

Hear Israel

Shelach Lecha ~ Send for Yourself
Bemidbar 13:1-15:41
Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA
Ben Ehrhardt, Shamash
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www.hearoisrael.org

This week, our Torah Portion is called “**Shelach Lecha**” in Hebrew; or in English, literally “**Send for Yourself**”. It has the connotation of doing something to benefit or help one’s self. In this case, Yahweh has a fact finding mission in mind for the Children of Israel.

Our *parsha* begins in **B’midbar / Numbers 13:1-20**; *And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Send men to spy out the land of Kena’an, which I am giving to the children of Yisra’el. Send one man from each tribe of their fathers, every one a leader among them.” And by the command of YHVH Mosheh sent them from the Wilderness of Paran, all of them men who were heads of the children of Yisra’el. And these were their names. From the tribe of Re’uben: Shammua, son of Zakkur. From the tribe of Shim’on: Shaphat, son of Hori. From the tribe of Yehudah: Kaleb, son of Yephunneh. From the tribe of Yissaskar: Yig’al, son of Yoseph. From the tribe of Ephrayim: Hoshea, son of Nun. From the tribe of Binyamin: Palti, son of Raphu. From the tribe of Zebulun: Gaddi’el, son of Sodi. From the tribe of Yoseph, from the tribe of Menasheh: Gaddi, son of Susi. From the tribe of Dan: Ammi’el, son of Gemalli. From the tribe of Asher: Shethur, son of Mika’el. From the tribe of Naphtali: Nahbi, son of Wophsi. From the tribe of Gad: Geu’el, son of Maki. These are the names of the men whom Mosheh sent to spy out the land. And Mosheh called Hoshea the son of Nun, Yehoshua. And Mosheh sent them to spy out the land of Kena’an, and said to them, “Go up here into the South, and go up to the mountains, and see what the land is like, and the people who dwell in it, whether strong or weak, whether few or many, and whether the land they dwell in is good or evil, whether the cities they inhabit are in camps or strongholds, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are forests there or not. And you shall be strong, and bring some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first-fruits of grapes.*

Here, Yahweh tells Moshe to “**send for yourself**” men to spy out the land of Kena’an, which He is giving them. Then Yahweh says that he is to send one man from each tribe; every one being a leader. The Hebrew here has “**nasiy’**” which means that these men are “**chiefs**” or “**princes**” from each tribe. These guys were prominent leaders of their tribes. In fact, the Hebrew word “**nasiy’**”, used here in Torah for “**chief**” or “**prince**”, spelled “*nun-sin-yud-aleph*” also means the “**vapor or fog that rises from the earth and becomes a cloud**”. This is a picture of leaders that rise up, in their time, toward heaven; because, they are to be “**overseers**” of people(s) before Yahweh. The numeric value of “**nasiy’**” (*nun-sin-yud-aleph*) is 361, which equals “**v’ Pharaoh**” (**and Pharaoh**) and “**la Ephraim**” meaning “**Ephraim’s**”. It also equals “**Shittim**” which is the place where B’nei Yisra’el committed whorings, while in the wilderness, with the women of Moab, in **Bemidbar 25**

(*parsha Pinchas*). This is the curse that Balak & Bil'am engineered for the Children of Yisra'el to get the to worship "**Ha Peor**" or "**Ba'al Peor**" ("**lord of the hiatus**" or "**lord of the sabbatical**", in their culture meaning "**lord of play time**"); their idol who required the women to literally commit acts of whoredom as acts of worship. And, what a coincidence to find that the numeric value of "**HaPeor**" is also 361, as is "**shineh**" which means "**hating**". What interesting links between these "**leaders**" and "**princes**" (rising stars) of the twelve tribes of Yisra'el and the sins of their brothers and sons.

Now, these men were leaders in Yisra'el. And, Yahweh was about to test them. And, in testing them, He in turn was about to test all of B'nei Yisra'el. In **verse 20**, the ISR Scriptures read; "**And you shall be strong, and bring some of the fruit of the land.**" The phrase, "**And you shall be strong**" in Hebrew reads "**v'heet chazaq t'am**". This phrase translates like a command, "**And you shall be courageous 't'am**". There's this other word in there, "**t'am**", which is a contraction of the word "**tamiym**" which means "**complete**" or "**perfect**". So, what's this saying? "**And you shall be complete in courage.**" Or "**And you shall be perfect in courage.**" This idea of being perfect or complete, "**tamiym**" before Yahweh is not new. He told Avraham to walk before Him and "**be perfect**", or to "**be complete**" in his walk, in **B'reshith / Gen. 17:1**. And later, in **Debarim / Deut. 18:13**, Yahweh tells B'nei Yisra'el to be "**tamiym**" before Him. So, here He tells the princes of the Tribes of Yisra'el to be complete in courage in this "**test**".

This is a valuable lesson for us to remember when we are tested. It's not only His desire that we be courageous; but, He commands us to be courageous. Why? Because courage is based on belief, just as obedience is based on belief; as we learned that last week. This is why it is so very important that when testing comes in Yisra'el, that we "**encourage**" one another. We're all tested. And now, we're entering a time when we're all to be tested. Together, we can be many more times courageous than we can alone. We can even be "**perfect**" in courage. That's what this test in spying out the Land was all about. It was about leadership being courageous and leading the people into being courageous. Heart failure is contagious.

Now, there's one more thing that bears looking into here. I don't know if you noticed; but, the names of these "**nasiy**" or "**princes**" are different than those we read about last week, who lead the army of each tribe. Perhaps Yahweh didn't want the "**military**" involved in this operation. Maybe instead, He used the "**FBI**" (**Fearful B'nei Israel**). Although, we'll learn that two of them, Yehoshua ben Nun and Kaleb ben Yephunneh, were anything but fearful.

Last week we looked at the meanings of the names of those who led the armies. And, in them, we got a glimpse of Yisra'el's entire history. What might we find this week, if we look at the meanings of the names of these princes? First, from "**Re'uben**" (*behold the son*), we have "**Shammuah**" or "**rumor**" son of "**Zakkur**" (*memorial*). Next, from the tribe of "**Shimon**" (*hearer*), we have "**Shaphat**" or "**judge**" and "**condemn**" son of "**Hori**" (*troglydote or caveman*). Then from "**Yahudah**" (*praised*) we have "**Kaleb**" or "**fiercely loyal**" son of "**Yephunneh**" (*prepares the way*). Next, from "**Yissakar**" (*recompense*) is "**Yig'al**" or "**Yah avenges**" son of "**Yoseph**" (*Yah has added*). Then, from "**Ephraim**" (*doubly fruitful*) is "**Hoshea**" or "**salvation**" son of "**Nun**" (*continue or continuity*). Next, from "**Binyamin**" (*son of the right hand*) there is "**Palti**" or "**my escape**", son of "**Raphu**" (*healed*). Then, from "**Zebulun**" (*dwelling place*) is "**Gaddi'el**" or "**fortune is my El**" son of "**Sodi**" (*my friend*). Next, from the tribe of Yoseph, from "**Menasheh**" (*one who forgets*) is "**Gaddi**" or "**my fortune**", the son of "**Susi**" (*horseman*). Then, from "**Dan**" (*Judge*) is "**Ammiel**" representing "**people of Elohim**" son of "**Gemalli**" (*keeper of camels*). From the tribe of "**Asher**" (*blessed*) is "**Shethur**" or "**hidden**" son of "**Mika'el**" (*who is like Elohim*). Then, from "**Naphtali**" (*my strife*) is "**Nachbi**" or "**run away**",

son of “**Vopsi**” (*rich*). And, from “**Gad**” (*fortune*) is “**Geu’el**” or “**pride of Yah**”, son of “**Maki**” (*decrease*).

Now, that’s a lot of information. But, if you focus on the names of these leaders who were sent to spy out the “**Land**” and consider the outcome, you start to get an understanding as to why Yahweh tested them so. With the exceptions of Hoshea (**salvation**), who would become Yehoshua ben Nun, and Kaleb (**fiercely loyal**), you’ve got “*rumor, condemnation, recompense, fortune is my mighty one, then my fortune [talk about luck], then escape, hidden, run away and pride*” representing the “**people of Elohim**”. Most of these names are representative of the Egyptian (worldly) culture they came out of and are a picture of the spiritual condition of the Children of Yisra’el.

Now, let’s read on from **B’midbar 13:21-33**; *So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Tsin (low palms) as far as Rehob (open place), near the entrance of Hamath (walled city). And they went up through the South and came to Hebron (conjunction). And Achiman (my brother is part of me), Sheshai (made white), and Talmai (accumulation), the descendants of Anaq (long neck), were there. Now Hebron had been built seven years before Tso’an (Tanis by the Nile) in Mitsrayim. And they came to the wadi Eshkol (cluster), and cut down from there a branch with one cluster of grapes. And they bore it between two of them on a pole, also of the pomegranates and of the figs. That place was called the wadi Eshkol, because of the cluster which the men of Yisra’el cut down from there. And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. And they went and came to Mosheh and Aharon and all the congregation of the children of Yisra’el in the Wilderness of Paran, at Qadesh. And they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they reported to him, and said, “We went to the land where you sent us. And truly, it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. But the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are walled, very great. And we saw the descendants of Anaq there too. The Amaleqites dwell in the land of the South, while the Hittites and the Yebusites and the Amorites dwell in the mountains. And the Kena’anites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Yarden.” And Kaleb silenced the people before Mosheh, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are certainly able to overcome it.” But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.” And they gave the children of Yisra’el an evil report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land eating up its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. And we saw there the Nephilim, sons of Anaq, of the Nephilim. And we were like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and so we were in their eyes.”*

These twelve spies actually entered the Land from Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Paran. As we learned last week, this is located in northern Saudi Arabia, north of Mt. Sinai and west southwest of Edom/Jordan and just south of the Negev in Israel. From the order of the cities mentioned here, they traveled from the south, up the east side of the Land and then came back from the north along the coastal cities of Kena’an; until arriving back at Kadesh, where Moshe and B’nei Yisra’el were encamped. Now, we see that 10 of these “**leaders**”, “**princes of the tribes**”, failed in their trust in Yahweh. They saw in the “**natural**” and couldn’t believe, even though Yahweh had told them previously that they were to “*put under the ban*” the very peoples that they were now so afraid of. Because they saw themselves as “**grasshoppers**” in their own eyes, they said; so, they were grasshoppers in the eyes of the Nephilim. I don’t need to remind you, I’m sure, that after the coming punishment and after five years of subduing the Land, Kaleb (at 85 years old) killed **Arba**, a descendant of Anaq and a Nephilim, when he conquered Hebron (**Yehoshua / Joshua 14:6-15**).

Next, we move on to **B'midbar / Numbers 14:1-10**; *Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Yisra'el grumbled against Mosheh and against Aharon, and all the congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Mitsrayim! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! And why is YHVH bringing us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become a prey? Would it not be better for us to turn back to Mitsrayim?" And they said to each other, "Let us appoint a leader, and let us turn back to Mitsrayim." Then Mosheh and Aharon fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Yisra'el. And Yehoshua son of Nun, and Kaleb son of Yephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their garments, and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Yisra'el, saying, "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If YHVH has delighted in us, then He shall bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which is flowing with milk and honey.' Only, do not rebel against YHVH, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread. Their defense has turned away from them, and YHVH is with us. Do not fear them." But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the esteem of YHVH appeared in the Tent of Meeting before all the children of Yisra'el.*

For B'nei Yisra'el, their test ended in failure. They not only embraced the evil report of ten of their leaders, they wished to stone to death, Yehoshua, Kaleb, Moshe and Aharon. And, they, no doubt, would have, except that the esteem of Yahweh appeared in the Tent of Meeting before all B'nei Yisra'el. What happened next is all too familiar. We read in **B'midbar 14:11-25**, as Yahweh's presence filled the Mishkan; *And YHVH said to Mosheh, "How long shall I be scorned by these people? And how long shall I not be trusted by them, with all the signs which I have done in their midst? Let Me smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." And Mosheh said to YHVH, "Then the Mitsrites shall hear it, for by Your power You brought these people up from their midst, and they shall say to the inhabitants of this land they have heard that You, YHVH, are in the midst of these people, that You, YHVH, are seen eye to eye and that Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a column of cloud by day and in a column of fire by night. Now if You shall kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your report shall speak, saying, 'Because YHVH was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' And now, I pray, let the power of YHVH be great, as You have spoken, saying, 'YHVH is patient and of great kindness, forgiving crookedness and transgression, but by no means leaving unpunished; visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.' Please forgive the crookedness of this people, according to the greatness of Your kindness, as You have forgiven this people, from Mitsrayim even until now." And YHVH said, "I shall forgive, according to your word, but truly, as I live and all the earth is filled with the esteem of YHVH, for none of these men who have seen My esteem and the signs which I did in Mitsrayim and in the wilderness, and have tried Me now these ten times, and have disobeyed My voice, shall see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor any of those who scorned Me see it. But My servant Kaleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me completely, I shall bring into the land where he went, and his seed shall inherit it. Since the Amaleqites and the Kena'anites are dwelling in the valley, turn back tomorrow and set out into the wilderness by the Way of the Sea of Reeds."*

Let's continue with **14:26-39**; *And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, and to Aharon, saying, "How long shall this evil congregation have this grumbling against Me? I have heard the grumbings*

which the children of Yisra'el are grumbling against Me. Say to them, 'As I live,' declares YHVH, 'as you have spoken in My hearing, so I do to you: The carcasses of you who have grumbled against Me are going to fall in this wilderness, all of you who were registered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. None of you except Kaleb son of Yephunneh, and Yehoshua son of Nun, shall enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. But your little ones, whom you said would become a prey, I shall bring in, and they shall know the land which you have rejected. But as for you, your carcasses are going to fall in this wilderness. And your sons shall be wanderers in the wilderness forty years, and shall bear your whorings, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days – a day for a year, a day for a year – you are to bear your crookednesses forty years, and you shall know My breaking off. I am YHVH, I have spoken, I shall do this to all this evil congregation who are meeting against Me: In this wilderness they are consumed, and there they die.' ” And the men whom Mosheh sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing an evil report of the land, even those men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before YHVH. Of those men who went to spy out the land, only Yehoshua son of Nun, and Kaleb son of Yephunneh remained alive. And when Mosheh spoke these words to all the children of Yisra'el, the people mourned greatly.

So, even though Yahweh forgives their sin, their rebellion brings a punishment. An entire generation of Yisra'el, except for two (*Yehoshua* and *Kaleb*) are forbidden from entering the Promised Land. Instead of entering His rest, B'nei Yisra'el will spend the balance of forty years wandering about in the wilderness (“*midbar*”) learning to obey Torah; a year for each day that the princes spied out the Land. And, Yahweh concludes **verse 34** with; **“and you shall know My breaking off.”** The Hebrew word here is “*tenuwah*” and means, according to Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, “*alienation*”. So, the Children of Yisra'el would learn what it means to be *alienated* by Yahweh. The 40 years of wandering in the “*Wilderness*” or “*Midbar*” corresponds to the 40 days in which the “*nasiy*” “spied out the Land with disobedient hearts.

It's all interesting how, as the scales have dropped from our eyes, we are realizing that we've been *alienated*, as a people, from Yahweh, due to the sins of **our** fathers. But, as Moshe said of Yahweh in **verse 18**; **‘YHVH is patient and great in kindness, forgiving crookedness and transgression, but by no means leaving unpunished; visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.’** The reference here is to when Moshe was with Yahweh on Mt. Sinai in **Shemot / Exodus 34:6-7**; **And YHVH passed before him and proclaimed, “YHVH, YHVH, an El compassionate and showing favour, patient, and great in kindness and truth, watching over kindness for thousands, forgiving crookedness and transgression and sin, but by no means leaving unpunished, visiting the crookedness of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”** This has perpetuated itself, for us, in every generation for 2,730 plus years, as our fathers have continued in idolatry and false worship. Even we continued, as they did, until Yahweh began speaking to us with the voice of “*Chesed*” or “*Loving-kindness*”.

The sin of the spies was a failure of faith (*belief*). They allowed themselves to be misled by the external appearance of the natural world into a colossal failure of nerve, despite all the promises given by Yahweh; that He would bring them to the land; and, the “*mighty deliverance*” that He wrought in bringing them out of Mitzrayim (Egypt). Only Hoshea and Kaleb closed their eyes to

external appearances, knowing that by Yahweh's Hand, they would take the Land and defeat their enemies, as He promised.

The theme of this *parsha* is about "**vision**", but not "**eyesight**". **Mishle / Proverbs 29:18** says, directly from the Hebrew; **Where there is no vision, the people are let loose, But blessed is he who guards the Torah.** The word here for "**vision**" is "**chatzown**" (*chet-tzadee-vav-nun*) and literally means "**a divine or prophetic vision**". Without Yahweh's vision firmly in our hearts, we are "**let loose**". We're totally on our own and we always end up doing what is right in our own eyes. And, we end up far from Yahweh's vision for us. The Hebrew word for "**let loose**" is "**para**". And, while some English translations use "**perish**" as its meaning, it is the same word used in **Shemot / Exodus 32:25**, when Moshe comes down from Har Sinai to confront Aharon and the people over the golden calf; **And Moshe saw that the people were let loose, for Aharon had let them loose, to their shame among their enemies.**

This week's *parsha* begins in **Bemidbar 13:1-2**, with the phrase; **And YHVH spoke to Moshe, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of Kena'an, which I am giving to the children of Yisra'el."** It ends with **Bemidbar 15:37-41**; **And YHVH spoke to Moshe, saying, "Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and you shall say to them to make tzitziyot on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue cord in the tzitzit of the corners. And it shall be to you for a tzitzit, and you shall see it, and shall remember all the commands of YHVH and shall do them, and not search after your own heart and your own eyes after which you went whoring, so that you remember, and shall do all My commands, and be set-apart unto your Elohim. I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, to be your Elohim. I am YHVH your Elohim."** We are given the *tzitzit* to help us keep our focus on Torah and our vision intact.

What I discovered, as I studied this week, was that the Hebrew word for "**spy**" in **13:2** is "**tuwr**" (*tav-vav-reish*), which means to "**spy out**" or "**explore**", even "**tour**". Well the same word is used in **15:39**, translated as "**search**" by the ISR folks; **And it shall be to you for a tzitzit, and you shall see it, and shall remember all the commands of YHVH and shall do them, and not search (tuwr) after your own heart and your own eyes after which you went whoring,.....** In other words, **And it shall be to you for a tzitzit, and you shall see it, and shall remember all the commands of YHVH and shall do them, and not spy out (or explore) after your own heart and your own eyes after which you went whoring,..** This perfectly describes the "**sin of the ten spies**". They spied out the Land after their own hearts and eyes and succumbed to fear and doubt. This is why we are to wear *tzitzit*, so that we remember the Torah; but, also so that we remember the "**vision**" of Yahweh for His people and the command for us to "**believe**"; so that we can fulfill what Torah says back in **13:20**; **"And you shall be complete in courage."** When the path seems dark and the way is scary, and you are as a grasshopper in your own eyes; grab your *tzitzit* and remember your belief. Find courage in Yahweh, our Redeemer and Savior. **"Hallel-u-YAH!"**

There are times in history that Yahweh designates for His works to be accomplished, when His Set-apart Spirit moves in the hearts of His people. We don't choose those times; He does, for His purposes. We choose whether or not to be obedient to His leading. Family, our time of testing has already begun. We've seen rebellion in our camp more than once. We've seen it in leaders within this movement. We've had to deal with it, as elders, as a congregation and more importantly as brothers and sisters (*mishpochah*) in Yisra'el. It wasn't easy. And, as we're seeing in our preparations to go home to Eretz Yisra'el, there is even more dissention and rebellion. And, we're done yet. We bring baggage from the world with us. That's what the "**wilderness**" or "**midbar**" is all

about, losing the baggage. Remember, the word “**midbar**” for “**wilderness**” is a “**sterile place**”, Strong’s Concordance and Gesenius’ Lexicon say. It’s like a Petri dish in a lab, that technicians grow cultures in. Isn’t that similar to what Yahweh did? Elohim literally grew a new culture, a Torah observant culture for Yisra’el, “**b’midbar**” (*in the wilderness*), in the Petri dish. “**Midbar**” also means “**mouth**”, or the “**organ of speech**”. Yahweh indeed spoke to His people in and through the “**wilderness**” experience; even as the prophet puts it in Yehezqel 20:35, “*the wilderness of the peoples*”, that we’re currently going through. The trials and testing come to make sure we’ve let go of the baggage. If need be, it’s literally shaken from our grasp. And, those who ultimately can’t let it go, don’t make it.

How truly blessed we are right now that Yahweh is being gentle with us. Yes, He is. He’s shaking us in many ways to make us let go of what we think is important, many of our old beliefs, opinions, our rights, our baggage, our stuff; but, most importantly, “**ourselves**”. This is why Sha’ul (Paul) warned us in **Ibrim / Hebrews 3:7-19**; **Therefore, as the Set-apart Spirit says, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.’ As I swore in My wrath, ‘If they shall enter into My rest ...’ ”** Look out, brothers, lest there be in any of you a wicked heart of unbelief in falling away from the living Elohim, but encourage one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened by the deceivableness of sin. For we have become partakers of Messiah if we hold fast the beginning of our trust firm to the end, while it is said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” For who, having heard, rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Mitsrayim, led by Mosheh? And with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter into His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they were unable to enter in because of unbelief.

Sha’ul is quoting part of **Tehillim / Psalm 95:1-11**; **Come, let us sing to YHVH! Let us raise a shout to the Rock of our deliverance. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; Let us raise a shout to Him in song. For YHVH is a great El, and a great Sovereign above all mighty ones. In whose hand are the depths of the earth; the mountain peaks are His also. His is the sea, for He made it; and His hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down and bend low, let us kneel before YHVH our Maker. For He is our Elohim, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice: “Do not harden your hearts as in Meribah, and as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, When your fathers tried Me, have proved Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, ‘They are a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways.’ As I swore in My wrath, ‘They would not enter into My rest.’ ”**

As we learned last week, the Hebrew word used in all these verses for “**rest**” is “**menuwchah**” (*mem-nun-vav-chet-hey*). And, its definition is “**place of resting**” or “**habitation**”. “**Yahweh’s rest**” is “**Eretz Yisra’el**”. That’s why He brought B’nei Yisra’el back to their inheritance; in our Torah portion and after. Every time one tribe or ten tribes are in dispersion, He brings them/us back to the Land. That’s why the New Yerushalayim comes down out of Heaven. His “**rest**” is “**Eretz Yisra’el**”.

Each week, I talk about how we are “*chosen*” and “*a people set-apart*” to Yahweh. We read and study how Yisra’el is His Bride and He is our Husband, our Fair One. But, I must remind you now what we are chosen for. Elohim chose us to be His people; to love, honor and obey Him. That’s

what a bride does. I was truly “*blown away*” when I learned that the rest of Yahweh’s creation honors Him because of what He does for us. **Yeshayahu / Isaiah 43:20-21** says; ***“The beast of the field esteems Me, the jackals and the ostriches, because I have given waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen, this people I have formed for Myself, let them relate My praise.”*** Even though our fathers disobeyed and committed adultery/idolatry, He has not forgotten us. **Yeshayahu** goes on to say in **44:1-8**; ***“But now hear, O Ya’aqob My servant, and Yisra’el whom I have chosen. Thus said YHVH who made you and formed you from the womb, who helps you, ‘Do not fear, O Ya’aqob My servant, and Yeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I pour water on the thirsty, and floods on the dry ground. I pour My Spirit on your seed, and My blessing on your offspring, and they shall spring up among the grass like willows by streams of water.’ One says, ‘I belong to YHVH; another calls himself by the name of Ya’aqob; another writes with his hand, ‘Unto YHVH,’ and names himself by the name of Yisra’el. Thus said YHVH, Sovereign of Yisra’el, and his Redeemer, YHVH of hosts, ‘I am the First and I am the Last, besides Me there is no Elohim. And who is like Me? Let him call and declare it, and lay it before Me, since I appointed the everlasting people. And the events that are coming and those that do come, let them declare these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid. Have I not since made you hear, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there an Eloah besides Me? There is no other Rock, I know not one.’ ”***

There, He says it again; ***“Do not fear, nor be afraid (you can add B’midbar 13:20, ‘be complete in courage’). Have I not made you hear and declared it?”*** Let’s learn the lessons of ***“Shelach Lecha”***, the ***“wilderness”***. Let’s hear (***Sh’ma Yisra’el***) what Yahweh is speaking by ***“Ha Midbar”***, His Mouth, that is to say, ***His Word (Torah)*** to His people. If we are His ***“chosen people”***, let’s grab our tzitzit and remember His commands that we trust and obey Him in belief. Then, when the shaking comes, we, having done all to stand, will be left standing in Him.

Baruch HaShem Yahweh !