



Shearith Israel
SPANISH &
PORTUGUESE
Synagogue of Montreal
Est. 1768

SHABBAT BULLETIN

June 17, 2023 | 28 Sivan, 5783



Dvar Torah Shelach 5783

By: Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis

I met yesterday with a couple who first showed up in Poland in March 2022, in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. They are refugees from the war, each with their own unique story and Jewish history. They have been active in the Ukraine refugee community and the Jewish community in Warsaw, playing an active role in connecting and activating the two of them. We spoke mostly about their future, and where they should seek it.

The woman, I will call her Sarah, said that her whole childhood everyone around her spoke only about Europe. Everyone she knew, everyone, was doing all they could to secure themselves a ticket out of Ukraine, she was the only person amongst her friends who had found a program of study outside of Ukraine before the war. Now that she had the chance to truly experience Europe she wasn't

rushing back to Ukraine, but she certainly didn't find here what she had been promised.

Her boyfriend, I will call him Avraham, is a Zionist, he has tried to live in Israel before and part of him wants to try again. He was part of the initial effort to help absorb the tens of thousands of new immigrants in Israel as a result of the war in Ukraine. At one meeting the representative from the Ministry of Labor told him that Israel was not interested in the highly skilled worker from Ukraine but rather people to serve as waiters, lifeguards and gardeners. "I lost almost all of my Zionism when I heard that."

I started thinking about the Parsha, what I am supposed to learn from it to tell them now and what I can learn about it from them. Avraham wants to go to Israel but at the same time feels that all doors there are closed to him, Sarah spent her whole life pursuing a promised land that was not in the end what it was promised to be. We spoke about many options and they asked me about moving to Israel, does it have to be a priority for them? Yes of course Israel has to

be the priority of every Jew. It is our home, it is the greatest physical gift that G'd ever gave and he gave it to us. We can never lose sight of that and never undermine its value.

My discussion with Avraham and Sarah encapsulated the two greatest challenges that the spies and everyone in our generation faces regarding Israel. It won't be as perfect as we dreamed and there I will just be a nobody. These are two truths that remain and that every person who makes Aliyah has to contend with. The answer that G'd gives in our Parsha though is the ultimate source of comfort for all of us who long for Israel. Even if you aren't able to make it, your children will. The spies were not wrong when they feared going into land Israel, but their fear came from the wrong place. The ultimate question we need to ask ourselves is not whether or not Israel will be the place that I always thought it should be, rather whether or not we have the resolve to make it the place that it needs to be for all of the Children of Israel.

Shabbat Shalom!

OPINION

Chevra Shaas Words From Rabbi Menahem White SHELACH 5783

Dear Shearith Israel/Chevra Shaas Mitpallelim

Our Israeli friend Dr. Gehr observes *yahrzeit* for his father Werner (Ze'ev ben Avraham) this Wednesday 2 Tammuz; This Thursday 3 Tammuz, the Miller family observes the *yahrzeit* of their "pater familias," and our late President, Yosef ben Hayyim, Joe Miller. Next Shabbat, 5 Tammuz, Mariam Mintz and Stanley Goldstein observe for their father, David ben Alexander, Sender Goldstein.

Mazal tov to Yehudah Haimovici on his upcoming Bar Mitzvah.

This Shabbat we bless the month of Tammuz, which will be on Monday and Tuesday. For those who miss my Yiddish announcements: "Der Molad vet Zayn zuntog bai tog, zeks un draisig minutn mit fuftsig chalokim noch drai." [= Monday, 36 minutes and 50 chalokim after 3 p.m.]

HOW FORMER US PRESIDENT HELPED ME UNDERSTAND THE PARASHA:

Every student asks the question: what did the *meraglim*, the spies, do wrong? Moshe had selected 12 spies, each one a leader of his respective tribe. The Hebrew term is "*nasi*," which literally means a person who is raised above the others, and happens to be the word in modern Hebrew that means "president."

Moshe asked them to tour the land, and bring back a report: describe the land, the strength and numbers of the people; if the cities seem fortified. He also asked them to bring back samples of the fruit.

And they did as he apparently had asked. They said it's a good land, but the inhabitants are too powerful. It is a land that "eats its inhabitants." This report caused the Israelites to want to turn around and go back to Egypt.

As a result, the Israelites had to wander in the desert for 40 years, and the spies were killed in a plague.

However, we can ask: what did the spies do wrong? The answer we have given in previous years was that Moshe had requested just a report on the facts [The old-timers among us will remember Jack Webb on *Dragnet*, "just the facts, ma'am."] Moshe didn't ask for an

opinion.

But now we can say even more. The *meraglim* should have returned right away to Moshe and offer their report privately. It is clear that instead of that, they publicized it to the masses. Let Moshe, who had sent them on the mission, deal with it. Know when and how to speak!

The big news here in US, news that is dividing the nation, is the trial of former President Trump, as he has been indicted on 37 charges, and could face jail time.

Now, we are indebted to President Trump for many things that he accomplished in his presidency, such as the recognition of Golan heights, and sanctions on Iran. Yet, I can't help but be reminded of one of the first *agadot* that I learned when I was very young, illustrating the verse in *Mishei* chapter 18: "death and life are in the hand of the tongue." Unfortunately, for all his brilliance, the former president did not know when it is appropriate not to speak. There was no excuse for his handling of classified documents, and his response to such.

Let us pray for good news for the US, for Israel, and for the world.

Shabbat shalom,

SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut End/Fin
8:27 p.m. 9:44 p.m.

PARASHAT SHELAH
HERTZ PAGE 623
HAFTARAH JUDGES
HERTZ PAGE 635

SHABBAT SERVICES
SHAHRIT: 8:30A MINHA: 8:15P

ROSH HODESH TAMMUZ

MONDAY/LUNDI JUNE 19 JUIN
TUESDAY/MARDI JUNE 20 JUIN

WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday
Shahrit: 8:30A Minha: 6:00P
MONDAY - FRIDAY
Shahrit: 7:00A Minha: 6:00P

CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

SHABBOS, June 17TH
Schachris 9:30 a.m.
SUNDAY, June 18TH
Schachris 8:00 a.m.

TORAH CLASS

Join ANDRE ROTCHEL every
Shabbat after services
Beit Hamidrash
Refreshments

To contact Reverend Hazan
Daniel Benlolo:
cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org
(514) 892-2859



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

A true gift comes with ribbons,
not strings.

| Aish HaTorah

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE SHABBAT KIDDUSH SPONSORED BY:

Martha Lawee & Family, in memory of her husband, Alfred Lawee z'l.

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE SHABBAT SEUDAH SPONSORED BY:

The Congregation.

CHEVRA SHAAS SHABBOS KIDDUSH SPONSORED BY:

The Congregation.

COMMUNITY

Congregation
Maghen Abraham

PERASHA SHLACH
Thoughts: Mayer Sasson

"And they came to the Valley of the Cluster of Grapes and they cut down from there a vine with one cluster of grapes and they bore it upon a carrying-pole between two..." (13, 23)

Specifically, two

On the words "and they bore it upon a carrying-pole between two" our Sages ob'm ask: Why did the Torah write "between two"? If it says "they bore it upon a carrying-pole", obviously two people carried it.

Our Sages answer that when the spies explored the Land of Canaan they obviously also went on Shabbat, for it says "at the number of days you explored the land, forty days".

If so, we can ask: It is understandable that they considered it permissible to transgress the prohibition of walking a distance from one domain to another at such an important time, as that prohibition is only from the Oral Law – but how could they permit themselves to carry a load on Shabbat? That is forbidden from the Written Law and it is one of the 39 fundamental labors forbidden on Shabbat!

The answer is "and they bore it upon a carrying-pole between two". The Halacha is that "two who carry are exempt from punishment". As we know, "In all forbidden labors on Shabbat we say – If one person did it he is punishable, two who did it are exempt from punishment."

SHABBAT SHALOM!!

Got a Question for
Reverend/Hazan
Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny,

Why is it so important for our son to have his Bar Mitzvah?

Having a Bar Mitzvah is important for several reasons. Firstly, it is a significant milestone in a young person's life within the Jewish faith. It marks the transition from childhood to adulthood and symbolizes the assumption of religious responsibilities and obligations.

Secondly, the Bar Mitzvah ceremony provides an opportunity for your son to publicly demonstrate his knowledge and understanding of Jewish traditions, values, and teachings. It allows him to showcase his commitment to his faith and community.

Additionally, the Bar Mitzvah celebration is a time for family and friends to come together, celebrating your son's achievements and offering support and encouragement as he embarks on his journey into adulthood. It fosters a sense of belonging and reinforces the importance of community and shared values.

Ultimately, the Bar Mitzvah is a meaningful and joyful event that helps your son connect with his Jewish heritage, deepen his spiritual understanding, and strengthen his sense of identity within the Jewish community.

until next time...

Mazal Tov To



Grandparents, Margaret Mankin & Jacques Hazan, and proud father, Eric Hazan, on the Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel Hazan.

Jewish Wisdom
HALAKHA

LIGHTING THE CANDLES FOR SHABBAT
Submitted by Reverend/Hazan D. Benlolo

In Jewish tradition, lighting candles before sunset on Friday marks the onset of Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. This practice is known as candlelighting or kindling the Shabbat candles. The specific time for candlelighting varies depending on your location and the time of year. The general guideline is to light the candles 18 minutes before sunset.

The primary source for this practice is found in the Talmud, in tractate Shabbat (The Sabbath), which discusses the laws and customs of Shabbat observance. The Talmudic sages established the practice of lighting Shabbat candles to bring honor and joy to the Shabbat.

The specific requirements and customs related to candlelighting are further expounded upon in later Jewish legal codes, such as the *Shulchan Aruch*, particularly in Orach Chayim, chapter 263. These sources provide detailed instructions on how to properly fulfill the mitzvah (commandment) of candlelighting, including the number of candles to be lit and the blessings to be recited.

It's important to note that specific customs and practices may vary among different Jewish communities, so it is advisable to consult with your local rabbi or a trusted authority for the exact candlelighting time and any additional customs followed in your community.

Shabbat shalom

PARNASS HAYOM
BEIT HAMIDRASH
HELWANI

SUNDAY/DIMANCHE 29 SIVAN - JUNE 18
Spanish & Portuguese, in memory of Laura Mizrahi ז"ל

Carole & Elie Cohen, à la mémoire de Rafael Shimon Cohen ben Olga ז"ל

TUESDAY/MARDI 1 TAMMUZ - JUNE 20
Henri & Arlene Abitan, en l'honneur de Jimmy Levy.

FRIDAY/VENDREDI 4 TAMMUZ - JUNE 13
Mike Yuval, in memory of his parents, Naima & Ovadia Yuval ז"ל



INSIGHTS

Thoughts on
Parashat Shelah
Lekha

By: Rabbi Marc D. Angel

An old joke has it that a pessimist says the glass is half empty; the optimist says the glass is half full; and the realist says--you're using the wrong size glass!

In this week's Torah portion, we read of the twelve spies who were sent to scout the land of Israel. Ten of them were pessimists. They told the Israelites that the land was inhabited by giants. "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."

Caleb and Joshua were optimists. They reported that the land was wonderful, and that the enemies would be easily defeated. "Do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us; their defense is removed from over them and the Lord is with us."

While the ten spies were alarmists and defeatists, the two spies presented a rosy picture totally at odds with the report of their colleagues. The masses of people believed the pessimists; they slipped quickly into despair and mourning. As a result, the Israelites were condemned to wander forty years in the wilderness before the next generation would be allowed to enter the Promised Land.

Where were the realists when they were so very much needed? In the Torah's narrative of this episode, we don't hear their voices.

How might this story have turned out happier? When the spies returned from their mission, they should have reported their findings to Moses in a closed meeting. The pessimists and the optimists could have made their cases. Moses could have been the realist who fashioned the report in such a way that it reflected the concerns of the pessimists while also expressing the confidence of the optimists. The entire group could have presented the people with a balanced report, honest about the dangers ahead but confident that God would bring them victory.

When people face a crisis, they need to be told the truth about the challenges ahead. But they also need to be given a realistic plan of action. It is destructive to create alarm and panic; it is irresponsible to ignore genuine threats.

The story of the twelve spies demonstrates the serious flaws of going public without first having serious private consultations that are grounded in realism. This is true for government officials, for journalists, for opinion makers--for everyone. Responsible leadership entails careful analysis, concern for how one's words and deeds will affect the public, an honest and realistic plan of action that can gain public support and confidence.

In Israel's War of Independence in 1948, David Ben Gurion called a meeting of his military experts to address a serious crisis. Reinforcements were desperately needed in the north, but there seemed to be no way to get the troops there. The experts told Ben Gurion that it was impossible to move troops to the north, since the enemies' positions were too strong. Ben Gurion replied: "We do not need experts to tell us that something is impossible. Anyone can say this. We need experts who can tell us how to accomplish the impossible!" Upon further deliberation, the experts came up with a plan--and they succeeded in doing the "impossible." They found a way of getting the needed troops to the north, and ensuring a victory for Israel in the battles there.

In the many crises which face us--individually as well as communally--it is tempting to give in to pessimism and judge things to be hopeless or impossible. It is also sometimes tempting to ignore the real dangers before us, and to be unrealistically optimistic about chances of success. It is vital, though, that we maintain clear-sighted realism--facing problems honestly, being neither fearful nor foolhardy. If we consider things from different perspectives, we often can gain clarity on how to move forward.

It is the realists who are best suited to achieve the "impossible."

Shabbat shalom

