

"According to Hashem's commandment they camped and according to Hashem's commandment they journeyed." (9:20)

The *Talmud* in *Shabbos* (31b) discusses the *melacha* (labor) of demolishing. Usually, any form of destruction is not categorized as prohibited labor on *Shabbos*. However, when this destruction is performed in order to correct or prepare for another labor then it is prohibited. Demolishing for the purpose of construction is therefore prohibited on *Shabbos*. The *Talmud* contends that demolishing in order to rebuild on the same site is destroying and therefore prohibited, while demolishing in order to rebuild elsewhere is not considered destroying. The *Talmud* questions this, since all forms of labor are derived from the various forms of labor performed in building the *Mishkan*, yet the *Mishkan* itself was dismantled for the purpose of rebuilding elsewhere. To this the *Talmud* responds that since it is stated "*according to Hashem's commandment they camped*" it was considered as demolishing in order to rebuild on the same site. The implication that the Jews were so subservient to Hashem's Guiding Presence and influence over their lives, that there was a unique sense of security.

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz Zt"l poignantly draws an analogy between *Klal Yisroel's* relationship to Hashem in the wilderness to that of a child in its mother's arms as it is carried from place to place. If we were to question the child as to its whereabouts at any given moment, it would likely respond, "in my mother's arms!" This response would be received at every juncture of the journey, be it in the city or on the road. For all intent and purposes this child is only cognizant of one place in the world - his mother's arms. When we realize that every aspect of our lives is directed by Hashem, then, whatever situation, or wherever we find ourselves, we are only cognizant of our whereabouts in relation to Hashem. Our consciousness of His Presence and our dependency on Him enable us to transcend wherever we may be. As *Klal Yisroel* journeyed in the desert from place to place, they were only aware of being situated in one place - the shadow of Hashem.