

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



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Bo

3 Shevat, 5785

What Makes a True Leader?

With so many people purporting to be leaders these days, how do we recognize a true leader? To answer that question, we must step back and ask: What is it that a leader is really trying to accomplish?

A true leader wants nothing more than to make people stand on their own, as leaders in their own right. Instead of trying to blind us with his or her brilliance, a true leader reflects our own light back to us, so that we may see ourselves anew.

Moses was the quintessential leader. He kept watch as thousands of sheep grazed, yet noticed when one sheep was missing and went off to look for it.

When G-d saw this, He had proof that Moses was a man of reason, empathy and selfless devotion, a man truly worthy to lead His people.

In our secular society, we tend to think of a leader as a person who is well-connected, who is powerful or charismatic or wealthy. We judge our leaders by what they have. But a true leader should be judged by what he has not - ego, arrogance, and self-interest. A true leader sees his work as selfless service toward a higher purpose. As the sages say, "Leadership is not power and dominance; it is servitude." This does not mean that a leader is weak; he derives great strength from his dedication to a purpose that is greater than himself.

Each generation has its Moses, a leader who inspires absolute trust, who is totally dedicated to fulfilling his unique role. He understands and appreciates each person's role in perfecting this world, and guides him or her accordingly; he rises above any individual perspective to take a global view, seeing how each person and issue fits into the entire scheme of the contemporary world.

A true leader shakes people from their reverie and tells them, "No, you don't need to live a life of desperation and confusion. Yes, you do have the ability to find meaning in your life, and the unique skills to fulfill that meaning. You are an important link in a chain of generations past; you have a legacy worth preserving and a future worth fighting for.

A true leader shows us that our world is indeed heading somewhere and that we control its movement. That we need not be at the mercy of personal prejudices or the prevailing political wind. That none of us are subservient to history or nature - that we are history and nature. That we can rid the world of war and hate and ignorance, and obliterate the borders separating race from race, rich from poor.

A true leader does not want followers; he wants to teach others how to be leaders. He does not want control; he wants the truth. He does not impose his leadership on others, nor does he take away anyone's autonomy. He inspires by love, not coercion. He is so passionate about your welfare that when you consult him for guidance, it is like coming face to face with yourself for the first time.

A true leader is a living example of his teachings. When we see that a leader's personal life embodies his philosophy, we too are inspired to learn that philosophy.

It is useless for a leader to be a visionary in the abstract; he must be a successful communicator whose vision can be translated into specific, applicable principles - not knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but knowledge that can actually help improve the world.

So a leader must be many things - selfless, devoted, visionary, courageous, and above all, humble. When G-d chose Moses to lead His people out of bondage in Egypt, Moses replied, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" (Ex. 3:12). Indeed, "Moses was humbler than any man on the face of the Earth" (Num. 12:3).

We must recognize the characteristics of a leader - not only so we can weed out the demagogues, but so we can freely embrace a true leader when he does emerge. When people sincerely believe in a leader, they rise above their petty self-concerns. They become eager to accept his direction and input, and are inspired to accomplish far more than they could have on their own.

By recognizing the characteristics of a true leader, we set a standard for our leaders and, more important, for ourselves. Setting your sights on the summit, even when you have yet to arrive there, is the surest way of completing the journey.

(by Rabbi Simon Jacobson, [meaningfullife.com](http://www.meaningfullife.com) from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

When Free Will is Miraculous

Our reading begins, "And G-d said to Moses, come in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may place these signs among them" [10:1].

This seems to contradict the idea of free will, which is a core concept in Judaism. Much as Hashem knows all of history, and the decisions we will make, we still have the ability to choose for ourselves between good and evil. How, then, could G-d remove free will from Pharaoh?

This question, however, can be answered by looking at the context. Pharaoh and Egypt have already experienced seven of the Ten Plagues. His magicians have already admitted that what they are seeing is the "finger of G-d" [8:15]. And although Hashem tells Moshe that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh's servants as well, when threatened with another plague they turn to Pharaoh and say, "do you not yet know that Egypt is lost?" [10:7]

In other words, at this point the evidence is overwhelming. There is no denying that a plague threatened by Moshe will come to pass, and that it will do terrible damage to Egypt. So how can Pharaoh possibly resist?

Thus when G-d hardens Pharaoh's heart, he is not taking away Pharaoh's free will. To the contrary, he is giving it back! Without intervention, Pharaoh would have no choice but to give in—like his servants who, despite having their hearts hardened as well, tell him to give in.

I believe we are living now in a time when again the evidence and truth are overwhelming, yet people are granted free will to choose between good and evil. How can so-called feminist organizations side with mass assaults against women? How can human rights organizations support those who committed a massacre? Anyone with a shred of decency would make the obvious choice.

It is a lesson even to we who are not blind to the obvious.

(by Rabbi Chaim Flom from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Kol Hanaarim – every Friday evening during the winter at **7:30 p.m. in The Shul**. Cholent and other refreshments are served. Each session is 'topped off' at the end with a fascinating story. For any questions, please see Rabbi Itzkowitz.

Mr. Yehudah and Mrs. Bracha Buchwalter
are co-sponsoring Kiddush after davening this Shabbat
in memory of the **yahrzeit** of Yehudah's father, **Usher Zelig ben Yaakov Yehudah HaLevi**.



Mr. Moshe and Mrs. Nomsie Berry
are co-sponsoring Kiddush after davening this Shabbat
in honor of their son, **Menachem's upcoming wedding**.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Yehudah Buchwalter	4 Shevat - Saturday night / Sunday	for father	Usher Zelig ben Yaakov Yehudah HaLevi
Larry Ziffer	9 Shevat - Thursday night / Friday	for mother	Rochel bas Meir Yehuda Leib HaKohen
Mindy Pazornick	9 Shevat - Thursday night / Friday	for brother	Yezkiel ben Yekutiel

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 1/31 — 2 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Shabbat Candles — 5:09 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:10 p.m.

Shabbat, 2/1 — 3 Shevat

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m.
Minchah — 4:55 p.m.
Shiur — after Minchah
Shkiah — 5:28 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 6:10 p.m.

Sunday, 2/2 — 4 Shevat

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Maariv — 5:15 p.m.

Monday, 2/3 — 5 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 2/4 — 6 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m..
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 2/5 — 7 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.
Tanya Shiur: 2nd part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud
V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation and
the unity of Hashem — 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, 2/6 — 8 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.

Friday, 2/7 — 9 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Shabbat Candles — 5:16 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.