



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

RAV KEHILLA, NOFEI HASHEMESH
MAGGID SHIUR, DAF YOMI, OU.ORG
ROSH BAIS MEDRASH ENGLISH SPEAKING PROGRAM MACHON LEV

Rock and Roll

וְהָקִמְתָּ לָךְ אֲבָנִים גְּדֹלוֹת... (דברים כז:ב)

...that you shall set up for yourself huge stones... (Devarim 27:2)

There are several occasions in Tanach where stones are to be utilized to build a monument. Rashi citing a Gemara in Sotah (35b) claims that stones were used on at least three separate instances: (i) in the Jordan (ii) Gilgal (Bnei Yisrael's first stop in Eretz Yisrael, and (iii) at Har Eval. What is the significance of building with stones?

STONES- STUMBLING BLOCKS

Rav Nissan Alpert (*Limudei Nissan*) suggests that stones symbolize stumbling blocks which one encounters that often stand in one's way of achieving a goal. In retrospect, one gains from past experiences, and it is crucial to recall past stumbling blocks so as to avoid tripping over them again.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY

At this juncture as Bnei Yisrael are about to enter Eretz Yisrael, Moshe builds a monument with the **desert stones** to highlight to the nation that they were able to overcome the difficulties of travelling through the dry desert. Hashem provided food (*mann*) and water (Miriam's well) for sustenance. Moshe seeks to instill faith in the people that once they enter Israel and are subject to natural law, they will be able to overcome obstacles

that they will encounter as well. Another reminder occurs as they cross the Jordan river and again after they conquer the land.

STONES OF IRON

The Torah describes Eretz Yisrael as אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבָנֶיהָ בְּרֹזָל - *a land whose stones are iron* (Devarim 8:9). The same stones that symbolize “stumbling blocks” and challenges, are depicted as strong and valuable. **Perhaps the lesson is that we must face challenges and recall our hardships so that we learn and grow from those experiences.**

ACRONYM OF אבן

Additionally, the word אבן is the acronym of אב, בן, נכד. This symbolizes the *mesorah* that is to be transmitted from generation to generation. From father to son and then to grandson – fulfilling the statement from *Shir HaShirim*: וְהָיוּ הַמְּשָׁלֵשׁ לֹא בְמִהְרָה – which is interpreted as when Torah is transmitted through three generations it will remain strong within the family.

We all face challenges – when we encounter rocks in our path – we need to learn to roll with the punches, so they strengthen us. May we be able to overcome all obstacles we encounter and properly transmit our Torah knowledge and enthusiasm to future generations so that we solidify our eternal commitment to Torah. ■

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