**Why couldn’t Moses enter the land**

Hi everybody, this is Rabbi David Fohrman, and before I begin I just want to introduce to you a little experiment that I'm going to do this week. This lecture, like the other ones, are about 45 minutes to an hour long or so, and I know that not all of you get a chance to listen to that in one shot and I heard, perhaps, that it might be difficult to find a place to stop and a good place to stop and a good place to pick up. So just as an experiment I'm actually breaking this lecture into three segments and indicating where a good place to stop is. I'll try and put it up actually on the website as three separate files, or as one file, so if you're listening to it on an iPod you're welcome to download it as three file, and if you burn it as a CD you can just burn it onto one CD and it will come up as three tracks. So you can just listen to a track and listen to another track, and listen to another track. Or if you're just listening to it as one file, at least you'll have an indication of where you can sort of take a breather and get up, go to work, get out of the car, whatever it is that you're doing and pick up again. If you can, shoot me an email or something and tell me if you think this is a distraction or if this works for you. If it's a distraction I'll stop doing it, if you think it's really helpful I'll continue doing it. But I just thought I'd try the experiment and see how it goes.

Onto the lecture, here we go.

Hi everybody, this is David Fohrman and welcome to week 4 of our lecture series; Why Couldn't Moshe Enter the Land? As I think I mentioned to you in an email I am currently in America on a short trip, I'm doing some teaching here in Baltimore, so I am currently suffering from jetlag, it's a very early morning here with the sun not quite up and I figured I'd use the time to get started on this week's class with you.

What I'd like to do in a moment is to kind of get to your homework question where we talked about trying to understand Deuteronomy, Chapter 1, this speech that Moses begins the Book of Deuteronomy with, where he gives this very short recap of 40 years of history. To try and put together that speech, to understand what it's about.

But before we do that I'd like to take a moment to introduce two Midrashim - two comments made by the Rabbis. Midrash is the very ancient form of Rabbinic commentary, it goes back about 2,000 years, Midrash is difficult to understand, it requires some skill in putting it together. But there's two, rather strange pieces of Midrash that I'd like to share with you that I think shed quite a bit of light on this speech, in a strange kind of way.

The two Midrashim I have in mind focus on one word in the speech. One word which Moses says, which is a significant word, and it's the word Eicha. You'll find it in Chapter 1, I guess it's verse - looks like verse 13, verse 12, it's hard for me to tell in this text. But; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem, Moses says when he's talking about something that occurred way back in Exodus, his decision to introduce judges at the advice of his father-in-law Yitro - Jethro. So he says, I told you at that time; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - that the task of judging you was getting too difficult for me, and I told you how can I possibly manage this burden? Havu lachem anashim chachamim u'nevonim - I'll find for you wise men and they will be judges that will help me out in this endeavor.

Now, if you actually look at this word in Hebrew it's the word Eicha. And for those of you who are familiar with it, the Hebrew word Eicha is a significant word in the Jewish tradition, it actually appears later in the Bible as the signature word for one of the Megillot - for one of the Scrolls of the Bible, known as Megillat Eicha - the Scroll of Eicha, which is read on Tisha B'Av, on the saddest day of the Jewish calendar. Eicha - in English Lamentations, is the book written by the prophet Jeremiah and foretells what will happen in Jeremiah's lifetime just a few short years later, the destruction of the Temple, and it begins with the word Eicha.

Now Eicha is a word of lament. In this case - in the case of Lamentations - it is sort of the signature word of Lamentations, it's a signature lament, and what it really means is how, and how could it possibly be? Related to the word Eich which literally means how, Eicha is a sort of how with the connotations of woe. How could this possibly have happened to us? How could it be - the first verse of Eicha says - that; Ha'ir rabati am - that the city that was full of people, Jerusalem, could be exiled and there would be nobody left?

Anyway, so this word Eicha appears here in - not in Lamentations but way back in Deuteronomy, here in this text of Moses, and it just seems sort of coincidental and not really a big deal. But Jewish tradition has made something of a big deal of it. First of all, if you happen to be in Shul - in Synagogue, when these verses are read, you'll find that these verses, the first chapter in Deuteronomy, are always read on the Shabbat - on the Sabbath, right before Tisha B'Av. And when these verses are read they're read with the cantillation - with the Trop, of Eicha. When verses are read in the Torah on the Sabbath so the person reading them always uses a sort of singsong, it's called Trop, and there's different Trop - there's different cantillation, for different Books. The cantillation for Eicha is a signature kind of lamenting, very sad, [singing tune] Eicha yashvah badad ha'ir rabati am. So when the person reading the Torah gets to these verses so he's reading it in regular Torah Trop - in the regular cantillation for the Torah, but when he gets to this, he uses the cantillation of Eicha. [Singing tune] Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem.

Now the question is why? It's really not such a big deal. Moses is saying something which seems happy. I mean if you look at the verse before Moses is saying that I told you at this time - I'm reading now from Chapter 1, verse 9 - I told you at this time; Loh uchal levadi se'eit etchem - it's difficult for me to judge you all by myself, millions of people. Hashem Elokeichem hirbeh etchem - and I have no problem that there's so many of you, God has multiplied you; V'hinchem ha'yom kekochvei ha'shamayim larov - God has made you like the stars of the heaven. Hashem Elokei avoteichem yosef aleichem kachem eleph pe'amim - I wish you that God should make you a thousand times more numerous than this. Vivarech etchem - God should bless you like God promised to you. However; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - it's so difficult for me to judge you all alone.

So it's not like there's something sad going on here, it doesn't seem, Moses has no problem with there being lots of people, so how come we use this strange, sad Eicha Trop - this Eicha cantillation at this time? Is it just because it happens to be the same word going back to Lamentations? That seems kind of arbitrary. What's the problem here? So that's one question I'd like you to keep in the back of your mind and it sets the background for these two Midrashim which I'd like to introduce to you. Two Midrashim that focus on this word Eicha that appears here in Deuteronomy, and sort of trace its echoes and connotations throughout the corpus of Biblical literature.

So I want to share these Midrashim with you right now, let me quote the first one to you. So here's the first of these strange Midrashim, you can find it in Eicha Rabbah, it's the first Midrash in Eicha Rabbah, which is the Midrash specifically written on the Book of Lamentations. Here's what it says. The Midrash says; Shelosha nitnabu b'lashon Eicha - the Midrash traces back and says there were three prophets who prophesied using this particular language of Eicha - of lamentation. These three prophets were Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Moshe amar - Moses said; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - the Midrash quotes our particular verse - Moses said it's so difficult for me to judge you all alone.

Yeshayahu amar Eicha haytah l'zonah - Isaiah said, look how she is like a harlot. This is in Isaiah Chapter 1, looking at the Jews, speaking of the Jews, that she's become like a harlot, she has gone to other gods. And Jeremiah later says; Eicha yashvah badad - look how she sits in solitude, speaking of Jerusalem.

Commenting on these three instances of the use of the word Eicha, these three prophets who said it, Rav Leivi made sense of it by saying it could be compared to a; Matronah - a matron; Shehayu lah shelosha shushbinin - a woman that had - a noblewoman that had three sort of ladies-in-waiting. Echad ra'ah otah b'shalvutah - the first of these women saw their princess in her times of tranquility. Echad ra'ah otah b'pachzutah - a second saw her in her times of travail. V'echad - and one of them, the last one, saw here; B'nivulah - when she was downcast and downgraded and had really fallen apart.

So too; Moshe ro'oh et Yisrael bichvodom v'shalvutam - so too Moses saw the Jews in their times of glory and he said Eicha; Eicha esah levadi torchachem - how could I possibly judge you? Yeshayahu ro'oh otam b'pachzutam - Isaiah saw them in their times of travail and he said; Eicha haytah l'zonah - how is she like a harlot. Jeremiah saw them in their times of degradation and said; Eicha yashvah badad.

Now the question is what is this Midrash saying? Yeah, it's very nice, so the Midrash points out that there were three people who used Eicha, big deal - and says there were three different times. But is the Midrash really trying to attach some sort of significance to this, see some sort of pattern in this?

Seemingly, no such pattern exists. I mean, maybe you could say that Isaiah and Jeremiah are kind of similar, but the Moses thing seems to stick out like a sore thumb, just doesn't seem to fit.

One of my favorite Sesame Street games I think I told you about, is Which One of These Things - last week we talked about this - Which One of These Things is Not Like the Other? Which one just doesn't belong? The Moses piece just doesn't seem to belong. The Moses piece is very different, everything is happy, everything is fine, everything is wonderful, what does it have to do with Eicha, what does it have to do with this terrible lament? There's no lament going on here. So why is it that the Midrash seems to group what Moshe is saying here together with these other Eicha? I think, again, this is supported by the - as I mentioned to you - the cantillation, which is Jewish tradition, the way when we come to Deuteronomy for some reason we read it as if it's a sad thing. But the text doesn't seem to be talking about anything sad? So that's Midrash number 1.

Now here's Midrash number 2 - again, focused on this word Eicha. Midrash number 2 takes us all the way back, not just from Moses, Jeremiah and Isaiah, but all the way back to Adam. Adam number 1, first man in the world, and says that in fact there's a hidden Eicha in the story of Adam. What the Midrash is talking about here is a word which is not really Eicha but is the same word spelled with the same letters but with different vowelization. In Hebrew, of course, it's a language only of consonants and the vowelization is underneath the words, underneath the letters. So if you change the vowelization you change the word. It so happens that the word Eicha spelled Alef, Yud, Chaf, Heih, appears actually as a different word, but with the same consonants in the story of Adam. That is when God asks Adam where he is. So He says Eicha but He doesn't say Eicha, He says, Alef, Yud, Chaf, Heih; Ahyekah - where are you? But Ahyekah is spelled the same way as Eicha.

So the Midrash seems to make a connection between these two words and seems to make a sort of play on words of the Ahyekah which exists - 'where are you' that exists in the story of Adam and connects it to the Eicha in Jeremiah. Here's what the Midrash says. The Midrash says there's an analogy between the Eicha of Jeremiah and the Ahyekah of Adam. Here's the analogy; Mah Odom Ha'rishon - God says, Adam, the first man in the world what happened? Hichnastiv l'toch Gan Eden - I brought him into paradise; Tzivitiv - and I commanded him, I told him not to eat from the tree; V'avar al tzivuyai - and he did not follow My laws. V'danti oto - and as a result I imposed upon him; B'geirushin ub'shiluchin - I sent him away and I cast him out of paradise. V'konnanti alav eicha - and after I did that I lamented his fate with the word Alef, Yud, Chaf, Heih, with the word Eicha. And in this case not the word Eicha but the word Ahyekah. I asked him, where are you?

So too, the Midrash says, his children, Adam's children; Hichnasti l'Eretz Yisrael - I brought them into the land of Israel; V'tzivitem - and I commanded them - once I brought them into this promised land, this paradise of theirs, the land flowing with milk and honey; V'avru al tzivuyai - and they did not follow my laws. V'danti otam b'geirushin ub'shiluchin - and I also imposed casting them out of the land in the same way that I had done for that Adam. Just as I had lamented for Adam with the language of Aleph, Yud, Chaf, Heih, so too I lamented the fate of the Jewish people; V'konanti aleihem Eicha - and that's the Eicha of Jeremiah.

I think the question when you look at this Midrash is, again, what's the Midrash trying to say? It's a very nice, cute play on words, yeah, just so happens that Eicha and Ahyekah are the same letters, but the actual truth is, is the words have nothing to do with each other grammatically speaking. It's just a play on words, it's a cute pun. Grammatically they come from two different roots. Ahyekah comes from the root Ayei - which means where, and Eicha comes from the root Eich - which means how. I mean, they have nothing to do with each other. So why is this Midrash sort of throwing together two words which doesn't seem to have to do with each other? Is there some real, essential connection between the Ahyekah of Adam and the Eicha of Lamentations? It's true that some of the events surrounding them are similar, there is, interestingly enough, sort of the promised land and being sent out of the promised land. But does Adam's Ahyekah - and in some way does that other root shed any light on the meaning of Eicha?

As we try to come to a deeper understanding of Eicha and how it transpires throughout Jeremiah, Isaiah and here in Deuteronomy, this is also a helpful Midrash to keep back of our minds. A sort of residual connection back to Adam, how is it that we understand that?

So these are things I just want you to keep in the back of your minds as you think about Deuteronomy. We're now going to sort of forget about all of this and go, look at Deuteronomy carefully, read through Deuteronomy and try to figure out what's going on.

So this is going to be the end of your first track here, if you have to get up, do something else, go to work, drive home, whatever it is, this is a good place to stop and we'll pick up in our next segment with looking at Deuteronomy.

So let's take a look at this speech in Deuteronomy Chapter 1. We're going to be looking at Chapter 1 from verses 1 through say, 38, 39 or so. I asked you last week to see if you could try to figure out what this speech is about, if you could give it a title, and if you could try to divide it up into sections. So let's try and work on that.

Let's take a look at the introduction here, because I think the introduction provides us with a good set of clues as to what is going on here. In the introduction to the speech, as I mentioned to you last week, we've got a number of places, and we hear about all these places, and seemingly, too many places, we don't need to hear about this many. But one of them is treated differently than the others, let's try and figure out which. I'm just reading the first verse here.

Eileh ha'devarim asher diber Moshe el kol Yisrael - these are the things that Moses says to all of Israel. Here come the places. B'eiver ha'Yarden - when they were across from the Jordan; Bamidbar - they were in the desert; Ba'Arava mul Suf bein Paran u'bein Tofel - they were in the Arava, near Suf, between Paran and Tofel. V'Lavan va'Chatzeirot v'Di Zahav. Achad asar yom mei'Chorev - they were 11 days away from Mount Chorev - another name for Sinai; Derech Har Se'ir - going the way of Har Se'ir - Mount Se'ir; Ad Kadesh Barnei'ah - towards Kadesh Barnei'ah. Vayehi b'arba'im shanah - and it happened in the fortieth year in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, Moses said the following to all of Israel. And these are the words, really, of the introduction.

Now if you look at these places, one place that seems to me stands out, and that is the only place to which a time period is attached. There is a time period of 11 days. Every other place we're talking about is you're near here, you're near there, you're between this, you're between that, but there's one place where you get a very specific time period, they are 11 days away from Chorev. Chorev seems to stand out, 11 days away from Chorev. The time period is especially interesting because if you look at the very next verse there's another time period. The other time period is; And it happened in the fortieth year - the fortieth year of what? The fortieth year of them being in the desert, and really, the fortieth year since they were at Chorev, they were at Sinai - again, Chorev is another name for Sinai.

And, in case that point was lost to you, if you look at the very beginning of this speech, how this speech begins, the speech begins in verse 6 with Moses reminding everyone that God had spoken to us in Chorev and had said, time to go. So very clearly, the speech is talking about a time as beginning from a time when they were at Chorev and saying it was time to go, and in the introduction to the speech where they are - we're told where they are in relation to Chorev. But not just where they are, we're told how many days' journey by foot they are from Chorev - they're 11 days away. Now let's go back to the verse right after that, verse 2 says they're 11 days away from Chorev and verse 3 says that the speech took place when? Forty years. Forty years since they were at Chorev.

So there's a very big question that the text sets up for you with these two time periods; 11 days and 40 years. There are 11 days' journey from Chorev but it's been 40 years since they've been there. So the obvious question is what are they doing only 11 days' journey away from Chorev 40 years later? What have they been doing for 40 years? That, I think, is the theme of the speech. The theme of the speech is that question; you're only 11 days' walk from Chorev, what are you doing - why did it take 40 years for you to only get 11 days' journey away from Chorev? How come it took so long?

Now if that's the theme of the speech, what's the answer to that question? From all we know, from the Bible, from all we know from the story, if we read from Genesis through to Deuteronomy, if we read the story of the Jews here in the desert, we know the answer to that question. If there's one reason why it took so long, why the Jews couldn't have gone into the land just in the first year, and it took 40 years, it's because of a certain episode. A lot of bad things happened in the desert but one of them sealed the Jews' fate and pushed them to a position where they had to wait 40 years to get to the land. What episode was that? Well it's the episode of the spies.

It's back in Numbers, Chapter 13 in Numbers is the original time when the story is recorded. Basically what happened was that the Jews were poised to enter the land, everything was going to work out fine and then there was this idea that we should send out spies. Moses says, send out spies, take a look at the land, see if the land is really a good land. It is a good land, God promised you, but these spies will go check it out themselves. Go see what the best way to approach the land is, if the cities are well fortified, if they're not well fortified, what the best plan of attack is. That was the deal, send out the spies. Everything seems kind of fine, except the spies come back and basically everything cascades into disaster.

The people are scared they won't be able to conquer the land, they say, how come we're here, God just took us here to die in the desert. That's really the last straw for God. God said the spies were there for 40 days and you're going to stay here for another 40 years; one year for every day that the spies were gone. And all the people who said that our children are going to get slaughtered in the desert, well those children will be the ones who will enter the land, because this generation, the current generation, the generation of the spies, is going to die out and it will only be their children who actually conquer the land.

So now, if you're looking at this speech back in Deuteronomy and you're saying okay, we get this hint that the speech is about you're 11 days away from Sinai but it took you 40 years to get here, we think we're going to hear about the spies. If Moses is going to talk about something he's going to tell us about the spies. But in fact, what happens in the speech? Basically we get a short history of the last 40 years. But it's a very short history, Moses leaves out a lot of things. We anticipated that he would get to the spies and in fact he does get to the spies about 30 verses in, but he tells us some other things in here, he adds in some other pieces of history.

But it's, I think, important for us to try to figure out what other pieces of history he does add in, because in certain way it's counterintuitive. I mean, if the general idea of the speech is to sort of chastise the Jews for how come it took so long to get to the land, it didn't have to take you 40 years, well there are a lot of things that Moses could point to in the desert that went wrong. The Golden Calf comes to mind, but there's lots of things besides the Golden Calf, many times when the Jews didn't do what they were supposed to do. The first water crisis way back in Merivah where Moses hits the rock, other times when the people complained, they didn't like the Manah, they didn't like - they wanted meat instead. There's lots of things Moses could have said if he was looking to chastise the people, and in fact, his choice of what he includes in the speech and what he doesn't, I think, is revealing and somewhat perplexing.

I'd like to go through the speech and say, aside from eventually his target, which is - seems to be the spies - what else does Moshe decide to include here? So that brings us to the other question I gave you last week which is to see if we can divide the speech up into sections, just so we know what's covered here. I did a little bit of work on this on the PowerPoint, and you can follow along with my sections, or you can look at your sections. But let's try and figure it out.

You got the narrator's introduction - the very beginning of Deuteronomy - where he tells you the setting, where this took place; 11 days away from Sinai and it took place 40 years after Sinai. Then we get to Moses' speech itself which starts more or less in verse 4. Verse 4 and 5, or it's actually 5 and 6, when it says; B'eiver ha'Yarden - they were in Eiver ha'Yarden and Moses held forth and explained the Torah and said the following. Verse 6; Hashem Elokeinu diber eleinu b'Chorev - God spoke to us in Chorev and said; Rav lachem shevess ba'har hazeh - it's enough for you, you spent enough time here at this mountain, time to go on. Penu u'se'u lachem u'bo'u Har Ha'Emori v'el kol shechaynav ba'Arava ba'har ubashefaylah - get going, and approach the mountain of the Amorites. Re'ei natati lifneichem et ha'aretz - this is verse 8 - see I have placed before you the land; Bo'u u'reshu et ha'aretz - go take possession of the land as I have sworn to your forefathers to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that I would give the land to them and to their progeny after them.

Okay, so this, I think, is really the beginning of the speech, this is section number 1, this is Moses' introduction to everything that follows. The idea is we were at Chorev, we were back at Sinai and God said, get up and go, go conquer the land. That's the main idea, sort of section number 1.

Okay, but now we get a story and it's, I think, a perplexing story - the story itself is not perplexing, but why it's here is perplexing. Moses spends a long time telling us this story, let's kind of read it through, verses 9 to 17. So the story here is a story of - I guess we might call them Jethro's judges, or the intermediate judges suggested by Jethro - by Yitro, Moshe's father-in-law. Again, a story originally told way back in Exodus. Instead of me just summarizing this story you see it right here in the text; Moses says it, so we can just look at his words.

Moses says; Va'omar aleichem ba'eit hahi - and I told you back at that time, back when we were at Chorev. I said to you; Loh uchal levadi se'eit etchem - I said, you know, I can't really continue to carry you all, it's too difficult. Hashem Elokeichem hirbeh etchem - look at how many people you are, God has made you numerous, you're like stars of the heaven. And it's not such a bad - it's a good thing you're like stars in the heaven. Nevertheless, Moshe says, it's difficult; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how can I possible do this all myself, Moses says.

Havu lachem anashim chachamim u'nevonim - we're going to have to appoint wise men, judges, a system of judges underneath me, that will be able to judge you. As Moshe goes on to say, these people will judge the small cases and if they have any questions they'll be able to come to me. Moses says and I explained this to you and you said it was a good idea - Tov ha'davar asher dibarta la'asot.

I took these people and I set them up as; Sarei chamishim v'sarei asarot v'shotrim le'shivteichem - I set up judges over 50, judges over 10, judges over thousands, a whole system of judges that would take care [of you 25:10]. I commanded them what to do; Va'atzaveh et shofteichem ba'eit hahi leimor shomo'ah bein acheichem u'shefatetem tzedek - I told them that they should do a good job, they should judge righteously between one person and the other. Verse 17; Loh takiru panim bamishpat - they should not be biased; Ka'katon ka'gadol tishma'un - they have to listen to the small people just like the big people.

Loh taguru mipnei ish - they shouldn't be afraid of anybody, even a person of great stature; Ki hamishpat l'Elokim hu - because God is the one who judges. V'hadavar asher yiksheh mikem takrivun eilai u'shemativ - and if they should ever find difficulty and they don't know what the answer to some question, they can always go back to me, sort of the Supreme Court.

This is the story of the intermediate judges. Again, recorded initially back in Exodus. So this is section 2 of the speech, the story of Jethro's judges, of the intermediate judges.

After that Moses says, we left Chorev, we left Mount Sinai - verse 19 - and we went through this whole great desert that you saw and we came to the mountain of the Amorites, just like God commanded us. Then we have verses that remind us very much of sort of that first transition statement when Moses gives that introduction and said we were at Chorev, and then God said leave, come to the mountain of the Amorites, go and conquer the land. We again hear words very similar. Va'omar aleichem - and I told you; Batem ad Har ha'Emori - I said we've come to the mountain of the Amorites that God is going to give us. Re'ei natan Hashem Elokecha lefanecha et ha'aretz - look, God has given us the land. Go, take possession of the land just like God told your forefathers. Don't be afraid. It sounds very similar to what Moses had said before, now the dream is coming true, they're coming to the land.

Then at that point we get the story of the spies, from verse 22 on. Vatikrevun eilai kulchem - you all came to me; Vatomru - and you said; Nishlechah anashim lefaneinu veyachperu lanu et ha'aretz - let us send forth people and let them do espionage against the land and figure out the way we should go up against it and how we should attack the cities. Moses says; Vayitav b'einai ha'davar - I thought it was a good idea and I took 12 people from you and set them up, one from each tribe. Set them up as your spies. They went up and they brought back wonderful fruit from the land, but then you didn't want to go when they came back, you complained and you said it was in God's hatred of us that He took us out of Egypt, and you decided you didn't want to go. You were scared that; Am gadol va'rom mimenu - it's a very big nation, they're going to squash us. And you were afraid and you didn't want to go.

I pleaded with you at that time and I told you; Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - I told you that the God who is walking before you, He's going to fight for you. U'bamidbar asher ra'ita - in this desert that you have been in that God has been carrying you like; Ka'asher yisah ish et beno - like a man will carry his son, throughout this whole desert, until you came to this place. You've seen God in your life, nevertheless; U'ba'davar hazeh einechem ma'aminim baHashem Elokeichem - in this thing you don't have faith in God. You don't have faith in which God? Haholech lifneichem - the God that is going before you; La'tur lachem makom - He's searching out places for you; La'chanoteichem ba'aish lailah - He's searching out places for you supernaturally with a pillar of fire at night; Larotchem ba'derech - to show you where you should be going; Ube'annan yomam - and there's a pillar of cloud during the day. So God Himself is your spy, but that didn't work, you didn't want to do it. God became angry and said - and swore that if any of these people will go into the land, it's not happening, there's going to be 40 years that you're going to be here, and that's why it's going to take so long.

That really is the answer that Moses seems to be arriving at - and by the way, immediately after that the next verse, verse 37; Gam bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem - and also me, God became angry at me on your account also. Again, coming immediately after the spies. So you have sort of section 4 here, which is the story of the spies. Section 1 is introduction; God said time to leave Chorev, go conquer the land. Section 2; the intermediate judges, section 3; when they come to the mountain of the Amorites and Moses says okay, time to go conquer the land, and then the story of the spies. That is it, those are the only stories over the last 40 years that Moses sees fit to tell the people.

I think the obvious question is, why is the story of the intermediate judges in here? What does that have to do with anything? It just seems like so much trivia. Look, there's lots of things that Moses could have talked about if he wanted to remind people of things that happened along the way, he could have told us about the Manah, he could have told us about the war against Amalek which we won miraculously, he could have told us about the bad things, he could have told us about the good things. There's a lot of things that happen, we could have heard about the rebellion of Korach, there's many different things that happened, but for some reasons Moses feels a need to talk to us about the institution of this series of judges that takes place back in Exodus. Why? Why is that so important? Not only does he tell us about that, he tells us not just about the institution of the judges, he also goes into great deal about he commanded them, exactly the rules that he told them how to judge people. What does this story have to do with judging people, it has nothing - it's about why it took 40 years, is this part of the story about why it took 40 years? Or is this a digression?

Okay, so that's section 2 of our talk here today and in a second we're going to move on to section 3. Again, a good place to take a break if you need to take a break, but come right back, we're going to try and put this together. What is this section doing here?

Okay, so we've got this question which is what is this story of the intermediate judges doing here in Moses' first speech of introduction? It seems to indicate that the point of the speech is how come it took us 40 years to cover 11 days of ground, the answer to that seems to be the spies, what's the story of the intermediate judges doing here?

Now this is the kind of thing that if you were, say, a critical Biblical scholar you might just say well, there were a number of editors here and the original speech went directly to the spies but then 500 years later another editor with another agenda came and just stuck in this story of the intermediate judges. But it's a digression and it worked well for 2,000 years but then we came and we were able to piece together and see that this was one story and this is another story and they came from two different time periods, and really it's not unified, and it's a patchwork quilt kind of thing. But is it really a patchwork quilt kind of thing? A lot of times what appears to be disharmonious, what appears to be pasted together is not really pasted together and if you look carefully there's a deeper unity that brings things together and I think you see that here very clearly.

What I'd like to ask you to do is to take a closer look, if you would, at the two story elements in this speech. We've isolated two stories in this speech; the story of the intermediate judges and the story of the spies. At face value these two stories have nothing to do with each other but if you look carefully I think you'll begin to see that they're connected in a fascinating series of parallels which the author draws between these stories - linguistic parallels. What I'd like you to do, if you can, if you speak Hebrew do this in Hebrew, if you speak English, do this in English, but if you have the chance, if you're not driving, don't kill yourself doing this, but if you can get a chance to just take a look at the text, and you can look at the source sheets, I'll copy these two sections so you can try and do it in the source sheets.

But try and see if you can see any parallels as you're reading one text, anything that reminds you of the others. You could even just keep one finger on one piece of the text, and one finger on the other, look at the spies, look at the story of the intermediate judges, say are there any linguistic elements which seem curious which reappear? They're first in the story of the judges and then they reappear in the story of the spies. If you look carefully you should find a whole bunch of these elements. So take a little break, I'm going to give you five seconds over here, but you can put your MP3 player or whatever you're listening to this on, on pause and take your time and do this, or you can just rush in and listen to what I have to say about it. But try and see can you isolate these linguistic elements? I think these linguistic elements that are parallel make it very clear that this did not happen by chance, these were not two things that just got pasted here. There is a very careful series of connections which the author is embedding between these two texts and the question is what is the meaning of those connections? How do we understand it? But first let's find them.

Here's your short break, again, what you're looking for is you're going to read the story of the intermediate judges and you're going to look, pay close attention to the language, concepts or ideas that appear in this short text. Then you're going to read the story of the spies and you're going to ask yourself are any of the ideas that I heard about in the story of the intermediate judges are they reappearing somehow in the story of the spies? You can just keep track of this on a little piece of paper and we'll compare notes. Ready, you figure out what you came up and here's what I came up with.

One very interesting, broad connection between the idea of the intermediate judges and the idea of the spies, is of course you know that both of these stories were told before in the Torah. Deuteronomy is not the first time we hear about them, we are rehearing about them in Deuteronomy, but the first time they appear are Exodus for the story of the intermediate judges and Numbers for the story of the spies. Now what's fascinating is that when you go and you actually compare the original story of the spies with how it's recounted here in Deuteronomy and the original story of the intermediate judges with how they're recounted in Deuteronomy, you'll find that the stories differ. That in some ways it doesn't seem to be a faithful record, that there's discrepancies between the ways the story is originally told and the way it's re- told. You might say, okay, that's very interesting, but when you take a look at in particular what these discrepancies are, you'll find that it's the same discrepancies. The most obvious example of this is the question, whose idea is this?

By the way, if you want, if you've already found your list of connections and you want to see mine, you can follow along in your PowerPoint, because I've illustrated these in the PowerPoint.

But question number 1 is - or issue number 1, connection 1 is - whose idea was this? Now if you read the story in Deuteronomy and you ask yourself whose idea was the intermediate judges, the answer from the perspective of Exodus where the story of intermediate judges is originally told - and you can check this out in your source sheets - is that it's Jethro's idea.

The way it works is that Jethro comes to Moses and says, hey it's not a good idea what you're doing, you're going to wear yourself out, Moses, you're judging people from the morning until the evening and it just can't go this way, you need some sort of assistance. Why don't you have this system of intermediary judges? So it's Moses' father-in-law Jethro who comes up with this idea in Exodus. But what's interesting is that when you read in Deuteronomy exactly how this story progresses, if you look in Chapter 1, verse 9, Moses is the one who says it's sort of his idea; Va'omar aleichem ba'eit hahi - Moses says I told you at this time; Loh uchal levadi se'eit etchem - I can't really bear the burden of judging you. Now in fact, this is more or less what Jethro says to Moses, it's not actually what's recorded in Exodus that Moses says to the people, but here in Deuteronomy Moses talks about and attributes these words to him.

So bottom line, when we compare the story of the intermediate judges as it's originally told in Exodus and as it's repeated in Deuteronomy, we find that there's some confusion as to whose idea it is. In Exodus it sounds like it's Jethro's idea, in Deuteronomy it sounds like it's Moses' idea.

Now let's fast-forward to the other thing discussed here in the speech in Deuteronomy, the story of the spies, whose idea is the spies? Well if you go back to the original source of the spies in Numbers, it seems pretty clear that the idea is God's; the story begins with God instructing Moses to go send spies to search out the land. Yet for some reason when the story is recounted in Deuteronomy God's role, just like Jethro's role earlier, is not mentioned, and in fact, it's the people who come to Moses and the people say, we'd like to have spies. So the question is why are these stories recounted differently? But even beyond that question it's very intriguing that the stories are recounted differently, and they're recounted differently in precisely the same way, ironically, which is the question of whose idea is it changes from the original story to the story as it appears when it's recounted.

So that seems to be interesting question number 1, the question of whose idea is it?

But there's a number of other connections in this story and as you go through it I think they become pretty clear. Listen to the language. When Moses proposes the idea of the judges to the people, how do the people respond? So we'll find that the people say that they think it's a really good idea? Vatomru - and they say - this is in verse 15 - Tov ha'davar asher dibarta la'asot - what a good idea Moses you've sprung on us, this idea of these intermediate judges to be able to help you bear the burden of judging us. So that language; Tov ha'davar asher dibarta la'asot, appears.

Interestingly, almost the same language appears in the story of the spies. What happens there? There there's a proposal as well and instead of Moses proposing an idea to the people, the people propose an idea to Moses. They say Moses, how about some spies? What's Moses' response? Well lo and behold it's identical. Vayitav b'einai ha'davar - Moses says in verse 23 - and it was good in my eyes this thing that you suggested to have these spies. So the language 'a good thing', that it was a good thing in my eyes, and the response, it was a good thing, to a proposal by the other, is virtually identical, connection number 2.

Okay, let's move on to a possible connection number 3. Let's go to the story of the judges, you can follow along with me here in Chapter 1, verse 15 in Deuteronomy. So where do these judges come from? Well Moses tells the people that he selected the judges from among the heads of your tribes - from Roshei Shivteichem. Well let's look at the spies, where do the spies come from? If you fast-forward to the story of the spies here in Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people that he took 12 men, one from each tribe, to serve out as spies. So there's tribal representatives in both cases; first in the judges and then in the spies.

Let's go on, connection number 4. 'Bring the hard things to me.' A very interesting thing. One of the fascinating things about the story of the judges is not only is the story retold but it's retold in such detail that we hear of Moses' very specific commands to the judges of exactly how they're supposed to conduct themselves. In particular we're told that they're supposed to treat equally people who are in greater stature and people who are of lesser stature - Ka'katon ka'gadol tishma'un. We're told that they're not supposed to fear anybody; Loh taguru mipnei ish - don't fear anybody. Why? Ki hamishpat l'Elokim hu

- because ultimately judgment is up to God. Realize that you are just earthly judges but God is behind you, He is the ultimate Judge. If you make any mistakes, whatever it is, God will - in His wisdom and in His judgment God will see to it that justice is done. Finally, Moses says, look don't worry because ultimately I'm also here to help and if you find anything too difficult to judge it's like a system where I can be the Supreme Court, you can come to me if you can't figure out a case, and I'll be happy to help you.

So if you look at that language, it's really the last thing that Moses says in the story of the intermediate judges, he says that you can always bring things to me. The language is; V'ha'davar asher yiksheh mikem takrivun eilai u'shemativ - and this is in verse 17 in Chapter 1 in Deuteronomy - that the thing when it becomes very difficult for you; Takrivun eilai u'shemativ - you can bring it to me and I will be happy to hear the case. Well does that language ever appear again in the story of the spies? And it turns out it does.

Listen to these words; V'ha'davar asher yiksheh mikem takrivun eilai u'shemativ. Takrivun eilai - even if you don't know Hebrew just listen to those words; Takrivun eilai - bring those things to me. Those were the very last words of the story of the intermediate judges, look at the opening words of the spies' saga. What happens to open the spies' saga? Verse 22; Vatikrevun eilai kulchem - and you all came to me - you, all the people - and you said; Nishlechah anashim lefaneinu - let's send forth these people. Fascinating, the very last words of the judges' story are the same as the very first words of the spies' story, which is, bring it to me. Moses says, bring the difficult things to me, and what happens in the beginning of the spies' story? They came to him and they brought something to him and they said Moses; Nishlechah anashim lefaneinu - send spies out to help us conquer the land.

So fascinating, bring these things to me. Another connection, connection number 4.

Let's move on, connection number 5. We mentioned how strange it was that Moses gets into such intricate detail in instructing the judges, why do we have to hear about this? It's enough to hear about it in Exodus, we have to hear every last thing that he told the judges? One of the things that he told the judges was that they're supposed to treat big people and small people just the same; Loh taguru - you shouldn't be afraid of anybody, and; Ka'katon ka'gadol tishma'un - you should listen to the small people just like you listen to the big people. Treat big people and small people the same.

Go through the story of the spies does this ring a bell? Do we hear about big people? Do we hear about small people? Do we hear about an equality or inequality between big people and small people? Well lo and behold we do hear about big people. We actually hear about giants in the story of the spies. Where do we hear about giants? The people say, we can't conquer the land. Why? How could we possibly do it? Am gadol va'rom mimenu - verse 28 - look at this people that we're going to face there in the land, it's a great nation, it's much bigger than us, their cities are much bigger than us. V'gam bnei anakim ra'inu sham - there are giants there. Who are we? Well earlier when the story of the spies is retold in Numbers they say, we looked in our eyes like grasshoppers, we felt really small.

Again, Moses in Deuteronomy talking about the judges; Treat big people and small people the same. In spies, there's also big people - the people you're going to conquer. There's also small people - us. The question is do you treat them the same? Connection - I forget what number we're up to - number 5 I think.

Moving on to number 6, and number 6, I think, also comes from these very intricate details that Moses commands them. One of the things he says to the judges is don't be afraid. Don't be afraid, you don't have to worry about judging. Why? Because ultimately there's God behind you, God is the ultimate Judge. Do we have this concept don't be afraid because God is behind you with judges, do we have don't be afraid because God is behind you with the spies? We absolutely do.

When Moses tries to convince the people when everything is falling apart he says look, don't be afraid, you can go, conquer these people, why? Because yeah, even though you're fighting, I mean you're not the ultimate fighters, God is behind you, God will fight for you. The language is very clear; Va'omar aleichem - and I said to you - verse 29; Loh ta'artzun v'loh tire'un meihem - don't be afraid, don't tremble before them. Why? Immediately, in verse 30; Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - the G- d who is going in front of you; Hu yilachem lachem - He's going to fight for you, just exactly like He did in Egypt. So again, you don't have to worry because God is there, right there along with you.

Again, first we hear it in the judges, then we hear about it in the spies. Now the truth is, there are a number of other connections besides this, there are at least two or three other ones, and I'll leave you to look for them, and I'll get back to them next week. But let's just stop here, it doesn't seem like this is coincidental, it really does seem like there's some connections between this strange digression of the story of the judges which really isn't a digression. Somehow it seems intimately connected with the story of the spies. The question is how do we understand that? What are we to make of these connections between these stories?

So let me give you a sort of a hint to the direction I want to take next week. I'm going to suggest to you that there are a number of times really in the Torah where you find two stories that just kind of line up with each other. That at face value the stories have nothing to do with each other but then you see these textual connections - and there's not just one connection, not just two, but three, four, five, six, seven, eight connections that seem to link these stories. One of the things that happens sometimes is that when you look at story A and you look at story B, each story is a little difficult to understand on its own but if you put the connections together with each other, they each shed light on each other, so that all of a sudden you understand both stories. They each serve as a key to the other. It's almost like connection A in story 1, sheds light on the meaning of connection A in story 2, and connection B in story 2 sheds light on connection B in story 1. Together they really enlighten both stories.

It seems like a complicated kind of thing, but it's not so complicated, and once you see it it's almost like a [wave encoding 45:44] information across two stories. Let me just give you an example of this, or maybe give you some homework to look at in another example of this. I'll come back next week and talk about that example, and then apply the same idea to our stories here in Deuteronomy with the judges and the spies.

The example I want you to look at, or my little homework assignment for you, you're going to look at the story of Joseph and the brothers. And we talked about this in our earlier on-line class, very briefly, but this fleshes things out a little bit more. You know, one of the strange things about the story of Joseph and the brothers is where did the brothers think they can get away with this from. Or what were they doing? They were taking a brother and selling him into slavery, I mean, could they possibly have thought that they were justified? How could they have rationalized what they were doing to themselves? What exactly were they thinking? I think that if you look at the story in light of a parallel story that appears later in Deuteronomy, you'll find some fascinating information that you can plug back into Genesis and plug from Genesis into Deuteronomy to really understand them both.

It turns out that there is a story in Deuteronomy which borrows the language of the story of Joseph and his brothers, see if you can find that language. What I'm going to do is actually read the story in the Deuteronomy for you and then point out to you some of the text in Deuteronomy which is actually borrowed from Genesis. And it might be fun for you to see if you can actually find the parallel text back in Genesis and see what it is that you make of it. The story I'm thinking of appears in Deuteronomy Chapter 21 and it goes like this - and as you're reading this I want you to listen for the strange words.

Ki tiheyena l'ish shtei nashim - when a man will have two wives - the verse in Deuteronomy says, in Chapter 21, verse 15. When a man will have two wives; Ha'achat ahuva v'ha'achat senu'ah - one wife that he loves and one wife that he hates. Now that I think is strange word number 1, a wife that you hate? I understand a wife that you don't love as much, but why would you marry a wife that you hate? All right, but it seems a little exaggerated. But anyway, he has these two wives, a wife that he loves and a wife that he hates. V'yaldu lo banim ha'ahuva v'hasenu'ah - and they both give birth to him children - this wife that he loves and wife that he hates. It turns out that the elder son, the Bechor - the firstborn son, is born to the Seni'ah - to the wife that is the hated wife.

Vehaya b'yom hanchilo et banav - and it shall be on the day that he gives his inheritance over to his children, the verse says; Loh yuchal levaker et ben ha'ahuva al pnei ben hasenu'ah habechor - you can't, he can't turn the child of the loved wife into the firstborn son. Rather; Et habechor ben hasenu'ah yakir - he has to recognize his true firstborn child; Latet lo pi shnayim b'kol asher yimotzeh lo - to give him a double portion in everything that will be found to him. Ki hu reishit ono - for this child is the first of his loins; Lo mishpat habechora - to him goes the right of the firstborn.

Now, if you look over that text very carefully, you'll find a number of pieces of language which is very strange. First of all we talked about the Senu'ah - the notion of hated. Second of all, this language of recognizing. I mean why not just say that if he wants to make one the firstborn he can't do that, instead he has to give a double portion to the one that is the son of the hated wife. But it doesn't just say that he has to give that son the double portion, it says, he has to be Makir him - he has to recognize him. It seems like extra words, you have to recognize him to give the double portion. Just say, you have to give him the double portion. So recognize seems to be extra.

Furthermore, how does the verse talk about estate? It doesn't just say you have to give him a double portion in everything that he has, or in everything that's his estate, in all of his possessions. Instead, it uses the very ambiguous language; you have to give him the double portion; B'kol asher yimotzeh lo - in everything that will be found to him. What do you mean, in everything that will be found to him?

What's that supposed to mean? By the way, the Talmud in Bavah Batra finds the phrase very difficult and tries to expound all sorts of different Halachot - all sorts of different laws that you learn from it. But just in the simple text it's a very strange thing, what do you mean, give him double portion of everything that's found to him?

Finally, this very poetic language; Ki hu reishit ono - for he is the first of his loins. This a prose piece and all of a sudden the Torah diverges into poetry for two sentences.

Well folks it turns out that each of these four strange elements are borrowed from Genesis and it's up to you to figure out where. This notion of number 1, Senu'ah - hated. I'll give you a hint; there's only one person who is referred to as Senu'ah - as hated, in feminine form, in the entire Bible. And it seems like we're referring back to that person. Who is that person? Hint number 1; Senu'ah - hated. Then go to Yakir, where in the story of Joseph and his brothers do we get the notion of recognizing, when people ask; Do you recognize something. Yakir - recognize. Similarly; Yimotzeh Lo, the strange word for estate, not; Yesh lo - not that which he has, but that which is found to him, in connection with Hakarah

- in connection with recognition in the Joseph story. Do we have recognition ever tied with finding things? Do we have finding things and recognizing things together? See if you can find it.

Finally, in the Joseph and the brothers story, where at the very end of the story do we ever have the phrase - the strange phrase - first of his loins? That phrase in fact is quoted from Genesis, it comes from the very end of the Joseph and the brothers' story.

So see if you can find that, it's quite a challenge, see what you come up with, and then see if you can put the two together. Having found those examples in Genesis - and if you don't find it, that's fine, we'll come back to it next week - but if you find those examples in Genesis, the question is how does that become a code to understand what the Torah is really saying in Deuteronomy? It's almost like Deuteronomy is acting as a commentary on Genesis, what is the meaning of the commentary of Deuteronomy on Genesis? If the Bible is commenting on the meaning of its own stories, it's telling you how to understand what's happening in Genesis. It's telling you how to understand Jacob, it's telling you how to understand the brothers, in a very fascinating way.

Similarly, I think, the story of the spies may be informed by the story of the judges and it may be that one story is a commentary on the other. If you want to understand the story of the judges you have to understand the story of the spies and these two are very intimately connected, and one sheds light on the other. How is that so? That's what we're going to come back and talk about next week. See you then.

Hi everybody, this is Rabbi David Fohrman and we're back with week 5 of our series Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land. I'm back in the land, back in Israel, after a short trip to the States, nice to be back and I wanted to welcome you back here as we begin trying to tie together a number of the loose ends that are out there here in our look at why couldn't Moses enter the land. We talked about the Book of Numbers over our first three weeks, last week we talked about the Book of Devarim - of Deuteronomy, Moses' opening speech in Deuteronomy, and we left with this central question; what is this apparent digression of the story of the judges doing in the speech? If the main point of the speech is to talk about why was it that it took the Jews 40 years to accomplish a journey that was only 11 days long, the real answer to that is the story of the spies; the story that Moses gets to but only after a very long and detailed digression with the judges.

Last week we saw a number of connections animated the story of the spies and the story of the judges, suggesting that these are not disconnected stories. It's not some story that just got interpolated here randomly, but in fact there is a close inner connection between these stories, and we began to struggle with what that connection might be.

In a moment I will talk about two further connections between these stories which I think are very key, which we didn't get to last week. Before we do that I'd just like to get back to one of the homework questions which I left you with last week, to try to fill out this notion of what it means to use one story as commentary on another. I suggested to you that a model for doing this, for reading one story in light of another that it appears to be connected to, could be the story of Joseph and his brothers. I suggested to you that the story of Joseph and his brothers seems connected in linguistic ways to a story that appears - or a series of laws that appears - in Deuteronomy. I mentioned to you that there are four strange words that appear in the series of laws in Deuteronomy about a man that has two wives, one wife not as loved as another and the issue is who is his rightful firstborn. I mentioned to you that there are four strange words in that story - each of those four strange words seems to be borrowed from the story of Joseph and his brothers.

Actually in a few minutes I'll check and see whether any of you guys got this on the discussion boards or not, but let me tell you what I came up with here in looking at these four words. To just give you the four words in context again, one word was Senu'ah. The verse here - and we're reading - again, you can see in your source notes - we're in Deuteronomy, Chapter 21, verse 15. The verse talks about a man who has two wives, one of which he loves and one of which he doesn't love as much - apparently. That seems to be what the verse means in context, and in fact, it's how Aryeh Kaplan translates it. The translation I gave you is from Aryeh Kaplan, which is really a wonderful translation. If you're looking for a nice translation of the Bible a very good one is The Living Torah by Aryeh Kaplan. I'll try and put a link to it on the website, on the source notes page, so you can take a look and even purchase it.

But Kaplan, when he talks about this, translates Senu'ah as unloved, even though the literal translation is hated. It seems like the verse is being too harsh; the man marries two wives, one of which he loves, one of which he hates. That's kind of strange word number 1.

Then the elder son, the Bechor - the firstborn son, is to the wife that is unloved. The second strange word is when it says that the father needs to treat the son of the wife that he doesn't love as much, who in fact is the firstborn, as the real firstborn, it interpolates the word recognize. Instead of just saying that the father should give him the double portion to which he's entitled, it says; Loh yuchal levaker et ben ha'ahuva al pnei ben hasenu'ah habechor. Ki et habechor ben hasenu'ah yakir - he must recognize the child of the hated wife. So Yakir - recognize, seems to be an extra word.

Then finally, the word for estate, when it says that we have to give him a double portion in the estate it's; B'kol asher yimotzeh lo - anything that is found to him. A very strange word for estate. Immediately followed by the fourth strange word; Ki hu reishit ono - for this son is in fact the first of his loins. And we mentioned it's a poetic phrase that seems out of place in this otherwise, completely prose piece.

As it happens, and as I mentioned to you last week, each of these four strange words seems to be borrowed from the Joseph and his brothers' story. And if you read the Joseph and the brothers' story together with this story, they seem to enlighten each other. Let me go through this text again to you, interpolating what happened in the Joseph and the brothers' story. And while we do that, let's just keep in mind a couple sort of nagging questions about the Joseph and his brothers' story.

Nagging question number 1; exactly what were the brothers trying to do? What were they doing throwing Joseph in the pit? How can they even rationalize this to themselves? Just because they're jealous of this guy, it's your brother, you throw him into slavery? Second, what exactly was Jacob up to with giving Joseph the coat of many colors? Was that just a nice present and it got the other brothers jealous because Joseph got a present and they didn't get a present? Was there some significance to that present?

If there was significance to the present what exactly was that significance?

Well I think the verses here do provide a kind of rationale in sort of retelling this story from the brothers' perspective, let's read these verses again. Ki tiheyena l'ish shtei nashim - when a man will have two wives; Ha'achat ahuva v'ha'achat senu'ah - one wife that he loves and then one wife - codeword number 1 - that he hates. Now look throughout the entire Torah and look for the word Senu'ah, feminine form, the wife that is hated, the woman that his hated. You'll find that this word appears only one time in the entire Five Books of Moses aside from here, it appears in Genesis, and it is a reference to Leah. Leah, one of the two wives of Jacob, saw herself as a Senu'ah. If you look back in Genesis Chapter 29, verse 31; Vayar Hashem ki senu'ah Leah - and God saw that Leah, comparatively speaking, was hated - Senu'ah.

That's the only other time you find Senu'ah ni the entire Five Books of Moses.

So this seems to be a reference to Leah, and if the two wives - the hated wife - is a reference to Leah then the whole story seems to be a reference at some level to the story of Jacob and his two wives. When a man will have two wives - who is that? It's Jacob, and one of the wives is Senu'ah.

Well what happens to this man who has two wives? Let's keep on reading in Deuteronomy. V'yaldu lo banim ha'ahuva v'hasenu'ah - the two wives give birth to children, both the hated wife and the loved wife, as in fact both Rachel and Leah did. Vehaya haben habechor laseni'ah - but the firstborn child was the child of the hated wife. Now who would that be in the Genesis story? That would be Reuven who was the first child born to Jacob, and who was his mother? His mother was Leah, the hated wife.

Well what happens? Keep on reading in Deuteronomy. Vehaya - and it shall be; B'yom hanchilo et banav - when the time comes for the man to impart his legacy to his children, to give his children over his inheritance to them; Et asher yihiyeh lo - to give them all that he has. Loh yuchal levaker et ben ha'ahuva al pnei ben hasenu'ah habechor - he shall not be able to make the child of the loved wife, the eldest child of the loved wife, the Bechor - his firstborn son, over the child of the hated wife, who in fact has that right. What are we talking about here? Who was the child of the loved wife in the Joseph story? Who was the firstborn, eldest child of Rachel? It was Joseph. Once we see that, we see a lot of things begin to make sense about the Joseph story. The verses in Deuteronomy seem to suggest that what Jacob was trying to do was to see Joseph as in fact his firstborn son - illegitimately so.

Now just in case any of this was lost on you keep on reading in Deuteronomy, Chapter 21, verse 17. Ki et habechor ben hasenu'ah yakir latet lo pi shnayim - rather, what do you need to do? You need to recognize the actual firstborn son of the hated wife; Yakir latet lo pi shnayim - and remember we talked about that word which was strange here, Yakir - that he must recognize him to give him a double portion. Then the next strange word; B'kol asher yimotzeh lo - in everything that is found to him. He must recognize, and, in everything that's found to him.

Let's go back to Genesis, just like we went back to Genesis and we saw that Senu'ah - hated wife, was a codeword that referred to Leah, we'll find that these strange words; Yakir - recognize, and; Yimotzeh lo

- found to him, are also code words. Where do those words show up in the Joseph story? Free Coke for correct answer, folks. Well, what's the answer? Go back to Genesis and see. Where do we have - we actually have in one verse actually - the idea of things that are found and the idea of recognize. Things that are found and things that are recognized. It comes at the climax of the story of Joseph and the pit, and here's what happens.

What do the brothers do? They take the coat of Joseph, the many-colored coat, and what do they do? They take it and they strip Joseph of the coat, and they put blood on the coat and they present it to father. When they present it to father here's what they say. Genesis Chapter 37, verse 32; Vayavi'u el avihem - they brought the coat to the father; Vayomru - and they said these words; Zot matzanu - this we have found. Next words; Haker nah - recognize please; Haketonet bincha hi im loh - is it in fact your son's coat or not? Fascinating, these two stray words out there in Deuteronomy, to recognize and found to him, both appear back in the Joseph story; This we have found, now recognize it, is it really Joseph's coat or is it not?

Now if you take the meaning from Deuteronomy and plug it in to Genesis there's a fascinating double meaning that now appears in Genesis. Zot matzanu - this we have found. Now what does found mean in Deuteronomy? What's the meaning of that codeword found? Well, 'everything that is found to him' he has to give him a double portion of everything that is found to him. Found to him really means estate. So when they say Zot Matzanu it could be what the brothers are really saying is, Dad this is your estate, look at this coat, this is your legacy; Haker nah - recognize please. What do the words recognize mean in Deuteronomy? The words recognize means that; Ki et habechor ben hasenu'ah yakir - you have to recognize who your real Bechor is - who your real firstborn son is. So Haker Nah - when they say, do you recognize the coat, there's a double entendre there, what they're really saying is, you have to recognize who the real firstborn is which is borne out - pardon the pun - by the next words that they say; Haketonet bincha hi im loh - which also has a double meaning. Is it really Joseph's coat or not?

In other words, they're not just saying, see and identify the coat and see, does it really seem to be Joseph's coat, what they're really saying is, Dad this is your estate, recognize, does it really belong to Joseph? Is Joseph really the legitimate firstborn? In giving that coat to him they're summing up their entire case against Joseph, and indeed their entire case against Jacob. They're saying, Dad you got it all wrong, Joseph is not the firstborn. And that was really the significance of giving the coat to him in the first place, that coat of many colors was the symbol of Joseph being the firstborn, it was the symbol of Joseph's authority over the brothers, which they resented and which they considered completely illegitimate.

Really what Deuteronomy is saying is you can't do this and get away with it. It doesn't justify the brothers selling Joseph into slavery but it does give us an insight, I think, into what the brothers were thinking, what was going on in their heads when they stripped Joseph of the coat and presented it to their father. What they would have wished to tell their father, so to speak, if only they could.

Okay, this is going to be the end of our first track over here, so this is a good place to stop and take a little break and grab a cup of water. What we're going to do when we come back is we're going to try to apply this idea of taking one story to shed light on another through the parallels - through the linguistic parallels that come through in the story, we're going to apply this back to Deuteronomy. See how the story of the spies sheds light on the story of the intermediate judges and vice versa, by reading through those stories, noting the parallels, and trying to understand that. If you want to try it yourself before you listen to what I have to say feel free to go ahead, jot it down, make some notes. Otherwise, come along with me and we'll pick up after you finish that glass of water.

Okay, I hope you're enjoying your drink as we move along here. Just before we go and again look at these two stories; the story of the intermediate judges and the story of the spies, and read them along together with their parallels, I do want to mention one other parallel which we didn't get to last week, which I think is very, very key. Really two other parallels which we didn't get to last week between these two stories; the intermediate judges and the spies. We mentioned last week all these very interesting linguistic parallels, but there are two more and they come out of the verse in which Moshe says Eicha - in which Moses says; Eicha - how could I bear your burden? Let's take a careful look at that verse and see what connection we see in it to the story of the intermediate judges.

Here's the verse. That will be verse 12 in Chapter 1 of Deuteronomy, here's what Moses says; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how can I possibly bear alone your burden; Torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - the trouble of the burden of judging you? Now, let's focus on the word Eicha, that word which we mentioned a while back, seems to be a key word, and that sort of foreshadows Jeremiah's Eicha which we said before. It foreshadows Jeremiah's Eicha in a couple of ways.

One is that we talked about how when these verses are read in the Synagogue in the Shabbat before Tisha B'Av - the ninth day of Av which commemorates the destruction of the Temple, so it's read with a cantillation of Eicha, it's read in that sad sort of way. [Chanting] Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem.

But the truth is that cantillation comes from somewhere, it's not out of anywhere, it so happens that if you add up the dates - and the Midrash does this - when did the story of the spies occur? The story of the spies - which again is the last thing that Moses says in the speech here in Deuteronomy Chapter 1 - just happens to occur on Tisha B'Av - on the ninth day of Av. That's when the spies came back with their report. And interestingly, we have the word Eicha, that first word in the Book of Lamentations, which of course is the signal word for Tisha B'Av. That is the one word which evokes memories of this ninth day of Av; Eicha - how could Jerusalem sit in solitude after being exiled? So there's this very interesting sort of Eicha connection here. There's an Eicha in the story of the intermediate judges and that seems to foreshadow the Eicha which the spies is a precursor to. The spies take place on the ninth day of Av and of course that leads to the Eicha of the destruction of the Temple.

By the way, the Midrash goes out of its way to suggest that it really does lead to it. It's not coincidental that the spies happened on the ninth day of Av and the Temple was destroyed on the ninth day of Av. It's a very curious Midrash, and I want to share it with you, you can find it on your source sheets - let's see, what number it is, I think it's selection 6 or 7 or so. What it says here - it's from Bamidbar Rabbah, Chapter 16, verse 20. Bachu b'leil tet b'Av - the Midrash says - that the people when they cried after the spies came back, that was the evening of the ninth of Av. And God, so to speak, said to them at that point; Atem bachitem bachiya shel chinam - you cried at that time tears for nothing. Ani ekvah lachem bachiya l'dorot - I'm going to give you something to cry about for generations. U'min oto sha'ah nigzar al Beit Hamikdash she'nitcharev - and it was from that moment that God decreed upon the Temple that it was to be destroyed.

Now at face value the Midrash sounds a little capricious; God says, oh you're crying for nothing, I'll give you something to cry about! But I think what the Midrash is really suggesting is this connection between the story of the spies and the destruction of the Temple, that somehow it wasn't just random that - like a father says, oh you're crying because you spilled water, I'll give you something to cry about, and then he punishes the child with something. When there's no real connection between act A and act B and that strikes us as capricious. I think the Midrash is pointing out to a real connection between these, that somehow the story of the spies really is tied in to the story of the destruction of the Temple, but the question is how? How is it that people crying about the spies should lead in some sort of logical way to the destruction of the Temple? So that's something we'll also want to get back to eventually.

But in the meantime, there is this Eicha connection here between the story of the intermediate judges on the one hand; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem, and the story of the spies which comes up right after it in Deuteronomy.

Now for connection number 2 which we didn't get to last week, and this one, I think, is really the key.

Let's go back to that verse that Moses says with the intermediate judges; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how can I possibly bear you to be able to judge you? Well; Esah literally means - I've translated it as bear, but it literally means carry. How could I possibly carry your burden all by myself? Do we have the idea of carrying not just here in the story of the intermediate judges but does it pop up anywhere in the story of the spies? Does the idea of carrying or the word carrying pop up anywhere with the spies?

Well you guessed it, the answer is yes, it does appear in the spies, and here it is. Anah anachnu olim - verse 28 - how can we possibly go up - Moses said the people had said when the spies came back.

Acheinu heimasu et levaveinu - our brothers said - they had melted our hearts saying that there's such a big nation waiting for us to consume us, and there's giants there. I told you at that time, Moses says; Loh ta'artzun v'loh tire'un meihem - not to be afraid of anything. Why? Listen carefully. Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - because the L-rd your God that is going now before you; Hu yilachem lachem - He will fight on your behalf; K'chol asher asah itchem b'Mitzrayim l'eineichem - just like you saw it before your very eyes He fought for you against Egypt. U'bamidbar asher ra'ita - and through this desert that you have seen; Asher nesa'acha Hashem Elokecha ka'asher yisah ish et beno - that God has carried you throughout this desert as a man will carry his son; B'chol haderech asher halachtem - through this whole desert for 40 years that you've gone through till you come to this place.

Moses says that God has carried them, he uses the word twice; He's carried you, He's carried you like a man will carry his son. So we have carrying in the story of the spies - God carrying the people, and carrying in the story of the intermediate judges - Moses carrying the people. We have a carrying parallel as well.

Okay, let's put this all together, what do all these parallels mean? How do the story of the spies and the story of the intermediate judges shed light on each other? Now, keep in mind that last week we mentioned briefly that it's not just here in Deuteronomy that the story of the spies and the intermediate judges seem to be laced with all these parallels to one another, but there's two other sections of text here in Deuteronomy Chapter 1 that also seem to be laced in these parallels back to each other. And you can see this if you go back to your PowerPoint from last week, I pointed this out to you.

I mentioned there that when we broke the text up in Deuteronomy Chapter 1 in this speech, into four or five sections, we said that there are these two main story sections; the story of the spies and the intermediate judges, but there's also these transition sections between the introduction and the story of intermediate judges on the one hand, and the story of the intermediate judges and the story of the spies on the other hand. There are these little, two or three sentence transition that is almost exactly the same. The basic idea of this transition is that God says, go up, it's time to go up and it's time to go conquer the land. Immediately after they left Chorev - after they left Mount Sinai, Moses says, go up, go to the mountain of the Amorites and go conquer the land. And almost exactly the same language is used, word for word just about, through two sentences, when after the story of the intermediate judges happens, then Moses says; And God said to us at that time, we had come to the mountain of the Amorites and it's time to go up and conquer the land. Go take possession of the land, just like God swore to your forefathers.

Now, as it happens, these two transition sections are almost exactly parallel, but they're not quite exactly parallel, there is one little piece that gets added in the second transition section which wasn't there in the first one, and it bears noting what the difference is. It's the words at the very end. Now we're going to read the second piece and just listen to the very last words. We're in Chapter 1, verse 21. Re'ei natan Hashem Elokecha lefanecha et ha'aretz - see - Moses says - God has given you the land; Aleh resh - go and take possession of it; Ka'asher diber Hashem Elokei avotecha lach - as the L-rd of your forefathers said to you. Now these are the words which weren't there in the first one; Al tirah v'al teichat - do not fear and do not tremble. Moses says that here, after the intermediate judges. When he had said almost exactly the same words before the story of the intermediate judges he didn't mention do not fear and do not tremble.

I think what that seems to indicate is that something changed, something happened. It seems that in the wake of the story of intermediate judges fear is a possibility, Moses has to say do not fear and do not tremble. Somehow, before that, he didn't have to say that, it was understood. All of a sudden now, after the judges, there's an issue of fear.

And by the way, when he commands the judges - when he tells the judges what to do, even though it seems to have nothing to do with conquering the land, interestingly enough, Moses also mentions fear; Do not fear any man. As we mentioned before, fear appears in the story of the spies as well, when the spies say we're so scared, we're worried.

Okay, now let's come back and put this all together. Why would the story of the intermediate judges introduce an element of fear? Where could that come from? What does that mean? How do we understand these parallels? Let's go back - I'm going to read through - say, let's do it this way. I'm going to read through the story of the spies and whenever we get to a connection where it takes us back to the story of the intermediate judges, we're going to look at how that word appeared in the story of the intermediate judges and see what significance it might have, again, in the story of the spies. So let's read through the story of the spies, and see what it is that we come up with. Here we go.

By the way, maybe this is a good place to stop our segment 2. Segment 2 - if you want to stop and get another sip of water, this is a good place to do it, and we're going to come right back and pick up - let's go and jump in.

We're going to start in with Chapter 1, verse 22 in Deuteronomy, and this is where Moses starts the story of the spies. Here's how it begins. Vatikrevun eilai kulchem - and you all came to me; Vatomru - and you said; Nishlechah anashim lefaneinu - let's send men to go to spy out the land. Now here's our first parallel; Vatikrevun eilai kulchem - I mentioned to you - and you all came to me - which is the beginning by the way, of the story of the spies here - parallels the very last words in the story of the intermediate judges. If you go back to the story of the intermediate judges you'll find; Ha'davar asher yiksheh mikem takrivun eilai u'shemativ. In verse 17 the very last thing that Moses says when instructing the judges is that you don't have to worry if you find something too difficult judges, because if you find something too difficult you can always bring it to me, I'm the Supreme Court. So; V'ha'devar asher yiksheh mikem - anything that's difficult for you; Takrivun eilai u'shemativ - bring it to me and I will hear it.

Now, what light does that shed on the first words here in the spies story, where those exact same words when Moses says; Takrivun eilai - bring it to me, and; The people brought it to me - Vatikrevun eilai kulchem - and you all brought it to me and you came? Seemingly, something was too hard for them. I mean, that's what the words meant in the story of the intermediate judges, if there's anything that's too difficult bring it to me, the people are coming to Moses and in effect they're saying, there's something that's too difficult for us. But it's not a case that we're judging, apparently it's conquering the land.

The insight which the text seems to be giving us by this parallel here, seems to be that when the people asked for the spies it wasn't just sort of a request for some military reconnaissance, what they were in effect doing; Vatikrevun eilai kulchem, is they were saying, something is too difficult for us, we need someone to lean on. The spies were someone they could lean on.

Let's continue. Let's look next at how Moses responds to this request. The people have requested; Vatikrevun eilai kulchem, they've come to him with a request, how does Moses respond? Moses responds with; Vayitav b'einai ha'davar - and the thing was good in my eyes, and I took 12 men; Ish echad la'shavet - one man from each tribe. Here we have two parallels going back to the story of the intermediate judges.

The first is; Vayitav b'einai ha'davar, those words are echoes of the story of the intermediate judges. Where do we have those words in the intermediate judges story? What happened there? There too there was a request and there was a response to the request. In that case the shoe was on the other foot, Moses made the request, Moses said, there's something that's too difficult for me, how can I possibly carry you? And I need these intermediate judges to be able to carry the administrative burden. How did the people respond? The people responded by saying; Tov ha'davar asher dibarta la'asot - it's a good thing that which you have said to do. Now we have the echoes of these words; Vayitav b'einai ha'davar. Moses responds now to the people's request about the spies; Vayitav b'einai ha'davar - and it seemed like a good thing in my eyes. It's almost as if Moses is saying, I asked something of you back in the story of the intermediate judges, I asked for judges and you were kind enough to respond; It's a good thing that which you've said, it's fine, you can have this administrative support. Now you came to me with something that was difficult, the shoe was on the other foot, what was I supposed to do? I also responded, I said; It seems like a good thing in my eyes. I did what you guys did for me back then.

What happened back then? What happened back then is I took representatives of all your tribes, and what is it that you asked for here? You asked for representatives from all your tribes and I took representatives, 12 men from each tribe - each person from his tribe. Again, a parallel back to the judges story. And these people are going to be your spies.

Let's continue. So continuing in the story of the spies, the spies went, they took from the fruit of the land, they came back and in Moses' words, they said; Tovah ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokeinu noten lanu - the land is good that God Himself says to give to you. By the way, what's interesting also is to note the apparent discrepancies between this story - just Derech Agav - just sort of by the way - to note the apparent discrepancies between this story here in Deuteronomy and the way the original story is told in Numbers. Last week I mentioned to you one difference is whose idea was it, was it God's idea, or was it Moses' idea, but there are other differences too.

For example, over here when Moses paraphrases it he says that the spies said that it was a good land. And if you notice Moses doesn't say that the spies said anything nasty about the land or that the spies convinced the people not to go in. If you read the story in the Book of Numbers it sounds like the spies apparently are a little bit more guilty, the spies end up saying - the verse says; Vayotzi'u dibat ha'aretz - they said bad things about the land. It sounds like the spies really convinced the people not to do it - at least that's how the people saw it. Yet, over here in Deuteronomy, Moses doesn't say that at all; The spies said it was good! And he places the blame squarely on the lapse of the people alone; V'loh avitem la'alot - but it was you who didn't want to go up. Which is strange also, because if you look at the text back in Numbers - at least at face value - in the original story, it doesn't sound like the people didn't want to go up, it just sounds like they got scared. But Moses says no, you didn't want to go up.

So one of the things we're going to do next week or this week, is we're going to try to reconcile these two accounts. How do we reconcile the account in Deuteronomy with the account in Numbers? Are they really at odds with each other? Are they not at odds with each other? I think they're not at odds with each other but they're telling two stories from two different perspectives, and we'll try and flesh that out later. But that's just sort of by the way, and we'll get back to that. But for now, let's just focus on the parallels between these stories.

So again, Moses says; the people said - the spies said; Tovah ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokeinu noten lanu - the land that God is giving you is a good land; V'loh avitem la'alot - but you guys, you just didn't want to go up and you rebelled against God. Vateiragnu b'ohaleichem - and you complained in your tents and you said; B'sin'at Hashem otanu hotzi'anu m'eretz Mitzrayim - it was in God's hatred of us that the L-rd took us out of Egypt.

By the way, these are words also which don't really appear exactly in the original story, it's Moses' paraphrase, how he understands what's really happening in that story. That the people are in effect saying that it was in God's hatred that He took us out of Egypt to just kill us here by giving us in the hands of the Amorites. How can we possibly go up - the people say; Acheinu heimasu et levaveinu - our brethren, the spies, have caused our hearts to melt, saying; Am gadol va'rom mimenu arim gedolot u'b'tzurot bashomayim v'gam bnei anakim ra'inu sham - the people are so much greater and so much more numerous and populous than us. Their cities are so fortified. V'gam bnei anakim - we even saw giants there.

Now what does this remind you of in the story of the intermediate judges - Am gadol va'rom mimenu? Last week again, we pointed out that Am gadol va'rom mimenu, that when they talk about a nation that's greater than them and seeing giants, that recalls to us Moses' advice to the intermediate judges.

What did Moses say to the intermediate judges? Going back to verse 17, just a couple of verses before in Deuteronomy. Loh takiru panim bamishpat - literally, do not recognize faces, don't look at people in the face and say, oh I recognize you, I know who you are. Ka'katon ka'gadol tishma'un - you have to treat big people just like small people. Loh taguru mipnei ish - you shall not fear any man. Why? Ki hamishpat l'Elokim hu - because judgment belongs to God. You always have God in the background, do not worry about people, do not let people intimidate you, he says to the judges.

So what's fascinating is you see there's a triplicate parallel here; Ka'katon ka'gadol tishma'un - number 1, treat big people just like small people. Number 2; Loh taguru mipnei ish - judges, do not fear any man. Number 3, why should you not fear any man? Ki hamishpat l'Elokim hu - because judgment ultimately belongs to God. (1) Big and small are equal. (2) Do not be afraid. (3) Because judgment belongs to God. Take all those three ideas, bring them back to the story of the spies and here's what you see.

The people come and complain; Acheinu heimasu et levaveinu - our brethren have made our hearts melt. They said; Am gadol va'rom mimenu - the people are too great for us. What do they do here? They failed to treat big people just the same as small people. They said they're giants. But Moses said in the last story don't worry about giants, big people are just the same as small people. Remember what Moses said? Do not fear any one, he said to the intermediate judges. What do we hear next in the story of the spies when they said we see giants? Va'omar aleichem - and I said back to you; Loh ta'artzun v'loh tire'un meihem - I said to you - just like I said with the judges - do not be afraid. Why do not be afraid? Why did I tell you not to be afraid? Why did I tell the judges not to be afraid? Because God is behind them in judgment. Why am I telling you not to be afraid now here in the spies? Because; Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - because the L-rd your God who is walking before you; Hu yilachem lachem - He will fight to you. Just like you saw in Egypt.

So again, a triple parallel; do not be afraid, treat big people the same as small people, because ultimately it is God behind you. It is the same thing in both stories. But it didn't work. It didn't work. Moses had instructed the judges to treat big people the same as small people, but it all falls on deaf ears here, they treat big people differently, they're scared of big people. Moses' entreaty to them to not be afraid and that God is fighting for you, again falls on deaf ears. It's strange, because Moses makes a direct appeal to their experience; Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - notice the present tense here - the L-rd your G- d, present tense; Haholech lifneichem - who even now is walking before you in the desert. And appealed to what they've seen; K'chol asher asah itchem b'Mitzrayim l'eineichem - as God has done before your eyes, to Egypt, you saw this. These aren't fairytales, these aren't stories, you've lived through this. If you've lived through God fighting for you so at least trust that He's going to fight for you again.

For some reason - and it's a strange thing - the people don't buy it. Why don't they buy it? How do we understand that? But the parallel back to the story of the intermediate judges is very chilling. Moses said don't be afraid - to the judges - and maybe that worked, but it didn't work here, why not?

The answer, I think, comes from the very last parallel here. Let's continue. Moses, while continuing to entreat the people in the story of the spies, talking about how God has fought for them in Egypt, continues, let's read. He says; Hashem Elokeichem haholech lifneichem - the L-rd your God who is walking before you, He's going to fight for you just like you saw in Egypt before your very eyes. Keep on reading; U'bamidbar asher ra'ita - and then in the desert that you have seen; Asher nesa'acha Hashem Elokecha - that the L-rd your God has carried you; Ka'asher yisah ish et beno - like a man will carry his child; B'chol haderech asher halachtem - in this whole way that you've gone; Ad bo'achem ad ha'makom hazeh - until you've come to this place. He's appealing; look God has carried you, you're like a child on God's back, don't you see it? Everything that you've gotten in the desert, all the Manah, everything, it's all from God, it's like God is carrying you through this desert. Can't you trust that He's going to fight for you?

But Moses says no; U'ba'davar hazeh - in this thing; Einechem ma'aminim baHashem - you do not have faith in God. By the way, there's that sort of chilling connection back to the Mei Merivah episode which we talked about the first couple of weeks - back to the story of Moses and the rock, the issue of faith.

U'ba'davar hazeh einechem ma'aminim baHashem- in this thing you don't have faith in God. What do you mean you don't have faith in God? Which God don't you have faith in? Keep on reading.

The God; Haholech lifneichem - the God who is walking before you here; La'tur lachem makom la'chanoteichem to find for you, to spy out - by the way, there's a play on words, very significant. La'tur

- the job which the spies were supposed to do, the verb was; La'tur et ha'aretz - they were supposed to - in Hebrew - La'tur - to spy out the land. What's Moses saying here? Look, your God who is walking before you; [La'tur lachem makom la'chanoteichem 35:20] - He's the one who spies out places for you. Where do you think you find that there's a good place to camp in the desert where you know there's no scorpions and snakes? God Himself spies out places, you don't need spies, God is your spy. Ba'aish lailah - with a pillar of fire at night and a cloud by day; Larotchem ba'derech - to show you the way; Asher teilchu bah - that you will go.

But none of this works. None of this matters. It falls on deaf ears. Now come back to the parallel here in these verses. Moses talked about God carrying them, when the central image that he says, the people don't have faith, they don't have faith in the God that has carried them through the desert like a man will carry his son. We mentioned those parallels of carrying go back to the story of the judges too. Where do we have carrying in the story of the judges? Right at the beginning of the story; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how can I possibly carry you? How can I possibly carry your burdens?

What happens here? I think what's happening is that Moses had said, how can I possibly carry you and what had he done there with those words Eicha - how can I possibly carry you? He put the people down, it was too difficult for him to carry. So instead of carrying them all himself he put them down and he asked for help. Then the people later on when something was too difficult for them, they saw something that was too difficult for them, they asked for help too. Then Moses says, but one second what are you doing, you're rejecting God, don't you even have faith in God who is carrying you through in the desert? It seems so inexplicable, so strange, why would the people not have faith in God? It makes so much sense, they've seen with their own eyes everything that gives the best possible evidence for having trust in God. They saw the plagues, they saw Moses deliver them from Egypt, they saw God deliver them from Egypt, they saw God split the Red Sea, they saw God carry them in the desert like a man carries their son, why wouldn't they have the trust in God who carries them?

Maybe it was because they got - perhaps - I'm just speculating - but Moses had put them down, maybe it was because once you get put down by someone who is carrying you, you aren't so sure if you're going to trust somebody else to carry you anymore. Yes, it was true God had carried me all this way in the desert, but maybe He's going to put me down? Maybe so. Maybe there's something about that intermediate judges which laid the groundwork somehow for the cataclysm of the spies. Nothing obviously that Moses intends to do but somehow something in what he does somehow puts the seed, the germ, that possibly flowers into what becomes the spies.

But then if you look at the intermediate judges, you say one second, isn't this really just making a mountain out of a molehill? I mean, what's the big deal? The guy needs a rest. If you look back Jethro says, look you're doing this 24 hours a day, how could you possibly judge the people? It makes so much sense. It does make so much sense. Look, have a system of judges, every decent democracy has it, a system of judges, there's the lower courts, there's the federal courts, there's the supreme courts, there's all sorts of courts. Moses says, I'll be a top, I'm always available, you can always ask me. I mean, what's the problem? It seems so strange because if you look at the story of Jethro, it does seem like such a good idea, there's no hint of condemnation [that appears 38:39] in what's going on, is it really possible that somehow something was rotten in this whole story of the intermediate judges that it really did lay the groundwork and the foundation for the spies? The text in Deuteronomy seems to be indicating at some level that that's possibly true, but how do you square that with the text back in Exodus, the original story of the judges?

What I want to do with you next is to go back and carefully read that text in Exodus. Let's go through that text in Exodus and take it apart and see what we make of that story of the intermediate judges. It seems like such a benign thing, like what's the big deal? He put them down, is it such great existential significance to simply having your court cases settled, how do we understand that? So let's go back to that story - another place for your third sip of water, you can take a little break here if you like, but I'm going to come back with segment number 4 here, and try to put it together with the story in Exodus, how the intermediate judges is told in its original source. Then to understand how it's being portrayed here in Deuteronomy. So get ready to go back to Exodus with me.

Okay we're back and just before we jump in to that story back in Exodus which is the original story of Moses and the intermediate judges, I just want to give you one other support for this notion that Moses saying that I'm carrying the people, and how could I possibly carry them, is not just a trivial thing, not just an unfortunate choice of words. But there's something significant about Moses saying how could I carry you, that leaves a deep impression, and that there really is something intimate about this notion of Moses carrying the people. You see it another time. This is not the only time that Moses talks about carrying the people here in Deuteronomy. There actually is another time back in Numbers. A very similar story in many ways - and I don't really understand exactly how this is so, I throw it out for you and you're welcome to take up this issue on the discussion boards if you like. But it's almost like a parallel story, a very similar kind of story unfolds - and some of you who have been talking about it, and I know Dale and some of the others brought it up in discussion boards this past week, this story of Chovav.

Chovav really is another name for Jethro, according to the Midrash - why he was called Chovav is another issue, and I'm not going to get into that now. But this is another name for Moses' father-in-law Jethro, and there's an episode in Numbers where Jethro comes to visit the people. Now, what's strange - and the Medieval Commentators struggle to understand this - is how the story of Chovav or Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, coming to visit them in Numbers, differs or jives with the story in Exodus. Because there are two times when Jethro comes to visit the people, and the question that the commentators struggle with is did he really come twice or is it really the same time? Rashi and the others discuss this, and I'm not going to get involved in the intricacies of this.

But the second time that we hear about Jethro coming to visit the people is in Numbers, Chapter 10. Strangely enough, just like in Exodus where Jethro first comes there's this request that Moses makes, or really Jethro makes, that Moses needs help, so too just after the story of Jethro in Numbers there's also this request, this time made by Moses to God, for help. Now it's not exactly the same kind of help; the help that Moses gets in Exodus is he gets intermediate judges, the help that he gets in Numbers is 70 Elders. What's the relationship between the 70 Elders and the intermediate judges? It's a good question and I don't really know the answer to that. It seems that they perform different roles, but you can argue about that. But it is interesting that in both cases there's Jethro comes and immediately afterwards Moses feels that he needs help.

But what's also interesting about this, is that if you plot the whole Numbers out on a graph and you look how the Book of Numbers progresses, the Book of Numbers begins with a very cheery scene - and by the way, there's a very beautiful talk by Rabbi Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik - Rabbi Josef Soloveitchik of blessed memory, where he analyses - he was just sitting in Shul, sitting in Synagogue, listening to the story here in Numbers Chapter 10 and 11 unfold, the story of Chovav, and thoughts occurred to him.

That, I think, Saturday night, he gave a talk, I think to an RCA convention - the Rabbinical Council of America - and he said, I just happened to be listening to this week's Parsha - to this week's Torah portion, and this is what I came up with. He sort of plots out the entire Book of Numbers and sees here, right after the story of Chovav, a precipitous break in the Book of Numbers.

You can see it by the way, even visually. If you look in the Book of Numbers right after the story of Chovav there's these two upside down Nuns, which seem to break - there's a Midrash about this - as if the story of Numbers, the Book of Numbers, is broken in the middle. The first half of Numbers is very cheery, very happy, really what it's about is the Jews are getting ready to enter the land, it's the first year after they came out of the land of Egypt, they're all set. They've got the Tabernacle going, Moses gives the Levites their jobs, everybody their jobs, sets up all of the encampments, sets up the flags, they're ready to go. And all the preparations are made, the Chatzotzrot - the trumpets are made so that they can blow the trumpet and call everybody to battle. The Ark is there; Vayehi binso'ah ha'Aron - when the Ark would go; Vayomer Moshe - Moses would say; Kumah Hashem - God go up and fight for us, and the Ark was their great weapon, it was going to do the job and conquer the land. They're ready to go.

Now what's interesting is that the very last story in the good part of the Book of Numbers is the story of Jethro, when Jethro comes to visit Moses. Interestingly, by the way, the word good appears over and over again in the Jethro story. Here's how the story goes, it's in Numbers, Chapter 10. What happens?

Vayomer Moshe l'Chovav ben Re'uel - and Moses said to Chovav, his father-in-law; Choten Moshe - the father-in-law of Moses. Nosim anachnu - we're about to go to the land that God told us. Lecha itanu - come with us; V'heitavnu lach - and we'll do good for you - that's the first language of good. Why? Ki Hashem diber tov al yisrael - because God has spoken good about the Jews. Everything is going to be good. Vayomer eilav - and he says; Loh eileich - I will not go; Ki im el artzi v'el moladeti eileich - I will go back to my home, back to my father's house.

By the way, what does this remind you of, going back to your land, back to your forefathers? If you're talking about Genesis by the way, that's the language of Abraham and it's the other way around.

Abraham leaves his forefathers' house, and leaves his land and goes forth. He's the first convert. Jethro here is pictured as going the other way.

Vayomer al nah ta'azov imanu - but Moses pleads and says, please don't leave us; Ki al kein yadata chanoteinu ba'midbar - you know how we encamp in the desert; Vehayita lanu l'einayim - you can be our eyes for us. Vehaya hatov hahu asher yeitiv Hashem imanu v'heitavnu lach - and it shall be that when you go before us the good that God will do good for us and we will do good for you. Again, good, good, good - five times good. Everything is good here in this story.

But then everything turns bad. Vayehi ha'am k'mitonenim - immediately after this story - next chapter, Chapter 11, verse 1; Vayehi ha'am k'mitonenim - the people were complaining; Ra'ah b'oznei Hashem - it was evil in the eyes of God what they were doing. Vayichar apo - and God became angry with them. And from here on everything goes downhill. The culmination by the way, of that downhill, is the story of the spies, it all leads here to the story of the spies. The people complain and then they say we want meat, and when they say we want meat, Moses has just had it. A few verses later; Vayichar af Hashem - and God becomes angry; and now; Ub'einei Moshe ra'ah - it's bad in the eyes of Moses. Everything was good, good, good, and all of a sudden; Ub'einei Moshe ra'ah - it's bad in the eyes of Moses. The turning point has occurred.

At this point, immediately after Jethro was there - by the way - and Jethro said that he would not go back; Vayomer Moshe el Hashem - Moses says to God; Lamah harei'otah l'avdecha - why have You done so bad to me, God? There's the language bad again - again bad, bad, bad. Bad as opposed to good.

Lamah harei'otah l'avdecha - why have You done so bad to me God? Lamah loh matzati chen b'einecha - how come I haven't found favor in Your eyes; La'sum et masah kol ha'am hazeh alai - to place the burden of all of this nation upon me. But by the way, Masah - is carrying. To place the carrying of all this nation upon me.

But now listen to the next words, I talked to you before, this is the proof, the proof about the language of carrying being an intimate kind of language. Moses talks about carrying the people, listen to these next words. He'onochi hariti et kol ha'am hazeh - did I give birth, did I conceive this people? Are they mine? Im onochi yelidetihu - did I give birth to them? Ki tomar eilai - such that You should say to me; Sa'eihu b'cheikecha - carry them, these people, in your bosom; Ka'asher yisah ha'omen et ha'yonek - like a nursing mother would carry a suckling child; Al ha'adamah asher nishbata la'avotav - on the land that You've sworn to the forefathers. Mei'ayin li basar latet l'kol ha'am hazeh - where am I going to find the meat to give these people that they want meat? Loh uchal onochi levadi laseit et kol ha'am - I cannot carry these people all alone.

But listen to this language of carrying, it's suffused with maternal love. Moses is saying, what am I? Am I the mother of this people? Did I conceive this people? Am I their parent? And God doesn't answer. I don't know what the answer to that question is, is Moses the parent? I mean, on some level he is the parent. Yeah, he didn't give birth to them but that really is the role that God has placed him in, whether he likes it or not, and here he doesn't like it very much. But it's clear that this notion of carrying the people is suffused with these sort of maternal implications when Moses says I can't carry them anymore, and to put them down it's like your father or your mother may be putting you down, that's a significant kind of thing.

By the way, going back to the story of Chovav there, which a number of you brought up on the discussion boards, I just want to highlight a couple of very fascinating points that a few of you brought up on the discussion boards that really shed light. I'm not going to take this all the way to a conclusion here, but you can really think about this. First of all, I forget who said this, if it was Barry or Machlah or somebody brought this up on the discussion boards, this notion that when Jethro says back here in Chapter 10, verse 31 - Moses says to Jethro, please do not leave us; Ki al kein yadata chanoteinu ba'midbar - you know how we encamp in the desert. Vehayita lanu l'einayim - and you shall be our eyes.

Now at the face value what's he really saying? The argument for Jethro to stay is strangely enough, is you know where to tell us to encamp. Now if you think about that, that sounds like what role is Jethro having? It sounds like he's having a role of spying out the land for them really. It seems to anticipate this notion of spying out the land, which interestingly, this story begins a cascade of terrible things that happen that culminate in the story of the spies, in the disaster of the spies, a couple of chapters later.

Moses says, you're going to be the one who is going to figure out where we're going to go and interestingly, later on in Deuteronomy, Moses castigates the people for needing spies because God is the one who figures out where to go.

Similarly, listen to this language a sentence or two later. After the Jethro story, the next verse right after the Jethro story; Vayisu mei'Har Hashem - they left the mountain of God, they left Chorev three days, and they went with the Aron Brit Hashem - they went with the Ark of the Covenant going before them; La'tur lahem menucha - to spy out for them places to stay. Again, a premonition of the story of the spies. What was the Ark doing? The ark was spying out for them where to go, and again, that language of La'tur. La'tur - to spy out, is of course that codeword for the spies which appears much later in the story of the spies as well. So there's this tension, is it Jethro who is spying for you or is it the Ark who is spying for you? Which one is it?

But the Ibn Ezra has a very interesting comment and this was what I saw on the discussion boards, I wasn't aware of this Ibn Ezra before. But when - the Ibn Ezra says - and the Ibn Ezra is a Medieval Commentator, oftentimes he and the Ramban - Nachmanides, who is a little bit more well known, argue in very vicious terms over how the simple meaning of the text is supposed to be construed. But the Ibn Ezra's approach at least is that when Moses says to Jethro; Vehayita lanu l'einayim - that you are going to be eyes for us, that it's not really a reference to spying out, but interestingly enough he says, that's reference to the advice that Jethro gave Moses. What's the advice that we know that Jethro gave Moses? The advice we know back in Exodus was to have the intermediate judges. Moses was saying that you will be our eyes, you've given us such good advice about the intermediate judges and allowed us to be able to proceed, we need you around please stay around.

Now, I don't really know what to make of all of this. If Moses is really appealing back to the story of the intermediate judges when he says you'll be our eyes for us, or it's a premonition of Jethro with some sort of role of spying out. But it is interesting that there's two ways that you can see this phrase, 'that you'll be our eyes', and the two ways are two sides of the knife; it's either the spies or it's the intermediate judges. Go forward to Deuteronomy, it's the spies and the intermediate judges, those stories again always seem to be inextricably linked somehow to each other.

Okay, so this is a very interesting episode, the story of Chovav. Again, I just throw it out for your consideration, I don't know really quite what to make of it. The point that I'm bringing to you now is really the episode that happens immediately after Chovav. That somehow in this story of Jethro aka Chovav - otherwise known as Chovav, in this story of Jethro immediately afterwards Moses seeks help just like he does in Exodus and again, you have this language that clearly associates this notion of Moses carrying the people with the sort of maternal love that Moses has for the people. And it's a significant thing to no longer carry the people, as we have later in Deuteronomy. But in terms of the general implications of the Chovav narrative, hopefully we'll come back to that maybe next week, perhaps if we continue with this particular topic another week, the week after. But it is a very interesting thing and I encourage you to look into it further.

But for the meantime let's get back to what we talked about before, going back to that original story in Exodus of the intermediate judges and looking at that. Again, the question we had is what is the big deal? So what? So Moses put in some administrative help and got some judges to help him out. Big deal. That's putting down the people? What's the big deal? So let's go back to that story and read it.

Just so we're on the same place here, if you happen to have a source sheet handy, we're going to be looking at Exodus Chapter 18, verses 13 to 27, on your source sheets this is selection number 5. Okay, let's at least get the questions on this text out into the open this week. We're going to go through this text, I just want - let's just read it, again, as we usually do whenever we read Biblical text, you just want to clear your mind of everything you know about the story and you just want to read it as if you're reading it for the first time. What would strike you as strange about this story? Let's just put together what are the issues that we need to be aware of in this story? Follow along with me.

Vayehi mimacharat - and it happened the next day; Vayeishev Moshe lishpot et ha'am - by the way we're reading now verse 13 - and Moses sat down to judge the people; Vaya'amod ha'am al Moshe min ha'boker at ha'erev - and the people were standing there to be judged by Moses from the morning until evening. Vayar choten Moshe et kol asher hu oseh la'am - and the father-in-law of Moses saw everything that Moses was doing for the people and said; Mah ha'davar hazeh asher atah oseh la'am - what is this thing that you are doing to the people? Maduah atah yoshev levadecha - how come you're sitting all alone; V'kol ha'am nitzav alecha min ha'boker ad erev - and the people are standing there all day long from day until night?

By the way, I just have to tell you that one of the great things about teaching this stuff, even though I have taught it once or twice before, is I'm just - I love the discussions which is going on in the discussion boards. I know sometimes it's tough even to find time to listen to the complete lecture during the week and you find a little bit of time here and time there. But if you do get a chance to log on to the discussion boards there's a lot of fun things going on and I certainly have learned a lot. One of you, I think it might have been Machlah, brought up some fascinating series of parallels between this story here of Jethro and the judges and the earlier story of Moses' fight against Amalek.

The story which comes right before this, right before Jethro appears in Exodus, is the fight against Amalek. By the way, that was another story when Moses needed help, he got the help of Aaron and Chur. If you remember that story; Amalek the great archenemy of the Jews just before Jethro comes in Exodus, attacks the Jews. When he attacks the Jews, Moses is able to win the war for the Jews by keeping his hands pointed towards heaven and as long as he has his hands up the Jews are winning the war. But the problem is Moses' hands get tired, so Aaron and Chur come and they hold his hands.

I think it was Machlah points out that there are many parallels between that story and the next story, the story of Jethro. First of all both stories happen tomorrow, that God tells Moses 'tomorrow' to go take people and battle against Amalek, and here the story with Jethro it happens 'tomorrow'. The same language of the people standing with Moses, there too Moses was standing and he had to sit, here too he sits. There Moses needed help and here too he needs help. A number of other parallels, you can look on the discussion boards, I think it was - I forgot which thread it was. But you can look through it, it might have been the responses to Lecture 4 or it was observations, it was somewhere around there, you can find it. But a very interesting series of parallels.

And it sounds almost as if Jethro took his cue from what happened with the story of Amalek, which happened just before he came, which is that there are situations where Moses needs help. He needed help in the story of Amalek and he needs help here, he just can't do it alone. There he couldn't do it alone, here he couldn't do it alone.

In that vein, by the way, there's an interesting Midrash. The Midrash says that if you look carefully at the story of Jethro in Exodus where he first comes to meet Moses the first words are; Vayishma Yitro kohen Midyan - and Jethro heard everything that God had done for the Jews, and he came to visit Moses and he was very happy. Now the Midrash asks, exactly what did he hear - when it says; And Jethro heard? The Midrash says, interestingly enough, that one of the things he heard was the very last thing, which is the defeat of Amalek. So it's interesting in light of that Midrash, perhaps it was the battle against Amalek in which Moses needed help that inspired Jethro to think that maybe Moses needs help here too?

But in any case, moving on, just continuing our look at the Exodus story. Vayomer Moshe l'chotno - Moses responds to Jethro. Now remember what had Jethro said? Jethro says to Moses what are you doing all day? You know how come you're sitting there all alone and the people are standing from morning until evening and you're judging them? Okay now let's listen to Moses' response, and see if there's anything puzzling about this response. Moses says - verse 15 in Exodus Chapter 18; Vayomer Moshe l'chotno - Moses says to his father-in-law, here's what I'm doing; Ki yavoh eilai ha'am lidrosh Elokim - when the people come to seek out God; Ki yihiyeh lahem davar - when they have something they need to judge; Bah eilai v'shafateti - I come and judge it; Bein ish u'bein rei'eihu - between one person and another. V'hodati et chukei ha'Elokim v'et toratav - and I make known to them what God's law is and what His commands are and how the case is to be judged.

Okay, now what was going on there? This is question number 1 I want you to think about for next week. Exactly what was the dialogue between Moses and Jethro? Think about it carefully because something is going on here if you listen carefully to the words. I'm going to play devil's advocate. The devil's advocate is I don't understand what this dialogue is. What did Jethro say? Jethro says what are you doing standing here all day long? Now was Jethro a fool, he couldn't see what happened? I mean he saw Moses was judging everybody all day long. So it wasn't like Jethro didn't understand that Moses was judging the people, he did understand but he was saying, what are you doing judging the people?

Now what's Moses' response? He says, well I sit here all day and I judge the people. Well Jethro already knew that, good morning, why is he telling Jethro what he already knows? Moses must be telling Jethro something new. Look carefully at the words, what was Moses telling Jethro? That's question number 1, very important thing.

Now question number 2. Question number 2 is a very broad question, what is this story doing here? There's a debate among the Medieval Commentators when this story happened, but it's not so simple that this story happened here. It seems like it's possible that this story may have been put out of place, because if you look in the general context this story in Exodus Chapter 18 of Jethro coming, happens or takes place just before the Torah relates to us the Revelation at Sinai and the giving of the Ten Commandments, the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Now what's strange about that sequence is, is that what exactly does Moses say that he's doing for Jethro? It says that he's telling them God's laws and he's judging the people according to God's laws, but the problem is it doesn't seem like there's any of God's laws yet, because God's laws haven't really been given until after the Revelation at Sinai.

So this causes some consternation among the Medieval Commentators. Some suggest that no, there were some laws before and it really is in place. Others say no, that these events actually happened later but they were taken out of context and placed over here. Now the problem of course is why were they placed here. Now again - and I think I alluded to this in Lecture number 1 of this series - there is this idea that the Torah doesn't always follow chronological order. Why? Because the Torah is not primarily a history book. What it will do is it will sometimes take sequences out of order in order to teach you something. If there is a lesson that can be taught by putting two stories that didn't necessarily happen in chronological order next to each other, because you can learn something from that, then sometimes that's very important.

That may be what's happening over here, that the Torah took the story of Jethro and the judges and placed it before the Revelation story to teach you something. But then of course the question is what is it teaching you? Why take the story out of context and place it here before the Revelation story back to back? How do we understand that? So that's question number 2, why is this story here? How is it related to the story which comes after it which is the whole revelation at Mount Sinai story?

Now I'm going to give you one last thing to think about here in this story of the original source for the intermediate judges here in Exodus. It's a very interesting thing and I'll leave this for your last bit of homework. Again, you're going to be looking at these questions and trying to figure out just what are the questions that you need to struggle with here in the story? I have given you the two to think about, you may find others. But I want you just to think about this one last thing, I'll be very impressed if anyone comes up with this. There is a piece - there's actually two pieces, one of them actually came up on the discussions boards that I hadn't seen, and I'll talk about it next week, an interesting parallel between this story and the creation of Eve in the story of Genesis and we'll get to that next week. But in the meantime, I want to talk about another very interesting parallel that I happened to find here going back to the Book of Genesis. A link between the Book of Genesis and this story here of Moses and the intermediate judges in its original source when Jethro first tells him the idea.

That is, that when Moses listens to Jethro and does exactly as he says to go find these intermediate judges, Jethro gives this whole long advice and then there's one verse that says; And Moses listened to him. I want you to hear what it is that the verse says and ask yourself does it remind you of anything else in the Torah? So those of you who have the Torah on the tips of their fingertips over here, you can see if there's anything in Genesis that this happens to remind you of. The verse is - it's verse 24; Vayishma Moshe l'kol chotno vaya'as kol asher amar - and Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did everything as he was commanded.

Now, at the face value, big deal, nothing fancy about these words, seems like regular, innocuous words, Moses listened to what Jethro advised him and that's it. But if you look carefully, you will find that this particular formula which sounds like it probably happens everywhere in the Torah; And so and so listened to Y, as it's phrased here; Vayishma X l'kol Y - and X listened to the voice of so and so, that is a very rare phrase in the Torah. As a matter of fact it occurs only one other time in the entire Torah, in the entire Five Books of Moses. It occurs somewhere in the Book of Genesis. Can you find the other occurrence of this phrase where it says; Vayishma X l'kol Y - and so and so listened to the voice of somebody else, and X listened to the voice of Y? Where else does it say that?

Now if you happen to find it, you find that other place, you'll find that the story there in Genesis also seems interestingly connected to this story here. It seems almost like the story of the intermediate judges itself in its original form is a play off of what's happening in Genesis. So we've seen that the story of the spies to some extent is a play off of what happens in the story of the intermediate judges, but the original source of the story of the intermediate judges is related back to something even earlier in Genesis. The tip of the iceberg is; Vayishma X l'kol Y, the only two occurrences of that, but the iceberg is much larger than this. There are a number of other significant connections between these two stories and I think Genesis sheds light on that too.

So there's a very intricate web of interconnected stories here, I hope it's not too complicated. We're beginning to put all of this together and next week we'll be able to put it together even more. I may stretch this out one more week, this was originally advertised as a six to seven week class, it may go seven weeks, perhaps we'll even go eight, we'll see how it goes. But I'm having fun, I hope you are as well.

Again, I hope to see you on the discussion boards and I look forward to seeing you next week.

Hi everybody, welcome back, this is week 6 of our class Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land. Last week we were looking at Parshat Yitro, we were looking at the section in Exodus where Jethro comes to visit Moses after the exodus, after the splitting of the Red Sea and the battle against Amalek, and the original story of the intermediate judges occurs here. This is where Jethro gives Moses the original idea. We were going back to this story because we had seen last week some disconcerting sort of connections between the story of the intermediate judges and the spies, seeming to suggest that the story of the intermediate judges lays the groundwork for the spies somehow. We were seeking to understand how that was so.

What was so terrible, what was so bad? Intermediate judges sounded like such a good idea, why was it that the people picked up on this and somehow came up with this idea which turned into disaster, which is the story of the spies? So we were going back to the story of Jethro's judges, going back to the story of the intermediate judges, the original story, reading it carefully to see what it is that we could find.

Now last week I left you with three questions. Question number 1 - I don't remember which particular order I gave them to you - but we were talking about the story of Jethro coming to Moses being out of order, that apparently it doesn't necessarily take place right at the point at which it appears to take place, right before the Revelation at Sinai. There's some indications that it takes place after the Revelation, so question 1 was why does the Torah put it before Revelation? Why does it make it right next to the story of Revelation? That's question number 1.

Question number 2, what really was the conversation between Moses and Jethro all about? Jethro comes and say, what are you doing with everyone coming and standing before you, and Moses says, oh I'm just judging them. Jethro has eyes, he can see that, what was Moses exactly trying to explain to him in that conversation?

Finally, how do we understand this strange parallel language lifted out of Genesis? I kind of gave you homework to figure out where that place in Genesis is. There is only one other time in the Torah where we have; Vayishma X l'kol Y - a certain person listens to the voice of another person, where was that? I noticed some of you picked it up on the discussion boards, and we'll get back to that - why use that parallel language?

Now while we're on the topic of parallel language, let me just bring up some other things which went on in the discussion boards over the past week or two, which brings to light some other parallel language between the story of Jethro's judges and other events elsewhere in the Torah, which I think is enlightening as well. I'm not going to quote everything that went on in the boards, you can look at it there if you're interested. But one really important piece is this link between the story of Jethro's judges and another event that happened in Genesis, and it's this language of; Loh Tov. Loh tov ha'davar asher atah oseh - Jethro says, it's not a good thing that you are doing. He says; Loh tuchal asohu levadecha - you cannot do it alone. You can check this out on your source sheets. Again; It is not a good thing that you're doing, you cannot do it alone.

Now, by the way, the notion of good, if you remember from last week, is a very important word with Jethro. Later on when the story of Jethro is recounted in Numbers - which may or may not be a version of the same story here in Exodus, it may be an entirely separate event - but there's this other story of Jethro in Numbers when Jethro comes to visit Moses in the desert. When that occurs - and he's called Chovav there - when that occurs this language of Tov is hammered in all these times. Over and over again Moses emphasizes how good things are going to be; Nosim anachnu - we're going to the land and the land is good, and God is going to do good for us, and you'll be able to share in the good. All of this is Tov, Tov, Tov. The genesis of this, I think, is the Tov that we find in the original Jethro narrative here in Exodus when Jethro first comes to Moses, and you find that Tov is also a theme.

When does it appear? It appears when Jethro hears what happened with the Jews and how God saved the Jews in the desert and saved them from Egypt. His response is; Vayichad Yisro - this is in verse 9 in Chapter - what is this - Chapter 18 in Exodus - Vayichad Yisro - Yitro rejoiced; Al kol ha'tovah asher asah Hashem l'Yisrael - on all of the good - Tov, that God did for the Jewish people, how He saved them from Egypt et cetera. Now it sounds like later on in Numbers when Moses says don't worry, everything is going to be good, good, good, Moses remembers the Exodus incident and what impressed Jethro was the good - Jethro was the man where good was important. Moses tells him, don't worry it will be good, it will be good.

One of the things, by the way, which Moses might have had in the back of his mind going back to Exodus, is not only does Jethro in Exodus say how wonderful it is that God took care of the Jews, that that was Tov, but the very next day when we get to the story of the beginning of these intermediate judges when Moses goes to judge the people and Jethro watches him, listen to the language here.

Vayar choten Moshe - and the father-in-law of Moses saw - I'm reading now from verse 14 here in the same chapter, Chapter 18. That the father-in-law of Moses saw everything that Moses was doing for the people and says; What is this that you're doing, why are you doing it all alone? Maduah atah yoshev levadecha - how come you're all alone and everyone stands before you from day until night? Then Jethro says; Loh tov ha'davar asher atah oseh - all of a sudden it's NOT good. The good is offset by the not good. No, it's NOT good that which you're doing, you're doing a bad thing. Navol tibol - you're treating the people in a disparaging way, you're bringing them down and you're bringing yourself down. Gam atah gam ha'am - you're bringing everyone down by what it is that you're doing. It can't be done. All of a sudden there's the Loh Tov and Moses back in Numbers he's no, it's Tov, it's Tov - it's going to be good, it's going to be good, appealing to the good. But there's one time when Jethro says it's not good; Loh Tov.

Well as it happens - again this was brought up on the discussion boards, I think it was Barry who says - that Loh Tov actually appears only one other time in the Torah. It's interesting, you'd think it's such a common phrase; Loh Tov, Loh Tov, Loh Tov, but it actually appears only one other time in the Torah. Can you guess where? Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock. Well I'll tell you, it's from the story of the creation of Eve, right in the middle of the story of tree of knowledge of good and evil. What happens is, is that God decides that it's not good for man to be alone and all of a sudden you have this language; Loh Tov. Loh tov heyot ha'Adam levado - it's not good for man to be alone. It's the only other time Loh Tov is used.

It sounds like Jethro's Loh Tov seems to be like a quotation from God's Loh Tov. God had said it's not good for man to be alone and Jethro says it's not good for Moses to be alone.

By the way, what's interesting is that lest you doubt this, it's not just the Loh Tov that's connected but the alone part is connected. What does Jethro say? Loh tuchal asohu levadecha. He says it's Loh Tov - it's not good, and then uses that same words that God had used to describe man as it's not good for you to do this all alone. So there's really two things, it's the 'not good' being lifted out of Genesis, and then, 'not good for you to be alone' lifted out of Genesis. What is the Torah meaning to say with this?

If you go back and you look over the discussion boards, I want to bring up one other point which somebody else mentioned, which is responding to that notion of Loh Tov being lifted out of Genesis. I think Barry said - [I think Phil 7:29 ] or [unclear] had mentioned that the episode of the giving of Eve to Adam is [preceded] immediately by God creating all of these creatures, all of these animals and bringing them before Adam to see if Adam could find a mate among them, but he can't find any mate among them. Interestingly, with Jethro we also have a parade of beings coming before the person who, so to speak, needs a mate, and that is the people. Immediately [before 7:59] Jethro says it's Loh Tov, we have this image of all these people coming before Moses one by one and somehow that seems connected to the picture too.

So a very interesting thing, how does that story in Genesis fit?

Now this brings us to the homework assignment which I gave you, which was where in Genesis do we have other unique words which appear in only two places in the Torah - in the story of Jethro and somewhere else in Genesis? That is; Vayishma X l'kol Y - and X listened to the voice of Y. We have it here in the story of Jethro when Moses listens to Jethro; Vayishma Moshe l'kol chotno - and Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law. We have it one other time in Genesis, we have it in the story - of? Anybody figure it out? Some of you did on the discussions boards, it's the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar.

Just to refresh your memory, what happens in the story of Genesis is that God promises Abraham that he's going to have children - this is back in, I think, it's Genesis Chapter 15 or so - and He promises Abraham that he's going to have children. But strangely enough, the very next chapter begins with Sarah doubting that you're going to have children. The way Rashi understands it, Sarah realized that God had promised children but God had promised them to Abraham and had not mentioned Sarah. Sarah's worried that that means that she was going to be left out and that she wasn't going to be part of the birth of this great nation. So Sarah devised an emergency plan, as it were. She assumed that the children weren't going to come from her, I mean she was already very old. Just because Abraham is going to have children, fine he'll have a miracle, but God had never said anything about her.

Therefore what she does is that she gives her maidservant, Hagar, to Abraham and she says; Ulai iboneh mimenah - maybe I will built up through her. The idea seems to be - the simple language of the verse seems to suggest that since this was her maidservant she would control the child, as it were. It would be surrogate motherhood. Of course the whole problem with surrogate motherhood is what happens when surrogate mommy wants the child, which is essentially what happens when Hagar, the maidservant of Sarah, conceives Ishmael and all of a sudden doesn't see herself as a maidservant anymore. She is a mommy too and she wants to keep Ishmael.

So it's the beginning really of a lot of problems. The relationship between Ishmael and Isaac has never been a very peaceful one - even in the very beginning it's not a very peaceful one. Isaac is made fun of by Ishmael, so much so that Sarah eventually feels that a divorce has to take place and that Ishmael and Hagar have to be expelled from the house, and it's a very sad kind of narrative. That's exactly what happens in Genesis Chapter 21. Ishmael, the archer, was - he grows up to be an archer and, according to the Midrash, he was in jest, slinging arrows towards Isaac, and jest is one thing, but when you play killing - it's like the video games, it prepares you for killing too.

Now in this story, remember that it is Sarah's idea that Abraham take Hagar, even though Sarah regrets it almost immediately when things start to go bad, and things fall apart rather quickly. It was Sarah's original idea and Abraham agreed to it. When Abraham agrees to the idea the language is; And Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah. Vayishma Avram l'kol Sarai - and Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah and took Hagar.

Now it's interesting, if you think about these two connections back to Genesis, these two unique phrases; And Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah, connecting in Genesis to the story of Jethro; And Moses listened to the voice of Jethro his father-in-law. Then the second connection; Loh tov ha'davar asher atah oseh - it's not good that which you're doing, you're sitting all alone, connecting back to Genesis; It is not good that man be alone. Again, both of these phrases, unique only in Genesis, and only here in the Jethro story, it seems like there's not a coincidence going on.

First of all, do you see any common denominator in these two connections? The common denominator, what are we talking about when we're talking about it's not good for man to be alone? What are we talking about when we're talking about listening to the voice of Sarah and take Hagar? In both cases we're talking about taking of an intimate mate, taking of a wife; in one case the taking of Chava - of Eve as a wife, the creation of Eve, and the other case, the taking of Hagar. What are we to make of that, it doesn't seem coincidental? It seems a very strange coincidence if it is, that both of these unique connections are talking about the taking of a wife. What does the taking of a wife have to do with the story of Jethro, with this very impersonal world of judges?

If you think about on a sliding scale of the most intimate things in the world, the most intimate things in the world are the relationship between man and wife. If you think about the most impersonal things in the world, the most impersonal things in the world is the world of judgment and the world of justice and the world of courts. Where, interestingly enough, the one people that are barred from testifying from each other are husband and wife and other Krovim - and other relatives, because of the subjective bond. There's the subjective world personified by man and wife and there's the objective world personified by the courts and something is linking this objective world to the courts and to that interpersonal, intimate world of man and wife. How are we to understand that? I think it's very intriguing.

I want to thank you guys. I want to - again, one of the really fun parts of doing this class for me is that I see all sorts of things that I haven't seen before that you guys bring up on the discussion boards, so it's very interesting for me and I really appreciate it.

So I think that's a real question, how is it that we understand that, so let's go back and put this story of Jethro together in a package. It's a good time for you to take your first drink of water for this talk, I'm going to end this track here and we'll pick up in a second with the second part of this where we try to put this together.

Okay, so let's talk about the Sinai experience - the Jethro story with the intermediate judges is juxtaposed, we suggested to the Sinai story, and not necessarily because the stories happened immediately in chronological succession to one another. So there may be a thematic connection here which overrides the chronological considerations, so let's talk about that, let's talk about Sinai. What was Sinai about? So normally when we think of Sinai we think Sinai was about the giving of the Torah and our receiving of the Torah. When we celebrate Shavuot - the holiday that commemorates our standing at Sinai, we think of Shavuot as the time of Kabalat HaTorah - the time when we accepted the Torah.

But I'd like to suggest that there's another dimension of Sinai which we sometimes overlook, which may be just as powerful - possibly even more powerful than that of simply receiving the Torah. You see this other dimension actually in some verses which are singled out by the Rabbis as one of six verses which suggest events that we need to remember all the time. They're known as the Shesh Zechirot - the six remembrances, six events that always need to be remembered. Now one of these events just happens to be the giving of the Torah at Sinai, but if you look at how the verse talks about the giving of the Torah at Sinai, listen to how it emphasizes it.

Now I'm going to read you the section, you can find it on your source notes, it's Deuteronomy, Chapter 4, let's go to say, verse 7 or so. Verse 7 says - Moses is talking to the Jews and talking to them about how special they can feel themselves to have been to have experienced the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Says; Ki mi goy gadol asher lo Elokim krovim eilav kaHashem Elokeinu b'kol kareinu eilav - what nation in the history of the world has experienced this closeness that you have to God? U'mi goy gadol asher lo chukim u'mishpatim tzadikkim k'chol haTorah hazot - and what other nation has such righteous precepts as you have in this Torah that I'm giving you today?

Now notice those two things that Moses has emphasized, not one thing, not just the Torah, not just the precepts, but another thing too, the closeness to God that you've experienced. Look at the next verse, it then takes these two elements and puts them together; the element of the closeness to God and the righteousness of the laws which they've received.

Verse 9; Rak hishomer lecha - the only thing you have to do is you have to be very careful; U'shemor nafshecha me'od - you have to be very, very careful; Pen tishkach et ha'devarim asher ra'u einecha - lest you forget these things that you've seen. And this is why this event is one of the six remembrances, the six things that you always need to remember. U'pen yasuru milvavecha - lest it come outside your heart and you don't always pay attention to it; Kol yemei chayecha - all of your lives. It's not just enough that

you remember it but; V'hodatam l'banecha v'l'bnei banecha - you have to tell your children about it, you have to tell your grandchildren about it. What do you have to tell them? The event at the time at which both of these things took place, that you received the righteous laws and you experienced that greatest closeness to God. Listen to the next verse; Yom asher amadeta lifnei Hashem Elokecha b'Chorev - you have to tell them about the day that you stood before God at Chorev - at Sinai.

There's very clearly another dimension going on here. What the experience of Sinai was about was not just about the receiving of laws. It was that, but it was also about something more, it was about a moment of great closeness between God and man. It was about the day that you stood experiencing God at Sinai in direct connection. That, by the way, is a fantastic thing, it's something which, when you think about it, boggles the mind. When you think about the connection between God and man it's not at all immediately obvious that such a connection could take place at all. We take for granted that such a connection did take place but it's not obvious that it could. If you think about it, God is the ultimate extraterrestrial, He's literally from outside of this world, He's our Creator but He doesn't live in this world, He's non-spatial, He doesn't take up any space. He's non-temporal, He doesn't take up any - nowhere in time - past, present and future is all the same for him. He doesn't belong anywhere, He's literally outside this world. Not just outside the world, He's outside the universe. It's not like He's in the Orion's Belt or in the Andromeda Galaxy, He's somewhere else, He's the ultimate extraterrestrial.

If you think about all the extraterrestrial movies - I mean, it sounds like a ridiculous comparison, but I don't think it's so ridiculous. What's the great tension in these - could there be any understanding? A while back there was this rather lousy science-fiction movie, it made a lot of money, I think it was called Independence Day, where the bad extraterrestrial aliens came to attack the earth and the climax of the movie was when the hero figures out how to attack the aliens by sending a computer virus to infect the computers used by the enemy aliens. Now if you think about how ridiculous this is, now exactly why would we assume that a computer virus engineered here in America on IBM computers, would affect aliens? Who says their computers are IBM compatible? A virus for one computer means nothing for another computer. There's a failure of imagination here, there's this sense that basically whatever beings there are that are out there are probably fundamentally like us, and I think it's a failure of imagination that we sometimes have when we think about God too.

Who is God? Yeah, He's extraterrestrial, He's - but basically it's just a matter of degrees; we're smart, God is smarter than we are, He's some sort of very powerful being up there sitting on His throne and basically He thinks the same way we think and He acts the same way we act. But it's not really true - and if you think about it the notion that man and God should really be able to connect is a mindboggling notion.

It's certainly something not to be taken for granted when it comes to regular extraterrestrials. To use another movie analogy, there's another, better extraterrestrial movie that came out called Contact - a while back. There, the whole tension of the movie was exactly how would other beings - even if they're intelligent, even if they're more intelligent than us - reach out and connect with people who don't share a common set of experiences, who don't share a common language? So the idea there was that maybe they would use some sort of prime number mechanism, maybe there's something universal about prime numbers. But at least they were trying to grapple with the problem.

One of the things that Sinai says is that this connection between God and man can somehow be made and that it's real. This is something that Sinai is meant to teach us. This is something we're always supposed to remember, that God not only was able to connect with us, but cared enough to connect to us, and that's something which we're supposed to transmit to our children and transmit to our children's children. That there was this connection between God and man, that that is real and that the Creator cares to make this direct contact with us.

Now, a manifestation of that contact is the giving of laws - the giving of righteous and just laws by which you can live your life. God shows His caring not just by the moment of contact but also by leaving us with something which says here's how I want you to live your life, it's a manifestation of G- d's love. Not only does God make that contact but He also reveals in a way that we can understand something of His will to us. Even though that will in its essence is - God's will is beyond us, but God is able to somehow translate His will and His desires down into terms which make sense for us in our world, and He gives that to us in the form of laws and says, this is how I want you to live your life. That, together, is; Yom asher amadeta lifnei Hashem Elokecha b'Chorev - the day that you stood before Me in Chorev. The moment of contact, as a direct show of care and then the giving of laws as another manifestation of caring.

So in other words, the laws that we get is not just something that we have to do - what's our relationship to these laws? It's not just something that we have to do and hoops that we have to follow through and we get rewards and punishments and all of that. It's more than that, there's an emotional connection which we can have to these laws, because these laws are a manifestation of God's love for humanity. The fact that God cares enough to make that connection to humanity and give us an understanding of His will and says, this is how I want you to live your life.

You see this by the way, in another way. You see it in Shema, in a fascinating way. You know, I never - I have a confession to make here, I never really understood Shema. Shema, of course, is the declaration of faith which Jews make, the famous words; Hear o Israel, the L-rd our God, the L-rd is one, followed by the next paragraph after that. We say it all the time and you think they're very simple words. Yet I - I've said them, I don't know, thousands of times in my life but it was only recently when I was actually looking at Maimonides' Sefer Hamitzvot - Book of the Commandments, where he orders his vision of Taryag - of the 613 commandments, I began to study that, that I began to really understand the Shema. If you see how Maimonides formulates the laws of Shema and puts them together, it's a fascinating thing.

It's - one of these days maybe we'll get to an analysis of the Sefer Hamitzvot - of Maimonides' Book of the Commandments. It's a fascinating book, and I think it can be unlocked to really a three-dimensional view of how the commandments all integrate with each other to form a unified vision. But that's a very long schmooze and it's certainly not something we have time for now. Hopefully we'll get to that maybe in these classes and do a series just on that.

But just a little piece of that in how it emerges that Maimonides understands the Shema. If you come with me - I wasn't really planning on talking about this, but I'm going to put it into your source notes.

This may sound like a digression but I think it's not really a digression. Let's flip over for a minute to the Shema and let's read it together - okay? Let's see what it says over here. Again, familiar words but just kind of erase anything you knew about these words. If you've heard them before just kind of approach them as if you've never seen them before. Let's see what they say to us.

Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad - listen Israel the L-rd our God, the L-rd is one. Now let's go to the next paragraph. V'ahavta et Hashem Elokecha - you should love the L-rd your God; B'chol levavcha u'b'chol nafshecha u'b'chol me'odecha - with all of your heart, with all of your life, and with all of your might. Vehayu ha'devarim ha'eileh asher onochi metzavecha ha'yom al levavecha - and these things that I command you today should be upon your heart. V'shinantom l'banecha ve'dibarta bam - and you should teach them to your children and you should speak of them; B'shivtecha b'beitecha u'b'lechtecha ba'derech - when you sit in your home and when you're on the road; U'b'shachbecha u'b'kumecha - and when you're sleeping and when you rise up.

Let's just stop there for a quick second. Now sometimes we're so used to seeing these words in terms of how they're interpreted in a legal sense, in a Halachic sense, that we sometimes fail to just ask ourselves what the words really mean in their simple sense. Let's think about first of all what do these words mean legally, Halachically, the way at least most observant Jews relate to them? This notion that you should teach your children and you should speak of them when you lie down at night, when you wake up in the morning, when you're on the road. These words are Halachically interpreted according to Jewish law, as requiring the recitation of this paragraph of the Shema at least twice a day; once when you wake up in the morning and once when you go to sleep at night. We fulfill this commandment by - in the morning prayers we say the Shema, that's when we wake up in the morning. Before we go to sleep or sometimes in Ma'ariv - when we pray the evening prayers, we say Shema there. That's how we fulfill this command.

But where does that command come from? Where is the simple meaning of the text from which these legalities devolve? Let's read this text again and just confront it for a second. Okay, let's just break this text really fast into three quick parts here. V'ahavta et Hashem Elokecha b'chol levavcha u'b'chol nafshecha u'b'chol me'odecha - you should love your God with all your heart, with all your soul. You should have a passionate sense of love for God - idea number 1. Idea number 1 is pretty clear. Idea number 3 is pretty clear; you should teach these words to your children.

Except the question, by the way, in idea number 3 when we talk about teaching these words to your children and speaking to them when you wake up in the morning, when you go to sleep at night, one of the issues there is what exactly does 'these words' means? Now Halachically - in its legal sense, these words refer to this paragraph itself, you should teach the Shema, but it's not entirely clear that that's what 'these words' mean in the sentence. If you think about it in the simplest meaning it's referring to the entire Torah, the whole system of law here, 'these laws you should teach to your children and you should talk about them'. So idea number 3 at least is that you should be constantly talking about these laws, you should be teaching them to your children, that's idea number 3.

So we have idea number 1 and idea number 3 here, what's idea number 2 in the middle? Idea number 2 is a little bit ambiguous, what does this mean? Vehayu ha'devarim ha'eileh asher onochi metzavecha ha'yom - these words that I teach you today - either the Shema itself in its narrow sense, this paragraph, or in its larger sense, the entire Torah - should be; Al levavecha - should be on your heart. What does it mean they should be on your heart? What's the connection between these three ideas; idea number 1, you should love God, idea number 2, these words should be on your heart, idea number 3, you should teach them to your children and you should say them when you wake up in the morning, when you go to sleep at night?

I think a coherent view of these sentences, I think is the following. Let's say you took the first idea in these sentences very seriously as the first sentence suggests that you're supposed to; that you should love God. But not just love God, you should love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all of your might, you should be filled with a love of God. What does that mean in real life? What does it mean to love God? Well what does it mean to love? What does it mean to love a person? What would you want to do if you would love a person? There are many things you would want to do but one of the things you would want to do - especially if that person was mysterious - is you would want to know about them. You would want to have an inkling of who it is that they are. If that being could reveal themselves to you, could give you a sense of not just who they are physically but who they are spiritually, what they're really all about, you would treasure that. You would treasure that very much.

What would it mean to treasure that knowledge? I think the Shema is about what it means to treasure that knowledge. One of the corollaries of loving God is to have an emotional relationship with God's will, with God's mind, as expressed through the laws that He gives us, through the Torah that He gives us.

In other words, let me ask you this question, how is it that we're meant to relate to the Torah? How is it that we're meant to relate to these laws? So if your answer is well we're supposed to do them, that's true but it's not just sufficient. It's not just enough to jump through the hoops, to do the laws, that's utilitarian, yes. But if you really love God you wouldn't want to just do the laws, you would have an emotional relationship to those laws, those laws would be important in terms of process too. Those laws are important to you because they mean something to you, they give you an insight into who your Creator is and to what, so to speak, He is like and what His expectations for you are. It is a window, so to speak, into the mind of the Almighty; you would treasure it, you would seek to hug that, you would just want it to be with you all the time.

How would you express that? You would express it in a number of ways. One thing is; V'shinantom l'banecha - you would learn about it, you would learn it so much you would teach it to your kids, you would be immersed in it. You would be immersed in it because you'd have an in-depth - you'd try to understand these laws in depth. But it's not just that you'd understand these laws in depth; Ve'dibarta bam - you would speak about them all the time; B'shivtecha b'beitecha u'b'lechtecha ba'derech - you'd speak of them wherever you are. You'd speak about them at home, you'd speak about them on the road, they'd be the first things you'd talk about when you wake up in the morning; B'shachbecha u'b'kumecha - when you go to sleep at night, they're the last things on your mind. Like, wherever you are; if you're at home or you're far away, whenever you are; at night, in the morning, all the time you'd be talking about them.

When a person is in love, what do they do? They talk about their beloved all the time, they're like a chatterbox, it's - you can't - one of the annoying things if you listen to people who are in love, they're always talking about their beloved. Oh, Cindy said this, she said that, she's - oh I couldn't believe it, we were thinking the same thing. You should be talking about the Torah all of the time, because the Torah is your key into the mind of your beloved.

That's really what the second sentence here is. The first sentence is that you should love God, the third sentence is what does it practically mean to love God, but the second sentence is the one that talks about that imperative. What is that? Vehayu ha'devarim ha'eileh asher onochi metzavecha ha'yom - and these laws that I teach you today - what should your relationship be to them? It's not just that you're supposed to do them, no, these laws should be; Al levavecha. Vehayu ha'devarim ha'eileh asher onochi metzavecha ha'yom al levavecha - these laws that I teach you they should be on your heart. What does it mean 'should be on your heart'? It means you should be emotionally attached to them. To be emotionally attached to them means a lot of things. It means to immerse yourself in them, it means to talk about them all the time, it means to study them, it means to wrap them physically around you, to do everything you can to immerse yourself in these words. That's what real love means.

So again, when we think of law, law is not some dry legalistic thing that you - again, these hoops that you have to walk through in order to get your rewards, in order to avoid punishments. There's an emotional vibrancy here, law is a gateway into love. Your relationship to these laws are not just linear, that there's some end that you need to do, you have to know them as a way of doing them and knowing them is just a way that you get to doing them. No! The knowing them, the involvement, is significant in and of itself - even before doing. The immersion in law is the expression of what it means to love. So there's this dual way that we relate to law. Yes we do law, but the real significance of it, is it's a fundamental way that we express our love of God by an involvement in that law.

When you get back to Sinai, really these two sides of Sinai merge to become one. One side of Sinai is contact, it's about what does it mean to have this Being beyond space and time who loves His creatures come and talk to His creatures. But there's another piece of it too. There's that - at the moment where that - that moment of very close contact between God and mankind, there's the giving of this law which is the expression of love. And then the acceptance of that law which is our expression of love towards G-

d. It's really all about the relationship. So it's not just this utilitarian thing that happened, that we needed to get these laws so we could figure out what to do. What it's really about is a relationship that is being built, that is at bottom really what Revelation is about, and what we mean to do when we're remembering Revelation.

Okay, so now, keeping that in the back of our mind, I think it gives us a new perspective of what the Jethro story is doing and why it's juxtaposed immediately before the story of Revelation. So now I'm going to ask you, if you could, to just go back to that Jethro story, back in Exodus Chapter 18, and read it one more time. You can read it without me - if you're driving a car do not stop in the middle of the road or crash into the tree - but if you have a chance just go back to Exodus Chapter 18, and keeping the Revelation story in the back of your mind, read the Jethro story one more time, and see if it doesn't say something new to you.

I'm going to end my track number 2 here and I'll come back and give you my thoughts on this, and I'll talk to you soon.

Okay, Exodus Chapter 18, verse 13, we'll start with Chapter 18, I'm going to start reading from verse 13 here. Vayehi mimacharat - and it happened the next day; Vayeishev Moshe lishpot et ha'am - Moses sat and began to judge the people; Vaya'amod ha'am al Moshe min ha'boker at ha'erev - and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening waiting for him to judge them. Vayar choten Moshe et kol asher hu oseh la'am - and the father-in-law of Moses saw everything that he was doing to the people; Vayomer - and he says; Mah ha'davar hazeh asher atah oseh la'am - what is this thing that you are doing to the people? Maduah atah yoshev levadecha - why are you sitting all alone; V'kol ha'am nitzav alecha min ha'boker ad erev - and the entire people is standing upon you from day until nighttime?

Vayomer Moshe l'chotno - and Moses said to his father-in-law; Ki yavoh eilai ha'am lidrosh Elokim - the people are coming to me to seek God. Ki yihiyeh lahem davar bah eilai v'shafateti - when they have something that occurs between them they come to me and I judge them; Bein ish u'bein rei'eihu - between one man and his friend; V'hodati et chukei ha'Elokim v'et toratav - and I make known to them the laws of God and His commands. Vayomer choten Moshe - and then the father-in-law of Moses says to him; Loh tov ha'davar asher atah oseh - it's not good this thing that you're doing. Navol tibol gam atah gam ha'am hazeh - it is debasing to both you and the people what's happening; Ki kaveid mimcha ha'davar - because this thing is too heavy for you; Loh tuchal asohu levadecha - it's something that you are not able to do by yourself. Listen to me and I'll tell you what to do. You get these intermediate judges.

Now, I asked you before, how do we understand this dialogue between Moses and Jethro? What exactly was Jethro asking? What did Moses answer him? What did Jethro say? So at face value there's a problem here which is that Jethro says what are you doing all this time? Now we know that Jethro saw what he was doing all this time, it says that he saw Moses sitting and judging the people, and he says, what are you doing? Moses responds at face value as well, I'm sitting and judging the people. So he hasn't told him anything he doesn't know. But if you look carefully, he has told him something he doesn't know.

Vayomer Moshe l'chotno - he says to his father-in-law, when the people come; Lidrosh Elokim. What does this mean? What it really literally means is the people are coming to seek God. Now Moses then says in explanation - apparently - what does it mean that the people are coming to seek God? Ki yihiyeh lahem davar - when they have some issues that goes on between them; Bah eilai v'shafateti - this guy has some issue with his property line with the next guy; this guy doesn't know what to do because his cow died and he owned an impartial partnership with so and so, he doesn't know how much - there's some dispute that goes on with them, so they come to me and I judge them. Bein ish u'bein rei'eihu - between one man and the other, and I teach them the laws of God and His commands.

What exactly is going on? What Moses is saying is that what's happening here is the people are coming to seek God. How is it that they come to seek God? What does it mean that the people come - the people are living regular, normal lives, they're people, they eat, they drink, they sleep, they have relationship with their neighbors, what does it mean that the people are coming to seek God? How do they seek God? They seek God through law. They seek God trying to figure out how to resolve the little stuff that goes on between them. When Jo shows up and Sam shows up to court, and they're asking Moses how to resolve some issue between them, it's not just the little issue that's going on between them, what they're seeking is guidance in how God views the issue of that dispute between them. They're seeking a connection to God through the medium of law, through the medium of judging, when the people are coming to search out God.

Then he explains, when they have some issues between them, they come to me and that's how they search out God. There was something more than just law as law going on, there was law as relationship with God, law as seeking a relationship with God, the same way that's what law is about at Revelation. This is a precursor to Revelation, or it comes after Revelation - whether it comes before or after, the idea is the same, the people are seeking the connection to God through law.

What happens? Jethro says to him it's not a good thing that which you're doing. It's going to debase you, he says, you're not going to be able to do it - Loh tuchal asohu levadecha. Listen to me and I'll tell you, you get these intermediate judges, you teach them, and they'll be able to take care of the issues. There will be a whole system. There will be a hierarchy, there will be the lower judges, then there will be the middle judges, there will be the higher judges, and you'll be above everybody and when there's a specific issue they'll come to you.

Now, is this a solution to the problem? Well on one level it's a solution to the problem, it's a solution to a technical problem. Moses only has so many hours in his day, it's difficult for him to continue judging the people, and at that level Jethro is right. But there's another level in which a great gulf is being created between Moses and the people, because the issue of judging the people is not just a technical issue, it's not just so that they can figure out the laws. Yeah, they can figure out the laws through a whole system of judges. But the close connection that they have through God of Moses being the sort of transparent figure, bringing the issues to God and God bringing the issues back to the people, that's about a close connection. That connection is lost or is dimmed when a whole bureaucracy of administrative judges are put in between. It's a technical solution to a spiritual problem. At that level of the spiritual level perhaps the solution is not really a solution.

Now let's go back, if we can, to a whole myriad of parallel texts which mirror this story of Jethro, which we've been talking about last week and the beginning of this week. We talked about the Hagar and Ishmael connection, how the language here seems to mirror language in Hagar and Ishmael - I'll get back to that in a second. We talked about the Eve connection and we talked also, briefly, last week, about something which I think Machlah mentioned on the discussion boards, the connection back to the story which appears right before Jethro and the judges, and that is the story of the Jews' battle against Amalek.

Let's go back to that connection first for a minute. Machlah noticed - and again, I hadn't noticed this at all, and I'm very grateful to you folks for pointing this out to me - but this bunch of connections between the story of Jethro and the judges and the story of the Jews' fight against Amalek. If you want to look at the Jews' fight against Amalek, it's the last major story that appears in Exodus before Jethro comes along, you can find it - I'll try and copy for you in your source sheets - you can find it in Chapter 17, verse 8 in Exodus. If you look at that you'll see a whole bunch of these interesting connections to the Jethro story. I'll just point out a couple of them which Machlah pointed out.

We have the notion of Moses standing and Moses sitting in both cases. In the Jethro story Moses starts off standing, then he's sitting. In that story as well, Moses starts off standing and then he sits. By the way, what generally happens in the story, that Amalek, the archenemy of the Jews, comes, they battle the people, and miraculously what happens is that Moses raises his hands towards heaven and whenever his hands are raised the Jews win the battle, whenever his hands go down, the Jews start losing the battle.

Pretty soon Moses becomes tired, he can't do it anymore, so Aharon and Chur, two people come, and they hold up his hands. So you have a whole bunch of these connections.

Again, Moses starts off standing and then he sits. This notion of from morning until evening; they fought against Amalek from morning until evening. This notion of standing; Jethro says, [how come you're sitting with all the people standing against you 41:14]? In the language of the verses with Amalek we also have this particular Hebrew language for standing. The idea of Moses getting tired happens in both stories. The same language is used for Moses getting tired; which is Jethro says; Kaveid ha'davar - it's heavy for you, in the previous story Moses' hands got heavy. And of course, in the previous story people came along to help Moses with his hands, and here also Jethro is suggesting that people come along to help Moses [with something which is 41:43] too heavy for him.

How do we understand these parallels? I don't know but I'll give you a theory. Rashi has a very interesting thing that he says about this strange thing with Amalek when Moses' hands were held up and when his hands were held up they would win the war, when his hands were put down they would lose the war. Rashi says what a strange thing, do Moses' hands win the war? Hands up wins the war, hands down doesn't win the war! But Rashi says, Moses hands were a sign, and what the sign was about was that when the people would look upwards towards heaven that is when they would win the war - when they would look to help to their Father in Heaven that's when they would win the war. When they would look towards the ground and see this battle in terms of natural terms, that's when they would lose the war.

So what position does Moses occupy here? Moses' hands are entirely symbolic and they are a physical symbol which is intended to focus the people on something higher, on their connection between God and man. Moses is intended to almost to dissipate, as an invisible figure, his hands are pointing towards heaven, don't look at Moses' hands, it's not about his hands, it's about the message of Moses' hands. It's about pointing upwards. If you can point your heart upwards towards heaven, that's when you win. If you keep yourself down towards the ground, that's when you lose.

That story, according to Rashi, is also about connection to God; connection to God not through law but connection to God through warfare. In war, what does it mean to connect to God, to put yourself in the hands of God and to see your help coming from heaven? Jethro seems to have taken his cue from that story. It's perhaps not coincidental that when Jethro first arrives on the scene here in Exodus, the first words to introduce him is that Jethro saw what God had done for the Jews. Rashi explains, what's one of the things he saw, he saw the last thing that happened, he saw the battle against Amalek, and when he comes the next day and talks to Moses about what he's doing judging the people, it's almost like he has the battle of Amalek on his mind. What he says is look, things were too hard for you back then, you couldn't keep your hands up, and when you couldn't keep your hands up you accepted help, and that was okay. I'm begging you, accept help here too.

And in fact, the stories were similar; it was Moses seeking to make a connection between God and the people there, and he accepted help there. Moses here, in a similar sort of role, Jethro says, seek help. And maybe that's Jethro's role? I mean, look he's his father-in-law, he's looking out for him as family, but there's another imperative beyond family and that's Moses as leader of the nation, and sometimes those things conflict. It's true, it's very difficult personally for Moses to judge the people from day until night, but there's also an imperative for Moses as leader, indeed as father - father figure to the entire people as his family - there's something that he needs to give to them, and no matter how difficult it is.

Now let's get to the second parallel here - I think this was pointed out by somebody else, it might have been Barry, on the discussion boards - this parallel to Eve. The only other time that you have in the Torah this language; Loh Tov, which Jethro says - it is not good. So interestingly enough, there's only one other time in the Bible - I mentioned before - where we have Loh Tov - it is not good, and it was with the creation of Eve. Where you have God looking at man all alone and saying; Loh tov heyot ha'Adam levado - it is not good for man to be alone. Here too, Jethro looks at Moses and says, Loh Tov, and then immediately after Loh Tov - it is not good, says; Loh tuchal asohu levadecha - it's not good for you to do it alone. You have the confluence of both Loh Tov - it is not good, on the one hand, and, 'alone' on the other hand, coming together. Jethro says it is not good for you to be alone, the same way that God looks at man, at Adam as the first man, and says it's not good for you to be alone.

What was the solution there? The solution there was ultimately Eve. Who was Eve? Eve was the soul mate of Adam; an intimate, Divinely-given creature taken from Adam, who would be the ultimate complement to Adam, who could entirely fulfill him. And that language is echoing here.

What does it mean? What it might mean is that in effect what Jethro was suggesting - whether Jethro realized it or not - was the giving of another intimate partner for [Moses 45:59]. In other words, there wasn't something just technical going on here between Moses and the people, there was the making of some sort of intimate connection. What Jethro is describing is the taking of someone who in effect will become another intimate for Moses, which is the taking of intermediate judges, they will be the people who will complete him. But ultimately it's not just a bureaucratic completion, there's something intimate happening here, and if the real connection that's supposed to happen is between the people and God, that Moses is supposed to facilitate, and this taking of another partner here, maybe that partner doesn't belong? Maybe that partner is not a partner to be taken? Maybe that partner just disturbs - there's not a place in this kind of relationship for that partner.

That brings us to the very next connection; the language of; Vayishma Moshe l'kol chotno - and Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law. I asked you at the end of last week can you find the only other time in the Torah where this language is used; Vayishma X l'kol Y - when so and so listens to the voice of so and so? There's only one other time where those words appear and it's when Abraham listens to Sarah to take Hagar as a wife. It's another intimate connection story, but listen to the intimate connection. What was happening in that story?

What was happening was that Abraham was promised by God that he would have children, but it was only Abraham who was promised by God that he would have children - this was back in Genesis Chapter 15. Sarah, in the beginning of Chapter 16, looks at that promise and fears that she wouldn't be included. Abraham is old, she says, and Abraham has a promise that he's going to have children, but I'm not necessarily included here, I'm not necessarily going to have children. So she comes to a plan. What does she say? She says, look if I can't be the one who is going to be the mate for Abraham to have these children, let me at least control who that person is who will bear his children and vicariously I can have control over those children.

So what does she do? She gives Hagar her handmaiden, her servant, to Abraham, to be as a wife, and she says; Ulai iboneh mimenah - maybe I will be built up through her. It's really the first case in the Torah of surrogate motherhood, and what develops is a conflict between Sarah and Hagar over who the child really belongs to. Hagar, ultimately, as every surrogate mother does, develops an attraction to the child and feels that she is the mother and not Sarah. When Sarah sees this, that Hagar now sees herself as an equal and as a wife of Abraham and as a mother and not as Sarah's servant who she controls, Sarah is very angry. Why? Not just because she's - she's not capricious, she's not jealous, because the whole plan is falling apart. Because once Hagar sees herself as mother, as equal, Sarah has no more control and Sarah is completely out of the picture - and Sarah is very upset.

Now if you think about what happened here, Sarah came to ultimately a hasty conclusion; God wasn't planning on ruling Sarah out, God had Isaac in mind the whole time. Technically, Abraham said look, am I going to have children and God says, yes you're going to have children. Sarah came to the conclusion that she was excluded, but it never said anywhere she was excluded, and worried about it, she sort of jumped the gun and inserted Hagar there in this relationship.

I treated this issue in depth - I'm not going to go into it all now - in tapes I have called; Hagar, Ishmael and the Birth of Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. But suffice it to say that it seems that what Sarah did was essentially insert Hagar into what otherwise would have been a unique, personal, intimate relationship between her and Abraham. She introduces someone else. Why? Again, it's a technical solution to a spiritual problem. We need to have children, technically how is it going to be? You'll have Hagar. But that's only a technical solution, the real child needs to come through a union of Abraham and Sarah. It's finding a technical solution to a spiritual problem, where such a solution doesn't really work out, and ultimately Ishmael does not work out and it ends in divorce and Ishmael is sent away and Hagar is sent away, and Ishmael and Isaac become nemesis and nothing good comes from it.

Again, what ends up seeming like a good idea at the time, is the bringing in of something that interferes with what otherwise is an intimate relationship. It's the only other time we have this language; And so and so listened to the voice of so and so, and the echo of Hagar is very clear. It sounds like what Moses was doing in accepting Jethro's well-meaning advice to bring in the intermediate judges, was also accepting a technical solution to a spiritual problem. There was supposed to be this intimate relationship; God, the people, Moses invisibly bringing together God and the people, when the people are coming; Lidrosh Elokim - to seek out God, and what happens is these intermediate judges seem to get in the way. Yes, they help Moses solve the problem how he's going to judge all of these people, but they are barriers between God and the people and barriers between Moses and the people. At that level a certain distance has been introduced between [God/Moses 51:14] and the people.

I'm going to return to that theme of distance, we're going to close out this track of the lecture, move onto track number 4 in just one second.

Let's go back to that idea of distance. That idea of distance brings us right back to that Eicha theme which we mentioned in these two Midrashic references that I talked about - either it was last week or the week before last. If you go back to your source sheets, if you happen to have them in front of you, I reproduced again those two Midrashim just to refresh your memory. One of the questions we had is that the Midrash - again, this ancient Rabbinic commentary - seems to see this connection between God's first question to Adam, which is Ahyekah, and a word which is spelled with those same letters; Eicha, which is the classic lament in Jeremiah. The verse says that Adam when he sinned, God lamented with the words Ahyekah, and Jeremiah when the Jews sinned and they were exiled from Israel, God lamented with those same words, spelled Alef, Yud, Chaf, Heih; Eicha - how could it possibly be? We had asked what's the connection between Ahyekah and Eicha?

I think really the idea is if you think about what a lament is, what does it mean to lament something? When is it that we lament things? What does it mean to lament? So we lament when people die. Why do we lament when people die? Let me ask you a question; one of the most fruitless questions you could possibly ask someone or ask someone who has lost a loved one is, gee how come you feel so terrible, why are you so - if you're a believing person don't you believe that so and so, your loved one, is in a better place? Oh don't worry, they're in a better place. Why is that - if you're a mourner you feel like hitting the guy, belting him one. Why is that not comforting in any way, shape or form? It's not comforting because the reason why you're mourning is not because you think the person who died is worse off now, the reason why you're mourning is because you're not there together with him, you're mourning about distance. It is distance between you and your loved one, that's what you're sad about.

By the way, it's the same thing when we dance at weddings we're happy about union. When we're sad a funerals, we're sad about separation. It's separation that brings the great sadness in life, and that's the classic lament. Ahyekah or Eicha is always about separation. When God said to Adam; Ahyekah - where are you, He was really lamenting a separation between Him and Adam. Adam was right there with God and something happened in eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil that distanced Adam from God. It's no coincidence, the Midrash says, that God uses the same letters; Aleph, Yud, Chaf, Heih, to lament, so to speak, by saying where are you? It's a lament over distance - which is much the same thing as saying; Eicha - how could it be? When Jeremiah says Eicha listen to the words, listen to the words of lament; Eicha yashvah badad - look how she sits in solitude - speaking of Jerusalem - the city that was so bustling with people and now there's nobody here. What's he talking about? He's talking about separation. Lament is always about separation.

Once we see that, I think it brings into sharp relief that second Midrash that we talked about. We asked which one of these things is not like the other? We played our favorite Sesame Street game with this Midrash at the beginning of the Book of Lamentations, and this Midrashic piece sees a link between three Eicha's - between three times that the word Eicha appears in the Torah. The first time it appears is the time that it seems out of place, it's when Moses says about the intermediate judges in Deuteronomy, he says; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how could I possibly bear your burden? At that time the Midrash says everything was fine, it was at the time of tranquility. But then the Midrash says there were two other times, and the two other times were in Isaiah and in Jeremiah when the Jews were in a process of sort of self-destruction, leading to exile - and it seems like the first Eicha had nothing to do with the other Eicha's. The first Eicha was nice, Moses was saying, look at how numerous you are that you need intermediate judges.

But I think we're now in a position to understand why Moses looks back on that with the word Eicha. In Deuteronomy, 40 years later, when Moses looks back on the significance of those intermediate judges, he uses the word Eicha when he says; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - I said, how could I possibly bear your burden? And it's interesting that in the original narrative in Exodus Moses does not use that language, but looking back in Deuteronomy with the benefit of hindsight, Moses sees things differently. What Moses is suggesting, I think, is that at that time what seems like a good idea was really lamentable. What I was really doing was creating distance between You and the people. I said, how could I possibly bear you - bear your burden, and in instituting these intermediate judges I created a distance between the people and between God, between the people and myself. That distance had serious ramifications, it was connected in some fundamental way to other Eicha's in the Torah.

Of course, don't forget the chilling reminder that the Eicha - the final Eicha, the Eicha of Jeremiah - the 'how could it be' of Jeremiah, the destruction of the Temple, takes place on Tisha B'Av. The first Tisha B'Av of note in the Torah is the time when the spies come back. It's almost as if one Eicha - the first Eicha which was said at a time when everything was wonderful, when Moses was talking about how big the people are, somehow, in some subtle way, that Eicha sets the stage for another Eicha, the Eicha that comes in the wake of the spies. It sets the stage for that first disastrous event that took place on Tisha B'Av, the coming of the spies, which in turn sets the stage for exile.

So again, it's like we said last week, Moses' great cry that he admits to the people - he desperately tries to beg them, he says look, you have the experience of God carrying you here in the desert like a man carries his son on his back, that is how God has carried you. You have this experience, you can touch it, you can feel it, it's not just stories, it's not just something you've heard about. You were there, you went through Sinai, you saw the Red Sea, you saw all of this, why can't you put yourself in God's hands to go and conquer the land and just trust Him? I think Moses begins to see in the connections that he's making to the intermediate judges story, the root of the spies. That the root of the spies really is the intermediate judges.

In the story of the intermediate judges Moses puts the people down, there was a burden that was too great and he set them down. He was like a father carrying the people, and once the people feel like they've been set down when they were too much of a burden, they don't easily trust perhaps, that a father won't set them down again. Yes, it's true, God has carried us, we have that experience, we know it, but how do we know it will last? How do we know it will go all the way through? The people - Moses had said look, when something gets too difficult for you, you can come to me and the people came to him with something that was too difficult, and Moses agreed to it. How could he say no - the people agreed to him when something was more difficult to him. He agreed to it against his better judgment.

This, I think, is ultimately what Moses means when he says; Gam bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem, in Devarim, in Deuteronomy. He says, and God became angry with me on your account. We said the simple meaning of the text is the spies, but we said, how is he responsible for the spies? He was trying to convince them not to do it. The answer is, he's not really responsible for the spies, it's exactly like Moses says, God became angry at me because of you. Who was responsible for the spies? It was the people, the people did it, the people did it and the people were punished for it. But Moses was included in the decree, the decree was that anybody from this generation won't go and enter the land, and Moses could have been an exception to that, he fought against the spies, but in the end he wasn't an exception to it, he was included. Why?

Because he couldn't really distance himself from the spies. Unwittingly, he had set the foundation for the spies. Without knowing it, it was understandable at the time, it was an understandable mistake, but something he did laid the foundation for the sin of the spies. Somehow the people took the cue from the intermediate judges that when it gets too hard to maintain, and to maintain the burden of that direction connection, that you can opt for an intermediate source, to be just a technical solution to the problem.

That's apparently what the spies were, a technical solution to the problem.

What do you need to do in order to be able to conquer the land, really? What exactly do you need to do? You need to really trust in God. You need to have that direct connection to God where you say, God, it's true, they're like giants and we feel like grasshoppers, but it doesn't make a difference, it's just like Moses says, because You're God and You can do whatever You want, we place ourselves in Your hands. It's like back to Miriam in Mei Merivah, it's back to that whole story of Miriam. If you're going to go and conquer the land and you're just a ragtag bunch of slaves, you can do it, you can conquer nations that are much greater than you, because you have that close relationship with God and it really doesn't matter what your military strength is anymore.

But that was too difficult to maintain. What was too difficult? It was the relationship with God, the close relationship that was necessary to make that happen. The people got the cue that when it becomes too difficult, you can go and you can ask for something intermediary. The spies, in Moses' view, was something intermediary, it was an excuse, it was a way out of a direct connection, it was a way where there could be a military solution to a spiritual problem - and there are no military solutions to spiritual problems, and that was the fundamental mistake of the spies.

When we come back next week what I want to do is - and I think next week will be the final week in this series, and then we'll go onto something new which I'll tell you about in a second. When we come back next week I want to do just like we did this week. This week we looked at the story of the intermediate judges in the original, in Exodus, I want to go back and look at the story of the spies in the original in Numbers, and compare it to the way the spies are portrayed here in Deuteronomy. That will completely, I think, flesh out our picture, to be able to really give us clarity in everything that we've seen thus far. When we do that I think we'll finally be in a position to be able to see how the story of Moses hitting the rock in Mei Merivah which we talked about the first three weeks, and how this story of the intermediate judges and the spies, come together to form a composite picture. We'll talk about that when we come back next week.

I do have something special, I think, planned for our next series. I think I'm going to do something a little bit differently than what I originally anticipated which is Whispers of Slavery in the Book of Genesis, that's what I had originally anticipated to do. We will do something centered around Passover, I'll give you a piece on Passover, but I think in our next series I'm going to focus on the Golden Calf. It's something I've been working on just recently and put together what I think is a fascinating series of things, and I really would enjoy the chance to share it with you. So I've put together something like that and I'll give you more information the next couple of days on that. So stay tuned for that, I'll send it to you in an email, I really think you'll enjoy it.

So look forward to hearing you on the discussion boards, and interacting with you, and I'll see you next week.

Hi everybody, it's Rabbi David Fohrman and we're going to launch right in to Lecture 7 here, the last lecture in our lecture series; Why Couldn't Moshe Enter the Land? Let's get back to some of the questions that we have outstanding here in this look at Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land. Generally speaking we had been looking in our first three sessions at the story in Numbers, the story of Moses hitting the rock as one source for this whole issue of Moses not coming into the land. The past last three weeks we have been looking at this story of the intermediate judges and the spies here in the beginning of Deuteronomy, and looking at it from that perspective. Today, I'd like to see if we can try to come somewhere in terms of integrating these two stories and in order to do that I'd like to finish our look at the story of the intermediate judges and the spies.

We mentioned that the intermediate judges and the spies seem to be connected here in Moses' speech at the beginning of Deuteronomy, and we noticed that one of the strange things about both of these stories is that both of these stories are retold in Deuteronomy differently than they're told originally when they first are related in the Torah. So for example, when the story of the intermediate judges is first told in the Torah it's described as Jethro's idea - the father-in-law of Moses, and yet when it's retold Jethro's left out and Moses speaks about it from his own perspective. Similarly, when Moses retells the story he says that I said at that time; Eicha esah levadi torchachem u'masa'achem ve'rivchem - how can I possibly bear your burdens, using that key language of Eicha which we talked about last week as lamentation, but if you look at the original story that's not there. It seems to be Moshe is editorializing later on 40 years later about how he now sees that story.

I'd like to suggest in general my approach to this is really going to be that one of the ways that we might reconcile this is to suggest that the events are recorded as they happened when the story is first recorded, and Moses editorializes about the events 40 years later. Not necessarily giving you a clean record of exactly what occurred but focusing on the why, focusing on the significance of what occurred.

Summing up in his own mind and to the mind of the Jews listening to him what really the meaning of those events are. Therefore he emphasizes and changes certain details in order to kind of give you his subjective picture of what the meaning of everything that has happened.

So for example, if you're looking at the story of Jethro and the judges, Moses does not mention Jethro, probably - in my mind at least - because from his standpoint 40 years later, the fact that it was Jethro who gave him the advice is insignificant. Jethro wasn't trying to mislead him or anything, but ultimately Moses takes responsibility for it and he was the one who ultimately took this advice and he says, I came before you, and this is what I said. The fact that the idea first came from Jethro in Moses' view, long shot view, 40 years later, is now no longer significant.

Similarly, when Moses says; Eicha esah levadi, that I think also is editorializing 40 years later, using that word Eicha it's as if Moses sees differently the significance of what happened now than he did then. He uses this word Eicha suggesting, perhaps, that he sees differently the beginnings, the seeds of this distance between him and the people which somehow led to the spies. I think it's Moses' view on it 40 years later, and not necessarily Moses view on it when it was actually happening.

What I'd like to do with you now is to take a look at this other major story that we see treated here in Deuteronomy Chapter 1, the story of the spies, and to compare the story as it appears here in Deuteronomy 40 years later, to the original story when it took place in the Book of Numbers. There are a couple of significant discrepancies, and I'd also like to see if we can make sense of those and get perhaps a fuller picture of the spies, especially how it is that Moses sees the significance of the spies 40 years later.

So let's just look here at Moses' account in Deuteronomy - if you have your Bible open you can follow along with me, if you don't, if you're listening in the car or somewhere else, you can just listen.

Otherwise, I have this also on your source sheets, you can look at it there. But just a couple of verses here where there are some pretty clear discrepancies between the way Moses sums it up here in Deuteronomy and the way it appears to have happened when it's first recounted 40 years ago.

So I'm reading now from Deuteronomy Chapter 1, verse - let's say - 25, and here's what we have. So the Jews came and they brought back fruits of the land - the spies - and they brought it back and they said these words; Tovah ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokeinu noten lanu - they said, it's a good land that our God wants to give us - that Hashem, our God wants to give us. V'loh avitem la'alot - Moses says - but you didn't want to go up; Vatamru et pi Hashem Elokeichem - and you rebelled against the word of God; Vateiragnu b'ohaleichem - and you complained in your tents and you said; B'sin'at Hashem otanu hotzi'anu - in God's hatred of us He took us out of Egypt to give us in the hands of the Amorites to completely destroy us.

Now just in those short verses that seems to be a significantly different view of the spies than what we originally heard. Let's just read this again, what is different from the original package as it first appears 40 years ago? First of all, listen to how Moses characterizes what the spies said. Vayomru - what did the spies say? Tovah ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokeinu noten lanu - it is a good land that God wants to give us.

Now, is that the most accurate description of what the spies said? If you go back to Numbers it doesn't sound like the most accurate description. Numbers, specifically says; Vayotzi'u dibat ha'aretz - that they said bad things about the land, they said; Eretz ochelet yoshveha hi - it's a land that consumes its inhabitants and they scared the people about the land. So why is it that Moses - is he whitewashing that? I mean, why is it that he's just focusing 'the land is very good' and nothing else - that's it, that's all he says? So that's one question, Moses seems to at face value mischaracterize what it was that the spies said when they came back.

Okay, discrepancy number 2, what was the Jews' response to what the spies said? Moses said the spies said the land is very good and the Jews' response was; V'loh avitem la'alot - verse 26 - and you didn't want to go up. Now, is that really true, the Jews' response to the spies - their response was they didn't want to go up? I mean at face value if you look back in Numbers it sounds like they wanted to go up, it's just that they were scared. The spies scared them with all these stories of giants and all these things and they said, oh gosh we're going to get killed. I don't think the most accurate at face value rendition of what they said is that they just weren't interested in the land. I mean they were interested in the land, otherwise they would have gone, but they were scared stiff, the spies really scared them. So why doesn't Moses say that? Why doesn't Moses say you got scared? He shouldn't say you didn't want to go up – you got scared, but Moses doesn't say that, Moses says you didn't want to go up. So that's discrepancy number 2.

Number 1 is the spies said it was good and that's it, no other Yachas - no other relationship to anything else the spies said. Number 2 is the people said they just didn't want to go up - again, it doesn't seem to be what happened.

Number 3, look at the next thing that Moses attributes to the people. Vatomru - and you said; B'sin'at Hashem otanu hotzi'anu m'eretz Mitzrayim - in God's hatred of us He took us out of Egypt. The people actually never said that, they didn't really say in God's hatred of us He took us out of Egypt. Is Moses putting words in their mouths? What does he mean by that? They never said God hates us and that's why He took us out of Egypt, they complained but Moses again seems to be editorializing here.

So I think what we have here - these are not discrepancies, these are not mistakes, Moses is well aware of what happened, Moses is not trying to give them a point by point, blow by blow, minutia description of exactly what occurred, he's summing up for them the significance of what happened. He's telling a story and he's telling it by painting to them what the picture is really all about. Yes, the technical details are x, y and z, but in Moses' view this is really what happened. I think in order to see that, I'd like to go back with you to Numbers and to read through that story there very carefully, then come back to Deuteronomy and I think we'll really see how the two stories mesh together with each other. Once we do that I think we'll be in a better position to understand really the significance of the spies story in a whole, and then come back to the larger picture of putting the story of the spies and the intermediate judges together with the story of Mei Merivah - of hitting the rock. To try and see what we can make of the entire picture.

So in the meantime let's go back to Numbers, let's read through - or maybe I'll give you this as a quick challenge - this is going to be the end of our first little segment here, and this is your time to take a quick, little break. But if you're so inclined, if you want to take a second to read through - take this challenge on yourself - read through the original story of the spies back in Numbers, you can find it on your source sheets, and to see how in your mind you think that story meshes with this story. Then you can come and listen to my thoughts on that. So I'll meet you back right after your little break, and we'll pick up in segment 2 right here in a second.

Okay, welcome back, I hope you've gotten a chance to take a look at the original spies story here in Numbers. If you'd like to follow along, I'm going to read through it here. It's in Numbers Chapter 13, verse 27, 28 or so, let's pick it up from there, and here we go. So the spies come back - and this is the original account remember of the spies; Vayesapru lo vayomru - the spies come back and they tell Moses and Aaron and the entire people - it's interesting by the way, that they're not just addressing the leaders but they're addressing the entire Jewish people as a whole. They say; Banu el ha'aretz asher shelachtanu - we have come to the land that you have sent us to; V'gam zavat chalav u'dvash hi v'zeh piryah - and in fact it is flowing with milk and honey and here is its fruits.

Now, what's interesting here is if you notice that remember that Moses in Deuteronomy says the spies come back and said it's a good land, if you look at what they originally say, Moses is actually right, that is what they originally say. What Moses is leaving out is what they say later, because later they're going to start saying not good things about the land. Moses is focusing primarily on what they first say; what they first say is, the land is terrific, it's flowing with milk and honey, and here is its fruits, and they show them the fruit that they come back with.

Now, continue reading and ask yourself have they said anything wrong yet? When is the first moment that things start to go south? I think it's - people often think that it is in this coming verse that I'm about to read, but I'm not convinced that that's actually true. Listen to the next words they say; Efess ki az ha'am hayoshev ba'aretz v'he'arim betzurot gedolot me'od v'gam yelidei ha'anak ra'inu sham - here they say that the people in the land are extremely strong, the cities are very fortified and the children of giants are there - the children of very tall people are there. Amalek yoshev b'eretz ha'negev - the Amalekites, the sworn enemies of the Jews, live in the south; Veha'Chitti veha'Yevusi veha'Emori yoshev ba'har - and these other nations live in the mountainous regions. The Canaanites live near the sea and near the Jordan River. That's all they say.

Now, at that point, a lot of people think that this is where things start to go south because the spies are scaring the people, telling them about how strong the people are, telling them about how fortified the cities were, and that is the sin of the spies. Now I'm not really convinced that's true, and here's why. If you look at Moses' command when he tells the spies what they're supposed to do, look at what Moses tells the spies they're supposed to do. He says, number 1, I want you to look at the people and I want you to look at the land; re'item et ha'aretz mah hi - and I want to take a look at the land and see what it is - Chapter 13, verse 18, when Moses is addressing the people. He goes on and says; U'mah ha'aretz asher hu yoshev bah ha'tovah hi im ra'ah - look at the land, see if it's a good land, or if it's a bad land and see if the land is fertile. U'mah ha'aretz ha'shmeinah hi im razah - or if it's not fertile; Ha'yesh bah etz - if there's trees or if there's not, and bring back fruits. Now the spies did that, they gave their view if the land was very worthy.

So you might say well that's all they were supposed to do, they weren't supposed to scare the people by telling them how fearful the people were that they were going up against. But if you look at Moses' command, again, to the spies, and you read it carefully, you'll find that that's again not true. Chapter 13, again, verse 18; Look at the land, but not just look at the land, look at; Ha'am hayoshev aleha - look at the people that are upon it; He'chazak hu ha'rafeh - are they strong or are they weak? Ha'me'at hu im rav

- are they many or are they few? Continuing; U'mah he'arim asher hu yoshev ba'heinah - and what about the cities that they're in? Ha'be'machanim im b'mivtzarim - are they open or are they fortified? Now Moses explicitly wants - asks them for - this military reconnaissance of what is going on here and is this land easy to take or not. So when the spies come back I don't see how you can blame them when the spies report honestly that the cities are very fortified and the people are very strong.

Then you say, so what exactly went wrong? At this point it doesn't seem that anything has really gone wrong yet.

Now I suppose you could complain and you say, well the spies over emphasized how strong they were, but I think that's kind of nitpicking, and if you look at their language I'm not so certain that they overemphasized it. There's some important transition words here in verse 28. Take a look here if you happen to have a Bible open to you - a Torah open to you, take a look at verse 28 in Chapter 13 in Numbers. After the spies say; V'gam zavat chalav u'dvash hi - that it's a land flowing with milk and honey and here is its fruit, they then say; Efess ki az ha'am hayoshev ba'aretz. So the question is what does Efess mean?

Now, the approach I've given you thus far is really that of the Ramban. The Ramban - Nachmanides, says that at this point nobody did anything wrong. The spies, as I mentioned, really did exactly what was asked of them. They asked of them two things; they want to know what the quality of the land was, that was number 1, and number 2 was they were told to figure out what the military preparedness of the enemy was, how easy would it be for them to conquer. They answer truthfully and there was no problem with that. Now the Ramban sees the first problem is with the word Efess. The word Efess can mean nothing. The Ramban interprets it in that sense, that it was a negative sort of word, that it meant that we have to give up, that we have no chance.

Look, I'm nobody compared to the Ramban, but I do think that in the simple meaning of the text when it says; Efess ki az ha'am, I don't think the simplest meaning is that it's this really negative thing. I think the simplest translation of it is notwithstanding the fact - notwithstanding the fact that the people are strong. In other words, the land is good, idea number 1, notwithstanding the fact that this is very strong people, which puts the emphasis really on the first part of the text. There's x, and you should also know y.

I'll give you a couple of other examples of this. You do have this same phrase Efess Ki which we have here, that appears a couple of other times in the Tanach. The next time it appears - one of the other times it appears here is in the Book of Judges, Chapter 4. The Book of judges Chapter 4 is the story of Deborah, when Barak and Deborah go and they fight against their enemy Sisera. Deborah, of course, is the first female Shofetet - the first female judge of the Jews. And what she does is she is petitioned by Barak to go with him and to fight alongside him. She says; Haloch eilech imoch - I will go with you, she says; Efess ki loh tiheye tifartecha al ha'derech asher atah holech - notwithstanding the fact that your glory will not come from what's happening here. That you're going to go and you're going to fight this war but ultimately the war is not going to be named after you, it's not going to be a credit that you put on your lapel's pin. Because; Ki b'yad isha yimkor Hashem et Sisera - because ultimately God is going to sell Sisera down the river in the hands of a woman - and ultimately that was in the hands of Yael.

I will give you one more example of this. In Shmuel Beit - in the Second Samuel, Chapter 12, I think, you've got the story of David and Batsheva. So after David sins and he's intimate with Batsheva and Nathan the prophet catches him and David realizes what it is that he's done. So David admits and he says; Chatati laHashem - I have sinned before God. In response to that, Natan says the following. Vayomer Natan el David gam Hashem he'evir chatat'cha loh tamut - don't worry, God has forgiven you, you will not die. Efess ki - there are those words - notwithstanding the fact; Ki ni'atz ni'atzta et oyvei Hashem ba'davar hazeh gam ha'ben ha'yilod lecha mot yamut - notwithstanding the fact that you have angered God greatly in what it is that you've done and the child that will be born to you from this union with Batsheva will ultimately die.

So again, Nathan is saying the major punishment which is that you were threatened with death, that God was ready to kill you, that's not going to happen, but you should know that the child is going to be a stillborn. Notwithstanding the fact that you've angered God and the child is going to be a stillborn.

So the simple meaning of Efess Ki, I think it simply is there is this major idea x, followed by - qualified by y. And that's what the spies are saying here. They're saying, look the land is great but you should just realize notwithstanding the fact, the qualification is the people that possess it are very strong. Now at that point, again, nothing - it seems nothing terrible has happened. So let's go a bit further.

So when do things go south? Let's continue reading. What happens next in this story - in this original story of the spies here in Numbers? So the next thing that happens here in verse 30 is that Kalev speaks up. Now Kalev is one of the good guys, he is one of the two spies that ultimately made it into the land of Israel - Kalev and Joshua. Joshua of course becomes the leader of the Jews after Moses. Kalev is also one of the good guys here, and Kalev and Joshua together ultimately stand against the rest of the spies and encourage the people to come into the land. Now here are Kalev's first words at this point. Here's what he says. Vayahass Kalev et ha'am el Moshe - Kalev sought to silence the people to Moses, speaking to Moses, and said; Vayomer aloh na'aleh v'yarashnu otah ki yachol nuchal lah.

Now before I even translate those words I just want to point out two interesting things just in how the narrator phrases what Kalev does. First of all Kalev silences the people, but notice the people haven't said anything. The people have not responded at all to what the spies have said. That's strange thing number

1. Strange thing number 2 is who is Kalev talking to? Vayahass Kalev et ha'am el Moshe - Kalev silenced the people but he didn't speak to the people, instead who did he speak to? He spoke to Moses. Well if he's trying to silence the people why is he speaking to Moses? A strange kind of thing.

So I don't know but this is just a theory that occurs to me, contrast who Kalev is speaking to and who the other spies are speaking to. When the other spies come back - sort of - I think it's kind of ominous, who do they give their report to? So you would think they would give their report to Moses, essentially who sent them, or Moses and Aaron. But if you look to actually who they actually give the report to; Vayavo'u el Moshe v'el Aharon - they came to Moses and Aaron, verse 26 says, but; V'el kol adat Bnei Yisrael - they also came to the entire congregation. So it was a whole public thing, they were reporting back to everybody. Vayashivu otam davar - and they reported Otam - plural, to all of them - the following things; V'et kol ha'eidah - and they also - the verse emphasizes the second time they're speaking to the whole congregation.

Now that changes things; sometimes you can say the same thing, but it depends who you're talking to. I think rightfully they should have been talking to Moses and Aaron, when you make it public, a whole big public thing, it's a different thing. You could be talking to your wife about something and have some ideas, but if the kids are listening in that same conversation takes on a whole different flavor, it means something else because the kids are listening. Over here too it means something else.

Another example of this, if you look at the story of Ephron - Abraham is seeking to buy this plot of land from Ephron, and they have this nice, little negotiation session. But it's very clear, the text emphasizes over and over again, that the conversation was public, everyone was listening to the conversation. All of the Bnei Cheit - all the Hittites, were listening, and once you see that, Ephron's words take on a whole different character, because he's speaking between the lines. When he talks about money and he talks about honor, he's very conscious that everyone is listening to him and a subtext in the whole story is, what does this really mean? What is he really telling Abraham?

Here too, I think the fact that the report of the spies is not to Moses and Aaron, but to the people, was itself the first sort of ominous sign. Because the subtle message it gives them is that it's not just Moses and Aaron who have to decide about what the meaning of the report is, but it's the people who have to decide about what the meaning of the report is. I think Kalev figured that out and one of the ways that Kalev is trying to steer things back in the right direction, that really the decision-making here is in Moses and Aaron's hands, it's not just a big, sort of free-for-all, in terms of what - popularity contest of what the people respond, what the masses think. So what Kalev does is he's trying to silence the people - even though the people haven't said anything. Kalev, I think, senses that they're about to, senses fear on the part of the people, and tries to preempt it in a sort of preemptive strike. So it's a preemptive silencing before they've had a chance to say anything, but instead of speaking to the people, it's very important that he speaks to Moses and to Aaron. So he's aiming to the people but he's speaking to Moses and Aaron.

I think it's in marked contrast to the other spies. Whereas the other spies publicly delivered the report to the people and Moses and Aaron; Kalev is trying to switch things around, he's saying no, we're talking to the wrong people here. The real people, Moses and Aaron, it's you, you are the authority figures, you have to know this, and I speak to you. He's trying to bring things back, I think, to direct conversation with Moses instead of a sort of free-for-all, we're reporting to everyone. No, we're reporting to Moses and Aaron, they're ultimately going to make the decision.

Now what is it that Kalev says in this preemptive strike? Let's listen to his words carefully. Aloh na'aleh - he says - we can surely go up, or we will surely go up; V'yarashnu otah - and take possession of the land; Ki yachol nuchal lah - for we surely are able to do it.

Now just two things about the Hebrew here, notice the double language, there's two verbs here which are emphasized. The first verb is Aloh - which means to go up, and the second verb is Yachol - which means to be able. That's important to remember the two verbs; Aloh - to go up, Yachol - able. Each of these verbs are doubled. In Biblical Hebrew when you want to really emphasize something you double it. So sometimes you have Mot Tamut - which we translate in English sometimes as you shall surely die. It doesn't really mean you shall surely die - Everett Fox sometimes translates it differently, as he shall die, yes he shall die. Here too; Aloh na'aleh - we should go up, yes we shall go up. But it's an emphasis, we shall surely go up; V'yarashnu otah - and take possession of it because we're able to. But not just because we're able to, because we're really able to. Yachol nuchal lah - we are surely able to, we can really do this. So this is what he says.

That is step 2 over here, Kalev's response, his sort of preemptive strike. What's happening? Kalev seems to have a sense, a premonition of where this is going. Even though the spies had been completely objective in what they say, nevertheless he fears that the people just aren't going to be able to handle this information that the people who they are going to be fighting against are very strong. So what does he say? Don't worry, we can do it, everything is going to be fine.

Okay, now all this is very fine, except for one little, itty-bitty problem. Is what Kalev is saying true? Is it true; Aloh na'aleh - let's go up; Ki yachol nuchal lah - because we can surely conquer it? Is it true that they can surely conquer it? Well at face value you say yeah, of course it's true, it's true because God can conquer it for them. But if you listen carefully what Kalev's words are, there's almost like an inadvertent omission there, he doesn't mention God. At face value the fact is his words aren't really true, of course they can't conquer the land, they're not strong enough to conquer the land. Now if you would ask Kalev, what did you mean Kalev? He probably would have said well obviously God will help us, we'll conquer the land. But he doesn't say it, and I think it's a fatal flaw - the spies will pick up on this flaw, that at face value Kalev's words don't make sense; what do you mean, you can't conquer the land. We aren't strong enough to conquer the land.

Let's continue. What happens next is that the other spies then retort to Kalev and they rebut what his says. Listen carefully to their words. Veha'anashim asher alu imo - the people that came up with him; Amru - then said; Loh nuchal la'alot el ha'am - we cannot go up against these people; Ki chazak hu mimenu - because they are very strong. Now at face value this is all very logical, this makes a lot of sense. Kalev says we can do it, they're saying we can't do it. It really sounds like they're just saying you say x, we'll say the opposite of x. You say that we can do it, we say we can't do it. At face value it is the spies that seem to make sense because the spies are saying well look, we already said that the people are very strong.

Now you might object, of course, that the spies are not telling the truth because they're saying that we can't do it, we can't conquer the land, and of course if God is on their side then they can conquer the land. But the truth is the spies seem to be just reacting exactly to what Kalev said. Kalev, for all of his good intentions in trying to - the spur of the moment, get the people involved, he actually didn't mention God, he said, don't worry, we can do it. The spies seem to just be offering a very calm and cool, rational counterpoint to that which is that you say we can do it, we can't do it, look these people are too strong. You didn't mention God, we're not mentioning God. You're asking do we have the power to do it, no, we don't have the power to do it. And that's true.

Now it's true also that the spies are giving a subjective judgment here and they weren't supposed to give a subjective judgment, they were only asked for their objective judgment. But they weren't the first people to give a subjective judgment, ironically enough it was the good guy Kalev, who began with the subjective judgments, who jumped in and, seeking to preempt the building fear of the people that he senses, don't worry we can do it, we can do it. To which they're coming back and also giving a subjective judgment, but apparently a rational one, and saying, well look you say we can do it, these people are too strong for us.

But if you look a little bit more carefully something strange is afoot here. Take a look at the Hebrew. Remember those two key verbs that Kalev said, that he repeated twice? He said; Aloh na'aleh v'yarashnu otah ki yachol nuchal lah. Aloh and Yachol - let's go up because we're able to. Well it just so happens that the other spies when answering Kalev play off of Kalev's words and take those exact two verbs and construe them to say the opposite of what Kalev wanted to say. Kalev said; Aloh na'aleh … ki yachol nuchal lah - first Aloh and then Yachol - let's go up because we can. They then say; Loh nuchal la'alot. Taking the Nuchal - the Yachol verb, and placing it first, and the Aloh verb and placing it second, and saying, we can't go up because they're too strong.

Now at face value it seems the structure of the sentence seems like they're just saying the mirror image, the opposite of what Kalev said. You say x, we say anti-x. You say that we can do it, we say we can't do it. And the verb - the switch of the verbs - seems to say that. But if you look a little bit more carefully, logically they're not saying the same thing, they're not saying the opposite of Kalev, they're adding something, another little extra subjective judgment which doesn't make sense. They appear to be cool, calm and rational but they've added something which really doesn't follow. What do they say? They say; Loh nuchal la'alot - we cannot go up, we are unable to go up to this people; Ki chazak hu mimenu - because they're too strong for us. Now is that rational? Does that make sense? No. It's not true that they can't - it may be they can't win, they might say we can't win, but to say we can't go up, that's not true, they can go up if they want.

So Kalev has made this very small sort of misjudgment which the people have picked up on. He didn't say we can surely win because God is on our side, he just says, look we can surely do it. I mean obviously Kalev probably thinks that God is on their side that's how we can win, but he says, look don't worry we can do it. Then the spies come back and say no, we can't do it, picking up on that little misjudgment that

- without God, they don't mention God; we can't win, the people are too strong. But they also there's a little extra misjudgment which doesn't quite follow, which is they don't just say, we can't win, which would have been the opposite of Kalev saying we can win, let's go up because we can win. They say, we can't go up. So what sounds like they're responding in exact terms to Kalev, in fact they're not, they're adding something else; it's impossible for us to even try, they're saying. It's just no use. They've added an extra element of Yi'ush - of despondency into this picture, under the guise of sounding very rational and just doing a tit-for-tat response to Kalev.

Now let's continue, what happens once they inject this sort of note of despondency? At this point, the very next verse says; Vayotzi'u dibat ha'aretz - and now, having injected one thing which didn't follow rationally, they inject another thing that doesn't follow rationally, they get farther and farther away from a purely rational perspective. Whereas before they had said that the land was very good, now all of a sudden, they're changing their mind; Vayotzi'u dibat ha'aretz - they talked about in bad terms, in Lashon Harah terms, in terms of disparagement, against the land. Asher taru otah - that they had spied. They said; Ha'aretz asher avarnu bah la'tur otah - the land that we've spied out; Eretz ochelet yoshveha hi - it's a land that consumes its inhabitants. Implication is you don't really want to go there. And the people that are there; Anshei middot - are very strong, and they're giants, they're huge, they're; Bnei anak min ha'nefilim. And again, before they had also mentioned that they were big people, but now notice the extra subjectivity; Va'nehi b'eineinu ka'chagavim - and we were in our eyes like grasshoppers; V'kein hayinu b'eineihem - and so we were in their eyes.

Now how did they know that we looked like grasshoppers to them? They don't know, they don't have an in to these people's minds to see what the Jews looked like to them. But the last part of the sentence gives it away; V'kein hayinu b'eineihem - we saw ourselves as grasshoppers. You know if you see yourself as a grasshopper you're going to think everyone else sees you as a grasshopper too. So this perspective that they had before that they kept in, is now coming out. One thing leads to another, it's a sort of cascade. Everything seems to make sense but every, little step is one step more and one step more.

The cascade then continues and what had originally been just a discussion between Kalev and the spies and Moses, now the people come in the picture. What do the people do? The first thing they do; Vatisah kol ha'eidah vayitnu et kolam vayivku - they raise their voice and they cried out; Vayivku ha'am ba'lailah hahu - and they cried that night. Now it's very significant here because these are code words; Vatisah kol ha'eidah vayitnu et kolam vayivku - they lifted up their voice and cried, I think we mentioned before that the language of lifting - I don't know if we mentioned this before but if we haven't we should have mentioned this before. That the language of lifting up your voice and crying always signifies complete and utter despondency. In the Bible it seems to be this codeword for when you see something that you desperately want slipping through your fingers.

For example, when Eisav realizes that he's not going to get the blessing that he thought that he was going to get from his father Isaac, he lifts up his voice and he cries and he says, is it really true that there's only one blessing and there's not another one for me? When Jacob realizes - in the eyes of the Sages - that he's not going to be buried along with Rachel, so he kisses her when he sees her but he sees that this woman of his dreams he's never really going to have her. I think I mentioned this before and I gave you another couple of examples.

But here too, the people see this land which they want, which they're going to conquer, and it's slipping through their fingers, and they just completely give up hope and they say, we just can't do it, and they cry. Then they complain against Moses and Aaron and what do they say? Vayomru aleihem kol ha'eidah lu masnu b'eretz Mitzrayim o bamidbar hazeh lu masnu - if only we had died back in Egypt or in this desert, if only we had died. V'lamah Hashem meivi otanu el ha'aretz hazot - how come God is bringing us to this land; Linpol ba'cherev - so we should die by the sword against our enemies? Nasheinu v'tapeinu yiheyu lavaz - our women and our children will be taken as captives. Haloh tov lanu shuv Mitzrayma - isn't it just better for us to go back to Egypt? Vayomru ish el achiv - and then each person said to their brother; Nitnah rosh v'nashuva Mitzrayma - yeah, let's set up a new head over us; V'nashuva Mitzrayma - and let's go back to Egypt.

Now if you remember this pattern of this cascade of one thing leading to another, the snowball getting out of control, you see the snowball effect continuing with the people. The key word to watch here is Egypt. What happened? When they give up hope what's the first thing they say? Oh man if only we had died back in Egypt or in this desert. Now the role that Egypt plays there is very ancillary, it's just like thrown in, it doesn't really matter where they die; in the desert or in Egypt or whatever, the point is they're saying how come we're going to go into this land to get killed? If only we had just died already. But they happen to throw in this word Egypt.

Continue in the next sentence and Egypt takes on a more prominent role. Hah, you know we mentioned Egypt already; [Vayomru - and they said]; V'lamah Hashem meivi otanu - how come God is bringing us to this land; Linpol ba'cherev - so we should die by the sword? Haloh tov lanu shuv Mitzrayma - wouldn't it be better to just go back to Egypt? It's like once the thought of Egypt is in your mind, even just thrown in, now it begins to occupy a more central - but still sort of just not really seriously. Yeah you know - it's like hyperbole, sarcasm; yeah, you know, it would be better just to even go back to Egypt. But then if you continue, the Egypt theme becomes deadly serious in the next verse. Now, having mentioned this, even in a sarcastic kind of way, even hyperbole, now it takes center stage; Vayomru ish el achiv - and one person then says to another; Nitnah rosh - yeah, Takeh, let's go find ourselves a new leader; V'nashuva Mitzrayma - let's go back to Egypt. It's front and center, Egypt.

So you've gotten all the way from this very cool, calm, rational discussion with the spies where everything - we're just saying the way it was, and Kalev with the best of intentions seems to anticipate the fear of the people and says something that makes a lot of sense, but is just not quite 100 per cent accurate. It leaves an opening for the spies to come and retort, yeah, we can conquer the land, we can go and do it, but it's not quite true, you can't really go and do it, at least not without God's help. Kalev didn't mention God, they don't mention God, and we can't do it, they're too strong for us. But there's this exaggeration after exaggeration, the spies exaggerate what Kalev says, they switch around his words and say we can't even try. You said we can succeed, we're not just saying we can't succeed, we're can't even try. Once we can't even try then already what's the land anyway, then we don't really even want the land. Then already the people come in and there's this cascade and cascade, and before you know it let's go back to Egypt, in a very deadly, serious kind of way.

Now, let's continue reading a little bit more. Vayipol Moshe v'Aharon al pneihem lifnei kol adat Bnei Yisrael - now at this point Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all of the congregation. Now for those of you who have been attuned through our last few discussions here since week 1, that is a warning sign. It reminds you of what happened with Korach, and it reminds you also of what happened in the story of Mei Merivah with the hitting of the rock. When things got out of control and the people were complaining when there was nowhere to go, the last stance is Moses and Aaron fall upon their faces and then God's response seems to be - at least what it was with Korach - is you know this is ridiculous, I'll just wipe everyone out. In fact, that is God's response in a moment where He decrees that this whole generation is going to be wiped out. But Moses and Aaron - so it seems that things have really come to a head.

Now as things come to a head the next thing that happens is Joshua and Kalev, the two good spies, then go and they're; Kar'u bigdeihem- they tear their clothes. Now why is that significant? What does it mean to tear your clothes? We'll come back to that in one second. They tear their clothes and they speak; Vayomru - and they say; El kol adat Bnei Yisrael leimor - they say to everyone saying. Ha'aretz asher avarnu bah la'tur otah - the land that we have spied out; Tovah ha'aretz me'od me'od - it's a great and wonderful land. They continue; Im chafetz banu Hashem - if God only wills it, if God wants us; V'heivi otanu el ha'aretz hazot - He can bring us to - He'll bring us to this land; U'netanah lanu - and He'll give it to us; Eretz asher hi zavat chalav u'dvash - this wonderful land that's flowing with milk and honey, He can do it. The only thing is; Ach baHashem al timrodu - whatever you do, don't rebel against God, that's the only thing that can mess it up. V'atem al tiru et am ha'aretz - you don't have to fear the people; Ki lachmeinu hem - they're like our bread, it's like bread and butter; Sar tzilam mei'aleihem vaHashem itanu al tira'um - if God is with us we have nothing to be afraid of.

Now, does this make sense? It makes a lot of sense. It makes perfect sense. It's perfectly logical. But everything is out of control and now it doesn't work. It's almost as - if they had said this before, if this was the first thing Kalev said it could have worked but by now things have spun out of control.

Vayomru kol ha'eidah lirgom otam ba'avanim. What's the response of the people? The response of the people is to stone them. They're really ready to stone them. And at that point God appears.

Now, remember I had mentioned to you that just before Kalev and Joshua had said this, they ripped their clothes. What's the sense of ripping their clothes? Why did they do that? Ripping your clothes is a sign of mourning, and I think what they were doing ripping their clothes is they too acknowledged that there was no way they could do it. They too were despondent. Having seen the people gone so far it was like they didn't really think they could get them back, it was a last-ditch attempt - and they couldn't, in fact the people wanted to stone them. But they had to stand up for what they knew was right, they said, look, the facts of the matter is guys, we can do this, it's just God on their side. It was the first time that God has been mentioned, it was in the back of their minds, but the whole thing just cascaded out of control and now the genie is out of the bottle and there's no way to get it back.

Now having seen all of this, having looked at the story carefully, let's now go back to Deuteronomy, 40 years later, Moses looks back on this episode and summarizes it. I think his summary will now make a lot more sense. Moses hits the main points and even though none of what he says is really explicit in the text here, everything that we've seen I think, underscores what Moses is really saying here in Deuteronomy. Let's turn back to Deuteronomy Chapter 1 and look again at what Moses says, recapturing the spirit, essentially, of what happened 40 years ago.

Here's a good spot, I think, to end this segment, I'll come back in a second, if you want you can flip forward in Deuteronomy, look at that speech, come up with your own thoughts and then listen to what I have to say, I'll catch you on the other side of this segment.

Okay, back in Deuteronomy Chapter 1, verse 25, here we go. Vayikchu b'yadam mi'pri ha'aretz - and they took - the spies did - they took from the fruit of the land and they brought it to us. Vayashivu otanu davar - and they brought us back word; Vayomru - and this is what they said; Tovah ha'aretz asher Hashem Elokeinu noten lanu - it's a good land that God our God is giving us. Now we asked before, well what about the rest of the things the spies said - the spies later on said bad things? Yes, of course they did, but Moses from his perspective that's not important, what's important is, is that the people came back and they basically said the land is good, that's the first thing that happened, they said the land is good. And it was at that point that things already started spiraling out of control.

That was the point when they had just said that the land is good - and yes, of course they warned that there are people that are strong, but that's fine, that was completely within their purview, there was nothing wrong with that. There was no reason why that logically should have caused any problems, of course the people are strong, everyone knows the people are strong, obviously that's the whole point, G- d is going to conquer the land for you.

The spies came back, they said the land was good and at that point you should have been ready to conquer the land. What happened then? According to Moses, keeping on reading, Moses says; V'loh avitem la'alot - you didn't want to go up. Now what does that mean you didn't want to go up? I mean, did they really not want to go up? They wanted to go up to the land. From Moses' perspective they didn't want to go up. What is Moses saying here? I think he's saying something very deep. I think Moses is isolating a general sort of background issue which he sees as responsible for the whole catastrophe.

That whole catastrophe that happened in Numbers, that snowballing effect, where does that snowballing effect come from? It doesn't come out of nowhere. It doesn't just sort of happen that one coincidence leads to another coincidence and pretty soon everybody wants to go back to Egypt. It comes from somewhere. It comes from; V'loh avitem la'alot - evidently, you didn't want to go up.

Here you have - you had a land that was being given to you, that was a beautiful, good land, that God was going to conquer the land. The only way it's comprehensible that what happened in Numbers could have possibly happened is if at some level you didn't want to go up. What does it mean you didn't want to go up? It means that how are you going to go up? You were going to go up with God conquering the land for you miraculously, God's Ark coming before you and just conquering the land. You know, if that's the case, when you think back on it, you really didn't even need spies, the whole idea of spies was itself the beginning of a travesty. Moses almost said, I didn't see it at the time, I was sort of snookered into it, it seemed like it was a good idea at the time, but in retrospect, the spies itself was just a travesty, it was just a cover up, it was a cover up for wanting distance. You guys wanted distance. You didn't want to conquer the land in that kind of way, in a way in which God would go and conquer the land [for you 43:02].

As Moses goes on to say just a couple of verses later; God who is walking before you, He's the one who is your spies - this is in verse 33. Haholech lifneichem - God walks before you; La'tur lachem makom - to spy out places for you; La'chanoteichem ba'aish lailah - to allow you to encamp with a pillar of fire at night and a cloud by day. God provides everything that spies could have possibly provided for you. But; V'loh avitem la'alot - you didn't want that, that was too difficult.

What was too difficult? Again, it gets back to those issues we talked about in our first three weeks in Mei Merivah, what does it mean to live in a miraculous world? What it means to live in a miraculous world is to live in this intense close relationship with God, it's the only way that miracles work, putting yourself in God's hands in complete faith, it's a very difficult thing to do. [They say 43:50] ironically it is easier to conquer the land militarily than it is to conquer the land in this very close, intimate relationship with G- d, where God fights for you, that is difficult and that's the meaning of them coming to Moses; Vatikrevun eilai kulchem.

Remember those words coming from the intermediate judges; And you all came close to me? Well those words which start the beginning of the spies, you all came close to me, had appeared with the intermediate judges, and when did it appear there? When Moses instructed the judges and said, you know; V'ha'davar asher yiksheh mikem - when everything gets too tough for you, so; Takrivun eilai - bring it to me and I will hear it. Those are code words for things getting too tough. The beginning of the spies narrative that something got too tough. What got too tough? The idea of conquering the land straight. Conquering the land with this close, intimate relationship with God, with nothing separating us from God, that was too tough.

What did they see from Moses? They had seen in the story of the intermediate judges that when closeness becomes too difficult, when it's too hard to carry you, when closeness is too difficult, then there is a possibility to make things easier. You can bring in an intermediary; Moses you brought in intermediaries when things were too difficult for you, allow us to bring in intermediaries. That's what the spies were, they were intermediaries that would come between them and the people and that's what Moses sees the spies really were. Now he sees it for what it really was.

You didn't want to go up that way, that's what it was about, it was all just an excuse, you were looking for someone to put between you and God. It wasn't a coincidence that everything cascaded out of control. They said it was a good land, of course, God is going to conquer the land for you, no, but one thing led to another until before you know it you're saying, how can we possibly get the land? Are you blind? What do you mean, are you blind? God is going to conquer! What do you mean - what - we're going to die? You really think you're going to die here? No, they're intentionally blinding themselves to the truth that God is going to conquer the land for us, they just simply don't want to see it.

And that, by the way, I think explains why it is that they're going to stone Kalev at the end. Because what does Kalev say at the end, with Joshua? Kalev comes out and says, you know we forgot to mention God before, but obviously it was on our minds, let's just clarify guys, if God wants to He's going to conquer the land for us. Kalev puts it out right there, and that's the moment when they want to stone him. Why? Because he's touched upon the sum of all their fears. That's the thing that they're avoiding, that they just absolutely want to avoid.

Do you even notice - I occasionally come across this with my kids, if there's something the kid is embarrassed about and he just doesn't want to admit to himself it was there in his past, and you sort of innocuously bring it up, and the kid has been avoiding it. It just - it provokes - it's like touching an open wound. The kid is just trying to avoid this and does not recognize it in his own head, and then you bring it there innocently enough. That's what Kalev does. Kalev puts them in touch with the reality, the obvious reality, but it's a reality that they're strenuously trying to avoid; God is going to conquer the land for us. No! We're going to stone you, we can't do that, we can't put ourselves in God's hands, let's just believe we're not going to get it, we're going to die, that's what we need to believe.

This is the situation that Moses sees himself confronted with. V'loh avitem la'alot - the bottom line is guys, the land was good and you didn't want to go up. You didn't want to go up that way, you had a different plan.

What happens next? Again, eerily similar back to the story of Mei Merivah - the story of hitting the rock. There too there was a question of faith and what did you have instead of faith, you have the very opposite of faith, rebellion. That's exactly what happens here. V'loh avitem la'alot - you weren't willing to place yourself in God's hands and have that closeness with God. What happened instead? It wasn't just that you didn't have that closeness but yeah, we can have a relationship with God, no, the opposite then takes place. Vatamru et pi Hashem - not only did you not have that close relationship, you rebelled against God, you just completely went the other way. Vateiragnu b'ohaleichem - and you complained in your tents; Vatomru - and you said - now listen to these words, these words sound crazy at face value, but listen to what they said, this is what the people said. B'sin'at Hashem otanu - in God's hatred of us; Hotzi'anu m'eretz Mitzrayim - He took us out of Egypt; Latet otanu b'yad ha'Emori l'hashmideinu - to give us in the hands of the Amorites, to kill us.

Now what the people are saying is absolutely ludicrous. In God's hatred of us, you think - you really think that God hated you and that's why He took you out of Egypt? Is it possible to think that? And that's exactly what Moses tries to tell them. Moses tries to show them how completely irrational this is, tries to show them the rational basis for why they should put their faith in God.

And by the way, faith can, believe it or not, have a rational basis. We don't think of faith and rationality in the same terms, but the truth is I think in Judaism faith is to some extent based upon rationality. What does faith mean? Faith isn't just a matter of saying, oh I believe in God, I believe that there's God. No, faith is not about believing in God. From a Jewish perspective you don't believe in God, you know there's a God. The people in the desert - these people in the desert they're struggling with faith, were they not sure whether there was God? I mean they saw God, they saw God part the Red Sea, they knew there was a God, it wasn't a matter of believing that there was a God, they know there was. So if they knew there was a God what was faith about? Because just because you know someone is there doesn't mean you trust them, doesn't mean you're willing to put yourself in their hands. That's the struggle.

And what Moses says is, look there are rational grounds for putting yourself in God's hands. Faith is built upon rationality, trust is built on rationality, you learn to trust someone, how? Through experience. And Moses points out, you have enough experience with God to learn to trust Him. Listen to what Moses says.

Va'omar aleichem - and I said; Loh ta'artzun v'loh tire'un meihem - don't be afraid of these Amorites.

Hashem Elokeichem - the L-rd your God; Haholech lifneichem - who is now - listen to the present tense here - He is walking before you. Not years ago, now, He's walking before you. Hu yilachem lachem - the God who is right now taking you through the desert, He's going to fight for you. K'chol asher asah itchem b'Mitzrayim l'eineichem - everything that you saw in Egypt, before your eyes, not stories from a long time ago, no, you guys saw, God took you out of Egypt before your very eyes. You guys are witnesses to this. U'bamidbar asher ra'ita - and in this desert that you have seen. Again, seen, seen - over and over again. Asher nesa'acha Hashem Elokecha - that God has carried you; Ka'asher yisah ish et beno - God has been carrying you like a man carries his son. B'chol haderech asher halachtem ad bo'achem ad ha'makom hazeh - this whole way He has been carrying you. So He's going to continue to carry you. But; U'ba'davar hazeh einechem ma'aminim baHashem Elokeichem - in this thing you don't trust God, you don't have faith in God.

Finally, which God don't you have faith in? Haholech lifneichem - the God that's walking now even before you. La'tur lachem makom la'chanoteichem - there's that key word going back to the spies - who is spying out - He is your spy, He is spying out the places for you. Ba'aish lailah - with a pillar of fire at night; Larotchem ba'derech asher teilchu bah - to show you the way in which you're going to go; Ube'annan yomam - and with a cloud during the day.

Now we pointed out before that Moses here is paraphrasing what the people said, the people never actually said these words; It was in God's hatred of us that He took us out of Egypt. But in essence Moses is paraphrasing what he sees as the core perspective of the people that brings them to see all of this. It is the people seeing God's taking them out of Egypt - as irrational at it sounds - as a manifestation of hatred. What does that mean? Where does that come from?

So I think what Moses is really doing here is he's pointing out the disastrous consequences of lack of faith. You know if you define faith as trust, if faith is about learning to make yourself vulnerable and really put yourself in somebody else's hands, if you think about that, the decision of whether to have faith or not is really a momentous one in a relationship. First of all, it's one of the greatest gifts that you can give another person in a relationship. If I'm never really willing to have faith it means I'm never really willing to let go. It's almost like if I can never have faith I'm stuck in being just me, I'm not even reaching out to you. One of the ways I can reach out to you is by saying you know what, I don't always have to be in the driver's seat, I can let you take control and I can come along with you and trust that you know where you're going - that you know where it is that you're taking us. That's a great gift.

Now when faith is warranted, when there's enough experience that I can say that you are a trustworthy person and then there's that momentous decision will I trust or not, that decision is not just like, what are the consequences of it? That if I don't trust, okay fine, so I don't trust. I can either give this gift or I can decide to withhold the gift. No. The consequences of this are much more momentous than that. If I don't trust it's not just that the relationship hasn't gained this great, wonderful asset called trust; the relationship can only go down, could only suffer a devastating blow as a result. Because now I have to answer a question. I have to answer a question not just to my partner, I have to answer a question to myself. The question I have to answer is why did I not place my trust in her? Why did I not place my trust in him? Why did I not place my trust in God?

So there are two answers to that question. The very courageous answer, if I have enough courage to answer that, is well I was a coward, I should have done it, I just didn't have enough strength to do it. If we can do that then we can do that. But more often than not if we don't have the strength to trust we also don't have the strength to acknowledge to ourselves the true reason of why we didn't trust. And if we aren't willing to acknowledge that we were coward-like, the only other possible explanation of why it is that we didn't trust is that the person or the being that we are trying to trust just wasn't trustworthy enough.

Now how is it possible to believe that? How is it possible to convince myself of that? If the Being truly is trustworthy, if He demonstrated that He can be trusted, if He demonstrated His love, if He demonstrated His caring, if He demonstrated His ability to take care of me, if He did all of that, if He carried me through the desert, if He showed me where to encamp, if He brought me out, if He carried me on his shoulders like a father carried his child, how can I possibly not trust Him? How can I possibly say that that Being is not trustworthy? But you can, that's the nature of a human being, they can do that.

If a human being wants to he can deny all that evidence, he can decide that he's not facing all that evidence and come to the only other conclusion - the only other logical conclusion that he can come to. What does he have to do? He has to take all of that evidence that's lying before him, which is evidence of love, and somehow transmute it into the very opposite, as evidence of hatred, as evidence of something that I just can't - how can I possibly trust? Just somehow, in some crazy, shop-of-horrors kind of mirrors, that don't make sense, you say, all of this stuff that looks like - it just looks like He loves me, really He hates me. He took me out of Egypt? It was all a big conspiracy so He could kill me in the desert. And it sounds ludicrous to anyone you talk to, but it's the only way that you can rationalize your lack of trust.

So in the end the momentous decision not to trust ultimately makes or breaks the relationship. If you decide not to trust, the only other conclusion you can come to is that this person hates me. And it is literally corrosive and destructive to the relationship. The relationship does not stay neutral; it either goes up or it comes close to destruction.

So all in all I think when Moshe looks back 40 years later on this episode of the spies I think he feels that he sees things as they really are. He says that what at the time - Vayitav b'einai ha'davar - it seemed like it was just a good idea, maybe I was just reciprocating? Maybe you said it was a good idea when I asked for distance and now I felt compelled to say it was a good idea when you were asking for distance. But that's really what it was, it was a request for distance. Moses introduces the words 40 years later, Eicha - the lament over distance, when he looks back at the story of the intermediate judges and he sees the spies as; V'loh avitem la'alot - you just didn't want to go up. It's the only way to explain the terrible cascade, that you weren't willing to go up and conquer the land with that kind of closeness that God was offering to you, that God was seeking to conquer the land for you with.

The other thing that I would argue that Moses sees after 40 years is that he sees in his own inability to come into the land, he sees a manifestation of these two stories. The story of the spies which he got included in, that ultimately the reason why he couldn't go into the land from the perspective of Devarim - of Deuteronomy, is because he was included in the decree on the spies. Why? How could he be included in that decree? Because, I think, Moses sees the connections between the story of the spies and the story of the intermediate judges and sees himself - whether rightly or wrongly, we don't know - but sees himself as having introduced the first seeds of distance with the story of the intermediate judges that made possible the story of the spies.

Moses says there was a time when I told you how could I possibly carry you? And then there was a time later when you all said, how could we possibly be carried? How could we be carried by God? When I had pleaded with you, look God is carrying you like a man carries his child on his shoulders, but; V'loh avitem la'alot - but you didn't want to go up, you didn't want to listen. And; Loh he'amantem - you didn't have faith, you didn't have faith in God carrying you on His shoulders.

Moses, I think, sees himself as included in the sin of the spies even though he argued against it, every fiber of his being was screaming at the Jews against it, but somehow he sees or he implicates himself. Sees that perhaps the seeds of what allowed the spies to become possible started with the story of the intermediate judges, started with his acceptance of this advice that perhaps it's a good idea to bring in this bureaucracy of judges between Moses and the people, it will help Moses bear the burden and being able to carry what he feels he can't carry otherwise.

Ultimately, how do we reconcile the two stories - the two accounts of why Moses can't come into the land; the account in the Book of Numbers which talks about Moses hitting the rock, and then the account of Deuteronomy which seems to have nothing to do with Moses hitting the rock? So I don't know for sure, but I'll give you a theory. One part of this theory I think is that one of these stories is talking about why Moses can't go into the land as a leader, and the other story is talking about why Moses can't go into the land as a citizen.

I think this is something I may have mentioned earlier on in the series, and I don't recall exactly. But if you look carefully at the verses in the story of Moses hitting the rock you'll find that when God says that Moses can't go into the land, it says; Lachein loh tavi'u et ha'kahal hazeh - you may not bring these people into the land. Now, when it says you can't bring these people into the land, that doesn't mean Moses can't go into the land, it just means he can't go into the land as a leader. I think what's happening in the story of Deuteronomy, is the story of Deuteronomy has nothing to do with Moses as a leader, it has to do with Moses as a person. Gam bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem leimor gam atah loh tavoh sham - God got angry at me and said you too can't come in here. Not, you can't bring the people in here, not, you can't lead the people in here, but you can't go in here, even as a private citizen. Why? Because you are included in the sin of the spies.

It's almost like when there's a Gezeira - a decree against the entire community that they can't go into the land, you really, really have to be separate. And Moses' separateness from that community was compromised because even though he protested vehemently about what was happening with that community, still something in what he did that allowed that mistake to tumble, to snowball forth and to develop into what it developed.

So now what's interesting about this is that which event happens first? Well the Book of Numbers comes before the Book of Deuteronomy, but interestingly, the story that appears in the Book of Numbers, the story of Moses hitting the rock, actually takes place after the events that are recorded in Deuteronomy.

Remember the story of the intermediate judges happens first, in the first year, and the story of Moses hitting the rock happens in the fortieth year. So if you place it in historical context, what that means, I think, is that Moses 40 years later looks and says, the reason that I can't go into the land as a citizen, the reason why I lost that right to go into the land as a citizen, is because of that story of the intermediate judges and its connection with the story of the spies. Because I got included in that and that allowed me to be - that made me included in this community of these people who would die out in the 40 years in the desert.

But then there was another chance that I had to be able to go into the land, which is not to go in as a citizen but to go in as leader. If I was needed to lead the people, if I was the one who had to take them into the land, that even though I lost the right to go in as a citizen, still I would go in as their leader. But Moses lost the right to go in as a leader too because of hitting the rock. What's interesting about both of these events - and this I don't have completely worked out and I'll leave it to you to think about and see what you come up with - but it seems to me very intriguing that both of these stories, the story of Moses hitting the rock and the story of the spies and the intermediate judges, they all revolve around a common denominator. They all revolve around this notion of faith and what it really means to have faith.

Before the story of the spies God was going to conquer the land without any spies, just direct, forget the military strategy. God is going to conquer the land, the Ark will do its job and God will do His job and all the people need to do is just kind of follow. That's one way of doing it, but that requires an incredible closeness, that requires the kind of faith, that very close intimacy between man and God in order to be able to pull off. And that's very difficult to pull off. And that's one story of the people falling away from that and Moses' involvement - to whatever extent, small extent - in that falling away.

But then there's that other story, and interestingly, the story of Moses hitting the rock is the mirror image. In that story what God is trying to show is a way that the people can live going into the land where a paradigm for living - where that kind of closeness is no longer as necessary for survival. Where that intimate closeness between man and God is not quite there in the land because man can get his bread without Manah, and he can survive with water without daily miracles. It's a whole new way of living.

What Moses was really being asked to do in order to be the leader who would carry them into the land is that if they really are going to be leaving behind that life of intimacy - that life of intimacy which they rejected in the spies - for a new kind of life, entering the land, can you be the one to teach them what they need to know? Can you be the one to be able to give them that Kal v'Chomer? To be able to show them that one last lesson that Miriam's well was supposed to teach them, which is that in a world without so many miracles there's a new spiritual challenge, and it's not anymore so much that challenge of faith, it's the challenge of action; will I be able to act in consonance with God? Where is it going to come from? I can no longer rely on miracles. Where is my spiritual impetus? It's a whole new world and the spiritual challenges of that world is different.

The question at the end of his life, at the end of the fortieth year, is whether Moses can teach them that lesson. The question in the beginning, in the first year, was whether or not the people could learn to be able to have the faith that was necessary for God to be able to conquer that land with that incredible intimacy. The question at the end of Moses' life, at the end of the 40 years, is the question about whether they can learn what it means to live in a whole new paradigm, to be able to rise to the spiritual challenges in a world in which that incredibly intimate faith is no longer a standard feature of life. Somehow these two stories of Moses entering the land, both revolve around this issue of faith. But perhaps two different sides of that issue.

I'll leave you - enough said - I'll leave you to think about that.

It's really been fascinating for me to be able to do this with you. I know that I don't get to see you guys and we don't get to chat in person but through - by reading what's been going on in the discussion boards, and by own participation here and there with that, I've really felt I've had a chance to be able to interact with you. I hope by these talks you feel that you've had a chance to be able to interact with me as well, and you're also welcome to email me if you like. I'm really always interested in your feedback and your comments and your ideas. It's really been fun.

What we're going to do is next week - I'm going to give you a special treat actually from our archives, for one week. I'm going to give you a talk which - access to a talk which I gave on Dayenu in preparation for the Seder - for Passover. It's a famous song, Dayenu, one of the hallmarks of the Seder, where we talk about how it would have been enough, it would have been enough, it would have been enough. All these different things that - all these miracles that God did for us as He took us out of Egypt, every one would have been enough. But if you look at any one of these miracles, none of them look like they would have been enough. If God parted the Red Sea for us but didn't bring us through onto the other side, we say it would have been enough, what do you mean it would have been enough? We would have gotten slaughtered by the Egyptians on the other side. So I'm going to talk about Dayenu and would it really have been enough?

That's just going to be a one-session thing, just to sort of clear your minds before we get into our next series, which will be the week after that. The next series; Shattered Tablets and a Calf of Gold. We're going to be looking at the story of the Golden Calf - again, a fascinating story. I'm really looking forward to it, I hope you are too, so stay tuned and see you then. Bye-bye.

PART II

and so can mankind

Hi everybody! This is Rabbi David Fohrman and I want to greet you here from Israel where it's a beautiful evening here in Nof Ayalon, about equal distance between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Through the wonders of modern technology, I will speak to you from here and really all parts of the world. I want to welcome you all who really are from all parts of the world. I hope you got to know each other a bit and meet through these series of classes. This first of our weekly online classes, the first series here is going to be called, 'Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land?' It will take us about six or seven weeks , although in truth, these classes are recorded live, so I can't promise it will take us precisely six or seven weeks, , if the conversations get interesting on the discussion board, then maybe it will take eight; we'll see how it goes.But I want to take a moment here to introduce you to the format of the classes and to how they will be working. The backbone of each class, of each weekly class is going to be a weekly lecture which I will deliver in usually forty-five to fifty minutes and you will be able to hear that through your computers. Those will be posted about 6 p.m. or so Eastern Standard Time every Sunday. And you have a number of different ways you can listen to that, you can listen to that straight on your computer, you can stream it, you can also download it, which means that you can bring it on to your computer's hard drive and listen to it whenever you like, or you can burn a CD with it and put it on your iPod or other MP3 device; so there are a lot of ways you can access it. And once the lecture are posted, you will have access to it whenever you like later on. Although technically you can listen to the lectures months or years later, I do encourage you to try to keep up with the weekly lecture and that way you will be able to participate with everybody else on the discussion board, you will kind of be current with where everybody else is holding.

In addition to the lectures, there are a couple supporting elements of the class, those would be Power Point, slide shows, lecture outlines and lecture notes. Generally speaking in the PowerPoint and the slide shows, what I do is take a particular area of the lecture and try to elaborate a little bit more graphically.

Sometimes those would be more complex areas that I think would help if you sort of saw it laid out, sometimes it's just an area that I think can bear with some graphical illustration , but those are the PowerPoints; you are free to use them, you are free to ignore them if you like. There is also source notes that I hope will contain most of the major sources that I will be quoting. I hope to post a Hebrew version as well. So for you Hebrew speakers out there, you can just download Hebrew, for the English speakers, you can download the English. Lecture outlines are going to be pretty brief, they are not going to be able to replace the lecture themselves; you won't be able to figure out what's going on if you haven't heard the talk but you will be able to follow along and I think it will give you a quick thirty second review later on in the week in case you want to look it over. So those are really the supporting elements of the class.

In addition to the lectures and those supporting elements, there is also a discussion board which I really encourage you to get on and interact with and basically those are a forum where we can all talk to each other. You can do it anytime of the day or night you like, 2 a.m. in the morning when you're in your pajamas and you think you have something to say, you can log on to the discussion board, see what everyone else is saying and I encourage you to respond to each other, gently of course, and with cordiality even if people disagree with you. But I do want to encourage you to make use of the discussion boards and sort of talk to each other and with me, I will be checking in on those discussion boards as well once or twice per week, I will be posting my responses to the general direction of the discussion, I don't think I can respond to every individual person, but I respond to where I think things are going on the discussion board. Sometimes I will respond in writing, sometimes I will respond by posting voice message, which are three to five minutes in length that you should be able to listen to by clicking on them. So that's basically the outline of the course. But I do hope to keep it kind of interactive. The lectures in some way will be influenced by the discussions that goes on in the discussion board and in that way I think we can keep the flow of things dynamic. It's really a way that we can continue to interact with each other and have a group discussion about this almost. Again, really through the wonders of internet technology and I am really pleased to be able to make use of it, this kind of technology, for such an exciting project.

So without any further ado, why don't we jump in and begin talking about this topic, 'Why Couldn't Moses enter the land?' This is a topic that I've actually been working on for a while. For those who follow my work, a while back I released a set of tapes called 'Miriam and the Mysterious Waters of Mei Merivah' where I took a stab at this issue. And over the years, I have come to see where the issue is much larger than that and I guess that's one of the hazards of doing this kind of work which is that it is always dangerous to put something on tape because the issues grow and grow and do get larger and I guess there is no real definitive point where you get to where you have it all resolved.

So what we are going to do in this series is to some extent in a couple of these lectures, I am going to revisit points which I made in that series, 'Miriam and the mysterious Waters of Mei Merivah but I am also going to go beyond that to look at number of other really whole panoply of stories throughout the Bible and to try to take a very broad view of this issue of 'Why couldn't Moses enter the land' and we're going to be looking at stories in Numbers, we're going to be looking at stories in Deuteronomy, we're going to be looking at stories of the spies, story of Jethro in Judges, looking at the story of Moses hitting the rock, really a whole number of stories, Korach's rebellion, which I think are all tied into this issue either one way or another, and we'll try to see if we can really get some comprehensive picture of this by putting all the different puzzle pieces together over the course of these lecture.

So let's begin our look at this question, if I can, by just pulling back the zoom lens and just asking the question from a basic emotional level. Everybody has got their views, I think, of what the emotionally poignant parts in the Torah are, and for me, I think one of them has always been the very end of the Torah where God tells Moses to go up to Mount Har Nevo and he's going to die there, and he looks out on the land, east, west, north, south, and he sees the whole thing but he is never going to go in. And it seems like such a terrible, tragic thing. When you think of Moses, you think of him as arguable God's favorite person in the entire world and you think, "What did he do to deserve this, that at the end of his life, the only thing that he really wanted in life was taken away from him. How do we understand that?" You can imagine, "what did he do?"

So if you read the story of Numbers, which is the first story which we are going to look at, and I will give you the address in just a second, but if you read the story in Numbers of Moses hitting the rock, God tells him that the people want water and you're supposed to speak to the rock and instead Moses hits the rock and it seems to be that he's sinned. And after that God says, "Because you failed to sanctify my name, you can't go into the land." You can imagine at that moment that there was some kind of heavenly tribunal and you could've been one of the Angels sitting on that tribunal and the question was put, "Here, Moses has done this great crime, he's hit a rock rather than speak to it; what shall we do to him?" So you can imagine, "well, before we figure out what we're going to do with him, we're going to take a close look at Moses life; we'll make a quick credit/debit analysis. What are the credits? What are the good things that Moses has done in life?" Well he's taken the Jewish people out of Egypt, he's done the Ten Plague, he's taught them the entire Torah, he's lead them faithfully through the desert for forty years, he's put up with all of their meshugasim, all their travails, and he's sacrificed his life for them with the Golden Calf, God has wanted to wipe them out and Moses heroic intercedes and says, "If you wipe them out God, you can forget about starting over with me", mecheni na misifrecha asher katavta – "you can either forgive them or you can erase me from the book that you've written", you know, Moses takes this heroic stand with the people, and the question is, here is the good thing that Moses has done in his life, they are really not trivial. And now you say, "What are the bad things he has done in his life?" "Well, he hit a rock." Okay, good things - taught the Jews the entire Torah, took them through the slavery in Egypt and interceding at the Golden Calf, lead them through the desert for forty years, and the bad thing is that he hit a rock, what are you going to do?

So imagine there is one angel in the back of the room who says, "Well, let's really hit him where it hurts. What's the one thing that he really wants in life?" "He really wants to go into the land." "Alright, take that away from him." It seems preposterous! If this is how God deals almost with his favorite person, it just seems so harsh. How do we understand that? Is it just that the more a favorite person you get to be with God, the more strict God is with you? It just doesn't seem like much of an incentive I guess to be so good; I don't know it's just that it's very hard to understand; how do we understand that? So that's the emotional question I would ask. I can't say it's a textual question, it's a problem; it's an emotional problem, how do we deal with this?

The story I told you once, long ago, when I taught a story in a bookstore, there was a woman who called right before the talk and the employees from the store ushered me to the back of the room and said you have a phone call and I took the phone call and this woman said, "I saw this talk advertised, 'Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land', and I knew that I had to come because I used to be an observant Jew living in Brooklyn and I left religion after being a kid because I never got answers to my questions, and one of my questions was, "How could Moses not enter the land?" And after all these years I finally saw a talk that dealt with this and I knew I had to come, but I broke my ankle and I can't come. Do you have a tape recorder?" I didn't have a tape recorder. So I can say to the woman wherever she is, if she is listening or hears about this, you are welcomed to join in and we can talk about it. But it is a very painful question. So we are going to deal with it. Again, as I mentioned to you before, I think there is a number of stories to touch on this. The two most obvious stories to touch on this are the stories of Moses hitting the rock in Numbers and a little bit less obviously, the story at the beginning of Deuteronomy. And I want to outline to you very basically what those two stories are about and some of the problems we face in reconciling those two stories.

So very briefly, story number one; the story of Moses and the rock in Numbers. If you want to follow along, this is in Numbers 20 vs 1-14. You have it on your source sheets, you can go into the source sheet sections of this class and download it. The source sheet is either in Hebrew or English and you can follow along. It's a very short story, and basically what happened is that the people in the desert, it's the 40th year of the Jews in the desert and they are on the verge of entering the land of Israel and they are in a water crisis; they are in the desert and they need water. So they come and they complained to Moses, "We need water." And God tells him that there is this rock and you are supposed to speak to this rock and the rock will give its water. And inexplicable for some reason, Moses doesn't do it; he takes the staff and he hits the rock. And God says because of that you can't enter the land. That in a nutshell is story number one. It's a lot more detailed than that, in a few minutes, we'll take a look at the story more in depth, but that's the story in a nutshell. Now let's cut to Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy is one long speech really, where Moses gives his sort of good bye speech to the Jews and he gives them a sort of long overview of what they need to know to enter the land, and the beginning of that speech in chapter one, is a very quick overview of the history of the Jews, and inside that speech in Deuteronomy chapter one, Moses refers to this issue of him not being allowed to go into the land; he gives his take on why it is he can't go into the land. If you read his take, it's kind of striking and very strange. Here are the relevant verses, Deuteronomy chapter 1 vs 37, and you can follow along here in your source sheets also, this is selection number two on your source sheets. Here is what Moses says.

Gam bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem lemor gam atah lo tavo sham. If you just read the verse straight, Moses says, "God also got angry with me on your account", he says to the Jews, gam atah – "you too shouldn't go into the land." Now just listen to these words, "And God also got angry at me because of you, on your account, saying you can't go into the land too."

Imagine you just finished reading the book of Numbers and you read the story of Moses and the rock , you've been bothered by that story, but whatever it is it is, Moses hit the rock instead of speaking to it, then all of a sudden he can't go into the land. Then all of a sudden you fast forward to Deuteronomy and you are reading this verse and Moses says, "And God got angry at me because of you and says, 'you can't go into the land'." Now what's the problem with that verse? Something just doesn't seem to sit right about that verse and that is, what does Moses mean that "God got angry at him because of the people"?

What does that mean? It sounds vaguely like sour grapes. If Moses is saying that he hit the rock and that in hitting the rock God got angry at him because of the people, you say, look, Moses had a choice as to whether to hit the rock or not; the people didn't force him to hit the rock. It's true that the people got him angry. That's really how Rashi understands it. If you look at Rashi in Deuteronomy, Rashi says, "Moses means that the people got him angry, and because the people got him angry and upset, and he hit the rock, so it's really their fault." But the difficulty is, it doesn't seem so characteristic of Moses to talk like this, it just sounds like sour grapes; it's not the people's fault, it's true the people shouldn't have been complaining, but it really was Moses' choice to hit the rock or not. It sounds very un-Moses like as it were, to shift responsibility away from himself in that way and say, "And God got angry at me because of you." So you might say well, maybe he just said it quickly or maybe he doesn't mean it or whatever, but the fact is he repeats it.

If you go further and go to selection number two on your source sheets, the one I just read for you from the beginning of Deuteronomy, if you go in section number three, you will see in the beginning of Parshat Va'etchanan a little bit later in Deuteronomy chapter three, you will find that Moses repeats the exact same perspective. Listen to these words, va'etchanan el-Hashem baet hahi lemor – "I pleaded", Moses says, "With God at that point saying", Hashem Elokim atah hachilot leharot et-avdecha et- gadlecha et-yadecha hachazakah – "you've just began to show me your greatness, please allow me to go into the land, I just want to be able to walk in." Vayitaber Hashem bi – "And God became angry at me," lemaanchem – "because of you", v'lo shama elai – "you didn't listen to me", vayomer Hashem elai – "God said to me" rav-lach – "that's enough for you" al-tosef daber elai od badavar hazeh – "don't speak to me about this thing anymore." So again, Moses seems to have this perspective, he really does have this perspective; he thinks that it was because of the people. So first of all, how does that square with Numbers? It doesn't seem like it was because of the people, and then second of all, it just doesn't seem fair. Why would God got angry at him not because of him, but because of the people?

Now, the truth is, if you look at the context of these verses, the context of these verses begin to give you a clue of a different story sort of unfolding. Go back to section two in your source notes, just go back to that first section of Deuteronomy for a second, in Deuteronomy chapter one, let's just look at the verse in context when Moses says, "God got angry at me because of you". What's the larger context there?

So if you go back a couple verses, you will see we're talking about something here. What are we talking about? We're talking about the stories of the spies. And the story of the spies is of course that famous story where if there is one reason why the Jews are wondering around the desert for forty years instead of going quickly into the land, is because of the spies. The Jews sent these spies to spy on the land and they came back and a whole disaster ensue. They became fearful that God wouldn't help them conquer the land and they wanted to go back to Egypt and they had enough of the whole thing and God became very upset with this and swore that none of the generation that lived and complained in the time of the spies, would go to the land. Rather, their children, the generation they feared would be lost in war and would be killed, those children are the ones who would enter the land and would take forty years a year for a day, every day that the spies were out on their mission, would be another year, forty year it would take for the corpses of the generation of the spies to fall in the desert and then they would go into the land.

Now at the end of that story, after they said that God swore, im-yireh ish baanashim haeleh – " If any of these people from this generation see the land, God swears it's not going to happen except for the two good spies, Caleb and by implication Joshua". At that point, the very next verse is gam-bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem, I am reading from chapter 1 vs. 37, "And also God got angry at me because of you." By the way, you see the 'also' there? "God also became angry at me because of you." What's the 'also'?

The also is in reference to what we were just talking about. We were talking about the spies, where the entire nation was not allowed into the land and Moses says, "Not only was the entire nation not allowed into the land, but I also was not allowed into the land; God also became angry at me." Why? "Not for anything I did really, because I was anti-spies. I didn't condone the behaviors of the spies, but God became angry at me because of you."

Okay. So textually, it seems to fit a little bit better. Moses maybe is not talking about, I mean, there is another alternative possibility here, maybe Moses is not talking about hitting the rock, he is talking about the spies. And so we see it's because of the spies why he can't go into the land. Now we have two basic problems. Number one, first of all doesn't seem very fair. If Moses wasn't guilty of the spy, if he was protesting, he apparently was, why should he be punished for that? Why isn't he as good as Joshua and Caleb, the good spies were allowed into the land, question number one. Question number two is how do we resolve this contradiction? It seems that Deuteronomy and Numbers are completely contradictory. If you read Deuteronomy, you think that the reason why Moses can't go to the land is because of the spies. Somehow God got angry at him because of the people. But if you go back and read Numbers, you hear an entirely different story. It sounds like it's because Moses hits the rock and because he hit the rock, God became angry at him saying he didn't have faith in Him and it just seems to be entirely two different narrative. How do you square them?

Some might respond by saying you don't square them, and this is not a view that I propound as an Orthodox Jew, but there are those out there, Bible critics for example, that say the Book of Numbers contradicts the Book of Deuteronomy, these are two entirely separate accounts; there is one author here, there is one author there, and this proves perhaps that there is no unity in the Torah, and the Torah is just a haphazard conglomeration of different things. I certainly don't believe that but I think it's really just a different perspective. If you start with the preconceived notion that the Torah was composed by many different authors and it is haphazard, then yes, you can see haphazardness wherever you want to see it. But if you think about the Bible, this great classic of religion, it's a very small document; it tells stories very briefly. It's what we call in Literature a minimalist document, it tells stories very briefly, and if you think about a minimalist document, a text that devotes all of eleven verses to the story of the Tower of Babel, if you were the Encyclopedia Britannica, how long would it take you to tell the story of the Tower of Babel? It would take you fifty pages. Nine verses for the Tower of Babel, twenty-one verses for Adam and Eve, nine verses for Cain and Abel, how are you going to pack any meaning into these stories? There must be ways in which the Torah compacts meanings, there must be sort of these techniques by which the Torah puts meanings into its stories, if it does have meaning at all.

I think one of those ways is by setting up glaring issues that a reader needs to struggle with and in finding the meaning to those issues, the reader begin to descend some of the deeper meanings that the text is trying to get out to them, and the glaring contradiction is just a window into a deeper meaning. Give you an example of this, is a beautiful essay by Rabbi Soloveitchik called, I believe it's the 'Lonely Man of Faith', where he deals with the two creation stories, what he calls 'Adam 1' and 'Adam 2', where the Torah gives apparently two different accounts of creation. Of course, Bible critics will say that there is this author, and there is that author. The other view of it is, no, there is not two authors, there are two perspectives on Adam, that Adam himself is sort of internally contradictory, there are two sides of Adam, and when you explain the story from different perspectives, you begin to see different sides of Adam emerging and the technique, the literary technique which the Bible uses for it is to tell two different stories of the emergence of Adam.

I think for example, one of the fundamental question you have to ask whenever you read any book is what kind of book is this that you're reading. If you're reading a chemistry book and you think you're reading a poetry book, you're going to misunderstand the chemistry book. If you're reading a math book, and you think you're reading a literature book, you're going to think that there is no grace or style in the math book. You have to understand the kind of story it is that you're telling. And Mortimer Adler makes this point, and a very nice point in this book he has called, 'How to Read a Book', he says there are most books that aren't worth reading, but there are few books, about one hundred and so that are, and he gives you rules for how to read a book. And one of the rules that he gives you is you have to understand the kind of book that you are reading and you have to understand that genre. I think that's a challenging question to ask, "What kind of book is the Bible?" Is it a history book? Well, it has a lot of history in it but doesn't seem primarily to be a history book, it's not just a history book. Is it a book that teaches morality? There is a lot of morality in there. Is it a law book? There's lot of laws in there. Is it a philosophy book? There is philosophy in there, but there is a lot of other stuff besides philosophy. Then what kind of book is it?

Well I think that ultimately the book is about how God wants us to live our lives and there are a lot of different things you need to know to know how God wants us to live our lives. You need know some law, you need to know some philosophy, you need to know some history but it's all told from the perspective of how God wants us to live our lives; so it is history told from that perspective. So it's not just the dry facts of the recounts of history but the history is molded in such a way that this is what you need to know in order to live your life. The dinosaurs aren't in the Bible, so why are the dinosaur not in the Bible? Well, maybe we all need to know about that in order to know how to live our lives. There is a saying that the sages have that there is no chronological order in the Torah, which seems like a very bizarre statement. What the sages' means is that, you can't take for granted that just because two events are put one after the other that those events necessarily happened in chronological order. Why? What kind of crazy history book is this, telling me that things are not in chronological order all the time? The answer is, if you are telling history from the perspective of what you need to know in order to live your life, sometimes there are some lesson that need to be taught that can better be taught by putting two events together that happens years apart but shed light on each other and when one story sheds light on another story, there is more to learn by putting those stories than by separating them, so the stories are put together.

So if someone asks, what kind of book is the Bible? The Bible I think, if it is a book as to how it is that we are supposed to live our lives, and it is a minimalists text, the Torah will use devices to be able to get at those meanings. And one of those devices I think are intentional problems or difficulties that are supposed to strike the reader and have a struggle in understanding how they fit in. I think perhaps that is what is going on here with Deuteronomy and with Numbers. There is this striking difference, it's not that there are two different authors and it's not a unified text, it is a unified text, the challenge is for us to find the unity; how does Numbers live together with Deuteronomy? If they seem to tell two different tales, are they really two different tales, or are they two sides of the same coin? So this is something that we want to explore as we go further in this series. But these two basic texts that we are going to be looking at, the story of mei merivah, the story of the water and strife, the story of the hitting of the rock on the one hand and the story of Moses and the spies and the speech in Deuteronomy chapter one on the other hand. These are the two basic stories we will be looking at. We will be looking at a lot of other ones and we're going to flesh out these stories too.

Okay. So what I would like to do with you is to take a look first at the story of Moses and the rock. What we are going to do right now, is to read through this text carefully. What we are going to do right now, if you want, is to just put this on pause and just take a look through your texts. Again, you can go to your source sheets or the Bible itself, Numbers chapter 20 vs 1-14 or so, selection number one in your source sheet, and you might just want to read through this yourself and just ask yourself, if you are reading this text for the very first time, if you never had any experience with this text before, what would be the problems you would have? What are the problems that strike you? What are the difficulties here? Problem number one of course, is what did Moses do that was so terrible that made him not enter the land? What's the big deal about hitting a rock? Besides that, there are a number of other problems in the text and if you look at it carefully, you should become aware of them. So I am going to challenge you to do that. I am going to read through it and touch on some of the problems, but I don't think we are going to get through all of it tonight and what so I want to challenge you to continue to think about this over the course of the week and to really chew on this, what are the difficulties here in this text, and if you want, you can bring this up on the discussion board and we'll talk about it next week. So let's read through this and see what it is that we come up with and let's just kind of dive in here.

The story begins vayavo benei-Yisrael col-haedah midbar-tzin – "The Jewish people came, the entire congregation to the Wilderness of Zin in the first of the month, in the first month" vayeshev ha'am beKadesh – "and the people settled in Kadesh, vatamat sham Miryam vatikaver sham – "And Miriam died there and she was buried there." V'lo hayah mayim laedah –"and there was no water for the congregation", vayikahalu al-Mosheh v'al-Aharon – "and they gathered against Moses and against Aaron." Vayarev haam im-Mosheh – "They battled against Moses, they argued with him because Moses, vayomer, and they said lu gavanu bigeva acheinu lifnei Hashem – "If only we had died along with our brother and before Hashem, before God", that's a little strange what it is that they are talking about there, we'll get back to that. V'lamah havetem et-kahal Hashem – "Why did you bring the congregation of God to this desert?" lamut sham anachnu uvirenu –"that we were going to dies here or sell our cattles," lamah he'elitunu miMitzrayim –" why did you bring us out of Egypt anyway," lehavi otanu el-hamakom hara hazeh – " and bring us to this lousy place where there is no fertile ground, there is no figs, there is no pomegranates, there is no vineyard, there is not even any water to drink" vayavo Mosheh v'Aharon mipnei hakahal el-petach ohel moed vayiplu al-penihem – " And Moses and Aaron retreated from the face of the congregation to door of the tent" vayiplu al-penihem –" and they fell on their faces." Vayera chevod Hashem aleihem – "and then the glory of God appeared before them."

Let's just stop right there for a second. This is the very beginning of the story that sets up problem with this terrible water crisis here. One question at the very good beginning, every good paragraph has a topic sentence, what's the topic sentence for this paragraph? What's the beginning of this paragraph? By the way, when I speak about paragraph, the Torah really does have paragraphs, even though we don't think of the Torah as having paragraphs, if you look at an actual Torah scroll, you're going to see all kinds of paragraphs. There are times where the previous line ends in the middle of the line and when that happens, the statement is considered to be a new paragraph; a new idea. So really in fact, chapter 20 vs 1 really is a new paragraph. By the way, the chapters are not a part of Jewish traditions that goes back a long way, they actually were introduced by gentiles at some very later stage in history. But a much more ancient way of seeing the topics of the Torah are really through these paragraphs that are written in the Torah scrolls.

A new paragraph begins, as it happens in chapter 20 vs 1 with the words, "And the Jewish people came to the land of Zin and they settled in Kadesh and Miriam died there and she was buried there." And then the very next words are "there wasn't any water for the congregation and they gathered against Moses and against Aaron." I think it's a little strange because this is a very strange topic sentence. One of the first things my teacher told me about topic sentence is at the beginning of the paragraph, it is supposed to have something to do with the rest of the paragraph, and we never hear Miriam again, she seems to have nothing to do with the rest of the paragraph. Not only that, nobody mourns her passing, it's completely disconnected from the rest of the paragraph. Which is very strange because when Moses died and Aaron died, the rest of the triad of the leaders of the Jewish people as it were, and his family, Moses, Aaron and Miriam were brothers and sisters, when Moses and Aaron died, everybody mourns; how come nobody mourns when Miriam dies? Well, she doesn't count because she is a woman or something? Miriam was important. How come nobody mourns her? It's very strange that nobody mourns her and it's very strange that he death is put here in the middle of nowhere and just seems to drop out on the field, it was never picked up again in the text. So that I think is one problem, how does Miriam's death relates to this whole story? Let's continue.

Okay, so what happens next here? Vaydaber Hashem el-Mosheh lemor – "God commands Moses", there is this terrible water crisis and he needs to find something to do, so God says, here is the plan, kach et- hamateh – "take the staff," v'hakhel et-haedah atah v'Aharon achicha –"gather the congregation together, you and Aaron," v'dibartem el-hasela leineihem –" I want you to speak to the rock before their eyes" v'natan memav – " it will give of its waters" v'hotzeta lahem mayim min-hasela – " and you will draw water out from the rock" v'hishkita et-haedah v'et-biram – " and you will give the congregation to drink and their cattle." Vayikach Mosheh et-hamateh milifei Hashem ka'asher tzivahu – "And Moses took the staff from before God as he was commanded" vayakhilu Mosheh v'Aharon et-hakahal el-penei hasala - " Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation before the rock and they said" shimu-na hamorim – "listen you rebellious ones" hamin-hasela hazeh notzi lachem mayim – " you really think we are going to get water out of this rock for you?" Vayarem Mosheh et-yado vayach et-hasela bematehu pa'amayim –" Moses picks up his hand, hits the rock twice and a lot of water comes out, he gives the people to drink, and God's response," vayomer Hashem el-Mosheh v'el-Aharon – " And God says to Moses and Aaron" ya'an lo-he'emantem bi lehakdisheni –" because he didn't have enough faith in me to sanctify God's name before the children of Israel, therefore you will not bring this congregation to the land that I've sworn to them. These are the water of strife for the Jewish people strove with God and God will sanctify through them." Very strange story on many levels. What are the problems here? So there are a number of problems and just very briefly, I want to touch on a couple here.

Listen to the beginning of his response. God says to Moses, "Take the staff and gather everyone together and speak to the rock." Is there something strange about this? What's the idea basically? Speak to the rock? Okay, so what's extraneous in this sentence? What exact does "take the staff" has to do with anything? He is not supposed to use the staff. If he is not supposed to use the staff, why bother taking it? Why not just say, if you are supposed to speak to the rock, "gather everybody together and speak to the rock"? What does a staff have to do with that? Why take a staff? It's very strange in that the text seems to go out of its way, in what seems to be an entirely superfluous verse to then say, vayikach Mosheh et- hamateh milifei Hashem ka'asher tzivahu, this is verse nine –" God then took the staff from before God exactly as he was commanded", I mean, the verse goes out of its way, "yes, and he took the staff, just as he was commanded!" But why was that so important? Why was he even commanded to take the staff?

Was it like some game? Like 'take the staff and don't use it'. Was he tempting Moses? Why bother taking the staff if you're not going to use it? So that's one question, what's the role of the staff in the story?

The other thing by the way, kach et-hamateh – "Take the staff", is something strange about those words? "Take the staff". How else would you say that? "Take your staff"? Well Moses does have a staff, he's been walking around with one. He has a staff that he struck the Nile with the plague of blood, that he used with all the plagues in Egypt; he's got a staff that he is carrying around and in the past the Torah has referred to it as "your staff", why not just say, "take your staff"? What does it mean, "Take the staff"? I guess that seems like a subtle point, like a no big deal but what do you mean, "Take the staff"? And then later on, where is he taking it from? The verse goes out of its way to say, "And he took the staff from before God". What does that mean, "from before God"? I mean, Moses has the staff in his tent and home, so he took the staff from his house, what do you mean, "He took the staff from before God"? What, God is in Moses' tent? He took the staff from wherever it is he took the staff. Who cares where he took the staff from? What exactly is going on here? Something a little strange about the staff maybe. How is it we understand the staff? And by the way, this issue I mentioned to you of the staff as opposed to his staff, that the bible specifically didn't specifically say that it is his staff. Fascinatingly, at the end of the story, it does! Listen. What did he do?

Vayarem Mosheh et-yado, I am reading now from chapter 20 vs. 11, Moses lifts up his hand finally at the end of the story, and he hits the rock bematehu, with what? Not "the staff", with "his staff". What's going on here? It starts out "the staff", specifically not "his staff", he is not taking it from his house, he is taking it from before God, and it ends up "his staff"? Did the staff change? Are there two different staffs? I mean it sounds like "who cares? The staff is ancillary. It doesn't seem to be a part of the issue at all." But the staff seems kind of strange. What's going on here exactly? Okay, we'll get back to the staff issue in a couple minutes but one other problem which I will just raise here a little bit later in the text. What's God's response here? It's a little strange. Vayomer Hashem el-Mosheh – "God then says to Moses," this whole story is done, just when you think there was a happy ending, everyone has got their water, what's the big deal? He hit the rock, he didn't hit the rock, ya'an lo-he'emantem bi lehakdisheni – "because you didn't have enough faith in me to sanctify my name before the Jewish people, therefore you shall not bring the people into the land."

Now, imagine you hadn't read that verse, imagine you were thinking about that and you were thinking, okay, if you were God, what would you say Moses did wrong here? Now what's wrong with hitting a rock when you were supposed to speak to it? So you sit back and you muse and imagine you hadn't read what the Torah has said about this, and you were thinking, "What's wrong with hitting a rock instead of speaking to it?" What exactly is Moses guilty of? I would say, "Well, he is guilty of not following directions. Maybe the moral of the story is when God says jump, you jump. When God tells you to do something, you have to listen to exactly what God says. God says "speak to rocks", that means you have to speak to rocks, you don't hit rocks when God says speak to rocks. And the lesson from here is you have to be careful about following exactly what God wants from you." If God had said that, it would have been kind of difficult or a kind of harsh, but I would understand; that's what Moses is guilty of, he is didn't follow direction. I wonder what God actually says? He doesn't say that you are guilty of not following direction, what he actually says is, "You didn't have enough faith in me to sanctify my name." What does that mean? Moses didn't have enough faith in God? Here there were 2.1 million people waiting for water, and Moses hit a rock and got water out from the rock, you call that a lack of faith?

The example I like to give in this is, imagine I was standing before you and I said, "You know, really, I am a prophet and I am a very powerful prophet and I am going to prove I am a great prophet. You see this lectern that I am speaking from? Well it's not just any ordinary lectern. It's a magical lectern because I am a magical prophet and here is what I am going to do. I am sitting here in Nof Ayalon in central Israel at a ridge overlooking the Ayalon valley and we have here the city of Modiin with close to fifty thousand people in it and the surrounding area of Gush Dan going up to Tel Aviv and the hills, we're in the Shvelah, in the lower hills outside of Jerusalem and from here, it's downhill all the way to Tel Aviv. Now what I am going to do is, I am going to speak to the lectern, and I am going to cause Diet 7Up to flow from the lectern, so much Diet 7Up that the entire population of Gush Dan and the entire hugely populated area around Tel Aviv is going to be able to drink from the tidal wave of 7Up which is going to emerge from this lectern. So you are sitting here in this room, do you believe me? Very few of you believe me. How do I know? Because none of you got up to leave the room, if you were worried that tidal wave is coming, you would be running for your life but everybody is still here. Now what do you think the chances are that what I am saying is going to come through? The chances are vanishingly close to zero; very unlikely.

Okay. What if I said, alright, I understand that you are skeptical, but let's change this a little bit, I am not going to speak to the lectern and get the Diet 7Up to flow that would be too difficult, instead, I am going to hit the lectern with my pencil twice and as a result of hitting the lectern with my pencil, the 7Up is going to flow, we're going to have tidal waves of 7Up; now do you believe me? Well, everybody is still here in the room, nobody ran away. How come? Now I am going to hit it! The answer is, you think it's the same odds, you say it's still vanishing close to zero, no difference.

Now, what would happen if in fact I hit the lectern with my pencil and the 7Up flowed? There is a huge tidal wave of 7Up flowing all the way down the hill, all the way down to Tel Aviv and all the people in Tel Aviv have all the diet 7Up they could want, would you be impressed? You would be impressed.

Would the headline in the newspaper say "Fohrman prophet guilty of lack of faith"? "Huh! Fohrman, if he really knew what he was doing, he could have spoken to the lectern and got the 7Up to flow. No! He had to hit the lectern with his pencil twice. Big deal!" No one would have said that, they would have been very impressed with this miracle, it would have been a great act of faith. So how could he possibly accused Moses of not having faith? And by the way, if he did want to accuse Moses of not having faith, there are other places where he could accused him of not having faith, there are other explicit examples in the Bible where God talked about Moses not having faith and he didn't get him for that and to some extent, the medieval commentators struggled with this, Rashi and Rambam and others. But just to give you the problem.

There is an episode in Numbers called Kivrot HaTa'avah – "and the graves of those who lusted after meat" that story of Kivrot HaTa'avah basically what happens is the people want meat and Moses said to God, "Where am I going to get meat for them?" And God said, "Don't worry. There will be so much meat, they won't be able to stop eating meat, they are going to be eating meat for breakfast, meat for lunch, meat for dinner, not for one day, for a week, but for thirty days every single day, meat, meat, meat." Moses says, "God, that's very nice but where are you going to get all this meat from? Im et-kol dagei hayam yaasafu – If you gather together all the fish in the sea, you wouldn't have enough meat.

Where is all this going to come from?" What is God's response? God said, hayad Hashem tiktzar – "What? You think I can't do?" Atah tireh hayikrecha devari im-lo – "You'll see whether I can do it or not." And indeed, God makes a miracle, and the meat comes. Now, God did not say to Moses, "because you didn't have enough faith in me, you can't go into the land" at that point. It's understood, sometimes the mortal, he forgets that he is talking to the master of the universes for a second, it's understandable.

God does not punish Moses for that. So what is this lack of faith here? It's a very strange thing. It seems like a qualitatively different type of lack of faith. It's not the same kind of lack of faith, it's a very different kind of lack of faith. So that's one question I want you to think about, 'what exactly is the nature of this lack of faith, instead of speaking to the rock, striking the rock, what exactly is the difference?' There are a number of other questions. I want to leave this as a challenge so you can talk about it on the discussion board, what are the other problems in this story?

But before you go, I want to mention something which I only recently became aware of, which I think is very fascinating, and that is a fascinating series of parallels. I mentioned to you before about the Bible being a minimalist document and having these methods by which to encode meaning in its text, that you sort of unpack it almost like a zip file on a computer and one of the methods that I think the Bible uses to encode meaning in its text is that it will occasionally intentionally quote from an earlier story. There will be stories where you read through the story and you think it reminds me of an earlier story and if you look carefully you will see that words after words, phrase after phrase quoted from that earlier story and at face value, it's very strange, very difficult to see how the stories relate to each other because they are so very different from one another. I give you lots of example of this, but I will suffice by giving you no example, except the one which I am talking about now, which is that, as you read the beginning of the story here of Moses and the rock, the very beginning of it, from chapter 20 vs 1-6, you will find a fascinating thing, which is if you keep your eyes open, you will find a series of parallels which will take you back to another story, a story that happened forty years before; forty years earlier. Although it happened forty years earlier, it only happened seven tens of verses earlier in the Torah. Remember there is a dividing line, we know very little about what took place in the intervening thirty nine years in the desert; we know a lot about what happened in the first year, we know a lot about what happened in the last year, but we don't know a lot about what happened in the middle. And really, the story of Miriam's death is the very first story that we hear about the Jews in the fortieth year. One of the last story we hear about the Jews at the beginning of their sojourn into the desert, is the story of Korach, the rebellion of Korach, and interestingly, it's one of the very last story which we've heard about in Numbers right before this one. What happened in the rebellion of Korach?

So, Korach was a Levite and he felt that it wasn't fair that Moses lead the people and who says God really wants him to lead the people and who says people really need a leader anyway, and he gathers himself a rebellion and he says, "we're not submitting to the authority of Moses anymore, we're not submitting to the authority of Aaron, time to do things differently", and there is a long painful series of trail where time and again, God shows that he wants Moses and Aaron to lead the people.

First, the earth swallows up Korach and his followers but even then, the remnants of the rebellion was still around and God again demonstrates the veracity of Aaron's leadership with a test by which he has everyone brings staffs before God and then the staff of Aaron miraculously sprouts into an almond tree and God says take the staff and keep it lifnei ha'edut, before God, before the Ark of the Covenant and it will a testimony to anybody in the future who is rebellious in that kind of way. So there is the story of the rebellion of Korach, fascinating. As you read through the story of Moses here and hitting the rock, the beginning of the story, one after the other, you are hit, over and over again with these memories of Korach. What does it mean? What is the Bible trying to tell us by setting up this duality here, these connections between these stories? I created a PowerPoint on this to give you some more details than I have time to get into right now, but I will just touch on a couple of these now, and you can download the slide shows and see the others. Listen carefully.

Vayavou benei-Yisrael kol-haedah midbar, I am reading again from chapter 20 vs 1 – " They all come to the Wilderness of Zin, they come to Kadesh, Miriam dies," now listen, there is no water in the desert, vayikahalu al-Mosheh v'al-Aharon - "and they gathered against Moses and Aaron." But they don't just gather, there is a very specific name for gathering, vayikahalu, literally, "and they congregate", and the people congregated against Moses and Aaron. It turns out that that's actually a quote, it's a quote from the Korach story, when Korach gathered, or congregated, the entire congregation against Moses and Aaron. So you may say, "okay, big deal. Same words this probably happen a lot", you know what; they don't happen a lot. There is only two instances of the words "congregate against", in the entire Bible, thousands of pages in the Bible and it only appears twice, these words, vayikahalu al, "and they gathered against", these are the two appearances, one in the story of Korach, and one in the story over here. And again, it's the same things, "and they gathered against Moses and Aaron", "and they gathered against Moses and Aaron", almost like a replay of Korach somehow. Vayarev ha'am im Mosheh – "And the people struggled with Moses and they said," lu gavanu bigva acheinu lifnei Hashem – "if only we had died with our brother and before God." Remember when we said that was a little strange, "if only we had died", what do you mean "before"? Who are the brothers that died before God? That's a very ambiguous statement.

Well guess what? The last story happened forty years ago, but it's in the last major story we talked about, the story of Korach when in fact everyone died before the presence of the Lord, the land opened up and swallowed Korach and his followers. And in case you didn't get the point, lu gavanu bigva acheinu, it's an unusual language for death, gavanu – "If only we had died along with our brothers" and they are seeing the followers of Korach as their brothers and the language, lu gavanu – "If only we had died".

Interestingly enough, if you go back to the Korach story, you'll find, if you look in the source sheet you will see this, you'll find that the language, gavanu, "if only we had died", that word also appears only twice in the Torah, one of the earlier times that it appears is with Korach. Hein gavanu kulanu avadnu, the verse said, "The people after the destruction of Korach all cried and said, 'We're all going to die!

We're all going to be lost! We're all going to be lost!' the only two appearances of the word gavanu was there in Korach, and again here.

Continuing on in the story, Moses says lamah hevetem et-kehal Hashem el-hamidbar hazeh – "The people complained, why did you bring the congregation of God to this terrible desert?" "Congregation of God". What a strange thing. Why not say, "how come you brought us"? "How come you brought the congregation of God to this desert"? Well, that's also a quote from Korach. The language kehal Hashem

– "congregation of God", originates from the story of Korach, where Korach complained that Moses had no right to put himself above everybody else in the kehal Hashem, in the congregation of God. Kol ha'eida kulam kedoshim – "We are all holy in the congregation of God". The people are again it seems, almost intentionally quoting from Korach and this language of kehal Hashem – "the congregation of God". Notice by the way, the verbs in the story Vayikahalu al-Mosheh – "And they congregated against Moses". The verb form of the "congregation of God," the noun. Anyway, they continued. "How come you brought the congregation of God to this desert for us to die here, us and our cattle?" Lamah he'elitunu miMitzrayim – "How come you brought us out of Egypt to bring us to this bad place? It's not fertile ground, no figs, no grapes, no grains, there is not even any water here." What does this remind you of? Go back to the story of Korach, read the story of Korach. Go back to the source sheet, look at that story, if you look at that story, you will find an almost identical complaint by the chief followers of Korach, Dathan and Abiram, and they talk about the same language, "what did you bring us out of this great land of Egypt for to bring us to this lousy place and there is nothing here." Again, seems to be quoted from that. By the way, if you missed the point, the language, he'elitunu – "How come you brought us out", the only prior appearance of that verb is again in the story of Dathan and Abiram and again in the story of Korach in that connection. And we continue. Look at the reaction of Moses and Aaron.

Vayavo Mosheh v'Aharon mifnei hakahal el-oetach ohel moed – "Moses and Aaron retreat from the conversation to the doorway of the tent of meeting" vayiplu al-peneihem – "and they fall their faces" vayera chevod-Hashem aleihem – "and the glory of God appears before them." So there is three reactions:

1.They retreat from the congregation who seems to be attacking them; 2.They fall on their faces; and

3.The glory of God appeared before them.

If you look in the story of Korach, there is the exact same three reaction, the retreating from the congregation, the falling on their face, and the glory of God revealing himself unto them, although interestingly, they are different combinations. What exactly does the Torah means by this? Why create these parallels? The one fascinating thing I think, the light that the parallel shed upon the question of the staff.

We talked about the mystery of the staff, 'is it one staff, two staff, his staff, the staff before God', what's going on? If you remember the Korach story, there was a staff, Aaron had a staff, and Aaron staff sprouted into an almond tree as a way of indicating that God favored Aaron to lead the Jewish people. And Moses has been commanded to take that staff, le'ot bivnei-meri, to take that staff and to place it before God, before the Ark of the Covenant in order to show any future rebels that they should not rebel. There was a staff before God, not Moses' staff, but Aaron's staff, now listen, vayidaber Hashem el- Mosheh lemor, back to the story of Moses and the rock, kach et-hamateh – "take the staff", not "take a staff", "the staff! You know what staff I'm talking about." "Which staff?" "Not your staff, take the staff! You know what staff I am talking about!" It's all about Korach all over again. "Take that staff, and you gather the congregation, you congregate the congregation, you and Aaron your brother. Don't let them congregate against you, you congregate against them," v'dibartem el-hasela – "holding that staff, speak to the rock" and then fascinatingly what happens at the end? Moses picks up his hand and he hits the rock, bematehu – "with his staff". One second. The verse before said, vayikach Mosheh et-hamateh milifnei Hashem ka'asher tzivahu -- "Moses took the staff from before God", which staff was before God? It's the staff of Aaron. That's the staff which was before the Ark of the Covenant, he took that staff from before God, that's what the verse is saying; the story of Moses and the rock? Sounds like Aaron's staff but then, what happened? He hit the rock with his staff, it says, "with his staff". In a subtle kind of way, there seems to be a lot of staff confusion going on here. The story of Korach seems to be giving us an insight, seems to be suggesting it was Aaron's staff and I think that gives us an insight as to what the meaning of that staff was. Did Moses switch staff? How do we understand this? It's just very strange.

Okay. My time is up. So I am leaving you with these questions:

1. What's the deal with the staffs here?
2. How do we understand the staff confusion; the mystery of the two staff?
3. Also, we just began to touch on the problems in these text. What are some of the other problems in these text? Read through the text, what are the issues that you struggle with? What are the difficulties that we need to figure out as we go through this text? I think there are a few other questions also in the story of Moses and the rock.

So think about that, get on the discussion board, I'd love to talk with you. I will check in I think on Tuesday and I'll check in again I think on Thursday. I very much look forward to hearing what you have to say, I'm very excited about this venture together and I hope we have a good time and proceed to enlighten each other in our studies. I look forward to seeing you next week This is David Fohrman signing off from the hills of Nof Ayalon.

Hello everybody, this is Rabbi David Fohrman and we are back at week number two here of our series, 'Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land?' We are going to pick up straight away with the homework questions I left you with last week which is, 'what are the other issues which you think needs to be dealt with here in the story of Moses and the Rock which we've been reading her in Numbers chapter 20.So a number of you came up in the discussion board with a number of questions which I want to raise over here and talk about. One of the thing which some of you have asked about is Moses' question. Moses asked a very strange question and it seems like it is unclear, does he not know the answer to this question when he said, hamin-hasela hazeh notzi lachem mayim shimu-na hamorim – " He says, listen you rebels, are we really going to get water from out of this rock?" What exactly does he mean by that? Is he unsure if he is going to get water out from the rock? It doesn't seems so because he hits the rock and in fact he does get water from it. Is he just trying to make a demonstration that look, wow! How he can get water out from the rock and make it more dramatic by asking a rhetorical question? What really is the nature of this question? Why didn't he just say, "Listen, we are about to get water out from the rock." If he's really unsure if we're going to get water, it doesn't seem like he's unsure, he hits the rock and the water comes. It's not like Moses hasn't done miracles before, it's not like he's a skeptic about miracles, so why is he unsure here? "Are we really going to get water from the rock?"

Now to some extent, this question may be answered with some of the observations which we came up with last week tying this story back to the rebellion of Korach. Remember there, the people who rebelled were called benei meri – "the rebellious ones", and here also Moses invokes that phrase when he says shimu-na hamorim – "listen you rebellious ones". We talked about the staff and Aaron's staff and it's supposed to be a sign for the rebellious people. It's possible perhaps that Moses thinks that since they are rebellious, that maybe they won't be able to get the water. But again, he seems to hit the rock and thinks that he is going to get the water, so why is he so unsure as to whether he is going to get the water? Was Moses surprised when water came out of the rock? That I think is one question. How do we understand Moses' question coupled with the fact that he hits the rock and the miracle happens? So that's one question.

Now another question which I think some of you ask is, "What in fact was Moses trying to do?" What's the big deal? Why in fact did he hit the rock and not speak to it? Why not just speak to it? Was it that he was just frustrated and angry? If so, then I think the moral of the story is, if you are the leader of the Jewish people, then you can't afford to get frustrated and you can't afford to get angry. A mean, it still seems a very harsh punishment for getting frustrated and angry. It's not the first time Moses has been angry with the people, he's angry with them for justifiable reasons, he's been angry with them before for justifiable reasons and he wasn't punished for that. Plus, God didn't tell him that the problem was that you got angry and as we mentioned last week, he said the problem was ya'an lo-he'emantem bi lehakdisheni – "because he never had faith in me to sanctify my name", whatever that means. We talked about the problems last week. So, why is it that Moses is hitting the rock instead of speaking to it? If it's not just sort of out of anger, was there some type of agenda with that? Was he trying to do something with hitting the rock? So that's another question, what's the meaning of Moses hitting the rock and not speaking to it?

Now we mentioned last week that we had a problem with one of the definite article in the story which is "why is it that the Torah refer to the staff here as 'the staff'?" Take 'the staff' as if he knows which staff it is. And we talked about the significance of that last week with which staff it might be. If you actually comb through the story a little bit, you'll find that there are a couple other places where the definite article is used in a little bit of a strange way. I think one of the rally glaring example of this is in chapter 20 vs.8 when God commands Moses to take the staff and gather everyone together and then listen to these words, v'dibartem el-hasela leineihem – " speak to the rock before their eyes". Now the definite article is a little bit strange, what do you mean "speak to the rock"? I think if you were Moses and God says to you "speak to the rock", the first thing you would say is, "what do you mean "speak to the rock"? Which rock? Like there is a desert here, there are fifteen thousand rock around. Which rock? Do you have in mind a particular rock? Why not "speak t o a rock"? What do you mean "speak to the rock"?" If you say "speak to the rock", it seems to imply that Moses is supposed to know which rock we are speaking about, the same way you're supposed to understand which staff, "take the staff", right? And we're supposed to understand which staff that is. Here too, is there an implication that there is a history here that you are supposed to understand which rock it is? So this I think is an important clue and we will see soon that the Midrash, the Sages picked up on this in a very fascinating kind of way. So that's one definite article here. Again, so far, we have "the staff" and we have "the rock", and there is one last definite article here in plural at the very end of the story , which is kind of interesting, and that is in the final verse of this story, which is verse thirteen, Hemah mei merivah asher ravu benei-Yisrael et-Hashem vayikadesh bam – " There are the water of strife. The Jewish people strove with God and he was sanctified through them."

Now this is a verse strange verse in general, as a couple of you noted about this in the discussion on the discussion board and I commented a little bit on this too on the board, that this is very strange and very difficult to understand. What does it mean "that God became sanctified through them"? First of all, who is the "them"? Is it through the water? That's one way to read the verse. That's not actually the way that Rashi reads the verse. Rashi reads the verse as saying that, it as through Moses and Aaron being punished and not coming to the land, which was what the verse before talked about, that the current verse is saying, vayikadesh bam–" God became sanctified through them". Through who? Through Moses and Aaron. In fact, Rashi quotes another example of this which actually Barry had quoted on the discussion board too if am not mistaken, which is bikrovai akadesh in the story of Aaron, when Aaron two sons died, God also said that "I will be sanctified through the death of holy ones, through the death of those close to me", in this case, Aaron's son. It's a very strange idea, this notion of God becoming sanctified through what's happening to Moses and Aaron, through what happened to Aaron's sons. But actually I think, it just struck me today that perhaps when you think about the notion of sanctified, in Hebrew, the word is kadosh or kadesh over here, yikadesh bam. By the way the name of the place is named Kadesh, when they come to Kadesh and apparently it's named for what happens here. The very last words are vayikadesh bam – "he becomes kadosh – sanctified through it". In Hebrew, the word kadosh, holy, has different perhaps connotations for what it means in English. It of course has those connotations of reverence and kind of religious majesty, but it also has other connotations as well. The real truth is that kadosh means "separate". For example, when you would sanctify an offering for example, in the temple before you bring it, what it means is that you would set aside the offering so that it no longer has any use in the mundane world, it's completely set aside. The word kadosh often by the way, does not have a connotation of holiness at all, it can have just a connotation of something that is set aside. A kadeshah is an example of woman who is set aside for immorality actually, it's a synonym for a harlot, so to be kadosh in the sense to be godly, seems to be completely, completely separate. In fact, God is very completely separate. We like to think God in a warm and fuzzy term and a father with a long white beard but when we get a little bit older we realize that God doesn't have a body, he doesn't have a long white beard, he doesn't sit on a throne in heaven, he is very different than us, he is completely beyond us. He is not physical, we can't touch him, we can't feel him and these are the kind of things we mean when we say he is kadosh, he is completely separate from us, it is very difficult to reach out across the divide and be able to understand.

It's almost as if God is the ultimate creature beyond, really the word 'extraterrestrial' is technically correct, we tend to think of them as the fuzzy little ET but beyond this world, God really is beyond this world; and to be kadosh, really means to be beyond this world. Perhaps, that's what the verse are talking about here, that when God does things that are completely inexplicable to us, that for some reason, very important and wonderful people have to die, the sons of Aaron, Moses and Aaron themselves for what ultimately seems, inexplicable reasons, that that is an expression of God's kedushah, of God's complete separateness form us, that even though on one hand we feel that we can relate to God and we try to understand and try to come close to him but the reality is, this is a being beyond our understanding, and that reality comes crashing home to us when we confront the deaths of wonderful people or punishment of wonderful people in that kind of way; perhaps that's a meaning of the phrase. It's just an idea that comes to me now, I don't know, it's just speculation.

In any case, back to the reason why I quoted this verse, hemah mei merivah, we're talking about this definite articles here, "the staff", "the rock", and in this verse also, there is a strange definite article, hemah mei merivah asher ravu benei-Yisrael et-Hashem – " these are the water of strife that the Jewish people strove with God". "These are the waters of strife", it's a little strange, it's almost as same as "the staff" refers to some staff that you know from before, that there is a history here, and takes us back to the story of Korach, "the rock" maybe refers to some history that we have before that there is some rock which we should know about, maybe "these waters" refers to something about these waters. In fact, as we will see, that's exactly how Rashi takes this term, that all of these definite article refers to some history, some earlier story which this story is connected to, and the waters are part of this, it's like we've heard about these waters before and will take us back to Exodus and we'll get to that Rashi a little bit later.

Okay, what I would like to do now, we've dissembled a lot of questions this week and last week about the story, maybe there are some others too, but let's just stop here for a minute and let's try to begin to put some of this together. In order to do this, I'd like to introduce two things into the mix. We've notice that the story doesn't stand alone and there is a history behind the story. Part of that history is Korach but there are other pieces of the history too. We've been hearing incidents in those definite articles which are bringing us back to those stories. Let's try and think about the larger picture now historically and then I am going to introduce four comments by Rashi which do two things. First of all, begin to reconstruct some of that larger history and do it using the Midrash, using the words of the ancient Sages two thousand years ago and what they had to say about these stories. And again, midrashim, you have to be careful when you interpret them, it's a very deep kind of rabbinic commentary but it's expressed in an allegorical kind of language, you have to be careful how you understand it. Midrashim tend to sound strange, they tend to sound silly, they tend to sound juvenile but if you begin to learn how to interpret them, I think they begin to open up worlds. So let's begin to sort of pull back the zoom lens here.

Let's begin with this question, Where are we at historically here; this story, Moses and the Rock, Numbers chapter 20, where are we at? So I mentioned last week that we are in the fortieth year of the Jews in the desert, they are just on the cusp of coming to the land of Israel, they spend forty years wondering in the desert.

Now, you've got to ask yourself a context question here which is, they've been in the wilderness for forty years now, we're not talking about modern hydraulic systems here, there is no water pipeline, where exactly have they been getting water from for the last forty years? It's a very strange crisis, you expect it to be every day or so, you've got a tremendous logistical problem on your hand, you've got a couple million people wondering through the desert, and I can tell you, the desert in these parts, you go down to the Negev, you go down to Eilat, you're wondering around, you make a left turn towards Egypt, you're wondering around in the Sinai desert, in the summer it gets pretty hot there. Its one hundred and ten degrees in the shades, it's very hot. How are people surviving here?

Now, as it happens, if you look back through the history of the Jews in the desert, this isn't the first time that there has been a water crisis, the Jews have had water crisis before but the pattern of water crisis is very strange. There is a grand huddle of three water crisis laid out throughout the Jews sojourn in the desert. The first one happened three days after the crossed the red sea that is immediately after they left Egypt and that's roughly the time you would expect there to be a big water crisis because everyone's container that they took from Egypt kind of dries up and what do you do now for water? That water crisis makes lot of sense. Then we get to water crisis number two, and you can follow these water crisis if you like, they are on your source sheet , you can look them up there, if you go to water crisis number two, it happens a week or two later. Again, in the first year of the Jews in the desert, just after they go through the Red Sea and they complained to Moses. In water crisis number one, what happened was they came to a place called Marah which was bitter waters, they were very thirsty and finally they saw this oasis and they were so thrilled but the water was bitter and they were very upset and they complained to Moses and Moses took a piece of tree and threw it in the water, some wood and throw in the water and the water became sweet. In water crisis number two, just a little while after that, the people get very upset and they are ready to stone Moses and what happened there? Now what happens there is a fascinating thing. What happens there is God says to Moses, "take your staff and hit a rock". Now that's kind of interesting "take a staff and hit a rock", you know might think that one of the morals of the story here is that rock should not be hit with staff, maybe that's what Numbers 20 teaches us, never hit rocks with staff. Well that's just patently not true.

What happens is, there was another water crisis, water crisis number two where in fact God commanded Moses to hit the rock with a staff, very strange. So you can't say God doesn't like this, God commanded this before. That is a very interesting thing that emerges from history too. But if you look at the whole panorama here, these three water crisis, when do these take place? Water crisis number one takes place immediately after the Jews leave Egypt, water crisis number two takes place shortly after that then for forty years there is no more water crisis until now, until the fortieth year in Numbers chapter 20, all of a sudden the people need water; how did they survived, millions of people in the desert, without any water issue? So something strange is happening here. If you look at it in context, this story just glares, there is a history here and as you begin to put together these details, they emerge to form a larger picture. That's where Rashi comes in. Rashi quoting the Midrash, gives these sort of allegorical interpretations that are really growing out of the text, growing out of these issues in the text. I want to get to them one by one then we will begin to put them together.

The first Rashi I want to look at begins to deal with the following three questions which we raised over the course of last week. Number one, how come there were no recent water crisis? So the last forty years there was no water crisis. When they first left Egypt, there was a water crisis immediately, then another one couple days later, then all of a sudden forty years there has been no water crisis. Then, "speak to the rock". Which rock? What do you mean "speak to the rock"? Which rock? As if we know which rock.

Thirdly, the death of Miriam in our story completely apparently unconnected to anything. A topic sentence at the beginning of our story, Miriam dies, nobody mourns her, all of a sudden there is no water. Now, let's put all of those three questions together with the last thing we know about water. Forty years ago, God commanded Moses to hit a rock. Now God commanded Moses to hit a rock back then and forty more years there is no water crisis. All of a sudden, Miriam dies, there is no water, and God says, "Speak to the rock". Maybe "the rock", is that rock; that rock forty years ago that I commanded you to hit, speak to it. And how come there was no problem with water until Miriam died?

Okay enter Rashi, Rashi says if you put all this together, they just put it all up and adds it all up and say, must be that the rock that Moses hit back then forty years ago, when it gave it's water, it never stopped giving water, it continued producing water over and over again and there was no water crisis until what happened? Evidently when Miriam dies, all of a sudden there is no more water. Seemingly this well, this rock that sort of served as a well, it's connected with Miriam somehow. When she dies, it stops giving water. The Sages called it Miriam's well. The idea of Miriam's well comes from here. It must be that there was this well that was there in the mirror of Miriam and continued to provide water for the last forty years. That's one piece of the puzzle and that was the rock, "the rock", which rock, Miriam's well. Okay, that's Rashi number one. Let's go to Rashi number two.

Now, here is another fascinating Rashi and this Rashi, I think, really gets to the heart of the issue we've been struggling with, 'why couldn't Moses enter the land'? And Rashi, based on the Midrash, proffers an answer to this very difficult question but, it's a strange answer, I am warning you now, it's difficult to understand but in essence, everything we are going to be doing for the rest of this week and the beginning of next week, I think is trying to figure out what Rashi might mean by his comment here.

Here is what Rashi says.

Rashi says that when the verse says that Moses failed to sanctified God's name and that he didn't have enough faith in God to sanctified God's name, that there was a very crucial lesson that Moses was meant to teach the entire people. If he had only spoken to the rock rather than hit the rock, he would have been able to teach this lesson. It was a very crucial lesson that needed to be taught at this point in time.

However, Moses didn't do that. He failed at that opportunity, he didn't take advantage of it and that lesson was not taught to the Jewish people at this crucial time.

Now, what was this great lesson that Moses was meant to teach the entire Jewish people? Rashi tells us what that lesson was. It's the lesson the people would have learned if only they had seen Moses speak to the rock and the rock gives its water. Here is what Rashi says. You can find this Rashi, I copied it for you, at selection number three, if you want to follow along with me. Here is what Rashi says, commenting on the words lehakdisheni – "that he failed to sanctify me", Rashi says, ilu dibartem el hasela vehotzi –"Had you only spoken to the rock and the rock had given its waters" hayiti mekudesh leini haedah –"God said I would have been sanctified before the people, v'omrim, because the people would have said mah selah zeh, listen very carefully, this is a crucial kal vachomer, this is a crucial lesson, the people would have said mah selah zeh – " if this rock", she'einu medaber v'einu shomea – " that doesn't speak, it doesn't hear" v'einu tzorech leparnoseh - " it doesn't need anything. It doesn't need to get things form God, it doesn't need God to give it a living or anything like that, nevertheless, despite that it's not getting rewarded, it's not getting punished" mekyim diburo shel makom – "it still listens to what God has to say," kal vachomer anu – "so we should too." This is what we call a kal vachomer argument, an argument from the light to the heavy, if you can lift fifty pounds, for sure you can lift twenty-five pounds. If the people would have seen this rock would have said "look, this rock, it doesn't get reward, it doesn't get punished still listens to God. So for sure us, we do get reward, we do get punished, so we should listen to God."

Okay folks. You now know the secret according to Rashi, you know Rashi's great kal vachomer, you know the secret lesson that Moses was meant to transmit to the people if they had only seen Moses speak to that rock instead of hit it. But, because Moses hit the rock, he was banished from actually going into the land and this crucial lesson was not taught. Now, are you happy with this? Does it make a lot of sense to you? Now the story is all explained, we can just go home and forget the rest of these next four lectures, we've got it all figured out, right? The real question I think here is how convincing is this kal vachomer? I mean how convincing is this argument? You've just heard this argument, you've heard this great secret argument that Moses was supposed to teach the people and is your life transformed? Ask yourself this, are you going to walk out after this lecture and are you going to be a new different person? You now know this great secret, you have this great key to spirituality, you will go out , you'll write books, you'll tell everyone about it; no! You feel no different than you did five minutes ago. This didn't profoundly affect you. What exactly is the power of this great kal vachomer? It just doesn't seem like it's very powerful. It also seems flawed if you think about his analogy, what's wrong with his analogy? "If a rock that doesn't get rewarded, doesn't get punished listens to God, do I should listen to God", what's the analogy between me and a rock?

A teacher of mine once used the following analogy, he says it's like this kal vachomer, this analogy is kind of like saying, 'imagine a guy who is a computer programmer, he works all day with computers, comes home, his kids are jumping all over him and he finally says, after he is trying to have a peaceful time trying to read his newspaper, he finally says kids, I don't understand you. All day long I work with my computer, my computers don't get rewarded, they don't get punished, I don't kick them when they do the wrong thing, I don't give them rewards and lollipops when they do the right thing, and they listen to me. You kids, I do give you lollipops when you do the right thing, I do kick you when you do the wrong thing and you still won't listen to me'. Now, what are the kids going to say? They are going to say that dad has been spending too long at the office, he just doesn't understand it, a kid is not the same thing as a computer. But what really is the power of this analogy? Rashi says this analogy holds the key to understanding our story, that it was this lesson that Moses failed to teach the people and this was what they needed to hear. What exactly is this analogy? I think this is the key to at least Rashi's view of the story. So we are going to come back to this Rashi and try and elaborate it some more.

Okay, having looked at these two Rashi, I want to continue the effort to kind of pull back the zoom lens and look at this story in broader context. Rashi began to put together some of these pieces together for us, but let's just remind ourselves.

The story we are talking about is the third of three water crisis, the third water crisis takes place in the fortieth year and the first two took place in the first year of the Jews come out of the desert. Let's look at these three water crisis in context and I think we'll find a very fascinating thing.

Remember, Rashi says that the rock which Moses hit in water crisis number three, was what the Sages called Miriam's well. That well became Miriam's well in water crisis number two when it was called Miriam's well because she died and it stopped giving water. But that's when Moses hit the rock and he was supposed to hit the rock. Now, just thinking about all these water crisis for a second, take a look at water crisis number one, and see if in any way, it remind you of water crisis number three. In particular, think of the prologue to water crisis number one and the prologue to water crisis number three. What happens immediately before each water crisis? Well, you can look at this in your handy dandy source note section. If you look at, I think it's selection seven or eight, Exodus 15 vs.22, you will find the prologue to very first water crisis, water crisis number one. Here is what it says and think about water crisis number three, does it sounds familiar? Vataan lahem Miryam Shiru laHashem ki-gaoh gaah, this is the very end of the story of the seas where they go through the sea and they triumphantly sing their song and Miriam sings her song and she sings this song to God and the very next verse says, vayasa Mosheh

et-Yisrael miyam-suf – " that Moses took the Jews from the sea of Reeds" vayetzu el-midbar-shur – " and they go to the wilderness and they go three days and they can't find any water and they come to Marah and they can't drink water from Marah because the water are marim, they are bitter, that's why they called it Marah. And the people complained against Moses saying, "What could we eat? What could we drink?" And Moses called out to God and God showed him a stick to throw in the water and it made the water sweet.

Okay. Now what's the prologue here? How is the prologue here similar to water crisis number three? If you like, I think I will put this up on the PowerPoint too, I think you can follow us along in the PowerPoint, but what happens immediately before water crisis number three? We have Miriam. Miriam dies. What happens immediately before water crisis number one? Miriam sings her song at the sea. And very interestingly, let's just cut to water crisis number two. What happens? There is this rock that gets hit and it becomes all of a sudden, Miriam's well. Very strange. Miriam seems very important behind the scenes in all of these water crisis. She is there right before water crisis number one, she dies right before water crisis number three and it is her rock and her well that is brought into action, so to speak, in water crisis number two. But the truth is, the connections about Miriam goes much deeper than this. This is very fascinating. It's time for us to play a very quick game of Jewish anagrams or Hebrew anagrams. You play Hebrew anagrams a little different from how you play English anagrams because Hebrew is a language that doesn't have any vowelization. So we're going to play with the vowelization. And what I want to do is I want to keep Miriam's name, in Hebrew you spell mem-resh-yud-mem, those four letters and remove the vowelization. The way it's written in the Torah scroll by the way is without the vowelization and therefore the letters, since they are only consonants, could be pronounced in different ways depending on how you play with the vowelizations. Now, if you actually take these four letters and keep them as one word, how many words can you make from them? You can follow this along in the PowerPoint too. Mem-resh-yud-mem as one word, how many letters can you come up with? So you Hebrew speakers might want to pause for a second and think about this and see how many you can come up with. The fact is, I can only come up with three, three single word that can be made from this one word Miriam. They are merim, which means "to lift up", morim, spelled without the vav, which means "rebels" and marim which means "bitter".

Now, think of these three words for a second, do they remind you of anything? Fascinatingly, each of these three words appears in these water crisis, all thee permutations of Miriam's name. Why can't they drink the water in water crisis number one? They get to this wonderful oasis but the water is bitter. Ki marim hem – "the water is bitter", that's why they can't drink it. Mem-resh-yud-mem same letters as Miriam's name. And when Moses is about to strike the rock, what does he do? He lifts up his hand, he is merim yado, he lifts up his hand to strike the rock and what does he say? He says shemu-na morim, spelled by the way without the vav, "listen you rebels", the third permutation of Miriam's name. Every possible permutation of Miriam's name appears in these three water crisis story, right when Miriam herself appears in the verse before these stories; Miriam dies before water crisis number three, she sings before water crisis number one, he rock becomes the well in water crisis number two, Miriam seems very intimately tied behind the scenes with all these water stories. I think the larger question is why? How do we understand that connection? Okay, so let's take that point and just ponder it for a moment. Why should Miriam be so closely associated with the water in the story? Think about history and pull back the zoom lens farther.

Well it turns out that there are two events which took place earlier on in Miriam's life that I think can give us some close insight to the connection between Miriam and water on in the Torah. There are two events where Miriam is closely associated with water. The first is famous story of Miriam by the Nile with the birth of Moses and the second is the story of Miriam at the Sea of Reeds where she sings the song of thanksgiving after the Jews were saved from the army of Pharaoh and the sea splits in the famous story of the Red Sea. I want to take a look at these two stories because I think if you look at them carefully, you will find some fascinating things which I think will shed a lot of light on Miriam's role later in the water stories.

Let's take a look at these two stories and let's begin for a second with the story of Miriam and the Sea of Reeds. What happens? The Jews are surrounded on all sides by the Egyptians, to their back is the sea, there seems to be no hope, all of a sudden the sea splits and the Jews go through and make it to the other side on dried land, while the Egyptians are drowned. The entire Jewish people sort of erupt with a song of thanksgiving then something kind of odd happens, Miriam sings a song too; she takes all the women aside and she sings her own song with them. I think there is a couple questions to ask. One question is, why did she do it? Why wasn't one song of thanksgiving good enough for everybody? This is not the only time that we have songs of thanksgiving in the Torah. Later on, for example in the Book of Judges, the entire people are saved at the hands of Barack and Deborah, and Deborah, who was a woman, sing a song for everybody; there wasn't one song for men and one song for women, there was one song for everybody. This is the only place in the entire Bible where there are two songs. Everybody sings one song but then Miriam leads people aside to sing another song. I mean what's this? The beginning of women lib or something, so she had to take all the women together? I mean why not one song for everybody? What was going on? Why did Miriam feel like she personally needed to sing a song here?

This is actually something that the Sages of the Midrash were concerned with and interested in and made a very fascinating interpretation which I want to share with you based upon two other problems in the text.

If you look at the language of how Miriam is introduced in the song, you will find she is introduced in a very odd kind of way. So here is the verse, this is what the verse says vatikach Miryam haneviah achot Aharon et-hatof beyadah – "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron took the musical instrument in her hand and all the women went after her and they sing the song." Now listen carefully to that for a second, who is Miriam? Miriam is the prophetess, the sister of Aaron. Now why do I need to know this exactly? Why is this her identity card, so to speak, before she sings this song? She's two things, she's a prophetess and the sister of Aaron. First of all, why is any of these things important? Is it that we want some background, CV information on Miriam before we hear about her song? Did she have to be a prophetess in order to sing this song? Did she have to be the sister of Aaron in order to sing this song?

And also if you can identify her as the sister of somebody, why identify her as the sister of Aaron? Why not identify her as the sister of Moses? So why Miriam the sister of Aaron in particular, and Miriam the prophetess?

So the Midrash says a fascinating thing, it says if you want to understand Miriam's song and why she sings it, you have to understand another event in Miriam's life and it's that first event that we talked about , is that event when Miriam is present at the saving of Moses when Moses was just a baby at the Nile. The Sages say that there was another event that happened in Miriam's life when she was only the sister of Aaron because Moses had not yet been born and during that even she prophesied. And the Torah here that Miriam's song is hinting to that point in time when Miriam prophesied and she was only the sister of Aaron and not yet the sister of Moses because Moses had not yet been born. The Midrash creates a fascinating story behind the story, so to speak, of the famous story of Miriam at the Nile and suggest that the hidden story behind that story is based on a prophesy that Miriam had when Moses was not yet born.

I want to look at that second story, really that first story, that first story where we meet Miriam in the Torah, I think that hold the key, at least the Sages thinks it does, to events later on at the sea and I think it hold the keys to events even later on with Miriam enduring relationship with Moses throughout the water crisis. So let's look for a second at the text of that first story of Miriam at the Nile and then we will try and interpolate the Midrash and the Midrash fills out that story a little bit.

Okay. So here is what happens in that story. It's a terrible time for the Jewish people. Pharaoh had decreed limited genocide against the Jews and any make Jewish child who was born is going to be thrown into the Nile. A man and a woman get together, they are married, they have a child and that child s Moses, except he is not yet named Moses; he's just a child. And the mother hides the child for three months but then there came a time when she can't hide the child anymore, Pharaoh's henchmen are all around and she takes the child and she puts him in this little boat and she puts him by the reeds by the side of the Nile. Miriam, the sister, stands and watches, and what happened? The daughter of Pharaoh all of a sudden comes by the side of the Nile, sees the little boat, opens up and find it's a Jewish child crying. She sees the child, she sees that it's a Jewish child, she takes the child, she brings the child up in the palace. So she adopts the child as her own, she brings him up as a Jew in the place.

Now the truth is, we know the story pretty well, and we are used to the story, but if you actually read the story without knowing the end of the story, the moment when the daughter of Pharaoh comes, that's a scary moment. The daughter of Pharaoh at that moment is a threatening personality, not a kind personality. It's Hitler's daughter walking down the path, that's the last person in the world you want to see this child and recognize it as a Jewish child. The story ends up goof but it doesn't sound good at that moment. Okay, let's just stop here for a moment and look at these two stories that we've began to touch on, these two stories that involve Miriam earlier in the Torah; Miriam at the sea and Miriam at the Nile. Just think about these two stories, are they similar in any kind of ways? Does one story reminds you of the other?

Just imagine you were there in each story, imagine the setting, is there anything about the setting of the story that reminds you one of the other? Okay. So one story takes place where? It takes place at the Nile, on the shores of the Nile. Where is the next story that we see Miriam? Where does it take place? It also takes place on the shores of a body of water, the shores of the sea. And what's the single outstanding topographical characteristic that will hit you at the Nile that you see a whole bunch of, and that would hit you at the sea? What was the sea called? It wasn't called the Red Sea actually, it was called the Sea of Reeds, yam suf – "The Sea of Reeds". And what was there at the Nile? Where exactly was the child hidden in this little boat? Look at the text, "vatasem basuf al-spat hayor – "she placed him", the mother did, "in the suf, in the reeds by the side of the river". There are these reeds at the shore and there is a Nile with a few reeds and then later on there is this whole sea, a whole Sea of Reeds, and who should come?

Who is there? There is a little Jewish child in story number one at the Nile, and that child, what kind of situation is he in? He is threatened. Threatened by who? Threatened potentially by an Egyptian princess, the daughter of Pharaoh is coming and it looks like it's the end.

Now fast forward, at the sea of Reeds, another Jewish child that threatens an entire Jewish nation is threatened, threatened by who? Not just by one representative Egyptian but by a whole bunch of Egyptians. And who do the Egyptians have with them? The Egyptians don't just come by themselves, they come with a whole host, with chivalry and with everybody. I mean if you look, who does the daughter of Pharaoh have with her? She has her hand maiden and she has her hosts, it seems almost like one story is happening on a smaller level, another story, very similar story, is happening on a larger scale and then there is also a very fascinating series of words that the Midrash picks up in drawing a connection between these two stories. These are the following words.

If you look at Moses at the moments before the splitting of the Red Sea, everything was falling apart. The people just wanted to go back to Egypt, they couldn't believe, they thought they were going to die. The Midrash says that they split up into four different groups; this group wanted to surrender, this group wanted to fight, this group wanted to scream out to God to save them, this group wanted to commit suicide, everybody had a whole bunch of different options and Moses said to the people, hityatzvu uru

et-yeshuat Hashem asher yaaseh lachem hayom – "Just don't do anything. Don't say anything, don't do anything, just stand and watch, stand and watch the salvation that God is going to perform to you today." Let's look at those words, "stand and watch". Read the story carefully of Miriam and the Nile, you can find it in your source notes, also this is on the PowerPoint. Look at the PowerPoint and you'd be able to see all of these connections here. Think of these words, "stand and watch the salvation that God will perform to you". Do these remind you of anything of Miriam story at the Nile? Look at what Miriam did by the Nile with the bulrushes, with the threatening Egyptian there, what does Miriam do?

Vatetatzav achoto merachok ledeah mah-yeaseh lo - "She stood from afar to see what would be with the child." The moment before the daughter of Pharaoh comes, Miriam stood and watched, vatetatzav achoto merachok – "she stood and watch." Later on at the sea, what does Moses say, hityatzvu uru – "stand and watch", literally a quotation from Miriam's words. Something is going on here. What happens at the Nile replays again in Jewish history with Miriam there on a macrocosmic scale, not with just individuals, but with an entire nation? If we can understand more carefully what happen at the Nile. I think we can understand a little bit better what happened at the sea; the Nile is a key to the sea, and that's how the Midrash saw it. Let's go to that Midrash at the Nile and see how the Midrash elaborates that story there, I think it will begin to put everything into focus for us.

The Midrash begins by looking at these words, vatetatzav achoto merachok – "The Miriam stationed herself at the Nile far apart away from the bulrushes so that she could see what was happening." And we mentioned by the way that a similar verse appears with the Jews at the sea when Moses says hityatzvu uru

– "stand and watch". And the Midrash focuses on these key words, vatetatzav achoto merachok – ' that she stood from afar", and asked what the significance of those words are. Why did she do it? Lamah amdah Miryam merachok, the Midrash says. By the way, if you want to follow along, this is selection number eleven, the very last selection in your source sheet, you can follow along either in Hebrew of in English, Lamah amdah Miryam merachok, the Midrash says, – " why did Miriam do this? What exactly was she standing to watch?" And what the Midrash is going to do is sort of reconstruct and expand on the story which the Torah tells of the birth of Moses and how Moses was saved and that by the way is in your source sheets, in section nine of your source sheets if you want to follow along as well. In any case, here is what the Midrash says, amar v'amram beshem rav "[Hebrew, 0:42:40]" – "And Amram says in the name of Rav," interesting play on words here because Amram happens to be the name of Moses' father and here is the name of the Rabbi who says what the Midrash is about to say , but this is what Rabbi Amram says, shehaytah Miryam mitnaavah, remember those key words at the sea when Miriam was introduced and Miriam was neviah achot Aharon – " that she was prophetess, the sister of Aaron" and the Midrash says because there was a time when she had a prophecy when she was just the sister of Aaron and not Moses, here is what the Midrash says, "And Miriam had a prophecy before any of her siblings were born, before Moses was born, and she said, v'omeret atidah imi sheteled ben sheyushi et Yisrael – "These are all my prophecy, my mother will give birth to a child that will save the Jewish people." What happened? Now let's go to the text and see how the text plays this through.

Vyelech ish mibeit levi vayikach et bat levi – " So there was a man from the house of Levi that married a woman from the house of Levi," vatahar haishah vateled, now I am reading by the way from the text of Exodus, section nine on your source sheet, – "and the woman gave birth" vatere oto ki tov – "and she saw that the child was good." Now, it's a little ambiguous here in the text, what does it mean, 'and she saw that the child was good"? The Midrash picks up and says ki ben shenoled Mosheh – "when Moses was born," nitmalei kol habait orah - "the entire house was filled with light." In other words, there as some sort of supernatural child that indicated this was a good child, that there was something special going on here. And of course, if you were the parent at that point, and your daughter had prophesied and you weren't quite sure if this is true or not, but your daughter had prophesied that her mother is going to give birth to a child that is going to take the Jews out of all this slavery and then something supernatural happened, you would be overjoyed. And the Midrash says, amad aviha – "At that moment, the father got up" , venashkah al roshah – " and kissed her on the forehead and said,' amar la biti nitkaimah nivoteich – " my daughter, your prophecy has evidently been fulfilled. Look, there is something special and supernatural about this child." Now remember, at this point, Pharaoh's henchmen were looking all over for babies to throw in the Nile. And if you look what happened next, keep on reading the verse, vatitzpenehu shloshah yerachim – " and the mother hid the child for three months".

Now, if you were the mother, you might expect some kind of protection at this point, but desperation creeps in, three months go by and nothing happens and Pharaoh's henchmen are closer and it's only a matter of time before they find the baby." V'lo-yachlah od hatzpinu, the verse says, – "she could not continue to hide the baby". What did she do at that point? Vatikach-lo tevat gome - "she took this little pitiful ark" vatachmerah vachemar uvazafet - " and use mud to put it all together" vatasem bah et-hayeled

– " and she put the child in it" vatasem basuf al-sfat hayor - " there was nothing she could do, she put it by the bulrushes on the side of the river".

Now, if you could put yourself in the mother's shoe when she did that, what kind of spirit did you do that with? What are you feeling? Nothing has happened for the last three months. Yes, it's true there was a spark of light when he was born, yes it's true there was this prophecy but then nothing happens, you're reduced to putting your child out by the bulrushes and not just leaving any infant by the bulrushes, there is a decree going on that Pharaoh's lynch men, they are going to take any child that they find and throw them into the river. And you leave this little defenseless infant crying in the bulrushes, what are the chances that the child will survive? Look what the Midrash says, the Midrash says that when her father, when Miriam's father saw what was happening, saw that her mother was reduced to putting this child in the bulrushes, in this pitiful little boat, he stood up and he slapped her on the forehead and he said, "my daughter in pain, where is your prophecy now?"

I mean think about that moment of desperation, at that moment, if you were the mother, if you had to put that child that you had thought there was so much hope for in this little boat by the bulrushes and there are Pharaoh's people all over the place, what are the chances that child makes it? Almost none.

Could you watch what happens next? Could you look out the window and watch? I mean there are examples of this in the Torah, Hagar, when Hagar thinks that Ishmael is going to die, she can't bear to watch. Almost any mother, to see the impending death of a child, it's too horrible watch. It's like the Holocaust, the mother is in the line, she is going to the trains and she tells her six year old to run to the church courtyard to see if she can make it to the children playing happily in the church courtyard and mingle with them but there are dogs and there are German soldiers all over the place, you can't watch, how can you watch? But there is someone who watches. Vatetatzav achoto merachok ledeah mah-yeaseh lo – "her sister stood from a far to see". The Midrash says why was she looking? She was looking to see what would be with her prophecy. "My prophecy was that my mother was going to give birth to the savior of the Jewish people, I am going to see what's going to be with this prophecy." If Miriam stood and watched, it means, she thought the game wasn't over yet. She had faith. What does it mean to have faith? If you stood and you asked Miriam, "so what does it mean to have faith? Exactly why isn't the game over? What's going to happen here? How do you envision Moses is going to be saved?" I don't think Miriam would have an answer for you. She doesn't know. But just because I don't know, doesn't mean it can't happen. Just because I can't figure it out, doesn't mean there is not a way.

Who comes down the road next? The next verse says, vatered bat-Paroh lirchotz al-hayor –"The daughter of Pharaoh comes down next." And again, we know the end of the story, but if you didn't know the end of the story that was the worst possible news. If you are Miriam and you see the daughter of Pharaoh coming down, it's all over but Miriam still keeps on watching. And what happens? The daughter of Pharaoh sees, let me keep on reading the verse, she sees that there is this child crying and her next words are miyaldei haivrim zeh – "It must be a Jewish child". There is this conflict on the one hand, there is this compassion, "I see a child crying", on the hand, vatomer miyaldei haivrim zeh - 'she says it's a Jewish child". What do you do if you are the daughter of Pharaoh? Fascinatingly, what's the very next verse?

Enter Miriam. Miriam says, haelech v'karati lach ishah meineket – "Shall I go and call somebody who can take care of this child for you? I can find a solution for you. Let somebody else take care of the child, but then you will adopt her." And it's almost as if the eyes of Pharaoh's daughter lights up and she says, "Yes, go! Go do it!" What just happened here? Miriam became the instrument of saving Moses .She had no idea what was going to happen, but providence had it that she was going to be the way that he was going to be saved. Fascinating. She had a prophecy, "my mother is going to give birth to the child who is going to save the Jewish people" and somehow, through Miriam, through her faith, the threatening waters turn into saving waters.

So that's another fascinating Midrash by the way, it's in your source sheet, it's selection number four. Fascinating Rashi. Remember we talked about earlier all those definite articles and to fast forward to our stories in Numbers and Moses hitting the rock, and talked about 'the staff' and 'the rock'. Also "these are the water of strife", what do you mean, "these are the water of strife", as if we knew them from before? So here is what Rashi says in selection number four, Numbers 20 vs 13, hemah mei merivah - " what does it mean 'these are the water of strife'? Hem henizkarim bemakom acher, Rashi says, he means that they were mentioned before. Elu ra'u etztaganenei Paroh, "The astrologers of Pharaoh foresaw these waters when the astrologers of Pharaoh said, the savior of the Jewish people we see , we foresee is going to meet his end through water and they thought it was referring to what? The Nile. Why was it that Pharaoh commanded all the Jewish children to be thrown into the Nile?

By the way, not only just the Jewish children, but if you look carefully at the verse, and by the way, this is in selection five of your source notes, listen to this verse, Exodus 1 vs. 22, vayetzav Paroh lechol-amo – " Pharaoh commanded all of his people, Gentiles as well, saying," kol-haben hayilod –" all children", it sounds like all Jewish children but the Midrash says all children that day, any child, even Gentile children, they are going to be thrown into the river and daughters live. Why, it was such a crazy thing, why?

Rashi there on Exodus 1 vs. 22, it's there in selection six of your source notes. Rashi explains, lechol-amo af alehem gezer, Rashi says "he was talking even to the Egyptians." Why? Because the day that Moses was born, his astrologers says to him, "today, the savior of the Jewish people have been born," v'ein anu yodin im miMitzrayim im miYisrael – " and we can't tell if he is Egyptian or if he is Jewish" veroin anu shesofo lilkot bemayim – " but we do see that he will meet his end through water." Lefikach gozer oto hayom af al haMitzraim – "And therefore Pharaoh commanded on that day, all children, Jewish children or Egyptian children," because he didn't know from what nationality the savior would arise, "should be thrown into the Nile" shenomer kol haben hayelud - " all children are going to be thrown into the Nile," v'hem lo hayu yodim shesofo lilkot al mei merivah –" they knew that he would meet his end through water". Pharaoh thought it would be through the Nile, but it wasn't at the Nile, it was at mei merivah, it was the 'waters of strife', it was in Numbers 20 in our story we have Moses and the rock.

But then, why do you think it was that the astrologers of Pharaoh couldn't figure out if he was Egyptian or Jewish? They can figure out everything else. They can figure out the day he was born, they could figure out that he was going to meet his end through water, why couldn't they figure out if he was Egyptian or Jewish? Probably because the identity of Moses really is uncertain. There was Moses as a Jew, but he grows up as an Egyptian, he grows up in the palace, he really has an ambiguous identity. But it's almost like they weren't really wrong, they knew that he was going to meet his end through water, it could have been through the Nile, it should have been through the Nile, by all counts, it should have been through the Nile, the only reason it wasn't through the Nile was because of Miriam. Miriam is there and Miriam is the ticket, Miriam saves Moses at the Nile. She is there at the sea when there is another crucial moment and the people have to be saved and Miriam is there, but she is not there at mei merivah, she is not there at the 'waters of strife', she died just before that. And in fact, Moses meets his end through water at that point when she is not there.

So now let's come back to our questions. Why did Miriam have to sing the song at the sea? Why was she introduced as "the prophetess, the sister of Aaron"? So the Midrash has an answer. It says if you want to understand why Miriam sings her song at the sea, you have to understand Miriam at the Nile. Remember the connections we saw, go back to that PowerPoint, remember the connections we saw between the story of the Nile and the story of the sea, it's almost like whatever happens at the Nile in microcosm, to one person, happens in macrocosm at the sea. There is one Jewish child threatened by one Egyptian at the Nile with a couple bulrushes around and at the sea, it's a whole sea with a whole mass of bulrushes, and there is not just one person threatened, it's a whole nation threatened and threatened by not just one Egyptian, but a whole army of Egyptians. And what's the ticket out? The ticket out of the first difficulty was vatetatzav achoto merachok –"It was Miriam's faith. Miriam's willingness to stand and watch without knowing how." What did Moses say to the people at the sea? Everyone wants to do something. The Midrash says the Jews broke up into four different groups, one wants to commit suicide, another one wants to run, this one wants to fight, Moses says, "no, hityatzvu uru – "stand and watch", you've got to do what Miriam did. If we want to succeed as a nation in this replay of what happened to me at the Nile, we as a nation have to do what Miriam did, we have to stand and watch. That's another fascinating Midrash, I didn't copy this one in the source sheet for you but the Midrash says that the Jews broke up into these four groups when they faced the Egyptians. Some wanted to pray and scream to God, some wanted to fight, some wanted to surrender, some wanted to commit suicide, and Moses told them all, don't do whatever you have in mind, just stand and watch.

It's a strange Midrash in a way, why didn't Moses encourage the good guys? Pray, what's wrong with prayer? Moses says there is a time for prayer when you're trying to get God to listen to you and there is a time just to place yourself vulnerable in the hands of God and just say, "I don't know how it's going to happen, but you can make it happen." And if you think about those options, really they broke into the only four groups they could, there were only four options, you can either pray, you can fight, you can commit suicide or you can surrender, I mean those are the only options. Moses says, "no, there is a fifth option that you don't know about that you can't even imagine."

I always says that this reminds me of this social psychology experiment, this famous social psychology experiment, that was replicated before with classes, they say, we're testing you to see what's your ability or perception, what they do is they show college kids a bunch of plain cards and some of the plain cards are doctored so there is a three of hearts but there is only two hearts on it, so it says three of hearts with only two hearts. So when they get to the doctored card, the wanted to see what the college kids would say. So you could see the cards for a good five seconds and fascinatingly what happened? Some kids say it was two of heart, some kids say it was three of hearts, but no kid say there is no card like that in the deck. Hundreds of cards saw this, no kid said, there is no card like that, and that's a doctored card. How is that possible? What does that teach you? It teach you that when you only think there is fifty two cards in a deck and your brain meets the fifty-third card, but you think there is only fifty-two cards in a deck, you are going to take that round peg and smash it into the square hole. You are going to make reality fit your preconceived notion, you are going to make it work, this has to be a different card, you see the truth but it doesn't matter.

What is faith really about? Faith is saying when I only see four options before me and they are the only thing that I can imagine, there could be a fifth card in the deck that I can't imagine. As I stand and place myself vulnerable in the hands of God and say God, you run the world, I can't figure it out, but just because I can't figure it out doesn't mean there is not a fifth card on the deck. That's what Miriam did. When Miriam stood and watch when there was no conceivable way out, she says, "but that doesn't mean that there is no way out". There could be a fifth card on the deck. And that's what Moses say we have to do in order to succeed, we have to do what Miriam did and to stand and watch. And behold, there was a fifth card, the sea splits, no one could have imagined the sea would split. When the sea spilt, it's not enough for the Jewish people to sing to God, Miriam had to sing; Miriam has to take the women and sing to God. Why? Because this is the realization of her prophecy. When does Moses become confirmed as the savior of the Jewish people? When finally does it happen? After the Egyptian pursing army is destroyed at the sea. That's when it happens. And how does Miriam's prophecy becomes fulfilled? Moses is saved at the Nile through Miriam, and the Jewish people are saved at the sea through Miriam too. It's her ability, so to speak, to teach what she learn as an individual to the nation and for the nation to rise to the occasion and had the faith that Miriam had. It's through them that the miracle happens, without that, then the miracle doesn't happen. Miracles don't come from nowhere. It's like Julie Andrews says, "nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could", miracles comes from come from somewhere.

Miracles don't just happen, they happen when you have the incredible faith where you can place yourself completely vulnerable in God's hands and say, "God, you take care of us now", it's only then that the sea can split. And then the sea does split and Miriam sings her song because Moses is confirmed as the savior of the Jewish people and is confirmed as in her vision and therefore Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron going back to her prophecy that my mother will give birth to the savior of the Jewish people, it's then and through her that that is finally fulfilled.

What happens next? Immediately after Miriam sings, the very next verse, Moses leads the Jews through the desert and they go for three days and they can't find any water. Then, there come v'lo yachlu lishtot mayim mimarah ki marim hem - " and they couldn't drink water from Marah because marim hem, mem-resh-yud-mem, same letters are Miriam, except somehow the sweetness of Miriam somehow turned to bitterness, the waters are bitter, you can't drink the bitter waters. What's going on here? If you

are in the desert, how long can you go without water? About three days. The Jews go three days without water and they are hit with a water crisis, why? Because they've got 2.1 million people in the desert and it's a normal ting not to have water, where are you going to find water in the desert? There is only one way you are going to get water in the desert for 2.1 million people, through a miracle. But where is the miracle going to come from? "Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could". You need faith. God is testing the people. Three days, as long as you can go without the water. God is waiting for what? For the people to come and again put themselves vulnerable in the hands of God, say, we don't know how, but could you please take care of us." What happens? They see the water and it looks like it's all over, they see the oasis and they taste the water and it's bitter and at that moment, it feels like it's all over.

What does this reminds you of by the way? Remember those dark times back in Egypt?

So there is this prophecy that I am going to have this child and the house if full of light and you think God has smiled on me, you see the light at the end of the tunnels so to speak and then three months go by and it looks like it's all over but then you still have faith. And then you station yourself by the bulrushes but who comes along? The daughter of Pharaoh. Just when you think maybe there is a light but no, it seems like the iron hand comes down and it's all over. It's sort of the ultimate test. How many times can you live with your hopes being dashed and you finally get to the oasis and the waters are bitter and the people can't take it anymore and they complain to Moses and they cry out and they say, "what are we going to drink?" And God shows Moses a piece of wood and Moses throws it in the water and the water becomes sweet and God says "okay fine. They didn't have faith this time, let's try it again". What happens? Only a little bit more time and there is another water crisis. They journey a little farther and this time they are ready to stone Moses. Bad goes to worst and Moses cries out to God, "What am I possible going to do?" And then God says to Moses,"take the staff, take your staff and go to the rock and strike the rocks and from then on, there is never anther water crisis for forty years. What just happened? What did God really say? The way the Sages see it is that that became the well of Miriam. What do they mean when they say that is the well of Miriam? It was almost as if God was saying, "okay, fine. The people can't do it. The people aren't going to have the faith necessary to make these miracles happen, but I will give it to you, I will give you water anyway." Why? I will give you water in the merit of Miriam. Miriam had the faith, Miriam will have the faith for you, she will carry you on her back and it's through Miriam's merit there is a well. The travelling rock that Moses hit goes along with the people and provides for them for forty years there is never another water crisis until Miriam dies. And that sets up Numbers chapter 20.

We've gone back with the zoom lens and we've seen really the whole picture unfold, Miriam's connection to water leading up to Miriam's death. And now the stage is set for our story, what does the world looks like after Miriam? What does Miriam's well looks like after Miriam? When we come back next week, we're going to try and put these remaining puzzle pieces together. We're going to get back to Rashi's kal vachomer which we talked about, Rashi strange argument that the great lesson that the Jews were supposed to learn if only Moses could speak to the rock. What was that lesson? I think Rashi is getting to something very deep, the real core of the story which emerges from Miriam's involvement through this whole story and the final lesson that Miriam's well had to teach after she died. We are almost ready to put together the first stage of our inquiry into why Moses couldn't enter the land. One piece of it, the piece of it in Numbers, when we come back next week, we're going to try finish putting together this picture. I would like you to kind of speculate on it and think on it and illuminate on it and when we come back next week, we are going to finish this piece of the picture and launch into the story in Deuteronomy which seems to be an entirely different picture and try to ask how these stories live together, how is it that one sheds light on the other? So we really do have work cut out for you. I very much look forward to reading your interactions on the discussion board, participating, I may put some voice posts on this week also so be sure to listen to them if you get the chance. I encourage your feedback. I am excited by our adventures as we continue to move forward. I will see you next week.

Hi everybody, welcome back, this is Rabbi David Fohrman and welcome to Lecture 3 in our series Why Couldn't Moses Enter the Land. It's a beautiful, fine, sunny day here in Jerusalem, and I'm happy to be with you. What I'd like to do today is to try to wrap up our look at this question of why couldn't Moses enter the land from the perspective of the Book of Numbers which we've been looking at this last couple of weeks, and then begin to move into the question from Deuteronomy, which seems to address this whole issue perplexingly from a very different angle.

We were up to coming back to finally taking another look here at this very perplexing story of Moses and the rock in the Book of Numbers, Chapter 20. So what I want to do with you is sort of take all the information which we gathered in the last two weeks, back to the Korach parallels - the rebellion of Korach which seems to beat so insistently in the background here in Chapter 20. Back to the whole history of Miriam and Moses and Miriam's faith throughout all of these water crises, going back to the Nile, going back to the Red Sea. Viewing - coming back to our story here in Numbers, Chapter 20 and viewing this story in terms of all that context.

Let's go back, read through the story again, and try to come back to some of our unresolved questions here about what was going on in this story. So let's look, what happens. The Jews come to the wilderness of Tzin, Ba'chodesh ha'rishon - in the first of the month. Vayeishev ha'am b'Kadesh - the people come to a place called Kadesh; Vatomos sham Miriam - and Miriam dies; Vatikaver sham - and she's buried there. As we mentioned last week that is the chapter heading here, it's the title sentence for the whole paragraph. I think now we understand why it is the title sentence of the whole paragraph. The only reason why the Jews had water for these last 40 years, as we've seen, is because of the Well of Miriam, it's because of Miriam and now ominously Miriam dies and the people are thrown into another water crisis; V'loh haya mayim la'eidah - there was no water for the people. This is the first time that this has happened in 40 years. This has not been a problem but now we're back to where we started from 40 years ago.

What happens? And notice by the way, that there's no mourning for Miriam. Miriam's death is sort of dropped in here and there's no response. But in fact there is a response, the response is that there's no water and that the people's lives are in danger because Miriam is not here. Mourning is something you can do when you have the luxury of time to be able to sit and to be able to mourn, here there's no luxury of time, the people have no choice, they're forced to struggle with a survival issue. V'loh haya mayim la'eidah - there was no water for the people to drink, and what happens?

Now, if you think about it, what needs to happen? What is the whole history of water with the Jews, going back to the Nile, going back to the Red Sea, going back to the water crisis after that, what does that history teach? That history teaches that if you're in the desert and there's no water and you've got millions of people that need water, really there's only one way that you're going to get the water, how are you going to have that miracle? To have a miracle, a miracle comes by people placing themselves vulnerable in the hands of God. Coming to God and saying, God, we don't know how this is going to work out, we can't figure it out, but there's got to be a fifth card in the deck, there's got to be a way of working it out, please help us. That's what needs to happen, especially now that Miriam is not in the picture. But what does happen?

This is the great crisis. Vayikahalu al Moshe - the ominous echoes of Korach, the same language of Korach - the gathering of a congregation against Moses. The only time that language is used is the language of rebellion, they gather against Moses, they congregate against him. Vayarev ha'am im Moshe

- and they argue with Moses. Vayomru leimor - and they say; V'lu gavanu b'givah acheinu lifnei Hashem - a direct quote back to Korach - if only we had died back with our brethren who had rebelled against you 40 years ago. This was 40 years before. V'lamah haveitem et kehal Hashem - again, direct quotes back to Korach - how come you brought the congregation of God into this desert so that we should die, us and our cattle? V'lamah he'elitanu mi'Mitzrayim - again, going back to Korach - how come you brought us out of Egypt; L'havi otanu el ha'makom hara'ah hazeh - to bring us to this bad place? It's not a place with any fruit, it's not a place with - there's not even any water to drink.

Now, in order to really appreciate what happens next and the significance of the words that happens next, I think we need to go back for a minute, back to the story of Korach. Because the words which appear here, again, are lifted right out of Korach, and if we play the old Sesame Street game; What Happens Next, the story of Korach has very dramatic implications for what could be expected to happen next. Here's the quote back in Korach. What happened in Korach after people came and said; Hey, you haven't brought us to this land, what are you doing? How come you're leading us?

Vayakhel aleihem Korach et kol ha'eidah - Korach had gathered together the entire congregation. I'm reading now from Numbers, Chapter 16, verse 19, you can check it out in your source sheets. Vayakhel aleihem Korach et kol ha'eidah - Korach had gathered together the entire congregation; El petach Ohel Mo'ed - to the doorway of the Tent of Meeting. What happened next? Vayeira kevod Hashem el kol ha'eidah - the glory of God appeared to the entire congregation, step 2. Now step 3; Vayedaber Hashem el Moshe v'el Aharon leimor - and God spoke to Moses and Aaron saying - in verse 20. Hibadlu mitoch ha'eidah hazot - separate yourselves from this entire congregation; Va'achaleh otam k'ragah - and I will destroy them in an instant. Vayiplu al pneihem - and Moses and Aaron fell on their faces; Vayomru - and they said; Kel Elokei ha'ruchot l'kol basar ha'ish echad yechetah v'al kol ha'eidah tiktzof - God, one man sins and You're going to wipe out the whole nation? They find themselves pleading for the survival of the whole people.

Now, listen to those words come back to the story of Moses and the rock in Numbers. What happens? We've had the same background, the people have made the same complaint, they've gathered against Moses and Aaron, almost the same words. Then; Vayavoh Moshe v'Aharon mipnei ha'kahal el petach Ohel Mo'ed - Moses and Aaron retreat from the congregation to the Petach Ohel Mo'ed, just as they retreated and came to the Petach Ohel Mo'ed - to the doorway of the Tent of Meeting, back in Korach. Vayiplu al pneihem - and they fell on their faces. Just like Moses and Aaron fell on their faces and pleaded before God in the story of Korach. Vayeira kevod Hashem aleihem - and the glory of God appeared before everyone - just as the glory of God had appeared before everyone back in the story of Korach.

Now what happens next? What happened next in Korach? What did God say? God said; Hibadlu mitoch ha'eidah hazot - separate yourselves from these people, I'll destroy them in an instant. That seems to be the lead up, that's what we're expecting to happen next, but that's not what happens next. Something dramatically different happens next.

Continuing reading in Bamidbar - in Numbers, Chapter 20, in our story of Moses and the rock, God says to Moses; Kach et ha'mateh - take the staff; V'hakhel et ha'eidah atah v'Aharon achicha. Now again, go back to Korach, what do these words mean; And gather the congregation, you and Aaron your brother? These aren't just innocent words, gather the congregation, get everybody together. Again, whenever you have; Hakhel et ha'eidah - gather the congregation, there's meaning to those words, those are words that are dripping with Korach. Until now the congregation has been gathered against Moses with these words, and finally God is saying, do it the other way. Don't allow them to gather against you, you and Aaron gather everyone together, you take the initiative. It's a counteroffensive against this rebellion.

What's the counteroffensive? Kach et ha'mateh - take the staff. What do you mean THE staff? Which staff? We know what staff. The staff of Aaron, the staff that when Moses takes it two verses later; Vayikach Moshe et ha'mateh milifnei Hashem - Moses took the staff from before God; Ka'asher tzivahu - just as he was commanded. That's the staff that was placed before the Ark of the Covenant, before the Tablets, to always be a sign. What? To those who are rebellious. This is the plan. Take the staff. It's almost as if God is saying we don't have to go through the whole Korach thing again. The whole purpose of that staff was to be a sign that people should remember. That we don't have to go through all of the pain and all of the hardship of Korach, the lecture, all of the Mussar, everything that everyone needs to know, it's all right there in the staff. It's the picture of the staff at this moment is worth a thousand words.

It reminds me - it's almost facetious and perhaps it's not a good comparison. But I had a chat with a neighbor of ours down the block in Baltimore, now that I was in Israel, and I was talking to him about how things are going, and he says he has a really great child-raising strategy which he's developed. What it is he says he always couldn't stand it when his parents would give him a lecture over and over again, and it's like, I know that lecture, I know that lecture. But from the parents' perspective, you don't know the lecture, you keep on doing the thing wrong. So with his own kids what did he do? When they do something wrong and he has a lecture to give them, he gives them the lecture and he says, remember this lecture, we're going to assign it a number, this is lecture 59, and remember this lecture well. Once in a while I'll test you, I'll say, 59, give me the main points of this lecture, just so that we know it. Then what happens? If the kid ever does it again, there's no lecture, he just says, 59. That's it, 59, no lecture, you know the lecture, just remember lecture number 59.

It's almost like the staff is lecture number 59. Remember Korach, we don't have to go through all of that, just look at the staff. The staff was designed to be an; Ot livnei meri - to be a sign to those who would rebel. That's the plan.

But there's another part to the plan too. The other part of the plan is what you do with the rock. If you continue reading, what does Hashem - what does God tell Moses to do? Kach et ha'mateh - take the staff; V'hakhel et ha'eidah atah v'Aharon achicha - gather together the congregation; V'dibartem el ha'selah l'eineihem - and then speak to the rock before their eyes. V'natan meimav v'hotzeita lahem mayim min ha'selah - speak to the rock before their eyes, it will give of its water and that's how you'll draw water out from the rock. V'hishkita et ha'eidah v'et be'iram - and you will give the people and their cattle the water to drink.

Now, Moses' response to this, as we said before, is kind of perplexing. Moses takes the staff from before God, does as he's told, gathers everyone together before the rock, but then he says something strange. He asks in question form, he says; Shimu nah ha'morim - listen you rebellious ones; Ha'min ha'selah hazeh notzi lachem mayim - can we really draw water out from the rock for you? Now I think we're in a position to understand Moses' strange question. It's not because he doesn't believe in miracles, this man has done miracles all over the place, it's because he really believes in miracles, he, better than anyone else, understands what's behind a miracle. You don't get nothing from nothing, you don't get water from a rock, Stam, out of nowhere, miracles come from somewhere. Who are you? Look at you. You're rebels. Listen you rebels, how can we really get water from the rock?

God had set forth a plan, but Moses almost disbelievingly looks at the plan and it just doesn't make sense to him how you get water from a rock. How does it work? The only way it works is one of two ways, either you have this tremendous faith, you're able to say God, we can't figure it out, it's been three days, we don't have any water, but please help us out. Or if you don't have that faith you have Miriam, and Miriam somehow carries you through. Miriam's well, the rock that was struck 40 years ago, becomes Miriam's well. But now you have neither, Miriam is dead and the well has stopped producing water.

That means that now it is crucial that the people come to God with some sense of faith, but where are they at? They're at 40 years ago with Korach. They're rebels. That's the very opposite of faith. Not only do they not have faith, but they don't even want to be here, they want to go home to Egypt.

This is the worst possible situation to be in, and Moses, more than anyone, understands that this is the worst possible situation. He turns around, he says, I don't understand, how can we do it?

If you listen to Moses' question, by the way, very carefully, there's a very chilling sort of double entendre in his words. Listen to what he says. Shimu nah ha'morim - listen you rebels; Ha'min ha'selah hazeh notzi lachem mayim - do you really think we can get water out of this rock? But of course you know that Morim - first of all the word Morim - rebels, comes back from the Korach story where they were called rebels and the staff was an; Ot livnei meri - was a sign to the rebels.

But there's another double entendre in that word rebels, because Morim of course is spelled here in a strange way. Usually you could spell Morim with a Vav; Mem, Vav, Reish, Yud, Mem, but here interestingly it's spelled without the Vav; the Vav is implied. Mem, Reish, Yud, Mem. What does that word spell; Mem, Reish, Yud, Mem? Vowelize it differently and it's Miriam. There's almost like another level of what Moses is saying here. If you read this with - just sort of switched the vowelization, it's not; Shimu nah ha'morim - listen you rebels, it's almost as if Moses is talking to his dead sister; Shimu nah ha'Miriam - listen Miriam; Ha'min ha'selah hazeh notzi lachem mayim - can we really get water out of this rock without you?

How are we going to do this? It's one or the other, it's either through faith or it's through Miriam. Miriam, you're not here, how can we get water from this rock without you? Through faith? But the people are rebels; Shimu nah ha'morim - listen you rebels, how can we get water out from the rock?

Moses doesn't see it. God has said there's a new way, the rock before that you hit, the rock that became Miriam's well, that rock, speak to it now, it's a whole new world. Speak to the rock and the rock will give of its waters. Take the staff, take Aharon's staff, show it to the people and then do something else, speak to the rock, and then I'll take care of everything - and God doesn't explain.

Moses turns to the people and says, how can it happen? Vayarem Moshe et yado - and he lifts his hand; Vayach et ha'selah b'mateihu pa'amayim - and he strikes the rock with what? With apparently his staff. It says his staff. Which staff? The staff that he had previously struck the rock with, 40 years ago. What is Moses trying to do? Yes, he took the staff, he showed it, that's what God said. But now he takes his staff, the same staff that 40 years ago he hit this rock, and he hits the rock again. What's he trying to do? It's almost like in desperation he's trying to restart the Well of Miriam without Miriam. The only way that this well has worked is through what happened 40 years ago, he tries to hit the rock, and the rock does produce water, and the water flows, and it looks like everything was fine.

Except then God said; Ya'an loh he'emantem bi l'hakdisheini - you didn't have enough faith in Me to sanctify My name. Something else had to happen. In the world in which Miriam was alive that was a world in which I told you to hit the rock and that's how the rock produces water. But we're not living in that world anymore, Miriam is dead, there was a new way that it needed to happen, you have to speak to the rock in this world. What's the big deal? Who cares? Speak to the rock, hit the rock, either way it's same faith, what's going on?

Now, we're ready to look one more time at Rashi's Kal v'Chomer, that strange argument that I'm arguing to you from Rashi's perspective holds the key to the whole story. Let's go back and look at that Kal v'Chomer and ask what really is that Kal v'Chomer about? What was that rock supposed to teach? It seems as if Miriam carried the people on her back with her faith and now that she died Miriam's well had one last lesson to teach, which is how to live in a world without Miriam, when there's no Miriam for you anymore, then how do you get water? That's Rashi's Kal v'Chomer.

So what was Rashi's Kal v'Chomer, remember? If a rock that doesn't speak and doesn't hear, that doesn't get anything out of listening to God, that doesn't get rewarded, doesn't get punished, doesn't need to make a living, if a rock listens to God when God speaks to it, then shouldn't you as well, shouldn't people as well? We asked well people aren't rocks, what really is the comparison between this? How do we understand that? So I want to pull back and see if we can understand what Rashi is talking about here.

There's a Midrash that I want to share with you, you can find it on your source sheets, it's selection number 4. I found it in Seder Olam here, but this is what it says. Shelosha parnassim tovim amdu l'Yisrael the Jews had three people who really took care of them, and they were all from one family; V'eilu hein

* and these were them. Moshe v'Aharon u'Miriam - the three siblings; Moses, Aaron and Miriam. V'shalosh matonot tovot nitnu al yadam - and three wonderful gifts were given through them; V'eilu hein - and these were they. Be'er - the well; V'(Amud) Annan - and the cloud that guided the Jews in the desert and told them where to camp; [Veha'man/U'man 18:03] - and the Manah. Man b'zechut Moshe - the Manah came through the merit of Moses. Amud annan b'zechut Aharon - the cloud that guided them came in the merit of Aaron. Be'er - the well came; B'zechut Miriam - came in the merit of Miriam. Meitah Miriam nistalek ha'be'er - once Miriam died the Be'er was lost, and indeed, once each of these great people died another piece of this was lost.

Now think about these three people and these three gifts, so to speak, that came to the Jewish people in their merit. What's the commonality between these gifts? You take these three ideas; Amud he'Annan - the cloud that guided the Jews, the Manah, and the water, what's the common denominator? What brings all this together? They're all three miraculous, but they're certain kinds of miracles, they're miracles that happen every day, that happen every day in the desert, and they're necessary for basic survival. So you're in the desert, you have to know where to go. If you don't know where to go the cloud of God guides you and tells you where to camp and tells you where not to camp and tells you where to go. If you're in the desert you have to have something to drink, if you're in the desert you have to have something to eat. The Manah and the well provided these needs.

Now, these were miracles, but these weren't miracles like the splitting of the Red Sea, these weren't miracles like the Ten Plagues. The Ten Plagues and the splitting of the Red Sea is something that is a once in a lifetime event; you see it and it's gone and you never see anything like that ever again. These are not once in a lifetime events, these happen every single day.

The Midrash is pointing out, I think, a stark fact of life in the desert and that is, life in the desert is miraculous. It's miraculous on a mundane level - even though that sounds like an oxymoron. It means that your mundane life is miraculous. But that mundane, miraculous life was coming to an end, we're in the fortieth year in the desert, we're on the cusp of the Jews coming into the land of Israel, it's all going to change. They're about to enter into the land of Israel and there's not going to be Manah anymore, there's not going to be the well anymore, there's not going to - you're going to get all of it from the environment. You'll get food from the environment, you'll grow food, you'll get water from the environment. The Jews are making a transition, transitions are always difficult and you have to isolate what are the challenges that face me in one environment and how are those challenges different in the other environment, it's not the same challenges.

How are the challenges which the Jews face in the desert different from the challenges that the Jews are going to face in the land of Israel? What do they need to do in order to change and make it in a new world, at this moment in history when their leaders are going to die and leave them, and when they're going to have a whole new way of living?

So I refer you here to our PowerPoint which I used to try to illustrate these points. But if you think about the challenges that faced the Jews in the desert, if you think about the unique spiritual challenges that faced the Jews in the desert, what are they? What characterizes life in the desert? The signal characteristic of life in the desert is that your basic needs are taken care of miraculously, on an everyday basis.

What does that mean to me as a spiritual person in a relationship with God? What are my challenges? What are some of the things that are not so challenging? So it's a little difficult to imagine because we don't live in a miraculous world. But if we can close our eyes and imagine what would it be like if we live with miracles every single day of our lives? Not just the occasional miracle that we can easily forget about, but miracles that literally shake you, you see the Divine manifesting Himself, you see God in your life in a vivid, full color way, every day in your life. How is life different in that world?

So imagine for a second you say oh you know, I don't want to be such a religious person, I like cheeseburgers, I'll eat my cheeseburger on Yom Kippur - on the Day of Atonement, God doesn't mind so much. I can say that now, I can say that well, maybe God doesn't see me, maybe God isn't so real, maybe He's just a philosophical concept, who really knows - philosophize. But if I live with Manah coming from the heavens every single day, if I live with geysers flowing out of portable wells that feed millions of people with their water, if I live with that on an everyday basis, it's very hard to eat that cheeseburger, it's very hard to pretend that God isn't present and that I can just get away. It's almost like I just don't have a choice. What? I'm supposed to say no? I'm supposed to eat the cheeseburger? I'm supposed to take these lightning bolts from heaven - God is everywhere, His presence is right there in my life, how do I say no?

So the challenge to just simply listen to God's fundamental commands is less of a challenge if you live in a world of miracles.

By the way, I think this is what Chazal meant - what our Sages meant, there's a famous Midrash that - actually it's a Gemara, it appears in the Talmud, I quoted it to you in section 3 in your source notes. But it's this notion that when God gave the Torah at Sinai the Midrash says He held the mountain above their heads as if it was a wine barrel. Very strange Midrash. The Midrash is actually based upon the fact that it says that the Jews stood; Vayityatzvu b'tachtit ha'har - which literally means that they stood at Mount Sinai under the mountain. Now colloquially it means that there was this big mountain near them and relative to the mountain they were down and the mountain was up, but literally it means they stood underneath the mountain. The Midrash takes it literally and says, so to speak, God held the mountain over their heads such that they were really underneath the mountain and said, either you accept the Torah that I'm about to give you, or; Sham tehei kevuratchem - or I'll drop the mountain onto your heads and you'll die.

Now, what's the Midrash talking about? Does it mean it really happened this way? It didn't really happen this way. First of all if it did happen this way we couldn't have been responsible for accepting the Torah, what's the big deal, we were forced into it. It doesn't say in the Torah we were forced into it, well what's the Midrash talking about? I think what the Midrash is saying is that in effect when you show up at Mount Sinai and you have a fire and light show and God comes down out of the heavens and reveals Himself in front of everybody and speaks to you, to an entire nation and gives the Torah, what are you going to say, no? You can't say no. The presence of the Divine is so real and so imminent there's just no way to say no, it's in effect taking away your choice. You know, what are you going to say, no God, never mind, sorry, try somebody else?

So I think what the Midrash is getting at really - I mean, if you imagine it's not just Sinai but it's life in the desert all the time, at some level God is breaking your back. It's like, we're influenced by nature, nature matters to us, nature teaches us. You ever wonder why people in California are different than people in Minnesota? People in Minnesota live with snow, they know what it's like not to be able to get out of their houses in the morning because the forces of nature can take you over. If it's sunny and it's 75 degrees every day, it's a whole different world, the nature affects you. And if you live in a world of miracles nature really affects you. God, so to speak, breaks the back of nature daily, makes nature - twists nature's arm behind its back and says, do what I tell you to do, and in effect that's like twisting our arm behind our back because we can't say no either. How do you say no in a situation like that?

Now, this doesn't mean that people in a world of miracles don't have any choices, that choices are taken away from them. Yes, it's true that listening to God and basically following His commands becomes more taken for granted because it's this outside impetus. But it doesn't mean you don't have choices.

There are real choices but they are in a different realm, and that is where do miracles come from? Miracles only come from - again - faith. Putting yourself in God's hands. When there's no other way you can do it, it's not up to me anymore, it's not up to my actions, God is going to do the actions, I have to say it, God it's not up to me anymore, it's up to You, and it's a very difficult thing to say. Faith is a very, very tricky thing. It's one of the hardest things in the world to do - whether it's faith in God or even faith in another human being - to be able to say, I leave myself vulnerable in your hands. That's tough.

I remember one time there was this - it was back in California, and you - when I was a kid and we had these neighbors that had a cat and a dog. One day I see the dog and the cat - they were actually good friends - and one day dog opens its mouth and cat sort of playfully comes up to dog and dog has its mouth wide open, and cat sticks its head in dog's mouth. And dog very gently puts its teeth down and has its teeth just in the tops of cat's ears, and just stays there and cat stays there, and dog stay there, and then they - I don't know, it looked like they both just kind of fell asleep in that position.

That's faith, and that's really tough, to really put your life in someone else's hands, it's a very, very tough thing, and it was required on a daily basis in the desert. Faith is a central challenge in the desert, it's not really actions. Your actions you have the impetus of miracles, but how do the miracles happen? Miracles only happen when you can say God, it's up to You. Or you can say, God, You take over from here.

That's the dynamic in the desert.

But that dynamic is about to change. The Jews are about to go into the land of Israel, and in the land of Israel it's a whole different world. In the land of Israel there are no miracles - at least no miracles that happen on this daily basis, to provide for your basic needs. So that changes things. Faith becomes less significant. It doesn't mean you don't have to trust God, but as a daily necessity of living to be able say it's not up to my actions, it's up to God, God You put it in - You make it happen, you don't have to do that on a daily basis. You can plant - yes, you got to pray to God for rain, but you can plant, you can do something. You can go find a well yourself, you don't have to rely on some miraculous water spigot that comes in the merit of great faith or in the merit of Miriam, to quench everyone's thirst. You can dig a well.

So what then is the great challenge in the land? If the challenge is not faith really, the challenge, I think, is action, which is that when you lose everyday miracles you also lose that sort of artificial external impetus that just gets you to listen to God, God is not obviously present at every second, at every stage. Now the great question is from where does it come, this impetus to follow God's will, to listen to what God says? God gives you these commands, why should I listen? I'm not living in a world of miracles where I'm forced essentially to listen, so why should I listen? I can plant my crops, I can dig my well, I can get along, why really should I listen? That, I think, is the great critical challenge. Where is the impetus to action to just follow God's commands going to come from in the new world, in the land of Israel? That, I think, was what Miriam's well was meant to teach after Miriam died. That really is Rashi's Kal v'Chomer.

What Rashi's Kal v'Chomer is saying, I think, is that the same way that in the wilderness you looked to nature and you followed nature, that nature's back, so to speak, was broken by the incredible manifestation of God in everyday level, and our backs were broken, so to speak, what can we do, say no? We took nature's lead at that point, in the land of Israel you can also take nature's lead. As strange as it sounds, you can find in nature the impetus for following God's will even without miracles, too, and that was what the argument was meant to teach.

In the world of Miriam you hit the rock and the rock gave of its water. What's the significance of hitting a rock? Symbolically when you hit a rock, what are you doing? The language by the way, in the text is that - when you look back in Exodus when Moses hit the rock - that God commands him hit the rock and draw forth water from the rock. The rock doesn't have any choice, you hit the rock and you force the rock to give its water. That's one paradigm, that's the paradigm of the miraculous world. But now there's a transition miracle, there's a non-miraculous miracle, a miracle that gets you ready for a world without miracles, a miracle that says there's another way that nature listens to God, nature doesn't have to get hit. A rock can be spoken to and it can listen.

If you look at the language by the way, here in Numbers, Chapter 20 in the story of Moses and the rock, the command was, speak to the rock; V'natan meimav - and it will give its water. V'hotzeita lahem mayim min ha'selah - and that's how you get water from the rock. You're not forcing the rock, you're not drawing water from the rock, the rock is not passive, so to speak, the rock is active, you speak to the rock and you let the rock give its waters.

What is this lesson? Listen to the Kal v'Chomer. If a rock that doesn't get anything outside, there's no external stimulus, there's no reward, there's no punishment, it doesn't need to make a living, if it listens to God, then shouldn't you as well? Think about that Kal v'Chomer. What is it saying? Why does a rock listen to God? What do you mean that a rock listens to God? That a rock doesn't have to be hit to listen to God? That, so to speak, God can speak to the rock, can make His will known to the rock, and the rock, nature, will just listen. Why would nature do that? Does nature do that? What the Kal v'Chomer is teaching is that there's another way in which nature follows God's will. It's not only when incredible miracles happen that nature is following God's will, it's not only when rocks get hit and forced to do what they normally don't do, that they follow God's will. Every time that nature follows its path, its normal path, it's following God's will.

You know, one of the strangest things that scientists feel there is in the world is why there are laws of nature at all. Why are there laws of nature? Why is it that there's this inverse square law of gravity? That gravity always follows that? Why is it that the ratio of the strength between the nuclear weak force and nuclear strong force is always the same no matter where we are in the universe? Who said? I mean why is it that water flows down all the time and not up? Why are there laws? Why isn't it just sort of random? There's no answer to that really, it's just the way things are.

But there is a theological answer to that. The theological answer to that is, is that nature just wants to follow the will of its creator, it is natural to follow the will of its creator. Every time that water flows downhill in a stream it's following the will of God. Every time that bodies act according to the laws of physics it's following the will of God that planted these laws in nature and said, this is what I expect of you. It's another, more subtle way in which nature follows God, and it's a way which we're meant to learn from too. Nature can be spoken to and respond. Why would it do that? Why would it respond? It will respond because it's natural. That's the fundamental teaching. It's natural for a creature to want to fulfill the expectations of its creator. That's just the way it is. That's why rocks listen to God. That's why nature listens to God without being hit.

By the way, that is the fundamental spiritual characteristic of nature. Nature can be dangerous, we can worship nature, we can worship the sun, we can worship the moon. But there's a beautiful bright side to nature too. There's something that nature can teach us. Why is it - what is it that's so spiritual, so enticing, so intoxicating about nature? Why is it that you feel - I used to feel when you go into Yosemite, you hike the Vernal Falls Mist Trail, you feel it's a spiritual experience. What is it about that that is so spiritual?

There's a story I like to tell when I kind of felt this. I was in - I think it was in, Carmel Bay, out in California and I was Davening Mincha, it was time - the sun was setting, it was time for the afternoon prayers. I'm looking out and it's by the ocean and there was this gorgeous scene. Off in the ocean there's this driftwood, but it's not really driftwood, you look a little closer and there are these harbor seals and they're just playing in the water and they're just frolicking, they're having a great time. I'm looking at this and you have this - it sounds crazy but you just wanted to jump in the water with them. You want to be part of that. It was like there was this whole symphony of nature, doing God's will, naturally, and you say to yourself, I'm a creature too, I want to be part of this, I also want to do what my Creator wants.

That's the impetus that nature can give us, and that, I think, is the Kal v'Chomer.

If a rock - look at a rock, a rock doesn't get rewarded, a rock doesn't get punished, when God speaks it can listen, not just when it's hit, and you too, if you're a human being can't you find it in yourself to listen too? Plus, you also get rewarded, you also get punished, there's gravy, but that's not the fundamental reason why you listen. The fundamental reason you listen is for the same reason that rocks listen, because you're a creature just like a rock, just like the rest of nature, don't you want to? It's the finding of an internal stimulus, you're not dependent upon external stimuli. It's the finding of an internal stimulus, you could do it even without miracles forcing you.

And, in a certain way, life in the land is a more mature life than life in the wilderness. It's almost like - if you would envision it, it's like - a life of miracles is like when you constantly have kindling and you add kindling to try to get the fire going, to try to get the fire going. But then there's a time when it's not about all the miracles and the kindling which makes these fancy flames, that's all external. Ultimately, the fire has got to burn on its own, the logs have to catch and it's a slow, steady flame, and it's not as bright and it's not as dramatic, but it's internal, it's working on its own. And that's life in the land and that's what we're mean to be able to do as we go into the land.

By the way, I think the lessons are very significant for us or for me, at least. You ask yourself this question - it's a very real question, why do I listen to God? You say, all right, so well, because I believe He'll throw me in Hell afterwards if I don't listen. All right, that's one reason. I believe I'll get punished. But is that it? It's just because - so God is like a powerful terrorist in the sky and He'll really get you if you don't listen, is that what it all boils down to? Or there's a huge reward and I have to listen to that? The Mishnah in Avot says; Al tiheyu ka'avadim hameshamshim et ha'rav al menas le'kabel pras - don't have reward and punishment as your prime goal. If it's not your prime goal, if there's no outside stimulus, then where does it come from?

Where does it come from? Is it because you grew up religious and if you didn't grow up religious, if you didn't grow up in an Orthodox home, if you didn't grow up in a God-fearing home so you - ? So if doesn't come from nurture, just from people telling you this is what you have to do, if it's not society just keeping up appearances that everybody else around me is doing it, is there anything internal? Forget society, even forget anything external, even forget reward, forget punishment, is there anything else?

Fundamentally it's that yes, if God is my Creator I want to follow His will, that's what creatures want to do. That was the crucial lesson that Moses was meant to teach.

But if you go back to Numbers 20 the lesson didn't get taught, what happened? The people were rebelling, it was a nightmare, it was Korach all over again. Moses, the man most sensitive to what it really takes for miracles and miraculous life to happen, looks at this situation and it's a complete nightmare. His sister is no longer here, the title for this whole paragraph is Miriam dies, how do you live in the world without Miriam? So the only way you could do it is faith. But it's not just that people don't have faith, they're rebelling, it's the very opposite of faith. Shimu nah ha'morim - listen you rebels, listen Miriam, how is it possible to get right? There's only two possible ways that you can manage to get water? You can either get it through faith or you can get it through Miriam having faith for all of you, but without that it can't happen.

God said, it can happen. God said, do this, speak to the rock. Moses doesn't do it; for whatever reason Moses doesn't see the third possibility. And it is characterized in the Torah as a lack of faith, that's what faith is, the ability to say I don't understand it but there can be another way of seeing it. For some reason Moses didn't do that. He was a man of miracles, he understood the reality in a way that we can't even understand, the reality of what it takes for miracles to exist in the world, and it was unimaginable for him, apparently, any other way and in desperation he takes his staff and he strikes the rock. God says no, that wasn't what needed to happen, all you need to do is quell the rebellion.

God says take Aaron's staff, lecture number 59, show them the staff, get them to stop rebelling. That's all you need. After that something else will happen, after that speak to the rock. Moses looks [at them 41:23] and says, what do You mean? It's not just enough just that they shouldn't rebel? They are rebelling. But even if they shouldn't rebel they still need this faith, where is it going to come from? There's no Miriam.

Moses doesn't do it, he doesn't speak to the rock, he hits the rock and Moses can't go into the land. Why? I don't believe it's a punishment. It's not a punishment, it's just a reality. The people need to learn this lesson, they need a new kind of leadership going into the land. If you can't teach them that lesson then you can't be the leader, they need someone else to bring them into the land. Who is that going to be? So that will be Joshua. Because you didn't sanctify My name and you didn't have that faith to see that other possibility, you can't teach them what they need to know; Lachein loh tavi'u et ha'am hazeh - you can't be the one to bring them into the land. They need someone else who can teach them how to live in that new kind of existence. That, I think, is what the Book of Numbers has to say about this issue of why Moses can't come into the land.

But we have to say the Book of Deuteronomy does seem to tell another side to this story, it seems that somehow this picture which Numbers paints is not complete, there is a very different view being presented in Deuteronomy. Ultimately, what I want to do is see if it's - I don't know if it's possible to make sense of how these two views come together. What I want to do now is turn our attention to Deuteronomy and try and figure it out.

Now I mentioned in the first class that we had, just towards the very beginning, the central problem, which is that in Deuteronomy if you read carefully it doesn't sound like we're talking about the story of the rock when Moses says that God for some reason didn't allow me to go into the land. That reason doesn't appear to be the same reason as striking the rock in Numbers Chapter 20. Again, the particular verse which is relevant in Deuteronomy Chapter 1 is verse 37 when Moses says; Gam bi hitanaf Hashem biglalchem - and God became angry at me because of you saying; Gam atah lo tavoh sham - so too you as well shouldn't go into the land.

There's some debate among the commentators as to what this means, and I mentioned this back in the first lecture. There's some who suggest that we are talking about the same story of hitting the rock and Moses is complaining that God became angry at me because of you, it is essentially blaming the episode upon the Jews. Although, as we mentioned, that sounds strange, it sounds like sour grapes, what do you mean God became angry at me because of you? You were the one who hit the rock. I mean it's true the people provoked you, they got angry, but it doesn't mean that you had to hit the rock, you had a choice, but why blame the people? We mentioned that this isn't the only place in Deuteronomy - again later on; Va'etchanan el Hashem ba'eit hahi - when Moses says I pleaded to God and I said, please let me go into the land; Vayitaber Hashem bi lema'anchem - and God became angry at me because of you. Same kind of language. It's Moses' consistent vision that God became angry because of the people, and somehow Moses bore the brunt of that. Why? How does that fit with Numbers?

We mentioned before that it seems like if you take a little bit of a broader view, Moses is talking about another event other than hitting the rock. He seems to be talking about the event of the Spies, the story of sending these spies out to spy out the land - which is again recounted for the first time in Numbers and recounted again in Deuteronomy. The spies come back and a whole disaster ensues when the Jews don't want to go into the land as a result of the report of the spies. If you look at Deuteronomy in context - in other words, if you look at the first couple of verses before Moses says; And also God became angry at me because of you - that was the story we were talking about, the story of the spies. So it sounds like we're talking about the story of the spies, but again, the problem is why would Moses be blamed for the story of the spies? Why would God get angry at Moses because of the Jews?

So these are some of the puzzles that we're going to try to work out in figuring out the section of Deuteronomy. But in order to do that we really need to pull back the zoom lens, just like we did in Numbers - just as in Numbers we tried to look at a larger picture, here too we really need to look at the larger picture. The first steps of that are to look at the entire chapter in Deuteronomy and try to understand the chapter in context and then try to understand what this little piece of it means when Moses says that God became angry at me because of you.

So what I want to do is focus on the entire Chapter 1, or really Chapter 1 from verse 1 all the way through this section where Moses says God became angry at me because of you, which is in verse 37. So here is your homework question for next week. What I want you to do is look at this opening speech in Deuteronomy, this is Moses' opening speech in Deuteronomy. Again, just to set the context, the Jews are on the cusp of entering the land and Moses addresses them. There is a speech here and whenever there's a speech there's got to be a theme, otherwise it's not a good speech. What I want you to ask is what really is the theme? What's the main idea of this speech?

Again, this is a question we're not often used to asking when we study Chumash - when we study Bible, oftentimes we go verse by verse, we understand this verse, we understand what this commentary says, that commentary says, we go onto the next verse. But sometimes it's just worth it to just pull back and say, what's the big picture, what's the speech all about? Forget what each verse is about, what's the picture? So that's what I want you to ask, what is the picture, what is the main idea of this speech from verse 1 in Deuteronomy, Chapter 1, through 38?

Now here are a couple of things which you can always do when you want to figure out what something is about - and I think we can do it here with great profit as well. (Profit with an f and not with a ph.) When we look at a section of text, one of the important things to ask if we want to know what it's really all about is what are the sections? Can we break this up into sections? How do the sections relate to one another? If we can figure out what the sections of the text are and how they relate to one another, we can also figure out what the whole is about.

So that's what I want you to do with Deuteronomy here. See if you can break this speech into sections. There's a prologue, where does the prologue end? Where does the first section begin? Where does the first section end? Second section? You should be able to break it into three or four sections. So that's one important thing to do in figuring out what the speech is about. Maybe we can give sort of a title for each of those sections and that will help us.

But what I want to do with you for just a second is point out one of the issues just in the prologue, and you can think about that just to kind of get started, because I think the prologue - as any good prologue does - sets the tone for what the speech is about. Okay, so here's what the prologue says; Eileh ha'devarim asher diber Moshe el kol Yisrael b'eiver ha'Yarden - these are the words that Moses spoke to the entire Jewish people when they were on the other side of the Jordan River in the desert. Now we're going to have a lot of place names; we're about to get a lot of identification markers of where they were

* a lot of identification markers. I think the obvious question is why do I need so many identification markers? First of all what do we care exactly where they were? And also you only need two or three places to triangulate a position, here we have a lot more than two or three places. So it seems that there's some other meaning to the places that are being spoken about beyond simply telling us where they were at the time. The question is, what is that other meaning and how do we figure it out?

What I want to ask us to do is to play my favorite Sesame Street game which is; Which One of These Things is Not Like the Other? You know that Sesame Street game where there's a bunch of boxes on the screen and you have to figure out which box just doesn't belong, it doesn't fit with all the others? There's a little song and you got 30 seconds to figure it all out. Well if you put all of these place names in a box, or in different boxes, which one of them is not like the other? Which one is being treated a little bit differently than all the others?

So listen carefully to the place names, see if you can figure out which one is a little different. Where were they? They were; B'eiver ha'Yarden - (1) they were on the other side of the Jordan. (2) In the desert. (3) In the Arava. Mul Suf - (4) opposite Suf. Bein Paran u'bein Tofel - (5) and (6) between Paran and Tofel. And Lavan and Chatzeirot and Di Zahav - that's (10). Achad asar yom mei'Chorev - they were 11 days away from Chorev - from Sinai; Derech Har Se'ir - travelling towards Har Se'ir - Mount Se'ir. Ad Kadesh Barnei'ah - going towards or until Kadesh Barnei'ah. So this is the prologue. Which place name was different than all the others? Which place name was treated differently than all the others? And how is it treated differently?

That's a question I want you to think about for next week, it will help us, I think, indentify the meaning of the speech. So read through the speech, see what you think, divide it up into sections if you can, we'll compare notes next week once you have your sections figured out. Again, we're trying to look at the big picture of this speech as a way of understanding ultimately why Moses feels that he can't enter the land now.

So it's been a pleasure folks, I will see you next week. I'm taking a quick trip to America so I'll be speaking to you from there, I'll be doing our next lecture from there, until then, have a good week, and I look forward to being back in touch with you guys. Bye-bye.