

Moshe was instructed to pass leadership to Yehoshua.

וְצַו אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְתַזְקֶהוּ וְאַמְצָהוּ כִּי־הוּא יַעֲבֹר לְפָנֵי הָעָם הַזֶּה וְהוּא יִנְחִיל אוֹתָם אֶת־

הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה:

“And command Yehoshua and fortify and encourage him, because he will pass before this people. And he will allocate to them the Land that you will see.” (Devarim 3:28).

Moshe is talking here and giving his own impression of what Hashem told him. Why does he not refer to Yehoshua as “bin Nun” like he does so often? What does he command Yehoshua? What is the strength and courage that Moshe had to give to Yehoshua? What is the connection between the fact that Yehoshua will pass before the people and allot them the Land, and Moshe only seeing the Land?

Gemara Kiddushin 29a says, *we learn that “command” means to inspire the person to do the commandment. As it says, “Command Yehoshua, and fortify and encourage him.” (Devarim 3:28). Just as command here is tied to the encouragement, so too, other places.*

Midrash says, *encourage Yehoshua that he will actually cross to the Land. Yehoshua was afraid that if Moshe did not, he would not. The pasuk says “who will allot the Land.” (Sifrei Devarim 29:9).*

Rashi says, *command Yehoshua regarding the burdens he has to bear.*

Ohr Chaim says, *what precisely was Moshe to command Yehoshua? The Yalkut Shimoni says on parshas Pinchas that Moses was to command him not to be taken in by the Gibeonites. Another opinion is that Moshe warned him concerning possible strife amongst the people. However, as there is no hint in the text of this, we do not have to accept this explanation. The command is that Moshe simply told Yehoshua to exert authority over Yisroel already while Moshe was still alive. He personally would support him in this before the eyes of the whole nation.*

In transferring leadership, Moshe is teaching the later generations how power and leadership should be transferred peacefully. First, it must be done by divine inspiration (or at least with *daas Torah*). It also must be done by a significant act to establish the new person as a leader. This is all done best while the previous leader is alive and actually done by the previous leader.

“And command Yehoshua.” Moshe calls him אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ and not Yehoshua bin Nun. He is no longer that spy, the leader of Ephraim. He is now his own person. אֶת connotes a proper noun. Now Yehoshua was his own being. He was not his father’s son or from a tribe, anymore. He was “Yehoshua.” This is what Moshe commanded him. *Command him that he is now, forthwith, Yehoshua, the leader of Yisroel.*

There is a similar pasuk later. וַיֹּאמֶר׃ בֶּן־נֹחַן וַיֹּאמְרוּ׃ חֲזַק וְאַמְץ׃ כִּי אַתָּה תְּבִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָהֶם וְאַנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ׃ “And command Yehoshua bin Nun and say, be strong and have courage, because you are bringing Bnei Yisroel to the Land that I swore to them, and I will be with you.” (Devarim 31:22). This pasuk is not a repeat of ours. The reason why it says Yehoshua’s full name is because he is being commanded to be strong and take courage, and have belief in Hashem. Hashem will be with the simple Yehoshua bin Nun and make him the leader, Yehoshua. There, the command is “to be strong and have courage.” Here, the command is, “You are now Yehoshua.” In fact, after this pasuk it refers to Yehoshua without “bin Nun” (Ibid 3:21, 31:3, 31:7) until Hashem commands him to believe in Him.

“Fortify and encourage him.” Until now, Yehoshua was a follower. Yes, he led the army in battle. However, he was always submissive to Moshe. Now, he is told to lose the humility and following attitude of a student, and gain the humility and resilience and self-confidence of a leader. He will have to lead with strength. He cannot allow the nation to roll over him. This is how Moshe fortified and encouraged him.

“Because he is passing before this people.” This nation is not easy. This is a stiffed neck nation. He will need to have strength and courage. “And he will allot them the Land.” He is going to have to carry out the conquest of the Land and also enforce its divisions and allotment. He cannot be seen as tied to Moshe and Shevet Levi, nor can he be seen to be tied to the family of Nun and Shevat Ephraim. That is why, he must be “Yehoshua.”

“That you will see.” Moshe will see the Land, but he will not conquer it. Therefore, he cannot be the one to divide it or allot it. The leader who conquers the Land must be the one that divides and then can enforce its allotments properly and with authority.