

PARSHAT SH'LACH LECHA  
23 SIVAN 5781/03 JUNE 2021



Untitled Triptych in Rothko Chapel by Mark Rothko

MAKING DREAMS REAL

1. "...It does indeed flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. *Efes* (עֲפָרָיִם) the people who inhabit the country are very powerful..." (Numbers 13:28)

עֲפָרָיִם – v. cease, fail, come to an end  
n. end, non-existence; zero

Their wickedness was in their use of the word *efes*, which indicates that the matter is completely impossible. (Ramban)

2. The spies were not afraid of failure. They were afraid of success. (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson)

3. Always keep Ithaca in your mind.  
To arrive there is your ultimate goal.  
But do not hurry the voyage at all.

....

Ithaca has given you the beautiful voyage.  
Without her you would never set out on the road.  
She has nothing more to give you.  
(Constantine Cavafy, "Ithaca")

4. If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand forget its cunning;  
let my tongue cleave to my palate  
if I cease to think of you,  
if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory  
even at my happiest hour.

(Psalm 137)

5. The secret of the Jews in the years of their exile was in having and not having: in having the memory and the promise of home *and* the freedom of the road, in cherishing a home without having to defend it or even keep its roads free of potholes. (Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, *Booking Passage*)

6. “If God desires us...” (Numbers 14:8)

This should be read as “All depends on Israel’s desire.” (Sefat Emet)

7. Like any great work of art, Torah is designed to draw you in, to make you realize that what you are witnessing is something that you yourself have experienced.
8. I do not believe that there was ever a question of being abstract or representational. It is really a matter of ending this silence and solitude, of breathing, and stretching one’s arms again; transcendental experiences became possible. (Mark Rothko)