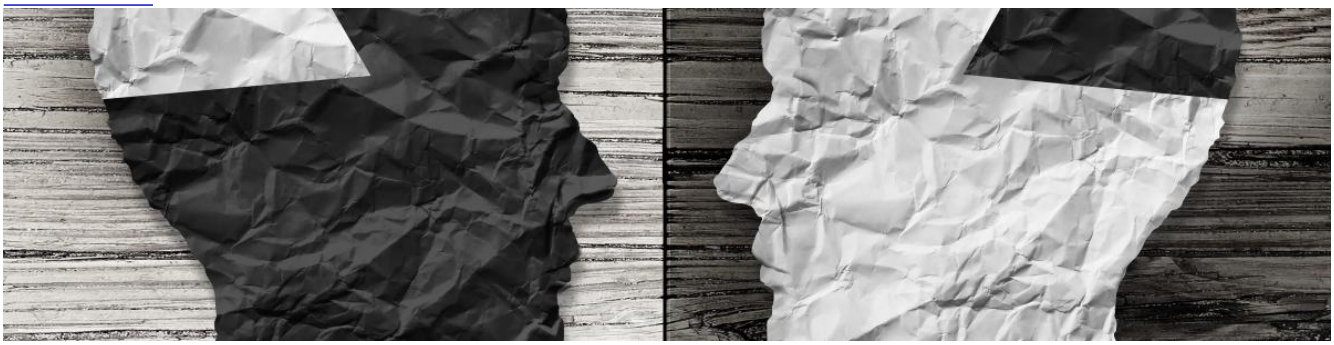
Moshe and Aharon: Two...Together

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Shemot 6:26. That is Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, "Take the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt with their legions."

Shemot 6:27. They are the ones who spoke to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to let the children of Israel out of Egypt; they are Moses and Aaron.

In Parashat Va’eira, Hashem refers to Moshe and Aharon in two consecutive verses. In verse 26, He puts Aharon's name first and in verse 27, Moshe’s . Why is that?

According to Rashi, the reason is to show that one is not greater than the other. They are equals. The Kedushat Levi (the Berditchever Rebbe) expands on the matter. He explains that in verse 26, Aharon is mentioned first because when Hashem speaks, it is to Moshe (as seen just before in 6:2), so one might think that Moshe is greater; and therefore the Torah puts Aharon first to show they are comparable. When they speak to Pharaoh, Aharon is the primary speaker, and one might think he is the superior. The Torah this time puts Moshe first to again show they are on the same level.

The Berditchever further explains that we need the aspects of both Moshe and Aharon in our service of Hashem. Moshe represents awe and fear of Hashem, while Aharon represents pleasure and enjoyment. The Berdichiver shows by explaining their names and tying together their attributes, that the only way for the Israelites to leave Egypt was for Moshe and Aharon, both as leaders of their

people and due to their divine aspects, to be working together.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explained that Moshe represents the study of Torah, while Aharon represents Tefillah, prayer. The reason that sometimes one of them is mentioned before the other is to show that we need both of these fundamental principles of Judaism in our lives at all times; but sometimes we need to relate to Hashem with prayer, and sometimes through learning.

Our relationship with Hashem must be two ways, just as our relationship with others must be mutual. One can't talk to a friend and only listen, nor only talk. Real conversation is achieved when one listens to what the other has to say and not just be waiting impatiently to get one's own point across. The same is the case if one is too timid to speak and only listens and nods the head like a robot. We all must do both to be productive.

When it comes to our relationship with Hashem, it is certainly difficult to keep this balance. One day it might be easy to learn for many hours but have an immensely difficult time flipping through the siddur, or maybe even waking up for morning prayers in the first place. Another day, one may be super passionate in prayer, but learning a page of Talmud will seem as appealing as a root canal.

It is important that we engage in both praying and learning, and incorporate them both into our lives each day. As the Rebbe explained, it is fine to favor one over the other sometimes, but we still need both for spiritual success.

May we all merit to take the aspects of both Moshe and Aharon, as well as incorporating every positive quality and deed in our lives, and always keep them balanced. Even though sometimes our prayer, study, or performance of mitzvot may seem annoying or tedious, we should always strive to do what is right… with enjoyment, satisfaction, and awe.