

Lesson of Nachshon

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Source:

Imagine you are standing on the bank of the sea of reeds and you look forward and all you see is water. Suddenly, you look behind you and you see the Egyptian army quickly approaching you. The Israelites pled to Moses and Moses spoke to God. God told Moses, raise your staff over the water and I will split the seas. So Moses did, and nothing happened.

Suddenly a man named Nachshon started walking into the water. The water was up to his knees...no splitting. The water rose up to his waste...no splitting. The water was up to his chest...still no splitting. Not until the water was under Nachshon's nose did the sea split and all the Israelites walked across singing Micah Mocha and praising G-d.

A lot of people interpret that the miracles of this story were the result of G-d being a show off and trying to demonstrate his powers. I take it another way, I say that G-d just needed people to believe in him and then he came through. The message of this story is that we need to take action before God helps us. We need to take the first step into the "sea" because G-d won't help us until we try to help ourselves, our world, and our community.

However, some commentators suggest that maybe Nachshon was pushed into the sea and didn't necessarily intend on becoming a leader. He was just some random guy who was at the right place at the right time. In this scenario, Nachshon becomes a hero for something he wasn't even intending on doing. I personally like the idea of Nachshon being a leader and coming out of the crowd, standing along the banks, and deciding to step into the water without anyone else having anything to do with it.

In real life, we have a little of both. We are often put into the position of the Nachshon who was *pushed*, and into the shoes of the Nachshon that *walked*. We often try to be the brave Nachshon that walks into the water, but we are really the Nachshon that was pushed. Regardless of what you believe, we can all realize that most often we are somewhere in the middle of being pushed and walking intentionally.