

Lighting Candles, Pouring Cups: Leadership Transition in Parashat Pinchas
Miriam Gedwiser ~ Drisha Conversations on the Parashah, Pinchas 5783

1. Bamidbar 27:12-23

12 The LORD said to Moses, “Ascend these heights of Abarim and view the land that I have given to the Israelite people. **13** When you have seen it, you too shall be gathered to your kin, just as your brother Aaron was. **14** For, in the wilderness of Zin, when the community was contentious, you disobeyed My command to uphold My sanctity in their sight by means of the water.” Those are the Waters of Meribath-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin. **15** Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, **16** “Let the LORD, Source of the breath of all flesh, appoint someone over the community **17** who shall go out before them and come in before them, and who shall take them out and bring them in,^b so that the LORD’s community may not be like sheep that have no shepherd.” **18** And the LORD answered Moses, “Single out Joshua son of Nun, an inspired man, and lay your hand upon him. **19** Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before the whole community, and commission him in their sight. **20** Invest him with some of your authority, so that the whole Israelite community may obey. **21** But he shall present himself to Eleazar the priest, who shall on his behalf seek the decision of the Urim before the LORD. By such instruction they shall go out and by such instruction they shall come in, he and all the Israelites, the whole community.” **22** Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and before the whole community. **23** He laid his hands upon him and commissioned him—as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹהֵי מֹשֶׁה עֲלֵה אֶל-הַר הָעֵבְרִים הַגֹּהַ וּרְאֵה וְרָאִיתָ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְרָאִיתָ אֹתָהּ וְנִאֲסַפְתָּ אֶל-עַמִּי גַם-אַתָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר נִאֲסַף אַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ: כַּאֲשֶׁר מְרִיתֶם פִּי בְּמִדְבַר-צִוּוֹ בְּמִרְיַבַת הָעֵדֻה לְהַקְדִּישֵׁנִי בַּמַּיִם לְעִינֵיהֶם הֵם מִי-מִרְיַבַת קְדוֹשׁ מִדְבַר-צִוּוֹ: {ס} וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-ה' לֵאמֹר: יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹהֵי הַרֹחוֹת לְכָל-בְּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל-הָעֵדֻה: אֲשֶׁר-יֵצֵא לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבֵא לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאֵם וְלֹא תִהְיֶה עֵדוּת ה' כִּצְאֹן אֲשֶׁר אִין-לָהֶם רֹעֵה: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹהֵי מֹשֶׁה קַח-לְךָ אֶת-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-רָוַח בּוֹ וְסִמַּכְתָּ אֶת-יָדְךָ עָלָיו: וְהָעִמַּדְתָּ אֹתוֹ לְפָנֵי אֱלֹעֶזֶר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְפָנֵי כָל-הָעֵדֻה וְצִוִּיתָה אֹתוֹ לְעִינֵיהֶם: וְנִמַּתְתָּ מִהוֹדֶךָ עָלָיו לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ כָל-עַדְוַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וּלְפָנֵי אֱלֹעֶזֶר הַכֹּהֵן יַעֲמֹד וְשָׂאֵל לוֹ בְּמִשְׁפַּט הָאוּרִים לְפָנֵי ה' עַל-פִּיּוֹ יֵצְאוּ וְעַל-פִּיּוֹ יָבֹאוּ הוּא וְכָל-בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אִתּוֹ וְכָל-הָעֵדֻה: וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אִתּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיַּעֲמֵדְהוּ לְפָנֵי אֱלֹעֶזֶר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְפָנֵי כָל-הָעֵדֻה: וַיִּסְמַךְ אֶת-יָדָיו עָלָיו וַיְצַוְהוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' בְּיַד-מֹשֶׁה: {פ}

2. Devarim 34:1-5

1 Moses went up from the steppes of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the summit of Pisgah, opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan; **2** all Naphtali; the land of Ephraim and Manasseh; the whole land of Judah as far as the Western Sea; **3** the Negeb; and the Plain—the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. **4** And the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, ‘I will assign it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you shall not cross there.” **5** So Moses the servant of the LORD died there, in the land of Moab, at the command of the LORD.

וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה מֵעַרְבַת מוֹאָב אֶל-הַר נְבוֹ רֹאשׁ הַהַר הַפְּסִגָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי יְרִיחוֹ וַיְרְאֵהוּ ה' אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ אֶת-הַגִּלְעָד עַד-דָּן: וְאֶת-כָּל-נַפְתָּלִי וְאֶת-אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה עַד הַיָּם הַיְמָנִית: וְאֶת-הַנֶּגֶב וְאֶת-הַבְּשָׁר בְּקִעַת יְרִיחוֹ עִיר הַתְּמָרִים עַד-צֹעַר: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלָיו זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶתְנַתְּנָהּ הִיא וְעַתָּה יָרָאִיתָ בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְשָׂמָה לֹא תַעֲבֹר: וַיָּמָת שָׁם מֹשֶׁה עַבְדֵּי ה' בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב עַל-פִּי ה':

3. Devarim 3:23-28

<p>23 I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying, 24 “O Lord GOD, You who let Your servant see the first works of Your greatness and Your mighty hand, You whose powerful deeds no god in heaven or on earth can equal! 25 Let me, I pray, cross over and see the good land on the other side of the Jordan, that good hill country, and the Lebanon.” 26 But the LORD was wrathful with me on your account and would not listen to me. The LORD said to me, “Enough! Never speak to Me of this matter again! 27 Go up to the summit of Pisgah and gaze about, to the west, the north, the south, and the east. Look at it well, for you shall not go across yonder Jordan. 28 Give Joshua his instructions, and imbue him with strength and courage, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he shall allot to them the land that you may only see.”</p>	<p>וְאֶתְחַנֵּן אֵלָיִהּ בְּעֵת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר: אֲדוּשָׁם ה' אֱתָהּ הַחִלּוֹת לְהַרְאֹת אֶת־עֲבֹדֶיךָ אֶת־גְּדֻלָּתְךָ וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה אֲשֶׁר מִי־אֵל בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה כְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְכַגְּבוּרֹתֶיךָ: אֶעֱבְרָה־נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן הַהַר הַטּוֹב הַהַר וְהַלְבָּנוֹן: וַיִּתְעַבֵּר ה' בִּי לְמַעַנְכֶם וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֵלַי וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלַי רַב־לָךְ אֵל־תוֹסֵף דְּבַר אֵלַי עוֹד בַּדְּבָר הַזֶּה: עֲלֶה רֹאשׁ הַפְּסָגָה וְשֹׂא עֵינֶיךָ יָמָה וְצָפְנָה וּמִיָּמִינָה וּמִזְרָחָה וּרְאֵה בְּעֵינֶיךָ כִּי־לֹא תַעֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה: וְצֹ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְסִנְתָּהוּ וְאַמְצָהוּ כִּי־הוּא יַעֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם הַזֶּה וְהוּא יִנְתִּיל אוֹתָם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה:</p>
--	--

4. Sifrei Bamidbar 27

<p>We find, then, two kinds of "seeings" — one of pleasure; the other, of pain. Of Abraham it is written (Bereshit 13:14) "Lift up your eyes and see, from the place where you find yourself, etc." — a seeing of pleasure. Of Moses it is written (Bamidbar 27:12) "Go up to this Mount Avarim, etc." (Devarim 3:27) "Go up to the summit of Pisgah, etc." — a seeing of pain.</p>	<p>פסקא קלו וּנְמַצָּאת אֶתְּךָ אֹמֵר ב' רֵאיוֹת הֵם: אַחַת רֵאיוֹת שֶׁל נַחַת וְאַחַת רֵאיוֹת שֶׁל צַעַר. בְּאַבְרָהָם הוּא אוֹמֵר: שֶׁא נֹא עֵינֶיךָ וְרֵאָה מִן הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶתְּךָ שָׁם (בְּרֵאשִׁית י"ג:ד). — זֹו הִיא רֵאיוֹת שֶׁל נַחַת. בְּמֹשֶׁה הוּא אוֹמֵר עֲלֶה אֶל הַר הָעֵבְרִים, עֲלֶה רֹאשׁ הַפְּסָגָה — זֹו הִיא רֵאיוֹת שֶׁל צַעַר.</p>
<p>"And Moses spoke to the L-rd to say, etc.": (This is mentioned) to apprise us of the virtues of the righteous, that when they are about to die they put aside their own concerns and occupy themselves with those of the congregation.</p>	<p>פסקא קלח וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל יְיָ לֵאמֹר — לְהוֹדִיעַ שְׂבַחֲךָ שֶׁל צְדִיקִים, שְׁכַשְׁתֶּם נַפְטָרִים מִנִּיחִים עֲצֻמֵּן וְעוֹסְקִין בְּצוּרֶךָ צְבוּר.</p>
<p>"and he 'took' Joshua": He "took" him with words, apprising him of the reward of the leaders of Israel in the world to come.</p>	<p>פסקא קמ וַיִּקַּח אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ — לְקַחוּ בְּדַבְרֵים וְהוֹדִיעוּ מִתֵּן שְׂכָר פְּרָנְסֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא.</p>
<p>"And you shall place (some) of your glory upon him": and not all of your glory — whence we derive "The face of Moses was like the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon."</p>	<p>וַנִּתֵּן מִהוֹדֶךָ עֲלָיו — וְלֹא כָל הַדֶּרֶךְ. נִמְצִינוּ לְמַדִּים פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה כְּפְנֵי חָמָה וּפְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כְּפְנֵי לְבָנָה:</p>

5. Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar 27

<p>“Let the Lord appoint”: What reason did [Moses] have to request this need after the ordering of inheritance? It is simply that since he saw the daughters of Zelophehad inherit the properties of their father, Moses said, “See it is the time for me to claim my needs. If daughters inherit, it is [also] proper for my sons to inherit my glory.” The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him (in Prov. 27:18), “‘He who tends a fig tree will enjoy its fruit.’ Your sons sat [with] their own [concerns] and were not involved with Torah [study]. [Whereas] Joshua served you much and showed you much honor. And he got up early to your house of meeting and left late. He arranged the benches and spread out the mats. Since he served you with all of his ability, he is worthy to serve Israel, so as not to lose his compensation.” (Numb. 27:18) “Take Joshua bin Nun,” in order to fulfill what is stated (in Prov. 27:18), “He who tends a fig tree will enjoy its fruit.”</p>	<p>(טז) [יד] יפקד ה', מה רצה לבקש הדבֿר הזה אחר סדר נחלות, אלא כִּיִּן שִׁירְשׁוּ בנות צִלְפַּחַד אֲבִיהֶן, אָמַר מֹשֶׁה הֲרֵי הַשְּׁעָה שְׁאֲתַבַּע בָּהּ צָרְכִי, אִם הַבָּנוֹת יוֹרְשׁוֹת בְּדִין הוּא שִׁירְשׁוּ בְּנֵי אֶת כְּבוֹדִי. אָמַר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא (משלי כ"ז:י"ח): נֹצֵר תְּאֵנָה יֹאכַל פְּרִיָּהּ, בְּנֵיהּ יֵשְׁבוּ לָהֶם וְלֹא עֲסָקוּ בַתּוֹרָה, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הֲרַבָּה שְׂרָתָהּ וְהֲרַבָּה חֵלֶק לָהּ כְּבוֹד, וְהוּא הֵיךָ מְשָׁפִים וּמַעְרִיב בְּבֵית הַנֹּעֵד שְׁלָף, הוּא הֵיךָ מְסַדֵּר אֶת הַסִּפְסָלִים, וְהוּא פּוֹרֵס אֶת הַמַּחְצָלָאוֹת, הוֹאִיל וְהוּא שְׂרָתָהּ בְּכָל כַּחוֹ, כְּדָאֵי הוּא שִׁישְׁמַשׁ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂאִינוּ מֵאֲבָד שְׁכָרוֹ, (במדבר כ"ז:י"ח): קַח לָהּ אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן נּוּן, לְקַיֵּם מֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: נֹצֵר תְּאֵנָה יֹאכַל פְּרִיָּהּ.</p>
<p>Another interpretation of (Numb. 27:16) “Let the Lord, appoint”: A parable: A king saw an orphan woman [and] sought to take her for him as a wife. He sent to seek her. She said, “I am not worthy to marry the king.” He sent to seek her seven times, but she did not allow it. In the end she married him. After a time, the king was angry with her and sought to divorce her. She said, “I did not seek to be married to you; you sought me. Since this is so and you have decreed to divorce me and to take another, do not do to that one like what you did to me.” So is it with the Holy One, blessed be He: R. Samuel the son of Nahmani said, “The Holy One, blessed be He, tried for seven days to persuade Moses from the midst of the burning bush, but Moses replied, (in Exod. 4:13), ‘Send please, whomever you will send’; (ibid. 4:10) ‘I am not a man of words, neither yesterday nor the day before.’ This indicates seven days. After time, the Holy One, blessed be He persuaded him; and he went as His agent; and He did all of those miracles through him. In the end, He said to him (in Numb. 20:12), ‘You shall not bring.’ Moses said, ‘Master of the world, (as in Deut. 3:24), “You who let Your servant see the first works of Your greatness, etc.” Since this is so [and] You have decreed against me, do not do like what You did to me to the one that will go in. Rather (as in Numb. 27:17), ‘Who shall go out before them and</p>	<p>[טז] דָּבַר אַחֵר: יִפְקֹד ה' – מְשַׁל לְמַלְךְ שֶׁרָאָה אִשָּׁה אֶחָת יְתוּמָה, בִּקֵּשׁ לְטַל אוֹתָהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה, שְׁלַח לְתַבְעָהּ, אָמְרָה אֵינִי כְּדָאֵי לְהַנְשֵׂא לְמַלְךְ, שְׁלַח לְתַבְעָהּ שִׁבַּע פְּעָמִים, וְלֹא הִיָּתָה מְבַקֶּשֶׁת, לְסוּף נִשְׂאָת לוֹ. לְאַחֵר זְמַן כָּעֵס עָלֶיהָ הִמְלִיךָ וּבִקֵּשׁ לְגַרְשָׁהּ, אָמְרָה אֲנִי לֹא בִקֵּשְׁתִּי לְהַנְשֵׂא לָךְ אֶתָּה בִקֵּשְׁתָּ אוֹתִי, הוֹאִיל וְכָךְ גִּזְרַת לְגַרְשֵׁנִי וְלְטַל אַחֲרָת, אַל תַּעֲשֶׂה לְזוֹ כְּשֵׁם שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לִּי. כִּד הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי שִׁבְעָה יָמִים הֵיךָ מִפְתָּהוּ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שִׁלַּח בְּשְׁלִיחוֹתָו, וְהֵיךָ אוֹמֵר לוֹ (שמות ד':י"ג): שְׁלַח נָא בְּיַד תִּשְׁלַח, (שמות ד':י'): לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם מִתְּמוֹל גַּם מִשְׁלָשִׁים, הֲרֵי שִׁבְעָה יָמִים, לְאַחֵר זְמַן פִּיִּסוּ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְהִלְךְ בְּשְׁלִיחוֹתוֹ וְעָשָׂה כָּל אוֹתוֹ הַנְּסִים עַל יְדוֹ, בְּסוּף אָמַר לוֹ (במדבר כ"ז:י"ב): לֹא תָבִיאוּ, אָמַר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה רַבּוֹנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, אֲנִי לֹא בִקֵּשְׁתִּי לְהִלְךְ, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר (דברים ג':כ"ד): אֶתָּה הַחַלּוֹת לְהִרְאוֹת אֶת עַבְדְּךָ וְגו', הוֹאִיל וְכָךְ גִּזְרַת עָלַי, אוֹתוֹ שִׁכְנַס אֵל</p>

come in before them.”	מעש לו כְּדָרָךְ שְׁעֵשִׂיתָ לִי, אֱלֹא (במדבר כ"ז:י"ז): אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבֵא לְפָנֵיהֶם.
“and lay your hand upon him,” like one who lights a candle from a candle. (Numb 27:20) “Invest him with your majesty,” like one who pours from one vessel to another vessel.	וְסִמַּקְתָּ אֶת יָדְךָ עָלָיו – כְּמִדְּלִיק נֵר מִנֵּר. (כ) וְנִתְתָּה מִהוֹדֶךָ – כְּמִעֲרָה מִכְּלִי לְכָלִי.

6. Bechor Shor 27:12

Because above it spoke of the topic of inheritance, as it is written, “when a man dies,” it juxtaposes here the death of Moses.”	עלה אל הר העברים – לפי שדיבר למעלה בפרשת נחלה, כדכתיב בה: איש כי ימות (במדבר כ"ז:ח'), סמך כאן מיתה של משה.
--	--

7. Netziv 27:12

“Mount Avarim” - For it has two sides, on one side was for Israel, and on the other belonged to Moab, as we will explain.	(יב) הר העברים – שיש לו שני עברים, מצד אחד היה לישראל ומצד השני היה שייך למואב, כמו שנתבאר בספר דברים (לב, מט).
---	---

.8

9. Vezot Ha-berakha | Seeing the Land from Mount Nevo, R. Itiel Gold

<https://www.etzion.org.il/en/tanakh/torah/sefer-devarim/parashat-vezot-haberakha/mabato-shel-moshe>

(R Itiel Gold)

Moshe's ascent of the mountain takes place just before the conquest of the land begins. As mentioned, it is also connected to the beginning of the leadership of Yehoshua, whose role is to immediately begin taking possession of the land. This connection, between Moshe's ascent of the mountain and the war under the leadership of Yehoshua, evokes an obvious association with Israel's war against Amalek at the end of *Parashat Beshalach* (*Shemot 17:8-13*). There too, Moshe and Yehoshua play different roles: Moshe goes up to the top of the hill, while Yehoshua goes out to lead the people in war. Moshe performs a spiritual activity of connecting to God on the mountain, helping the people below to succeed in the physical war. Perhaps a similar process is taking place here as well: Moshe's spiritual vision was not meant to help him, as the Ramban explained, but to help Israel take possession of the land.