

Stories with a Twist [339]

One Hundred Deaths, But Not One [Instance of] Jealousy!

Insights into Deuteronomy Rabbah 9:9



Background to Our Story (What you need to know to better understand the story)

Deuteronomy 31:14

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הֵן קָרְבוּ יְמֵיךָ לָמוּת קְרָא אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְהִתְיַצְּבוּ בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד וְאֶצְוֶנּוּ וְיָלֵךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיִּתְיַצְּבוּ בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד:

The Lord said to Moses: The time is drawing near for you to die. Summon Joshua and present yourselves in the Tent of Meeting, that I may instruct him. Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the Tent of Meeting.

Pillar of Cloud



The "pillar of cloud" refers to a visible manifestation of God's presence that guided the Israelites. When God spoke, a pillar of cloud descended and stood at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, or later the Tabernacle, where God would speak with Moses. The cloud also served to guide the Israelites during their travels and to signify God's presence among them.

The Text: Deuteronomy Rabbah 9:9

אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם, ישל יהושע ארכי שלי ואהא חי.

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא עשה לו פִּדְרָף שֶׁהוּא עוֹשֶׂה לָהּ, מִיַּד הַשָּׂפִים מֹשֶׁה וְהֵלֵךְ לְבֵיתוֹ שֶׁל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, נִתְּנָה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְאָמַר מֹשֶׁה רַבִּי בּוֹא אֵצְלִי, יֵצְאוּ לְהֵלֵךְ, הֵלֵךְ מֹשֶׁה לְשִׂמְאוֹלוֹ שֶׁל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, נִכְנָסוּ לְאֵהָל מוֹעֵד, יָרַד עֲמוּד הָעָנָן וְהִפְסִיק בֵּינֵיהֶם, מִשְׁנֹסֶתֶלֶק עֲמוּד הָעָנָן הֵלֵךְ מֹשֶׁה אֵצְלֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְאָמַר מָה אָמַר לָךְ הַדְּבֹר, אָמַר לוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כְּשֶׁהִיָּה הַדְּבֹר נִגְלָה עָלָיְךָ יוֹדֵעַ הֵייתִי מָה מְדַבֵּר עִמָּךְ, אוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה צָעַק מֹשֶׁה וְאָמַר מֵאָה מֵיָתוֹת וְלֹא קִנְאָה אָחַת. וְשִׁלְמָה מִפְּרִשָׁה (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ת, ו): כִּי עֲזָה כְּמוֹת אֲהַבָּה קִשָּׁה כְּשֹׂאֵל קִנְאָה, אֲהַבָּה שֶׁאֵהָב מֹשֶׁה לִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ, וּמָה שֶׁקִּנְאָה מֹשֶׁה בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ.

פִּיּוֹן שֶׁקִּבֵּל עָלָיו לְמוֹת, הִתְחִיל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מִפִּיֶסוֹ, אָמַר לוֹ חֲיִיךָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הַנִּהְגָּת אֶת בְּנֵי, אֶף לְעֵתִיד לְבוֹא עַל יְדֶיךָ אֲנִי מְנַהֵיג אוֹתוֹן, מִנִּי, שְׁנֹאֲמַר (ישעיה סג, יא): וַיִּזְכֹּר יְמֵי עוֹלָם מִשָּׂה עִמּוֹ.

He [Moses] said before Him [before the Holy One Blessed be He]: Master of the universe, let Joshua take my kingdom, but I will live.

The Holy One blessed be He said to him [to Moses]: Act towards him [towards Joshua] just as he acts towards you. Immediately, Moses awakened and went to Joshua's residence.

Joshua became afraid, and Moses said [to Joshua]: My master, come to me. They went out walking. Moses walked to Joshua's left. They entered the Tent of Meeting. The pillar of cloud descended and partitioned between them. When the pillar of cloud ascended, Moses went to Joshua and said: What did the Divine Speech say to you?

Joshua said to him: When the Divine Speech was revealed to you, would I know what it was speaking with you?

At that moment, Moses shouted and said: One hundred deaths, but not one [instance of] jealousy.

Solomon articulated it: "As love is as intense as death, jealousy is as cruel as the grave" (Song of Songs 8:6) – the love that Moses loved Joshua, and the fact that Moses was jealous of Joshua.

Once he accepted that he would die, the Holy One blessed be He began to appease him. He [the Holy One Blessed be He] said to him [to Moses]: In this world, you led My children. In the future, too, I will lead them through you. From where in scripture do we know this? For it is stated (Isaiah 63:11): They remembered the days of old, Moses [with] his people."



Explaining the Story - What is going on in our story? (Explain the sequence of events)

Comprehension and Analysis Questions

? What did Moses mean when he told God: Master of the universe, let Joshua take my kingdom, but I will live?

? What did God mean by instructing Moses: Act towards him just as he acts towards you?

? Why did Moses go to Joshua's residence?

? What was Joshua afraid of?

? Why did Moses call Joshua, "my master"?

? Why did Moses tell Joshua, "come to me"?

? Why did Moses walk to Joshua's left?

? How did the pillar of cloud partition between Moses and Joshua?

Extra Bonus ? Why did Moses ask Joshua: What did the Divine Speech say to you?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Answer 4 _____

Extra Bonus ? Why didn't Joshua want to tell Moses what the Divine Speech told him?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Answer 4 _____

? *At that moment, Moses shouted and said: One hundred deaths, but not one [instance of] jealousy.*

- How do you explain Moses' words?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

- Why did Moses *shout* his words?

Bonus ? Why did Moses need to be appeased?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Bonus ? How did God appease Moses?

“The Twist” – Or the Lessons We Can Learn from This Text.

! *“Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way”* (attributed to General George S. Patton).
When you are not leading, and are not ready to be led, you must get out of the way: The lesson Moses learned the hard way



Our short story is one that should be included in any leader’s manual. When you are a leader and your time is over, you must leave and let others lead. Your reluctance to leave and to confront your new reality will be detrimental to your successor, to the people that need to be led, and it will bring out the worst in you, tarnishing all your prior accomplishments.