



## TORAH 4 TEENS

### BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



**DAFNA ERLBAUM**  
**CHAI GIRLS SUMMER**  
**MADRICHA**

### DOUBLE VISION, DANGEROUS OUTCOME

Parshat Devarim opens with Moshe's farewell speech, where he reviews the major events that took place during Bnei Yisrael's journey through the desert. One of the most intriguing retellings is the story of the *meraglim* (spies). We first read about it in Parshat Shelach, but Moshe's version in Devarim is noticeably different. And as we know, the Torah never repeats a story without purpose. When we see different versions of the same event, it is a signal to stop and ask: what is the deeper message?

In Shelach, the mission seems like a tour of the land. The spies are told to examine the soil, the cities, the people, and the fruit. It feels like an inspirational journey, meant to excite the nation about the beauty and potential of Eretz Yisrael. The command appears to come directly from Hashem.

In Devarim, the tone shifts. The initiative to send spies seems to come from the people. The goal is not to admire the land, but to strategize its conquest. Moshe describes a more tactical mission, focused on roads, defenses, and military planning.

Rav Elchanan Samet offers a powerful explanation. He suggests that these are actually two different missions. The first, initiated by God, was meant to build love and connection to the land. Later, the people requested a second

mission for practical, military reasons. Wanting to be efficient, Moshe decided to use the same group of leaders for both tasks.

But this decision led to disaster. The spies returned with a mixed message that caused panic and despair. The confusion of having two different goals wrapped into one mission created room for misinterpretation and fear. What began with good intentions ended in tragedy.

There's a powerful lesson here about the importance of clarity in our intentions and roles. Sometimes, trying to "kill two birds with one stone" might seem smart or efficient, but it can actually lead to confusion, blurred focus, and unintended consequences. When our goals are muddled, it becomes easy for our mission to be misinterpreted or manipulated. The Torah reminds us that good intentions require good structure. Our job is to stay focused, define our goals clearly, and make sure that the way we pursue them stays aligned with their original intent.

### Shabbat Shalom!



**LEORA WEINBERG**  
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### IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

In this *parasha*, Moshe is criticizing *Bnei Yisrael* and recounting their major mistakes—*chet ha-meraglim*, *chet ha-ma'apilim*, their lack of faith, and more. *Devarim* is the *sefer* that contains Moshe's farewell speech to *Bnei Yisrael*.

It takes place during the last few days of his life and serves as a *sikum*—a summary of everything that happened on their journey. But he's not just talking to *Bnei Yisrael*—he's challenging them.

The *pasuk* uses the word "*diber*" instead of "*amar*" because it's not just casual speech—it's *tochacha*, rebuke. Moshe doesn't just say "You did this and that wrong"; he also teaches them how to fix their mistakes and grow from them. He shows them how to become better people and want to be part of *Bnei Yisrael*—something greater than themselves.

In the *Haftarah* from *Yeshayahu*, we see something similar. *Yeshayahu* criticizes *Bnei Yisrael* for their *chata'im* (sins), but he also encourages them to do *teshuvah*. If they return to Hashem, Hashem will redeem them.

From this, we can learn how to make ourselves better during the Three Weeks. *Tisha B'Av* and *Shivah Asar B'Tammuz* are not just tragic dates—they are learning opportunities. Yes, they are full of sadness, but we must learn how to respond, grow, and transform our pain into growth.

When something difficult happens, we can choose how to react. Instead of seeing it only as a loss, we can use it to grow and become better. That's a powerful part of life—learning from our mistakes and turning them into stepping stones.

**May we all be zocheh to take the hard situations and bad choices in life and turn them into a source of growth.**

בעזרת השם שהמשיח יבוא במהרה ונתראה בבית

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