

## He prepared on it the setting of bread before Hashem, as Hashem commanded Moshe. (40:23)

Everything in the *Mishkan* was carried out precisely as Hashem had commanded Moshe *Rabbeinu* – no more – no less – no infusion of self. Their personal zeal and enthusiasm in every aspect of their work were completely subordinated to the commands of Hashem. None of the craftsmen made any attempt to inject their own ideas or their own individuality to the construction of the *Mishkan*. They executed their mission obediently, with scrupulous care and precision, with unabashed joy at having been able to serve Hashem. By doing this, they achieved the sublime moral perfection which characterizes an *eved*, servant, of Hashem.

*B'diyuk*, precisely, expressly, rigorously: all these terms describe what it means to carry out a *mitzvah*/mission in accordance with Hashem's command. By performing exactly as Hashem instructs us, we become totally devoted to Him as *avadim*, slaves. The concept of precisely following instructions is underscored through the two following vignettes (related in *Nachalas Tzvi*). When *Horav Avraham Yitzchak Zimmerman, zl*, was called to become *Rav* of Kremenchuk (Central Ukraine), his son-in-law, *Horav Baruch Ber Leibowitz, zl (Bircas Shmuel)*, was asked to fill his position in Halusk. His appointment did not sit well with the members of the *chassidic* community who preferred one of their own, a *Rebbe* who had *chassidic* leanings. *Rav* Baruch Ber might have been one of the most brilliant Torah minds in Europe, but he was not *chassidic*. While they respected his knowledge and piety, they insisted that one of their own guide them. Therefore, they hired their own *Rav*.

The city of Halusk now had two *rabbanim*, a situation that caused the lay leaders of the community some angst. As a result, tensions in the community reached tinderbox level. The *parnesai ha'ir*, lay leaders of the community, had commissioned *Rav* Baruch Ber, and, as a result, were prepared to enter the fray and create a serious controversy over this. *Rav* Baruch Ber turned to his supporters and declared, "My *Rebbe* instructed me to accept the *rabbanus*, rabbinic position. He did not instruct me to enter into a *machlokes*, dispute, over it."

*Rav* Baruch Ber understood and acted upon his *Rebbe's* words verbatim. If his *Rebbe* would have acquiesced to his entering into a dispute over the position, he would have said so. He did not. Thus, *Rav* Baruch Ber said he would rather leave than quarrel.

The *Brisker Rav* was an individual who not only lived and served Hashem in a precise manner, but he also trained his family and students to act likewise. It was not an issue of *chumra*, stringency. It was about executing Hashem's command precisely, to the full letter of the law. The *Brisker Rav* once asked his son to go to the butcher store to see whether an apple was there. His son returned a few minutes later and said, "Yes, an apple is there." The *Brisker Rav* said, "If this is the case, go and bring it to me." His son returned to the butcher, purchased an apple and returned home. A few minutes passed, and the *Brisker Rav* once again asked his son to go to the butcher shop and see

whether the shop had an apple. The son returned to the shop and then came home to inform his father that, indeed, the shop had an apple. The *Rav* told him to return and purchase the apple.

A student who had been observing the scene remarked, "I now understand the level of *Kibbud Av*, honoring a father, that one should achieve. First, the *Brisker Rav* asked his son to see – not to buy. Had he wanted him to purchase an apple the first time he went to the store, he would have said so. He did not. Afterwards, he instructed his son to purchase an apple – which he did. He went through the same ritual a second time. This was the *Rav's* way of training his son to a) listen, and b) follow instructions in accordance with the tone, vernacular and manner that they were given.

The legacy of Brisk is not about being *machmir*, looking for opportunities to act stringently. Brisk is about being *medakdek*, precise, to fulfill the *halachah* to perfection. This is not *chumra*, this is performing *halachah* correctly.