

## Parshas Noso – A Lesson In Chinuch – R' Sholom Segal

יב סיון תשע"ט – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – שבת פ' נשא

When it came time for the inauguration of the משכן, Hashem instructed the נשיאים to offer their קרבנות in line with the order in which they journeyed. In order to better understand the rationale for this, let us return to the source of their layout. When the שבטים carried אבינו's coffin to ארץ ישראל, he ordered them to arrange themselves in the way that they would encamp around the משכן. What is the connection and what message did he seek to convey?

The last פרשה in ספר במדבר begins, 'אלה מסעי', these are the travels of בני ישראל, and then proceeds to list all the places that the Jewish people encamped in the desert. This is because even when the Nation took a break to rest up, though physically they had stopped, in a deeper sense, their quest for דבקות with Hashem continued unabated.

With this in mind, we may explain the relevance of the word חינוך to a house or even a מזבח. To translate the word as 'education' is difficult, for how does one educate his abode? The more elegant 'inauguration', does not do much for us in understanding the purpose of a חנוכת הבית, for the cutting of a red ribbon surely has no spiritual purpose. Rather, 'חינוך' means to map out a path, be it in child rearing, in house rearing or even Altar rearing. חינוך לנער על פי דרכו requires a parent to examine the tendencies and capabilities of their charge, and thereafter, with a large dose of סייעתא דשמיא, set down a route for their child to take in life. True, the house is going nowhere, but it is surely home to a long road ahead, hopefully one of קדושה וטהרה.

אבינו was the מוחך par excellence, recognising the unique qualities of each of his 12 sons, each with his avenue in עבודת ד', but, most importantly, all imperative in the final picture. He then established, through the ברכות he bestowed upon them, the path for each tribe; one through תורה, another through working to support the תורה, the next through מלכות and so-on-and-so-forth. When instructing them how to carry him to his final resting place, he was teaching them the essence of חינוך. He wanted them to understand that there was a long road ahead, and that now, they were to journey onwards, each on his individual path, but working hand in hand, to reach one common goal. Whether they were encamped or on the move, the formation was one and the same, for the journey ends only in Hashem's outstretched arms, not before.

So too, when inaugurating the בית המקדש or the משכן, they were setting up the ladder that יעקב saw in his dream. The physical structure may be stationary, but therein is the שערי השמים. There is a tall ladder which leads the individual along a road to Heaven, the בית ד'. The חנוכת המזבח was yet a further expression of their journey, yet a further facet of the on-going flight to the highest realms.

Many people talk of a 'gap year', a year of back-packing in India. For those who are lucky enough to go to ישיבה, it is not a gap year. While the בחור sits, rocking back and forth over the hallowed words of גמרא, he, from his stationary position, journeys back to the study halls of אביי and רבא, and sets his compass for the journey ahead; it is a year of true חינוך.

Likewise, in the spirit of ויגדך ושאל אביך, we daven that we should be left alone by those who wish to build our children's future on ... nothing [remember, their ideals have no basis, are 'reform' and constantly 'evolving'] and allow us to continue to guide our pure and precious youth along the path mapped out all those years ago by the Torah.