



THE ALUMNI PERSPECTIVE

by Zach Morrow

Parshat Shlach/Korach

Let me first start by saying that although my bed here in LA is comfortable, I have started missing the *Old City*, living in the dorms (not eating the food), and certainly learning in the *Bais*. It's been an interesting week, Monday morning I got off the plane in LAX at about 0600 and by 0640 I was in the car with my parents on the way back to our house. We got back to the house and my father pointed out that if I was interested there was a *minyán* about to start, and if I wanted to go, he would come with before he went to work. Alright, I figured, this is great, I can *bench Gomer*, *daven* and then go back to sleep and wake up in three days, and I'll have *davened* with my father, awesome. I get to the shul, and it's one of those shul where the tenth man is godly, he is your *Eliyahu HaNavi* for the day, he is superman. So naturally we waited for a *minyán*, and when we finally got one, there was nobody who wanted to *daven*. Now looking back at that moment, I have no idea exactly how I ended up standing in the front of the room with a *talit* on, but I am happy that I did. So I proceeded to lead *davening* that morning. Either way it wasn't until I was *benching Gomer* that I realized that I had just read this *parsha* last week, (I know I was that tired) and so I could use all of the *Divrei Torah* from Last week this week...



However being that I don't know which *parsha* I'm supposed to abide by in this perspective I'll use both and then see where we end up. In *Parshat Shlach* we talk about the spies, and in the first *Aliyah*, it is very careful to mention all of their names and which *Sheivet* they come from. Looking at this list I kept thinking, well great Moshe, this is what you do, take 12 people that don't really know each other and send them to spy on the land. What a great way to get a scouting patrol killed! You have people who don't trust each other, don't really know each other, and to top it they are the leaders of the Jewish People, these are not the soldiers, these are not the scouts, and these are the leaders, the people who don't get their hands dirty. Choose a game, any team game, I bet nine times out of ten if you have to choose you take the person you know to be on your team, the reason being that you know their strengths and their weaknesses. So what is Moshe doing here? I think there are two things that have to be said on this piece. One, the Leaders of the Jewish People are meant to get their hands a little dirty. It's not okay for

leaders to sit behind and watch as other people do their bidding. If you remember the first full day *Tiyul*, when we were in Latrun, and Rav Binny talked to us about the meaning of *Acharai!* *Acharai* means after me, and it is a very important principal in the Israeli military, meaning that your officer in the midst of battle be it before a charge or leading off into the dust, yells *Acharai!* He is the person in front leading, not like the days of olde, where kings and officers would send their people off into battle before them, how does one fight for someone who isn't willing to put his life on the line for them, rather in the Israeli military the *Katzin*, the officer leads the charge.

Secondly, I think there had to be something about these men that was special. If these are the men that you are choosing it do this mission then there must be something that individually they bring to the table, otherwise it would have been better to just choose one sheivet and send 12 spies from them. In Judaism there is a concept that someone's name is indicative of who they are, as is seen in this parsha when Moshe changes Hoshai'a's name to Yehoshua. But if you look at the other names like, *Shamu'a*, *YiGa'al*, *Shfat*, and *Hoshai'a* they all have interesting meanings. *Shamu'a* is listen, *Yiga'al* is will redeem, *Shfat* means to Judge and *Hoshai'a*, which means saving, turns into He will Save. All of these are indicative of skills that would be needed on a scouting mission. In the *other parsha* for this week, *Korach*, we see exactly what happens when people stand up and try to do what they are not meant to, what they don't have the skills for, Korach starts a revolution, claiming that Moshe has kept all of the important Jobs for him and his favorite people. What Korach is lacking, at least in my opinion is an understanding that we are put in certain positions for a reason the same way that Moshe chose the spies for certain reasons, Hashem chose Moshe and Aaron to do their jobs because they were the only person that could do it.

The same is true for this past year at Orayta. We have just come off a great year; the learning was great and the Rabbis were great. But most of all, I think the combination of guys of all kinds was amazing. Orayta wouldn't have been as much fun; I wouldn't have grown as much as I did; had it not been for the person that struggled, the person that commented on everything anyone said, the person that loved Shakespeare, or D-Rob! (I want to make sure everyone is aware this is meant out of love and awesomeness, not any amount of meanness).

This next year is not going to be easy for any of us. Some are starting in new *Yeshivot*, some will bring the light of Orayta into YU, some are going to college; I'm going to the army. We have to take these amazing friendships and experiences into this year and into the rest of our life. We need to be able to count on each other in the years that come, be it for advice, a place to go for *Shabbat*, or for whatever it is however inane. I want to extend a hand to anybody in Israel - if you're there, come by and say hello! And for the short time that I'm in LA this also applies. I would like to be able to help, however I can, wherever I am.

Shabbat Shalom everybody,

Enjoy your HOMECOOKED food (Thank God, No more Orayta Food!)
And your comfortable beds,

Zach