



דרכים בפרשה

שלח



**ויהס כלב את העם אל משה ויאמר עלה נעלה וירשנו אתה כי יכול
נוכל לה**

Calev hushed the people before Moshe and said, "Let us by all means go up, and we shall gain possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it."

Yehohoshua and Calev were in a next-to-impossible situation. They were part of a group of tzaddikim gathered from the highest echelons of Klal Yisroel. These great *nesiim*/tribal leaders were selected because of their ability to discern right from wrong and see the forest for the trees. Furthermore, HaShem specifically orchestrated numerous funerals in the Land to keep all of its inhabitants busy and allow these "spies" to pass through unnoticed. Considering all of this and more, ten members of this group came to the conclusion that the Land of Canaan would not be a suitable home for Klal Yisroel. The pressure was now at an all-time high to just be like everyone else. Breaking away from the *vox populi* would be an unlikely outcome. As unpopular as it was, Yehoshua and Calev chose to tell the truth, thus earning them entry into Eretz Yisroel, and showered with great blessing.

We do find however that the praise for Calev was greater than that of Yehoshua. From this incident alone Calev received the lofty title of "avdi", *My servant*, whereas Yehoshua worked his entire life to reach that level.

Furthermore, HaShem praises Calev by saying that "he was of a different spirit, following Me wholeheartedly" (Bamidbar 14:24).

The Or HaChayim explains that the difference between Yehoshua and Calev was that Calev had a different spirit, i.e. a *yeitzer hara* to join the rest of the group, and yet he still managed to separate himself and do the right thing. **HaShem reserves His greatest praise for those that take up the fight with their Yeitzer Hara and don't just throw in the towel when things get tough.** Yehoshua on the other hand was not in this category because as a student of Moshe, he had no desire to go against his rebbe. He was never really a member of the group to begin with.

From Rashi, we see yet another aspect of Calev's greatness. The different spirit mentioned previously refers to Calev's ability to act outwardly like one of the *meraglim* telling them that he was on the same page as them. Inwardly however was a completely different story. Calev needed to do this in order to gain credibility in their eyes. Later on, this would be invaluable as he

would use it to hush the people (13:30). With the belief that he was also willing to wave the anti- Eretz Yisroel banner, he now had a platform to stand on.

Simply put, Rashi is telling us that the great praise for Calev was that he managed to pull off fooling them. As difficult as this might have been, one still needs to wonder what the extraordinary accomplishment was. Upon looking at the pesukim, it seems that although he quieted down the crowd, the impact lasted for only a moment or two. Immediately after they were silenced, the shouting started up again by the other *meraglim* and everyone else to the point that the crowds wanted to stone him and Yehoshua. If so, why was Calev deserving of such great praise from HaShem?

There is an idea that I heard from Rav Yosef Elefant shlita a number of times (based on the Ohr Gedalyahu parshas vayeichi) that can be used to explain very nicely what Calev sought to accomplish. In reality, by causing a moment of silence, he created a *hafsaka*, a break in the action between the initial yelling and all that was yet to come. It's true that they spoke lashon hara just afterwards, but their burning fire was no longer as hot as it would have been, downgrading their tempers from a "kli rishon to a kli sheini".

While at times it may be necessary to say certain things, and perhaps even make harsh comments, one must always first take a deep breath before jumping in. The purpose of this moment is to serve as a "revach l'hisbonein",

giving one's self the space required to contemplate that which they are about to do or say.

This lesson is found throughout the Torah and is an invaluable tool for life. Paraoth refused to let up on the workload of the Jews for the same reason; so that they would never stop and think. The *meraglim* didn't stop and think about what they saw in Eretz Yisroel either, which would have led them to a different outcome. The meforshim note that in the middle of the story of Pinchas killing Zimri, Parshas Balak ends and Parshas Pinchas begins. They explain as well that the Torah is telling us that as hastily as his actions were, he gave pause before committing them.

There are many more examples that can be given throughout the Torah, but the greatest example is our own daily lives. While running on the proverbial hamster wheel called life, we must pause from time to time to ask ourselves if we are hitting our goals. Do we even have goals? The Yeitzer Hara tries to keep us busy so we should not ever think about why we came to this world and to Whom we must eventually answer to. We should not be that hamster that just keeps going around and around until eventually tiring and falling off.

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפלי



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