Points to Ponder

Shelach Master

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ אֲנָשִׁ֗ים  Send spies for yourself (13:2) - Rav Schachter**  would often tell us of the Derasha of Rav Soloveitchik who noted that Moshe didn’t want to send the spies but that he needed to, because the Bnei Yisrael were like a Chosson and Eretz Yisrael like a Kallah and it is forbidden to be Mikadeish a women until you see her. Hence, Hashem thought it would be a simple visit and approval. Unfortunately the chosen spies had other plans.

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ אֲנָשִׁ֗ים  Send spies for yourself (13:2) – Rashi** notes that the connection between the stories of the spies and that of miriam comes from the fact that they saw what happened to her when she spoke about her brother and they did nothing about it. **Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman** asks how a lesson of Lashon HaRa can be applied to a case of an inanimate object like the land? He explains that although the transgression might not be the same, the concept is. Namely, people need to learn that when they hold their tongues, they are saving themselves from Tzoros. Whether or not, the intent was evil or rose to a level of punishable transgression – the person who is careful with what comes out of the mouth gets away without the Tzoros.

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ אֲנָשִׁ֗ים  Send people for you (13:1)** – Why not send people for me? The Gemara (Sotah 34b) notes that Hashem did not want to send the spies. **Rav Schachter quoted Rav Soloveitchik** who noted that in Chumash Devarim they were referred to as Miraglim but here only as Anashim. The difference is that the idea of sending the Miraglim was not to spy out the land out but rather to check it out like a person on a date. In Chumash Devarim it became apparent that even as they left they had already decided that they were going to come back with a negative report. Thus, there they, are already referred to as Meraglim.

**שלח לך אנשים** **Shelach (13:1) – Rashi** notes that the connection between the story of Miriam and that of the Miraglim is to teach us that the Miraglim saw Miriam’s punishment and did not take the appropriate Mussar. **Rav Yerucham Levovitz** asks why Rashi makes this seem like it was the main sin of the Miraglim. Weren’t they punished for tarnishing the land of Israel? Rav Yerucham explains that although this was not the main error, in life one needs to learn from previous life experiences and take a personal perspective from it. The Miraglim did not do so and it was no surprise that as a result, they committed an even bigger fail.

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣  Send for yourself (13:2) - Rashi** explains that that Hashem told him that Hashem was not commanding and demanding Miraglim but that if Moshe wanted, he could send them. **Rav Shlomo of Zvhil** compared this to a person who set up a Shidduch for his daughter and told the son in law not to date too much because it will eventually hurt the Shidduch (See Bamidbar 16:7). Here too, when you send Miraglim, Hashem said that He was not scared about the trip but that it displayed a lack of faith in the relationship and that even great people fail in their faith in the land of Israel.

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ אֲנָשִׁ֗ים Send for yourself (13:2) - Rashi** notes that Hashem was not in agreement in the process of sending the Miraglim.  But why would Hashem allow Bnei Yisrael to fall into such a trap? Doesn’t He WANT us to be successful in our goal of serving Him? **Rav Ovadiah Yosef** explains that if you follow the timeline, Bnei Yisrael would have had only a short amount of time to learn Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu before moving into and conquering the land of Israel and settling it. Ultimately, this could either have been helpful to the people as they would have achieved their destiny or hurtful to the people insofar as they would have lacked a certain fortification of their values and beliefs due to limited contact with the Torah. Sending the Miraglim, especially when it was not the will of Hashem, served as a great test to see if the people really knew what their next step was and if they were ready for it.

**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.

**שְׁלַח לְךָ֣ Shlach Lecha (13:2) - Rashi** notes that the connection between this section in the Torah and the previous one is that the Miraglim saw what happened when Miriam told Lashon Hara and didn’t learn from her punishment. **Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz** explained that one who watches an episode needs to properly assess cause and effect for himself or herself. **Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel** added that the reason why we often fail to do that is because of our personal component or “ism” that interferes with our vision. The Miraglim didn’t see that they wanted to remain in charge of the people which blocked their ability to properly assess the situation.

**כֻּלָּ֣ם אֲנָשִׁ֔ים רָאשֵׁ֥י בְנֵֽי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל They were all men who were leaders of the Jewish people (13:3) – Rashi** points out that at the time they were sent, they were all Jewish leaders and Kosher. The Midrash adds that at the time, Moshe sought out Hashem’s opinion about each and every one, and Hashem approved them. How then, did they fail? **Rav Yechezkel Abramsky**  explained based on the Gemara’s (Kesubos 111a) assumption that if one walks 4 amos in Eretz Yisrael, s/he does not sin. Rav Yechezkel wondered what the significance of walking in Eretz Yisrael is. He answers that 4 amos is a Reshus HaYachid. Even when one is out and about, he is in his private domain when he stays to himself and does not lose himself to the values of the street. Alternatively, when one is in the influence of Moshe and Aharon, one can be a kosher and yet, once influenced from a poorer resource the result can be devastating.

**כֻּלָּ֣ם אֲנָשִׁ֔ים רָאשֵׁ֥י בְנֵֽי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֖לThey were all distinguished men; heads of Bnei Yisrael were they. (13:3)** - So how did leaders make such a colossal error?  **Rav Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht** explained that as leaders, they felt responsibility for the benefit of the people. They were afraid that entering the Land would represent a step down from the spiritual level that they were accustomed to in the desert. From a pragmatic perspective, they were correct that their level of spirituality would go down, but they did not understand that our role in this world is to serve Hashem through the many difficulties that exist in the material world. When it says in the Zohar that they would lose their office, they were not concerned about their personal good, but thought that a change in the way of life would require different leadership. They did not succeed in understanding that G-d wanted them to prepare themselves for a new reality. The reason is that only one who received the necessary preparation needed in the desert, can succeed later in Eretz Yisrael. The proof for this is the success of Yehoshua bin Nun, who became the leader of Am Yisrael when they entered the Land. Each and every generation needs to try to correct the sin of the spies. We live in a difficult time period, with dangers from within and without. We must believe that it is possible to deal with all the challenges, and not run away from them, since Eretz Yisrael is acquired through difficulties. When we approach reality through the Torah and belief, the work becomes much easier. Just as Yehoshua and Calev did not give up, even though they were the minority, and they tried to persuade the rest of the people - we also must go in their footsteps.

**רָאשֵׁ֥י בְנֵֽי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל הֵֽמָּה They were all men who were leaders of Bnei Yisrael (13:3)** - How could people who were identified with such greatness become people capable of such destruction and chaos? **Rav Shmuel Rozovsky**  explains that when a person sees himself as a fool then he does foolish things. That is the meaning of the Possuk Kee Dor Tahapuchos Heimah Banim Lo Eimun Bam. When we see ourselves in a backward, lowered, foolish position, we make mistakes -- BIG ones (compare to Rav Aharon Soloveitchik’s comment about grasshoppers).

**לְהוֹשֵׁ֥עַ בִּן־נ֖וּן יְהוֹשֻֽׁעַ Moshe called Hosheiya Yehoshua (13:16) - Rashi** cites the Gemara that Moshe saw that Yehoshua would need extra protection and added the Yud as a reminder that Hashem should save him from the advice of the Miraglim. Kalev too, went to daven in Chevron to be saved from the situation. **Rav Gershon Edelstein**  explains that when the mob is strong, one needs to work extra hard to have the heavenly assistance not to get swept up in the hysteria.

**לְהוֹשֵׁ֥עַ בִּן־נ֖וּן יְהוֹשֻֽׁעַ And Moshe called Hosheia Bin Nun Yehoshua (13:16) – Rashi** notes that Moshe davened for Yehoshua that he should be saved from the evil intentions of the Miraglim. Why not daven for them all? **Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank quotes Rav Yitzchak Shidlaver** who explained that Yehoshua had an unfair Negiya because he heard what the Nevuah of Eldad U’Meeeidad was and that Moshe considered it legitimate. Lest Yehoshua think that it was in his hands to thwart the death knell of Moshe (Moshe Meis V’Yehoshua Machnis La’Aretz ) and join the miraglim, Moshe davened that he not be swayed by this. Alternatively, Rav Schachter cited the Targum that Yehoshua was very humble and would give in to the others as the majority.

**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** 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.

**וְהִ֨תְחַזַּקְתֶּ֔ם And you will be strong (13:20)** - What does this extra instruction come to teach? **Rashi** explains that the people will need the strength in order to take the fruit which were expected to be large. **Ramban** argues that the strength would be needed in order not to be afraid to take the fruit lest they be recognized as spies because they took the fruit**. Rav Chaim Feinstein** offered a third possibility. The Gemara (Bava Basra 31a) notes that a person lacks the strength and Chutzpah to take fruit that are not his. Thus, the command to be strong is in order for the spies to realize that the fruit that they were to take was already theirs.

**And you will be strengthened and will take from the fruit of the land (13:20) – Rav Moshe Wolfson**  explained that the spies were going to need strengthening not to be caught up in the corruption and thus he told them to take from the fruit of the land. The reason is simple. By taking of the fruit, the people would be swayed by the purity and truth that they would put in them. Be’er Mayim Chaim adds that through the fruit there is a holiness that adds to the greatness of Hashem that comes from Kedushas HaAretz.

**Is there a tree in the land or not (13:20)** – Why are they told to check the land out in all different ways except for the primary purpose – to identify Kedushas Haaretz? Why should they not see that? **Rav Yisroel Reisman**  quoted the **Arvei Nachal** who explains that wherever the Klal Yisrael camped Al Pi Hashem, that place had the status of a piece of Kedushas Eretz Yisrael. Therefore when the spies were to spy out the land, they would not need to move to Eretz Yisrael to achieve it. (In fact, the Miraglim wanted to keep the Jews out of the land in order to preserve this kedusha) <This idea may explain why the gemara notes that in the future the Shuls and Battei midrash will go to Eretz Yisrael. They too, will go home to rejoin the rest of the land from which they are a piece>.

**They went to the Negev and he came to Chevron (13:22)** – The Talmud (Sotah 34b) tells us that Kalev went to daven at the Kivrei Avos. Why didn’t the other Miraglim do the same? Even if they were thwarting Moshe’s plan, didn’t they think they were doing the right thing? Why not go to Chevron and gain from Tefillah there and Zechus avos? **The Imrei Emes** suggests that when one goes for a visit that has no effect, it is as if the person didn’t go at all. Kalev’s tefilla was successful. Those of the other Miraglim were not. Therefore their coming isn’t worthy of mention.

**And they went up in the south and he came until Chevron (13:22) - Rashi** notes that Calev alone went to Chevron. He prostrated himself upon the graves of the patriarchs and declared that he would not be swayed by the evil counsel of his colleagues. **Rabbi Shimon Kerner** adds that Rashi teaches us a great lesson in confronting negative peer pressure. First, is the power of prayer. When an individual needs courage and inner strength, he can generate it through sincere prayer. Additionally, by choosing the burial site of his ancestors Calev was noting that the numbers of people who withstand peer pressure successfully might be few in this particular moment but strongly mark those who have been successful throughout history.

**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**  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.

**ויהס כלב את העם Kalev silenced the people (13:30) – Ramban** notes that the real reason Moshe agreed to send the Miraglim was that their mission was to figure out HOW to best conquer the land. **Rav Nissan Alpert** adds that they were not supposed to decide IF they should conquer the land. There was never any doubt about that. When the Miraglim discussed whether they SHOULD and were stirring the nation up, Kalev opened up and tried to shut down that effort. Hence Vayahas – he brought them to their reminder.

**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 Dovd 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**  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.

**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.

**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 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**  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.

**אֶ֣רֶץ אֹכֶ֤לֶת יֽוֹשְׁבֶ֨יהָ֙ הִ֔וא A land which consumes its inhabitants (13:32)-** As the Meraglim traveled through Eretz Yisrael, they saw many cities in tumult over the recent death of their leaders. The Meraglim thus concluded that with so many Canaani officials dying, the land must be unsafe and one which “consumes its inhabitants”. **The Steipler** notes that if the death of officials was in fact a routine event in Canaan, then the funerals the Meraglim saw would not have served to distract the populace. Rather, they would have been ordinary occasions. If so, why didn’t the Meraglim realize that the abundant funerals were in fact unusual for the populace and in fact not the norm? The Steipler explains that someone who is in a negative state of mind will see things as such. Just as someone who is wearing dirty glasses will see everything as soiled, so too a person's attitude colors his outlook and determines his point of view. Since the Meraglim viewed Eretz Yisrael with suspicion, they understood the numerous deaths they witnessed to reflect negatively on the land. Their negative outlook on Eretz Yisrael distorted the reality of Hashem's intervention and acts of kindness. Conversely as well, being in a positive state of mind leads us to see reality in a more favorable light. The unprecedented circumstances of today leave us with various challenges, yet a positive state of mind enables one to embrace the good and carry on.

**אֶ֣רֶץ אֹכֶ֤לֶת יֽוֹשְׁבֶ֨יהָ֙ הִ֔וא It is a land that consumes its inhabitants (13:32)** – **Rashi** explains that the Miraglim saw many funerals while there – at the direction of Hashem in order to deflect attention away from the Miraglim. However, instead of seeing this event as fortuitous, they saw it as a danger. **Rav Chaim Sabato**  notes that this concept – that of a land that consumes the people – is one that seemed tied to the land of Israel in other instances as well (Yechezkel 36). Why then does it get used by the nations of the world in such a negative manner? Rav Sabato explains that when Eretz Yisrael is under Jewish sovereignty, then it thrives – when it is not, the level of growth is destructive in totality. For when under Jewish sovereignty then the name of Hashem can be associated with the land – assuming the Jewish sovereign chooses to recognize the source of the prosperity. If, however, the Jewish people, like their non-Jewish counterparts cannot allow the name of Hashem to reign – the land and its blessings shall consume the people sitting on the land.

**וַנְּהִ֤י בְעֵינֵ֨ינוּ֙ כַּֽחֲגָבִ֔ים וְכֵ֥ן הָיִ֖ינוּ בְּעֵֽינֵיהֶֽם And we were like grasshoppers in our eyes and that is how we were in theirs (13:33)** - Why did they compare themselves to grasshoppers? Why not ants? We have pointed out that ants are associated with hard work. When we roll up our sleeves and work at something, with Hashem’s help we can make anything happen. Unfortunately, the Miraglim were more grasshopper-like, didn’t see their own destiny coming to fruition and simply stopped trying. When one believes in himself, no matter how small s/he may be, s/he knows that s/he can accomplish anything with Hashem’s help..

**וַנְּהִ֤י בְעֵינֵ֨ינוּ֙ כַּֽחֲגָבִ֔ים And we were like grasshoppers in our eyes and that is the way we were perceived (13:33) - Ba’al HaTurim** quotes a midrash that when the meraglim arrived in Eretz Yisrael, they saw a giant eating a giant pomegranate and then discarding the shell. All twelve mergalim took shelter inside that shell and that is when they felt like grasshoppers. **Rav Dr. Norman Lamm** interprets this midrash to be saying that the meraglim had the “golus Jew” mentality who were willing to accept an empty hollow shell as long as it was used by the non-Jews. They were willing to lower themselves to feel like grasshoppers simply because the surrounding culture wanted them to feel that way.

**וִֽיהוֹשֻׁ֣עַ בִּן־נ֗וּן וְכָלֵב֙ בֶּן־יְפֻנֶּ֔ה And Yehoshua and Kalev tore their garments (14:6)** - Why doesn’t Yehoshua get rewarded the way that Kalev does? And why doesn’t Kalev get the leadership that Yehosua does? **Rav Elyashiv** explained that Kalev hid his impressions and thoughts but his intentions were in Sakana so he davened -- himself - away from the danger. Yehoshua used the opportunity to grow in his leadership capacity even while in the Sakana.

**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.

**סָ֣ר צִלָּ֧ם מֵֽעֲלֵיהֶ֛ם Their shadow (tzel) has been removed from them (14:9)** - In an explanation of the intent of Yehoshua and Kalev here**, Rav Yosef Carmel**  explained that roots that contain the root-part tzel represents the form in which a matter is seen … and it is similar to ‘their shadow has been removed,’ which means that the images of their faces were changed … due to fear**.” Ibn Ezra** adds that “If a warrior does not have a shield to protect him and be a shadow for him, his heart will be full of fear.” Here too, notes Rav Carmel, the Canaanite nations were so fearful of Bnei Yisrael’s expected arrival that they were ready to throw away their weapons and run for their lives.

**ה אֶ֤רֶךְ אַפַּ֨יִם֙ וְרַב־חֶ֔סֶד Hashem Keil Erech Apayim (14:18)** - How come this time there is no mention of Hashem, Hashem as with Cheit HaEigel**? Or HaChaim** says that here there was no “before the sin” as there was before the Cheit HaEigel since the people had sinned with the Eigel. **Rabbi David Holzer**  added that today we also tend to sin, thinking that we are always “before sin” which is what holds us back from getting involved in Teshuva -- we do not even see previous sin. It is a danger.

**Hashem, slow to anger and full of Chessed (14:18)** – When the Miraglim sinned Moshe davened and did not mention the attribute of Emes. **Rav Elyashiv** explained that the Zohar HaKadosh points out that we cannot mention a Middah of Hashem if we do not use it appropriately. The Miraglim lied – therefore the Midddah of Emes was not important to them. Ergo, Moshe left it off his list of middos too.

**סָלַ֖חְתִּי כִּדְבָרֶֽךָ: I have forgiven you just as you said (14:20)** - If Hashem forgave them then why did they have to die? **Rav Amital** noted that from this we learn that what we need to do is not always what ideally should be done; it is not always the ideal situation.  Rather, we need to ask ourselves whether we are on a sufficient level to merit doing what we propose. One has to be on a certain level in order to merit performing a mitzva.  If one has not yet achieved that level, then performance of the mitzva is not worthwhile, and may even be detrimental. Although they will not be punished for their sin, the Dor HaMidbar have shown that they are not on a sufficiently high spiritual level to enter the land and to live under "natural" conditions.  Thus, there is no choice but to let them die off in the desert and to look to the next generation. This is not a punishment, but rather the reflection of the fact that they are not worthy (in themselves, as shown by their sin) of entering the land

**Hashem said “I have forgiven” in accord with your words (14:20) – Rashi** explains that Hashem forgave because of Moshe’s argument that the nations of the world would say that Hashem couldn’t bring them into the land. **The Tchibiner Rav** explained that when one needs a Yeshua, he should argue that the salvation will bring glory to Hashem. His proof is the fact that despite Moshe’s myriad of tefillos on behalf of the Jews, it is this specific one that Rashi says is included in the idea of Salachtee K’Dvareicha.

**And still as I am alive and the glory of Hashem fills the world (14:21) – Rav Asher Weiss** notes that the issue of recognizing the glory of Hashem here is relevant because there are 2 distinct ways that Hashem’s glory can be felt throughout the world. The first is when we accept His direction without question. This was an opportunity that the Jews would ultimately fail at. At the same time, the other option is to scatter the Jews in the exile and have the glory of Hashem recognized as we experience the miraculous survival of the Jew there. (This also explains the concept of Ani Eten Lachem Bechiya L’Doros – you gave up on the faith aspect and I will give you something to cry about in the future where you will display the glory of Hashem in a different context).

**ועבדי כלב עקב רוח אחרת בו And my servant Kalev who was of a different spirit (14:24) – Rav Elyashiv** explains that when one is surrounded by a group of like-minded individuals bent on a sinister purpose one needs to not only have a different idea – s/he needs to have a totally different spirit to remain focused on the real truth. Kalev was able to withstand the peer pressure of the Miraglim because he had an entirely different spirit about him and was able to overcome the challenge they presented.

**And my servant Calev since he had a different spirit (14:24)** – What kind of different spirit did he have? **Rav Zaidel Epstein** suggested that it came in the form of Hisbonenus – the ability to consider and recognize that there are challenges that will attempt to thwart a Tzaddik from achieving his destiny. Calev saw this and thus he went to Chevron in order to stay off the attempt to corrupt him by his Yetzer Hara.

**עַד־מָתַ֗י לָֽעֵדָ֤ה הָֽרָעָה֙ הַזֹּ֔את How long for this Eidah? (14:27**) - It is fascinating that the concept of Minyan is derived from this group of 12 Miraglim minus Yehoshua and Kalev. How is it that we utilize the concept of Tzibbur from 10 failing spies is incredible!? **Rav Schachter**  explained that  perhaps what the *chachomim* had in mind with this derivation was the following: The Rambam writes that we have *halachos* that are based on the premise that only the Jewish people who live in *Eretz Yisroel* constitute *Klal Yisroel*; all of the millions of Jews who live in *chutz la'aretz* are considered to be *yichidim* - individuals (*Ta'anis* 14B.) (Those who live in *chutz la'aretz* but view *Eretz Yisroel* as their national homeland are also considered, to a lesser degree, part of *Klal Yisroel*.) The din of *kiddush Hashem b'rabim* really should have required the presence of all of *Klal Yisroel*, but, as we said above, we derive from this week's *parsha* that wherever there is a *minyan* of Jews they represent *Klal Yisroel* and the *Shechinah* is present there. Perhaps the *chachomim* could only derive this principle from the *meraglim* since after *yetzias Mitzrayim* they were the only Jews who had stepped foot in *Eretz Yisroel*.

**How much longer for this evil Eidah (14:27)** – The concept of a Minyan is learned from this number. Why not use the more positive example of Eidah discussed in Parshas Emor? Why use the Evil Eidah to teach us about a minyan? **Rav Hershel Schachter**  notes that at the time, this group had entered the land of Israel. The idea of Kiddush Hashem B’Rabim applies first to those living in Eretz Yisrael and, as a result, this group is the one used to derive that principle.

**בַּמִּדְבָּ֣ר הַ֠זֶּ֠ה יִפְּל֨וּ פִגְרֵיכֶ֜ם In this desert you will die and there you will perish (14:29)** - Why is it that the punishment for the Miraglim was more severe than the Avoda Zara of the Eigel? It seems lop-sided -- the sin of Avoda Zara should have been seen as worse? **Rav Elyashiv**  explained that in Tehillim we read that the people despised “Eretz Chemda” and thisi s why they were punished. It was not the beauty of the land -- the Zavas Chalav U’Devash that they despised. It was the Eretz Chemda. Chemda or desire comes not only from the physical comforts that the land provides. It comes from the desire for holiness. When the people were not willing to lay their lives down for Kedushas HaAretz but were for milk and honey, this was a serious basic flaw in themselves and they did not deserve the land.

**הִנֶּ֗נּוּ וְעָלִ֛ינוּ 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.

**הִנֶּ֗נּוּ וְעָלִ֛ינוּ Here we are and we will go up (14:40)** - After the incident with the meraglim, a group of people called the ma’apilim decide to go to Eretz Yisrael and they are killed. What did they do wrong? Wasn’t their act the greatest form of teshuva — expressing a true desire for Eretz Yisrael**? Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl**  suggested that what they did was an extension of the original cheit. The original cheit was not believing that they could conquer Eretz Yisrael. The teshuva was not that they had the physical means to conquer but that HaShem would help them conquer. They, like the meraglim, took HaShem’s role out of the equation.

**כִּ֥י חָטָֽאנוּ Here we are and we will go to the place that Hashem said that we have sinned (14:40) -** It is interesting to note that Hashem forgave the people for the sin of Avoda Zara with the Eigel but not for the sin of not wanting Eretz Yisrael. Thus, we see that the sin of not wanting Eretz Yisrael is as serious as overt Kefirah. **Rav Elyashiv** noted that the sin is identified in tehillim as being part of the fact that the people were disgusted with Eretz Chemda. Rav Elyashiv noted that the term Eretz Chemdah refers specifically to the spiritual aspects of the land centered and anchored in the fact that the land is the home of the Beis HaMikdash. He added that the Miraglim were excited about the economic and physical attributes of the land (Zavas Chalav U’Devash Hee), but not the spiritual aspects therein.

**Moshe said to them “Why do you violate the word of Hashem, it will not be successful? (14:41)** – The entire episode of the Maapilim seems odd in that the people declare that they were wrong for rebelling against Hashem and then immediately – or so it seems – did it again by attacking and forging onward? **Rav Elchanan Samet**  explains that the Maapilim thought that since they had done Teshuvah, it was a test to see if they had truly resolved to enter the land and that Hashem REALLY wanted them to attempt. Their fervor was to be applauded though their attention to detail led to their downfall.

**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.

**וְיַ֤יִן לַנֶּ֨סֶךְ֙ And wine for drink-offering, a quarter of a hin(15:5)** - Why was it necessary to focus on the Mitzva of Nesachim when they came into the land? Why this Mitzva? **Rav Moshe Feinstein** explains that when a person brings a Nedavah then s/he is obligated in Nesachim. When someone voluntarily decides to perform Mitzvos, we can be sure that s/he will continue to perform them. This needs to be the focus of each person and as such, the Nesachim were given preference here.

**And wine for a libation (15:5) – Sifre** suggests that the idea of offering libations was obligatory only upon entering Eretz Yisrael where it even applied to the Bamas Yachid. Why? **Rabbi Yaakov Haber**  suggested that the true test of elevating all of creation through all the faculties of Man would only come in the Land of Israel where all the commandments would be placed into action. Consequently, n'sachim – which **Rav Kook** explains represent the added dimension of sanctification of all aspects of life - only applied to the individual upon entry into the Land wherein man would have the chance to consecrate everything he did for Hashem – both individually and as part of a tzibbur.

**'והיה באכלכם מלחם הארץ תרימו תרומה לה When you eat from the bread of the land separate Terumah (15:19)** – Why is it that after the sin of the Miraglim the three immediate Mitzvos that we received were the ones of Challah, Nesachim and Tzitzis? The **Chiddushei Harim** explains that it was a reminder to the three miracles that the Jews got in the Midbar that they did not want to give up – the Manna, Be’er and clouds. **Rav Bernard Weinberger** added that the reason that Challah is called Terumah to Hashem is that whatever one does, s/he can do it L’Shem Shomayim – even the eating is in of itself a means to raise oneself to Hashem.

**'תרומה לה A Terumah for Hashem (15:19) – Rav Schachter**  noted that the Torah notes 4 different things referred to as Terumah: 1) Challah 2) Fruit in Eretz Yisrael 3) Terumas Maaser 4) Bikkurim. Why does this matter? Rav Schachter explained that these Issurim are Mitztaref together because of the title Terumah. He added that there seems to be a requirement upon separation of the Challah to declare Terumah L’Hashem. If so why do we not do so today? The **Malbim** explains that since we make a Beracha on the Challah there is no need to separately recite the name of Hashem on the Challah – it is covered by the Beracha.

**רֵאשִׁית֙ עֲרִסֹ֣תֵכֶ֔ם חַלָּ֖ה תָּרִ֣ימוּ תְרוּמָ֑ה Hafrashas Challah (15:20) - Rav Schachter**  pointed out that there is a disagreement between the Michaber and the Rema as to the proper Beracha that one makes upon the separation of Challah. The **Shulchan Aruch** notes that the proper Beracha is Al Hafrashas Terumah while the **Rema** notes that it is L’Hafrish Challa Min HaIsa. Rav Schachter quoted the Gra who noted that the difference seems to be based on the idea of whether Berachos need to be made in Biblical hebrew or not. Citing Avudraham, who notes that the biblical Challah refers only to raw dough – the Michaber prefers the Beracha of Terumah which would include both baked and raw Challah. Rav Schachter noted that the Netziv disagrees and maintains that the Berachos do not need to be made in biblical hebrew.

**כִּתְרוּמַ֣ת גֹּ֔רֶן כֵּ֖ן תָּרִ֥ימוּ אֹתָֽהּ Like the Terumah of the silo you shall separate the Terumah(15:20)** - Why does the Torah say that it is Hafrashas Terumah but Hafrashas Challah should be a stand alone Mitzva? The **Meshech Chochma** notes that sometimes the people think about cheating on their Terumos and Maaseros but that the fact that doing so involves a public awareness usually stops them. The Torah here is telling us the same should be so for Challah -- one should separate that too -- eventhough you can technically hide cheating it from the public.

**רֵאשִׁית֙ עֲרִסֹ֣תֵכֶ֔ם חַלָּ֖ה The Mitzva of Challa (15:20) - Sforno** notes that after the sin of the Miraglim the people needed the Mitzva of Challa so that they would have the impetus for Beracha in their homes. **Rav Gifter**  adds that it was not enough to have them separate the Terumah and Maaser from the unprocessed grains, the people needed to take that which they had processed, in their homes, and instill the idea that even this is to be dedicated to Hashem. This would help build their faith.

**And the soul that acts with strength whether a native or a convert is blaspheming Hashem and will receive Kares (15: 30) – Rashi** explains that the warning about Avoda Zara came from Hashem and the rest of it came from Moshe. **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide** explains that this is why the Possuk reaffirms that it applies to both native and Ger – so that we do not think that since the Ger did not hear the Issur Avoda Zara it might not be considered as if he cursed Hashem. Thus, the Possuk spells it out that clearly it is.

**וַיִּמְצְא֗וּ אִ֛ישׁ מְקשֵׁ֥שׁ עֵצִ֖ים בְּי֥וֹם הַשַּׁבָּֽת They found a man gathering wood on shabbos (15:32)** - The Talmud (Bava Basra 109b) notes that his intentions were noble. Why is he to be treated differently than Yael who got Sachar for her activities with Sisra? **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin** explains that we could have learned these Hilchos Shabbos without the fireworks or the blaze of glory. The Mikoshesh did not do that and so he pays with his life.

**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** answers that even if there is but one Michallel 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.

**כי לא פרש מה יעשה לו For it wasn’t clear what should be done to him (15:34)** – How could they not know what to do with him? At the very least they should have known of the fact that he deserved the death penalty based on the Possuk of ובערת הרע מקרבך? **Rav Dovid Kav** explained that the Torah is teaching us an important idea here – that one who does an Avaira with good intentions cannot easily be called הרע. For when a Jew acts based on intentions that are purely לשם שמים, one cannot say it is רע . It could lead to being punished – and it was – but the action is not intended as Ra.

**וְעָשׂ֨וּ לָהֶ֥ם צִיצִ֛ת עַל־כַּנְפֵ֥י בִגְדֵיהֶ֖ם לְדֹֽרֹתָ֑ם They will place Tzitzis on their garments (15:38)** - If Tzitzis are so important that they are compared to all Mitzvos, why is wearing them voluntary? **Rav Asher Weiss**  explained that Tzitzis is an Avdus for as Tosafos (Menachos 43b) explains, the Tzitzis is a Kabbalas Ol Malchus Shomayim coming together with an acceptance of Mitzvos.

**וּרְאִיתֶ֣ם אֹת֗וֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹ֣ת And you shall see it and remember all the Mitzvos of Hashem (15:39)** - The Gemara, Menachos (43b), states that techeiles was chosen because its color is similar to the sea, which is similar to the sky, which is similar to the כסא הכבוד. Why not just state simply that techeiles is similar to the כסא הכבוד? **Rav Moshe Feinstein** suggests that this is to teach us that if we want to get to the כסא הכבוד, we have to do so incrementally. We can’t just jump to the top level.

**וּרְאִיתֶ֣ם אֹת֗וֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹ֣ת And you will see it and remember all the Mitzvos of Hashem and do them and not follow your eyes or your heart (15:39)** - Why is the seeing so critical to remembering the Mitzvos of Hashem? **Rav Zaidel Epstein** noted that through the process of visualization we make Torah LIVELY. When we stop to SEE the Torah and experience it (which is associated with the “Seeing” sense) we become a part of the living Torah process and therefore able to serve Hashem best.

**וּרְאִיתֶ֣ם אֹת֗וֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹ֣ת 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**  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.

**וּרְאִיתֶ֣ם אֹת֗וֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם֙ אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹ֣ת** **And you will see them and remember all the Mitzvos of Hashem and you will do them (15:39)** – This mitzvah of Tzitzis seem magical? Why is the Mitzva so significant that the Gemara accords it such serious fascinating insight. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein** suggested that Tzitis are not a Garment itself – they hang on the garment. While Tefillin are altogether holy, tzitzis are attached to a garment -- which is profane --and are not an object on their own. On the one hand, the tzitzis are attached to a garment, but on the other hand, they are not really a part of it; rather, they are connected to it. It is a sort of restriction on the authority that the garment expresses. Through tzitzis Hashem tells man that he should indeed leave his human mark on nature, but this must be done in the proper way by imbuing it with elements of holiness.

**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.

**ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם And do not be swayed after your hearts and after your eyes (15:39)- Rav Nachum Percovitz** wrote in one of his notebooks that the human eye takes pictures at a rapid pace. The heart serves as the photo development center of the human and the brain as the storage and processing unit. That brain works full time and is constantly working. What it works on and whether it will be positive or wasted is dependent on the person – and dictated by the eye. Thus, it is important that we be careful what we look at in order to protect our greatest investment – ourselves.

**וְלֹֽא־תָת֜וּרוּ אַֽחֲרֵ֤י לְבַבְכֶם֙ Don’t follow after your heart (15:39)** - The Gemara (Berachos 12) says this refers to Minus -- heresy. But why does heresy become associated with the heart? Shouldn’t it be closer associated with the brain?  **Rav Elchanon Wasserman HyD** explains that intellectual Emunah is relatively easy to achieve -- provided that the person’s heart is open to it. Heresy becomes a challenge when the heart is not open to hearing it.

**ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם And you will not be swayed to follow your hearts and your eyes (15:39) – Rav Wolbe** points out that man is stuck between 2 pulls. One part pulls him toward desire. The other pull is toward Godliness. The dual pulls makes man sway in the balance like a boat on a sea. Herein comes the Mitzva of Tzitzis like an anchor line to keep man on the straight and narrow anchor of the Taryag Mitzvos. The Tzizis line keeps us from drowning by anchoring us to the actions of the Taryag.

**And you will see them and remember all the Mitzvos of Hashem and you will do them (15:39)** – This mitzvah of Tzitzis seem magical? Why is the Mitzva so significant that the Gemara accords it such serious fascinating insight. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein** suggested that Tzitis are not a Garment itself – they hang on the garment. While Tefillin are altogether holy, tzitzis are attached to a garment -- which is profane --and are not an object on their own. On the one hand, the tzitzis are attached to a garment, but on the other hand, they are not really a part of it; rather, they are connected to it. It is a sort of restriction on the authority that the garment expresses. Through tzitzis Hashem tells man that he should indeed leave his human mark on nature, but this must be done in the proper way by imbuing it with elements of holiness.

**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.

**אֲשֶׁ֨ר הוֹצֵ֤אתִי אֶתְכֶם֙ מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרַ֔יִם I am Hashem...who has taken you out of the land of Egypt (15:43)** - The **Rambam** does not include the Mitzva of remembering Yetzias Mitzrayim as a Mitzva -- one of the 613. Why? **Rav Schachter**  explained in the name **of Rav Soloveitchik**  that Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim is part of the Mitzva of Shema. That Mitzva, says Rav Soloveitchik is the Mitzva  of accepting the yoke of Heaven based on what the Jewish nation experienced at the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim. In other words, all three sections of Shema are biblical -- and why we mention Yetzias Mitzrayim in this section of Shema is because it is a fundamental part of Kabbalas Ol Malchus Shomayim.

**Haftara:**

**Yericho (Yehoshua 2:1) - Rav Eliezer Melamed**  noted the uniqueness of Yericho. He noted that Yericho was all that remained from the physical areas that Lot saw when he chose to live in Sodom. These areas provided physical beauty and the tastiest of fruit and it is this attraction to base physicality that excited the despised Canaanites who were especially devoid of any sense of spirituality. Removing that area by the walk 7 times which removed the seven layers of Chol that it surrounded itself with, allowed the Kedushat HaAretz to be apparent and displayed ridding Eretz Yisrael from that which is simple.

**וַ֠יָּבֹ֠אוּ בֵּ֣ית־אִשָּׁ֥ה זוֹנָ֛ה וּשְׁמָ֥הּ רָחָ֖ב They went to the house of a woman who was a zonah (Yehoshua 2:1)** - Why did they choose the home of a house of ill repute? Why did Rachav choose to change so dramatically to become a virtuous savior of Am Yisrael? **Rav Binyamin Eisenberger**  explains that the spies this time were not merely conducting reconnaissance on the physical conquerability of the land, they were also focused on its spiritual conquerability. The Torah warns us that we need to be different or the land will vomit us in the same way it did to others before us. They went directly to the source of the Tumah -- a harlot. As they were able to destroy the Tumah at the source, Rachav’s goodness was able to become apparent and she had a strong desire to join up with the Jewish people. This became a good beginning to a future wherein we would conquer the land spiritually first and then ultimately physically too.

**וַ֠יָּבֹ֠אוּ בֵּ֣ית־אִשָּׁ֥ה זוֹנָ֛ה וּשְׁמָ֥הּ רָחָ֖ב 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** 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.

**And she took the 2 men and hid HIM (2:4) - Rashi cites the Yalkut Shimoni** which clarifies that Pinchas did not need to be hidden because he had the ability to make himself invisible. The question begs itself then as to why Moshe didn’t send Pinchas alone with the cloak of invisibility? The **Imrei Emes** suggests that Moshe was setting a message for the Jewish people as a whole then – Eretz Yisrael will need 2 types of people – those who live like malachim who are Torasam Umanusam and those who work the land and settle it with the Jewish spirit. Thus, both types of Jews were sent to check out the land.

**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.

**וַתּֽוֹרִדֵ֥ם בַּחֶ֖בֶל בְּעַ֣ד הַֽחַלּ֑וֹן  And she let them down through the cord in the window in the wall (Yehoshua 2:15)** – The Talmud (Zevachim 116b See also Yalkut Shimoni here) notes that Rachav called to Hashem to allow her to atone for the sins of the string, the window and the wall (The men who came to visit her for her services also used the same string, window and wall). It was this call for forgiveness that led to her Teshuva and her reward of 8 Neviim and Kohanim. However, wasn’t the sins of the string, rope and wall the smallest of her sins? What about her lifestyle in general? Why does she focus on these three things**? Rav Shimon Schwab** learns a VERY valuable lesson from this Chazal – that Teshuva begins from the stirrings in any part of the person that still remains wholesome. While her reputation was known, she still had room to consider the Busha of the Canaanite men who might not visit her through the front door. Other people too, do not become stirred to teshuva by hearing how small and useless we are. They are stirred by the greatness of the Neshama and how these behaviors are not becoming the Godly souls we possess.

**And she lowered them by the rope through the window (Yehoshua 2:15)** – The Gemara (Zevachim 116b) notes that the rope was used by Rachav’s customers to gain access to her home and now it was being used as some sort of Teshuvah – in saving the lives of Calev and Pinchas. The Gemara (Megillah 14b) adds that she later converted, married Yehoshua and became matriarch to 8 future prophets including Yirmiyahu. **Yalkut Shimoni** adds that after being thrown into a pit as punishment, Yirmiyahu was lifted out of the pit by ropes that tore into his skin. When he cried out to Hashem, Hashem reminded him that the rope was good enough for his ancestor, and should be good enough for him too. **Rav Pam** pointed out that when a person does a Chessed for another, it is crucial that s/he do the Chessed in the best way possible. It needs to be done in a manner that does not imply or create a source of discomfort or embarrassment if the provider had been the recipient.