



Carnegie Shul Chatter

January 5, 2022



Light candles 4:50pm

Shabbat Services 9:30am

Shabbat Services

The Carnegie Shul continues to offer hybrid Shabbat services. Please join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19. Masks are optional. To attend virtually, watch for a Zoom link in your email. If you don't receive it, contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found on line at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2492594/jewish/Vayechi-Torah-Reading.htm

Being a Man

This week's Torah portion and Haftorah both deal with the death of great men, Jacob and Joseph in the Torah portion and King David in the Haftorah.

King David's son, Solomon, would always be known for his wisdom, for being one of the wisest of all men. But Solomon was still quite young when he became King. David was 70 when he died and most sources say that Solomon was 20, but this week's Haftorah commentary talks about David giving his son advice when Solomon was just twelve years old — not even a boy of Bar Mitzvah age — on what to do when he becomes king. What a weighty responsibility for one so young.

Before reading this Haftorah, I was already thinking ahead to next week, when we will be reading my Bar Mitzvah parshah and Haftorah. I was thinking that I was expected to be a man when I turned 13, but in reality I was still very much a child with a whole lot of growing up to do. I don't think I really started behaving as a man until my early to mid-twenties. Yet Solomon was to, not only be a man, but to think as a king would

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think when he was only twelve. What a tremendous burden this must have been.

Many men of my generation did not really grow up until we completed college, yet others were drafted into the military and were shipped overseas to fight in Vietnam when they were just 18. And how about my father's generation? My dad had to quit school when he was in tenth grade to help a family struggling through the depression, then joined the Navy to fight in World War II. Circumstances made many young men grow up much faster than they otherwise would have.

I'm very grateful that I did not have to grow up as fast as Solomon and my father did.

Vayechi in a Nutshell

Genesis 47:28–50:26

From Chabad.org



Jacob lives the final 17 years of his life in Egypt. Before his passing, he asks Joseph to take an oath that he will bury him in the Holy Land. He blesses Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, elevating them to the status of his own sons as progenitors of tribes within the nation of Israel.

The patriarch desires to reveal the end of days to his children, but is prevented from doing so.

Jacob blesses his sons, assigning to each his role as a tribe: Judah will produce leaders, legislators and kings; priests will come from Levi, scholars from Issachar, seafarers from Zebulun, schoolteachers from Simeon, soldiers from Gad, judges from Dan, olive-growers from Asher, and so on. Reuben is rebuked for

“confusing his father's marriage bed”; Simeon and Levi, for the massacre of Shechem and the plot against Joseph. Naphtali is granted the swiftness of a deer, Benjamin the ferociousness of a wolf, and Joseph is blessed with beauty and fertility.

A large funeral procession consisting of Jacob's descendants, Pharaoh's ministers, the leading citizens of Egypt and the Egyptian cavalry accompanies Jacob on his final journey to the Holy Land, where he is buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron.

Joseph, too, dies in Egypt, at the age of 110. He, too, instructs that his bones be taken out of Egypt and buried in the Holy Land, but this would come to pass only with the Israelites' exodus from Egypt many years later. Before his passing, Joseph conveys to the Children of Israel the

testament from which they will draw their hope and faith in the difficult years to come: “G-d will surely remember you, and bring you up out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

Haftorah in a Nutshell

I Kings 2:1-12.

In this week's haftorah, King David delivers his deathbed message to his son and successor, Solomon, echoing this week's Torah reading that discusses at length Jacob's parting words and instructions to his sons.

King David encourages Solomon to be strong and to remain steadfast in his belief in G-d. This will ensure his success in all his endeavors as well as the continuation of the Davidic Dynasty. David then goes on to give his son some tactical instructions pertaining to various people who deserved punishment or reward for their actions during his reign.

The haftorah concludes with David's death and his burial in the City of David. King Solomon takes his father's place and his sovereignty is firmly established.

Haftorah Commentary

This week we again turn to torahvort.com for a commentary on the haftorah.

The Haftorah for Parashat Vayechi comes from the book of Melachim (Melachim I 2:1-12), a narrative featuring King David and Shlomo. As King David's life was drawing to a close, Shlomo was in line to take the throne, King David advised Shlomo in various components of Kingship, including advising him on who could be the potential rebels to his throne and what action he would need to take on them.

King David gave him valuable advice necessary for a King, “be strong and become a man (Melachim I 2:2),” he wanted reassurance that his son will be able to gain the reverence of all the world dominions. It could also be that at this stage of life, Shlomo was only 12 years of age, potentially being vulnerable for people taking advantage of him, due to his young age.

The most important thing to King David, is that his son, Shlomo, would walk in all the ways of Hashem, following all the mitzvot featured in the Torah. Very similar to this week's Parashah, when Yaakov was on his death bed, and he blessed all his sons, including the deputy of the Egyptian King, Yosef, wanting assurance that they were to follow in the mitzvot over the years to come and also gave all the tribes various potent blessings. We learn a lesson from this, how



important it is not just to follow the mitzvot, but to honor one's father's wishes is seen as vital; however, one has to follow through with it the Torah way.

King David assures Shlomo that the throne will follow the Davidic line, since we learn in this week's reading, the blessing of Kingship was awarded to Yehudah (Bereishit 49:8-12), his descendants to come were to be on the throne. The savior of Israel is to also descend from an individual from the tribe of Yehuda.

David advised Shlomo to exact retribution on his general, Yoav (Melachim I 2:5-6). He was deserving of the death penalty several years before when he killed Avner and Amasa, when he did not need to, since it was a time of peace. Since Yoav was still alive, David ordered Shlomo to find a way of punishing him for a capital offence. In fact the Medrash of Yalkut Shimoni understands that King David wanted to do an act of kindness to Yoav, since he was guilty of killing these two people, he wanted to spare him having punishment exacted onto him in the world to come, by having him punished in this world (Rashi).

King David urged Shlomo to show everlasting gratitude to Barzillai the Gileadite, a man who had supplied David with much food and sustenance at a time when he was fleeing from his son, Avshalom (Shmuel 19:32-41/ Shabbat 152). He wanted Barzillai to remain a permanent guest at the royal table. We learn an important rule from this, that in life if a person does another a favor, one should always have a debt of gratitude towards the other person and express it to the other person.

David also explained to Shlomo, that his teacher, Shimi Ben Gera, once had humiliated him, while he was fleeing from Avshalom, throwing stones at him and insulting him badly, despite later on pleading for forgiveness and mercy. David knew that Shimi could not be trusted and this posed serious danger to Shlomo's future kingship. David also pointed out that Shimi was a descendant of Benyamin, and that he did not accept the fact that the royal monarchy would be under the rule of the tribe of Yehudah. David stated that if Shimi was to rebel or sin in any way, Shimi would be deserving of the death penalty (Melachim I 2:9/ Shabbat 105a).

The Haftorah concludes relating the death of King David, living 70 years, similar to the fact in Parshat Vayechi, Yaakov also died, however at the age of 147 years.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Leonora C. Sherman

Samuel Fogel

Sylvia S. Cramer

May their memories be for a blessing.