

O H R N E T

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PARSHA INSIGHTS

My Own Space, Man!

“Send forth people, if you please...” (13:2)

If I were to ask you to conjure up in your mind’s eye a picture of the archetypal untrustworthy salesman, you’d probably imagine a greasy-looking character with enough oil on his hair to fry chips. He’d be wearing a Prince-of-Wales check suit loud enough to be heard from the middle of next week. His mouth would be dripping with superlatives. And what would he be selling? Probably a used car. My apologies to the legions of upright used-car salesmen in the world, but gentlemen, your trade has a bad rap.

“No, no, sir, that brown color is not rust. It’s the original paintwork. It’s called French Ochre. No, no, the tires aren’t bald! These are special treadless treads. They cost a fortune new...No sir, 100,000 miles on a jobby like this is practically brand new! They go on forever!”

Nothing goes on forever. We’re in this world for a very short time, and while we’re here we have to make some pretty important decisions — and I don’t mean where to spend this year’s summer vacation. If we’re Jewish, we’re going to have to decide if our Jewishness will define our lives and our relationship with G-d, or will it be just another cultural affinity on par with belonging to the Seattle Large Format Camera Club.

One of the clarion calls of my partly misspent youth was that everyone wanted “their own space (man).”

It may come as something of a surprise to the “Love” generation (and its current spiritual heirs) that, on an ultimate level, G-d created the world for us to have our own space.

In this week’s Torah portion it seems that G-d lets the Jewish People make a terrible blunder. He tells them “Send forth people, if you please, and let them spy out the Land of Canaan.” The journey of the spies led to the biggest debacle in Jewish History when Israel spurned the Land of Israel and were punished so severely that we feel the repercussions of that blunder to this day.

In fact, G-d never told Israel to send spies. The opening of this week’s Torah portion is a response to the request of the Jewish People to Moshe at the beginning of the Book of Devarim (1:22). There it clearly shows that the Jewish People instigated the idea. They clamored around Moshe in confusion and concern. He told them that the Land was a good land, an excellent Land. The Jewish People then treated Moshe like the first used-car salesman in history. Not content with his word, they demanded to send spies to verify his claims. And G-d acquiesced. He didn’t command them to send spies. But He acquiesced. Why? Because G-d wants to give us the space to succeed.

But being able to succeed also means that we must have the possibility to fail.

That’s what having “our own space” really means.

Sources:
• Rashi, Ramchal

PARSHA OVERVIEW

At the insistence of *Bnei Yisrael*, and with Hashem’s permission, Moshe sends 12 scouts, one from each tribe, to investigate Canaan. Anticipating trouble, Moshe changes Hoshea’s name to Yehoshua, expressing a prayer that Hashem not let him fail in his mission. They return 40 days later, carrying unusually large fruit. When 10 of the 12 state that the people in Canaan are as formidable as the fruit, the men are discouraged. Calev and Yehoshua, the only two scouts still in favor of the invasion, try to bolster the people’s spirit. The nation, however, decides that the Land is not worth the potentially fatal risks, and instead demands a return to Egypt. Moshe’s fervent prayers save the nation from Heavenly annihilation; however, Hashem declares that they must remain in the desert for 40 years until the men who wept at the scouts’ false report pass

away. A remorseful group rashly begins an invasion of the Land based on Hashem’s original command. Moshe warns them not to proceed, but they ignore this and are massacred by the Amalekites and Canaanites. Hashem instructs Moshe concerning the offerings to be made when *Bnei Yisrael* will finally enter the Land. The people are commanded to remove *challah*, a gift for the *kohanim*, from their dough. The laws for an offering after an inadvertent sin, for an individual or a group, are explained. However, should someone blaspheme against Hashem and be unrepentant, he will be cut off spiritually from his people. One man is found gathering wood on public property in violation of the laws of Shabbat, and is executed. The laws of *tzitzit* are taught. We recite the section about the *tzitzit* twice a day to remind ourselves of the Exodus.

JOSHUA 2:1 - 2:24

In this haftara, Joshua's two spies explore Jericho preparing for the first conquest of the Promised Land. Our Sages teach that these two were Calev and Pinchas, two very righteous people, for Joshua wanted to avoid an outcome similar to that of the 12 spies sent by Moses. The spies enter Jericho as earthenware dealers and seek lodging at Rachav's inn. When they are detected by the authorities, their hostess proves a great ally by hiding them. She tells them that the psychological war has already been won, as the inhabitants are petrified of the Israelites, having heard about the miracles G-d did for them. She sends them off safely and they promise to save her and her family.

hinting that they were disguised as traveling earthenware merchants. Why specifically this disguise?

The Chidushei HaRim explains that Joshua chose clay vessels as the ware for their disguise to remind them not to stumble as had the previous spies. Earthenware, unlike other vessels, does not contract spiritual defilement unless its interior comes in contact with the spiritually defiled. This is because — unlike metal or wood — the clay from which it is formed has no intrinsic worth; its sole significance is its form as a vessel. Spiritual impurity passes only when it contacts the important aspect of an entity; so, regarding clay vessels, unless it touches the interior, the useful part of the vessel, the impurity will not pass on. Joshua wished the spies to understand that a man is like an earthenware vessel: His significance lies in his duty, he has no self importance. This thought would prevent them from diverting from their assignment.

EARTHENWARE

The verse tells us that the spies entered Jericho "in secrecy." The term used for secrecy is "cheresh," reminiscent of the word "cheres" — "earthenware" —

LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

MACHANEH YEHUDA

The name conjures up the image of Jerusalem's massive and colorful outdoor food market, but it is actually the name of one of the city's oldest Jewish neighborhoods, dating back to 1888. Only a couple of



blocks from the modern downtown area of King George, Jaffa and Ben Yehuda, this neighborhood is also home to the famous Yeshiva Eitz Chaim and the Zoharei Chama compound of synagogues where non-stop prayer services are available throughout almost the entire day for market stallkeepers, shoppers, and travelers.

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

The minimal volume of dough requiring that *challah* be separated from it is 43 egg-volumes plus a fraction. The word *challah* hints at this number by the combined numerical value of its letters: 43! (*Challah* is spelled *chet lamed hey*. *Chet*=8, *lamed*=30, *hey*=5)

• Midrash Tanchuma

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WHO IS MORE BELIEVED?

“I know this woman to be suspect of swearing falsely.” This disclosure made to the Sage Rava by his wife caused him to withdraw from the woman her right to take an oath. His court had imposed an oath upon her to allow her to verify her denial of a monetary claim made against her, and based on his wife’s statement, Rava took away this right.

As in any case of a defendant suspected of swearing falsely, the oath was transferred to the claimant, who was empowered to collect his money after swearing that he had not been paid.

Another case came before Rava in which someone wished to collect a debt based on a note that he produced. Rava’s disciple Rabbi Papa confided to him that he knew that this note had been paid. Rava asked him if there was a second witness to discredit the note, and when he heard that there was no other witness he rejected Rabbi Papa’s testimony.

Rabbi Ada bar Masna, who observed this, asked his master why the testimony of Rabbi Papa was less reliable to him than that of “the daughter of Rabbi Chisda,” Rava’s wife. The sage’s reply was that he was absolutely familiar with the character of the daughter of Rabbi Chisda, and he was certain that she never lied, a familiarity he did not have concerning Rabbi Papa.

Rava never meant to intimate, writes Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in his responsa (*Iggerot Moshe, Yore Deah 54* and repeated in his responsa on *Orach Chaim* and *Even Haezer*), that he considered his wife a more pious person than his disciple. This is evident from the challenge of Rabbi Ada, which was based on Rabbi Papa’s piety, and from Rava’s response which did not refute that assumption. Believing someone because of his record of piety cannot, however, make his testimony any more effective than that of a single witness, which the Torah ruled was insufficient in monetary matters. Even the testimony of *tzaddikim* as great as Moshe or Aharon is not given more credence than that of any single witness.

This is true, however, only when the judge believes the witness based only on his record as a righteous person. But if he has an intimate knowledge of the character of the witness and has had many occasions to observe that person’s steadfast aversion to lying, we consider the testimony of such a witness equivalent to the judge himself seeing the act reported by the witness. For Rav, this was so in regard to his wife but not in regard to his disciple.

[The applications of this principle by Rabbi Feinstein range from aged parents relying on the special kashrus arrangement made for them by non-observant children (a question

he was asked in Moscow back in 1934), to a *kohen* believing his wife who reports that she was violated by an Arab before the marriage and therefore forbidden to him (a question put to him in 1961 from *Eretz Yisrael*.)]

• *Ketubot 85a*

THREE STORIES — TWO REASONS

Three stories with one theme and two reasons: Someone deposited with Rabbi Measha seven pearls wrapped in a sheet. A sudden death prevented Rabbi Measha from informing his household that he had undertaken to watch these pearls for their owner. When the owner came to claim the pearls from the heirs and accurately described the package he had left for safekeeping, the heirs argued before the court of Rabbi Ami that perhaps the pearls belonged to their father. Rabbi Ami rejected their claim and offered two reasons for doing so. One was that he knew Rabbi Measha was not a man of means who would own such a treasure. Secondly, the claimant provided an accurate description of the contested pearls which indicated that they belonged to him.

The same situation arose regarding a silver goblet deposited by a man who subsequently died. Rabbi Nachman gave the very same ruling. The third story concerned a precious silk garment deposited with Rabbi Dimi and it was Rabbi Abba who gave the identical ruling based on the two reasons for discounting the possibility that the disputed property may have belonged to the deceased.

Are these two independent reasons or are they interdependent? What if the deceased was indeed a man of means who could afford owning something of the value of the disputed property — would the identifying description provided by the claimant still serve as valid proof that it indeed was his?

The answer to this question given by Tosefot and Rosh is that the only time that the claimant is awarded the disputed object is when both reasons are there. Should the deceased have been a man of means, the identifying description would not serve as sufficient proof for the claimant.

Tosefot explains this by pointing out that if he were a man of means we assume that he purchased it from the claimant whose ability to accurately describe it could be based on earlier ownership. Rosh suggests a different approach. If he were a man of means, we assume that someone who frequented his home and saw the precious object described it to someone else — (the visitor himself is disqualified from making such a claim, as his familiarity with the object is based on his frequent visits) — who then proceeded to claim it on the basis of his ability to describe it.

• *Ketubot 85b*

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Why is the portion about the spies written immediately after the portion about Miriam's *tzara'at*?
2. To what was Moshe referring when he asked the spies "Are there trees in the land?"
3. Who built Hebron?
4. Which fruits did the *meraglim* bring back?
5. How many people carried the grape cluster?
6. Why did Hashem shorten the *meraglim's* journey?
7. Why did the *meraglim* begin by saying the land is "flowing with milk and honey?"
8. Why did the *meraglim* list Amalek first among the hostile nations they encountered?
9. How did Calev quiet the people?
10. Why did the Land appear to "eat its inhabitants?"
11. Besides the incident of the *meraglim*, what other sin led to the decree of 40 years in the desert?
12. On what day did *Bnei Yisrael* cry due to the *meraglim's* report? How did this affect future generations?
13. "Don't fear the people of the land...their defense is departed" (14:9). Who was their chief "defender"?
14. Calev and Yehoshua praised *Eretz Canaan* and tried to assure the people that they could be victorious. How did the people respond?
15. "How long shall I bear this evil congregation?" Hashem is referring to the 10 *meraglim* who slandered the Land. What halacha do we learn from this verse?
16. How is the *mitzvah* of *challah* different from other *mitzvot* associated with *Eretz Yisrael*?
17. What is the minimum amount of *challah* to be given to a *kohen* according to Torah Law? Rabbinic Law?
18. Verse 15:22 refers to what sin? How does the text indicate this?
19. Moshe's doubt regarding the punishment of the *mekoshesh etzim* (wood-gatherer) was different than his doubt regarding the punishment of the blasphemer. How did it differ?
20. How do the *tzitzit* remind us of the 613 commandments?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 13:2 - To show the evil of the *meraglim* (spies), that they saw Miriam punished for *lashon hara* (negative speech) yet failed to take a lesson from it.
2. 13:20 - Were there any righteous people in the land whose merit would "shade" the Canaanites from attack?
3. 13:22 - Cham.
4. 13:23 - A cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig.
5. 13:23 - Eight.
6. 13:25 - Hashem knew the Jews would sin and be punished with a year's wandering for each day of the spies' mission. So He shortened the journey to soften the decree.
7. 13:27 - Any lie which doesn't start with an element of truth won't be believed; therefore, they began their false report with a true statement.
8. 13:29 - To frighten the Jews. The Jewish People were afraid of Amalek, because Amalek had once attacked them.
9. 13:30 - He fooled them by shouting, "Is this all that the son of Amram did to us?" The people quieted themselves to hear what disparaging thing Calev wished to say about the "son of Amram" (Moshe).
10. 13:32 - Hashem caused many deaths among the Canaanites so they would be preoccupied with burying their dead and not notice the *meraglim*.
11. 13:33 - The golden calf.
12. 14:1 - The 9th of Av. This date therefore became a day of crying for all future generations: Both Temples were destroyed on this date.
13. 14:9 - Iyov.
14. 14:10 - They wanted to stone them.
15. 14:27 - That ten men are considered a congregation.
16. 15:18 - The obligation to observe other *mitzvot* associated with *Eretz Yisrael* began only after the possession and division of the Land. The *mitzvah* of *challah* was obligatory immediately upon entering the Land.
17. 15:20 - No fixed amount is stated by the Torah. Rabbinic Law requires a household to give 1/24 and a baker to give 1/48.
18. 15:22 - Idolatry. "All these commandments" means one transgression which is equal to transgressing all the commandments — i.e., idolatry.
19. 15:34 - Moshe knew that the *mekoshesh etzim* was liable for the death penalty, but not which specific means of death. Regarding the blasphemer, Moshe didn't know if he was liable for the death penalty.
20. 15:39 - The numerical value of the word *tzitzit* is 600. *Tzitzit* have eight threads and five knots. Add these numbers and you get 613.

KASHA! (KASHA MEANS "QUESTION")

Question: *Efraim and Menashe were both sons of Yosef. So why in Parshat Shlach is only Menashe's tribe called "the sons of Yosef" and Efraim's tribe isn't? (13:8,11)*

Answer: Yaakov gave Yosef's sons Menashe and Efraim "tribe" status. Yaakov stipulated that Yosef's future sons would not have "tribe" status; rather, they would become part of either the Tribe of Menashe or the Tribe of Efraim, at Yosef's discretion. Yosef

chose Menashe as the tribe to absorb these children. Hence, the Tribe of Menashe includes not only Menashe's offspring, but the other "sons of Yosef" as well. (*Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetzky*)

Also, the scout from Menashe's tribe was one who spoke ill of the Land, hence, he is identified with his ancestor Yosef, who spoke ill of his brothers. Whereas the scout from Efraim's tribe, Yehoshua, did not speak ill of the Land; hence, he is not identified here as a "son of Yosef." (*Musaf Rashi*)

Do you have a KASHA? Write to kasha@ohr.org.il with your questions on any Parsha!

ADDICTION TO MITZVOT

From: Ethan Greenwood in London UK
 <Ethan.greenwood@mindshareworld.com>

Dear Rabbi,

Since Judaism opposes addiction because it implies a loss of self control, is it therefore also forbidden to be addicted to the observance of mitzvot?

Dear Ethan Greenwood,

Just a minute...I can't answer your question yet...I've got this uncontrollable desire to...to...stick this dollar into that charity box...There! I feel much better now!

Now, what was your question again? Oh yes, does Judaism oppose "addiction" to *mitzvot* (commandments)?

Judaism encourages behavior which enhances physical and spiritual well-being, and opposes behavior detrimental to physical and spiritual well-being.

If a person accustoms himself to proper behavior, and as

a result he is uncomfortable doing what he feels is wrong, that's healthy. Call it an addiction if you want.

On the other hand, if a person falls into a depression because his observance is not up to par, or if his observance expresses itself in counter-productive or destructive behavior patterns — such as obsessive compulsive behavior — that's not healthy. Call it a negative addiction.

But that's true of almost any activity or lifestyle: Almost anything can be expressed in either a healthy or an unhealthy way. Take eating, for example: When was the last time you went a day without eating a bunch of food? So, you're a *food addict*, are you? But you decide whether to stuff your face with chocolate cake ten times a day, or to eat three nutritious meals, or a compromise between the two. Either way, you must eat.

So, you might be right: We Jews are *mitzvah* addicts. We *must* do the *mitzvot*! Done properly, the *mitzvot* enhance our lives and nourish our souls.

In fact, the Sages have taught us over and over again that unless you approach Judaism with a passion and an intense desire — unless you are "addicted" to Judaism — you'll never scale its heights and grow!

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous "Ohrnet" features

Re: Bagels:

You've got to agree that there is definitely something really Jewish about the bagel. Even though the bagel is great, well-baked, great tasting, there is also the hole. The sign that something is missing. There is room for improvement. So that is the Jewish way of thinking, that although we are the Chosen People, there is still much room for improvement.

• Izzy Moseson <mmsec@juno.com>

Our Generation:

You recently published a story in which the Arizal emphasized the greatness of *mitzvah* observance in his day. At the Agudath Israel Convention, November 1976, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein echoed the powerful words of the Arizal:

"Viewed in the context of trends and temptations of contemporary society, the handful of Jews who devote their

efforts to Torah study and *mitzvah* observance have such great worth that they can overwhelmingly weight an evaluation of the entire generation's standing to merit. As for the majority that is sunk in evil — this has little bearing on G-d's judgement, for the transgressors only act out of conformity with prevalent trends, not out of willful rebellion. By this standard, our current generation is far, far closer to the ideal of 'the generation that is completely worthy,' which is a requisite for mashiach's coming, than were previous generations that had so many *tzaddikim* in their midst." (The Jewish Observer, Feb-Mar 1977, p. 17-18)

• Benjamin Buxbaum
 <bbuxbaum@aish.com>

We Light Your Week:

It's always a light in my week to read your mail!

• Ronen <RVerbit@aol.com>

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

RAMBAN

13:4	Order of the <i>Meraglim</i>
13:27,32 & 14:1,3	Tactics of the <i>Meraglim</i>
14:17	Moshe Rabbeinu's Prayer
15:2	Order of the Chapters

SEFER HACHINUCH

385	<i>Challah</i>
386	<i>Tzitzit</i>
387	Avoiding Intellectual and Physical Temptations

When things go wrong, we may misjudge one person; worse yet, we may misjudge many people in...

A PACKAGE DEAL

My daughter's teacher was going on an extended vacation. Just before she left, I gave her money to order a special piece of equipment for my daughter. The teacher promised me she would take care of it before she left. Weeks went by, and the package never came. I was sure the teacher forgot, and I was angry at her apparently nonchalant attitude to this important matter.

Eventually, the package arrived, badly damaged. "Oh," I thought, "so I misjudged her! She *did* order it, but it was damaged and delayed in transit."

Now I had the correct party to blame; I called the ship-

ping department. The shipping clerk was surprised because the tracking number on the box didn't match the original shipment. The clerk then made a claim to the package delivery company, who agreed to accept responsibility for the damage and delay.

I was satisfied the matter was finished, until the shipping clerk called back — it wasn't the delivery company's fault. The clerk originally sent the package to an incorrect address; it was then returned to the company, remailed, and damaged in transit only a few days before I received it. The clerk apologized and sent me a replacement by overnight mail.

Just think — first, I blamed the teacher for forgetting to place the order, then the package delivery company for mangling the box, and it turns out the whole thing started with a typographical error by the shipping clerk.

• An Ohrnet reader

YIDDLE RIDDLE

WHO KNOWS 19?

In the song at the end of the Pesach Seder we describe the significance of the numbers from one to 13 as they relate to Jewish life and thought: "Three are the fathers, Four are the Mothers... 12 are the Tribes of Israel..." What about the next 13 numbers? And after those? What significance do they have in Jewish tradition? This week, we challenge you:

"Who knows 19?" Write to info@ohr.org.il

Here are some reader responses regarding previous numbers:

17 is the Gematria of "egoz" (nut) and "chet" (sin) without the "aleph." Which is one reason given for not eating nuts during the 10 Days of Repentance. Which shows to go you that you have to be nuts to sin!

Zvi Freund, Kew Gardens
<zvifreund@juno.com>

18 is the number of life.

Shoshana, student of Nicola M. Bookey
<smilecentre@lineone.net>

17 is the gematria-value of "tov" — "good."

Zevi Saftlas
<zevi@mail.com>

Yosef was 17 years old when he was sold by his brothers.

Fayge Guzik <guzscene@juno.com> and
"Miller The Genius" <DalliLamma@aol.com>

I know 17. 17 is the number of camps in the desert. Each of the 12 tribes formed a camp, plus the four camps of *lev-i'im*, plus the *Shechina* (Divine presence) resting amongst the Jews.

Chezkie Mark
<mark@ateret.org>

16 mil by 16 mil (or 16 square *parsah*) is the amount of milk and honey that Reish Lakish found flowing in Tzipori (*Megilla 6a*). 17 is the length of time Jacob spent in Egypt in his last years.

Philip Silverman
<PHILIP@telemate.net>

I know 17! 17 words at the beginning of *Sefer Bamidbar*.

Y. Fox
<fox@moreshet.co.il>

On the 17th of Cheshvan the flood began in the time of Noach. The Jewish People counted 17 *yovlot* (Jubilee years) from Joshua until the first destruction.

Raffi
<RaffiAs@shaam.gov.il>

17 is the date in Tamuz on which five calamities befell the Jewish people: The Tablets were broken, the daily burnt-offering was abolished, a breach was made in Jerusalem's walls, the Roman's burned the *Sefer Torah* and an idol was placed in the Temple.

Avraham
<gareth.silverstone@spcorp.com>