



THE SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Va'etchanan

When the Answer Is No

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

When facing obstacles, people often try to work things out before moving to acceptance.

As a therapist, I've noticed that many people first go through what I think of as the working phase. They continue trying to make it work, look for solutions, try to influence the outcome, and do everything they reasonably can to overcome the challenge.

Research suggests that people are often better able to accept difficult situations after having genuinely done everything they could.

The working phase gives us the opportunity to keep trying while allowing us time to process what may ultimately be beyond our control. Only after we've tried, accepted the outcome, and let go of trying to change it can we begin to focus our attention on what's right in front of us.

Parashat Va'etchanan begins with Moshe Rabbeinu trying to change the decree against him.

After leading Bnei Yisrael for forty years, Moshe pleads to enter Eretz Yisrael.

"וְאֶתְחַנֵּן אֵלֶיּהָ בְּעֵת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר"

"And I pleaded with Hashem at that time" (Devarim 3:23)

Chazal teach that Moshe prayed 515 times. After doing all that he could to change the decree, Boreh Olam tells Moshe that the decree will not change and that he won't be entering Eretz Yisrael.

Boreh Olam responds:

"רַב־לָךְ אֶל־תּוֹסֵף דִּבֵּר אֵלַי עוֹד בַּדִּבָּר הַזֶּה"

"רַב־לָךְ" literally means, "It is great for you."

"Do not continue speaking to Me about this matter." (Devarim 3:26)

Rashi explains "רַב לָךְ" as, "*It is too much for you.*" The Sifrei understands the same words as, "*Much is still for you.*"

Although Moshe would not enter Eretz Yisrael, much goodness and reward still awaited him.





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Moshe Rabbeinu was unique among all the prophets. He had an unparalleled relationship with Boreh Olam:

"לֹא־יָקָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר יָדְעָה ה' פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים"
"Never again did there arise in Israel a prophet like Moshe, whom Hashem knew face to face."
(Devarim 34:10)

Perhaps we can take the idea of **רַב לָךְ** one step further. Moshe could not change the outcome, but there was still *much left for him to do*.

Only after we've tried, and accepted the outcome, can we begin to focus our attention on what is right in front of us.

After accepting what he could not change, Moshe turned his full attention to what remained before him. He prepared Bnei Yisrael for a future without him by reviewing the Torah, the Aseret Hadiberot, the Shema, and warning the nation about the challenges they would face after entering Eretz Yisrael.

Once Moshe accepted his fate, he devoted himself fully to the responsibilities still before him.

Acceptance allows us to stop fighting what cannot be changed and begin focusing on what we can still do. There are times to keep trying, and times to accept our circumstances and focus on what's right in front of us.

Often, it is the people who need us, the responsibilities we carry, and the choices we can still make. Like Moshe, we may not always be able to change our circumstances, but we can devote ourselves to the people who need us and to what remains before us.



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.

