

# Kriyat HaTorah Companion

Questions Raised in Each Aliya

## Shelach

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Shabbat Shalom

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*Italics indicate author's  
comments or Hebrew words*

Aliya 1 | 13:1-20

Examine verse 13:2.

**Who was the sending for? Was this a command from God?**

**Rashi** suggests that the inclusion of the word '*Lecha*' (for you) in this verse means that it was up to the Jewish people to decide whether to send spies. This was not a mandate from God, rather permission for them to pursue reassurances that are probably not required. The **Sforno** suggests that God was giving Moshe very specific instructions to not permit the Jewish people to select the spies themselves. It may be legitimate to send spies before you enter the land, but if they are to report on the worthiness of the Promised Land, they themselves need to be worthy. The **Chizkuni** suggests that it is clear as day that this was not an instruction of God's.

Aliya 2 | 13:21-14:7

Examine verses 13:21-22.

**Why is 'coming to Chevron' written in the singular, while going to the Negev written in the plural?**

**Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra & Rabbeinu Bachya** suggest that it was only Kalev who went to Chevron with the interest of praying at the graves of the *Avot*. **Why didn't Yehoshua join Kalev in Chevron?**

**Rabbeinu Bachya** suggests that Yehoshua did not need to go and pray in Chevron by the graves of the *Avot* because he had received a blessing from Moshe that afforded him the protection necessary from the poor influences of the other spies. He also comments that it was perhaps God who "went" to Chevron to tell the *Avot* that the time had come for their descendants to enter the land.

Aliya 3 | 14:8 - 25

Examine verse 14:8.

**What new information did Kalev & Yehoshua introduce here? What made this statement different from the other spies?**

The **Sforno** suggests that this statement was introducing the Jewish people the idea that this land is unique in that its ability to prosper is directly related to God's favor towards its inhabitants. If the Jewish people listen to God, they will flourish in this Promised Land. The **Sforno** also points out that Kalev & Yehoshua were saying that the very opposite of the spies' statement is true. The Jewish people will be met with no resistance. It is startling to note that, following this incident, the inhabitants of Israel had 40 years to prepare for this invasion and they still did not adequately do so.

Aliya 4 | 14:26-15:7

Examine verse 14:26.

**Why does God address both Moshe & Aharon in this verse? What did they each hear when God spoke to them now?**

The **Ramban** points out that both Aharon & Moshe fell on their faces in verse 14:5 in response to the spies. With their joint reaction to the spies, God maintains that team in His initial reaction. Later, in verse 14:28, God gives directions only to Moshe in regards to what to now say to the Jewish people. The **Ohr HaChaim** points out that God had already made known His dissatisfaction with the Jewish people to Moshe and he repeats his dissatisfaction now so Aharon can also hear it. *This seems to indicate that in the most troubling of moments, when the Jewish people deserved to be wiped out, both the political (Moshe) & the religious (Aharon) leadership needed to be engaged to save the Jewish people.*

Aliya 5 | 15:8-16

Examine verses 15:15-16.

**What is added by verse 16? What exactly is being discussed in these verses?**

The **Netziv** suggests that the word *Torah* in this verse is used to describe the teaching of the Sages of each generation. The word *Mishpat* describes laws that are enacted based on intellect. He suggests that teachings that are explicit within the Torah are in effect whether the reason behind the ruling applies or not. Rulings that were created by the Sages throughout generations should only apply if the reason behind the ruling is still in effect. *Obviously a qualified Halachist should be consulted.* The **Torah Temimah** applies this verse to how one should treat *Gerim* when involved in a judgement with them.

Aliya 6 | 15:17-26

Examine verse 15:18.

**How is the entry to the Land of Israel described and what is significant about it?**

**Rashi** points out that the language used here to describe their entry to the land of Israel is unique. The language of '*bevo'achem*' is used here to teach us that this *Mitzvah* is different than all others in that it applies in the Land of Israel immediately, even before the land has been conquered. The **Ramban** points out that the *Mitzvah* of *Challah* is a little different in that it may not be obviously tied to inhabiting the Land of Israel. The Torah teaches that it is connected to the Land of Israel but not reliant on conquering the land.

Aliya 7 | 15:27-41

Examine verse 15:27.

**Which sin is being discussed in this verse? What is unique about it?**

**Rashi** suggests that the sin we are discussing in this verse is the sin of idolatry. The **Siftei Chakhamim** explains that the '*vav*' at the beginning of this verse connects it to the prior discussion of idolatry. The **Chizkuni** points out that there is subjectivity in which animal is brought. The subjectivity does not relate to the nature of the sin, but specifically to the status of the sinner. The **Da'at Zkenim** points out that the impact of a violating a sin has a greater effect on the soul than on the physical body. It is for this reason that this verse (and others like **Vayikra 4:2**) uses the word '*nefesh*' when discussing a sin offering.

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