

Community Shabbat Dinner at the Rabbi's home
Friday, June 24th
Following Services

**Sponsored by Marilyn Mishaan in memory of her dad, Frank C. Haddad
and Sheila Pack in memory of her dad, Abe Kawer.**

RSVP by Monday, June 20th

Friday, June 17, 2011 Candle Lighting 8:07 pm (Sag Harbor) / 7:06 pm (Jerusalem)

There will be no Kabbalat Shabbat services this week.

Shabbat Morning, June 18th Old Whalers 9:30am
**Rabbinic student Aaron Weininger will be leading services
and Torah discussion**

This week's Torah reading: Shelah-Lekha
Annual: Numbers 13:1 – 15:41 (Etz Hayim, p. 840)
Triennial: Numbers 13:1 – 14:7 (Etz Hayim, p. 840)
Haftarah: Joshua 2:1 – 24 (Etz Hayim, p. 857)

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**Musings on Shelah-Lekha:** Caleb hushed the people before Moses and said, "Let us by all means go up, and we shall gain possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We cannot attack that people, for it is stronger than we." Thus they spread calumnies among the Israelites about the land they had scouted, saying, "The country that we traversed and scouted is one that devours its settlers. All the people that we saw in it are men of great size; we saw the Nephilim there — the Anakites are part of the Nephilim — and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them."  
*(Bamidbar 30-33)*

The Nephilim, these Goliaths who inhabit the Promised Land are already mentioned back in Genesis 6:4. There we learn that in those primordial times "the Nephilim were then on earth." This account is so long ago, at the beginning of Genesis, because it is also deep within the childhood memory of every human being. Now there was a time when real giants prowled the land and we felt like grasshoppers. It is an indelible, if repressed, unconscious memory in each of us. Contrary to the intended effect of nursery pastel colors and soft lullabies, this was frequently not a time of abiding personal security. Who could relax with giants everywhere?

Taking possession of the Land of Canaan may therefore also be a metaphor for returning to the scene of one's childhood—now prepared to stand one's own against its inhabitants, to conquer it for oneself. It is going back to when you were a child among huge people. If you were lucky, they were kind and loving, but even if they were, the thought must have crossed every child's mind: If those guys ever get mad at me, I'm toast. So, to be able to stand toe-to-toe with them, now that you're grown up yourself, must surely be one of the great joys of coming of age.

Menahem Mendl Morgenstern of Kotzk says that it's all right to say you feel like a grasshopper in your own eyes— that means you're alert—but when you start guessing what you look like to someone else, you've given them permission to define you, so you're still a child. For this reason, Caleb, who refused to let anyone else define him, is a man and, along with Joshua, was one of the only two men of the wilderness generation to live to enter the Promised Land. But that's another story.

Five Cities of Refuge: Weekly Reflections on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, New York: Random House/Schocken Books, 2003, pp.112-113.

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This week we read a story of Biblical proportions. The Jewish people are preparing to enter the Land of Israel but before they are willing to begin their conquest, the Jewish people need to feel comfortable with their odds of victory. They decide it would be wise to send a reconnaissance mission to stake out the land so they could plan their attack.

The mission is a success insofar as the recon. It is an abject failure in every other way possible. The spies return with a negative report. "The land eats its inhabitants and the people there are giants". For their troubles, the spies and their entire generation died in the desert and could not enter the Land of Israel.

When the people heard the report from the spies they cried. The Talmud in Sanhedrin (104b) states: Raba said in the name of R' Yochanan, that night was Tisha B'Av, God said to the Jewish people, tonight you cried crocodile tears, I will make tonight a night of tears for generations.

In response to the sin of the spies we deserved to have to have the 1st and 2nd temples destroyed. Our day of mourning for the Temples is Tisha B'Av. The day is marked by a reading of the scroll of Eicha. The Talmud in Sanhedrin (1d) wonders what the correct order of the aleph beis is. Is the pey before the ayin or is the ayin before the pey. To prove that the ayin is before the pey the Talmud quotes Raba in the name of R' Yochanan, that ayin comes before pey as per the first chapter of Eicha which goes in the order of the aleph beis. However, the pey comes before the ayin in the subsequent chapters. Why? Because of the spies who used their mouth (peh) to say things that they did not see with their eyes (ayin).

R' Schwab points out that it seems like the Talmud calls the spies liars. But their report was truthful according to Chazal. What is the meaning of this gemara? Every time we see something with our eyes, our minds interpret what we saw using our personality and life experiences. Two people can see the exact same event and perceive it completely differently. This is even more profoundly apt when he talks about holiness. One person could see stone and the other can see the kotel. One person could see a barbecue and another could see a korban.

This was the sin of the spies. They saw the Holy Land and took it for sticks and stones. Had they not been so blind to the kedusha of the land of Israel they would have seen the shechina on Har Hamoriah, the city of Chevron and all the places that were infused with holiness after the lives of Avos. If they had seen all that, their report would have been completely different. They would have led the charge to the Land of Israel!

But since they went with their sticks and stones goggles and not their kedusha glasses they were only able to see sticks and stones. The only things that came out of their mouths in their report were what their eyes failed to see. The eyes that were stripped of their kedusha lens only allowed their mouths to report the physical attributes of the land. As the gemara says, their mouths reported that which their eyes did not see.

This is also why we learn this lesson in Eicha. R' Schwab says that the Jewish people that saw the Temple destroyed failed to see the kedusha of Israel. Had they appreciated the elevated kedusha of a life with a Beis Hamikdash they would have never let it be destroyed by their other sins.

While the lessons of kedusha are important. I think the best lesson here is that everything can be seen in at least two ways. Take the flotilla saga for example. Some say it's proof that Israel is a terror state and others say it's proof that the Palestinians are terrorists. In our lives we oftentimes see things that can be interpreted many ways. We need to try to be fair and reasonable and not forget to put on all of our glasses.

<http://www.frumSATire.net/2010/06/04/shelach-dvar-torah-all-a-matter-of-perspective/>



This parsha opens with the story of the sin of the spies, which led to forty years of wandering in the wilderness. This event carries echoes of the worst previous sin, that of the golden calf a year before. In each, G-d threatened to destroy the Jewish people; in each, resolution came from Moshe's recitation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, the only two times that recitation occurs in the Torah. In addition, the "murmurings" against Moshe in last week's parsha remind us of the times a year before that the people had also complained for lack of food and water. With these parallels between the two times of complaining, the two great sins, and their resolution, the Torah seems to invite comparison and contrast. What can we learn from this? The apparent failure of Moshe to return from the mountaintop led to the crisis of the calf. In a state of panic that turned into mania, the people created a substitute that they could worship. At the sin of the spies, leadership was again the issue in a different way: ten of the spies questioned and rebelled against him.

As Nechama Liebowitz points out, those spies gave three different reports. To Moshe they said, "We came into the Land . . . it does flow with milk and honey; nevertheless the people are fierce. . . and the cities strongly fortified." When Caleb urged preparation for immediate conquest, they told him, "We are not able to go against the people; they are stronger than we." Then, when they spoke to the rest of Bnei Yisrael, they said, "The land . . . eats up its inhabitants, and all the people we saw in it are men of great size." The three different stories reveal the spies' own internal conflict. They report to Moshe with reasonable accuracy. To their colleague, they challenge his assessment. To the people, they exaggerate in order to turn everyone against the project, and against Moshe. After the murmurings and complaints of the previous parsha, this was not a difficult job.

To read the dvar in its entirety go to: <http://ajrca.org/parsha-of-the-week/parshat-shelach-2/>



Yom Huledet Sameach

Morty Chwasky

Yom Nisuin Sameach

Merrill and Steve Barnett
Bonnie Oglensky and Ira Schwarz (belated)

A Reading for Father's Day

By Rabbi Eliezer Ben-Yehuda

<http://www.benyehuda.us/Default.htm>

**in memory of my own father, Ehud Ben-Yehuda, z'l
My father, whom I Love**

When I was young, and small,
I lifted up my eyes and saw a mighty giant...

My father, whom I love.

As I got older, and wiser and taller,
It seemed that he grew grayer and smaller --

My father, whom I love.

With time I learned to pray, to hope --
I also learned, alas, that life is short.
I grew apart from him,

My father, whom I love.

I came to think that I was master of my life --
Yet I had to let go of my "old man" --

My father, whom I love.

Beyond my home and hearth, I learned, with time,
A greater power dwelt, and it would give me solace:

My father, whom I love.

'Twas our creator, glorious king, benevolent
Master supreme of all I beheld --

My father, whom I love.

In Him I can find the answer to all questions,
The end of all doubts and fears,

My father, whom I love.

He comforts me and brings me healing,
He teaches me the brotherhood of Man --

My father, whom I love.

Through Him, my father, flesh and bone,
As I and my progeny, will gain eternal life

My father, whom I love.

To Him are due honor and glory,
Sovereignty and majesty

My father, whom I love.

He shall have my allegiance and my trust
My never ending thankfulness,

*My Glorious Master, Creator of life and knowledge,
My Father, whom I love.*

Shabbat Shalom. Happy Father's Day.

Stacy