

ויגד משה את דברי העם אל ה' (יט:ט)

"And Moshe spoke the words of the people to G-d" (19:9)

Why the need for this verse when it just stated in the previous verse (19:8) that "Moshe reported the words of the people to G-d."

”וישב משה את דברי העם אל ה'”

Why the redundancy? Moshe just reported the words to G-d, were there any new words?

The Talmud (Shabbat 87a) distinguishes between the two reports. The first report, "vayashev", means Moshe's words which appeased one's mind. However, the second report, "Vayaged", subsequently Moshe explained the penalties. This means that Moshe words describing the Torah were hard to man as wormwood (Gidin), eliminating any need for threats to fulfill the Torah. As the Targum Unkelos explained, that Moshe showed them where this would lead to.

However, the Chasidic master, Rabbi Mordechai Dov Twerski (Admor of Hornsteipel, 1839-1902) explained that no quality is so vital and necessary to be a G-dly nation as the virtue of modesty. G-d had just described Israel, "you will be a treasure to me among all the people of the world." (19:5). These words were not merely a promise but a test to see how Israel would react to this description of being a "treasure." Israel passed the test. Their response was that they are ready to accept all G-d's demands without once referring to that great title.

Now, the second response was to show that after Israel, Moshe too is tested. Shortly, all of Israel will witness the fulfillment of Moshe's prophecy and will believe Moshe forever. However, Moshe responded modestly, ready to accept the will of G-d, without any reference to his own greatness.

Moshe answered with the same words which the people had stated as his own answer as well. Moshe passed the test. Shabbat Shalom