

Parashat Tetzaveh: Who Licked My Cookie?

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Shemot 28:30

וְנָתַתְּ אֶל-חֹשֶׁן הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֶת-הָאוּרִים וְאֶת-הַתְּמִיּוֹם וְהָיוּ עַל-לֵב אַהֲרֹן בְּבֹאוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְנִשָּׂא אֲהֲרֹן אֶת-מִשְׁפָּט בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל-לִבּוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה תָּמִיד:

Inside the breastpiece of decision you shall place the Urim and Thummim, so that they are over Aaron's heart when he comes before GOD. Thus Aaron shall carry the instrument of decision for the Israelites over his heart before GOD at all times.

1. Shared Leadership

Midrash Tanhuma, Shemot 27

דָּבָר אַחֵר, לָךְ לְקִרְאָת מֹשֶׁה הַמְדַּבֵּרָה. זֶה שֶׁאָמַר הַכְּתוּב: מִי יִתְנַךְ כָּאֵחַ לִי (שה"ש ח, א). יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹמְרִין לִפְנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, מִי יִתְנַךְ כָּאֵחַ לִי. אֶת מוֹצֵא, כָּל הָאֲחִים שׁוֹנְאִים זֶה לָזֶה. קִין שׁוֹנֵא לְהֶבֶל, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיָּקָם קִין אֶל הֶבֶל אָחִיו וְגו' (בראשית ד, ח). יִשְׁמָעֵאל שׁוֹנֵא לְיִצְחָק, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה אֶת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית וְגו' (בראשית כא, ט). וְאִין מִצְחִיק אֲלָא שֶׁבִּקֵּשׁ לְהַרְגוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: יָקוּמוּ בָּנֵי הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּשְׁחָקוּ (ש"ב ב, יד). עֵשָׂו שׁוֹנֵא לְיַעֲקֹב, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבּוֹ וְגו' (בראשית כז, מא). הַשִּׁבְטִים, שֶׁנָּאוּ לְיוֹסֵף, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּשְׁנֹאוּ אוֹתוֹ (בראשית לז, ד). וְכַאֲזֵה אֵחַ אֶמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַקְדֹּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, כְּמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: הִנֵּה מֶה טוֹב וְמֶה נְעִים שָׁבַת אֲחִים גַּם יָחִיד (תהלים קלג, א). שֶׁהָיוּ אוֹהֲבִין וּמִחְבְּבִין זֶה אֶת זֶה. שֶׁבִּשְׂעָה שֶׁנִּטַּל מֹשֶׁה אֶת הַמַּלְכוּת וְאַהֲרֹן אֶת הַכֹּהֲנָה, לֹא שֶׁנָּאוּ זֶה אֶת זֶה, אֲלָא הָיוּ שְׂמִיחִים זֶה בְּגִדְלַת זֶה וְזֶה בְּגִדְלַת זֶה.

Another comment upon the verse **And the Lord said to Aaron: "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses" (Exod. 4:27)**. Scripture says elsewhere in reference to this verse: *O that thou wert as my brother* (Song 8:1). The Israelites said to the Holy One, blessed be He: *O that thou wert as my brother*, yet you find that all brothers hated each other. Cain hated Abel, as it is said: *And Cain rose up against Abel his brother* (Gen. 4:8). Ishmael hated Isaac, as is said: *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne unto Abraham, making sport* (Gen. 21:9). *Making sport* implies, in this instance, that he wanted to kill him, as it is said: *Let the young men, I pray thee, arise and make sport before us* (II Sam. 2:14). Esau hated Jacob, as is said: *And Esau said in his heart*, etc. (Gen. 27:41). And the tribes hated Joseph, as it is said: *And they hated him* (Gen. 37:4). But in this instance the Israelites asked of the Holy One, blessed be He: Do you mean like Moses and Aaron, of whom it is said: *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity* (Ps. 133:1)? They loved and cherished each other. At the time that Moses took the kingship and Aaron the priesthood, they bore no resentment toward each other. In fact, they rejoiced in each other's exalted role.

יָדַע לָךְ, שֶׁבִּשְׂעָה שֶׁאָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמֹשֶׁה שִׁלַּךְ בְּשִׁלְחוֹתוֹ אֶצֶל פַּרְעֹה וְאָמַר לוֹ שְׁלַח נָא בִּידְךָ שִׁלְחָה, אֶת סִבּוֹר שְׁמָא עֵבֶב מֹשֶׁה שְׁלַח רָצָה לִילָךְ. אִינוּ כֵּן, אֲלָא כְּמַכְבֵּד לְאַהֲרֹן. אָמַר מֹשֶׁה: עַד שֶׁלֹּא עָמַדְתִּי, הָיָה אַהֲרֹן אֲחִי מִתְנַבֵּא לָהֶם בְּמִצְרִים שְׂמוֹנִים שָׁנָה. הוּא שֶׁכְּתוּב: וְאֹדַע לָהֶם בְּאֶרֶץ

A proof of this is that when the Holy One, blessed be He, told Moses to go to Pharaoh as His messenger, he replied: *O Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send* (Exod. 4:13). Put out of your mind the thought that Moses was distressed because he was not willing to go. That is not so. He actually was concerned about Aaron's prestige. Moses said: Before I was designated (to go), my brother Aaron prophesied in

¹ All translations are from Sefaria, unless otherwise noted.

<p>מִצְרַיִם (יחזקאל כ, ה). וּמִנִּין שְׂאֵהָרָן הָיָה מִתְנַבֵּא לָהֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם? שָׁכַר הוּא אוֹמֵר: וַיָּבֹא אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אֶל עֲלִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו כֹּה אָמַר ה' הִנְגִּלָה נְגִלָתִי אֶל בֵּית אַבִּיךָ בְּהִיוֹתָם בְּמִצְרַיִם וְגו' (ש"א ב, כו). אָמַר מֹשֶׁה: כָּל הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלּוּ הָיָה אֶהְרֹן אֲחִי מִתְנַבֵּא, וְעָכְשׁוּ אֲנִי נִכְנָס בְּתַחוּמֹו שֶׁל אֲחִי וַיְהִי מִצֵּר, לָכֵן לֹא הָיָה רוּצָה לֵילֶךְ. אָמַר לוֹ הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמֹשֶׁה: לֹא אֶכְפֹּת לְאַהֲרֹן בְּדִבְרִי זֶה, לֹא דִי שְׂאִינוּ מִצֵּר אֲלֵא עוֹד שְׂמַח, יִתְּדַע לָךְ, שְׂאֵמַר לוֹ: וְגַם הִנֵּה הוּא יוֹצֵא לְקִרְאָתְךָ וְרָאָךְ וְשְׂמַח בְּלִבּוֹ. אֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר וְשְׂמַח בְּפִיו אוֹ שְׂמַח בְּלִבְדּוֹ, אֲלֵא וְשְׂמַח בְּלִבּוֹ.</p>	<p>Egypt for them for eighty years, as it is written: <i>And I made known to them in the land of Egypt</i> (Exod. 20:5). How do we know that Aaron prophesied for them in Egypt? We know this from the verse: <i>And there came a man of God unto Eli and said unto him: "Thus saith the Lord: Did I reveal Myself unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt?"</i> (I Sam. 2:27). It was for this reason that Moses said: Throughout all these years my brother prophesied, and if I should now intrude into his area (of service) he will be deeply distressed. That is why Moses did not wish to go. The Holy One, blessed be He, replied to Moses: Aaron will not be offended. In fact, not only will he not be displeased, but he will rejoice. You know this is so, for He said to him: <i>And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart</i> (Exod. 4:14). It does not say "he will be glad with his mouth" or simply "he will be glad," but rather, he will glad to see him, <i>in his heart</i>.</p>
<p>אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּר יוֹחַאי: הַלֵּב שֶׁשְׂמַח בְּגִדְלַת אֲחִיו, יָבֹא וַיְשְׂמַח וַיִּלְבֹּשׂ אוֹרִים וְתַמִּים, שְׂנָאָמַר: וְנִתְּתָה אֶל חֹשֶׁן הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֶת הָאוֹרִים וְאֶת הַתַּמִּים וְהָיוּ עַל לֵב אֶהְרֹן (שמות כח, ל). הָיוּ, וְגַם הִנֵּה הוּא יוֹצֵא לְקִרְאָתְךָ וְגו'. כִּיֵּן שְׂאֵמַר לוֹ כֹּה, קִבַּל עָלָיו לֵילֶךְ. מִיָּד נִגְלָה הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל אֶהְרֹן וְאָמַר לוֹ: לָךְ לְקִרְאָת מֹשֶׁה. הָיוּ, מִי יִתְּנֶךָ כָּאֵח לִי, כְּמֹשֶׁה וְכֶאֱהֲרֹן, אֲמַצְאָךְ בְּחוּץ אֶשְׁקֶךָ, וַיִּפְגְּשֵׁהוּ בְּהַר הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּשָּׁק לוֹ.</p>	<p>R. Simeon the son of Yohai said: The heart that rejoices in the importance of his brother will ultimately rejoice in his own role, and as it is said: <i>And thou shalt put on the breastplate of judgment, the Urim and Thummin; and they shall be put upon Aaron's heart</i> (ibid. 28:13). Therefore, <i>Behold, he cometh forth to meet thee</i> implies that when he told him that (Aaron would be glad) he agreed to go. Immediately the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself unto Aaron and said to him: <i>Go into the wilderness to meet Moses</i>. Hence, <i>O that thou wert as my brother</i> refers to the kind of brothers Moses and Aaron were to each other. <i>When I would find thee without, I would kiss thee</i> (Song 8:1) indicates that he met him at the mountain of the Holy One, blessed be He, and kissed him.</p>

2. Who Licked My Cookie?

<p>Robert I. Sutton and Huggy Rao, <i>The Friction Project</i>, 109-110</p>
<p>The term cookie licking is inspired by sneaky children who lick all the cookies to deter their friends and family from eating them. Urban Dictionary defines it as "the act of calling 'dibs' on something long before you actually intend to do it." Cookie lickers take resources, projects, and decisions away from others, even when they have less expertise, time, or interest in such things...</p>
<p>Cookie licking is pervasive in organizational life, doing minor harm when people reserve conference rooms they never use or take slices of cake they never eat. Putting up one of these no-trespassing signs does more damage when leaders insist on doing work or being involved in decisions but are so busy or put such chores so low on their priority list that their inaction slows progress and drives people crazy. Beware of deluding yourself into believing that only you can do the job right, calling dibs, and jamming up the works.</p>
<p>Big Question: What might those who wrote this midrash be trying to achieve by emphasizing that Moshe and Aharon could share power?</p>