



# Focused on the Future

Adapted from a *Shmuess* by Rabbi Stulberger

**Parshas Ki Savo**

By Elan Perchik

At the end of Parshas Ki Savo, Moshe Rabbeinu gathers the Jewish people together to relate an important message. Recapping how Klal Yisroel has been witness to tremendous miracles throughout their travels in the desert, Moshe says, “*V’lo nasan Hashem lachem leiv la’daas... ad ha’yom hazeh*” –“And Hashem has not given you an understanding heart until today.” It is only at this point after traversing the desert for forty years that the hearts, eyes and ears of the Jewish nation have opened and come to terms with the truth that their sole purpose in life is to wholeheartedly carry out the will of Hashem.

What is notably difficult is what changed all of a sudden. What was it now after forty years that Klal Yisroel said or did indicating their devoted will to fully live in accordance with *ratzon Hashem*? What clued Moshe into realizing that such a momentous day had arrived?

Rashi provides the answer. Upon completion of the writing of the Torah by Moshe Rabbeinu, it was handed over to Shevet Levi. As soon as this was done, the rest of Klal Yisroel was sorely upset. “Wait a minute,” they said, “why are you giving the Torah to Shevet Levi? Why are they more entitled to the Torah than we are? We are concerned that some time in the future an argument will ensue as to whom received the Torah, and it will wrongfully be assumed that it exclusively belongs to Shevet Levi!”

When Moshe Rabbeinu heard of this concern regarding the safekeeping of the Torah, he declared, “Now I understand that the Jewish people’s hearts are in the right place. They will forever remain committed and loyal to Hashem’s Torah.”

Pondering this Rashi raises an obvious question. It was abundantly clear to everyone that Klal Yisroel as a whole received the Torah on Har Sinai. There was no doubt that every man, woman and child was an equal participant and recipient of the Torah. That being so, was it really a logical and legitimate concern that somewhere down the line Shevet Levi would make this claim? Isn’t it a greatly far-fetched worry?

As it appears, Rashi is conveying a profound idea. True concern for the preservation of Torah is defined by the unwillingness to take any chances. Even if it means thinking hundreds of years into the future and considering a remote situation in which the Torah may be at risk, such are the feelings of care and concern one is to have. One who understands how vital Torah is for the Jewish nation will deeply worry about its eternal existence and project ahead into the future.

Such is the perspective we are to possess. Every Jewish member carries the obligation to see to it that the Torah’s future existence is in no way ever jeopardized. From our own commitment to Torah study to the upbringing and education of our children, our lives mustn’t be lived in a vacuum. Our relationship with Torah is to be wide-ranging and extend to our children and children’s children. We all occupy an integral part in the chain of our *mesorah* and must assure the continued flourishing of Torah. Our eyes are not to be focused only on the present, but as well on the prospective future.

As the anticipated day of Yom Kippur arrived, the town of Brisk was ready to begin Kol Nidrei. However, their Rabbi, Rav Binyomin Diskin, had yet to arrive at Shul. After waiting for a while, the congregation began to become uneasy. Where was their Rav? He was known for his punctuality and he certainly would not wish to delay the davening?

Dispatching the *gabbai* on a search, he entered the home of Rav Diskin. Surprised, he found Rav Diskin sitting over a book of Mishnayos and learning with his young son. “Rabbi,” asked the Gabbai, “isn’t it time to go to Shul and begin Kol Nidrei? Why are you here now learning with your son?”

Rav Diskin began to cry as he explained his behavior: “As I began to think about the upcoming Day of Judgment, I soon realized that I need much merit to be granted a favorable judgment. I thought and thought about the greatest mitzvah I could do to tip the scales, and I concluded that there is nothing better than to sit with my young child and learn Torah.”

Why is learning and teaching Torah so special? Because it insures that Torah is kept alive forever. Rav Diskin understood that there is no greater merit than transmitting Torah and its beauty to the next generation. It is what breathes life into our children and grandchildren and guarantees the Torah’s uninterrupted continuity for years to come.

Embracing this vital and privileged role, the bright flame of Torah will continue to warm the hearts of Klal Yisroel for eternity, promising each and every Jew a deepened relationship with Hashem. Yes indeed, you and your little child hold the keys to the Torah’s eternal existence.