

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE PINHAS

JULY 11-12, 2014

14 TAMUZ 5774

The fast of the Seventeenth of Tamuz will be on Tuesday, July 15.

DEDICATIONS: In Memory of Mrs. Lee Rishty, 'A"H - Leah bat Mazal Lee and her husband Mike, A'H were very much like an aunt and uncle to me. We extend our condolences to her children Robyn Beyda, Stanley Rishty, Marlene Mizrahi, and to her siblings Jack Jemal, A.J. Jemal, Celia Cohen, Isaac "Zuki" Jemal, and Marilyn Cohen

And in memory of Rabbi Jack Simcha Cohen, father of our dear friend Malki

Shaharit on Friday July 4th at 8AM
Candle lighting Friday evening 8:08p.m. Shir Hashirim 7:15 Mincha at 7:30 SHARP

SHABBAT Class at 8:30, Relevant Daily Halachot based upon the teaching of HaRav Ovadia Yosef Hashem Melech at 9:00 AM - Please say Shema at home by 8:24AM
We will endeavor to keep it to the 7 aliyot, somech, samuch and maftir each week.

Kiddush this Shabbat is sponsored by Jerrie Colish (Shlomo ben Yaakov Sholem)
Who will be called up to the Torah in honor of the 47th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.

Please sponsor a Kiddush or Seudah Shelishi or breakfast in memory or in honor of a loved one
Anyone wishing to do a Dairy Kiddush with hot food must speak with Rabbi Colish in advance.

Shabbat Morning Children's Program 10:30 - 11:30
Ages 0-5 - in the Playroom/ Girls Ages 6-12 - In the Upstairs Library / Treats, Games, Stories, Prayers and Fun!

Children's afternoon program with the Bach at the Bach from 5:30 to 6:30
We are doing this program with the Bach and the program will be held at
The Sephardic Congregation for the latter part of the summer.

Pirkei Avot with Rav Aharon at 6:45
Mincha at 7:30 – Followed by Seudah Shelishi at 8:00
Seudah Shelishi Class with R' David – Shaar HaGilgulim Dinah, Shechem, Cozbi, Zimri, Tunus Rufus and
Rabbi Akiba ... Birkat HaMazon at 8:50 Arbit at 8:55 - Shabbat Ends – 9:08

Sisterhood meeting this Sunday morning at 9 AM in the Synagogue

WEEKDAY TEFILLA SCHEDULE
Shaharit Sunday 8:00AM, Mon and Thurs at 6:55, Tues, Weds and Fri at 7:00

WEEKDAY TORAH CLASS SCHEDULE - Men and Women are Invited
Monday Night Class with Rabba Yenai 7:30

Daily class with Rabbi Colish - Weekday 6:30 AM (ADDITIONAL NEW TIME Sunday Mornings 7:30)
Kaballah as a Guide to Spiritual Growth based upon the teachings of Likutei Moharan

Thursday Nights 8:30-9:30 Virtual* Class facilitated by Rabbi Yosef Colish. Practical Laws of Shabbat for Sephardim

AMIT will present a Yom Iyun – Day of Learning Seminar – For Women by Women on Wednesday, July 30th from 9:30-1:30 at the Sephardic Temple - 775 Branch Boulevard, Cedarhurst, New York. The Seminar is titled "Reading Between the Lines: A Bibliodramatic Approach to Tisha B'Av"
The Keynote Speaker is Sally Grazi-Shatzkes ,
noted Drama and Creative Arts Therapist, Lecturer and Educator.
Lunch will follow. For more information please call the AMIT office at 212-477-4720

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Editors Notes

Pinchas - Thanks for the reminder Dad

"What is the Jew?...What kind of unique creature is this whom all the rulers of all the nations of the world have disgraced and crushed and expelled and destroyed; persecuted, burned and drowned, and who, despite their anger and their fury, continues to live and to flourish. What is this Jew whom they have never succeeded in enticing with all the enticements in the world, whose oppressors and persecutors only suggested that he deny (and disown) his religion and cast aside the faithfulness of his ancestors?! The Jew - is the symbol of eternity. ... He is the one who for so long had guarded the prophetic message and transmitted it to all mankind. A people such as this can never disappear. The Jew is eternal. He is the embodiment of eternity." Leo Tolstoy

Towards the end of this week's Perasha, when the nation is starting to prepare to enter Eretz Yisrael, Hashem commands Moshe: "Go up to this mountain of Abarim and see the land that I have given to Bnei Yisrael. You shall see it and you shall be gathered unto your people." Moshe, out of concern for Am Yisrael, asks Hashem to appoint an able successor to lead the Jewish people into Eretz Yisrael with the request: "May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall take them out and bring them in; and let the assembly of Hashem not be like sheep that have no shepherd." Hashem answers: "Take to yourself Yehoshua bin Nun, a man in whom there is spirit, and lean your hand upon him." Yehoshua, is the appropriate choice. Our sages liken the face of Moses to that of the sun and the face of Joshua to the moon. After the sun set upon Moses's death, it will be time for the moon to shine.

As the sun sets on one generation, a new generation takes the mantle. Each new generation looks at

themselves as the moon and merely a reflection of the light of those who preceded them. If we are the moon and they are the sun, then in trying times it is best to reflect on what those who came before us would have said and what they would have done. On days like this, I wish I could walk into my dad's office a few steps from mine and ask him what he thought. Having grown up during the depression, and having served the nation during World War Two and lived through much of the century, he pretty much saw or experience most everything we can imagine. I wish I could turn to him or to Rabbi Abittan and gain a better appreciation of the situation from his very unique perspective.

As I write this, my son Moses just landed in Israel. As he departed the airport, sirens rang out sending him back to the terminal. More than 100 Hamas rockets were fired or intercepted today and tonight over Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Rishon Lezion, Givatayim, Raanana, Caesaria and Yavne, as well as southern Israeli cities. The IDF called up another 40,000 reservists after Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu ordered Operation Solid Rock expanded against mounting Palestinian rocket assault. Moses was to spend the night in Tel Aviv and the next few days in Jerusalem. Instead he is traveling up to Sefat. B'H they are being very cautious and Hashem will watch over them.

We were so hopeful last week that Eyal, Naftali, and Gilad would be returned to their parents. Who imagined that they had been murdered even before anyone knew that they were kidnapped? We were so sure that it was impossible for Jews to act so despicably in kidnapping, murdering and burning the body of a 15 year old boy. We offered theories of it being an honor killing perpetrated by the boys own relatives. After all that's what Arabs do. Just look at Pakistan in the news this week where the father of a pregnant Muslim woman who was stoned to death and four other men were charged with killing her after she married against the family's wishes. This is what they do. This is not us. We were sure that the murder of this boy couldn't be us.

It looks like we were very wrong. So do I dare venture to speculate again?

Why the sudden escalation by Hamas? In our minds they need to be embarrassed that the top suspects in the kidnapping and murder of three boys are Hamas people. But they are not ashamed. It appears that the massacre makes them heroes in the eyes of Palestinians. How sick? But what else can be motivating them?

Hamas is broke. They have not paid their people for months. Syria stopped covering subsidies. Egypt has barred arms- transfers from Gaza as well as much of the trade through the tunnels. Qatar recently offered to cover Hamas' entire back payroll, but without Abbas signing off, that won't happen. Is Hamas channeling anger and frustration toward Israel or do they hope to collect funds from someone in exchange for a cease fire? Is this a Mafia like shakedown?

Do the Israeli government and IDF hope that the operation and staged offensive will in the long run destroy Hamas' logistical and strategic infrastructure? Are they willing to put their lives on hold for a month and stage a limited ground incursion and targeted assassinations so that can restore some semblance of quiet to the residents of the south? Let us pray that Hashem will continue to protect his people and lead our soldiers.

And we must show support to the people; The Nation of Israel whose inner strength has for years served to encourage and motivate us. At these times it's up to us to return the favor. And when they see us or our children still flying in to Ben Gurion, still touring the Old City, and still supporting them, it supports that inner Sabra strength.

The world hates them. The world hates us. We are treated with a double standard. The people of Israel need to know that we are with them and that we are one.

And how do they and we react to the world?

It gets tiring reading the lies. Look at the Arab and Muslim press throughout the world and it almost seems ridiculous the lies upon lies which are penned.

At the same time, we must admit that against our ability to even comprehend, a few bad apples do tend to reflect poorly on the whole bunch. The actions of those extremists who brutally took the life of a little boy, has shamed us to the core. We are in shock. Nothing justifies this hideous crime. The way that these killers have presented us negates everything that is Jewish. And it gives ammunition to our enemies. We've given them a truth to build their lies on.

I remember complaining to my father a few years back. Why can't we respond in kind? Why can't we just carpet bomb them? Why do we phone them to leave their homes moments before missiles are fired? They think nothing of directing rockets at schools, yet we do everything we can to prevent loss of "innocent" life. The same hospitals that save their lives become targets. Why can't we set aside our scruples for a moment?

And my dad answered. We can't be like them, because we are Jews.

He showed me the following written by author Eric Hoffer in May 1968, about a year after the Six Day War, in an article he wrote for the Los Angeles Times titled "Israel's Peculiar Position:"

"The Jews are a peculiar people: Things permitted to other nations are forbidden to the Jews. Other nations drive out thousands, even millions of people, and there is no refugee problem. Russia did it. Poland and Czechoslovakia did it. Turkey threw out a million Greeks and Algeria a million Frenchmen. Indonesia threw out heaven knows how many Chinese--and no one says a word about refugees. But in the case of Israel, the displaced Arabs have become eternal refugees. Everyone insists that Israel must take back every single Arab. Arnold Toynbee calls the displacement of the Arabs an atrocity greater than any committed by the Nazis. Other nations when victorious on the battlefield dictate peace terms. But when Israel is victorious it must sue for peace. Everyone expects the Jews to be the only real Christians in this world."

Thanks for the reminder Dad.

Shabbat Shalom
David Bibi

In Gaza, Israel faces new jihadist threats on top of a wounded Hamas
By Sean Savage/JNS.org—With reporting by Alina Dain Sharon

With the launch of the Israeli army's Operation Protective Edge in Gaza, much of the public's attention has appropriately focused on Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist group behind the June 12 abduction and murder of three Jewish teens and more recently the escalation of rocket fire on Israel. But the threats the Jewish state faces from Gaza may not be as clear-cut as they seem.

While Hamas is still extremely deadly, it has seen a weakening of its grip on the coastal enclave over the past few years, due to challenges from other Islamic terror groups and isolation from its former patrons in the Muslim world.

"Hamas has been on the brink of collapse," Jonathan Schanzer, vice president for research at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, told JNS.org. "It has become very isolated politically and economically."

"It is very difficult to figure out what Hamas's calculus is [in its current escalation with Israel]," Schanzer added. "Hamas may have nothing to lose, but on the other hand, they could have really overplayed their hand, which could lead to complete devastation of their assets."

Since taking control of Gaza in 2007, Hamas has seen a steady decline in its support from the Palestinian people and the rise of other Islamic terrorist groups there—including its main Palestinian rival, Islamic Jihad, as well as al-Qaeda-inspired Salafi global jihadist groups.

In February, leaders of the Salafist factions known as the Al-Quds Mujaadeen Shura Council in Gaza issued a statement pledging allegiance to Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS), which has made global headlines for its brutality and swift victories in the Syrian civil war and Iraq.

These Gaza-based Salafi jihadist groups have often been at odds with Hamas and have been targeted by Hamas's internal security forces. At the same time, these groups have also been responsible for rocket fire on Israel, both from Gaza and Salafi groups operating in the Sinai Peninsula. This includes rockets fired on the southern Israeli city of Eilat in January 2014.

Meanwhile, recent reports indicate that jihadists from ISIS—now also known simply as "Islamic State"—have attempted to infiltrate Gaza from Egypt, the Gatestone Institute reported.

According to the Egyptian newspaper Al-Masry Al-Youm, 15 ISIS terrorists were arrested by Egyptian security forces trying to enter Gaza from the Sinai. Eyad al-Bazam, a spokesman for Hamas, has flatly denied the reports, calling them "blatant lies" and part of an Egyptian smear campaign against Hamas.

Nevertheless, at a recent funeral for two terrorists killed in late June by the Israel Defense Forces, ISIS flags were seen wrapped over the dead body of one of the terrorists. ISIS flags were also seen during their funeral procession through Gaza.

Rafi Green, head of the Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor for the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), said that although ISIS "has no presence in Gaza as an organized group," there are "quite a few adherents of radical Salafism in the [Gaza] Strip, who constitute a base of support for ISIS."

"Radical Salafis in Gaza provide practical services to ISIS, especially moral and media support," Green told JNS.org. "Media activists in what's known as 'the Jerusalemite Support'... help produce and distribute pro-ISIS propaganda and media releases. They have a very active Twitter account that has ten of thousands of followers."

Like other jihadist groups in Gaza, Hamas sees the presence of ISIS as a direct threat to its rule. Ironically, despite Hamas's long and bloody history of suicide bombings and rocket attacks against Israeli civilians, the other jihadist groups in the area consider Hamas to be too moderate and believe that more needs to be done to destroy Israel.

Hamas also faces challenges from other rocket-launching Palestinian terror groups such as Islamic Jihad, which has received increased funding from Iran. Aside from that growing internal threat, Hamas is increasingly isolated within the Muslim world.

For many years, Hamas relied on Iran and its partners, Syria and Hezbollah, for military and financial support. All of that changed, however, following the group's December 2012 fallout with Iran and Syria over the Syrian civil war. Hamas then decided pursue support from Sunni powers such as Turkey, Qatar, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, all of which were on the rise at the time.

But since the July 2013 ouster of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas has found itself in the crosshairs of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Egypt's new president.

El-Sisi has severely cracked down on the Muslim Brotherhood and by extension Hamas, which had tied its fortunes closely with the Brotherhood—its parent group—when the Brotherhood briefly rose to power in Egypt in 2012.

Under El-Sisi, the Egyptian military has embarked on an aggressive campaign—with Israel's blessing—to eliminate terrorism in the Sinai Peninsula, including destroying Hamas's smuggling tunnels under the Egypt-Gaza border. Egypt has also kept the border crossing largely closed to regular civilian traffic.

Hamas has lost significant funds from the Egyptian closure of smuggling tunnels, which the Palestinian terror group operated for the dual purpose of revenue as well as the smuggling of rockets and other weapons.

"This time the Egyptians will not help [Hamas] out in this mess," Schanzer told JNS.org, referring to previous Egypt-brokered ceasefire deals between Israel and Hamas such as the one that ended the November 2012 Israel-Gaza conflict.

For Israel, the rise of global jihadist groups in Gaza and Hamas's isolation there creates a different set of problems.

"It is a question of whether it is in Israel's interest to weaken [Hamas] further or even destroy the terror organization," said Schanzer.

"It is clear that [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu did not want to escalate things with Hamas. With the fallout of the Arab Spring, the rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and the Iranian nuclear program, this was not the right time and Hamas did not pose a strategic threat right now," he said.

At the same time, if Hamas becomes severely weakened, Salafi jihadist groups or Islamic Jihad may use the opportunity to seize control of Gaza.

"[Israeli operations] might create a vacuum where it can give rise to other jihadi groups who would be worse than Hamas," Schanzer said.

At this point, Netanyahu and Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon have not indicated that completely destroying Hamas is an objective for Operation Protective Edge. Israel is instead focusing on the immediate threat of ending the rocket attacks, while also approving the call-up of as many as 40,000 reserves in case of a ground operation in Gaza.

Nevertheless, Ya'alon has said this will be a long-term operation, and that Hamas and other terror organizations "will pay a very steep price" for rocket fire on Israel.

"We are destroying arms, terrorist infrastructure, command and control systems, institutions, government buildings, terrorists' homes, and we are killing terrorists in the organizational high command," said the defense minister.

In the immediate future, Hamas remains the biggest game in town in Gaza for Israel, given the terror group's tens of thousands of fighters and a substantial arsenal of rockets capable of striking Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

"Whether this becomes an all-out war really depends on the amount of rockets fired out of Gaza," Schanzer said. "It is up to Hamas."

But in the long run, Hamas's goals are shared by like-minded terrorist organizations.

"As far as intentions go, Israel is obviously an enemy for all global jihad groups," MEMRI's Green told JNS.org. "They all claim to be fighting in order to liberate Islam's holy sites in Jerusalem and so on. But right now they're focused on winning the internal battles within the Arab/Muslim world."

Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading:

1st Aliya: As a reward for his act of zealousness, Pinchas is appointed as a Kohain. Although a grandson to Aharon, he was not included in the original selection of Kohanim. No other person would ever be so honored

2nd Aliya: Moshe is told to do battle against the Midianites in retaliation for the incident at Baal Peor. Moshe counts the Bnai Yisroel in preparation for entering Eretz Yisroel. The total number of men over 20 years old, not including the Leviyim, is 601,730; compared to 40 years earlier when it was 603,550. If you include all men, women and children, the total is approx. three million

3rd Aliya: Moshe divides Israel through a lottery that miraculously matched each tribe to its proper portion. The Leviyim are counted.

4th Aliya: Motivated by the "shayla - question" of Tzelafchad's daughters regarding their father who died without any sons, the laws of inheritance are discussed. Moshe is told to prepare for his death, and Yehoshua is chosen as his successor.

5th, 6th & 7th Aliyot: The remainder of the Parsha details the various public sacrifices offered throughout the year: daily, Shabbos, Musaf, Rosh Chodesh, and every Yom Tov.

EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

"May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly." (Bemidbar 27:16)

Moshe Rabenu's first concern upon hearing that he would not enter the Land was that someone should take his place. This shows his extreme selflessness (see Rashi on pasuk 15). Let's see a recent example of the changing of the guard in the Torah world.

In the year 1977, after the passing of Rabbi Ezra Attieh zt"l, a meeting was held with the Rabbis of Porat Yosef Yeshivah to decide who would be the new Rosh Yeshivah. The Rabbis decided to appoint Rabbi Yehudah Tzadka zt"l as the new Rosh Yeshivah. However, he humbly refused the offer and said his beloved colleague Rabbi Bension Abba Shaul zt"l is more worthy of the position.

Rabbi Abba Shaul, however, strongly refused to accept. The two Rabbis argued with each other that the other one is more worthy and suited for the position. Finally, Rabbi Tzadka stood up and said that a Rosh Yeshivah also must be a posek (one who renders halachic decisions). Therefore it is fitting that Rabbi Abba Shaul, who is a renowned posek, should be the Rosh Yeshivah, not !!

Rabbi Abba Shaul countered that "if you are right that I am a posek, I hereby rule right now that the honorable Rabbi Tzadka be the new Rosh Yeshivah!"

Three weeks went by and no Rosh Yeshivah was appointed. Finally, Rabbi Tzadka yielded to the extreme urging of Rabbi Abba Shaul to be the new Rosh Yeshivah, but only on condition that Rabbi Abba Shaul will decide with him on all important questions related to the daily running of the Yeshivah. And so it was from then on, two great ones stood up and guided the Yeshivah for decades with dedication and love. Their fiery love still burns today in the heart of the Yeshivah. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

"May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint..." (Bemidbar 27:16)

When Moshe asked Hashem to appoint the next leader, he described Hashem as G-d of all spirits of men. Rashi explains that Moshe was saying, just as mankind is made up of all kinds of people, each with their own mind and personality, You Hashem should find a leader who can relate to each one on his own level. This lesson is not only regarding leadership. We all know that no two people are exactly alike. What we don't realize is that since there are so many different kinds of people, we must have an enormous amount of tolerance and patience when dealing with others. This is where we tend to go wrong and what causes relationships to be strained. We expect others to know how we are feeling and what we need or want, and then we get disappointed when they don't come through. Very often, two people are in the same situation and one thinks it's a great place to be and the other is miserable. When we realize how we are all different from each other, we will be patient and tolerate each other's peculiarities. This

will bring us peace and unity. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

LABELS

The educated American consumer has become reliant upon labels.

When shopping for food, the buyer checks ingredient labels for caloric content, nutritional information, and the presence of potentially dangerous ingredients such as foods to which the consumer is allergic, or even chemicals or dyes which the buyer deems undesirable. When purchasing medicine, the consumer wants to be sure that the item being prescribed or bought over the counter will address the condition for which it is being purchased; that the medicine does not interact negatively with anything else the person is ingesting; and that there is no allergy alert.

Clothes-shopping at the mall is another exercise in label checking. People tend to search for the labels of manufacturers or designers they recognize, labels which, in the past, assured the desired quality, fit, value, and/or status. The care labels sewn into garments advise how to clean them properly in order to ensure satisfactory long-term wear.

Then there are warning labels. Cigarettes and alcoholic beverages carry labels cautioning consumers about their harmful effects. Electronic devices come with labels warning customers of the dangers of product misuse.

Labels are mini-directories of information that helps us maximize our sage use of consumer products. However, when applied to human beings, labels can cause great damage.

When we negatively label people, we harm their potential for positive action. If a parent or teacher tells a child, "You are bad," the child becomes shackled to a pattern that is, in fact, "bad." The label reminds the child of what he or she did. It is as if the parent or teacher is constantly saying, "This is what you were, this is what you are, and this is what you always will be." The same is true when the victim of harsh labeling is an employee or a friend.

Labeling a person negates the fact that there is always potential for change. We cannot assume future behavior based on past actions with any degree of certainty; everyone deserves to start the day with a clean slate.

When you are unhappy with someone's behavior, criticize the activity in a constructive manner. Don't label the person for life with indelible ink. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Rabbi Wein WHO WILL GO FOR US?

In the great vision that the prophet Isaiah witnessed in Heaven at the onset of his immortal prophetic career, he heard a voice that asked: "Who shall I send and who will go for us?" That verse in Isaiah has always been a marker for me as to how to judge Jewish leaders and other people of note. There are moments in life and in history when that question reverberates throughout the Jewish world.

And history and destiny and even, I daresay, Heaven itself judges and will judge every generation of Jews according to the response that they gave to this question. The Jewish world is coming off of a week of tears, heartbreak, angst, enemy rockets, Arab riots and great uncertainty. We need leaders, both religious and temporal, that will go for us.

That will comfort, inspire, act and give us strength and reason to hope and continue, to build and believe. These types of people are rare, scattered throughout Jewish history, often ignored and reviled by their contemporaries and rejected because of current political correctness.

The prophet Isaiah does not receive a warm welcome for his words and visions from the people of Israel. Nevertheless, it is those words that have guided and protected us throughout the ages, all because he was willing to go for us, for all of us.

He initially said that he lived amongst the people that had impure lips and speech. Heaven immediately punished him for that statement. Someone who goes for us is not allowed to complain about us to our Father in Heaven. Heaven searches for defenders of Israel and shuns those who are its accusers, even if those accusations may seemingly be correct and on point. Going for us requires commitment, wisdom, empathy and compassion. It should never be cloaked with moral relativism or sham piety, or with a political and ideological agenda.

Last Saturday a few hundred Jews conducted a rally in Haifa (naturally not in Sderot) demanding that Israel abandon the seven hundred thousand Jews living in Judea, Samaria and the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem and immediately grant the Fatah-Hamas rulers of the Palestinians a state encompassing the 1948 armistice borders.

This took place while Israeli Arabs rioted throughout the country causing great material damage and physical wounds to the police who were trying to keep the peace. These Jews – the hard Left –

certainly are not interested in going for us. They are willing to sacrifice countless lives in their attempt to undo the past century of Jewish effort - and to do so on the altar of illusory peace and a very distorted sense of justice and relative morality.

Their ideological fervor in following the false gods of suicidal pacifism and moral relativism blinds them to the realities of the conflicts that rock our section of the world. Their naïveté is ludicrous and almost comical and yet it is so dangerous for our present and future.

Haaretz planned a "peace" conference gathering for this coming week. Representatives of the Palestinian government were invited and expected to use it as a propaganda coup for their cause. However, the violence and hatred of the Palestinian street, encouraged and educated by this very same leadership, has caused them to withdraw from attending the conference.

So once again, we will have no real partner while arguing amongst ourselves about the fantasies of Oslo, Geneva, Camp David, etc. We should instead convene a conference to rally those many amongst us who are yet willing to go for us.

A leading American Chasidic rebbe made a statement this past week about the placing of blame for the murders of the three young yeshiva students. His remarks were intemperate, foolish and completely lacking in fact and without any sense of Jewish empathy and compassion. Again, ideology and extremism – two of the great dangers lurking in our religious society – drove these public utterances. It is clear that he also does not go for us.

I have grandsons who are students in a major yeshiva here in Jerusalem. They told me that none of their teachers spoke to them about the tragedies and troubles that we are currently experiencing. Apparently they are somehow unable to join themselves in the situations and difficulties that the Jewish people are facing daily here in Israel and throughout the world generally. I don't feel that they - these teachers and scholars - are going for us either.

Where is the voice of necessary comfort, of commitment, of perspective and Torah wisdom? Our mother Rachel wept for us for thousands of years and her tears have seen us through the long night of exile. She has always been going for us. All of us should emulate her and feel part of the great Jewish people and the events that we encounter and surround us, good and better. We should all be

willing to listen to that echo from Heaven and continue to go for us.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks Lessons of a Leader

Pinhas contains a mini-essay on leadership, as Moses confronts his own mortality and asks God to appoint a successor. The great leaders care about succession. In Chayei Sarah we see Abraham instruct his servant to find a wife for Isaac so that the family of the covenant will continue. David chooses Solomon. Elijah, at God's bidding, appoints Elisha to carry on his work.

In the case of Moses, the sages sensed a certain sadness at his realisation that he would not be succeeded by either of his sons, Gershom or Eliezer.[1] Such is the case with keter Torah, the invisible crown of Torah worn by the prophets and the sages. Unlike the crowns of priesthood and kingship, it does not pass dynastically from father to son. Charisma rarely does. What is instructive, though, is the language Moses uses in framing his request:

"May the Lord, God of the spirits of all flesh, choose a man over the congregation who will go out before them and come in 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." (Num. 27: 16)

There are three basic leadership lessons to be learned from this choice of words.

The first, noted by Rashi, is implicit in the unusually long description of God as "the Lord, God of the spirits of all flesh." This means, he says, "Master of the universe, the character of each person is revealed to you, and no two are alike. Appoint over them a leader who will bear with each person according to his individual character." [2]

Maimonides in *The Guide for the Perplexed* says that this is a basic feature of the human condition. Homo sapiens is the most diverse of all life forms. Therefore co-operation is essential – because we are different, others are strong where we are weak and vice versa – but it is also difficult, because we respond to challenges in different ways. That is what makes leadership necessary, but also demanding:

This great variety and the necessity of social life are essential elements in man's nature. But the well-being of society demands that there should be a leader able to regulate the actions of man; he must

complete every shortcoming, remove every excess, and prescribe for the conduct of all, so that the natural variety should be counterbalanced by the uniformity of legislation, and the order of society be well established.[3]

Leaders respect differences but, like the conductor of an orchestra, integrate them, ensuring that the many different instruments play their part in harmony with the rest. True leaders do not seek to impose uniformity. They honour diversity.

The second hint is contained in the word *ish*, "a man" over the congregation, to which God responds, "Take for yourself Joshua, a man [*ish*] of spirit (v. 18). The word *ish* here indicates something other than gender. What this is, is to be found in the two places in the Torah where we found the phrase *ha-ish Moshe*, "the man Moses":

One is in Exodus:

The man Moses was highly respected [*gadol me'od*, literally "very great"] in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of Pharaoh's servants and the people. (Ex. 11: 3)

The second is in Numbers:

Now the man Moses was very humble [*anav me'od*], more so than anyone else on the face of the earth (Num. 12: 3)

Note the two characteristics, seemingly opposed – great and humble – both of which Moses had in high degree (*me'od*, "very"). This is the combination of attributes Rabbi Yohanan attributed to God himself: "Wherever you find God's greatness, there you find his humility." [4] Here is one of his prooftexts: "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger residing among you, giving them food and clothing" (Deut. 10: 17-18).

An *ish* in the context of leadership is not a male but rather, someone who is a *mensh*, a person whose greatness is lightly worn, who cares about the people others often ignore, "the fatherless, the widow and the stranger," who spends as much time with the people at the margins of society as with the elites, who is courteous to everyone equally and who receives respect because he or she gives respect.

The real puzzlement, however, lies in the third clause: "Choose a man over the congregation who

will go out before them and come in before them, who will lead them out and bring them in." This sounds like saying the same thing twice, which the Torah tends not to do. What does it mean?

The Torah is hinting here at one of the most challenging aspects of leadership, namely timing and pace. The first phrase is simple: "who will go out before them and come in before them." This means that a leader must lead from the front. He cannot be like the apocryphal remark of one British politician: "Of course I follow the party. After all, I am their leader."^[5]

It is the second phrase that is vital: "who will lead them out and bring them in." This means: a leader must lead from the front, but he or she must not be so far out in front that when they turn around, they find that no one is following. Pace is of the essence. Sometimes a leader can go too fast. That is when tragedies occur.

To take two very different examples: when Margaret Thatcher was prime minister she knew she was going to have to confront the miners' union in a long and bitter struggle. In 1981 they went on strike for a pay rise. Mrs Thatcher immediately made enquiries about the size of coal stocks. She wanted to know how long the country could survive without new supplies of coal. As soon as she discovered that stocks were low, she in effect conceded victory to the miners. She then, very quietly, arranged for coal to be stockpiled. The result was that when the miners went on strike again in 1983, she resisted their demands. There was a prolonged strike, and this time it was the miners who conceded defeat. A battle she could not win in 1981 she was able to win in 1983.

The very different example was that of Yitzhak Rabin. The peace process he engaged with the Palestinians between 1993 and 1995 in was deeply controversial, in Israel and outside. There was some support but also much opposition. The tension mounted in 1995. In September of that year I wrote an article in the press giving him my own personal support. At the same time, however, I wrote to him privately saying that I was deeply worried about internal opposition to the plan, and urged him to spend as much time negotiating with his fellow Israeli citizens – specifically the religious Zionists – as with the Palestinians. I did not receive a reply.

On Motsei Shabbat, 4 November 1995, the world heard the news that Prime Minister Rabin had been assassinated at a peace rally by a young religious Zionist. I attended the funeral in Jerusalem. Returning the next day, I went straight from the

airport to the Israeli ambassador to tell him about the funeral, which he had not been able to attend having had to stay in London to deal with the media.

As I entered his office, he handed me an envelope. "This has just arrived for you in the diplomatic bag." It was Yitzhak Rabin's reply to my letter – perhaps one of the last letters he wrote. It was a moving re-affirmation of his faith but by the time it was delivered he was no longer alive. He had pursued peace, as we are commanded to do, but he had gone too fast.

Moses knew this himself from the episode of the spies. As Maimonides says in *The Guide*,^[6] the task of fighting battles and conquering the land was just too much for a generation born into slavery. It could only be done by their children, born in freedom. Sometimes a journey that seems small on the map takes forty years.

Respect for diversity, care for the lowly and powerless as well as the powerful and great, and a willingness to go no faster than people can bear: these are three essential attributes of a leader, as Moses knew from experience, and as Joshua learned through long apprenticeship to the great man himself.

[1] That is the implication of the statement that "Moses long to die as did Aaron," *Sifrei*, Pinhas, 136, s.v. vayomer.

[2] Rashi to Num. 27: 16, based on Tanhuma, Pinhas, 11.

[3] Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, book 2 chapter 40.

[4] From the liturgy on Saturday night. The source is *Pesikta Zutreta*, Ekev.

[5] The phrase has been attributed to Disraeli and Baldwin.

[6] *The Guide for the Perplexed*, book 3, chapter 32.

Appreciating a New Hero Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb

Having taken decisive action to stop the deadly plague that was ravaging the nation, Pinchas is certainly deserving of honor and acclaim. In fact, Hashem is effusive in His praise and rewards him generously: Pinchas is described as the one who "heshiv es chamasi," turned God's wrath away from the Jewish people, "be'kano es kinasi," when he

avenged God's honor; and as a result, "hineni nosen lo es berisi shalom," Pinchas is rewarded with the "covenant of peace" and then, "ve'haysoh lo u-le'zaro acharav beris kehunas olam," he and his descendants are also given a "covenant of eternal priesthood" (Bamidbar 25:11-13).

And yet, the just reward that Pinchas receives raises the question why others were not similarly repaid for their efforts on behalf of the Jewish people. After all, Moshe saved the nation from destruction after the chet ha-egel, yet where is the mention of his reward? And why didn't Aharon receive great praise or a special covenant for stopping an earlier plague – in the aftermath of Korach's rebellion – which also threatened the people? Pinchas was unquestionably courageous and his actions were clearly heroic but he was not the first hero of the Jewish people; why, then, was he the only one who was so lavishly and publicly rewarded for his efforts?

Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin (Oznayim Le'Torah) explains that the special treatment that Pinchas received stemmed from the fact that before this incident he was a virtual unknown. While Pinchas is mentioned previously in the lineage of Levi (Shemos 6:25), there is no reference to anything that would distinguish him from anyone else in his family or the nation. In fact, when the nesi'im were chosen from each tribe it was not Pinchas but one of his cousins who was elevated. Moreover, according to some commentators Pinchas wasn't even anointed to serve along with the rest of his family as a practicing kohen (see Rashi, 25:13). In retrospect it is clear that until he took this dramatic action, Pinchas may have lived a virtuous life, but it was an anonymous one at that.

Consistent with this observation, R. Sorotzkin notes that there is a tradition that the first time Pinchas' name is mentioned in this week's parsha (25:11) it is written with a small yud. R. Sorotzkin suggests that perhaps this is meant to symbolize that in the "big picture" and compared to other, more illustrious, members of his family Pinchas was a "pashuter yid" – not bad, but nothing special.

In light of this background we can now understand the different reactions to the heroism of Moshe and Aharon, on the one hand, and Pinchas on the other. R. Sorotzkin explains that while it's true that Moshe and Aharon did great things, but "ro'ey Yisrael sha'ani," they were leaders and, "aleihem mutal," that's what leaders are supposed to do. It was their responsibility to do whatever was necessary to protect the Jewish people. Moshe and Aharon did what was expected of them as leaders and – given that expectation – there was no fanfare and they

received no public accolades for their actions.

But Pinchas wasn't a leader and this wasn't his responsibility. In the face of a terrible calamity he rose to the challenge – and out of obscurity – to save the Jewish people.

Without expectations he achieved greatness and for this he was justly praised and rewarded.

This story has inspired many people who, like Pinchas, have made enormous and lasting contributions to the Jewish people without any official position of leadership and expectation of accomplishment.

One amazing example is the story of Rabbi Dovid Dryan, a simple shochet and mohel who lived in Gateshead, England. Despite his lack of formal leadership in the community it was he who originally conceived of the idea of starting a kollel and it was he who envisioned the impact that such a project could have on this small and sleepy community. R. Dryan sent out over 20 letters to prominent rabbis in the U.K., sharing his vision and inviting them to join him. The idea of starting a kollel, however, was considered so farfetched in 1941 that most of the rabbis never even bothered replying and a few politely declined. Only one, Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, while not overly optimistic, decided to give it a try.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Not only did the kollel impact the community, but the leading rabbis that have emerged from the kollel's beis midrash have uplifting the level of Torah study and observance throughout England and the world. The kollel has achieved decades of accomplishment and all of it is the result of the vision and initiative of a simple – though clearly special – member of the community.

Formal titles and positions of leadership are not prerequisites for heroic action. This is the enduring legacy of Pinchas.

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

"And you will see it" (27:12)

Why was it necessary to see the land? Moshe surely believed Hashem's promises of the exceptional excellence of the land, and even without viewing the land he would be deeply grateful to Hashem. But here we learn we are all in this life for the purpose of

gaining a sensory Awareness of Hashem and His Wisdom and His Kindliness. Although all this would be fully revealed to Moshe in the Afterlife, it was of the most urgent necessity to gain this information in this life, where the Free-Will operates to bestow the true Perfection.

And this perfection does not consist merely of knowing Hashem's wisdom and kindness, but especially in seeing and experiencing His wisdom and His kindness. By utilizing our Free-Will existence here to gain the most concrete form of Awareness by means of our senses, we achieve the True Knowledge ('Daat') for which we were created.

"You will see it" while you are yet alive. "I have caused you to see with your eyes" (Devarim 34:4). "With Your eyes", while you are yet alive and are able to exercise your Free-Will to feel the emotion of gratitude for the gift of this beautiful land. Similarly, Moshe had requested "Cause me to see Your glory (Shemot 33:18), for he did not wish to wait until he entered the Afterlife where he could gaze at Hashem's Presence (Iyov 19:26, Berachot 17A). He desired to see as much as was possible with his eyes of flesh and his Free-Will in this life.

Similarly, Hashem "brought Abram to the outdoors" (Beresheet 15:5) to see how numerous are the stars, "and He said to him: So shall be your seed" (ibid.). Why was it necessary to show him the stars? Hashem could have spoken to Abraham in his tent that his seed would be too numerous to count. But here we see that Abraham was being given the opportunity to experience a sensory perception of the great number of his progeny in order for his physical faculties of sight and his emotion of gratitude to Hashem to be activated, in addition to the mere intellectual knowledge of Hashem's promise.

We learn that men are in this world in order that their nerves and brains and their mouths and ears should experience the sensory Awareness of Hashem and His wisdom and power and kindness. "The praise of Hashem my mouth shall speak, and all flesh shall bless His holy name forever" (Tehillim 145:21). "My heart And my flesh shall sing to the living G-d" (ibid. 84:3).

The True Knowledge is gained not from mere ideas, but from the manner in which the great truths become perceived by our physical faculties, which is the Awareness (Yirat Hashem) that Hashem created Man to attain.

Quoted from "Journey Into Greatness" by Rabbi Avigdor Miller ZT'L

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