

# Morale Always Wins

Category: Bamidbar, Shlach

*What was the true mission of the spies? And how does it relate to Gimmel Tammuz?*

## The Second Spies

Good Shabbos!

In this week's Haftarah, we read about the story of the Miraglim, the Spies. Just as our Parshah tells us about the Miraglim that Moshe sent, the Haftarah tells us about Moshe Rabbeinu's successor, Yehoshua, who sent two spies before he conquered the Land, telling them, "Go see the land and Yericho (Jericho)." So they arrived in the city of Yericho and entered the first house, which was actually attached to the wall surrounding the city. It was the guest house of Rachav.

Despite the secrecy, it somehow became known to the king of Yericho that there were now spies in the city. The king immediately sent the "police," his royal guard, to arrest them. So the guards showed up at Rachav's house and demanded that she turn them over to the law.

Now, Rachav had indeed hidden the two men in her house. But when the king's men showed up, she said that yes, there had been men here—but before they had locked the city gates at night, they had left the city. She added, "Hurry and chase after them and catch up to them!" So the soldiers left her house—at which point she ushered the two spies to her rooftop, where she hid them.

Later that night, she went up to the roof to speak with them. She said to them, "I know that G-d has given you this Land and that everyone here is afraid of you." She asked for a personal favor from them: "Since I have done this kindness for you and saved you, I request that when you conquer Yericho, you save me and my family."

The spies swore that they would rescue her, at which point she lowered them out a window, since her house was part of the city. Once on the ground outside the city, they fled. She had advised them that they hide in the hills for three days and

only then return to Yehoshua and the Jewish camp.

But before they had left, they instructed her that the very same red rope with which she had rescued them should be hung out of the same window—and so when they came to conquer the city, they'd be able to identify the house—and anyone in the house would be saved.

## The Differences

Now, when we compare the story of the Miraglim of Yehoshua to that of the Miraglim of Moshe Rabbeinu, we discover that the story of Moshe Rabbeinu's spies sounds very strange: As a general rule, when you send spies, you send one or two individuals, and even that is done secretly so that the enemy does not discover them.

Moshe Rabbeinu, on the other hand, chose to send 12 spies, a "full contingent"—and he didn't do so secretly: The entire Nation knew that he was sending spies. And if "sixty myriads" know, then people in the Land of Canaan surely also knew.

Additionally, while Yehoshua's spies entered Yericho discreetly, Moshe Rabbeinu's spies entered with heads held high, with everyone seeing and recognizing them and knowing that they had arrived to check out the Land.

Not only that, but, unlike common practice, Moshe Rabbeinu's spies had their names broadcast publicly. Yehoshua's spies, on the other hand, are not identified in the Book of Yehoshua.

The Rebbe explains that there is one key difference between the stories:

Moshe Rabbeinu didn't send "spies." He had never been concerned about how they were going to conquer the Land. He was certain and faithful that G-d would do miracles and everything would work out, just as it had with Yetzias Mitzrayim (the Exodus from Egypt). And indeed, the word "Miraglim" doesn't actually appear anywhere in our Parshah.

Moshe Rabbeinu sent a delegation of 12 Nesi'im, the Princes of the Tribes, "to scout out the land"—to be impressed by the goodness of the Land of Canaan and bring some of its fruits back with them so as to convince the Nation that "the

Land is very, very good.”

Moshe Rabbeinu sent the delegation for “domestic affairs.” The problem was not to defeat the enemy—the problem was the Jewish Nation itself. They were the ones who needed to be convinced to go up to the Land.

On the other hand, with Yehoshua, the mission there was to conquer the Land—and so Yehoshua sent only two spies, and he sent them secretly. No one was told he had sent them, to make sure that no one in Yericho would hear of it. (Shlach 5751, *Toras Menachem* pg. 352.)

## **What Was Yehoshua’s Mission**

But apparently, Yehoshua’s spies didn’t finish the mission. Yehoshua instructed them, “See the Land and Yericho”—and they were satisfied with visiting just one house in Yericho! Not only that, but after visiting one house, they were discovered and they had to flee back. They don’t seem to have fulfilled their mission!

However, the end of our Haftara, in the words of the spies to Yehoshua, we learn what the mission really was:

It’s logical to say that Yehoshua wasn’t that concerned about the technical aspects of how they’d exactly conquer the Land. Instead, what Yehoshua really wanted was to find out about the morale of the people living in Canaan: Were they strong in spirit, or would they be weary of fighting? And it was that information that Rachav supplied the spies with immediately.

She told them that everyone in Yericho had heard about the miracle of the Splitting of the Reed Sea—and even though 40 years had passed since, the fright still silenced them: “And we heard and our hearts melted, and no spirit rose up anymore in any man before you.” In other words, no one had the courage to fight the Jewish Nation.

So when the spies heard that, they knew that they had completed their mission and could go home. And that’s what we read at the end of the Haftarah. They returned to Yehoshua and reported to him: “G-d put the entire Land in our hands, and all the inhabitants of the Land are also scared of us.”

In every war throughout history, it wasn’t necessarily the mightier military that

won, but the one with higher morale.

## **An Offensive War**

This week, we will mark Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe's yahrzeit.

When the Rebbe arrived in the United States in 1941, he declared that the war against assimilation needs to go from a "war of defense to a war of offense."

People who are afraid build walls and try to protect themselves—but that philosophy has never worked. The only way to win a war is with soldiers who have high morale, who believe in the mission for which they are fighting and in which they are sure they will win.

And therefore, in the war against assimilation, too, it does not matter how many soldiers we have but only matters how high a morale we have—whether we are sure of the justice of our cause. And if so, we'll succeed in tearing down all the walls and conquer the world for the coming of Moshiach. (See *Simchas Beis Hashoevah* 5717, *Toras Menachem* vol. 1 pg. 61.)

Good Shabbos!