



# Shelach-Lekha

You shall send out



# Introduction

- 1) The main event in this portion is the sending out of the ten spies by Moshe
- 2) It is commonly held in Jewish literature that the spies gave their evil report on Tisha B'Av.
- 3) This year, Tisha B'Av will begin at sunset on August 12th.
- 4) It is customary to read Eichah/Lamentations on Tisha B'Av.
- 5) WHY?
- 6) The Book of Eichah is written in an acrostic with each verse beginning with the following letter of the aleph bet.
- 7) That is, until you get to ayin. The ayin and pey are transposed.

## Eichah 2:16 & 17

פָּצוּ עַל־יָד פִּיהֶם כָּל-אֹיְבָיָד שָׂרְקוּ בִּיחְרָקוֹ-נֶשֶׁן אָמְרוּ  
בְּלָעֵנוּ אֵת זֶה הַיּוֹם שֶׁקִּוִּינָהוּ מִצָּאֵנוּ רָאִינוּ: ס

עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם בַּצָּע אֶמְרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִימֵי-קֶדֶם  
הָרֶם וְלֹא חָמַל וַיִּשְׂמַח עַל־יָד אֹיְבֵי הָרִים קָרוּ צָרָיָד: ס

All your enemies have opened their mouths wide against you; They hiss and gnash their teeth. They say, “We have swallowed her up! Surely this is the day for which we waited; we have reached it, we have seen it.” The LORD has done what He purposed; He has accomplished His word which He commanded from days of old. He has thrown down without sparing, and He has caused the enemy to rejoice over you; He has exalted the might of your adversaries.

New American Standard Bible: 1995 update (Lamentations 2:16, 17). (1995).  
The Lockman Foundation.

# Introduction (p. 2)

8) The midrashim/commentaries on this link draw the following from this connection.

- a) ayin is the name of the 16th letter of the Hebrew aleph bet. It is also the word for eye.
- b) Pey is the name of the 17th letter of the Hebrew aleph bet. It is also the word for mouth.
- c) The ten evil spies put their mouths before their eyes.
- d) They had already decided what their report would be before they went into the land.

# Main Discussion

- I. Deuteronomy 1:20-23 gives us a clue to the sending out of the ten spies:
  - A. "I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the Amorites which Adonai Eloheinu is about to give us. 'See, Adonai Eloheinu has placed the land before you; go up, take possession, as Adonai, Elohim of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' "Then all of you approached me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may search out the land for us, and bring back to us word of the way by which we should go up and the cities which we shall enter.' "The thing pleased me and I took twelve of your men, one man for each tribe. *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update (Dt 1:20–23). (1995). The Lockman Foundation. (Names of The Almighty changed to Hebrew form).*
  - B. We see from this account that Moshe had told the people to go in and take the land of the Amorim.
  - C. They decided, instead, that they needed to send men ahead of them into the land to "check it out".
  - D. It seems from our portion this week that The Almighty said, "If that is what they want to do, go right ahead."
  - E. We know how that went.

- 1) The ten spies who gave the evil report died of the plague that day.
- 2) The Almighty wanted to destroy the people and start over through Moshe.
- 3) Moshe interceded for them, putting his own life on the line.
- 4) The people spent forty years wandering in the wilderness when they could have entered the land of promise in less than two to three months after leaving Egypt.
- 5) It was eleven days journey from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea, a border town between Sinai and Israel.
- 6) None of the people, other than Kaleiv and Yehoshua ben Nun, who had left Egypt, from 20-years old and above would be allowed to enter the land promised to them. They were to die in the wilderness.
- 7) By tradition, many terrible things have occurred to Israel throughout her history on the anniversary of the day of the evil report.

- II. The people made an even greater sin by trying to correct the situation in their own power.
  - A. Again, that did not go well.
  - B. The soldiers were scattered from Seir to Chormah, a large area near the southern tip of the Dead Sea, and they were defeated.
  - C. According to Deuteronomy 1:46, Israel camped in the vicinity of Kadesh “for many days”.
- III. Most of the studies I examined online concerning this portion end here.
- IV. I want to go through the rest of this portion and see what we can learn and apply those things to our lives.
  - A. Israel is instructed to add a grain, wine, and oil offering to the sacrifices they offer after entering the land.
    - 1. This provided food for the Levites who received no land inheritance.
    - 2. There was no distinction between the native born and the foreigner who had converted. The same law applied to both.
  - B. Israel is instructed to give an offering of the bread they make when they enjoy the bounty of the land. This portion is where we get the name for the Shabbath loaves, challah.

C. Those who intentionally sinned had no recourse. They were kicked out of the nation of Israel.

1. This is called blaspheming The Almighty in 15:30
2. The writer of Hebrews seems to allude to this in Heb. 10:26, 27
3. For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

New American Standard Bible: 1995 update (Heb 10:26–27). (1995). The Lockman Foundation.

D. This warning is followed immediately with the account of the man who was gathering firewood/kindling on the Shabbath.

1. The people report him and ask Moshe what should be done.
2. The man is taken into custody
3. Moshe seeks wisdom from The Almighty
4. Moshe is instructed that the man is to be taken outside the camp and stoned to death by the people.

E. The portion then gives the instructions on tzitziyot.

1. The command is to make tassels upon the “corners” of their garments.
2. On the tassels they are to put a thread of techeilet.
3. These tassels are to be a reminder to keep the commandments of The Almighty.
4. The Hebrew, plus the manner of making clothing at that time, give us some insight into what the tzitziyot and techeilet looked like.
  - a) The phrase translated upon the corners is al-kanaphei (עַל-כַּנְפָּי).
  - b) It means the extremities or borders.
  - c) Originally, these were woven into an outer garment worn daily.
  - d) They were not worn only in prayer time. (ex., the disciples taking off their outer garments to fish).
  - e) It was only later, when clothing styles changed, that we had the tallit gadol and tallit katan as the proper way to wear the tzitziyot and techeilet.
  - f) The techeilet would be a band of techeilet woven into the fabric above the tassels. Not simply a single thread.







- F. Our portion this week ends with a declaration that Y-H-V-H is our mighty authority and that it was HE who delivers us from affliction.

# Conclusion

- 1) Let us not be like the ten spies who gave the evil report and discouraged the people against receiving their blessing from The Almighty.
- 2) Let us not be like the Israelites who questioned the blessing of promise.
- 3) Let us not lean upon ourselves in correcting our sinful actions.
- 4) Let us always seek an audience with The Almighty.
- 5) Let us always take care of the physical needs of those working in the kingdom.

## Conclusion (2)

- 6) Let us not be guilty of blasphemy against The Almighty through rebellious sin.
- 7) Let us be known as one, as a group, who guard(s) the Shabbath to keep it holy.
- 8) Let us not forsake the wearing of the tzitziyot.
- 9) Let us declare with unwavering devotion our belief that Y-H-V-H is our authority in all matters of faith.
- 10) Let us be firm in our belief that it is HE from whom all blessings flow.