

“See I have called by the name — Betzalel son of Uri... I have filled him with a G-dly spirit.” (31:2-3)

We note that referring to Betzalel, Hashem says, “See, I have called by name – Betzalel.” Should it not simply have said, “I have called Betzalel”? What does the word “by name” add to this *pasuk*? Moreover, when Moshe *Rabbeinu* repeats Hashem’s statement, he also says the word “*b’shem*,” by name. Furthermore, the *taam*, sound/cantillation note, beneath the word, *b’shem*, is an “*esnachta*,” which separates this word from the next. In other words, the word *b’shem* and the name Betzalel are distanced from one another. This implies an element of significance to the word *b’shem*, as if calling Betzalel “by name” is of special importance. *Targum Yonasan* comments that *b’shem* means, “*b’shem tov*,” with a good name. How are we to understand this?

Horav Mordechai Gifter, z.l., explains the significance of Hashem calling someone “by name.” He first cites the *Midrash Tanchuma* on *Parashas Vayakhel* that teaches us that a pious man who increases his *mitzvah* observances, acquires a “good name for himself.” The *Midrash* continues, explaining that a person is referred to by three names: the name his parents have given him; the name by which people refer to him; the name he acquires for himself. The proof to this is to be derived from Betzalel, who was chosen to construct the *Mishkan* because he had acquired a good name. We must endeavor to understand what *Chazal* mean by “the name which he acquires for himself.” Is this not the same as the name he is called by others, the name that he has earned? How are we to distinguish between the two “names”?

Horav Gifter continues, citing the *pasuk* in which Shmuel *Ha’navi* was instructed to anoint one of Yishai’s sons who was suitable and proper to be king. At first, when Shmuel noticed Eliav, the eldest, he was greatly impressed with his visage and stature. He looked like a king, displaying characteristics befitting one who descended from the tribe of Yehudah, the tribe destined for monarchy. Unquestionably, it was not just his physical appearance that struck Shmuel. Apparently, the *Navi* noted spiritual qualities and character traits in Eliav by which he would qualify to be king. He was, however, mistaken. Hashem told Shmuel, “*Do not look at his appearance or at his tall stature, for I have rejected him. For it is not as man sees – man sees what his eyes behold, but Hashem sees into the heart*” (*Shmuel I* 16:7). Shmuel certainly looked beyond the superficial impression which Eliav manifest. Yet, he was only a human being, with human limitations and faculties. He might have been able to penetrate one’s psyche better than other human beings. He was not, however, G-d. Shmuel did not see Eliav’s true essence. He could not perceive that Eliav was not fit for the monarchy.

Horav Gifter posits that Hashem sees the internal man. With a gaze that penetrates his heart, Hashem observes his true essence. This view constitutes the *shem tov* that one acquires, his real name. It is not the name that parents give or that peers confer. It is the name that Hashem

gives. This is the name that Hashem saw in Betzalel. The Betzalel that *Klal Yisrael* saw and knew was truly a remarkable, virtuous, unique individual. That was not sufficient. Hashem saw that it was real; He peered into Betzalel's heart and saw that what was manifest to the world flowed from a pure and holy heart.

Many people of that generation warranted such a *shem tov*. They participated in the building of the *Mishkan* with enthusiasm and excitement, with zeal and dedication, with energy and courage. They strove to be involved; they did their utmost to excel. As the *Ramban* writes, they had no background in this form of craftsmanship. They were laborers, not artisans. Yet, they vied to be included, because their hearts inspired and elevated them to seek to be involved. They were so confident that they would succeed, that they began to believe in their natural ability. This is what it means to be "called by name."

The *Rosh HaYeshiva* related this idea to *Torah* study. Success in *Torah*, catalyzed by fear of Heaven, is not dependent upon one's innate acumen and ability. It is determined by the individual's "*hisamtzus*," stalwartness, his daunting courage to overcome any obstacle that stands in his way. One's willingness to increase his *mitzvah* observance; to increase his *Torah* study; to elevate his *yiraas Shomayim*, fear of Heaven: these determine the difference. His success is a product of his willingness and desire to excel, as well as his courage and resolve to see the desire reach fruition. Such a person warrants *Siyata d'Shmaya*, Divine assistance. Suddenly, he possesses new strength, boundless energy, greater ability and superior acumen, all as a gift from the One Who gazed into his heart and called him by name.