

For the sons of Yosef: For the sons of Ephraim, their offspring according to their families, according to their fathers' households, by number of the names. (1:32)

Interestingly, in the previous mention of Yosef's sons/tribes, the Torah (ibid 1:10) writes, "To the sons of Yosef... to Ephraim... to Menashe." In this *pasuk*, however, the Torah adds the word *l'vnei*, "To the sons of Ephraim." It seems as if the Torah does not record Ephraim's sons as part of Yosef's genealogy. By adding, "to the sons of," there appears to be a break, indicating that Ephraim has his own distinction. The **Baal HaTurim** explains that Yosef did not participate in carrying the coffin of his father, Yaakov *Avinu*, because he was a *melech*, king. Out of respect for his royal position, he was excluded. Thus, the Torah does not want to count Yosef amongst the *Degalim*, Banners; rather, the *Degel* goes by the names of his sons. Only the bearers of Yaakov's coffin received distinction with regard to the *Degalim*.

Is this right? It is not as if Yosef had refused to carry his father's coffin. As a monarch, it was deemed inappropriate. Should he, nonetheless, forfeit his right to a *Degel*? The **Alter, zl, m'Kelm**, derives from here a profound lesson. When a person receives a dispensation concerning *mitzvah* performance – due to an accident which was beyond his control-- the fact that he did not perform the *mitzvah* cannot be held against him. It is simply not his fault. On the other hand, it cannot be viewed as if he actually performed the *mitzvah*, because, after all is said and done, he did not execute the *mitzvah*.

As a monarch, Yosef was *patur*, exempt, from carrying out the *mitzvah* of carrying his father's coffin. This, however, does not grant him the right to a *Degel*. The Banners went to those tribes who participated in carrying Yaakov. Yosef did not have to carry it, but that does not make it as if he did carry it. When one receives a dispensation regarding a *mitzvah*, it means just that – a dispensation. It does not, however, mean that he performed the *mitzvah*, because he did not actually perform it.