

דברי מנחם

Diarei Menachem

mpersoff@ouisrael.org

There is a story of the Chassidic rabbi who would dance and sing when he received a letter from his old friend overseas. However, when his Shamash took a curious peek at the notepaper, he found nothing written on it! The Rebbe explained: "I know my friend so well and he knows me so well - there is no need for us to write anything at all!"

So it seems that when our Parsha relates that Moshe descended Har Sinai with the two Tablets of Stone, and that his face had become radiant, "when (He?) he had spoken to him (Him?)" (Sh'mot 34:29), we are not quite sure who spoke to whom - Hashem to Moshe or Moshe to Hashem. And again in verse 35, we might ask who spoke (first) with the other, for when Bnei Yisrael saw that Moshe's face had become radiant, Moshe put the mask back on his face, "until he came to speak with him".

We know from our Parsha that Moshe was the only person with whom Hashem would speak, "face to face, as a man would speak with his fellow" (33:11). So, perhaps it is not so important who speaks to the other first.

Oh, if only we could reach such heights, not only in our relationship to G-d - to speak genuinely and sincerely, from the heart and with intimacy - but also in our relationships with each other: With an empty sheet bereft of pretensions that allows us to enjoy each other, so much so that we feel the wish to sing and to dance. And if only we could feel that way in the presence of Hashem, like a beloved, chosen first-born in the presence of his Father.