

NOT TO WORRY, G-D'S IN CHARGE

by Rabbi Pinchas Avruch

Parshas Devarim

Not To Worry, G-d's In Charge

By Rabbi Shlomo Jarcaig

The book of Devarim is referred to by the Talmud as Mishneh Torah - a repetition of the Torah - a concept alluded to by its Greek name, Deuteronomy. This fifth and final book of the Torah is Moshe's recounting, prior to his death, of the events of the previous forty years. The significance of the repetition of these events is discovered in nuances between the wording describing the events here and the language used when they were previously recorded. These fine distinctions teach us valuable lessons about life.

After relating how the tribes of Reuven and Gad would inherit the portions of land that they had chosen on the eastern side of the Jordan River, Moshe reminded them of their responsibility to join the rest of the nation in crossing the Jordan and conquering the land of Israel. He charged them to stay with the other tribes "until G-d will give rest to your brothers as unto you, and they will also possess the land..."(3:20). This is somewhat different from what he said at the moment (Bamidbar/Numbers 32:22) when he told them that they only had to stay until they were finished conquering the land, but did not have to wait until everyone divided up their possessions and felt secure. Why did Moshe determine he must add this new obligation?

Malbim (1) explains that Moshe's initial decision was based on his understanding that the war they would fight would be "before G-d" (ibid 32:21). Moshe anticipated a miraculous victory, the likes of which would leave the rest of the Jews feeling no need for Reuven and Gad to stay with them since it would be clearly evident that G-d was the one who fought on their behalf. Ultimately, however, Moshe realized that the wars would not be so blatantly miraculous and Reuven and Gad would have to cross "before your brothers" (Devarim 3:18) and conquer the land in a more natural way. Thus, even after the land would be conquered the Jews would still feel insecure until they divided their inheritance and settled the land. With his reevaluation of the circumstances, Moshe reacted by appropriately refining the course of action.

Interestingly, the question was the academic one of determining the appropriate degree of human effort to expend relative to the miraculousness of the victory. Either way, they had been given a Divine guaranty that they would succeed and rested assured that if they simply fulfilled their due diligence and maintained their allegiance to and relationship with G-d, they would conquer the Holy Land and not suffer casualties.

While G-d's presence in our daily lives appears much more hidden than during the miraculous wars of conquest 3277 years ago, we, too, possess G-d given guaranties: He will give us all the financial sustenance we need; He will give us challenges to help us grow, but He will only give us challenges we can master; He will give us mitzvah situations to allow us ample opportunities to forge and foster our relationship with Him. The question is: How do we respond? Do we become agitated and aggravated because we still delude ourselves into believing that we truly control the outcome of life's situations (when we know that we cannot really control anything other than our own emotional responses to these situations)? Or do we progress through life, happy and serene in the knowledge that if we do our due, G-d will do all the rest?

Have a Good Shabbos!

(1) acronym for (Rabbi) Meir Leibush ben Yechiel Michel; 1809-1879; Rabbi in Germany, Romania and Russia, he was one of the preeminent modern Bible commentators, often demonstrating how the Oral Tradition is implicit in the Torah's text

Text Copyright © 2005 by [Rabbi Shlomo Jarcaig](#) and **Torah.org**.

Kol HaKollel is a publication of The Milwaukee Kollel Center for Jewish Studies • 5007 West Keefe Avenue • Milwaukee, Wisconsin • 414-447-7999