

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON PARSHAS SHELACH - 5757

B'S'D'

I now have capability to send this formatted document via e-mail. So please send your e-mail addresses to crshulman@aol.com. For instructions and listing of Torah e-mail lists and web sites see <http://members.aol.com/crshulman/torah.html>

ohr@jer1.co.il (Ohr Somayach) weekly@jer1.co.il

The Best Protection "Moshe called the name of Hoshea, son of Nun, 'Yehoshua.'" (13:16) Of all twelve spies that Moshe sent to scout out the land of Israel, only Yehoshua and Calev did not fall prey to a conspiracy to slander the Land of Israel. Before Yehoshua (who was then called Hoshea) left to scout the land, Moshe added the letter yud to the beginning of Hoshea's name so that it would begin with one of Hashem's Names. He did this to protect Yehoshua against the evil of the spies. Why didn't Moshe also change Calev's name to protect him? Calev was married to Miriam. Miriam was Moshe's sister. She was a prophetess in her own right. It was through her merit that the Children of Israel had water in the desert. The best protection a man can have is a righteous wife. If he has that, both his good name and his good sense will need no further protection.

Fringe Benefits "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them; and they will make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments..." (15:38) The world is like a tallis (prayer shawl). The world has four compass points. The tallis has four sides. We talk colloquially of the four 'corners' of the world. The tallis has four corners. The tzitzis -- the fringes that hang from the tallis -- are strings. They look like unfinished parts of the tallis itself. They teach us that the world is incomplete as it stands. They teach us that man's job is to perfect the world through his actions. The tzitzis have five knots, which correspond to the five Books of the Torah. Because the world reaches its fruition only with the giving and the observance of the Torah. The five knots also correspond to the five senses. All of which can be dedicated to the service of the Creator. The five words of the verse of the Shema are paralleled in the five knots of the tzitzis. Tzitzis have eight strings. Eight is the number of transcendence. There are seven days in the week; seven notes in the diatonic scale. Eight is that which links this world to that which is above this world. The eight strings of the tzitzis relate to bris mila (circumcision), which takes place on the eighth day after the birth of a boy. This represents the ability of the Jew to elevate the physical to the metaphysical. There are 613 commandments in the Torah. If you take the gematria (numerical equivalent) of the word tzitzis -- 600 -- and add it to the five knots and the eight strings, the result is 613. Through the mitzva of tzitzis we can 'attach' ourselves to something that goes far beyond the physical world.

The Secret Weapon "Send for yourselves men to spy out the land of Canaan" (13:2) After the Six Day War, the American military was intrigued to discover the secret ingredient which allowed Israeli pilots to knock-out an unheard-of ninety percent of the Egyptian airplanes. The investigation examined every aspect of the pilots' lives -- even the most personal and secret. Any conceivable difference was investigated: Did they have pets? How many times did they shower each week? After the results were collated, the Americans published their report: There was absolutely no identifiable pattern to differentiate between Israeli pilots and American... with one exception, said the report jokingly: The Israeli pilots all had bris mila! But the joke was really on the American military -- they had indeed discovered the Israeli 'secret weapon' without realizing it. The Midrash tells us that Avraham Avinu stands at the gate of Gehenom and prevents anyone who has a bris mila from entering. The purpose of sending the spies into Eretz Yisrael was that future generations shouldn't say that the dwellers of Eretz Yisrael were weaklings and that the Land of Israel was conquered by purely natural means. That's why the Torah says "Send for yourself men to spy out the land of Canaan," and you'll see that its inhabitants are extremely powerful.

And if, in spite of this, you are able to conquer the land, you will realize that "That I am giving it to the Bnei Yisrael." The Jewish People have but 'One Friend' in a world of seventy wolves. But He is the only Friend we need. When we triumph, it's not because of F-16s, superior morale, motivation, or fortified breakfast cereal; it is because Hashem wills it.

Sources: o The Best Protection - Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetzky, heard from Rabbi Hertzl Schechter o Fringe Benefits - Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan o The Secret Weapon - Tzvi Yisrael, Rabbi Mordechai Arnon

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Mailto:ohr@virtual.co.il <http://www.ohr.org.il>

ohr@jer1.co.il (Ohr Somayach) parasha-qa@jer1.co.il
Recommended Reading List Ramban 13:4 Order of the Meraglim 13:27,32 & 14:1,3 Tactics of the Meraglim 14:17 Moshe Rabbeinu's Prayer 15:2 Order of the Chapters Sefer Hachinuch 385 Challah 386 Tzitzis 387 Avoiding Intellectual and Physical Temptations

"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Shlach

Borrowing From the Strength of Sarah our Matriarch This week the Torah recounts the mission of the spies. The verse lists the names of the various spies. We all know that one of the spies was Yehoshua. The verse makes a point of telling us that his name had been Hoshea bin Nun and Moshe -- at this point in time -- changes his name to Yehoshua. Many of us are familiar with the teaching of our Rabbis that the letter Yud that was added to the name Hoshea came from the name of our first Matriarch. Sarah originally was called Sarai. Moshe took the Yud that was dropped from her name and gave it to Hoshea. There is an interesting Medrash in the book of Bereshis: The Yud was upset at being dropped from the name of our Matriarch and complained before the Heavenly Throne. The Yud protested, "Because I am the smallest letter, You took me away from the righteous woman? That's not fair!" G-d responded, "Before you were at the end of a name, now I am going to put you at the beginning of a name... (You are not being discriminated against, on the contrary -- it is a promotion!)." This is the type of Medrash that begs for explanation. In previous years, we mentioned an interesting Targum Yonasan ben Uziel. He explains that Moshe added an extra letter to Hoshea's name after witnessing Hoshea's humility. Moshe anticipated that Yehoshua would need tremendous strength and assertiveness to stand up against the other spies in defending the Land and the plan to inhabit it. Moshe felt that because of his personality traits, Hoshea did not have the resolve necessary to stand up and fight. That is why he had to give him the new name including the letter Yud. But still, what does the Yud from Sarai have to do with protecting Hoshea? The Menachem Zion says a wonderful interpretation: If there was one personality in Tanach who had this inner fortitude, to stand up to adversity and know how to fight ill influences, that was our Matriarch Sarah. When she saw that there was a Yishmael growing up with her son Yitzchak and she saw that this person would provide the wrong type of influence for her son, she knew what type of action was necessary. She insisted, "Send this lady out of my house with her son, into the desert!" When Avraham questioned her how he could act so cruelly, G-d told him, "All that Sarai tells you, listen to her" [Bereshis 21:12]. That took a tremendous strength. But a mother knew what was right for her child. She knew that so-called compassion now would end in cruelty. What was required over here was to say emphatically, "I am sorry. I will not have my son ruined!" Yehoshua also required that. There were 10 people, great and worthy leaders. It would be necessary to stand-up to the Gedolei HaDor, in effect. Where does one get that strength? One gets it from what Sarah our Matriarch had. Sarah was the Torah prototype when it came to standing up to the wrong crowd. That is what G-d told the 'Yud'. "I need you, Yud. You represent the strength of personality that will be needed by Yehoshua."

There is a powerful Medrash in Mishlei. In the chapter of the Woman of

Valor (Chapter 31) we read, "...she seeks out wool and linen..." The Medrash Tanchuma says, "This refers to Sara who told Avraham 'Send out this hand-maiden and her son.'" What is the interpretation of the Medrash? We know that wool and linen is Sha'tnez -- they cannot be mixed together. Wool by itself may be fine. Linen by itself may be fine. But together they are no good. The woman who "expounded concerning wool and linen" -- who knew that certain combinations are no good -- was Sarah, who insisted that Hagar and Yishmael be sent away. Yehoshua needs this ability to recognize when to take action and this strength of personality to persevere and stand up for what is right. That is why it was the Yud from Sarai that was given to Yehoshua.

A Timely Enactment: Aleinu L'Shabeach (We Need to Give Thanks...) Later in the Parsha the verse tells us that the Meraglim came back and reported, "And we were like grasshoppers in our eyes, and so too we were in their eyes" [Bamidbar 13:33]. "We heard them saying, 'There are people-ants crawling around in the fields.'" [Rash"i ibid.] Rav Yaakov Kamenesky, z"tl, explains that the reason they looked like ants to the inhabitants of the Land was because they saw themselves as ants in their own eyes. Rav Yaakov says, "If you hold yourself to be a rag (shmateh), others will hold you to be a rag as well!" If one thinks he has no chance, he will, in fact, have no chance. We have a mesorah [tradition] that before Yehoshua took the Jews into Israel he instituted the prayer "Aleinu L'Shabeach" in which we thank G-d that "He did not make our portion as their portion and did not make us like the families of the earth." We are not like idol worshippers, we are not like the misdirected of other nations -- they bow down to vanity and nothingness, to a god that will not save! Rather, we bow down and give thanks to the King, King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed be He. We are special. We are Jews. This is the only attitude with which they would be able to conquer an Eretz Yisrael. The tefilah that the new generation was given was an antidote for the inferiority complex of the old generation. The old generation held themselves to be like ants. So long as they maintained that view of themselves, it would be impossible to do battle with the 31 Kings of Canaan. The cure for that was to go in with the attitude -- we must thank G-d for not making us like the nations.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington. Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, Maryland. Copyright _ 1997 Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Project Genesis

mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Shiur haRAv Soloveichik ZTL on Parshas Shelach

shelach.97 Shiur HaRAv Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Shelach (Shiur date: 6/4/75) [Note: this summary was taken from a shiur presented by the Rav on Parshas Shelach. I have attempted to transcribe it as close as possible to the actual shiur, therefore it is quite a bit longer than the usual summary. Any mistakes in the transcription are attributable to me...]

Shelach Lecha Anashim. We all know Rashi's quotation of the Tanchuma as to why was the story of the Meraglim juxtaposed next to Miriam? Because these wicked people saw how Miriam was punished for speaking slander against her brother yet did not learn from her mistake. This is a simple yet complex Tanchuma. Every Tanchuma needs to be explored in depth. We must first explore the Miriam incident to understand the Tanchuma. What exactly was her sin?

In Ki Teytze we are commanded to remember what happened to Miriam on the way from Egypt. It is included as one of the 6 Zechiros recited daily by many. Rashi in Ki Teytze interprets the verse of Zachor in terms of Lashon Hara, remember and don't engage in slander. A Jew may not speak slander against another like Miriam did against her brother. It is interesting how the Torah singled out Lashon Hara from all other Mitzvos Bayn Adam Lachaveiro. Why was it necessary to place special emphasis on Lashon Horah? Why did the Torah deem it necessary to include the incident of Miriam among the greatest events in Jewish History, to the point that it is one of the 6 incidents that a Jew must always remember? On the surface it seems like an episode that was not on par with other events like the war

against Amalek or Mattan Torah or creation of the world, which are other incidents that we are commanded to remember.

The answer to this problem lies elsewhere. In order to understand it we have to analyze the Miriam episode and discover what was the error on the part of Aharon and Miriam. What did they accuse Moshe of?

[The Rav added the following parenthetical remark: the Rambam in his introduction to Zeraim and his classification of Torah Shbeal Peh, has a separate section of interpretations of the Torah as transmitted to us by Moshe. Rambam says that we must interpret the text in these cases exactly the way the Mesorah interprets. Normally we have great latitude in interpreting the Torah. With certain Parshios we don't have this freedom. For example Ayin Tachat Ayin. We interpret as monetary damages not physical retribution. We have no right to interpret this in a manner that differs from the Mesorah. The Rambam also quotes another case of Pri Aytz Hadar etc. One may not interpret Pri Aytz Hadar as any type of beautiful fruit other than the Esrog. Another example is Vkatzosa es Kappah. We may not interpret it in any way other than money damages. There is only one way of translation, that of the Mesorah and Kabbalah. The Rav said in the name of Reb Chaim and Reb Moshe, that the Parsha of Miriam belongs to the group of Parshios that we must explain strictly according to the Kabbalah.]

So how did Chazal interpret the sin of Miriam? Why was Moshe's wife called Kushis? Because she was unique and singular. Kushis means black but it means that she was unique and singular in her beauty and depth of character. Chazal say that Moshe took her and separated from her (Isha Kushis Lakach). When Hashem told Moshe to send Bnay Yisrael back to their tents He commanded Moshe to remain with Him. Other people can return to their homes and jobs. Not Moshe. He did not return to his previous life. Even though Moshe should have continued the marriage, he did not. Miriam and Aharon considered this separation as unnecessary and unfair. Rashi says that this episode developed when Tziporah commented that now the wives of Eldad and Maydad, after they prophesied, will be divorced like she was.

How did Miriam and Aharon argue against Moshe's actions? How did they know that he was not commanded by Hashem to separate from his wife? They said "aren't we all prophets"? They asked why is Moshe's contact with Hashem different than theirs? Hashem told them that indeed Moshe is different. Moshe is unique as he has a completely different level of prophesy. This answer on the surface does not seem to satisfy their question. They agreed that Moshe was the greatest of prophets. They only wanted to know why he was different as far as separating from his spouse since they did not.

The answer is that they did not understand Moshe. Moshe was completely different from other prophets. Miriam and Aharon were not aware of the incongruity of Moshe's prophecy and that of other prophets. They knew that Moshe was the most outstanding prophet. But they did not appreciate his singularity of being totally at variance with other prophets. They argued that Hashem has also spoken to them, yet they were never told to withdraw from their spouses. They concluded that apparently Hashem disapproves of a life of abstention. They failed to see that what was correct for them was not correct from Moshe. Moshe enjoyed a separate status that was beyond comparison. Certain rules applicable to Miriam and Aharon were out of place in reference to Moshe. The Rambam in Yesoday Torah says that the prophecy of Moshe differed from other prophets. All prophets were inspired in a dream, Moses while awake, prophets were spoken to through angel, but Moshe spoke "mouth to mouth" with Hashem. There was no allegory revealed to Moshe no riddle or parable. All prophets prophesied through fear and weakness. Moshe was vigorous enough to prophesy without physical change. None of the prophets could prophesy at their leisure. Moshe simply needed to concentrate his mind and prepare for prophetic revelation. Others could not. Moses was totally different. In the words of the Torah, Lo Kayn Avdi Moshe. Not only was he greater than all others, he is different, there is no comparison. It was a different dialogue between Moshe and Hashem as compared to other prophets.

Their sin was overlooking these 4 words of Lo Kayn Avdi Moshe. The uniqueness of Moshe took expression in a separate article of faith as one of

the 13 fundamentals of faith (formulated by the Rambam). We testify that we believe the words of all prophets and that the prophecy of Moshe is true and that he was the father of all prophets that came before him and after. We single out Moshe from the rest of the prophets. He was the father and greatest, no one compared to him. This uniqueness is so important that we must remember it constantly as an article of faith. The Rambam derived all this from the sin of Miriam.

There will never be another like Moshe. He was the most unique and different. But he was also alone. No one could share his experiences. Here we come across the cornerstone of Judaism: the idea of Bechira. We believe that we are an Am Hanivchar, a Chosen People. Anyone who denies Bechira denies Judaism. If we would not have been selected, our worth as Jews would be naught.

What is Bechira? What does it mean to be a chosen people? The Torah defines it by equating it with Segula, which is defined by Chazal as something special. Man has many possessions. However there is a certain treasure among many others that is treasured the most. Man treats it with special tenderness and care and relates to it in a peculiar way. It is singular. There is an intrinsic quality that is different in terms of the relationship. For example, Jacob loved Rachel. The Torah says that Leah saw that she was hated. It was not that he hated her, rather it was a different type of love. Jacob loved all his children, but there was something special between Joseph and Jacob that did not exist between Jacob and Reuven. There was a special relationship that existed between Jacob and Rachel that Jacob and Leah did not have. It was not a question of intensity, it was a different type of love. Ki Oso Ahav Avihem, Joseph was loved in a different manner than the others. It was an indescribable love that can't be analyzed. The one who recognized this was Judah. In his confrontation with Joseph in Vayigash, he said Vnaphso Keshura Bnafsho, the life of Jacob was tied up with the life of Benjamin. The special love resulted in a metaphysical union of souls. There was oneness between Jacob and Joseph and Jacob and Binyamin. The Midrash says V'ayle Toldos Yaakov, Yoseph, it inserts a hyphen saying Toldos Yaakov-Yoseph. They were one single person. According to Chazal, what happened to Jacob happened to Joseph. It was not a psychological love. The I-awareness of Jacob included Joseph. However the love for his other children did not facilitate this oneness. Jacob only united with Joseph and Binyamin.

Miriam failed to understand the uniqueness of Moshe, the Segula element in him. She and Aharon did not know that he merited special attention and deserved to be treated specially. Their sin was to compare Moshe to the other prophets. We now understand why the Torah added the 3 words Baderech Btzayschem Mimitzrayim in Ki Taytze when telling of the obligation to remember the Miriam incident. The Torah is stressing that if Moshe would not have been the unique prophet that was different from all others, Yetzias Mitzrayim would not have taken place. No other prophet could have accomplished Yetzias Mitzrayim. Only Moshe, because he was special and had the element of Segula. In order to liberate the people, the appointment to speak on behalf of Hashem and to be His messenger was indispensable. Only Moshe could achieve that distinction. Not Aharon nor Miriam.

Why did the Jews merit to be taken out of Egypt? After all, Chazal say that both the Jew and Egyptian were idolaters. They were taken out because the Jew is different. The Segula element in Moshe made it possible for him to take them out. Miriam did not recognize the greatness of Moshe. Even though they were poised to enter Eretz Yisrael, they did not see the Segula quality in Moshe. We must remember never to repeat Miriam's mistake and deny the Segula, the unique element in Moshe, to such an extent that it is one of the fundamentals of faith.

No other prophet can announce new laws after Moshe. No other prophet can interpret the Torah. Regular people can interpret, But a prophet can not claim that he has been told by Hashem to interpret the law. Only Moshe could interpret and introduce laws on behalf of Hashem. In Zecharia, there is a story that some people in the diaspora sent a letter inquiring from the Kohanim as to how should they observe the fast days after the construction

of the Beis Hamikdash? Should they continue the observance or not? This inquiry was addressed by the Navi to Hashem. Hashem answered that these fast days will eventually be Lsason Ulimimcha. Hashem gave instructions to Zecharia concerning a Mitzvah Drabanan. Hashem told the Navi how they should observe this Mitzvah. Why should that not raise the Mitzva of these fast days to the level of Dorayasa? The answer is that since it did not come from Moshe it remains a Mitzvah Drabanan. This demonstrates the uniqueness of Moshe.

The episode of the Meraglim is very puzzling. Why was it necessary to send them in the first place? What were they supposed to report to Moshe? The report they brought did not satisfy the mission that Moshe gave them. Why were they so severely punished? At first glance their sin is an enigma.

The Rav explained: if one reads the verses in proper context, we see the answer. The main question is why did Moshe send them in the first place? In the Torah they were not called Meraglim. The Torah describes their mission as Latur. The difference between Rigul and Tur is Rigul means to seek out the weak spots of a potential enemy. The spy must collect strategic military information. The Torah describes the job of a spy in Miketz. Yoseph accused his brothers of being spies that came to find the most vulnerable spots in Egypt to attack. The spies sent by Moses were charged with a mission that had very little to do with seeking out the weaknesses of the land. They were charged with exploring the land. It was simply a study of the land. Moshe asked that they submit on their return a demographic report based on a few characteristics. Tell us about the population size, the climate, the farming conditions. The requested report was almost devoid of intelligence data. Moshe knew that their entry to Eretz Yisrael would depend on miracles anyway. Why did he send them? After all, when they went out of Egypt they had no intelligence. Yet they went anyway.

The Rav suggested that Moshe acted according to the Halacha of Assur Ladam Lkadeh Isha Ad Sheyirena. One may not betroth a woman until he sees her, no matter how highly recommended she comes. The story of Eliezer and Rivka is the basis for this law. Even though Eliezer told Isaac what transpired on his trip to Charan, even though Eliezer was a trusted servant, Isaac did not take her for a wife immediately. Before Kidushin and Nissuin he brought her into the tent of Sarah. Is she a worthy successor? Will she be able to restore the glory of his mother? Would the same blessings that were present in the tent of his mother return? Rashi says that all these things returned. Only then was he convinced and he married her. He did not betroth Rivka based on Eliezer's report until he was convinced that she was worthy of replacing Sarah.

Avraham testified to the trustworthiness of Eliezer. Eliezer told Isaac about her piety and kindness and commitment. Why did he not trust his opinion? Because marriage is not just an ordinary transaction or a civil commitment or mundane partnership. It is an existential commitment, a personalistic covenant of 2 lonely people that join together to unite and reach a common destiny, to travel the same road together. In order to make such an all encompassing commitment one can not trust anyone. One must know the woman well enough, and visa versa. The woman must know the man also. Had marriage been just a civil institution and not an existential, covenantal union, then first hand personal knowledge would not have been necessary. Marriage is more than a conventional, practical solution. It is a metaphysical merger of destinies. It is the oneness of two souls. Therefore Eliezer could not be relied upon no matter how loyal he was.

We read in Bhaloscha that the Jews, with Moshe in the lead, were ready to invade Eretz Yisrael. Moshe invited Yisro to join them on their march to Eretz Yisrael. The entry to Eretz Yisrael was not simply the act of crossing the Jordan River or climbing up the hills. To Moshe it was the marriage of people and land. It was the union of the rocky hills and the sandy trails with the people that returned to their origin who left centuries before. Entry to Eretz Yisrael meant that land and people were to be fused into one single existence with a common destiny. Land and people were to share victory and defeat, honor and shame, forever. As the Rambam says Kidsha Lashata V'Kidsha Leasid Lavo. The marriage was to last forever. The groom could not enter the land without getting to know the bride, the land, intimately.

They knew that it was a land of milk and honey but they had to experience it. That's why Moshe sent explorers to study the land prior to their entry. He sent them simply to study the land. There was no reason to gather intelligence. He sent them as the prospective groom to meet the would be bride. He sent them to see the land "Mah He" to get acquainted because we are going to unite destinies forever.

Why was it necessary for Moshe to give them instructions of how to enter the land and the route they should take? They would have found the road on their own. Moshe revealed to the explorers why he sent them and what their mission consists of. He said that they should go up through the Negev and up the mountain. We have to go back to Vayeshev to understand the significance of this.

When Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers it says that he sent him from the valley, the depression, the depths of Chevron and he came to Shechem. Rashi says something that prima facie appears puzzling. He asks: Chevron is not in a valley it is on a plateau. Valley here refers to the Bris Bayn Habesarim and Avraham Avinu. Rashi saw in the word Emek great symbolism. In a valley, one finds himself surrounded by tall mountains, with restricted light and a very limited field of vision. On the contrary, a person standing on top of a mountain has an enormous field of vision. From the top of the mountain he can see things that normally would be beyond his scope of vision in a valley. Rashi tells us that Emek Chevron, the depression of Chevron, means that Jacob accompanied Joseph down the hill and into the depression. He didn't just send Joseph, he accompanied him along the way. When he came into the valley, Jacob bade Joseph farewell and sent him to his brothers in Shechem.

Why did Jacob accompany Joseph, after all it was quite a distance from where they lived in the hills, down to the valley. He did this because the Hashgacha wanted him to. There was great symbolism in Jacob accompanying him down the hill into the valley. Jacob was completely unaware of the consequences that this mission would have. He descended from the mountain where he normally enjoyed clear vision, Ruach Hakodesh, to the valley where his vision became clouded. Had Jacob had his decisive intuition that day, he never would have sent Joseph to his brothers. He knew that the brothers hated Joseph. He never would have sent him to check on their welfare. Jacob did not know that he would not see Joseph for another 22 years. The Exile in Egypt began the moment he kissed Joseph good bye and sent him to Shechem. Joseph was not being sent to Shechem but to Egypt. That day Jacob was in the valley with obscured vision. If he was on the plateau with Ruach Hakodesh, with his clarity of vision, he would never have lost Joseph. But he descended with Joseph into the valley and his vision became obscured. He precipitated the exile by sending Joseph. Joseph was the first exile to leave Eretz Yisrael for Egypt. Jacob was the next. Jacob lost his vision and acted in ignorance of the results that this errand would produce.

Now Moshe said, what Jacob started will now be consummated. He told the 12 explorers to go up to go up from the south, to climb the same mountain to the same place where the covenant that united people and land was struck. Go up the same mountain that Jacob descended when he entered the depths of exile. Jacob was the one who precipitated the process of separating clan and land when he sent Joseph to see his brothers. The history of Jewish Exile started when Jacob descended from the peak of the mountain into the valley of Chevron with Joseph, from the moment Joseph turned his back on Jacob.

Now Moshe said that they were elected to carry out a much more pleasant assignment. We are about to climb to the peak of the mountain and cast a searching glance across the land. We no longer belong to the generations that waited and looked forward to the return of the people to the land. We are a fulfilling generation. With one look we will embrace the entire grandeur of the land and landscape and you will immediately understand our relationship to the land. We are not looking for a land in terms of material sense. We are being wedded to the land with a merged destiny. We will feel the suffering of the land when it is occupied by strangers. The land shares in our plight when we are suffering in exile.

Rashi quotes that when Hashem appeared to the patriarchs as Kel Shakay, He used a name that means He promised but did not yet fulfill. The patriarchs lived in an era of superhuman faith in Hashem. Moshe's generation was one of fulfillment, it is characterized by the Shem of Hashem. Moshe said that their era will be one of fulfillment with the return of the people to the land.

Moshe told them U'Reysem es Haaretz Ma He. What was their mission and what they were to report back? He told them to go up through the Negev. The Negev is the cradle of Jewish History. It was what pulled Avraham and where the Bris Bayn Habesarim, covenant between Hashem, man and land was consummated. Now Moshe said we will reverse Jacobs movements. Jacob went from the peaks of the mountain to the depths of depression and exile. We will go up from exile to return to the land and unite our destinies. It behooves us to unite destinies with the land because you will see that the land is worthy of waiting for and uniting with it. The most outstanding quality of the land according to Chazal is that Shechina is to be found there. Everyone can be inspired only in Eretz Yisrael. There is no prophecy in Chutz Laaretz. The task of the Jewish people is to be a nation of prophets. This can only happen in Eretz Yisrael. In his attempt to run away from prophecy, Jonah attempted to escape from the land. You will see that the land is worthy of our sacrifices and our waiting and hope.

He told the explorers to recognize the element of Segula in Eretz Yisrael. Somehow that uniqueness, Segula, can be united with the uniqueness of the people. He sent them because its forbidden to betroth a woman without first seeing her. He wanted them to see the beauty of the land, that it is worthy of the people. The majority of the spies did not even show enough interest to enter Chevron. They certainly did not go up the mountain that Jacob descended from. They just explored it piece meal instead of taking in all its grandeur from the top of the mountain. They did not understand the Segula charisma of the land and the people. The land is dispensable, and if so, so are the people. It was just a land. They never reported back to Moshe "U'Riysem es Haaretz Ma He": is it worthy of an eternal union with the people or not? Only Yehoshua and Kalev said that the land is Tova Meod Meod, it is worthy of us to be joined in an insoluble union. We have no other land, our destinies are linked up. That's why Tanchuma said that the spies should have taken a lesson from Miriam. Just like she overlooked the Segula element of Moshe, they ignored the Segula element of the land. That's why they were both severely punished. She ignored his uniqueness even though she knew that there were differences between her, Aharon and Moshe. Both stories showed a lack of appreciation of the Segula. If one does not believe in Segula, he can not simply act in faith and can not wait for the redemption.

The element of Segula applies in Judaism to many situations. We have a hierarchy of values where we must make choices. For example Shabbos is considered Chemdas Yamim, it is unique, singular, a Segula. Yom Tov is not Segula as there is a common Kedusha that applies to all Yomim Tovim. Torah, Moshe, Moshiaich, Am Yisrael, Shabbos, Malchus Bays Dovid have the element of Segula. The definition of Segula is to be found in the Almighty. The Rambam repeats many times that Hashem is not only One, but He is the only One. He is singular. This is the great mystery of faith. On the one hand Hashem is the origin of everything. Wherever there is existence Hashem is present. This is the mystery of Ehye Asher Ehye. To exist means to be in the heart of eternity. Whoever is embraced by Hashem exists. There is unity between creation and creator. On the other hand, Hashem is alone, different in the ultimate sense of the word from the world. Hashem not only created and sustains the world, He also negates the world. He is exclusive, a Yachid. If there is being, it is only the true being of the Almighty. No one can imitate Hashem or say that he shares in divinity. Divinity is exclusive. Consequently our existence is a dream, as the Piyut says on Yom Kippur, Kachalom Yaouf. It is only an illusion.

In one sense, Hashem supports the world and is close to the world. All we have to do is look at Hashem to see how to live. On the other hand Hashem is Yachid, only He exists. When the finite being comes close to Hashem, he discontinues to exist, as when finitude is added to infinity, you have infinity. Hashem is Echad. The paradox is that there is communication

with man in this world, yet Hashem is Yachid Bolamo, and there can be no communication because there is no world existence besides Hashem. The Zohar says Kulo Kman Dlaysa Dami, from the standpoint of Hashem the world is as if it never existed.

Since man is created in the image of Hashem he has a dialectic existence. He is part of the universal order as well as a single Segula individual. Man may be compared with other creatures, with the brute in the field and the tree in the forest. At the same time man remains an outsider with nothing in common with nature. He is at times part of the universal order and other times he confronts the universal order. Moreover, within society and the relation between man and man, on the one hand he is told to practice Chesed to tear down the barriers surrounding the egocentric individual and share everything with others through an open existence of Chesed. On the other hand, man is also urged to guard his uniqueness.

Man exists in 2 spheres. If man lives only in Reshus Hayachid he becomes and egotist. If he lives only in the Reshus Harabim he loses his originality and inspiration, his Segula element, and becomes an imitator.

Moses was the great leader who on the one hand was one of the crowd. In Judaism, leadership is measured by the leader's ability to suffer for the crowd. The leader takes over the accumulated total suffering of the individuals in the crowd. The capacity to suffer for the millions is the first prerequisite of the Jewish leader. Not to be glorified by millions. That is the approach of the pagan hero. The Jewish hero is the individual suffering for the many and with the many. Moshe suffered with them at the Golden Calf episode when he said Mechayni Na. He sacrificed his life for the people. His life was open to all. He did not display his Segula when he dealt with simple people. He could never be left alone. He sat and judged the people from morning till night, surrounded by them in the midst of the crowd. He personified their hopes and dreams. He suffered with them and rejoiced with them.

However there was a Segula element in Moses. He was lonely. This Segula, singular existence could not be communicated to the people. How could there be communication with the people if there was no one else like him. He was the loneliest person on the earth who would take the Ohel Moed and erect it outside the camp. Moshe was 2 people in Reshus Harabim and Yachid. When he was in the Reshus Harabim he merged with the people. When he was in Reshus Hayachid, he could communicate only with Hashem. This mode of existence which is rooted in the idea of Vhalachta Bdracahv finds its complete harmony in Hashem, but as far as human beings are concerned, we are dialectic beings.

Wherever the Segula element is present we can not rationalize events. For example our faithfulness and attachment to Eretz Yisrael is incomprehensible in logical terms. The closeness of people to land is amazing. American Jews are usually very pragmatic. But they are ready to attack anyone, even the president, if he says something that is not in the spirit of zionism, we must ask where is their logos? They will risk everything, even their status and standing as citizens of this country when it comes to Eretz Yisrael. [Editor note: this shiur was given in 1975, a time of crisis for Israel in the UN and within the American Government]. The normally clear minded Jew becomes cloudy when it comes to Eretz Yisrael. This is because our relationship with Eretz Yisrael is one of Segula.

We can not rationalize events that revolve around Segula. There is an element of the frighteningly strange, of the hidden and ineffable in the Segula charisma. Why were we selected as Segula? Why was Eretz Yisrael selected as the land of the Am Segula and endowed with the Segula quality? These are enigmas. Why should an Am Segula live in exile for hundreds of years? This is logically incomprehensible. When values are comparable and when common denominators unite many values, the mind is capable of rationalization. However, Segula is above and beyond the capacity of the logos to understand. When Segula is in the background it is easy to understand history. At other times when Segula is revealed, Am Segula, Eretz Segula, Moshe Segula, the enigma arises and everything becomes mysterious. Segula element can only be lived and accepted as an act of faith.

A fringe of blue, Tcheyles, is included in the tzitzis, Lavan or white.

White and sky blue symbolize 2 ideas in hebrew semantics. Lavan symbolizes that which is plain and readily grasped. It is symbolic of human understanding. The clear and distinct, white and obvious, are the criteria of truth. As we say in hebrew, Hadavar Mechuvar. White represents that which is clear and understood in my mind.

Blue according to Chazal is indicative of the mysterious, boundless distance. Chazal said that Tcheyles is similar to the sea and the sea is similar to the heavens which are similar to the Kisei Hakovod. It represents what is remote from our reach, the Segula quality. The paradoxical unfolding of our destiny is symbolized by Tcheyles.

The Jew apparently is expected to focus on the white. The Torah encouraged man to explore the phenomena of nature and use his mind to be scientifically oriented and technologically minded. as long as he is exploring the white color. 7 (or 6) threads of Tzitzis are white (Machlokes Rambam and Raavad). There is one thread that is blue in the tzitzis. There are things that go beyond the rational, something mysterious and awesome where we encounter unexpectedly the Segula quality. Everything becomes distant and strange, remote as the sky and distant from our mind. But we have been trained to accept Lavan and Tcheyles. If the experience is understandable then our intellect interprets it accordingly. Otherwise we interpret it through Tcheyles, through an act of faith: Uriysem Oso Uzechartem es Kol Mitzvos Hashem.

This summary Copyright by Dr. Israel Rivkin and Josh Rapps, Edison, N.J.

[Last week's] weekly-halacha@torah.org Parshas Beha'aloscha - Cereal Brochos WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5757 BEHA'ALOSCHA

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

"And it (the manna) tasted like the taste of dough kneaded with oil" (11:8) What blessing is recited over "dough kneaded with oil?" Was the manna bread or cake? Vegetable or oil? Did it require a blessing - perhaps a Heavenly substance does not? All of these questions and possibilities are raised by the commentators and the actual blessing for manna remains unresolved(1). Indeed, the nature of manna was never understood, for upon seeing the manna for the first time in the Wilderness the Israelites queried: 'What is it?' (Shemos 16:15). The Reisha Rav, Harav A. Levin, interprets their comment to mean: What blessing is recited over this food, whose composition we do not know. In a similar vein, today's breakfast cereal market is loaded with many a product about which we may ask: "What is it" - what is its exact composition and what blessing does it require? As with the manna, each ce! real needs to be researched thoroughly so that its blessing can be determined. We offer here an updated review of a previous issue that was published last year.

BLESSINGS OVER BREAKFAST CEREALS: AN UPDATE

Before listing some of the popular breakfast cereals and their correct blessings, we must first make an attempt to learn the basic principles governing blessings over cereals. Obviously, it is next to impossible to list all of the cereals on the market today, nor is it possible to predict what combinations cereal makers will come up with in the future. Upon mastering the basic rules, however, the educated reader can present his findings to a rav for a final decision.

BASIC RULES RULE # 1: Cereals whose basic ingredients include one or more of the five species of grain - wheat, barley, spelt, rye and oats - require a mezonos. If, however only the bran (outer shell) of the grain is used, the blessing is shehakol(2). RULE # 2: Cereals whose basic ingredient is corn flour, also known as "corn meal", are shehakol(3). RULE # 3: Cereals which are made out of pieces of whole corn are ho'adamah(4). This form of corn is called "milled corn" by the cereal companies. RULE # 4: Cereals whose basic ingredient is rice (which was either baked or cooked) are mezonos(5). RULE # 5: When the basic ingredient of a cereal is corn flour, but a small amount of oat or wheat flour (or both) is added to it, the blessing depends upon the purpose for which the oat or wheat! flour is added. If it

was added in order to enhance the taste of the corn, then the entire mixture turns into a mezonos, even though the oat or wheat flour is the minority ingredient. If, however, the main purpose of the oat or wheat flour is to add texture and/or to "bind" the mixture, as is frequently the case when wheat starch is added, then the blessing remains shehakol(6). RULE # 6: Milk mixed with cereal does not require its own shehakol, since most people add milk to their cereal to make it more palatable and easier to eat(7). [The small amount of milk that may remain in the bowl after the cereal has been eaten does not require a shehakol(8).] In the atypical case where the milk is not secondary to the cereal but is consumed for its own value, it would require a shehakol(9). RULE # 7: Raisins or bananas added to cereal do not require their own blessing since they are secondary to the cereal(10). When the main intent, however, is for the fruit, a separate blessing should be made over them(11). RULE # 8: When various cereals are eaten together in one bowl and one of the cereals requires a Mezonos, then a Mezonos is said over the entire mixture. No further blessings are required(12). The exception to this rule is when mezonos is made over rice(13). In that case, since the mezonos is not made over one of the five species of grain, everything else in the bowl does not automatically become secondary to it. Unless rice is the majority ingredient, a blessing needs to be made over each item. [For this reason, mezonos made on Crispix will not cover the corn part of that cereal.]

PARTIAL LISTING

NOTE: Cereal manufacturers may - and, according to experts, often do - change their ingredients and/or manufacturing processes. One should be aware of the possibility of changes that may affect the kashrus or blessing of any product listed below. Several of the cereals listed below may be dairy - non cholov yisroel.

MEZONOS: Apple Jacks - made from corn, wheat and oat flour. Alpha Bits - made from a combination of whole grain oat and corn flour. Cheerios - made from oat flour(14). Includes all varieties. Cocoa Pebbles - made from rice by a process called oven puffing. Fruit Loops - made from corn, wheat and oat flour. Fruity Pebbles - made from rice by a process called oven puffing. Grape Nuts - baked as heavy, dense barley bread which is pulverized into cereal(15). Farina - cooked wheat. Honey Combs - made from a combination of corn and whole grain oat flour(16). Life - made from whole oat, whole wheat, corn and rice flour. Oatmeal - cooked oats. Oatmeal Crisp - made out of oats and wheat. Raisin Bran - produced from wheat bran plus other parts of the wheat kernel(17). See Rule # 7. Raisin Clusters - made from bran and other parts of the wheat kernel. See Rule # 7. Raisin Nut Bran - wheat bran with other parts of the wheat kernel. See rule # 7. Rice Chex - made from rice by a process called oven puffing. Rice Krispies - made from rice by a process called oven puffing. Wheat Chex - wheat based cereal. Wheaties - wheat based cereal.

SHEHAKOL: All Bran, made from the outer shell of the grain (wheat bran) which is not considered as part of the grain(18). May also contain some corn flour. There is, however, a product called All Bran Extra Fiber. This product is made from wheat bran and wheat flour. Its blessing is mezonos. Captain Crunch - made mainly from corn flour with a small amount of oat flour for consistency(19). Cocoa Puffs - made from corn meal. Some companies(20) add no wheat starch at all, while others(21) add a small amount(22). Fiber One - made from the outer shell of the grain (wheat bran) which is not considered as part of the grain(23). May also contain some corn flour. French Toast Crunch - a corn meal cereal. Kix (all varieties) - made from corn flour with a small amount of oat flour added for consistency(24). Resse's Puffs - made from corn meal with no oat flour added. A small amount of wheat starch is added as a binder. Trix - made from corn meal with no oat flour added. A small amount of wheat starch is added as a binder.

HO'ADAMAH: Corn Chex - Recent research(25) indicates that it is made out of whole pieces (milled corn). If so, its brachah is ho'adamah(26). Corn Flakes when processed by pressing pieces of cooked corn kernels into flakes, its blessing is ho'adamah(27). When produced from corn flour, its blessing is shehakol, borei nefashos(28). Frosted Flakes - See Corn Flakes. Corn Pops - Present research(29) indicates that it is made while the corn kernel is still intact - it is merely formed into a new shape. If so, its blessing is

ho'adamah(30). Kashi - Puffed wheat which remains whole throughout the puffing process(31). Wheat Germ - The "embryo" of the kernel. Usually it is only steamed momentarily; it is not cooked(32).

BRACHA ACHRONAH: All cereals listed in the ho'adamah and shehakol sections require a borei nefashos afterwards. All cereals listed in the mezonos sections which are made out of rice, require a borei nefashos afterwards. All cereals listed in the mezonos section which are made mostly from the five species of grain require an al hamichyah afterwards. These include: Cheerios, Grape Nuts, Farina, Life, Oatmeal, Oatmeal Crisp, Raisin Bran, Wheat Chex and Wheaties. All cereals listed in the mezonos section which are made from a combination of corn and oats, require a borei nefashos afterwards. This is because al hamichyah is said only if one eats at least a kzayis (1.1 fl. oz.) of grain within a time span of 3-4 minutes. Many cereals listed in that section contain only a small amount of oat flour, which makes it unlikely that a kzayis of grain will be consumed in that brief period of time. Al hamichyah should not be said over those cereals, since the other ingredients (sugar, cocoa, etc.) are not included as part of the required kzayis of grain(33). For less than a kzayis of grain, a borei nefashos is said(34). Such cereals include: Alpha Bits, Fruit Loops, Honey Combs.

QUESTIONABLE BRACHAH RISHONAH OR BRACHA ACHRONAH: The following list contains cereals whose blessings remain in doubt. Different opinions among the poskim, and incomplete, inaccurate or constantly changing information all contribute to uncertainty in determining the correct blessing. [It is recommended that the cereals listed below be eaten only during a meal, or with other mezonos cereals [of the five species of grain(35)] whose blessing is not subject to debate, see rule # 8 above.] Corn Bran - contains mostly corn and corn bran flour with a small amount of oat flour. It is difficult to assess the exact amount and purpose of the oat flour and therefore it is recommended to eat! it with other cereals only. If not possible, a shehakol should be said. Crispix - made from equal amounts of rice and milled corn. The correct brachah is problematic since neither ingredient is the majority of one of the five species of grain(36). Some poskim rule that both mezonos and ho'adamah should be recited(37). Granola - made from rolled oats. Some companies(38) just steam the oats briefly. The blessing on such granola is ho'adamah. Other companies(39) cut and bake the oats and the granola flakes adhere one to another - such granola is mezonos(40).

The brachah achronah on both types is borei nefashos, although preferably(41), steamed grain should be eaten only during a meal to avoid making a brachah which does not satisfy all opinions. Sugar Crisp (Golden Crisp, Sugar Smacks) - made from puffed wheat(42). Many poskim(43) rule that ho'adamah is said, while others(44) hold that the proper blessing is mezonos. Harav M. Feinstein rules that either blessing may be said(45).

The brachah achronah is borei nefashos(46), although preferably(47) it should be eaten only during a meal to avoid making a blessing which does not satisfy all opinions.

FOOTNOTES:

1 Yechaveh Daas 6:12 quotes 4 views: Mezonos; Hamotzi lechem min haaretz; Hamotzi lechem min hashomayim; No blessing at all. 2 Igros Moshe EH 1:114; Teharas Mayim pg. 330. 3 Rama OC 208:8. 4 Mishnah Berurah 208:37. 5 OC 208:7 and Shaar Hatzion 31. 6 Mishnah Berurah 208:49 and Biur Halachah; Mishnah Berurah 212:1. See Hebrew Notes for an elaboration. 7 Igros Moshe OC 4:43. 8 Mishnah Berurah 168:46. 9 Igros Moshe, OC 4:43. If the cereal serves as an inducement to get a child to drink milk, then the milk requires its own brachah (oral ruling by Harav M. Feinstein quoted in Brachos Study Guide pg. 43). 10 Aishel Avrohom 208:2; Biur Halachah 212:1; Mekor Habrachah pg. 65; V'zos Habrachah, 4th edition, pg. 92; Kashruth Kurrents (Star K) Winter, 1997. 11 See Igros Moshe OC 4:43 (concerning bananas which are found in cereal) and explanation offered by Pischei Halachah pg. 96. (See also Guide to Practical Halachah vol. 2 pg. 210, oral ruling from Debricener Rov). See Hebrew Notes for clarification of this issue. 12 OC 212:1, Mishnah Berurah and Biur Halachah. 13 Mishnah Berurah 207:30. 14 Kvius Seudah over Cheerios would require Hamotzi and Bircas Hamazon - Harav S.Z. Auerbach (V'sain Brachah by Harav P. Bodner pg. 527). 15 Research and ruling of The Laws of Brachos (pg. 386). 16 The Laws of Brachos (pg. 371); Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), Winter, 1997 17 According to research done by the Star K, even companies (like Kellogg's) who list only 'wheat bran' in the ingredient list, include endosperm in this cereal. Unlike All-Bran, the brachah for Raisin Bran is definitely Mezonos. 18 V'sain Brachah (pg. 531). 19 Research done by Star K Certification. Although this cereal is marketed as a corn and oat cereal, it is only a marketing ploy to downplay the amount of sugar which is in the cereal. 20 Quaker. 21 General Mills. 22 The Laws of Brachos (pg. 364); V'sain Brachah (pg. 528). 23 The Laws of Brachos (pg. 359;367) 24 Based on research done by the Orthodox Union and Star-K, who have determined that the oat flour serves only as a binder. In the past, some had ruled that the proper

brachah was Mezonos, see The Laws of Brachos (pg. 371) and Harav Forst's responsum in the Hebrew Notes, but it now seems that their ruling was based on erroneous information. 25 By Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), Winter 1997 (Ralston). 26 Previously, it has been reported that this cereal is made of corn flour. 27 Kellogg's and Post currently use this process. According to experts in the field, this could change at any time and without warning. 28 General Mills (Country, Total) and Kemach currently use this process. If accurate information is not available, Hoadama should be said (Harav S.Y. Elyashiv quoted in V'zos Habrachah, 4th edition, pg. 287). 29 Of Kellogg's (U.S.A.) by Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), Winter 1997. It is certainly possible, however, that other companies produce this kind of cereal from a batter of corn flour. 30 L'torah V'horaah (vol. 2) quotes Harav M. Feinstein as ruling that this type of cereal is like pop corn and the proper brachah is Hoadamah. See also The Laws of Brachos pg. 365. 31 Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), winter 1997. 32 Igros Moshe OC 4:46. Research done by V'zos Habrachah, 4th edition, pg. 282 # 50; Kashrus Kurrents (Star K), Winter 1997. 33 Harav Y.Z. Soloveitchik (quoted in Teshuvos V'hanhagos 132); Igros Moshe OC 1:71; EH 1:114; Divrei Yoel 13; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in V'sain Brachah pg. 230); Harav S.Y. Elyashiv and Harav C.P. Scheinberg (quoted in V'zos Habrachah, 4th edition, pg. 46); Yalkut Yosef 3:491. See Hebrew Notes for an explanation as to why the custom (quoted in Mishnah Berurah 208:48 concerning cakes) does not apply here. 34 OC 208:9. 35 A Mezonos said over rice cereal, however, will not exempt the questionable cereals [see rule # 8], unless the rice cereal is the majority cereal. 36 See Rule 8 above. See also The Laws of Brachos, pg. 386. 37 Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), Winter, 1997. 38 Kellogg's. 39 Quaker. 40 V'zos Habrachah (4th edition, pg. 103) quoting Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv. See also V'sain Brachah pg. 505-506 and The Laws of Brachos pg. 369. In reality, there are many ways to produce granola and each company does it differently. Methods are constantly changing. 41 Interpretation of Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Birchas Hanehenin pg. 147) of OC 208:4 and Mishnah Berurah 18. 42 Recent research shows that the bran and part of the endosperm is removed during the puffing process. Based on Mishnah Berurah 208:15 who says that cooked pearled wheat is Mezonos, the proper brachah should be Mezonos. Nevertheless, many poskim rule that Hoadamah is said for the following reasons: 1. Puffing is not cooking, since no water is used. 2. Some Rishonim hold that Mezonos can only be recited if the kernels adhere to one another. See The Laws of Brachos (pg. 272). 43 Igros Moshe OC 4:44; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (V'sain Brachah pg. 527), Harav S. Y. Elyashiv and Harav C.P. Scheinberg (V'zos Habrachah, 4th edition, pg. 101); Ohr L'tzion 14:21. 44 Mekor Habrachah (54); Kashruth Kurrents (Star K), Winter 1997. 45 Igros Moshe OC 4:45. 46 Igros Moshe OC 4:45 - even if a Mezonos was said as the brachah rishonah. 47 Mishnah Berurah 208:18 - according to the interpretation of Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Birchas Ha'nehenin pg. 147 and V'zos Habrachah pg. 101).

THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS SPONSORED BY BETH(POPP) AND ABSHALOM MEIRI BROOKLYN, NEW YORK IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF THEIR BECHOR RAPHAEL ELIEZER BEN ABSHALOM 22 IYAR,5757---MAY 29,1997

weekly-halacha@torah.org Parshas Shelach-Trees, Plants & Flowers on Shabbos WEEKLY-HALACHA By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

They found a man gathering wood on the Shabbos day (15:32).

TREES, PLANTS AND FLOWERS ON SHABBOS The are various opinions in the Talmud(1) regarding the nature of the offense committed by the man described in the verse cited above. Which of the thirty-nine forbidden Shabbos labors did he perform? Some say that he gathered sticks which were spread out on the ground - "gathering;" others hold he that he carried sticks in a public domain - "carrying;" while others hold that he tore twigs from trees - "reaping." There are many laws that govern handling and touching trees and plants on Shabbos, and this week's Torah reading is an opportune time to review them.

TREES: Since it is Biblically prohibited to tear a branch or a leaf from a tree on Shabbos, the Rabbis erected numerous 'fences' [precautionary measures] in order to prevent this transgression. It is rabbinically prohibited, therefore, to:

1. Shake a tree on Shabbos(2). One may touch a tree if it will not shake(3). 2. Climb, sit, or lean heavily [e.g., to tie one's shoes] on a tree on Shabbos(4). One may sit on a dead tree stump(5).

3. Swing from a branch or from an object directly connected to a tree. Thus a swing or a hammock which is connected to a tree may not be used on Shabbos(6). Even a swing which is connected to a chain and the chain, in turn, is connected to a ring which is attached to the tree is still forbidden to be used(7). If, however, poles are connected to two trees and a swing or hammock is attached to the poles, they may be used, provided that the trees are sturdy and will not move or bend. =

4. To place or hang an object [e.g., a jacket, a sefer] on a tree on Shabbos. 5. To remove an object from a tree on Shabbos. Even before Shabbos, it is prohibited to place [or leave] items on a tree that are usually used on Shabbos, since one could easily forget and remove them from the tree on Shabbos(8).

6. To smell a growing, edible fruit while it is growing on a tree, since it

could easily lead to picking the fruit from the tree in order to eat it(9). It is even forbidden to eat - on Shabbos - a fruit that has fallen off the tree on Shabbos. It is permitted, however, to eat it immediately after Shabbos(10).

7. Ride an animal on Shabbos, since it is easy to forget and pull a branch off a tree while riding an animal(11). As an extension of this edict, the Rabbis declared all animals to be muktzeh(12).

All trees - whether fruit bearing or barren, living or dead - are included in these rabbinical decrees(13). But the restrictions apply only to the part of the tree which is higher than ten inches from the ground(14). Trees and bushes which do not grow to a height of ten inches are not restricted in any way(15).

PLANTS AND FLOWERPOTS In halachic terms, all potted plants are considered to be "nourishing from the ground(16)" and consequently "connected" to the ground and forbidden to be moved or lifted on Shabbos. Regardless of whether the pot has a hole in its base, is indoors(17) or outdoors - it is classified as severe muktzeh and may not be moved for any purpose on Shabbos(18). It is permissible, however, to smell, touch and even bend the stem or the leaves, provided that they are soft and flexible and would not break upon contact(19). It is strictly forbidden to move a plant or a flowerpot from a shady area to a sunny area so that exposure to the sun's rays will aid its growth. It is also prohibited to open a window or to pull up a shade with the specific intention of allowing the sun or air to aid a plant's growth. Conversely, if sun light or fresh air is detrimental to a plant, it would be prohibited to shut them out, since shutting them out promotes the plant's growth(20).

Flowers Flowers, while still connected to the ground, may be smelled and touched provided that their stem is soft and does not normally become brittle(21). Flowers in a vase may be moved on Shabbos(22). They may not, however, be moved from a shady area to a sunny area to promote blossoming. If the buds have not fully bloomed, the vase may be moved only very slightly, since the movement of the water hastens the opening of the buds(23). One may remove flowers from a vase full of water, as long as they have not sprouted roots in the water(24). Once removed, they may not be put back in the water if that will cause further blossoming.

Water may not be added to a flower vase on Shabbos(25). On Yom Tov, however, water may be added but not changed(26). Flowers should be placed in water before Shabbos. In case they were not, they may not be placed in water on Shabbos if the buds have not blossomed fully. If the buds are completely opened, however, some poskim permit placing them in water on Shabbos(27).

One may not gather flowers, create an arrangement and place it in a vase on Shabbos, even if the vase contains no water(28).

GRASS Touching, moving, walking, running or lying on grass is permissible(29). Some poskim(30) prohibit running in high grass if it would definitely result in some grass being uprooted, while other poskim are not concerned with this possibility(31). Grass which was uprooted on Shabbos and gets stuck on one's shoes is considered muktzeh, since it was attached to the earth when Shabbos began. One may remove it only in an indirect manner(32).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Shabbos 96b. 2 Unless mentioned otherwise, Yom Tov has the same halachos. 3 Rama OC 336:13. 4 OC 336:13 and Biur Halachah. 5 Aruch Hashulchan 336:18 6 OC 336:13. 7 Harav M. Feinstein (oral ruling quoted in Sefer Hilchos Shabbos vol. 1. pg. 62) 8 OC 279:4 and 514:6 according to the explanation of Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasah pg. 330). There are other, more lenient, opinions, see Tehilah L'Dovid 279:7. 9 OC 336:10. 10 OC 322:3. 11 OC 305:18. 12 OC 308:39. 13 Mishnah Berurah 336:1. There are some poskim who are lenient in the case of a tree which has completely dried out, see Mishnah Berurah ibid. and Aruch Hashulchan 13. 14 Mishnah Berurah 336:21. 15 OC 336:2. However, if the tree or bush are fruit-bearing, some poskim prohibit those as well - Mishnah Berurah 336:19. 16 OC 336:8. Even a non-perforated pot nourishes a "bit" from the ground - Mishnah Berurah 336:43. Possibly, this is only so with wood or ceramic pots; metal or glass non-perforated pots do not allow for nourishment from the ground - Bris Olam pg. 31. It remains questionable if plastic is like wood or like glass (see Piskei Teshuvos pg. 223). 17 View of Chazon Ish, Harav S.Y. Elyashiv and Harav S. Vosner (quoted in Shalmei Yehudah pg. 73). There is a minority opinion that non-perforated pots do not "nourish" through solid (wooden or ceramic) floors - Bris Olam pg. 31. 18 Shaar Hatzion 336:38 quotes the Pri Megadim as debating whether a plant can be moved [when no question of reaping is involved]. While some poskim (Tehilah L'Dovid 336:6; Bris Olam pg. 32) are lenient and allow moving a flower pot when there is no question of reaping, many other poskim (Kalkeles Shabbos - Zoreah; Minchas Shabbos 80:194) are stringent. It is proper to be stringent on this issue (Harav S.Z.

Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Shalmei Yehudah pg. 73) and Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in Sefer Hilchos Shabbos pg. 64). 19 Mishnah Berurah 336:48. 20 Entire paragraph is based on the rulings of the Chazon Ish Shviis 22:1; Shvisas Hashabbos - Zoreah 10; Har Tzvi OC 211; Yesodei Yeshurun pg. 25; Shevet Halevi 4:36. 21 Mishnah Berurah 336:48. 22 Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in Sefer Hilchos Shabbos pg. 64). 23 Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Shalmei Yehudah pg. 73); Bris Olam pg. 32. 24 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa pg. 333). 25 Mishnah Berurah 36:54. 26 OC 654:1; Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa pg. 333. 27 See Shaar Hatzion 336:48; Yechave Daas 2:53. Harav S.Z. Auerbach is quoted (Nishmas Avrohom OC 336) as being stringent on this. 28 Igros Moshe OC 4:73. 29 OC 336:3; 312:6. 30 Mishnah Berurah 336:25 and Biur Halachah. 31 Aruch Hashulchan 336:21. See also Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa pg. 331. 32 Mishnah Berurah 336:24.

Weekly-Halacha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis, Inc. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Haya'el Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available jgross@torah.org . Project Genesis: 3600 Crondall Lane, Ste. 106 Owings Mills, MD 21117

parasha-page@jerl.co.il Intriguing glimpses into the weekly Torah reading and Jewish holidays Parashat Shelach 5757 - "Kalev's reward"

P * A * R * A * S * H * A - P * A * G * E

by Mordecai Kornfeld of Har Nof, Jerusalem (kornfeld@virtual.co.il)

Dedicated by Josh Daniel and family of Efrat/ Yerushalayim in honor of Dovid Avrohom Daniel, who is celebrating his Bar-Mitzvah this Shabbos in Baltimore. Special Mazel Tov wishes to mother Rosaline and her husband Yakov Wollner, who helped make it all possible, and of course to the grandparents, Mr. And Mrs. Noah Daniel and Mr. And Mrs. Joseph Eisner. May they enjoy only Nachas from their grandchildren.

KALEV'S REWARD

As for my servant Kalev, since he was of a different spirit and he chose to follow me I will bring him to the land to which he came (when he spied the Land of Israel) and his children will conquer it. [Rashi: Chevron (the city which Kalev visited while traveling with the spies -- see Rashi 13:22) will be given to him as his portion of the land.] (Bamidbar 14:24)

Why was Kalev singled out in this verse as the one who "was of a different spirit?" Didn't Yehoshua also follow the words of Hashem and refuse to go in the evil ways of the other spies? Shouldn't he also have been praised and rewarded independently, just as Kalev was? The Alschich (16th century Safed) suggests that this question can be answered through a deeper understanding of the words of the verse. The conventional understanding (see Rabbeinu Bachye) of the words "he was of a different spirit," is that Kalev was not of the same spirit as the other spies; he chose to trust fully in Hashem's promise that the land will be theirs. The Alschich, however, proposes that these words mean exactly the opposite. Kalev was rewarded because he was *originally* of a different spirit, i.e., of an *evil* spirit, and was almost swept up in the counsel of the spies. However, Kalev later *changed* his spirit, conquering his evil inclination and refusing to join the spies in their evil plot. Yehoshua, on the other hand, never entertained any evil thoughts. Moshe Rabbeinu had prayed for his pupil Yehoshua before sending him out with the other spies, and Moshe blessed him that he should have no desire at all to sin (Rashi 13:16). (Even without Moshe's blessing, how could Yehoshua even consider rebelling against his mentor to whom he was so closely attached, as in Bamidbar 33:4)? That is why Kalev was singled out as being "of a different spirit," and why he was rewarded with the city of Chevron. (Alschich 14:22 -- see also Ohr Hachaim and Malbim 14:24.)

II We may add that it now becomes clear why specifically the city of Chevron was the proper reward for Kalev's behaviour. The city of Chevron was noted for the unusual might of its gargantuan occupants, the "Bnai Ha'anak" (Bamidbar 13:22). The Torah

makes a point of telling us that the spies started their Israel tour with the city of Chevron, home of the Bnai Ha'anak. Undoubtedly, this demonstrated that they already had unworthy intentions. They had decided to discourage the Jewish People from entering Eretz Yisrael and they were looking for ways to give the Jewish People a disheartening report. News of the Bnai Ha'anak would be enough to scare off even the most stout-hearted of warriors.

When the Jewish People eventually took over and divided Eretz Yisrael, not all of the Shevatim conquered the inhabitants of their allotted portions. They let them be, for fear of the military prowess of the Canaanite natives. If so, there certainly was reason for concern that the tribe allotted Chevron would be intimidated by the mighty Bnai Ha'anak, and would leave the city unconquered. It was therefore appropriate that Kalev, who had proven his valor in face of the Bnai Ha'anak and who had remained undaunted by their power, should be granted Chevron as his portion in Eretz Yisrael. He certainly would follow through with conquering his portion of the land!

Yehoshua, on the other hand, never had been of "a different spirit." He had only showed his valor under the influence of Moshe Rabbeinu's blessing and tutelage. Since Moshe was destined to pass away before the Jewish People entered the Land of Israel, there would be nothing to deter him from being intimidated by the Bnai Ha'anak after entering Eretz Yisrael.

III Hashem praised Kalev in the verse with

which we began by calling him "my servant, Kalev." This is an extraordinary praise; a praise the Torah normally reserves for the most righteous of people, such as Avraham Avinu, the first of our forefathers (Bereishit 26:24) and Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest of the prophets (Bamidbar 12:7). What did Kalev have in common with Avraham and Moshe? The Alschich's words answer this as well (as the Ohr Hachayim hints in his commentary on this verse). Avraham Avinu's ultimate test was to sacrifice his son at Hashem's request. Killing his only son was against every natural tendency of Avraham's. Aside from his love for his only son Yitzchak, whose birth did not come easily, Avraham's very nature was to show kindness and mercy to all who dealt with him. If he could bring himself to slaughter his son out of his love for Hashem, this demonstrates that he was able to conquer all of his personal desires and emotions for the service of Hashem (see Kol Eliyahu, #17). This is the sign of the true "servant," who gives precedence to the will of his master over his own will. Because he conducted himself in such a manner, Avraham was the true "servant of Hashem." Similarly, Moshe Rabbeinu conquered his personal desires and gave precedence to the will of Hashem over his own natural impulses. The Ohr Hachaim on Devarim 33:1 tells us that Moshe is referred to as "Ish Ha'elokim" ("The man of G-d"), because his modesty and good traits (for which he is referred to as "Ish" - a perfect man) were not natural to him, but rather came to him through his fear of Hashem ("Elokim" -- The basis for this analysis seems to be in Yalkut Shimoni #739). Through his fear of heaven, Moshe overcame his natural tendencies. Perhaps this is why he, too, is referred to as a "servant" of Hashem. Kalev also had to struggle intensely with his natural impulses and desires (his "different spirit," as mentioned in this verse) in order to resist sinning along with the spies. Therefore he, too, joined the ranks of those who were called "Hashem's servant." This, then, is what the verse means when it states, "And *my servant* Kalev, since he was *of a different spirit* and he chose to follow me...." Because he rejected his original spirit, he deserves to be called, "My servant!"

Mordecai Kornfeld [Email: kornfeld@virtual.co.il]
 TI/Fx(02)6522633 6/12 Katzenelenbogen St. | kornfeld@netmedia.co.il
 US:(718)520-0210 Har Nof, Jerusalem

[Last year's] From: dmgreen@skynet.net (Dvartorah@torah.org)
 Parshas Shelach

by Chaim Ozer Shulman (crshulman@aol.com)

A. BUT THE PEOPLE ARE POWERFUL The Ramban (Nachmanides) in the beginning of Parshas Shelach struggles to explain what the sin of the Meraglim (spies) was. The simple understanding of the Chumash is that the Meraglim sinned by saying: "Indeed the Land flows with

milk and honey - BUT - the people that dwell in the Land are powerful" (Efes Ki Az Ha'am) (13:27-28), implying that they would not be able to conquer the Land. The Ramban, however, asks that how could the Meraglim have been punished for this report if they were sent by Moshe Rabeinu in the first place to: "See the Land how is it, and the people that dwell therein are they strong or weak, few or many" (13:18). The spies were merely doing what they were sent for! An answer to the Ramban's question, which is implicit in many commentaries, is that the Meraglim were sent not to see whether to conquer the Land but to see the best way to conquer the Land, so that to the extent possible they would not have to rely on miracles. But when they said "But the people are powerful" they implied that Bnei Yisroel would not be able to conquer the Land. And this showed a lack of trust (Bitachon) in Hashem. For Hashem said: Go & conquer the Land. And Bnei Yisroel should have believed that they would be able to conquer the Land. There is a principle "Ein Somchin Al Hanes" - that one should not rely on miracles. However, that principle does not apply where Hashem promised that Bnei Yisroel could conquer the Land. In such a case, as long as Bnei Yisroel make an effort (Hishtadlus) they should be confident that Hashem will help them conquer the Land. So by not believing that they could conquer the Land, they showed a lack of trust in Hashem.

B. THE SIN OF SLANDERING THE LAND Rashi in the beginning of the Parsha seems to learn that the sin of the Meraglim was a different one. Rashi says: The story of Meraglim is adjacent to the story of Miriam (at the end of last week's parsha) to show us that Miriam was punished for the slander she spoke on her brother, and the Meraglim saw this and did not take heed. It appears from this Rashi that the sin of the Meraglim was that they spoke Lashon Hora on the Land. In fact the Torah in verse 32 states: "And they slandered the Land ... saying: The Land consumes its inhabitants, and all the inhabitants are giants." Rashi states that in fact Hashem caused many Caananites to die so they would be preoccupied with their own mourning, and not notice the spies. The Meraglim failed to understand this, and slandered the Land, saying the Land kills its inhabitants.

The Ramban, however, states that one cannot learn that the sin of the Meraglim was merely that they spoke Lashon Hora because even before the Torah states in verse 32 that: "they slandered the Land," Caleb silenced the people in verse 20 stating: "We shall surely ascend and conquer the Land."

It appears that Rashi understands that the Meraglim committed two sins, one in that they did not believe that they could conquer the Land stating "But the people are very powerful," which caused Caleb to respond by silencing them stating "We shall surely ascend", and second in that they spoke Lashon Hora on the Land stating "the Land eats its inhabitants." In fact, we see that there were two sins from the response of Yehoshua and Caleb (14:7-8): "[Yehoshua and Caleb] spoke to the entire Bnei Yisroel saying the Land that we passed through ... is very very good. If Hashem desires us He will bring us to this Land ... a Land flowing with milk and honey." They countered the Lashon Hora by saying "the Land is very very good," and they countered the lack of trust in Hashem by saying "If Hashem desires us He will bring us to this Land."

C. COMPARISON TO MIRIAM Rashi in beginning of the Parsha, quoted above, states that the story of Meraglim is adjacent to the story of Miriam because Miriam was punished for the slander she spoke on her brother, and the Meraglim saw this and did not take heed. Rashi implies that the Meraglim violated the prohibition of Lashon Hora. It seems strange, however, that there could be Lashon Hora on land? I would suggest that Miriam's sin was not just for speaking Lashon Hora on Moshe, but also for speaking Lashon Hora on Hashem, as we see from what Hashem told Miriam: "Why did you not fear to speak against my servant Moshe" (12:8). In other words, if Hashem chose Moshe as his servant, then criticizing Moshe is indirectly criticizing Hashem, as if to say Hashem chose a servant who does not know the proper way to serve him. And the same is true with the Land of Israel. Hashem would not choose a Land that was bad. So to slander the Land of Israel is indirectly to slander Hashem, implying that He would choose an inferior Land. In fact, this is implied by Rabeinu B'Chaye (Rabbi Bachya Ibn Pekudah) who states in last week's parsha that

the story of the complainers about the Mon (manna, the heavenly bread the Jews ate in the wilderness) was placed right before the story of Miriam, and in turn the story of Miriam was placed right before the story of Meraglim, because they were all sins of slander. The complainers spoke badly about the Mon, Miriam spoke badly about Moshe and the Meraglim spoke badly about the Land of Israel. Certainly there is no Lashon Hora on Mon! But the comparison must be that by criticizing the Mon they were indirectly criticizing Hashem who gave it to them. And the same is true of criticizing the servant of Hashem, or of criticizing the Land of Israel. To conclude, we see that the Meraglim sinned: (i) by speaking badly about the Land that Hashem chose, and not having faith (Emunah) that his choice was a good one, and (ii) by lacking trust (Bitachon) that Hashem would help them conquer the Land.

<dmgreen@skynet.net> <dmgreen@michiana.org> Moderator, Dvar Torah Project Genesis DvarTorah, Copyright (c) 1996 Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network learn@torah.org P.O. Box 1230 http://www.torah.org/ Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914) 356-3040

Parashat Shelach

Did Moshe Sin in the Meraglim Incident?

by Rav Yaacov Meidan

[Note: Rav Meidan has analyzed the responsibility of Moshe for the Meraglim incident at length in Megadim 10 (pp. 21-39). This shiur presents a completely different solution to the problem.]

In three different places, the Torah declares that Moshe and Aharon were punished because of their conduct during the Mei Meriva incident (hitting the rock): Bemidbar 20, 27, and Devarim 32. Rashi (Bemidbar 27:13, quoting the Sifre) explains that this repetition is a deliberate attempt to distinguish between the Jewish people, who were doomed to die in the desert and not enter the Land of Israel because of the sin of the spies, and Moshe and Aharon, who were guilty ONLY of the Meriva sin, but not of the Meraglim sin. In other words, the Torah is emphasizing that Moshe is blameless in the meraglim incident.

However, the Torah in Devarim (1:37) seems to imply the opposite. "And God was angry with me as well because of you, saying, 'You too shall not come there.'" The context of Moshe's words here is clearly the sin of the spies.

The Ramban, Ralbag, and others immediately explain that this is misleading - Moshe's fate is mentioned at this point in his oration only because of the mention of Yehoshua (who will bring the Jews to Israel), or incidentally to the other sins of the Jews. This seems to be somewhat forced in terms of peshat. Alternatively, the Malbim and the Ohr HaChayim offer different variants of the same theme - that Moshe was denied entry to the Land because of the meraglim incident, DESPITE the fact that he was personally blameless, based on his general responsibility for the fate of that generation as their leader. Once they were denied entry, it was inconceivable that he would enter without them.

The only commentator that I know of who attributes culpability to Moshe in the meraglim incident and consequently connects his punishment to his role with the spies, is the Abrabanel. He claims that Moshe added various instructions to the spies beyond what God had commanded (compare the verses yourselves and find the additions), and these additional tasks are what led to the corruption of the initial mission. Although Moshe's intention was of course good, he was liable for changing God's instructions and thus was held responsible for the terrible results.

I would like to suggest another solution to this problem.

Moshe did not sin at all in sending the spies. His sin was in his REACTION when they returned and delivered their terrifying report to the Jews. The reaction of the Jews to this report was qualitatively worse than any previous rebellion. The demand to "turn around and go back to Egypt" (14:4) was unprecedented. Here we do not have merely murmuring about how wonderful it had been in Egypt, or complaints about the relative hardship of the desert. The Jews turn to each other and make an operative decision - we are going back!

Returning to Egypt means reversing the giving of the Torah, abandoning the Ten Commandments, which open with the words, "I am HaShem your God who took you out of Egypt." Returning to Egypt implies asking forgiveness of Pharaoh for all the terrible things he and his people suffered in Egypt and at the sea. It means the cancellation of the conclusion of the Song of the Sea - "God shall rule forever and ever." This had never taken place since the Jews had left Egypt, and the danger of God's destroying the Jews had never been as imminent.

At the time of sin of the golden calf, Moshe had not relied only on prayer. Immediately after succeeding in receiving a postponement in the punishment, he went down to the Jews, smashed the tablets, ground up the heifer, and displayed no personal fear before those who had slain Chur (who was killed trying to prevent the sin). Moshe purged the Jews of the guilty ones. No one dared to object in the face of his forceful determination. Only then did he return to God to beg for forgiveness. We have here a picture of true leadership, courageous struggle with the problems of the people, and definitive action to solve the problem.

Moshe, facing the sin of the spies, appears as a totally different person, bereft of any signs of leadership (there is room in this short supplementary shiur to explain why). Moshe's reaction to the outrageous demand to return to Egypt was, "And Moshe and Aharon fell on their faces before the entire assembly of the congregation of the Jews" (14:5). This was not the required act of leadership. In the vacuum created by Moshe's paralysis, Calev and Yehoshua attempt to enter the breach, coming close to endangering themselves. But they are unable to supplant Moshe and Aharon, and the situation is about to completely deteriorate, saved only by the direct appearance of the presence of God. Now is the time, I believe, that Calev and Yehoshua assume the leadership that will eventually lead to their bringing the Jews into the Land, instead of Moshe and Aharon.

Moshe is denied entry to the Land, not because of a particular transgression, but because he is no longer the leader who can accomplish the entry into the Land. It is not so much a matter of punishment as the natural consequence of his failure as a leader. The advantage of this explanation is that it explains the connection to the oft-repeated reference to Meriva as the cause of Moshe's exclusion from the Land. We are not explicitly told what was the sin of Moshe and Aharon at the waters of Meriva. (There are at least sixteen different explanations in the commentators!) For our purposes, we may follow the Ibn Ezra. On the verse, "Moshe and Aharon came to the entrance of the ohel mo'ed from before the congregation and fell on their faces" (20:6), the Ibn Ezra comments: "Moshe and Aharon came - as ones who flee." Compare this to the similar problem at Refidim, where the people complained of thirst, and Moshe remonstrates with them: "Why do you argue with me, why do test God?" (Shemot 20:6). There, Moshe struggled with the complainers, trying to return them to the proper path. Here, at the waters of Meriva, he is silent,

falling on his face, actually fleeing, according to the Ibn Ezra, before his people. Waiting for God's answer is not true leadership. Moshe's fate is originally decreed at the time of the spies, as stated in Devarim 1, but he is given another chance 38 years later, at Meriva. When he failed a second time, his fate was sealed.

The midrash supports our assertion that Moshe did not sin, neither regarding the spies nor at Meriva, and so was not worthy of punishment. The decree that he would not enter the Land was not a punishment for a sin, but a result of a failure of leadership. The actual decree was not that he would not enter the Land, but that he would not be the leader.

"Moshe said to God: Master of the World, let Yehoshua take my crown, and I shall live. God said to him: Act with him as he has acted with you. Moshe immediately went to the house of Yehoshua... They went out, and Moshe walked on the left of Yehoshua... At that time, Moshe cried and said: Better a thousand deaths than one jealousy." (Devarim Rabba 9:19).

Yehoshua replaces Moshe as leader, and Moshe could have lived and entered the Land, had he been able to accept entering the Land as a follower of Yehoshua. This can be inferred from Devarim 3 and 31 - but my time is up.