

Pinchas: From Moshe to Joshua

Transitional leadership

Moses spoke to the LORD, saying,

Let the LORD, Source of the breath of all
flesh, appoint someone over the community

who shall go out before them and come in before them, and who shall take them out and bring them in, so that the LORD's community may not be like sheep that have no shepherd.”

And the LORD answered Moses, “Single out Joshua son of Nun, an inspired man, and lay your hand upon him.

Rashi

TAKE] TO THEE — take one who has been
examined by you, the one with whom you are
familiar

מדרש רבה במדבר כ"ז:ט"ז:ט"ז

מָה רָאָה

לֵב

י"ח): קח לך את יהושע בן נון, לקיים מה ששנאמר: נצר תאנה יאכל פריהק

מדרש אגדה (בובר) כ"ז:ט"ז:ט"ז
כיון ששמע משה שימות, התחיל לבקש רחמים על
ישראל, שיתן להם רועה שיהיה לו רוח לסבלם,
והתחיל ואמר רבונו של עולם אתה יודע כל רוחות של
בני אדם, מי הוא סבלן, ומי הוא רגזן, אתה פקוד איש
על העדה אשר יצא לפניהם במדבר, ואשר יבא
לפניהם לעשות כל צרכם, ואשר יוציאם בזריזות, ואשר
יביאם בתפלותיו, ואמר לו הקב"ה כל הדברים שאמרת
תמצאם ביהושע תלמידך, לך והקם אותו, הדא הוא
דכתבי קח לך את יהושע בן נון

ילקוט שמעוני במדבר כ"ז:י"ח:י"ח

מ

הא הולך עם הקפדנים כפי דעתן ועם המתונים כפי דעתן פ

Moshe and Joshua talks

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מֶלֶךְ מָחָר אָנֹכִי נֹצֵב עַל-רֹאשׁ הַגְּבֻעָה וּמִיֵּטָה הָאֱלֹהִים בְּיָדַי:

us, and go out and do battle with Amalek.

Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand.”

וְדַ

זֶה וּמִשְׁרָתוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נּוּן נִעַר לֹא יָמִישׁ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֹהֶל: (ס)ב

The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one man speaks to another. And he would then return to the camp; but his attendant, Joshua son of Nun, a youth, would not stir out of the Tent.

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וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת-קוֹל הָעָם בְּרִיעָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-מֹשֶׁה קוֹל מִלְחָמָה בַּמַּחֲנֶה:

boisterousness, he said to Moses, “There is a cry of war in the camp.”

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רַיִן קוֹל עֲנֹת גְּבוּרָה וַיִּינן קוֹל עֲנֹת חֲלוּשָׁה קוֹל עֲנֹת אָנְכִי שִׁמְעֵי:

triumph, Or the sound of the tune of defeat; It is the sound of song that I hear!”

Ramban

The Rabbis have likewise said in an Agadah³⁵⁷ *Koheleth Rabbah 9:11*. that Moses told Joshua, “Is it possible that one who is destined to be the leader of Israel cannot distinguish between the different kinds of sounds?”

A youth ran out and told Moses, saying, “Eldad and Medad are acting the prophet in the camp!”

And Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ attendant from his youth, spoke up and said, “My lord Moses, restrain them!”

But Moses said to him, “Are you wrought up on my account? Would that all the LORD’s people were prophets, that the LORD put His spirit upon them!”

חיד"א

ק"ק ע"ז דלפי האמור דידע דיהושע ישמש אחריו וזה
היה קודם המרגלים. אמאי הוצרך אח"כ בשנת
הארבעים להתפלל יפקוד ה' וגו' איש על העדה ולא
תהיה עדת ה' כצאן אשר אין להם רועה והשיבו ה' קח
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Sanhedrin 17a

ומה נבואה נתנבאו אמרו משה מת יהושע מכניס את ישראל לארץ אבא חנין אומר משום רבי אליעזר על
אפּוּפּוּס אֵלְדָד וּמֵדָד בְּיָמֵינוּ הָיוּ מְנַבְּאִים עָלַי שְׁלִי הֵן מְתַנְבְּאִים עָלַי שְׁלִי עָלַי שְׁלִי
Gemara asks: **And what prophecy did they prophesy? They said: Moses will die, and Joshua will bring the Jewish people into Eretz Yisrael. Abba Ḥanin says in the name of Rabbi Eliezer: They prophesied about the matter of the quail that came afterward (Numbers 11:31–33), saying: Arise quail, arise quail, and then the quail came.**

Rav Naḥman says: They were prophesying about the matter of Gog and Magog, as it is stated with regard to Gog and Magog: “So says the Lord God: Are you the one of whom I spoke in ancient days, through my servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years [*shanim*] that I would bring you against them?” (Ezekiel 38:17). Do not read it as: “Years [*shanim*]”; rather, read it as: Two [*shenayim*]. And who are the two prophets who prophesied the same prophecy at the same time? You must say: Eldad and Medad.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who says those other two opinions, this is the reason for that which is written: “And Moses said to him: Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all of the Lord’s people were prophets” (Numbers 11:29). But according to the one who says that Eldad and Medad prophesied that Moses will die and Joshua will bring Israel into the land, would it have been satisfactory to Moses that all of the people of God would utter similar prophecies? The Gemara answers: They did not conclude it before him. Moses was not aware of what they had said, but only that they were prophesying.

Did Joshua do the same?

Israel served the LORD during the lifetime of Joshua and the lifetime of the elders who lived on after Joshua, and who had experienced all the deeds that the LORD had wrought for Israel.

Rav Amital and Rav Lichtenstein z'l

He loved him but wanted divine approval
Liked Joshua too much to give him the job
He thought he was just a second in command
He didn't like him
He wanted his own kids
Had no idea