



harm another? At the last possible minute he swerved sharply to avoid the old man. The Egyptian tank in hot pursuit behind him didn't have any such tinge of sympathy. As the tank ran over the spot where the old Jew was standing, it suddenly exploded into a fiery inferno as it tripped a hidden landmine underneath. The tank commander breathed a sigh of relief. After the war, the soldier decided to visit his father, and when he walked into the house after so long a time, the photo of his grandfather was still on the wall. Although he had seen it before, as he looked at the picture, the face appeared familiar in a strange way. He suddenly recognized the face of the old Jew who was praying in the desert. It was his own grandfather who had come to save him during his time of need! It was then that the young soldier embraced religion. "I realized right then, that he was praying for me that I should live," explained the newly religious soldier, "And I wanted to be like him." <u>TORAH GEMS</u> ומה הערים אשר הוא יושב בהנה הבמחנים אם במבצרים וגו' (יג-יט) The <i>parsha</i> tells us that Moshe sent scouts to see, among other things, if the inhabitants of Canaan lived in open cities or walled fortresses. The scouts reported that the cities in Canaan were surrounded by enormous walls with solid gates and locks. The people were now dismayed. If the Canaanites had lived in open cities, it would have been so much easier to defeat them. But now, what will <i>Bnei Yisroel</i> do? The problem, says R' Yehoshua of Galanti ZT"L, was that the people misunderstood Moshe's request. Kalev did not misunderstand, and he told the spies, "If the cities were open, then we would have reason to fear. Open cities indicate peaceful relations between the various cities and regions. The absence of walls reflects a sense of security and stability, unity amongst the people and confidence in their well-arranged and organized army. But if every city encloses itself with walls, then evidently the country is torn into quarreling factions, the society is fragmented and people suspect one another. Its army will not come together to defend against the enemy, and its forces will easily fall prey to attack." Thus, Kalev was convinced that from such a people, they have no reason to fear! Indeed, this principle is so relevant to contemporary times, and we must learn the critical lesson - to avoid fragmentation among our nation and increase brotherhood and unity, for after all, we are all one people.	*** ***	להבין היטב, מדוע לא נתקבלה התשובה של דור המדבר יוצאי מצרים, שהתחרטו על מה שהלכו אחרי עצת המרגלים וקראו למשה, "הננו ועלינו אל המקום אשר אמר ה' כי חטאנו" - הרי אם שערי תשובה אף פעם לא ננעלת, אמאי נסגרו לפני הדור ההוא? והשיב הגמ"ר דוד גולדמאן זצ"ל מעיר קלץ, שידוע שתשובה אמיתית אינה חוזרת ריקם, כי שערי תשובה באמת לא ננעלו לפני כל מי שנכשל בחטא. אך התנאי לכך הוא, שהחוטא צריך להכיר בחטאו ומתחרט עליו בלב שלם. אולם דור המדבר שיצאו ממצרים, ונגזר עליהם למות במדבר ולא להכנס אל ארץ ישראל, הם לא הגיעו אותה שעה לתשובה אמיתית, שכן לא אמרו, "הננו ועלינו אל המקום כי חטאנו לה' " - אלא אמרו דברים אחרים, "הננו ועלינו אל המקום אשר אמר ה' כי חטאנו". כלומר, יוצאי מצרים אינם מכירים אפוא בלא סייג בחטאם הכבד, אלא מציינים שה' אמר אליהם שנכשלו בחטא. משום כך אין זה נקרא תשובה אמיתית, המתקבלת בשמים בכל עת, ולכן קרא אליהם משה בשם ה', "אל תעלו כי אין ה' בקרבכם." <u>מעשה אבות....סימן לבנים</u> וראיתם אותו וזכרתם את כל מצות ה' ועשיתם אותם וכו' (טו-לט) A secular Jew in Israel from a <i>Chassidic</i> background once related the following story. His son, a commander of a Tank Artillery division in the Israeli army had become vehemently anti-religious. He even went so far as to complain about a photograph of his grandfather which hung on the wall in his father's house. The photograph, of an old man in traditional <i>Chassidic</i> garb with <i>peyos</i> and a long beard, was particularly offensive to the young soldier. "That man is a barbarian. Take the picture down," he would shriek. He stopped coming altogether to visit his father and threatened to continue to do so until the picture was removed. Everything changed during the Six Day War, in June of 1967. The Israeli tanks in the Sinai Desert found themselves all spread out. If they were attacked, they would be unable to ward off the enemy alone and would have no choice but to regroup and fight together. Suddenly, Egyptian tanks approached. The Tank Commander quickly turned his tank around and began to race back to the platoon. Unfortunately, the fastest way was straight across an open stretch. Suddenly, he saw an old man <i>davening</i>, wrapped in <i>tallis</i> and <i>tefillin</i>, right in his path! "Doesn't the fool have any place better to pray than in the middle of the desert?" he screamed. "I can't take these religious Jews anymore. I'm going to run him over!" And he was determined to do so. But how could one Jew willfully
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