



The Joy of Torah - For Life

Parshas Va'aira - From Everything to Nothing!

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In this week's Parsha - "רָאָה נִתְתִּיךָ אֱלֹהִים לְפָרְעֹה". The Midrash Tanchuma (7,1) explains that Hashem said to Moshe, that Pharoah has made himself into a God, so let him know that he's "a nothing". And how will this be accomplished? by making you rule over him, and then he'll look at you and say that you are a "god" over him.

The Midrash Tanchuma seems to be saying that the goal of making Moshe a god over Pharoah is to let Pharoah know that he's a nothing, and the means of doing that is by seeing Moshe doing miracles and seeing Moshe dominate him.

Why does this accomplish the goal of smacking him down from his highly inflated ego to a "nothing"? Instead of himself being number one, Pharoah will see himself as second-best not a nothing! Being a nothing is all the way at the other end of the spectrum, but how will this be accomplished through Moshe dominating him? We see from here that Pharoah, seeing that Moshe was a god over him and constantly "seeing him", that picture in his head of Moshe consistently beating him at everything makes him blow up and lose his ego all the way down to rock bottom of you and himself as a nothing. It wasn't just seeing the plagues happened to him though. It was seeing Moshe, the person, being better than him, and having that picture consistently in the head of a person who is so arrogant, with such an inflated ego, will make Pharoah flip completely to thinking he's a zero.

An example of this would be a guy who views himself as the best in learning, and just if he finds out that there's someone out there, who's better than him he's OK, because now he'll just view himself as second-best. But if he's in shiur with this other guy and is constantly seeing himself being dominated by the other guy, it will make him view himself as a nothing. The Midrash is saying that an arrogant person seeing someone else be above him, and having that constant picture in his head, makes him crash to the end of the spectrum.