



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

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

Consistency at Home and on the Road

כְּאִשֶּׁר יֶחֱנּוּ בְּנוֹ יִסְעוּ אִישׁ עַל־יְדוֹ לְדִגְלֵיהֶם...
... **Just as they encamped, so must they travel** — each person in his place, by their banners. (Bamidbar 2:17)

The Menachem Tzion (son-in-law of Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank) offers a striking *drash* on this *pasuk*.

Human behavior is often inconsistent. At times, we swing between extremes depending on where we are and who is watching. When we are in our own environment like in our home, our shul, or our neighborhood, people recognize us, so we are careful to behave appropriately and preserve our reputation. Yet when we leave that environment and go on vacation or travel out of town, where no one knows us, we may allow ourselves liberties that would be unthinkable back home.

For others, the opposite is true. At home, among familiar faces, they may feel comfortable “letting loose,” assuming that people understand them or will excuse their behavior. Yet when they leave their community, they suddenly become careful, reserved, and measured, taking special care to make a good impression on those who do not know them.

The Torah speaks directly to this inconsistency. **“Just as they encamped, so must they travel.”**

Our behavior should not change based on geography. The same standards that guide us when we are settled at home must guide us when we are on the move. Who we are in familiar spaces should be who we are everywhere.

Rabbi Benjamin Blech points to a related idea in the mitzvah of Chanukah. We place the menorah near the doorway, opposite the mezuzah. The mezuzah, on the left as we enter, reminds us to maintain a high level of spirituality inside our homes. When we leave the house, the menorah stands on our right, reminding us that we defeated the Greeks and must carry that confidence and commitment beyond our private space into the public world, even when it feels hostile or challenging.

True *avodat Hashem* is not situational. It does not depend on comfort, familiarity, or who happens to be watching. The Torah asks us for integrity. We should exhibit one identity and one set of values whether we are encamped or traveling.

May we merit to live lives of consistency and inner strength, serving Hashem with the same sincerity at home and on the road, in the safety of our communities and in the uncertainty of unfamiliar places. When our *penimiyut* (inner- spirit) and *chitzoniyut* (outer- behavior) align, we become walking sanctuaries wherever we go. ■