

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

PINHAS / Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 1:1-2:3
JUNE 29, 2013 21 TAMUZ 5773

DEDICATIONS: For a refuah sheleimah - Yosef Ben Esther and Malka bat Mazal
And Rabbi Ovadia Yosef ben Gorgia
Happy Birthday Mariyah Bibi and Keren Shetrit

This week's Kiddush donated by Dr and Mrs Baruch Kahn in honor of Baruch's brother's yarzeit, Ziskind Alexander Zerach ben Scmueal Eliyahu Hacoheh. May his Neshama have an Aliyah



Candles: 8:11 PM - Afternoon and Evening service (Minha/Arbith): 7:00 PM

Morning Service (Shaharith): 9:00AM –Please say Shemah at home by 8:16 AM

The Kiddush this week Donated by the Lemberger family in memory of Uri's brother

11:00 - 12:00 Orah's will be here with our Shabbat Morning Kids Program upstairs in the Rabbi's study. Stories, Tefillah, Games, Snacks and more . . . And Leah Colish will be babysitting down in the playroom

6:30 - Shabbat Afternoon Oneg with Rabbi Yosef and Leah; Treats, Stories, Basketball, Hula-hoop, Parsha Quiz, Tefillot, Raffles and Fun! Supervised play during Seudat Shelishit.

5:30: Ladies Torah Class at the Lemberger's 1 East Olive.

**Pirkei Avot with Rav Aharon: 6:45 Minha: 7:25 PM –
Seudah Shelishi and a Class 8:00 – with David
Evening Service (Arbith): 9:00 PM - Shabbat Ends: 9:11 PM**

WEEKDAY TEFILLA SCHEDULE

Shaharit Sunday 8:00, Mon-Fri at 7:00 (6:55 Mondays and Thursdays)

WEEKDAY TORAH CLASS SCHEDULE

Daily 6:30 AM class – Honest Business Practices

Monday Night Class with Rabba Yanai – 7PM

**LADIES: Wednesday Night 8PM with Esther Wein at The Grill Home
Financial Peace University – Tuesday at 8PM**

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Editors Notes

We all get a chance at some point in our lives to step up to the plate with the bases loaded. Those who take the opportunity and give it their best shot whether they get a hit, a homerun or even strikeout can say that at least they tried. The saddest story told is about the person who is afraid to even pick up the bat and give it a try. Life is about giving it your best shot. Day in and day out, that's what's expected of us and that's why we're here.

This week we begin the portion by recalling the heroic deeds of Pinchas. In the closing verses of Balak we read of the trap set by Bilaam and Balak using the ladies of Moav to attract the Israelite men into illicit relations and idol worship of Baal Peor. When the leader of the tribe of Shimon takes Cozbi the princess into his tent in front of Moses and Aaron and challenges them, Pinchas steps up and takes action. He risks his life in entering the tent and forces his spear through the two and raises the spear with the engaged couple still on it for all the people to see. The commentaries count a number of miracles that took place for Pinchas.

The opening verses of this week tell us that, "Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon HaCohen, has turned my wrath away from the children of Yisrael, in that he was zealous for My sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Yisrael in my jealousy." Pinchas is rewarded for his



effort with miracles and with the priesthood, His one action was enough to save the nation who were dying from the plague. The lesson to us all is that one person can accomplish so much with the help of Heaven if he is willing to try.

This Shabbat I was honored to attend the weekend Semicha celebration of Yeshivat Pirchei Shoshanim. Dozens of students received Semicha. The students included doctors, lawyers, businessmen, and the ages ranged from people in their twenties to those in their eighties. For me though the highlight was in speaking with the various military chaplains from the US armed forces who have received semicha through Pirchei Shoshanim and are currently serving our country throughout the world and in introducing the Chaplains to the hundreds of others in attendance for a special Seudah Shelishi.

I never wanted to be a rabbi. There is more than enough responsibility in simply being a Jew. And no matter how we dress or what we wear, people know we are Jewish. Pesach Krohn tells of a chemist who worked for a large firm that was taken over by Bayer. All the American employees were flown to Germany for a conference. At the opening dinner, this man was seated with some coworkers as a trio of musicians walked through the crowd playing different classical pieces. When he passed his table they began playing Hava Nagila. He was mortified. How did they know?

And as Jews our actions typically lead to judgment not only of each of us as individuals, but of the entire Jewish nation. Someone sees a Jew commit a crime and condemns all Jews. It wasn't just Madoff, it was the Jews. On the other hand when someone sees a Jew do a kind deed, it reflects on all the Children of Israel. This is the concept of Kiddush Hashem, sanctifying G-d's name through our deeds or Chilul Hashem, profaning G-d's names through our misdeeds. The rabbis teach us that any action by a Jew that brings honor, respect, and glory to G-d is considered to be sanctification of his name, whereas any behavior or action that disgraces, harms or shames G-d's name and his Torah is regarded as a chillul Hashem. There is no greater honor than for one who sanctifies G-d's name, while there is no greater sin than the sin of one who profanes G-d's name.

The level of responsibility rises tenfold when one takes on the title of Rabbi. With this in mind, I was reluctant for years to accept either title or certificate. I often worry I'll mess up as a regular guy catching myself on the road or with people. Why take on the

added responsibility? And I believe that's why I am still much happier when people call me David rather than Rabbi.

When a well-known rabbi I know did something that for most of us would be considered nothing, he was attacked viciously. When he complained, I suggested that in his position, he is like the guy with the white silk scarf. If someone has a dark wool scarf and it gets stained, nobody notices but even a small stain on white silk, jumps at you.

And tenfold over the rabbi, is the rabbi who becomes a chaplain in the US military. Every action is scrutinized. Everything he does, every single day has the potential to be a Kiddush Hashem or can blow up as a ch'lul Hashem. He is an Orthodox Jew who is known wherever he goes as "the rabbi", handling things that are even beyond our imagination.

We heard from the Chaplain who was responsible for all troops in Afghanistan and Iraq during 2010-11 and from his successor for 2011-2012. I asked how one deals with the wounded and with those suffering battle shock. I was told that as in all tragedies one needs to remember that when faced with these situations, soldiers as everyone else are not looking for intellectual responses. Everything is emotional. And only when your empathy is real and coming from the right place can one help. These officers had so much to give and so much to teach.

We heard stories of hasgachat perati – special Divine providence. One rabbi was doing his best to avoid travel by plane on Shabbat and in doing so found himself in a precarious situation with his superiors when his later flights were cancelled. Out of the blue a C130 transport plane shows up empty and is being sent that way to Afghanistan. The arrival and departure of an empty plane was an obvious mistake, but one which allows him an opportunity to hitch a ride with the captain's permission. And when he gets aboard, alone with his body guard, in the belly of the giant transport plane, he is summoned to the cockpit. There he sees someone with a kippah who turns around and smiles offering him a bag of rugelach that his wife just made. The captain is a friend who when questioned on why he showed up with an empty plane just to move it again empty is as puzzled as anyone else. First he thought it was a mess up in orders, but when he saw the rabbi and was told he needed a ride, he realized the request may have come from some Higher Command.

We also heard about the kids, some from religious homes who might mess up, or get in a fight and run away signing up to join the army. They suddenly find

themselves thousands of miles away in some other world. The chaplain becomes mother, father and friend.

When I returned Sunday and told my dad some of these stories, he told me that to truly appreciate the role of the chaplain I needed to speak with the soldiers. These guys were being humble in all that they told us. My dad told me how his own experience in the army was dramatically altered by his chaplain/rabbi – a two star general – during World War 2 who adopted him and looked out for him every step of the way.

I asked why these guys became chaplains. Couldn't they think of something easier? They felt it was a calling. They felt it was a way to step into a place that few were willing to step into. They quoted, Ethics of the Fathers/Pirkei Avot, "In a place without a person (willing to step up), strive to be a person (and to step up)". They were willing to step up to the plate. They were willing to give it their best shot and take a swing. And the good will that is born from their efforts bears so much fruit. They all felt that Hashem was with them and if they made the effort, Hashem would see it through.

Few of us take on the role of rabbi and only a fraction of rabbis would consider a role in the military. (If you're interested in taking the next step towards studying for semicha or to the military chaplaincy through Yeshivat Pirchei Shoshanim – let me know and I'll connect you.) But we all have opportunities every day. So many organizations need us, from the schools to the Synagogues, from the charity organizations to volunteer programs. We can mind our own business and never step up to bat, or we can set aside our fears and give it a shot.

Pinchas took a shot. He saved the people and changed his world and the future. The chaplains I met took a shot and are making the world a better place. Won't you take the opportunity to pick up the bat and step up to the plate? No matter how it turns out, you'll know you tried. And that's all G-d asks of us. And he promises that if we make the effort, Heaven will help.

"In a place without a person (willing to step up), strive to be a person (and to step up)".

Shabbat Shalom

David Bibi

Women's Prayer Protests at Western Wall Are Just Childish Provocation

Hillel Halkin is an author and translator who has written widely on Israeli politics and culture and was the Forward's Israel correspondent from 1993 to 1996.

I am, in my religious behavior, somewhere between what Israelis would call a hiloni or "secular" Jew and a masorti or "traditional" one. My wife and I light candles on Shabbat, we celebrate the Jewish holidays with our children and grandchildren, and now and then, for one reason or another, I find myself in a synagogue. (Preferably, an Orthodox one. It's the only kind I know how to pray in.) On the whole, though, the religious customs and rituals that I don't observe vastly outnumber those that I do. And of course, I don't bother going around with my head covered, as observant Jews do, unless it's raining. Why am I telling you this? Because in certain places — on a rare visit to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, for example — I'll put on a kippah even though I resent having to do it. As a Jew and an Israeli, I feel that the Wall is as much mine as anyone else's; being forced to place a round piece of fabric on my head, or the ridiculous cardboard substitute that's handed to me if I've forgotten to bring one, irritates me.

Why do I have to meet religious standards that aren't mine for the right to stand in a public place that resonates with my people's history and that I respond to with genuine emotion?

Why am I telling you this? Because if someone were, improbably, to come to me and say, "Listen, next week there's going to be a demonstration of bare-headed Jewish men at the Wall; we're going to pray and sing and keep coming back every month until our rights are recognized — and we'd like you to join us," I'd politely tell him to get lost.

First, though, I might say: "What kind of stupidity is that? I don't like having to wear a kippah at the Wall any more than you do. But we have the whole world to go around bareheaded in — why insist on doing it in the one place where it's going to offend the sensibilities of hundreds or thousands of people and perhaps even cause a riot? If you need to go to the Wall, just cover your head and don't indulge in childish provocations."

The Women of the Wall, as they're called, are childish provocateurs. They have all of Israel in which to pray with tefillin and tallitot. Doing it demonstratively at a site that is and always has been heavily frequented by observant Jews who find the spectacle of women in traditionally male ritual garb

repugnant has nothing to do with religious freedom. It has nothing to do with any sane kind of feminism. It has nothing to do with rational political protest. It has to do only with the narcissism of thinking that one's rights matter more than anyone else's feelings or the public interest.

This is a narcissism that's typical of our me-first age. An Orthodox Jew is hurt by how I behave in his presence? That's his problem. (If he were black, gay or transsexual, of course, it would be very much my problem — but that's another story.) Large numbers of Jews coming to pray at the Wall have their experience spoiled by me? That's their problem. I'm besmirching an Israeli government that's simply trying to keep the peace by portraying it throughout the world as reactionary and misogynist? That's its problem. I have my rights! And indeed, the Women of the Wall do have their rights, because Israel's Supreme Court has ruled that there's no legal hindrance to their singing and dancing at the Wall in tallitot and tefillin all they want. In democratic countries, we all have our rights. I have the right to stand with a group of evangelicals outside a Catholic Church during Sunday mass and sing Baptist hymns. I have the right to make insulting remarks to a woman walking in my ultra-Orthodox neighborhood with bare arms. I have the right to publish a dumb cartoon making fun of the Prophet Muhammad in a country with millions of Muslims. These rights are important. The police and courts should protect them. But does that mean I have to flaunt every one of them? The Women of the Wall believe that the cause of Judaism can be advanced by abolishing all traditional Jewish gender distinctions. Many Jews agree with them. Many (of whom I happen to be one) do not. The argument is a legitimate one, but the Western Wall should not be its venue. It isn't, despite what many American Jews seem to think, Selma or Montgomery. No woman who tries to turn it into that can really care about it as much as she pretends to.

FBI bus ads featuring photos of wanted terrorists screeches to a halt

By Paige Cornwell

Charges of stereotyping behind move
JewishWorldReview.com |

BEATTLE — (MCT) After a wave of criticism from politicians, advocacy groups and the public, 46 bus ads featuring photos of wanted terrorists will be taken down within the next few weeks, officials said Tuesday. The "Faces of Global Terrorism" ad was criticized for promoting stereotypes of Muslims and painting a broad brush against one group.

The ad is part of a campaign launched earlier this month by the Puget Sound Joint Terrorism Task Force for the U.S. Department of State's Rewards for Justice program. It features 16 photos of wanted terrorists sandwiched between the taglines "Faces of Global Terrorism" and "Stop a Terrorist. Save Lives. Up to \$25 Million Reward."

Titan, the company that handles King County Metro bus advertising, received a request Tuesday afternoon from the task force that the ads be taken down, according to King County Metro spokesman Jeff Switzer. Two different ads without photos will remain on billboards, light rail and at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

The decision to remove the bus ads was "a result of our continued engagement with the community and



the feedback we are getting," FBI Special Agent Fred Gutt said. U.S. Rep. Jim McDermott wrote a letter last week to FBI Director Robert Mueller expressing concern over the ads, saying the ad would "only serve to exacerbate the disturbing trend of hate crimes against Middle Eastern, South Asian and Muslim-Americans."

"When you start saying that this is the face of terrorism, you are really stigmatizing a whole group of people," McDermott, D-Wash., said Tuesday.

King County Metro received a half-dozen complaints through the customer information line, Switzer said.

Lynnwood resident Jeff Siddiqui, the founder of American Muslims of Puget Sound, said he received phone calls from other Muslims in Seattle who said they were concerned for their safety. He said the ad would be similarly objectionable if the government were to post photos of men from another ethnic

group on billboards with the tagline "the face of murders in the United States."

"It is affecting all kinds of people who have no experience with Muslims, who look at it and say, 'Oh, Muslims are the face of global terrorism,'" Siddiqui said.

The 16 men in the ad are affiliated with extremist groups around the world. Seven are from African countries, four are from the Philippines, one each is from Malaysia and Chechnya, and three were born in the United States.

When a bus is whizzing by at 35 mph, McDermott said, it's difficult to look closely at each photo and see the differences.

"The impression you get is that terrorism is caused by brown-skinned men with beards, and occasionally they wear a turban — which isn't true," McDermott said.

Gutt said the State Department solicited input from community members before the ads were placed and has continued that relationship.

Department staff members attended a meeting on Monday night with several community and civil-rights organizations, and staff members were open to establishing a campaign that combats terrorism while being respectful to minority communities, according to McDermott's office.

"I am glad, because now we can start again, we can rebuild a relationship," Siddiqui said. "Please GOD, let it be a relationship of open communication and trust."

The ads will be taken down in the next seven to 10 days, Switzer said.

Seattle is the first city in the United States targeted for the campaign, according to Gutt. The city has a diverse population that travels and has connections internationally, which makes it an effective area for the pilot program, he said.

The Rewards for Justice Program was created in 1984 and reviews tips for credible information that leads to the arrest or conviction of terrorism suspects or prevents terrorist acts from occurring. The program has paid about \$125 million to more than 80 people and played a significant role in the 1995 arrest of Ramzi Yousef, who was convicted in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

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.

Jeremiah 1:1 - 2:3 - Tlas Diparanuta is the name given to the next three Haftoros. These are special selections from the Navi Yirmiyahu that were chosen because they prophesies the destruction of Yerushalayim and the 1st Beit Hamikdash.

In this Haftorah, Yirmiyahu HaNavi foretells of the Babylonian invasion. The condemnation of the Jews for abandoning G-d and Torah is somewhat softened by the concluding description of Hashem's love for His children. "I remember the devotedness of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." as if we are given permission to envision the tears of the Creator as He confronts His beloved's infidelity

EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

“You shall place some of your majesty upon him.” (Bemidbar 27:20)

Hashem tells Moshe Rabenu that Yehoshua will be the next leader of the Jewish nation and that he is to give Yehoshua some of his special honor.

The Talmud comments that Moshe was commanded to give some of his majesty but not all of his majesty. So Yehoshua was great, but not as great as Moshe.

The elders of that time commented that “the face of Moshe was like the face of the sun and the face of Yehoshua was like the face of the moon. Oh the disgrace of it, oh the shame of it.” The great Rabbi called the Chida asks, “What is this shame and disgrace of which the elders speak? What do they despise?”

According to the Midrash, Yehoshua merited the leadership of the nation because he served Moshe faithfully. He also performed such tasks as arranging the benches in the Bet Midrash and sweeping the floor. The elders had been ashamed to perform these mundane tasks, but now they realized that these very tasks had made Yehoshua worthy of the mantle of leadership, and they felt a sense of shame.

Rabbi David Goldwasser illustrates this with an amazing story said by the Sephardic sadik Baba Sali. Baba Sali once said that a certain soldier's life had been saved in the merit of his having cleaned up the Bet Midrash and straightened the chairs when the rest of the troops had finished praying.

What a great merit it would be for all of us if we would volunteer to keep our shuls in order after prayers. Let's grab this opportunity! Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

When Pinhas saw the Prince of the tribe of Shim'on doing a sinful act in public, he acted with zealousness and put the sinners to death. By acting with "jealousy" for the sake of Hashem, he stopped the plague from consuming the Jewish people, and was credited with saving the entire nation.

This act of zeal, although the appropriate response during this particular crisis, is not usually the way that Moshe and Aharon led the Jewish people during their years of leadership. We find Moshe almost always praying to Hashem, sometimes falling on his face and tearing his garments, and rarely getting angry at the people. However, there is always something that occurs during a crisis. Even crying out to Hashem and begging Him for His help is a response, in that we recognize the problem and realize there is nothing for us to do. What we don't find is that a problem arises and it's accepted as is, with no reaction at all. In our times, society is constantly putting pressure on our Torah way of life. When a situation becomes unacceptable and leads to a crisis, we must know not only to react, but how to react! Sometimes, what's needed is a soft word, sometimes a cry of anguish and maybe even an isolated act of zeal, but we can't just ignore or accept

problems, hoping they will go away. When we see someone stuck on the road, we can either help out ourselves, give him a lift somewhere, or call someone else to help him. However, if we just slow down, rubberneck and see the situation and then do nothing, not only didn't we help out with the problem, we created more traffic problems. Life is like traffic; let's respond rather than rubberneck! Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

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Pinhas' Delayed Reward
 Parashat Pinhas begins with G-d's announcement of the reward He granted to Pinhas, Aharon's grandson, for his heroic act of zealotry. As the Torah relates in the final verses of the previous Parasha, Parashat Balak, Pinhas brought a halt to the devastating plague that ravaged the nation and killed 24,000 people as a result of their immorality and worship of the Ba'al Pe'or idol. He ended the plague by killing two people – a member of Beneh Yisrael and a Midyanite woman – who committed a public act of immorality in front of the entire nation.

A number of commentators raised the question of why Pinhas' reward was "delayed" until the beginning of our Parasha. God's announcement of Pinhas' reward begins a new paragraph and a new Parasha, indicating that it was not immediate, that it was not automatic that Pinhas would be rewarded for his heroic act.

The explanation given is that not all acts of zealotry are necessarily valuable, or even legitimate. People act in a zealous, extreme manner for all kinds of reasons, such as immaturity, impulsivity, the thrill of controversy, self-promotion, or advancing some sort of personal agenda. And when acts of zealotry are driven by such motives, they are illegitimate and condemnable. G-d paused, so-to-speak, before announcing Pinhas' reward in order to dispel the possible misconception that such acts are inherently admirable and automatically bring reward. The pause points to the hesitation and ambivalence with which we must approach such acts, and the extremely delicate nature of zealous reaction to improper behavior. The validity of zealotry must be carefully weighed and considered on the basis of the person's motives and the circumstances surrounding the act in question. Was the individual sincerely driven by a desire to help the Jewish people, or was this just a spontaneous, immature outburst? Did he carefully consider alternatives, and take into account the

consequences of his action, or did he act on raw, mindless impulse?

Pinhas' reward was not immediate because these questions needed to be asked before the announcement was made. In the end, of course, G-d emphatically affirmed that Pinhas acted purely for the sake of Hashem and the Jewish people. But the hesitation teaches us to exercise extreme caution before resorting to drastic acts in the name of G-d.

Rabbi Wein
The Loyal Fan

One of my most beloved grandchildren (all of my grandchildren are most beloved but...) wrote to me last week and in the letter made a wonderful comparison between the frustrations of being a loyal baseball fan – almost a rabid supporter – of a bad and losing baseball team and reading and listening to the news reported from Israel about the quarrels, divisions and scandals that currently plague its national and religious society.

Listening to the radio broadcast of another bumbling and inept performance by that baseball team, my grandchild turns off the radio in wall-climbing frustration only to switch on the radio again some time later in the forlorn hope that an amazing turnaround has occurred and that the team is now winning. So too it is with news of the squabbles and embarrassments about the issues and events of Israeli political and religious life that are so widely covered in the media.

My grandchild is torn between ignoring the whole mess or reading and listening to all sides of the arguments and becoming emotionally involved in issues over which my grandchild has no influence or control. He, of course has no influence or control over the performance of the baseball team on the playing field either.

This fact also undoubtedly is guaranteed to raise the level of frustration and disappointment felt by the loyal fan condemned to suffer through a long and dismal baseball season. But being the ever loyal fan, he cannot resist being involved with the team even though it often brings with it heartbreak and disappointment.

My generation was raised on a diet of loyalty. The American public school that I attended taught us the motto "My country, right or wrong – my country!" I know that sounds so primitive to our sophisticated Wikileaks ears today but that made perfect sense to me in my formative years. My parents who were not

Zionists in the formal sense and could even be characterized, as being Charedi-light in today's world, would brook no negative statement from anyone visiting our home about the State of Israel.

My father taught me that the sin of the spies in the desert that led to the destruction of that entire generation – the generation that stood at Sinai and witnessed God's revelation and the granting of the Torah to the Jewish people! – was that they spoke out negatively against the Land of Israel and denigrated it publicly.

The State of Israel may not yet be perfect but we are nevertheless expected to be its loyal fans. And if it is going through a rough patch in its societal relationships and governmental and religious institutions, we are not allowed to arbitrarily turn off our radios and remain emotionally unattached to the real game that is being played out there.

My motto has always been that one should never confuse the behavior of individual Jews with Judaism itself nor the antics and statements of rabbis with the true religion. Loyal fans also require a degree of sophistication in discerning the baby from the bath water.

Long postponed solutions to problems in Israeli society have now become imperative necessities, since the problems were allowed to fester for decades without being properly addressed. The official Chief Rabbinate, politicized and ossified as it has become, faces public opinion extinction. The welfare state has run out of money and its annual governmental deficits are no longer sustainable.

And the intractable Arab-Jewish conflict still begs for some sort of live and let live solution. The demographic success and political clout of the Charedi sector of Israeli society has forced Charedi society itself and Israeli society generally to face the harsh realities of its poverty-stricken state and its attitudes towards the general society in which it finds itself enmeshed.

Problems of education and curriculum, job training and a computer-centered workforce can no longer be ignored. The true and loyal fan always says, "wait till next year." Well, for most of these problems touched upon above, next year has now arrived - and with a vengeance. Yet, in the long history of the Jewish people and in the much shorter history of the State of Israel, great problems such as these have somehow come right and solutions found.

But loyalty to the core principle of our right to live in the Land of Israel, to our Torah, our nationhood and our faith characterize our being loyal and true fans, long-suffering and sometimes as frustrating as that status may be. So let us not despair for we are truly rooting for the winning championship team.

**Sir Jonathan Sacks
Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations
of the Commonwealth
On Parents and Teachers**

Just beneath the surface of this week's parshah is an exceptionally poignant story. It occurs in the context of Moses' prayer that God appoint a successor as leader of the Jewish people.

One hint is given in the words of God to Moses: "After you have seen you also will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was." Rashi is intrigued by the apparently superfluous word "also", and makes the comment that "Moses desired to die as Aaron had died."

In what sense was Moses envious of his brother? Was it that he, like Aaron, wished to die painlessly? Surely not. Moses was not afraid of pain. Was it that he envied his brother's popularity? Of Aaron, it was said that when he died, he was mourned by "all the children of Israel", something the Torah does not say in the case of Moses. This too cannot be the answer. Moses knew that leadership does not mean popularity. He did not seek it. He could not have done what he had to do and achieve it.

The Ktav Sofer gives what is surely the correct interpretation: Aaron had the privilege of knowing that his children would follow in his footsteps. Elazar, his son, was appointed as high priest in his lifetime. Indeed to this day cohanim are direct descendants of Aaron. Accordingly to Ktav Sofer, Moses longed to see one of his sons, Gershom or Eliezer, take his place as leader of the people. It was not to be.

Rashi arrives at the same conclusion by noting a second clue. The passage in which Moses asks God to appoint a successor follows directly after the story of the daughters of Zelophehad, who asked that they be permitted to inherit the share in the land of Israel that would have gone to their father, had he not died. Rashi links the two episodes: "When Moses heard God tell him to give the inheritance of Zelophehad to his daughters, he said to himself, 'The time has come that I should make a request of my own – that my sons should inherit my position.' God replied to him, 'This is not what I have decided. Joshua deserves to receive reward for serving you and never leaving

your tent.' This is what Solomon meant when he said, 'He keeps the vineyard shall eat its fruit and he that waits on his master shall be honoured.'" Moses' prayer was not granted.

Thus, with their ears attuned to every nuance, the sages and Rashi reconstructed a narrative that lies just beneath the surface of the biblical text. What happened to Moses children? Was he, the great leader, inwardly disappointed that they did not inherit his role? What deeper message does the text communicate to us? Is there something of continuing relevance in Moses disappointment? Did God in any way provide him with consolation?

Moses and Aaron epitomise the two great roles in Jewish continuity – horim and morim – parents and teachers. A parent hands on the Jewish heritage to his or her children; a teacher does likewise to his or her disciples. Aaron was the archetypal parent; Moses the great example of a teacher (to this day we call him Moshe Rabbenu, 'Moses our teacher'). Aaron was succeeded by his son; Moses by his disciple Joshua.

The sages at various points emphasised that Torah leadership does not pass automatically across the generations. The Talmud (Nedarim 81a) states:

Be careful not to neglect the children of the poor, for from them Torah goes forth, as it is written, "the water shall flow out of his buckets", meaning "from the poor among them" goes forth Torah. And why is it not usual for scholars to give birth to children who are scholars? Rabbi Joseph said, that it might not be said that Torah is their legacy. Rabbi Shisha son of Rabbi Idi said, that they should not be arrogant towards the community. Mar Zutra said, because they act high-handedly towards the community.

Were Torah leadership to be dynastic, a matter of inheritance, Judaism would quickly become a society of privilege and hierarchy. To this, the sages were utterly opposed. Everyone has a share in Torah. It is the shared patrimony of every Jew. Nowhere is this more clearly stated than in the great words of Maimonides:

With three crowns was Israel crowned -- with the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of sovereignty. The crown of priesthood was bestowed on Aaron . . . The crown of sovereignty was given to David . . . The crown of Torah, however, is for all Israel, as it is said, "Moses commanded us the Torah, as an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." Whoever desires it can win it. Do not suppose that the other two crowns are greater than

the crown of Torah, for it is said, "By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me, princes rule." Hence we learn the crown of Torah is greater than the other two crowns.

This is one of the great egalitarian statements in Judaism. The crown of Torah is available to whoever seeks it. There have been societies which sought to create equality by evenly distributing power or wealth. None succeeded fully. The Jewish approach was different. A society of equal dignity is one in which knowledge – the most important kind of knowledge, namely Torah, knowledge of how to live – is available equally to all. From earliest times to today, the Jewish people has been a series of communities built around schools, sustained by communal funds so that none should be excluded.

The sages drew a strong connection between home and school, parent and teacher. Thus, for example, Maimonides rules:

A duty rests on every scholar in Israel to teach all disciples who seek instruction from him, even if they are not his children, as it is said, "And you shall teach them diligently to your children". According to traditional authority, the term "your children" includes disciples, for disciples are called children, as it is said, "And the sons of the prophets came forth" (II Kings 2:3).

In the same vein he writes elsewhere:

Just as a person is commanded to honour and revere his father, so he is under an obligation to honour and revere his teacher, even to a greater extent than his father, for his father gave him life in this world, while his teacher who instructs him in wisdom secures for him life in the world to come.

The connection runs in the opposite direction also. Consistently throughout the Mosaic books, the role of a parent is defined in terms of teaching and instruction. "You shall teach these things diligently to your children." "It shall come to pass that when your child asks you . . . thus shall you say to him." Education is a conversation across the generations, between parent and child. In the one verse in which the Bible explains why Abraham was chosen as the father was of a new faith it says, "For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just". Abraham was chosen to be both a parent and an educator.

Moses was therefore denied the chance to see his children inherit his role, so that his personal

disappointment would become a source of hope to future generations. Torah leadership is not the prerogative of an elite. It does not pass through dynastic succession. It is not confined to those descended from great scholars. It is open to each of us, if we will it and give it our best efforts of energy and time. But at the same time, Moses was given a great consolation. Just as, to this day, cohanim are the sons of Aaron, so are all who study Torah the disciples of Moses. To some are given the privilege of being a parent; to others, that of being a teacher. Both are ways in which something of us lives on into the future. Parent-as-teacher, teacher-as-parent: these are Judaism's greatest roles, one immortalised in Aaron, the other made eternal in Moses.

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

"And on the day of the Shabbat, two lambs..." (28:9)

What is the message that is proclaimed by the Shabbat offerings?

Three gigantic principles are being enunciated.

1) The Universe was created from Nothing. "By the Word of Hashem the heavens were made; and all their host by the breath of His mouth" (Tehillim 33:6). "For He spoke, and it became; He commanded, and it arose" (ibid. 33:9). Forever Hashem, does Your Word stand in the heavens" (ibid. 119:89). "You established the world and it stands" (ibid. 119:90). The word "Hashem means "Being" and also "Causing Being". He alone has intrinsic existence ("Being"), and all that exists has come into being and remains in being, because of His Will. Thus all of what we call Reality is solely His Will.

2) "The world is built with Kindliness" (ibid. 89:3). Every phenomenon: every object and every process are intended for kindly purpose. "For His kindliness is everlasting" (ibid. 118:1), not only in the sense that the processes of the world continue to function forever with the same purpose of benevolence for life in this world; but the phenomena of the world, if utilized properly by the holy nation, cause the eventual happiness of the Afterlife, which is forever.

3) "Between Me and the sons of Israel it is a sign forever, that in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth" (Shemot 31:7). The message of Shabbat proclaims that this superlative privilege of serving as agents in the promulgation of Hashem as the Creator: is given solely to the sons of Israel. No other nation (or creed) is permitted to assume the dignity of this function, and therefore cannot be justified in declaring a Shabbat, whether on the seventh day or any other day of the week. "The

Kingdom of Cohanim, and the holy people" (Shemot 19:6) are elected by Hashem for this function.

The Mussaf-offerings of Shabbat come to remind us of these three principles. Even today, when we are unable to bring these offerings, we are still expected to proclaim these outstanding lessons of the Shabbat.

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

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