

## Leadership—Jewish Insights

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Chose theme LP bec: theme intrigues me; Isr going into elections; **Mostly:RJ**

I: talking re J LP--nt poltcl, mostly spl/institl; thrfr will illustrt fr lf Moses  
While I'll tlk mostly USA, leave it t y to apply t ISR; סדנא דארעא חד הוא  
J LP is distinguished by 1 phenomn: what it is NOT. Lt m explain

M=boggd dwnתנחנן לא תוכל עשהו לכד ממך הדבר כי כבד ממך העם הזה אשר עמך גם אתה גם אתה  
Yitro – hw t orgnz. M accepts/implements

- ♦ YET (בהעלותך), M complains -- identical lang-- not workg: לא אוכל אנכי לבדי ולשאת את כל העם הזה כי כבד ממני
- ♦ God: אספה לי שבעים איש... BUT wasn't that same advice Yitro gave?
- ♦ Ans: No--Yitro--mgt advc, Gd--LP.
- ♦ Yitro: MBA-MIT/Hrvrd--Bt Gd: SP'L LP--ושמתי עליך ושמתי ואצלתי מן הרוח אשר עליך ושמתי עליהם. Dn't need jst gopher/execs; need men of sprt.
- ♦ Ths= charctrzs gennly J, esp rel, LP. Mgt=imp skill--bt not possess quality of commitment t רוח, beynd slf/ constituency. W-o that spl comm't LP nt J

So, we talkg LP; proceed t adumbrate salient features LP~our commy.  
But rmmbr: Diffnt kinds Leadership—not all=M (radcal...) vs Aaron....

1<sup>st</sup> charctrstc=simple yet enormsly diffict: Courage--morl/psychic courage t walk by self/alone among disagree/deprecate/defame, & defy publ opinion & do wht=polity incorrect, guided only by committ t wht y considr right/true.

- ♦ LP, esp our commy/times, esp media... nt effectv w-o healthy diet courage.

יוהי בנסוע " (בהעלותך), מוקף בשני נונין הפוכין מדה"י: הם כבודו של הקב"ה ממש, והם עיקרו של עולם, ובאלו נונין עתיד הקב"ה לפרוק להו לישראל ע"י משיח ובגנים בדרך יעקב לנכדיו "וידגו לרוב בקרב הארץ" [נון="דג, ואונקלוס תירגם, "וכונוני ימא ישגון"]

W-o readiness to swim upstream when you are convinced it is the only right way to go, you will never get to the other side.

Founders YU--TuM/mv Uptown. Assimilated: ridiculed Orthx upstarts nerve in encroachg on Enlghtnd ones. Frum: treasn vs. "real" Js. Ltle hs changd snce  
Founders St-Isr: evn greatr demonstrtn Courage. ST: B-G/Peres/Agnon....

2<sup>nd</sup> feature LP= best introduc'd by John Kenneth Galbraith... "All great leaders hv hd 1 charctrstc in common: willingness t confront unequivocally major anxiety of ppl in their time. This=essence of LP."

We can't all=great ldrs, bt all can learn fr giants.

What="major anxiety" our gen Js? ISR: J state/Democrtc state....

USA: 2 "mjr anxieties": 1=prevnt sp'l demise by קירוב לתורה

Other=keep Js as one ppl, halt unravelg oneness as a ppl.

(Y know>I re:ISR; so: will concentrt USA. YOU apply t Isr!)

Tht=tall order, bt mst daunting challeng= the 2 anxieties=incompatible!

- ♦ Norml tms, Saadia: Tor=essence nationhood; YHL: Isr=chief value.
- ♦ Bt tod-- lv-Tor/lv-Isr=in conflict; 2 seemngly irreconcilbl aims.
- ♦ Wnt keep Jsm alive/Tor flourishg--bt most Js nt observe Hal.
- ♦ Wnt keep Js 1 ppl--bt too mny Js=funct'y nn-Jsh; price too high t pay.



- ♦ If we= loyal to Hal, look askance 85-90% of Js world; & if loyal to Israel, we violate integrity Tor. Is painful predicament, a perplexity most characteristic of our times.

Here→grtst test ldr: ability handle *element of tragedy* inheres enterprise LP, esp Jsh.

LP~risks--nt only polit/financ/soc/psychol risks, bt also *moral* risks.

Nt all decisions→this high level tension/seriousness, bt most critical do jst tht.

Often, ldr=אונס. Hs most poignant & fateful challenge=nt in articulating vision/managing emergencies/reacting to critics--all=imp-- but "*dirty*" decisions challenge most sacred values/poke int innards of most cherished beliefs, & upset h's deepest self-image. Therein=tragic element: need to reject 1 good/greater, evil...

**Rambam:** כל מי שהצבור ממנה אותו פרנס מלמטה, נקרא רשע למעלה.

**Zohar** on אשר נשיא יחטא ודאי יחטא. You can't be w/o added onus by Talmd/Zohar/Rambam?

**How strange thing!** esp by **Rambam** who=פרנס! Deterrent to public service!

Granted sm ldrs abuse positions/neglect duties; is tht reason all ldrs=רשעים?

Don't we bear enough burdens... w/o added onus by Talmd/Zohar/Rambam?

**What Rabbis meant:** LP~hard, *dirty decisions*--choose betw alternatives neither of which=perfect/clean/pure/desirable/even acceptable, bt select least evil, least harmful.

Clean decisions betw good/evil, right/wrong, helpful/injurious=risk-free, not reqr LP. Any intelligent/reasonable person w/ modicum moral judgment can make such decisions. Ldr~willing embrace risk רשע למטה, <thn perfect/ideal, of being accused of ideological error/moral truancy, if by so doing carries out his mission of protecting ציבור מלמטה, sparing them greater hurt/more serious injury, worse moral blemish.

**Not easy task**, bt is what LP is all about. אשר נשיא יחטא, ודאי יחטא; no way out.

One who wants to play safe/side angels--even if thereby→opening of demons who will take over later--such person has no right to be ldr, best go back to own private affairs.

This **dilemma** not peculiar Jsh community; universal phenomenon.

Ex--Dershowitz: **Churchill--Coventry**--Nazi code--Coventry soon to be bombed.

Chose *sacrifice* lvs citizens Coventry to save *mr* British lvs by keeping Nazis from learning Brit intellig intercepting communications. H=רשע למעלה. Bt who could blame him

**Whether J/gen'l LP**, rule: not easy way out: אוי לי מיצרי, אוי לי מיוצרי. **I KNOW**

...Such decisions often=difficult/messy. Those who=mortally afraid controversy & unwilling to make unpopular decisions=popular not proper leaders. Responsible leaders seek least harmful/least unprincipled alternative, even if=<perfect/has jagged ends on which we'll cut yr ideological fingers. There's something worse>רשע למעלה-- a רשע למטה...

**Does this mean must always choose one alternative--& least unattractive--& totally reject other?** No... Even when making tragic choices, rejected option must never be totally discarded. *This=way of Halakha itself*... rejected opinion continues to be revered; sacred as accepted view! Thus, spends life studying בית שמאי... So, in our case, must forget neither Tor nor Js--wherever they are, no matter what condition. *We must love each unconditionally, even if 2 loves sometimes seem to conflict w/ each other. We may give preference now to one/other, but never do we abandon either of them.*

**In Q raised as to choice** betw integrity Hal vs unity Jsh ppl, **ans:** assign priority, bt other never be dismissed. In our case, תדב"א taught: אהבת ישראל trumps אהבת התורה, bt Hvn help us if treat Tor lightly, if fail to consult Halakha at every step.



- ◆ So, ldr w conscienc--somehw accommodt both oppost options if at all possibl, evn if gives preference t one>other, offrg less thn totl right t either side. More imp, must judge each issue afresh & use responsbl judgmt, sometims mr weight t one/somtms t anothr, alwys keepg both values bfr hm
- ◆ O-c, thus assures will b roundly criticizd by advocates both sides. (I oft'n in tht position, confss getting used t it. Is lk havg tight/uncomfortbl pair shoes which, if only pair y hv, y learn t live w it. Is still bttr thn going barefoot.)

3<sup>rd</sup> aspect of LP=reltn ldrs t followrs. All mentiond thus far--courg t go it alone & risk unpopl'rty, courg mk terribl choices bet 2 goods/evils--all comes t naught if ldr not really/truly lv hs ppl, ready t sacrifice f thm evn while disagr'g/vilified

Ldr mst knw: his authory/effectivnss/strength ←fr hs ppl. YHL: "no Js, no Tor. They nt deriv high position fr M, bt M--f their sake.

Ldr mst love hs ppl, evn if thy annoy/trouble hs spirts/fail t undrstnd hm. Bt wht if thy undermin/criticz merc'lsly w-o cause/justific'n/intellgnc? How far cn lv tk y whn beneficiaries yr work/hrt/tears rdcule y f it? Cn y possbly lv thm?

Yes. M loved Js, ועתה אם תשא חטאתם ואם אין מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת... Yet --tent למחנה. How lk ppl wh nvr graspd hs ideas/ ideals-- whn M askd f faith/holinnss/redemptn, they: הדגה אשר נאכל במצרים חנם--"fish for free/ את הקשאים ואת האבטחים ואת הקציר ואת הבצלים ואת השומים : cucumbers/melns/leeks/onions/garlc." M: 10 Commndts, thy--grocery list Supersol Hw say h lovd thm-- s unlovbl, s unworthy hs suprem sacrfc, nt understnd hm /accused hm pilfering funds/suspectd philndrg w their wives?

Ans: Eng, not Heb/Yid: LOVED/LIKE. (Closest Heb: אהבה/חיבה) M resentd obtusenss/embarrssd pettinss/deplord superfc'y--s didn't like the, but loved them more thn he loved himself. (משה רבינו אוהב ישראל היה (מנחות סי"ה) (ST: London—I love my husbnd/bt don't like him...)

Tht=M. Rest us mortls hardly aspire hs lev'l lv, nor dare entertain/emulate hs utter disdain f vry same ppl. Anythg contempy ldrs cn learn fr hm? I blv there is

אהבת ישראל—must hv profnd symphy evry J, no matt'r what blfs/practcs...

Also: Modrn ldr who loves ppl bt=frustrtd/exasprtd need n/should nt mv tent t חוץ למחנה. But --a sense of humor. (If M had had a sense of humor...heartache.) (Such Ldr will implement אוהב מאויב שעושה גיבור איזהו אדר"י: thus: שלום

O-c, when confrontd deep existntial crises as in Isr tod, hard t laugh at selvs – but may be psycholgclly healthy, restore sense balance... We=nervous if not neurotic ppl, & tht=undrstndbl. Yet touch humor, sense absurd—will mk us like fellow Js, not only love thm

I refer t own M-O/Rel Zt commy. Learn t develop sense of humor, see comicl in harsh cricsm, the absurd in our own obsessns. We pride selves our tolernce, yt intolerant of any petty mov't on Right-Left on rel or politcl spectrum! We→commy of nit-pickers.

We all--subject same pressrs/inanties. But those who wsh ld cn presrve health only if sense humr/sense absurd/comical – in addn t tragic. Hard t balance, but only thus cn sv sanity/becm creatv Jsh ldr, lv ppl even more.

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**R. Nachman Brtzlov** evry J hs מושל על העולם, בחינת מלכות שהוא מושל על העולם, capacity great LP, bt some=באתגליה (normally=LP)--all othrs LP=באתגליה fr thy מושל על העולם. Transl fr Hsc t contemp lang: some ld opnly/publcly, bt all can/should exercise sp influence on othrs, evn on Self!--thus=truly ldrs--in ths "hiddn" way.

**In Isr:** elections—old/new Lp. Hope pray they wll lead rght drection—dffcult path achv both , שלום ובטחון, J/democ state... freedom/unity...

**At Y-U – new Ldr—Richard Joel Mid-June.** Has superb Lp qualities – Hillel; exprnc Y-U (alum, CSL) – ch at Y-U; values of TuM.

May **רבש"ע** grant him th yrs/health/strength/vision/courag/heart t succeed in new venture. May y b blessd w **courg** t mk tough decisions--& be presentd w vry few of thm; w th **bravery** t flout poplr bt hurtful pressurs--bt find vry few of thm; **th opprty t love our ppl/Y-U--& grace** t bear thm, if need be, w patienc/tolernc/humor/smls--& may there be many. עלה והצלח.



## A Leader's Self-Doubt

The final reason for our abandonment of our LP role--& perhaps the most fundamental cause--is our own self-doubt. We suffer from an inner failure of philosophic nerve. We have been bullied into doubting our own *shittah*, the one on which we have built our personal & professional lives. When one or another of the sides that surround us shouts loud enough & long enough, we begin to wonder if maybe, maybe we were wrong all along, that others are right & we are in error. & there is nothing more deadly than that kind of pernicious self-doubt. It kills a man's initiative, his dignity &, finally, his integrity.

This, then, is a time for us to reaffirm our faith in our own most fundamental principles, & our confidence in the correctness of our convictions. Assailed by Right & Left, we must stand up with strength, with both the courage of our convictions & the conviction of our courage.

There is a time for self-questioning, even for a degree of self-doubt. But now is not such a time. The kind of *Yiddishkeit* we stand for must be reasserted when it is assaulted.

The letter ע in the word שמע ישראל is writ large, it is an עין רבתי. Why so? R. Samson Raphael Hirsch explains: it is large in order not to be mistaken for an א, for the word שמא means "maybe," "perhaps"; it is the sign of self-doubt, of hesitation, of unsureness. Such שמא is the very opposite of שמע, which connotes a commanding certainty & rightness.

We are attacked for being true to the Tor heritage, supposedly marking us as Ne'erthals & as benighted advocates of antidemocratic intolerance. At the same we are assailed from the other side & are disqualified for not being authentically Orthodox because we do not pay obeisance to a political organization which lays claim to be the anointed apostle of the Absolute Truth of Sinai to the exclusion of non-members or non-sympathizers; or because we believe in Tor U-Madda; or because we affirm that the State of Isr is no exception to the principle that everything in this world is brought about by the השגחה העליונה; or for our insistence that כלל ישראל includes those who do not necessarily agree with us on every count. But no matter where the attacks come from, we must have the strength & the courage to proclaim שמע for our principles--שמע & not, Heaven forbid, שמא.

Kenneth Clark concluded his massive study, *Civilization*, by stating, "It is lack of confidence, more than anything else, that kills a civilization." If what we have cherished as our interpretation of our "civilization," is to thrive & flourish, then we must rid ourselves of our שמא stance & return to a firm & self-respecting שמע attitude.

The halakhic test for a questionably kosher spine of an animal, to determine if the חוט השדרה is kosher or *treifa*, is to hold the spine at its base & see if it wavers. If it leans to one side or another, it is *treifa*; if it stands erect, it is *kasher*.

That, in sum, is a test of effective rabbinic LP: a Rabbi to be kosher has to have backbone, a חוט השדרה that doesn't crumble or bend over submissively

## A Leader must Dream, have Vision