



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS NCSY ISRAEL



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Rabbi Ephraim Luntschitz, in his commentary Kli Yakar on Devarim, highlights a subtle but significant change in the Torah's wording. Throughout the earlier books of the Torah, the Jewish people are usually referred to as *Bnei Yisrael* ("the children of Israel"). However, in Devarim, the Torah repeatedly uses the expression *Kol Yisrael* ("all of Israel"). According to the Kli Yakar, this change reflects an important transformation in the nation's identity as they prepare to enter the Land of Israel.

Until this point, the Jews were united primarily by their ancestry. They were all descendants of Yaakov, whose name was changed to Israel, making them one extended family. Their connection was rooted in a shared past and a common lineage. As they stood on the border of the Promised Land, however, Moshe was preparing them for a new stage in their development.

In this week's parsha, Moshe reinforces that transition through the giving of the *Shema*: „*Shema Yisrael*”—a call addressed not merely to individuals, but to the entire nation. Once they entered the land, they would need to function as a nation rather than simply a family. They would establish systems of justice, provide for one another, defend themselves, and take collective responsibility for society. During their years in the wilderness, Hashem had miraculously supplied their needs and

protected them. In the future, they would still rely on Hashem, but they would also be expected to act responsibly and uphold the covenant through their own actions.

The shift from *Bnei Yisrael* to *Kol Yisrael* symbolizes the transition from dependence to maturity. Their unity would now be based not only on their shared origins but also on their shared mission, responsibility, and commitment to building a society founded on the values of the Torah. It is therefore fitting that on **Shabbat Nachamu**, as we begin the journey of consolation and renewal after Tisha B'Av, we are reminded that our greatest strength lies in our ability to come together as **Kol Yisrael**—united by a shared covenant, shared purpose, and shared responsibility for one another.



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WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM MOSHE IN HIS FINAL DAYS?

Parshat Va'etchanan opens with one of the most emotional moments in the Torah. Moshe Rabbeinu pleads with Hashem to allow him to enter Eretz Yisrael. Chazal tells us that he davened **515 tefillot** to Hashem, yet despite all of his prayers, Hashem tells him that he will not enter the Land. But why?

If Moshe Rabbeinu, whose relationship with Hashem was stronger than anyone else's, did not receive the answer he hoped for, what does that teach us about tefillah?

Maybe it isn't for us as a wish list but instead to strengthen our relationship with Hashem. We often think that a successful tefillah is one that gets the answer we want. The Torah reminds us that sometimes the greatest accomplishment of tefillah is not changing what happens, but changing our wants and our neshamas.

What is most remarkable is Moshe's response. Although he is denied his lifelong dream, he does not become discouraged or give up. Instead, he

dedicates the rest of his life to preparing Bnei Yisrael to enter without him.

Moshe teaches us that even though we can't choose what we want, we can choose how we respond to them. Disappointment does not have to define us. Instead, it can become an opportunity to grow and to become the people we are capable of being. ■



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