

A-19

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הרב נחום לאם

Rabbi Norman Lamm

1255 CARROLL STREET

BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.

PRESIDENT B-5008

Bar Mitzvah Talk - - - - Yithro, 1952 - - - - - CKJ - - 2/16/52 - -
(Julius Noveck)

Now that you are Bar Mitzvah, and have attained your majority, Jewish Law holds you legally responsible for all your actions. You are now expected to act as amature member of your people and to do your duty as an adult Jew. But you are not beginning on this new venture of a fully responsible Jew as a raw recruit. You have been trained for this role many years. Your stay at the Religious School, your home environment and your parents' guidance have all been directing you towards this high goal. You have had a basic training for your actions as a good Jew.

One of the things which you will be expected to keep and observe, and for which you have been trained for all your thirteen years, is one of the Ten Commandments which we read this morning. *הון ויוני*, "Honor your father and mother". This is a well-known commandment, and which goes to the very root of all family life and respect. But this commandment is different from the other nine of the "Asseress ha'dibros" in a special way. The other commandments merely tell you what to do and what not to do. This one adds something - it tells you what the reward is for abiding by this law - *הון ויוני* it is the promise of longevity, long life, "that thy days may be long". Haven't you ever wonder ed, Julius, why this mitzvah above all others is accompanied by a promise of long life, long days?

Well, I want to give you an answer to that question which my grandfather gave me on my B-M day, & which he heard from his father on the same occasion in his life.

It happens many times, Julius, that because of lack of experience in life, you start out upon a venture which may last a day or a month or a year or many years, and which you later regret. At the end of a certain period of time, you look backwards, and think to yourself, Oh, if only somebody had warned me beforehand that a course of action of this sort was bound to end in faliure. If only somebody with more experience than me had opened my eyes and directed

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me properly. Why, then I would have saved all this time instead of having wasted ~~them~~ it. I would have lived that much longer. Had I spent this month or year on guided and directed work, had I begun on ~~it~~ now that I have the experience that I do, I would live ~~fd~~ that much longer. It would have added to my years by eliminating the necessity for this wasted time.

Well, Julius, your parents have that experience. They have seen more of life than you have. They have had to surmount many obstacles and survive many crises. They have that experience which can guide you on the right path right from the beginning. Their advice can save for you those months or years you might otherwise waste because of lack of experience and foreknowledge. By honoring them, you will save so many years, you will actually live longer. { 12/11/72 }

לכבוד אב ואם Honor your father and mother - and it is a law of nature that those days G-d has given to you will be that much longer and fuller.

And we all hope, Julius, that G-d will give you, and your family, long life and the desire and will to carry on in the Jewish tradition, to keep the Sabbath, to visit the synagogue, to continue your Jewish education, and to act as a proud and full Jew.

I now invite you to this platform for the traditional priestly benediction.