

Pharaoh approached; the Bnei Yisrael raised up their eyes and behold - Egypt was journeying after them. (14:10)

Rashi notes that the word "nosea," journeying, is written in the singular. It should be written as "nosim", in the plural, which would be the appropriate term for describing an entire army. He explains that the Egyptians were all united in heart and mind, committed to pursuing and destroying the Jews. Everyone amassed into a united front with the singular goal of destruction. The *Avnei Nezer* notes a similar syntax for describing the Jewish camp at *Har Sinai* immediately preceding the Giving of the *Torah*. The *Torah* states (*Shemos 19:2*), "*Vayichan ha'am neged ha'har,*" "*and the nation camped before the mountain.*" The word "*vayichan,*" and they camped, is singular -- as opposed to "*vayachanu*". In response, *Rashi* notes that *Klal Yisrael* lived in total harmony, united like "one person, with one mind." Why does *Rashi* change the sequence describing their *achdus*, unity? Regarding the Egyptian unity he says, "of one mind, like one person." In contrast, referring to the Jews, he says, "one person with one mind."

The *Avnei Nezer* teaches us a timely lesson in his explanation for the disparity between these two types of unity. Uniting against a common enemy is not only commonplace, it is practical. How else is one to survive? This occurs not only among intelligent humans, it is a common phenomenon among all creations, even animals. For example, we note that a herd unites against a common enemy. The common denominator in this form of unity is the "one mind," the shared objective for survival that melds the group into one unit. Hence, the "one mind" precedes the "one person."

With *Klal Yisrael*, however, the common denominator was ideological unity, their commitment to receive the *Torah*, to observe its *mitzvos* and to serve the Almighty. No one threatened them; no enemy was breathing down their necks, dedicated to destroying them. They were united as "one person and, therefore, one mind."

The Jewish People have united under specific situations. Regrettably, the motivation for this shared unity was *tzaros*, persecution, affliction, anti-semitism. Rarely was it ideological in nature. If our unity is to be binding, it has to be the type of togetherness that we experienced at *Har Sinai*, an awareness that "*Yisrael, v'oraisa, u'Kudsha Brich Hu chad hu*" -- "*Yisrael, and the Torah, and Hashem Yisborach are One.*"