



# The Marcos and Adina Katz YUTORAH IN PRINT

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### The Backward River

Rabbi Moshe Taragin

The primary Hebrew word for inheritance is “*yerusha*.” However, the Torah supplies an additional term for inheritance– the word “*nachalah*”– and the eighth perek of Bava Batra which begins by listing the legal inheritors is named “*yesh nochalin*”. Interestingly, this term “*nachala*” describes inheritance but also refers to a “*nachal*” or a river. Through inheritance, family wealth is ‘continued’ or sustained just as a river exhibits continuous flow. Inheritance and a river share an additional feature– they are each unidirectional. Gravity determines that a river flows in only one direction; similarly, worldly possessions stream in one direction from previous generations to future generations.

There is one exception, or one inheritance which flowed backward– from a current generation to a previous one. The first inheritance in halachik history– the allocation of the land of Israel functioned in an atypical fashion – as a “backward” flowing river. Each Jew of the new generation, who entered Israel, received a personal portion of land; the allocated lands of all cousins who entered were then grouped into larger packages of land which reverted back to the previous generation– effectively to the “Uncles” who had departed Egypt but who, sadly never made it to Israel. Those land parcels of the cousins were then equally divided among all the deceased Uncles; Subsequently each Uncle’s share of the package was inherited by his children who entered Israel. For example, a single Israeli child with many cousins would ultimately receive more than just his single land allocation. His numerous cousins would each receive land, and the entire family’s package would revert to previous generation and then ultimately back to the new generation which entered Israel. A lone child who entered Israel would receive some of the lands which his cousins were allocated, which reverted to his own father, and ultimately trickled down

to himself. This was the only inheritance in history which reversed through previous generations; it flowed upstream to the previous generation before trickling back down to the current generation. It was a backward river!

This reverse inheritance acknowledged the sacrifice and courage of that original “pioneering” generation which was enslaved in Egypt and had eloped into the wilderness with G-d. They had suffered miserably in Egypt and ignoring their role in this journey would be morally insensitive, especially given their tragic death in the sands of an anonymous desert. Their suffering in Egypt, their courage at the Red Sea, and their vision at Sinai all enabled the ultimate arrival in Israel. Routing the allocation of Israeli lands through the past generation is a “shout-out” to their accomplishments and, of course, a memorial to the tragedy of their death in the desert.

However, this rearward inheritance process isn’t just a moral accommodation. The Jewish deed to the land of Israel spans centuries of faith and generations of heroes whose lives were devoted to a land which G-d had bestowed, but which humanity rarely acquiesced to. The entry of this generation into the land of Israel must be accompanied by historical consciousness and expanded imagination. The new generation isn’t merely a fortunate generation who randomly hit the jackpot – to enter the land of dreams. The “entering” generation represents previous generations of dreamers and by passing their shares back to the previous generation, the historical process of acquiring Israel is showcased.

Typically, talmidim who depart Yeshiva, ask me for some ‘takeaway’ ideas or core values. I always encourage them to live lives of “verticality”. Our lives aren’t isolated points but rather points on a line – a lineage of Jewish history; we are the beneficiaries of previous generations and the pioneers of future ones. Vertical lifestyles reduce self-interest and integrate us to larger generational trajectories.

This past Shabbat I attended a kiddush with 23-year old, post-army talmidim. I asked them each to discuss an aspect of our lives which would be permanently altered by the Corona crisis. One boy mentioned that the crisis provided him with a deeper appreciation of the elder generation. Much of our efforts – at least during the initial stages of the virus- have been geared toward preserving the health and well-being of older people- many of whom were quarantined in lonely conditions. This boy predicted that our society would become more sensitive to the needs of the previous generation. I hope his predictions are fulfilled.

So many cultural forces have thinned our relationships with the elder generation. Dramatic advances in transportation and communication seduced us into relocating at great distances from our families; we were convinced that technology would assist us in preserving these relationships. The breakneck pace of our modern professional lives left little time for intergenerational interaction.

Whatsapps replaced relationship-building. Our communities generated sufficient wealth to create institutional living space for elders. Medical advances convinced us that the previous generation would live longer lives: we had plenty of time to reconnect.

Will this be of the great cultural corrections of the

## **The Third Path to Jewish Leadership**

*Rabbi Yosie Levine*

**T**his past week I met with two candidates running for US congress. One is running here in the City and one is running in Westchester. Both are facing incumbents. Both are facing almost impossibly long odds. And both are almost sure to lose. “So why are you doing it,” I asked them. And each said the same thing: “I’m in it for the kavod!” No – I’m only joking. Each of them said they perceive a vacuum – a crisis in our national leadership and they’d like to contribute to the solution.

Leadership an important topic, but it seems especially resonant now. But there are no elections in the Torah. So how does one become a leader?

And the specific issue that I want to think about with you this morning is the question of succession.

It’s in these parshiot in Bamidbar that we get a sense from the Torah about the models that are possible.

The first model is Aharon. It couldn’t be more explicit and it couldn’t be more straightforward. Right before

Corona crisis? Will we emerge more connected to, and appreciative of, previous generations? Will we ponder their generation, their lives and the stiff challenges they faced and gain a better sense of how we benefitted from their accomplishments? In the early to mid-20th century many economies were pivoted upon a six-day work week. Under those financially trying conditions, halachik Shabbat observance was almost impossible and those who maintained Shabbat observance were heroic in ways which far surpass the religious commitment which we celebrate in the modern era. Will this appreciation help us overcome built-in generation gaps which so often prevent younger generations from respecting the values of previous generations? Will this historical vision bolster our resolve in facing modern challenges and navigating the current crisis? Often a clear sense of past struggles, provides vital perspective upon our current adversity. In so many ways, the hardships we are currently enduring seem minor in light of the immense challenges faced during the Holocaust and the early stages of the State of Israel.

Will this be a moment in which the relationships between generations is rebooted? Will the prophecy of Malachi of “turning hearts of children back to their parents” come true? Will the River flow backward?

Aharon dies, Moshe takes the priestly vestments from Aharon and uses them to dress Elazar. The son inherits the position of the father.

The next one that comes to mind comes up in our parsha. It’s not as straightforward as the first model, but the conclusion is unambiguous. Moshe is thinking about his own demise and he asks Hashem to appoint a successor.

Rashi tells us that Moshe was secretly hoping one of his children would inherit the mantle of leadership, but Hashem had other plans.

Of course ultimately it’s Yehoshua.

And so we have a clear second model.

If the first model is succession by way of inheritance, the second is succession by way of initiation. It’s not the son who inherits the position of the father, it’s the student.

And intuitively it makes perfect sense. Maybe it even makes more sense. The child may or may not have the talent and the knowhow to fill the shoes of the parent. At

least the student has been trained and mentored.

If he's never done the job before, at least he knows what the job entails.

But there's a problem. Because there's a gap in the narrative. There are three great leaders of the dor hamidbar: Moshe, Aharon and Miriam.

The Gemara is very explicit about the effects of their respective deaths.

- Aaron dies: ananei hakavod disappear
- Miriam dies: the well that accompanied the Jewish people in the wilderness – suddenly runs dry.
- And eventually when Moshe dies, the manna stops falling from heaven.

So if Elazar succeeds Aharon, and Yehoshua succeeds Moshe, who succeeds Miriam?

I want to suggest that Miriam didn't have one successor. She had five.

And of course I have in mind the five daughters of Tzlofchad: the five women who change the very nature of what it means to be an heir – the five women who insist that their father's name not be lost simply because he was a victim of circumstance.

And I want to share with you a midrash that I find nothing less than extraordinary.

ותקרבנה בנות צלפחד: כיון ששמעו בנות צלפחד שהארץ מתחלקת לשבטים לזכרים ולא לנקיבות נתקבצו כולן זו על זו ליטול עצה אמרו לא כרחמי בשר ודם רחמי המקון רחמי בשר ודם רחמיו על הזכרים יותר מן הנקיבות אבל מי שאמר והיה עולם אינו כן אלא רחמיו על הזכרים ועל הנקיבות רחמיו על הכל שנאמר טוב ה' לכל ורחמיו על כל מעשיו.

This is an amazing text on many levels.

I just want to zoom in on one.

These women freely recognize that left to their own devices, human beings may have prejudices and human beings may leave people behind. But they also recognize that in an objective world – in the eyes of Hashem – there's really no room for prejudice. And no one can get left behind.

What I want to argue is that the Bnos Tzlofchad pick up where Miriam leaves off. It's not just she was a model of women's leadership and so are they. Of course that point shouldn't be lost on us; but there's something more.

What was Miriam's great contribution in the Torah?

She had a knack for bringing people together.

It started way back at the beginning of Shemot when she reunited Moshe with his mother.

It continued after Yam Suf when she brought all the

women together in song. And even in the complicated story where she said something she shouldn't have: What was her goal? To reunite Moshe with his wife.

At moments in Jewish history where someone was in jeopardy of being along or being left out, Miriam stepped up and brought people together.

(And of course we have Rashi's famous comment about how she brought her parents back together.)

And both locally and globally, this is exactly what the Bnos Tzlofchad do. Remember the story? To whom do they ask their question? Of course it's Moshe who answers them, but in the text we find something stunning.

ותעמדנה לפני משה ולפני אלעזר הכהן ולפני הנשיאם וכל העדה פתח אהל מועד.

I'm not aware of another pasuk like this in the Torah. And I don't know how they organized it. But somehow they've managed to get an audience with the entire Jewish people!

And it fits perfectly. If their goal is to ensure that no one gets left out, what better strategy than to make that point explicitly in front the leadership and membership of the Jewish people.

But it goes even further. As Rashi already mentions, what's the consequence of the new set of rules that they've set into motion? Because women inherit, what might happen if they marry out of their shevet? The land could ultimately pass over into another shevet. Which is why the pasuk uses the word והעברת to prevent that from happening, everyone in their shevet will have an extra incentive to make sure they marry within the community. And so once again, they'll have brought everyone together.

And maybe that's even what they mean when they go out of their way to say that their father was not part of עדה קרחה. He wasn't one to sow division – and neither are they.

And so what emerges is a third model.

- You could be Elazar and just inherit leadership.
- You could be Yehoshua. Through study and mentorship you could be a Jewish leader.
- Or you could be Bnot Tzelofchad.

You don't have to be the child of great Jewish leader.

You don't even have to be the student of a great Jewish teacher.

You can model greatness all your own and you can rewrite the story in the process. Three thousand years before Cheryl Sandberg said lean in, the Torah already told us: ותקרבנה. Step up and lead.

I'm not suggesting that everyone in this room run for congress. I wouldn't wish that upon any one. But I am suggesting that each of us step up and lead. When summer turns to fall and the year begins in earnest in September, what are the ways in which we want to contribute?

We love to sit around our Shabbat tables and discuss the problems and challenges that face our community and our city and our nation. It's not an accident that all the founders of psychotherapy were Jewish. We've been sitting

## From Brisk to Jerusalem

Mrs. Michal Horowitz

In this week's parsha, Parshas Pinchas, we learn of the Bnos Tzelafchad, מִחֵלָה נָעָה, הַגִּלְגָּה מִלִּכְּהָ וְתִרְצָה, from the tribe of Menashe ben Yosef, whose father died without leaving sons. As the Bnei Yisrael prepare to enter the Holy Land under the leadership of Yehoshua bin Nun (Bamidbar 27:15-23) these five righteous women approach Moshe with a novel request.

לָמָּה יִגְרַע... אָבִינוּ, מֵת בְּמִדְבָּר שָׁם-אָבִינוּ מִתּוֹךְ מִשְׁפַּחָתוֹ, כִּי אֵין לוֹ בָּוֹן; תִּנְהַ-לָּנוּ אֲחֵינוּ, בְּתוֹךְ אֲחֵי אָבִינוּ, *why should the name of our father be omitted from among his family because he had no sons? Give us a possession among our father's brothers.* Unsure of how to proceed, Moshe brings their case before G-d (27:1-5). And Hashem said to Moshe, saying: כִּן, בְּנוֹת צִלְפַּחַד דִּבְרֹת--נָתַן תִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲחֵיוֹת נַחֲלָה, בְּתוֹךְ אֲחֵי: *The daughter of Tzelafchad speak properly. You shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among the brothers of their father, and you shall cause the inheritance of their father to pass over to them (v.6-7).*

Interestingly, immediately after the chapter of the Bnos Tzelafchad, the Torah tells us of Moshe's banishment from the land. And G-d said to Moshe, עֲלֵה אֶל-הַר הָעֵבְרִים הַזֶּה; וְרָאָה, אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי, לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. Avarim and see the land that I have given to the Children of Israel. You shall see it and you shall be brought in to your people... because you rebelled against My word at the waters of strife... (12-14). Due to his actions at Mei Merivah (Bamidbar 20:1-13), Moshe was forever banned from entering Eretz Yisrael, both in life, and in death.

It is interesting that this parsha, with its thematic topics related to Eretz Yisrael, is read during the mournful time of Bein Ha'Meitzarim, the Three Weeks of mourning for Churban Batei Mikdash and galus, exile, from our beloved land.

around listening to people complain for thousands of years. They just found a way to monetize it.

But we have an equally long history of Jewish activism. And it's particularly true in the history of our shul. Our members have been founders and leaders of dozens and dozens of outstanding causes. So whether it's here at The Jewish Center or at another inspired venue, let's turn crises into opportunities and problems into possibilities.

During the saddest time on the Jewish calendar year, when we diminish rejoicing and festivities as a sign of aveilus, mourning, we read of those who desired to enter, and take a portion of, the Land. From our great leader Moshe Rabbeinu, to five heroic women in the desert, love for the Land of Israel, and longing to return to her, is a trademark of our nation.

In 1972, thirty years after the city of Brisk was liquidated R"L by the Nazis y's, at a commemoration event held by former residents of Brisk living in E"Y, Menachem Begin delivered the keynote address. In this never before translated speech, Begin reminisced and waxed poetic: "In the midst of their innocence, our fathers, in their faith, loved the Land of Israel. We still remember how they prayed for rain in the Land of Israel. Not rain for the land on which they lived, and from whose soil they lived, but rain for the Land of Israel. They pleaded for the Land of Israel, cleaved to it. They would say, 'the Land of Israel,' in holiness and purity. And when they recited the grace after meals, coming to the words 'and rebuild Jerusalem' - their eyes would flow with tears. How they would articulate the name 'Jerusalem.' They loved the Land of Israel.

"We will remember their love and sanctify it just as we merited to free the Land of Israel and redeem Jerusalem. 'And the priests and the people, standing in the courtyard of the Temple' - this was the prayer they recited. And the day came that we redeemed Jerusalem, and we have dug into its dirt, and we have walked the path and so we have seen the Gates of Chuldah (that lead into the Temple). They are still locked. And behold the mighty stones the Roman legions threw downward, covering the gates for 1,800 years. But they are before our eyes. Recalling your prayers in the synagogue, over 50 years ago: standing there

(on the Temple Mt.), by the southern wall, you can see in your mind's eye the Gates of Chulda, and the masses of people flocking through them. 'No one in Jerusalem (who arrived for the pilgrimage festivals) ever said, 'I don't have enough room' (Avos 5:5). That is: It was not said! It was tightly packed, but no one complained that it was too crowded in Jerusalem. The masses, thousands of them, came to Jerusalem - a city of 600,000 souls, in the time of King David. They ascended to the Gates of Chuldah through the courtyard and the women's courtyard - and you can see it, as if it were yesterday...

"Brisk. From there we came. But we were born in Jerusalem... Gratitude to our fathers, gratitude for their love of the Land of Israel, gratitude for their prayers, gratitude for their faith in the coming of the Moshiach. 'And even though he may tarry, nevertheless I await his coming.' Our parents did not have the opportunity, but their children after them conquered the 'beginning of redemption.' And so with love of Israel, with love for the Land of Israel and for Jerusalem, we will sanctify their scattered ashes, elevate their souls in holiness and purity, and carry in our hearts the memory of their love (for the land) from generation to generation."

In the Book of Lamentations, the prophet weeps the cry

## Social & Emotional Leadership

Rabbi Dr. Mordechai Schiffman

**A**fter processing the news that he will not be leading Bnei Yisrael into the land of Canaan due to his and Aharon's sin at Mei Meriva, Moshe turns to G-d and asks Him to appoint a successor. In his dialogue with G-d, Moshe addresses Him with a strange appellation – Elokei HaRuchot. Two pesukim later, G-d tells Moshe to take Yehoshua, a man who has "ruach" and appoint him as the leader. The role of ruach is clearly essential in the narrative, but it is unclear exactly what it is and why it is so important.

Depending on the context, the term ruach can mean several things in Tanach, including wind, breath, spirit, feelings, or will. Rashi understands the term here as a reference to people's general personality. G-d is a G-d of ruach, meaning that the personality of every individual is revealed before Him. He should appoint a leader who will be able to tolerate each person based on his or her own inner makeup. Yehoshua is a man who has ruach, meaning

of generations:

מה-אעידך מה אדמה-לך, הבת ירושלים--מה אשנה-לך ואנחמך, כי-גדול פים שבך, מי ירפא-לך בתולת בת-ציון: *What shall I testify for you? What shall I compare to you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is as vast as the sea - who can heal you?* (Eichah 2:13).

As we mourn once again for the destruction of our Temple, city, and Land, let us recall the prayer of generations of Jews who came before us, in every city and land of our wandering, for the restoration and healing that G-d has promised our nation and Eretz Yisrael.

My grandfather, Yitzchak ben Moshe a'h, wrote in his Holocaust memoirs: "Reb Peretz Feder and I slept on one pallet (in the concentration camp) and talked continually about the murderers that they were sent by G-d and their end is near. We suffer now so that Moshiach will come. Whoever will survive this hell will see a Jewish state..."

We have lived, B"H to see the Jewish state my grandfather could only dream of. Halavay - would that it be! - that we merit to see the ultimate salvation, and an end to our suffering, mourning, exile and pain, with everlasting redemption for our people and our Land.

he can conduct himself in a manner that would correspond to every individual.

Rashi's description of the skills required to lead is striking on two fronts. The first, is the care and concern the leader must have for ALL of his or her followers. Rashi emphasizes the importance of understanding the innumerable differences between each individual and the duty to adapt accordingly. The leader doesn't just make policy for the masses and let some fall through the cracks. He or she needs to tend to everyone.

The second is the seeming parallel to the constructs of social and emotional intelligence. Broadly speaking, emotional intelligence incorporates the ability to read and manage emotions both in the self and others. Social intelligence encompasses verbal and listening skills, a depth of understanding of social situations, and the capacity to insert oneself effectively in those contexts. Rashi's description of ruach highlights the need to understand the

depths of personality of the other and manage the self and others accordingly. Research in educational psychology as well as in industrial and organizational psychology demonstrates how important these skills are for leaders and educators -- but the question becomes, how does one attain these abilities?

One answer is that having this ruach is simply a gift from G-d. I either have it or I don't. All I can do is daven and hope that Hashem grants me these abilities. In fact, we find precedent for such a notion when Hashem took some of Moshe's ruach and placed it upon the elders until they absorbed it (Bemidbar 11:17). However, the Alshich points out, this is not the same procedure that happens with Yehoshua. Yehoshua apparently already had these traits so he did not need a Divine intervention to provide them. That's why, according to Abarbanel, G-d tells Moshe

## Legendary Leadership

*Mrs. Shira Smiles (Adapted by Channie Koplowitz Stein)*

**H**ashem has just informed Moshe Rabbenu that the time has come for him to leave this earth, for he would not lead Bnei Yisroel into the Promised Land. As it had been throughout his life, Moshe's concern was for the people he had so faithfully led for all these years. Therefore, "Moshe spoke to Hashem saying, 'My Hashem, Elokhei haruchot/God of the spirit of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly... and let [them] not be like sheep that have no shepherd.'"

Before we enter into a discussion of the leadership qualities Moshe thought were essential, Rabbi Reiss in Meirosh Tzurim points out that this is the only time Moshe speaks to Hashem, "Saying," implying that Moshe's request applied not only to his immediate successor, but to all leaders of Bnei Yisroel throughout the generations.

Hashem's response echos Moshe's address to Hashem; He tells Moshe to appoint Yehoshua bin Nun, a man asher ruach bo/in whom there is spirit." Rashi explains that a person in whom there is spirit understands each person intrinsically, as an individual, in addition to leading the nation as a whole.

The Medrash fills in some of the blanks that show how Yehoshua served Moshe faithfully for forty years, service that reveal the essence of Yehoshua that make him such a good leader of the nation. The Medrash tells us that Yehoshua would arise early every morning and arrange all

in reference to Yehoshua: "kach lecha" – you take—as if to say, don't turn to me to appoint him and make him ready for leadership. Yehoshua already has the skills because he spent years observing Moshe's behavior and modeling his own behavior accordingly.

Most of us in some form or another, whether at home, work, or school, take on a position of a leader. We learn from this narrative that we need to be a person of ruach – to care and tend to everyone we are guiding, and to attempt to understand their inner psychology using our emotional and social intelligence and deal with each one accordingly. The good news is that this is a skill that can be taught and learned, which makes it a worthwhile investment of our time and resources if we want to develop into more effective leaders.

the benches and spread the mats in the study hall so that the disciples could listen comfortably as Moshe expounded the Torah. Through this service, Yehoshua has earned the reward for this service. Then the Medrash continues enigmatically by citing a verse from Mishlei/Proverbs: "He who guards the fig tree shall eat its fruit." This segue begs clarification, especially, as Rabbi Druck asks, the one who guards the fig tree is praised rather than the one who originally planted the tree.

The Manchester Rav, Rabbi Segal, explains how the guardian of the fig tree is an apt metaphor for a true Talmid Chacham who studies Torah diligently. The Torah is full of multiple meanings and nuances that slowly reveal its depth. One cannot understand Torah by trying to harvest all its wisdom at one, or even several, sittings. Each time one studies a passage, new insights are revealed, and the next time, additional knowledge can be harvested. This characteristic is similar to the fig tree. While the fruit on most fruit trees ripen fairly uniformly over a short period of time and can be harvested rather quickly, each fig on the fig tree ripens at its own individual pace over an extended period of time. To harvest the figs takes great, constant diligence and patience to pick each fruit only when it is ready. [Several years ago, on tour with the Eretz Yisroel Movement, we visited the Seven Species Farm in the Upper Galilee. We were privileged to pick small samples

of figs and grapes for personal consumption. While it was early in the season, each of us managed to find one or two already fully ripened figs, while all the other figs were at various stages of ripeness, some just barely grown. The grapes, although only some were ripe, were at a more uniform stage. CKS] Therefore, adds Aish Tamid, the one who watches over the fig tree benefits more greatly than the one who initially planted it.

Let us return to a discussion of leadership qualities. The Sifsei Chaim notes that one can lead as a ruler over others, or as a server of others. One who rules is serving his own ego, whether for honor or for wealth. He would not deal with the menial tasks of making sure the room had been cleaned and the seats are arranged. The one whose purpose is to lead others to their advantage rather than to his own, will search out the details, even the menial tasks, to make others comfortable. This was Yehoshua's perspective.

Serving Moshe this closely for forty years added an additional dimension to Yehoshua. Yehoshua was able to observe the consummate leader, Moshe. More than the verbal teaching of Moshe was the role model for being a servant of Hashem and the ideal leader of the people.

Man has tremendous potential, the spirit within him. This is what even a simple maidservant witnessed at the splitting of the Red Sea. She recognized Man's potential as one of the supports of God's "chariot." She could point to the image of God stamped upon Man and declare, "This is my God ve'anvehu/I will glorify Him. Ani vaHu/I and He together," in the characteristics that I resemble Him, are the support of the world, writes Rabbi Wolbe in Alei Shor. The simple maidservant saw the inherent greatness of Man, and we must strive to actualize that vision.

Who is the man who has the spirit within him, asks the Seforno? He is the chacham lev/wise of heart who has a burning desire in his heart for that wisdom. We must open up our hearts to receive Hashem's words and gifts, or they cannot enter.

A Jewish leader is one who has built a relationship between himself and Hashem, studying the Torah to create and enhance the relationship. But a leader must also have a special relationship with others. He is not someone who does chesed from time to time, but one whose entire essence is chesed. That's why the medrash of Yehoshua's service in the beit medrash is so important, teaches us Birkat Mordechai, Rabbi Ezrachi. Yehoshua himself could occupy only one small bench for himself. But his focus was not on himself, but on the needs of others. Every

day, without considering anything beneath his dignity, he prepared the benches and the rugs for everyone. Caring for others was his essence. Simil!!br0ken!!

Aishet Chayil is not a woman who does acts of chesed, but a woman whose entire life is chesed, a woman who acts as a role model for her children and raises them to bnos chayil. A leader must break down the barrier between himself and others so that he can see their needs and their potential.

What kind of shepherd does Moshe want? Daas Schrage notes that there are two kinds of shepherds. Most shepherds take care of their own sheep because they want to fatten them up and make a personal profit from their sale. It is the rare shepherd who is aware of the needs and comfort of the individual sheep and works for the sheep as well as for himself. [Remember the medrash of Moshe tracking the thirsty lost sheep and carrying it back to the flock. CKS] A leader needs to understand the needs of the individual sheep, not just the needs of the entire flock. When Moshe refers to Hashem as Elokhai haruchot, Moshe is referring to Hashem's ability to fathom the depths of each individual. It is this perception that Moshe seeks in the future leaders of Bnei Yisroel, writes Rabbi Reiss. See not only the immediate needs of each person, but also recognize his potential greatness, his unique quality in bringing down God's greatness to the world. Each person has his moment to shine, and every leader, not just the rabbi of the community, but also the parent and teacher, are charged with finding the special note each individual can contribute to the symphony playing out in the world of Hashem's creation.

A leader must have the ability to tolerate and appreciate the differences among us. He must understand that we all have the same goal of serving Hashem. Each of us has a unique path to that end, and we, not just our leaders, should celebrate the multiplicity of approaches rather than denigrate customs and pathways different from our own, teaches us Rabbi Wolbe. In this way, we can hope to hasten the arrival of Moshiach.

The Ohel Moshe, Rav Eliezer Meir Bloch, brings us the third element necessary for effective leadership. Citing the Saba of Novharodek, Rav Bloch tells us that a good leader must have control over the spirit within himself. His self discipline must serve as a model to others, for everyone notices every step, especially every misstep that a leader takes, adds Rabbi Gamliel Rabinowitz. Our leaders are not like Aristotle who, when confronted doing something

terribly wrong, replied that he was not the famous Aristotle in his private life.

The guardian of the fig tree must notice every subtle change, both in himself and in others so he can make a timely correction before it's too late. One must go out before the nation with love and constantly check on the "figs" he is responsible for.

People sense how others, especially their leaders, feel about them and what their leaders value. Yehoshua loved the Torah so much that he was the first one in the beit medrash each morning, preparing the space, and the last one out at night, not allowing himself to miss even one moment of Torah study. But this love extended to all the other people as well, as he treated each with love and respect. Hashem recognized Yehoshua's modesty in this regard, and He told Moshe to "take to himself" Yehoshua and appoint him as the leader to follow you. Take Yehoshua with gentle, convincing words. Tell him how fortunate he is to be chosen to lead Hashem's children. For

it is his love of Torah and his love of each of his fellow Jews that makes him Hashem's choice.

We have to work on growing the love for one another, of acting with kindness to each other, of smiling at each other (even through our Covid 19 masked faces), not just participating in occasional acts of chesed. Rabbi Friefeld urges us to look at people with a positive eye, for by doing so, we also build up the other's self esteem. Focus on his pure Jewish soul rather on our differences and possible lapses. Rebbetzin Heller distills our treatment of our fellow to three points: always treat him with respect, always speak well of him to others, and be concerned with his welfare.

As we approach the Three Weeks and the destruction of the Beit Hamikdosh, we must train ourselves, not just our leaders, in these values. If we can transform the baseless hatred that caused the destruction of our second Beit Hamikdosh to baseless love for our fellow Jew, we will hasten our final redemption with the arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, may it be speedily in our time.

## Next in Line

*Rabbi Dr. Dvir Ginsberg*

**T**he first intimations of the succession in Jewish leadership can be found in the Torah portion of Pinchas. The section begins with a description of the laws of inheritance, followed by God revealing to Moshe the locale of his eventual death. Moshe then addresses God (Bamidbar 27:15-17):

"(15) Moses spoke to the Lord, saying: (16) Let the Lord, the God of spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, (17) who will go forth before them and come before them, who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

We can first note the unusual situation of Moshe addressing God, rather than the "usual" God speaking to Moshe. The impetus certainly was intuitive. Moshe sensed his time as leader was coming to an end, thereby necessitating a discussion concerning succession. Rashi elaborates on the initiative:

"Let the Lord... appoint: When Moses heard that the Omnipresent told him to give Zelophehad's inheritance to his daughters, he said, "It is time to ask for my own needs—that my son should inherit my high position." The Holy One, blessed is He, said to him, That is not My intention, for Joshua deserves to be rewarded for his service, for he

"would not depart from the tent" (Exod. 33:11). This is what Solomon meant when he said, "He who guards the fig tree eats its fruit" (Prov. 27:18)."

Per Rashi, the instructions concerning inheritance encouraged Moshe to speak his mind to God. What stands out about this exchange is the assumption Moshe had that his son would be the one to take over. It is hard to imagine Moshe was unaware that his greatest student, Yehoshua, was not the ideal candidate. How could Moshe have assumed his son should be anointed in his place? In contemplating the next leader, it would be natural to assume the only factor would be the traits of the next person in line. Yet the transitional process is one that can be quite traumatic, and a lack of familiarity with the next leader could produce a significant degree of insecurity among the people. Having his son inherit the role would be perceived as an extension of Moshe's leadership, an important consideration due to the unique mission Moshe undertook. God responds to Moshe's concern with an assurance it would be Yehoshua.

There is one other point here. Rashi focuses on the incident with the daughters of Tzlofchad and the subsequent laws of inheritance as that which nudged Moshe to approach God. Yet there was an additional

recorded communication prior to Moshe's address to God. God commands Moshe to ascend Har Avarim, the eventual place of his death. He reminds Moshe that due to his sin, there would be no future heading of the Jewish nation. One might assume, then, that the impetus for Moshe's conversation with God concerning succession was due to his knowledge of his impending death. There is no better reason to discuss who will be taking over than the clear indication of Moshe's death. And yet, Rashi chooses to focus on the laws of inheritance as being the drive.

The Torah could be pointing out how sensitive Moshe was to the fragile period involving his replacement. Moshe was known as the humblest of all humans, but that did not mean he had no sense of how important he was to the Jewish people. Moshe did not want his death to be viewed as a loss in leadership, with someone else trying to replace him or step into his shoes. The people would always characterize the next leader as attempting to live up to previous expectations. Rather, the focus should be on the process being natural, where the first phase of God's plan was complete, and a new leader would step forward for the next phase. A "regular" succession, such as inheritance, would project a greater sense of independence in the future leader, a critical consideration for Moshe.

Moshe then describes the qualities of leadership he considered critical for the next in line. The final verse above can be divided into two. The first concerns the physical position of the leader (going out, coming in, etc.) while the second is a plea the Jewish people not be without a leader. The Sages, through the tools of Midrash, offer an elaboration of Moshe's considerations. The first part is recast in the framework of a military leader. Often, a king would send his army into battle, while he remained behind in his palace. The Jewish leader needed to lead his people to and from battle, thereby being a constant presence. Often a king would begin with a formidable army, but sacrifice his troops as needed for the sake of victory (referring to leading them out and bringing them back in). Moshe wanted to ensure the next leader would not see his army as expendable. The Sages reframe the second part as well, as it would seem self-evident the Jewish people would be lost without a leader. Moshe questions God's system of justice when taking the Jews out of Egypt. It would seem inconceivable for the plan to be that God would bring the

Jews out of Egypt, they sin, and then God destroys them. Rather, the Jews would sin, and He would forgive them. The role of producing repentance would be up to the leader; thus, Moshe was focusing on the trait of the leader being a liaison to God.

While being a good military leader seems to be an important trait, why does Moshe treat this as essential? The same should be asked of beseeching God on behalf of the Jewish people when they sin. While no doubt this is important, does it need to be the primary focus?

Moshe was certainly emphasizing the critical facets required of his successor. In the first part, Moshe was focusing on how the leader needs to view himself relative to the people. Being the leader was a unique role, but one should not conclude the person was intrinsically different than the rest of the nation. The Jewish leader is required to view himself as part of the nation. It may seem simple and obvious, and yet so many leaders have ignored this dictum. Leading troops to battle reflects this trait. It was not just important for the next leader to make sure he saw himself as one of the people; he also needed to view each member of the nation as an individual. Treating every life as sacred, in contrast to the general who throws his troops in to be butchered, was critical to the success of Moshe's successor. Every person had to sense the ability to forge a bond with the next leader.

Moshe's analysis was not complete, as his successor needed to be well-versed in the ideas of Divine justice and God's relationship with the Jewish nation. The next leader would carry the nation on his shoulders, and therefore needed to be worthy of being the ideal representative to God. To reach such a level was a supreme challenge, and Moshe understood only a unique individual could fit the role. Thus, Moshe is pointing to the dual role of the next leader. He would need to be both a part of the nation as well as their liaison with God.

Time was running out for Moshe, as made clear in this week's Torah portion. He understood all too well the precarious situation, knowing how important the process of succession was to the future of the Jewish people. Once again, we are privy to witness the greatness of Moshe, emblematic in his devotion to ensuring all was set for the next step.