

Cong. Etz Chaim's  
Torah at the Table  
Parshat Vayechi

In this weeks Parsha, Yaakov gives his final blessings to each of his children. Each blessing is unique and designed specifically for the recipient.

What would your final blessing be to your children? Would it be different for each child?

When giving the bracha to Efraim and Menashe, Yaakov famously switches his hands around. The right hand was to give the superior bracha, and he wanted the younger of the brothers to receive it.

Why did Yaakov switch his hands and not ask the brothers to switch places?

This Shabbos is known as "Shabbos Chazak," where we say "Chazak Chazak VNischazeik" and finish the book of Breishis. This Shabbos also happens to be the beginning of the secular New Year.

Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetsky (1891-1986) once asked his students what their New Year's resolutions were. Surprised, they responded that it was the secular New Year and the Jewish people don't follow that calendar. Rabbi Kaminetsky responded "The whole country is doing teshuva and we will be left out? The whole world is taking stock of themselves and the Jews wont participate? of course you should make resolutions!"

What are your New Years resolutions?