

Reflections from Rabbi . . .

NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS ASSUMES LEADERSHIP ROLES

A few weeks ago we began reading the book of Numbers--"B'midbar" in Hebrew. It recounts the journey of the Israelites from Mt. Sinai to the Land of Israel. It is punctuated with numerous accounts of unrest amongst the children of Israel. They become upset with Moses and his leadership skills. They are frustrated with the food that is provided. They are dejected over their apparent future, limited to wandering around the wilderness of Sinai.

In a moment of fury Moses turns to God and says, and I paraphrase, "I give up. Take my life. I cannot bear to live with the constant barrage of complaints from my people!" In response to Moses' painful outburst, God instructs him, "Gather seventy of Israel's elders who have experience as elders and officers of the people....they shall share the burden of the people with you so you will not have to bear it alone." Numbers 11:16-17.

It is this instruction to share the responsibility to lead that gives rise to the current leadership structure that guides so many of our institutions. Our synagogue is blessed with a dedicated group of people known as the board of directors. The board of directors has an Executive Committee made up of the officers of the congregation. Together, with the paid professionals of the synagogue, we share the responsibility of guiding our people--Congregation Anshai Torah. Just as God placed His spirit on the seventy elders and officers who would assist Moses, we pray that our new set of leaders will be blessed with the same kind of insight and foresight that has blessed this congregation from its inception. At every juncture, the congregation has placed its trust in another set of outstanding leaders. Knowing that each of us is flawed, our leaders assumed the role of leadership with humility and responsibility, realizing they were given the responsibility to take charge, to lead as best they could with the corps of dedicated people at their side.

As we welcome the newest slate of leaders to our congregation, we trust that God will guide their hand just as He did in every prior administration. May we, the congregation, do all in our capacity to work with our leaders to ensure another two years of outstanding accomplishment by our thriving congregation. To all of our newly elected officers and members of the board of directors I say, Kol HaKavod. May each of you move forward with the charge, "Hazak v'ematz," may you go forward with determination and the knowledge that you are God's partner in one of the most rewarding opportunities of a life time.

Rabbi Stefan Weinberg