Assembly Notes
PARSHAS BESHALACH 5785
Assembly Theme: Leadership

בסד

the lubavitch multi-academy trust
lubavitch girls' school

We can learn a lesson about leadership from this week's Parsha, Beshalach. It is known as Shabbos Shira, the Shabbos of Song, because in Beshalach the great miracle of the splitting of the Sea unfolds.

The Jews are finally safe from the Egyptians, and "Moshe (leading) the children of Israel sang this Song to Hashem: I will sing to G-d for He is very exalted; horse and rider He cast into the sea".

The children of Israel actually numbered a few million people whom Moshe led in the singing. How did the logistics work? How did millions of people sing the same song? This is discussed in the Gemara (Talmud) and three views are shared.

Rabbi Akiva says that Moshe sang the song and the Israelites responded, stanza by stanza. Moshe said Ashira LaHashem (I will sing to G-d) and the people answered with this refrain (Ashira LaHashem). Moshe then said the next phrase: "for He is very exalted" and they responded Ashira LaHashem. And so they sang this same refrain for all of the verses. They affirmed Moshe's singing and expressed their commitment by singing just the chorus.

According to Rabbi Eliezer, the people actually sang each verse after Moshe, repeating that verse. They became loyal followers who themselves sang what Moshe had sung.

Rabbi Nechemia says that Moshe began the Song, and all the people then followed and they all sang the entire song together! Everyone experienced Divine inspiration.

These three views can be seen as three different paradigms of leadership. In the first, Moshe led and only he sang the whole song; whereas the others affirmed their total commitment and *acceptance* of his leadership.

The second approach to leadership is where the people were good disciples, *following* Moshe's lead.

The third aspect of leadership is where Moshe begins, sets the goal and the tone; and ultimately everyone sings the entire song. It is with their own *initiative*, yet totally loyal to Moshe's song.

All three paradigms are needed, depending on the situation. The sign of the ultimate leader is his ability to inspire the third aspect. As Rabbi Lord Sacks Z''L said (about the Rebbe): Good leaders create followers. Great leaders create leaders.

This Shabbos is the tenth of Shevat, known as Yud Shevat. It is the Yahrzeit of the sixth Chabad Rebbe (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok) and the day that the Rebbe assumed the leadership of the seventh generation.

The Rebbe's teachings and vision have been adopted widely by Klal Yisrael, especially in Chabad with Shluchim and Shluchos (emissaries) as well as many more lay people, who are meticulous in following the Rebbe's teachings and example; and using their initiative in trying to reach out to bring Redemption to the individual and the world.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol 31)

Shabbat Shalom! Good Shabbos!

גוט שבת!