

B”H, Tevet 5786

Dear Michael,

The world recognizes various styles of leadership. There is the leadership of Moshe Rabbeinu, a leader who answered a divine call with profound humility and self-nullification, albeit with reluctance, while delegating authority to Yitro, the Elders, and Yehoshua. This was pure spiritual leadership, destined to lead the people to the threshold of the Land, though he himself would not enter it. He was followed by Yehoshua, a mission-driven leader tasked with the conquest and physical establishment of the Land, a transitional leader, like those who followed him.

Above them all stands the figure of King David, the ultimate leader who harmonized spirit and action, balancing the establishment of sovereignty with the founding of the permanent Bet Hamikdash. He was a leader who shaped the nation's identity through a unique blend of authority, service, and humility, for eternity.

Every worthy leader carries within them a spark of Moshe, a measure of Yehoshua, and a touch of David.

Over the past decade, we have faced three monumental challenges: a divisive political crisis, the global COVID-19 pandemic, and security crises that culminated in "Guardian of the Walls," the events of October 7th, and the long, difficult war that followed. Each of these carried the potential to fracture our community, whether through ideological rifts, physical fear, or the isolation forced upon us.

Amidst these storms, we were fortunate to have you, Michael, at our helm. During these years, we learned how vital wise leadership is at the communal level. You stood in the breach in a wondrous way: managing security and patrols during dark days, organizing the community under the restrictions of the pandemic, and tenaciously guarding our unity by preventing the politicization of our community.

We all feel that Divine Providence provided us with a wise leader—a man of spirit who knows how to stand his ground, yet consults with and respects every individual.

Thank you, Michael. We are certain that the path you paved and your positive influence will continue to resonate within our community for years to come. Thank you for the countless hours, your deep caring, your concern for both the individual and the collective, and for your personal example of quiet, serious, and modest leadership.

We wish Alex Pomson great success as he assumes this role, with a prayer that we will not be faced with such harrowing challenges again. May it be His will that he continues this path in tranquility, and that together we merit prosperity, peace, and the growth of Torah.

With great appreciation and in friendship,

Shlomo Vilk