

Good Shabbos Everyone. In the end of this week's parsha, the Torah tells how Moshe Rabeinu has his assistant Yehoshua stand by him. Rashi explains that it was the last day of Moshe's life and he wanted to give credence to Yehoshua, who would assume the leadership of the Bnai Yisroel after Moshe's death. In a sense, Moshe was "grooming" Yehoshua to take the lead. Yehoshua would be the leader in the next generation. It is from this point in history which began the process which continues until today. Namely, every generation has its Tzadikim, righteous leaders. We believe that our great Rabbis are vested with higher spiritual wisdom. The following amazing true story illustrates the power of our great Rabbis.

Although Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson was not Jewish, his dedication and respect for the Jewish people were remarkable. Reb Moshe Londinski, who was a rabbi in Seattle, Washington, worked close with Senator Jackson. Reb Moshe helped with fundraising and often spoke to help gain the Senator support in his political career. One Sunday afternoon in early June, several years ago, Reb Moshe received a phone call from the gabbai of the Skulener Rebbe, Reb Eliezer Zisia Portugal, of blessed memory (1896-1982). "I am calling on behalf of the Rebbe," the gabbai told Reb Moshe. "The Rebbe must see Senator Jackson tomorrow at nine in the morning. Can you arrange an appointment?" Miraculously, Reb Moshe was able to arrange a meeting with the busy Senator. The Skulener Rebbe had requested that Reb Moshe act as an interpreter between the Rebbe and the Senator, so Reb Moshe took the next plane to Washington, D.C.

The Rebbe arrived with his gabboim (attendants) to Washington, D.C. They met Reb Moshe in the outer office, and they entered the inner office of Senator Jackson together. But instead of speaking to the Senator, the Rebbe whispered something to his gabbai who in turn whispered something to Reb Moshe. Reb Moshe turned pale. He looked helplessly at Senator Jackson. "What is the problem?" The Senator asked curiously. "Well ah. .." Reb Moshe took a deep breath. "It seems that the Rebbe has not had a chance to say his morning prayers. He needs a place where he can concentrate. Would he be able to use your office for a little while?" "Of course, no problem!" Said the Senator. The Senator immediately stood up and walked with Reb Moshe out of the inner office. The two of them stood in the hall, waiting for the Rebbe to finish.

Twenty minutes went by. By this time, both men were pacing the hall. Reb Moshe did not know what to say to the Senator. After all, it was his office! Fortunately, the office door opened just then, and the Rebbe himself beckoned them back inside. Senator Jackson once again seated himself behind his desk. "Now," he said with a smile. "What can I do for you?" Reb Moshe stood next to the Rebbe, ready to interpret every word.

The Rebbe opened his mouth to speak. But the Rebbe said just two short words and then the holy man burst into tears. "What is wrong?" the Senator asked in concern. "I do not know," Reb Moshe said in bewilderment. The Rebbe was trying to speak through his tears, but Reb Moshe could not understand a single word. He stood, waiting for the crying to stop, but the tears continued to pour down the face of the Rebbe. Senator Jackson beckoned Reb Moshe over. "Tell the rabbi that I know what he wants," he said abruptly. "You do?" Reb Moshe said, startled. "How?" "Just ask the rabbi what he wants me to do about it," the Senator told him.

Reb Moshe stared at the Senator for a moment, but then he obediently turned to the Rebbe and relayed the statement of the Senator. The Rebbe stopped crying. "I want it stopped immediately," the Rebbe told Reb Moshe. Reb Moshe translated the statement of the Rebbe. "How does he want me to stop it?" the Senator asked. Again Reb Moshe relayed the question

to the Rebbe. "The Senator knows which buttons to press," the Rebbe replied. The Senator reached for the phone, punched in a number and began to speak. And as Reb Moshe listened, the story slowly became clearer to him. It seemed that a few days before, the Romanian government had arrested twenty Jews and falsely accused them of currency speculation. They were imprisoned and due to be executed in a few days. The whole situation was a ploy by the Romanian government to pressure the United States into giving them Most Favored Nation status, which would bring the country great financial gain.

The Senator, as the head of the Foreign Relations Committee, was also very involved with Soviet Jewry, and he knew of this action by the Romanian government. He had immediately understood what the Rebbe had come for. The Senator was speaking to the Romanian ambassador. "As head of the Foreign Relations Committee, I strongly suggest that you immediately call the Prime Minister. Tell him that if those twenty prisoners are not released within forty-eight hours, I guarantee that Romania will never see a cent of American aid. Hair will grow on the palm of their hands before they ever receive the Most Favored Nation status." The Senator put the phone down and looked up at Reb Moshe. "Tell the rabbi that it has been taken care of."

The Rebbe smiled and warmly shook the hand of the Senator. Within forty-eight hours, all twenty prisoners had been released and brought to Eretz Yisroel. Once again, Reb Moshe had seen the concern that Senator Jackson had for the Jewish people. Reb Moshe was curious about this, and one time he took the opportunity to ask the Senator why the Senator cared so much about the Jews.

Senator Jackson smiled. "Three reasons: One, I was a prosecutor during the Nuremberg trials. I saw how much the Jews had suffered in the concentration camps, and I resolved to do whatever I could to help them. Two, my mother a widow, was a housekeeper for a Jewish family in the town of Evret, Washington. They treated her very well. They gave her extra food and money during the Depression years to help her raise her family. In her will my mother asked that her children should always be good to the Jews. And finally, when I was a young boy, there were a few Jews I would always help out on Saturday. They always treated me nicely..."

But, Senator Jackson did not stop there; he was not satisfied to help merely those 20 Jews in Romania. Soon after, Senator Jackson along with Congressman Vanik of Ohio introduced an amendment to the trade bill, linking emigration to most favored status. Ultimately the Jackson-Vanik Amendment of the 1974 Trade Reform Act become law. The implementation of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment made one of the first cracks in the Soviet Iron Curtain. Later, when Russia suffered a famine, and had to purchase millions of tons of American grain, the evil Communists had to allow tens of thousands of Jews to leave the country. The doors of freedom had been thrust open and the seeds of freedom began to sprout in Communist Russia. It is the opinion of many historians that the Jackson-Vanik Amendment significantly contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union, thereby forever changing the course of history! (Visions of Greatness, R.Y.Weiss, p.73 and Reflections of the Maggid, R. P.J. Krohn, .104)

From this story we see the tremendous power of our holy Rabbis. Let us all therefore seek out qualified Rabbis, in order to take advantage of the divine wisdom which Hashem has imparted to His holiest servants. **Good Shabbos Everyone.**