

Take Aharon and Elazar his son and bring them up to Hor Ha'hor. (20:25)

Rashi teaches that Moshe *Rabbeinu* was instructed to console Aharon, to calm him now that his mortal life was coming to a close. It was a difficult blow. He did, however, achieve the tremendous *nachas*, satisfaction and pleasure, of seeing his son ascend to the High Priesthood – something which had eluded Moshe. We derive an important lesson from here. We must make people feel good – regardless of how painful it might be for us personally. Aharon had the true *nachas* for which every parent aspires: to see his offspring achieve an enviable spiritual plateau. Moshe, the quintessential leader of *Klal Yisrael*, the *Rabban shel Kol Yisrael*, would have done anything to have such *nachas*.

Alas, it did not seem to be happening. Can we even begin to imagine how much strength of character it took for Moshe to calm Aharon, highlighting the very *nachas* that he himself did not have?

Imagine that your neighbor's third daughter becomes engaged, while your own daughter is five years older and cannot even get a date. Now it is time to march over to your neighbor's house to share in the *mazal tov*, while your own insides are torn apart with sadness for your daughter. This is just one scenario. We all know there are more such gut-wrenching stories. Each one of us, at one time or another, has had the experience. The Torah teaches us to put our own feelings aside and make our friend feel good. This is what Jews are supposed to do.

The story is told that a Jew once came to *Horav Meir, zl, m'Premishlan*, manifesting a countenance that had pain and anguish written all over it. "*Rebbe!*" the man began to weep uncontrollably. "I had a small grocery store in which I slaved for over fifty years. I literally put my life into this store. I spent every waking hour in my precious store. Now, tragedy has struck: my store is gone! It burned to the ground. Fifty years of my life have gone down in ashes. Without my store, for what do I need to live?"

Any of us hearing an adult speak so, would console him – to a point. After all, a store is a means for earning a livelihood. It certainly is not life itself! Yet, we must take into account that to this simple Jew, his store was indeed his life.

The legendary *Rav Meir'l Premislaner* understood the psyche of the members of his flock. He responded in kind. "Do not worry," the *Rebbe* began, in an effort to soothe the man's raw emotions. "Hashem only wants what is best for you. You loved the store even more than you cared about yourself. Therefore, you wanted the store to outlive you. Hashem, however, loves you more than He loves your store. Therefore, He wants you to outlive the store."

When we think about this response, it not only demonstrates pure genius on the part of the *tzadik*,

it also shows how well he understood his people and how deeply he cared for each and every one of them. Empathy for the “little” man is what determines one’s greatness.