

And Hashem spoke to Moshe on Har Sinai saying. (25:1)

Hashem spoke to Moshe *Rabbeinu* on *Har Sinai* concerning the laws of *Shemittah*, the Sabbatical/seventh year. *Rashi* asks: Why *Shemittah*? How is *Shemittah* linked to Sinai? He explains that the Torah is teaching us that just like *Shemittah* is detailed with rules and fine points, likewise, this applies to all *mitzvos*; their rules and details were taught to them at that time as well. The laws of *Shemittah* were not repeated again prior to the Jews' entrance into the Land. As such, everything took place at Sinai, with *Shemittah* serving as the exemplar, prototype, for all other *mitzvos*. Is this lesson so vital to our observance of *mitzvos* that the Torah underscores the fact that the minutiae of details of the *mitzvos* heralds back to Sinai? Furthermore, to cite the *Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh*, why is *Shemittah* selected, as opposed to any other *mitzvah*, to demonstrate this fact?

Horav Nissan Alpert, zl, explains that the lesson for us is that we have maintained the same degree of sanctity upon hearing the details of the *mitzvah* as we had when we heard its general principles. Sometimes we hear a general concept and we agree, accept and are prepared to move forward with execution until we hear the details, the nitty gritty, daily demands. *Klal Yisrael* did not flinch when they heard the details. Why is this so important?

The *Rosh Yeshivah* offers a number of citations which emphasize the significance of incorporating the Revelation, the moment when we received the Torah at Sinai, into our daily learning. *V'hodaatam levanecha v'livnei vancha...yom asher amadatam lifnei Hashem Elokecha b'Chorev*. "And you shall teach it to your children and to your grandchildren...the day upon which you stood before Hashem, your G-d, in Chorev." We are to incorporate that feeling of awe, trembling and quaking into our Torah study. (*Berachos* 12a) "Each day the Torah shall be (as) new in your eyes" (*Rashi, Devarim* 26:16). The Torah should always appear to us as a gift which everyone seeks to possess and enjoy.

Rashi writes that this "newness" should be our attitude towards the manner in which we relate to *mitzvah* observance. In other words, *mitzvah* observance should be exciting, invigorating, ideal. The problem is: How does one inject this flavor, this life, into something he has done a thousand times? Is it realistic to expect someone to maintain the same attitude on his 1001st time as he had the very first time he carried out the *mitzvah*?

Rav Alpert quotes the *Chazon Ish, zl*, who posits that if each time one performs a *mitzvah*, he does so with the complete intention of fulfilling its every detail, then each time he performs that *mitzvah* it will be as if it was his very first time – as if he had just been commanded regarding its observance.

We now understand the significance of *Shemittah* and why it was (possibly) selected as the *mitzvah* to emphasize detail and newness. *Shemittah* is replete with detail. Furthermore, *Shemittah* is a once in seven-year *mitzvah*. The average Jew probably will not have the *Shemittah* experience more than ten times in his life. Thus, each cycle will present itself as something exceedingly new

and novel, something for which he has been waiting for the past six years. We are instructed to view each and every *mitzvah* as we view *Shemittah*, the uncommon, wait-for-six-years *mitzvah*. As the *Chazon Ish* teaches, the key is to view each *mitzvah* as being so special, so precious, that we want to be in the proper frame of mind to carry it out meticulously, with extreme care, paying attention to every detail as if we were performing it for the very first time.