

TORAH

חומש

במדבר

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TORAH

CHUMASH BEMIDBAR  
*The Book of Numbers*

*Parshat Shelach*

*A free excerpt from the Kehot Publication Society's  
Chumash Bemidbar/Book of Numbers with commentary  
based on the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe,  
produced by Chabad of California.*

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*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of  
The Lubavitcher Rebbe*

**THE TORAH - CHUMASH BEMIDBAR**

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

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Chabad of California

Second, revised printing 2009

A project of  
**Chabad of California**

741 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024  
310-208-7511 / Fax 310-208-5811

Published by  
**Kehot Publication Society**

770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11213  
718-774-4000 / Fax 718-774-2718  
editor@kehot.com

**Order Department:**

291 Kingston Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11213  
718-778-0226 / Fax 718-778-4148  
www.kehot.com

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ISBN: 978-0-8266-0193-3  
ISBN: 978-0-8266-0195-2 (set)

*Published in the United States of America*



TORAH

# חומש במדבר

## THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of  
The Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*  
וצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

CHUMASH BEMIDBAR  
*The Book of Numbers*

*Parshat Shelach*



*Kehot Publication Society*  
770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11213  
5769/2009





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# שלח Shelach

## Overview

Notwithstanding the two delays in the previous *parashah*—one lasting a month and the other a week—this *parashah* opens with the people ready to enter the Land of Israel. As the final preparation before embarking on the conquest, the Israelites send their most distinguished and refined leaders to scout out the land. But as a result of this mission, the people suffer their third and most serious setback, causing their whole generation to die in the desert and delaying entry into the Promised Land for another 39 years.

The bulk of this *parashah* is devoted to the details of this dramatic and tragic story. The latter part of the *parashah*, however, abruptly departs from the historical narrative and discusses a number of laws and events that seemingly have no connection with each other or with the events recounted in the beginning of the *parashah*:

- the requirement to bring grain and wine offerings with animal sacrifices,
- the requirement to give part of every batch of dough (*challah*) to the priests,
- the laws pertaining to offerings that atone for the sin of idolatry,
- the incident of the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, and
- the commandment to affix tassels (*tzitzit*) to the corners of garments.

The laws would seem to belong in the Book of Leviticus, and the incident of the stick gatherer—which took place shortly after the giving of the Torah—would seem to belong in the Book of Exodus. Why are these placed here, and how are they connected to the name of the *parashah*, *Shelach*, which simply means “send”?

To understand this, let us recall once again that the purpose of the soul’s descent into the body, the creation of the Jewish people, the exile in Egypt and the Exodus, the giving of the Torah, and the entry and conquest of the Land of Israel are all in order to make this world into a home for God, which means to disseminate Divine consciousness to the entire world.

In other words, we are all—both individually and collectively—emissaries of God to accomplish His purpose on earth. It is therefore quite fitting that on the eve of the entry into the land where this purpose is to be consummated, God tells Moses to send representatives of the people on a mission. This assignment encapsulated the essence of what the entry into the Land of Israel is all about: fulfilling our Divine mission as God’s emissaries in this world.

## OVERVIEW OF SHELACH

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There are many explanations why the scouts failed in this mission, some of which we will see in our exposition of the narrative. But the underlying thrust of their tragic mistake was they thought the emissaries (i.e., the Israelites) were not capable of fulfilling their mission, that the Sender somehow overestimated the abilities of His agents or underestimated the difficulties they would face.

The generation of the Exodus attained the highest level of Divine consciousness of any generation in history. God sustained them with the heavenly manna, which taught them daily the lesson of His constant involvement in even the mundane facets of life. This made them the ideal recipients for the Torah.<sup>1</sup> They had witnessed God's absolute control over the "immutable" laws of nature and His ability to suspend them for His people. And finally, they had witnessed the Divine revelation of the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. How, then, could such people, exposed daily to God's miracles, suddenly turn into frightened skeptics? And how could their spiritual elite fall so low as to question God's omnipotence?

The answer is that it was specifically their heightened spiritual orientation that led them astray. They wished to experience life and pursue Godliness unencumbered by the distractions of materiality. In the desert, they were protected by the clouds of glory, sustained by the manna and the well of Miriam, and all their physical needs were fully attended to. All of their time was spent in Torah study, meditation, and prayer. They were repulsed by the notion of entering the real world, where bread must be wrested from the earth and life cannot be a heavenly paradise.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the scouts described the land as one that "consumes its inhabitants," fearing that once they entered the land they would fall prey to its earthliness and no longer be spiritual beings. Their sentiments were echoed centuries later in the words of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, who said: "If a person plows when it is time to plough, sows when it is time to sow, reaps when it is time to reap, threshes when it is time to thresh, and winnows when it is time to winnow, what will become of the Torah?"<sup>3</sup> Indeed, this aspiration has inspired us to yearn throughout the ages for the messianic era, when the materiality of the world will no longer distort our spiritual focus.<sup>4</sup>

It is indeed commendable to yearn for such a time, but this yearning must be balanced with humble submission to God's plan for creation. The purpose of life is to live within mundane reality and reveal the Godliness concealed within it. The spies and their generation were not willing to carrying out the mandate given at Sinai—to bring heaven to earth and earth to heaven—because they did not recognize the advantage of entering the material world, where God's essence can be found through fulfilling His commandments on the physical plane, and because they were afraid of the pitfalls accompanying this task.

**I**t was precisely this misconception that had to be proven wrong once and for all before the entry into the land. It is very easy, when we consider the wide range of the Torah's demands on our life and the effort we have to expend to fulfill them properly, to fall into the trap of thinking that God is asking too much of us. After all, the Torah seeks to govern every aspect of our life, in all its myriad details. Even learning the Torah per se seems impossible, for "its measure is longer than the earth, and it is wider than the sea."<sup>5</sup>

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1. *Mechilta, Beshalach* 16:4.

2. *Likutei Torah* 3:36c ff.

3. *Berachot* 35b.

4. *Mishneh Torah, Teshuvah* 9:2.

5. *Job* 11:9.

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## OVERVIEW OF SHELACH

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And on top of this, the Torah requires us to vanquish our inborn animal instincts and resist the pervasive pull of society and its norms. How can the faint voice of the few that are faithful to God be heard over the din of those who ignore Him?

Strong arguments, to be sure, but upon even momentary reflection, they crumble. For even a human dispatcher, if he has any sense, will not give an emissary a charge too difficult for him to accomplish. And while a human dispatcher can err in the estimation of an emissary's capabilities, God knows us better than we know ourselves: as our Creator, He is fully aware of both our strengths and weaknesses. It is therefore inconceivable that He could or would assign us a task that we cannot fulfill.

By failing in their mission, the spies ironically succeeded in a much more profound way. Their failure allowed the very value they disregarded—God's purpose of making the world into His home—to be accomplished more fully than their success ever could have.

The ultimate way of making the world into God's home is by revealing our own Divine natures and thereby making God's perspective, goals, and desires our own. When we do this, we follow God's will not only because we are told to, but also because our own minds and hearts impel us to.

The problem is that remaking ourselves over this way is a process of self-refinement, which is long, hard work. It is much simpler and quicker to submit *carte blanche* to God's will than to gradually refine our intellect and emotions by training them constantly to see through the world's materiality. But this is exactly what the spies' sin enabled us to do in a straightforward manner.

First of all, the spies succeeded in exciting the Jewish people about entering the Land of Israel.<sup>6</sup> Thanks to them, the people heard from eyewitnesses that the land flowed with milk and honey, and they did not have to take God's promises on mere faith. Once they were shaken from their momentary doubt, they were swept up with the desire to enter the land. Their children carried this knowledge of the land's virtues when they joyously entered it with Joshua. The spies that Joshua sent were only for strategic purposes, since the people did not need another report of the land's beauty and beneficial properties.

Secondly, the very fact that the spies—as Jewish leaders—walked through the land prepared it spiritually for the eventual entrance of the people as a whole. The spies' mission thus had the immediate effect of beginning the conquest of the land and paving the way for the actual conquest.<sup>7</sup>

Thirdly, had the spies and their generation not sinned, the people would have indeed entered the land headed by Moses and would have been led to a miraculous victory by God's cloud of glory and pillar of fire. But then, the victory and the conquest would have been God's alone, rather than the people's, aided by His constant support. Because of the spies' sin, the land now had to be won by military prowess, but the ensuing victory would be the result of the people's efforts. And because they would fight for it, they would value it more than they would have had they received it only as God's gift.

And finally, the spies' error taught us the invaluable lesson that we can all indeed fulfill God's mission, that we should never make the mistake of thinking that we do not measure up to His calling.

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6. Cf. Ramban on Numbers 13:1.

7. This spiritual preparation was concluded when Moses gazed upon the land from outside it just before his death (see *Tzafnat Pane'ach*, Deuteronomy 34:1).

## OVERVIEW OF SHELACH

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Thus, in this light, it was crucial that the spies should “sin”: it was the only way the objective of making the world into God’s home could be accomplished, the only way the historical process could proceed in exactly the best manner possible. Their real fault was not in what they did but in the fact that they focused on only one side of the coin.

Perhaps they can be forgiven for this; this was the first time a generation was called upon to live out this paradox of yearning for heaven while toiling on earth, of acknowledging the importance of the self while abrogating it in raw obedience—and as our sages say, “all beginnings are difficult.”

In any case, the lesson we must learn from the spies is the importance of both ardently aspiring to the spiritual life and humbly submitting to God’s desire to make this world into His home, and attaining the proper balance between them. Both acting as a self-interested agent and operating on blind obedience have their drawbacks: Blind obedience has its place as the bedrock of our commitment to God, but a life based solely upon it does not involve the entire person; acting in our own interests allows God’s perspective to permeate our whole being, but doing so exposes us to the risk of letting our egos lead us astray.

The goal is to remain aware of our supra rational and unconditional commitment to God even while making His reality our own. When we undertake the quest to manifest our Divine dimension as God’s mandate rather than an exercise in furthering our self-interests, our mission is guaranteed to succeed.<sup>8</sup>

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8. Based on *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, p. 92 ff.; *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, p. 617 ff.; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 13, pp. 39-40. ff.

ONKELOS

13:1 ומליל יי עם משה למימרא:  
2 שלח לך גברין ויאלוון ית  
ארעא דכנען די אנא יהב לבני  
ישראל גברא חד גברא חד  
לשבטא דאבתוהי תשלחון כל  
רבא דבהון:

13:1 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 2 שלח-לך אנ-  
שים ויתרו את-ארץ כנען אשר-אני נתן לבני ישראל  
איש אחד איש אחד למטה אבתיו תשלחו כל נשיא

RASHI

”ותקרבון אלי כלכם וגו’”, ומשה נמלה בשכינה, אמר:  
”אני אמרתי להם שהיא טובה, שנאמר: אעלה אתכם  
מעני מצרים וגו’”, חיייהם שאני נותן להם מקום לטעות  
בדברי המרגלים למען לא ירשוה’:

2 שלח לך אנשים. למה נסמכה פרשת מרגלים לפרשת  
מרים? לפי שלקחה על עסקי דבה שדברה באחיה,  
ורשעים הללו ראו ולא לקחו מוסר: שלח לך. לדעתך,  
אני איני מצוה לך, אם תרצה – שלח. לפי שבאו  
ישראל ואמרו: ”נשלחה אנשים לפנינו”, כמה שנאמר:

1. דברים א, כב. 2. שם. 3. שמות ג, יז.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

**2 You shall send one man from each tribe to represent his father’s tribe:** The Land of Israel is divided into twelve portions, corresponding to the twelve tribes. Each tribe’s territory is particularly suited to its unique spiritual path within the overall path of the Torah.<sup>11</sup> And through the efforts of the twelve tribes in elevating the twelve parts of the Land of Israel, the entire world is elevated, since the Land of Israel is a microcosm of the whole world.<sup>12</sup>

By traversing the entire land, the delegates prepared the land for the mission their tribe would fulfill: transforming the land to holiness.

The fact that each one walked the length and breadth of the whole land, not merely his tribe’s specific territory, reflected the intrinsic unity of the Jewish people that transcends their division into twelve tribes. This unity derives from the common Divine mis-

INNER DIMENSIONS

**[2] Send out men:** Allegorically, conquering the Canaan and transforming it into the Land of Israel means conquering the body and animal soul, sanctifying them and transforming them into holy entities.

The espionage mission spoken of here is the first of such operations recorded in Scripture. The mission of the spies sent by Joshua is the third.<sup>13</sup>

There were two basic differences between the two missions. Firstly, while Joshua’s mission was dictated by God,<sup>14</sup> Moses’ mission was left to Moses’ discretion. Secondly, Moses’ spies canvassed the entire land, while Joshua’s were sent specifically to Jericho. These differences reflect the spiritual variations inherent in the two missions.

The seven nations that inhabited Canaan signify and embodied the seven basic emotions. God does not *command* us to “spy out” and conquer our seven emotions, since the average person is not able to completely control and transform his seven emotions, i.e., his inner self. Such a mission can only be undertaken on Moses’ discretion, since it can only be accomplished by some-

one whose Divine consciousness is on the level of Moses’, a *tzadik*.

The average person has complete control only of his outer self, i.e., his soul’s means of expression: actions, words, and thoughts. These means of expression are signified by the city of Jericho. Jericho means “scent,” and scent is an external aspect of a person’s being; it therefore signifies his behavior—thought, word, and deed—which are external in contrast to his emotions.<sup>15</sup> The soul’s means of expression are its “garments”: we can change our modes of thinking, talking, and acting, just as we can change our clothes. Joshua’s mission, therefore, “canvassing Jericho,” is appropriate for all, since anyone can examine and rule over his “Jericho.” Thus, God directly commanded Joshua to send spies to Jericho.

The account of Moses’ mission is relevant for the rest of us in that we must also strive to achieve Moses’ level of Divine consciousness. The more we meditate on the futility of materialism and the awesomeness of God, the more we develop ecstatic love for God and antipathy for anything that opposes Divinity. To the extent we succeed

11. Cf. *Sifrei, Eikev* 11:10. 12. See *Sifrei, Eikev* (beginning). 13. This mission is read as the *Haftorah* (the supplemental weekly reading from the Prophets) of this *parashah*. 14. *Likutei Torah* 3:51c. 15. See *Zohar* 3:186a.

## The Scouts

13:1 On the 29th of Sivan, 2449, the day following their arrival at Ritmah, Moses addressed the people, telling them to prepare to enter and take possession of the Land of Israel. But the people (except for the tribe of Levi<sup>1</sup>) asked Moses to first send spies into the land in order to scout it out.<sup>2</sup> Moses knew that it was not necessary to scout out the land, since God would lead them and do battle for them,<sup>3</sup> but he agreed anyway, thinking that if the people would see that he was not afraid to send spies, they would withdraw their request.<sup>4</sup> But the people did not withdraw their request. Still, Moses thought that if he sent men to report on the quality of the land,<sup>5</sup> the people would get excited about possessing it when they heard the good reports about it. He therefore consulted with God, **and God spoke to Moses, saying,**

2 **“Send out men, if you wish, who will inspect Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites.** I already told them that it is a good land, but if they don’t believe Me, let them inspect it. But since they doubt Me, they will now run the risk of misinterpreting what they see and forfeiting their opportunity to inherit the land. **You shall send one man from each tribe to represent his fathers’ tribe; each one should be a prince among them.”** By “princes” God meant “distinguished tribe members” or “clan leaders,”<sup>6</sup> not the tribal leaders that had been designated a month and half previously.<sup>7</sup> It was necessary to send a representative from each tribe because the primary purpose of this mission was to report on the *quality* of the land, and each tribe was distinguished with different qualities that would make it value different aspects of the land.<sup>8</sup>

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### CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

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**1 Moses knew that it was not necessary to spy out the land:** On another level, however, Moses knew that despite God’s promises of supernatural assistance, it was proper to approach the entry into the Promised Land in a natural way, for there is never any guarantee that miracles will occur, or to what extent.<sup>9</sup> By preparing ourselves maximally in the natural way, we pave the way for God to bless our efforts in a miraculous way, and even elicit this Divine favor. In this context, Moses approved of sending out spies to see how the land could be conquered naturally.

Furthermore, Moses knew that God wants us to fulfill our Divine mission with our own understanding, not just out of pure faith. When we understand the particulars of what God wants us to do, we do it with greater enthusiasm and involvement. He therefore thought that it was proper to send men both to report on the land’s quality and to spy out how to conquer it, for that way, the people would be more enthused about entering it and more confi-

dent that it could be conquered.

This is also why God left the final decision of whether or not to send spies up to Moses. By doing so, the whole venture became an expression of this ideal of letting the people take the initiative rather than having them rely solely on God’s express instructions.

The spies’ error, in this sense, consisted of going beyond the scope of their mission and drawing conclusions. They were not being deceptive: Moses had asked them to see how the land could be conquered naturally, and they felt it could not. But they should have recalled that Moses only asked them to see *how* the land could be conquered, not *if*.

The lesson for us is that even when we employ our own understanding, we must remember that we are doing so because God wants us to, that we are doing so on *His* behalf. This way, we can be sure that we are using our intellect to arrive at the objective truth, not to supply us with evidence that bolsters any subjective perspective.<sup>10</sup>

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1. Rashi on Deuteronomy 1:23. 2. Deuteronomy 1:19-22. 3. See Exodus 23:20, 23, 27, 34:11; Deuteronomy 1:30-33. 4. Deuteronomy 1:23. 5. Thus, he refers to these spies throughout this section as “explorers” or “inspectors” (*tarim*), instead of the typical term for “spies” (*meraglim*). 6. See Rashi on 25:14. 7. Above, 1:4 ff. 8. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, p. 623. 9. Pesachim 64b. 10. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 92-95.

ONKELOS

3 ושלח יתהון משה ממדברא דפאין על מימרא די בלהון גברין רישי בני ישראל אנון: 4 ואלין שמהתהון לשבטא דראובן שמוע בר זכור: 5 לשבטא דשמעון שפט בר חורי: 6 לשבטא דיהודה כלב בר יפנה: 7 לשבטא דיששכר יגאל בר יוסף: 8 לשבטא דאפרים הושע בר נון: 9 לשבטא דבנימין פלטי בר רפוא: 10 לשבטא דזבולן גדיאל בר סודי: 11 לשבטא דיוסף לשבטא דמנשה גדי בר סוסי: 12 לשבטא דדן עמיאל בר גמלי: 13 לשבטא דאשר סתור בר מיכאל: 14 לשבטא דנפתלי נחבי בר ופסי: 15 לשבטא דגד גאואל בר מכי: 16 אלין שמהת גבריא די שלח משה לאללא ית ארעא וקרא משה להושע בר נון יהושע: 17 ושלח יתהון משה לאללא ית ארעא דכנען ואמר להון סקו דא בדרומא ותסקון לטורא:

בהם: 3 וישלח אתם משה ממדבר פארן עלפי יהוה כלם אנשים ראשי בני ישראל המה: 4 ואלה שמותם למטה ראובן שמוע בן זכור: 5 למטה שמעון שפט בן חורי: 6 למטה יהודה כלב בן יפנה: 7 למטה יששכר יגאל בן יוסף: 8 למטה אפרים הושע בן נון: 9 למטה בנימין פלטי בן רפוא: 10 למטה זבולן גדיאל בן סודי: 11 למטה יוסף למטה מנשה גדי בן יוסף: 12 למטה דן עמיאל בן גמלי: 13 למטה אשר סתור בן מיכאל: 14 למטה נפתלי נחבי בן גאואל בן מכי: 16 אלה שמות האנשים אשר שלח משה לתור את הארץ ויקרא משה להושע בן נון יהושע: 17 וישלח אתם משה לתור את ארץ כנען ויאמר אליהם עלו זה בנגב ועליתם את ההר:

RASHI

”יה יושיעך מעצת מרגלים“: 17 עלו זה בנגב. הוא היה הפסלת של ארץ ישראל, שכן דרך התגרים מראין את הפסלת תחלה ואחר כך מראין את השבח:

3 על פי ה'. ברשותו, שלא עכב על ידו: כלם אנשים. כל "אנשים" שבמקרא לשון חשיבות, ואותה שעה בשרים היו: 16 ויקרא משה להושע וגו'. התפלל עליו:

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avoiding evil and doing good. Furthermore, these spies specifically scouted out only Jericho, one city that acted as the "key" to the entire Land of Israel, expressing the unity that underlies plurality.<sup>21</sup>

**16 Moses prayed for Joshua, "May God save you from the counsel of the spies":** Even though the other delegates were righteous men with good intentions, Moses sensed that extending the scope of their mission to spying out the land would ultimately lead to their downfall. He knew that *spying* entails deception, an unholy quality. Even if it is be-

ing used for a noble cause, special precautions must be taken to ensure that the person who uses it is not adversely affected. This being the case, deception should be used only when absolutely necessary. Indeed, years later, Moses himself sent men to spy out the city of Ya'zer,<sup>22</sup> and Joshua sent men to spy out Jericho.<sup>23</sup> But in the present case, Moses was sure that the Jewish people's entry into the land would be miraculous, and therefore would not require the use of deception. He therefore feared that using it would lead to disastrous results, as indeed it did.<sup>24</sup>

INNER DIMENSIONS

[continued...] in this, so may we inspect and conquer our seven emotions, as well.

Nonetheless, our primary task is to inspect and conquer our modes of expression. This is in fact the key to our ultimate conquest of our emotions (the seven nations) and intellect (the additional three nations), just as Jericho was the "key" for-

truss that "unlocked" the way into the Land of Israel.<sup>25</sup> This is because the source of expression is deeper in the soul than is intellect or emotion, and therefore, harnessing our modes of expression and reorienting them toward holiness indirectly affects our emotions and intellect in the same way, just as our choice of clothing affects our self-image and perspective on life.<sup>26</sup>

20. Joshua 2. 21. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, pp. 626-627. 22. Below, 21:32. 23. Joshua 2. 24. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 78 ff. 25. *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:15; *Midrash Tanchuma, Beha'alotecha* 10. 26. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 2, pp. 311-314.

**3 So Moses sent the men out from the Paran desert with God's permission. All of them were men of distinction; they were leaders of the Israelites, i.e., the best of them.**<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, 10 of the 12 intended to do more than just inspect the land and report on it, which is all that Moses sent them to do; they intended also to *spy* out the land and see how it could be easily conquered.<sup>17</sup>

**4 These were their names: For the tribe of Reuben, Shamua the son of Zakur.**

**5 For the tribe of Simeon, Shafat the son of Chori.**

**6 For the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Yefuneh.**

**7 For the tribe of Issachar, Yigal the son of Joseph.**

**8 For the tribe of Ephraim, Moses' attendant, Hosea the son of Nun.** (This was Joshua's given name.<sup>18</sup>)

**9 For the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Rafu.**

**10 For the tribe of Zebulun, Gadiel the son of Sodi.**

**11 For the other tribe of Joseph, the tribe of Manasseh, Gadi the son of Susi.**

**12 For the tribe of Dan, Amiel the son of Gemali.**

**13 For the tribe of Asher, Setur the son of Michael.**

**14 For the tribe of Naphtali, Nachbi the son of Vofsi.**

**15 For the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.**

**16 These are the names of the men that Moses sent to inspect the land, but Moses now formally changed the name of Hosea the son of Nun to Joshua,** which means "May God save you," that is, from the plans of the spies. Moses sensed that by acting not only as inspectors but as *spies*, the other men would risk perverting their intentions and draw false conclusions from the evidence they would gather. This was not reason enough to prevent them from going, since their intentions were good, but it was reason for caution.<sup>19</sup>

**17 Moses sent them to inspect the quality of Canaan, and he said to them, "Go up this way to the worst part of the land first, the dry south part, and then climb up the mountain to see the better parts, so that you are left at the end of your tour with a good impression of the land.**

— ❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧ —

sion shared by every Jew: to make the world into God's home. The division into twelve tribes stems from the reality that there are many ways in which this one goal must be accomplished, and each individual is given specific powers and characteristics that suit the part of reality he is charged by Divine providence to transform. The person performing his tribal or individual mission requires a much more focused and limited Divine consciousness than the greater, more abstract and all-encompassing Divine consciousness shared by every Jew. Although the general mission is more fundamental and more sweeping, it must be reduced and applied to specific situations in order to be fulfilled by individuals acting in a pluralistic world.

Yet, the individual goal must never lose its context within the greater goal of the entire nation. By traversing the entire land together, the delegates expressed and evoked this transcendent consciousness. At the same time, the fact that all twelve tribes were represented signified that this transcendent unity should and would eventually permeate the level of reality where there *are* differences in purpose and approach.

This promise was realized in the spies that Joshua sent to spy out Jericho 40 year later.<sup>20</sup> These spies were only two, not twelve, because they expressed the unity of the Jewish people as based on the unity of their mission to make reality into God's home—which is divided into the two overall objectives of

16. Rashi on Deuteronomy 1:23. 17. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 82. 18. The Torah has already referred to Joshua as Joshua (Exodus 17:9-14, 32:17, 33:11, Numbers 11:28), using the name he would assume later (*Sichot Kodesh* 5733, vol. 1, pp. 319, 325). 19. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 82 ff.

— ONKELOS —  
 18 ותחזון ית ארעא מא היא וית  
 עמא דיתב עלה התקוף הוא אם  
 חלש הזער הוא אם סגי: 19 ומא  
 ארעא די הוא יתב בה הטבא היא  
 אם בישא ומא קרניא די הוא יתב  
 בהו הפפצחין אם בכרכין: 20 ומא  
 ארעא העתיקא היא אם מסכנא  
 האית בה אילנין אם לא ותתקפון  
 ותסבון מאבא דארעא ויומיא יומי  
 בכורי ענבין: 21 וסליקו ואלילו  
 ית ארעא ממדברא דצן עד רחוב  
 למטי חמת: 22 וסליקו בדרומא  
 ואתא עד חברון ותמן אחימן ששי  
 ותלמי בני גברא וחברון שבע שנין  
 אתבניאת קדם טגס דמצרים:

18 וראיתם את הארץ מה הוא ואת העם הישב עליה  
 החזק הוא הרפה המעט הוא אסרוב: 19 ומה הארץ  
 אשר הוא יושב בה הטובה הוא אסרעה ומה הערים  
 אשר הוא יושב בהנה הבמחנים אם במבצרים: 20 ומה  
 הארץ השמנה הוא אסרוזה הישבה עין אסאין והת-  
 חזקתם ולקחתם מפרי הארץ והימים ימי בפורי ענ-  
 בים:

◆ שני 21 ויעלו ויתרו את הארץ ממדבר צן עד רחב לבא  
 חמת: 22 ויעלו בנגב ויבא עד חברון ושם אחימן ששי  
 ותלמי ילידי הענק וחברון שבע שנים נבנתה לפני צען  
 מצרים:

— RASHI —

מערבית צפונית, כמו שמפרש בגבולות הארץ בפרשת  
 "אלה מסעי": 22 ויבא עד חברון. כלב לבדו הלך שם  
 ונשתטח על קברי אבות, שלא יהא נסת לחבריו להיות  
 בעצתם. וכן הוא אומר: "ולו אתן את הארץ אשר דרך  
 בה". וכתוב: "ויתנו לכלב את חברון". שבע שנים  
 נבנתה. אפשר שבנה חם את חברון לכנען בנו הקטן  
 קדם שייבנה את צען למצרים בנו הגדול אלא שהיתה  
 מבנה בכל טוב על אהד משבעה בצען, ובא להודיעך  
 שבחה של ארץ ישראל — שאין לה טרשין בארץ  
 ישראל יותר מחברון, לפיכך הקצוה לקברות מתים;  
 ואין לה מעלה בכל הארצות במצרים, שנאמר: "כגן  
 ה' בארץ מצרים", וצען היא המעלה שבארץ מצרים,  
 ששם מושב המלכים, שנאמר: "כי היו בצען שרי"ו,<sup>34</sup>  
 והיתה חברון טובה ממנה שבעה חלקים:

18 את הארץ מה הוא. יש ארץ מגדלת גבורים, ויש  
 ארץ מגדלת חלשים; יש מגדלת אוכלוסין, ויש ממעטת  
 אוכלוסין: החזק הוא הרפה. סימן מסר להם: אם בפרוץ  
 יושבין — חזקים הם, שסומכין על גבורתם, ואם בערים  
 בצורות הם יושבין — חלשים הם: 19 הבמחנים. תרגומו:  
 "הבפצחין". כרפין פצוחין ופתוחין מאין חומה: הטובה  
 הוא. במענות ותהומות טובים ובריאים: 20 היש בה  
 עין. אם יש בהם אדם אשר שיגן עליהם בזכותו: בפורי  
 ענבים. ימים שהענבים מתבשלין בכבור: 21 ממדבר  
 צן עד רחב לבא חמת. הלכו בגבוליה בארץ וברחב  
 כמין גאם: הלכו רוח גבול דרומית — ממקצוע מזרח  
 עד מקצוע מערב, כמו שצוה משה: "עלו זה בנגב",  
 דרך גבול דרומית מזרחית עד הים, שהים הוא גבול  
 מערבי. ומשם חזרו והלכו כל גבול מערבי על שפת  
 הים עד לבא חמת, שהוא אצל הר ההר במקצוע

4. אות וניית כמין כ"יש הפוכה. 5. לעיל פסוק יז. 6. במדבר לד, ז. 7. דברים א, לו. 8. שופטים א, כ. 9. בראשית יג, י. 10. ישעיה ד, ד.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

18 Are they strong or weak? Moses stated first the possibility that they are strong, for the Jews must be willing to go to war and conquer the land even if their enemies are mighty.

Furthermore, even if the enemy is strong, the Jews' self-sacrifice and willingness to attack them will weaken them. Thus, the verse can be read as saying, "Even if they are strong, they will become weak."<sup>34</sup>

34. Likutei Sichot, vol. 4, p. 1314.

18 See what the effect of the land is on the people who inhabit it: are they strong or weak? Are they few or many?

19 And what of the water supply of the land they inhabit? Is it good or bad? And what of the cities they live in: are they living in open cities or in fortresses? If they live in open cities, it means the land makes them strong and confident of their strength, but if they live in fortresses, it means they must be weak.

20 What is the soil like: is it rich or poor? And most importantly, since God told Abraham that he would not give the Land of Israel to his progeny until "the sin of the Amorites has run its course,"<sup>27</sup> you must ascertain if **there is** a righteous individual still living **in it**, whose merit might protect them, as a **tree** provides shade from the sun, **or not**. And finally, **you shall be courageous and take some of the fruit of the land** back to show us, even though it may be dangerous to expose yourselves in this way."<sup>28</sup> He told all 12 delegates to inspect the entire land, since it had not yet been divided into tribal territories and they therefore could not inspect just their particular tribe's area.<sup>29</sup> **It was the season when the first grapes begin to ripen.**

- ◆ **Second Reading 21 So they went up and inspected the land**, traveling westward along its southern border **from the Tzin desert**, which is in the southeast, and then they turned northward and traveled along the coast **until Rechov**, until they reached **the way to Chamat** (see Figure 1).

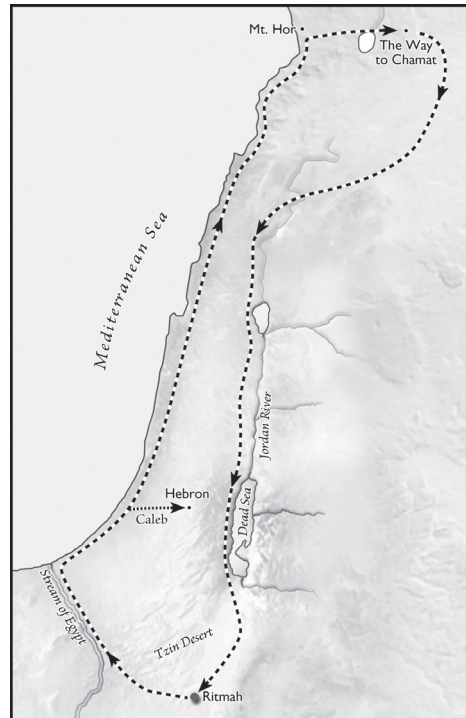


Figure 1: The Route of the Scouts

22 While **they went up through the south**, Caleb came by himself to **Hebron**<sup>30</sup> in order to pray at the graves of the patriarchs that he not be persuaded to spy out the land, as the others planned.<sup>31</sup> **Achiman, Sheishai, and Talmi, descendants of the giant race** that existed before the flood, **were there**. Now **Hebron** was a rocky area, the least arable region of the Land of Israel. This is why it was used as a burial ground. Nonetheless, its soil was so good that it **was built up seven times better** than was **Tzoan**, the choicest place in **Egypt**,<sup>32</sup> which possesses the finest soil on earth.<sup>33</sup> From this we see how excellent the Land of Israel was.

27. Genesis 15:16; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 163. 28. Nachmanides; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, p. 93. 29. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, pp. 623-624. 30. See Deuteronomy 1:36 and Judges 1:20. 31. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 82. 32. As is evident from Isaiah 30:4. 33. As implied in Genesis 13:10.

ONKELOS

23 וְאָתוּ עַד נִחַלָּא דְאִתְּבַלָּא וְקִצּוֹ מִתְּמַן עוֹבְרָתָא וְאִתְּבַל עֲנָבִין חֹד וְנִטְלוּהִי בְּאֵרִיחָא בְּתֵרִין וּמִן רִמּוֹנֵינָא וּמִן תְּאֲנִיא: 24 לְאִתְּרָא הֵהוּא קִרְיָא נִחַלָּא דְאִתְּבַלָּא עַל עֵסֶק אִתְּבַלָּא דְקִצּוֹ מִתְּמַן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 25 וְתָבוּ מִלְּאִלְלָא יָת אֲרַעָא מִסּוּף אֲרַבְעִין יוֹמִין: 26 וְאָזְלוּ וְאָתוּ לְוֹת מִשָּׁה וְלֹת אֶהְרִן וְלֹת כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִדְּבָרָא דְפִאָרְחָן לְקַם וְאִתְּיָבוּ יִתְהוּן פִּתְגָמָא וְיָת כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא וְאִתְּוִיֵּאֲנוּן יָת אָבָא דְאֲרַעָא: 27 וְאִשְׁתַּעֲיָאוּ לֵה אֶמְרוּ אִתְּיָא וְאֲרַעָא דִּי שְׁלַחְתָּנָא וְאִף עֲבָדָא חֶלֶב וְדָבֵשׁ הֵיִא וְדִין אָבָה: 28 לְחֹד אֲרִי תִקִּיף עֲמָא דִּיתֵב בְּאֲרַעָא וְקִרְוֵינָא כְּרִיכֵן רֶבְרָבִין לְחֹדָא וְאִף בְּנֵי גִבְרָא חֲזִינָא תְּמָן: 29 עֲמַלְקָאָה יָתֵב בְּאֲרַע דְּרֹמָא וְחִתָּאָה וְיִבּוּסָאָה וְאִמּוֹרָאָה יָתֵב בְּטוֹרָא וְכַנְעַנְיָאָה יָתֵב עַל יִמָּא וְעַל בִּיף וְדָנָא: 30 וְאִצִּית כָּלֵב יָת עֲמָא לְמִשָּׁה וְאִמְרַם מִסַּק נִסַּק וְנִיִּרַת יָתֵהָ אֲרִי מִכָּל נְבוּל לֵה:

23 וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד-נַחַל אֲשָׁפֵל וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשָׁפֵל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ בְּמוֹט בְּשָׁנִים וּמִן-הָרִמּוֹנִים וּמִן-הַתְּאֲנִים: 24 לְמַקּוֹם הַהוּא קָרָא נַחַל אֲשָׁפֵל עַל אַדְוַת הָאֲשָׁפֵל אֲשֶׁר-כָּרְתוּ מִשָּׁם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 25 וַיָּשְׁבוּ מִתּוֹר הָאָרֶץ מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם: 26 וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל-מִשָּׁה וְאֶל-אֶהֱרֹן וְאֶל-כָּל-עֲדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-מִדְּבַר פְּאָרְחָן קִדְשָׁה וַיִּשְׁבוּ אֹתָם דָּבַר וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעֵדָה וַיִּרְאוּם אֶת-פְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ: 27 וַיִּסְפְּרוּלוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ בָּאֲנֹו אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְתָּנוּ וְגַם זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבֵשׁ הוּא וְזֶה-פְּרִיָּהּ: 28 אַפֶּס בִּיעֲזוּ הָעָם הַיֵּשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ וְהָעָרִים בְּצִרּוֹת נְדָלֹת מְאֹד וְגַם-יְלָדֵי הָעֵנֶק רְאִינוּ שָׁם: 29 עַמְלֶק יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב וְהַחִתִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי וְהָאִמּוֹרִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּהָר וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי יוֹשֵׁב עַל-הַיָּם וְעַל יַד הַיַּרְדֵּן: 30 וַיְהִים כָּלֵב אֶת-הָעָם אֶל-מִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר עֲלֶה נַעֲלֶה וַיִּרְשְׁנוּ אֹתָהּ כִּי-יָכוֹל נוֹכַח לָהּ:

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לְהִקִּישׁ הַלִּיכְתֵּן לְבִיאתֵן: מַה בִּיאתֵן בְּעֶצֶה רָעָה, אִף הַלִּיכְתֵּן בְּעֶצֶה רָעָה: וַיִּשְׁבוּ אֹתָם דָּבַר. אֵת מִשָּׁה וְאֵת אֶהְרֹן: 27 זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבֵשׁ הוּא. כָּל דָּבַר שֶׁקָּר שָׁאִין אוֹמְרִים בּוֹ קִצֵּת אֶמֶת בְּחַחְלָתוֹ, אִין מִתְּקִים בְּסוּפוֹ: 28 בְּצִרּוֹת. לְשׁוֹן חֹזֶק, וְתִרְגוּמוֹ: "כְּרִיכֵן". לְשׁוֹן בִּירְנִיּוֹת עֲגֻלוֹת, וּבְלִשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי "כְּרִיף" עֲגֻל: 29 עַמְלֶק יוֹשֵׁב וְגו'. לְפִי שְׂכָנוֹ בְּעַמְלֶק כְּבָר, הַזְּכִירוּהוּ מִרְגְּלִים כְּדִי לִירְאֵם: וְעַל יַד הַיַּרְדֵּן. "יָד" כְּמִשְׁמַעוֹ, אֲצַל הַיַּרְדֵּן, וְלֹא תוֹכְלוּ לַעֲבוֹר: 30 וַיְהִים כָּלֵב. הַשְּׂתִיק אֵת כָּלֵם: אֵל מִשָּׁה. לְשַׁמֵּעַ מַה שִׁדְּבַר בְּמִשָּׁה, צוּחַ וְאָמַר: "וְכִי זֹו בְּלִבְד עֲשָׂה לָנוּ בֵּן עַמְרָם?" הַשׁוֹמֵעַ הִיָּה סְבוּר שְׂבָא לְסַפֵּר בְּגִנּוּתוֹ, וּמִתּוֹף שֶׁהִיָּה בְּלִבָּם עַל מִשָּׁה בְּשִׁבִיל דְּבָרֵי הַמְּרַגְּלִים, שֶׁתְּקוּ כָּלֵם לְשַׁמֵּעַ גִּנּוּתוֹ. אָמַר: "וְהִלָּא קָרַע לָנוּ אֵת הַיָּם, וְהוֹרִיד לָנוּ אֵת הַמָּן, וְהִגִּיד לָנוּ אֵת הַשָּׁלֹחַ": עֲלֶה נַעֲלֶה. אֲפֹלוּ בְּשָׁמַיִם, וְהוּא אוֹמֵר: עֲשׂוּ סְלֻמוֹת וְעֲלוּ שָׁם — נִצְלִיחַ כְּכֹל דְּכָרְיִו: וַיְהִי. לְשׁוֹן שְׂתִיקָה, וְכֵן: "הִס כָּל בְּשָׁרִי", "הִס כִּי לֹא לְהוֹכִיר". כֵּן דָּרַךְ בְּנֵי אָדָם — הַרוֹצֵה לְשִׁתֵּק אֲגֻדַּת אֲנָשִׁים, אוֹמֵר שִׁי"ט:

23 זְמוּרָה. שׁוֹכֵת גִּפֹן וְאֲשָׁפֵל שֵׁל עֲנָבִים תְּלוּי בָּהּ: וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ בְּמוֹט בְּשָׁנִים. מִמִּשְׁמַע שְׂנֵאֲמַר: "וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ בְּמוֹט", אִינִי יוֹדֵעַ שְׁהוּא בְּשָׁנִים, מַה תִּלְמוּד לומר "בְּשָׁנִים"? בְּשָׁנִי מוֹטוֹת. הָא כִּי־צַד? שְׁמוּנָה נִטְלוּ אֲשָׁפֵל, אֶחָד נִטְל תְּאֲנָה וְאֶחָד רִמּוֹן, וְהוֹשַׁע וְכָלֵב לֹא נִטְלוּ כָּלֹם, לְפִי שֶׁכָּל עֲצָמָם לְהוֹצִיא דְּבָה נִתְכַּנְּנוּ: כְּשֶׁם שְׁפָרְיָהּ מִשְׁנָה, כֵּף עֲמָה מִשְׁנָה. וְאִם חִפֵּץ אִתָּה לִידַע כְּמָה מִשְׁאוּי אֶחָד מֵהֶם, צֹא וְלִמַּד מֵאֲבָנִים שֶׁהִקִּימוּ בְּגִלְגָּל — "הִרִימוּ לָהֶם אִישׁ אֶבֶן אַחַת" — מִן הַיַּרְדֵּן — "עַל שְׂכָמוֹ", וְהִקִּימוּהָ בְּגִלְגָּל: 12 וְשִׁקְלוּם רְבוּתֵינוּ מִשְׁקַל כָּל אַחַת אַרְבָּעִים סָאָה, וְגַמְיָרִי: טוֹנָא דְּמִידְלִי אָנֹשׁ עַל כַּתְּפָה, אִינוּ אֲלֹא שְׁלִישׁ מִשְׁאוּי, מִמִּשְׁאוּי שְׁמִסִּיעִין אוֹתוֹ לְהִרִים: 25 וַיִּשְׁבוּ מִתּוֹר הָאָרֶץ מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם. וְהִלָּא אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת פְּרֻסָה עַל אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת פְּרֻסָה הִיא, וּמִהֶלֶךְ אָדָם בִּינוּנִי עֶשֶׂר פְּרֻסָאוֹת לְיוֹם, הִרִי מִהֶלֶךְ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם מִן הַמְּזוּרַח לְמַעֲרָב, וְהֵם הִלְכוּ אַרְבָּה וְרַחֲבָה? אֲלֹא שְׁגָלוּי לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שִׁגְרוּ עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹם לְשָׁנָה, קִצֵּר לְפָנֵיהֶם אֵת הַדֶּרֶךְ: 26 וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ. מַהוּ "וַיֵּלְכוּ"? 11 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ ד, ה. 12, שֵׁם, כ. 13, זְכַרְיָה ב, יז. 14, עֲמוֹס ו, י.

providing us miraculously with manna during our trek in the desert, even though this trek is only a preparation for our entry into the land? The spies said that we have forfeited God's protection by doubting it. But in the case of the quails,<sup>38</sup> didn't

23 The spies came to the Valley of Eshkol and they cut off a branch with a cluster of grapes. This cluster was so big that eight of them carried it on two poles, and two others took one of the pomegranates and one of the figs; the pomegranates and figs were so big that each of them could only carry one. Joshua and Caleb did not carry anything, because by this time it was clear that the others had drawn conclusions from their observations and their intentions had become evil. True, Moses had commanded *all* of them to “take some of the fruit of the land,” but Joshua and Caleb knew that bringing back fruit in order to bolster false conclusions was not Moses’ intention.<sup>35</sup>

24 They called that place the Valley of Eshkol [“cluster”] because of the giant cluster of grapes the Israelite spies cut down there.

25 Since God foresaw that the people would need a year to rectify each day that the spies spent scouting out the land, He made them travel miraculously fast. They returned from scouting the land at the end of only 40 days, having spent only a fourth of the time it would normally take to scout out the land. This was on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Av.

26 Just as their intentions became evil<sup>36</sup> when they went, their intentions remained evil when they came back to Moses and Aaron and all the community of the Israelites at Ritmah, opposite Kadesh Barnea, in the Paran desert. They brought back a report to Moses, Aaron, and to the entire community, and they showed them the fruit of the land.

27 In order to look objective, they began by praising the land. They addressed Moses and said, “We came to the land you sent us to, and it is indeed flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

28 However, just like the fruit of the land is extraordinarily large, the people who inhabit the land are extraordinarily mighty, and the cities are fortified and extremely huge, and we even saw there descendants of the giant race that existed before the Flood. It is therefore impossible to conquer the land by natural means.

29 Nor will God help us supernaturally, because by doubting His protection we have forfeited it, and the Amalekites, who attacked us when we previously doubted His protection,<sup>37</sup> dwell in the south land ready to strike at us again. And even if we can rely on Him to fight for us *inside* the land, the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountainous region, and the Canaanites dwell on the coast and alongside the Jordan, so the land is surrounded by hostile nations, and there is no guarantee God will come to our aid *outside* the land.”

30 Caleb saw that the other spies were turning the people against Moses. He silenced the people so he could talk about Moses by exclaiming “Is this the only thing Moses has done for us?” Thinking that he was going to list Moses’ failures, the people remained quiet. But instead, he said, “The spies said that it is impossible to overcome the inhabitants of the land by natural means. But didn’t God wage war for us supernaturally when Moses split the sea? The spies said that even if God will fight for us *inside* the land, there is no guarantee that He will help us overcome the hostile nations blocking our entry into it. But, in Moses’ merit, hasn’t God been

35. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 48-52. 36. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 81. 37. Exodus 17:7-16. 38. Above, 11:1.

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31 וְגִבְרִיָּא דִּי סְלִיקוּ עִמָּה אָמְרוּ לֹא נִבְּוֵל לְמַסַּק לְוֹת עֵמָא אֲרִי תְקִיף הוּא מְנַנָּא: 32 וְאִפְּיִקוּ שׁוּם בִּישׁ עַל אֲרַעָא דִּי אֵלִילוּ יְתֵה לְוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימַר אֲרַעָא דִּי עֲבַרְנָא בָּהּ לְאֵלְלָא יְתֵה אֲרַע מְקַשְׁלַת יְתִבְהָא הִיא וְכָל עֵמָא דִּי חֲזִינָא יְתִבְהָא אֲנָשִׁין דְּמַשְׁחִין: 33 וְתַמָּן חֲזִינָא יְת גִּבְרִיָּא בְּנֵי עֲנַק מִן גִּבְרִיָּא וְהוֹינָא בְּעֵינֵי נַפְשָׁנָא כְּקַמְצִין וְכֵן חֲזִינָא בְּעֵינֵיהוֹן: 14:1 וְאֲרִימַת כָּל כְּנֻשָׁתָא וִיחִבּוּ יְת קְלָהוֹן וְכִבּוּ עֵמָא בְּלִילָא הַהוּא:

31 וְהַאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר עָלוּ עִמּוֹ אָמְרוּ לֹא נִבְּוֵל לְעֵלוֹת אֶל־הָעָם כִּי־חֹזֶק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ: 32 וַיֵּצִיאוּ דְבַת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תָּרוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר עֲבַרְנוּ בָּהּ לְתוֹר אֹתָהּ אֶרֶץ אֲכָלֶת יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ הִוא וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־רָאיֵנוּ בְּתוֹכָהּ אֲנָשִׁי מְדוּת: 33 וְשָׁם רָאיֵנוּ אֶת־הַנְּפִילִים בְּנֵי עֲנַק מִן־הַנְּפִילִים וְנָהִי בְּעֵינֵינוּ כְּחַגְבִּים וְכֵן הָיִינוּ בְּעֵי־נֵיהֶם: 14:1 וַתִּשָּׂא כָל־הָעֵדָה וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת־קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ הָעָם בְּלִילָהּ הַהוּא:

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וְכֵן: "אִישׁ מְדוּן"<sup>16</sup>, "אִישׁ מְדָה"<sup>17</sup>: 33 הַנְּפִילִים. עֲנָקִים מְבַנֵּי שְׂמֻחָזַאי וְעֶזְאֵל שֶׁנִּפְּלוּ מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם בִּימֵי דוֹר אָנוּשׁ: וְכֵן הָיִינוּ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם. שֶׁמַּעֲנוּ אוֹמְרִים זֶה לָזֶה: נְמָלִים יֵשׁ בְּכַרְמִים כְּאֲנָשִׁים: עֲנַק. שֶׁמַּעֲנִיקִים חֲמָה בְּקוֹמָתוֹ: 1 כָּל הָעֵדָה. סְנֵהֲדָאוֹת:

31 חֹזֶק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ. כִּבְיָכוֹל כְּלָפֵי מַעְלָה אָמְרוּ: 32 אֲכָלֶת יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ. בְּכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁעֲבַרְנוּ מְצָאנוֹם קוֹבְרֵי מֵתִים. וְהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֹשֶׂה לְטוֹבָה, כְּדִי לְטַרְדֵם בְּאֲבָלָם וְלֹא יִתְּנוּ לָב לְאֵלוֹ: אֲנָשִׁי מְדוּת. גְּדוּלִים וְגִבּוּהִים וְצִרִיף לְתַת לָהֶם מְדָה, כְּגוֹן גְּלִית: "גְּבַהוּ שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת וְזֵרַת"<sup>15</sup>,

15. שמואלא ז, ד. 16. שמואלב כא, כ. 17. דבה"א יא, כג.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

resilience was a gift, while Caleb's was selfmade. Because Caleb's resilience was the product of his own efforts, his faith had a stronger impact: he was able to silence the doubts of all the people, even the spies. Furthermore, because God desires our effort,<sup>48</sup> He grants us access to His boundlessness when He sees us doing our best. Thus, Caleb, who had fought doubt with his own efforts, reached this boundlessness, where impossibilities do not exist and "the heavens can be ascended."<sup>49</sup>

Moses instructed the spies to check on two important pieces of information: the enemy and the land. "The people that dwells in it—is it strong or weak? Is it few or numerous? And how is the land in which it dwells—is it good or is it bad?... Is it fertile or lean?"

The spies returned with their report. "The land flows with milk and honey. But the people that dwells in the land is very powerful...."

Upon hearing this report, Caleb immediately silenced them. So far, all that they had done was to answer the questions Moses had asked. Yet, Caleb already sensed that their approach was not right.

Moses had commanded the spies first to first check the people—the details necessary to wage the war—and only afterwards to ascertain the extent of the reward, the fertility of the land. Their reply, however, dealt first with the wealth that awaited them.

As soon as Caleb realized that their focus was upon the reward, he silenced them. He understood that when we serve God merely because of the promised incentives, we are only prepared to expend effort commensurate with the perceived value of the prize. The spies' focus, therefore, was certain to lead to the eventual result: their declaration that under the circumstances it was not worthwhile to attempt to enter the Land.

Caleb knew that Moses' directives must be followed to the letter, for even the smallest digression can lead far astray.<sup>50</sup>

**33 Shamchazai and Azael:** The Midrash relates that—although their original intentions were good—these angels eventually became more corrupt than the humans of their generation.

By referring to these fallen angels, the spies bolstered their argument that living a holy life in the corporeal world is impossible. After all, look what happens when even angels enter the earth: they become corrupt, fallen angels.

To this Caleb and Joshua answered, "If God desires us"—if God wants us to sanctify the physical world, then "He will bring us to this land and give it to us"—He has given us the power to do this. We have an advantage over the angels: the soul is "literally a part of God,"<sup>51</sup> and, like its Creator, stands beyond the dissonance of heaven and earth.<sup>52</sup>

48. Job 14:15. 49. Likutei Sichot, vol. 8, p. 90 ff. 50. Likutei Sichot, vol. 4, pp. 1313-1314. 51. Tanya, chapter 2; cf. Job 31:1. 52. Likutei Sichot, vol. 28, pp. 91-92.

we doubt God's protection and He provided it anyway?" Having refuted their contentions,<sup>39</sup> he concluded, "Surely, even if Moses tell us to ascend to heaven on ladders, **we can successfully go up and take possession of it, for if Moses tells us we can succeed, we can indeed overcome it no matter how hard it may seem.**"

**31 But the men who had gone up with him said** in reply, "What difference does it make if God is on our side? **We cannot go up against this people, for they are stronger than Him:** God Himself cannot overcome them!"

**32** In order to prove this point, **they gave an evil report to the Israelites about the land that they had inspected, saying, "The land we traveled through to inspect is a land that consumes its inhabitants** unnaturally: everywhere we went they were burying their dead." In fact, God had arranged this so the local populace would not notice the presence of the spies, but instead of recognizing this as God's providence, the spies interpreted it negatively. **"And,"** they continued, **"all the people we saw in it are men of unnaturally great size.**

**33 There we saw** not only the mortal giants we mentioned before, but also *supernatural* giants: **fallen** angels, who are **descendants of Og,**<sup>40</sup> **a giant descended from the original fallen** angels, Shamchazai and Azael, who assumed material form and descended to earth in the days of Enosh.<sup>41</sup> These angels were involved with the beginnings of idolatry, so their race is therefore quite capable of rebelling against God. Even the names of these angelic progenitors indicate rebellion and destruction: *Shamchazai* means 'vision of desolation,' while *Azael* means 'a mighty angel' and is phonetically similar to *Azazel*,<sup>42</sup> the name of a desolate, rocky cliff. Furthermore, since their descendant, Og, survived the Flood,<sup>43</sup> it is clear that God has made at least some members of this race immune to Divine punishment. And these giants were much larger than the mortal giants we saw in Hebron: **we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves next to them, and so did we seem to them,** for we overheard them saying that there are ants in the vineyards that look like people!"<sup>44</sup>

**14:1** When they heard that it would require supernatural power to overcome the inhabitants of the land, the people did not believe that God would manifest such power.<sup>45</sup> **The entire congregation** of judges, the 70 elders, **raised their voices and shouted, and the people wept that night,** the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av.

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**30 We shall surely ascend:** According to the Talmud,<sup>46</sup> Caleb said, "Even if our destination were the heavens, and Moses would tell us to make ladders and ascend, we would succeed in all that he instructs."

Both Joshua and Caleb equally defied the doubt of their colleagues and declared that the people could conquer the land. However, a close look at their words shows a subtle difference between them. Firstly, when *both* of them spoke, the entire nation wished to stone them; but when *Caleb* alone spoke, he quieted the entire nation, including the spies. Secondly, when both of them spoke they used logical reasoning: "do not fear the people of the land, since

their protector is gone" (meaning that the righteous among them had died<sup>47</sup>), whereas Caleb himself, in addition to presenting logical arguments, said that they could accomplish even the logically impossible when following Moses' command and "ascend to heaven."

These differences reflect an essential distinction in the way Joshua and Caleb resisted the influence of their colleagues: Joshua received inspiration from Moses, who had prayed for him before he left for Canaan. Caleb, on the other hand, sought inspiration on his own. While in Canaan, he prayed at the graves of the patriarchs in Hebron. Joshua's

39. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 8, pp. 82-93. 40. Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai, *Pnei David ad loc.*; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, p. 89, note 38. 41. See Genesis 6:4. 42. Leviticus 16:8. 43. See on Genesis 14:13. 44. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, pp. 85-91. 45. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 109-110. 46. *Sotah* 35a; cited by Rashi. 47. Rashi.

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2 וְאֶתְרַעְמוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהְרֹן כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ לְהוֹן כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא לְוֵי דְמִיתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם אוֹ בְּמִדְבָּרָא הַדִּין לְוֵי דְמִיתְנָא: 3 וְלֵמָּא יֵי מַעַל יִתְנָא לְאַרְעָא הַדָּא לְמַנְפַּל בְּחֻרְבָּא וְנִשְׁנָא וְטַפְלָנָא יְהוֹן לְבֹזָא הַלָּא טַב לָנָא דְנִתְּוּב לְמִצְרַיִם: 4 וְאָמְרוּ גְבַר לְאַחֻזְיָה גְּמִנֵי רִישָׁא וְנִתְּוּב לְמִצְרַיִם: 5 וְנִפְּל מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן עַל אַפְיְהוֹן קָדָם כָּל קְהֵלָא כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 6 וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּר נֹון וְכָלֵב בֶּר יִפְנָה מִן מַאֲלֵלֵי יֵת אַרְעָא בְּזַעוּ לְבוּשִׁיהוֹן: 7 וְאָמְרוּ לְכָל כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימַר אַרְעָא דֵּי עֵבְרָנָא בַּה לְאֵלְלָא יְתָה טַבָּא אַרְעָא לְחֻדָּא לְחֻדָּא: 8 אַם רַעֵנָא בְּנָא מִן קָדָם יֵי וְיַעַל יִתְנָא לְאַרְעָא הַדָּא וְיִתְנַנְּהָ לָנָא אַרְעָא דֵּי הִיא עֵבְדָּא חֵלֵב וְדִבְשׁ: 9 בְּרַם כְּמִימְרָא דֵּי לָא תִמְרְדוּן וְאַתּוּן לָא תִדְחֻלוּן מִן עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא אַרְי בִּידְנָא מְסִירִין אַנּוּן עֲדָא תִקְפְּהוּן מַנְהוּן וּמִימְרָא דֵּי בְּסַעֲדָנָא לָא תִדְחֻלוּן מְנַהוּן:

2 וַיִּלְנוּ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם כָּל־הָעֵדָה לֹא־מִתְּנוּ בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה לֹא־מִתְּנוּ: 3 וְלֵמָּה יְהוָה מְבִיא אֹתָנוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְנַפֵּל בְּחֶרֶב נַשִּׁינוּ וּטְפָנוּ יֵהוּ לָבוּ הַלֹּא טוֹב לָנוּ שׁוּב מִצְרַיִם: 4 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו נִתְּנָה רָאשׁ וְנִשׁוּבָה מִצְרַיִם: 5 וַיִּפֹּל מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם לִפְנֵי כָל־קְהַל עַדַּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 6 וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון וְכָלֵב בֶּן־יִפְנֵה מִן־הַתְּהַרִים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ קָרְעוּ בְּגֵדֵיהֶם: 7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־כָּל־עַדַּת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר עֵבְרָנוּ בָּהּ לְתוֹר אֹתָהּ טוֹבָה הָאָרֶץ מְאֹד מְאֹד:

◆ **שלישי 8** אִם־חִפְּזִין בָּנוּ יְהוָה וְהֵבִיא אֹתָנוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְנִתְּנָה לָנוּ אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־הִיא זֶבֶת חֵלֵב וְדִבְשׁ: 9 אַךְ בִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵל־תִּמְרְדוּ וְאַתֶּם אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־עַם הָאָרֶץ כִּי לְחַמְנוּ הֵם סָר צַלְמֵם מֵעֲלֵיהֶם וַיְהוָה אֹתָנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

RASHI

**כי לחמנו הם.** נאכלם בלחם: **סר צלם.** מגנם וזקקם — בשרים שבהם מתו: איוב שהיה מגן עליהם. דבר אחר: צלו של המקום סר מעליהם:

2 **לו מתנו.** הלואי ומתנו: 4 **ניתנה ראש.** בתרגומו: 'נמני רישא' — נשים עלינו מלך. ורבותינו פרשו<sup>61</sup> לשון עבודה זרה: 9 **אל תמרדו.** ושוב — 'ואתם אל תיראו':

18. פסיקתא זוטרתי.

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of his time to Me; that little bit is most precious, and brings Me the greatest joy."<sup>60</sup>

7-8 **The land...is an exceedingly good land. If God desires us, He will bring us to this land:** As mentioned before, the spies wished to remain in the desert, where they could devote themselves properly to the intellectual pursuit of Torah study, unencumbered by the trials and tribulations of the mundane life they would face in the Promised Land. Joshua and Caleb gave them a twofold answer:

- *The land is very, very good.* Studying the Torah is good, but elevating mundane reality by performing God's commandments is "very, very good," for in this way we can reach an even higher spiritual level.
- *If God desires:* Secondly, entering the Promised Land is also God's desire, and we should fulfill it with no second thoughts.<sup>61</sup>

9 **Do not fear:** Since time immemorial, those who aspire to do what is right have faced opposition and

even ridicule. Yet, the Code of Jewish Law begins with the instruction: Do not be embarrassed by the mockers. When God is with you, there is no reason for fear.<sup>62</sup>

**For they are our bread:** By referring to the inhabitants of the land as "bread," Joshua and Caleb implied two things:

- Bread is the archetypal human food, produced specifically for human consumption. Similarly, said Joshua and Caleb, there is no reason to fear the people, for the Land of Israel was designated specifically for us, for Jewish settlement.
- A lot of hard work is required to make a loaf of bread, from tilling the land and planting it all the way through grinding the flour and baking it. Yet, when the labor is complete, the end product is a form of food that is both a pleasure to eat and satisfies us for a long time. For these reasons, there is a special blessing recited only on bread.

The same is true of the work required to conquer

60. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, pp. 581-582, vol. 13, pp. 195-197. 61. *Hitva'aduyot* 5746, vol. 3, pp. 653-654. 62. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 272.

2 All the Israelites except for the tribe of Levi<sup>53</sup> complained against Moses and Aaron, and the entire congregation of judges said, "If only we had died in Egypt, or if only we had died in this desert.

3 Why is God taking us to this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be spoils of war. Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?"

4 The men said to each other, "Let us appoint a new leader and return to Egypt! And let us worship a new god, and return to the religion of Egypt!" The women, however, did not rebel.<sup>54</sup>

5 Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire community of the Israelites, pleading with them not to rebel.

6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Yefuneh, who were among those who had inspected the land, tore their clothes as a sign of distress

7 and spoke to the entire community of the Israelites, saying, "The land we traveled through to inspect is an exceedingly good land.

◆ *Third Reading* 8 If God desires us, He will bring us to this land and give it to us, this land flowing with milk and honey.

9 Just do not rebel against God, and then you will not need to fear the people of that land, for as long as we follow God's will they are ours to consume, as easily as our bread<sup>55</sup>—not like the spies said, that the land will consume *us*. *Their* Divine protection has departed from them, for while we were there we heard that the last, most righteous individual among them, Job,<sup>56</sup> had just died. Thus, the condition that God placed on our conquest has been fulfilled,<sup>57</sup> and He is with us; do not fear them!"

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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3 Our...children will be spoils of war: It would seem that the spies chose to stress the plight of the young children in order to arouse the sympathies of the people. However, the fact that God's answer also stresses specifically the "young children" (rather than simply "the children," "the younger generation," or the like) proves that somehow the infants are really the crux of the discussion.

The first reference to young children (*taf*) in the Torah is when Joseph sent bread to his brothers "according to the children."<sup>58</sup> Our sages comment that he sent enough to provide even for the young children, "who crumble more than they eat."<sup>59</sup>

Spiritually, our "bread," or staple, is the holy Torah. It is consumed differently by various groups of people: The "adults," those who are fully developed in their appreciation of Torah, do not waste any of it or any opportunity to learn it. They devote the bulk of their time to Torah study, and fully assimilate it into their lives and beings. The "children," on the other hand, those who are weak in knowledge and spiritual maturity, "crumble more than they eat." The bulk of their time and

energy is expended on mundane matters. Furthermore, even the little bit of Torah study and observance that they do find time for is mingled with other concerns and motives, and thus more of it is "crumbled" rather than internalized.

The complaint of the spies, as explained in the overview, was that they felt they were better off in the wilderness, unfettered by the bothers of a material world. Their main worry was about the "children"—those who would undoubtedly lose focus when faced with the realities of the physical world and fritter away their time on mundane irrelevancies.

God's reply, however, was that they were completely mistaken. "On the contrary," He said. "My primary satisfaction is not from the intellectual greats of the generation of the wilderness. It is these simple 'young children,' the ones who will deal with the distractions of the physical Land of Israel, who bring Me the greatest joy. For when a person is challenged—either just beginning to learn or facing the obstacles of having to earn a living—and yet manages to overcome these challenges and devote some

53. See above, on 13:1, and below, 14:29. 54. Rashi on Numbers 26:64. 55. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 164. 56. See on Exodus 1:10; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 163, note 18. 57. See above, on 13:20. 58. Genesis 47:12. 59. *Leket Tov ad loc.*; cf. *Pesachim* 10b.

— ONKELOS —

10 ואמרו כל כנשתא למרגם  
יתחון באבניא ויקרא דיי אתגלי  
במשכן ומנא לכל בני ישראל:  
11 ואמר יי למשה עד אימתי יהון  
מרגוזין קדמי עמא הדין ועד אימתי  
לא יהימנון במימרי בכל אתרא  
די עבדית ביניהון: 12 אמחונן  
במותא ואשיצנון ואעביד יתך  
לעם רב ותקיף מנהון: 13 ואמר  
משה קדם יי וישמעון מצראי  
ארי אסקתא בחילך ית עמא הדין  
מביניהון: 14 ויימרון ליתב ארעא  
הדא דשמעו ארי את יי שכינתך  
שריא בגו עמא הדין די בעיניהון  
חון שכינת יקרא דיי ועננך מטל  
עלהון ובעמודא דעננא את  
מדבר קדמיהון ביממא ובעמודא  
דאשא בליליא: 15 ותקטל ית  
עמא הדין בגברא חד ויימרון  
עממאי די שמעו ית שמע גבורתך  
למימרי: 16 מדלית יוכלא קדם יי  
לאעלא ית עמא הדין לארעא די  
קים להון וקטלנון במדברא:

10 ויאמרו כל־העדה לרגום אתם באבנים וכבוד יהוה  
נראה באהל מועד אל־כל־בני ישראל: פ  
11 ויאמר יהוה אל־משה עד־אנה ינאצני העם הזה  
ועד־אנה לא־יאמינו כי בכל האתות אשר עשיתי בקר  
רב: 12 אכנו בדבר ואורשנו ואעשה אתך לגוי־גדול  
ועצום ממנו: 13 ויאמר משה אל־יהוה ושמעו מצרים  
ביהעלית בכחך את־העם הזה מקרב: 14 ואמרו אל־  
יושב הארץ הזאת שמעו כי־אתה יהוה בקרב העם הזה  
אשר־עין בעין נראה אתה יהוה ועננך עמד עליהם וב־  
עמד ענן אתה הלך לפניהם יומם ובעמוד אש לילה:  
15 והמתה את־העם הזה כאיש אחד ואמרו הגוים  
אשר־שמעו את־שמעך לאמר: 16 מבלתי יכלת יהוה  
להביא את־העם הזה אל־הארץ אשר־נשבע להם  
וישחטם במדבר:

— RASHI —

היא: 14 ואמרו אל יושב הארץ הזאת. כמו: "על יושב  
הארץ הזאת", ומה יאמרו עליהם? מה שאמור בסוף  
הענין: "מבלתי יכלת ה'", בשביל ששמעו כי אתה ה'  
שוכן בקרבם, ועין בעין אתה נראה להם, והכל בדרך  
חבה, ולא הפירו בך שנתקה אהבתך מהם עד הנה:  
15 והמתה את העם הזה כאיש אחד. פתאם, ומתוך  
כך יאמרו הגוים אשר שמעו וגו': 16 מבלתי יכלת  
וגו'. לפי שיושבי הארץ חוקים וגבורים, ואינו דומה  
פרעה לשלשים ואחד מלכים. זאת יאמרו על יושב  
הארץ הזאת: מבלתי יכלת. מתוך שלא היה יכלת בידו  
להביאם — שחטם: יכלת. שם דבר הוא:

10 לרגום אתם. את יהושע וכלב: וכבוד ה'. העין  
ירד שם: 11 עד אנה. עד היכן: ינאצני. ירגיזוני: בכל  
האתות. בשביל כל הנסים שעשיתי להם היה להם  
להאמין שהיכלת בידי לקיים הבטחתי: 12 ואורשנו.  
לשון "תרוכין". ואם תאמר: מה אעשה לשבועת  
אבות? ואעשה אתך לגוי גדול. שאתה מורעם:  
13 ושמעו מצרים. ושמעו את אשר תהרגם: כי העלית.  
"כי" משמש בלשון "אשר". והם ראו אשר העלית  
בכחך הגדול אותם מקרבם, וכשישמעו שאתה הורגם,  
לא יאמרו שחטאו לה, אלא יאמרו: שפגגדם יכלת  
להלחם, אבל פגג יושבי הארץ לא יכלת להלחם. וזו

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

of His people it is not a "massacre" but a "ritual slaughtering," an *elevation* for those being killed, just as ritually slaughtering an animal elevates it to a higher level of existence: being fit for human consumption.)

Therefore, when Moses argued to spare the Israelites, he did not argue, as he did after the sin of the Golden Calf, that God should spare them for their own sake. For their own sake, they should be killed, since they had proven themselves unwilling to fulfill the mission set out for them. By doubting God's

power for the tenth time, they demonstrated that they were not interested in achieving on their own the level of faith required of them.

Therefore, Moses' only qualm was with what the Egyptians would say: that God was unable to take the people into the land, so He had to "slaughter them in the desert." Moses said to God: You want to end the lives of the Israelites because of their lack of belief, but if you kill them in the desert, You will only succeed in *diminishing* humanity's belief in Your power.<sup>65</sup>

65. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 96-103.

10 Still, **the entire community** of judges **threatened to pelt** Joshua and Caleb **with stones** for opposing them, **but the glory of God** appeared to **all the Israelites** in the form of a cloud that descended and rested **in front of the Tent of Meeting**. Understanding this as a sign that God wished to address Moses, they desisted.

11 This was the tenth time the people had challenged God to demonstrate His power instead of believing in it implicitly. **God said to Moses**, “Since the people have demonstrated that they do not wish to believe in Me, **how long** should I let **this people** continue to **provoke Me**? **How long** should I let them continue to **refuse to believe in Me**, **despite all the signs I have performed in their midst**?

12 They have betrayed their mission in this world, so I now have only one choice: **I must strike them with pestilence and annihilate them!** As for My oath to the patriarchs to give the land to their descendants, **I will make you into a nation, greater and stronger than they.”**

13 **Moses said to God**, “True, they have forfeited their right to continue to live. **But** if You annihilate them as You propose to, **the Egyptians will hear of it, and they have seen that You brought this nation out of their midst with great power.**

14 **They will say about the inhabitants of this land** that even though You could overcome the Egyptians, You cannot overcome them. They might indeed realize that You are wiping out the Israelites for their own good, for they **have heard that You, O God, are in the midst of this people; that You, God, appear to them in plain sight, that Your cloud rests over them, and that You go before them with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of cloud by night.** All of this indicates how much You favor the Israelites.

15 Nonetheless, **if You kill this nation** suddenly, **as if You were killing one man, the nations who have heard of Your reputation will say as follows:**

16 ‘Why didn’t He wait to punish them until He brought them into the land, as He promised? It must be that **since God was unable to bring this nation to the land which He swore to them, He slaughtered them in the desert.** The inhabitants of Canaan are strong, and it is harder to battle a number of kings than it is to battle one Pharaoh.’<sup>63</sup>

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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both the physical and spiritual Land of Israel. “There is no doubt that there will be hardships,” declared Joshua and Caleb, “but eventually you will thank God even for the difficulties, for through them you were able to settle the Land of Israel.”<sup>64</sup>

**12 I must...annihilate them:** God does not punish in order to exact revenge; He punishes in order to enable a person to reach the next level of his spiritual development. By failing to meet the challenge he was presented with, the person demonstrated that he is unwilling to reach this next level on his own.

If a person’s punishment is death, it means:

- that he has shown that he is unwilling to fulfill his purpose on earth altogether. Removing him

from this life is therefore to his benefit, for living a life of blessing is predicated on fulfilling one’s Divine purpose; were this person to stay alive, it would only be torture for him.

- that his death will serve as an atonement for him so that he can live in peace in the afterlife.

So when God threatened to kill off the Israelites—and eventually did so over forty years—it was not a merciless massacre, but the only way of taking them where they needed to be.

(Moses alluded to this by referring to the way God would kill of the people as “slaughtering.” By using this unexpected, jarring term, he implied that even the Egyptians understood that if God ends the lives

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63. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 92-103. 64. *Hitva’aduyot* 5745, vol. 4, pp. 2300-2301.

ONKELOS

17 ובען סגי בען חילא קדמך ??  
 כמא די מללתא למימר: 18 ??  
 מחק רגו ומסגי למעבד טבון  
 שבק לעון ולמרוד סלח לדתיבין  
 לאוריתה ולדלא תיבין לא מזבין  
 מסער חובי אבון על בנין מרדן  
 על דר תליתי ועל דר רביעי:  
 19 שבוק בען לחובי עמא הדין  
 פסגיאות טבונך וכמא דשבקתא  
 לעמא הדין ממצרים ועד בען:  
 20 ואמר ?? שבקית כפתגמך:  
 21 וברם קים אנא ומליא יקרא  
 די? ית כל ארעא: 22 ארי כל  
 גבריא דחזו ית יקרי ית אנותי די  
 עבדית במצרים ובמדברא ונסיאו  
 קדמי דנן עשר זמנין ולא קבילו  
 למימר: 23 אם יחזון ית ארעא  
 די קימית לאבדהתון וכל דארגיו  
 קדמי לא יחזנה: 24 ועבדי קלב  
 חלף דיהה רוח אחרי עמה ואשלם  
 בתר דחלתי ואעלנה לארעא  
 די על לתמן ובנוהי יתרכנה:  
 25 ועמלקאה וכנענאה יתב  
 במישרא מחר אתפנו וטולו לכוון  
 למדברא ארח ימא דסוף:

17 ועתה יגדלנא פח אדני כאשר דברת לאמר:  
 18 יהוה ארך אפים ורחימוס נשא עון ופשע ונקמה לא  
 ינקמה פלךד עון אבות על-בנים על-שלשים ועל-רבעים:  
 19 סלחנא לעון העם הזה כגדל חסדך וכאשר נשא-  
 תה לעם הזה ממצרים ועד-הנה: 20 ויאמר יהוה סל-  
 חתי בדברך: 21 ואולם חי-אני וימלא כבוד-יהוה את-  
 כל-הארץ: 22 כי כל-האנשים הראים את-כבדך ואת-  
 אתתי אשר-עשיתי במצרים ובמדבר וינסו אתי זה עשר  
 פעמים ולא שמעו בקולי: 23 אם-יראו את-הארץ אשר  
 נשבעתי לאבתם וכל-מנאצי לא יראוה: 24 ועבדי קלב  
 עקב היתה רוח אחרת עמו וימלא אתרי והביאתיו אל-  
 הארץ אשר-בא שמה וזרעו יורשנה: 25 והעמלקי והכ-  
 נעני יושב בעמק מחר פנו וסעו לכם המדבר דרך ים-  
 סוף: פ

RASHI

במגפה הזאת לאמר: מבלתי יכלת ה' להביאם, שלא  
 אמיתם פתאם כאיש אחד, אלא באחור ארבעים שנה,  
 מעט מעט: 22 וינסו. כמשמעו: זה עשר פעמים. שנים  
 בים, ושנים במן, ושנים בשלן וכו', כדאיאתא במסכת  
 ערכין<sup>19</sup>: 23 אם יראו. לא יראו: לא יראו  
 את הארץ: 24 רוח אחרת. שתי רוחות: אחת בפנה  
 ואחת בלב. למרגלים אמר: "אני עמכם בעצה". ובלבו  
 היה לומר האמת, ועל ידי כן היה בו פח להשתיקם,  
 כמו שנקמר: "ויהס כלב"<sup>20</sup>, שהיו סבורים שיאמר  
 כמותם, והו שנקמר בספר יהושע: "ואשב אתו דבר  
 כאשר עם לבבי"<sup>21</sup>, ולא "כאשר עם פיי". וימלא אחרי.  
 וימלא את לבו אחרי, וזה מקרא קצר: אשר בא שמה.  
 חברון תנתן לו: יורשנה. בתרגומו: "יתרכנה", יורישו  
 את הענקים ואת העם אשר בה. ואין לתרגמו "יתנה",  
 אלא במקום "יורשנה": 25 והעמלקי וגו'. אם תלכו שם  
 יהרגו אתכם, מאחר שאיני עמכם: מחר פנו. לאחוריים  
 וסעו לכם וגו':

17 יגדל נא פח אדני. לעשות דבורך: כאשר דברת  
 לאמר. ומהו הדבור: 18 ה' ארך אפים. לצדיקים  
 ולרשעים. כשעלה משה למרום מצאו משה להקדוש  
 ברוך הוא שהיה יושב וכותב: "ה' ארך אפים". אמר לו:  
 "לצדיקים?" אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: "אף לרשעים".  
 אמר לו: "רשעים יאבדו"! אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא:  
 "היניי, שתצטרך לדבר". כשחטאו ישראל בעגל  
 ובמרגלים התפלל משה לפניו ב"אך אפים". אמר לו  
 הקדוש ברוך הוא: "והלא אמרת לי לצדיקים!" אמר  
 לו: "והלא אמרת לי: אף לרשעים!" ונקמה. לשבים: לא  
 ינקמה. לשאינן שבים: 20 בדברך. בשביל מה שאמרת:  
 "פן יאמרו מבלתי יכלת ה'": 21 ואולם. כמו "אבל זאת  
 אעשה להם": חי אני. לשון שבועה — בשם שאני חי  
 וכבודי ימלא את כל הארץ, כך אקים להם, "כי כל  
 האנשים הראים וגו', אם יראו את הארץ". הרי זה  
 מקרא מסרט: חי אני כי כל האנשים אם יראו את  
 הארץ וכבודי ימלא את כל הארץ, שלא יתחלל שמי

19. טו, א. 20. במדבר יג, ל. 21. יד, ז.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

The lesson here for us is that we must take special care to internalize the implications of all the Divine miracles we have witnessed, both throughout Jewish history and in our own, personal lives. Then, we will be mentally and spiritually ready to experience

our own miraculous return to the Promised Land, led by the Messiah in the final Redemption, and to lead lives permeated by the highest levels of Divine consciousness.<sup>20</sup>

17 **Therefore, please, for Your sake, let the strength of God to forgive be increased, as You spoke—not as I did<sup>66</sup>—when You said,**

18 **‘God is slow to anger both toward the righteous and the wicked, and abundantly kind, forgiving iniquity and transgression, cleansing those who repent and not cleansing those who do not, visiting the iniquities of parents on children only up to the third and fourth generations.’**

19 **Please forgive the iniquity of this nation in accordance with Your abounding kindness, as You have borne this people from Egypt until now.”**

20 **And God said, “I have forgiven them, but only in accordance with your word, i.e., because of your argument about the impression that wiping them out all at once will have on the non-Jewish world, and therefore I will not wipe them out all at once.**

21 **However, this does not change the fact that they have shown themselves unworthy of entering the land in order to fulfill their Divine mission. Therefore, as surely as I live, and as surely as the glory of God fills the earth,**

22 **so do I swear that all the people who perceived My glory and the signs that I performed in Egypt and in the desert—and who nonetheless challenged me these 10 times<sup>67</sup> and did not listen to My voice—**

23 **will not see the land that I swore to their fathers. All who provoked Me this time will not see the land, for I shall do away with them gradually. In this way, My glory will still fill the earth, for My power will not be questioned—as it would have been had I wiped out the whole people at once.**<sup>68</sup>

24 **But as for My servant Caleb, since he pretended to be party to the other spies’ scheme so they would let him speak—while in fact there was a different, righteous spirit within him and he tried to dissuade the people from following them, for he was loyal to Me—I will therefore bring him to the Land of Israel to inherit Hebron, the place to which he came to pray to be saved from their error, and his descendants will drive its present inhabitants out.**

25 **Your enemies, the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley. Since I am no longer planning to help the people enter the land, they will be powerless to overcome these enemies, just as the spies said in order to frighten the people.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, as of tomorrow, we will change direction and journey into the desert, toward the Sea of Reeds.”** In fact however, God did not signal them to leave their present location (Ritmah) until 19 years later.

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✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

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22 **These ten times:** Despite their exalted spiritual level, the generation of the Exodus did not work hard enough to internalize the profound significance of the Divine miracles they witnessed, and therefore remained subject to their “slave mentality,” the assumption that reality is enslaved to the

laws of nature, and that God is unwilling or incapable of overriding them whenever He chooses. Because they could not overcome this way of thinking, they lost the privilege of entering the Promised Land where heightened Divine consciousness was to prevail.

66. See Exodus 34:9. 67. These were: (1) before entering the Red Sea, when they said, “Was it for want of graves in Egypt that you brought us to die in the desert?” (Exodus 14:1); (2) after leaving the Red Sea, when they feared that the Egyptians had crossed as well (Exodus 14:30); (3) when they complained about a lack of water at Marah (Exodus 15:24); (4) when they complained about a lack of meat (Exodus 16:3); (5) when they left over some of the manna (Exodus 16:20); (6) when they went out to collect manna on the Sabbath (Exodus 16:27); (7) when they complained again about a lack of water at Refidim (Exodus 17:1); (8) when they worshipped the Golden Calf (Exodus 32); and (9) when they complained again about a lack of meat (Numbers 11:4) (*Arachin* 15ab). The incidents at Taveirah/Kivrot HaTa’avah (Numbers 10:33, 11:1-34) are not counted because in those cases the Jews did not challenge God’s ability to come to their aid supernaturally; they merely sought pretexts to justify their reluctance to lead religious lives (*Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 104-112). 68. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, pp. 109-110. 69. Above, 13:29.

ONKELOS 26 ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימרו: 27 עד אימתי לכנשתא בשתא הדא די אנון מתרעמין עלי ית תרעמת בני ישראל די אנון מתרעמין עלי שמיע קדמי: 28 אמר להון קים אָנא אמר יי אם לא כמא די מללתון קדמי בן אַעביד לכוּן: 29 במדברא הדין יפלוּן פגריכון וכל מנגיכוּן לכל חשבנכון מבר עשרין שני ולעלא די אתרעמתון עלי: 30 אם אתון תעלוּן לארעא די קימית במימרי לאשראָה יתכון בה אלהין כלב בר יפנה ויהושע בר נון: 31 וטפלוּן די אַמרתון לבנא יהי ואעל יתהון וידעון ית ארעא די קצתון בה: 32 ופגריכון דלכוּן יפלוּן במדברא הדין:

◆ רביעי 26 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר: 27 עַד-מָתַי לָעֵדָה הָרַעְהוּ הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר הִמָּה מַלְיָנִים עָלַי אֶת-תְּלָנוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הִמָּה מַלְיָנִים עָלַי שְׁמַעְתִּי: 28 אָמַר אֱלֹהִים חַי-אַנִּי נְאֻם-יְהוָה אִם-לֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתֶּם בְּאָזְנֵי בֶן אֶעֱשֶׂה לָכֵם: 29 בַּמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה יִפְּלוּ פְגַרְיֹכֶם וְכָל-פְּקֻדֵיכֶם לְכָל-מַסְפְּרָכֶם מִבְּנֵי עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמֵעַתָּה לֹא אֲשֶׁר הִלְיַנְתֶּם עָלַי: 30 אִם-אַתֶּם תָּבֹאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת-יָדִי לְשַׁבֵּן אֶתְכֶם בְּהָ בִּי אִם-כָּלֵב בֶּן-יִפְנֶה וַיהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון: 31 וְטַפְלֹכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם לְבוֹ יִהְיֶה וְהֵבִיאֲתִי אֲתֶם וַיִּדְעוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר מְאַסְתֶּם בְּהָ: 32 וּפְגַרְיֹכֶם אֲתֶם יִפְּלוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה: 33 וּבְנֵיכֶם יִהְיוּ רָעִים בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וְנִשְׂאוּ אֶת-זְנוּתֵיכֶם עַד-תֵּתֶם פְּגַרְיֹכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר:

RASHI

לשון זה כאן לומר "אתם": 33 ארבעים שנה. לא מת אחד מהם פחות מכן ששים, לכן נגזר ארבעים, כדי שיהיו אותם של בני עשרים מגיעים לכלל ששים. ושנה ראשונה היתה בכלל, ואף על פי שקדמה לשלוח המרגלים, לפי שמשעשו את העגל עלתה גזרה זו במחשבה, אלא שהמתין להם עד שתתמלא סאתם, וזהו שנאמר: "וביום פקדי" — במרגלים — "ופקדתי עליהם חטאתם". ואף כאן נאמר: "תשאו את עונותיכם" — שני עונות: של עגל ושל תלויה, וחשב להם במנין חייהם מקצת שנה ככלה, וכשנכנסו לשנת ששים מתו אותם של בני עשרים: ונשאו את זנותיכם. כתרגומו: "ויקבלון ית חוביכוֹן".

27 לעדה הרעה וגו'. אלו המרגלים. מכאן ל"עדה" שהיא עשרה: אשר המה מלינים. את ישראל עלי: את תלנות בני ישראל אשר המה — המרגלים — "מלינים אותם עלי, שמעתי": 28 חי אני. לשון שבועה: "אם לא כן אעשה", כפיכּוּל איני חי": באשר דברתם. שבקשתם ממני: "או במדבר הזה לו מתנו": 29 וכל פקדיכם לכל מספרכם. כל הנמנה לכל מספר שאתם נמנין בו, כגון לצאת ולבא לצבא ולתת שקלים, כל המנויים לכל אותן מספרות ומותו, ואלו הן: "מבן עשרים שנה וגו'", להוציא שבטו של לוי, שאין פקודיהם מבן עשרים: 32 ופגריכם אתם. כתרגומו, לפי שדבר על הבנים להכניסם לארץ, ובקש לומר: "ואתם תמותו", נופל

22. במדבר יד, ב. 23. שמות לב, לד.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

**For forty years:** Although the spies' sin only added thirty-nine years to the Israelites stay in the desert—the affair took place in the second year of their journey—the Torah refers to decree as being for forty years.

This alludes to the effect and purpose of their stay in the desert. The number 40 is associated with the ability to understand.<sup>78</sup> A student is considered to have fully assimilated the teachings of his master only forty years after studying them.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, the incident of the spies demonstrated that the Jewish

people did not yet fully "understand" the message of the Torah, as explained above. The forty-year stay in the desert, which was an intensely spiritual experience, brought the Israelites to this level of "understanding." After these forty years, they would be able to enter the earthliness of the land and accomplish their mission there.<sup>80</sup>

**Your children shall wander:** Punishments are administered to correct the wrong committed. But what kind of punishment was it for the generation of the desert to receive what they wanted, namely

78. Avot 5:22. 79. Avodah Zarah 5b. 80. Hitva'aduyot 5747, vol. 3, p. 528.

◆ **Fourth Reading 26** Having finished discussing the fate of the people in general, **God spoke to Moses and Aaron** about the fate of the spies themselves, **saying, 27 “How much longer must I tolerate this evil congregation of spies, who are causing everyone else to complain against Me? I have heard the Israelites’ complaints that the spies make them voice against Me.** Since your argument about what the other nations will say does not apply here, I have to kill them immediately.

28 So now, **say first to the Israelites** what their fate is to be: ‘I swear that **as surely as I live,’ says God, ‘if I do not do to you just as you have spoken in My ears, it will be as if I do not live.**

29 **Your corpses shall fall in this desert,** just as you wished.<sup>71</sup> **All of you who are counted in any tally of those 20 years old and up**—i.e., everyone except those under 20, the Levites (who are counted from the age of one month<sup>72</sup> or 30 years<sup>73</sup>), and the women and the mixed multitude (who are not counted at all)—**will perish because you complained against Me.**

30 And similarly, **if you will enter the land that I swore I would settle you in, except Caleb the son of Yefuneh and Joshua the son of Nun,** it will be as if I do not live.

31 **As for your infants, whom you said will be taken captive as spoils, I will bring them there, and they will come to know the land which You despised.**

32 **But as for you, your corpses shall fall in this desert.**

33 **Your children shall wander in the desert with you for 40 years.** Those of you who are 60 years old or older will die now; the rest of those who were 20 years old or older at the incident of the Golden Calf will die at the age of 60. It will thus take 40 years for you all to die out. In this way, your children **will bear your guilt until the last of your corpses has fallen in the desert.**

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✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

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27 **This evil congregation:** The “evil congregation” is the ten mistaken spies. From this verse it is derived that an “assembly” is defined as a minimum of ten men, since God refers to the ten misbehaving spies as an “assembly.” Thus, those prayers (such as *kaddish*) that may only be recited in the presence of an assembly require the presence of at least ten men.<sup>74</sup>

It seems rather strange that the source in the Torah for the idea of a *minyan*—the quorum required for reciting exceptionally holy prayers—would be from the condemned spies!

The explanation is that, as we have noted, the spies were not evil in the literal sense; indeed, they were on an extremely lofty spiritual level. What they did would not be considered a sin for the average person. It is only because of their sublimity that they were judged so severely. So it is actually quite fitting that the definition of a *minyan*, a holy assem-

bly, is taken from the ten “evil” spies.<sup>75</sup>

33 **Your children shall wander in the desert with you for forty years:** If God’s intent was only to punish the Jews for their reluctance to enter the Land of Israel, there was no reason to keep them wandering in the wilderness. It would have been sufficient to force them to live for forty years in some other settled area, as long as it was outside the Holy Land.

As we have mentioned previously,<sup>76</sup> their wanderings served an added purpose. The desert is an inhospitable place, full of harmful and dangerous creatures. It symbolizes the realm of reality that lies outside the realm of holiness. Wherever the Jews traveled with the Tabernacle, the desert was transformed to an inhabitable, even hospitable place. Their wanderings thus prepared them for their entry into the Holy Land, teaching them how to transform darkness to light and to spiritualize the material.<sup>77</sup>

71. Above, 14:2. 72. See above, 3:40. 73. See above, 4:3. 74. *Megilah* 23b, cited by Rashi. 75. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 85 ff. 76. Above, on 4:22. 77. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 13, pp. 16-17.

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33 ובניכון יהוון מאחרין במדברא ארבעין שנין ויקבלון ית חוביכון עד דיסופון פגריכון במדברא: 34 במנני יומיא די אללתון ית ארעא ארבעין יומין יומא לשתא יומא לשתא תקבלון ית חוביכון ארבעין שנין ותדעון ית דאתרעמתון עלי: 35 אנא יי גורית במימרי אם לא דא אעביד לכל כנשתא בשתא הדא דאודמנו עלי במדברא הדין: סופון ותמן ומותון: 36 וגבריא די שלח משה לאללא ית ארעא ותבו וארעימו עלוהי ית כל כנשתא לאפקא שום ביש על ארעא: 37 ומיתו גבריא דאפיקו שום ביש על ארעא במותנא קדם יי: 38 ויהושע בר נון וכלב בר יפנה אתקומו מן גבריא האגון דאזלו לאללא ית ארעא: 39 ומליל משה ית פתגמא האליו לכל בני ישראל ואתאבלו עמא לחדא: 40 ואקדימו בצפרא וסליקו לריש טורא למימר הא אנהנא סלקין לאתרא די אמר יי ארי חבנא:

34 במספר הימים אשר-תרתם את-הארץ ארבעים יום לשנה יום לשנה תשאול את-עונתיכם ארבעים שנה וידעתם את-הנאותי: 35 אני יהוה דברתי אם-לא ואת אעשה לכל-העדה הרעה הזאת הנועדים עלי במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימתו: 36 והאנשים אשר-שלח משה לתור את-הארץ וישבו וילוונו (וילינו) עליו את-כל-העדה להוציא דבה על-הארץ: 37 וימתו האנשים מוצאי דבת-הארץ רעה במגפה לפני יהוה: 38 ויהושע בין-זו וכלב בין-יפנה חיו מן-האנשים ההם ההלכים לתור את-הארץ: 39 וידבר משה את-הדברים האלה אל-כל-בני ישראל ויתאבלו העם מאד: 40 וישכמו בכפר ויעלו אל-ראש-ההר לאמר הננו ועלינו אל-המקום אשר-אמר יהוה כי חטאנו:

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טבורם ותולעים יוצאים מלשונם ובאין לתוך טבורם, לכה נאמר "במגפה" ולא "במגפה". וזהו "לפני ה'", באותה הראייה להם על פי מדותיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא שהוא מודד מדה כנגד מדה: 38 ויהושע וכלב חיו וגו'. מה תלמוד לומר: "חיו מן האנשים ההם"? אלא, מלמד שנטלו חלקם של מרגלים בארץ, וקמו תחתיהם לחיים: 40 אל ראש ההר. הוא הדרך העולה לארץ ישראל: הננו ועלינו אל המקום. לארץ ישראל: אשר אמר ה'. לתתה לנו, שם נעלה: כי חטאנו. על אשר אמרנו: "הלא טוב לנו שוב מצרימה":

34 את הנאותי. שהניאותם את לבבכם מאחרי. "תנואה" לשון הסרה, כמו: "כי הניא אביה אתה" 36 וישבו וילינו עליו. וכששבו מתור הארץ הרעימו עליו את כל העדה בהוצאת דבה, אותם אנשים — וימתו. כל הוצאת דבה, לשון חנוף דברים שמלקיחים לשונם לאדם לדבר בו. כמו: "דובב שפתי ישנים" 25. וישנה לטובה וישנה לרעה, לכה נאמר כאן: "מוצאי דבת הארץ רעה", שיש דבה שהיא טובה: דבה. פרלידי"ץ בלעז 26: 37 במגפה לפני ה'. באותה מיתה ההגונה להם, מדה כנגד מדה: הם חטאו בלשון, ונשתרבו לשונם עד

24 במדבר ל, ו. 25. שיר השירים ז, י. 26. דבור, רכילות.

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help. What changed? Moses did not show them any great miracles,<sup>89</sup> and God did not appear and perform some heavenly exhibition of His strength. So what caused the people to suddenly change from skeptics to fervent believers?

Our sages point out that every Jew inherently believes in God.<sup>90</sup> So even while the people were voicing their skepticism, they still believed; their belief was just temporarily overridden by a fleeting insanity. Therefore, as soon as God rebuked them and confronted them with the harsh severity of what they had done, they awakened from their stupor. The rebuke broke through the coarseness of their

animal materiality, and the inherent purity of their souls shined once again. They did not have to be convinced of God's abilities; they just needed to be shaken awake.

The same is true of many of the doubts that we suffer from. Our questions are often due to no more than the dominance of the material perspective in our lives, while deep within our hearts we indeed believe in God. In such cases, the proper method of dealing with our doubts is not to attempt to answer them directly but simply to reawaken the pure faith that burns within our souls.<sup>91</sup>

89. Although verse 37 describes the spies dying miraculously, there are opinions according to which this actually happened some time later (in the month of Elul), and that this is recorded here as a tangential note (*Likutei Sichot*, vol. 8, pp. 298-299; vol. 13, p. 46, note 23). 90. *Shabbat* 97a. 91. *Tanya*, end of ch. 29 (37b).

34 Your punishment will be **according to the number of days that your emissaries, the spies, toured the land, 40 days, a day for each year; you will thus bear your two fundamental iniquities**—this one and the sin of serving the Golden Calf—**for 40 years. Thus you will come to know the extent of your alienation from Me.**'

35 **I, God, have spoken: I am nothing if I will not do this to the entire evil community who have assembled against me; in this desert they will end, and there they will die."**

36 **But as for the men whom Moses had sent to inspect the land, since, when they returned from their mission, they caused the entire community to complain against Moses by spreading their report about the land, he could not commute their sentence through his prayer, as he was able to for the rest of the people. By challenging his authority, they weakened his power to act for their benefit.**<sup>81</sup>

37 **Therefore, these men, who spread an evil report about the land, died immediately in a plague suited to them by God's method of punishment, measure for measure. Since they slandered by misusing their tongues, their tongues unrolled down to their navels<sup>82</sup> and worms came out of their tongues and entered their navels, killing them. Their crime was particularly serious because they had recently seen how Miriam was punished for airing her grievances against Moses publicly instead of approaching him personally and privately, yet they did not learn from her mistake. They also failed to learn from how Miriam had underestimated Moses' stature: they felt that if God and Moses had sent them to inspect the land, then no one was more qualified than they were to evaluate the evidence they gathered—including Moses!**<sup>83</sup>

38 **But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Yefuneh remained alive and even received the land-inheritance rights<sup>84</sup> of the other men who went to tour the land.**

39 **Moses related all these words<sup>85</sup> to the Israelites. The people mourned greatly.**

40 **But not all of them accepted God's verdict. Some of them arose early in the morning and ascended to the mountaintop on the route into the land, saying, "We have repented and are ready to go up to the Land of Israel, the place that God said He would give us, for we have sinned by wanting to return to Egypt."**

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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to stay in the Divine atmosphere of the desert, protected by the clouds of glory and provided for by the manna and the well of Miriam? How did giving them what they asked for correct their mistake?

As we explained above, their request was not evil *per se*; it was merely based on a mistaken premise. By expressing their preference for the spiritual life of the desert, they showed that they were not yet ready to deal with the physical world. They proved that they indeed needed another forty years of spiritual sustenance and nurturing before they would

be able to safely descend into the "real" world.<sup>86</sup>

37 **These men...died:** The sages derive from this verse that the spies do not have a portion in the World to Come.<sup>87</sup> The Kabbalistic interpretation of this statement is that the lofty spiritual level that the spies experienced *transcends* the revelations of the World to Come.<sup>88</sup>

40 **We have repented and are ready to go up to the Land of Israel:** The people had refused to proceed toward the Land of Israel because they believed that it was impossible to conquer it, even with God's

81. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 13, pp. 46-47. 82. Cf. Isaiah 57:4. 83. Rashi on 13:1; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, pp. 144-146. 84. See below, on 26:55. 85. I.e., vv. 28-35. 86. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, p. 87. 87. *Sanhedrin* 108a. 88. Cf. *Megaleh Amukot*; sources cited in *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, p. 102, note 60.

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41 ואמר משה למא דנן אתון  
 עברין על גזרת מימרא דיי והיא  
 לא תצלה: 42 לא תסקון ארי לית  
 שכניתא דיי ביניכון ולא תתברון  
 קדם בעלי דבביכון: 43 ארי  
 עמלקא והכנענא תמן קדמיכון  
 ותפלון בהרבא ארי על כן תבתון  
 מבתר פלחא דיי ולא יהי מימרא  
 דיי בסעדיכון: 44 וארשעו למסק  
 להיש טורא וארון קומא דיי ומשה  
 לא עדו מגו משריתא: 45 ונחת  
 עמלקא והכנענא דיתב בטורא  
 ההוא ומחונן וטרדון עד חרמה:  
 15:1 ומליל יי עם משה למימר:  
 2 מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר  
 להון ארי תעלון לארע מותבניכון  
 די אגא יתב לכון:

41 ויאמר משה למה זה אתם עברים אתפי יהוה והוא  
 לא תצלה: 42 אל תעלו כי אין יהוה בקרבכם ולא תגו  
 גפו לפני איביכם: 43 כי העמלקי והכנעני שם לפניכם  
 ונפלתם בהרב כיעל בין שבתם מאחרי יהוה ולא יהיה  
 יהוה עמכם: 44 ויעפלו לעלות אלראש ההר וארון  
 ברית יהוה ומשה לאמשו מקרב המתנה: 45 וירד  
 העמלקי והכנעני הישב בהר ההוא ויכום ויבתום עד  
 החרמה: פ

15:1 וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: 2 דבר אל בני יש  
 ראל ואמרת אליהם כי תבאו אל ארץ מושבותיכם אשר  
 אני נתן לכם:

— RASHI —

— הרכבו חשכים שלא ברשות: 45 ויבתום. כמו: "ואבאת  
 אתו טחון"<sup>99</sup>, מכה אחר מכה: עד החרמה. שם המקום  
 נקרא על שם המארע: 2 כי תבאו. בשר להם שיכנסו  
 לארץ:

41 והוא לא תצלה. זו שאתם עושין, לא תצלה: 43 כי  
 על כן שבתם. כלומר: כי זאת תבא לכם על אשר  
 שבתם וגו': 44 ויעפלו. לשון חזק, וכן: "הנה עפלה"<sup>100</sup>.  
 אינגרי"ש בלעז<sup>101</sup>, לשון עזות, וכן: "עפל בת ציון"<sup>102</sup>,  
 "עפל ובחן"<sup>103</sup>. ומדרש תנחומא מפרשו<sup>104</sup>: לשון אפל

27. חבקוק ב, ד. 28. עזי רות. 29. מיכה ד, ח. 30. ישעיה לב, יד. 31. תנחומא ישן שלח לך יט. 32. דברים ט, כא.

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sacrifices. These laws would not apply for another thirty-nine years, when the Israelites would enter the Land of Israel—the sacrifices they offered in the desert were brought without libations. Yet, God gave them these laws here in order to comfort the second generation and assure them that He intended to bring them into the land.<sup>98</sup>

On a deeper level, God gave these laws here because the concept of the libations is the antithesis—and therefore a rectification—of the spies' mistake.

There is a basic difference between the sacrifices and the libations: the sacrifices were consumed by a heavenly fire and *ascended*, whereas the libations were poured *down* (into two pipes that led beneath the altar underground).<sup>99</sup>

In other words, sacrifices transform the mundane into the holy, while the libations infuse holiness into the mundane. Thus, following the affair of the spies, God instructed the Israelites concerning the libations, as if to say: the time of (relative) transcendence in the desert will come to an end. The entrance into the Land of Israel will mark the true de-

scent into earthliness, signified by the libations.<sup>100</sup>

This idea also explains the statement of the Talmudic sage Rabbi Yochanan that a person who recites the *Shema* while not wearing *tefilin* is like someone who offers sacrifices without libations.<sup>101</sup>

The main theme of the *Shema* is that God pervades and controls all reality, and that this awareness should be so real to us that we are willing to give up our life for God because of it. This is why the *Shema* has always been on the lips Jewish martyrs throughout history. Thus, the *Shema* epitomizes transcendence, the readiness to transcend the world and the physical body.

*Tefilin*, on the other hand, draw Divine awareness into our mind, heart, and even the lower aspects of life. The head *tefilin* draw Divine awareness into the mind; the hand *tefilin* draw Divine awareness into the heart and actions. The straps of the head *tefilin* are required to descend past the navel,<sup>102</sup> drawing the Divine awareness into the lower aspects of one's life.<sup>103</sup>

98. See Nachmanides. 99. *Sukah* 49a. 100. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, p. 617, note 9. 101. *Berachot* 14b. 102. See *Tur*, *Orach Chaim* 27. 103. *Hitvo'aduyot* 5747, vol. 3, p. 525 ff; *Likutei Torah* 3:40a ff.

41 But although they repented, they wished to take the initiative on their own rather than submit to Moses' leadership, so God told Moses to tell them that His decree remained in force and to warn them not to proceed.<sup>92</sup> So **Moses said** to them, **"Why do you transgress the word of God? It will not succeed.**

42 **Do not go up, for God is not among you; do not let yourselves be beaten by your enemies.**

43 **For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you will fall by the sword, because you have turned away from God, and therefore God will not be with you."**

44 Nonetheless, they defiantly ascended to the mountaintop, but neither the Ark of the Covenant of God nor Moses moved from the camp.

45 The Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived on the mountain came down and smote them and crushed them, pursuing them until a place that was then named **Chormah** ["destruction"] because of their defeat (see Figure 2).<sup>93</sup>

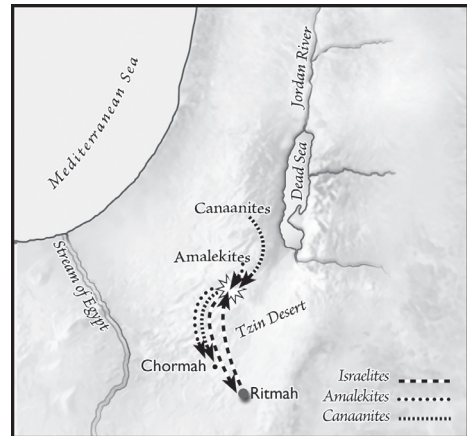


Figure 2: The Unsuccessful Attack

## Grain Offerings and Libations

15:1 Now that this episode was over, God encouraged the people by focusing their attention on the fact that their children would eventually inherit the Land of Israel. He did this by teaching them some laws that would apply only once they entered the land. **God spoke to Moses, saying:**

2 **"Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you arrive in the land of your dwelling place, which I am giving you,**

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41-44 **It will not succeed:** These Jews had repented from the sin of the spies and now declared their readiness to ascend to the Holy Land. Yet, Moses told them that their endeavor would not succeed. Why? We know that nothing ever stands in the way of repentance.<sup>94</sup>

True, the Land of Israel was promised to the Jewish people, and God had instructed them to conquer it. Yet that could only be done if the ark and Moses led the way. Repentance could erase the sins of the people but it could not change the procedure necessary to acquire the land. Since these people were unwilling to submit to Moses' leadership and wanted to conquer the land on their own, their initiative was rejected.

The same is true in our day. However deserving we may or may not be, there is a prescribed procedure

for the Redemption, as described by Maimonides<sup>95</sup>: "A king will arise from the house of David, learned in Torah and observant of the commandments as was David his father, according to the teachings of the Written and Oral Torah. He will influence all of Israel to follow and strengthen it, and he will fight the wars of God.... He [and only he] will build the Temple in its proper place, and gather the exiles of Israel...and he will rectify the entire world so that they serve God together...."<sup>96</sup> Any attempt of ours to bypass steps in the redemptive process is doomed to failure; hastening the Redemption, as success in any endeavor, is possible only if our approach is based on submission to God's plan.<sup>97</sup>

2 **When you arrive in the land:** Following the incident of the spies, God instructed the Israelites regarding the libations that would accompany certain

92. Deuteronomy 1:42. 93. Cf. below, 21:3. 94. Cf. *Y. Peah* 1:1; *Zohar Chadash* 19d; *Igeret HaTeshuvah*, ch. 4 (93b). 95. *Mishneh Torah, Melachim* 11:4. 96. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, p. 327. 97. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 7, p. 280.

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3 ותעבדון קרבנא קדם ?? עלתא או נכסת קדשיא לאפרשא נדרא או בנדבתא או במועדיכון למעבד לאתקבלא ברענא קדם ?? מן תורי או מן ענא: 4 ויקרב דמקרב קרבנא קדם ?? מנחתא סלתא עשרונא דפילא ברבעות הינא משחא: 5 וחמרא לנסכא רבעות הינא תעבד על עלתא או לנכסת קדשיא לאמרא חד: 6 או לדכרא תעבד מנחתא סלתא תרין עשרונין דפילא במשח תלתות הינא: 7 וחמרא לנסכא תלתות הינא תקרב לאתקבלא ברענא קדם ??: 8 וארי תעבד בר תורי עלתא או נכסת קדשיא לפרשא נדרא או נכסת קדשיא קדם ??: 9 ויקרב על בר תורי מנחתא סלתא תלתא עשרונין דפילא במשח פלגות הינא: 10 וחמרא תקרב לנסכא פלגות הינא קרבן דמתקבל ברענא קדם ??: 11 בדין יתעבד לתורא חד או לדכרא חד או לאמר באמריא או בעזיא: 12 כמנן די תעבדון בדין תעבדון לחד כמנניהון: 13 כל יציבא יעבד בדין ית אלין לקרבא קרבן דמתקבל ברענא קדם ??: 14 וארי יתגיר עמכון גיורא או די ביניכון לדריכון יעבד קרבן דמתקבל ברענא קדם ?? כמא די תעבדון כן יעבד:

3 וְעִשְׂיָתֶם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה עֹלָה אוֹזֶבֶחַ לְפִלֵּא־נֹדֶר אוֹ בְנֵי-רָבָה אוֹ בְּמַעֲדֵיכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה מִן-הַבֶּקָר אוֹ מִן-הַצֹּאן: 4 וְהַקָּרִיב הַמִּקְרִיב קִרְבָּנוֹ לַיהוָה מִנְחָה סֵלֶת עֲשָׂרוֹן כֹּלֹל בְּרַבְעֵית הַחֵיץ שֶׁמֶן: 5 וַיִּזֵּן לַנֶּסֶךְ רַב־בֵּיעֵית הַחֵיץ תַּעֲשֶׂה עַל-הָעֹלָה אוֹ לְזֶבֶחַ לְכַבֵּשׁ הָאֶחָד: 6 אוֹ לְאֵילִי תַּעֲשֶׂה מִנְחָה סֵלֶת שְׁנַי עֲשָׂרִים כֹּלֹלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלִשִׁית הַחֵיץ: 7 וַיִּזֵּן לַנֶּסֶךְ שְׁלִשִׁית הַחֵיץ תַּקְרִיב רֵיח־נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה:

◆ חמישי 8 וכי תעשה בין בקר עולה או זבוח לפלא נדר או שלמים ליהוה: 9 והקריב על בן הבקר מנחה סלת שלשה עשרנים כלול בשמן חצי החיץ: 10 ויזין תך ריב לנסך חצי החיץ אשה ריח ניחוח ליהוה: 11 ככה יעשה לשור האחד או לאיל האחד או לשה בפכשים או בעזים: 12 כמספר אשר תעשו ככה תעשו לאחד כמספרם: 13 כל האזרח יעשה ככה את אלה להקריב אשה ריח ניחוח ליהוה: 14 וכי יגור אתכם גר או אשר בתוכם לדרתיכם ועשה אשה ריח ניחוח ליהוה באשר תעשו כן יעשה:

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6 או לאיל. ואם איל הוא. ורבותינו דרשו: "או" לרבות את הפלגס לנסכי איל: 10 אשה ריח. אינו מוסב אלא על המנחה והשמן, אבל היין אינו אשה, שאינו נתן על האש: 11 או לשה. בין שהוא בפכשים, בין שהוא בעזים. כבש ושה קרוים בתוך שנתם: איל. בן שלשה עשר חודש ויום אחד: 12 כמספר אשר תעשו. כמספר הבהמות אשר תקריבו לקרבן, ככה תעשו נסכים לכל אחד מהם, "כמספרם" של בהמות מספרם של נסכים:

3 וְעִשְׂיָתֶם אִשָּׁה. אין זה צווי, אלא כשתבואו שם ותעלה על לבבכם לעשות אשה לה: ריח ניחוח. נחת רוח לפני: לפלא נדר או בנדבה וגו'. או שתעשו האשה בשביל חובת מועדיכם, שחיבתי אתכם לעשות במועד: 4 והקריב המקריב. תקריבו נסכים ומנחה לכל בהמה. המנחה כליל והשמן נבלל בתוכה והיין לספלים, כמו ששינינו במסכת סנהדרין: 5 לכבש האחד. על כל האמור למעלה הוא מוסב: על המנחה, ועל השמן, ועל היין:

33. מ.ח. א. 34. חולין כג, א.

13 Every native born Israelite, who owns a portion of the land, shall do it in this manner, to offer a fire-offering to please God.

14 Similarly, if a convert resides with you or those among you in future generations, and he offers up a fire-offering to please God, as you make it, so shall he make it, even though he will not possess any land.

**3 and you make a fire-offering to God**, i.e., an offering burnt on the Altar, in particular, one that takes the form of **an ascent-offering or a festive-offering**, the latter term meaning a peace-offering or a thanksgiving-offering—and you bring this offering either (a) in order to fulfill **a pledge** that you have made, (b) **as a dedication**, or (c) as an obligatory offering that you must offer **on your festivals—to please God**, whether **from the herd or from the flock**, you must offer an accompanying grain-offering and wine libation. The grain-offering will be burnt on the Altar and the wine libation will be poured out on the Altar. As long as you remain in the desert, however, you do not have to offer supplementary grain-offerings and libations together with your animal offerings. And even in the Land of Israel, you will only have to offer supplementary grain-offerings and libations with ascent-offerings and peace-offerings, but not with sin-offerings or guilt-offerings.

**4** As to how much flour and wine you must offer, it depends on the animal being sacrificed: If it is a lamb, **the one who brings his offering to God shall present a grain-offering containing one tenth** of an *ephah*<sup>104</sup> (about 2.5 liters or quarts) of **fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin** (about a liter or quart) of oil.

**5** And you shall offer a quarter of a *hin* of wine with the ascent-offering or the feast-offering as a libation, for each lamb.

**6** Or, if it is a ram, you shall offer a grain-offering containing two tenths of an *ephah* (about 4.8 liters or quarts) of **fine flour mixed with a third of a hin** (about 1½ liters or quarts) of oil.

**7** And you shall offer a third of a *hin* of wine for a libation; you shall offer these to please God.

- ◆ **Fifth Reading 8** If you offer one of the herd as an ascent-offering or feast-offering in order to fulfill a **pledge** that you have made (in which case you will most likely bring an ascent-offering), or as a dedication (in which case you will most likely bring a peace-offering) for God,

**9** the one who brings his offering shall offer with this cow a grain-offering consisting of three tenths of an *ephah* (about 7.25 liters or quarts) of **fine flour mixed with half a hin** (about 2 liters or quarts) of oil.

**10** And you shall offer half a *hin* of wine for a libation. The grain offering with its oil, which is burnt on the Altar, is a fire-offering to please God.

**11** So shall it be done for each ox, ram, or kid, whether of the sheep or of the goats. All cattle require the same grain-offerings and libations; a goat requires the same grain-offering and libation as a lamb.

**12** In accordance with the number of animals you offer, so shall you present grain-offerings and libations for each one, exactly according to their numbers (see Figure 3).

Animal	Grain Offering		Libation
	Fine Flour	Oil	Wine
lamb or goat	1/10 <i>ephah</i>	1/4 <i>hin</i>	1/4 <i>hin</i>
ram	2/10 <i>ephah</i>	1/3 <i>hin</i>	1/3 <i>hin</i>
bull, ox, or cow	3/10 <i>ephah</i>	1/2 <i>hin</i>	1/2 <i>hin</i>

Figure 3: Grain Offerings and Libations

<sup>104</sup> Exodus 16:36.

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15 קהלא קנימא חד לבון ולגיורא די תגיר קים עלם לדריכון פותכון בגיורא יהי קדם ? 16 אורייתא חדא ודינא חד לבון ולגיורא די תגיר עמכון; 17 ומליל ? עם משה למימר: 18 מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון במעלכון לארעא די אנא מעל יתכון לתמן; 19 ויהי במיכלכון מלחמא דארעא תפרשון אפרשותא קדם ? 20 ריש אצותכון חלתא תפרשון אפרשותא כמא די מפרשין מן אדרא כן תפרשון יתה: 21 מריש אצותכון תתנון קדם ? אפרשותא לדריכון:

15 תִּקְהַל תִּקְהָה אַחַת לְכֶם וּלְגַר הַגֵּר חֲקַת עוֹלָם לְדוֹר־תֵּיכֶם כַּכֶּם בְּגַר יְהוּה לִפְנֵי יְהוּה: 16 תּוֹרַה אַחַת וּמִשְׁפָּט אֶחָד יְהוּה לְכֶם וּלְגַר הַגֵּר אֶתְכֶם: פ  
 שִׁישִׁי 17 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוּה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: 18 דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּבֹאֲכֶם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְבִיא אֶתְכֶם שָׁמָּה: 19 וְהָיָה בְּבֹאֲכֶם מִלְחָם הָאָרֶץ תִּרְיָמוּ תְרוּמָה לַיהוּה: 20 רֵאשִׁית עֲרֹסְתְּכֶם חֲלָה תִרְיָמוּ תְרוּמָה בְּתְרוּמַת גֵּרָן בֵּן תִּרְיָמוּ אֹתָהּ: 21 מִרֵאשִׁית עֵר־סִתְיֶכֶם תִּתְּנוּ לַיהוּה תְרוּמָה לְדוֹרֹתֵיכֶם: ס

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כלומר, קדם שתאכלו ממנה, ראשית חלקה, חלה אחת ממנה תרימו תרומה לשם ה' חלה. טורטיל בלעז: בתרומת גרן. שלא נאמר בה שעור, ולא בתרומת מעשר שנאמר בה שעור. אבל חקמים נתנו שעור: לבעל הבית — אחד מעשרים וארבעה, ולנחתום — אחד מארבעים ושמונה: 21 מראשית ערסתיכם. למה נאמר? לפי שנאמר: 'ראשית ערסתיכם' — שומע אני ראשונה שבפסות, תלמוד לומר: 'מראשית' — מקצתה ולא כלה: תתנו לה' תרומה. לפי שלא שמענו שעור לחלה, נאמר 'תתנו', שיהא בה כדי נתינה:

15 כַּכֶּם בְּגַר. כְּמוֹתְכֶם כּוּן גַּר. וְכֵן דָּרָךְ לְשׁוֹן עֵבְרִית: "כְּגִן ה' בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם" — כּוּן אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. "כְּמוֹנִי כְּמוֹךְ כְּעַמִּי כְּעַמְךָ": 16 בְּבֹאֲכֶם אֶל הָאָרֶץ. מִשְׁנָה בִּיאָה זֶה מִכָּל בִּיאֹת שְׁבִתוֹרָה, שְׁבִכְלֵן נֶאֱמַר: "כִּי תָבֵא", "כִּי תָבֵאוּ", לְפִיכָךְ כָּלן לְמִדּוֹת זֶה מִזֶּה, וְכִיּוֹן שִׁפְרַט לָךְ הַכְּתוּב בְּאַחַת מֵהֶן, שְׂאִינָה אֵלָּא לְאַחַר יְרֻשָׁה וְיִשְׂבָּה, אִף כָּלן כּוּן, אֲבָל זֶה נֶאֱמַר בָּהּ: "בְּבֹאֲכֶם", מִשְׁנִכְנֶסוּ בָּהּ וְאֲכָלוּ מִלַּחְמָה, נִתְחַיְבוּ בַּחֲלָה: 20 רֵאשִׁית עֲרֹסְתְּכֶם. כְּשִׁתְּלוּשׁוּ כְּדִי עֲסַתְּכֶם שְׂאֵתָם רְגִילִין לְלוֹשׁ בַּמִּדְבָּר. וְכֵמָּה הִיא — "וַיִּמְדוּ בְּעָמֶר" 37, "עָמֶר לְגִלְגָּלֹת" 38: תְרוּמוֹ. מִרֵאשִׁיתָה.

35. בראשית יג, י. 36. מלכים א' כב, ד. 37. שמות טו, יח. 38. שם, טו. 39. עוגה עגלה.

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to touch it. This gave the serpent his opening and ultimately caused the sin. As our sages commented, "He who adds, subtracts."<sup>110</sup>

True, the Torah instructs us to add safeguards to protect ourselves from wrongdoing. In fact, we are told that it is necessary to avoid one hundred measures of the permitted in order to avoid one measure of the forbidden. Yet, Adam's zeal was misplaced. He was in the Garden of Eden, where no evil was possible. In that situation, safeguards were unwarranted and uncalled for.<sup>111</sup>

This is corrected by setting aside *challah*. As noted, valid concerns—equality, peace, and harmony—seemingly contradict the spirit of this commandment. Unity and love of a fellow Jew are indeed all-important, and they would seem to preclude the divisions implied by giving *challah*. However, when we give some of the dough to the priest despite these valid concerns, we are showing that everything has its place; that pluralism and equality when applied improperly and in contradiction to

Jewish law are destructive and harmful. By setting things in perspective and ensuring that good intentions are only applied when and where they belong, we are able to right the wrong committed by Adam and Eve.<sup>112</sup>

**The first of your dough:** The word for "dough" in this verse can also mean "crib" or "bed." In that context, the verse means that our first thoughts, words, and acts when we wake up in the morning should be "raised as a *challah* offering," i.e., directed and devoted to God.<sup>113</sup>

**The first of your dough:** Adding water to flour and turning it into dough serves as a parable for the effect of the Torah on mundane physical reality. Flour consists of thousands of small and independent pieces, but when water is added, these pieces become a solid mass of dough. Just as water serves to make a unified reality out of the unconnected particles of flour, so does the Torah allow us to see the underlying unity and harmony of all existence. Every created thing serves a unique purpose, but

110. *Sanhedrin* 29a. 111. See above, on Genesis 3:2 and Leviticus 19:2. 112. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, pp. 584-585. 113. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntresim*, vol. 1, p. 165.

15 In general, **one rule applies to the whole community, both to yourselves and to the convert who resides with you; one rule applies throughout your generations for you as for the convert, before God.**

16 And just as there will be one “rule,” **there shall also be one law and one ordinance for you and the convert who resides with you.’ ”**

### The First of the Dough

◆ *Sixth Reading* 17 **God spoke to Moses further, saying:**

18 **“Speak to the Israelites and say to them, ‘Although other laws that will take effect only upon your arrival in the Land of Israel will do so only once you have conquered and divided the land, the following is different. As soon as you arrive in the land to which I am bringing you**

19 **and you eat from the bread of the land, you shall donate some of it as a raised-offering to God, as follows:**

20 Whenever you knead at least an *omer* of dough, **the first thing you shall do with your dough is donate a loaf of it to a priest as a raised-offering.** Just as you may donate **the raised-offering of the threshing floor** in any amount<sup>105</sup>—there is no fixed minimum—the same applies to how **you shall donate** this loaf. Nonetheless, you must give the priest enough to be considered a *loaf*—you may not just give him some crumbs.

21 The minimal size of this loaf is relative: **from the first portion of your dough that you give to God, you must give enough to be considered a gift,** and this is determined by the size of what you are baking. A private person, who bakes large loaves for himself and his family, should give at least one 24th of his dough, while a baker, who bakes smaller loaves, to sell, needs to give only one 48<sup>th</sup> of his dough.<sup>106</sup> **This applies in all your generations.’ ”**

#### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

20-21 **The first of your dough:** The commandment of giving *challah* (a loaf) is very straightforward. A part of the dough is set aside to be holy, to be given to the priests, while the rest remains non-sacred and may be eaten without any particular restrictions.

The Torah’s ways “are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.”<sup>107</sup> It would seem that the way to peace is equality, while this commandment, like so many others, emphasizes the differences between us. Creating elitist classes encourages jealousy. The priest is different than a Levite, who is himself distinguished from the average Jew. We are fermenting division within every bowl of dough!

The lesson here, however, is that true unity can only be achieved when clear distinctions are made between those who fulfill the various offices of society. Harmony is possible only when every cog of the machine, every unit of the army, knows its proper place and performs its unique function. If there are no separations and distinctions, the result can only

be anarchy.

Of course, all Jews have the same inherent value and equally deserve our love and assistance. However, when we are dealing with the question of who is a “priest”—a rabbi and authority—we must realize that there are clear rules and distinctions. Only someone who has truly attained the requisite level of knowledge, is truly God-fearing, and observes *all* the dictates of the Torah can aspire to that title. If someone wishes to spread the title of rabbi more liberally under the cry of pluralism, inclusiveness, and unity, he is actually destroying rather than building, and separating rather than uniting.<sup>108</sup>

**The first of your dough:** According to the sages, the commandment of *challah* was given to women as a way to correct Eve’s wrongdoing in the Garden of Eden.<sup>109</sup> The sin of the Tree of Knowledge was caused by misplaced good intentions. Adam wanted to add a safeguard to God’s command not to eat from the tree and so instructed Eve not even

105. Deuteronomy 18:4. 106. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, pp. 178-180. 107. Proverbs 3:17; cf. *Mishneh Torah, Chanukah*, end. 108. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, pp. 584-588. 109. *Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit* 32.

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22 וארי תשתלון ולא תעבדון  
 22 ית כל פקודי האלין די מליל יי  
 עם משה: 23 ית כל די פקיד יי  
 יתכון בידי דמשה מן יומא די  
 פקיד יי ולהלא לדריכון: 24 והי  
 אם מעיני כנשתא אתעבדת לשלו  
 ויעבדון כל כנשתא תור בר תורי  
 חד לעלתא לאתקבלא ברענא  
 קדם יי ומנחתה ונסבה כדחזי  
 וצפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא:  
 25 ויכפר כהנא על כל כנשתא  
 דבני ישראל וישתבק להון ארי  
 שלותא היא ואנון איתיאנו ית  
 קרבניהון קרבנא קדם יי והיבתהון  
 קדם יי על שלותהון: 26 וישתבק  
 לכל כנשתא דבני ישראל ולגיורא  
 דיתגיר ביניהון ארי לכל עמא  
 בשלותא:

22 וכי תשגו ולא תעשו את כל המצות האלה אשר-  
 דבר יהוה אל-משה: 23 את כל אשר צוה יהוה אליכם  
 ביד-משה מן-היום אשר צוה יהוה והלאה לדרתיכם:  
 24 והיה אם מעיני העדה נעשתה לשגגה ועשו כל-  
 העדה פר בן-בקר אחד לעלה לריח ניחח ליהוה ומנ-  
 חתו ונסכו כמשפט ושעיר-עזים אחד לחטת: 25 וכפר  
 הכהן על-כל-עדת בני ישראל ונסלח להם פי-שגגה  
 הוא והם הביאו את-קרבנם אשה ליהוה וחטאתם לפני  
 יהוה על-שגגתם: 26 ונסלח לכל-עדת בני ישראל ולגר  
 הגר בתוכם כי לכל-העם בשגגה: ם

RASHI

שכל המודה בעבודה זרה כפופר בכל התורה כלה  
 ובכל מה שנתנבאו הנביאים, שנאמר: "מן היום אשר  
 צוה ה' והלאה": 24 אם מעיני העדה נעשתה לשגגה.  
 אם מעיני העדה נעשתה עברה זו על ידי שוגג, כגון  
 ששגגו והורו על אחת מן העבודות שהיא מתרת לעבד  
 עבודה זרה בקר: לחטת. חסר אל"ף, שאינו כשאר  
 חטאות, שכל חטאות שבתורה הבאות עם עולה,  
 החטאת קודמת לעולה, שנאמר: "ונאת השני יעשה  
 עלה"<sup>120</sup>, וזו — עולה קודמת לחטאת: 25 הביאו את  
 קרבנם אשה לה'. זה האמור בפרשה, הוא פר העולה,  
 שנאמר: "אשה לה": וחטאתם. זה השעיר:

22 וכי תשגו ולא תעשו. עבודה זרה היתה בכלל  
 "כל המצות" שהצבור מביאין עליה פר, והרי הכתוב  
 מוציאה כאן מכללן, לדון בפר לעולה ושעיר לחטאת:  
 וכי תשגו וגו'. בעבודה זרה הכתוב מדבר. או אינו אלא  
 באחת מכל המצות? תלמוד לומר: "את כל המצות  
 האלה" — מצוה אחת שהיא ככל המצות, מה העובר  
 על כל המצות, פורק על ומפר ברית ומגלה פנים, אף  
 מצוה זו פורק בה על ומפר ברית ומגלה פנים, ואיזו? זו  
 עבודה זרה: אשר דבר ה' אל משה. "אנכי" ו"לא יהיה  
 לך" — מפי הגבורה שמענום — "אחת דבר אלהים,  
 שטים זו שמעתי"<sup>121</sup>: 23 את כל אשר צוה וגו'. מגיד

40. תהלים סב, יב. 41. ויקרא ה, י.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

Idolatry is not limited to a denial of God's existence. In fact, the intentions of the first pagans were actually pure and altruistic: they felt that since God runs His world through the intermediaries of nature, such as the sun and the moon, etc., these intermediaries, too, deserve to be honored and revered. Eventually, they forgot about God and paid homage only to the forces that they considered to be the direct sources of their sustenance.<sup>120</sup> Their mistake was in attaching any importance at all to the intermediaries of nature, for in truth, these are only tools in the hands of the master Craftsman; they have no more influence on the world than a craftsman's tools have on his work. Thus, any consideration given to any entity other than God, whether it be a false deity or the laws of nature, is essentially idolatrous.

In order to avoid this misconception, we are enjoined to set aside some of the very first of our

dough as a portion for God. This reaffirms our faith that it is indeed God who has granted us all that we have and that He is truly the source of our sustenance. In giving away the loaf of *challah*, we do not give away something that is ours, but rather merely return to God some of what is His. This simple action destroys the very premise of idol worship and precludes the errors that we could make that could lead to its subtler forms.

This also explains allegorically why a private person must give a greater share of his dough as *challah* than a baker. A baker, being a businessman, is in a position to observe God's constant providence in his daily life, and therefore does not need such a great reminder that he owes everything to God. A private person, on the other hand, is not as openly exposed to Divine providence, and therefore his reminder must be relatively greater.<sup>121</sup>

120. Mishneh Torah, Avodah Zarah 1:1. 121. Likutei Sichot, vol. 18, pp. 183-186.

## Offerings to Aton for Idolatry

22 God told Moses to teach the Israelites the following laws, as well: “ ‘It was explained previously that if the entire community commits an inadvertent sin together, they must offer a young bull as a sin-offering.<sup>114</sup> However, there is an exception to this rule, namely, **if you should all err and** inadvertently commit the sin of *idolatry*. It was mentioned previously that idolatry is as serious a sin as transgressing all the other commandments together.<sup>115</sup> But more than this, committing idolatry is actually tantamount to **not fulfilling**—i.e., transgressing—**all the commandments**, because someone who serves idols inherently contravenes the three bases of the commandments: he denies God’s authority over him, betrays the historic covenant between God and the Jewish people, and contradicts logic. For this reason, idolatry is one of the two commandments **that God spoke to Moses** publicly on Mount Sinai.<sup>116</sup>

23 Furthermore, idolatry undermines the basis of the entire Torah altogether, so transgressing it is tantamount to abrogating **all that God commanded you through Moses from the day on which God commanded you on Mount Sinai and from then on**, as well as all that He will have commanded you **for all generations** through the succeeding prophets.<sup>117</sup>

24 **If you all commit idolatry inadvertently because** the Sanhedrin, who are the “eyes” of the community, mistakenly permit you to serve an idol in a particular way, then **the entire community shall** collectively offer a young bull as an ascent-offering to please God, with its prescribed grain-offering and libation, and, after that, **one young he-goat for a sin-offering.**

25 **The priest shall atone on behalf of the entire community of the Israelites, and they shall be forgiven, for it was an error, and because of their error they brought their ascent-offering as a fire-offering to God and their sin-offering before God.**

26 **Both the entire community of the Israelites and any convert who resides with them shall be forgiven, for all the people were in error.**

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### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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these purposes can often seem at odds with one another. The Torah illuminates physical reality, allowing us to realize the ultimate purpose of creation as a whole and the specific contribution of each created thing toward the overall purpose.

According to Jewish Law, the flour that remains in the bowl after the dough is made is not considered part of this batch of dough; when we remove the *challah*-portion from the dough, the leftover flour is still under the obligation to have *challah* taken from it. This teaches us that even if we have illuminated certain aspects of reality with the light and holiness of Torah, we must not forget about the areas we have not yet touched.<sup>118</sup>

22 **If you should...commit the sin of idolatry:** According to our sages, the commandment of *challah* is juxtaposed to the discussion of idolatry because

someone who fulfills the commandment of *challah* is considered to have helped nullify idol worship, while one who ignores it is regarded as if he has perpetuated idol worship.<sup>119</sup> Even though *challah* seems like a relatively minor ritual, the nullification or perpetuation of idol worship— the very foundation of our faith— hinges upon its observance!

This is because bread is the most basic staple of human sustenance. The reality of our physical world is that we have to work hard to satisfy our needs. Because of this, it is easy to fall into the trap of feeling that our material success is dependent on the brutal laws of nature: the more and better we work, the more we earn. It is easy to feel that God is not involved, even if we acknowledge that He determined the rules and set them in motion. Although this a common enough assumption, it actually borders on idol worship.

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114. Leviticus 4:13-21. 115. Exodus 23:13. 116. Exodus 20:3. 117. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 53-58. 118. *Sichot Kodesh 5718*, pp. 266-267. 119. *Vayikra Rabbah* 15:6.

ONKELOS

27 ואם אָנשׁ חד יחוב בשלוי ויקרב עזא בת שתה לחטאתא: 28 ויכפר כהנא על אָנש דאשתלי במחבה בשלוי קדם ? לכפרא עלוהי וישתבך לה: 29 יציבא בבני ישראל ולגירא דיתגיר ביניהון אורייתא חדא יהי לכון לדיעבד בשלוי: 30 ואנש דיעבד בריש גלי מן יציבא ומן גירא קדם ? הוא מרגו וישתצי אָנשא ההוא מגו עמה: 31 ארי על מימרא דיי בסר וית פקודוהי אשני אשתצאה ישתצי אָנשא ההוא חובה בה: 32 והו בני ישראל במדברא ואשכחו גברא פד מגבב אַעין ביומא דשבתא: 33 וקריבו יתה דאשכחו יתה פד מגבב אַעין לות משה ולות אהרן ולות כל כנשתא: 34 ואסרו יתה בבית מטרא ארי לא אתפרש להון מא דיעבדון לה: 35 ואמר ? למשה אתקטלא יתקטל גברא רגמו יתה באבניא כל כנשתא מבכרא למשרייתא: 36 ואפיקו יתה כל כנשתא למבכרא למשרייתא ורגמו יתה באבניא ומית כמא די פקיד ? ית משה:

◆ שביעי 27 ואם־נפש אחת תחטא בשגגה והקריבה עו בת־שנתה לחטאת: 28 וכפר הכהן על־הנפש הש־גגת בחטאה בשגגה לפני יהוה לכפר עליו ונסלח לו: 29 האזרח בבני ישראל ולגר הגר בתוכם תורה אחת יהיה לכם לעשה בשגגה: 30 והנפש אשר־תעשה א ביד רמה מן־האזרח ומן־הגר את־יהוה הוא מגדף ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מקרב עמה: 31 כי דבר־יהוה בזה ואת־מצותו הפך הכרת | תפרת הנפש ההוא עונה בה: פ 32 ויהיו בני־ישראל במדבר וימצאו איש מקישש עצים ביום השבת: 33 ויקריבו אתו המצאים אתו מקישש עצים אל־משה ואל־אהרן ואל כל־העדה: 34 ויניחו אתו במשמר כי לא פֶרַש מה־יעשה לו: ס 35 ויאמר יהוה אל־משה מות יומת האיש רגום אתו באבנים כל־העדה מחוץ למחנה: 36 ויצאו אתו כל־העדה אל־מחויץ למחנה וירגמו אתו באבנים וימת באשר צוה יהוה את־משה: פ

RASHI

של ישראל דבר הכתוב, שלא שמרו אלא שבת ראשונה, ובשניה בא זה וחללה: 33 המצאים אתו מקישש. שהתרו בו, ולא הניח מלקושש אף משמץאווה והתרו בו: 34 כי לא פרש מה יעשה לו. לא היו יודעים באיזו מיתה נמות, אבל יודעים היו שהמחלל שבת במיתה: 35 רגום. כמו "עשה"<sup>45</sup>, פיישנ"ט בלעז<sup>46</sup>. וכן: "הלוך"<sup>47</sup>, אלנ"ט<sup>48</sup>. וכן: "זכור"<sup>49</sup> ו"שמור"<sup>50</sup>: 36 ויצאו אתו. מכאן, שבית הסקילה חוץ ורחוק מבית דין:

27 תחטא בשגגה. בעבודה זרה: עז בת שנתה. שאר עברות — יחיד מביא כשבה או שעירה, ובזו — קבע לה שעירה: 30 ביד רמה. במזיד: מגדף. מהרף, כמו: "והיתה הרפה וגדופה"<sup>42</sup>, "אשר גדפו נערי מלך אשור"<sup>43</sup>. עוד דרשו רבותינו<sup>44</sup>: מכאן למכרף את השם שהוא בכרת: 31 דבר ה'. אזהרת עבודה זרה מפי הגבורה, והשאַר — מפי משה: עונה בה. בזמן שעונה בה, שלא עשה תשובה: 32 ויהיו בני ישראל במדבר וימצאו. בגנותן

42. יחזקאל ה, טו. 43. ישעיה לו, ו. 44. כריתות ז, ב. 45. יחזקאל כג, ל. 46. בעשותו. 47. בראשית ח, ג. 48. בלקחו. 49. שמות כ, ו. 50. דברים ה, יא.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

Why would the people think that the decree God imposed upon them after the incident of the spies implied that they were exempt from the performance of the commandments?

As mentioned above, the focus of life in the desert was learning the Torah, a primarily spiritual occupation that engages only thought and speech, not action. Only after entering the Land of Israel was life's focus going to shift toward performing the

commandments. (It was precisely this preference for the spirituality of learning over the physicality of the commandments that led to the spies' mistake in the first place, as we have mentioned.)

Therefore, it is entirely reasonable that the Jews felt that the decree to stay in the desert accentuated the dominance of Torah study and detracted from the need to perform physical commandments.<sup>128</sup>

128. Likutei Sichot, vol. 28, pp. 96-97.

◆ **Seventh Reading 27** Similarly, it was explained previously that if an individual commits a sin inadvertently, he must offer either a she-goat or a she-lamb as a sin-offering.<sup>122</sup> **But if an individual sins by committing idolatry inadvertently, he must offer only a she-goat in its first year as a sin-offering.**

**28 And the priest shall atone for the erring person who sinned inadvertently before God, so as to atone on his behalf, and he shall be forgiven.**

**29 One law shall apply to anyone who sins inadvertently, both to the native born of the Israelites and to the convert who resides among them.**

**30 But should a person commit idolatry highhandedly, i.e., on purpose, whether he is a native born or a convert, he is blaspheming God, and a person who commits either idolatry or blasphemy shall be cut off from among its people—he will die prematurely and childless.<sup>123</sup>**

**31 For he has scorned the word of God that you heard directly at Mount Sinai and violated His commandment not to serve idols; that person shall be utterly cut off if he does not repent and thus his iniquity is still in him.’ ”**

### The Man who Gathered Sticks

**32** The Torah now backtracks 13 months to the 28<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, 2448, the second Sabbath the Jewish people kept, and relates an incident involving the desecration of the Sabbath. This incident is recorded out of its chronological order in order to juxtapose it with the laws concerning idolatry just given, thereby indicating that desecrating the Sabbath is equivalent to committing idolatry and that keeping the Sabbath is equivalent to keeping the entire Torah. **When the Israelites were first in the desert, they found a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day, and they warned him not to continue, for this is forbidden.**

**33** But he did continue, so **those who found him gathering wood presented him before Moses and Aaron and before the entire community to be punished.<sup>124</sup>**

**34** **They put him under guard, because** when God had given them the commandment to observe the Sabbath, **it had not been specified what was to be done to someone who desecrated it, like him.** They knew that he was to be put to death, but they did not know by what means, because the Torah had not yet been given.<sup>125</sup>

**35** **God thereupon said to Moses, “The man shall be put to death as follows: the entire community shall pelt him with stones outside the camp.** And similarly, whenever you must put someone to death by stoning, he should be stoned outside the camp and at a significant distance from the sentencing court.”<sup>126</sup>

**36** **So the entire community took him outside the camp, and they pelted him to death with stones, as God had commanded Moses.**

#### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

**32 And they found a man gathering wood on the Sabbath:** According to the Midrash, this occurred immediately after the incident of the spies, and the wood-gatherer did this for religious motives. The people were saying, “Since it has been decreed that we will not enter the Land of Israel due to the deeds

of the spies, we are therefore exempt from performing the commandments.” The wood-gatherer desecrated the Sabbath on purpose, in order to show the others, through his death, the gravity of observing the commandments.<sup>127</sup>

122. Leviticus 4:27-35. 123. See on Exodus 12:19. 124. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, p. 187. 125. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, p. 165, note 32. 126. *Sanhedrin* 42b. 127. Midrash quoted in *Tosafot, Bava Batra* 119b, s.v. *Afilu*.

— ONKELOS —  
 37 ואמר יי למשה למימרי: 38 מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון ויעבדון להון ברוספדין על כנפי כסותהון לכריהון ויתגון על ברוספדא דכנפא חוטא דתכלתא: 39 ויהון לבון לברוספדין ותחזון יתה ותדכרון ית כל פקודיא דיי תרהור לבכון ובתר חיוז עיניכון די אתון טען בתריהון: 40 בדיל דתדכרון ותעבדון ית כל פקודי ותהון קדישין קדם אלהכון:

◆ מפטיר 37 ויאמר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 38 דבר אל-בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם ועשו להם ציצת על-כנפי בגדיהם לזרתם ונתנו על-ציצת הכנף פתיל תכלת: 39 והיה לכם לציצת וראיתם אתו וזכרתם את-כל מצות יהוה ועשיתם אתם ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם אשר-אתם זנים אחריהם: 40 למען תזכרו ועשיתם את-כל מצותי והייתם קדשים לאלהיכם:

— RASHI —

וחמשה קשרים, הרי תרי"ג: ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם. כמו "מתור הארץ". הלב והעינים הם מרגלים לגוף, ומסרסרים לו את העברות: העין רואה, והלב חומד, והגוף עושה את העברות:

38 ועשו להם ציצת. על שם הפתילים התלויים בה, כמו: "ויקחני בציצת ראשי". דבר אחר: "ציצת", על שם וראיתם אתו, כמו: "מציץ מן החרכים"<sup>52</sup>: תכלת. צבע ירק של חלזון: 39 וזכרתם את כל מצות ה'. שמנן גמטריא של "ציצית" — שש מאות, ושמונה חוטים

51. יחזקאל ח, ג. 52. שיר השירים ב, ט.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

mandments, rather than any particular effect the commandments have on us. Yet this transcendence permeates all of the individual and different commandments that the *tzitzit* recall.<sup>131</sup>

The Ba'al Shem Tov said that even the archangel Michael, the greatest of all the angels, would gladly trade all of his Divine service and recognition of Divinity for one of the four *tzitzit* worn by every Jew.<sup>132</sup>

There are several possible explanations as to why the Ba'al Shem Tov chose specifically *tzitzit* to express the advantage of our ability to serve God over that of the angels:

- The original blue coloring of the *tzitzit* was a reminder of the heavenly Throne of Glory.<sup>133</sup> Since the angels reside before the heavenly Throne, their direct view of it is obviously much greater than any reminder. Yet, the value of a person's fulfilling God's commandment, even though it is merely a reminder, is far more valuable than their entire service.
- The four corners of the *tzitzit* correspond to the four "beasts of the chariot" that carry God's throne. One who wears *tzitzit* is therefore regarded "as if he has prepared a throne for God."<sup>134</sup> The angel Michael is one of the four constant components of the Heavenly chariot.<sup>135</sup> The fact that

Michael, who is part of the actual throne, would want to exchange his place for one of the *tzitzit* that are merely a reflection thereof underscores the unique value of our fulfillment of *mitzvot*.<sup>136</sup>

**39 You will remember all the commandments:** We are told in the Midrash that Moses said to God, "What's the point of giving the Torah to the Jewish people? They live in a material world. They'll forget it all immediately." God replied, "I will give them the commandment of *tzitzit*, through which they will remember all of My commandments."<sup>137</sup>

Granted that we need the tassels to remind us of the 613 commandments, but why do we need the *tal-lit*—the garment upon which the tassels are hung? Why not just carry the tassels themselves?

The answer lies in the allegorical significance of garments. The difference between clothing and food—our two main necessities—is that food becomes a part of us when we eat it, while clothing always remains outside of us. Food is therefore an allegory for the aspects of the Torah that we can comprehend and digest, while clothing is an allegory for whatever is beyond our grasp.

The instruction to attach the tassels to a garment indicates that it is not sufficient simply to remember the commandments. We must also remember that the basis of the Torah and its commandments is supra-

134. Tikunei Zohar 10. 135. Zohar 3:217a. 136. Likutei Sichot, vol. 13, p. 198. 137. Bemidbar Rabbah 18:21.

## Tassels (Tzitzit)

- ◆ **Maftir 37** The following commandment—to attach tassels (*tzitzit*) to our garments—was given at Sinai, but it is placed here because it, too, is equivalent to keeping the entire Torah, as shall be seen presently. **God spoke to Moses, saying:** **38** “**Speak to the Israelites and say to them that they shall make for themselves a tassel on the four corners of their garments, throughout their generations, and they shall affix a wool thread dyed turquoise with the blood of the *chilazon* (a sea creature) onto the tassel of each corner.** This may be done even if the garment is made of linen, even though mixing wool and linen in a garment is usually prohibited.<sup>129</sup> They should make each tassel by inserting four threads—three white and one turquoise—into a hole in the garment’s corner, doubling them back on themselves, and then tying five knots with the two sets of half-threads (see Figure 4).

**39** Tell them: “**This tassel shall be for you to look at; when you see it, you will remember all the commandments of God,** for the numerical value of the word for “tassel” [צִיצִית] is 600;<sup>130</sup> this together with the 8 half-threads and 5 knots gives 613, the number of commandments in the Torah. This will help you remember **to perform them.** By focusing on God’s commandments, **you shall not wander after your hearts and after your eyes, after which you go astray.** For the heart desires what the eye sees and then encourages you to go after it.

**40** And beyond the fact that seeing them will *remind* you to perform all the commandments, affix these tassels to your garments **so that** by doing so **you shall remember and in effect perform all My commandments** by wearing them. Thus **you shall be holy, focused on your God.**

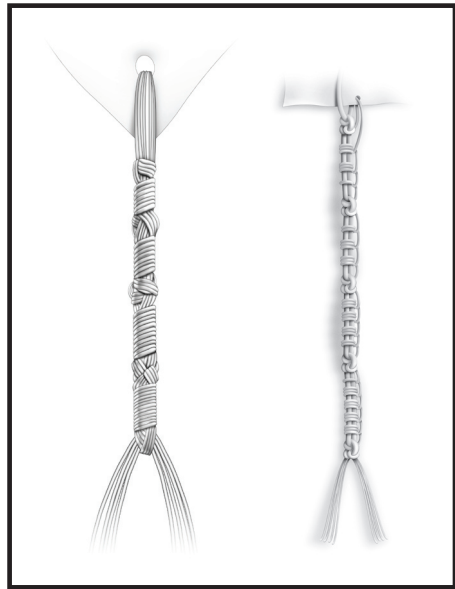


Figure 4: Tassels (*Tzitzit*). On the left is the general custom, in which there are 7, 8, 11, and 13 coils between the five knots. The numerical value of 7 + 8 + 11 is 26, the numerical value of God’s Name; 13 is the numerical value of the Hebrew word for “one” (*echad*). The *tzitzit* thus remind the wearer that “God is one.” On the right is the Chabad custom, according to which the 39 coils are further subdivided into groups of three.

### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

**38 They shall make for themselves a tassel:** We saw above that all twelve spies traversed the entire land together, expressing how transcendent Divine consciousness must permeate non-transcendent consciousness; how our common unity of purpose and approach should inspire and direct our particular pursuits, where we each have different purposes

and approaches.

This explains the connection between the spy mission and *tzitzit*. *Tzitzit* is one of the “general” commandments that in a certain way include all the others. As the sages say, “*Tzitzit* is equal to the entire Torah.” This means that *tzitzit* expresses the all-encompassing, transcendent aspect of the com-

<sup>129</sup>. Deuteronomy 22:11-12; Rashi on Exodus 20:8. <sup>130</sup>. *Tzadik* (90) + *yud* (10) + *tzadik* (90) + *yud* (10) + *tav* (400) = 600. <sup>131</sup>. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, pp. 625-627. <sup>132</sup>. *Kitzurim VeHeorat LeTanya*, p. 46. <sup>133</sup>. *Sotah* 17a.

— ONKELOS —  
 41 אָנָא ׀ אַלְהֲבֹן דִּי אַפְקִית  
 יְתִבֹן מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם לְמַהֲוֵי  
 לְכוּן לְאַלְהָ אָנָא ׀ אַלְהֲבֹן:

41 אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהֵיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

קריט פסוקים. פל"ט סימן.

— RASHI —

בְּעֶרְא: "וְעַל הַר סִינִי יִרְדְּתָ, וְתַתֵּן לְעַמְּךָ תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת, וְאֵת שַׁבַּת קֹדֶשְׁךָ הוֹדַעְתָּ לָהֶם"<sup>54</sup>. וְאַף פְּרִשְׁתָּ צִיצִית לְכַף נְסֻמְכָה לְאַלּוֹ, לְפִי שְׂאֵף הִיא שְׂקוּלָה כְּנֶגֶד כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וְעֲשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל מִצְוֹתַי": **עַל כִּנְפֵי בְּגָדֵיהֶם**. כְּנֶגֶד וְאֲשָׂא אֶתְכֶם עַל כִּנְפֵי נְשָׂרִים"<sup>55</sup>. עַל אַרְבַּע כְּנָפֹת, וְלֹא בְּעֵלֶת שְׁלֹשׁ, וְלֹא בְּעֵלֶת חֲמִשׁ — כְּנֶגֶד אַרְבַּע לְשׁוֹנוֹת שֶׁל גְּאֻלָּה, שְׁנֵאמַר בְּמִצְרַיִם: "וְהוֹצֵאתִי", "וְהִצַּלְתִּי", "וְגִאֲלֵתִי", "וְלִקַּחְתִּי"<sup>56</sup>. **פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת**. עַל שֵׁם שְׂכּוֹל בְּכוֹרוֹת. תְּרַגּוּם שֶׁל "שְׂכּוֹל" — "תְּכֵלֶת". וּמִכֶּתֶם הִיְתָה בְּלִילָה, וְכֵן צִבַּע הַתְּכֵלֶת דּוֹמֶה לְצִבַּע רְקִיעַ הַמִּשְׁחִיר לְעֵת עֶרֶב. וּשְׁמוֹנֶה חוֹטִים שָׁבָה — כְּנֶגֶד שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמִים שֶׁשָּׂהוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִשְׁיָצְאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם עַד שֶׁאֲמָרוּ שִׁירָה עַל הַיָּם: חֲסֵלַת פִּרְשַׁת שְׁלַח

41 אֲנִי ה', נֶאֱמַן לְשֵׁלֶם שְׂכָר: **אֱלֹהֵיכֶם**. נֶאֱמַן לְהַפְרֵעַ: **אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם**. עַל מִנַּת כֶּן פְּדִיתִי אֶתְכֶם, שֶׁתִּקְבְּלוּ עֲלֵיכֶם גְּזוּרֹתַי: **אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם**. עוֹד לְמָה נֶאֱמַר? בְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא יֵאמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל: "מִפְּנֵי מָה אֲמַר הַמְּקוֹם, לֹא שֶׁנַּעֲשָׂה וְנִטַּל שְׂכָר? אֲנִי לֹא עוֹשִׂים וְלֹא נוֹטְלִים שְׂכָר!" — עַל כֶּרְחֻכְם אֲנִי מְלַכְכֶם. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "אִם לֹא בִּיד חֻזְקָה וְגו' אֶמְלוֹךְ עֲלֵיכֶם"<sup>53</sup>. דְּבַר אַחֵר: לְמָה נֶאֱמַר יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם? "אֲנִי הוּא שֶׁהִבְחַנְתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם בֵּין טַפָּה שֶׁל בְּכוֹר לְשִׂאִינָה שֶׁל בְּכוֹר, אֲנִי הוּא עֵתִיד לְהִבְחִין וּלְהַפְרֵעַ מִן הַתּוֹלָה קָלָא אֵילָן בְּבִגְדוֹ וְאוֹמֵר תְּכֵלֶת הִיא". וּמִסוּדוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי מִשֶּׁה הַדְרָשׁן הִעֲתִיקְתִּי: לְמָה נְסֻמְכָה פְּרִשְׁתָּ מְקוֹשֶׁשׁ לְפָרֶשֶׁת עֲבוּדָה זָרָה? לוֹמֵר שֶׁהִמְחִיל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת כְּעוֹבֵד עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, שְׂאֵף הִיא שְׂקוּלָה כְּכָל הַמִּצְוֹת, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר

53. יחזקאל כ, לג. 54. עי"פ נחמיה ט, גידיד. 55. שמות יט, ד. 56. שמות ו, וז.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

who don't. The Torah demands that before going to work in the morning we pray and study a little bit. In the afternoon, right in the middle of the work-day, we have to stop and pray again. When we finally get home in the evening, there's still one more prayer to be recited. At work, we have to be careful to stay away from dishonesty or illegal business practices. We are not even allowed to open direct competition to someone else's business under many circumstances. How can we possibly live with all these rules?"

God replies, "I am your God, who took you out of Egypt. Until then, not a single slave had ever managed to escape from Egypt. Yet, I took several million of you out, and ensured that each one of you left with no less than ninety donkeys laden with gold and silver.<sup>146</sup> So you see, I am not bound by the restrictions of nature. If you fulfill all of My directives, disregarding the limits of reason and rational thought, I will reward you supernaturally and ensure that you have an abundance of everything that you need."<sup>147</sup>

146. Bechorot 5b. 147. Likutei Sichot, vol. 2, p. 325.

**41 I am God** the merciful, who will reward you for your fidelity, but I am also **your God**, who will punish you if you are unfaithful. And since I **took you out of Egypt** on condition that I **be your God** and you obey Me, **I am** therefore **God, your God**, and you may not elect to ignore My commandments and waive their reward. And just as I **took you out of Egypt** and distinguished there between which Egyptians were firstborn and which were not, I can distinguish between a thread that is dyed with the blood of a *chilazon* and one that is dyed with something else, so you should not try to deceive Me. The implication of the Exodus vis-à-vis your obligation toward Me is particularly relevant to this commandment because the theme of the Exodus is intrinsically connected with all its details:

- You must attach tassels to the corners of your garments because the word for “corners” (כנפיים, literally, “wings”) alludes to how I **took you out of Egypt** “on eagles’ wings.”<sup>138</sup>
- You must attach them only to *four*-cornered garments to allude to the four expressions I used when I described how I was going to take you out of Egypt.<sup>139</sup>
- You must attach a turquoise thread because:
  - it alludes to the Egyptians’ mourning over their firstborn dead (because the word for “turquoise” [תכלת] is similar to the Aramaic word for “mourning” [תכול]), and
  - it alludes to when this happened, the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (for its color is the color of the sky in the evening).
- You must make the tassels out of eight half-threads in order to allude to the eight days that passed from when I pronounced this decree—which was the beginning of the Exodus—to the Song at the Sea, which signaled its completion.’<sup>140</sup>

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Shelach* may be found on p. 238.




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❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

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rational, for they originate in God’s wisdom, which transcends the limitations of human intellect.<sup>141</sup>

**This tassel shall be for you to look at:** The Talmud<sup>142</sup> derives from this phrase that we need not wear *tzitzit* at night, since we cannot see clearly at night. Nevertheless, the Arizal maintains that we should wear *tzitzit* at night, even when sleeping,<sup>143</sup> since in addition to serving as a visual reminder of the commandments, *tzitzit* have an inner, spiritual effect on the person, regardless of whether or not they can be seen.<sup>144</sup>

**You shall not wander after your hearts and after your eyes, after which you go astray:** Everything was created for a purpose, including our eyes. If we use them in improper ways, by looking at forbidden or undesirable things, we forfeit their use; we are at that moment effectively blind.<sup>145</sup>

**41 I am God, your God, who took you out of Egypt:** There are those who complain, “The way of Torah just doesn’t work in the real world. The Torah demands that we observe the Sabbath and the holidays, but we have to compete with people

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138. Exodus 19:4. 139. Exodus 6:6-7. 140. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 8, pp. 94-101. 141. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, pp. 324-325. 142. *Menachot* 43a. 143. *Pri Eitz Chaim, Sha’ar HaTzitzit*, chapter 1 (end). 144. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 33, pp. 102-103. 145. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 23, p. 363.

## Haftarah for Shelach

Joshua 2:1-24

The subject of *parashat Shelach* is the mission of the scout to spy out the Land of Israel in preparation for its conquest. The *haftarah* is the story of the spies Joshua sent to Jericho in preparation for conquering it.

2:1 Shortly after Moses died, his successor, **Joshua the son of Nun, sent two men**, Pinchas and Caleb, **out of Shitim**, where the Jews had been encamped since early 2488, **as secret spies, saying, "Go see the land in general, and particularly, the first city we are going to conquer, Jericho."** Jericho was the first city inside the border and the most fortified city in the land. Joshua told the spies to act as if they were deaf so the people would speak openly in their presence, and to disguise themselves as potters. **They went, and came to the house of an innkeeper who was also a harlot, named Rachav, and they went to sleep there.** 2 But despite their efforts to keep their mission a secret, **it was told to the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here this night from the Israelites to search out the land."** 3 So the king of Jericho sent emissaries to Rachav, saying, **"Produce the men who have come to you, that have entered your house, for they are enemy spies who have come to search out the entire land."** 4 Now the woman had taken the two men, and had hidden them in a narrow alcove. She replied, **"Indeed, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.** 5 When it was time to close the city gate at dark, the men left. I do not know where they went. Pursue after them quickly, for if you hurry, you will overtake them." 6 She had brought them up to the roof, and had hid them in the stalks of flax that were arranged for her on the roof. 7 The king's men pursued them in the direction of the Jordan River, to the fords, assuming they had returned to the Israelite camp. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gatekeepers shut the gate. 8 Before the spies went to sleep, Rachav came up to them on the roof. 9 She said to the men, **"I know that God has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that it as if all the inhabitants of the land have melted away because of you."**<sup>10</sup>

2:1 וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּנֵי־נוּן מִן־הַשְּׂטִיִּים שְׁנַיִם אַנְשִׁים מְרַגְלִים חָרַשׁ לֵאמֹר לְכוּ רְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־יְרִיחוֹ וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ בֵּית אִשָּׁה זֹנָה וּשְׁמָהּ רַחַב וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ שָׁמָּה: 2 וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַלְךְ יְרִיחוֹ לֵאמֹר הֲנָה אַנְשִׁים בָּאוּ הֲנָה הַלִּילָה מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַפֵּר אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: 3 וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְךְ יְרִיחוֹ אֶל־רַחַב לֵאמֹר הֲוֵי־אֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ לְבִיתְךָ כִּי לְחַפֵּר אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ: 4 וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה אֶת־שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַתַּעֲפֶנּוּ וַתֹּאמֶר כֵּן בָּאוּ אֵלַי הָאֲנָשִׁים וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי מֵאֵין הֶפְחָה: 5 וַיְהִי הַשָּׁעַר לִסְגֹר בַּחֲשָׁד וְהָאֲנָשִׁים יָצְאוּ לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אָנָּה הָלְכוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים רֹדְפוֹ מֵהָר אַחֲרֵיהֶם כִּי תִשְׁיָנוּם: 6 וְהִיא הִעֲלָתָם הֲנָה וַתִּטְמַנְם בַּפִּשְׁתִּי הָעֵץ הָעֲרֻכוֹת לָהּ עַל־הַגֶּגֶז: 7 וְהָאֲנָשִׁים רֹדְפוֹ אַחֲרֵיהֶם הַרְדָּ הַיַּרְדֵּן עַל הַמַּעְבְּרוֹת וְהַשָּׁעַר סָגְרוּ אַחֲרַי כַּאֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ הַרְדָּפִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: 8 וְהֶפְחָ טָרֶם וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ וְהִיא עָלְתָה עֲלֵיהֶם עַל־הַגֶּגֶז: 9 וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁים יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה לְכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְכִי־נִפְלָה אֵימַתְכֶם עָלֵינוּ וְכִי נִמְגְּו כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵיכֶם:

10. See Exodus 15:15.

10 For we have heard how God dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds for you when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of the Jordan River, Sichon and Og, whom you completely destroyed. 11 As soon as we heard, our hearts melted, and there did not remain anymore virile spirit in any man because of you, for there is no escape from God, your God; He is God in heaven above and on the earth below. 12 So now, I pray, swear to me by God, since I have showed you kindness, that you will also show kindness to my father's house. Give me a true, recognizable token that you will see when you conquer the city and thereby know where we are, so that 13 you shall preserve alive my father, and my mother, and my brothers and my sisters, and all that they have, and you shall save our lives from death." 14 The men answered her, "We will give our lives to defend yours, if need be, but only if you will not tell anyone about this discussion of ours. If you keep this condition, then it shall be, when God gives us the land, that we will deal with you with kindness and truth." 15 So she let them down through the window by the rope, for her house was in the town wall and she dwelt in the wall. These were the same window and rope that her clients had used until then to enter her house; she hoped to atone now for her past sins by using them to save the spies. 16 She said to them, "Do not return directly to your camp. Go instead to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you, and hide yourselves there three days until the pursuers return; afterwards you will go your way." She prophesied that the pursuers would return in three days. 17 And the men said to her, "We will be absolved of transgressing this oath of yours which you made us swear unless 18 behold, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your home and keep them there throughout the siege.

10 כִּי שָׁמַעְנוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר-הוֹבִישׁ יְהוָה אֶת- מִי יַם-סוּף מִפְּנֵיכֶם בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם וְאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם לְשְׁנֵי מְלָכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן לְסִיחֹן וְלֹעֹג אֲשֶׁר הִתְרַמְתֶּם אוֹתָם: 11 וְנִשְׁמַע וַיִּמָּס לְבַבְנוּ וְלֹא-קָמָה עוֹד רוּחַ בְּאִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל-הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת: 12 וְעַתָּה הִשָּׁבְעוּנָא לִי בַיהוָה כִּי-עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד וְעָשִׂיתֶם גַּם-אִתָּם עִם-בֵּית אָבִי חֶסֶד וּנְתַתֶּם לִי אוֹת אֲמַת: 13 וְהַחַיִּיתֶם אֶת-אָבִי וְאֶת-אִמִּי וְאֶת-אֲחָיו וְאֶת-אֲחֹתִי (וְאֶת-אֲחֵי) וְאֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם וְהַצַּלְתֶּם אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵינוּ מִמּוֹת: 14 וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ הָאֲנָשִׁים נַפְשֵׁנוּ תַחְתִּיכֶם לְמוֹת אִם לֹא תִגְדוּ אֶת-דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהָיָה בְּתַת־יְהוָה לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְעָשִׂינוּ עִמָּךְ חֶסֶד וְאֲמַת: 15 וְתוֹרְדֶם בַּחֶבֶל בְּעַד הַחֲלוֹן כִּי בֵיתָה בְּקִיר הַחוֹמָה וּבַחוֹמָה הִיא יוֹשְׁבַת: 16 וְתֹאמְרִי לָהֶם הִהָרָה לָכֵן פְּנֵי-פָנֵינוּ בְּכֶם הָרְדָפִים וְנַחֲבַתֶּם שָׁמָּה שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד שׁוּב הָרְדָפִים וְאַחַר תֵּלְכוּ לְדַרְכְּכֶם: 17 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הָאֲנָשִׁים נָקִים אָנַחְנוּ מִשְׁבַּעְתְּךָ הִזָּה אֲשֶׁר הִשָּׁבַעְתָּנוּ: 18 הִנֵּה אָנַחְנוּ בָּאִים בָּאָרֶץ אֶת-תְּקוֹת חוּטֵי הַשָּׁנִי הִזָּה תִקְשְׁרִי בַחֲלוֹן אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדְתָנוּ כֹּן וְאֶת-אָבִיךָ וְאֶת-אִמֶּךָ וְאֶת-אֲחֵיךָ וְאֶת כָּל-בֵּית אָבִיךָ תֹאסֶפִי אֵלֶיךָ הַכְּפִיתָה:

19 It shall be that whoever goes out of the doors of your house to the outside, his blood shall be upon his head, i.e., he will assume responsibility for his own life, and we will be blameless if anything happens to him, while whoever shall be with you in the house, his blood shall be upon our head, i.e., we will be responsible if any hand be upon him. 20 And, as we said before, if you tell anyone about this discussion of ours, then we will be absolved of your oath which you have made us swear." 21 She said, "According to your words, so be it." She sent them away, and they departed, and she bound the scarlet line in the window. 22 They went and came to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned to Jericho. The pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but they did not find them. 23 The two men then returned and descended from the mountain, and crossed over the Jordan River and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had happened to them. 24 They said to Joshua, "God has delivered the whole land into our hands; and furthermore, it is as if all the inhabitants of the land have melted away because of their fear of us."

19 וְהָיָה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִדְלֹתַי בֵּיתְךָ |  
הַחוּצָה דָמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וְאִנְחָנוּ נְקִיִּם וְכֹל  
אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה אִתְּךָ בְּבַיִת דָמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ  
אִם יִדַּע תְּהִיחֶבֶד: 20 וְאִם תִּגְדִּי אֶת־  
דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהִינוּ נְקִיִּם מִשְׁבַּעְתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר  
הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ: 21 וְתֹאמַר כְּדַבְרֵיכֶם כִּי  
הוּא וְתִשְׁלַחֵם וְיִלְכוּ וְתִקְשֶׁר אֶת־  
תִּקְוַת הַשָּׁנִי בַחֲלוֹן: 22 וְיִלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ  
הַהָרָה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד־שָׁבוּ  
הַרְדִּפִּים וַיִּבְקְשׂוּ הַרְדִּפִּים בְּכָל־הַהַרְדִּי  
וְלֹא מָצְאוּ: 23 וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּרְדּוּ  
מִהָהָר וַיַּעֲבְרוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־  
נֹון וַיְסַפְּרוּ לוֹ אֶת כָּל־הַמַּצְאוֹת אוֹתָם:  
24 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה  
בְּיַדְנוּ אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְגַם־נִמְגְּוּ כָּל־  
יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵינוּ:





*Dedicated in honor of our children*

**Nathan, Yitzchok,  
Moshe Lev,  
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways  
of our holy Torah*

**Yuri and Deana Pikover**

