

PARSHAT SH'LACH  
NUMBERS 13:1-15:41  
HAFTARAH JOSHUA 2:1-24  
23 SIVAN 5785/19 JUNE 2025



*Flag*

Encaustic, oil and collage on fabric mounted on three wood panels  
by Jasper Johns, dated 1954-55

## DREAMS AND DEEDS

1. God spoke to Moses, saying: **שְׁלַח** [send] men to scout [**יְתַרְוּ**] the land of Canaan. (Numbers 13:1-2)

**לָךְ**  
**תּוֹר**

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

**עֲפָס** – 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)

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

4. 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*)

5. 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")

6. [Joshua] said to the whole community: "If God desires us, God will bring us into the land... (Numbers 14:8)

This should be read as "All depends on Israel's desire." (Sefat Emet)

7. וְשַׁלַּח-לְךָ (Numbers 13:2)

According to your own understanding. I am not commanding you, but if you wish, you may send. (Rashi)

8. When the opportunity [תָּר] of each young woman came to go to King Ahasuerus...whatever she asked for would be given to her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. (Esther 2:12-13)

9. "One night I dreamed that I painted a large American flag, and the next morning I got up and went out and bought the material to begin it." (Jasper Johns)

10. "Dreams are not so different from Deeds as some may think. All the Deeds of human beings are only Dreams at first. And in the end, their Deeds dissolve into Dreams." (Theodore Herzl, epilogue to *The Old New Land*)