

KOL MEVASSER

Rabbi's Message When Do We "Tell it Like it Is"?

At end of the Book of Genesis, the Torah's narrative follows the life of Jacob to a close. Although his story has been eclipsed for several weeks by that of Joseph, he reemerges at the end of his days as the grand patriarch of Israel, and the entire 49th chapter of Genesis is devoted to the beautiful and dramatic moments of the deathbed blessings that he gives to his twelve sons.

In the example set by his father Isaac (Gen. 27:27-29), we see that an ideal blessing for a child should contain good wishes for their future, so that they can live in a state of wellbeing free from worry. Many of our sages interpret that such a life would allow the child an easier pathway to serving God as a loyal and sincere Jew. However, Isaac's example also demonstrates that the uncomfortable truths of real life can sometimes interfere with this ideal type of blessing, and that modifications can be made to suit an imperfect situation (Gen. 27:37-40).

Jacob seems to take his father's model to heart when he blesses his own sons, and each blessing is tailored to reflect his relationship with the relevant child and his moral assessment of their lives. While children such as Judah, Asher, and Joseph get classical blessings in which no apparent fault can be read, others including Reuben, Simeon, and Levy receive stiff doses of musar (moral censure) in their blessings. Since the blessings are delivered all at once, each son hears the others' blessings and can discern the family merits and faults from what is said.

Although we might think it harsh or insensitive of Jacob to do this, there is also great wisdom in his words. Because of social niceties – or simply out of fear of confrontation – it can be hard for us to "tell it like it is" to our friends and family. Instead of revealing our true concerns, we feel so paralyzed and inhibited that we never actually take care of business with people whom we love the most. This leaves behind a legacy of tension and distance between those with whom we would have liked to be relaxed and intimate, and that is a regrettable loss for everyone involved.

"Why not just let it out?" asks Jacob. Why not just tell people what you really think and spend your energy on what's actually going on between you? Wouldn't that be better than spending it on insulating people from ever knowing the truth about what you think? It is hard, and we do take a risk by putting ourselves out there, but perhaps that risk can sometimes be worth the potential payoff because it will enhance our relationships with those whom we cherish the most.

May we all take encouragement from the value of taking our skeletons out of the closet with our loved ones. Like Jacob, we should do it in a context of blessing, where it is clear that the goal of doing so is to bring us closer together. When the moment is right, may we all have the resolution to take the plunge and clear the air!

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Melhado

Parashat Vayhi
Completion of Sefer Bereshit
Torah: Gen. 47:28–50:26, 85 Pesukim
Hertz 180–191; Stone 268–289
Haftarah: I Kings 2:1–12
Hertz 191–192; Stone 1145–1146
Tefillot: Mashib Haruah (Birkat Halebanah cannot be made up after the 14th of Tebet)

KJ Schedule

Ereb Shabbat

Friday, December 25th

Shaharit 6:25 am
Minha..... 4:30 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting 4:31 pm
Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat.... 5:00 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, December 24th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer.. 8:30 am
Keri'at HaTorah 10:15 am
Musaf 11:30 am

Minhah..... 4:00 pm
Women's Tehillim 4:00 pm
Se'udah Shelisheet..... 5:00 pm

Arbit 5:20 pm
Habdallah 5:35 pm

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Norma & Sam Dabby Jewish Education Center

KJ Talmud Torah & Sunday School

Friends Creativity
Jewish Learning

For information contact
Mrs. Hanna Elkouby, Director
424-283-0893

We Want You to be a KJ Member!

Did you join us for one of KJ's community or holiday events? Have you enjoyed our wonderful new website, the Children's Room, High Holy Days, Rabbi Angel's Shabbaton or Dinner with the Rabbi? Consider joining us with an annual membership. Go to kahaljoseph.org or call 310.474.0559.



Thank You Kelly Family

Thank you to Hannie Kelly and Sigal & Jonathan Kelly for generously providing such lovable and fun toys for our students in KJ's Sunday morning Talmud Torah program. The gifts on Hanukkah capped off a semester of learning and encouraged our youngest members to continue their commitment to and love of Jewish life and its traditions.



Refuah Shelemah

Abe Abraham • Moselle Amron
Mordechai Cohen • Esther Duke
Sassoon Ezra • Miriam bat Yetta
Sylvia Cohen • Tilda Levy
Maurice Ovadia • Florice Newberry
Sally Amron

KJ Schedule (continued)

Weekdays

Sunday, December 27th

Shaharit..... 7:30 am

Monday, December 28 to Friday, January 1

Shaharit 6:25 am

Ereb Shabbat / Friday, January 1st

Shaharit 6:25 am

Minha 4:30 pm

Shabbat Candle Lighting 4:36 pm

Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat..... 5:00 pm

In Memoriam

We remember yearzeit anniversaries from December 26, 2015 to January 2, 2016. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka & attend Shabbat services.

14 Tebet / Shabbat, December 26th

Joseph Isaac Joseph Yoseph ben Itzhak

16 Tebet / Monday, December 28th

Khasnah bat Rahel

17 Tebet / Tuesday, December 29th

Ezekiel Menashe Akerib Yehezkel ben Moshe

Victoria Reuben Victoria bat Chahla

Farha Shamash Farha bat Masooda

18 Tebet / Wednesday, December 30th

David Davoudian David ben Yehezkel

Esperance Mathalon Shaaya Esperance bat

Simcha

19 Tebet / Thursday, December 31st

Yehekel Goury Yehekel ben Shaul

Solomon Raymond Shlomo ben Rahamim

20 Tebet / Friday, January 1st

Ronnie Kelly Raphael ben Saleh Moshe Kadoorie

Joseph Hayeem Messiah Yoseph Hayeem

Ruby Mussry Reuven ben Yaacob Saleh

21 Tebet / Shabbat, January 2nd

Solomon Reuben Shlomo ben Reuven D'loomy

Behejohn Yehudah Behejohn bat Yehudah