

26 Shevat, 5782
January 28, 2022

Parashat Mishpatim

In Parashat Mishpatim it says “Naaseh V’nishma – *we will do and we will obey*”. Rabbi Simcha Bunim of P’shis’cha asks: Since each person was answering for himself, shouldn’t the words have been “Eeseh V’eshma - *I will do and I will obey*”?

He answers with a parable. A group of people were stranded in a barren desert with no protection from the elements. They were all parched with thirst, languishing in the blistering sun. Suddenly, a well-stocked caravan arrived on the scene. A man descended from one of the wagons, bearing large flasks of cool water. Approaching one of the thirsty individuals, he asked, “Would you like some water?”

Thankfully, the man replied, “Yes! We would be so grateful for some water.” He spoke in the plural, for he knew with certainty that every member of the group was as desperately thirsty as he.

When the Jews were in the Sinai desert and Hashem asked them whether they wanted the Torah, each member of the Jewish Nation felt with certainty that his neighbor had as great a desire to hear the word of Hashem as he himself did. They were as one man, with one heart, and each could say confidently that he and all his fellow Jews were united in the longing.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Roth