

having to make hard choices and not having to become self-reliant.

Even the sojourn in the desert of Sinai appealed to them for they were free from the everyday challenges of toil, tilling the land, building communities and constantly defending themselves from the enemies that would always surround them. To a great extent it was this deep fear of independence and all of the challenges that independence would bring with it that motivated the Jewish people to accept the negative report that the ten spies presented and to long for foreign domination over personal and national independence.

Much of the ambivalence that is present today in the Jewish world regarding the State of Israel stems from this fear of independence and longing to belong to a foreign nation that will somehow alleviate our problems and make us less special. The millennia of Jewish history reflect this inner psychological struggle, which exists within us. As is often the case in human affairs, it is the minority report of Caleb and Yehoshua that proves to be correct and beneficial. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tendler

This week's Haftarah relates the story of Yehoshua sending Kalev and Pinchas to spy out Yericho, their encounter with Rachav, and their report confirming the fear of Yericho's inhabitants. The connection to our Parsha is obvious, however the outcome of this "second mission"

Minyan Schedule

Erev Shabbat Parashat Shelach
Candle lighting 1/07/16 4.39 pm
Mincha (Mizrachi) 4.45 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat 6.00 pm

Shabbat Parashat Shelach
Shacharit 2/07/16 9.15 am
Children's Service 10.00 am
Mincha (Mizrachi) 4.30 pm
Shabbat ends 5.38 pm

Rosh Chodesh 1 Tamuz 6/07/16
Rosh Chodesh 2 Tamuz 7/07/16

Erev Shabbat Parashat Korach
Candle lighting 8/07/16 4.42 pm
Mincha (Mizrachi) 4.45 pm

Announcements

**Kiddush is sponsored by
The Synagogue**

**Mazal Tov to Vicki Liebovitz
and Daniel Salek and family
on the birth of a son and
brother, Edward (Asaf)**

Welcome back to David Levy

**Shiurim with Rabbi Ysoscher
Katz and Dr Sharon Flatto
Shabbat afternoon and
evening**

was far different than the first one 38 years earlier. The year was 2488 -1273 b.c.e. *Rabbi Aron Tendler and torah.org.*

Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Shabbat Parashat Shelach

26 Sivan 5776; 2 July, 2016

Shabbat Torah reading: Stone Chumash
page 798, Haftarah page 1184.

President Jonathan Erlich

Rabbi-in-residence

D'var Torah Rabbi Ysoscher Katz

Make Up Your Own Mind Rabbi Marc D. Angel

Moses appointed the top leader of each tribe to spy out the promised land. When they completed their mission, ten of the twelve spies told the Israelites that the natives of the land were mighty giants, that the Israelites would be unable to conquer them. The people lost heart, mourning their dismal fate. Caleb and Joshua were the two spies who spoke words of encouragement, assuring the Israelites that the land was good and that they would surely succeed in their march into it. But the people listened to the ten spies. Morale sank. G-d's anger rose: He punished the people by telling them that their

generation had proven unworthy to enter the land. They would remain in the wilderness for 40 years. Their children would then enter the land. Caleb and Joshua were rewarded for their faithfulness, by being promised that they would survive the wilderness experience and would be privileged to enter the land.

Why did the ten spies bring back a negative report, even when they had G-d's assurance that He would lead the Israelites into the land? And why did the Israelites accept their report, rather than relying on Caleb and Joshua? Why didn't the Israelites themselves trust G-d's promises to them?

Some time ago, I read an article that discussed a phenomenon known as "informational cascade". Researchers found



that people tend to suspend their own judgment when they hear an opinion espoused by a group of people or by an authority figure. Once they hear such an opinion, they are far more likely to go along with it—even if they think or know that it is wrong. An authoritative person or a group of people say something; those who hear are likely to accept it; and they in turn pass on this (mis) information to others. The result is an informational cascade, where mistaken ideas and false “facts” are spread throughout society.

Why don't people think for themselves? If they believe that something is wrong, why do they accept it anyway? Why do they pass on the mistaken information to others? Researchers have found that people tend to conform; they are ready to doubt their own judgment and defer to authorities or groups. Researchers found that public opinion changed, depending on who was first to voice an opinion. If the first was an authority figure or a group of people, it was more likely that the rest of the group would go along.

In the case of the spies, an inner dynamic must have occurred in which the negative view came to prevail. The ten spies, being authorities and a group, spoke

first to the Israelites, before Caleb and Joshua spoke. This generated an informational cascade. People stopped thinking for themselves; they spread the negative information and mood to others. It was a cascade.

The 16th century rabbinic sage, Rabbi David Ibn Abi Zimra (born in Spain, and then lived in Egypt and Safed), explained a rabbinic teaching that the highest ranking judge should not give his decision first, because others would be reluctant to argue with him. Rabbinic tradition demanded that the greater judges withhold their opinions until the lesser ones have had their say. In this way, all opinions can be evaluated fairly, without intimidation. Our ancient sages well understood the power of “informational cascade” and took steps to prevent this from happening.

The upshot of this discussion is: we all need to think for ourselves. We need to avoid being caught up in an informational cascade. We must not abandon our reason and our judgment just because an “authority” or an “in-group” expresses an opinion. If the spies had known this, they would not have brought back a bad report. If the Israelites had known this, they wouldn't have had to spend 40

years wandering in the wilderness. We need to think carefully, evaluate the data honestly; and then make up our own minds. *Rabbi Marc. D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

Fear of Independence, Longing to Belong Rabbi Berel Wein

Moshe, at the behest and request of the Jewish people, chooses twelve outstanding leaders and orders them to embark on a mission of spying regarding the Land of Israel and its current Canaanite population. Moshe is confident that this mission will reinforce the enthusiasm and commitment of the Jewish people to settle and build their national homeland, promised to them by G-d through their ancestors.

G-d Himself, so to speak, appears to be almost aloof and passive about this spying mission. In the words of Rashi in this week's commentary to the parsha, the Lord leaves the choice of executing such a mission solely in the hands of Moshe. It is his option to proceed with the mission or to declare to the people that G-d's promises regarding the Holy Land are in themselves sufficient and need no human confirmation or empirical proof.

Moshe, the great leader, prophet and visionary of the Jewish people, is confident that the spies will confirm his positive view of the Land of Israel and thus dispel any remaining hesitation or doubts that the Jewish people may have regarding their old - new homeland. Once the spies returned and issue their glowing

Or Chadash is a friendly community. We hold tuneful participatory services, in the nusach Ashkenaz tradition, on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Focusing on personal growth, we welcome all, from small children to older men and women, of all levels of observance.

We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.

report, Moshe is convinced that he will no longer hear the nagging refrain of “let us return to Egypt.” He is therefore personally crushed by the betrayal of the ten spies, who not only do not issue a positive report but rather proclaim to the people that a Jewish homeland and national entity in the Land of Israel is an impossibility. And in a final statement of heresy, these ten spies state that even G-d Almighty cannot overcome the difficulties of Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel.

Moshe apparently miscalculated the depth of fear and hesitation that lay within the Jewish people regarding the Land of Israel. This fear and hesitation was evident throughout the narrative of the wanderings of the Jewish people in the desert of Sinai. It resonates throughout the centuries of later Jewish history, even unto our day and in our current situation. In a strange and almost irrational manner, the Jewish people favored being under foreign rule and its “protection” over true national independence and reliance upon their own abilities and G-d's protective hand, so to speak. Egypt was no picnic for the Jews, but it allowed them the luxury of not

Are you on the Or Chadash email list? To receive information about Or Chadash times and events, contact us on orchadash613@gmail.com.

Please be in contact if you have recently changed your details.

Contributions to Or Chadash Inc. can be made by contacting Jonathan Erlich on 0404 093 173 or orchadash613@gmail.com or by post **PO Box 109, Rose Bay**

NSW 2029. Details are also available at www.orchadash.org.au