

“Not so is My servant Moshe; in My entire house he is trusted.” (12:7)

The Torah emphasizes the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu’s nevuah, prophesy, is unlike that of other prophets, such as, Aharon and Miriam. Once Horav Simcha Zelig Reiger, z.l., the Av Bais Din of Brisk asked Horav Chaim Soloveitchik, z.l., the significance of the term, “b’chol baisi neeman hu,” “in My entire house he is trusted,” in regard to Moshe’s level of prophesy. Indeed, in his Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah in which he enumerates the various differences between Moshe’s nevuah and that of other prophets, the Rambam does not mention the concept of “in My entire house he is trusted.”

Rav Chaim explained that when each of the neviim, prophets, conveyed his prophesy, he prefaced his message with the words, “ko amar Hashem,” “so says Hashem,” identifying the source of his prophecy. He was indicating that he was following Hashem’s directive in his communiqué. Indeed, if the individual did not dwell on the fact that it was Hashem Who commanded him to deliver this message, it was not considered to be a prophesy from Hashem, and Klal Yisrael was not obligated to accept this message. On the other hand, because of Moshe’s unusual status as a ben-bayis, member of Hashem’s household, he did not need to preface his message with these words. It was understood that every nevuah that Moshe expressed was from Hashem’s mouth. Moshe Rabbeinu’s word was considered synonymous with Hashem’s word. It was a given that what he said originated from the Almighty.

Rav Chaim elucidated this phenomenon in the following manner: The neviim did not limit their speech to prophesy. They had other conversations that, although spiritual in nature and oriented towards a more sublime goal, did not constitute prophesy. Consequently, when they were conveying Hashem’s message, it was necessary for them to differentiate this speech from the others. Moshe Rabbeinu spoke only nevuas Hashem. Because everything that exited his mouth was Torah, it was not necessary to cite the source. Everyone knew that whatever Moshe uttered was transmitted from the Almighty.

What an incredible statement: Moshe embodied the highest form of nevuah, the closest relationship with Hashem. Nothing mundane existed in his sphere. His word was kulo Torah, all Torah. He represented it; he embodied it; he lived it. We may suggest that this is the idea behind Daas Torah, the wisdom that results from total immersion in Torah. One who has Daas Torah is an individual whose Torah values are integrated into his personality, utilizing his understanding of Torah as the frame of reference for all of his rulings for Klal Yisrael, encompassing the community and the individual. As Moshe Rabbeinu was integral to Hashem’s household, to the point that every word he spoke was the word of Hashem, so, too, does the Torah personality form a unified entity with the Torah, his life comprising a repository of its tradition.

This towering personality does not emerge overnight. It is the product of endless hours of study

and thought, a brilliant mind coupled with an intensity of concentration. Furthermore, as the Maharal explains, one who studies Torah lishmah, for its own sake, becomes one entity with the Torah, with the power of the Torah becoming his power. Conversely, one who studies Torah for ulterior motives, for intellectual purposes or simply to become erudite in the fascinating and mind-developing sea of Torah knowledge, remains detached from the Torah. Thus, he does not benefit from any of the characteristics endemic to Torah proficiency. The authority that ensues with Daas Torah is the reward, the product of years of dedication, determination and diligence, studying Torah lishmah, coupled with yiraas Shomayim, fear of Heaven. The power of authority is never the goal, since this would undermine the entire process.

Horav Mordechai Gifter, z.l., explains that Daas Torah is measured not as much by one's knowledge as by one's striving and yearning to acquire, to uncover, to plumb the depths of Torah. Daas Torah in stagnation is not Daas Torah. It must emanate from vibrancy and perpetual renewal of one's Torah knowledge.

Many people have become accomplished Torah scholars, but not gedolim. To achieve the distinction of gadlus baTorah one must become integrated with the Torah, his character traits and personality perfected by its lessons.

There is yet one other aspect that complements this individual's scholarship and erudition; a special gift. This gift from the Almighty to those who fear and cling to Him is "Sode Hashem L'yiraiav," the Divine secrets that Hashem imparts to those who fear Him. This is a critical component of the constitution of a gadol ba'Torah, Torah leader, guiding him in ways that cannot be limited to scholarship alone. The Torah authority who expounds Daas Torah is uniquely equipped to address the various problems from all facets of the entire spectrum of life. He is Divinely inspired, because he is Divinely connected.

Yet, there are people who refuse to accept or respect Daas Torah, claiming that acceding to the authority invested in individuals detracts from one's intellectual ability to question and to challenge. They view deferring to the wisdom and Torah perspective of gedolei Yisrael as an affront to their own intelligence. The hostility towards accepting Daas Torah stems from an almost childlike resistance to authority. The resentment among those who challenge Daas Torah is pernicious and, at times, bizarre. This is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, it dates back to Dasan and Aviram who were Moshe Rabbeinu's nemeses in Egypt and the wilderness. As Moshe triumphed then, so, too, will Daas Torah prevail over its antagonists. As our link to eternal truth, Daas Torah is our assurance that the Torah as given to us on Har Sinai will remain unsullied and that the chain of Torah transmission will continue uninterrupted. It represents our bond with the past, providing a measure of tranquility when we face the challenges and vicissitudes of the present. Indeed, Daas Torah is our only hope for the future.