

Parsha Bullets on Matos/Masei, 5783

Above Board

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

Bamidbar 30:3-5	במדבר ל'ג-ה'
<p>If a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath imposing an obligation on himself, he shall not break his pledge; he must carry out all that has crossed his lips. If a woman makes a vow to the LORD or assumes an obligation while still in her father's household by reason of her youth, and her father learns of her vow or her self-imposed obligation and offers no objection, all her vows shall stand and every self-imposed obligation shall stand.</p>	<p>אִישׁ כִּי-יָדַר יְדָר לַיהוָה אִוְ-הִשָּׁבַע שְׁבַעַה לְאִסָּר אִסָּר עַל-נַפְשׁוֹ לֹא יַחַל דְּבָרוֹ כְּכֹל-הֵי יֵצֵא מִפִּיו יַעֲשֶׂה: וְאִשָּׁה כִּי-תִדְרַר נָדַר לַיהוָה וְאִסָּרָהּ אִסָּר בְּבֵית אָבִיהָ בְּנַעֲרִיהָ: וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת-נִדְוָהָ וְאִסָּרָהּ אֲשֶׁר אִסָּרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהִחֲרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ כָל-נִדְוֵיהָ וְכָל-אִסָּר אֲשֶׁר-אִסָּרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יִקְוּם:</p>

Why are oaths significant?

- **R. Soloveitchik** points out that the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur, begins with Kol Nidrei, expressing the importance of our words.

Why is there this difference between men and women?

- The **Tosafos HaRosh** notes that women mature faster than men.

Bamidbar 31:2	במדבר לא"ב'
<p>"Avenge the Israelite people on the Midianites; then you shall be gathered to your kin."</p>	<p>נָקָם וְקָמַתְל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֵת הַמִּדְיָנִים אַחַר תֵּאָסֵף אֶל-עַמִּיךָ:</p>

What does this teach us?

- Moshe did not delay with his mission, even though he was told he would not enter the room.
- The verse below (v. 4) says **אֶלֶף לַמִּטָּה אֶלֶף לַמִּטָּה**; **the midrash** notes that 1 thousand people davened for the military success of the people.

Bamidbar 32:4	במדבר לב"ד'
<p>the land that the LORD has conquered for the community of Israel is cattle country, and your servants have cattle.</p>	<p>הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר הִנֵּה ה' לִפְנֵי עֵדוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶרֶץ מִקְנֵה הוּא וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ מִקְנֵה: {0}</p>

The tribes of Gad and Reuven ask for land. Why does Moshe chastise them? Why does Moshe include half the tribe of Menashe?

- They saw a business need and wanted to have a place for their flock. Moshe responds and reverses the order of their request to teach that taking care of their children must take precedence over their livestock.
- The **Nachalas Tzvi** connects this to Avraham. He was also described as someone with a lot of livestock. However, in his case it did not define him.
- **R. Shaul Alter** also notes that Moshe taught them the importance of demonstration and example when he said, "וְהִיָּצֵא מִפִּיכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ.".
- **R. Moshe Shmuel Shapiro** explains the Targum who says that they were students of the *mergalim* by saying that we can learn from people subtly, even without being explicit students of them.
- **R. Yosef Sorotzkin** gives an explanation for why Moshe made assumptions about the tribes of Gad and Reuven: 1) they failed to appreciate the Land and 2) they failed to prioritize their offspring.

Bamidbar 32:22	במדבר לב:כב'
and the land has been subdued, at the instance of the LORD, and then you return—you shall be clear before the LORD and before Israel; and this land shall be your holding under the LORD.	וּנְכַבְּשָׁה הָאָרֶץ לְפָנַי ה' וְאַחַר תָּשׁוּבוּ וְהִיִּיתֶם נְקִיִּים מֵה' וּמִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְהִיִּיתָה הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְכֶם לְאֻחֲזָה לְפָנַי ה':

What is the significance of this verse?

- The **Raavad** says this principle of וְהִיִּיתֶם נְקִיִּים מֵה' is incredibly important.

Bamidbar 33:2	במדבר לג:ב'
Moses recorded the starting points of their various marches as directed by the LORD. Their marches, by starting points, were as follows:	וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם עַל־פִּי ה' וְאֵלֶּה מַסְעֵיהֶם לְמוֹצְאֵיהֶם:

Why does it say Moshe wrote this?

- The **Or HaChaim** says Moshe first recorded them in a notebook, then Hashem told him to write it down.
- **Degel Machane Ephraim** tells us that we all, like the Jews in the Midbar, go through 42 journeys in our lives.
- R. Yosef Sorotzkin teaches: it says מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם and מַסְעֵיהֶם לְמוֹצְאֵיהֶם as there is significance to both nature and nurture.