

*SHABBAT SHALOM. Today is 26 Sivan 5778. We bensch Rosh Chodesh Tammuz which will be this Wednesday and Thursday. The Molad, re-appearance of the moon, will be Wednesday evening at 7:05 p.m. and 7 chalakim (about 23 seconds).*

*Mazel Tov to Avi Waxman upon today's celebration of his Bar Mitzvah. Mazel Tov to Avi's parents Stacy (Waxman) & David Callen.*

TORAH DIALOGUE

(p. 623 Hz) (p. 860 S) (p. 560 Hi) (p. 798 AS)

SHELACH שְׁלַח

Numbers 13:1

[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis (RED), Rabbi Emeritus Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale]

1. The incident of the ill-fated spy mission is a major misstep by Bnei Yisrael, and it seems to be completely spearheaded by the tribal princes selected for this mission. But not one of these princes are mentioned earlier by name when the Torah lists the princes when discussing the flags and positioning of the tribes in Parshat Bamidbar. Who are they and how were they selected? The Rashbam wrote that Moshe sought tribal leaders who were not weak-hearted and who were willing to enter a foreign country and take from its fruit. But this further strengthens our question: none of the original tribal princes were strong enough to volunteer for this mission! It is possible that the original princes were so righteous that they didn't see the need to send spies, that the mission meant lacking faith in Hashem. But according to this, why did Yehoshua and Calev volunteer? Perhaps Yehoshua and Calev had a different mindset. They saw it as an opportunity to discover an easy way to conquer the Land!

2. When the spies returned and reported: "They went and came to Moshe and Aharon and the entire congregation of Bnei Yisrael. They showed them the fruit of the Land; they told HIM and said..." (13:25...) It seems that there were two reports: one for Moshe and one for the people. To Moshe they reported on the questions he asked. They showed him the fruit and gave a good report on the quality of the Land. And then the spies gave their evil report to the people, namely that the people of Canaan are too strong for Bnei Yisrael to conquer. At this point Calev hushes the people and states emphatically that "we will ascend and conquer it (the Land)." It worked for a minute, but the Torah follows with the statement (Ch. 14:1...) "The entire assembly raised up and gave voice; the people wept that night. All the children of Israel murmured against Moshe and Aharon..." No one in the entire nation listened to Calev and Yehoshua! All of them accepted the evil report of the ten spies. (RED)

3. For the sin of the spy mission Hashem punishes Bnei Yisrael and has that generation die in the desert; they will not enter the Promised Land. For forty years the people

will travel in the desert and die there; one year for each day the spies spent in Eretz Yisrael. Rashi explains (13:25) that Hashem miraculously shortened their sojourn in the Land to be forty days, for Hashem knew what the decree would be. Now it wasn't exactly 40 years because the spy mission occurred in the 2nd year of their journey. So the expression "a year for each day" traveled was an expression and not a fact! Forty was the important number, since that meant that the twenty year old men would die at age sixty in accordance with the Talmud's statement (Moed Katan 28a) that 60 years is the definition of Death in the Hands of Heaven. It is also possible that the 40 years includes some of the punishment of the sin of the Golden Calf. Hashem said that He would reserve some of the punishment of the sin of the Golden Calf until a later time. (RED)

4. In the aftermath of the spy mission, Moshe delivers the divine decree that the generation will die in the desert. What happened? How come the people did not believe Moshe when he said that they would conquer Canaan, but now they did believe him when he told them that they would die in the desert? The text reveals the incident that changed the people's mind. The ten evil spies died in a divine plague, and Yehoshua and Calev lived. Usually a plague is a massive blow. Previous divine plagues killed 14,700 people and later 24,000 people. It was miraculous to see such a small plague that was so decisive. And the Torah tells us that Yehoshua and Calev survived. Lest the people think that the spies picked up something in Canaan, it reminds us that Yehoshua and Calev were also in Canaan with the others, and they did not come down with anything. In Parshat Korach the divine judgement brought an unusual manner of death: the earth swallowed up the sinners. Here there was no need for something that demonstrative. Or perhaps a "small" plague is demonstrative.

HAFTORAH

(p. 635 Hz) (p. 875 S) (p. 892 Hi) (p. 1184 AS)

JOSHUA יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

(Joshua 2:1-24)

The Prophet refers to the spies sent by Joshua as "Cheresh"—potters. The Yalkut Shimoni explains that the verse is teaching us that they disguised themselves as pottery salesmen so they would not be detected. However, there appears to be a more significant message in their characterization as "Potters." The Talmud (B'rachot 57b) states that one who sees a pot in his dreams should anticipate peace. This is understandable, given the reality that a pot creates peace between the two opposing forces of water and fire. The fact that the scouts sent by Joshua succeeded is directly linked to the fact that they were able to make peace between the physical aspects of man and his spiritual responsibilities. The lack of this accommodation is precisely where Moshe's spies failed.

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT SHELACH 5778  
by Rabbi Edward Davis, Rabbi Emeritus

**From the Text**

1. According to our text here (13:2), whose idea was it to send spies? According to the text in Deuteronomy (1:22), whose idea was it?
2. What fruit did the spies bring back to the Israelite camp? (13:23)
3. How long were the spies on their mission to Canaan? (13:25)
4. Which two spies stood up righteously in favor of Hashem and Eretz Yisrael?
5. What happened to the 10 evil spies? (14:37)

**From Rashi**

6. "Are there trees in it?" (13:20) It is obvious that there are trees in the Land because the verse ends with the fact that the spy mission was during the grape harvest! How does Rashi interpret Moshe's question about trees?
7. "They ascended to the south, and he went to Chevron." (13:22) Who was the spy who went alone to Chevron?
8. What is the source for a Minyan to be ten men? (14:27)
9. How do we know that the tribe of Levi was exempt from the decree that the generation that was in the desert would die in the desert? (14:29)
10. Why was the incident of the spies followed by the law of the meal offering and libations, which would not apply for some 39 years later? (15:12)

**From the Rabbis**

11. Why was the tribe of Levi not represented in the mission of the spies? (Daat Zekeinim)
12. Why did Moshe pray for Yehoshua and not for Calev? (Chafetz Chaim)
13. Why do we call the bread on Shabbat with the word Challah which is a different law in the Torah to separate a portion of dough from the bread making? (Artscroll)

**From the Haftorah : Joshua**

14. What were the names of the two spies that Joshua sent to Yericho?

**Relationships**

- a) Calev- Miriam
- b) Moshe – Elisheva
- c) Joshua – Rachav
- d) Mitzrayim – Canaan
- e) Yosef - Gil'ad

ANSWERS FOR PARSHAT SHELACH 5778

1. According to our text, it was Hashem's idea. According to Deuteronomy, it was the people's idea.
2. Grapes, pomegranates, and figs.
3. Forty days.
4. Calev and Yehoshua.
5. They died in a divine plague.
6. Moshe's reference for a tree was a Tzaddik, a righteous person who could protect Canaan.
7. Calev.
8. Hashem refers to the ten evil spies as an evil congregation (assembly). (Megillah 23b)
9. Hashem said the generation which was older than twenty years old would die in the desert, and the tribe of Levi was counted from one month old!
10. Hashem was informing Bnei Yisrael that they (the next generation) will definitely enter Eretz Yisrael.
11. Because the tribe of Levi was not to receive a share in the Land.
12. Joshua was Moshe's student and everyone would expect him to oppose the spies. Hence his life would be more in danger.
13. It illustrates Jewish loyalty to the Torah. We call our Shabbat bread with the word for the law associated with making bread.
14. Calev and Pinchas.

Relationships:

- a) Husband – Wife
- b) Brother-in-Law : Sister-in-Law
- c) Husband-Wife
- d) Brothers
- e) Great-grandfather Yosef