

## *Hukkat*

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Shabbat Shalom!

In this week's portion, *Hukkat*, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying "You and your brother Aaron take the rod and assemble the community and before their very eyes order the rock to yield its water." If Moses and his brother had done this there would be water for drinking for the congregation and their animals. Moses took his rod, and instead of speaking to the rock, he struck the rock twice. Although copious water did come out they did not follow the order of the Lord, so the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron again telling them that because they did not have trust in him they could not lead the congregation into the land He had given them.

*Hukkat* teaches us a great lesson, to trust our leaders. From his own previous interactions with God, Moses should have trusted in Him; for example, when God split the sea, and led Moses and the people into freedom and safety from Pharaoh, or when he had been taught God's teachings on Mt. Sinai. If Moses had just simply followed the Lord's command he could have led the congregation into the Promised Land.

A time in my life when I had to put my trust in someone was when I donated my hair. For seven years I had been growing my hair out and I loved my long locks. Everybody told me that short hair could look just as nice as long hair. At first though, I wasn't sure, but I put my trust in my mom and others who had given me the same advice, and I cut and donated my hair for a person in need. I was very pleased with the way my hair turned out and best of all I had done a mitzvah for somebody else. For my Mitzvah project I will be cutting my hair again and hosting an event on June 29<sup>th</sup> called "A Donation from your Head, A Mitzvah from your Heart". For anybody interested in participating who has at least 10 inches of hair to donate, your contribution really counts. All the hair will be donated directly to the Locks of Love organization and used to make wigs for patients who have lost their hair due to medical conditions. At the Kiddush after services today, you will find a flyer on the tables concerning the event, including all the details and contact information.

Unlike Moses, I had trust in my leaders and things did turn out well. If Moses had the same trust in the Lord he, with his brother Aaron would have been able to enter the land of Israel, and continue to be leaders to the people.

Holding trust in wise, trustworthy leaders will make you successful. There is a time to question authority, though, if their command does not seem reasonable or ethical. For example, in the Holocaust, the authoritative position was held by a man who did not have very reasonable or ethical commands. If people had questioned him, we would have been a lot better off. In my opinion Moses was given many reasons to trust God.

There are many people to thank for making this special day happen. First, I would like to thank Rabbi Small for helping me with this d'var torah, Cantor Cohn for teaching me the torah readings and prayers for today and throughout the years, and all my Hebrew school teachers. Next, I would like to thank my brother Corey for always being there for me and being the best friend anybody could have. My parents have brought this whole day together, and everything they do for me really counts! Mom, you have driven me here every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday for the past year, which I really appreciate. Dad, you study with me every night, and that has gotten me to the place I am today. I want to thank both of you for teaching me the lessons of life, and guiding me along the way. Finally, I would like everyone here today to know that it means a lot to me and my family that you are here to celebrate with me. Now please turn to page 880 in the big red book.