



The Will of Hashem

The long-awaited day had finally arrived; the Mishkan was ready for inauguration and the nation awaited the descent of Hashem's glory. To prepare for this experience, Moshe Rabbeinu instructs the people, "This is the thing which Hashem has commanded to do" (*Vayikra* 9;6). The Midrash explains this enigmatic statement in the following way. Moshe was instructing *Am Yisrael* to remove their evil inclination from within them. The commentators are troubled, what evil inclination is this referring to? What was it they were to accomplish at this time?

Rav Weinberger in *Shem Hatov* quotes the Brisker Rav and explains that this is the *yetzer hara* that affects the 'lishmah' aspect of doing a mitzvah. Moshe Rabbeinu was cautioning *Am Yisrael*, be sure that your intentions in bringing the proscribed sacrifices are focused on fulfilling Hashem's command. Although you desire to see the revelation of Hashem's Presence, that is not the target. It is easy to get caught up in the fervor and excitement of doing

a mitzvah and forget that the principal objective is to do the will of Hashem. Hence, notes Rav Weinberger, one says a *brachah* before the performance of a mitzvah, as a reminder that the mitzvah is a fulfillment of the will of Hashem. Rav Goldvicht in *Asufot Marachot* adds that this is reflected in Chazal's statement, "nullify your will to the will of Hashem" (*Avot* 2;4). This includes even in the act of doing a mitzvah.

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Rav Goldstein in *Shaarei Chayim* extends this idea to all our mitzvah observance. To be worthy of having the *Shechinah* rest on the mitzvot we perform we must be totally focused on doing mitzvot because Hashem commanded us to do them. The *yetzer hara* we all encounter tries to convince us to do a mitzvah because we feel good when we do it or because it makes sense to us. Our challenge is to constantly reiterate to ourselves when we do a mitzvah that it is solely

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Happy 95 to Shirley Zuckerman!

because Hashem commanded us to do it that fuels our action. Such a mindset allows us to have the appropriate humility which then allows the *Shechinah* to reside in our what we do. Indeed, the *Ketav Sofer* warns that often the *yetzer hara* encourages a person to feel pride in his actions and to boast to his friends of his accomplishments. One must be mindful of this pitfall and work hard to avoid it.

Rav Kotler in *Mishnat Rav Aaron* notes that one who does mitzvot out of habit lacks this angle of doing Hashem's will. A mitzvah in essence connects one to Hashem with love and joy. Moshe Rabbeinu is teaching us to remove the *yetzer hara* of mindlessness in serving Hashem, thereby becoming worthy of continuously feeling connected and invigorated in our service.

Rav Reiss in *Merosh Tzurim* understands the *yetzer hara* here in a much more personal fashion. He quotes the *Imrei Emes* who teaches that every person in this world is created to fulfill a particular task. Wherever the *yetzer hara* challenges us most is an indication that this is the area in which we need to work hardest, for this is why we were created. Moshe Rabbeinu is teaching each one of us to battle with our personal *yetzer hara*, fulfilling our individual mission, thereby bringing G-dliness to this world. ■

Mazal Tov to
Neville & Avril Gatoff
and family on the Bat Mitzvah
of their granddaughter
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