

Kol Rina  
*An Independent Minyan*  
Parashat Shelach Lecha  
June 20, 2020 \*\*\* 28 Sivan, 5780

Kol Rina – An Independent Minyan, is a traditional egalitarian community. We are haimish (homey/folksy), friendly, participatory, warm and welcoming. We hold weekly services in South Orange as well as holiday services and celebrations which are completely lay led. We **welcome all** to our services and programs from non-Hebrew readers to Jewish communal and education professionals.

[Shelach Lecha in a Nutshell](https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/2201/jewish/Shelach-in-a-Nutshell.htm)

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Moses sends twelve spies to the land of Canaan. Forty days later they return, carrying a huge cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig, to report on a lush and bountiful land. But ten of the spies warn that the inhabitants of the land are giants and warriors “more powerful than we”; only Caleb and Joshua insist that the land can be conquered, as G-d has commanded.

The people weep that they’d rather return to Egypt. G-d decrees that Israel’s entry into the Land shall be delayed forty years, during which time that entire generation will die out in the desert. A group of remorseful Jews storm the mountain on the border of the Land, and are routed by the Amalekites and Canaanites.

The laws of the menachot (meal, wine and oil offerings) are given, as well as the mitzvah to consecrate a portion of the dough (challah) to G-d when making bread. A man violates the Shabbat by gathering sticks, and is put to death. G-d instructs to place fringes (tzitzit) on the four corners of our garments, so that we should remember to fulfill the mitzvot (divine commandments).

[Haftarah in a Nutshell: Joshua 2:1-24](https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/691124/jewish/Haftarah-in-a-Nutshell.htm)

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This week's *haftarah* tells the story of the spies that Joshua sent to scout the city of Jericho, prior to the Israelites' invasion of the Holy Land, a point in common with this week's Torah reading, which discusses the twelve spies that were sent by Moses years earlier to explore the Holy Land.

Joshua sent two spies to Jericho, where they lodged at an inn located in the city's walls, operated by a woman named Rahab. Their presence was quickly discovered by the king who sent for Rahab and asked her to turn in her guests. Rahab responded that her guests had already left the city — when actually she had hidden them on her rooftop. "And she said to the men, I know that G-d has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away because of you. For we have heard how G-d dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you completely destroyed."

At Rahab's request, the two spies assured her that she and her family would not be harmed during the conquer of Jericho—provided that she would tie a scarlet thread and

hang it from her window. This would be a symbol that this home is a safe haven. Rahab helped the men escape via a rope she lowered from her window and told them how to hide from possible pursuers. The spies escaped safely and returned to report to Joshua.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What is Going on? (Shelach Lecha 5780) by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

<https://rabbisacks.org/shelach-lecha-5780/>

In March 2020, whilst launching a new book,<sup>[1]</sup> I took part in a BBC radio programme along with Mervyn King, who had been governor of the Bank of England at the time of the financial crash of 2008. He, together with the economist John Kay, had also brought out a new book, *Radical Uncertainty: decision-making for an unknowable future*.<sup>[2]</sup>

The coronavirus pandemic was just beginning to make itself felt in Britain, and it had the effect of making both of our books relevant in a way that neither of us could have predicted. Mine is about the precarious balance between the “I” and the “we”: individualism versus the common good. Theirs is about how to make decisions when you cannot tell what the future holds.

The modern response to this latter question has been to hone and refine predictive techniques using mathematical modelling. The trouble is that mathematical models work in a relatively abstract, delimited, quantifiable world and cannot deal with the messy, unpredictable character of reality. They don't and cannot consider what Donald Rumsfeld called the “unknown unknowns” and Nicholas Taleb termed “black swans” – things that no one expected but that change the environment. We live in a world of radical uncertainty.

Accordingly, they propose a different approach. In any critical situation, ask: “What is happening?” They quote Richard Rumelt: “A great deal of strategy work is trying to figure out what is going on. Not just deciding what to do, but the more fundamental problem of comprehending the situation.”<sup>[3]</sup> Narrative plays a major role in making good decisions in an uncertain world. We need to ask: of what story is this a part?

Neither Rumelt nor King and Kay quote Amy Chua, but her book *Political Tribes* is a classic account of failing to understand the situation.<sup>[4]</sup> Chapter by chapter she documents American foreign policy disasters from Vietnam to Iraq because policy-makers did not comprehend tribal societies. You cannot use war to turn them into liberal democracies. Fail to understand this and you will waste many years, trillions of dollars, and tens of thousands of lives.

It might seem odd to suggest that a book by two contemporary economists holds the clue to unravelling the mystery of the spies in our parsha. But it does.

We think we know the story. Moses sent twelve spies to spy out the land. Ten of them came back with a negative report. The land is good, but unconquerable. The people are strong, the cities impregnable, the inhabitants are giants and we are grasshoppers. Only two of the men, Joshua and Caleb, took a different view. We can win. The land is good. God is on our side. With His help, we cannot fail.

On this reading, Joshua and Caleb had faith, courage and confidence, while the other ten

did not. But this is hard to understand. The ten – not just Joshua and Caleb – knew that God was with them. He had crushed Egypt. The Israelites had just defeated the Amalekites. How could these ten – leaders, princes – not know that they could defeat the inhabitants of the land?

What if the story were not this at all? What if it was not about faith, confidence, or courage. What if it was about “What is going on?” – understanding the situation and what happens when you don’t. The Torah tells us that this is the correct reading, and it signals it in a most striking way.

Biblical Hebrew has two verbs that mean “to spy”: lachpor and leragel (from which we get the word meraglim, “spies”). Neither of these words appear in our parsha. That is the point. Instead, no less than twelve times, we encounter the rare verb, la-tur. It was revived in modern Hebrew and means (and sounds like) “to tour.” Tayar is a tourist. There is all the difference in the world between a tourist and a spy.

Malbim explains the difference simply. Latur means to seek out the good. That is what tourists do. They go to the beautiful, the majestic, the inspiring. They don’t spend their time trying to find out what is bad. Lachpor and leragel are the opposite. They are about searching out a place’s weaknesses and vulnerabilities. That is what spying is about. The exclusive use of the verb latur in our parsha – repeated twelve times – is there to tell us that the twelve men were not sent to spy. But only two of them understood this.

Almost forty years later, when Moses retells the episode in Devarim 1:22-24, he does use the verbs lachpor and leragel. In Genesis 42, when the brothers come before Joseph in Egypt to buy food, he accuses them of being meraglim, “spies”, a word that appears seven times in that one chapter. He also defines what it is to be a spy: “You have come to see the nakedness of the land” (i.e. where it is undefended).

The reason ten of the twelve men came back with a negative report is not because they lacked courage or confidence or faith. It was because they completely misunderstood their mission. They thought they had been sent to be spies. But the Torah never uses the word “spy” in our chapter. The ten simply did not understand what was going on.

They believed it was their role to find out the “nakedness” of the land, where it was vulnerable, where its defences could be overcome. They looked and could not find. The people were strong, and the cities impregnable. The bad news about the land was that there was not enough bad news to make it weak and thus conquerable. They thought their task was to be spies and they did their job. They were honest and open. They reported what they had seen. Based on the intelligence they had gathered, they advised the people not to attack – not now, and not from here.

Their mistake was that they were not meant to be spies. They were told latur, not lachpor or leragel. Their job was to tour, explore, travel, see what the land was like and report back. They were to see what was good about the land, not what was bad. So, if they were not meant to be spies, what was the purpose of this mission?

I suggest that the answer is to be found in a passage in the Talmud<sup>[5]</sup> that states: it is forbidden for a man to marry a woman without seeing her first. The reason? Were he to marry without having seen her first, he might, when he does see her, find he is not attracted to her. Tensions will inevitably arise. Hence the idea: first see, then love.

The same applies to a marriage between a people and its land. The Israelites were

travelling to the country promised to their ancestors. But none of them had ever seen it. How then could they be expected to muster the energies necessary to fight the battles involved in conquering the land? They were about to marry a land they had not seen. They had no idea what they were fighting for.

The twelve were sent latur: to explore and report on the good things of the land so that the people would know it was worth fighting for. Their task was to tour and explore, not spy and decry. But only two of them, Joshua and Caleb, listened carefully and understood what their mission was: to be the eyes of the congregation, letting them know the beauty and goodness of what lay ahead, the land that had been their destiny since the days of their ancestor Abraham.

The Israelites at that stage did not need spies. As Moses said many years later: “You did not trust in the Lord your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp and to show you the way you should go” (Deut. 1:32-33). God was going to show them where to go and where to attack.

The people needed something else entirely. Moses had told them that the land was good. It was “flowing with milk and honey.” But Moses had never seen the land. Why should they believe him? They needed the independent testimony of eyewitnesses. That was the mission of the twelve. And in fact, all twelve fulfilled that mission. When they returned, the first thing they said was: “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit” (Num. 13:27). But because ten of them thought their task was to be spies, they went on to say that the conquest was impossible, and from then on, tragedy was inevitable.

The difference between the ten and Joshua and Caleb is not that the latter had the faith, courage and confidence the former did not. It is that they understood the story; the ten did not.

I find it fascinating that a leading economist and a former Governor of the Bank of England should argue for the importance of narrative when it comes to decision-making under conditions of radical uncertainty. Yet that is the profound truth in our parsha.

Ten of the twelve men thought they were part of a story of espionage. The result was that they looked for the wrong things, came to the wrong conclusion, demoralised the people, destroyed the hope of an entire generation, and will eternally be remembered as responsible for one of the worst failures in Jewish history.

Read Amy Chua’s Political Tribes, mentioned earlier, and you will discover a very similar analysis of America’s devastating failures in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq.[6]

I write these words while the Coronavirus pandemic is at its height. Has anyone yet identified the narrative of which it and we are a part? **I believe that the story we tell affects the decisions we make. Get the story wrong and we can rob an entire generation of their future. Get it right, as did Joshua and Caleb, and we can achieve greatness.**

Shabbat Shalom [1] Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times, Hodder, 2020.

[2] John Kay and Mervyn King, Radical Uncertainty, Bridge Street, 2020. I referred to this book in Covenant and Conversation Emor.[3] Richard Rumelt, Good Strategy/Bad Strategy, Crown

Business, 2011, 79. [4] Amy Chua, Political Tribes, Penguin, 2018. [5] Kiddushin 41a. [6] A more

positive example would be to contrast the Marshall Plan after World War 2 with the punitive

provisions of the Treaty of Versailles after World War 1. These were the result of two different narratives: victors punishing the vanquished, and victors helping both sides to rebuild.

### What True Leadership Demands: Shelach Lecha by Barry Holtz

<http://www.jtsa.edu/what-true-leadership-demands>

This is truly a fateful parashah. For it is in this week's Torah reading that we learn why Israel is condemned to wander in the wilderness for forty years before entering the Promised Land. The details of the story are straightforward: Moses chooses twelve representatives, one from each of the tribes, to scout the land that the people are about to enter. The spies are given a very specific assignment: *Come back with facts—is this a good land? Are the peoples who live there strong or weak? What is the produce of this land like?* (Num. 13:17-20) The spies set out, scout the Land, and return with their report: indeed the Land is good, but the people who live there are too powerful to conquer. Only Joshua and Caleb dissent from the report. Caleb says, "Let us go up and . . . we shall surely overcome it." (v.30) But the other ten disagree—the people who live there are "stronger than we." (v.31) The Israelites break into cries and complaints and ask to return to Egypt. (14:1-4) And these complaints lead to the punishment that the current generation must die off during the next forty years so that a fresh start can be made when entering Canaan. Of the older generation only Joshua and Caleb will have that privilege. (14:22-24)

From a literary point of view Shelah Lekha is anything but a simple story. Perhaps the most prominent question the story raises is: Who is to blame for the disastrous consequences of the reconnaissance mission? On the surface it appears that the failure of nerve evidenced by ten of the twelve scouts directly causes the people's cowardly reaction. After listening to the scouts, the people wail that it would have been better to have died in Egypt than to "die by the sword" (14:3) now. By those words, they choose to forget the 400 years of oppression in Egypt and God's miraculous delivery of them from slavery. They do not recognize God's saving hand or understand that the power that could split the Sea of Reeds could also help them defeat the inhabitants of Canaan. But perhaps the blame is not only with the scouts or with the people. After all, Moses sends the scouts on their mission and asks them to evaluate the situation from a military point of view. The list of his questions leads to their pessimistic assessment of the situation. Even more troubling is the fact that the origin of the scouts' mission was through God's command. The parashah begins with God saying to Moses, "Send men to scout out the Land of Canaan . . ." (13:2) Isn't it that command from on high that sets this whole tale down its tragic path? Traditional commentators were well aware of this possible interpretation and aimed to undercut such a reading. Rashi, for example, picks up on the two-word Hebrew command "*shelah lekha*" (in which the second word "you" can be viewed as superfluous) and understands it, midrashically, as "for yourself": "Do this for yourself," Rashi says, "I am not commanding you to do it, but if you want to, send them." Midrash Tanhuma (*Shelah* 1) takes it even a step further stating that God actually *didn't* want Moses to send out the spies—an interpretation that contradicts the plain meaning of the opening words of our parashah!

The Bible itself reinterprets the mission. In Deuteronomy Moses recounts the story of the

twelve scouts and says that the people came and asked him to designate people to spy out the Land. God's command does not even appear.

But no matter who is to blame for the impetus for the mission, we are left to ask, what exactly did the spies do wrong? What was it about their report that led to God's disapproval? Were they lying? And if they weren't, why should they be punished for simply reporting what they saw?

I suggest that the spies failed not by misrepresenting what they had seen in the Land but rather, they failed in more subtle ways. First, they didn't take into account the social impact of their words. Their report brought despair and a virtual rebellion into the Israelite camp. While each of the spies was a "chieftain among them" (13:2)—they misunderstood the essence of leadership and proved themselves unworthy of the trust Moses had placed in them. To be a true leader one has to understand who your followers are and what support they need from you.

And secondly, the spies failed not by misstating the truth about the Land, but by their own interpretation of what they had discovered. True, the nations of Canaan were powerful. But the self-perception of the scouts was what brought about their downfall. Caleb announced that they would succeed against the inhabitants; the others proclaimed that they would fail. Surely both Caleb and the ten doubters had scouted the same land, seen the same things. But the doubters stated, "all the people that we saw . . . are men of great size . . . and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them." (13:33) This is the most telling line of all. *In their own eyes* the Israelite spies were weak. It was a failure of their own self-understanding, not the reality of the situation that was the problem.

Interestingly enough, the Torah in verses 13:21–24 never tells us what the spies actually saw. We only learn what happened from the participants themselves. Truth, the Torah suggests, is the perception of reality that each individual brings. If, as the midrash *Pesikta deRav Kahana* tells us, each person at Sinai received the revelation in his or her own individual and appropriate way, what we have in this week's parashah is the terrifying other side of that midrash. Each person can *doubt* God's power in his or her own individual way. Thus the story of Parsahat Shelah Lekha forms a kind of undoing of the revelation at Sinai which we celebrated just a few weeks ago at Shavuot. The people were condemned to die out in the desert because they had failed God's expectations—having experienced Sinai through the power of each individual soul, they fail God by their very human weaknesses. (Barry Holtz is the Theodore and Florence Baumritter Professor of Jewish Education at JTS)

### [Shelach Lecha by Rabbi Shaul Rosenblatt](https://mailchi.mp/b12b4fc7196e/weekly-davar-ki-sissa-2577834?e=e0f2ca6c0d)

<https://mailchi.mp/b12b4fc7196e/weekly-davar-ki-sissa-2577834?e=e0f2ca6c0d>

This week's portion focuses on the story of the spies who are sent by Moses to check out the land of Israel. They return with a negative report – it is a land that eats its inhabitants. It cannot be conquered. A land of giants.. While the women, as usual, stand strong and insist on entering Israel nevertheless, the men are terrified. In spite of the miracles they have witnessed, they are unwilling to put their trust in God and refuse to enter. God responds that they are most welcome to spend another 40 years in the desert instead.

Only their children will inherit the land. This is not a punishment, merely a granting of that which they requested – that they should not have to enter the land of Israel. God always leads us in a way that we have chosen.

The portion talks of other bits and bobs, but the spies' story is the main event.

There is a commandment in this week's portion 'not to follow your heart and eyes'.

However, I am a firm believer that, many times in life, our hearts lead us in the right direction. I don't disagree with this commandment, I just think that, like all of Torah, if you take it to an extreme or out of context, that which is very sensible ends up being very stupid. Here's how I see the difference.

In my mind, the Torah is instructing us not to be animals. A hungry, untrained animal sees food and eats – no considerations in between. It sees an animal of the opposite sex and it chases after it – if you've ever been to the park with a male dog and had a female in heat turn up, you will know what I mean. It needs to relieve itself, so it goes on the spot – doesn't matter that it's a million-dollar Persian rug or that the whole world is watching. Animals simply follow their desires as and when they arise. Equally, when the passions are not there, they have no desire to do anything. Try to get a well-fed lion to run after a gazelle. You would have no chance.

The Torah believes that we human beings have something that animals do not – and that is freewill. We can choose, rather than simply follow our desires. We can be hungry, have food right in front of us and say to ourselves that it's not healthy and so not eat. We can meet someone of the opposite sex, feel highly attracted – and stay away, because, let's say in the instance of their being married, we feel it is immoral. And when we need to relieve ourselves, we consider modesty as well as need, no matter how desperate we feel.

So, the Torah says, 'don't follow your heart'. When you have a desire pressing you to do something, consider before you act. Don't eat the whole chocolate cake in the fridge at 3am just because you feel like doing so. Don't flirt with the good-looking married employee because it seems like a fun thing to do. Don't speak unkindly to your spouse just because every bone in your body is begging you to do so. We human beings have been given the gift of being able to consider before we act. And make choices rather than just follow our base instincts. In this week's portion, the Torah implores us to use this gift. So where do you, yes, follow your heart?

There is a deeper knowing in our heart that comes with a softer, milder, less urgent and passionate feeling. It is our own inner wisdom. It doesn't pressure us or insist, it talks quietly and firmly – a gentle prodding. The prophets refer to it as a kol dumama daka, a 'soft and refined voice' – not screaming and shouting, but whispering in our ear – just loud enough for us to hear. So often, we have the high-decibel blaring boombox of our animal desires screaming at us to act right now. But whispering softly in our ear is the kol dumama daka pointing us towards where we know our true values lie. And this is the crux of freewill – to succumb to the loud noise. Or to listen beyond it to the gentle and wise message of truth. We are, every one of us, the same in this way. We all get to have wisdom whispered in our ear. If we choose to listen.

So, when the Torah says don't follow our hearts, it means the loud noise of our desires. But it does not mean the kol dumama daka; that would never lead us astray.

## Entertaining the Possibility of Success by Rabbi Rebecca Weintraub

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/11spbHaX2JAdp3R7vHU3i9ggzQRgxEb6\\_Y8kBdlhUH7k/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11spbHaX2JAdp3R7vHU3i9ggzQRgxEb6_Y8kBdlhUH7k/edit)

We, as human beings, are hardwired to focus on things we cannot do or on negative experiences. We tend to shy away from the positive, or even neutral, aspects of our lives. This concept is known in the world of psychology and mindfulness as the negativity bias. The story of the spies, in this week's Torah reading, parashat Shlach, helps us reframe our negative bias and teaches us how to work with it in a more compassionate way. Our parasha opens with Moshe and the people of Israel sending emissaries to scout out the land of Canaan. Each tribe sends one representative from "the heads of the people of Israel (Bamidbar 13:2)." We can assume the people selected were trusted, well-respected leaders. After the twelve spies explored the land, ten of them returned with a damning report. They began their report with the positive attributes of the land. It did in fact flow with milk and honey and the fruits were large, juicy, and plush. Yet they quickly turned to the negative ending their report with fear and uncertainty:

"There we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, descended from the giants. In our eyes, we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes." (Bamidbar 13:33)

They focused on how small they felt, how scary the people of the land were, and how they were certain that they would be defeated. Two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua, tried to focus on the positive but they were outnumbered, and the people of Israel became full of fear and rage. The negativity bias of the ten Spies spread to the people, and they wondered why God had freed them from Egypt just to kill them as they attempted to conquer their land.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks shares a teaching of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on the story of the spies. The Rebbe asked why the spies were so afraid of the people who dwelled in the land when they were already aware that the people of the land feared them:

"Then the chieftains of Edom were startled; [as for] the powerful men of Moab, trembling seized them; all the inhabitants of Canaan melted.

May dread and fright fall upon them; with the arm of Your greatness may they become as still as a stone, until Your people cross over, O Lord, until this nation that You have acquired crosses over." (Exodus 15:14-16)

As the people of Israel crossed the sea, they chanted these words in the Song of the Sea. If Bnai Yisrael knew they were going to be successful, what were they so afraid of? The Lubavitcher Rebbe answers his question by teaching that *success* was what the spies were afraid of, not failure.

Often it is scarier for us to think about our success than our failure, hence the negativity bias. How often do we hear that voice in our head say, "this will never work out." Or "what if I totally mess this up even though I worked hard on it?"

The story of the spies makes us think about what it would look like to entertain the possibilities of our own success; to interrupt our anxious thoughts with questions like, "what if things *do* work out?" or "what if all of my hard work *does* pay off this time?" Our very own internal Calebs and Joshuas.

This Shabbat as we read the story of the twelve spies surrounded by a world full of fear and uncertainty, may we be inspired to embrace our own success, whether personally,

nationally, or globally. Shabbat shalom! ( Rabbi Weintraub is a Rabbi at B'nai Jeshurun in NYC)

[Haftarah: On a Religious Mission by Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein \(from the Archives\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11spbHaX2JAdp3R7vHU3i9ggzQRgxEb6_Y8kBdlhUH7k/edit)

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/11spbHaX2JAdp3R7vHU3i9ggzQRgxEb6\\_Y8kBdlhUH7k/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11spbHaX2JAdp3R7vHU3i9ggzQRgxEb6_Y8kBdlhUH7k/edit)

The rabbinic tradition marvels over the success of the Joshua's spy mission when compared to that of Moses. It sees clues to its success in the way that the story of Joshua's mission is told. The unsung heroes of Joshua's mission are left nameless while the antiheroes of Moses' mission are named in all of their infamy. A late midrash asserts that the heroes of Joshua's mission remain nameless in order to emphasize the fact that they performed their mission selflessly. They acted as "shlihei mitzvah" – those sent on a religious mission and thus God has a particular interest in their success.

The midrash, noted above, quotes a mishnah which shapes the entire discussion of the halakhic (legal) concept of "shaliah mitzvah": "Those who are engaged in a religious (mitzvah) mission are exempt from [the obligations of] sukkah." (Sukkah 2:5) This mishnah prompts an interesting debate among the rabbis in the Talmud (Sukkah 25a; 26a) about the prioritization of the performance of mitzvot. What should a person do when faced with a situation where, while he is involved in the performance of one mitzvah he becomes obligated to perform a second mitzvah? According to this mishnah, a person who is in the process of performing a mitzvah is not obligated to dwell in a sukkah.

Some authorities take this exemption, which is known as "ha'osek bemitzvah patur m'mitzvah – one who is busy with a mitzvah is exempt from another mitzvah" to be operative only where the observance of the second commandment would interfere with the observance of the first. For instance, if a person was traveling in order to rescue captives and sleeping in a sukkah would hamper their mission by making the person lose sleep, this person would be exempt. Otherwise, this person would be obligated (Tosafot). Others hold that this exemption applies even where the second mitzvah would not interfere with the first mitzvah. This exemption is limited, however, to those who provide others with the ability to perform commandments. These would include those who tie tzitzit or make tefillin for those in immediate need of them. Such a person would even be exempt (in theory) from saying shema or praying, in order that they not be troubled by the performance of other commandments. (See Sukkah 26a; Or Zarua 399; Shulhan Arukh Orah Hayim 38:8). God loves those who perform God's commandments. At times, this, like many other things in life, can be a complicated exercise – one fraught with difficult choices. While neither of these models provide absolute answers to the question of how to prioritize, it is helpful that the sages have given us some helpful principles to guide the way.

### Yahrtzeits

Ilisia Kissner remembers her father Jack C. Snyder (Yaakov ben Kalman v'Leah) on Thursday June 25<sup>th</sup> (Tamuz 3).