

# דברי מנחם

*Diarei Menachem*

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In Parshat Pinchas we observe how Moshe's successor came to be. At first glance, we might have expected that the mantle of leadership would be passed on to Moshe's sons. All the more so because the Midrash comments that the question of Moshe's successor followed on directly from the Laws of Inheritance: Yes! This could have been just the right opportunity for Moshe to make a pitch for his sons.

Maybe - but to cite the Midrash again: G-d told Moshe, "Your sons idled away their time and did not study Torah; but, as for Yehoshua, he ministered you and apportioned you much honor... Take Yehoshua the son of Nun..."

Actually, Moshe's sons were never granted any appointments at all. And, in truth, there is no overt suggestion in Moshe's prayers that his sons should take over from him. On the contrary, it appears that Moshe's only concern was that the congregation not be as sheep without a shepherd.

It appears that the Torah does not see either leadership or Torah wisdom as something naturally passed on from father to son. Appropriately, then, Rabbi Yossi advised: "Perfect yourself for the study of Torah, for it is not an inheritance to you (Avot 2:12). And concerning leadership, the Torah has given us a clear directive that anticipated the wise King Shlomo who proffered this dictum: "Whosoever keeps the tree, [he] shall eat the fruit thereof" (Mishlei 27:18).

