

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT VA'ERA

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Did Moshe have good rizz?



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The Oxford English Dictionary word of the year for 2023 was 'rizz'. As this is the Tribe Weekly, I assume I do not need to explain the meaning of this term, but just in case (or for any older readers of this column), this can be roughly understood as a shortening of the word 'charisma', or a replacement for the Millennial term 'chat'.

Over the course of the Torah's narrative at the start of the Book of Shemot (Exodus), it becomes clear Moshe (Moses) was an exceptionally talented leader. Rambam (Maimonides, 1135-1204) includes the belief in Moshe's status as the greatest of the prophets as

one of his fundamental principles of Jewish faith. Naturally, it is extremely important to determine whether or not Moshe had good rizz.

Looking at the depiction of Moshe at the very start of this week's parasha, we see Moshe's reluctance to take on the mantle of leadership, complaining to God that he gets "tongue tied" (Shemot 6:30). Similarly, just a few verses earlier, Moshe's self-doubt is clear, "If the Israelites would not listen to me, how should Pharaoh heed me?" (v.12). Being inarticulate and filled with self-doubt, the case for Moshe's rizz is difficult to make here.

So how come he is such a good leader? Surely this lack of rizz held him back?

The answer is clear - rizz must not be a necessity in being an effective leader. There must be something else at the heart of Moshe's capabilities.

Moshe's strongest attribute, and

the key to his leadership, was his humility. Without the need for rizz, Moshe changed the world through his humility.

Humility itself is the most personal of virtues, it is entirely an internal struggle. Whilst it may seem counterintuitive that this can be a vehicle for leading change, Moshe clearly exemplifies how humility translates into leadership. As the narrative develops over the Torah portions of the next few weeks, we learn how Moshe's patience and ability to listen cement his status as the ultimate Jewish role model.

Clearly, great leadership is not about who is most charismatic, forceful or loud. Rather, the way to enact change in the world comes from having the humility to listen to others and translate that into thoughtfulness and common understanding.

Parasha Magic!

The Egyptian magicians tried to recreate God's miracles in this week's parasha. Can you help the magician find what he has lost? Unscramble the names of the plagues to reveal the missing item!



1 **STOCLUS**

2 **AHIL**

3 **IESPNEELTC**

4 **CIEL**

