Points to Ponder

Yisro 5782

**אֲשֶׁ֨ר שֵׁ֤ם הָֽאֶחָד֙ גֵּֽרְשֹׁ֔ם  The first one’s name was Gershom (18:3)** – Why is it important that the boys are named now? **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide ztl.** explained that after seeing all of the great miracles, he did not forget the more local and personal miracles that happened to him. This is part of what happens when we remember that Hashem’s Nissim are with us all the time.

**וַיֹּ֘אמֶר֘ יִתְרוֹ֒ בָּר֣וּךְ ה Yisro said Baruch Hashem (18:10) –** The gemara (Sanhedrin 94a) notes that it is a negative that none of the Bnei Yisrael said Baruch Hashem until Yisro came and said it. But did they not sing the Shirah and Hallel? Why is it so sad that they didn’t say Baruch Hashem? **Rav Nebenzahl Shlita** explained that singing Shirah is not included in Beracha and to this point no one said a Beracha in public. Praise is great but the recitation of BERACHA in public is essential.

**אַנְשֵׁי־חַ֜יִל  Men of valor (18:21)** – Who are men of Chayil (valor)? **Rav Baruch Dov Povarsky Shlita** noted that the situation is best found in interpreting 2 different description of Chayil in Mishlei – that of the Eishes Chayil versus the Rabos Banos ASU Chayil. While there are many who DO Chayil, there are not as many who ARE Chayil themselves. In the case of the Anshei Chayil we not only have respect for what they do, we are able to have trust and confidence in who they are and what they stand for.

**וַיִּֽחַן־שָׁ֥ם יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל נֶ֥גֶד הָהָֽר: The Jewish nation camped (19:2) – Rashi** explains that they camped as one person with one heart. The gemara at the end of Nazir notes that non Jews cannot accept Nezirus since they don’t belong to a tzibur. The concept of Tzibur only applies to כלל ישראל. Rav Saadiah Gaon utilized this idea to convey the notion that אין אומתינו אומה אלא מפני התורה. **Rav Schachter Shlita mentioned in the name of Rav Soloveitchik**  that this is the reason why we hold Sefer Torah when engaging Mevorchin HaChodesh. It is the Torah that metzaref us a tzibur, enabling us to establish the time of the month, just like Beis Din used to do it on behalf of the כלל.

**וַיִּֽחַן־שָׁ֥ם יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל נֶ֥גֶד הָהָֽר: The Jewish nation camped (19:2) - Rashi** explains that they camped as one person with one heart. Why was it necessary to be both as one person AND with one heart? **Rav Gedaliah Schorr ztl.** explained that even within a single human being there are many different contradictions. Man is not necessarily united and at peace within himself. Thus, when coming to Har Sinai not only were the people together united but within each person there was a unity of commitment on life task that ended the internal conflict.

**כֹּ֤ה תֹאמַר֙ לְבֵ֣ית יַֽעֲקֹ֔ב וְתַגֵּ֖יד לִבְנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵֽל: So you shall say to Beis Yaakov and speak to Bnei Yisrael (19:3)** – It is interesting that we find both words – Leimor and L’Haggid which appear here also in regard to teaching about Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim. *Chazal* explain that "*Lehagid*" refers to speaking in a stronger manner, whereas "*leimor*" has the connotation of a softer tone. Both terms are used because there are two messages that must be conveyed. The softer word "*leimor*" is used for the story. **Rav Zvi Sobolofsky Shlita** explained that the events of *yetzias Mitzrayim* which are the prelude to *kabbolas HaTorah* are told in a soft tone that is used for a story to draw the hearts of the listeners. However, merely being inspired by a moving tale is not significant. A commitment to the rigorous life of *mitzvah* observance symbolized by the stronger form of speech "*lehagid*" must follow the "*leimor*." Eventually, a life dedicated to the "*lehagid*" of *mitzvos* in turn inspires us and we internalize the stories we once heard. As our appreciation of *mitzvos* matures, we continue on a life long journey of "*leimor*" and "*lehagid*," as our *avodas* Hashem merges the soft words of a story with the rigorous commitment to *shemiras hamitzvos*.

**שֵׁ֣שֶׁת יָמִ֣ים תַּֽעֲבֹד֘ Six days you shall work and do all your work (20:9) –** Why does the Torah talk about the days we SHOULD work? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl**. explained that one needs to learn that even when engaging in material pursuits we are still doing so to fulfill the will of Hashem. Moreover, if we work to fulfill Hashem’s will then abstaining when we need to abstain, like for Shabbos, will be easier since it is also the will of Hashem.

**Haftara**

**מְלֹ֥א כָל־הָאָ֖רֶץ כְּבוֹדֽוֹ The whole world is filled with his Honor (Yeshayahu 6:3 ) – The Dubno Maggid** notes that when we think of a human being, the human is named and is known by his name. Later as time goes on, the person develops a deeper clarification of the name – perhaps based on his actions or his educational or financial pursuits. For instance, Dovid was first Dovid then he was Dovid the shepherd, Dovid the musician, Dovid the warrior and ultimately Dovid the king. But we recognize him as Dovid first. When it comes to Hashem, our only ability to relate to Him is through the accomplishments – the whole world is a pale description but it contributes to the Kavod of who He is.