

"And Aharon and his sons carried out all the matters that Hashem commanded through Moshe." (8:36)

Rashi tells us that Aharon exemplified perfect obedience in that he did not deviate one iota from all he was told. The commandments were many and filled with much detail, but Aharon readily agreed to perform that which was expected of him. This statement is enigmatic! Are we to commend Aharon for doing his job ? Does this mean that every time one does what is expected of him his praises should be publicly acclaimed?

The Maharal explains that Aharon accepted Hashem's order as stated by Moshe as if it had come directly from Hashem. In fact, to acknowledge the directive of a contemporary is evidence of a selfless personality. Aharon was not resentful of the fact that he heard Hashem's command through Moshe. He performed the necessary service with alacrity and enthusiasm as if it had been heard directly from Hashem. Yet, isn't this what is to be expected of a sublime personality such as Aharon?

Horav Moshe Swift, z.l., makes one small comment about Aharon's deed which may make Aharon's selflessness more comprehensible. Aharon performed the service together with his sons as commanded to him by Moshe, his younger brother. It isn't easy to subordinate oneself to a younger brother and heed his instructions, especially when one is in the presence of his own children! How often do we attempt to "put on a show" in order to impress our children! Imagine the remarkable graciousness and selflessness of Aharon to do as he was told by his younger brother while his four sons were watching! This is the epitome of gadlus, greatness.

We may expand on this idea. Children, by nature, follow what they see at home. The example set forth by parents is a most powerful influence in molding the perspective and attitude of their children. Children who see parents defer to Torah scholars with respect will do the same. However, those who grow up in a home where disdain for those who disseminate Torah is the accepted norm, will regrettably continue this "legacy" of disrespect. Aharon's service was performed together with his sons as commanded. His actions as a gadol were reinforced by his personal example as a father. This combination motivated his children to join him in fulfilling Hashem's directive through Moshe.