The great Rabbi Yerucham Leib Perlman, the “Gadol of Minsk,” was once approached by some members of his community. It seemed to them that the rabbi was spending an inordinate amount of time adjudicating the judgments of the rich, as he was busy attempting to arrive at compromises and equitable arrangements for them. It also seemed that the cases involving the poorer people of the community were being ignored and overlooked. The people asked their rabbi for an explanation.

Reb Yerucham Leib listened to the comments of the townsfolk, and he responded to their concerns. “There is a common misconception,” he pointed out, “that the role of the rabbi is to worry only about the poor and destitute, and to protect them from their oppressors. On the one hand, it is true that the Torah instructs a dayan ‘not to recognize faces in judgment’ by favoring the rich and affluent. Yet, in the same verse the Torah also adjures a judge that ‘the small and the great shall you hear alike.’” As Rashi points out, the Torah is concerned that the poor be treated fairly, but the Torah is equally demanding that we do not take advantage of the rich just because it may seem that they have money they can afford to lose. The Gemara (Gittin 36a-b) describes the institution of Prozbol, which was enacted by Hillel to enable loans to be collected even after Shemitta. Rav Chisda explains that Prozbol is actually a combination of three words: “proz buli u’veti” - that which benefits the rich as well as the poor. We see that the Torah is concerned that the rich not suffer undue losses.

In fact, we must be especially careful about the assets of the rich and should pray for their welfare. When a businessman succeeds in his dealings, he can keep a factory or an establishment in business, thereby providing employment for many workers. Any damage that the businessman may suffer could not only damage him but also could affect the welfare of many families who are dependent upon their jobs which he furnishes. This, then, is also the reason that Rebbe gave great honor and respect to the wealthy (Eruvin 86a), for Hashem has given them the opportunity to channel resources toward many other individuals and families.

When a businessman succeeds in his dealings, he can keep a factory or an establishment in business, thereby providing employment for many workers.

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**FLAWED FROM THE START**

The people approached in a disorganized and rushed manner. The children were pushing the elders, and the elders were pushing the leaders. -- Rashi

At this point, Moshe was beginning to review one of the most tragic events in Jewish history. He was addressing the people and pointing out how their decision to send the spies displayed a great lack of trust in God, and how their believing the evil reports about Eretz Yisrael had caused the trek through the desert and the death of a
generation. Surprisingly, however, we find that Moshe decided to mention an additional detail which also showed some element of indiscretion on the part of the people. Moshe took this opportunity to criticize the people for their improper approach toward him when they asked their question. “You should know,” Moshe said, “that there was a lot of pushing and shoving in line! I saw some elders get bumped, and even some of the leaders lost their place in line. That really was not proper.” At first glance, this criticism seems absurd at this point. Moshe was dealing with one of the most severe failures in our history! Is this the moment to focus on such details as improper pushing in line?

Rabbi Itzele of Volozhin explains that Moshe knew that when he would tell them that sending the spies was a sin, they might retort and claim that their intentions were indeed noble. They meant to send these men to hear about the positive features of the land. It was the spies who ruined everything. The people could claim that they were victims, innocently fooled into believing the misleading slander about the land.

Moshe directly confronted them and showed them that when a project is good and proper, it is administered with thought and implemented with restraint. When someone means harm, it often is evident in the way in which he conducts himself as he approaches the mission, often with confusion and with inconsistency. This is what Moshe said. “It was obvious from the beginning that you came to me with conspiring intent and evil objectives. Your initial approach was all wrong. Elders were trampled and leaders were treated with contempt. Is this the manner in which an endeavor is performed when it is truly for the sake of Heaven?” This is one facet of what is meant when we say: "דִּבְרֵי אֶצְרַיִל שְׁמֵיהָ לָבָנָה".

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YEHOSHUA AND CALEV MERITED

It is clear from the verses that Yehoshua and Calev each merited to enter into Eretz Yisrael for a different reason. They each refused to cooperate with the evil group of spies, as they withstood all pressure to join ranks and besmirch the land promised to them by God. Yet, this alone would not have been enough for them to escape the judgment of doom which was passed against the entire generation that had left Egypt. Calev merited to be excluded from this decree due to the fact that he sanctified the name of God and fulfilled His command, in sharp contrast to the others who desecrated the name of God by displaying utter despair and hopelessness.

His command, in sharp contrast to the others who desecrated the name of God by besmirching the land promised to them by God. Yehoshua earned his entry into Eretz Yisrael by assuming a role of leadership and guidance in terms of preparing to assist in the apportioning of the land to its rightful owners. Both Yehoshua and Calev, each in his own way, rose to the occasion and merited to enter Eretz Yisrael while the rest of the people of that generation died due to their disloyalty.

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A KEY TO PRAYER

The focus and intent that a person maintains as he davens can result in a prayer that is desirable and effective in eliciting a heavenly response. What is a necessary component of prayer, and what should a person think about as he pronounces the words in the siddur? He should express concern for the plight of the honor of Hashem which is being belittled and disgraced due to our being in exile because of our sins. Without this aspect in our prayers, we can hardly expect Hashem to hearken to our requests regarding our own personal agenda.

Ksav Sofer points out that the verse in our parasha can be read homiletically as conveying this message. “And God was not heard in your voices.” If your prayers do not include any reference to the pain of the Shechina, “then God, in turn, will not listen to you regarding your own condition”.

The verse in Tehillim (32:6) states: “For this - puesto que yo soy humanos, entonces yo no debo esperar en ti a que me dé la felicidad que yo deseo, aunque estoy inmune a todo".

“Then you wept again before God, but God did not listen to your voice and He did not give ear to you.”

Devarim 1:45

The focus and intent that a person maintains as he davens can result in a prayer that is desirable and effective in eliciting a heavenly response.
come near him.” The word “אֲנֵה” refers to Torah and the Shechina, while “a time You may be found” refers to the ten days from Rosh HaShana until Yom Kippur (see Rosh HaShana 17a). The verse can be understood to convey a message similar to the theme we mentioned above. Let every devout person daven in regard to the honor of Torah and of Hashem. This should be the focus of one’s thoughts, especially during the Days of Repentance when prayers are most readily acceptable. The flow of great floods is a reference to the tears one sheds as he davenes. Yet, a person’s tears should be due to the empathy a person has for the Shechina, and not for his own personal needs.

If, at such an auspicious time, a person can only think of himself, but he has no regard for the disgrace which the Shechina suffers, he risks being the object of a serious accusatory finger in the heavens.

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NOT ONLY ON THE DEFENSIVE

There seems to be a contradiction inherent in this verse. If Eisav’s descendents were fearful of the Jews, why, then, was there a specific concern to have to guard against them? It would seem that their fear of the Jews would serve as a deterrent against their being a threat, and it would not be so necessary to guard against them.

Sefer Be’er Yosef explains that this, however, is the nature of the world. It is indeed necessary to be more careful when dealing with those who feel intimidated and fearful of a situation. When someone is nervous or panic-stricken, this condition generally causes him to become more defensive and wary. He can become overwhelmed with anxiety to the point where he is constantly thinking of how to overcome his adversary. The instinct of self-preservation takes over, and whenever an opportunity arises, the underdog might suddenly lash out and attack.

This was the situation in our verse as well. The people of Seir were terrified by the Jewish nation. This had the effect of creating a tense, defensive attitude among them whereby the slightest provocation could have resulted in a fierce battle for survival on their part.

In fact, this continues to serve as the guideline for how we should conduct ourselves regarding the nations of the world even today. We should avoid instilling fear of ourselves among the nations. This only serves to drive the people of these nations to contrive desperate plans to defend themselves against us, as they envision us to be mortal threats to their existence. It is also noteworthy that this strategy is not only appropriate for our nation as a whole, but it is also proper for every individual as well. As the Gemara teaches (Gittin 6b): “A person should always be careful not to place excessive fear in the hearts of the members of his household.”

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TISHA B’AV

“A grievous sin did Yerushalayim commit. Therefore, she became a wanderer.” Eicha 1:8

The Midrash is commenting on two conspicuous aspects of the verse. First, the double expression of sinning must be understood (פָּנַי אֲנָשִׁים). Secondly, the verses prior to this one refer to the iniquities of Yehuda and Yerushalayim in general, and the previous verse (v.7) specifically mentions Yerushalayim. Why, then, does our verse have to attribute the sinning to Yerushalayim by name, when it is obvious that this is the subject of the sentence? It seems, though, that the verse is emphasizing that it is only Yerushalayim that sinned, and not the nations of the world. This, then, is the question of the Midrash. Is it in fact true that the Jews sin, and that the nations of the world do not sin?

The lesson, as pointed out in Bina L’itim, is that there is a substantial difference between the sins of the Jews and the sins of everyone else. If any of the nations of the world sin, the act itself is reprehensible. However, that is the extent of the error. When the Jews sin, beside the error of their ways, there is another aspect to the tragedy which must be considered as well. We must remember that we are the treasured nation of Hashem, and that we are in a covenational relationship with Hashem. This
very fact magnifies the significance of the sin into being an act of treachery and disloyalty. A sin on the part of the Jews represents both the sin in terms of itself, as well as a violation on our part, in terms of not keeping our role in the special relationship we have with Hashem.

The Midrash concludes: Yisrael sins, and they are smitten. The double expression of sin in the verse indicates this doubled and compounded problem. One aspect is the sin in and of itself, and the other is how the misdeed reflects a dishonoring of our role as Hashem’s precious people.

Halachic Corner

We must remember that we are the treasured nation of Hashem, and that we are in a covenantal relationship with Hashem.

Questions for Thought and Study

1. Why does Pasuk 1:8, regarding the inheritance of Eretz Yisrael, begin in singular form ("יהיה" - "see") yet end in plural form ("לךẽים" - "before you")? See Ohr HaChaim 1:8
2. How do we know that judges sit while adjudicating cases? See Ba’al HaTurim 1:16
3. To whom was Moshe speaking when he said (Pasuk 1:18) "יִתְנָה אֲנָהִי לְדַעַת אֲנָהּ וּלְעַנַּן וּלְכָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל "("and I commanded you at that time")? What was he saying? See Rashi and Ramban 1:18
4. As they were about to enter Eretz Yisrael, how could Bnei Yisrael think that Hashem did not provide victory for them, after all they had seen in the wilderness? See Ha’amek Davar 1:27
5. Which ten nations would the family of Avraham inherit?
6. Why does Moshe try to make peace with Sichon in Pesukim 2:26 and 2:27, but was commanded by Hashem in Pasuk 2:24 to drive them out? See Ramban 2:24

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- By the members of Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef Polstein on the engagement of their daughter Etta to Ezra Suss; to HTC Board of Regents member Dr. Michael Friedman and his wife Susan on the birth of a great-grandson, born to Yoni & Eliana Dauber; to HTC Board of Regents member Martin Samber and his wife Esther on the birth of a great-grandson, born to Yitzchak Yonasan & Rochel Miriam Samber; and to HTC Board of Regents member Dr. Oscar Novick and his wife Bernice on the Bar Mitzvah of their great-grandson, David Teboule.

- By the Blitstein Institute of Hebrew Theological College would like to thank Mr. Rudolph Tessler, the Davis family, the Hartman family and the Rajchenbach family for their generous sponsorship of the Summer Institute for Orthodox Holocaust Educators completed this week.

- This important Blitstein Institute program, held in collaboration with the Associated Talmud Torahs and the Illinois Holocaust Museum from the Yad Vashem International School along with noted Rabbanim and Mechanchim from our community. The event exceeded all expectations and participants left with knowledge and skills to teach the difficulty history, hashkafot, and the story of Klal Yisrael’s strength and resilience following Churban Europe.


- Attention recent High School & Seminary graduates: Get a real education with expert faculty & interaction with friends in the classroom; Spend your time in an environment of real spiritual growth. Get real credits for your classes that are accepted at prestigious schools across the country. Get a real degree, real fast- accepted by top tier employers. Gain real knowledge that you’ll use for life. Blitstein Institute for Women: It’s the Real Thing. Fall semester begins Sept. 3. Call Mrs. Mann to set up an appointment with Dr. Tessler 773-973-0241.

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Visit our website at www.park-plaza.org or contact Adina at 773-465-6700 or at adina@park-plaza.org.
**Register: jccchicago.org/sports.**

- **Save the date!** Guess who’s coming back to town? The one and only original Uncle Moishy at the 6th annual “Taste of Kosher” event at your Jewel-Osco on Howard Street! Our biggest year yet, with dozens of kosher company products, plus live cooking delicious presentation by Chef Adam of Miekke Sauces and a special appearance by world-renowned kosher food maven, The Kosher Guru. A fun event for all! Sun., Sept. 8, 12-5; plus don’t miss the free Customer Appreciation Kosher BBQ!
- **Adas Yeshurun invites the community to Rabbi Cohen’s annual Tisha B’Av Drasha on Sunday, August 11th, at Congregation Atereth Yehoshua, 2915 Touhy, after the first Mincha (7:10). Rabbi Binyamin Olstein, Menahel Ruchani of Blitstein Institute and Rosha Yeshiva of Beis HaMidrash LaTorah, “Be Inspired on Tisha B’Av: Yirmiyahu HaNaivi’s Message: Not Outdated - A Voice of Reality”.
- **Or Menorah schedule on Tisha B’Av at our shul, 7006 N. California Avenue: Saturday- Maariv at 8:30 PM (to allow those who need to drive to arrive), followed by Eicha. Sunday morning: 9:20 AM followed by Selected Kinot (We daven every Sunday morning at 9:20 AM – latest weekly Minyan in WRP.) and Sunday Mincha with Talit & Tefillin at 1:30 PM. Join us for meaningful davening and a meaningful fast. Info: www.ormenorah.org.**
- **MadaRigos Midwest is hosting a community event for all women, mothers & daughters, with Momentum Trip Leader Adrienne Gold. Sunday, 9/1, 10:30 AM, at Northbrook Hilton. Adrienne will speak on “Beauty & Self-Esteem in the Glare of the Media” - Brunch served. It’s the concluding event of our High School Girls Retreat. RSVP to info@madarigosmidwest.org. Make donations for women, or teens (reduced donation) on our donations page. No charge for girls attending the retreat. We hope their mothers come too!**
- **Join MadaRigos Midwest for a Morning of Dancing out the Stigma of Mental Health with Frumba Chicago. In memory of BatSheva Chaya Stadlan z”l. Sponsored by Dr. Noam Stadlan and Marianne Novak. September 22, 2019, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at the Ida Crown Jewish Academy. Register at www.madarigosmidwest.org/zumba.**
- **Join Lincolnwood Jewish Cong. A.G. Beth Israel (7117 Crawford) Sun., Aug. 11 (Tisha B’Av), at 5:30 PM, for the movie “The Final Victory of Dr. Felix Zandman”. Dr. Zandman was a Holocaust survivor who learned trigonometry by rote while in hiding from the Nazis & went on to start a top international innovative technology company. After the movie, Mr. Sol Kreiner will speak about his connection & conversations with Dr. Zandman, as we complete the fast. Rabbi Biber will speak between Mincha (7:10) and Maariv (8:15).**
- **Special unplugged/acoustic kumzitz! Musical Melave Malka series is back at Young Israel of West Rogers Park, featuring The Carlebach Combo. Saturday night, August 17th, Motzaei Shabbas Nachamu, at 10:00 PM. Live Jewish music in a family-friendly kosher environment. Free ice cream, drinks, and chips! Pizza available for purchase. 2706 W. Touhy Avenue. Donation requested.**
- **Limited time! Purchase the Chai Option for Bais Yaakov High School of Chicago’s “Success in Yerushalayim” Raftle! You receive free extra tickets with purchase by August 20! First Prize: Round-trip airfares to Erez Yissroel, 11 days luxurious accommodations & $1,000; or take $12,000 cash! Second Prize: 6 round-trip airfares to anywhere in the continental United States! Add the $50 Chai option to be able to win an additional $18,000! Drawing October 16th. Call 872-241-4540 or www.succosraffle.com.**
- **Adas Yeshurun invites the community to Rabbi Cohen’s annual Tisha B’Av Drasha on Sunday, August 11, at 2:00 PM, for men and women. Mincha will be at 1:30 PM.**
- **This Tisha B’Av visit Torahanytime. Experience strength, hope and inspiration from 50+ outstanding magidim shiru. Choose from 10+ live streams taking place on 3 continents - from the comfort of your own home. Visit www.torahanytime.com/tishabav for full schedule. You can also dial-in by phone: 718-298-2077.**
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Join Congregation Shaarei Tzedek Mishkan Yair for a meaningful Tisha B’Av experience. Shacharis at 8:30 AM followed by Kinos (approximately 9:10 AM). Each of our selected Kinos will be introduced and explained by inspiring speakers. The kinos program will also be streamed over the internet: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2099614043702609420 or email treasurer@shaareitzek.com for the link.

Shaarei Tzedek Mishkan Yair invites girls 8th grade and up to a kumzitz/words of inspiration led by Mrs. Shira Francis, Motzaei Shabbos, layl Tisha B’Av, at 10:45 AM. Can’t make it in person? Call in 712-770-4914 access code 564867#.

By Alida and Daniel Harris, Tye & Nikki and Baer, Max, and Dodi, and the Feld family, in loving memory of their beloved son, father, brother and uncle, Avi, by Mrs. Shira Francis, Motzaei Shabbos, layl Tisha B’Av, at 10:45 PM. Can’t make it in person? Call in 712-770-4914 access code 564867#.

Rashi says that Moshe was speaking to the judges. He was telling them the ten differences between capital and monetary cases. Ramban says that he was speaking to Bnei Yisrael. He was instructing Bnei Yisrael about proper laws (as he was told to do so by Yisro) after the judges were appointed.

At this point, Bnei Yisrael were afraid that they would be conquered in war with Canaan. They thought that the women and children would be captured and eventually live in Canaan to fulfill Hashem’s promise.

Bnei Yisrael inherited the seven canons of Canaan. Lot had Ammon and Moav descend from him. Esav inherited the nation of Seir.

According to Ramban there is no chronological order in the Torah. Pasuk 2:24 takes place after Moshe had previously tried to make peace in Pasuk 2:26.

Answers:
1. In terms of seeing the land, Bnei Yisrael would all see the land as one unit (‘ pozostał עליה גואל בני ישראל’). Regarding conquering and inheriting the land, each individual would do his part in each person’s own way.
2. The first letters of the words ‘וַיִּמֹּסְרוּ אֶל הָעָנָב נַפְּלֵיָּהּ’ form the word לֵבָנָה - indicating that they shall be seated (Shavuos 30b).
3. Rashi says that Moshe was speaking to the judges. He was telling them the ten differences between capital and monetary cases. Ramban says that he was speaking to Bnei Yisrael. He was instructing Bnei Yisrael about proper laws (as he was told to do so by Yisro) after the judges were appointed.
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