

## **Parashah SH'LACH L'CHA**

(Send for Yourself)

Num. 13:1-15:41, Josh. 2:1-24, Heb. 3:7-4:1

**THEME: FEAR VS. FAITH**

**Def faith rom.**

Summary: In this week's parashah, Moshe (Moses) sends 12 spies (M'raglim) into the land of Canaan to spy the land. They came back with **huge clusters of grapes**, for it was the **season of the first ripe grapes**. (Numbers 13:20) Here is a picture of the grapes from our own grapevine in Ramat Razel in Israel. Delicious! But ten of the spies also brought back an 'evil report' about the giants of the Land, which caused the people of Israel to become discouraged and fearful of going in to possess their inheritance. This lack of faith provoked God's wrath, and He condemned the Israelites to wander in the midbar (wilderness) for forty years, a year for each day that the spies were in the land. A journey that should have taken eleven days took four decades! And even then, it ended in death and defeat; as most of the Israelites never made it into the Promised Land. Only two men, Hoshea (Joshua) and Calev (Caleb), entered the land because they trusted wholly in the Lord. They believed that with His help, they could overcome all obstacles, defeat the giants, and take the land! Why is this message so important? In the end times, we may be forced to re-live these tests of the Israelites in the wilderness. Therefore we must learn from their mistakes so that we and our children will not repeat them but rather pass quickly through the wilderness trials victoriously and cross over the Jordan into the Promised Land.



### The Mitzvah of Aliyah (Immigrating to Israel)

The following is an excerpt from Israel Center Torah Tidbits (June 23,24 '00)

"My father my teacher used to get very agitated on Shabbat Parashat Shlach and expressed his amazement at what seemed to him to be the gross ignoring of the lessons from the Sin of the Spies. How can Jews today, religious Jews, sincere Jews, continue to commit this most heinous of sins? If you want to boil down the Sin of the Spies to one trite but true expression, we can say that 10 of the 12 Meraglim returned from their "tour" of Israel with the following reaction: *"It's a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to*

*live there.*" Look at how the spies were punished. Look at what happened to the whole generation that panicked upon hearing their report and "recommendations". And then listen to how many people, good Jews, knowledgeable Jews, sincere religious Jews – say the same thing today.

There are some who will proudly show you their passports with dozens of entry and exit stamps. *"I visit Israel two or three times a year!"* But what about Aliyah?

*"Are you kidding? I would never go on Aliyah. You'd have to be crazy" ...*

In my first days back in the land of Israel, fears and doubts assaulted me (Hannah) – fears of an unknown future in an unfamiliar land. But one day, I accompanied my daughter, Courtney on a doctor's appointment in Beit Shemesh and there, on the shelf, *'just happened'* to be a book called *'The Mitzvah<sup>1</sup> to Live in Eretz Israel'*. Written on the cover were the words, *"Take for Free"*, so I did. This book greatly encouraged me that, despite the obstacles and challenges of living in Israel, God has called us to return and He will therefore keep us. Each time the difficulties threatened to overwhelm me, God would find some way to encourage me to keep pressing on in faith. One time it was through a religious woman I picked up hitchhiking, who shared her own story. Her parents made aliyah many years ago and it was very hard for them, but now their children, including her, are all fluent in the culture and language of the Land and very happy to live in Israel. *"There is no better place in all the world for Jewish people to live"*, she said. *"You have done the right thing in coming home to 'Eretz Yisrael' (the Land of Israel)"*, she assured me. I asked if she was afraid of hitchhiking and she looked at me like I was crazy! She said, *"I am not afraid of anything in this land – not terrorists, not Arabs, not anything – because I know that God is watching over us and He will keep us safe in our Land."* I broke down and wept when I heard her comforting words.

Another time, doubts kept coming into my mind, especially when my husband was denied entry into the Land. Now I would be completely on my own here. Is it still God's will for us to stay in the Land, I wondered? I visited a mission for prostitutes in Tel Aviv and there on the wall was a poster with a scripture that read, **"I will plant you in this Land, never again to be uprooted from the Land I have given you."** Again, God strengthened my faith and determination that even though we had failed in the past, that this time our roots would go deep enough to keep us here. It takes radical faith to believe God for the strength, courage, and provision to make aliyah. We all need encouragement to press on in faith.

The spies were faulted for attempting to remove Aliyah from the agenda of the Jewish people. They discouraged the people from wanting to fulfill God's will. That was Calev's point: If this is what God wants, then of course we will be able to succeed.

The important lessons to be gained from this parashah for all of us is FAITH!

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<sup>1</sup> Mitzvah – commandments or good deed

What is faith? Faith is **“The substance of which we hope for but do not yet see.”**(Heb. 11:1) If we can see it, we no longer need faith. We cannot say, like the world, *“I’ll believe it when I see it.”* No, we are Kingdom people who say, *“I believe it, therefore according to the Word of God, I will see it.”* I know that there are some situations that we just can’t fix; but even in these seemingly ‘hopeless’ circumstances, we always have the hope of eternity where everything will be perfect forever!

Hebrews 11:6 states that **without faith, it is impossible to please God.**

Before leaving Canada to make Aliyah to Israel, we heard many ‘evil reports’ about the land – that surely it “devours its inhabitants.” We determined not to let these reports discourage us, and even decided that when the number of evil reports reached ten (the number of negative spies), it was time to go! But, we soon discovered that there surely are giants in the land; that these reports were not false. I remember, after facing one of the most formidable giants of them all, named *‘Misrad Hapnim’* (The Ministry of the Interior), and being told that they would not grant us citizenship because of our faith in Yeshua. After hearing of their refusal to grant us citizenship I felt very discouraged.



We were living in Netanya at the time, having a great time on the coast – on our honeymoon! But to think that we would be denied our right to live here in the Promised Land because we followed Yeshua the Messiah? Unthinkable! I ran down the steps to the sea, fell on my face in the sand, and wept, crying out to God – *“Why did you call us home and bring us all this way only to send us back into exile in defeat?”* That evening, we went to the Kehilla (congregation) and guess what was the parashah? Of course, it was Shlach Lecha, the exact same one we are on this Shabbat. The elder of the congregation gave a stirring commentary, exhorting us to faith in a great and mighty God, for it was not only us facing tremendous trials and difficulties

in the land. The giants battle against all people here, but they especially war against those who keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Yeshua. (Rev. 12:17)

The Holy Spirit convicted me deeply of my sin of unbelief; I repented, and held firm by faith to God's promises in His eternal word for our place of inheritance in this land.

And you likely know the rest of the story from my book, Journey to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> By a miracle, Misrad Hapnim did, in fact finally grant my citizenship. This is a lesson for all of us, not just for citizenship in the land of Israel, but for every giant, every challenge, every problem that we face. We must not cave in to discouraging reports; to the things we see around us. If you feel like you're sinking – don't look down! Look to Yeshua, who is ever ready to extend His saving hand to us, for He knows our weaknesses. Yeshua rebuked Peter, saying, **“O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”** (Matthew 14:31) Yeshua told the disciples that they were not able to cast out the demon because of their own unbelief. He said if we have faith as a mustard seed, we will say to the mountain to move and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for us. (Matthew 17:20)

Many of us, including myself, need to trust God for what seems impossible in the natural. We must take a lesson from the Israelites and beware of indulging in the sin of unbelief. **1 Cor 10:5** says that God was not well pleased with most of the Israelites, and for this reason, most of their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. We certainly do not want to share this same fate! We are warned not to complain as some of them also complained, and were therefore destroyed. **“Now when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; for the Lord heard it, and His anger was aroused.”** (Num. 11:1) It is faith that pleases God, not whining and complaining.

While living in Ariel, I witnessed an example of the destructiveness of complaining and unbelief. We paid home visits to several people experiencing serious problems in their lives. One, a single woman from Leningrad, had her son apprehended by Israeli Social Services on charges of child abuse, an accusation that was completely false she insisted. Upon hearing her story, I wept with compassion at all the trials and difficulties she has been through. Later, however, as I thought about our conversation, I realized that everything she said about Israel was negative. The land is bad, the people are awful, the busses make her sick, it's too hot, she can't find work here; the kids are always ill, and on and on it went. She claimed that everything was wonderful in Leningrad and she made a mistake to come here to Israel. After listening to her – and she had some real valid complaints – I almost felt like getting out of the country ASAP! Negativity is a dangerous and contagious disease. It brings death and destruction. Have you ever noticed that some people just seem to attract more than their fair share of trouble? Could it be that we bring at least some of these things upon ourselves by the fearful, negative, faith-less thoughts we think and words we speak? Complaining is the opposite of thankfulness. We can always find something to complain about, but the Word tells us to focus on whatever is good,

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<sup>2</sup> You can order Journey to Jerusalem and other books & DVD's from our website:  
[www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)

right, true, lovely...We can choose to complain or choose to find something to be thankful about.

Faith may be compared to a trapeze act in a circus. One stands on a thin bar high in the air, sometimes blindfolded, waiting to hear the call to jump. The acrobat must instantly leap – with absolute trust that the one at the other end will catch her or him securely. It may even be a matter of life or death!



We are called to ‘fight the good fight of faith’. The giant we are truly doing battle with is a spirit of fear – fear of the unknown...will it work out? Will God really come through? Where the battle is the most intense is ‘in the middle’ – in transition – when we’ve left where we’ve been and have not yet arrived at where we’re going to be. Left Egypt but not yet in Canaan. Saved but not yet walking in the promises. The temptation is to doubt and fall into unbelief and complaining, negativity. The only way we will ever reach the ‘Promised Land’ is by keeping an attitude of faith no matter what the circumstances look like. We must get ahold of God and obey His command to be strong and of good courage.

**Perfect love casts out fear.** Much depends upon the words we speak – death and life may be found in the power of the tongue. (Prov. 18:21) We must also be careful to the words we listen to! We can choose to listen to faith-filled messages from the Word of God, or we can listen to the evil reports in the media or from fearful, negative-minded companions.

**Num. 13:27:** *“Yes, the land does flow with milk and honey and here is the fruit, but....there are huge giants!”* **BUT** is a small word but its potential to destroy dreams is immense! I have a vision to do this, but....The spies spoke truth but in a way that demoralized the people. Joshua and Caleb also saw the giants – they did not live in denial - but they kept their eyes fixed on God. We can focus on the size & strength of our enemy or on the size & strength of our God. Instead of telling God how huge our enemies are, we should be telling our enemies how great and powerful our God is! Caleb said, **“let us go up at once!** (v. 30) He didn’t procrastinate to do the will of God. Waiting can bring on reasoning and our heads can talk out hearts out of doing God’s will.

Here is the difference:

Caleb and Joshua spoke faith: We are well able to overcome it (v. 30)

10 Spies spoke fear: We are not able..... (v. 31)

There are two types of people: the ‘we are well able’ ‘I think I can’ people; and the ‘we are not able..’ ‘I don’t think I can’ people. Like Joshua and Caleb, we can choose to be a positive, faith-filled, person who encourages others to be strong and of good courage. Beware pessimistic, fear-filled, negative, ‘kvetchers’ (complainers). They can destroy our faith! Sometimes the only thing wrong with our life is that we’ve been spending too much time with people like the ten spies who are more than happy to tell us the *but* of why we are not able. When we’ve been under an *oppressive ‘slave type’ situation* for any length of time, such as control, domination, or manipulation, we may have a tendency to think of why we can’t do this or that...

our confidence has been shattered. We have to build ourselves up again. Speaking daily positive affirmations, reading inspiring biographies, and listening to faith-filled messages, will all help to strengthen our faith. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Forming new associations with positive people of faith may be necessary. We must beware hanging out with the slaves that want to go back into bondage and are afraid of the challenges of freedom. Eagles don't belong in the chicken yard, squawking and running for cover of the chicken coop in fear. Eagles soar higher - on the winds above the storms.

Only overcomers will inherit the Kingdom. Look at the huge rewards that overcomers will receive: (Rev. 2:7, 11,17,26; 3:5,21)

- privilege of eating from the tree of life in Paradise,
- protection from the second death,
- hidden manna to eat,
- a new name written on a white stone,
- power over the nations,
- clothed in white garments,
- name in the book of Life,
- the right to sit with the Lord on His throne.

Wow!

We must learn to overcome fear and walk in faith. Only those who walk in faith rather than fear will be fit for the Promised Land. All those who caved in to fear (cowards) died in the wilderness. Cowards also will not enter the Kingdom. (Rev. 21:8) **God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind.**<sup>3</sup> **If God be for us, who can be against us? Greater is He that is in me than He that is in the world.** We can confess these scriptures and fill our hearts with faith. We can write these words out and put them on our doorposts and our gates, to remind us daily to be strong and of good courage for the Lord our God is with us! Halleluyah!

Deliverance: Sometimes, an evil, tormenting spirit of fear can gain entrance into our life and attempt to control us. Oftentimes, these or other spirits of darkness (anger, lust, etc) find an open door through generational or personal sin. Perhaps our parents allowed us to watch a horror movie as a child. Some of the TV and movies that people watch may inspire fear. We may need to renounce this spirit of fear and pray for deliverance from it in the powerful name of Yeshua! Then we need to believe in our heart and confess with our mouth, "I am well able." **I can do all things through the Messiah who strengthens me.** Like young David speaking bold words of faith as he ran towards the mighty Goliath, we must never run against a giant with our mouth closed. Many of us have been silenced through people shutting us down, but we must open our mouths and speak God's word over our every challenge. We must stop speaking the problem; instead speak the word of God over that situation.

Build up a record of victories: King Saul tried to dissuade David, saying, "*You are not able...*" (1 Sam 17:35) His brothers accused him of acting out of ego. His father didn't even consider him when Samuel asked to see all his sons to choose the next

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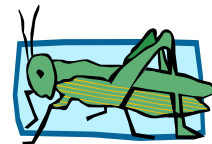
<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim 1:7

King of Israel. Now how bad is that? When your own father just leaves you out with the sheep and doesn't even consider you a possibility for success!? But David had already experienced times of victory with God and he called upon those memories to gird him with courage greater than any heavy armor. He said, God has helped me kill a lion and a bear and God will help me kill this giant too. It is essential that we build up a history of successes with God. We can keep a memory box or scrapbook of times when God helped us, healed us, protected us, saved us, or provided for us that will build our faith as we review all the great things God has done for us in the past. Recently I heard a message about trusting God for financial provision. They asked for personal stories so that night I sat down and wrote out just a few of the many, many ways that God supernaturally provided for us when we made aliyah to Israel. At the end, I was amazed all over again at the incredible faithfulness of God and encouraged to trust Him even more.

I used to read a story to my children about a small train engine called The Little Engine that Could who wanted to do something great but encountered difficulties along the way. But rather than allowing these obstacles to 'stop him in his tracks', he overcome to victory. Like this little but courageous engine, we can keep repeating to ourselves, "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can..." There are times when it seems that all is lost – like when the avalanche lands on the little engine and it looks like the fire has been completely extinguished. It is at these times that cruel voices of accusation and self-doubt assault us saying, *You're too little! Too weak! You'll never make it!* "We can believe it and think, *"They're right. I can't do it. I'll never make it. I guess I might as well go back ..... (to whatever oppression and bondage we came out of).* But then we see the tiny glow of a small light. And the little engine comes back to life and completes his mission of bringing toys to the children. Yeshua has the power to resurrect us to life from the dead. If we have faith small as a mustard seed....nothing will be impossible ....

v. 32: Beware slander, gossip: The ten spies spread an evil report of the land. This is the sin of slander, called in Hebrew Lashon Harah. It was the same sin that brought God's judgment upon Miriam, Moses' sister (she was struck with leprosy). We must be very careful of spreading malicious gossip about others, especially those that God has sanctified and set apart for His holy purposes.

Numbers 13:33: They saw themselves as grasshoppers and so others saw them that way too. How we see ourselves is how we project ourselves to others. Our self image is very important. **As a man thinketh so is he.** When I began a new job of teaching English in the Israeli public schools, I was so nervous on my first day. I walked into the bathroom and there was a poster of a lion looking at himself in the mirror and the sign read, *"How you see yourself is very important."* How do we see ourselves? How do we speak about ourselves?



Mephiboshet, crippled son of Johnathan, son of King Saul, called himself a 'dead dog' instead of a covenant son of royal lineage. He even lived in a place called Loh Davar, which in Hebrew is literally no thing. Mephiboshet saw himself as a nobody from nowhere, and I suspect that many of us see ourselves that way too. But King David, a type of the Messiah, sought out someone from Johnathan's family whom he could bless. He brought Mephiboshet to the Royal Palace to eat forever from His table and



to receive the lands which were rightfully his. Yeshua is seeking covenant sons and daughters that He can bless also. God is longing to be gracious to as well. It's time to move from Loh Davar to the palace and dine at the King's table. It's time to see ourselves as God's segulah (special treasure), created in God's image (carrying a spark of God's divine presence – Shechinah)

The balance to this is that although we are not to see ourselves as grasshoppers or lowly worms, we are also not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. IT is a paradox to know that, although we are created in the image of the Almighty God and His highest creation, we are also warned that without Him, we can do nothing; but with God all things are possible. God plus one makes a majority.

Adding God (Yah) makes all the difference: What made Joshua and Caleb different? The Word says that **they possessed a different spirit**. (Numbers 14:24). They followed God wholeheartedly. They had also been slaves; also endured the hardship and oppression of Egypt, but they chose to be overcomers through faith. We have to have a different spirit than the world that is succumbing to fear – of financial collapse, of plagues and terrorism. We are different than the world and God makes a distinction between His covenant children and those outside His protection. Joshua used to be called Hoshea but then God changed it to Y'hoshua. (Num 13:16) by adding the tiniest of the Hebrew letters – the yud. It is a letter that stands for Yah, a name for God, Adding the yud brought God into the picture. With God all things are possible.



Yeshua said, I am the vine you are the branches. Remain in me. Abide in me. By yourselves you can do nothing.

Num. 14:1 **And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried and wept.** Note that not all crying and weeping is pleasing to God. Could at least some of our weeping actually be evidence of our unbelief? We can be joyful in hope.

Here are some of the sins that are recorded against the Israelites that we can be warned not to follow:

- \* Complaining: They murmured against leadership - Moses and Aaron.
- \* Doubt: They doubted the goodness of God – **“Why has God brought us out here just to fall by the sword?”** (Numbers 14:3)
- \* Victim Mentality & Negative Expectation: They confessed their fear instead of their faith – they predicted the worst possible outcome ...called disasterizing: They cried, **“our wives and out little ones will be a prey (victims).** The problem was that they saw themselves not as free people, but as victims. Years of bondage in Egypt caused them to hold a victim mentality rather than attitude of a victor. They expected the worst. Negative expectation will never bring a positive result.. What are we expecting? Are we expecting to see God's goodness in the land of the living? Are we expecting that our teenager is going to turn out okay and that our children will serve the Lord? Or are we expecting that our families are going to be just 'prey' for the enemy? Are we expecting to go broke? To get cancer and die early? Or are we expecting to prosper even in a famine and to be in good health even as our soul



prosper? It is so important to maintain a positive expectation, a positive confession, trusting in the goodness and the power of God.

We must renew our minds in the word of God and know that we are more than conquerors in Him. He always leads us in triumph in Messiah Yeshua. He will cause all things to work together for our good. What comes out of our mouth usually begins in our mind – what are we thinking about and meditating on? The real battle is in our mind – to gain control of our negative and destructive thoughts and bring them into alignment with the Truth of the Word of God.

\* They looked back in regret, **“If only we had died in the Land of Egypt...If only we had died in the wilderness...”**<sup>4</sup>“If only we hadn’t listened to Moses....” We can drive ourselves crazy with the ‘if only’s”

When things got tough, they wanted to go back. They cried, Let us select a leader and return to Egypt. (Numbers 14:4)

Fear wants to drive us back into bondage. We had made this same mistake ourselves. When the Ministry of Interior gave orders to my husband to leave the country we gave up and went back to Canada instead of entering into a battle for our inheritance. When we move into something new, we must never look back and say, *“Oh, it was better for me back there.”* We are likely seeing things with ‘rose-colored glasses’ with a distorted view or memory. There is always the tendency to want to go back to what was familiar, thinking it wasn’t really that bad! No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God. Lot’s wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. We will also be paralyzed if we look back. The prophet Isaiah wrote, **“Forget the former things....Behold I do a new thing....”** (Isa. 43:18-19) We must look to the new and good thing that God has for our lives, pressing on in faith.

Joshua & Calev tried to inspire faith in the people. Oh, how we need people like this who see the possibilities, not the obstacles. We can determine to be this sort of a person for others. **“Do not rebel against the Lord; neither fear the people of the Land. They are bread for us (lachmeinu hem.)** (Numbers 14:9) Like the manna (their bread) it would just melt away. We need not fear the giants; they are bread for us. **Their protection has departed from them and The Lord is with us. Do not fear them.”** But the congregation would not listen; they tried to stone the messengers of faith. Not everyone wants to receive a message about faith; they want to stay stuck in fear and their victim mentality, and then blame it all on God.

God responded in anger and frustration, **“How long will this people despise Me? And how long will they not believe in (have faith – ya’amin) Me, after all the signs and wonders I have shown them?”** (Numbers 14: 11) We show our love for God by refusing to give in to fear, doubt and unbelief but maintaining our faith in Him. Without faith it’s impossible to please God. When we give into fear, it’s as if we despise God and don’t believe in Him. We are called Believers because we are supposed to actually believe in and trust God.

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<sup>4</sup> Numbers 14:2

God actually threatens to strike them all down with pestilence and to disinherit the people of Israel, offering to start over again with Moses and make a new nation with him. (Numbers 14:12) But Moses refuses the generous offer and pleads for God to save the nation of Israel and bring them into the Land. Moses was called the most humble man on face of the earth. Does the Christian Church walk in this humility or are they content to say, *“That’s right God, the Jews blew it, so go ahead and start over again with us. We, the Church, will be the ‘new Israel’* This is a false doctrine called replacement theology. We are called to walk in humility and to contending with God for His promises for Israel. Like Moses, we can appeal to the nature and character of God as “rav chessed” full of mercy & grace. (Numbers 14:15-18)

**Prophecy life!** God says, **“Just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you. The carcasses of you who complained against me shall fall in the wilderness...except for Calev...and Joshua...you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness.”** (Numbers 14:29-32) Ouch!

God is basically saying that they prophesied their own destruction upon themselves. He said, *“You said you will die so shall it be.”* We truly have the power of life or death in our tongues. We can prophecy life or death. God told the prophet Ezekiel to prophecy life to the dry bones. We can do the same for our own dry bones. What are we speaking? Life or death? Maybe we should listen to ourselves more closely. Are we maybe wondering why we are struggling or suffering? The answer could be right under our nose! Is it possible we have spoken destruction with our mouth in a moment of upset or anger?

God hears our words. God may make promises to us but they may be conditional upon our faith-filled rather than fear-filled words to fulfill them. There exists immense creative power in the spoken and written word. God spoke the entire universe into existence! (God said....and it was created). God’s promises are only possibilities; we need to add the catalyst of faith to bring them into being.

**“ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. These things are written as our examples”** (1 Cor 10:5) We don’t need to make the same mistakes: idolatry, unbelief, lust, complaining. Whether or not we walk in ‘faith-fulness’ affects not only ourselves but also future generations. If we do not choose to get take hold of faith and overcome fear, then it is our children and children’s children that will bear the brunt as well. **“Your children will bear the brunt of your infidelity”** (Numbers 14:33). Our children can definitely make it into the ‘Promised Land’, even if we are unfaithful, but when we walk in fear instead of faith, it makes the journey much more difficult for future generations. Fear and unbelief may keep our children in the wilderness longer than is necessary.

Numbers 14: 42,44: Beware presumption: They presumed to go up (without the Lord now) but were defeated. Neither the ark of the covenant, nor Moses departed from the camp. We must beware of presumption - of doing things in the flesh in our own

strength and timing. If God's presence does not go with us, we had better just stay home! Sometimes God just says no.

Numbers 15:16: One torah and one ordinance for both the native born Israelite and the stranger who joins them. Haven't the Gentiles joined the commonwealth of Israel through the blood of the Jewish Messiah? Grafted into the olive tree? God wants one new man and one way, not a double standard for Jews and Gentiles. His Torah is the way of life.

Numbers 15:32 When a man was caught gathering sticks on Shabbat, the Lord said to stone him. Breaking the Sabbath a serious offence.

God has given us six days to gather and work for our provision, but we are no longer slaves. We have a right and privilege and obligation to obey the command to rest on the seventh day Sabbath.

Numbers 15: 38: The commandment to wear tzitzit – the fringes on garments with a thread of blue. The color of blue used in this scripture is not cahol (dark blue) but t'chelet (sky blue). Many religious Jews wear the tzitzit but without the blue thread. Others use a prayer shawl, called a Tallit, like the one in this picture. It is usually only wore during prayer times or religious ceremonies and is also missing the blue thread. This is an example of how some religious people keep man-made traditions that transgress the commandments of God. They maintain a false belief that the thread had to be dyed with the blood of a rare mollusk found in the waters near the coast of Phoenicia. They dye was scarce so the rabbis decreed that only white threads are required. So they wear only white. Dark blue (cahol) is being sold on a small scale since it is believed that the snail has been found again (for a high price). This is not sky blue (t'chelet). You can get the tzitzit with the light blue thread through many Messianic distributors (or just make your own). The outward act of looking at the fringes with a thread of blue is to remind us of heaven on a moment by moment basis. It is a physical reminder that we are to be heavenly minded.



Haftorah: In the prophetic portion of Scripture for this week, it is 39 years later and now Joshua, Moses' successor is in leadership, preparing to take the children of Israel across the Jordan into the Promised Land. Again, spies are sent out to check out the Land; but whereas the first spying mission was characterized by fear, this one is about faith. Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, taught the spies about faith. She said, ***“Indeed, YHVH your God is the only God in the heavens above and on the earth below.”***

Rahab then secured the crimson or scarlet cord (representing the blood of Yeshua and the cord of Covenant) to the window. Rahab in Jericho had such faith in the God of Israel that she hid the spies and was therefore the only one saved. It was not her righteousness (she was a prostitute) but only her demonstration of faith in the God of Israel by her willingness to help the Israelite spies. If we have faith, our acts should show it - faith without works is dead. Rahab also teaches us about importance of showing kindness and standing with Israel against her enemies. What would you do if faced with an opportunity to help an Israelite or Jewish person if it puts your life at risk? Like Ruth, a Moabite who showed kindness to Naomi, Rahab also helped Israel and was rewarded with salvation of herself and her household. Even though she was

not Israelite by birth, her kindness (chesed) towards Israel earned her a reward. Rahab, Canaanite prostitute, is forever recorded in the Bible as a great woman of faith in chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews.

Her name, “Rachav”, means wide or broad in Hebrew. She was a person open to a wide range of possibilities. She could see broadly. Can we? Do we have ‘broad, possibility thinking?’ or narrow, small minded thinking?

The crimson cord – Rahab foreshadows how non-Jews would join the nation of Israel through the blood of the Messiah that brings salvation. The blood opens the previous boundaries and lets outsiders in. Rahab saves her family with the crimson cord – like the blood of the lamb over the doorposts of the Israelite homes that were saved from destruction. Rahab lied in order to save the Israelite spies’ lives. Some Christians question whether or not lying is ever justified; but we can also note in the exodus story that Shifra & Puah, the two midwives, also lied to save the Israelite babies. (Ex. 1:15-21). God rewarded their faith with houses for themselves because they trusted in God more than they feared man. God also rewarded Rahab for her courage by granting her a place with the children of Israel.

Rahab teaches us about faith, loyalty, kindness and about not judging people by what they do, especially the sins of their past.

Rahab, a non-Israelite, had more faith in God than the ten spies that Moses sent out previously. She said, **“I know...that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you...”** (Josh 2:9) This reminds us that our enemies will melt away before us, just like the manna. They are ‘bread for us’, as Caleb and Joshua declared. Do we have the faith to believe it? Whatever ‘giants’ we are facing today, we can trust God that it will melt away in the presence of God!

Psalm 37:9-10: **“For evildoers shall be cut off; but those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; indeed, you will look carefully for his place, but it shall be no more...I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.”** (35,36)

Let us determine to trust in God wholeheartedly, as did Joshua and Caleb, for every battle that looms before us, for every challenge we face. I want to encourage you that no matter what you are facing today, choose to praise the Lord. Choose to declare His goodness. Our words have tremendous power, and they open the door for either God to work in our life or the enemy to work. Instead of magnifying our problems today, let us magnify our God!

Scripture says that God inhabits the praises of His people. When we praise Him, He shows up and all the forces of the enemy have to flee! Giants fall at our feet with a single stone. There’s no foe that can stand against us in the presence of Almighty God! Remember that because God lives, because God is on our side, we can face whatever we need to face and emerge victorious. Halleluyah!

*“You should not be satisfied with being a victim, nor with being a survivor.  
You should aim to be a conqueror.”*

Dr. Laura Schlessinger, author of *Bad Childhood, Good life*.

## SHABBAT SHALOM !

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### Additional Suggested Resources:

Walking in the Wilderness (DVD) [www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)  
Articles: I think I can, Scattercat, Living as a Sukkah (Playing it Safe)  
John Bevere: Victory in the Wilderness

Please receive this blessing I send you from Zion:

**Y'VARECH'CHA ADONAI V'YISHM'RECHA  
YA'ER ADONAI PANA V A LECHA VICHUNECHA  
YISA ADONAI PANA V ALECHA  
V'YASEM L'CHA SHALOM**

**MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU  
MAY THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE SHINE UPON YOU AND BE  
GRACIOUS TO YOU  
MAY THE LORD LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE UPON YOU  
AND GIVE YOU PEACE**

Shabbat Shalom & Love in Yeshua,

Hannah

### About the Author:

Hannah Nesher grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching Christians about the Jewish roots of their faith.



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**“For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isaiah 2:3)**

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