The Jews in the desert in our parasha were not satisfied with that alone, and they sought to send the spies on a much more extensive reconnaissance mission. They wanted to find out if the land was “fat or thin”, thus changing the nature of the mission completely.

Rashi points out that the men were chosen properly to succeed in their specific task. “At that moment” they were qualified, for had they gone on a quick visit to determine the mindset of the population, these men would have accomplished their job admirably.

We can now understand why the punishment for the nation was reflected in the time element of the spies’ mission. The people were now doomed to remain in the desert for forty years, “a day for each year” of the spies’ journey in the land. After all, the sin of the people seems to be only that they believed the report of the spies, and that they cried for that one tragic night after hearing the ominous tidings. Nevertheless, the foundation of their sin was in the original indiscretion of the nation in sending these men on an extended and tragic mission which delayed them in the land for forty days.

The names of the princes are listed at the beginning of the parashah, each with the tribe that he represented. The tribes of Menashe and Ephraim are each listed, but the ancestry back to Yosef is mentioned only in reference to Menashe. Why is the association between Ephraim and Yosef ignored?

Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried, the author of Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, notes that in Parasha Pinchas we find that at the end of forty years in the desert, all the men who were doomed to die had passed away (BeMidbar 26:64). Rashi explains that the verse emphasizes that the men had died, but not the women. The original decree to die in the desert was only against the men, for it was they who had complained and said (14:4), “Let us appoint our own leader and return to Egypt.” The women cherished the Land, and they were committed to entering the Holy Land.

Alshich explains that this same attitude of appreciating the Land was shared by Yehoshua. Yet, his love of the Land was his own, aside from the fact that he was a descendant of Yosef who had expressed a special appreciation and love of the Land (Bereshis 50:24). The verse did not write that Yehoshua, from Ephraim, was from Yosef, because it wants to credit Yehoshua for his own initiative to yearn for the Land. Gadi ben Soosi, from Menashe, is written
in context of his being from Yosef, but this is in order to condemn him further for his despicable capitulation. In spite of his outstanding family heritage and its commitment to the Land, he failed terribly by joining forces with the other nine men, who were sad disappointments to the Land and its chosen people.

EXPOSING FLAWS – NOTING STRENGTHS

Eight of the spies together carried a cluster. One took a fig, and one took a pomegranate. Yeohoshua and Calev did not take anything. -- Rashi, from Gemara Sota 34a

Our sages have determined that the intent of the men was to denigrate the Land by bringing specimens of its fruit and portraying them as being grotesque. Where, however, is there any indication in the verse of this sinister aspect of the displaying of the fruit?

Sefer Iyunim B’Divrei Chazal notes that the mission of these men is referred to as one of “exploration” – “_SCAN”. This was the job they were sent to do (13:2), and the Torah tells us (v. 21) that even as they arrived in the Land, “the men headed north and explored the Land”. This goal, to explore, is one whereby the strengths and benefits of an area are identified. In a parallel context, we find (10:33) that the Holy Ark scouted ahead of the Jewish camp at a distance of a three-day advance, “_SCAN”, meaning “to find a place for the people to settle”. In regards to the Land, the men were sent to seek out the advantages and resources of the Land. These features were to be noted, and the information reported to the authorities, who could utilize it for the benefit of the nation. This is a positive and worthwhile task, and even from a perspective of full trust and confidence in Hashem, such an expedition would have been deemed appropriate.

Yet, there is another type of mission which is drastically different in scope and purpose from being an exploratory journey. This is when the goal is to “spy” and “expose” the flaws of the Land and its people. In Hebrew, this type of destructive excursion is called "_SCAN". Here, the purpose is to discover the weaknesses and identify the possible inroads to undermine and defeat the country. A perfect example of this was when Yosef accused his brothers of being מרגנים who had come to spy the land of Egypt and whose purpose was to scout the country in order to expose the land (Bereshis 42:12) - "TA REIH EY KEMAH LRAI". In this situation, even resources which are valuable are only seen in terms of how they can be abused and utilized for harmful advantage.

The one place where the Torah itself refers to these men and their mission as being one of מרגנים is Devarim (1:24) when it describes their arrival at Nachal Eshkol to collect fruit. “And they came to Nachal Eshkol and they spied the place.” It is clear that the Torah intends to reveal that the nature of this visit was not to find the benefits of the Land, but to discover the flaws and its failings. It is therefore obvious that the fruits collected at this station were taken in order to undermine the mission of these men.

It is also interesting to note that the Hebrew noun "_SCAN" - valley - is a masculine gender noun. Accordingly, the verse should have said that the men explored “it – והנה”. However, the Torah changes the grammer and tells us that these men spied “it – והנה”. This again demonstrates that the purpose was to show the weakness of the Land, by claiming that just as the fruit was grotesque, so too were the inhabitants of the Land strange and unusual.

DRIVING A WEDGE BETWEEN THEM

This bears on the text (Yirmiyahu 12:8), “She has uttered her voice against Me; therefore I hated her.” This implies that the very voice with which you wept was the cause of your being hated. For Israel had wept on the night of the ninth day of Av, and the Holy One, blessed be He, had said to them: “You have wept a causeless weeping before Me. I shall therefore fix for you a permanent weeping for future generations.” At that hour it was decreed that the Beis HaMikdash should be destroyed and that Israel The “lifting up of the hand” (Tehilim 106:26) was a retribution for the “lifting up of the voice”. -- BeMidbar Rabba 16:12

According to this passage in the Midrash, the sin of heeding the words of the spies was ultimately the cause of the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash. Rabbi Shlomo Harkavi, Mashgiach of Grodno Yeshiva, maintains that this has to be explained in light of several statements in the Gemara (Shabbos 33a and Yoma 9b), which attribute the downfall of Yerushalayim and the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash to
other flaws and sins of the people, but not to the sin of the spies. He cites the Maharal, who explains that the exodus from Egypt does not merely involve the celebration of a physical release from bondage and slavery, but it encompasses a much greater and more significant level of accomplishment. When the Jews departed from the borders of Egypt, they rose from being a group of individuals whose efforts were subjugated to other human beings into becoming a people who aimed for spirituality. They set their sights upon Har Sinai, where they were to receive the Torah, and they were to travel directly to Eretz Yisrael. This was to be their final destination, where they were to pursue an eternal mission of uniting with the Shechinah. The Land was an essential component of this process. Even if the nation would suffer setbacks, the nature of its punishment would not have been exile, but rather some other form of retribution. The nation and its Land were to be one, and their destiny was to be woven together as one.

The sin of the spies did not directly cause the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash and the exile which followed. It did, however, cause a deep wedge to be driven between the Jews and their Land, and the eternal bond was severed. Once this had been opened, other sins could result in the unfortunate outcome of exile. Had it not been for the episode of the spies, these sins would have been dealt with in a manner whereby the Jews could remain in their homeland, and the necessary retribution would be applied while they stayed there.

The nation and its Land were to be one, and their destiny was to be woven together as one.

The answer to these questions is found in the Minchas Chinuch (Mitzvah 32, Mosach HaShabbos No. 4). He explains that since the gathering of the ‘wood collector’ was of wood, rather than of food, Rashi was compelled to find a source not only for the prohibited labor of me’amer (gathering) but in particular for the application of the prohibition even to non-foods. Rashi found this in the prohibition of gathering salt, since salt, too, is not considered a foodstuff. This, the Minchas Chinuch explains, is

What did Yehoshua and Calev mean when they compared the occupants of the Land of Canaan to bread? How did this analogy serve to encourage the people to no longer fear the occupants of the Land?

Rabbi Sholom Shwadron cites the Chovos HaLevavos (Sha’ar HaBitachon, Ch. 4) which states that a person should have full confidence that he will not be lacking in bread and water. These are basic staples necessary for life, and Hashem, Who provides life, will certainly provide the minimal nourishment to sustain it (see Ta’anis 5b). Other additional forms of sustenance, however, which are in the realm of being extra and non-essential, are not guaranteed. We can assume that we will always be furnished with that which is critical for our survival, but that which is not vital may or may not be provided.

When Yehoshua and Calev spoke, they pointed out that the existence and survival of the Jewish people and the fulfillment of the Torah were only to be possible if the nation would be able to enter and live in the Land of Israel. Their inheriting the Land was just as essential for their survival as eating bread is for the subsistence of a person. This is why they were secure in their insisting that the conquest of Eretz Yisrael was certain.

We can assume that we will always be furnished with that which is critical for our survival.

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THE ESSENTIAL CONNECTION TO OUR LAND

And Bnei Yisrael were in the wilderness and they found a man gathering wood on the day of Shabbos. BeMidbar 15:32

The prohibition of gathering refers primarily to gathering reaped produce from the field.

Rav Acha, the son of Rabbi Yaakov, said: He was punished by death for the transgression of ‘gathering’. (Shabbos 96b) One who gathers salt transgresses the prohibition of ‘gathering’. - Rashi, ibid.

The words of Rashi call our attention. A number of opinions are listed by the Gemara regarding the crime of the famed ‘wood collector’ – the man who desecrated Shabbos. Baraisa says that he detached wood that was connected to the ground. One of the opinions refers to the prohibition of gathering/bundling, which refers primarily to gathering reaped produce from the field. It is the only one for which Rashi cites a source. Why is this so? Furthermore, rather than simply citing the mention of ‘gathering’ in the Mishnah in Shabbos 96b, Rashi cites a particular detail in the laws of the prohibition – namely, that gathering salt is included in the transgression. Why does Rashi specifically mention this law?

The prohibition of gathering salt, too, is not considered a foodstuff. This, the Minchas Chinuch explains, is
in contrast to Rambam, in whose opinion the prohibition of me’amer applies to foodstuffs alone. According to Rambam, the offense of the ‘wood collector’ was one of the other transgressions mentioned by the Gemara. As for salt, perhaps Rambam opines that salt is considered a food, in contrast to the opinion of Rashī, who does not.

Halachic Corner

According to the Gaon of Vilna
Krias Shema - Sat.  9:04
Terilah - Sat.  10:20
Simhat 8:28
Sunnah 9:56
Rosh Chodesh Tamuz will take place on Monday and Tuesday, Yom Sheni v’Yom Shlishi

A person should be very careful to pronounce all the words in Krias Shema correctly and clearly. Technically, it can be read in any language which one understands. This also applies to the recitation of the Amidah and Birkas HaMazon. The Bach (O. C. 193) rules that nevertheless one should be very careful to read Krias Shema in Leshon HaKodesh because there are many words that cannot be translated exactly into other languages. Some examples of this would be the word לא ב in the word כלי כלכליות.

Except for the first two sentences, which must be read while sitting or standing still, a person can read Krias Shema whether he is walking, standing, sitting, riding, or lying on his side, but he cannot recite it while lying on his back or stomach.

If a man does not remember whether or not he recited Krias Shema, he must repeat it, as well as the brachos which precede and follow it. If he knows that he read Krias Shema but is not sure that he recited the brachos, he does not have to repeat anything.

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This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- By Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to Rabbi & Mrs. Shmuel Leib Schuman on the engagement of their daughter Zavaa to Yechezkel Reischer.
- Likutei Peshatim is back in shuls next week! Hebrew Theological College is pleased to report that beginning next week, Parshas Korach, HTC will resume distribution of Likutei Peshatim in its printed form to the shuls and other venues. We look forward to once again sharing divrei Torah and Halachah, as well as organizational and personal announcements, with the community in both the printed and the updated email formats. To advertise about your shul, organization or business, email samber@htc.edu or call 847-982-2500.
- Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro is not meeting in the restaurant, so we are bringing Torah to you. Please join Rabbi Tsvi Haskell over Zoom on Thursday, June 23rd, at 12:30 PM. Zoom info: https://zoom.us/j/3240863084 or call in +1 312-626-6799. Zoom ID 999 2124 0863.
- Beitstein Institute is pleased to invite the community to a free LinkedIn webinar with LinkedIn expert Chaim Shapiro on Wednesday, June 24, at 6:00 PM. Learn how to create a winning LinkedIn profile, find jobs that match your skills and interests, and use LinkedIn to promote yourself and make connections. Advance registration is required to participate. Please email scohen@htc.edu.
- TAG Chicago is here to help! Now selling kosher email, talk and text, and talk-only phones. We offer free volunteer assistance to keep your devices safe. Visit tagchicago.org. Call 847-920-8245 or email Help@TAGChicago.org to book your appointment. 8150 Central Park, Skokie. Remember - “Call before you buy!” We will help guide you.
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- JDBY-YTT is seeking an administrative assistant for our very busy business office. Staff is currently working remotely. The ideal candidate will possess a passion for organization, ability to multitask, excellent verbal and written communication skills, and advanced computer skills, including complete familiarity with Microsoft Office.
- JDBY-YTT administrative assistant candidates should be able to manage areas of responsibility and assist others in a variety of projects. Graphic design experience a plus. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habonim v’habanos of nearly 1300 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Administrative Assistant” in the subject line. Please include several references.
- Yachad Chicago is now hiring! Join our expanding team as we launch brand new programs & services for individuals with special needs in the Chicago community. Yachad, an agency of the Orthodox Union, is dedicated to enhancing life opportunities of individuals with disabilities, ensuring their participation in the full spectrum of Jewish life. Open position: Yachad Chicago Regional Director. Be part of Yachad Chicago’s team & help make a difference in the Jewish community! For info & to submit a résumé: herrmann@ou.org.

Pirkei Avos Chapter 3

Questions for Thought and Study
1. How many spies did Hashem recommend to Moshe to send after he made his request? What was Moshe’s counter argument? See Maharsha Sotah 34b
2. What was the only thing that the evil spies would inherit from Eretz Yisrael? See HaKesav VeHakabbalah 13:24
3. How did the spies actually act like “grasshoppers”?” See Ba’al HaTurim 13:33
4. Why didn’t Moshe invoke the merit of our forefathers (as he did in connection with the Golden Calf) when trying to defend Bnei Yisrael in connection with the spies? See Ramban 14:17
5. How does the Torah allude to the fact that there will be a time in history when techeiles will be unavailable or we will be unclear of its true identity? See Ohr HaChaim 15:38

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In loving memory of father, grandfather & great-grandfather, - Gershon Young, on his 5th yahrtzeit on 4 Tammuz. The patriarch of our family, he exemplified a life filled with kindness, love & complete emunah in Hashem. A survivor of the Shoah, he constantly yearned for his lost loved ones. He is truly missed. May his neshama have an aliyah. - Norm & Judy Litz, Fischel & Harris, Zvi & Tsvi, on the occasion of her twenty-second yahrtzeit on 28 Sivan.

By Philip & Corinne Cutler in loving memory of their grandparents, Dora Ross, רוח, וישראל Gershon Weinstein, רוח, on the occasion of their yahrtzeits on 29 Sivan and 30 Sivan. May their memory be for a blessing.

We remember with love our dear husband, father, and grandfather, שמואל הולמן בן אלתר, הדר, רל Helman Allswang, on his 14th yahrtzeit on 5 Tammuz. - Gilda Allswang, Saretta & Louis Lazovsky, Avraham & Yocheved Allswang, Ronnie & Aviva Allswang, and their families.

In loving memory of my father, Mr. Alex Friedman, רוח, on his fifth yahrtzeit on 10 Tammuz. Devoted family man, survivor, staunch supporter of yeshiv Eretz Yisrael, especially Yehuda, Shomron and the Negev. Missed by many. - Leah Cohen. (KINS)

By Stan Zoller in memory of his sister, Lynn Zacherl, רוח, וליאת, על, on the occasion of her 22nd yahrtzeit on 2 Tammuz. May her memory be for a blessing.

By Debbie & Arthur Smerling, Jonathan, Shayndeh Leah, Cheryl Rose, and Laura; Sharon & Alan Matten, David, Nachum, Sophia, Eliyahu Tuvia, Yosef Chaim, Lucy, Mascha Russie, and Adina Elisheva Sutker, רוח, שלמה וوطنית, על, on the occasion of their grandfather and great-grandfather, Nathan Saltzberg, רוח, שלמה רוח, על, on the occasion of his yahrtzeit on 28 Sivan. (Anshe Motele).

By Justin and Aviva Gordon; Eitan, Rebecca, Maya and Layla Gordon; Sruly, Adina, Batya Rena, Shalom Tzvi, Yechiel Aryeh, Alisa Sara, Akiva Yonason, and Shendel Rifka Isenberg; and Shmueli, Sara, Yechiel, Chaim Dovid, Yosef Nechemya, and Aharon Tzvi Farekas in memory of our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Beatrice Gordon, רוח, רוח, על, on her 11th yahrtzeit on 30 Sivan.

Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les & Ethel Sutker in loving memory of Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein, רוח, וירוח. May their memory be for a blessing.

1. Hashem suggested that Bnei Yisrael send only two spies. Moshe countered that Bnei Yisrael would not be satisfied by only two spies.
2. The evil spies would only receive the fruit that they brought back with them. That is why that place was called יער גפן, “the inheritance of the vineyard”.
3. One of the giants ate a pomegranate and tossed the shell down. All twelve spies were able to hide underneath the huge shell, as if they were grasshoppers.
4. Moshe didn’t invoke the merits of the forefathers because inheriting Eretz Yisrael was a promise given to the forefathers. The spies intended to not inherit the land, so they directly contradicted that promise.
5. The Torah inserts the word "sthroughout their generations" (“throughout their generations”), indicating that the mitzvah of titziz will apply even in a totally righteous generation.

Prepared by Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand, Editor, and Mrs. Naomi Samber, Managing Editor
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