* changed *Sarai's* name to *Sarah* (*Bereishit* 17:15), He removed the *yud* from her name and added it to *Yehoshua*, who had been named *Hoshea*, and since "*Sarai*" had no vowel under the *yud*, but "*Yehoshua*" had a *shevau* (2 dots), *Hashem* changed the *segol* (3 dots) of "*ben*" into a *chirik* (1 dot) of "*bin*" to compensate (*Medrash Talpiot*).

Q-2. (a) Why did *Moshe* ask the *meraglim* to determine, "does the land have a tree?" since every country has trees? **(b)** Why did 10 of the *meraglim* talk negatively about *Eretz Yisrael*? **(c)** Since they told no overt lies, why were the *meraglim* punished? **(d)** (1) 13:22 says, "*they* [the *meraglim*] ascended in the *Negev*, and *he* arrived at *Chevron*" – why the change from plural to singular? (2) Why did *Yehoshua* not go to *Chevron*? **(e)** (1) 13:23-24 says that the *meraglim* arrived at "*Nachal Eshkol*" (Valley of *Eshkol*) – how did *Nachal Eshkol* get that name (2 views)? (2) Why is "*Eshkol*" in 13:23 first spelled without a *vav*, then with a *vav*? (*Bamidbar* 13:20-29).

A-2. (a) *Moshe* figuratively asked if there was any morally fit inhabitant – symbolized by a tree – who had sufficient merit to protect the *Cana'anim* (*Rashi*). **(b)** Under *Moshe*, they were respected *nesi'im* but knew from *Eldad's* and *Meidad's nevu'a* that *Yehoshua*, not *Moshe*, would lead in *Eretz Yisrael* and would probably appoint new *nesi'im* – they thought that detaining *Bnei Yisrael* in the *midbar* would allow them to remain as leaders (*Torah Ohr*). **(c)** While they began giving factual information, they showed a lack of faith by saying "*efes*" ("but"), i.e., despite the land's goodness, it was unconquerable (*Ramban*). **(d)** (1) While the *meraglim* went south, as per *Moshe's* instructions, *Calev* went to *daven* at *Me'orat haMachpeila* that *Hashem* should save him, in the *avot's* merit, from the *meraglim's* plot; (2) *Yehoshua* did not pray for help since *Moshe* already had *davened* for him (13:16), when he added the *yud* to his name (*Sotah* 34b). **(e)** (1) (i) The valley bore the name of *Avraham's* friend *Eshkol*, as mentioned in *Bereishit* 14:13,24 (*Rabeinu Chaim Paltiel*). (ii) The place would later be called "*Eshkol*" due to the large cluster of grapes that the *meraglim* had brought (*ibn Ezra*). (2) First, it refers to *Avraham's* friend *Eshkol*, whose name is spelled without a *vav* – the *meraglim* arrived at the valley named after *Avraham's* friend, but they renamed after the cluster, which is spelled with a *vav* (*veChur leZahav*).

Q-3. (a) How do we know that 10 adult males must be present in order to recite *kaddish* and *birchat kohanim*? **(b)** Why did *Hashem* want the *meraglim* to return the night before *Tisha B'av*? **(c)** What did *Yehoshua* and *Calev* mean by "[the *Cana'anim's*] protecting shadow has left them" (3 views)? **(d)** (1) Why is the *yud* enlarged in "*yigdal*" ([may *Hashem's* strength] be magnified)? (2) What were *Bnei Yisrael's* 10 tests in the *midbar*? **(e)** Why is "*ve-hei-veit*" (I shall bring [your children to the land]) spelled with an extra *yud* (2 views)? **(f)** Why were *Bnei Yisrael* afflicted with 38 additional years in the *midbar* after the *meraglim's* sin (2 views)? **(g)** (1) Which 5 groups of *Bnei Yisrael* did not die in the *midbar* and were allowed to enter *Eretz Yisrael*? (2) Why did *Hashem* punish only men in the 20 to 60 age range? **(h)** (1) Why is the text of 14:36 written, "*va-yilonu*", but it is read, "*va-yalinu*"? (2) From where do we learn that those who cause others to sin get no chance to do *teshuva*? (i) (*Bamidbar* 14:1-36)

A-3. (a) 14:27 says, "*ad matay la-eida ha-ra'a hazot ...?*" (how long will this evil congregation (*eida*)?) – "*eida*" here refers to 10 of the *meraglim*, excluding *Calev* and *Yehoshua* – *kaddish* and *birchat kohanim* must be recited in an "*eida*" of 10 men (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Tefila* 14:27). **(b)** On 8 *Av*, *Ya'akov* beat *Esav's* angel (*Bereishit* 32:25-31), and *Hashem* wanted *Ya'akov's* merit to beat the *meraglim's yeitzer hara* that caused them to speak out against *Eretz Yisrael* (*Zohar*). **(c)** (1) *Hashem* beat the *Cana'anim's* guardian angels (*R. Bechaya*). (2) *Iyov*, whose virtue guarded the *Cana'anim*, died (*Rashi*). (3) On *Hoshana Raba*, no shadow is cast from one destined to die that year, i.e., death had been decreed for the *Cana'anim* (*Ramban*). **(d)** (1) *Moshe* asked that although *Bnei Yisrael* failed *yud* (10) tests, they should be saved in the merit of the 10 tests that *Avraham* passed (*Ba'al haTurim*). (2) *Bnei Yisrael* (i) complained about the *Mitzrim* chasing them at *Yam Suf* (*Shemot* 14:11), (ii) complained about nothing to drink except bitter water at *Mara* (15:24), and (iii) when they ran out of food (16:3); (iv) left over *mun*, although they were told not to (16:20), (v) left the camp to gather *mun* on *Shabbat* (16:27); (vi) complained when their water ran out at *Refidim* (17:2); (vii) made the *eigel hazahav* (32:4); (viii) criticized *Hashem's mitzvot* (*Bamidbar* 11:1), (ix) said that the *mun* was bad (11:4), and (x) believed the *meraglim's* report that *Eretz Yisrael* was bad (14:2) (*Arachin* 15a). **(e)** (1) *Hashem* will bring them to *Eretz Yisrael* that has *yud* (10) levels of *kedusha* (*Rokeach*). (2) It

can be split into “*ve-hei-vi ti*” (He will bring them [for] “*ti*” – *gematria* 410, the years of the 1st *Beit haMikdash*) (*Rabeinu Efrayim*). **(f)** (1) They were punished a year for each of the 40 days that the *meraglim*, whom *Moshe* sent in the 2nd year, spent in *Eretz Yisrael* (*Rashi*). (2) The *Cana'anim* respected *Sarah* at her funeral and *Avraham* who died 38 years later – when they showed respect at *Iyov*'s funeral, they received 38 more years before *Bnei Yisrael*'s conquest (*Oznayim laTorah*). **(g)** (1) (i) *Yehoshua* and *Calev*; (ii) the generation's women and (iii) *Sheivet Levi*, who did not join in the sins of the *eigel* and the *meraglim*; (iv) boys under 20 years old; (v) men above 60 (*Bamidbar Raba*). (2) They were eligible for the army but refused to fight the *Cana'anim* (*Chizkuni*). **(h)** (1) Not only did the *meraglim* complain (*va-yilonu*), the also incited others (*va-yalinu*) to join their protest (*Eim laMikra vela-Mesoret*). (2) The *meraglim* were punished instantly so that they could not repent (*Alshich*).

Q-4. (a) How do we know that (1) *nesachim* (libations) were not (i) required for *korbanot chatat* or *asham* (sin or guilt offerings)? (ii) brought with a *korban olah* offered by a gentile? (2) a gentile who converts (i) is considered a Jew in every respect? (ii) must undergo *mila* (for males), immersion in a *mikva* and offering *korbanot* (during the era of the *Beit haMikdash*)? **(b)** (1) When did *Bnei Yisrael* begin doing the *mitzvah* of *chala*? (2) Why do the laws of *nesachim* and *chala* follow the sin of the *meraglim* (2 views)? **(c)** (1) Why do we separate *chala* today, since it cannot be given to a *kohen* (2 views)? **(d)** (1) How much dough requires separation of *chala*? (2) How do we know this? **(e)** (1) From which 5 grains is *chala* taken? (2) How do we know this? (3) Under *Torah* law, separating *chala* from which grain is required? **(f)** How much dough has to be separated as *chala*? **(g)** If a liquid other than water is used to knead the dough, is *chala* required? **(h)** How does a woman's separating *chala* atone for *Chava*'s sin? **(i)** How do we know that doing *avoda zara* (idolatry) equals violating all of the *Torah*'s *mitzvot*? (*Bamidbar* 15:3-5,13,18-22)

A-4. (a) (1) (i) 15:3 says, “*le-falay neder oh bi-nedava*” (to fulfill a clearly-uttered vow or as a free-will offering) – an individual must bring *nesachim* only for voluntary offerings, not for a mandatory *chatat* or *asham*; (ii) 15:13 says, “*kol ha'eizrach ya'aseh kacha*” (every “*eizrach*” (native) shall do this – not a gentile (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Ma'aseh haKorbanot* 2:3,5). (2) 15:15 says, (i) “*ha-kahal chukka achat lachem*” (for the congregation, there shall be one statute for both of you [for the *geir* and natural-born Jew]); (ii) “*kachem ka-geir yihiyeh lifnei Hashem*” (as you are, so shall the *geir* be before *Hashem* – just as *Bnei Yisrael* had *mila*, immersion in the *Yam Suf* and offered *korbanot* before *Matan Torah*, so shall a *geir* in future generations do these things (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Issurei Bi'ah* 17:17,13:4). **(b)** (1) When they entered *Eretz Yisrael* – not in the *midbar* (*R. Bechaya*). (2) (i) Since the sin of the *meraglim* banned *Bnei Yisrael* from entering the land, *Hashem* comforted *Bnei Yisrael* by giving laws related to *Eretz Yisrael*, indicating that their children would enter the land (*Rashi*). (ii) After the *cheit ha'eigel*, libations gave communal *korbanot* a *rei'ach nicho'ach* – after the *meraglim*'s sin, libations gave individual *korbanot* a *rei'ach nicho'ach*, too (*Sforno*). **(c)** (1) It is required only *mi-derabanan*, since *Torah* law requires all of *Bnei Yisrael* to be in *Eretz Yisrael*, which, from the era of *Ezra*, they were not (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Issurei Bi'ah* 20:3). (2) So this law should not be forgotten – we burn the dough instead; **(d)** (1) an *omer* (the volume of 43.2 eggs); (2) *Bnei Yisrael* separated *chala* from “*arisoteichem*” (your kneadings) – the amount of *mun* with which they were familiar was an *omer* (*Sifri*). **(e)** (1) Wheat, barley, spelt, oats, rye; (2) 15:19 says, “*ve-haya be'achalchem milechem ha'aretz*” (it will be when you eat of the bread of [*Eretz Yisrael*]) – only bread made from these grains is called “bread”, but bread made of rice or other grains is not considered bread and not subject to *chala*; (3) Since the *Torah* law applies when all of *Bnei Yisrael* are in *Eretz Yisrael*, all instances of separating *chala* are *me-derabanan*, and there no *Torah* requirement (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Bikurim* 5:5,6:2). **(f)** the *Torah* sets no minimum – *Chazal* required 1/24 of an individual's dough and 1/48 of a baker's dough; **(g)** yes (*Sefer haChinuch* – *Mitzvah* 385). **(h)** *Chazal* call *Adam*, when he was created, the world's “pure *chala*” – *Chava* caused *Adam* to lose his purity when she caused him to get a *yeitzer hara* – a woman's separating *chala* helps restore mankind's purity (*Shabbat* 32a – *Rashi*). **(i)** When describing *Bnei Yisrael* doing *avoda zara*, 15:22 says, “when you err and do not observe all of these *mitzvot*”, equating the sin of *avoda zara* to violating all of the *mitzvot* (*Rambam* – *Hilchot Avoda Zara* 2:4).

Q-5. (a) What was the *mekosheish*'s (*Shabbat* twig gatherer's) identity? **(b)** When did this incident occur (2 views)? (2) If it occurred earlier, why is it stated now? (3) Why is *tzitzit* after it? **(c)** Why did the *mekosheish* sin (2 opinions)? **(d)** Which banned *Shabbat melacha* did he do (3 opinions)? (*Bamidbar* 15:32-33,41)

A-5. (a) *Tzelofchod*, whose daughters later requested shares in *Eretz Yisrael* (*Rashi* – *Bamidbar* 27:3). **(b)** (1) (i) On *Bnei Yisrael*'s 2nd *Shabbat* in the *midbar* (*Rashi*). (ii) After the *meraglim* incident (*Ramban*). (2) It is next to *avoda zara*'s punishment – just as idol worship is like violating all of the *mitzvot* of the *Torah*, so too is *Shabbat* violation; (3) the *mitzvah* of *tzitzit* also equals all the other *mitzvot* – 15:39 says, “you shall see them [*tzitzit*] and remember all of the *mitzvot* of *Hashem* and do them” (*Rashi*). **(c)** (1) He rebelled against the *Shabbat* restrictions; (2) he saw *Bnei Yisrael* being lax about *Shabbat* observance – he sinned *le-sheim shamayim* to show the severe penalty for *Shabbat* violation, so *Bnei Yisrael* would take *Shabbat* seriously (*Targum Yonatan*). **(d)** (1) *Kotzeir* – breaking twigs off trees; (2) *me'ameir* – gathering twigs; (3) *hotza'a* – carrying wood 4 *amot* in a *reshut ha-rabbim* (*Shabbat* 96b).

Q-6. (a) (1) Why do men have to wear *tzitzit*? (2) Why not women? **(b)** When discussing doing sins, why does 15:39 mention the “heart” before the “eyes,” since the eyes see before the heart desires (2 reasons)? **(c)** Why did *Hashem* require *tzitzit* on a garment's 4 corners (3 reasons)? **(d)** Why are *avoda zara* laws followed by the *mekosheish* incident, which in turn is followed by the *tzitzit* laws? (*Bamidbar* 15:38-41)

A-6. (a) (1) It is constant reminder of all 613 *mitzvot*; (2) a reminder of all 613 *mitzvot* does not apply to women, who are exempt from time-bound *mitzvot*; **(b)** (1) desires first stir one's imagination, then one's eyes lead one's body to sin (*Malbim*). (2) The white strings correspond to heart, while the blue string, which is wrapped around the white strings, corresponds to the eyes – we first attach the white strings to influence our heart not to sin, and we see the blue string, the color of the Throne of Glory, to remind us to do all of *Hashem*'s *mitzvot* (*R. Bechaya*). **(c)** *Tzitzit* (1) remind us not to sin wherever we turn in all 4 directions (*Ba'al haTurim*). (2) are 2 “witnesses” in front of us and 2 “witnesses” in back of us, warning us not to sin (*Rokeach*). (3) remind us always of the 4 phrases of redemption in *Shemot* 6:6-7 – *ve-hotzeiti* (I [*Hashem*] shall take you out), *ve-hitzalti* (I shall rescue you), *ve-ga'alti* (I shall redeem you), *ve-lakachti* (I shall take you) (*Rashi*). **(d)** Just as *avoda zara* equals violating all the *mitzvot*, violating the *Shabbat* also equals violating all the *mitzvot*, and wearing *tzitzit* equals doing all the *mitzvot* (*Rashi*).

Q-7. In the *haftara*, how did the mission of (1) *Moshe*'s *meraglim* differ from the mission of (2) *Yehoshua*'s *meraglim*? (*Yehoshua* 2:1)

A-7. (1) *Moshe*'s *meraglim* assessed whether the land was good and whether the *Cana'anim* could be defeated – (2) *Yehoshua*, one of *Moshe*'s *meraglim*, knew the land was good, and *Hashem* guaranteed the *Cana'ani* defeat – his *meraglim* went to find *Bnei Yisrael*'s best military strategy (*Ralbag*).