



# KINDER TORAH®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table  
Parshas Shelach

## Remember the Miracles

The *Eser Makkos* (Ten Plagues) in Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, the sustenance in the desert, and the war with Amalek were all miraculous events. They are the types that become etched in a person's memory and stay with him for a lifetime. Unforgettable. Or are they forgettable? Rabbeinu Bechaye comments that the Jewish people's faith diminished at the time of the sin of the spies. They did not remember all of those miracles that Hashem performed for them just a short time ago. In fact the miracles continued even during the sin! The *mun* continued to fall! Hashem guaranteed them a miraculous conquest of the Land of Israel. As Yehoshua and Calev said, "Hashem is with us. Do not fear them" (Bamidbar 14:9). If they would have remembered the past miracles, then they would have realized that a miraculous conquest was no more difficult for Hashem than splitting the Red Sea. Perhaps the whole *Chet HaMeraglim* could have been avoided.

### Kinderlach . . .

*How many tovot (good things) has Hashem done for us? I am sure that we can all recall some special time where we saw Hashem's hand clearly helping us. Perhaps we needed some money to do a particular mitzvah, and Hashem sent us the exact amount that we needed. Or perhaps we felt trapped in a difficult situation with no way out, and Hashem turned it all around for us. We should try to remember these things. The next time that we are faced with a challenge, we can face it calmly; knowing that Hashem is with us. Remember how He helped us in the past. A good time to remember Hashem's chasodim (acts of kindness) is during the beracha of Modim Anachnu Lach in the Amidah. Three times a day you can remember the miracles. If you do that kinderlach, you are on your way to becoming giants in emunah.*

## How You See It

"Go see the land (of Israel). What is it like?" (Bamidbar 13:18). Thus began the mission of the *meraglim*

(spies). They were sent to spy out the land of Israel; specifically to answer these questions: "Are the inhabitants of the land strong or weak, many or few? Is the land good or bad, fertile or lean, wooded or barren? Are the cities open or fortified?" They returned from their forty-day mission with a report of a rich land flowing with milk and honey, with powerful inhabitants who lived in fortified cities.

The Ramban zt"l comments that they answered all of the questions correctly. Yet the Torah reports that they committed a disastrous sin. What did they do wrong? They used a little word that means nothing, yet it changed the meaning of everything. "*Efes*" (Bamidbar 13:28) is translated as "nothing". The land, although it is wonderful, is worth nothing to us because we cannot conquer it. The inhabitants are too powerful. Although Hashem had promised the Jewish people that they would inherit the land, the *meraglim* questioned Hashem's credibility. This was their sin. Calev and Yehoshua saw things differently. They tried to salvage the situation by assuring the Jewish people that the inhabitants were easily defeated. However, their pleas fell on deaf ears. The other *meraglim* had convinced them to see things in a negative light.

### Kinderlach . . .

*Conquering the Land of Israel certainly looked difficult. Many things in life appear difficult. How do we react to difficulties? Do we rebel as the meraglim did? Do we get discouraged and just give up? Or do we look at it as a challenge? Hashem put us in this situation for a reason. See the positive in it. Great challenges make great people. Give it your best. B'ezras Hashem you will get siyata dishmaya (heavenly assistance) and succeed.*

## True Strength

The *Chet HaMeraglim* (Sin of the Spies). A terrible sin, whose effects we still feel to this day. The night of the sin was Tisha B'Av, a night which became earmarked for disasters all throughout Jewish history. Due to the magnitude of the sin, Hashem wanted to wipe out the entire Jewish

people except for Moshe Rabbeinu. He would then make a new nation with Moshe as its patriarch. Moshe pleaded with Hashem to save our people. "And now, may the strength of the Lord grow" (Bamidbar 14:17). What type of a plea is this? A show of Hashem's strength sounds like the opposite of what Moshe Rabbeinu wants. He would use His strength to annihilate us. Rabbeinu Bechaye explains that we must read the next verse. "Hashem, Slow to Anger, Abundant in Kindness, Forgiver of Sin, and Negligence" (Bamidbar 14:18). This is Hashem's strength. He has patience (Slow to Anger) which is a tremendous power to break the trait of wrath.

### Kinderlach . . .

*How do we measure strength? Do we say that a strong person is one who can lift up a heavy weight? Or can kick a soccer ball very far? What about the commander of a massive army? Or the ruler of a powerful nation? Ben Zoma has a different measure of strength (Pirkei Avos 4:1) Who is a strong person? One who conquers his desire. As it says, "He who is slow to anger is better than a strong man. One who rules over his spirit is better than one who conquers a city" (Mishlei 16:32). We know who the strongest enemy is. The yetzer hara (evil inclination). Conquering him is a real feat of strength. Whenever you feel yourself getting upset, take a few deep breaths. Speak in a low voice. Perhaps walk away until you calm down. By doing this, you are exercising your "patience muscles". With enough exercise, you will become the strongest person around! Nothing will get you upset.*

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