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Amidst the cacophony of plagues and the emergence of Moshe as the reluctant hero of Bnei Yisrael, we find a seemingly irrelevant section inserted in *perek* six *pesukim* 14-28 detailing a terse genealogy for Reuven and Shimon followed by an extended one for Levi which concludes with Aharon's grandchildren. While this is far from the first genealogy listed in the Torah, they are usually placed at the end or beginning of a narrative as a transition into new characters who continue the legacy of Bnei Yisrael.

Here it is as an abrupt interruption to the narrative, as our genealogy is placed between two separate attempts of Moshe trying to shirk his responsibility as leader of his people. Additionally, the other genealogies usually follow one person's descendents and ours follows three ostensibly arbitrary shevatim each one of varying lengths. What then is the reason for this genealogies placement and format?

Rashi brings an explanation that Reuven, Shimon, and Levi are specifically mentioned here because they were the tribes that were admonished by Yaakov, and the Torah specifically repeats their genealogy to tell us that they were important.

This observation can be expounded to some extent that despite these tribes having done something wrong, they were still kept within the nation of Israel as equals and not outsiders.

This message is important on two levels:

1. Just as those shevatim were still maintained within the nation despite their behavior, so to Bnei Yisrael, despite ignoring Moshe's prerogative, are still the chosen nation and deserve to be saved and 2. Moshe, despite his protests and waffling of his identity within the Jewish people, can't just place his role as leader of the Israelites aside. The Torah brings this genealogy here to show us Moshe's inextricable connection to his nation and that even if he was absent in Midian for all those years, grew up in Paraoth's household, and doubted his Jewish identity, he is still worthy to be part of, and even lead, the chosen nation.

Fortunately for me, I don't have the challenge Moshe did of wrestling up the motivation and desire for creating a community unburdened by the shackles of an oppressive nation. The Zionist pioneers already fought for our state, and JLIC has already provided the community infrastructure. B"H my wife and I have recently had our first child and within hours our meal train was full of our friends and community members who were more than happy to lend a hand while we transition to a new stage in life. JLIC has played a

vital role for us in Givat Shmuel, as I'm sure they do in their other cities, in giving us the support and structure to not just be in Israel, but to truly belong as a part of a community. ■

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