

## Many Types of Leaders

Shanen Bloom Werber

Family coordinator for the first Torah MiTzion's presence in Chicago in the 1990's

Currently community activist, she currently lives in Gush Etzion



---

Leaders come and go. And that is the way it should be.

Some leaders are appointed; and willingly or reluctantly, they serve. The people may follow or not.

Some leaders are born into the role and they may or may not fit it. Some act; and through their actions, they become leaders, as others follow.

Some leaders do a specific action in which they lead, and then they fade into history. Others may act in a way that becomes the norm, and that action is remembered as historic.

Surprisingly, parshat Pinchas has a number of fascinating leader-types, although the hero of last week's parsha, Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon haKohen, is the leader most focused on when learning and discussing this parsha.

Pinchas saw what was happening, realized how problematic this "contagious" idolatry was, and stepped forward to stop it. (The man Pinchas killed was himself a tribal prince, a leader; who was leading Bnei Yisrael - to sin!) Pinchas acted when no one else did. And for this powerful public action he was awarded a unique "brit shalom". His leadership was rewarded, and featured to the nation.

Bnot Tzafchad, 5 daughters of a man with no male heirs, were leaders of a different type. They saw a wrong which affected their family and stepped up to ask for equal rights. Quietly, directly to the leader, Moshe, they made their case. But their quiet request needed to be referred to HaShem to judge. And the rest is history – inheritance rights (and regulations) for daughters when there is no son.

Yehoshua is a leader with proven abilities: he and Calev were the only scouts who presented a positive view of Eretz Yisrael. An aide to Moshe, he trained - learning the issues and the approaches needed to guide / lead a nation into an unknown Homeland, through wars, with a goal of establishing a nation's government and settlements.

Moshe asked HaShem for a leader who would take his place, as his role was to end before crossing the Yarden. Requesting a leader who would guide the people faithfully, HaShem directed him to Yehoshua, an already familiar figure who had long been by Moshe's side. A formal "passing of the scepter" made the appointment public and the transition was smooth.

In one parsha, full of names and inheritance groups, and of chagim and their korbanot, there are 6 types of leadership roles presented:

- Zimri, a prince, who led the people to sin
  
- Pinchas, whose initiative ended the idolatry
  
- Machla, Noa, Chogla, Milka, and Tirza who gently gained rights for women
  
- Moshe, the faithful retiring leader, concerned about continuity

- Yehoshua, his aide; prepared for this role, smoothing the transition

- Elazar haKohen, whose priestly role proclaims the continuity of leadership

May Am Yisrael merit leaders with initiative, who are willing to stand up for principle and halacha, who train and learn from those before them, who know quietly when and how to ask, and how to make things happen. And may we, the people, recognize and follow these types of leaders.

Indeed, may we head for גאולה שלימה and a ברית שלום with such leadership.

אמן! כן יהי רצון!

Dedicated to the memory of Rav Michael Jay Bloom, as we read his bar mitzva parsha, Pinchas. He knew how to lead and how to follow.

רב מיכאל יעקב בן אברהם וחיה דבורה בלום

comments: [werberfamily@gmail.com](mailto:werberfamily@gmail.com)