

BS"D

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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON DEVARIM - Shabbos Chazon - 5762

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From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2002 8:38 PM
To: weekly1@torahweb.org Subject: Rabbi Yaakov Neuberger - Old Sin and New Opportunity
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RABBI YAAKOV NEUBERGER
OLD SIN AND NEW OPPORTUNITY

It was Moshe Rabbeinu himself beginning his final charge to the generation whom he nurtured and he correctly suspected that his children were not quite ready to listen. According to the medrash, as Moshe recalls debacles and setbacks his people openly question that perhaps his advanced age was finally catching up with their leader. Sadly enough it is expecting their skepticism that Moshe, according to Rashi, had waited saving these words for the end. Thus Moshe would be spared the aggravation of seeing himself ignored and avoid the attendant embarrassment. Rashi further tells us that Moshe wants all his people gathered together to eliminate any "if only I had been there" challengers, that he is sure there would be.

As disappointing as this may sound, especially of our fathers who merited to see the miracles of Yehoshua, I can understand them quite well. After all, they may have honestly felt that Moshe's litany of failures did not speak to them at all. Why should this generation, eager to enter Israel and too young to have a significant role in the sin of the meraglim or the chet ha'egel or even ba'al peor, have to hear about the sins of the past?

It is precisely this sentiment that Yirmiyahu apparently fears and therefore addresses in one of the closing pesukim of Eicha (5,7): "Our fathers sinned and are no longer and we suffer their sins. (see Targum)". Yirmiyahu has the "next" generation understanding that they are not suffering the punishment thrust upon them, rather they are suffering i.e. tolerating the elders' failures and flaws. In contemporary terms, we and those before us may not have created the divisiveness that brought down the second Beis Hamikdash but we certainly have not found the formula for national harmony.

Similarly Moshe realized that later generations would fall prey to the same lapses and errors and thus found it appropriate to recall these difficult events. Unfortunately we learn that the energies to conquer all of our G-d given land did peter out during Yehushua's time. Ultimately they did make peace with sharing the land with the native pagans and are censured for that. True they were too young to shoulder any responsibility for the chet hameraglim, yet they - as we too - must be wary that our love for our land never lose its depth or the profound passion that it deserves. Furthermore, those gathered to listen to Moshe may have never complained about the manna, yet all future generations should be concerned to be fully appreciative of Hashem's blessings and the obligations that they entail. Finally, Moshe refers to the sin of the golden calf as the sin of "enough gold" to raise in our minds that though we did not smelt golden images we may at times suffer from the complacency that comes with comfort.

In Moshe's words as well, I think we can find how he responds to his children who would rather not hear him out. Looking carefully at the

parsha we note that Moshe closes his critical description of the sin of the spies with a seeming incomplete pasuk: "(2,16) And it was when all the men of military age died from amongst the nation." Why does the Torah give this thought an entire pasuk and thus close an episode whereas we would expect it as an introduction to a new parsha? It would seem to me that the point of this pasuk is simply to put that moment into historical perspective. That the nation fated to die in the desert had passed on was well known, and yet keeping it in mind creates an attitude that gives singular direction. Moshe in this one pasuk gives the most disturbing and energizing tochecha possible. How can one not be inspired knowing that one is being granted opportunities that eluded those who came before? Clearly a generation that approaches the conquest of Israel understanding that this opportunity has been denied to their parents will focus on Israel with unprecedented strength. Thus Moshe Rabbeinu begs his children to study the foibles of the past so that they will internalize the opportunities and responsibilities that lay ahead. Thus this unfinished pasuk is not a hanging thought, but rather a pregnant phrase waiting for the next generation to write its conclusion.

From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2002 9:01 PM
To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Devarim
"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Devarim -
Special note: As announced last week, Mesorah Publications / ArtScroll has granted permission for us to use the summer parshios from the book "Rabbi Frand on the Parsha". As a result, for the first time ever, the RavFrاند shiur will continue through the summer without interruption.

Children are a Gift

"May G-d, the Lord of your fathers, add a thousandfold more like you and bless you, as He spoke to you." (Devarim 1:11)

The Jewish people, Rashi informs us, were not very happy with the blessing Moshe gave them. "May G-d, the Lord of your fathers," he had said, "add a thousandfold more like you and bless you as He spoke to you."

"Only that and no more?" the people responded. "Is that the full extent of your blessing? Hashem blessed us (Bereishis 32:13) to be 'like the dust of the earth that is too numerous to count.'"

"You will surely get the blessing Hashem gave you," Moshe replied. "This is just my own personal blessing to you."

What exactly was Moshe's reply? What additional benefit would the Jewish people derive from his blessing of a thousandfold increase if they were already receiving Hashem's blessing of virtually limitless increase?

The Chasam Sofer explains that Moshe was testing them. Why did they want children? Was it because children were useful, because they help carry the household burden, provide companionship and are a source of security in old age? Or is it because each child is a spark of the Divine, a priceless gift from Heaven, a piece of the World to Come?

So Moshe gave the Jewish people a test. He blessed them with a "thousandfold" increase in their population. If they had wanted children for their usefulness alone, they would have said, "Thank you, but that's enough already! A thousandfold will suit our purposes just fine. We have no use for any more right now." But that was not what they said. They wanted more children. They wanted children "too numerous to count." Obviously, they were not thinking about their own material and emotional needs, but about the transcendent blessing that each child represents, and so, they proved themselves worthy of Hashem's blessing.

Hundreds of years earlier, these two conflicting attitudes toward children had already become an issue. Yaakov and Eisav had made a division. Eisav was to take this world, and Yaakov was to take the World to Come. When Yaakov came back from Aram, Eisav welcomed him at the head of an army four hundred men strong. In the tense early minutes of the confrontation, Eisav noticed Yaakov's many children.

"Who are these children?" Eisav asked.
 "These are the children," Yaakov replied, "that Hashem graciously gave to your servant."
 The Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer expands the dialogue between Yaakov and Eisav and reveals the underlying argument.
 "What are you doing with all these children?" Eisav asked. "I thought we made a division, that I would take this world and you would take the World to Come. So why do you have so many children? What do children have to do with the World to Come? Children are a boon in this world!"
 "Not so," Yaakov responded. "Children are sparks of the Divine. The opportunity to raise a child, to develop a Divine soul to the point where it can enter the World to Come, is a privilege of the highest spiritual worth. That is why I have children."
 Yaakov wants children for their own sake, but Eisav views them as an asset in this world. Children are an extra pair of hands on the farm. They can milk the cows and help with many other chores that need to be done in agrarian societies.
 Modern man has progressed beyond agrarian life. He has moved off the farm and does not have such a need for children anymore. In fact, he has made a startling discovery. Children are a tremendous burden. They are expensive, time consuming and exasperating. Who needs children?
 But what about companionship? Loneliness? No problem. Modern man can get a dog. Dogs are wonderful. Instead of coming home to a house full of clamoring, demanding, frustrating children, he can come home to an adoring, tail-wagging dog who will run to bring him his slippers and newspaper. So why does he need children? This is the attitude of Eisav adapted to modern times.
 Yaakov, on the other hand, understands that the purpose of children is not for enjoying this world or for making our lives easier. Each child represents a spiritual mission, a spark of the Divine entrusted to our care and our guidance, an opportunity to fulfill Hashem's desire to have this soul brought to the World to Come.

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From: Kerem B'Yavneh Online [feedback@kby.org] Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2002 5:56 PM To: Parsha English Subject: Parshat Devarim Parshat Devarim
 MOSHE, THE SPIES, AND TISHA B'AV
 RAV YISHAI BUCHRIS

The incident of the spies is related once again in this week's parsha, as it says: "All of you approached me and said, 'Let us send men ahead of us and let them spy out the Land.'" (Devarim 1:22)

There are many discrepancies between the account of the story in Parshat Shelach and what is recounted in our parsha. We would like to focus on an addition that is found in our parsha, namely -- Moshe Rabbeinu's accusation that he, as well, was punished not to enter the Land on account of Am Yisrael: "With me, as well, G-d became angry because of you, saying: You, too, shall not come there." (Devarim 1:37)

This pasuk is clearly difficult, as it says explicitly in Parshat Chukat that Moshe's sin at Mei Meriva is what caused him not to enter Eretz Yisrael. Why does Moshe now implicate Am Yisrael in this, because of their sin with the spies?

Many of the commentators address this difficulty. The Ramban explains that Moshe did not intend to say that he was punished because of the sin of the spies. Rather, Moshe was mentioning all those who were withheld from crossing over to the Land, even though it is possible that different sins caused this punishment.

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh objects to the Ramban's interpretation, since afterwards the Torah continues discussing the sin of the spies, so why would he interrupt the topic with another issue? Therefore, the Ohr Hachaim explains:

The correct interpretation is based on the words of our Sages who comment on the pasuk: "The nation cried that night" -- They established crying for generations, because it was the night of Tisha B'Av, on which the Temple was destroyed. They also said, that if Moshe were to enter the Land and build the Beit Hamikdash the Temple would not be destroyed ... Now, if Moshe were to enter the Land and would build the Temple -- so that is not possible to vent His wrath on it, and G-d would become angry with Israel, they would be destroyed instead of the destruction of the Temple. Therefore, G-d decreed as part of the decree of the spies also upon Moshe that he should die in the desert, and this is what he said, "With me, as well, G-d became angry because of you."

If you ask, we see that Moshe's death was on account of Mei Meriva? I already wrote there that if Moshe would have sanctified G-d's Name, Israel would have returned to the purity that they were in before the sin of the spies through the great kiddush Hashem.

This explanation is very beautiful. Yet, we still need to understand how Moshe would raise Am Yisrael through the kiddush Hashem at Mei Meriva in a way that would atone for the sin of the spies? In other words, what is the root cause of the sin of the spies that it could have been rectified at Mei Meriva, and how is this connected to the Temple, that on the same day that they sinned -- on that same day it was destroyed? In the Aggadah in the fifth chapter of Masechet Gittin relating to the destruction of the Temple, Chazal associate a number of causes with the destruction of the Temple: "On account of Kamtza and Bar-Kamtza," "On account of a rooster and a hen," and others. However, it appears that there is a common denominator between all of the causes, namely, that one of the involved parties tattled to the Roman governor. Thus, it seems that the problem was linked to the sin of speech, the lashon hara, besides the incident itself.

It is possible that this is the thread that connects the three topics. The sin of the spies was with prohibited speech (they did not learn a lesson from the incident of Miriam); Moshe's sin was that instead of talking -- he hit; and, as mentioned, the destruction of the Temple is also connected to the sin of inappropriate speech.

Moreover, it seems that speech is inherently connected to these issues. The Maharal explains that speech is what connects the physical and the spiritual, as the Targum writes, "a talking spirit." Eretz Yisrael is the place where physical labor is, in essence, a spiritual mitzvah, and in this way the world is elevated from the physical to the spiritual. The Temple is the spiritual center where gross animals are offered on G-d's Altar. Thus, speech is the main force needed for them. After Am Yisrael failed with speech in the sin of the spies, Moshe could have raised them back to their prior level through speech that would sanctify G-d's Name. However, he, as well, failed in this, and therefore he did not enter the Land. For this same reason, the day of the sin of the spies is the day of the destruction of the Temple.

If we learn to guard our mouths from improper speech, and improve also in a positive manner to sanctify G-d's Name through speech -- we will merit to see the building of the Temple.

From RABBI DR. ZALMAN KOSSOWSKY rabi@icz.org
 [Gemeinderabbiner - Israelitischen Cultusgemeinde Zurich]
 Dear friends,

Today is the Shabbat before Tisha B'Av. This week when we observe Tisha B'av it will be the 1932nd time since the destruction of our Second Temple that our People have sat on the ground and mourned the destruction of both our Temples.

Our tradition tells us that unlike with the First Temple, one of the main reasons for the destruction of the Second was sin'at chi'nam – senseless hatred of other people. My teachers also told me that one of the reasons that we are still in Goleis – still awaiting the coming of the Mashiach, is because we also have not overcome this weakness in ourselves. I am sure that each one of you has heard such concepts before.

So my question this Shabbat Chazon to myself, and I share it with you, because we all should ask ourselves this question, is:- what can I do - in the circle of people around me - to overcome this normal human weakness?

In this context a story that a friend sent me this last Thursday struck a very deep cord inside of me. I have adapted the original story in light of the events in Israel in the past two years and I would like to share it with you .

My story is one of a high-school teacher in Israel a few years ago who must have asked herself exactly the same question that I have this morning. She therefore decided, the week before the end of the school year, also just before Tisha B'Av, to ask her students to list the names of the other students in the class on a sheet of paper, leaving a space between each name. Then she told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took a whole lesson-period to finish this assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed in their papers.

That night the teacher wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and listed what everyone else had said about that individual.

The next morning she gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. "Really?" she heard whispered. "I never knew that I meant anything to anyone!" and, "I didn't know others liked me so much," were most of the comments.

No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. She never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. That morning the students were happy with themselves and one another.

That group of students moved on and graduated. Many of them continued into the Army, as do most Israelis. Last year one of the students named Moshe was killed in an attack on the road-block that he was guarding. His teacher made a special effort and attended the funeral. She was surprised to see so many of his classmates also there.

The entrance to the military cemetery was packed. Many of his friends came up to touch the coffin and whisper some words. The teacher did too. As she stood there, one of the soldiers who acting as a pallbearer came up to her. "Aren't you Moshe's mathematics teacher?" he asked. She nodded: "yes."

Then he said: "Moshe talked about you a lot."

That evening the teacher decided to go to the parent's home for a Shiva visit. She found most of his high school class there also. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Moshe when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been taped, folded and refolded many times. The teacher knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which she had listed all the good things each of Moshe's classmates had said about him.

"Thank you so much for doing that," Moshe's mother said. "As you can see, Moshe treasured it very much."

Some of Moshe's former class mates started to gather around. Chaim smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home."

Menachem's wife said, "Menachem asked me to put his in our wedding album."

"I have mine too," Sara said. "It's in my diary."

Then Chedva, another classmate, reached into her bag, took out her wallet and showed her worn and tattered list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," she said and without batting an eyelash, she continued: "I think we all saved our lists."

That is when the teacher broke down and cried. She cried in pain for Moshe and his untimely early death and all his friends who would never see him again. But her tears were tempered by the awareness that she had given him and his whole class a gift, the gift of feeling appreciated and valued, even loved. And those feelings were stronger even than the sword of the Angel of Death.

My friends, this is the story that I wish to share with you today. I do not know if it really happened, but that is not the point. What is true is that if someone actually did that in a class, or any other group, the results WOULD BE that way.

And when I started to think about it, I realised that if I tried to do something analogous, even in the small circle around me, not only would I be really contributing to reducing the amount of sin'at chinam in the world and thus bring the end of the Galut closer, but on a simple human level, my world would be different.

My friends, we all know that life will end one day, but perhaps we who live in Switzerland and fly in the skies above us, should be even more conscious than others that we do not know when that one day will be. So please, tell the people you love and care for, that they are special and important. Tell them that today, before it turns out, chas v'shalom, to be too late. And for the people who are perhaps not that close to you, but are still part of your circle and environment, try to think of something nice about them, something that they may have said or done. And then - thank them for that word or deed.

It may not be that easy at first. You may even feel somewhat awkward or even silly. DON'T STOP. Persevere. The more people that you do this with, the better you'll become at reaching out to those who you should care about.

Remember, you reap what you sow, what you put into the lives of others comes back into your own.

And thus may we merit to help make the 9th of Av of the year 5763 – a true yontef – a day of joy and rejoicing for Israel and for the whole world.

Shabbat Shalom

From: Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalists@shemayisrael.com]
To: Peninim Parsha Subject: PENINIM ON THE TORAH BY RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM Devorim

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Yisrael. (1:1)

As Moshe Rabbeinu was about to take leave of his earthly abode, he bid farewell to the nation he had shepherded for forty years. His farewell consisted of a rebuke which guided the nation through their forty-year sojourn and alluded to the various places where they had angered Hashem. A true leader is one who cares about his flock. One who cares about his nation will reproach them at the appropriate time. Certainly, the most propitious time for admonishment is before the sin has occurred. The rebuke will endeavor to imbue the "potential" sinner with values that will prevent him from sinning. Rebuke, reproach, admonishment, warning and criticism are all terms describing the manner in which one can administer a critique of his friend's behavior. For the most part, it is rendered by a sensitive individual who has only the best interests of the other person on his mind. He feels compelled to speak out to prevent his friend from falling further into the abyss of sin. The primary function of a mashgiach in a yeshiva is to be a spiritual guide and mentor to the students. He is an ethicist who admonishes with love, rebukes with sensitivity, and instructs the students in the spiritual and ethical standard of a ben Torah. Rebuking is a very difficult responsibility - one that -- if it is not performed correctly -- can do more damage than good. Horav Moshe Aharon Stern, zl, was a contemporary mashgiach in the Kamenitz Yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael, who was well-known for his unique sensitivity towards each student. When he criticized, he was as concerned with the presentation as he was with the actual content of his critique. Everything was weighed according to one criterion: What could he do

or say that would make his criticism more palatable to the student? He would never ask a student to act in a manner which he would not do himself. His integrity and sincerity prevailed on his students, opening their hearts to his words. He had a maxim for rebuke: "If improvement is necessary, present it in such a manner that indicates that you truly do not want to do what you are doing." Rebuke should be soft-spoken - never harsh. Horav Dov Ber, zl, m'Lubavitch was a sensitive young boy. Upon hearing the Torah portion of the Tochechah, Rebuke, read one year, he became so disconcerted that a doctor was called to attend to him. The doctor questioned the young boy, "What happened all of a sudden this year that you became so agitated? The Tochechah has never seemed to bother you before." Rav Dov Ber replied, "Every other year, it was my father who read the Torah portion, and he would recite the Rebuke. When he recited it, it did not sound like a curse. This year, someone else read the Tochechah, and it sounded absolutely terrifying." The manner in which the rebuke is given should inspire the listener, not agitate him. This is especially true when dealing with students. Rav Stern would focus on a student's sense of hakoras hatov, appreciation/gratitude, when he was asked to discipline a student. "Do you have any idea what your rebbe does for you, to what great lengths he goes in order to prepare a lucid, well-thought out lecture? It is important that you appreciate your rebbe's devotion to you, so that you will accord him the proper respect." Gratitude is a fundamental of life. One who does not possess this character-trait is missing a vital component in his Jewish persona. Indeed, a person is measured by the degree of hakoras hatov that he manifests. The greater the individual, the more appreciative he is of those from whom he has benefited. Rav Stern was once invited to a Bar Mitzvah celebration. It was a miserable, cold and rainy day. Yet, he felt obligated to attend the simchah. As he neared the hall, he noticed a taxi pull up and an elderly man struggle to get out. As he hurried to assist the man, Rav Stern noticed that it was none other than Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, zl, the venerable Rosh HaYeshivah of Mir. He had that day delivered a hesped, eulogy, for Horav Mendel Saks, zl, and was now coming from the Mirrer Yeshivah where he had given his weekly shiur, lecture. "Why would the Rosh HaYeshivah trouble himself to come out in this weather after such an exhausting day to attend a Bar Mitzvah?" Rav Stern asked. Rav Chaim explained, "I feel indebted to the boy's father because he regularly attends my shiur." Rav Stern was taken aback. "But, thousands come to hear the Rosh HaYeshivah's shiurim each week. Does the Rosh HaYeshivah feel indebted to each and every one of them?" Rav Chaim answered, "If this one did not come and that one did not come, I would soon be talking to the walls. Each and every one is significant." As I said before, it is the great people who recognize the obligation to appreciate and repay the benefit they receive from others.

Provide for yourselves distinguished men, who are wise, understanding and well-known to your tribes... So I took the heads of your tribes, distinguished men who were wise and well-known. (1:13.15) Yisro mentioned seven attributes that Moshe should seek in a leader/judge. Moshe found only three. The Torah here mentions that he was to look for "distinguished men who were wise and well-known." As Rashi notes, he did not find nevonim, men with understanding. This seems strange. We can well appreciate that finding men of integrity who hate bribes might be somewhat difficult, because everybody has his own individual vested interests that can cloud over his perception of the truth. Quite often, one will even be able to justify taking a slight bribe if it is for a "good purpose." How is it possible, however, not to find men who are nevonim, understanding, in a nation that is called navon v'chacham, understanding and wise? Horav Shmuel David Walkin, zl, cited by Harav Zalmen Sorotzkin, zl, explains that veritably, there was a shortage of nevonim in Klal Yisrael. The Mishnah in Avos 4:1, defines a chacham, wise man, as one who is lomeid m'kol adam, learns from all men. He has an insatiable desire to study, to know, to develop greater proficiency in Torah. So too, a nation should be one that is lomeid mikol davar, learns from every episode, incident, experience. Nothing occurs just by chance. There is always a reason, and there is always something that can be derived from the

experience. Regarding the word/place Chatzeiros, Rashi explains that Klal Yisrael were being criticized for not learning a lesson from what happened to Miriam in Chatzeiros, for speaking against Moshe. They ignored the episode and the ensuing tragedy concerning the meraglim, spies, who spoke against Eretz Yisrael. This clearly indicated a lack of kavanah, understanding, on their part. To be witness to the effects of lashon hora, evil speech, and ignore the repercussions, demonstrates an unforgivable shortcoming, a deficiency in the ability to understand and act upon one's perceptions. You shall not provoke them, for I shall not give you of their land...for as an inheritance to the children of Eisav have I given Har Seir. (2:5) Rashi explains that Seir was Eisav's inheritance from Avraham Avinu. Lot, also, was compensated for standing by Avraham during his time of need. This is a reference to the incident of Sarah and Pharaoh. Lot was fully aware that Sarah Imeinu was Avraham's wife - not his sister. Lot kept the secret to himself, not exposing the truth, thereby saving Sarah. Hashem appreciated Lot's act of decency and granted him the lush, fertile lands that he sought. We wonder if this is the first time Lot was paid back for his kindness. Was he not spared the fate of his copatriots in Sodom? It would seem that being granted life is a very fair reward for keeping Avraham's secret safe. Why was he rewarded again? It seems implied from here that hakoras hatov, gratitude/appreciation, is a far-reaching responsibility, because the favor that one receives has a far-reaching effect. The gratitude must be commensurate with the effect of the favor. Do we have any idea what would have happened had Lot divulged Sarah's true relationship to Avraham? That is what we owe him. Indeed, the land that he received hardly reimburses him for the far-reaching effect of his favor. Let us look back for a moment at whom we - our generation of Torah-observant Jews - owe for our opportunity to live a Torah life, with yeshivos, day schools, and Bais Yaakov schools. For our children. It was not always like this. Indeed, seventy years ago, the scene was quite different. The spiritual landscape of America was hardly developed. The spiritual bounty that we have today is the result of the hard work, blood, sweat and tears of a small group of determined individuals who risked everything to build Torah on these shores. Interestingly, their approaches to Yiddishkeit were varied: Some were yeshivishe; others were chassidishe; and yet others were modern orthodox. Yet, they all worked together with great mesiras nefesh, self-sacrifice, to prepare the soil of America so that the spiritual landscape would be fertile and produce crops. We are their beneficiaries and, consequently, we are in their debt. Regrettably, it is so easy to take what we have for granted and ignore the sacrifice of our spiritual progenitors. Perhaps it is because we might not want to recognize all of those in whose debt we are. After all, we have outgrown our forebears. We think that we are more observant, have more yiraas Shomayim, fear of Heaven, are definitely more yeshivishe, and certainly are greater scholars. I wonder, however, do we have more mesiras nefesh for Torah? It certainly is easier to be smug when others have prepared everything for you. It is imperative that we recognize all of those from whom we have benefited. There would be no yeshivos or kollelim if it were not for those "American" Jews working hand-in-hand with the Roshei Yeshivah, embers spared from the fires of the Holocaust, to build Torah in America. Yes, those old American Jews sitting in the back of the shul, who might appear to be simple people, are the giants who sixty years ago built our Day Schools, who went from door to door collecting pennies and searching for Jewish children to educate in the Torah way. No! Those Jews are far from simple; they are the pioneers and vanguards of Torah life in America. We owe them so much!

You shall not distress Moav. (2:9) Chazal teach us in the Talmud Bava Kama 38a that Moshe was certain that Hashem would send him to vanquish the nation of Moav. After all, they were behind Midyan in the plan to destroy the Jewish nation. Their daughters were dispatched to seduce the Jewish men and lead them to immorality and idolatry. If Moshe was instructed to avenge Klal Yisrael of the Midyanites, surely at least the same was to apply to the Moavites. Hashem told him no. They were to be spared because of Rus, the Moaviah, who would later descend from this nation. She would be the Matriarch of the Jewish

nation's Davidic monarchy. They would be spared because of her. How are we to understand this? In his classic sefer, Michtav M'Elياهو, Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl, submits the following explanation. A person who has a pocket-watch invariably attaches it to himself via a chain. Similarly, we use key chains for the same purpose - to attach the key to us. Although there is no actual use from the chain itself, it becomes a necessity if one wants to make sure that he does not lose the watch or the key. The actual chain's only significance is its function as an attachment. This concept, likewise, holds true for each individual link in the chain. It is there for one purpose: to secure the watch or the key. If but one link in the chain were to break, the entire chain loses its viability -- and the key or watch will be lost. This idea may serve as an analogy to explain the concept of zchus avos, the merit of ancestors. Hashem ensured the Patriarchs that the purpose of the entire Creation would be fulfilled through their descendants. The greatest merit, the climax of the trial and travail that has been an integral part of this world, will be reached when Moshiach Tzidkeinu is revealed and Hashem's truth will be recognized and disseminated throughout the world. From Avraham Avinu until Moshiach is a journey of thousands of generations and millions of people - all links in the chain from Avraham to Moshiach. They are all attached together for a reason: to connect the past to the future. Without the generations in between, there would be an insurmountable void between Avraham Avinu and Moshiach. It is, therefore, quite possible that there have been individuals, families and even generations that have not been worthy to be sustained of their own accord. Yet, they serve as a necessary link in the chain of generations. Without them, there would be a gap -- a gap that would break the chain and cause the previous spiritual zenith to be lost. This is what Hashem told Moshe. You might think that Moav has no value and should be obliterated, especially after leading Klal Yisrael to such grave sin. What about the chain? From where will Rus descend? If there will be no Moav, there will be no Rus! Moav will be allowed to live, so that Rus will descend from them, and she will be the matriarch of monarchs. Horav Dessler suggests that this idea can in some way shed light on the age old query of "rasha v'tov lo": Why do the wicked prosper? With the above understanding, we perceive that in some situations they are part of a chain that can only continue through their existence. The wicked would not survive if they will not be sustained favorably. So the next time we see the wicked prosper, let us give some thought. Perhaps down the road, they will have a descendant that will help us in some way. This is where trust in Hashem plays a pivotal role in our lives.

From: chrysler [rachrysl@netvision.net.il] To: Midei Parsha Subject: MIDEI SHABBOS BY RABBI ELIEZER CHRYSLER
 Vol. 9 No. 40 This issue is sponsored anonymously
 Parshas Devarim (Shabbos Chazon) incorporating Tish'ah be'Av
 Angry With Moshe, Too After reprimanding Yisrael for the sin of the Meraglim (the Spies) and its dire consequences, Moshe adds that he too was deprived of the right to enter Eretz Yisrael, on account of their sins. The Ramban explains that Moshe is merely listing all those who suffered this fate due to Yisrael's sins, even though the decree forbidding Moshe to enter Eretz Yisrael had nothing to do with the Meraglim. The Or ha'Chayim however, asks why Moshe then decided to interrupt the episode with the Meraglim, to insert that of Moshe (seeing as the Pasuk then reverts to discussing the Meraglim). The K'li Yakar, in his second explanation, actually connects Moshe's sin with that of the Meraglim, though rather indirectly. It was only because of the decree of the Meraglim (forcing Yisrael to remain in the Desert for forty years) he explains, that Miriam's time to die fell due before they entered the Land. The result of that was of course, the water of Mei Merivah, and Moshe's sin. Conversely, if Yisrael had not sinned by the Meraglim, they would have entered Eretz Yisrael together with Miriam, with Moshe, who would not have sinned either, at their head.
 His first explanation however, is more direct. He refers to Parshas Chukas, where he explained that, although Yisrael had reached an extremely high level of Emunah at the Yam-Suf, where the Torah

declares "And they believed in G-d and in Moshe His servant", their Emunah dropped dramatically at the episode with the Meraglim. Indeed, the Torah writes here (Pasuk 32, quoting Moshe there) "And in this matter you do not believe in Hashem your G-d". Consequently, when dealing with Yisrael's complaint that they had no water, he should have acted in a way that restored their Emunah to its former level (by removing the stick and producing water by stretching out his hand, like he did by the Yam-Suf). But that was not what he did. He struck the rock with his staff, causing Yisrael to believe in the power of his stick, rather than in the power of G-d. Now the connection is abundantly clear. Yisrael lost the right to enter Eretz Yisrael at the episode of the Meraglim, due to their weak level of Emunah. And Moshe lost the right to enter, at the episode of Mei Merivah, for not restoring their Emunah to its previous strength, as indeed the Torah writes there "because you did not cause them to have faith in Me, to sanctify Me before their eyes". And, as Chazal have said 'Someone who causes the community to sin, must take responsibility for their sin'.
 But the explanation of the Or ha'Chayim (also hinted at briefly in the Seforno), is certainly the most innovative of all. He bases it on the well-known Gemara in Ta'anis (29a), where, commenting on the Pasuk in Ki Sisa "And the people wept on that night", Chazal explain how G-d fixed the night of Tish'ah-be'Av as a national night of mourning. On that night each year, we weep for the destruction of both Batei Mikdash, and for our expulsion from Eretz Yisrael. The Gemara in Sotah asserts that had Moshe entered Eretz Yisrael and built the Beis Hamikdash, no nation would have been able to destroy it (since Moshe's Midah was Netzach - Eternity). The Medrash explains why the Pasuk in Tehilim uses the expression "Mizmor le'Asaf" (a song to Asaf) when 'Kinah le'Asaf' (a lamentation to Asaf) would have seemed far more appropriate. The fact that G-d vented His wrath on the wood and the stones of the Beis Hamikdash rather than on K'lal Yisrael was indeed something to sing about. Had Moshe taken Yisrael into Eretz Yisrael and built the Beis Hamikdash, and Yisrael would then have sinned, G-d would have had no option other than to wipe out K'lal Yisrael. Consequently, not only was Moshe's death connected with the sin of the Meraglim; it was also connected directly with their own punishment, inasmuch as it prevented it from going beyond its intended limits. And that also explains why the Pasuk writes not "Therefore you will not come to the Land ...", but "you will not bring the congregation to the land which I promised to their fathers". Perhaps it is even possible to combine the Or ha'Chayim's explanation with that of the K'li Yakar, in which case Moshe was not punished only for the good of K'lal Yisrael, but for his own participation too.

From: Shlomo Katz [skatz@torah.org] To: hamaayan@torah.org
 Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring - Parashat Devarim
 HAMAAYAN / THE TORAH SPRING EDITED BY SHLOMO KATZ
 Devarim: Don't Just Scratch the Surface

In the language of our Sages, the book of Devarim is called "Mishneh Torah." Some commentaries translate this appellation as "the repetition of the Torah" (i.e., "mishneh" from the root "shnei" / "two"). They suggest that every halachah found in Devarim is stated, or at least alluded to, somewhere in the other books of the Torah. R' Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin z"l (1817-1893; known as the "Netziv"; rabbi and rosh yeshiva of Volozhin) offers a different explanation:
 "Mishneh" means "review," i.e., the main purpose of Sefer Devarim is to encourage us to delve deeply into, and review, the laws of the Torah. All of the mussar / rebuke found in this Book also boils down to this message: Accept upon yourselves the yoke of studying Torah in depth so that you do not deviate from its laws. True, many laws found in other Books are repeated in Devarim. The purpose of this repetition is to teach us to look beneath the surface of the verse. The peshat / "surface message" of the repeated pasuk or halachah was already learned elsewhere. Therefore, if you find a verse or law repeated, look deeper.
 R' Berlin continues: The Midrash records that when Hashem appeared to Yehoshua, he found that prophet studying Mishneh Torah. This shows the importance of this Book. Similarly, when the Torah

commands the king to write a Torah scroll for himself, the language it chooses is (Devarim 17:18), "He shall write for himself this Mishneh Torah." In fact, he is required to write the entire Torah, but the verse emphasizes writing this Book because of its important message. Indeed, our Sages teach that it is only this delving into the Torah, the essence of the Talmud, that serves as the covenant between Hashem and the Jewish People. (He'emek Davar, Intro. to Devarim)

"Rabbi Yochanan said, the humility of Rabbi Zechariah ben Avkolos destroyed our house, burned our hall, and exiled us from the our land." (Gittin 56a)

This statement is found at the end of the well-known story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza. Briefly, the Gemara relates that a certain man sent his servant to invite his (the master's) friend Kamtza to a party. Instead, the servant invited his master's enemy Bar Kamtza. After the host humiliated Bar Kamtza and evicted him from the party, and the Torah scholars who were present did not protest, Bar Kamtza decided to take revenge. He reported to the Roman governor that the Jews were planning a rebellion. As proof, he said that if the governor would send a sacrificial offering to Yerushalayim, the Temple authorities would not accept it.

The governor gave Bar Kamtza an animal to take to Yerushalayim, but, on the way, Bar Kamtza put a tiny blemish in the animal's eye that invalidated it for the altar. Many of the kohanim and sages argued for accepting the animal as is so that Jewish lives would not be put at risk.

However, Rabbi Zechariah ben Avkolos protested that the sacrifice was technically invalid and could not be accepted, and he prevailed. Thus began the chain of events that led to the Romans destroying the Temple.

R' Nosson Wachtfogel z"l (1910-1999; the Lakewood Mashgiach) asks: Why is Rabbi Zechariah's reaction described as "humility"? He explains that Rabbi Zechariah's miscalculation stemmed from his failure to implement the teaching of the Mishnah (Avot Ch. 5), "Be bold as a leopard . . . and strong as a lion." At a time that called for bold action - offering an invalid sacrifice - Rabbi Zechariah acted meekly. [Ed. note: See Rashi's comment to Beitzah 2b, noting that only one who has self-confidence is able to rule leniently in halachic matters.]

R' Wachtfogel adds: R' Yerucham Levovitz z"l (the "Mirror Mashgiach"; died 1936) used to say, "How many [potentially] great people have been lost to us because they did not heed the words of the verse (Yirmiyah 1:7), "Do not say, 'I am but a lad.'" R' Moshe Chaim Luzzato z"l writes in Mesilat Yesharim (Ch. 19) that every person must pray for the Jewish people's redemption. One might wonder: "Can my prayer make a difference?" The answer, says R' Wachtfogel, is that every person is obligated to believe that his prayer can make a difference. Our Sages teach that one reason that G-d created only one man is to encourage each of us to say, "The world was created for me."

The Gemara (Kiddushin 40b) states that a person must always imagine that the world's good and bad deeds are perfectly balanced and that his next deed will determine the world's fate. Is this plausible? Yes, explains R' Wachtfogel. If a person has confidence in his spiritual power and believes that he can make a difference, then he will eventually turn into a person who really does make a difference. (Lekket Reshimot B'inyanei Bet Hamikdash pp.13-15) Hamaayan, Copyright © 2002 by Shlomo Katz and Torah.org. Posted by Alan Broder, ajb@torah.org . Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 203 learn@torah.org Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 510-1053

From: Rabbi Ben Kelsen [benish@att.net] To: parshas_hashavuah@yahogroups.com Subject: [parshas_hashavuah] HAGAON HARAV SHLOMO ELIMELECH DRILLMAN, zt"l on Parshas Devorim HaGaon HaRav Shlomo Elimelech Drillman, zt"l Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon

Editor's Note: The following is based upon a private conversation between HaRav Drillman, zt"l and the editor that took place in Av of 5756 (July 1997). BGK

HaRav Drillman commented that the Ramban teaches that Sefer Devorim, the fifth book of the Torah, was addressed to the generation of Klal Yisroel that would be entering Eretz Yisroel. Even though Chazal call Sefer Devorim "Mishne Torah", the second Torah, the Ramban comments that there are some new mitzvos here which had not been taught previously. The Ramban offers two reasons as to why these mitzvos were not discussed previously. The Ramban says that perhaps these mitzvos are of the type called "talui b'aretz", dependant upon being the land of Israel for them to be applicable. The second explanation of the Ramban is that these mitzvos are halachos which are not quite so common and therefore were only mentioned at the end of Klal Yisroel's sojourn in the wilderness and the beginning of their preparations to enter Eretz Yisroel.

However, HaRav Drillman pointed out, there are several meforshim, commentators, such as the Abarbanel the Kli Chemdah, and the Radbaz, who object to the Ramban's first suggestion. One of the difficulties raised by these commentaries is that it is difficult to find a connection between the "new" mitzvos delineated here and Eretz Yisroel. While we know that those mitzvos which would fall under the classification of "agriculture" are generally held to apply only within the borders of Eretz Yisroel, the "new" mitzvos introduced here, such as marriage and divorce, have nothing to do with agriculture. How can the Ramban suggest that the mitzvos of Devorim are connected with Klal Yisroel's imminent entry in Eretz Yisroel?

However, Ramban stated his opinion previously, especially in Parshas Acharei. The Forefathers only considered themselves obligated in mitzvos in the Holy Land. For this reason, Ramban explained, Yaakov was able to marry two sisters in the Diaspora, but upon his entrance into Eretz Yisrael, Rachel died.

HaRav Drillman, citing his rebbe, HaGaon HaRav Elchonon Wassermann, zt"l hy"d, explained as follows: There are two aspects to each of these "new" mitzvos. The reason for the mitzvah and the legal requirements of the mitzvah. The Patriarchs lived before the Torah was legally binding. Therefore, they only kept the commandments because they perceived the reason; the reasons only applied in Eretz Yisrael. Once the Torah was commanded at Sinai, there is a legal obligation to keep the commandments which is not dependent on locale. (Koveitz Shiurim, end of Kiddushin).

In the Mishnah Torah, at the start of Hilchos Ishus, the Rambam writes that before Mattan Torah a man would meet a woman in the market and take her home with him as a "common-law" wife. However, following Matan Torah, we were required to perform Kiddushin, the marriage ceremony, thereby formalizing the "sanctification" of the union.

In other words, prior to Mattan Torah, marriage was a matter of convenience, made quickly and dissolved swiftly. It is only with the introduction of Kiddushin and Gittin, divorce, that we have the concept of sanctity added to the equation.

HaRav Drillman cited Reb Chaim Brisker who commented, when describing the marriage of Yaakov Avinu to Leah and Rachel, two sisters, that while certain relationships, such as incest, are prohibited by their very nature and will never be permitted, there are other relationships, however, which are only forbidden because of timing and/or circumstance. For example, in the case of Leah and Rachel, the marriage of Yaakov Avinu to either sister would have been acceptable, once one sister was married to him, the second sister could not, but only because the halachos of Kiddushin prevents a man from having a relationship with two sisters. For Yaakov Avinu the concept of Kiddushin was inapplicable because it was before Matan Torah. Reb Chaim explained that even though the Avos kept the spirit of the mitzvos, the actual halachos were not yet in effect. Interestingly, Rashi on Parshas Chayei Sarah, as well as the Da'as Zekeinim on Parshas Vayeishev, state that there was indeed a ceremony of sorts conducted by the Avos and the Shivtei Koh. HaRav Drillman explained that while this is true, Reb Chaim meant to say that even though there

was a ceremony the Halachic consequences of Kiddushin and Gittin were not yet being applied.

It is with this understanding, explained HaRav Drillman in the name of The Rav, zt"l, that the Ramban states that the mitzvos unique to Sefer Devorim are "talui b'aretz" associated Kiddushin with Klal Yisroel's entrance into Eretz Yisrael, because it was only at that point that the "Marriage" of Klal Yisroel to the Ribbono Shel Olam as the Am HaNivchar was completed.

--- Devorim 1:22-39 You approached me, all of you, and said, "Let us send men ahead of us to spy out the land for us, and let them bring back word to us: the route we are to go up on and the cities we will be coming to." The idea pleased me, so I took from you twelve men, one man per tribe. They turned and went uphill and arrived at Wadi Eshkol, and they spied it out. They took in their hand some fruit of the land and brought [it] down to us. They brought back word to us and said, "Good is the land that Hashem, our G-d, is giving us." But you were unwilling to go up, and you defied Hashem, your G-d. You grumbled in your tents and said, "Because of Hashem's hatred of us, He took us out of the land of Egypt to put us in the hand of the Emorites to destroy us. Where are we going up to? Our brothers have shattered our hopes by saying, 'A people greater and more powerful than we, cities great and fortified sky-high, and also descendants of the Anakim, did we see there.' " I said to you, "Do not crumble and do not fear them. Hashem, your G-d, who goes before you, He will wage war for you, as in everything that He did with you in Egypt before your eyes; and in the wilderness, as you have seen, (where) Hashem, your G-d, carried you the way a man carries his son all along the road you went until you arrived at this place. Yet in this matter, you do not trust Hashem, your G-d, Who has been going ahead of you on the road to seek for you a place to encamp; with the fire at night to show you the way for you to go on, and with the cloud by day. Hashem heard the intent of your words and angrily swore, to say: "That [no] man will see---of these men, this wicked generation---the good land that I swore to give to your forefathers. Except for Kaleiv ben Yefuneh, who will see it, and to whom I will give the land that he trod upon and to his sons, because he perfected himself in fear of Hashem." Also at me was Hashem angry because of you, to say, "You, too, will not arrive there. Yehoshua son of Nun, who attends you, he will arrive there. Encourage him, for he will apportion it to Yisroel.

HaRav Drillman inquired as to the connection between Chait HaMeraglim, the sin of the spies, and HKB"H's decree that Moshe Rabbeinu would not enter Eretz Yisroel?

According to the Ramban the Torah is listing here all those who would not enter Eretz Yisroel and that they would suffer this fate because of Bnei Yisroel's sins. However, both the Kli Yakar and the Or HaChaim HaKadosh find the Ramban's explanation unsatisfactory.

The Kli Yakar finds an explanation in his own commentary regarding Moshe's hitting of the rock. According to the Kli Yakar, Moshe Rabbeinu was punished because his actions during the episode of the rock failed to take advantage of an opportunity to strengthen Bnei Yisroel's Emunah and Bitachon in HKB"H. In an absolutely fascinating manner, the Kli Yakar says that Klal Yisroel actually thought that all of the miracles performed by Moshe Rabbeinu were done through the use of "magic". Klal Yisroel thought that this was reason that Moshe always used his staff. According to the Kli Yakar was for this reason that HKB"H said "Kach es ha'mateh", remove the stick, and "speak to the rock". By refraining from utilizing his staff in the production of water from the rock, Moshe Rabbeinu would have been demonstrating beyond a doubt that it was not through magic that he performed sorcery but, rather, miracles done the Ribbono Shel Olam. By striking the rock, Moshe failed to achieve this goal and raise the level of the people's Emunah, and it is for this reason that he was punished. The proof for this explanation is found in Parshas Chukas (20:12) where it is written: "Ya'an lo he'emantem bi ...", because you did not make them believe in Me.

HaRav Drillman posed the following question based on this Kli Yakar: Bearing in mind the level of emunah attained by Bnei Yisroel at Krias Yam Suf, of which it is written "And they believed in Hashem and in

Moshe His servant...", where do we find that Klal Yisroel fell from such a high level? The Kli Yakar explains that this occurred due to the Cheit HaMeraglim when Klal Yisroel failed to believe that HKB"H could or would assist them in conquering Eretz Yisroel. In other words, it was for not restoring the emunah of Klal Yisroel, lost during the Cheit HaMeraglim, that Moshe was punished. If not for the Cheit HaMeraglim Moshe would not have been required to restore the emunah of Klal Yisroel, and he would not have been punished for failing to do so. For this reason the passuk of Moshe's punishment follows the re-telling of the Cheit HaMeraglim.

According to the Or HaChaim there must be a more concrete connection between the passukim than suggested by the Ramban. To this end the Or HaChaim explains the connection in the following manner. HKB"H established Tisha B'Av as a day of mourning for generations to come as a direct result of the Cheit HaMeraglim. As Chazal tell us "You wept in vain, Hashem told them. I will fix for you something to weep about throughout the generations". We mean to say that the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash is a direct result of the Cheit HaMeraglim. If one looks at the perek of Tehillim on Shir l'Assaf we will find that Chazal say that we need to sing to the Ribbono Shel Olam "who poured out His wrath on the wood and stones of the Beis HaMikdash" and allowed us to go into exile and survive the destruction of Yerushalayim and Eretz Yisroel.

HaRav Drillman taught that Chazal tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu's primary middah was that of Netzach, the metaphysical attribute of victory and eternity. Chazal further tell us in Maseches Sotah, that had Moshe Rabbeinu led Klal Yisroel into Eretz Yisroel, led them into battle to conquer the land and then built the Beis HaMikdash, the Churban Bayis would never have occurred. However, in order for their to be a Geulah Sheleimah and the coming of the Moshiach there had to be a Churban and an exile. The Or HaChaim explains that it was for this reason that Moshe Rabbeinu could not be allowed to enter Eretz Yisroel. Furthermore, the language of the edict issued by HKB"H following the Cheit HaMeraglim included Moshe Rabbeinu as well. It was the episode of Mei Meriva which made the decree against Moshe irrevocable.

However, the Ohr HaChaim himself raises the issue that is apparent from the passukim of the episode of Mei Meriva. There the Torah tells us that it was because Moshe struck the rock instead of speaking to it that caused him to be barred from entering Eretz Yisroel. This being the case how can we suggest that it was really the Cheit HaMeraglim that caused him to be punished? The Ohr HaChaim explains that it is because of the great Kiddush Hashem that would have ensued had Moshe spoken to the rock, thereby restoring Klal Yisroel's emunah to the level that it was before the Cheit HaMeraglim. At such a level Klal Yisroel would not have sinned in the generations to come and the messianic era could have begun with Moshe Rabbeinu entering Eretz Yisrael and building the Beis HaMikdash, which would then have lasted forever.

--- HaRav Drillman said over the following idea that he heard from HaGaon Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky zt"l during the 1960's (which has been published in Emes l'Yaakov):

Why did Moshe Rabbeinu agree to send the Meraglim? When looking at the passukim in Devorim recounting the episode, we find that Moshe, when recounting the story of the Meraglim, says, "All of you came close to me..." Rashi, on this passuk, explains that the people approached Moshe Rabbeinu in a disorganized fashion. Therefore, we must ask, what does Moshe mean to impart upon the people by telling them that "All of you came close to me..."?

Rav Yaakov zt"l suggested that Moshe's criticism was that the people came to him in a frantic way, bred by fear caused by a lack of emunah.

Had the people wanted to send out the spies out of a motivation not stemming from a lack of emunah and bitachon in HKB"H they would have used normal channels to present their case to Moshe. Moshe is therefore illustrating to them the manifestation of their lack of emunah in HKB"H and his promise to take them into Eretz Yisroel where they would be a great nation.

And yet, asked Reb Yaakov, this raises another question. Had the basis of their request come from a lack of emunah why did Moshe agree to send the meraglim instead of refusing and finding a way to strengthen the people's Emunah in HKB"H? We find the answer in the Ramban on Sefer Vayikra (26:11). The Ramban teaches that the amount of Hishtadlus, initiative, that a person should put into his endeavors is directly proportional to his degree of emunah and bitachon in the Ribbono Shel Olam. The Ramban suggests that the only reason, for example, that we need doctors in this world is because Mankind as a whole lacks the proper amount of emunah and bitachon. Once Moshe saw that the people were not on a high enough level of emunah and bitachon he realized that the conquering of Eretz Yisroel would have to be brought about differently than planned. Originally, we are taught, Eretz Yisroel was to be conquered in a miraculous way, similar to Yitzias Mitzrayim and Krias Yam Suf. However, due to a lack of the prerequisite emunah and bitachon Klal Yisroel would have to conquer Eretz Yisroel in a more "normal" manner. This would include sending out reconnaissance mission to scout out the territory and the devising of military strategy. It was with this understanding that Moshe Rabbeinu agreed to send the spies.

From: RABBI LIPMAN PODOLSKY [podolsky@hakotel.edu] To: Shiur List Parshas Devarim Safe Haven

The Nine Days have just begun. The destruction of our Bais HaMikdash is foremost in our concerns. "Any generation in which the Bais HaMikdash is not rebuilt is considered to have destroyed it (Yerushalmi Yoma 1:1)!" Why was our beautiful Yerushalayim burnt? What caused our beloved Eretz Yisrael to spit us out? Even more pressing is our current situation. Anti-Semitism is rapidly rearing its ugly head and the threat to our safety and our land is more palpable than ever. A day that passes without Jews being killed or injured is a miracle! Tragically, not every day are we worthy of miracles. When an obvious terrorist attack against Jews in the terminal of a Jewish airline is deliberately designated a "hate crime" and an "isolated incident", we know we're in trouble. In Europe, the unabashed disdain for the Jewish State and the unconditional support for Palestinian terror reek of the Anti-Semitic putrefaction of yore. Were the Arab autocracies to annihilate us, chas v'shalom, the caricature of Europeans shedding tears would be almost laughable (not including the relatively few righteous gentiles, of course). What can we do about our situation? How can we take our destiny into our own hands? Is there a military or diplomatic solution? Everything, absolutely everything has been tried. Matters have only gone from bad to worse. What more can we do? A most poignant Medrash on our parsha provides us with the only strategy that will work.

"Pnu lachem tzafona (Devarim 2:3) -- Said Rabi Chiya, should you see that Esav desires to provoke you [into war], don't stand up against him, rather conceal yourself until his world passes... Said Rabi Yehuda bar Shalom: The Jews said to Him, Master of the world, Esav's father blessed him with, 'You shall live by the sword,' and You agree with him and tell us to conceal ourselves from him? To where shall we flee? Said Hashem to them, When you see Esav joining up with others against you, flee to Torah... (Devarim Rabba 1:19)." It was a lack of dedication to the imperative mitzvah of Talmud Torah that demolished our Bais HaMikdash and caused us to be vomited from our land (See Nedarim 81a and Ran ad. loc.). To restore our world, we have no recourse but to tackle the root cause of the disease. Symptomatic treatment may provide temporary pain-relief, but it will ultimately get us nowhere. Without a genuine renewal of our commitment to Torah and its principles, we will never vanquish our enemies. To continue to delude ourselves to think that we possess sufficient firepower to overcome evil is to play right into the hands of the Satan. And it is a sure-fire recipe for the third exile and destruction, chas v'shalom. Let us not fool ourselves. Worldwide, Jewish security is on a daily decline. Our existence in the Holy Land is as precarious as can be. And outside the Holy Land the only question is, where will Al Qaida

strike next? There is only one safe haven for Jews today -- Torah. The pernicious partnership of Esav (western civilization) and Yishmael (the Arabs) is our final battle battleground. Our only strategy for victory is to conceal ourselves within the Bais Medrash until their era of ascendance passes. "If you see disaster coming upon you, run to the chambers of Torah... (Eliyahu Rabba chap. 6)." Let them destroy one another while we wage battle in the Bais Medrash. "HaKol kol Yaakov v'hayadayim y'dei Esav (Breishis 27:22)." Esav's strength lies in his muscle -- his tanks and planes, his bullets and katyushas and bombs, his suicide murderers (Bamidbar Rabba 20:13). Our power emanates from our voice, our Torah, our Tefillah. We have no other source of energy. "Some with chariots, and some with horses; but we, in the Name of Hashem, our G-d, call out. They slumped and fell, but we arose and were invigorated (Tehillim 20:8-9)." To try to beat them at their own game is a suicide mission. And we are not suicidal. As we prepare for redemption, let us participate in the one endeavor that is guaranteed to succeed. Run to Torah -- run to life!

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From: ohr@ohr.edu To: dafyomi@ohr.edu Subject: Weekly DAFootnotes - #50

Weekly DAFootnotes Bava Batra 107-113; Issue #50 For the week of 3 Av, 5762 / July 12 2002 BY RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

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All in the Family

When someone is considering a woman for marriage, advises the Sage Rava, it would be wise for him to check on her brothers. The source for this advice is the passage in the Torah which informs us that "Aharon took as a wife Elisheva, the daughter of Aminadav and sister of Nachshon" (Shmot 6:23). After telling us that she was the daughter of Aminadav, why was it necessary to also let us know who her brother was? The answer is that Aharon married her because her brother Nachshon was the head of the Tribe of Yehuda, and this teaches us the importance of checking out the brothers of the intended mate.

The reason for this investigation is not to determine the character of the woman but rather to ensure that the children she will bear will be of good character. This is based on what our Sages tell us in this very same gemara that most children take after their mother's brothers. This reason is the background of an interesting dispute between two brother Tosefists. The gemara (Mesechtah Yevamot 62b) has high praise for someone who marries his sister's daughter. Rashbam (Rabbi Shmuel ben Meir, grandson of Rashi) contends that this praise extends also to marrying a brother's daughter, and the only reason the sister's daughter is mentioned is because a sister is more likely to persuade her brother to marry her daughter. Rabbeinu Tam (Rabbi Yakov ben Meir, grandson of Rashi and brother of Rashbam) disagrees. His reasoning is that only in the case of marrying a sister's daughter is it considered an ideal marriage, because she takes after her uncle and they are therefore perfectly matched, a situation which does not necessarily exist in regard to a brother's daughter.

Bava Batra 111a

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