

## Not so is my servant Moshe, in My entire household he is the trusted one. (12:7)

Moshe *Rabbeinu* is like a trusted member of Hashem's Heavenly kingdom. The Torah alludes to Moshe's unique qualities, especially in the area of *nevuah*, prophecy, in which he stood out above all prophets. He is referred to as *avdi Moshe*, My servant Moshe, who is trusted. The question that presents itself is obvious. Is it an accolade to state that Moshe was honest and, thus, to be trusted? To possess moral and ethical integrity is a basic quality which Hashem demands and expects of every person. What is novel about Moshe's integrity and being trusted in Heaven? When one hires a worker, regardless of the job, the first question that he asks is: Is he/she honest? *Horav Avraham Yoffen, zl*, explains this practically.

A man was compelled to leave his home for a month. He traveled to a community where he knew no one. He was nervous about being accepted, but his fears were unfounded. The people opened up their homes to him and, within a few weeks, he literally became a member of the community. He was invited by a member of the community to stay in his home. He had an extra guest room in the basement, and he would be happy to have him. At first, the guest did not touch a thing in the kitchen unless his host offered it to him or he asked for it. He would never go to the refrigerator and take something to eat. After two weeks, however, he felt comfortable opening the refrigerator and taking an apple from the fruit bin. What changed from day one to the end of week two? Familiarity. He began to feel *heimish*, comfortable, as if he were a member of the family – which he was not.

This, explains the *Rosh Yeshivah*, is what could have transpired with Moshe – but did not. No one had such an open relationship with Hashem. *Peh el peh Adaber bo*, "Mouth to mouth do I speak to him." "In a clear vision and not in riddles." "At the image of Hashem does he gaze." Moshe was like a trusted member of the Heavenly sphere who was free to enter the Palace at will. Clearly, Moshe's familiarity with everything Heavenly could have made him lose sight of his humanness. He could go to the "refrigerator and take an apple." The Torah attests: "Not so, My servant Moshe; in My entire house, he is the trusted one." Moshe acutely understood who he was and to what he had access. Nonetheless, this never went to his head. He represented humility at its apex. As the humblest man on the earth, he never allowed his achievements to cloud his perception of himself.

The *Chazon Ish, zl*, was the undisputed *gadol hador*, preeminent Torah leader, of his generation. His knowledge of all areas of Torah was peerless. One of his close students (who today is a prominent *Rosh Yeshivah*) asked the *Chazon Ish*, "Does the *Rebbe* know his distinction?" The *Chazon Ish*, who was known for his unusual humility, replied, "Certainly, I know." The student countered, "If the *Rebbe* knows his own greatness, how is it that he acts in such an affable, unassuming manner?" The *Chazon Ish* explained, "Specifically, because I am acutely aware that Hashem has blessed me with exceptional capabilities I realize how much I am capable of achieving. I tell myself that another person who had been born with such extraordinary talents would certainly have accomplished more than I. Having said this, over what should I arrogate? I fall

ruefully short of my potential.”

*Horav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, zl*, who was one of the preeminent *Halachic* arbiters of the previous generation, eulogized the *Chazon Ish*. In 1914, *Rav* Henkin became *Rosh Yeshivah* in Stowbtsy, Belarus. Prior to taking the position, he went to visit/present himself to the *Rav* of the community, *Horav Yoel Sorotzkin, zl* (brother of *Horav Zalmen Sorotzkin*). While he was in the *Rav's* house, he chanced upon a young man who was attired in ordinary clothes (not rabbinical garb). *Rav* Henkin asked the young man who he was. The reply was, “I am the son of the *Rav* of Kosava, Belarus, and I support myself here from the proceeds of a little store that I have.” *Rav* Henkin asked, “Do you set times for learning? (*Kovea Ittim*)” “Yes, I attempt to learn when I am free.” This was the entire exchange. *Rav* Henkin had no idea that he was speaking with the young (soon to be well-known as the) *Chazon Ish*.

*Rav* Henkin assumed that the young man was in the *Rav's* house because he had a monetary dispute which required the *Rav's* adjudication. Imagine his surprise when he was told that the young man was the author of a brilliant work which had taken the Torah world by storm. This volume was signed, *Chazon Ish*. During the *Rav's* absence, the young man became the proxy *Rav* to decide *halachic* queries. *Rav* Henkin spoke in learning, covering the gamut of *halachah*, penetrating the most complex areas of Jewish law, and he found the *Chazon Ish* to be proficient throughout every facet of *halachah*. *Rav* Henkin concluded that, despite the *Chazon Ish's* uncanny superiority in Torah, he continued to view himself as the “son of the *Rav* of Kosavo, who supports himself as a storekeeper.”

*Horav Emanuel Toledano, Shlita* (*Rosh Yeshivah, Sheeris Yosef Beer Yaakov*), related that, prior to the *bris* of one of his sons, he was in a quandary concerning whom he should be *mechabeid*, give the honor, of *sandek*, holding the baby. On the one hand was his revered grandfather, *Horav Refael Baruch Toledano, zl*, one of the *Sephardic* community's Torah giants. On the other hand was the *Ponovezher Rav, zl*, who was his *Rebbe*. He asked the *Rosh Yeshivah* (*Ponovezh*), *Horav Elazar M. Shach, zl*, for his advice. *Rav* Shach thought for a moment and said, “Give it to *Ponovezher Rav*, who, when he sees your grandfather, will surely demur and pass the honor to him.” This is exactly how it played out. The *Ponovezher Rav* was a very busy man. He walked into the *bris* and donned his *Tallis*. He was about to sit down when he gazed upon *Rav* Toledano. He stood up, walked across the room and draped his *Tallis* over the shoulders of the *Rav* of Meknes, Morocco, and asked him to act as *sandek*. Truly great men manifest humility in their every action.