

Where Have All the Leaders Gone?

♪ *Where have all the leaders gone, long time passing? Where have all the leaders gone, long time ago? Where have all the leaders gone? Foolishness have picked them everyone. Oh, when will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?* ♪

In Dr. Jeff Seif's Commentary on *Parashat Korach*, originally published on June 21, 2017 and republished on June 10, 2021, entitled *Mutiny on Moses*, he makes the statement: *Moses of yesterday was something of a political leader—much as he was a religious leader*. Perhaps, like me, you have also expressed your disappointment on our day's lack of leadership, not just in politics or religion, but in every aspect of our daily life. Former CEO of Ford and Chrysler Lee Iacocca (an admired and recognized leader), the man responsible for the Ford Mustang and the Chrysler Minivan among many other classic cars, wrote a book in 2007 entitled *Where Have All the Leaders Gone?* In his book Iacocca discusses the characteristics of good leadership, citing these *Ten C's*: *Curiosity, Character, Courage, Conviction, Charisma, Creative, Communicate, Competent, Common Sense* and the one he regards as most important, *Crisis*. When I served in the US ARMY from 1969-1979, we were taught *11 Principles of Leadership* from *Army Field Manual FM 22-100, The U.S. Army Leadership Field Manual*, on Leadership originally developed in 1948 and first published in 1951. These principles were: (1) *Know yourself* and seek *self-improvement*, (2) *Be* technically and tactically *proficient*, (3) *Seek responsibility* and *take responsibility* for your actions, (4) *Set the example*, (5) *Know your people* and look out for their welfare, (6) *Keep your people informed*, (7) *Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished*, (8) *Develop a sense of responsibility* among your people, (9) *Train your people* as a team, (10) *Make sound and timely decisions*, and (11) *Employ* your work unit in *accordance with its capabilities*. I am forever grateful for these military principles which have guided my entire adult life.

Last week's and this week's *Torah Readings* vividly illustrate another *Principle of Leadership* (which I will call *Humility before The Almighty*) demonstrated by Moses, and Aaron: *"5Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire assembly of the community of Bnei-Yisrael" (Numbers 14:5)* and *"4When Moses heard this, he fell on his face" (Numbers 16:4)*. The immediate recognition of Who is really in charge (or Whom we serve) is amazingly modeled by these *Torah Leaders*. If all of us were constantly aware of being in the continual presence of the *The Almighty* how much better leaders (and people) we would be. It is as if Moses had read and incorporated teachings by the *Apostles James and Peter*: *"10Humble yourselves in the sight of Adonai, and He shall lift you up" (James 4:10)* and *"6Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may lift you up at the appropriate time" (1 Peter 5:6)*. I think good leaders intrinsically demonstrate deference and humility before *The Almighty* and the people.

Virtue is the moral excellence a person exhibits by consistently making the right choices – the beauty of the soul. *Virtue* is the oft-missing link between character and reputation. In short, *virtue* is the total moral excellence evident in my life as I consistently do what is right. According to Peter we need to: *"3His (Yeshua's) divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue. 4Through these things He has given us His precious and magnificent promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, since you have escaped the corruption that evil desires have brought into the world. 5Now for this very reason, making every effort, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; 6and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, patience; and to patience, godliness; 7and to godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, love. 8For if these qualities are in you and increasing, they keep you from becoming idle and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah" Virtue comes from the Latin root *vir*, the term for an adult male. From it we get the*

English word *virile*, meaning *manly*. The related word, *virtus*, means *strength*. Thus, the etymology of the word *virtue* points to the idea of being full-grown, i.e., mature moral strength. It came to English through a French variant that meant *moral strength; manliness; valor; excellent worth*. We find the word *virtuoso* appearing in the early 1600s, meaning *one who is highly skilled* in some area of the fine arts. As a *violin virtuoso* is skilled in music so that excellent music becomes part of them, so a *virtuous* person is someone whose moral excellence is evident because it has become part of who they are. The dictionary definition of *virtue* is: virtue *n* 1: moral excellence; right action and thinking; morality 2: a particular moral quality regarded as good or meritorious 3: effective power or force 4: chastity. Peter is unequivocally stating that we *must add* to the thing (*faith*) that without it it is impossible to please *The Almighty* (*Hebrews 11:6*) . We must therefore pursue and appropriate *virtue*.

Is there anything about modern culture that really concerns you/us? Are there social trends in your community that trouble you? Are there problems in the world you wish you could do something about but know you never could fix by yourself? While we may not be able to solve the world's problems, we do have a *moral responsibility* for our *personal conduct*. The *influence* of our *good character* is an important contribution we can make to our home, family, job, and community. *Virtue* is the measure of that influence. As such, my dear sister *Amy* was the most *virtuous* (Hebrew *chayil*) *woman* I have ever known. As I sat in her funeral in 2006, I heard many, many voices of strangers (not just friends and family members) come pay tribute to a woman that had spread love to Daytona Beach. *Amy* was an *eshet chayil* (a *woman of valor*) and an excellent wife. You see a *virtuous woman* is the *king's* (*her husband Mandy's*) *crown*, far above any other measure of value. I was humbled by such outpour!

Virtue refers to a trait or characteristic deemed to be morally good and is valued as a foundational element of a person's character. *Virtues* are typically developed through habitual actions and are essential for leading a morally good life. Examples of *virtues* include *courage, temperance, prudence, and justice*. I want to add my own favorite character quality to the mix. In order to lead in *The Almighty's* economy, we must also have a good dose of *integrity*. David did and so do we: "*Of David. Vindicate me, Adonai, for I have walked in my integrity, and trusted in Adonai without wavering...¹But I—I will walk in my integrity. Redeem me and be gracious to me (Psalm 26:1, 11).*" This psalm reflects on the theme of *personal integrity* and trust in divine judgment. It serves as a prayer of vindication, where the psalmist pleads for *The Almighty* to judge him and prove his innocence. I like the KJV version of *Psalm 26:11*: "*But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; redeem me and be merciful unto me.*" *Integrity* is often described as the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles that one *consistently adheres to*. It involves *coherence and consistency between one's beliefs, values, and actions*. *Integrity* can be seen as a commitment to one's principles, even in the face of temptation or adversity.

While virtue is about cultivating morally good traits and behaviors, *integrity* is about maintaining a consistent and coherent moral identity and adhering to principles. Both are essential for ethical living, but they approach morality from different angles—*virtue* through the cultivation of good habits and *integrity* through the *steadfast adherence* to moral values. In ethics, *integrity* is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or earnestness of one's actions. *Integrity* stands in *complete opposition to hypocrisy*. It regards internal consistency as a *virtue*, and suggests that people who hold apparently conflicting values should account for the discrepancy or alter those values. *Integrity* is the inner sense of *wholeness* deriving from qualities such as honesty and consistency of character. In other words, you are what you are no matter where or who's looking, the same at home as in the congregation. *Shabbat Shalom!*