

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

PARSHAT SHELACH

The Spies Mistake, A Marriage Lesson

This week's Parsha, Shelach, tells us the story of the spies. They returned from their tour of Canaan and reported, "That the nation that is settled in the land is strong..." For this reason, they claimed that the Jewish people can't go up to engage in war with them, because "They are mightier than us." Our sages say that the spies were saying that they are mightier (heaven forbid) than Hashem. "If it's possible, the Owner of the house can't even get His things out of there." And thus they frightened the Jewish people.

It is difficult to understand how the Jewish people could have possibly been frightened by the words of the spies, after all the miracles that Hashem did for them.

They were living in a desert, where they were living with miracles. They were protected by the clouds of glory, they witnessed daily how the clouds killed the terrifying snakes and scorpions that were in the desert. They ate

manna that fell from heaven, they had the Well of Miriam, which was water that came out of a rock that traveled with them, and more.

They also witnessed miraculous victories over powerful nations like Egypt, and they saw amazing miracles such as

the Splitting of the Sea. So how is it possible that they were frightened by the report of the spies?

Even a bigger question is Calev's response. Why didn't he mention any of the miracles; wouldn't it have been the best proof that they shouldn't be afraid? All he said was, "Ascend we will ascend and we will inherit it." Why didn't he mention anything about the miracles?

You might think to say, that since Canaan had thirty-one kings, all of who were strong and powerful, maybe they were more powerful than Egypt, and that is why they were afraid. But it wasn't so, because Egypt was the superpower of the world at the time, they ruled all of civilization, and the Canaanite kings paid homage to Egypt.

When Egypt was destroyed, the Jewish people all sang together the Song of the Sea, which says, "All the inhabitants of Canaan melted." And this lasted until the conquest of the land forty years later, as the spies Yehoshua sent to Yericho heard from Rachav - whose house in Yericho they were at - about the Splitting of the Sea, "...that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away because of you. For we have heard how Hashem dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds for you when you came out of Egypt..."

The Alter Rebbe explains that the reason why the spies didn't want the people to go into the land, is because they didn't want to deal with the physical world.

In the desert they were living a totally spiritual life, they were higher than the world. Their food was bread from the heavens, their water was from the Well of Miriam and their clothing grew with them. They didn't have to deal with the physical world, they were able to be separate, with no one to bother them, and bask in the light of Torah.

Once they entered the land, the bread from the heavens was no more. They had to toil to make bread from the earth, which took a lot of work, sowing, planting, etc., etc. That is why the spies said, "The land eats its inhabitants," because the involvement in the land is all-consuming. That is the nature of the physical world, to make a living sometimes takes all of your effort. They also became the land, preoccupied with the physical and there was hardly any time for spirituality.

When they went into the land, the Well of Miriam stopped giving water and their clothing stopped growing with them. In other words, their involvement with the physical was complete. There was no more the spiritual pleasure associated with being cut off from the world.

In truth, the spies were making a mistake. The main purpose of the Torah and Jewish people is to make the lowest level, the physical world, into a home for Hashem. Life in the desert was only a preparation for the work of making a home for Hashem in the physical.

The spies were of the opinion that the miracles that they were experiencing now, was because in the desert they were above nature. Of course there were miracles, that

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is the way it is when we are above nature. But once you enter the reality of the settled land, there is no room for miracles, because the will of Hashem is that nature should rule. It is as if He has imposed on Himself that He shouldn't be able to act above nature and do miracles there. And being that this is the case, we have to take into account their natural strength in comparison to ours. That is why they said, "They are mightier than us," "The owner of the house can't even get His things out of there," Hashem Himself can't help us (if you can say such a thing).

To that Calev answered, "If Hashem wants us," if it's His will, then we will surely succeed, "they are our bread... Hashem is with us, don't be afraid." Hashem is with us, and He will bring above-nature into nature. Hashem is above nature and He is also beyond above-nature. Therefore He is able to mesh the two, He can bring above-nature into nature, which means doing miracles within and through nature, which is a greater feat than a miracle that breaks nature.

And how will they do it? "Ascend we will ascend and we will inherit it." Why does he say ascend twice? And why does he say inherit, shouldn't he have said conquer?

We will ascend twice and join Hashem by going above nature and then beyond above-nature. Therefore it was us that were able to conquer the land. We had miracles through nature and within nature when we were conquering the land.

Now we will understand why he said inherit. Because when we were conquering the land, we were put in Hashem's position, as a son who naturally fills his father's position and this is true for the land of Israel and the rest of the world. That means that we can affect nature by infusing it with holiness from above nature, making this world into a home for Hashem. We can do it because we are with Hashem, beyond above-nature.

And how do we do it? Through our actions, by the performance of mitzvos, and through doing our daily mundane activities for Hashem. When they entered the land this began. The time in the desert was only a preparation for the work of making a home for Hashem, and this work is the most important thing.

And this was the mistake of the spies, they meant well, but it wasn't what Hashem wanted.

That is why we have to be connected to the Moshe of the generation, he knows what Hashem wants and even with the best of intentions, we can be led to do the wrong thing and sometimes it can be destructive, as it was in the case of the spies.

We are all guilty of this at one time or another. With the best of intentions and sometimes with righteous zeal, we do things that are wrong, hurtful or destructive. That is why we need a good guide to tell us the proper way. Sometimes the difference in the way we think and the right way is very subtle, but it makes all the difference.

When it comes to Judaism and religious matters, we have to turn to the Moshe of our generation. Even a rabbi has to turn to him for guidance and even a Tzadik is not immune to failure, as the spies were all Tzadikim, hand picked by Hashem.

And this is true in marriage as well. With the best of intentions, we can be hurting the one we love most, it might be very subtle, but it is hurtful nonetheless. No one is immune to this and it works both ways, sometimes it is the husband that is the hurtful one and sometimes it's the wife.

That is where communication comes in. A husband and wife have to learn how to communicate with each other and have the difficult discussions that will put them on the path to a happier marriage.

If you are having a difficult time communicating, you should know that it's the most common problem between husband and wife, a good marriage counselor can help. Please don't be ashamed or hesitate to go to a marriage counselor, everybody goes, and you will be happy that you went.

May we merit to see the coming of Moshiach, which will come when we finish conquering the world with our mitzvos and good deeds, and make it into a home for Hashem. And, may we all have good and happy marriages, a little taste of Moshiach. May he come soon.

"Dear Rabbi Yitzi,

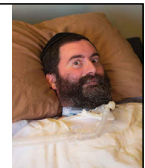
If you may remember, we met about five years ago. Recently, I was talking to a friend about challenges and I told him about you. That led me to look you up on social media and I started following you.

I'm happy to see that you are still sharing your light, and I am sending love and blessings to all of you!"

- Eron Z, Texas

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



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