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AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

בשבת



אור ישראל

Self Inspired

PARSHAS
TZAV

BY RABBI AVICHAI BENSOUSSAN
RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS

ENDURING EDUCATION

The end of *Parshas Tzav* details the installation of Aharon HaKohen and his sons as Kohanim. Moshe Rabbeinu dressed and anointed them, and then sacrifices were offered, with Moshe, Aharon and his sons each taking a role in the offerings.

After this was done, Moshe instructed Aharon and his sons to stay at the entrance of the *Ohel Moed*, and eat meat and bread from the sacrifices. Subsequently, they were to spend the next seven days¹ serving in the *Ohel Moed*, doing the *avodah* that was necessary in the *Mishkan* during that period of time.

The *parsha* ends by telling us that Aharon and his children followed Moshe's instructions precisely, not deviating one iota.² What significance does this *passuk* have, is there any reason we would have thought otherwise?

The Maharal³ (Rabbi Yehuda Loew, 1520–1609) quotes the Sifra that details how Aharon and his sons were as joyous to perform their duties as if Hashem Himself had told them what their responsibilities were. The Maharal explains that people aren't happy to take instruction from others. Aharon and his sons, however, were different. Despite hearing the instructions from Moshe, and not from Hashem, they didn't allow it to bother them, and continued as if they were listening directly to Hashem.

Though we can generally understand why one would not want to be ordered around by another, would we really have thought it applied here? Aharon was not just anyone, his humility was legendary.⁴ Furthermore, *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the greatest man who ever lived, was doing the instructing. It is not particularly difficult to take direction from someone like that. And lastly, once consecrated, Aharon would be second to Moshe — not a bad compensation for listening to some directions.⁵

Yet, at such a momentous occasion, with such holy people, we still find there is praise for Aharon and his sons because they were not concerned with such trivialities. It is not easy to listen to others, even when they mean the best for us. Once we recognize this hurdle for what it is, we are better equipped to deal with it, and grow in our *avodas Hashem*.

1 They only stayed when doing the *avodah*, see *Rabbeinu Bachya* on *Vayikra* 8:35

2 *Vayikra* Chap. 8

3 *Gur Aryeh* on *Vayikra* 8:36, s.v. להגיד שבחן

4 See *Tiferes Yisrael - Yachin* on *Avos* 1:12

5 *Rashi* on *Bamidbar* 16:1, s.v. דתן ואבירם

Aharon was not just anyone, his humility was legendary.

Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

If accepting another's direction is so difficult, and the resistance potentially so subtle, what can we do to combat this inherent prejudice?

Our natural resistance is an outgrowth of our ego and pride. If we accept another's instruction, we are admitting that, in some way, there is someone who knows more, is a greater expert, or is more familiar with a particular topic than we are. We are placing ourselves subordinate to the other, and that, on some level, is painful.

The antidote, then, is humility.¹ Working on one's humility can take a lifetime, and each person will have to find what works for them. But in this particular instance, it can be worthwhile to focus on the fact that one's wit, knowledge and wisdom are all from Hashem.²

This will allow us to accept whatever shortcoming we may have, recognizing that after all, Hashem holds the keys to intelligence.

1 *Lechem Shomayim* on *Avos* 4:1, s.v.

הלמד מכל

2 *Iggeres HaRamban*

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It is worthwhile for every Jew to run after these Mussar sefarim, for one who finds them finds life. - Yalizu Chassidim, end of Chapter on 'Kavod,' by R' Eliezer Pappo

THE PRINCIPLED PAL OF THE PRINCIPAL

“Did you hear? They hired Rabbi Shimon Jedwab* as the next principal.” Rabbi Malachi Fazayov was not shocked, but a bit surprised. After Rabbi Haber suddenly left midyear, the school leadership had quickly put together a search committee to find a suitable replacement. It wasn’t simple, as Yeshiva Tiferet Haim had a long and storied history, and not only would the principal have to uphold that tradition, be an excellent teacher and principal, they would also have to fundraise.

Of course! It made perfect sense, he was surprised that he didn’t realize it before.

Though Rabbi Malachi would have been perfect for the position, he was not comfortable with fundraising. Nevertheless, he sent the job description to his friend of many years, Rabbi Shimon Jedwab. Shimon and Malachi had met during their *yeshiva* years, and were friends ever since. They had both gone into the same field, and although Shimon was a principal, and Malachi a teacher, they often compared notes and helped each other with thorny challenges.

When Rabbi Fazayov heard that his good friend received the position, he was happy, but intrigued. He knew Shimon’s capabilities and professional history. He was a good principal, but frankly, not amazing. He would do a solid job, but Rabbi Haber had big shoes to fill, and Malachi just wasn’t sure that Shimon would be able to do so.

Malachi’s reservations didn’t stop there. Once Shimon joined the school, Malachi found that he was constantly questioning Shimon’s decision making. Never in public, but often mentally, and sometimes personally. Malachi wasn’t aggressive about it, and Shimon, to his credit, would often take Malachi’s advice into consideration, but the non-stop doubting started to erode their once-strong friendship.

Things came to a head when Shimon bluntly asked Malachi if something was wrong; things seemed so different from before Shimon joined YTH. Malachi denied everything, but he knew in his heart that things had indeed changed.

Later that evening, Malachi discussed the situation with his wife. He spoke about his friendship, and how that seems to have eroded once Shimon became his boss. Malachi sat up — that was it! Of course! It made perfect sense, he was surprised that he didn’t realize it before.

It wasn’t Shimon’s incompetence or unfamiliarity that caused Malachi to constantly correct his long-time friend. It was Malachi’s difficulty in accepting Shimon’s instruction and guidance. Having his friend as his boss hurt, and Malachi was just not comfortable in his new role.

This was a breakthrough. It took time, but once Malachi was able to work through this newfound challenge, he found that his friendship was better than ever, and Shimon was actually a pretty good principal too.

**Based on a true story, names have been changed.*

DID YOU KNOW?

- *Moshe Rabbeinu* would not have been born if not for his father’s willingness to listen to the advice of others.¹
- For those who learn Torah for its sake, Hashem gives them the ability to inspire and influence others with their words.²

¹ *Sotah* 12a

² *Tiferes Yisrael - Yachin on Avos* 6:1, s.v. ונהנין ממנה

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