

Harav Yisrael Apelbaum Shlitah
Rosh Yeshiva - Yeshiva Tiferes Chaim
Parshas Vayakhel - Pekudei 5778



וַיֵּצְאוּ כָּל עֵדֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלִּפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה - שמות לה כ

After Moshe taught Klal Yisroel the mitzvos of Shabbos and building the Mishkan, the Torah states that Klal Yisroel left from in front of Moshe. Why is it emphasizing that they left from in front of him? It's obvious that after being taught these mitzvos by Moshe, they left his presence! Rav Elyah Lopian zatzal answers, that the Torah is teaching us that after leaving Moshe, it was discernible that they had just been in his presence. This can be compared to a man seen staggering away from three shops. One is a barber shop, one is a restaurant, and one is a bar. It's obvious to everyone there that he must have just left the bar. So too l'havdil, Klal Yisroel was affected by being in Moshe's presence, and it was outwardly recognizable to everybody that they had just left his presence.

Why did the Torah choose to tell us this idea specifically at this point? We have said in the past an answer, that after Moshe had come down from Har Sinai with the second set of Luchos, and after fighting on Klal Yisroel's behalf, he had the קָרַן עוֹר פָּנָיו - a special glow on his face. That glow of greatness, of being in the presence of Hkb"h, was on Moshe's face. The Torah wanted to emphasise this here, that after Klal Yisroel left from in front of Moshe, not only did they receive the mitzvos, but they had also received from Moshe this special glow.

What caused Moshe Rabbeinu to get this special glow? Moshe took action and was moser nefesh on behalf of Klal Yisroel to defend them and plea to Hashem not to destroy them. Rashi comments on the words לְעֵינַי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל at the end of the Torah, שְׁנִשְׂאוֹ לְבוֹ לְשִׁבוֹר הַלּוּחוֹת לְעֵינָהֶם, - "his heart stirred him up to smash the tablets before their eyes". He had the courage to break the Luchos, because he knew that that was the right thing to do for the Ribono Shel Olam. This same courage that prompted him to break the Luchos, also pushed him to go up and implore Hashem to give them the second set of Luchos. This לָב נְשִׂיאת which pushed him to fight for Klal Yisroel, to do for Hashem, and to make Hashem's name great in this world, brought on him the קָרַן עוֹר פָּנָיו. This strength transferred from Moshe Rabbeinu in to Klal Yisroel. Now the next passuk can be understood beautifully. וַיִּבְּאוּ כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׂאוֹ לְבוֹ - "And every man whose heart uplifted him came". Where did they receive this power of לָב נְשִׂיאת from? From being in the presence of Moshe. Merely being in the presence of Moshe infused them with this courageous uplifted heart that Moshe had. Moshe wasn't only giving them the commandments about Shabbos and the Mishkan. Rather he was infusing them with this inspiration and power to rebuild and go on.

We can learn a great lesson from here, to try to be in the presence of gedolim and tzaddikim as much as possible. Besides for their Torah knowledge and wisdom, the Shechina rests among them. Rashi brings in parshas Yisro on the pasuk וַיִּבְּאוּ אֹהֶרֶן וְכָל זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַכֵּל לֶחֶם עִם חֵתָן מִשָּׁה לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹקִים. Why does it say they ate in front of Hashem? They were in front of Moshe, not Hashem! "From here we learn that if one has pleasure from a feast at which talmidei chachamim are seated, it's as if he has had pleasure from the Shechinah" (Berachos 64a). People go to gedolim and snap pictures the whole time. What do they leave with? Pictures! They don't realize that they're in the presence of the Shechina. Not only can you get daas Torah and good advice, but you can get infused with a special heavenly glow! This doesn't only apply to a gadol, but any Rov or talmid chochom has this power to inspire and uplift those around him. Similarly, every time a person enters a shul to daven, he's in the presence of the Shechina. He should leave infused with the radiance of being in the Shechina's presence. The same thing should happen every time a person sits down to learn. The gemara says in Berachos 8, that every time a person learns Torah, the Shechina is there. We also find that when a person learns Torah by night, the Shechina is opposite him, as it says שְׁפָכִי כַמִּים לַיָּרֵךְ נֹכַח פְּנֵי ד' (Tamid 32b). The gemara says in Berachos 6 that even one person who learns Torah is in Hashem's presence. As it says וַיִּבְרַכְתִּיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּבְרַכְתִּיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת שְׁמֵי אֱבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּבְרַכְתִּיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ. (And שְׁמֵי refers to Torah, as the gemara says in Berachos 21a, that we know that we have to say a beracha on Torah because it says לְאֱלֹקֵינוּ. The Maharsha says its called שְׁמֵי because the Torah is made up of the names of Hashem. As the Ramban says in his hakdama, that's why if one letter in the Torah is missing, it's passul, because it's all the names of Hashem.) When a person leaves shul, or the beis medrash, it should be obvious to everybody where he left from, and he should be infused with the glory of Hashem. May we be zoche to be infused with the glory of Hashem in all of our actions throughout our day.