

Shelach **“Send thou”**

Torah Reading: Numbers 13:1 - 15:41

Haftarah Reading: Joshua 2:1-24

Study Notes

The Great Spy Disaster

- God had seemingly completed all the necessary preparations.
- Then disaster strikes. Sin. Unbelief. Rebellion.

The Territory

- ...from the Wilderness of Zin to the expanse at the approach to Hamath (13:21).
- Hebron, Valley of Eshcol, the Negev, the seacoast, and the Jordan Valley.
- We are told the mission began in “the days of the first ripe grapes” (13:20). In Israel, this means that the time period was mid to late July.

The Culprits

- The spies are called “heads or leaders among them”. This meant they were not tribal heads but men of importance, capable of grappling with so trying a task.

Joshua

- “Moshe renamed Hoshea son of Nun, “Joshua” (13:16)
- Hoshea signifies, “He has helped.”
- Moshe, at the victory over Amalek, adds the ‘H’, a letter of the Divine Name. This gives us “Yehoshua” - “He [the Lord] will help” at the same time indicating the Source of salvation.
- Now the Hebrew letter (‘) is added to the front of the name which changes the tense to the future tense. Hence, his name now means “The Lord will save, help, deliver.”
- The Talmud teaches that is was, in essence, a prayer from Moshe.

Another Joshua

- Jesus is from the Greek word “Iasou”. This name is the usual rendering of the Hebrew name “Joshua”.
- Joshua means, the Lord will save, rescue, help, deliver. HaShem was teaching us that it would be by this “Joshua” that He will save His people.
- His name was a prophecy of what He would accomplish and in whose power and strength He would accomplished it.

- The Hebrew rendering of the name of Messiah is commonly known as, “Yeshua” (a form of Joshua or Yehoshua).

The Conclusions (13:30-32)

- The spies unburdened themselves three times.
- First they gave a report to Moshe. It seems that some of the people overheard and Caleb tried to silence the spies. This was to no affect.
- Caleb also tried to encourage the people. The spies also seem to respond to Caleb’s words.
- The final occasion in which they gave their report was verse 32. Here they turn from Moshe and Caleb and speak directly to the people. Their report was, then, false and negative.

The Consequences

- The first response of the people was one of bitter and intense emotions (14:1)
- The second response was based on the first and was a direct effect of it. Acting solely on their emotions they “...murmured against Moshe and Aaron...” (14:1-3) “...Let us appoint a leader and let us return to Egypt!” (14:4)
- In 14:10 they finally decide to stone Joshua and Caleb! All of this because of lies.

Renewing our minds

- 2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us to “take every thought captive”. If we let ungodly thoughts slip into our brains and then we dwell on them then it will always result in some kind of disaster.
- They should have taken the lies “captive” and not given them any room to fester in their minds.
- Our enemy wants to try in every possible way to get us to rebel against God and His Word. We need to take those thoughts captive.

Weeping throughout the Generations

- Read Psalm 106:24-27
- The sages say that the destruction of the first and second temples and the “Great Spy Disaster” all happened on the same date in history, the 9th of Av (late July to early August).

The Godly Leaders

- Their first reaction was to humble themselves before the people. Led by Joshua in (14:6-9), the leaders “tore their garments”.
- Their second reaction was to attempt to encourage the people by speaking the truth to them. God’s Word should always encourage us as we simply believe what it says.

The Cure

- The instructions about sacrifices in chapter 15 were reminders that there was/is only one way out of their/our mess. We must repent and be forgiven. The Lord is always saying “Come back to Me! I will forgive and change you.”

The Challah

- 15:17-21 teaches about setting aside a portion of the bread for the Lord.
- Bread is a staple. In ancient times it was made new each day. They were to set apart from each batch of new dough, one loaf to be given to the Lord (the kohanim).
- The text calls this loaf challah. The Israelites would be reminded daily of who their source of life is and how much He has provided.
- They are also reminded to give their best and first constantly to Him.
- Today, on erev Shabbat, we call the bread challah. We say a special blessing and acknowledge in a special way that He is the only source of life and sustenance.

Tzitzit

- 15:37-41 teaches us about the tzitzit, or fringes on the four corners of our garments.
- They remind us to, 1) observe the commandments of God and 2) to keep our hearts and eyes on the Holy One.
- All tzitzit are to have a cord of blue (techelet). This is the same color as the high priest's robe.
- The Brit Hadasha tells us that we are royal priests. In short, the blue also reminds us of who we are in Messiah - royal priests unto Him.