



THE SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Devarim

Building Togetherness

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

The strongest predictors of a healthy relationship is the ability to move from "me" and "you" to "us". Lasting relationships are built when two people learn to understand one another's needs and work together. One of our deepest emotional needs is to feel understood and supported. Every person has different fears, hopes, strengths, and struggles. Learning to understand your partner's feelings and needs is essential to a healthy relationship.

Healthy relationships grow when we recognize those differences, make space for them, and are there for one another. Togetherness begins when we stop asking, "What do I need?" and begin asking, "What do we need?"

When Sefer Devarim opens, Moshe reflects on the forty years in the wilderness.

"אִיכָה אֲשֶׁא לְבַדִּי"

"How can I bear alone your trouble, your burden, and your disputes?" (Devarim 1:12).

Is it really so difficult for Moshe, מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים?

Perhaps the difficulty was not leadership itself, but carrying it alone.

The word "לְבַדִּי" "alone" stands out.

Moshe is describing the burden and loneliness of carrying the nation by himself. Rashi, citing the Sifrei, explains that even Moshe's ordinary actions were viewed with suspicion.

If he left his tent early, people would ask,

"מָה רָאָה בֶן עַמָּרָם לְצֵאתוֹ?"

If he left later, they would say he was

"וּשָׁב וַיּוֹעֵץ עֲלֵיכֶם עֲצוֹת רָעוֹת"

sitting and plotting against them.

When trust is replaced with suspicion, even ordinary actions are misunderstood. Without trust, it becomes difficult to carry responsibility together.

Ha'amek Davar adds another layer. He explains that the burden became heavier because the people increasingly relied on what they thought they needed rather than allowing themselves to trust and be guided by Moshe. When everyone insists on their own perspective, togetherness begins to unravel. The relationships in the Torah offer important lessons for our relationships today.

*Lasting relationships are built
when 'me' and 'you' become 'us'.*





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Many couples enter conflict by focusing on their own needs and hurt feelings rather than showing up for one another. When each person in the partnership is pulling in a different direction, even good intentions become difficult to receive. A healthier mindset starts when we ask ourselves, "How can we show up together?"

*Togetherness means that no one
carries life's burdens alone.*

Relationships become stronger when both people feel seen, supported, and committed to what is best for "us." Real partnership begins when both people stop asking who is right and start asking what will strengthen the relationship.

Perhaps this is one of Moshe's final lessons. Strong communities are built when people share responsibility for one another. Leaders look out for the people, and the people learn to trust their leaders.

Togetherness is built when burdens are shared instead of carried alone.



About The Shalom Bayit Journal

The Shalom Bayit Journal explores the intersection of Torah, psychology, relationships, and the human experience. Through thoughtful essays and practical reflection, the Journal seeks to make timeless wisdom meaningful and accessible for everyday life.

