

# Shabbat Shelach

## June 5, 2010

### 23 Sivan 5770

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## News

### YOUTH MINISTRY IN ISRAEL

It was a great pleasure for me to in one of our congregation in Tel Aviv on May 29. Our very new youth pathfinders club is working well and as we approach the end of the year of activities before the vacation time, some of our pathfinders and adventurers received their badges, qualifications and specialities.



We can be proud of our young people in Israel who are the assurance of the our permanent presence in the land of Yeshua.

### ELDER ORDINATION IN ISRAEL

The first Elders and ministers of Jesus' Kehilah (assembly) have been ordained in Israel two thousand years ago. We continue today this tradition by ordaining our elders and pastors in this country. It also with a great pleasure that I have participated to this ordination.



## SHAVUOT IN ARGENTINA

Shavuot is always a good time for our congregations to meet and to invite Jewish friends to celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit in the book of the second covenant and the gift of the Torah in the book of the first covenant. We received a news from Buenos Aires where our very good friend, David Barzola, lead two congregation, Jewish



Adventist one and a Messianic one. Here is his news, "Shavuot marks the arrival of the Holy Spirit and the Ten Commandments, which are read during the evening service. One of the people who first attended the service said that he had enjoyed a 'spiritual moment.' We had the joy of seeing some people who attended our Shavuot services on the following Shabbat. I thank the Lord for his miracles and for everyone who prays for us."

### ISRAEL FIELD SESSION

The Israel Field hold his triennial this week from June 2 to 5. New plans have been voted, new departmental director have been elected. We don't have enough space here to give more news but we will come back to this news in our next newsletters.



# OVERVIEW

## SHELACH

### NUMBERS 13:1 - 15:41

**A**t the insistence of Bnei Yisrael, and with G-d's permission, Moshe sends 12 scouts, one from each tribe, to spy on Canaan.

Anticipating trouble, Moshe changes Hoshea's name to Yehoshua, expressing a prayer that G-d not let him fail in his mission.

They return 40 days later, carrying unusually large fruit. When 10 of the 12 state that the people in Canaan are as formidable as the fruit, the men are discouraged. Calev and Yehoshua, the only two scouts still in favor of the invasion, try to bolster the people's spirit.

The nation, however, decides that the Land is not worth the potentially fatal risks, and instead demands a return to Egypt.

Moshe's fervent prayers save the nation from Heavenly annihilation. However, G-d declares that they must remain in the desert for 40 years until the men who wept at the scouts' false report pass away.

A remorseful group rashly begins an invasion of the Land based on G-d's original command.

Moshe warns them not to proceed, but they ignore this and are massacred by the Amalekites and Canaanites. G-d instructs Moshe concerning the offerings to be made when Bnei Yisrael will finally enter the Land. The people are commanded to remove challa, a gift for the kohanim, from their dough.

The laws for an offering after an inadvertent sin, for an individual or a group, are explained. However, should someone blaspheme against G-d and be unrepentant, he will be cut off spiritually from his people.

One man is found gathering wood on public property in violation of the laws of Shabbat and he is executed.

The laws of tzitzit are taught.

We recite the section about the tzitzit twice a day to remind ourselves of the Exodus.

## LASHON HARA

**T**he Torah states: "And the Almighty spoke to Moshe, saying: Send for yourself men, that they may spy out the Land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Children of Israel; one man, one man of every tribe of their fathers you shall send, every one a prince among them" (Numbers 13:1-2).

The Torah is not written in chronological order. What is the meaning of the juxtaposition of this section to the previous section?

Rashi cites the Midrash Tanchuma to elucidate the juxtaposition of sending the spies to the land of Canaan to the section of Miriam's speaking lashon hara (derogatory speech) about Moshe. Even though Miriam was publicly punished for speaking against her brother, these wicked people who witnessed her punishment did not learn a lesson.

Rabbi Packouz says that the question arises: How could the spies be expected to learn from Miriam's lashon hara? Miriam spoke against a person, while they spoke against a land. Rabbi Yisroel Ordman, of Telshe Yeshiva in Lithuania, comments that one must acquire the attribute of always seeing the good in everything. A person who finds fault with things (meals, accommodations, etc.) will also find fault with people. Conversely, a person who always seeks to find the good in all phenomena will also see the good in his fellow man. That is the lesson the spies should have learned: to notice virtues rather than seek out faults.

As a pious man once noted, "We were given two eyes—one very powerful for introspection, so we should find our smallest faults; the other very weak, for viewing others. Only too often we switch their functions."

## "SEND FOR YOURSELF"

**F**rom time to time we have to make some difficult decision for ourselves and our family. It could happen that we receive a good promotion in our work, but we have to move to a new place where there is no believers or congregations where to meet, but we are not very sure, we hesitate, we don't know what to do. A wrong decision can lead to a catastrophe for ourselves and for our family. This parasha give us a good advice, "Send for YOURSELF, men,

and let them spy out the Land of Canaan that I am giving to the Children of Israel.” (Bamidbar 13:2).” Go There and check if this new place is really good for you and your family then pray and ask God if it his plan that you have to live in a place where there is no possibility to grow spiritually. But going over there to “spy” is also maybe to check the possibility of planting a new congregation of believers. The Lo-d is good and if we are ready to do his will he will bless us.

## G-D DEALS WITH US WHERE WE ARE

**T**he Torah states, “Send for YOURSELF, men, and let them spy out the Land of Canaan that I am giving to the Children of Israel.” (Bamidbar 13:2). This translation is a direct translation of the Hebrew expression “Shelach Lecha” which is not translated in most of the Christian translation. This words express really that this wish to send spies to explore the country of Canaan did not come from God but from the people of Israel who did not trust God about the country of milk and honey. It is also what Moses says when he recalls the story to the people of Israel, “You came near to me everyone of you, and said, Let us send men before us, that they may search the land for us, and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up, and the cities to which we shall come.” (Deut. 1:22)

Rashi comments: “For yourself, meaning according to your own counsel. I (G-d) am not commanding you to do so. If you want, you can send them.” G-d acquiesces to the Jewish People’s request to send spies but not enthusiastically: “I had told them that the Land of Israel was good (but they do not trust Me).” (Rashi 13:2).

Rabbi Baruch Leff says, “G-d deals with us where we are at, not where He is.

Did G-d want his people to send the spies? Certainly, not.

Did the Israel make a fatal mistake in descending to the level of having to send them? Definitely, yes.

But God reacted to Israel’s mistake, not with abandonment and disdain, but with a new task and mission for them. They now had to face the danger and the challenge of the spies’ report and how they

would deal with it.” They unfortunately failed this test as well

## JOSEPH AND THE 12 SPIES

**T**here is a very good insight of this parasha given by Rabbi Ari Kahn. He shows us a connection between the men who explored the country of Canaan and the brother of Joseph in Egypt. When Joseph recognized them he said, “You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land.” (Genesis 42:9). At first glance there is absolutely no connection between these two sections; in fact, they seem to be opposites. The “sin of the spies” deals with spies who are called men, and Yosef’s accusation of the brothers deals with men who are called spies! and in both stories we have 10 and 2 men. In the story of Joseph, the brother who came to get food were the 10 brothers (not Benjamin and Joseph) in the story of the spies, there were 10 men who spied and were against the conquest and 2 men (Calev and Joshua) who were faithful.

Rabbi Ari Kahn affirms that the word used in the text to describe the sin of the spied is “dibbah, which implies slander” most of the time translated as “evil report” it is the exact same word used to describe the report Joseph gave to his father about his brothers when he was young “This is the history of the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father’s wives. Joseph brought an evil report of them to their father.” (Genesis 37:2)

Rabbi kahn adds, “if we compare the consequences of Yosef’s mission with that of the mission of the spies—each having caused years of wandering and exile—these two seemingly disparate episodes come into closer focus.” a connection that is alluded to by an anomaly in the verses describing the spies. When the names of the men sent by Moshe are enumerated, only one of the representatives of the tribes of Joseph is attributed in the normal way. When the leader from Ephraim is named, no identification with Joseph is offered; when the representative of Menashe is named he is described as being from the tribe of Joseph. Rashi explains that only the descendant of Joseph who spoke slander—like Joseph himself—not Joshua who is presented as the son of Ephraim Numbers 13:8 and who was faithful to G-d.

## AHAVAT ISRAEL

The word “Areivim”, meaning “responsible”, can also be translated as, “blended” and “sweet”. Our rabbis explain the connection of the three translations: when Jews “blend” with each other (Ahavat Israel) and feel “responsible” for each other, the result is that they feel good and “sweet” about each other!

The Baal Shem Tov explains that this is the reason why the people of Israel are at times likened to the earth. For the earth contains wonderful treasures, including gold and precious stones. Yet, they are covered with layers of sand and dirt. In order to find these treasures, one must make the effort of digging through the layers of dirt until the treasures are found and exposed. This may require great patience, depending how deep they are buried.

“Every Believer,” says the Baal Shem Tov, “can find enough treasures and hidden good in every other believer. It is only a matter of how much effort, patience and dedication we will assign to this task”.

### WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

In traditional Torah societies one looks for a son-in-law who excels in learning Torah. The story is told of well-to-do Jewish farmer in Poland who was looking for an appropriate match for his daughter. Being a Talmud Chacham, a learned individual, he arranged to give a lecture at the local yeshiva with the proviso that whoever could solve the Talmudic problem he presented would be considered for his son-in-law.

He presented a brilliant presentation which dazzled the students. However, since none of the young men could find a solution, he got onto his wagon and started to head to the next yeshiva in a nearby town. Glancing back after he had driven for a few minutes,

he saw one of the yeshiva lads running with all his might to catch the wagon. Stopping the wagon, he waited for the young man to catch up and to catch his breath.

“So,” says the farmer, “You have an answer to my kasha (question)?”

“No,” replies the young man, “but I have to know. What is the answer.”

“Ah,” smiles the farmer, “a young man like you is someone I want to consider for a son-in-law!”

### TSEDAKA

A rabbi came to a wealthy businessman and asked him to contribute a large sum for a Yeshiva. The rich man replied, “I need to think about this. Come back tomorrow.”

When the rabbi came the next day the check was already prepared. “I have decided to contribute the amount you asked. However, I want you to explain the words of the Talmud, ‘Greater is the one who influences others to give than the one who gives.’ How is it possible that here I’m contributing such a large sum, yet, according to the Talmud, your deed can be greater than mine?”

The rabbi replied: “There is no question that your mitzvah and its reward is great. However, the courage and, at times, the embarrassment one experiences when collecting for charity can make it more difficult than giving.”

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# HAFTARA

## Joshua 2

**PARASHA:** In the text of the parasha the L-rd commanded Moses to send spies to the Land of Canaan: “And the L-rd spoke to Moshe, saying, ‘Send to you men that they may spy the land of Canaan which I give to the children of Israel...’ Moshe chose twelve men — one from each tribe (Num. 8:10-12).

**HAFTARA:** In our haftara it is Joshua who send spies to the Land of Canaan. “Then Joshua bin Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” (Joshua 2:1).

Thirty eight years before the people of Israel were not ready to trust the L-rd, but now they are. They want to leave the wilderness and to taste this land of honey and milk.

The Canaanites heard what the L-rd has done for Israel since they left the land of Egypt. They are afraid of them. Some of the Canaanites have gotten faith in the G-d of Israel and are ready to help them. It is the case of Rahab the prostitute of Jericho. “So they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and spent the night there.” (Joshua 2:1). Rahab said to the spies that she knows what the L-rd has done for them, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. (Joshua. 2:9-10). She asks them to remember her and her family when they will come back. “Now then, since I have dealt kindly with you, swear to me by the L-RD that you in turn will deal kindly with my family. Give me a sign of good faith that you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” (Josh. 2:12-13) Rahab become an example of faith “By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.” (Heb. 11:31). She deserved to become one of the ancestors of King David and the Mashiach, Son of David. (Matt. 1:5)

# BESORAT YESHUA

## Mark 4:35-5:8

**PARASHA:** In the parasha the spies had to go to the other side of the border to get Canaan and to scout the country in order to give back a report to Israel and Moses.

“Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, “Go up there into the Negev, and go up into the hill country, ” (Numbers 13:17).

**HAFTARA:** In Our haftara it is Joshua who send spies to go to the other side of the Jordan River to scout the Land of Canaan. “Then Joshua bin Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” (Joshua 2:1)

**BESORAH:** In our Besorah it is Yeshua who send his disciples to the other side “On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.”” (Mark 4:35).

In Numbers 13, a real storm of discouragement felt on Israel who did not believe in G-d, that he will give them the land of Canaan and they died in the wilderness.

In the Besorah a real storm felt on the disciples but they did not believe that Yeshua could save them, they cried to him: “A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” (Mark 4:37-38). But Yeshua was there. “He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” (Mark 4:39-40). The example of Rahab will be followed by the disciples and they will get a strong faith in G-d and in the Mashiach. “And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:41). Then in the pagan province of the Gerasenes, Yeshua continues to strengthen the faith of his disciples in performing many miracles.

