



From the desk of  
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## Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad \* Batei Hora'ah \* Religious Services \* Marriage Licensing \* Kashrut \* Mikvaot \* Eiruvim

### TORAT

### Parashat Naso

### HAMELECH

#### Giving Precedence

Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kehat and Merari. Each one blossomed into a beautiful family. When these families are enumerated in this week's parashah, Kehat is placed before Gershon. This is because Kehat was give the job of carrying the holiest of vessels, including the *Aron*, which hosted the Torah. Additionally, the nations' leaders – Moshe, Aharon and Miriam – descended from Kehat.

Yaakov Avinu also had placed Efrayim before Menashe. This is because he foresaw that Efrayim's offspring would outdo Menashe's. In truth, even between Menashe and Efrayim themselves, we see the young Efrayim excelling in Torah study whilst his older brother Menashe seemed to hold political office in Mitzrayim.

In Pirkei Avot we are taught that Torah surpasses *kehunah* and *malchut*. *Kehunah* and *malchut* have been designated for specific families, but excellence in Torah remains available for any Jew to attain.

#### The Clean Carpet

Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman was once collecting for his Yeshiva on a very rainy day. In those days before paved streets and sidewalks, a very rainy day meant a very muddy day.

Rebbi Elchanan was in a quandary. He was about to knock on the door of a wealthy philanthropist, but he did not wish to soil the man's beautiful carpets. So the Rosh Hayeshivah went to the back door which opened into a non-carpeted kitchen.

When the philanthropist saw Reb Elchanan at the back door and heard his explanation for this behavior, he insisted that Reb Elchanan enter through the front door, track up his carpets and sit down upon his expensive couch, drenched and all. The host explained that through this, he would impress upon his family his admiration and respect for Torah and Torah scholars.

Indeed, this man merited having two sons-in-law who were Talmidei Chachamim.

#### From Father to Son

Nedarim (81a) discusses why sometimes the sons of Torah scholars do not turn out to be Talmidei Chachamim. Rav Yosef says that it is so that all should realize that Torah scholarship is not hereditary. Rav Sheshet explains that the idea is that these sons should not become conceited. Mar Zutra says that it is a result – it becomes so after the fathers became conceited from their Rabbinic positions. Rav Ashi says that the problem is that some Talmidei Chachamim looked down on ordinary people, referring to them as donkeys!



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### Respect Your Scholars

A Talmid Chacham once asked this question to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach: why is it that my sons are not Talmidei Chachamim, while my neighbor, who works for a living, merited having sons who are Talmidei Chachamim?

Reb Shlomo Zalman knew both parties, so he was in a position to set the man straight. You, he said, speak out against other Talmidei Chachamim. Your sons hear your criticism and do not want to get near that lifestyle. This working person, on the other hand, holds Torah scholars in high esteem. He constantly sings their praise. It is no wonder that his sons turned out that way. They understood that Torah scholarship is a worthwhile endeavor. That is how they were raised.

Shabat (23b) teaches that one who admires Talmidei Chachamim will merit having sons who are Talmidei Chachamim. This is not just "reward". It is a simple outgrowth of growing up in such an atmosphere.

### With Torah Blessings

Bava Metzia (85a) brings another reason for this phenomenon of sons of Torah scholars not turning out to be scholarly themselves. This Gemara attributes it to their not having blessed upon Torah primarily. The simple explanation is that they learned Torah without having recited the appropriate blessings.

Some add an additional depth: when blessing or complimenting others, they first mention and stress all sorts of other realms of achievement, be it health or financial prosperity or whatnot. Only later on down the list do they bless or praise for Torah aspirations or accomplishments. Their order of precedence is indicative of their agenda, of their prerogatives.

So it is important, when building a Torah home, to give respect where respect is due. How you speak of Torah scholars, whom and what you praise, will be quite influential upon the outlooks your children will acquire.

A child takes it all in. He notices what his father talks about, whom and how he criticizes. When the father returns home after a long time outside the home, how does he relax; with a newspaper or with a sefer? Does he set aside time for learning? Does he get excited over financial acquisitions, new gadgets for the home, or new insight in the *parashah*?

If money is important to the parent, there is no reason to expect it not to be important to the child. If free time means go to a *shiur* or open up a *sefer*, that speaks volumes.

May we merit to create positive atmospheres, to build homes which value Torah and respect Torah scholars; for those are homes which produce Torah scholars and the future wives thereof.

**Shabbat Shalom Umevorach,  
Mordechai Malka**