

And what kind of land do they live on – is it good or bad (13:19) – Why did they need to investigate the quality of the land? Wouldn't this have risked the people's resolve to proceed to Eretz Yisrael? **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** explains that the secret to Eretz Yisrael is how attached we are to it. Moshe feared that after Cheit HaEigel, the people might not realize the greatness of the land. Thus, he asked them to check the land in order to know if their perspective showed how much Hashem loved them through their ability to love the land.

And this is her fruit (13:27) – There is a tremendous stress on the fruit of the land of Israel both in Moshe's direction to the spies and in their report. Why? **Rav Haim Sabato Shlita** explains that Eretz Yisrael gives of its fruit generously but only to its own children. When Bnei Yisrael are about to enter the land, it bears fruit (hence Moshe's test to show that the land was ready for them). Conversely, when the Jews are removed from the land, the land remains desolate and does not produce for other nations – who become discontent with the land. The spies find the fruit of the land and see it as incredible but instead of seeing the message that this sign contains, they compare it to the people—just as the fruit are unusual so are the people. In their haste, they lost a valuable clue as to the benefit of Eretz Yisrael and our appreciation of the personal connection it has uniquely for us.

The people living there were people of Middos (13:32) – **Rashi** explains that they were big people while Targum Yonasan explains that they were people with bad middos. How could the land of Israel raise people with bad Middos which is the antithesis of Kedusha? **Rav Baruch Simon Shlita** cited the **Maor SheBaTorah** who explains that the more that the land exudes Kedusha, the greater the energy to withhold it. Thus, the bigger the Kedusha, the greater the challenge in the middos against it. **Rav Schachter Shlita** would also utilize this idea when explaining the idea that Ara D'Eretz Yisrael Machkim as it only applies to those who acquire their knowledge before coming to the land. For those who confused prior, the confusion can continue in the land of Israel due to the challenge of being in the land.

Calev silenced the nation (13:30) – **Rashi** explains that he silenced the people in order to get them to listen to Moshe – he began by saying “Is this all Ben Amram did?” and then showed the people that Moshe did great things for them. But by silencing them into thinking that he was going to join them, he disarmed them momentarily and ran with his big break. But why was the momentary silence worth it if the people were going right back to their complaints a moment later once they heard him out? Moreover, Calev receives three rewards for this – he is the forefather of Dovid HaMelech, he receives Chevron and is called an Eved Hashem – why does he get so much reward for a moment's work – especially work that did not last? **Rav Zilberstein Shlita** explains that when tempers fly, people can develop a mob mentality. By delaying them, even for a moment, he let the tempers calm – allowing the people the opportunity to calm down.

Here we are and we will go out (14:40) – What happened that they decided to enter all of a sudden? The **Alter of Kelm** explained that once there is any command it becomes a challenge to comply. This is the case, even when the command is precisely what the people had requested.

The Jews were in the Midbar and they found a person who was Mikosheish Eitzim (15:32) – **Rashi** explains that this is not a positive report in that already the second Shabbos of Jewish life, the people could not observe Shabbos. But why is that a negative about the people – only one person was in violation? **Rav Dovid Soloveitchik Shlita** answers that even if there is but one Michal Shabbos, it is a

negative statement for Klal Yisrael. For had they been concerned about him and about Shabbos observance then he would not have been able to violate the Halacha. Thus it is a negative about the entire people.

And you will see it and remember all of the Mitzvos and perform them (15:39) – The Shaarei Teshuvah (O.C. 24:2) notes that Mitzvos do not protect from Avairos but that the Mitzva of Tzitzis does. He cites a Gemara in Menachos as proof (Menachos 44a). What is the reason for the protection? **Rav Yechezkel Meller Shlita** explained that this is because of the power of the Techeiles which reminds us of the heavenly throne. It is similar to Yosef's reminder about his father's image. Meiri (Shabbos 56a) explains that this refers to modelling – in that following the model set forth by the father, one learns what to expect from the children. The same can be said of the wearer of Tzitzis, who recalls by looking at the Tzitzis, the expectations modelled by Hashem.

Haftorah: And they came to the house of a woman who was a Zonah (Yehoshua 2:2) – The commentaries debate as to how to translate the word "Zonah". **Targum Yonasan** assumes that she was an innkeeper as does Rashi who assumes she sold food. However, the Talmud (Zevachim 116a) notes that she was indeed a prostitute who converted when the Jews were prepared to enter the land of Israel. Why would the spies choose to go to – of all places – a house of ill repute? **Rav Zaman Sorotzkin ztl.** explains that had they gone anywhere else they might have been identified and been the victims of a lynch mob. However, to those who might have seen them at the prostitute's home, their secret was safe. Who would want to admit being at the home of the prostitute? Therefore, the spies knew that the safest place for them was with Rachav.