

D'VAR FOR MVHC BOARD MEETING JUNE 14, 2015

By Ljuba Davis

In this week's Parasha, Shelach Lecha, G*d instructed Moses to send SCOUTS or Spies who were actually competent men of distinction of their respective tribes — to scout out the land of Canaan. They came back from this mission with mixed reviews. They reported that Canaan was indeed a land overflowing with “Milk and Honey.” But, it was also inhabited by GIANTS who lived in Cities fortified by huge seemingly impenetrable walls. and the People Israel were not happy with this report. They said, “why should we fight wars to claim this land and risk that our wives and children should become the slaves of these giants?” who were the Amalikites who lived in the Negev and the Hittites and Jebusites and Emorites who dwelled in the hills and the Canaanites who lived on the banks of the Jordan and in the land reaching to the sea?

This “Desert Generation” had really had it too good — and for too long. They had Miriam's Well (a miraculous stone that traveled with them) that provided them with water,; there was manna from Heaven which was daily bread, and there were the “Clouds of Glory” which followed the people throughout their journey which sheltered them from the heat and cold of the desert, kept them clothed and shod; the Clouds protected them from the poisonous snakes and scorpions of the desert and flattened the terrain as they continued on their difficult trek through harsh terrain.

SO —WHAT WENT WRONG? and how does this relate to us today??????

The desert generation were like little children who have their basic needs taken care of by mother and father. In the case of the People Israel, all their needs were met by HaShem ((the parent, of course)and they took this for granted. When presented by a challenge - entering Canaan - they rebelled. The result was that G*d decreed that this desert generation would not live to enter “the Promised Land.” Quite simply, they FORGOT G*D'S COVENANT WITH THEM FROM THE TIME OF ABRAHAM.

Tucked into this Parasha is an instruction to tie tzitzit on their garments as a reminder. Reminder —of What??? The reminder is multifaceted. We must remember that it was HaShem who took us out of Egypt, who gave us the Law by which we should live our lives, and daily we should remember this .

The late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, z”l, taught that we must be continue to be the generation that enters the land. We must seize opportunity based on faith as well as wise counsel which based on our daily attachment to HaShem and the laws he gave us. WE MUST “CROSS THE LAND —YET—NOT LEAVE OUR SPIRITUAL CHILDHOOD BEHIND WITH THAT MEMORY OF HASHEM SUSTAINING US AS WE WANDERED IN THE DESERT.”

As we daven Shacharit in the morning , covered by our tallit, the TZITZIT on it remind us daily of Hashem's miracles and our obligation to answer to Him, the Highest Power. Alas, we poor mortals need constant REMINDERS!!

In a moment we will read the Board Brit which - like the tzitzit, is our reminder of our obligation as board members and as leaders of our Jewish community on the Island to make decisions and formulate policy for the collective good of our community. May we be guided by that Higher Power!