

He sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to prepare ahead of him in Goshen (46:28)

Yaakov *Avinu* sent Yehudah ahead of the family to make the proper arrangements for their transition to Egypt. Yehudah was the definitive leader of the brothers, having proven himself in his confrontation with the Egyptian “viceroy.” *Rashi* quotes *Chazal*, who delve into the word *l’horos*, to teach, that Yehudah was actually destined to establish a *yeshivah*, so that when they arrived they could immediately continue their *Torah* study. It also shows the Patriarch’s profound insight into Jewish values. Without *Torah* as the foundation and lodestar for navigating life, the journey is untenable. The *Torah* is our inspiration and guide, especially during difficult and uncertain times. While this is all true, and Yehudah certainly had an impressive resume, Yaakov had officially designated Levi as the *Rosh Yeshivah* (*Rambam Hilchols Avodah Zarah 1:3*). If not Levi, *Yissaschar* was the son who exemplified *Torah* study at its apex. The commentators cite a number of reasons to explain the selection of Yehudah within his family dynamic. He was the king of the family. A *Rosh Yeshiva* must represent monarchy, as well as *Torah* erudition. Yehudah was the one who said, *Tzadkah mimeni*, confessing to his relationship with *Tamar*. A leader must admit when he errs and take responsibility. Yehudah stood up to Yosef, because he had assumed responsibility for *Binyamin*. He promised his father that he would return *Binyamin*. A *Rosh Yeshivah* assumes responsibility for his students in all aspects of their lives. It is not only about learning; it is about leading.

Perhaps we may suggest another avenue related to monarchy in which the king and the *Rosh Yeshivah*/spiritual leader align. Both leaders maintain immense responsibility for the lives and futures of those under their guidance. A king, particularly in times of war, makes decisions that directly impact the lives and welfare of his soldiers- deciding who goes into battle and when, with the full awareness that these decisions can determine life and death. This requires a profound sense of responsibility, wisdom, and a clear understanding of the strength and role of each individual in his army. A king must balance the needs of his kingdom with the well-being of his people, making choices that are often difficult and weighty.

Likewise, a *Rosh Yeshiva* carries an enormous responsibility over the spiritual and emotional well-being of his students. Every decision from the manner in which he guides his students in their learning to how they should address personal issues can influence, not only the present situation, but also their future growth. Just as a king must understand the individuality of each of his soldiers, so, too a *Rosh Yeshivah* must recognize and be sensitive to the unique potential of each individual student. He must remember that every one of his decisions, his guidance and how he presents such guidance, can affect each student’s long-term spiritual trajectory. He shapes the nation’s future leaders, and his ability to nurture each student’s personal and spiritual growth effectively is paramount to his success. In both cases, their decisions have a profound influence on the lives and futures of others. Whether it is the physical battlefield or the spiritual path, true leadership requires sensitivity, wisdom, and a deep sense of accountability.

In his *hesped*, eulogy for his revered *Rebbe*, *HaRav Yitzchok Hutner, zl*, *HaRav Shlomo Freifeld, zl*, addressed the concept found in *Chazal* of *Rebbe Muvhak*, a *Torah* scholar's primary *Torah* mentor. This is the *Rebbe* from whom one acquires the majority of his *chachmah*-not only in learning, but also the most significant roots of knowledge which serve as a catalyst in shaping his life. *Tosfos YomTov (Bava Metzia 2:11)* points out that the word *muvhak* is derived from the word *bohak*, a reference to an object that has a pronounced shine. A *Rebbe Muvhak* is the *Rebbe* who capitalizes on the student's innate talents and qualities that ultimately lead him to shine. He is the *Rebbe* who unlocks the repository of the treasures/characteristics that would otherwise lay dormant.

HoRav Chaim Scheinberg, zl, explains the words of *Chazal* who compare one's *Rebbe* to a *malach*, angel of G-D. An angel has one singular purpose, to fulfill its specific mission as Hashem prescribed. This is how a *Rebbe* must view his *talmidim*; they are his singular purpose in life. This is his only mission. *Rav Scheinberg* believed in the power to make people great. He infused each *talmid* with a desire to learn, and he instilled within him a sense of self-confidence, so that he would believe in himself. He would often tell them, "Keep smiling and keep going," as he encouraged their upward growth. He would reiterate, "if we are confronted with a challenge, we should realize that the *yeshuah*, salvation, will come, and that *Hashgachah*, Divine Providence, has something in store for us. We must view this as a passing situation, accepting that a happier time will soon arrive, bringing a sunnier day."

Rav Scheinberg was prepared to accept students who had not yet received elite status in learning. The *Rosh Yeshiva* explained, "We do not arrange to accept *metzuyanim*, excellent students, but rather to create *metzuyanim*." Indeed, when a young man sporting shoulder length hair, looking nothing like a *yeshiva bachur*, came to *Yeshiva*, *Rav Scheinberg* saw beyond his outward appearance and peered directly into his heart. He saw the beauty and sparkle from within a young man who wanted to learn *Torah*. Today, this young man is a *talmid chacham* of distinction and an extraordinary *marbitz Torah*.

Prior to *Rav Scheinberg* moving to *Eretz Yisrael*, a student, who was upset about the move, and unaware of the impudence of his words, said to the *Rosh Yeshiva*, "I feel you have no right to move to *Eretz Yisreal*." The next morning, *Rav Scheinberg* came over to the *bachar* and said, "I stayed up all night ruminating over your statement. I think you are wrong."

Rav Scheinberg inculcated his students with the dual perception that he was both *Rebbe* and father to them. He cared not only about their spiritual growth, but also their physical well-being. I conclude with a vignette that inspired me, one that defines the *Rosh Yeshiva's* relationship with his *talmidim*. A student who went on to become a successful *marbitz Torah*, a *Rosh Yeshiva* of note, visited his *Rebbe* and asked for a *bracha* for one of his students who was struggling with a number of challenges which impaired his spiritual growth. *Rav Scheinberg* was visibly moved and asked for the Hebrew name of the young man's mother. He would *daven* for him. Surprisingly, the *Rosh Yeshiva* replied that he was unaware of her name. *Rav Scheinberg* looked disappointingly at his

student, “How could a *Rebbe* not know the name of his *talmid*’s mother?” At this point, the *Rosh Yeshiva* mentioned the full name of the student standing before him-including his mother’s name! “Seventeen years ago, you were going through an issue that was disturbing you. You came to me for help and advice. I began *davening* for you then, and I have NOT ceased *davening* these entire seventeen years!”