

GREAT FOR SHARING
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

PARSHAS
HA'AZINU

בְּשִׁיטְיָחָא

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THE SCHOLAR, THE STUDENT

Moshe Rabbeinu's address to *Klal Yisrael* starts to wind down in *Parshas Ha'azinu*. From the beginning of *Sefer Devarim*, Moshe described the travels of the Jewish nation, explained *mitzvos* both mentioned earlier and new, and spoke about the future. All the while, the principle speaker was Moshe. Yet, in the middle of *Parshas Ha'azinu* we find Yehoshua bin Nun speaking alongside *Moshe Rabbeinu*!¹

Rashi² clarifies that on this day *Moshe Rabbeinu* gave the reins of leadership over to his protégé. Moshe specifically had Yehoshua publicly teach Torah while Moshe was alive, so that it would be clear who was Moshe's successor. Curiously, though, the *passuk* refers to Yehoshua as Hoshea, the name he had before his experience with the Ten Spies. After that incident, he was known as Yehoshua, as a result of Moshe's *tefillos*, when Moshe asked Hashem to look after his student.

Why does the *passuk* use the original name of Yehoshua? Rashi³ explains that this term is used to point out the humility of Yehoshua — he remained as he was before. R' S. R. Hirsch⁴ clarifies further that although Yehoshua reached the pinnacle of his professional career, he had 'made it,' becoming the successor to *Moshe Rabbeinu* himself, he remained as humble as he was in his youth, when he was first starting out on his journey of *avodas Hashem*.

In fact, this is the way all *talmidei chachomim* are supposed to see themselves. The Alter of Kelm⁵ (R' Simcha Zissel Ziv, 1824–1898) points out that the term used for a proficient Torah scholar is *talmid chochom*, not just '*chochom*.' The appellation '*talmid*' means student — why do we refer to the accomplished as students, are they not so much more? He explains that the true nature of the Torah scholar is to continue to seek, to study, to constantly grow in their erudition and conduct.

Thus, Yehoshua took this lesson to heart. Standing there in front of *Klal Yisrael*, on the brink of leadership, ready to lead them where *Moshe Rabbeinu* was unable to go, he still recognized that he is but a student. This is the true mark of a *talmid chochom*.

1 *Devarim* 32:44

2 *ibid.* s.v. הוֹשֵׁעַ בֶּן נֹחַן

3 *ibid.*

4 *ibid.*

5 *Chochmoh U'Mussar*, Vol. I, Essay 130

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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

It can pretty much happen to anyone — we accomplish something, someone shows us gratitude or honor, and the next thing we know, we're strutting around like we're the greatest who ever lived.

How do we acknowledge, and even celebrate our accomplishments, but at the same time, not allow these thoughts to lead to arrogance?

In general, in order to strengthen one's *avodas Hashem*, one should not compare oneself to others, rather, one should focus on their potential and accomplishments.

Thus, though one can and should feel a sense of accomplishment when successful, it is important to not lose sight of the goals of *avodas Hashem*. And though one may have many successes, there is likely still more to accomplish, more growth to be had.¹

With that focus, one can be happy with their accomplishments, but temper that with the recognition that there is still more to do.

1 *Sefer HaMiddos* by the Dubno
Maggid, Gate of Arrogance, Chap.
10

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Mussar is essential, not just for the effect it has on one's soul, but simply for the knowledge — how can one have *Yiras Shomayim* if they don't know what it takes? - Reb Aharon Kotler, *Mishnas Reb Aharon* Vol. I, pg. 113

CLEARING THE COACH

Reb Akiva Eiger and Reb Yaakov Lorberbaum, the author of the *Nesivos HaMishpat*, were very close friends. Both were accomplished scholars, their names were known around the globe, and people sought their knowledge and advice from far and wide. They had great respect for each other, as evidenced by the following story.

They once travelled together to the city of Warsaw to take part in a rabbinic convention. *Talmidei chachomim* were arriving from around the country, and the Jews of Warsaw were honored by the privilege of hosting such a gathering. When these two personages reached the city gates, they found that a large gathering of people had come to welcome them.

The crowd ushered the two men into a large, elaborate coach. In place of horses, the leaders of the community themselves began to pull the coach. Many among the crowd desired the honor of leading the two great men into Warsaw, and people began to mill about the coach, each one anxious to place his hands on the shafts attached to the coach.

In the tumult and confusion that followed, Reb Akiva Eiger, thinking the people came to honor Reb Yaakov, stepped down from his side of the coach and joined the welcoming crowd. At the same time, Reb Yaakov of Lisa, thinking the people came to honor Reb Akiva Eiger, stepped down from the other side of the coach and also joined the crowd.

The people themselves — including the two rabbis who went unnoticed in the excitement — pulled the beautiful empty coach all the way to the hotel where the rabbis were staying.

But lo and behold, the coach was empty. When the people discovered to their astonishment that both rabbis had been pulling the coach all the time, they asked the rabbonim why they stepped out of the coach — perhaps there was something wrong with the conduct of the populace?

With sincerity and humility, each rav explained how they simply wanted to join in the procession of honoring the other, it never occurred to them that the crowd was there for them!

Adapted from *In Their Footsteps* by Herman Axelrod

DID YOU KNOW?

- One who does not study *mussar* cannot truly be considered a *talmid chochom*.¹
- If a *talmid chochom* is arrogant, they cause the Torah itself to distance itself from those who learn it, and the effects of the Torah are impaired.²

¹ *Chochmoh U'Mussar*, Vol. 1, Essay 60

² *Tomer Devorah*, Chap. 7

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