

פ' ויחי • PARASHAT VAYECHI

11th of Tevet 5771 • December 118, 2010 • Shabbat Begins: 3:55pm • Shabbat Ends: 5:03pm

**PARNESS HAYOM
 TEVET**

These Days of Learning have been dedicated to the memory of the following by members of their family.

21 Tevet

Stanley Yetnikoff in memory of Isaac Babad (Yitzchak ben Moshe Yisrael z'l)

21 Tevet

Aron Lieberman in memory of his father, Laizer Lieberman (Lazer ben Meir Kolominis z'l)

22 Tevet

Philip Cola in memory of his father, Lemel Cola (Asher Lemel ben Fishel HaKohen z'l)

23 Tevet

Aron Lieberman in memory of his mother, Raizel Lieberman (Raizel bat Aharon z'l)

27 Tevet

Avrum, Joseph & Louis Drazin memory of their father, Samuel Drazin Shmuel Shlomo ben Aharon, z'l)

For more information on the KTM Parness Hayom Project, please call our office at 514 486 5718.



"והיה אלקים עמכם והשיב אתכם אל ארץ אבותיכם"

"And God shall be with you and return you to the land of your forefathers"

As Yaakov Avinu blesses Yosef's two sons, Efrayim and Menashe, he gives precedence to the blessing of the younger brother, Efrayim, by crossing his hands such that his right hand is placed on Efrayim's head, whereas the left hand rests on the head of Menashe. Yosef wants his father to switch his hands, saying, "Not so, my father, for this one [Menashe] is the older son – place your right [hand] upon his head" (Bereishit 48:19).

Yaakov, however, insists that his right hand must rest upon Efrayim's head: "His father refused, and said: I know my son, I know. He [Menashe], too, shall become a nation and he, too, shall be great, but his younger brother shall exceed him in greatness, and his offspring shall fill the nations" (48:20). Rashi explains that the tribe of Efrayim produced Yehoshua bin Nun, who led the conquest of *Eretz Yisrael* and taught Torah to the nation. Additionally, the entire world was filled with faith in God when Yehoshua achieved widespread fame by causing the sun to stay in its place in Givon, and the moon in the Ayalon Valley. Although the tribe of Menashe produced Gidon, through whom the Almighty performed a great miracle, Gidon's achievements paled in comparison to those of Yehoshua, who captured the land and taught Torah.


Our generation, which has settled in *Eretz Yisrael* after two millennia which our nation spent in the "desert" of exile, corresponds to the generation of Yehoshua, who led *Benei Yisrael* in seizing and settling land after the Egyptian exile and forty years of wandering in the desert. Just as Yehoshua captured the land and taught Torah to *Am Yisrael*, and even the sun and the moon joined in this sacred effort by standing still during the battle in Givon and the Ayalon Valley – the same is true of *Am Yisrael* as they return to their land. This process impacts upon all of humanity, and upon all of creation, in ways that are both

clear and concealed. All humanity senses that every event in Israel affects the entire earth, because "Israel is like the heart among the nations" (*Sefer Hakuzari*, 2). Everything that happens to the heart affects everything else. This accounts for the grossly disproportionate attention that is paid to the State of Israel throughout the world.

But besides the capture of the land and the establishment of the State of Israel, Torah study – and especially Torah study in *Eretz Yisrael* – also affects the entire world. *Chazal* teach the Torah refers to the sixth day of creation as *יום הששי*, with an extra letter ה (which represents the number five), to allude to the condition on which God created the world: "If Israel accepts the Torah [which contains five books], then you will endure; if not, then I will bring you back to your primordial state of nothingness!"

How fortunate we are to see with our own eyes the Jewish people's return to their land and to the Torah, in fulfillment of Yaakov's prophecy to his sons, והיה אלקים עמכם והשיב אתכם אל ארץ אבותיכם ("God shall be with you and return you to the land of your forefathers" – 48:21).

Shabbat Shalom, Rav Nadav Levin, KTM



A special time just for you!

WOMEN'S BEIT MIDRASH

with Rav Nadav Levin
 Tuesday, December 21
 Topic: On the Merit of our Righteous Women

**9:30 am @Kollel Torah MiTzion
 5700 Kellert Ave. Cote St. Luc**



Tehilim Group
 completion of the entire Book of Tehilim, and prayer for those who are ill.
 Tus. 10:30 am

TRIBUTE CARDS

With your donation of \$18.00 or more KTM will send a card to mark the occasion of a birth, anniversary, engagement, marriage, speedy recovery, holiday greetings, birthday, or in memory of.

The Living Beit Midrash
A Vibrant Community Learns Together

MONDAYS—THURSDAYS, 8-10PM (MAARIV 9PM)
For more information on other learning opportunities, please contact us.

Mondays, 8:30-9pm
Sefer HaKuzari with Rav Ido Tauber

Tuesdays, 8-9pm
Shiur Parashat Hashavua with Rav Nadav Levin

Tuesdays, 9:15-10pm
Masechet Brachot with Rav Nadav Levin (HEBREW)



**KTM Bachurim's Corner
by Moshe Mendelson**

Several of Yaakov's blessings to his sons come in the form of sharp criticism. Reuven, as the firstborn, was initially entitled to inherit the leadership role, but forfeited this privilege through his misguided actions in the incident of Bilha. Yaakov thus turns to him and says, ראוּבֵן ("Reuven – you are my firstborn, my strength, the first product of my vigor, [you were to receive] special stature and special power"). Rashi explains, "יִתְרוֹ – you were worthy of being higher than your brothers through the priesthood – from the term נְשִׂאוֹת כְּפִים – and יִתְרוֹ – in kingship, as in "וַיִּתֵּן עֹז לְמַלְכוּתוֹ". In this verse, Yaakov emphasizes the potential that was latent within Reuven's character.

In the next verse, Yaakov describes Reuven's immense loss, how he failed to actualize his leadership potential: פָּחוּז כַּמַּיִם אֵל ("You were hasty like water – you shall not be privileged, for you rose upon the bed of your father; you then desecrated my couch which was mounted"). Rashi explains, "What caused you to lose all this? פָּחוּז כַּמַּיִם – the haste and frantic action, that you rushed to show your anger, like water which runs quickly. Therefore, אַל תִּתֵּר – you will not receive all these privileges to which you were entitled").

Reuven's impulsiveness and hasty decision-making, which stemmed from emotions of anger and loss of self-control, reflected his nature. Reuven did not sufficiently develop and cultivate his leadership ability – the central qualities of which is patience and moderation. He was therefore denied the privilege of being the leader of *Am Yisrael*. With Reuven there was a disparity between the potential and the actualization. He was indeed worthy of kingship, but through his mistaken decision he failed to realize this potential and bring it to fruition.

Naturally, it is the firstborn who deserves leadership; as the

first of the children, he deserves the role of leader. The leader is Hebrew is called the ראש ("head"), as in the verse וַיִּקְרֵבוּ נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רֵאשֵׁי בֵּית אֲבוֹתָם (Bamidbar 7:2). The deserving leader does not abandon his constituents and remain behind, but rather takes the front position in any task, in any operation, regardless of the dangers entailed.

The talents with which a person is blessed are not enough. If a child is born with rare musical talent, this talent will go to waste and have no effect on his life if he does not develop the talent through practice and training (for example, he will be unable to earn a living as a professional musician). Similarly, leadership talent that is not developed through concentrated, consistent efforts to perfect one's character – particularly the area of patience – will have no effect on the person's life, and will certainly not grant him the privilege of serving as a leader.

There are bright students who rely upon their natural wisdom and intellectual talent, and take tests without adequate, serious preparation, and in the end they earn mediocre grades in relation to their high academic potential. Even though their grades are considered high in comparison to other students, in relation to their personal potential – their grades are dismally low. A person is not evaluated in comparison with his colleagues' achievements, but rather in comparison with his personal capabilities, as expressed by the famous adage of Reb Zushe, "In the heavens they will not ask, 'Why were you not like Moshe Rabbenu?' but rather 'Why were you not like Zushe?'"

Each and every one of us has been graced with certain talents and skills. We must not view them as simply "a gift from the heaven," but rather as something which obligates us to act seriously and responsibly. We must live our lives with the awareness that if we've received these talents, we are obliged to invest effort and exert ourselves in order to develop them and bring our full potential to fruition – not to feel content with mediocrity, with "average" success, and to instead exhaust our potential to its very fullest.



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Executive Director: Eddie Shostak

Kollel Torah Mitzion has a faculty of graduates from Hesder Yeshivot in Israel who come here to serve as teachers and role models in our community. The core of the Kollel is the Beit Midrash which features a full schedule of classes as well as a drop-in center with a warm atmosphere where all, regardless of background, feel comfortable.