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Our Sages gave expression to a profound universal principle when they said KOL HAS'CHALOS KASHOS, "all beginnings are difficult". The beginning of a rabbinate, like the beginning of any human venture or endeavor, is indeed a trying and hard experience. Despite the enthusiasm, the good wishes, and the so-called "honey-moon" atmosphere, the wheels of social contact between Rabbi and Congregation have not yet been lubricated by old friendships, and the gears of acquaintanceship have not yet been greased with tried and intimate loyalties. Time, experience, familiarity and generosity must be given the chance to afford both of us smooth functioning.

But whatever we may say about the difficulty of beginnings, we all admit that they are important. Just as a good part of a man's mental make-up is determined by his early childhood experiences, according to Freud, so too is a career or life's-work to a great extent molded by the attitudes and friendships and approaches of the beginning of that career. And therefore now, at the beginning of what I hope will be a long and fruitful association with Kodimoh, I want to think out, to wonder out loud, about the very nature of my service to this community. I want to invite you to think through, with me, the problem of what is the right kind of rabbinate for a traditional synagogue in the middle of the twentieth century.

I believe that there are two great and distinct attitudes as to the conduct, the nature and the role of the Rabbi, the spiritual leader, in Israel. They are two approaches which have been current since time immemorial, two conceptions of leadership which run like parallel threads through the entire fabric of Jewish History. The first maintained that leadership involves being with the people, mingling with them and mixing with them to the fullest extent possible. It means sharing their problems, their joys, their sorrows. It means that the Rabbi must live amongst his people, work with them, toil with them. His life must be a public life, and his life must be devoted to his community. The second conception of the Rabbinate was much different. According to this point of view, the Rabbi is the kind of leader who leads from a distance. He retires into himself and grows in stature, and his people grow with and through him. By deep introspection

and withdrawal from the scene of everyday petty affairs, the spiritual leader develops himself and grows greater. And with his rapid and high development, he inspires his people to follow his example. This leader does not push his people to greater heights; he pulls them up.

Of course, these two types, as I have described them, are "pure" types. That is, that they describe extreme examples. For in reality, every spiritual leader must have some of both. It is just that one type places the greatest emphasis on mixing and mingling and community living, whereas the other stresses primarily study, private thinking, and individual development. But the two types do exist. And they have existed, side by side, from the very beginning of our people's history.

In Biblical times, Moses and Aaron represented these two kinds. Aaron, High Priest of Isreal, was the first type. His life was devoted to ministering to his fellows. He heard their confessionals, healed their wounds, settled their disputes. Aaron was an OHEV SHALOM VE'RODEF SHALOM, he loved and pursued Peace. So close was he to his people, that even when they built for themselves a Golden Calf did he refuse to leave them. Even then he remained with them and cared for them. He was never angry, above or aloof. He was a leader of the people and amongst the people. Moses, however, was the other type Rabbi. He pitched his tent outside the camp of Israel. He would not be disturbed by trivial matters. He spent years in a ME'ARAH, in a cave, all by himself, building his great spirit. He received the Torah not in an assembly with the Children of Israel, but by himself, way up in the heights of Mount Sinai, after a sojourn of forty days and nights in pure holiness. He was a man with a halo about him, unapproachable at times and revered at all times. Withdrawal was Moses' way of leading. Here were two different types. And yet both were genuine Jewish spiritual leaders.

In Talmudic times, about two thousand years ago, we again find two great Rabbis who exemplified these two different conceptions of spiritual leadership. Hillel and Shammai are the two great historical figures of that age. Hillel is the

first type. It is he, in fact, who advises us: HEVAY MI'TALMIDAV SHE'AHARON, become a disciple of Aaron, and like Aaron the High Priest, you too love Peace and pursue it, and be one who OHEV ES HA'BRIYOS, who loves people and thereby draws them near to Torah. It is Hillel who enunciates the great principle AL TIFROSH MIN HA'TSIBUR, do not separate thyself from the congregation. It is Hillel who, despite his eminent position in Jewish life, will treat with kindness and fatherliness and generosity the man who comes to his house and insults and villifies him. Shammai, on the other hand, accepts the tradition of leadership established by Moses. Where Hillel counsels love and peace and community living, Shammai teaches ASEI TORAS'CHA KEVA, Fix a period for thy study of Torah; say little and do much. It is Shammai who is the supreme teacher. He is impatient with nonsense, and prefers to withdraw into the House of Study, to raise great minds and great spirits independent of the crowd. Hillel and Shammai are two types, almost completely different; and yet, the Talmud relates, a Divine voice announces EILU VE'EILU DIVREI ELOKIM CHAYIM, both Hillel and Shammai utter the words of the Living G-d. Both are genuine Jewish types. Both are important.

Coming closer to our own day, we find these two approaches to spiritual leadership embodied in two great personalities and movements. The Baal Shem Tov and the movement he fathered, Hassidism, embodied the principle of the sociability of spiritual leadership. The Rebbe was the living center of Hassidic society. To him were brought all problems, from the most intimate to the most communal. No marriage was undertaken without his blessing. No business ventures were begun without his approval. He taught his Hassidim not only how to pray, but also how to eat and sleep and laugh like Jews. He was an intimate part and parcel of their lives, and ~~he was all that~~ they were all he had. It was this type of spiritual leadership, in the tradition of Aaron and Hillel and the Baal Shem, which so contributed to the rapid spread of the movement all through Europe. But there was, ~~at~~ at the same time, another movement, known as Rabbinism, the movement of Misnagdim, and they were lead by that surpassing genius, Rabbi Elijah, called the Vilna Gaon. The Gaon was not what we would today call a "good mixer". His life he dedicated to the study of Torah and nothing else. Legend - - backed up by solid historical fact - - tells that he did not

leave his dark, windowless and tiny room in Vilna for two decades - not even once. In that room, which required a candle for light even in the middle of the day, he studied, there a "minyan" came to him and he prayed, there he wrote his masterpieces, there he slept his four hours a night, there the lay leaders of the Jewish community of Vilno came to ask for his sage advice and wise counsel. In this voluntary exile he grew great and renowned as probably the greatest Jewish scholar and intellect since Maimonides. And thus separated and aloof, lonely and above in his towering genius, he was also a faithful leader of his beloved people. The Baal Shem and his Hassidim had one way of leading spiritually. The Gaon and the Rabbinists had another way. Both were g-dly ways, and both had great precedent.

Well then, given these two great stereotypes, which shall a Rabbi of today choose? It is precisely this question which faces me at this time. And it is the answer to this question which will determine the HAS'CHALAH, the beginning and the entire character of my service in Springfield. There are dangers in either extreme. It is morally wrong for a Rabbi today to seek the comforting seclusion of the ivory tower, and to disregard the needs of his community. And yet it is equally tragic for him to be only a "mixer", only a social being, to lose his individuality and learning and become a cog in the social wheel. It is my belief and my opinion, that the wise way is that of both; that Duty calls upon today's spiritual leaders to follow both types - at times to devote themselves wholeheartedly in the everyday affairs of the community, and at times to withdraw, study, draw strength and inspiration from the holy sources of the Torah, and then return with renewed vigor to the people.

The famed Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk once expressed this idea in a novel Hassidic interpretation of a Talmudic statement. Our Rabbis quote G-d as saying: SHLOMO BNI CHACHAM HU, SHE'TIKEN EIRUVIN U'NETILAS YADAYIM, "My son Solomon is a wise man, for he instituted the ERUVIN and the washing of the hands before meals." It was King Solomon who first gave the law of ERUVIN, a symbolic act by virtue of which it is permissible for

two neighbors living in one large house to carry from one apartment to another on the Sabbath. This rite represents a common sharing and partnership between two parties. The word itself comes from the word meaning to mix, to be connected with. And the NETILAS YADAYIM is the traditional washing of the hands before the meal. These two, says the Kotzker Rabbi, are symbolic of that of which we spoke. The real Solomon, the wise leader of his people, is one who knows that there are times when he must perform the ERUV, mix and mingle and share with his people, share their joys and sorrows, their laughter and their tears. And there are times that he must be able to perform NETILAS YADAYIM, to wash his hands - in the colloquial sense - to wash his hands of the everyday community affairs, to retreat into himself, to privately build his mind and heart and soul. The true and wise leader must have something of both types.

My very dear friends, it is my fervent wish and my sacred prayer that G-d help me to attain that wisdom where I can realize both great norms of rabbinic leadership. For I am thankful that I have learnt both traditions. My family is Hassidic in origin, and despite the scholarship many of its members have attained, sight was never lost of the primary goal: human beings. Here I learnt the first type - warmth, friendship, comingling. And from my teachers I learnt of the second tradition. For those learned men were mostly the spiritual disciples of the Vilna Gaon, Lithuanian Jews who had retreated from the world of communal affairs and commerce, and had made their great marks as the leading scholars and Torah authorities of the day.

I hope that you will treat with kindness my attempts at ERUVIN, at living with you and for you. I look forward to cementing great friendships and mighty loyalties. From now on we share a common fate and a common destiny. I hope that you will welcome me in the future as graciously as you have these first few days. And I pray that you will encourage me too to seek the NETILAS YADAYIM, that occasional withdrawal which will contribute to my own spiritual development without which spiritual leadership is impossible. I hope and pray and know that your friendliness will lead you to welcome me in my first role; and that your inherent generosity and good sense will lead you to remind me of the second. And may all of us accomplish that cherished ideal: TZU GOTT UN TZU LEIT.