



Parshas Eikev 2020, extreme leadership

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Yahrzeit of the father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, may his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.

The Parsha Perspective is dedicated in honor of Fruma Miriam Bas Mordechai and Shlomo Ben Edward. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing for their families.

Our Parsha continues with Moshe's final address to the Jewish people. He tells them that if they follow the Torah's path and keep the Mitzvahs, they will be blessed above all Peoples. He reminds them that they did not inherit the Land due to their own righteousness. But instead, because of the promise G-d made to our forefathers.

Moshe recounts how he broke the Luchos on his way down from Har Sinai when he saw them sinning with the Golden Calf. He also tells them the second paragraph of the Shema, where we are told the physical rewards that we will receive for observing the Torah or the consequences if we don't, heaven forbid.

However, a question comes to mind: When Moshe describes how he broke the Luchos, he says (9:17) *"And I gripped the two Luchos with my hands and threw them away, breaking them before your eyes."* Why did Moshe need to grab hold of the Luchos if he was already carrying them down the mountain?!

The Or Hachaim Hakadosh explains that Moshe Rabbeinu suddenly grabbed hold of the Luchos because the holiness that kept the luchos afloat dissipated when Moshe saw the golden calf.

The Luchos were extremely heavy as it made entirely of sapphire. Hence, G-d made a miracle that the Luchos would hover slightly above Moshe's hands; this made it possible for him to carry them down the mountain.

But once he saw how Jewish people were joyfully dancing around the golden calf, the miracle abruptly vanished, causing Moshe to grab hold of the Luchos suddenly.

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more powerful explanation. He quotes the Midrash Rabbah (Shemos 53:1) that it was considered public property until Moshe Rabbeinu grabbed the Luchos.

Thus, its Mitzvahs and the rewards and punishments apply to the entire Jewish nation. But once Moshe took hold of the Luchos, he acquired them according to Jewish law, making the Luchos his personal possession. This action resulted in all Torah's rules and regulations applying only to him.

The Rebbe explains that Moshe signified to G-d that the Jewish people did not necessarily know the exact laws of the Torah, for it was not in their possession. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for G-d to punish the entire Jewish nation to the fullest extent of the law, which was total destruction. Instead, G-d should only punish those involved in its creation and worship as per Jewish requirements.

We see that G-d listened to Moshe's request of leniency, for He did not destroy the entire Jewish nation and gave us a second set of Luchas. Moshe Rabbeinu is showing us how a true and genuine leader reacts to difficulties and challenges. They must take total responsibility before trying to rectify any situation.

In our daily lives, we must take full ownership of all our behavior regardless of the actions of others. Whether in business or with friends and family, it is imperative that we take total responsibility for our conduct before we begin to judge others.

Being a leader implies taking extreme ownership and seeking to understand others' actions from a non-judgmental perspective. Only then does it become possible to create a plan of action that will steer you toward success and prosperity.

***“Being a leader is not about what you preach,
but rather about what you tolerate.”***

- Jocko Willink, former Navy Seal Lt. Commander

*Have a meaningful Shabbos
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*