

SICHA POEM

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



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Vayechi, Sicha 3

— By Rabbi Mottel Friedman, Coral Springs, FL

In Parshas Vayechi Yaakov Avinu gathers his sons
As he plans to tell them exactly when Moshiach comes
But Hashem hid that information from him and so Yaakov said
“I am going to bless all my children instead”

“Reuven, you are my firstborn” Yaakov said at that late hour
Superior in rank and superior in power
But you will not have that rank and power because enraged you went
Like rushing, running water and sinned with your father’s tent”

Rashi says that superior in rank means Kohanim you would be
And superior in power is the crown of royalty
As firstborn Reuven had the right to this superiority
But since he rushed to act in anger it wouldn’t come to be

The royalty, the kingship, Rashi says Yehuda got
Because he saved Yosef’s life, changing the brothers’ plot
But Reuven also wished to save Yosef a little later
So why can’t he be royalty? Why’s Yehuda greater?

The Rebbe says the answer is there in the words Rashi uses
Since he doesn’t say the Bechorah is a thing that Reuven loses
To be Kohen or Melech there are qualities you need
But Reuven showed he doesn’t have what it takes to lead

Yes, Reuven planned to save Yosef but it remained a plan
Yehuda actually saved his life, Reuven was not the man
Reuven was off, far away repenting his misdeeds
He wasn't there when needed most – the quality a leader needs

It's true what Reuven was busy with was lofty and divine
But while Yosef languished in a pit was not the proper time
The main feature a leader has is being there when he's needed
Personal needs should never cause the people's call to go unheeded

Patience is another quality a leader must possess
Like a Kohen who must teach the Torah with loving tenderness
A leader must hear the people out with tolerance and with grace
And impatience is what got Reuven in trouble in the first place!

Let's take a lesson from this story, a teaching for our lives
Spiritual growth is really good and towards it we should strive
But we must be able stop and listen and put others' needs above
Put aside our personal concerns and serve another Jew with love.
