

The Failure of the First Generation - Part #3

Why (possibly) Moshe and Aharon are to blame

For Torah in Motion - by Menachem Leibtag

Intro:

We are all familiar with the famous story of 'Moshe & the Rock' - and his tragic punishment - that he couldn't enter the Land of Israel.

In today's shiur, we re-examine the details of that event, in light of previous events in Sefer Devarim - in an attempt to better understand the logic of God's harsh decision.

Review: . The classic understanding -/The classic questions -.

Final questions - “shogeg” or “mazid” AND when?

I. The Crime Scene: - **Bamidbar chapter 20**

ז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר.

7 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:

ח קח אֶת-הַמַּטֶּה, וְהִקְהַל אֶת-הָעֵדָה אֹתָהּ וְאֶהְרֹן אָחִיךָ,

8 'Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water; and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give the congregation and their cattle drink.'

וְדַבַּרְתֶּם אֵל-הַסֵּלַע לְעֵינֵיהֶם, וְנָתַן מִמֵּיו; וְהוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם

מִים מִן-הַסֵּלַע, וְהִשְׁקִיתָ אֶת-הָעֵדָה וְאֶת-בְּעִירָם.

ט וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַמַּטֶּה, מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה, כַּאֲשֶׁר, צִוָּהוּ.

9 And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as He commanded him.

י וַיִּקְהִלוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאֶהְרֹן, אֶת-הַקְּהָל--אֶל-פְּנֵי הַסֵּלַע; וַיֹּאמֶר

10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them: 'Hear now, ye rebels; are we to bring you forth water out of this rock?'

לָהֶם, שְׁמַעוּ-נָא הַמְּרִים--הַמִּן-הַסֵּלַע הַזֶּה, נוֹצֵיא לָכֶם מַיִם.

יא וַיִּרָם מֹשֶׁה אֶת-יָדוֹ, וַיִּדְ אֶת-הַסֵּלַע בְּמַטְהוּ--פַּעַמַּיִם;

11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock with his rod twice; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle.

וַיֵּצְאוּ מִים רַבִּים, וַתִּשְׂתְּ הָעֵדָה וּבְעִירָם. {ס}

II. How many commandments was Moshe given?

Let's count them

1. קח את המטה
2. והקהל את העדה אתה ואהרן אחיך
3. ודברתם אל הסלע לעיניהם ונתן מימיו
4. והוצאת להם מים מן הסלע
5. והשקית את העדה ואת בעירם :

If you were Moshe,

what would you do for each command?

Discuss contradiction between #3 & #4

And what's the reason for the "mate"?

Compare with Shmot 17:1-6

א ויסעו כל-עדת בני-ישראל ממדבר-סין, למסעיהם--על-פי יהוה; ויחנו, ברפידיים, ואין מים, לשותת העם.

1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, by their stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and encamped in Rephidim; and there was no water for the people to drink.

ב וירב העם, עם-משה, ויאמרו, תנו-לנו מים ונשתה; ויאמר להם, משה, מה-תריבון עמדי, מה-תנסון את-יהוה.

2 Wherefore the people strove with Moses, and said: 'Give us water that we may drink.' And Moses said unto them: 'Why strive ye with me? wherefore do ye try the LORD?'

ג ויצמא שם העם למים, וילן העם על-משה; ויאמר, למה זה העליתנו ממצרים, להמית אתי ואת-בני ואת-מקני, בצמא.

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said: 'Wherefore hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?'

ד וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה לֵאמֹר, מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָעָם הַזֶּה; עוֹד מְעַט, וְסִקְלֵנִי.

4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying: 'What shall I do unto this people? they are almost ready to stone me.'

ה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, עֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם, וְקַח אֶת־רֹדְךָ, מִזֶּקֶנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל; וּמִטֶּדָּה, אֲשֶׁר הִכִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת-הַיָּאֵר--קַח בְּיָדְךָ, וְהִלַּכְתָּ.

5 And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Pass on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand, and go.'

ו הִנְנִי עֹמֵד לִפְנֶיךָ שָׁם עַל-הַצּוּר, בְּחָרֵב, וְהִכִּיתָ בַּצּוּר וַיֵּצְאוּ מִמֶּנּוּ מַיִם, וְשָׁתָה הָעָם; וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן מֹשֶׁה, לְעֵינֵי זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.' And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Command	Execution
1. קַח אֶת־הַמַּטֶּה	1. וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמַּטֶּה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה - כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ:
2. וְהִקְהֵל אֶת־הָעֵדָה אִתָּה וְאֶהְרֹן אַחִיד	2. וַיִּקְהֵלוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַקְּהָל אֶל־פְּנֵי הַסֵּלַע
3. וְדַבַּרְתֶּם אֶל־הַסֵּלַע לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְנָתַן מִימּוֹ	3. וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם שְׁמַעוּנָא הַמְּרִים הַמְּוַהֲסָלַע הַזֶּה נוֹצֵיָא לְכֶם מַיִם?
4. וְהוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם מַיִם מִן־הַסֵּלַע	4. וַיִּרְם מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיַּךְ אֶת הַסֵּלַע בְּמַטְהוֹ פְּעָמַיִם וַיֵּצְאוּ מַיִם רַבִּים.
5. וְהִשְׁקִיתָ אֶת־הָעֵדָה וְאֶת־בְּעִירָם:	5. וַתִּשְׁתֵּה הָעֵדָה וּבְעִירָם

Let's focus on command #3

How did Moshe understand it?

III. Let's examine the punishment

יב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן,
יַעַן לֹא-הֶאֱמַנְתֶּם בִּי,
לְהַקְדִּישְׁנִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל--לָכֵן,
לֹא תָבִיאוּ אֶת-הַקְּהָל הַזֶּה,
אֶל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר-נָתַתִּי לָהֶם.

12 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron: 'Because ye believed not in Me, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.'

יג הֵמָּה מִי מְרִיבָה, אֲשֶׁר-רָבוּ בְנֵי-
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-יְהוָה; וַיִּקְדָּשׁ, בָּם. {ס}

13 These are the waters of Meribah, where the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and He was sanctified in them. {S}

Topic of Leadership

Let's return to beginning of the story

א וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל-הָעֵדָה
מִדְּבַר-צֹן, בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן, וַיָּשֶׁב
הָעָם, בְּקַדְשׁ; וַתָּמַת שָׁם מִרְיָם,
וַתִּקָּבֵר שָׁם.

1 And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

ב וְלֹא-הָיָה מַיִם, לָעֵדָה; וַיִּקְהָלוּ,
עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן.

2 And there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

ג וַיָּרֶב הָעָם, עִם-מֹשֶׁה; וַיֹּאמְרוּ
לְאֹמֶר, וְלוֹ גֹועֵנוּ בְּגֹועַ אֶחֱיֵנוּ לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה.

3 And the people strove with Moses, and spoke, saying: 'Would that we had perished when our brethren perished before the LORD!

ד וְלָמָּה הֵבֵאתֶם אֶת-קְהָל יְהוָה,
אֶל-הַמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה, לָמוֹת שָׁם, אֲנַחְנוּ
וּבְעִירָנוּ.

4 And why have ye brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, to die there, we and our cattle?

ה וְלָמָּה הֶעֱלִיתֵנוּ, מִמִּצְרַיִם, לְהָבִיא
אֵתָנוּ, אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הָרָע הַזֶּה: לֹא
מָקוֹם זֵרַע, וַתֵּאָנֶה וַגִּפְנוֹ וְרִמּוֹן, וּמִיִּם
אֵין, לְשָׁתוֹת.

5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.'

ו וַיֵּבֹאוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן מִפְּנֵי
הַקֹּהֵל, אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד,
וַיִּפְּלוּ, עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם; וַיֵּרָא
כְבוֹד-יְהוָה, אֲלֵיהֶם. {פ}

6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tent of meeting, and fell upon their faces; and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. {P}

ז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר.

7 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:

ח קַח אֶת-הַמַּטֵּה, וְהַקְהֵל אֶת-
הָעֵדָה אֹתָהּ וְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ, וְדַבַּרְתֶּם
אֶל-הַסֵּלַע לְעֵינֵיהֶם, וְנָתַן מִיָּמָיו;
וְהוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם מַיִם מִן-הַסֵּלַע,
וְהִשְׁקִיתָ אֶת-הָעֵדָה וְאֶת-בְּעִירָם.

8 'Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water; and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give the congregation and their cattle drink.'

IV. The meaning of “Emunah”

The Hebrew word “emunah” - see Shmot 17:12

יב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר, וַיִּשְׁבַּע עָלֵיךְ; וְאַהֲרֹן וְחֹר
תִּמְכּוּ בַיַּדְיוֹ, מִזֶּה אֶחָד וּמִזֶּה אֶחָד, וַיְהִי יָדָיו אֱמוּנָה, עַד-בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ.

[See also Esther 2:7 וַיְהִי אֱמוּנָה אֶת-הַדְּסָה, הִיא אֶסְתֵּר בַּת-דָּדוּ--כִּי אֵין לָהּ, אָב וְאִם

Support – trust vs. belief

V. What staff was he supposed to take?

ו וַיִּלְנֹוּ כָּל-עַדַּת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִמַּחֲרַת,
עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן, לֵאמֹר: אֲתֵם
הַמֵּתִים, אֶת-עַם יְהוָה.

6 But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying: 'Ye have killed the people of the LORD.'

ז וַיְהִי, בְּהַקְהֵל הָעֵדָה עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-
אַהֲרֹן, וַיִּפְּנוּ אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, וְהִנֵּה
כֶּסֶהוּ הָעָנָן; וַיֵּרָא, כְבוֹד יְהוָה.

7 And it came to pass, when the congregation was assembled against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tent of meeting; and, behold, the cloud

covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.

ח וַיָּבֹאוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן, אֶל-פְּנֵי אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד. {ס}

8 And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting. {S}

ט וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר.

9 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:

י הֲרִמוּ, מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת, וְאָכְלָה אֹתָם, כָּרָגַע; וַיִּפְּלוּ, עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם.

10 'Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.' And they fell upon their faces.

יא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-אַהֲרֹן, קַח אֶת-הַמִּחְתָּה וְתֵן-עָלֶיהָ אֵשׁ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשִׂים קִטְרֹת, וְהוֹלֵךְ מִהֲרָה אֶל-הָעֵדָה, וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם: כִּי-יֵצֵא הַקֶּצֶף מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה, הֵחָל הַנֶּגֶף.

11 And Moses said unto Aaron: 'Take thy fire-pan, and put fire therein from off the altar, and lay incense thereon, and carry it quickly unto the congregation, and make atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the LORD: the plague is begun.'

יב וַיִּקַּח אַהֲרֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה, וַיֵּרָץ אֶל-תּוֹךְ הַקָּהָל, וְהִנֵּה הֵחָל הַנֶּגֶף, בָּעָם; וַיִּתֵּן, אֶת-הַקִּטְרֹת, וַיְכַפֵּר, עַל-הָעָם.

12 And Aaron took as Moses spoke, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people; and he put on the incense, and made atonement for the people.

יג וַיַּעֲמַד בֵּין-הַמֵּתִים, וּבֵין הַחַיִּים; וַתַּעֲצֹר, הַמִּגֵּפָה.

13 And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

יד וַיְהִיו, הַמֵּתִים בַּמִּגֵּפָה, אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר אֶלֶף, וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת--מִלֶּבֶד הַמֵּתִים, עַל-דִּבְרֵי-קֹרַח.

14 Now they that died by the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died about the matter of Korah.

טו וַיָּשָׁב אַהֲרֹן אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; וְהַמִּגֵּפָה, נִעְצְרָה. {פ}

15 And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tent of meeting, and the plague was stayed. {P}

טז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר.

16 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:

יז דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְקַח מֵאֹתָם מִטָּה מִטָּה לְבַיִת אָב מֵאֵת כָּל-נְשֵׂיאָהֶם לְבַיִת אֲבוֹתָם--שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר, מִטּוֹת: אִישׁ אֶת-שְׁמוֹ, תִּכְתֹּב עַל-מִטָּהוּ.

17 'Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of them rods, one for each fathers' house, of all their princes according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; thou shalt write every man's name upon his rod.

יח וְאֵת שֵׁם אַהֲרֹן, תִּכְתֹּב עַל-מִטָּה לְוִי: כִּי מִטָּה אֶחָד, לְרֹאשׁ בַּיִת אֲבוֹתָם.

18 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for there shall be one rod for the head of their fathers' houses.

יט וְהִנַּחְתָּם, בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד--לְפָנַי,
הָעֵדוּת, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹעֵד לָכֶם, שָׁמָּה.

19 And thou shalt lay them up in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you.

כ וְהָיָה, הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אֶבְחַר-בּוֹ--מִטָּהוּ
יִפְרָח; וְהִשְׁכַּחְתִּי מֵעָלַי, אֶת-תְּלֹנוֹת בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲשֶׁר הֵם מְלִינִים, עָלֶיכֶם.

20 And it shall come to pass, that the man whom I shall choose, his rod shall bud; and I will make to cease from Me the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against you.'

כא וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיִּתְּנוּ
אֵלָיו כָּל-נְשִׂיאֵיהֶם מִטָּה לְנִשְׂיָא אֶחָד
מִטָּה לְנִשְׂיָא אֶחָד לְבַיִת אֲבֹתָם--שְׁנַיִם
עָשָׂר, מִטּוֹת; וּמִטָּה אֶהְרֹן, בְּתוֹךְ
מִטּוֹתָם.

21 And Moses spoke unto the children of Israel; and all their princes gave him rods, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

כב וַיִּנַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַמִּטּוֹת, לְפָנַי יְהוָה,
בְּאֵהָל, הָעֵדוּת.

22 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

כג וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרָת, וַיָּבֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶל-אֵהָל
הָעֵדוּת, וַהֲנִיחַ פֶּרֶחַ מִטָּה-אֶהְרֹן, לְבַיִת
לְוִי; וַיֵּצֵא פֶּרֶחַ וַיֵּצֵץ צִיץ, וַיִּגְמַל
שְׁקָדִים.

23 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and put forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and bore ripe almonds.

כד וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶת-כָּל-הַמִּטּוֹת מִלְּפָנַי
יְהוָה, אֶל-כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; וַיִּרְאוּ
וַיִּקְחוּ, אִישׁ מִטָּהוּ. {פ}

24 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel; and they looked, and took every man his rod. {P}

כה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, הֲשִׁב
אֶת-מִטָּה אֶהְרֹן לְפָנַי הָעֵדוּת,
לְמַשְׁמַרְתָּ לְאוֹת, לְבְנֵי-מֹרִי;
וְתִכַּל תְּלֹנוֹתָם מֵעָלַי, וְלֹא יָמָתוּ.

25 And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept there, for a token against the rebellious children; that there may be made an end of their murmurings against Me, that they die not.'

כו וַיַּעַשׂ, מֹשֶׁה: כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
אֹתוֹ, כִּן עָשָׂה. {פ}

26 Thus did Moses; as the LORD commanded him, so did he. {P}