

בס"ד
ח' אב תשע"ט
August 9th, 2019

פרשת דברים

The first *pasuk* of this week's parsha says "אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה"¹ and Rashi comments² that since Moshe is listing all of the places where Bnei Yisrael angered Hashem, the phrase "אלא הדברים" is just an allusion to all of the incidents. Out of respect for Bnei Yisrael, this is not an explicit mention of these aveiros. But how could Moshe only use an allusion to rebuke Bnei Yisrael? Did it not say "הוכיח הוכיח את עמיתך"³ which means that one should give a clear and explicit rebuke so the transgressor fully understands his sin and will be unable to get away and return to his folly? How could Moshe simply allude to these aveiros in an ambiguous manner? Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel says⁴ that this comes to teach that even though the mitzvah of rebuke is one of great importance, the fear about embarrassing a person is an even bigger worry. Rebuke is no easy mitzvah to perform, as one must think about the best way to correctly fulfill the commandment without falling into the hands of sin; it is a thin line to tread. Moshe made it a priority of his to teach Bnei Yisrael about the importance of preserving dignity in rebuke, and to do so, he gave precedence to saying the rebuke only by allusion. He had to lambaste in a subtle way where Bnei Yisrael would understand the main part of his speech, for if he elaborated, his actions would likely fall into the category of an איסור גמור.

Throughout time, the importance of sensitivity when rebuking has constantly been on display. One famous instance is that of Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua,⁵ as Rabban Gamliel lost his position because he damaged the dignity of his colleague. The *Meiri* says⁶ that if Rabbi Yehoshua had been appointed in his stead, Rabban Gamliel would have had a special חלישות הדעת,⁷ because he completely forgot how much care must be paid to the weakness and shame of others.

We are nearing the end of the Nine Days and are at the footstep of Tisha B'Av, the day when the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed because of the sin of *sinas chinam*. We should all try our best to maximize our *kavod Yisrael*, and to fix the wound that *sinas chinam* caused so much; after all, the Gemara in *Yoma*⁸ says that *sinas chinam* is equal in balance to the three *yehareg ve'al ya'avors*⁹. Hopefully, this year will bring the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash, במהרה בימינו.

¹ דברים א:א

² רש"י דברים א:א ד"ה אלא הדברים

³ ויקרא יט:יז

⁴ שיחות רב נתן צבי פרשת דברים מאמר אופן מצוות תוכחה

⁵ ברכות כז.

⁶ מאירי ברכות כז. ד"ה כל

⁷ weakness of the mind

⁸ יומא ט:

⁹ cardinal sins