

*Rav* in any given generation, a *Rav* who is great like *Moshe Rabbeinu*. Everyone else, regardless of their particular merits, are equal. They are all *talmidim*, and there is one *Gedol Hador*.

And if there is only one *Gedol Hador*, there is hardly any reason for a person to aspire to greatness in Torah and *yirah* and *kedushah*, to become a *Rav*.

Yisro taught us that you don't have to become the greatest person in the generation in order to get somewhere. There are many levels of greatness. There are leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties and leaders of tens.

Each person according to his *madreigah* can attain greatness. Thus, every Jewish mother can cry in *tefilah* when lighting *Shabbos* candles that her son should become great in Torah and *yirah* and become a *Rav*, because *gadlus b'Torah* is not reserved for one person or a handful of exceptional individuals; it is open to all to attain.

Moshe took the idea even further. Yisro had advised him to look for אנשי חיל יראי אלקים אנשי בצע – “men of valor, G-d-fearing, men of truth, who hate unjust gain.” Having all these qualities is a very high level. Moshe did not find people like this, so he appointed mere “men of valor” over the people.

Moshe thereby taught us that even if a person does not have every possible desirable quality, even if he is not comparable to *Gedolei Hador* of past generations, he may still be a leader and teacher, and is well deserving of our respect, as long as he is valiant in Torah study and pursuit of *yiras Shamayim*.

When the Torah was given, *Hashem* added to this by saying ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש – “You shall be for Me a kingdom of priests and holy nation.”

What does this add?

Yisro taught us that out of every ten Jews, there needs to be at least one who is special among his people and dedicates his life to Torah and *avodah*. Then *Hashem* told us that He takes a broader outlook: He looks at us in relation to the whole world. We are the chosen people, the priests of G-d among them. It is not enough for one Jew out of ten to be great in Torah. Rather, out of every ten people in the world, there should be one Jew who is great in Torah.

Accordingly, the entire Jewish people is special, is distinguished in Torah and *yirah*.

Our *parshah* thus gives the lie to the idea that not everyone can be a rabbi. This is why the *parshah* gives us this introduction to *Matan Torah* and to the future of the Jewish people. It's true that not every person in the world can be a *Rav*, but every ten human beings need one *Rav*, so if we make an estimate according to how things are today, it comes out that even if every *shomer Shabbos* Jew would be great in Torah, would be a *Rav*, there still would not be enough even for leaders of thousands.

Thus there is a sacred and absolute obligation on every one of us to be a man of valor and G-d-fearing, to learn a lot of Torah, as much as possible, and to exert ourselves in *avodas Hashem* all our lives. Then we will fulfill the *pasuk* that says והייתם לי סגולה מכל העמים. ●

## לעילוי נשמות

מוה"ד משה בן אליעזר המבורגר זצ"ל

ומוה"ד ברוך זאב בן נפתלי קראוס זצ"ל

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