

And by all the awesome power that Moshe performed before the eyes of all Yisrael. (34:12)

Times change; people change; society and culture change. Change impacts upon our lives to the point that what had been right for one generation might not be right for the following generation. Mentalities change, and the new generation might have a different perspective, a varied approach to life. Different needs require different approaches. Those who are charged with teaching Torah to each ensuing generation has to adjust, adopt new skills and new methods, because their charges are of a different generation.

Horav Nissan Alpert, zl, posits that this is why Moshe *Rabbeinu* shattered the *Luchos*, Tablets, right before the very eyes of *Klal Yisrael*. The Torah alludes to the awesome power exhibited by Moshe. *Rashi* explains that this refers to his decision to break the *Luchos* before the Jewish nation. He did not ask Hashem; he just did it – and Hashem indicated that He was in agreement. It was the right and proper thing to do. Why? Why did Moshe think that the *Luchos* required such definitive action? Why did Hashem agree with Moshe?

This generation was different from the generation that left Egypt, but were they not one and the same? It had only been a short few weeks since the Exodus; what happened to change them? The *chet ha'eigel*, sin of the Golden Calf. The present *Luchos* were *Maase Elokim*, the handiwork of Hashem. This “altered” generation, having sinned egregiously, required a new set of *Luchos* – one made by Moshe. The original *Luchos* were no longer the right tools for transmitting the Torah to that particular generation. Why?

The generation which was liberated from Egypt experienced a series of miracles and wonders – all by the Hand of G-d. They miraculously went from slavery to freedom, from bondage to nationhood. Their entire existence was *min haShomayim*, from Heaven. Their *Luchos* reflected their needs.

The new generation was different. Having just made the Golden Calf, their needs were different. They had descended from the summit of spirituality to the pits of aggression and despair. They had demonstrated their independence. No longer under the thumb of their Egyptian taskmasters, they decided to act out their newly-found freedom. They sinned.

This generation would be charged with transmitting the Torah to ensuing generations. First, they would need to acquire it – not as a gift, but through toil and struggle. They would have to earn it, to work for it. It was now up to them.

Moshe recognized that this generation would require a set of *Luchos* that reflected this new reality, the nation's new mentality. Hashem instructed Moshe *psal lecha* – “You make the *Luchos* – you yourself!”

The Torah is inimitable. It endures forever and does not change – one iota. Its *keilim*, pedagogic tools, for transmitting the Torah, however, can change from generation to generation. In order to transmit the Torah effectively to each ensuing generation, we might have to improvise our teaching methodology. It all depends upon the need.