Points to Ponder

Shelach 5783

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ אֲנָשִׁ֗ים Send Anashim for yourself (13:2) - Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel** explained that the mistake of the Miraglim was that they were afraid that if the people would go into the land, they would no longer be relevant leaders. But why were Yehoshua and Kalev saved? Rav Nosson Tzvi explained that when Hashem doesn’t support your mission, it cannot be successful. This was the case here with the Miraglim. However, when it came to Yehoshua and Kalev who were both basing their trip on the will of Hashem (Yehoshua in name and Kalev in action as he went to Chevron) and thus, were spared from the lack of the divine in the general mission.

**לֹ֥א נוּכַ֖ל לַֽעֲל֣וֹת אֶל־הָעָ֑ם כִּֽי־חָזָ֥ק ה֖וּא מִמֶּֽנּוּ The people who were with him said we cannot conquer the nation (13:31)** - The Torah does not tell us what the motive of the Miraglim was. Why not? And what WAS their motive? **Rav Yechiel Perr** explained that sometimes giving a motive to an errant direction tends to normalize it and sometimes excuse it. Therefore, the Torah didn’t want us to walk away with sympathy for this terrible sin, hence, the Torah didn’t explain the motivation behind it.

**וִֽיהוֹשֻׁ֣עַ בִּן־נ֗וּן וְכָלֵב֙ בֶּן־יְפֻנֶּ֔ה מִן־הַתָּרִ֖ים אֶת־הָאָ֑רֶץ קָֽרְע֖וּ בִּגְדֵיהֶֽם And Yehoshua bin Nun and Kalev ben Yifuneh tore their clothing (14:6)** - On a pshat level, this means that they tore their own clothing. However, **the Reisher Rav** explained that there is another level of interpretation. When someone is not sincere and his words don’t reflect his feelings, we often use the imagery of a cloak, a mask, a veil or some other garment that is covering his true feelings. We also use words like “exposed” to describe someone who is caught in a lie. When the Torah says קרעו בגדיהם, perhaps it is referring to proverbial clothing of the meraglim that they were using to cover up their falsehoods. Yehoshua and Kalev exposed the mergalim.

**עַד־מָתַ֗י לָֽעֵדָ֤ה הָֽרָעָה֙ הַזֹּ֔את  Until when will this Evil Eidah continue (14:27)** - The Gemara determines that the source for a minyan comes from the account of the Eidah which, excluding Kalev & Yehoshua, constituted 10 and henceforth we see that for Devarim She’BKedusha we need a minyan of 10. It is odd that the concept of minyan comes from this group insofar as they were sinners and Kofrim and should not count toward a Minyan. Why would they be the source for a minyan in the future? **Rav Schachter** suggested that perhaps we learn an important lesson about Klal Yisrael here. WE see that the determination of who is Klal Yisrael will come from the minyan of people in Eretz Yisrael. Without that, we may have great individuals but not a klal. The Eidah is made up of the people in Eretz Yisrael (which at the time was simply the Miraglim group).

**וְהִקְרִ֛יב הַמַּקְרִ֥יב קָרְבָּנ֖וֹ לַֽה' מִנְחָה֙ The one who brings his Korban to Hashem should bring a Mincha (15:4) - Sforno** writes that after the Cheit of the Miraglim Hashem instituted the extra mitzvos including Minachos and Nesachim in order to get the people to feel close to Hashem again. **Rav Wolbe** adds that we learn 2 ideas from this concept. First, sin knocks us down one rung from previous standing and another mitzva brings us closer. At the same time, we also see that even if we are removed, Hashem will meet us at whatever level we are at and give us a chance to raise ourselves.

**וּרְאִיתֶ֣ם אֹת֗וֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹ֣ת ה' וַֽעֲשִׂיתֶ֖ם אֹתָ֑ם And you will see them and remember all of the Mitzvos of Hashem (15:39) - Rav Nosson Wachtfogel** explained that the Torah is highlighting the seeing of the tzitzis here. In other words, without seeing the Tzitzis, even if you know all of the Mitzvos you might not do the Mitzvos except when you see the Techeiles. The beginning of the motivation is seeing. Without it, change and action are not going to happen.

**אֲשֶׁ֨ר הוֹצֵ֤אתִי אֶתְכֶם֙ מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרַ֔יִם  I am Hashem who took you out of Mitzrayim (15:41) -** Why is the Parasha of Tzitzis supposed to remind us about Yetzias Mitzrayim? What’s the connection? **Rav Dovid Feinstein** explained that when we talk about not following our hearts and eyes, we are being reminded not to be like the spies who did follow the desires of their hearts. Instead, Hashem is telling us to be as He was when taking us from Mitzrayim. He recalled His promise and didn’t check in on what we were deserving of.

Haftara

**וַתִּקַּ֧ח הָֽאִשָּׁ֛ה אֶת־שְׁנֵ֥י הָֽאֲנָשִׁ֖ים וַֽתִּצְפְּנ֑וֹ The woman took the 2 men and hid him (Yehoshua 2:4)** - What made Rachav change and decide to convert? And how could these 2 Jewish leaders DREAM of coming into this home of ill repute in order to be safe from those seeking them? How did they know that they would be able to withstand the test of the place? **Rav Binyamin Eisenberger** explained that the 2 men went in order to destroy the Tumah of Eretz Canaan at the source – the house of Rachav. Everyone in Canaan failed at the home of Rachav. When the Miraglim withstood Rachav, she knew that there was a change in the air, and the spark of Kedusha in her was released serving not only to turn her around but to turn around the power of Tumah in the land, make it powerless in the face of Tahara.