



שמע ישראל אתה " 9:1
עבר היום את הירדן לבא
לרשת גוים גדלים ועצמים
ממך. ערים גדלת ובצרת
בשמם"

"Hear O Yisroel, today you cross the Yarden, to come to possess nations that are greater and mightier than you, cities that are great and fortified up to the heavens." Why does Moshe Rabbeinu need to say to Klal Yisroel – "שמע ישראל" – "Listen Yisroel" – this special Lashon, regarding that they would soon be crossing over the Yarden to enter into Eretz Yisroel? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic and support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

שמע " 9:1 – ר' שמשון רפאל הירש
 "Hear O Yisroel: You are now crossing over the Yarden." What is about to be stated here is the opposite of what one would theorize from the external appearance of the events. For from the events, it would appear that the people of Klal Yisroel are brave and heroic and have already attained moral perfection. The Torah repudiates both; hence, "שמע" – listen, that they are not!

Devorim Rabbah – ברכך משה
3:10 – "שמע ישראל" – The Midrash tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu was warning Klal Yisroel that they already lost נעשה, they should make sure not to also lose נשמע. The Midrash compares it to a king who betrothed a matron with two pearls. She lost one of them, and the king told her to make sure that she does not lose the second one. The Midrash says that Klal Yisroel lost נעשה by the Chet of the Eigel and they should make sure not to lose נשמע. We need to understand this Midrash, because didn't Klal Yisroel lose both, נעשה and נשמע by the Chet Ha'Eigel? And if you want to say that they somehow were able to get back נשמע after the sin, why couldn't they also get back נעשה?

In Parshas Shoftim 20:2 the Torah says, "והיה כקרבתם אל המלחמה ונגח" – הכהן ודיבר אל העם ואמר אליהם שמע ישראל אתם – "קרבים היום למלחמה על אויביכם" – Rashi explains this Posuk – "Listen Yisroel – even if you only have the Zechus of Krias Shema, it is worthy that Hashem will save you." What makes the Mitzvah of Krias Shema greater than other Mitzvos, that if one heeds this Mitzvah

alone, he will be successful in battle? It says in the Sefer Toldos Yaakov Yosef on Parshas Shoftim – The Gemara in Brochos 33b says on the Posuk, "ועתה" – "ישראל מה ד' אליך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה" – "And now Yisroel, what does Hashem ask of you, only Yirah - fear". This Posuk implies that Yirah is something very small – as that is all that Hashem is asking of you – this little thing called Yirah.

The Meforshim ask, we can understand that Yiras Shomayim was a small thing for Moshe Rabbeinu, but what about for the rest of Klal Yisroel? In fact, Yiras Shomayim was a small thing for all of Klal Yisroel while Moshe Rabbeinu was alive, for he infused Yiras Shomayim into all of his surroundings, and this had a profound effect upon Klal Yisroel as a whole – as Yiras Shomayim was a small thing for them to achieve. It says in the Tiferes Shlomo on the Posuk 28:10 "וראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ד' נקרא" – "עליך ויראו ממך" that due to the great fear of a great Tzaddik, fear falls upon all who are near him. We see similarly by Mordechai, as it says in Esther 9:3 "כי" – "נפל פחד מרדכי עליהם" – that because Mordechai had such Yiras Shomayim, it infused all around him with Yiras Shomayim. Based on this, we can answer something which seemed to be very difficult in Megillas Esther. The Posuk says 9:17 "ורבים מעמי הארץ מתיהדים" – "כי נפל פחד היהודים עליהם" – that many of the non-Jews became Jewish – became Geirim, converts, because the fear of the Jews fell upon them. This is very difficult to understand, for the rule is that we do not accept Geirim who want to convert because they are afraid of Klal Yisroel. However, based on our understanding, the Posuk does not mean that they became Geirim because they feared Klal Yisroel. Rather it means that because Klal Yisroel had such great Yiras Shomayim, that caused all those around them to also have Yiras Shomayim and to truly want to become Jewish, and thus they became Geirim.

It says in Shulchan Aruch Orech Chaim 61:1 that one is to recite Shema with Kavanah, awe, fear, shaking, and trembling. One is supposed to recite Shema and be Mekabel Ol Malchus Shomayim, the yoke of heaven, with great Yirah. This is what Rashi is explaining when he says that Shema

alone will help in battle, for if one recites Shema properly, he will have much Yiras Shomayim when doing so, which will espouse that great Yirah to all around him including his enemies. If his enemies will have Yiras Hashem, they will not do battle with him. This is also why Moshe Rabbeinu began this Parsha with the words, "שמע ישראל" – as he was telling Klal Yisroel that they are going to go out to battle, and to ensure that they are successful in defeating nations, even those greater than them, they must שמע, infuse themselves with great Yiras Hashem, and that will cause them to be victorious. Based on this we can also explain the Midrash. Klal Yisroel said out of Ahavah for Hakodosh Boruch Hu, that they were ready to do even before they heard what they needed to do. Moshe Rabbeinu was telling them here, that they already lost their Ahavas Hashem, as they sinned with the Eigel, and lost that element of נעשה, which represented the Ahavas Hashem that they had. Moshe Rabbeinu was telling them that they should therefore make sure that they retain נשמע, Yiras Hashem. For as long as they have Yiras Hashem, their Yiras Hashem will have an effect upon their enemies, and they will be successful in their battles, even against those who are greater than them.

שמע ישראל אתה " 9:1 – תורת משה
 "Hear O Yisroel: You are now crossing over the Yarden." It says in Devorim Rabbah 3:8 a Halacha – If a Yid drinks water to quench his thirst, he recites the Brocha of, "ברוך...שהכל נהיה בדברו" – Blessed is Hashem...that everything came to be through His word. Rebbe Tarfon says that he recites the Brocha of, "בורא נפשות" – the One Who creates numerous living things and their deficiencies. What is the connection between this Posuk and Halacha? Let's explain the Brocha of "בורא נפשות". Hakodosh Boruch Hu does great good with His creations, by causing them to desire and need liquids in order to quench their thirst. Had Hakodosh Boruch Hu created man complete and whole, then one would not need to desire liquids and foods, and thus one would not have a need to recite a Brocha of, "שהכל נהיה בדברו". However that would not be good, for that is the

amazing thing that Hakodosh Boruch Hu did for us, that He created us lacking, so that we would recognize our Creator, and that we need Him, and in that Zechus we can be Zoche to two worlds; Olam Hazeh and Olam Habah. Thus, that which He created us deficient is the greatest good for us.

This is what we say in the Brocha – “בורא נפשות רבות וחסרון” – “Who creates numerous living things with their deficiencies” – more than “על כל מה” – “all that You have created with which to sustain the life of every being.” The creation of man with deficiencies is the greatest good, for, “ברוך חי העולמים” – “Blessed is He the Life-giver of the worlds” – for this allows Hakodosh Boruch Hu to give us two worlds: Olam Hazeh and Olam Habah. (The אבודרהם says that when we say in this Brocha, העולמים, we are referring to two worlds: Olam Hazeh and Olam Habah). Moshe Rabbeinu is telling Klal Yisroel here about the great giants and fortified cities which they will need to conquer with great wonders of Hakodosh Boruch Hu to help them. One could ask, we know that from the beginning of creation the Land of Eretz Yisroel was to be given to Klal Yisroel and was given to Avrohom Avinu – he was a Muchzak in the Land. If so, why did Hakodosh Boruch Hu make it that it would be so difficult for Klal Yisroel to get it? He should have made it very easy for them, as it was really their land already. This that Hakodosh Boruch Hu made it so difficult was a great favor He did for Klal Yisroel. This way Klal Yisroel should see and recognize the Chesed of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and that they not think that it was their own might that gave them the rights and the access to the land. This is similar to the Brocha that we recite, “בורא נפשות”, that we thank Hakodosh Boruch Hu for the deficiencies so that we always remember to thank Him.

Shanah Aleph – בן איש חי
Parshas Eikev 8:18 זכרת את ד' אלקיך – “כי הוא הנותן לך כח לעשות חיל” – “Remember that it is your Hashem Who gives you the power to attain wealth.” One does not say to a person “remember” about something which the person will potentially forget. Like Chazal tell us on the Posuk in Shemos 20:8 “זכור את יום”

remember – to make sure that you do not forget. The Maharia explains that one forgets Hilchos Shabbos, and forgets Shabbos easily, for all week, the other six days of the week, one works and does the Melachos which are prohibited on Shabbos. Being that one is so accustomed to perform all of these actions, even without thought, it is very difficult to refrain from doing so on one day a week. Certainly, one's nature and regularity can bring him to forget – thus the Torah warns us to remember – and we have to awaken within us the Koach of Zikaron to remember. The same applies when one sees that he performs actions and sees what occurs from those actions, that he can forget that it is all from Hashem. It looks like it is part of nature, and can thus cause him to forget that it is all Hashem. One can see it as cause and effect in the world we live in, instead of realizing that all is from Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

That is why the Posuk tells us that we must remember that it is Hakodosh Boruch Hu Who gives us wealth and everything else. This is also why Anshei Kneses Hagdolah were Mesaken a Birchas Hoda'ah, to Bentch Gomel, when four specific things occur to a person, for it is very normal and regular for one to believe and think that what happened to him was part of nature, and not that it came from Hashem. Brochos 54b – Four need to thank Hashem: one who was imprisoned and freed, one who was sick and was healed, one who traversed the ocean, and one who traversed the Midbar.

The Siman to remember these four things is וכל החיים יודוך סלה – all who are חיים will thank Hashem. ח' - חבוש – imprisoned. י' - יסורין – one who is afflicted with a sickness. ים – ים – one who traversed the ocean. מ' - מדבר – one who traversed the desert. One who is sick and is healed from the serious sickness, he is generally helped by a doctor and or medicine – thus one can think that the reason he was healed was because of the doctor or medicine. One who is imprisoned and freed, is generally only freed by people working on his behalf by giving money to proper places, or other

political moves, and thus the person can feel that the only reason he was freed was because of the people who helped him. One who traverses the sea and ocean relies on the boat and the captain – and can easily feel that it was because of the skill of the captain and the quality of the boat that allowed him to pass safely. Similarly, one who traverses a desert, does not do so alone, and needs the help of the others to survive. Thus, in all of these cases, it is easy for one to think that the reason that he survived and was saved was for natural reasons, the way of the world, and not recognize that it is all from Hashem. Therefore, the Anshei Kneses Hagdolah were Mesaken a special Brocha by these events, so that we should make no mistake and realize that it is all from Hashem.

Now we can understand the special Lashon of “שמע ישראל” that Moshe Rabbeinu was telling Klal Yisroel. This was a fundamental lesson for life that every Yid needs to know – and needs to listen to carefully. Man is created with deficiencies. It is not to say Chas V'shalom that Hakodosh Boruch Hu couldn't create us “complete” – for He certainly could have. Rather it is a great Chesed of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, that He created us with deficiencies. We need to eat, drink etc.... this way we are always reminded that we need sustenance from elsewhere. We are not self-sufficient, rather we are reliant on the Ribbono Shel Olam for our life. If we were self-sufficient, we might Chas V'shalom forget the Ribbono Shel Olam.

We say a Brocha of “בורא נפשות רבות וחסרון” – thank you Hashem for creating us with deficiencies so that we always remember You. Moshe Rabbeinu was telling Klal Yisroel this lesson here when he said “שמע ישראל”. Listen Klal Yisroel – you are about to enter the Land of Eretz Yisroel. It will be difficult to conquer the Land, but it is not because Hashem can't make it easy for us. Rather it will be difficult for you – for your benefit. This way we will remember that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is giving us the great Land of Eretz Yisroel and will appreciate it. We must always be cognizant that all is from Hashem – and constantly remember to say, “Thank you, Hashem!”