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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

### Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:57 - פלג המנחה
- 8:14 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:32 - שקיעה
- 8:35 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:11 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:26 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:33 - שקיעה
- 9:23 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:44 - צאת

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

### Did You Know?

The meraglim were sent on a mission to spy out Eretz Yisrael, but they were misguided. Because they came back with a bad report, and led the Jewish People to cry in vain, HaShem gave us something to cry about, and that night, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, became a date of misfortune throughout history.

In truth, they were not sent to bring back an objective report, but to reinforce the message to Klal Yisrael that Eretz Yisrael was wonderful and could be theirs.

Some commentaries, including the Kotzker Rebbe, explain that Moshe's words to the spies should be punctuated a bit differently. [The English does not read as well as the Hebrew, so be sure to look up the actual pesukim to see this clearly.]

"You shall see the land, what is it?" can be read, "And you shall see the land, but what of it?" Your perception cannot override G-d's.

"Is it good or is it bad" can be read as, "It is good – even if it appears bad. It is fertile – even if it seems lean."

Had the spies understood their mission and brought back encouraging news, much suffering and tragedy could have been avoided.

### Thought of the week:

There are two ways of exerting one's strength; one is pushing down, the other is pulling up.

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"ומה הארץ... והתחזקתם ולקחתם מפרי הארץ והימים ימי בכורי ענבים" (במדבר יג)

**"And how is the land - is it fertile or lean, does it have trees, or not? And you shall strengthen yourselves and take from the fruit of the land." The days were the days of the ripenings of grapes."**

Moshe sent spies into Eretz Yisrael to bring back a report of the land. He asked them specific questions, and expected them to find answers he already knew. HaShem had already told us that the land was flowing with milk and honey; that it was a good land. Why then send these men to check it out? What was Moshe trying to accomplish?

One clue here is the use of the word "strengthen yourselves" to take from the fruit of the land. Presumably, Moshe didn't know that the produce was of enormous size, and if he did that wouldn't necessarily call for him to urge them on. Some commentaries explain that the spies were frightened to take produce lest the inhabitants of the land catch them. Moshe therefore told them they would be alright.

The Sifsei Chachomim makes an interesting comment on the end of this posuk. From the word structure, he understands that though grapes could have been ripe, the Meraglim specifically brought back unripe fruits that had already reached massive size. They would use these to prove that just as the produce was unusual, so were the people of Canaan unusually large and strong. Perhaps, in this context, Moshe could have been urging them to be strong in their choice and bring back ripe fruits.

Beyond these meanings, the adjuration to "be strong" could have a deeper and very significant meaning. They were being sent to bring back a report on a land which HaShem had told us was good. Of course we believe it is good. When Moshe sent the spies, he wanted them to see the good they could already see, and ignore the daunting obstacles.

He realized they would see both good and bad in Eretz Yisrael, but good and bad from a limited, human perspective. What he told them was, "Be strong, and take [a lesson] from the fruit of the land."

He was directing them not to focus on the giants and the challenges they would face later on, but on what the land was capable of producing, and the rewards which awaited them. Just as Eretz Yisrael could produce enormous physical produce, it could generate tremendous spiritual harvests as well. The fruit was just a hint to the wondrous ability imbued in the land which HaKadosh Boruch Hu constantly gazes at.

The lesson is that when we go to see something, we must understand that things may not be as they appear. Often, we will have subtle clues that the hand of HaShem is involved, but we can miss them and see what we take as "reality" instead. Therefore, says Moshe, go see the land, whether it looks to you to be good or bad, whether the people seem to be weak or strong, but take your cue from the fruits of the land, and know that everything will be good, as HaShem has promised it will be. That is the report you should bring back.

*After World War II, R' Eliezer Silver z"l went to Europe to visit the survivors and bring a message of hope and faith to them, as well as tend to their physical and spiritual needs.*

*At one Displaced Persons camp, a fellow came to him and said, "I will never be religious after what I witnessed in the concentration camps. A man had smuggled in a siddur and would not let others use it unless they gave him their food rations! If a "religious" person be so cruel, I want no part of such a religion."*

*"My son," said R' Leizer softly, "Why do you focus negatively on the man who charged others to use the siddur? Why do you not instead look in awe and wonderment at those holy Jews willing to give up their food for a few precious moments of davening from a siddur?"*