

## Parshat Pinchas: Legendary Leadership

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Mrs. Shira Smiles  
Summary by Devora Kaye

Hashem informs Moshe Rabbenu that the time has come for him to leave this world and that he will not lead *Bnei Yisroel* into the Promised Land. Moshe's concern is for the people and he speaks to Hashem saying, '...God of the spirit of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly... and let [them] not be like sheep that have no shepherd.' Meirosh Tzurim points out that this is the only time Moshe speaks to Hashem, "Saying," implying that his request applied not only to his immediate successor, but to all leaders of *Bnei Yisroel*.

Hashem tells Moshe to appoint Yehoshua bin Nun, a man, "*asher ruach bo/in* whom there is spirit." Rashi explains that this means a person who understands each person intrinsically, in addition to leading the nation as a whole. The Midrash tells us how Yehoshua served Moshe faithfully for forty years making him a suitable leader of the nation. He would arise early every morning and arrange all the seats in the study hall so that the disciples could learn *Torah* with Moshe. With this he earned the reward for this service. Then the Midrash cites a verse from Mishlei: "He who guards the fig tree shall eat its fruit." Rabbi Druck asks, the one who guards the fig tree is praised, why not the one who originally planted the tree? Rabbi Y. Segal explains how this is an apt metaphor for a true *talmid chacham*. One cannot understand *Torah* by trying to harvest all its wisdom at once. Each time one studies a passage, new insights are revealed. This is similar to the fig tree. While the fruit on most fruit trees ripen fairly uniformly and can be harvested rather quickly, each fig on the fig tree ripens at its own individual pace. It takes great patience to pick each fruit only when it is ready. Therefore, adds *Aish Tamid*, the one who watches over the fig tree benefits more greatly than the one who initially planted it.

The Sifsei Chaim notes that one can lead as a ruler over others or as a server of others. One who rules to serve his own ego, will not deal with menial tasks. The one whose purpose is to lead others to their advantage will search out the details, even the menial tasks, to make others comfortable. This was Yehoshua's way. A Jewish leader is one who has built a relationship between himself and Hashem and whose entire essence is chesed. That's why the *Midrash* of Yehoshua's service in the *beit midrash* is so important, teaches us *Birkat Mordechai*. Yehoshua focus was on the needs of others.

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 the 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 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.

Daas Schrage notes that most shepherds take care of their own sheep because they want to make personal profit. It is the rare shepherd who is aware of the needs and comfort of the individual sheep. 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*, he 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 Hashem's greatness to the world. Each person has his moment to shine, and every leader, including parents and teachers, 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. Each of us has a unique path and we should celebrate the multiplicity of approaches rather than denigrate ways different from our own, teaches us Rabbi Wolbe. In this way, we can hope to hasten the arrival of *Moshiach*.

Citing the Saba of Novharodek, Rav E. M. 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 that a leader takes.

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 midrash* 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 people as well, as he treated everyone with love and respect. We have to work on focusing on the purity of every Jewish soul rather than our differences and possible lapses. If we can transform the baseless hatred that caused the destruction of our second *Beit Hamikdash* to baseless love for our fellow Jew, we can hasten the final redemption.

## Primary and Secondary Vessels

### Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson  
Summary by Devora Kaye

The Mishna says, raw food cannot be put into a *kli rishon* on *Shabbat*, but you can do *hadacha* (rinse it off). This means you can pour from the *kli rishon* onto the food. This Mishna looks to be a strong proof for the opinion of the Rashbam which holds that *irui kli rishon* (pouring from a *kli rishon*) has the status of a *kli sheini* which doesn't cook. We don't rule like the Rashbam but rather like the Baalei HaTosfot who hold that *irui kli rishon* does cook. How then can we understand this Mishna?

Tosfot offers two explanations. Putting food in a *kli sheini* is prohibited because of the *issur d'rabanun of mechzi kemaveshel* (it appears like cooking). There's no visible difference between a *kli rishon* off the fire and a *kli sheini*, and if one would be allowed to put food in a *kli sheini* one could come to put it in a *kli rishon*. When the Mishna says *hadacha* is permitted it refers to *hadacha* from a *kli sheini* not from a *kli rishon*. Tosfot explains that putting spices in a *kli sheini* is permitted as the agenda is only to add flavor and not to cook, which would not be considered *mechzi k'mevashel*.

Tosfot offers a second explanation. The Mishna wanted to teach us that *hadacha* from a *kli sheini* over *kalei habishul* (food that is easily cooked), is prohibited. The stringency of *mechzi k'maveshel* isn't mentioned in the *Shulchan Aruch* which follows the *Mishna* that a *kli sheini* isn't *mevashel*. However, both the *Mishna Berura* and the *Magen Avraham* brings this opinion of the *Tosfot* that putting food in a *kli sheini* appears like cooking. Therefore, according to this view, one should avoid adding lemon to hot tea in a *kli sheini*.

## Travelling Through Life Accompanied by Tehillim

### Part 9 #2

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn  
Summary by Devora Kaye

Rav Hirsh writes that the *Bet Hamikdash* served two purposes. Hashem wanted a dwelling place on earth where he could connect with the Jewish people. When a Jew sinned, he brought an offering in the *Bet Hamikdash* and Hashem cleansed him. Although we often fail, Hashem gives us a way to return and come close to Him again. He is involved in our lives moment by moment, enabling us to achieve a relationship with Him. The second aspect of the *Bet Hamikdash* was our yearning to be close to Him. During the building of the *Mishkan*, the Torah describes in great detail the Jewish people's desire to donate and be involved in its construction. The *Bet Hamikdash* was not just an abstract symbol, but a place that enabled us to create a bond with Hashem.

The *Bet Hamikdash* had two sections. The *kodesh* which contained the *menorah*, *shulchan*, and the *mizbe'ach haketoret*, the altar where the incense was offered each day. The *menorah* stands for wisdom of *Torah* – spirituality in this world. The *shulchan* stands for physicality, and the *mizbe'ach*, which gave off a pleasant fragrance, signified the pleasure Hashem derived from our service. What creates the pleasure is when we combine the *menorah* and *shulchan* and use it properly to

serve Hashem. When we unite our physical and spiritual aspects and dedicate it to Hashem, it creates closeness to Him. We have the *Torah* in the *aron* guiding us how to achieve this relationship and when we invest in it, we are like the *keruvim*, the angels atop the *aron*, through which Hashem spoke to the Jewish nation. We become so to speak the bearers of spirituality in this world.

The basis of this happened much before the time of King David and King Shlomo. The first stage began when Yaakov fell asleep on *Har Hamoriah*, the place where the future *Bet Hamikdash* would be built. He had a dream in which he saw a ladder reaching the heavens, while the presence of Hashem hovered above. The dream signified man's desire to climb the ladder of life by combining heaven and earth, uniting the physical and spiritual, and as a result meriting the presence of Hashem. The *Torah* tells us that Yaakov was overwhelmed by the dream. He made a promise that if Hashem would be with him and fulfill what He had said, he would build an altar in this place and bring offerings. Why did Yaakov put a condition for building an altar? The fact that Hashem wants our connection is an act of kindness beyond understanding. Who are we but flesh and blood to merit a relationship with

Him? Yaakov meant to indicate, if Hashem feels I'm worthy, then I don't have any greater desire but to build an altar for Him.

King David didn't have an easy life. He went through many difficult moments. He had enemies who chased after him; people thought he was not a legitimate Jew, definitely not a legitimate king; his son rebelled against him, and he faced death countless times. But looking back at his life he saw the hand of Hashem saving him throughout. Hashem wants our closeness and He's with us day by day, moment by moment, helping us get there. There were moments in King David's life where it seemed Hashem wasn't there. Later on, it became clear as King David himself said, "In the evening, there was weeping, but in the morning, there was salvation and joy." King David then developed a tremendous desire to reveal the presence of Hashem to all and this was accomplished best in the *Bet Hamikdash*, which is why he had such a deep yearning to build it. He ends the chapter with, "*L'man yizamerecha kavod...*—In order that my soul will sing to you..." *Kavod* is another name for the soul. The real value of the human being is his soul. King David wanted Hashem to be revealed so that everyone would see Him and sing to Him.