

"In this desert shall fall your carcasses." (14:29)

Several commentators question the justification of the severe punishment of *Bnei Yisrael*. Indeed, the report the spies presented was a direct and accurate response to Moshe's inquiries. Their only mistake was their own judgmental assessment of what they had seen, suggesting that *Bnei Yisrael* would be unable to successfully invade the land. They simply expressed their opinion!

We may suggest the following idea. *Bnei Yisrael* were taken out of Egypt and until now Hashem had well provided for them. Moshe was their leader, specifically chosen for this position by Hashem. The assessment of the given situation should have been made by their leadership. They were merely to deliver the facts and wait for a response. This is the meaning of "*emunas chachamim*," trust in *Torah* scholars. The "*Daas Torah*," *Torah* decision, which they render is the only decision which should be the determining factor in resolving a problem. The negative assessment of the spies and the ensuing tragedy could have been prevented had they trusted in their *Torah* leadership.