



Parasha Shelach

June 29, 2024

Torah: Numbers 13:1-15:41

Haftarah: Joshua 2:1-24

Ketuvim Shlichim: Hebrews 3:7-19

Shabbat shalom Mishpacha! Our *Torah* portion is *Shelach*, meaning “send.” This *parasha* begins with the sending out of the twelve spies. ADONAI was ready to fulfill His promise of the Land of Canaan to Israel and He commanded Moses to send out twelve men to investigate it. Each of the twelve is spoken of as being a *nasi*, a prince, a leader from each of the tribes, and a man able to bear arms and fight for Israel. There was no man from the tribe of *Levi*. The twelve were leaders from ten tribes, plus leaders from the half-tribes of *Yosef*, *Efrayim*, and *Manasse*.

1 *Adonai spoke to Moses saying, 2 “Send some men on your behalf to investigate the land of Canaan, which I am giving to Bnei-Yisrael.”* (Numbers 13:1-2a TLV). Their sending began an event that the writer of Hebrews calls “the rebellion.” Twelve men were sent into the land of Canaan by ADONAI to show Israel what a beautiful land it was, a land of milk and honey. They came back carrying some of what they had found, a single branch with a very large cluster of grapes carried on a pole between two of them and some pomegranates and figs. Thirty-nine years later as they were preparing to enter the Land, Moses told them: 7 *For Adonai your God is bringing you into a good land—a land of wadis with water, of springs and fountains flowing out in the valleys and hills, 8 a land of wheat and barley, vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey,...* (Deuteronomy 8:7-8 TLV), that is, date honey. These agricultural products are what later became known as the “seven species of Israel:” wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates.” The first generation could have had it too, but they hardened their hearts.

Ten of the spies didn’t see the good land at all. They saw the warlike people and Nephilim, giant men, and refused to go in, and they convinced the rest of the people not to go. Up until this point, ADONAI had prepared Israel for life with Him by giving them the *Torah*, a priesthood, and a Tabernacle through which to worship Him, and now, the opportunity to possess the Promised Land just about a year and a half after leaving Egypt. But, they rebelled, and through their rebellion, they sealed their fate: 21 *“But as certainly as I live and as certainly as the glory of Adonai fills the entire earth, 22 none of the people who saw My glory and My miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness—yet tested Me these ten times and did not obey My Voice— 23 not one of them will see the land I promised to their forefathers. None of those who treated Me with contempt will see it!”* (Numbers 14:21-23 TLV). The tenth time Israel rebelled, ADONAI had had enough. That generation of people would wander and die one by one in the wilderness for forty years, serving one year for each day that the faithless spies spent in Canaan. Joshua and Caleb gave a positive report supporting ADONAI and would enter Canaan with the second generation, those born during Israel’s time of wandering in the wilderness. The Levites were allowed to enter the Land, but not Moses and Aaron, as we will see in *Parasha Bemidbar*. (Numbers 20:12).

Later generations of Israel continued to grieve about what had happened in the Wilderness, and later on, the rabbis decided that “the rebellion” occurred on *Tisha b’Av*, the ninth of the month of *Av*. It's now a day of fasting, as described in *Mishnah Ta’anit* 4:6. It occurs this year on August 13th. That day became a tragic day in the history of Israel. The destruction of the first and second Temples also occurred on the 9th of *Av* as well as a number of other terrible events affecting Jews. These tragedies continue to be mourned every year on *Tisha b’Av*. When Solomon’s Temple was destroyed on *Tisha b’Av* in 586 BCE by the Babylonians, it was ADONAI’s judgment of Israel for their hundreds of years of disobedience. A judgment predicted by the prophets, it was for Israel’s idolatry and turning away from Him. Almost beyond belief, the Second Temple was destroyed on *Tisha b’Av* in the year 70 CE by the Romans. There is no direct Scriptural evidence that ADONAI motivated the Romans to do this and only one reference to the destruction of the Temple in all of the *Ketuvim Sh’lichim*, a prophecy by Yeshua predicting its destruction. *1 Now when Yeshua went out and was going away from the Temple, His disciples came up to point out to Him the Temple buildings. 2 “Don’t you see all these?” He responded to them. “Amen, I tell you, not one stone will be left here on top of another—every one will be torn down!”* (Matthew 24:1-2 TLV). Forty years later, it happened. Even though none of Yeshua’s *talmidim* wrote that ADONAI motivated the Romans to be His instrument of judgment as He had done with the Babylonians, we suspect that the destruction of the Second Temple was a part of ADONAI’s plan. Today, two thousand years in the future, we don’t need a Temple. Animal sacrifices for sin are no longer needed because Yeshua has become a permanent and perpetual sacrifice for every sin that every person ever committed. He is the Way, the only way to a right relationship with ADONAI, and following Him gives the promise of eternal life. But it is important that we know history, especially Israel’s history, and how it relates to prophecy and other Scriptures.

Today, there are many different theologies in Yeshua’s body of believers and different understandings of Scripture, which keep us from becoming a unified body. This is a time when we are facing the most division that we have ever seen in this nation in which ADONAI has placed us. While the situation is very different from that which the first-generation Israelites faced in Numbers 13 and 14, what we are facing today also requires that we be positive and in unity regarding ADONAI’s plans. As Yeshua’s followers dwindle in number, we are facing a number of major giants in our land, giants of abortion, homosexuality, and antisemitism. What is the answer to our disunity? The only answer that I can see is continued prayer, calling upon ADONAI to have mercy and to deliver us. In my opinion, the major divider in Yeshua’s body today is the Nation of Israel, with the second being human sexuality. What we believe is important because not only does our life with Yeshua depend upon it, but also our relationship with the other members of His body. ADONAI gave us Scripture so that we could read and know what He wants us to know. But, man interprets Scripture and sometimes gets it terribly wrong. I am not setting myself up as knowing all the truth because I know that I don’t. *Sha’ul* told us that today we know in part and prophesy in part. (1 Corinthians 13:9). But, there is a way that we can minimize our error. However, it requires that the members of Yeshua’s body understand its necessity and do it. This also comes from *Sha’ul*. We can’t emphasize his words that we must “rightly divide the Word of truth” enough. When we choose to study the Scriptures to find answers for ourselves, according to *Sha’ul*, we present ourselves before G-d as being “tried and true.” (2 Timothy 2:15). Today, our division is largely related to “doctrines of men” which some blindly follow rather than rightly dividing the Word of Truth for themselves.

We must continue to believe that the Nation of Israel is a part of ADONAI’s plan and support it and its people, as well as all the Jews of the world, as best we can. Israel has not

been replaced by “the Church,” as some believe. The New Covenant was to be made with Israel as Jeremiah proclaimed: 30 *“Behold, days are coming” —it is a declaration of Adonai— “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—...”* (Jeremiah 31:30 TLV). Nowhere does Scripture tell us that G-d made a covenant with the Church. He made it with Israel. The Israel of the New Covenant is made up of Jews who have trusted Yeshua. That covenant membership has also been extended to the people of the Nations and includes Gentiles who have trusted Yeshua. ADONAI is also in covenant with all of the Jews of the world through the Abrahamic Covenant: 18 *On that day Adonai cut a covenant with Abram, saying, “I give this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River...”* (Genesis 15:18 TLV), and then He named the tribes whose land He was giving to Abram’s descendants. ADONAI further said: 8 *“I will give to you and to your seed after you the land where you are an outsider —the whole land of Canaan—as an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”* (Genesis 17:8 TLV). He stated twice more in Genesis 17 that it was an everlasting covenant, a covenant that is in effect today. (Genesis 17:7 and 17:19). He gave them the land from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates River, but it looks like we will have to wait until Yeshua returns for Israel to expand into those additional areas. No matter what the politicians or this people group or that people group say, Israel, the Jews of the world, are the rightful owners of the Land of Israel, a land stolen from them on many occasions throughout history. Those of us who are members of the New Covenant need to be keenly aware that Abraham’s descendants, the Jews of the world, are also a part of the Commonwealth of Israel along with us, and a treasured part of ADONAI’s family. With perfect faith, we believe that at ADONAI’s perfect time, they will trust in Yeshua (Isaiah 27:9; 59:20-21; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 11:25-27) and become covenant members of the New Covenant.

I also find it necessary to address the issue of sexuality. We must stand by ADONAI’s Word, which says: 27 *God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.* (Genesis 1:27 TLV). 2 *Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and called their name “Adam” when He created them.* (Genesis 5:2 TLV). *Adam אָדָם*, is Hebrew for “mankind.” *Zakar u’neqebah, זָכָר וְנִקְבָּה*, is male and female. There are no other genders. ADONAI also instituted marriage when He said: 24 *“This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.”* (Genesis 2:24 TLV). Yeshua reiterated and upheld this concept: <11> 4 *“Haven’t you read?” He answered. “He who created them from the beginning ‘made them male and female’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate.”* (Matthew 19:4-6 TLV). *Torah* also says: 28 *God blessed them and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, fill the land, and conquer it.”* (Genesis 1:28a TLV).

ADONAI also commanded the men of Israel: 22 *“You are not to lie with a man, as with a woman—that is an abomination.”* (Leviticus 18:22 TLV). There are verses in the writings of Yeshua’s disciples that comment on this, but this is the gold standard, the original statement by ADONAI regarding this subject. For us who know that the *Torah* is not antinomian and follow it, keep it, this is the definitive verse. The word homosexual is not found in the *Torah*, but what ADONAI said is very clear. He said:

וְאֵת-זָכָר--לֹא תִשְׁכַּב, מִשְׁכַּבִּי אִשָּׁה: תוועָבָה, הוּא

Ve’et zakar lo tishkav mishkavei ishav to’evah heiv.

22 “You are not to lie with a man, as with a woman—that is an abomination.” (Leviticus 18:22 TLV). In this verse, *zakar* is a man, and *Ishah* is a woman. *To’evah*, תועבה, abomination, is defined as: “a thing that causes disgust or hatred.” (Oxford Language Dictionary). ADONAI said: “Don’t do it,” and then said: “It disgusts Him.” We understand and believe that the *Torah* commands, which do not require a Temple or Levitical Priesthood to be carried out, are active for us today as Messianic followers of Yeshua. Some are directed at men, some at women, and some at both. This command is directed to males. If you are male and believe that the *Torah* is for today, you are commanded to obey Leviticus 18:22. I have not been called to interpret what this means for Yeshua’s followers who do not believe that the *Torah* is for today. But for us, there can be no argument. This is what ADONAI said, and we obey.

The *Torah* does not mention women lying with women, but *Sha’ul* wrote regarding it: *18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In unrighteousness they suppress the truth, 19 because what can be known about God is plain to them—for God has shown it to them. 25 They traded the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason, God gave them up to shameful passions. Even their women exchanged natural relations for what is against nature. 28 And just as they did not see fit to recognize God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what is not fitting.* (Romans 1:18-19; 25-26; 28 TLV).

This belief sets up a very strong possibility of division between us and those in Yeshua’s body who believe that homosexuality is permitted and also with those who actively engage in it. But, we don’t want to fight. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, be lovers not fighters. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31a; Luke 10:27b). While we do not and cannot agree theologically with them, we must treat them no differently. This means that we should offer the same kind of support to those in need as we would to anyone else. Love is not a feeling, it is an action. The word *ahavah*, love, is derived from the word *hav*, meaning to give. Loving is giving, and the end result of truly loving is that we will establish a relationship with those to whom we show love. This love cannot be shown by our flesh, but through our spirit in communion with the Holy Spirit, and even though we strongly disagree with what they are doing, we still love. This means that while we do not and cannot support their belief, we are called to treat them the same way as we would treat anyone with regard to individual basic needs. We are not the judges of their actions, reserving that for the one true judge, Yeshua. Individuals who have these beliefs or practices are welcome to attend our services.

Individuals who violate ADONAI’s commands are committing sin. Yeshua’s disciple *Yochanan* wrote: *4 Everyone practicing sin also practices lawlessness—indeed, sin is lawlessness.* (1 John 3:4 TLV). The answer as to why every person sins can be found in Scripture. But, in the beginning, Adam did not sin. ADONAI created humankind, Adam and Eve, good and without a sin nature. *26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness! Let them rule over the fish of the sea, over the flying creatures of the sky, over the livestock, over the whole earth, and over every crawling creature that crawls on the land.” 27 God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:26-27 TLV). When first created, man was sinless. He was created in the image of ADONAI. Then, in chapter 3, we learn about the sins that Adam and Eve committed. With that one act of disobedience, sin entered into these two previously sinless creatures which G-d made. And when they had children, their sin nature was passed on to their offspring. Each and every person born from and after Adam and Eve has inherited the sin nature of their parents. Every one of us was born with that sinful nature. David said: **5** “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin, my mother conceived me.” (Psalm 51:5

NASB). His son Solomon wrote: 20 *“Surely there is not a righteous person on earth who does what is good and doesn’t sin (Ecclesiastes 7:20 TLV). Sha’ul adds: 23....”for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23 TLV). Yochanan also says more about sin: 8 “If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8 TLV). We are the children of Adam and Chavah, Adam and Eve, and left to ourselves, it is our nature to sin. We may have some of the *yetzer hatov*, the "good impulse" in us, and do some good as well. But, without something to change the sinful nature that we have inherited, the *yetzer hara*, the evil impulse, is the dominant force in our lives. ADONAI created us with free will and we can choose the path which we will take in life. We have the choice to walk in the likeness of ADONAI or to follow the path offered by *HaSatan*, the Adversary, the one who tempted our ancestors. If you have chosen life through Yeshua, you are now in the right relationship and have *shalom* with ADONAI. Sha’ul said: 1 *“Therefore, having been made righteous by trusting, we have shalom with God through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah” (Romans 5:1 TLV). He also said: 45 “So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45 TLV). When we trust Yeshua, the last Adam, a life-giving Spirit, our old sinful nature is changed. Sha’ul also teaches us: 17 “Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17 TLV). When we have trusted Yeshua and have made Him our Messiah, we have *shalom* with ADONAI, and that is the door into everything else that He has for us.**

There is a righteous remnant in every generation. There was one when the twelve spies were sent to Canaan, there was one when the First Temple was destroyed and there was one when the Second Temple was destroyed. We want to be a part of the righteous remnant of this generation. How can we? We can by remaining in the right relationship with ADONAI. We enter a right relationship through Yeshua’s sacrifice, and we maintain this relationship through frequent confession of our sins. Sin in our lives is unrighteousness. Yochanan says: 9 *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9 TLV). John’s not talking about before salvation. He’s talking about after salvation. Unrighteousness can come in with unconfessed sins after salvation. All of us here today have a relationship with Yeshua, but each of us must continually work on keeping that relationship clear of sin by confession and repentance of our sins.*

The rabbis, in the years after 70 CE, pondered the destruction of the Temple and presented their own ideas about why it was destroyed. It was, they say, because of *sinat chinam*, baseless hatred. It was a hatred so strong among the Jews themselves, division between the different sects of Judaism, that it prevented them from coming together to resist the Romans. This is what we see today in our own nation. We have groups of people placing their own interests and their hates, above the needs of our nation. This kind of sinful activity could actually destroy our nation from within unless there is change. We desperately need confession, repentance, and turning to serve ADONAI. We need to have happen in our nation what happened in Ninevah to those people and their leader: 5 *Then the people of Nineveh believed God and called for a fast and wore sackcloth—from the greatest of them to the least of them. 6 When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his robe, covered himself in sackcloth, and sat in the ashes. (Jonah 3:5-6 TLV). Pray for it for our people and our leader!*

We see Israel and its people beset by enemies on every side. In the natural, things look grim. Speaking about this very time in history, Yeshua said: 28 *“Now when these things begin to happen, stand straight and lift up your heads, because your salvation is near!” (Luke*

21:28 TLV). The psalmist also wrote about this same time. He said; *3 For look, Your enemies make an uproar. Those who hate You lift up their head. 4 They make a shrewd plot against Your people, conspiring against Your treasured ones. 5 "Come," they say, "let's wipe them out as a nation! Let Israel's name be remembered no more!"* (Psalm 83:3-5 TLV). I emphasize "as a nation." Asaph, the Psalmist, knew that Israel would be a nation when these things happened, but not everyone did, and it could not have happened until after 1948 when Israel became a nation again. Those in Yeshua's body who don't recognize Israel as a nation should study prophecy more. We see that the nations that are gathered against Israel today are the very ones mentioned in this psalm: Edom (a mixture of Middle Eastern people), the Ishmaelites (certain Arabs of North Arabia), Moab (some of the Jordanians), the Hagrites (descendants of Hagar living in Jordan), Gebal (a certain group living in Lebanon), Ammon (certain Jordanians), Amalek (their DNA is scattered among the Arabs), Philistia (mixed among the Middle Eastern people), the inhabitants of Tyre (certain people in southern Lebanon), Assyria (certain people living in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey) and Lot's sons (certain people in Jordan today).

Ezekiel also wrote about this coming time in history: *1 The word of Adonai came to me saying: 2 "Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophecy against him 3 and say, thus says Adonai Elohim: 'Behold, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. 4 I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws. I will bring you out, with all your army, horses and horsemen—all of them splendidly dressed—a vast assembly with breastplate and shield, all of them wielding swords.'*" (Ezekiel 38:1-4 TLV). Some say that Gog and Magog are Russia and China. Meshech and Tubal are identified as southern Russia and the surrounding area. With them will be Persia (Iran), Cush (a part of modern Sudan), Put (peoples just west of Egypt), Gomer (peoples in Armenia), and Togarmah (possibly people within Armenia and Georgia). ADONAI said: *16 "You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud covering the land. It will happen in the last days. I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me—when I am sanctified through you, Gog, before their eyes."* (Ezekiel 38:16 TLV).

Yeshua also told Yochanan about this very same time in history: *16 Then the spirits gathered the kings to the place called in Hebrew Har-Megiddo.* (Revelation 16:16 TLV). He said that the "spirits," the demon assistants of *HaSatan*, would gather them. Their false god Allah is speaking words of hate to them even now. The Plain of Megiddo is found in central Israel just south of the Galilee. If there is an antichrist coming and a seven-year tribulation period, this battle cannot happen now. But there is no physical antichrist and the Great Tribulation has already happened, so there is nothing else that needs to happen before the Day of ADONAI. About the Tribulation, Yeshua said: *21 "For then there will be great trouble, such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will."* Matthew 24:21 TLV). It happened in the city of Jerusalem in 70 CE. In saying this, Yeshua promised that whatever happens to Jerusalem in the future, it will not be as terrible as what happened at the hands of the Romans in the year 70. (read about the Great Tribulation in *Parasha Vayashev*, December 9, 2023). There is one thing that must happen before Armageddon can occur. *HaSatan* must be chained and released from the Abyss. *1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and satan—and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He also threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short while.* (Revelation 20:1-3 TLV). Dispensationalism mistakenly places this thousand years in the future, but *HaSatan* has already been chained and released

and is now deceiving the nations for a short while. He is being used by ADONAI to put demonic spiritual hooks in the jaws of Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and Ali Khamenei. (Ezekiel 38:4). (read about *HaSatan* and the Abyss in *Parasha Ekev*, August 20, 2022).

Psalm 83, Ezekiel 38, and Revelation 16 are all about the same thing, the Day of ADONAI. It is the final battle between the kings of the earth and Yeshua. The events we see today are leading up to that great battle, the final deliverance of Israel. It's always been all about Israel and their brother and *Goel*, Yeshua, their Kinsman Redeemer. The centuries-long persecutions of the Jews that has been led by *HaSatan* is about to come to an end.

ADONAI is speaking to Yeshua's followers today through the events of our *parasha*. The author of Hebrews wrote: *7 Therefore, just as the Ruach ha-Kodesh says, "Today if you hear His voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness."* (Hebrews 3:7-8 TLV). The first generation of Israelites had hard hearts. Their hearts were not receptive to ADONAI's generous plan for them. This is the message that the whole body of the Messiah needs to hear and heed today. Hardness of heart is a problem that all of us can have at one time or the other no matter how committed to ADONAI we are. It even happened to Moses who struck the rock twice in anger: *8 "Do not harden your heart as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, 9 when your fathers tested Me, they challenged Me, even though they had seen My work."* (Psalm 95:8-9 TLV). If you have an area of hardness in your heart, something that you have against another person and have not forgiven, today is the day to forgive. Is there an area of your life that you have hardened and are withholding from Yeshua? Hebrews continues: *12 Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief that falls away from the living God.* (Hebrews 3:12 TLV). It can happen to all of us, and Yeshua is calling us to surrender it all to Him. He wants all of us. Pray for the body of Messiah that a spirit of repentance and return would fall upon every one of us.

We see the day approaching, the Day of ADONAI. The Prophet Joel declared: *1 Blow the shofar in Zion! Sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all living in the land tremble—for the day of Adonai is coming— surely it is near! 2 A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as blackness spreads over the mountains. A great and mighty people—from antiquity, there was never anything like it, nor after it ever again from generation to generation.* (Joel 2:1-2 TLV). It will be a day of terror for the unrighteous but a day of deliverance for Yeshua's faithful. It is near. When we blow the *shofar* to begin each *Shabbat* morning service, we are calling for the Day of ADONAI to come: *Blow the shofar in Zion! Sound an alarm on My holy mountain!* We must do our part to prepare the way. Pray that Yeshua's whole body will return and stand up for Him.

Don't forget our theme: "Revival begins with me!" Don't forget the three R's. It is time for the body to return to Yeshua, a return to spiritual authority, and a return to the pews. Pass this on to your Facebook friends!

Revival Begins With Me!

***Return to Yeshua!
Return to Authority!
Return to Attendance!***

Pass it on!

Shabbat shalom!

