



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim
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Melave Malka Parshas Yisro 5759

Soon after the *Pnei Menachem zy"ra* assumed the leadership of the Gerer chasidim, I related to him something that I had heard from Rav Moshe Slonim zt"l, a well-known and honored Lubavitcher chasid.

Rav Moshe had told me that the *Pnei Menachem*, while still serving as *Rosh Hayeshiva* of Yeshivas Sfas Emes, visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe *zy"ra* and met with him for a long time *b'yechidus*. When they came out of the room to *daven Mincha*, the Rebbe took out a special chair for the *Pnei Menachem*. The elder *chasidim* who observed this, understood it to be the Rebbe's way of telling the *Pnei Menachem* that he was to become a leader.

After I had finished relating this story, the *Pnei Menachem* responded with his typical humility.

"Does a chair represent Jewish leadership? On the contrary, standing represents leadership. A *manhig* needs to stand and serve the people, not to sit. As Hashem told Moshe Rabeinu (דברים ה:כ"ה) ואתה פה עומד עומדי (דברים ה:כ"ה) And you stand here with Me. Chazal (סוטה י"ג) say that this *pasuk* teaches us מה להלן עומד ומשמש, אף כאן עומד ומשמש - Just as he stands and serves over there, so too here does he stand and serve. Also, in *Maseches Horayos* Chazal teach us that Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe and Aharon, 'You imagine that I am giving you rulership? I am giving you servitude.'"



[1]

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This response certainly expressed the approach of the one who responded, for it was well known that throughout his life, the *Pnei Menachem* viewed himself as an *eved l'Am Hashem* - a servant of Hashem's people, who stood and served them with all his strength.

I thought that this explains Yisro's statement in our *Parsha*,

וַיֵּרָא חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר הוּא עֹשֶׂה לָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה לָעָם
מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה יּוֹשֵׁב לְבַדְּךָ וְכָל הָעָם נֹצֵב עֲלֶיךָ מִן בֹּקֶר עַד עֶרֶב (שמות י"ח:י"ד)

And Moshe's father-in-law saw everything that he was doing for the people, and he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people, why are you sitting by yourself, while all of the people stand (waiting) for you from morning till evening?"

In *Maseches Shavuot* (ל:) Chazal state, ובעלי דינין בעמידה, the *dayanim* sit, and the litigants stand. In other words, the *dayan* must sit at the time of judgement. Yisro, Moshe's father-in-law knew the nature of his son-in-law Moshe Rabeinu. He understood that because of his great *anava* (humility), it was very difficult for Moshe Rabeinu to sit while the litigants and all those waiting for judgement stood. Moshe Rabeinu was certainly a leader, but the type of leader who stands and serves the people.

The *Midrash Tanchuma* (ו' ואתחנן) tells us that *Am Yisrael* eulogized Moshe Rabeinu and said, וְאֵי לֵבָן עֲמַרְמָר שָׂרָץ לִפְנֵינוּ כֶּסֶס, וְנִפְלוּ עֲצָמוֹתָיו בַּמִּדְבָּר, - Woe to *Ben Amram* who ran before us like a horse, and yet his bones fell in the desert. They portrayed Moshe Rabeinu's devoted leadership as a horse who ran before them.

Therefore, Yisro advised Moshe Rabeinu to appoint the *Sarei Alafim* and *Sarei Meios* to be the *dayanim*. Then, he would no longer have to sit before the people but would be free to stand and serve them as his heart desired. This explanation exactly fits the words of the *pasuk*,



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אם את הדבר הזה תעשה וצוך אלהים ויכלת עמד - If you will do this matter, and Hashem will command you, you will be able to stand. (שמות י"ח:כ"ג)
By delegating the *dayanus* to others you will now be able to stand and serve Am Yisrael, leading them in the way that expresses your true nature and desire.



[3]

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