

SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 24

Bracha

The Context:

When Aharon passed away the entire Jewish nation mourned him, but when Moshe passed away the verse says, "And the sons of Israel wept for Moses." (Devarim 34:8)

Rashi explains the distinction: "Since Aharon used to pursue peace and bring peace between a man and his fellow and between a woman and her husband, it is said "The whole house of Israel [wept for Aharon]," meaning both males and females."

The Question:

Why would the Torah highlight Aharon's popularity and peace-making prowess over Moshe's at the time of Moshe's death? There are other opportunities to praise Aharon for his diplomacy, why denigrate Moshe in his final hour?

The Explanation:

Moshe and Aharon represented two different paths of spiritual guidance and Divine service. Moshe personified truth; Aharon, peace. Truth is uncompromising and deals in absolutes. It does not allow for blurring the truth in order to achieve peace. Moshe took the truth of the Torah and introduced it into the lowest of places without compromise. Harmony, however, requires compromise. Aharon would sacrifice the truth to achieve peace, telling each party in a dispute what they wanted to hear.

Throughout his life, Moshe remained dedicated to his distinct path. At the end of his life, he had the time to back away and gain perspective of the varying paths of Divine service. From this distance, he was able to appreciate Aharon's path. That is why Aharon's character is praised at the moments of Moshe's passing, because that is when Moshe took notice of his brother's true value.

The Deeper Explanation:

Moshe's objective throughout his life was to draw down Divine truth and wisdom into the world and the hearts of his people. Aharon's objective was "raise the lamps" of

the people's souls and draw them upwards. At the end of his life, Moshe was called to "ascend the mountaintop." This is not just literal, but an allusion to a new direction. Moshe was now called upon to change his orientation from drawing down to raising up. Therefore, at this moment, he identified with Aharon's path of ascension, and was sensitive to his success as a peace-maker.

This only heightens our appreciation of Moshe's greatness. For at the end of his life, as he describes the events leading up to and following his own passing, Moshe chooses to highlight his brother's path in love of a fellow Jew and its advantages. Until the end, Moshe was a selfless teacher and guide, concerned only for his people, never himself.
