

The last pasuk in the Torah ends with the words לְעֵינֵי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. What is the Torah telling us with those words? Rashi immediately jumps on it because it bothers him too, and he says this is referring to the שבירת הלוחות. It's a Gemara in Shabbos that Hashem praised משה רבינו for destroying the לוחות. R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the Rav of Yerushalayim יגן עלינו asks how did the חכמים know that לְעֵינֵי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל is referring to the שבירת הלוחות? Maybe it's referring to the עשר מכות, קריעת ים סוף, עשר מכות, or הר סיני. Why is שבירת הלוחות singled out as apparently משה רבינו's greatest achievement of all the outstanding things that he did?

We have to see that this was an important lesson that משה רבינו wanted to teach us, and that is, we don't compromise. We, frum-from-birth people claim and think that we don't compromise. We're not like those other people who compromise and give in a little here, a little there. If we think about it, we often times do compromise and we have to be a little bit more strict with ourselves, not with the people around us. Always be מחמיר on yourself and מיקל for everybody else - a very important side lesson. The people who are compromising want to give in a little bit and they want to say, you want to save the Torah, we have to give in a little bit over here, a little bit over there. Meanwhile משה רבינו called out אלי מי לה' and broke the לוחות because he said the עגל cannot coexist side-by-side with the לוחות. The לוחות have to go because we have to preserve the purity of the Torah. They could not exist with this tremendous עבירה. To preserve the Torah, he felt it was absolutely mandatory to shatter the לוחות and by that action, he was able to shatter the הרע of the עגל and to shatter this עבירה. This is what we have to do.

R' Yosef Chaim was famous through his entire life for never compromising. All of his מחלוקת'ן with all of the not frum Yidden at that time in ארץ ישראל are world famous amongst those who know him.

[By the way, Artscroll has a phenomenal bio on R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld which I recommend to everybody. It's a sefer well worth reading. You will get tremendous benefit out of reading it. It's so beautiful.] This inflexibility of משה רבינו, when it came to preservation of our דעת, of our beliefs, of our אמונה, was, according to this רש"י, his greatest achievement.

What a way to end the Torah. What a way to start a new year. Let us learn from משה רבינו's steadfastness that we too should be steadfast and continue to do everything we can to the best of our ability.

