

## פרשת במדבר הרב אליהו חקקיאן

*Parshas Bamidbar* generally falls out right before Shavuos. Because of the way the calendar and Pesach fell out this year and last, in *Eretz Yisroel* the preceding *parsha* was and is *Parshas Naso*. The Gemara in מס' : לא states that Ezra was *mesaken* that the *klalos* of *Parshas Bechukosai* should be read before Shavuos [עצרת] and those of *Parshas Ki Savo* are to be read before Rosh Hashana. The Gemara explains that this is in order for the *klalos* to end with the year's ending. Tosafos, the Rosh, and Ran all speak out that we do not want to go from the *klalos* straight into Yom Tov, and therefore, we add a *parsha* in between- *Bamidbar* before Shavuos and *Parshas Netzavim* before Rosh Hashana.

There is a Midrash in this week's *parsha* that sheds light onto the connection between Shavuos and *Parshas Bamidbar*. Going on the *posuk* in שיר השירים (ב, ד), שיר השירים "הביאני אל בית היין ודגלו עלי אהבה" it states the following: The יין refers to Har Sinai ("אין יין אלא תורה") and when Hakadosh Boruch Hu brought Klal Yisroel to Har Sinai to give the Torah, 220,000 *malachim* came with. All of these *malachim* had camps and flags, as alluded to in the words "דגול מרובה". When Klal Yisroel saw the *malachim* with their flags, they too wanted flags. This is why the *posuk* says, "ודגלו עלי אהבה". It means to say that Hashem shows his love by giving a flag to each individual in Klal Yisroel. The Midrash continues and says that Hakadosh Boruch replied that He would certainly give them flags, as alluded to in the following *pesukim*: "נרננה בישועתך ובשם ה' נדגל ימלא ה' כל משאלותיך" which is preceded by, "יתן לך כלבבך וכל עצתך ימלא". Hashem then instructed Moshe Rabbeinu to divide Klal Yisroel into the *degalim*.

There are many questions to deal with on this Midrash. Firstly, what is the significance of the flags which the *malachim* had? Secondly, why did Klal Yisroel desire them so much? What did they see in those flags to say that Hakadosh Boruch Hu would show His love by giving them to Klal Yisroel? Lastly, if Hakadosh Boruch Hu wanted to divide Klal Yisroel into different camps, why didn't He do so from the beginning?

The *sefer* "מאור ושמש" has a beautiful *pshat* in this Midrash. He explains that when Klal Yisroel came to Har Sinai, they came אחד בלב אחד with the understanding that they were there to become *avadim* to Hakadosh Boruch Hu. However, there was one *nekuda* which they didn't realize and Hakadosh Boruch Hu showed it to them by bringing all the *malachim* with their own flags.

A flag is representative of a motto, a mission. Each *malach* is created by Hakadosh Boruch Hu for its own unique mission, an individualized mission in the world. Hakadosh Boruch Hu was showing this *nekuda* to Klal Yisroel. When they saw the flags, they heard the message that to be an *eved Hashem* one must fulfill his personal mission in the world for Hashem. Each person contributes his own individualized qualities in *avoda* to Hakadosh Boruch Hu. When they realized this they all said, "*Halevai my mission should be revealed to me!*" They all wanted to know what they are on this world to do.

Hakadosh Boruch waited until they came to the realization themselves that each as an individual is unique. It is true that it took all of Klal Yisroel together in order to receive the Torah, yet it is equally important to know that every single person has his own mission to accomplish in his *avodas Hashem*. R. Bachaye in this week's *parsha* says that the number of *malachim* Hakadosh Boruch Hu brought to Har Sinai was similar and corresponded to the number of Klal Yisroel at Har Sinai. That was to show them this lesson.

Hakadosh Boruch Hu instructed Moshe to divide Klal Yisroel into *degalim* in order that each *shevet* should know through his flag and *makom* what their mission is. R. Bachaye also explains that each *machaneh* was also representative of the *malachim* which are divided into four camps of the *Shechina*. He adds that not only did the *shevatim* have their *meyuchad* places, but when the *posuk* states, "במספר שמות", it means that each individual was counted by name in order to reveal to each person his unique essence and *tafkid*. This is exactly what Klal Yisroel desired and Moshe Rabbeinu gave them when he divided them into their camps.

This is the connection of *Parshas Bamidbar* to Har Sinai and Shavuot. In order to be *mekabel* the Torah, every single person needs to be cognizant of the fact that he has a personal mission to accomplish in this world. His *avoda* cannot be done by anyone else.

At Har Sinai, Klal Yisroel had Moshe Rabbeinu to reveal their missions to them. What about us? How are we supposed to see our *tafkid*?

There is an incredible *Netziv* in *Parshas Shemini*. The *posuk* states, *זוה הדבר אשר צוה ה' תעשו וירא* (ויקרא ט, ו) עליהם כבוד ה'". The *Netziv* asks, what else was left to be done? The *Mishkon* was built and the *korbanos* were brought, what were they missing?

He explains that Klal Yisroel was so excited to bring *korbanos* when the *Mishkon* was built, they all wanted to do something for *avodas Hashem*. The only problem is that when people get excited, they don't always know what to do. They have nuances and new ideas for what to do. *Netziv* brings a *Midrash* which says that Moshe Rabbeinu told Klal Yisroel that those feelings are the *Yetzer Hara* and they must rid themselves of that urge. They should only do that which *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* has commanded.

Everything which we do must be על פי רוח התורה. It's good to come up with ideas, but we must make sure that they are aligned with "אשר צוה ה'". Throughout the history of Klal Yisroel, we have gone through tremendous challenges in *galus*. To confront those challenges and advancements, *yidden* have come up with different approaches. Unfortunately, not all of them have been על פי רוח התורה. The solutions for Klal Yisroel must always conform to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*'s רצון. This applies to us as individuals as well. Any approach which one wants to take for his personal *avodas Hashem* must be על פי רוח התורה.

Even when one has verified that his desired approach is על פי רוח התורה, how does he know that it is the right thing for him personally to do? R. Bachaye and others point out that Klal Yisroel are called, "צבאות ה'"- Army of Hashem. In the Army, there is a chain of command and hierarchy. There are generals who decide which soldier should be deployed to what place and which mission. They look at the qualities of each soldier to realize where and how each one can perform better in each mission.

We are also blessed to have our *rebbeim* and *rabbonim* who get to know us and can guide us according to our individual qualities to see what it is that each of us should do. Where we fit in our own lives, in our personal *avodas Hashem*, and in our respective communities. They can guide us in our *limmudim*, how much to learn, which *inyonim* or *mesechta* to focus on learning, and which *derech halimmud* we should be pursuing. They can help us with decisions of helping the *tzibbur* or pulling back to focus more on family. Whether to start an organization or approach in the community to help the *tzibbur*.

These things must both be על פי רוח התורה and also correct and proper for each of us individually, to accomplish that which is best for us in order to fulfill our *avodas Hashem* perfectly. For this we have our *rebbeim* to guide us in our lives and *avodas Hashem*. We each have our own flag and we need to find it, to find our mission and carry out our own unique service to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*.