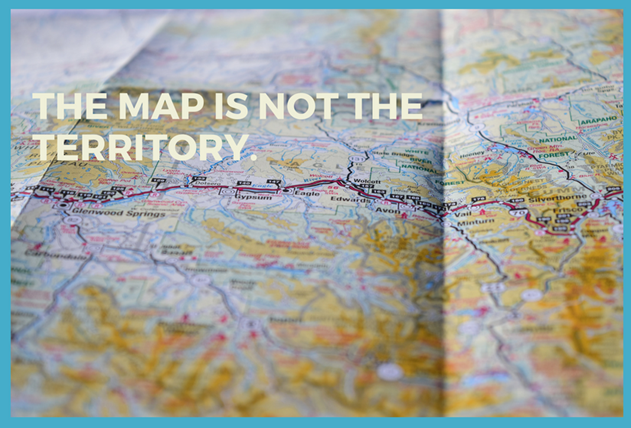
**Class # 36- Parshat Shelach – Ways To Recognize Toxic Friendships**

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel Z”l

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**Ways To Recognize Toxic Friendships -** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XaDhoufJ4W8>

1. What are the unaware, users and fakers friends?
2. Why are they toxic friendships?
3. Why didn’t the friend recognize this first and remain friends for so long?



By most accounts, Ron Johnson was one the most successful and desirable retail executives by the summer of 2011.

Johnson’s success at Apple was not immediate, but it was undeniable. By 2011, Apple stores were by far the most productive in the world on a per-square-foot basis, and had become the envy of the retail world. Their sales figures left [Tiffany’s in the dust](http://fortune.com/2015/03/13/apples-holiday-top-10-retailers-iphone/). The gleaming glass cube on Fifth Avenue became a [more popular](http://www.fastcompany.com/1596248/apple-store-cube-more-popular-landmark-statue-liberty-cornell-report) tourist attraction than the Statue of Liberty. It was a lollapalooza, something beyond ordinary success. And Johnson had led the charge.

With that success, in 2011 Johnson was hired by Bill Ackman, Steven Roth, and other luminaries of the financial world to turn around the dowdy old department store chain JC Penney. The situation of the department store was dour: Between 1992 and 2011, the retail market share held by department stores had declined from 57% to 31%.

The idea was to take the best ideas from his experience at Apple; great customer service, consistent pricing with no markdowns and markups, immaculate displays, world-class products, and apply them to the department store. Johnson planned to turn the stores into little malls-within-malls. He went as far as comparing the ever-rotating stores-within-a-store to Apple’s “apps.” Such a model would keep the store constantly fresh, and avoid the creeping staleness of retail.

The idea failed almost immediately. His new pricing model (eliminating discounting) was a flop. The coupon-hunters rebelled. Much of his new product was deemed too trendy. His new store model was wildly expensive for a middling department store chain - JC Penney customers had no idea what was going on, and by 2013, Johnson was sacked. The stock price sank into the single digits, where it remains two years later.

What went wrong in the quest to build [America’s Favorite Store](http://www.forbes.com/sites/onmarketing/2012/02/27/can-j-c-penney-become-americas-favorite-store/)? It turned out that Johnson was using a map of Tulsa to navigate Tuscaloosa. Apple’s products, customers, and history had far too little in common with JC Penney’s. Apple had a rabid, young, affluent fan-base *before* they built stores; JC Penney’s was not associated with youth or affluence. Apple had shiny products, and needed a shiny store; JC Penney was known for its affordable sweaters. Apple had never relied on discounting in the first place; JC Penney was taking *away* discounts given prior, triggering massive deprival super-reaction.

The main issue was *not* that Johnson was incompetent. He wasn’t. He wouldn’t have gotten the job if he was. He was *extremely* competent. But it was exactly his competence and past success that got him into trouble. He was like a great swimmer that tried to tackle a grand rapid, and the model he used successfully in the past, the map that had navigated a lot of difficult terrain, was not the map he needed anymore. He had an excellent theory about retailing that applied in some circumstances, but not in others. The terrain had changed, but the old idea stuck.

**Parshat Shelach - The Spies’ Mission**

13:18 See what kind of land it is. Are the people who live there strong or weak, few or many? 13:19 Is the inhabited area good or bad? Are the cities where they live open or fortified? 13:20 Is the soil rich or weak? Does [the land] have trees or not? Make a special effort to bring [back] some of the land's fruits.'[It was the season when the first grapes begin to ripen](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2978).

**The Spies report**

When they arrived, they went directly to Moses, Aaron and the entire Israelite community, [who were] in the Paran Desert near [Kadesh](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2989). They brought their report to [Moses, Aaron], and the entire community, and showed them fruit from the land.13:27 They gave the following report: 'We came to the land where you sent us, and it is indeed flowing with milk and honey, as you can see from its fruit. 13:28 However, the people living in the land are aggressive, and the cities are large and well-fortified. We also saw the giant's descendants there. 13:29 [Amalek](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2990) lives in the Negev area, the [Hittites, Yebusites and Amorites](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2991) live in the hills, and the [Canaanites](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2992) live near the [sea](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2993) and on the banks of the Jordan.' 13:30 Caleb tried to quiet the people for Moses. 'We must go forth and occupy the land,' he said. 'We can do it!' 13:31 'We cannot go forward against those people!' replied the men who had gone with him. 'They are too strong for us!' 13:32 They began to speak badly about the land that they had explored. They told the Israelites, 'The land that we crossed to explore is a land that consumes its inhabitants. All the men we saw there were [huge](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2994)! 13:33 While we were there, we saw the titans. They were sons of the giant, who descended from the [original] [titans](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2995). We felt like [tiny grasshoppers](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=13#C2996)! That's all that we were in their eyes.

**The people react**

14:1 The entire community raised a hubbub and began to shout. [That night](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=14#C2997), the people wept. 14:2 All the Israelites complained to Moses and Aaron. The entire community was saying, 'We wish we had died in Egypt! We should have died in this desert! 14:3 Why is God bringing us to this land to die by the sword? Our wives and children will be captives! It would be best to go back to Egypt!' 14:4 The people started saying to one another, 'Let's appoint a [new] leader and go back to Egypt.'

**Joshua and Caleb respond**

14:5 Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the whole assembled Israelite community. 14:6 Among the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Yefuneh tore their clothes in grief. 14:7 They said to the whole Israelite community, 'The land through which we passed in our explorations is a very, very good land! 14:8 If God is satisfied with us and brings us to this land, He can give it to us - a land flowing with milk and honey. 14:9 But don't rebel against God! Don't be afraid of the people in the land! [They have lost their protection](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=14#C2998) and shall be our [prey](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=14#C2999)! God is with us, so don't be afraid!' 14:10 The whole community was threatening to stone them to death, when God's glory suddenly appeared at the Communion Tent before all the Israelites.

**Rashi - FOR THEY ARE STRONGER -** They said this, — if this were at all possible (i.e. if one may be permitted to say so of God) — with reference to the Omnipresent (ממנו, stronger than "He", they thus uttered blasphemy) (Sotah 35a; Arakhin 15a).

**Seforno** - **It is a land that eats its inhabitants** - even though the people living there are strong, this is not a compliment to the land; rather it means that it is only due to their exceptionally hardy constitution that they were able to survive in that land. Ordinary people would die there because the climate is so hard to take.

**Seforno - like grasshoppers**, or even less significant. They did not bother to harm us as they did not think we represented a threat to them.

**The Mishna in Sanhedrin 10:3**

The spies have no share in the World to Come, as it says, ([Numbers 14:37](https://www.sefaria.org/Numbers.14.37)) "Even those men that did bring up an evil report of the land, died by the plague before the Lord." "Died," in this world; "in the plague," in the World to Come.

**Rambam, Laws of Character Traits - 7:3**

Our Sages said: "There are three sins for which retribution is exacted from a person in this world and, [for which] he is [nonetheless,] denied a portion in the world to come: idol worship, forbidden sexual relations, and murder. Lashon horah is equivalent to all of them. Our Sages also said: "Anyone who speaks lashon horah is like one who denies God as [implied by Psalms 12:5]: 'Those who said: With our tongues we will prevail; our lips are our own. Who is Lord over us!!”

In addition, they said: "Lashon horah kills three [people], the one who speaks it, the one who listens to it, and the one about whom it is spoken. The one who listens to it [suffers] more than.