

"Bnei Reuven and the Bnei Gad had abundant livestock ... The Bnei Gad and the Bnei Reuven came and said to Moshe ... Ataros and Divon ... the land that Hashem smote ... it is a land for livestock and your servants have livestock ... And they said, 'If we have found favor in your eyes ...' and Moshe said to the Bnei Gad and the Bnei Reuven." (32:1-6)

A number of issues can be raised regarding the text of the *pesukim* which describes the dialogue between *Bnei Gad*, *Bnei Reuven* and *Moshe Rabbeinu*. First, why is Reuven's name mentioned prior to Gad's in the opening statement of this *parsha*, although throughout the remaining *pesukim* Gad's name precedes Reuven's? Second, the word, *urnthu*, "and they said," is repeated in their dialogue. Why is there such an apparent redundancy?

Horav Tzvi Hirsch Ferber, z.l., cites *Horav Sapir* who asserts that *Bnei Gad* and *Bnei Reuven* were motivated by two disparate objectives, even though they were making the same statement. *Bnei Reuven* are mentioned first, since they were truly concerned about the welfare of their livestock. The *Torah* uses the term *urnthu* twice. The first reflects *Bnei Reuven's* demand, while the second *urnthu* reflects *Bnei Gad's* desire to remain on the other side of the Jordan. *Bnei Gad* were motivated by a desire to remain in the area where the remains of the quintessential leader of *Klal Yisrael* would be interred.

We may derive an important lesson from this distinction. Two people/groups may make the same request, but since their underlying motives are disparate, they are viewed from contrasting perspectives. Since *Bnei Gad* were inspired by a more noble intention, their name preceded *Bnei Reuven*. Hashem *Yisborach*, Who knows what goes on in the deep recesses of the mind, rewards us on a level commensurate with the nobility of our intentions.