

CBAJ Family Shabbat Companion: *Parshat Shelach*
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Parshat Shelach (OU Youth)

This parsha begins with Bnei Yisrael reaching Kadesh, which is in the wilderness of Paran.

Moshe sent one man from each tribe to explore the land of Canaan (the promised land). They were to go see what kind of life was waiting there for them and come back and report to Moshe. These people were called Meraglim (spies). Yehoshua and Calev were two people included in this group.

They were gone for forty days. When they came back they had with them big bunches of grapes, pomegranates, and figs. This was proof of the fertility of the land. Ten of the twelve Meraglim reported that the city of Canaan was very well protected and that it would be impossible to conquer it. Two people, Calev and Yehoshua, did not agree with the other ten. They were convinced Bnei Yisrael should move on and would successfully conquer Canaan.

Unfortunately, Bnei Yisrael sided with the majority and started to feel pessimistic about going. They started rebelling and insisted on finding a new leader to lead them back to Egypt. They refused to listen to Calev and Yehoshua!

Hashem was furious with His Nation and told Moshe He intended to destroy this nation and have another one formed by only Moshe's descendants. Moshe did Teshuva on behalf of the nation and Hashem did not destroy them. Bnei Yisrael, however, was now condemned to wander for another forty years in the wilderness. Hashem also decreed that anyone aged twenty and above would die before He would bring his nation to the promised land (except Calev and Yehoshua).

The ten Meraglim who spoke against Canaan died suddenly. Bnei Yisrael then realized that they were wrong and they should follow Hashem. Some of them decided to try and go to Canaan by themselves (Before Hashem would allow it). Moshe warned them that Hashem was not with them. They were defeated by the Amalekim who lived in Canaan when they tried to get in.

The people were told that Hashem promised that their descendants would get to see the promised land.

The parsha ends with Hashem giving the commandment of Tzitzit. They were to be worn on the four corners of every man's garments. This mitzvah was given as a reminder to observe Hashem's Torah at all times.

2. Q&A on the Parsha (OU)

Questions:

1. Why is the parsha called 'Shelach'?
2. What does the word 'Meraglim' mean?
3. How, in the future, was Yehoshua rewarded for believing and following Hashem?
4. Why did Moshe ask that the Meraglim bring back fruit with them?
5. Why did Moshe do Teshuva for Bnei Yisrael?
6. Why were Bnei Yisrael punished specifically to wander forty days in the desert?
7. What is the name of the nation who lived in Canaan at this time?
8. What are the three conditions for a shirt in order for it to require Tzitzit?
9. Why is this Mitzvah considered extra important?
10. If a garment is round or only has three corners is it a mitzvah to put tzitzit on it?

Answers:

1. The word 'Shelach' means 'send'. Hashem told Moshe to send the Meraglim to Canaan.
2. Meraglim means spies. The twelve chosen people were to spy on Canaan to see what life was like there.
3. Yehoshua will be the one to lead the Bnei Yisrael into The Promised Land. He will take over for Moshe, who dies before they go.
4. Moshe asked them to bring back fruit so that the nation would see how fruitful and productive the land in Canaan was.
5. Moshe was chosen as leader of this nation because of his compassion. His number one concern is to follow Hashem's commandments, one of which is to be a leader for His nation. A leader's responsibility is to back up his people and take care of them.
6. Hashem punished them for forty days - one for each day the Meraglim were on their quest in Canaan.
7. The nation living in Canaan at this time was Amalek.
8. a. It is a garment which is worn by day and has four or more corners.
 - It is big enough to cover a little boy's head and most of his body.
 - It is a garment of wool or linen.

9. Doing the mitzvah of Tzitzit includes, when you are wearing them, to remember ALL of Hashem's commandments.
10. No, there is no Mitzvah to put Tzitzit on a garment like this.

of Eretz Yisrael were unconquerable; they lacked trust in Hashem!

THE FALL OF YERICHO

(a story from the Book of Yehoshua)

Moshe's student, Yehoshua, led the conquest of Eretz Yisrael. The first city that Bnei Yisrael had to capture was Yericho. Bnei Yisrael wondered, "How can we ever conquer this mighty city that is surrounded by a thick wall?" But Hashem told Yehoshua, "Don't worry! Yericho is already in your hands. Just rely on Me and do what I command.

"Your soldiers must march around Yericho for seven days. The front guard - shevet Reuven, shevet Gad and half the tribe of Menashe - will go first. Follow-ing them will march seven Kohanim blowing shofarot (horns). They will be fol-lowed by other Kohanim carrying the Aron of Hashem as a sign that the Shechina is fighting for you. Finally, the rear guard - the degel of Dan - will march at the end of the army.

"There must be silence, except for the shofar sounds blown by the Kohanim each time you march around the city.

"On the first day of the week, march around the city of Yericho once. On the second day, go around it once again. Do this for six days. On the seventh day, march around it seven times."

This was a strange way to conquer a city! Bnei Yisrael were told not to take any action, except for marching around the city while the shofarot were blown. When hearing the shofarot, they would do teshuvah. They would realize that Hashem is all powerful and they would trust in Him to fight for them.

Bnei Yisrael followed Hashem's instructions. They silently surrounded Yericho once every day and seven times on the seventh day, while the Kohanim blew the shofarot.

Finally, Yehoshua commanded the people, "Now shout!"

A tremendous shout went up from Bnei Yisrael. Then the miracle happened! The wall of Yericho sank into the ground. Bnei Yisrael entered Yericho from wherever they stood. They conquered the city without an effort.

We see that Hashem did fight for Bnei Yisrael. The spies in Moshe's time sinned when they claimed that the cities