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2 Av 5768 ה
Parashat Devarim
Moshe: Caught Between Two Worlds

Who is Responsible for Sending the Spies?

(1) רש"י במדבר יג ב

"שלח לך." לדעתך (סוטה לד:), אני איני מצוה לך, אם תרצה שלח, לפי שבאו ישראל ואמרו נשלח אנשים לפנינו (דברים א כב), כמה שנאמר ותקרבוני אלי כלכם וגו' (שם).

1) Rashi Numbers 13:2

"Send for yourselves." For your own knowledge. I am not commanding you. If you want, then send them. Because Israel came and said "Let us send men before us" (Deuteronomy 1:22), as it says "And ye came near unto me every one of you, etc."

2) J.H. Hertz: The Pentateuch and Haftorahs (Deuteronomy 1:22)

By combining what is related here with Numbers 13, we get a full understanding of the incident. The plan originated with the people; it commended itself to Moses; and was sanctioned by God. Moses does not here repeat all the details, because a reminder of all those details is not required for his **address of admonition**; whereas the historical account in Numbers could well dispense with narrating the circumstance that it was the Israelites who had demanded the sending of the Spies. "It is evident that a circumstance may be passed over in silence by the historian, which nevertheless the orator selects as lending emphasis to his oration" (Hoffmann). It was important to remind them that the sending of the spies, which led immediately to their rebellion, was their own suggestion (Sifri).

3) Everett Fox: The Five Books of Moses (Deuteronomy 1:22)

In Numbers 13, the incentive for sending the spies comes from God. Here is yet another indication of the more human-oriented viewpoint of Deuteronomy.

4) Jeffrey H. Tigay: JPS Commentary on Deuteronomy, Excursus 2 (Page 424)

Critical theory views the differences between Deuteronomy and Numbers as discrepancies between sources; Deuteronomy either follows variant traditions about the episode, or knew at least some of the traditions on which Numbers is based but modified them for ideological reasons--such as making clear that the scouts' mission, which reflected lack of faith in God and has disastrous consequences, was the people's initiative, not God's.

Why is Moshe Punished?

5) תרגום אונקלוס ספר דברים פרק א

לו אף-עלי הוּא רָגַז מִן קִדְמִים וְ בְדִילְכוֹן לְמִימְרֵי אַף אֶתְּ לֹא תַעֲוֹל תִּפְּוֹן:

5) The Translation of Onkelos Deuteronomy 1:37

Even upon me the Lord was angry **from before** for your sakes, saying: Thou also shalt not go in thither.

6) רמב"ן ספר דברים פרק א

לו גם בי התאנף ה' בגללכם. יאמר הנה חטאתיכם אשר עשיתם בעת ההיא במרגלים מנעו מכם הארץ הטובה, ועוד הוספתם לחטוא בפעם אחרת עד שמנעתם גם אותי מלעבור. כי רצה להזכיר יחד עונש כל הנמנעים מעבור אל הארץ, כי הכל בגרמת עונותיהם.

6) Nachmanides, Deuteronomy 1:37

“Even upon me the Lord was angry”: He says that your sin of the spies kept you from the good Land, and you continued to sin at another time, until you prevented me as well from passing [into the Land of Israel]. He wanted to mention together the punishment of all those who were prevented from passing into the Land, because it was all due to their sins.

7) כלי יקר ספר דברים פרק א

לו גם בי התאנף ה' בגללכם... על שלא גרם להאמין כמו שנאמר (במדבר כ יב) יען לא האמנתם, אמנתם לא נאמר אלא האמנתם, שהוא לשון מפעיל יוצא לשני, שלא גרמתם לישראל להחזיקם באמונה... כמו שהמרגלים לא יבואו שמה מצד שאינם מאמינים בה' כאמור, כך גם אתה לא תבוא שמה מזה הטעם כמו שנאמר יען לא האמנתם בי, כי המחטיא הרבים חטא הרבים תלוי בו.

7) Kli Yaqar, Deuteronomy 1:37

“Even upon me the Lord was angry”: [Moshe was punished] because he did not bring about belief, as it is said (Numbers 20:12) “because you did not cause belief.” It didn't say that it was because “you did not believe,” but rather because “you did not **cause** belief,” which is causative, that you didn't cause Israel to be strengthened in their faith... Just as the spies will not come there because they did not believe in God, so too, you won't come there for the same reason, as it is said “because you didn't **cause** belief in me” - the sin of the many is upon he who causes the many to sin.

8) Jeffrey H. Tigay: JPS Commentary on Deuteronomy, Excursus 2 (Page 425)

Abravanel recognizes that Deuteronomy connects Moses' punishment with the incident of the scouts; he holds that Moses was implicated because he modified the scouts' orders and thereby brought about the report that undermined the people's faith.

9) ספר במדבר פרק ב

יב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְעַן לֹא־הֶאֱמַנְתֶּם בִּי לְהַקְדִּישֵׁנִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכֹן לֹא תְבִיאוּ אֶת־הַקְּהָל הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי לָהֶם:

9) Numbers 20:12

And God spoke to Moses and Aaron: Because you didn't believe in me to sanctify me in the eyes of the Children of Israel; therefore you will not bring this congregation into the land that I have given them.