



Parshas Shelach

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This week's Parsha discusses the Meraglim and they're ill-fated journey as spies coming to scout out Eretz Yisrael and the subsequent heavenly reaction that the Jews had to wander in the desert for 40 years before being allowed to go into Eretz Yisrael.

As a follow-up to that story, the Torah teaches us that the people said to Moshe, "Let us go up to the place that ashem has spoken about because we have sinned." **Moshe warns them severely not to go up and says that if they do, they will be in violation of the word of Hashem, and they will not be successful.**

The Seforno comments that what Moshe was really trying to say was that if they were to go up it would be a high-level sin "Lehachis", meaning "to anger Hashem" - meaning that it wouldn't be for their own personal gain or benefit rather it would be just to anger and rebel against Hashem! Because after all, Moshe was clearly telling them that they would not succeed! So why would they go on this suicide mission?! It must've been a very high-level and difficult to understand extreme rebellion for the sake of angering Hashem!

If you look at the first Seforno in the Parsha, he actually says that at this point when the people said "we have sinned", they were doing a high-level repentance, and the only reason they weren't fully forgiven was that it takes death to repent for a desecration of Hashem's name.

So this act, even though it ended up as a rebellion, it started with the highest of intentions and with full Teshuva. How can it be that they came with the purest of intentions and Moshe says they can't go, and if you go it will be with the intention to anger Hashem, and they still went?! Why would they be trying to anger Hashem if they just are coming off a complete repentance? What we see from here is a very scary thing - that we can turn on a dime! That whatever the catalyst here was exactly, whether it was rejection or intense disappointment, it can trigger such a high level of rebellion and emotional turmoil, that we would turn to severe rebellion even though moments earlier we were on a very high level. We think we're on a stable level but not necessarily! **And of course if we could swing negatively so extreme and so fast then certainly we can swing in a positive direction as well!**