

AND YOU WILL SEE*

וְאַתָּה תִּחְזֶה מִכָּל־הָעָם אֲנָשֵׁי־חַיִל
יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲנָשֵׁי אֱמֶת שׂוֹנְאֵי בָצַע
וְשִׂמְתָּ עֲלֵהֶם שָׂרֵי אֲלָפִים שָׂרֵי מְאוֹת
שָׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשָׂרֵי עֶשְׂרֹת:

And you will see out of all the people able men [and women],
God-fearing men [and women], men [and women] of truth, hating unjust gain;
and you will place [such people] over them [B'nai Yisrael],
[to be] rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,
rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

And you will see—You will know through vision from God those who are to be leaders; and through those leaders you will see the power of B'nai Yisrael. *Out of all the people*—From among those “nominated by the people themselves” (S.R. Hirsch), you shall confirm the leaders. *Able men and women*—They will have both physical and moral stamina, willingness to listen to all the people, and not be intimidated by the more powerful. *Men [and women] of truth*—They will be the ones upon whom the people may rely, and thus they will be followed. *Hating unjust gain*—They will reject personal enrichment gained at the expense of another by the threat or doing of evil. *And you will place [such people] over them [B'nai Yisrael]*—As My prophet you will consecrate them to their tasks of judging and teaching, all of them accessible to the people and thus holding one another accountable. *[To be] rulers of thousands*—You shall confirm those whose vision and capacities, like your own, extend to the well-being of Klal Yisrael. *Rulers of hundreds*—You shall confirm those who can teach and apply the law while respecting the uniqueness of each community. *Rulers of fifties*—You shall confirm those who shall hear the first appeals and thus balance the demands of both order, which requires the upholding the decisions of lesser judges, and disorder, which results from confirming unjust judgements. *And rulers of tens*—And you shall confirm those whose judging and teaching shall be face-to-face, as Mine has been with you, with each and every one of My people.

* Exodus 18:21 (in Yitro)