

NASO**Friday, June 1st, 2012**

12th Sivan

Global Responsibility

To what extent are we as individuals responsible for all Jewish people. After all we all have our family, friends and community which pre occupies most of our time and resources. Besides, how could we realistically add value in the lives of others beyond our immediate sphere.

This dilemma applies to all people, both leaders and ordinary people alike. For the underlying question is how we do as Jews view ourselves in relation to other Jews. How integral are the particular Jewish groups and organisations to which we belong, in relation to our connection with the Jewish people as a whole. In other words; how much do each of us as individuals have in common with other Jews of other affiliations.

At the dedication of the tabernacle in the desert over there thousand years ago - the first collective act of Jewish philanthropy - the leaders of each tribe offered up to G-d both sacrifices and a prayer on behalf of their respective tribes. However as the Torah recounts each and every one of these great leaders prefaced this particular effort on behalf of their constituents, with a collective prayer on behalf of all the Jewish people.

This coming together of the leaders of all the tribes, notwithstanding their differences, is a powerful demonstration of genuine leadership, which must serve as an inspiration to each and every one of their descendents at all times.

On the one hand we each have our strong particular views about Jewish life and the extent of our responsibilities, which for the most part are genuine. We have gained this insight from our parents (grandparents) and teachers albeit through our own unique prism. However it is vital that we must all remember that what lies at the core of our existence as a people throughout history is that powerful sense of oneness, rooted in our common history and our collective destiny.

And this truth has never been more real than in our day and age when all localised phenomena is fast fading, turning into a globalised version. This is true in all facets of our existence including and especially in human relationships. This is especially true with regard to the identity each and every one of us in the individual sense which effect the collective character of the Jewish people. No longer can we pretend that we as Jews have individual destinies.

This notion has powerful ramifications with regard to the scale of influence that each of us can have in a positive way. Never before in history can an individual of any age impact so many beyond their conventional social circle. Never in our long and illustrious history can we as individual Jews - whoever we are, wherever we are – live our lives both in spirit and action according to that most noble of Jewish ideals, “all Jews are responsible for each other”.

By Yosef Vogel

Friday 1st June

Naso

Shabbat Begins: 20.54pm

Shabbat Ends: 22.13pm