



# RABBI'S MESSAGE

## "Prophet" Maximization

Last week we read of משה רבינו's frustration in being directed to inspire בני ישראל and confront פרעה. He expresses recalcitrance due to his being a **כבד** פה, "heavy of mouth", referring to his speech deficiency. Hashem responds by appointing his beloved brother אהרן as his "mouthpiece", הוא יהיה לך פה, (שמות ד, טו), ...he will be your mouth.

The issue would seem resolved, yet this week we read how משה attempts once again to arouse excitement in בני ישראל with news of their impending redemption and yet they don't seem to be listening or "getting" it, ולא שמעו... because of shortness of breath and hard work.

This time משה refers to his inability to "reach" them due to his **ערל שפתים** (שם ו, יב), sealed lips. Hashem seems to address the issue by reiterating the fact that אהרן will assist him in his presentations to פרעה, where משה will present himself as the Master over פרעה, where משה will present himself as the Master over פרעה, I have made you a Master over Pharaoh, with אהרן serving as his spokesman, ואהרן אחיך יהיה נביאך (שם), and Aaron your brother shall be your spokesman.

What occurred between these two almost identical exchanges that warranted a repetition of the seemingly same sentiment?

Why does משה refer to his impediment first as כבד פה, heavy mouthed, and the second time as ערל שפתים, sealed lips? Why is אהרן described initially as פה, the mouth of משה and later as his נביא, spokesman (Prophet)?

The great מהר"ל, suggests that the inability of משה to communicate effectively was not due to any physical defect but rather to his "שכל נבדל", extraordinary intellect that was so perfect in its spiritual connection with the upper spheres that it literally couldn't bond with his material self. Speech is the ultimate "connector" between body and spirit. It allows the movement of the instruments of speech; the throat, palate, tongue, teeth and lips to express the movement of רוח, air, the very spirit of life that emanates from our lungs continuing through the larynx in forming "speech"! Speech as opposed to seeing and hearing is the most "physical" of faculties insofar as it alone requires visible and tangible activity as contrasted with sight and sound that operate independent of "movement".

משה originally was concerned solely with his physical incapacity and spoke of his heavy "mouth", פה, and was given a "mouthpiece" in the person of אהרן, who was equipped with the healthy corporeal tools needed. He later realized that בני ישראל couldn't absorb his message of the "spirit", not simply because of its inaudibility, but rather owing to their being so entrenched in physicality due to their "shortness of breath and hard 'manual' labor". He requested a "translator" who could penetrate through the "thickness" of their spiritual ears and be able to reach their souls. משה realized he is an ערל שפתים, his lips (called שפתים from the word שפת, edge, for they are the outer boundary of his physical self,) can not attach with his soul, he lacks the means to reach them.

Hashem responded by informing משה that אהרן wasn't just articulate in his enunciation of the words but he was also a "נביא", נביא רש"י directs us to the תרגום who translates this word as מתרגמןך, your translator. As for the root of the word נביא, נביא רש"י quotes a verse in (נוט, י) ישעיהו, "fruit of the lips", indicating that a Prophet is one who can be productive with his words in conveying and "translating" the lofty message of Hashem into the hearts and minds of his listeners. משה in his greatness is the "ערל שפתים", ערל as in the word ערלה, the fruit of the first three years of growth that is sealed and "limited" from use. אהרן possesses the capability to "relate" to others and transform and give meaning to the profound word and message of Hashem, making it tangible and understandable on their level. אהרן is the polar opposite of the ערל שפתים, he is the "ניב", rooted in the word טוב, to flourish and give forth!

Wherein lies the secret to אהרן's gift of communication?

הוא מתלמידיו של אהרן, אהב שלום ורודף שלום אהב את הבריות ומקרן לתורה (אבות א, יב), The משה exhorts us to become the students of אהרן, to love peace, pursue peace, love humanity and bring them close to תורה. Although the חז"ל elaborate about the acts of peace אהרן engaged in, there are few references in the חומש reflecting on any acts of greatness!?

אהרן was the great communicator, his ultimate goal was "מקרן לתורה", to make the message of תורה palatable and inspiring to all. He facilitated it through his "manner" of "speech". The first evidence of interaction with אהרן and his character is when he discovers his younger brother משה has been designated the leader of the תורה attests, כלל ישראל כלל ישראל, when he sees you he will rejoice in his heart. The next description is his "going out" to meet משה in the desert, encountering him and kissing him, וישק לו (שמות ד, כז), Finally משה and his "נביא", אהרן are "commanded" regarding בני ישראל... (שמות ו, יג), פרעה and בני ישראל ואל פרעה... (שמות ו, יג). The verse doesn't enumerate the specific command. רש"י informs us that the command regarding בני ישראל was to "suffer" them by leading with "kindness". The directive regarding פרעה was to display "respect" for פרעה and his position as King.

Aren't these the three attributes of אהרן? He rejoiced purely and selflessly for his brother without a taint of jealousy! Only those who erect barriers of selfishness create situations for dispute, a true אהב שלום, "lover of peace" sees only the other's happiness. He runs to greet and embrace משה, exemplifying the "pursuit" of peace, אהב שלום, His ability to "appreciate" and "value" the position of פרעה as a King and the qualities inherent, is the result of being a true אהב את הבריות, a lover of humanity, with the emphasis on בריות, all of humanity. This perhaps the most valuable tool in successful communication. When the opposing party senses you value him then they are willing to listen! The natural consequence of these traits is the ability to express effectively the message of תורה, ומקרן לתורה, תורה ומקרן לתורה!

The נביא רש"י says we are all "בני נביאים". We all have a message from Hashem to deliver to mankind. If we emulate these qualities the natural order will be to bring us ever closer to the day when the entire world will express the sentiment of ה' אחד, G-d is One!

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