

## Shelah-lekha

### Numbers 13:1 - 15:41

*This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh*

#### Chapter 13

<sup>1</sup> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Send men to scout the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelite people; send one man from each of their ancestral tribes, each one a chieftain among them." <sup>3</sup> So Moses, by the Lord's command, sent them out from the wilderness of Paran, all the men being leaders of the Israelites. <sup>4</sup> And these were their names:

From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur.

<sup>5</sup> From the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori.

<sup>6</sup> From the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh.

<sup>7</sup> From the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph.

<sup>8</sup> From the tribe of Ephraim, Hosea son of Nun.

<sup>9</sup> From the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Rafu.

<sup>10</sup> From the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi.

<sup>11</sup> From the tribe of Joseph, namely, the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi son of Susi.

<sup>12</sup> From the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli.

<sup>13</sup> From the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael.

<sup>14</sup> From the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi.

<sup>15</sup> From the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi.

<sup>16</sup> Those were the names of the men whom Moses sent to scout the land; but Moses changed the name of Hosea son of Nun to Joshua. <sup>17</sup> When Moses sent them to scout the land of Canaan, he said to them, "Go up there into the Negeb and on into the hill country, <sup>18</sup> and see what kind of country it is. Are the people who dwell in it strong or weak, few or many? <sup>19</sup> Is the country in which they dwell good or bad? Are the towns they live in open or fortified? <sup>20</sup> Is the soil rich or poor? Is it wooded or not? And take pains to bring back some of the fruit of the land." — Now it happened to be the season of the first ripe grapes.

<sup>21</sup> They went up and scouted the land, from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, at Lebo-hamath.

<sup>22</sup> They went up into the Negeb and came to Hebron, where lived Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the Anakites. — Now Hebron was founded seven years before Zoan of Egypt. — <sup>23</sup> They reached the wadi Eshcol, and there they cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes — it had to be borne on a carrying frame by two of them — and some pomegranates and figs. <sup>24</sup> That place was named the wadi Eshcol because of the cluster that the Israelites cut down there.

<sup>25</sup> At the end of forty days they returned from scouting the land. <sup>26</sup> They went straight to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, and

they made their report to them and to the whole community, as they showed them the fruit of the land. <sup>27</sup> This is what they told him: "We came to the land you sent us to; it does indeed flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. <sup>28</sup> However, the people who inhabit the country are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large; moreover, we saw the Anakites there. <sup>29</sup> Amalekites dwell in the Negeb region; Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites inhabit the hill country; and Canaanites dwell by the Sea and along the Jordan."

<sup>30</sup> Caleb hushed the people before Moses and said, "Let us by all means go up, and we shall gain possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it."

<sup>31</sup> But the men who had gone up with him said, "We cannot attack that people, for it is stronger than we." <sup>32</sup> Thus they spread calumnies among the Israelites about the land they had scouted, saying, "The country that we traversed and scouted is one that devours its settlers. All the people that we saw in it are men of great size; <sup>33</sup> we saw the Nephilim there — the Anakites are part of the Nephilim — and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them."

#### **Chapter 14**

<sup>1</sup> The whole community broke into loud cries, and the people wept that night. <sup>2</sup> All the Israelites railed against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in the land of Egypt," the whole community shouted at them, "or if only we might die in this wilderness! <sup>3</sup> Why is the Lord taking us to that land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be carried off! It would be better for us to go back to Egypt!" <sup>4</sup> And they said to one another, "Let us head back for Egypt."

<sup>5</sup> Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembled congregation of the Israelites. <sup>6</sup> And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, of those who had scouted the land, rent their clothes <sup>7</sup> and exhorted the whole Israelite community: "The land that we traversed and scouted is an exceedingly good land. <sup>8</sup> If the Lord is pleased with us, He will bring us into that land, a land that flows with milk and honey, and give it to us; <sup>9</sup> only you must not rebel against the Lord. Have no fear then of the people of the country, for they are our prey: their protection has departed from them, but the Lord is with us. Have no fear of them!" <sup>10</sup> As the whole community threatened to pelt them with stones, the Presence of the Lord appeared in the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites.

<sup>11</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me, and how long will they have no faith in Me despite all the signs that I have performed in their midst? <sup>12</sup> I will strike them with pestilence and disown them, and I will make of you a nation far more numerous than they!" <sup>13</sup> But Moses said to the Lord, "When the Egyptians, from whose midst You brought up this people in Your might, hear the news, <sup>14</sup> they will tell it to the inhabitants of that land. Now they have heard that You, O Lord, are in the midst of this people; that You, O Lord, appear in plain sight when Your cloud rests over them and when You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. <sup>15</sup> If then You slay this people to a man,

the nations who have heard Your fame will say, <sup>16</sup> 'It must be because the Lord was powerless to bring that people into the land He had promised them on oath that He slaughtered them in the wilderness.' <sup>17</sup> Therefore, I pray, let my Lord's forbearance be great, as You have declared, saying, <sup>18</sup> 'The Lord! slow to anger and abounding in kindness; forgiving iniquity and transgression; yet not remitting all punishment, but visiting the iniquity of fathers upon children, upon the third and fourth generations.' <sup>19</sup> Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to Your great kindness, as You have forgiven this people ever since Egypt."

<sup>20</sup> And the Lord said, "I pardon, as you have asked. <sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, as I live and as the Lord's Presence fills the whole world, <sup>22</sup> none of the men who have seen My Presence and the signs that I have performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who have tried Me these many times and have disobeyed Me, <sup>23</sup> shall see the land that I promised on oath to their fathers; none of those who spurn Me shall see it. <sup>24</sup> But My servant Caleb, because he was imbued with a different spirit and remained loyal to Me — him will I bring into the land that he entered, and his offspring shall hold it as a possession. <sup>25</sup> Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites occupy the valleys. Start out, then, tomorrow and march into the wilderness by way of the Sea of Reeds."

<sup>26</sup> The Lord spoke further to Moses and Aaron, <sup>27</sup> "How much longer shall that wicked community keep muttering against Me? Very well, I have heeded the incessant muttering of the Israelites against Me. <sup>28</sup> Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'I will do to you just as you have urged Me. <sup>29</sup> In this very wilderness shall your carcasses drop. Of all of you who were recorded in your various lists from the age of twenty years up, you who have muttered against Me, <sup>30</sup> not one shall enter the land in which I swore to settle you — save Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. <sup>31</sup> Your children who, you said, would be carried off — these will I allow to enter; they shall know the land that you have rejected. <sup>32</sup> But your carcasses shall drop in this wilderness, <sup>33</sup> while your children roam the wilderness for forty years, suffering for your faithlessness, until the last of your carcasses is down in the wilderness. <sup>34</sup> You shall bear your punishment for forty years, corresponding to the number of days — forty days — that you scouted the land: a year for each day. Thus you shall know what it means to thwart Me. <sup>35</sup> I the Lord have spoken: Thus will I do to all that wicked band that has banded together against Me: in this very wilderness they shall die to the last man.'" ,p. <sup>36</sup> As for the men whom Moses sent to scout the land, those who came back and caused the whole community to mutter against him by spreading calumnies about the land — <sup>37</sup> those who spread such calumnies about the land died of plague, by the will of the Lord. <sup>38</sup> Of those men who had gone to scout the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh survived.

<sup>39</sup> When Moses repeated these words to all the Israelites, the people were overcome by grief.

<sup>40</sup> Early next morning they set out toward the crest of the hill country, saying, "We are prepared to go up to the place that the Lord has spoken of, for we were wrong." <sup>41</sup> But Moses said, "Why do you transgress the Lord's command? This will not succeed. <sup>42</sup> Do not go up, lest

you be routed by your enemies, for the Lord is not in your midst. <sup>43</sup> For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there to face you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned from following the Lord and the Lord will not be with you."

<sup>44</sup> Yet defiantly they marched toward the crest of the hill country, though neither the Lord's Ark of the Covenant nor Moses stirred from the camp. <sup>45</sup> And the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that hill country came down and dealt them a shattering blow at Hormah.

## **Chapter 15**

<sup>1</sup> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

When you enter the land that I am giving you to settle in, <sup>3</sup> and would present an offering by fire to the Lord from the herd or from the flock, be it burnt offering or sacrifice, in fulfillment of a vow explicitly uttered, or as a freewill offering, or at your fixed occasions, producing an odor pleasing to the Lord:

<sup>4</sup> The person who presents the offering to the Lord shall bring as a meal offering: a tenth of a measure of choice flour with a quarter of a hin of oil mixed in. <sup>5</sup> You shall also offer, with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, a quarter of a hin of wine as a libation for each sheep.

<sup>6</sup> In the case of a ram, you shall present as a meal offering: two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with a third of a hin of oil mixed in; <sup>7</sup> and a third of a hin of wine as a libation — as an offering of pleasing odor to the Lord.

<sup>8</sup> And if it is an animal from the herd that you offer to the Lord as a burnt offering or as a sacrifice, in fulfillment of a vow explicitly uttered or as an offering of well-being, <sup>9</sup> there shall be offered a meal offering along with the animal: three-tenths of a measure of choice flour with half a hin of oil mixed in; <sup>10</sup> and as libation you shall offer half a hin of wine — these being offerings by fire of pleasing odor to the Lord.

<sup>11</sup> Thus shall be done with each ox, with each ram, and with any sheep or goat, <sup>12</sup> as many as you offer; you shall do thus with each one, as many as there are. <sup>13</sup> Every citizen, when presenting an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the Lord, shall do so with them.

<sup>14</sup> And when, throughout the ages, a stranger who has taken up residence with you, or one who lives among you, would present an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the Lord — as you do, so shall it be done by <sup>15</sup> the rest of the congregation. There shall be one law for you and for the resident stranger; it shall be a law for all time throughout the ages. You and the stranger shall be alike before the Lord; <sup>16</sup> the same ritual and the same rule shall apply to you and to the stranger who resides among you.

<sup>17</sup> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>18</sup> Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

When you enter the land to which I am taking you <sup>19</sup> and you eat of the bread of the land, you shall set some aside as a gift to the Lord: <sup>20</sup> as the first yield of your baking, you shall set aside a loaf as a gift; you shall set it aside as a gift like the gift from the threshing floor. <sup>21</sup> You shall make a gift to the Lord from the first yield of your baking, throughout the ages.

<sup>22</sup> If you unwittingly fail to observe any one of the commandments that the Lord has declared to Moses <sup>23</sup> — anything that the Lord has enjoined upon you through Moses — from the day that the Lord gave the commandment and on through the ages: <sup>24</sup> If this was done unwittingly, through the inadvertence of the community, the whole community shall present one bull of the herd as a burnt offering of pleasing odor to the Lord, with its proper meal offering and libation, and one he-goat as a sin offering. <sup>25</sup> The priest shall make expiation for the whole Israelite community and they shall be forgiven; for it was an error, and for their error they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the Lord and their sin offering before the Lord. <sup>26</sup> The whole Israelite community and the stranger residing among them shall be forgiven, for it happened to the entire people through error.

<sup>27</sup> In case it is an individual who has sinned unwittingly, he shall offer a she-goat in its first year as a sin offering. <sup>28</sup> The priest shall make expiation before the Lord on behalf of the person who erred, for he sinned unwittingly, making such expiation for him that he may be forgiven. <sup>29</sup> For the citizen among the Israelites and for the stranger who resides among them — you shall have one ritual for anyone who acts in error.

<sup>30</sup> But the person, be he citizen or stranger, who acts defiantly reviles the Lord; that person shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>31</sup> Because he has spurned the word of the Lord and violated His commandment, that person shall be cut off — he bears his guilt.

<sup>32</sup> Once, when the Israelites were in the wilderness, they came upon a man gathering wood on the sabbath day. <sup>33</sup> Those who found him as he was gathering wood brought him before Moses, Aaron, and the whole community. <sup>34</sup> He was placed in custody, for it had not been specified what should be done to him. <sup>35</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man shall be put to death: the whole community shall pelt him with stones outside the camp." <sup>36</sup> So the whole community took him outside the camp and stoned him to death — as the Lord had commanded Moses.

<sup>37</sup> The Lord said to Moses as follows: <sup>38</sup> Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. <sup>39</sup> That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge. <sup>40</sup> Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your God. <sup>41</sup> I the Lord am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I, the Lord your God.