

The Lutzker Rav, R' Zalman Sorotzkin, made a very insightful and, as usual, brilliant analysis of the first few פסוקים in פרשת קדושים, which go as follows:

וַיִּדְבֹר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דְּבַר אֶל כָּל עַדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אִישׁ אִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת שְׁבֹתָתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אֶל תִּפְּנוּ אֶל הָאֱלִילִים וְאֵלֶּהִי מִסֻּכָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

The question he raises is: what is the purpose of using this incredibly inclusive term, דְּבַר אֶל כָּל עַדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל? He explains that the proper qualification of an outstanding leader, a מנהיג, is that he has an influence on all aspects, on all members of his community, of his flock, of his עדה, of his congregation. He is able to talk to each and every part of his society successfully - not only to one group or another, but to the whole spectrum. And it's always been an interesting question, which he doesn't raise, but I'll raise it here: What is the purpose of a leader? Is it to come down to the level of the people, or to raise the people up to his level?

From משה רבינו we can learn that a leader has to be successful in both. What's the first thing that משה רבינו says? דְּבַר אֶל כָּל עַדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל - he was speaking to everybody, and then he goes according to a סדר. First, he has to find those people who are the outstanding members of society - the big צדיקים, the חכמים. These are people who already have a preparation, a ידיעה, a הנהגה, and קדושה מעשים. What does he say to them? וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ - When speaking to these types of people, it is sufficient just to exhort them: "You should be holy." Why? אֱלֹהֵיכֶם - If Hashem is holy, you should be holy. They can grasp that concept in a flash, because their entire lives have been devoted to דבקות to Hashem, to being close to Hashem.

What is the next job of the מנהיג? To speak to the people who are not quite on that level - the middle-class people, the בעלי בתים, those who do עבודה, who keep מצות, who are שומרי תורה ומצות. Their job is to walk בדרך ה'. Therefore, what does משה do with these people? He gives them practical advice. He gives them מצות לא תעשה and מצות עשה. Through working on the מצות עשה and מצות לא תעשה, they are able to come close to Hashem. What does he say here? אִישׁ אִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת שְׁבֹתָתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ - an עשה and a לא תעשה.

So once he's able to collect around him the leadership - the holy people - and then the בעלי בתים, the שומרי תורה, and is able to say to them: "You can be greater. You can reach up to Hashem as well", then, together with this entire ציבור that he has been able to influence and show the proper דרך to, he can go even to the people who are far, far away - the ones right at the edge of the abyss. Those who are busy doing nothing, or who have wasted their lives, who don't accomplish anything, and in fact are attracted to the lowest forms of עבירה. That's the next פסוק: אֶל תִּפְּנוּ אֶל הָאֱלִילִים - Get away from the אֱלִילִים; לא, וְאֵלֶּהִי מִסֻּכָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם - Don't make for yourselves your own foreign gods, graven images. When you have the whole ציבור around you and you've lifted them up, you have enough power, enough קדושה, enough influence to speak even to these people and say: "You can do it too. Even though you are so far away, you can come close to Hashem."

The Lutzker Rav brings a particularly brilliant ראייה by pointing out something you might not notice unless you're very clever. If you look at these three פסוקים carefully, you'll see that the last three words of each פסוק are the same: אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. He points out that even though these are three different groups of people - so far apart from each other - they still have a common thread. They still have the common ability, and with the proper influence, with the proper השפעה, we can bring each and every one of these members of society closer to Hashem and lift them up to a level where they will be able to be successful. And this idea isn't only true for משה רבינו. רש"י, too, was able to reach everybody - from the greatest חכם to the smallest little kid because he had the ability and the power to speak to each one on their level. Parents must have the same ability: to deal with each of their children according to the level that each requires, and to influence them and bring them to the הטובה דרך.

