

Ki-Sisah

Following the tragic story of the Golden Calf, the Torah relates in very brief terms, the changed relationship between Moshe and the Children of Israel. We are told that Moshe pitched his tent outside the camp and he called it the "Tent of the Meeting." It is further related that when the A-mighty communicated the Torah to Moshe, a cloud descended and hovered above his tent until that Parsha of Torah had been taught to him. The expression the Torah uses in regard to this relationship is "*panim el panim*"—the A-mighty communicated to Moshe face to face. Along with this fantastic description, we read that "*Umeshorso Yehoshua Bin Nun*"—and his valet, Yehoshua Bin Nun, was a lad who did not move from within the tent.

At first glance, the passage is startling. We have already read that Yehoshua singlehandedly created and led a Jewish army against the onslaught of Amalek, certainly no action attributable to a boy! Why then does the Torah refer to the future leader of the Jews, a mature man of 40 years old as "*na'ar*"—a lad?

Of what consequence is it that Yehoshua did not leave Moshe's tent, the Tent of the Meeting? How does that relate to the preceding verses which outlined Moshe's relationship with the A-mighty?

But the Gemora says (Minachos 99b): "This verse is none other than a blessing, for the A-mighty saw that the words of Torah were dear unto him as it is written: 'He did not move from the tent.' Said the A-mighty to Yehoshua: 'Since the words of the Torah are so dear to you, I promise you that the words of the Torah shall never be absent from your mouth.'"

The lesson is all too clear. Yehoshua merited the mantle of leadership and to be second in the chain of the tradition of Torah because, like a valet and a boy, he followed his master and never left the tent. While Moshe ascended to the greatest spiritual heights and the A-mighty spoke to him face to face, Yehoshua looked at his mentor and recognized that for him to attain his individual level of spirituality depended upon his devotion to the *Ohel* of Torah.

For us to reach our own maximum spiritual potential, we must create within our own milieu a sense of not ever being away from Torah and Mitzvos. Of course, one must be involved with the mundane needs of making a livelihood and, in that course, may find himself as far from the *Ohel* of Torah as Yehoshua on the battlefield. Nonetheless, just as to Yehoshua and the Bnei Yisroel, that battle was a lesson in "*Emuna*," faith in the A-mighty, as the Midrash expounds regarding that Parsha, so too is it the task of every individual Jew to raise himself above the tumult and the din of his material obligations and see that his essence is dedicated to the few hours he spends in Torah and Tefillah daily.