

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

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After teaching Bnei Yisroel about the blessings and curses, he gives them chizuk.

אַתֶּם נֹצְבִים הַיּוֹם כְּלָכֶם לְפָנַי הַ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם רְאִשֵׁיכֶם שְׂבִיטֵיכֶם זְקֵנֵיכֶם וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם כָּל
אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

“You all are standing at attention today, before Hashem, your Lord: your leaders, your tribes, your elders, your officials, all people of Yisroel.” (Devarim 29:9).

If Moshe was talking to the entire nation, they did he delineate each group that was there? If all people of Yisroel were there, then why also mention the leaders? Is it superfluous to say every group and every person and then also “all?” Bnei Yisroel knew that they were standing, why did he have to tell them that they were standing?

Moshe is saying two different things. He is first saying that all those present—which made up the entire Bnei Yisroel—were standing. Everyone was standing and everyone was before Hashem. There was no one with special privileges. Nor was anyone there with any disadvantages. “You are all standing” on equal footing. Everyone was on equal footing before Hashem. They all were seen by Hashem as equally responsible for keeping the Torah but also equally capable of keeping the Torah. All were equally subject to the consequences, blessings or otherwise.

נֹצְבִים “standing,” in the Torah, means at attention and it also means ready to serve. True, all were actually standing. No one dared sit or recline. However, Moshe was stating they were all standing ready for action. The word נֹצְבִים is brought other times in the Chumash and it always means standing at attention ready to serve.

Avraham, newly minted into Hashem’s covenant by having just undergone circumcision, was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא. “And he lifted up his eyes, and he saw. Behold, three men were standing upon him, and he saw, and he ran toward them from the opening of his tent, and he bowed to the ground.” (Bereishis 18:2). The pasuk says “he saw” twice. First, “and he saw, and behold!” Second, “and he saw, and he ran.” There, Avraham saw two things. He saw Hashem. Hashem appeared before him and he saw the imagery that Hashem was showing him. (Ibid 18:1). He understood the message that Hashem was conveying to him. He would have a son through Sarah (ibid 17:19) and will become a great nation (ibid 17:20). Then, Behold! Something new happened. Now, three men were standing upon him. “He saw [them] and ran toward them.” (Ibid 18:2). They were not merely standing around. They, clearly, came to see Avraham. They were standing *upon him*. They were there to serve a purpose for him.

Upon him is not literal but a figure of writing. These men of esteem (angels according to the Gemara) were waiting upon him. Their attention was on him. They stood and waited while Avraham saw what Hashem showed him. Then when that was done,

they were there, standing and waiting. They were there to serve Avraham with information and healing.

Further, when Yoseph finally revealed himself to his brothers it says, וְלֹא-יָכַל יוֹסֵף, וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל הַנֹּצְבִים עָלָיו וַיִּקְרָא הוֹצִיאוּ כָל-אִישׁ מֵעָלַי וְלֹא-עָמַד אִישׁ אִתּוֹ בְּהִתְנַדַּע יוֹסֵף אֶל-אֶחָיו: "And Yoseph could no longer control himself for all those that were standing on him. And he called, 'Everyone man go out from before me.' Not a single person [other than his brothers] stood with him when Yoseph confessed to his brothers." (Ibid 45:1). The people who were standing upon Yoseph were his servants and courtesans. They stood at attention and attended him.

Later, the Torah talks about Pharaoh's edict for Bnei Yisroel to make bricks without straw. The Yisroel officials were distraught because they were not allowed to have Bnei Yisroel reduce the number of bricks. (Shmos 5:19). וַיִּפְגְּעוּ אֶת-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת-אַהֲרֹן וַנִּצְבּוּ לְקִרְיָתָם בְּצִאתָם. "And they approached Moshe and Aharon and stood toward them, as they left from before Pharaoh." (Ibid 5:20). They were not simply standing in Moshe and Aharon's way. They were there ready to advocate for Bnei Yisroel. Their complaint was not about the bricks. It was that antagonizing Pharaoh did nothing to alleviate the situation, but instead made the Bnei Yisroel just seem like complainers. Now, the people still had to do the work, but Pharaoh felt emboldened in front of Hashem. Up until this point, Bnei Yisroel worked for Eretz Mitzrayim but there was still the fear that they would up and leave or join Egypt's enemies. However, after the meeting, Pharaoh was unmoved by Moshe and the simple request for Bnei Yisroel to leave for three days to serve Hashem. He was emboldened to even make the work harder. This made Bnei Yisroel seem even lower in Pharaoh's eyes. (Ibid 5:21). The Yisroel officials "stood opposite Moshe and Aharon" because their interest was the people's, not Moshe's or Aharon's. "When they left Pharaoh" their interests conflicted. They served Bnei Yisroel and their job was to promote Bnei Yisroel's interest. It seemed like their job was disrupted by Moshe who made Pharaoh loath Bnei Yisroel instead of appreciate them.

Finally, Moshe tells Bnei Yisroel to move away from the treasonous rabble of Korach. וַיַּעֲלוּ מֵעַל מִשְׁכַּן-קְרַח דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם מִסָּבִיב וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם יֵצְאוּ נֹצְבִים פְּתַח אֹהֲלֵיהֶם וּבְנֵיהֶם וְטַפָּם: "So they went up from around the dwellings of Korach, Dasan, and Aviram. And Dasan and Aviram went out and stood at the opening of their tents, and their wives, and children, and infants." (Bamidbar 16:27). Until the very end, Dasan and Aviram stood ready to serve Korach. They were such great attendants that they got their wives, adult children, and young children involved. Even Korach's sons did not follow Korach.

The word standing is also used as those ready to serve in nach. (Shoftim 18:16, Shmuel I 22:6, Melochim I 4:5). As Moshe said, "You are all standing today." Everyone was a servant of Hashem and everyone was ready to attend to Hashem. They were all able to hear the Torah and fulfill it. "All before Hashem." All were equal before Hashem. One did not need to be "the heads, the tribal leaders, the elders, and officials." Sure, those are usually the ones that serve the needs of the masses. But on this day, the day that Moshe was teaching Klal Yisroel about the Torah and how to keep it, all stood equally before Hashem as His attendants. "Every man in Yisroel."