

“And Moshe assembled the entire assembly of Bnei Yisrael.” (35:1)

Rashi tells us that the word *Vayakhel*, “and assembled,” is written in the *hifil*, causative, to teach us that Moshe *Rabbeinu* did not gather the people directly. Rather, he caused them to gather themselves. What is *Rashi* teaching us? Certainly, he did not gather them by hand. The *Satmar Rebbe, z.l.*, explains that the objective of this assembly was unique in that Moshe sought to assemble only those who were Jews, not members of the *eirev rav*, mixed multitude, the creators of the *eigel*, Golden Calf. Moshe was not assembling people “by hand,” for no specific purpose other than to make an assembly. No! Moshe sought to gather together the Jews of the same *weltanschauung*, perspective on life.

One can gather a group of people together for the purpose of having a group – or one can gather a group of people together in a manner that suggests that he is the one in charge of the group, such that his perspective guides the entire group. Moshe wanted the group to be as one: one G-d; one Torah; one leader – Moshe *Rabbeinu*. Moshe’s words were the *koach ha’me’achaid*, force/glue that was the mutual bond between them. Every assembly must have a goal in order for it to succeed. Their goal was realized, as they severed their relationship with the *eirev rav* and became one harmonious group.

Horav Yaakov Kaminetzky, z.l., takes a somewhat similar approach. He explains that when the Torah was given to *Klal Yisrael*, the Jewish People had achieved an unprecedented level of *achdus*, unity. They were *k’ish echad b’lev echad*, “as one person with one heart”. All their hearts beat as one. When the *eigel* was made, this unity was shattered. Indeed, the *Talmud Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin* 10:2 contends that each *Shevet*, tribe, had its own little *eigel*. Even then, they could not see eye to eye! Each one had his own individual perspective on how to rebel against Hashem! What a sad commentary on the Jewish People, suggesting that we have not changed much today. Every group that is not Torah-oriented has its own little *eigel*. Moshe *Rabbeinu* had to bring the people together first, under one banner with one outlook. He first had to make a *vayakhel*, and assemble the people together to give them one goal and one purpose. Then he could instruct them in the next step: building a Sanctuary.