

## **"Because you trespassed against Me in the midst of Bnei Yisrael, at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh in the wilderness of Tzin, because you did not sanctify Me in the midst of Bnei Yisrael." (32:51)**

*Rashi* explains that Hashem was blaming Moshe and Aharon for limiting the opportunity for a heightened effect of *Kiddush Hashem* (sanctifying Hashem's Name) when they caused water to flow from the stone. Had they spoken to the stone, rather than hit it twice, Hashem's Name would have reflected a more sublime level of sanctification. *Bnei Yisrael* would have remarked, "*If a mere stone, which does not receive reward or punishment, nevertheless fulfills Hashem's imperative, we should certainly fulfill His mitzvos.*" This grievance seems demanding. Although a greater miracle could have transpired had Moshe and Aharon spoken to the stone, nonetheless, a miracle did occur. We are differentiating between various degrees of *Kiddush Hashem*. It seems peculiar that the term "וַתִּשָּׁחֲקוּ", trespass, which connotes a grave transgression, should be used to describe this sin.

We may derive from this *pasuk* that maintenance of the status quo is, in fact, reactionary. One who is capable of attaining greater levels of erudition by applying his abilities to a greater extent but does not, is guilty of a grave sin. One who does not use his G-d-given talents to their fullest extent, one who lacks the motivation to rise to the occasion and to proceed in Hashem's service, actually stagnates. In essence, such a person "trespasses" and sins. As the *Talmud* in *Megillah* 18a explains, the term "וַתִּשָּׁחֲקוּ" - "trespass", implies a change which signifies a regression from a previous loftier level of sanctity. By not reaching the higher level of sanctity, Moshe was in effect "trespassing" the wishes of Hashem. We should take note of this lesson in order to catalyze us to stretch our abilities to their fullest extent, so that we can contribute to fulfilling Hashem's objectives for each one of us, individually.