



DID HASHEM FORCE THE YIDDEN TO ACCEPT THE TORAH?

Shabbos Parshas Nasso, 12 Sivan 5725*

Before Hashem gave the Torah to the Yidden, “He hovered the mountain over them like a barrel.” This created a disclaimer for the Torah—the Yidden could say that they were coerced into accepting it.

But if the Yidden had already joyfully and willingly stated “*Naaseh venishma*” before this occurred, why was this show of force necessary at all?

The answer given is that the Yidden accepted the Written Torah willingly, but they were forced to accept the Oral Torah. Only years later, they accepted the Oral Torah willingly, during the time of the story of Purim.

But the Oral Torah is the explanation of the Written Torah, and it is impossible to properly understand the Written Torah without the Oral Torah. So the Yidden must certainly have accepted the Oral

Torah as well when they said “*Naaseh venishma?*”

The answer lies in a *halacha* in the laws of acquisition: “A person cannot buy something that does not exist.” The Yidden would only receive the Oral Torah along with the second *luchos*, months later, so they could not accept it now, as willing as they may have been. The Written Torah, on the other hand, would be given less than a day later, and the Yidden had already been elevated to the spiritual level required to receive it. So when the Yidden declared “*Naaseh venishma,*” they *could not* have included the Oral Torah in their commitment.

That is why Hashem had to hold the mountain over their heads—in order for them to accept the Oral Torah, which they had not yet committed to.

WHAT SPOOKED THE SPIES?

Sunday, Parshas Shelach, 5725*

By the time they were readying to enter Eretz Canaan, Moshe Rabbeinu knew the Yidden well; very well. He was their leader and was familiar with their every character trait. When it came time to select the *meraglim*, he certainly chose the 12 most suited men

for the task, men who would be sure to bring back a positive, optimistic view of the land and the Yidden’s ability to conquer it. Indeed, Rashi confirms that “at that time, they were good”—the *meraglim* were indeed the best candidates for the job.