

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

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Pi-N'CHAS

In Parshat Pinchas, Moshe asks G-d to appoint a new leader over the people, that will replace him after his death. Moshe, knowing the challenges and difficulties that would be awaiting this new leader, Moshe sought out a person who would be correctly suited for the position. Moshe requested, " May the Lord, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall take them out and bring them in; and the assembly of the Lords shall not be as sheep that do not have a shepherd." (27:16-17) Rashi explains that when Moshe referred to G-d as the "G-d of the spirits of the flesh", he was referring to the idea that the personality of everyone is revealed before G-d. Therefore, it would be correct for G-d to choose the next leader because He would know which personality was well suited in dealing with the Jewish people. G-d told Moshe to appoint Yehoshua - "a man in whom there is spirit", as the new leader.

Rabbi Joshua Hoffman z"l quoting Rabbi Solomon, the Mashgiach Ruchani of Lakewood Yeshiva asked

why Moshe himself could not identify the good characteristics of Yehoshua? Yehoshua was his faithful servant, never leaving his side and always learning Torah with him?

Rabbi Solomon pointed out that Yehoshua had an inner quality, unnoticed by the human eye, that made him so suitable for the job. That quality was one of self-control. A person who can control himself is a person who can relate to others, thereby he can educate and lead others in the path best suited for them. Yehoshua knew how to balance his dual role, one of commander-in-chief of the army and one of spiritual leaders who was the link in the chain of Mesorah, according to Pirkei Avot. Yehoshua who was constantly found in Moshe's tent, learning Torah from him and observing his ways had the making of a true hero, a person who could control himself and his inner forces. He would be able to relate to each unique personality within the people and serve as a leader in both aspects, in battle and in keeping the chain of tradition. This inner strength could not be revealed by Moshe.

The Talmud records the story in the Book of Yehoshua, on the night before battle, the angel of G-d appears before Yehoshua and criticized him for not being engaged in the study of Torah. The angel wanted Yehoshua to be sure that he main-

tained control over himself so that he could properly relate to each of his soldiers as well. This was the uniqueness of Yehoshua - it was through his learning and continuous observance of Moshe's ways he was able to understand his own nature and control it. G-d told Moshe that it was Yehoshua's devotion to Moshe and the Torah he taught that made him qualified to lead the nation. It wasn't a particular characteristic Yehoshua had, rather G-d pointed out to Moshe that Yehoshua had the ability and patience to understand and relate to the characteristics of others and integrate them into his dual role that made him so suited for the leadership role. 🏹