

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Leadership...

Leadership Lessons from Someone Who Knew When to Let Go

By Yonatan Hambourger and Tzali Reicher

Echos from Sinai
"Torah for Everyone"
Rabbi Yonatan Hambourger



Leaders in all walks of life would do well to learn from how Moses transferred leadership of the Jewish people to Joshua, 3,300 years ago.

After 40 years of leading a nation, Moses knew he wouldn't be able to guide the Jewish people back into the Land of Israel, since he had been told by G-d that he wouldn't enter the Promised Land. In the book of Numbers, Chapter 27, Moses asked G-d to anoint a new leader so the people wouldn't be like a flock without a shepherd. G-d instructed Moses to appoint Joshua, his devoted student. Moses then presented Joshua to the people and publicly showed him honor, ensuring that everyone recognized Joshua as the legitimate new leader. Then, Joshua would consult the High Priest's breastplate known as the "Heavenly Code," demonstrating in front of all the people that G-d approved of his new status. Thus, it was clear for all to see that Joshua was the right person for the job, and that G-d would be with him. This ensured a smooth and easy succession process that the people could be confident in.

There are some clear and applicable lessons we can apply in today's day and age.

A true sign of leadership and strength of character is the willingness to pass on the torch by empowering others, assuming they are actually up to the job.

In our society, too often we see those entrusted with leadership hold on to their positions for far too long, long after they have lost the ability to exercise wise counsel and sound judgment. This is true in politics, in business, in academia, in sports, and even in the clergy. While typically leaders exhibit a profound sense of service and humility, some become seduced by their power and they covet honor and prestige, not knowing how to exit gracefully, until they are unceremoniously pushed out. By contrast, Moses, sensing that his time was near, and without anyone calling for his ouster, took the initiative and approached G-d to begin the succession conversation. He made the move of his own accord, well before he had to, and sought higher counsel on who his replacement should be, proving that the truly was all about serving the people, never seeking status or renown. This is true leadership.

But what lessons in leadership in this portion of Torah are there for the rest of us who are not corporate titans or world leaders? For that, we must look to the opening of the Book of Numbers, Chapter 25, when Phinehas saw one of the 12 tribal leaders publicly sinning. Without thinking twice, Phinehas charged through this leader's loyalists and exacted the punishment G-d had prescribed for people who commit such a sin. For doing this, Phinehas was honored with an exalted leadership position within the priesthood.

Phinehas wasn't particularly noticed before he acted on behalf of G-d. Yet, when he saw a supposed "leader" doing something wrong, while those who should've known better were unwilling or unable to stop it, with self-sacrifice and courage he did the right thing. Not because he had to, not because it was expected of him, and not because he sought honor and recognition for it. Rather, Phinehas stood up because it was what the situation demanded.

Here and now in the United States, we have the ability to express our G-d given First Amendment rights to always stand up for what's right, no matter what those in power say. And our incredible political system ensures we have the choice every two, four, and six years to elect wise leaders, who are humble enough to know when to stand up and lead, and when it's time to stand down.

It is our responsibility to use our power to appoint and empower leaders that heed our age-old Biblical leadership principles.

Yonatan Hambourger and Tzali Reicher are writers and rabbis serving communities throughout the regional South.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

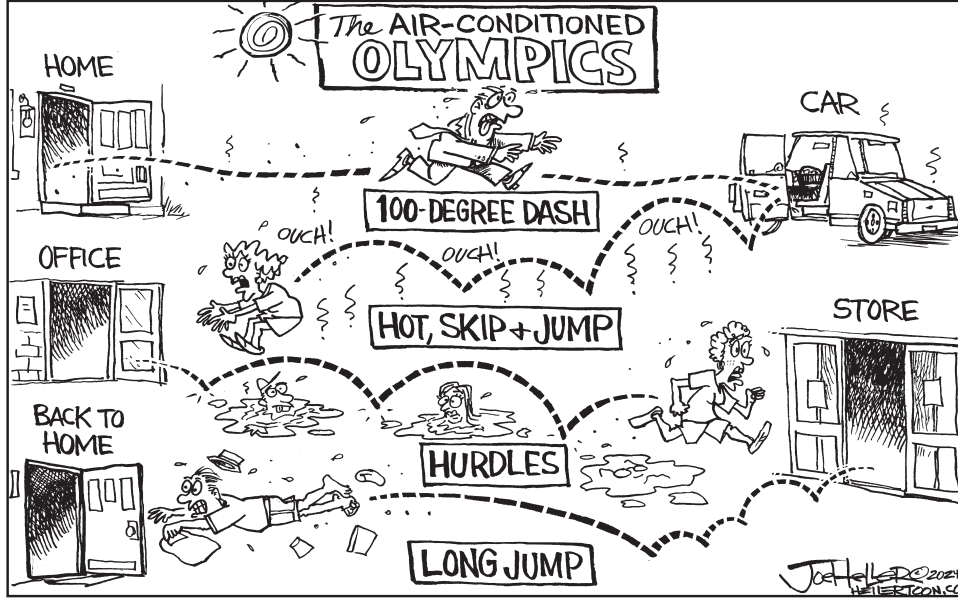
Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor
P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546
Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net

Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc. Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*

Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

Towns County Community Calendar

First Monday of each month: School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
Every Tuesday: Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month: Hiaw. City Council... City Hall YH City Council... YH City Hall	6 pm 6:30 pm
Second Wednesday of each month: Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
Third Monday of each month: Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month: Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse City of Young Harris Planning Commission...	5:30 pm
Meeting Room in City Hall	5 pm
TC Water Authority Board Meeting	6 pm



Chiggers

Chiggers are most active during the spring, summer, and early fall. If you haven't been bitten, then consider yourself fortunate, because you live a blessed life. Let's talk about chiggers, what they are, and what you can do to protect yourself from them.

Some people call chiggers red bugs because they are tiny red mites that are less than 1/50th of an inch long. Chigger are mites that are still in their larval stage. The larval stage is the only one that bites. The other stages of the chigger life cycle either lay eggs or prey on small insects. Chiggers like to live in areas that are full of brush and debris. They can be found in leaf litter. If you have areas with tall grass, they'll like that

UGA Extension
TOWNS COUNTY
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Through A Glass Darkly

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

It began with the bill from that famous online company that offers "free shipping" as one of the benefits of membership. Of course we can't tell you that Amazon is the name of the company, or that Walmart does the same thing, along with many others. You've probably noticed you can buy that gizmo for \$9.95 with free shipping, or scrolling down a bit you can get it from a third-party vendor for \$4.95 plus \$5 for shipping.

You'll notice the same math at the big box store's online site, where the cost of the item you pick up in the store is about half of the cost of the item shipped "freely" to your front door. There is no such thing as free shipping. Someone should do a study.

I read studies. I was about to say, "I like reading studies," but that isn't exactly true. It takes effort, especially when the field is not one with which you are familiar. But the alternative, if one is to be informed, is to take at more or less face value the claims of the professional talkers and information peddlers, and to paraphrase George Carlin, news organizations are just billboards for the companies that own them.

We see through a glass darkly. What we think we know, we remember from what we have read or heard or experienced, layer upon layer of interpretation of what our senses tell us. Even the scientific study is an interpretation of the data, an interpretation influenced by cognitive bias, and often by whoever paid for the study. The study, however, has the thinnest covering of layers of interpretation, unlike, for example, a news billboard reporting on the opinions of celebrities.

Perhaps the biggest motivation behind the scientific study is a sincere seeking after truth, even when we discount for "tobacco science" and the polls which oversample certain groups in an effort to encourage political momentum.

We can also eliminate the studies motivated by grant money which, if you follow government expenditures, turn out to be quite numerous. Consider The U.S. Department of Defense spending \$283,500 on a special unit dedicated to monitoring gnatcatchers, or The National Science Foundation receiving \$856,000 to study if lions could be trained to walk on treadmills. The National Institutes of Health funded a \$592,527 study to explain why chimpanzees throw their feces. Perhaps they were trying to gain a better understanding of the political process.

Yet even without these examples of studies which do not appear to be particularly motivated by a desire to discover truth, the quest remains a prime motivator for scientists, researchers, and average citizens who are no less truth-seekers than the professionals.

Which brings us to the study we offer this week for your consideration. It was conducted by Patrick Fagan of the University of the Arts in London and it's titled, "Clicks and Tricks: The Dark Art of Online Persuasion." The study addresses the practice of "nudging," which is a psychological technique to "influence people's judgment, choices, or behavior in a predictable way...It works by leveraging cognitive boundaries, biases, routines, and habits to guide individuals toward certain decisions or actions."

Here are some examples: Fake scarcity - Only 3 left in stock. Fake social proof - 3247 five-star reviews. Confirm shaming - Click here if you don't want to save 25% on your next purchase. Roach motel tactics - It was easy to subscribe to this service but there's no link for unsubscribing. Roadblocks - Up to 30 days required to be removed from this mailing list. Disguised ads - instead of closing the popup window the button opens a new webpage.

The list is quite long, and it underlines the extensive amount of research and effort which goes into designing an online experience that has a better chance of separating us from the money in our banking accounts.

Nudging, along with logical fallacies, gaslighting, and other psychological methods designed to acquire our money and our votes, are nothing new, but their effects are magnified and accelerated by information technology. And that brings us back to the studies. Nothing mentioned in the "dark arts" study is outside the boundaries of common sense, and this is true for many of the studies one can find that are circulating between cyberspace and our institutions.

It appears that our culture is experiencing a crisis of common sense. The necessity of scientific studies to confirm the fundamental knowledge held by a community suggests that the very bedrock of that society is unstable. This brings to mind Hannah Arendt's observation from last week: "The purpose of constant lying is not to convince people of a falsehood, but to create a state where nobody believes anything at all."

Guest Columns

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper.

If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

too. Chiggers mainly bite rodents and rabbits. So, if you have areas that make a good habitat for rodents and rabbits then there is a good chance that you'll have mites as well. Female mites will lay their eggs in the late winter, which will hatch in the spring. Chiggers will reach peak population in mid-summer and remain active until fall. They'll be killed off by a hard freeze.

Chiggers only bite, they don't bury under the skin. When they bite they inject their saliva which has a skin dissolving enzyme in it. As your skin cells dissolve, they drink it up. The saliva that they inject causes irritation, which makes you itch. Chiggers can stay latched on for three or more days, so if you have a chigger bite it's best to wash that spot with lather repeatedly, and then dab the spot with an antiseptic. That will kill most of the chiggers on you.

Chiggers typically like to bite in tight places. That means you'll often get their bites underneath your socks, in your waistband, or armpits.

Chiggers are susceptible to dehydration. Therefore, they like to populate areas with shade and high humidity. Removing brush piles and leaves, keeping grass cut, and removing bushes will eliminate areas that they like to live. Blackberry bushes seem to be a particularly favorite habitat. Chiggers don't like temperatures over 90 (I don't blame them), so when our temperatures drop as summer ends, chiggers will become more active.

There are some chemicals that can be used as repellents or to kill chiggers. Products containing DEET will be effective at repelling chiggers, mosquitoes, biting flies, gnats, and ticks. You can also spray it on your clothing to keep them off your clothes. Oil of lemon eucalyptus can be used as a repellent, except for children under 3 years old. Products containing permethrin can be used on clothing to kill chiggers and ticks.

Chiggers are very aggravating to have, but hopefully this article has given you some options for how to deal with chigger bites and how to prevent them from getting on you. If you have questions about chiggers contact your county Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters To The Editor

Thank You to EMS

Dear Editor,

On July 15 I had a stroke. I could have died or lived the rest of my life as an invalid. But thanks to God, my wife, and a very prompt and efficient EMS, I have recovered fully.

Towns County EMS arrived within six minutes of my wife's call to 911. Five men entered my home, all knowing exactly what to do. None of them fumbled or faltered. Their professionalism and quick action got me immediately on a helicopter and headed to Northeast Georgia Medical Center. Since EMS contacted the hospital at the onset, once there I was taken into surgery quickly to remove a large blood clot.

Thank you, Towns County EMS, for a job well done. You played a huge part in saving my life. Towns county is blessed to have such a well-trained and dependable emergency team. Indeed, they were a blessing to me. And thanks also goes to Commissioner Bradshaw for providing a free emergency helicopter. Yet another fantastic blessing of living in Towns County.

William "Scotty" Scott

When is enough, enough?

Dear Editor,

No doubt about it, Towns and Union Counties are wonderful places to visit or live. Having lived in the area for 20-plus years, I still tell everyone that "we got here as quick as we could." In the past couple of years, there has been a huge population surge. Campgrounds are packed and overflowing, with some of the campers and RVs parked only a few feet apart. Campers are appearing next to houses and seem to be set up permanently. From my observations, a lot of the people camping here are here full-time. The beautiful mountains and lakes in the area, the fine restaurants, the concerts and fairs, the festivals and rodeos are great reasons for wanting to visit or even move here.

Local governments may enjoy the additional income from the sales tax generated by our visitors, but is it enough to maintain our infrastructure? The area traffic has become horrific. The sheer number of people, at any given moment, could challenge the resources of our law enforcement, our fire department or our emergency medical services.

I don't have a solution that's viable, but the reality of the situation definitely needs to be examined.

Gene Vickers

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