

Kol Mevasser

SHABBAT PINHAS

19 Tammuz 5769

July 11, 2009

Kahal Joseph Congregation • 10505 Santa Monica Boulevard • Los Angeles, CA 90025

310-474-0559 • phone 310.441.4059 fax • www.kahaljoseph.org

Who is Fit to Lead

Rabbi Yosef Benarroch, SEC Jeruuallem

I had the privilege to spend the last three weeks with some seventy college students from various communities in the United States and Canada. One of the lectures that I gave them was on the subject of leadership. I asked them to tell me what the qualities that make a good leader are. With seventy people answering you can well imagine that there were many responses. If I had to sum up the main points they were traits such as courage, vision, being organized, smart, articulate, influential, self confident, and well connected. While all of these are undeniable, I felt compelled to add to the list.

In fact this week's Parasha entitled "Pinhas" addresses that very question. It takes place near the end of Moses life. G-d speaks to him and says the following, "Ascend the Mountain of Avarim and gaze upon the land that I have given to the children of Israel. After you see it you will be gathered to your nation (i.e. you will die) as was gathered your brother Aaron" (Bamidbar 27:12-13). In these short verses we are told about the impending death of Moses.

Feeling that his death is near Moses must begin to think about a successor. He turns to G-d and says the following, "Let the G-d of all flesh and all spirits appoint a man to lead the congregation" (Bamidbar 27:16). As any good leader would, Moses begins to think of an heir. He realizes that with his death the Jewish nation will need a new leader. But then he adds the following, "A man who can go out before them and who can go in before them. A man who can bring them in and take them out, so that the congregation of G-d will not be like sheep without a Shepherd" (Bamidbar 27:17).

There are two interesting statements that Moses makes. In choosing a new leader he makes no mention of intelligence, organizational skills, being articulate or influential, and being well

PRAYER SCHEDULE

SHABBAT PINHAS

18 Tammuz / Friday, July 10th

Shaharith6:30 am
Minhah & Arvith7:00 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting.....7:48 pm

19 Tammuz / Saturday, July 11th

Shaharit8:30 am
Minhah & Arvith7:15 pm
Motzei Shabbat8:51 pm

20 Tammuz / Sunday, July 12th

Shaharith7:30 am

Weekdays

21-24 Tammuz/ July 13th to 16th

Shaharith6:30 am
Learn to Pray
Wednesday, July 15th.....7:30 pm

SHABBAT MATOT-MASEI

25 Tammuz / Friday, July 17th

Shaharith6:30 am
Minhah & Arvith7:00 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting.....7:46 pm

connected doesn't even come up. Moses makes two basic points. The first is that he must be like a shepherd, and the second is that he is going to be leading the congregation of G-d.

That Moses makes mention of the Jewish nation as the congregation of G-d makes very good sense. By referring to the nation in this way, and not simply as the "children of Israel" as is usually the case, Moses is saying that the new leader must be a man of the spirit connected to the Torah and to matters of spirituality. This is made clear later on when Joshua is appointed as Moses successor and we are told, "Appoint Joshua the son of Nun who is a man of spirit" (Bamidbar 27:18).

But why does Moses refer to a leader as a shepherd? Of all the symbolisms he could have used

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why does he settle for a shepherd? What quality does the shepherd possess that makes him the ideal Jewish leader?

When enumerating the qualities of a king, Maimonides in his code writes that he must possess the following qualities, "He (the King) must be compassionate and merciful both to the young and to the old. He must seek their good and be careful of the honor even of a small child...He must be as a shepherd to care for the nation of Jacob. And the qualities of the shepherd are alluded to in the verse as it says 'he shall feed his flocks as a shepherd, he shall gather the lamb with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young' (Isaiah 40:11)". (Maimonides Laws of Kings 2:6)

Here too Maimonides refers to the leader a shepherd. But Maimonides also elaborates. He describes the leader as one who is filled with compassion, one who takes care of the young and old alike, one who cares for everyone.

The greatness of a shepherd is that he is not self-centered. He cares for every member of his flock always trying to figure out what is best for each one. His greatest qualities are mercy, compassion, and selflessness. The needs of the people always come first. Without these qualities the leader may be the most gifted person in the world, but he will ultimately fail.

Moses took great care to himself live by these ideals, and he insured that his heir would possess the same qualities. One of my favorite Midrashim describes Moses as just that, the great leader who was a dedicated shepherd. In Shemot Raba we are told the following story, "And Moses was a shepherd, this is to show that G-d tested Moses through sheep. Our Rabbis related that once Moses was tending to the sheep of Jethro when suddenly one small lamb went astray. He (Moses) ran after him and found him next to a rock. There the small lamb found a pond of water and it began to drink. When Moses came next to him he said 'I did not know that you escaped because you were thirsty'. He picked the lamb up and placed him on his shoulders and led him back. Said the Holy One blessed be he, you are so filled with compassion that this is how you care for the sheep of a man who is flesh and blood, by my word you will be the one who will tend to my sheep the children of Israel" (Shemot Raba 2). Wishing you all a Shabbat Shalom.

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In Memoriam

These anniversaries occur from Shabbat, the 19th of Tammuz (July 11, 2009) to Shabbat, the 26th of Tammuz (July 18, 2009). It is customary to light a memorial candle in the evening and donate tzedakah. Family members are encouraged to attend services.

Sunday / 20 Tammuz

Rahel bat Leah Nahid Pourati

Tuesday / 22 Tammuz

Abraham ben Eliyahu Shamash*

Wednesday / 23 Tammuz

Yaacov Shalom ben Yeshaiah
Salman ben Sasson
Lulu Farha Zekaria

Thursday / 24 Tammuz

Aharon David ben Avraham Haim*

Friday / 25 Tammuz

Haskel ben Yoseph Dabby

Shabbat / 26 Tammuz

David ben Itzhak Hattanian

**Yahrzeit names with asterisks are missing contact phone numbers and addresses for family members. To update the database, please call 310.474.0559.*

Refuah Shlemah

Please include these individuals in your prayers
Yonatan ben Alizah ▪ Mazal Tob bat Sulha
Matana ▪ Jack Wickett ▪ Ayala bat Naomi
Yosi ben Esther ▪ Yaheskel ben Regina
Matilda Louisa ▪ Victor ben Pauline
Haim ben Mordechai ▪ Khayah Noa bat Sara
Pnina bat Esther ▪ Moshe ben Naji

KJ Calendar 2009-2010

DEADLINE July 24, 2009

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Send us photos of new babies by e-mail or on CD for our newborn collage. We also would like information about births, bar/bat mitzvahs, graduations and weddings from Sept. 2008 to Sept. 2009. *For more information please contact Yvette Dabby at ydabby@sbcglobal.net or Selena Dallal at selenadallal@gmail.com*

Parasha & Haftara

Parashat Pinhas pp. 686 Haftarah pp. 699