

THE KING'S CHILDREN

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

"You are sons of Hashem your G-d"

Those who study psychology and personality development have been debating a key issue for decades. What is the overriding factor in the personality of a person -- environment or hereditary components like DNA? The trends in scientific thinking on this issue swing back and forth but the experts agree that if one does not develop self esteem one will be prone to behavior that can be self destructive -even suicidal. In his last words to his flock, Moshe Rabenu sprinkled his words of rebuke with words of promise, hope and encouragement to those who would practice what he preached -- a life of Torah observance. Unlike doctors and scientist whose theories change as new discoveries are made, Moshe Rabenu's words are based on the eternal, constant truth of the Torah. "You are sons to Hashem your G-d," he told us -- not only as a pat on the back but also in order to help future generations of Jews fight off the urge to sin.

There once was a man who was poverty stricken. He went out daily to attempt to earn an honest living but was constantly forced to go begging from door to door in order to survive. One day he bought a Jackpot Lottery ticket for a chance to win \$150,000,000. Distracted by his problems, upon arriving home he put the ticket in a safe place and got back to the battle of survival. Unfortunately, he was the only winner of the \$150,000,000 jackpot. Why do I say "unfortunately"? He never checked what the winning numbers were and continued to live a life of struggle and pain until the day he died.

The lesson is that for one to benefit from assets that one has one must be aware of those assets. Moshe told the Jewish people: "You are not commoners -- you are not like the masses that inhabit the Earth. You are children of the King -- Hashem. As His children you are considered royalty and along with that special status you will benefit from many privileges. But don't forget that the honor comes with responsibility. You must now dress like children of the King, talk like the monarch's offspring and behave in every respect as representatives of His Majesty." Moshe Rabenu told the people "Never forget how special you are." If one is uniquely talented or wealthy and is unaware of his or her loftiness one will not feel the benefits of one's riches. The greatest protection against sin -- the best insurance policy for avoidance of spiritual damage -- is to realize that one is a child of the King. This knowledge will sensitize a person to every word and deed and insure that he or she will only behave in a manner befitting royalty. Moshe's message was "You are spiritual multi-millionaires -- don't live life as paupers."

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