Dvar Torah

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CHAYEI SARA

In this week's parsha, Eliezer, the servant of Avraham is entrusted with the task of finding a wife for Yitzchak. The Torah records this mission with a large amount of text, repeating parts of the story over again. How does one define himself? What identity does one have? If one came to a strange place, how would you introduce yourself? No single answer is the "correct" answer. Everyone has many identities and characteristics. Yet we are faced with the question of what most stands out in me to describe myself to others. Eliezer faced this very question when he arrived in Aram looking for a wife for his master's son. Eliezer chose not to begin introducing himself by his name. Rather, he introduces himself by his relationship. EVED AVRAHAM ANOCHI – "I am the servant of Avraham."

This left no doubt of who he was. He established not only who he was but also his character and his purpose. As servant of Avraham, he knew where belonged and what he serves.

I understand that there was once a prominent Sephardic family from Bagdad who would always add to their name's signature the letters of AYIN-HEI to denote "eved Hashem", the servant of G-d. We too recite upon taking out the Torah ANA AVDA D'KUDSHA B'RICH HU - "I am the servant of Hashem." We are defining ourselves and our purpose in life.

With such defining purpose, we can discover our life's goal easier and help us make the correct decisions that face us.

Eliezer's nearness to Avraham was bound to bring out the finest qualities in Eliezer. Like a man who enters a perfume store, exits with beautiful fragrance. Eliezer was enhanced by Avraham's kindness, generosity and sensitivity and ends up adopting those very traits.

There is another important aspect that defines Eliezer in this position. In serving Avraham, Eliezer declares that he has only one master, and that is Avraham. No one else. So too, the message for us is clear. If we see ourselves as servants of G-d, we then are free from any other masters in this world. We are freed from any other pressures or strains that seek to pervert our path.

We learn from Eliezer, that when one has a single master, rather than many, then his identity is truly established. Eliezer did more than just fulfill Avraham's request to find a wife for his son. Eliezer sent a message to us by personal example

how we should identify ourselves not only to others but definitively, how we identify ourselves to ourselves. We are servants of G-d. Sometimes in life we are faced with an identity crisis, who we are and what is our purpose in life. We should always remember the sharp defining characteristic of Eliezer - EVED AVRAHAM.