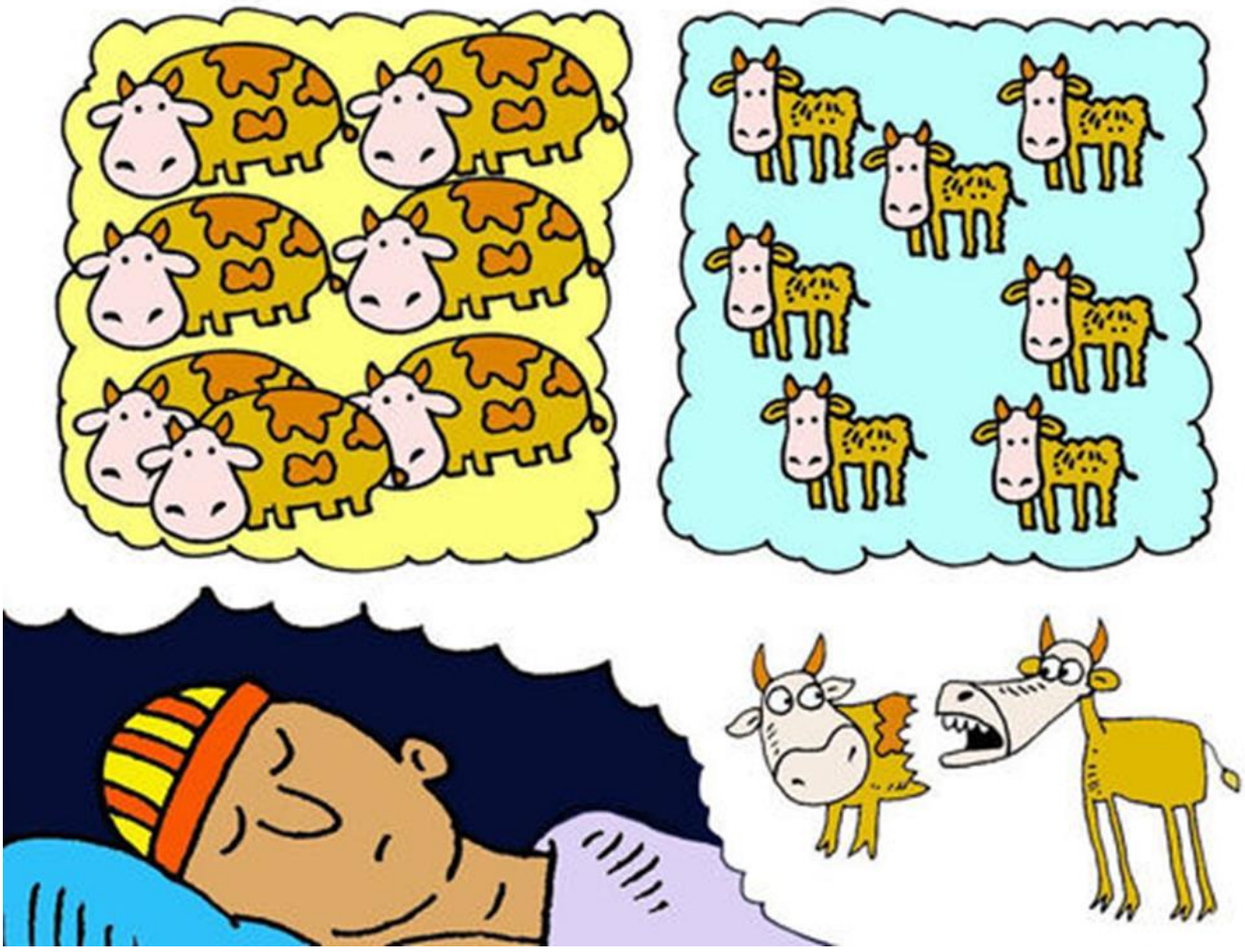
TORAH TREATS

An Anthology of Short Divrei Torah & Stories

Compiled by Yitzchok Henry



מקץ

לעילוי נשמת



אבי מורי ר' גדליה דוד ב"ר איסר הענרי ע"ה

ר' איסר ב"ר זרח הענרי ע"ה

ואשתו מרת גאלדא ב"ר יצחק אהרן ע"ה

ר'יעקב שמואל ב"ר צבי הלוי גרינספעלד ע"ה

ואשתו מרת חנה ב"ר דוד ע"ה

ר'שרגא פייביש ב"ר מרדכי צבי ערליך ע"ה

ר'יעקב ב"ר שלום הלוי פרידמאן ע"ה

ר'חיים דוד ב"ר אלכסנדר הכהן ריטשמאן ע"ה

ת*נ*צ*ב*ה

Yitzchok's Collections אוספי יצחק

מקץ

Hamaayan -The Torah Spring ~ Edited by Shlomo Katz



Hamaayan is prepared by laymen and published weekly for the edification and enjoyment of the reader who is lacking the time or ability to study the weekly parashah on his own. Hamaayan's goal is to acquaint the reader with a broad spectrum of traditional Torah commentary — classical, recent and "obscure" — as well as with aspects of Jewish history and thought. The editors hope these brief 'snippets' will engender further study and discussion of Torah topics ("lehagdil Torah u'leha'adirah")

וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן אֶל־אָבִיו לֵאמֹר אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנַי תָּמִית אִם־לֹא אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ תְּנָה אֹתוֹ עַל־יָדִי וַאֲנִי אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ ***"Then Reuven told his father, saying, `You may slay my two sons if I fail to bring him [Binyamin] back to you. Put him in my care and I will return him to you'."*** *(42:37)*

The Midrash records that Yaakov answered Reuven: "You fool! Are your sons not my sons?"

What was Reuven thinking?

R' Eliezer Papo z"l (1785-1827; author of the classic mussar work, **Pele Yoetz**) writes that he will defend Reuven. He explains: Reuven meant, "*I am so committed to bringing Binyamin back to you that, if*

it were conceivable that you would kill my two sons, I would be willing to take the risk."

Alternatively, Reuven meant, "I recognize that your pain upon losing Binyamin would be equal to my pain if I lost my two sons and I would deserve to lose them if I caused you such pain; therefore, I will protect Binyamin with great care."

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֙הוּ֙ עַל־אֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֔יִם. יַעֲשֶׂ֥ה פַרְעֹ֖ה וְיַפְקֵ֥ד פְּקִדִ֛ים עַל־הָאָ֖רֶץ... ***"Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh proceed and let him appoint overseers on the land . . ."*** (41:33-34)



R' Gavriel Ze'ev Margolis z"l (1849-1935; rabbi in Lithuania, Boston and New York) asks: If Yosef recommended that "Pharaoh [himself] proceed" and "appoint overseers over the land," what was the purpose of first recommending that Pharaoh appoint "a discerning and wise man" to head the food-gathering effort?

He answers: Once when there was a famine in 13 Russian provinces. The Czar appointed a commission to oversee the distribution of food to those provinces, and he named the crown to prince to head that commission. - Why did he do this?

Because without a very high-ranking official at the head of the relief efforts, those efforts undoubtedly would have become bogged down in inter-departmental red tape. Of course, the Czar himself could not be expected to become involved in the day-to-day activities of the relief effort, but someone whose stature was close

to that of the Czar's stature did have to participate in order to cut that red tape.

Similarly, said Yosef, Pharaoh must appoint a discerning and wise relief director whose stature would approach that of the Pharaoh himself. When Yosef said, "Let Pharaoh proceed and let him appoint overseers on the land," he did not mean that Pharaoh should do this; he meant that the head of the relief effort should be named "Assistant Pharaoh" in order to ensure that he could mobilize all necessary resources.

What was the outcome?

We read in the verses which follow (44-45): **וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲנִי פַרְעֹה. וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ.** "***Pharaoh said to Yosef, `I am Pharaoh'..and Pharaoh called Yosef's name, `Zofnat Panai'ach'.***"

Pharaoh gave Yosef sweeping powers, but he made clear that there was only one "Pharaoh", and that Yosef would have to be called by some other title, not "Assistant Pharaoh." (**Torat Gavriel**)



וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם חָלַמְתִּי וּפֹתֵר אֵין אֹתוֹ וַאֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי עָלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע חֲלוֹם לִפְתֹּר אֹתוֹ "***And Pharaoh said to Yosef, 'I dreamt a dream, but no one can interpret it. Now I heard it said of you that you comprehend a dream to interpret it.'***

וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף אֶת־פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר בִּלְעָדָי אֱלֹקִים יַעֲנֶה אֶת־שְׁלוֹם פַּרְעֹה "***Yosef answered Pharaoh, saying, 'That is beyond me; it is G-d Who will respond with Pharaoh's welfare.'***

וַיְדַבֵּר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף בַּחֲלֹמִי הִנְנִי עֹמֵד עַל־שְׂפַת הַיְאֹר "***Then Pharaoh said to Yosef, 'In my dream, behold! . . .'***" *(41:15-17)*

How did Yosef dare to interrupt Pharaoh? asks **R' Moshe Yechiel Epstein** (**the "Ozorover Rebbe"; died 1971**).

From here we see Yosef's great humility, he answers. Yosef could not bear, even for a moment, even under these circumstances, to have attributed to him a talent or ability which he did not possess. (**Be'er Moshe**, p. 778)



וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן אֶל־אָבִיו לֵאמֹר אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנַי תָּמִית אִם־לֹא אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ "***Then Reuven said to his father, 'You may slay my two sons if I fail to bring him [Binyamin] back to you'.***" *(42:37)*

Rashi wites: Yaakov did not accept Reuven's proposal because he said, בְּכוֹר שׁוֹטֶה הוּא זֶה, הוּא אוֹמֵר לְהָמִית בָּנָיו, וְכִי בָּנָיו הֵם וְלֹא בָּנַי "***This is a fool who proposes that I kill his sons. Are they not also my sons?***"

Yet, when Yehuda later proposed (43:9), אָנֹכִי אֶעֶרְבֶּנּוּ מִיָּדִי תְּבַקְשֶׁנּוּ אִם־ לֹא הֲבִיאֹתִיו אֵלֶיךָ וְהִצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים "***I will personally guarantee him; from my own hand you can demand him; if I do not bring him back to you and stand him before you, then I will have sinned to you for all time***," - Yaakov agreed.

Why didn't Yaakov respond, "***Are you not my son? I do not want you to lose your share in the World-to-Come***!" [This was Yehuda's proposal – that he would not find eternal rest if he did not bring Binyamin back.]

R' Baruch Sorotzkin z"l (1917-1979; Rosh Yeshiva of the Telshe Yeshiva) explains: Yehuda laid everything he had on the line. He was sure that, with G-d's help, he would return Binyamin to their father.

Reuven did not demonstrate that level of trust in Hashem. Reuven had four sons; thus, when he offered only two of his sons as a

guarantee, it appeared that he was not sure he would succeed in his mission.

R' Sorotzkin continues: Bitachon/trust-in-Hashem is the absolutely indispensable prerequisite to success in serving Hashem.

The classic work **Chovot Halevavot** teaches that one cannot serve Hashem if one does not have peace of mind, and one cannot have peace of mind if he lacks bitachon, the belief that no one can harm you in any way unless that is the will of Hashem. (**Ha'binah Ve'ha'berachah** p. 95)

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר "***So Pharaoh sent and summoned Yosef, and they rushed him from the dungeon***. . ." (41:14)



The Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 10b) records that Yosef was released from prison on Rosh Hashanah. Why is it useful for us to know this?

R' Yitzchak Meir Alter z"l (1798-1866; first Gerrer Rebbe, known as the "**Chiddushei Ha'Rim**") explains that Yosef represents that Jewish spark that is within even those Jews who are prisoners of their desires.

On Rosh Hashanah, our Sages are teaching, that spark can break free. This, adds the Chiddushei Ha'Rim, is why the month in which Rosh Hashanah falls is called "Tishrei," which contains the word "sharei" / "to release." (**Likkutei Yehuda**)

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל־אָחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְּנוֹ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא שָׁמָעְנוּ עַל־כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת "***They then said to one another, 'Indeed we are guilty concerning our brother inasmuch as we saw his heartfelt anguish when he pleaded with us and we paid no heed; that is why this anguish has come upon us***'." (42:21)

R' Yitzchak ben Yosef de Piera z"l (Spain; 14th century) writes: Yosef's brothers recognized that the treatment they were receiving at the hands of the Egyptian viceroy was no coincidence, and they immediately examined their own deeds in search of a sin to which to attribute their suffering.

Their greatness is demonstrated, in particular, by the fact that they had committed no other sins to which to attribute their own anguish. They searched for past sins, and they found none except for ignoring Yosef's anguish. (**R' Yitzchak ben R' Yosef Al Ha'Torah**)

Letters from Our Sages



This undated letter was written by **R' Eliezer Zusia Portugal z"l (1898-1982), the Skulener Rebbe** in Romania (until 1960) and then in New York. The Rebbe was renowned for his efforts to assist the victims of Communism by providing both their spiritual and material needs, activities which landed him in jail in Romania.

Much peace and blessing to his honor, my beloved, the friend of my soul, the young man ("*bachur*") who has chosen ("*bachar*") good-the

only good is Torah-who is marvelous and prominent in Torah and fear of Heaven, may his light shine!

I read your words with love, the love of Torah, and I give you my blessing as a layman on the occasion of your birthday. May Hashem lengthen your days and years and enlighten your eyes with His holy Torah and attach your heart to His mitzvot, as we pray every day, "Unify our hearts to love and fear Your Name."

May it be His will that you will continue to grow in Torah and holy fear of Hashem. May your parents merit to see from you, and from all their descendants amongst the rest of Klal Yisrael, pleasure and nachas based on holiness. May we all merit together the light of mashiach soon in our days, amen selah.

From your friend who loves you with a powerful love. [Signature]

P.S. Take note that a birthday is not only the day on which you were born years ago. For a G-d-fearing person who loves Torah, every day should be a birthday. Surely you remember what I said in the name of the Sefer Noam Megadim about the verse (Bereishit 6:9), "These are the offspring of Noach- Noach . . ." The Torah is hinting that Noach's first child was Noach himself, for he made himself into a perfect tzaddik. . .

Hashem created man and creates him anew at each moment. . . However, when it comes to spiritual matters, a person must give birth to himself every day so as to be one who rises in matters of holiness, strengthening himself in Torah and good deeds, with pure fear of Hashem and love of the Creator.

So may it be Hashem's Will that you will merit to strengthen yourself every day. Be strong regarding Torah and courageous regarding mitzvot!

I close with my blessing. (**Noam Eliezer**)

An Astonishing Midrash

At the moment when Yosef said (44:17), **הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נִמְצָא הַגָּבִיעַ בְּיָדוֹ הוּא יִהְיֶה־לִּי עָבֶד וְאַתֶּם עֲלוּ לְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־אֲבִיכֶם** "***The man in whose possession the goblet was found, only he shall be my slave, and as for the rest of you – go up in peace to your father***," - a bat kol/voice from heaven said (Tehilim 119:165), **שָׁלוֹם רָב לְאֹהֲבֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ וְאֵין לָמוֹ מִכְשׁוֹל** - "***There is abundant peace for the lovers of Your Torah, and there is no stumbling block for them***."

The sin of selling Yosef was a sin between man and his fellow man, for which G-d does not grant atonement until the victim forgives the sinner.

When Yosef said, "***As for the rest of you – go up in peace to your father***," he indicated that he forgave his brothers [although they did not realize it, since they did not know he was Yosef]. This enabled G-d to forgive them and grant them **שָׁלוֹם רָב** – "***abundant peace***." (**Binat Nevonim**)

וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן אֶל־אָבִיו לֵאמֹר אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנַי תָּמִית אִם־לֹא אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ תְּנָה אֹתוֹ עַל־יָדִי וַאֲנִי אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ "***Reuven told his father, saying, 'You may put to death my two sons if I fail to bring him [Binyamin] back to you. Put him in my care and I will return him to you'***." (42:37)

Commentaries wonder: How could Reuven even suggest such a thing?

R' Moshe Eliezer Dan Ralbag z"l (1832-1895) answers in the name of **R' Yehoshua Leib Diskin z"l** (1818-1898; rabbi of Brisk, Poland/Yerushalayim): Reuven meant that, if he failed to bring Binyamin back, Yaakov should strip him (Reuven) of his birthright.

A firstborn son inherits a share equal to "two sons," and losing one's wealth is referred to in the Torah as "death" (Rashi Shmot 4:19). Thus, Reuven meant: Strip from me the status of being equal to two sons if I do not bring Binyamin back.

Why did Reuven suggest this consequence, of all things?

He explains: Reuven was the firstborn of his mother, Leah, and Yosef was the firstborn of his mother, Rachel. Rachel was Yaakov's favourite wife. Thus, with Yosef missing, one might expect Yaakov to transfer the birthright to Rachel's second son: Binyamin. In turn, Reuven might have an incentive to make Binyamin disappear.

Therefore Reuven said: "***I hereby repudiate any claim on the birthright in the event that Binyamin does not return***." (**Quoted in B'tuv Yerushalayim**)

Bitachon

Our Sages teach that Yosef erred at the end of last week's parashah by placing his trust in Pharaoh's butler rather than in Hashem. This week we read that Yosef was forced to remain in jail for two more years — according to Chazal, as a punishment for his error.

In that connection, we present the following insights from **R' Yaakov Emden z"l** (1697-1776; Germany) regarding bitachon in Hashem.

There are seven traits that Hashem possesses that make it appropriate to place one's trust in Him and in no other being:

(1) He is the most merciful and compassionate of all beings. Moreover, any mercy that other beings exhibit is merely derivative of His mercy, as we read (Devarim 13:18), וְנָתַן־לְךָ רַחֲמִים וְרִחַמְךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ "***He will give you mercy and be merciful to you***."

(2) He knows all that is good for man and helpful to him. Likewise, no one knows the cures for diseases and other ailments better than the One who created them.

(3) His strength is greater than any force that can be imagined, and no being can contradict His will.

(4) He watches over the actions of all men, and He ignores nothing. Nothing is hidden from Him, and later events do not cause Him to forget earlier events.

(5) No being can do anything for himself or for or against another person without His consent. When one realizes that no being can hurt him without Hashem's consent, one realizes that it makes no sense to fear any being except Hashem.

(6) Hashem is good beyond description, and He does untold numbers of good things for every person with no initiative on the person's part.

(7) Every being (except Hashem) is subject to limitations, and one can do neither more nor less than Hashem desires. Thus, the laws of nature cannot change themselves, and any deviation from those laws that occurs is a purposeful act by Hashem Himself. (**Migdal Oz – Bet Ha'middot: Aliyat Bitachon ch.3**)



וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו שִׁלְחָה הַנַּעַר אִתִּי וְנָקוּמָה וְנֵלֵכָה וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַם־אַתָּה גַּם־טַפֵּנוּ ***"Then Yehuda said to Yisrael his father, `Send the lad with me, and let us arise and go, so we will live and not die, we as well as you as well as our children."*** *(43:8)*

R' Yaakov Kaminetsky z"l (rabbi in Lithuania, Seattle and Toronto; rosh yeshiva of Mesivta Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn; died 1986) notes that Yehuda's words are consistent with the halachic order of precedence for saving lives: first one must save himself, then his parents, and then his children.

R' Kaminetsky observes, we learn from this verse that even an *am ha'aretz* should save his own life before he saves a Torah scholar's life [since Yaakov's sons were of a lower stature compared to Yaakov, yet they still had to feed themselves first.] (**Emet L'Yaakov**)



וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ "***Pharaoh called Yosef's name Tzofnat-Paneach.***" (41:45) - **Rashi z"l** explains: מְפָרֵשׁ הַצְּפוּנוֹת - "***Revealer of hidden things.***"

R' Machir z"l Hy"d (Spain; 14th century) writes: The Hebrew letters of this name are the initials of "Tzaddik panah negged ta'avato; Potiphar inah nafsho chinam" / "The righteous one (Yosef) turned aside in the face of his desire (for Potiphar's wife); - Potiphar oppressed him for no reason." (**Avkat Rocheil ch.56**)

וְעַתָּה יֵרֶא פַרְעֹה אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם וְיָשִׁיתֵהוּ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם "***Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt.***" *(41:33)* - Why was a "discerning and wise man" needed to oversee the collection of provisions during the seven years of plenty?



R' Shalom Schwadron z"l (1911-1997) explains in the name of his teacher, **R' Elya Lopian z"l** (1872-1970): Gathering provisions during a time of plenty for a famine that is seven years in the future requires real wisdom and understanding, for it is against human nature. The Sages say (Tamid 32a): "Who is wise? One who has foresight." Moreover, convincing the entire nation to share this foresight requires an additional measure of wisdom and understanding.

Our lifetimes, continues R' Schwadron, are a time when mitzvot are plentiful, but they will be followed by years of famine when it is impossible to add to our stores of mitzvot. When those years come,

we will regret every berachah we omitted and every prayer and bentching that we recited with less than full attention.

This is what King Shlomo alluded to in the verse (Kohelet 11:8), "Even if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in all of them, but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many." (**Lev Shalom**)

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־עֲבָדָיו הֲנִמְצָא כָזֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹקִים בּוֹ "***Pharaoh said to his servants, 'Could we find another like him – a man in whom is the spirit of G-d?'"*** *(41:38)*

R' Yekutiel Yehuda Zalman Laib Teitelbaum z"l (1808-1883; the first "**Sigheter Rebbe**") asks: Were there no other people alive who had the spirit of G-d in them?

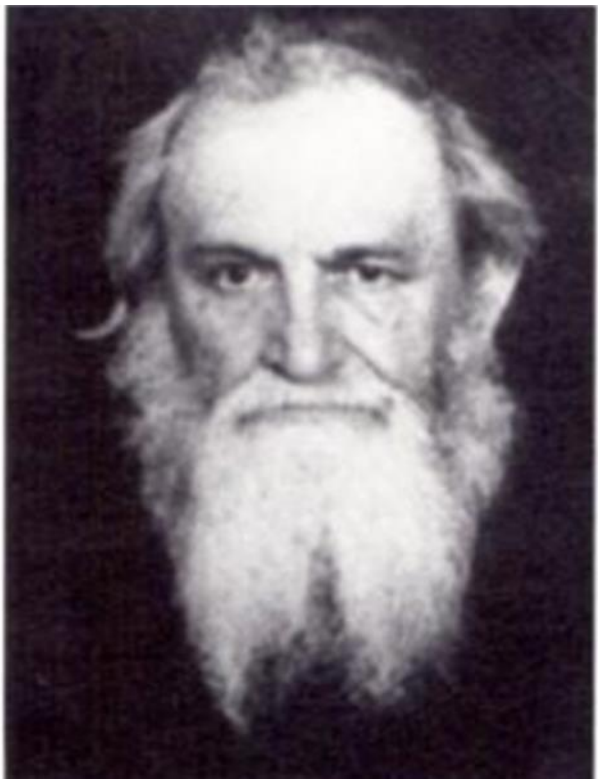
He answers: Certainly, there are many people who engage in spiritual matters all day and have the spirit of G-d in them. What impressed Pharaoh, however, and what is unusual, is to find a working person like Yosef in whom is the spirit of G-d. (**Otzrot Tzaddikei Ve'geonei Ha'dorot**)

וַיֵּצֵא לִבָּם וַיֶּחֶרְדוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו לֵאמֹר מַה־זֹּאת עָשָׂה אֱלֹקִים לָנוּ "***Their hearts sank, and they turned trembling one to another, saying, 'What is this that G-d has done to us'?"*** *(42:28)*

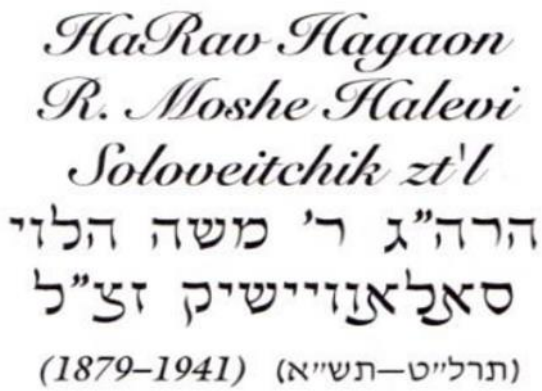
Why did they tremble "one to another" and not to themselves?

R' Shimon Yosef Meller shlita explains that each of Yaakov's sons was not worried for himself. After all, one is obligated to bless G-d for the bad just as for the good. However, that attitude is appropriate only regarding one's own troubles. When it comes to someone else's troubles, one must bear his burden with him. - This is why they trembled "one to another." (Haggadah Shai La'Torah.)

From the Haftarah . . .



In the overwhelming majority of years, Parashat Miketz is read on Chanukah, and a special Haftarah for Shabbat Chanukah supersedes the Haftarah for the Parashah, as on any "festival" Shabbat. Occasionally, however, Miketz falls after Chanukah, so the Haftarah for our Parashah – the famous story of King Shlomo "splitting the baby"–is read. On average, this occurs once in ten years, but the spacing is sporadic: but the next will be in 2023/5784. The previous time this occurred was in 5761 / 2000, and before that in 5757 / 1996 and 5737 / 1976.



וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל־עֲבָדָיו *"He made a feast for all his servants." (Melachim I 3:15)* - Rashi writes: מִשְׁמָחַת לִבּוֹ - *'From here we learn that one makes a festive meal upon completing the Torah.'*

R' Moshe Soloveitchik z"l (1879-1941; Rosh Yeshiva NY) notes: Here, King Shlomo did not complete the study of any section of the Torah. Rather, he woke up from his sleep with "a wise and understanding heart" that would enable him to learn more in the future.

From the fact that we nevertheless learn the concept of a Siyum from here, we see that the real joy of a Siyum is not in completing the Torah, but rather in beginning again. (**Reshimot Shiurim Sukkah**)

From the Haftarah . . .



וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ זֹאת אֹמֶרֶת זֶה־בְּנִי הַחַי וּבִנֵךְ הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֹמֶרֶת לֹא כִי בִּנֵךְ הַמֵּת וּבְנִי הֶחָי ***"The king said, 'This one claims, "This is my son, who is alive, and your son is the dead one," and this one claims, "It is not so! Your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one".'" (Melachim I 3:23)***

R' Shlomo Kluger z"l (1785-1869) writes: When King Shlomo repeated the women's claims, he noted that one said, "My son," and then, "Your son," while the other reversed the order. King Shlomo's judgment was not based only on one woman's willingness to cut the baby in half; rather, this, too, was a sign of who was telling the truth.

He explains: It is natural for a mother to recognize her own baby and say, in effect, "This one is mine, so the other must be yours." That is what one of the women said. The other woman, however, said, in effect, "The dead baby is yours, so the living one must be mine." That is not a natural way for a mother to speak.

In addition, R' Kluger writes, the Gemara (Pesachim 3a-3b) teaches that a person's righteousness, and even the purity of his pedigree, can be judged from the refinement of his speech. Thus, King Shlomo judged the woman who mentioned the living child before the dead child to be righteous compared to one who mentioned the dead child first. (**Shaima Shlomo**)

From the Haftarah . . .



וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר תְּנוּ־לָהּ אֶת־הַיָּלוּד הַחַי וְהָמֵת לֹא תְמִיתֻהוּ הִיא אִמּוֹ ***"The king spoke up and said, 'Give her the living newborn, and do not put it to death–she is his mother'." (Melachim I 3:27)***

Rashi quotes the Gemara (Makkot 22b): **בַּת קוֹל הוֹפִיעָה וְאָמְרָה: הִיא אִמּוֹ.** A Heavenly voice proclaimed, "***She is his mother***."

R' Yaakov Kamenetsky z"l writes: Apparently, no responsible person would make a definitive statement, "She is his mother," based on circumstantial evidence alone, no matter how compelling. Therefore, our Sages attribute those words to a Heavenly proclamation.

R' Kamenetsky's grandson, **R' Yosef Kamenetsky shlita**, adds in a footnote: The foregoing is consistent with the elder R' Kamenetsky's understanding of Yosef's motivation for accusing his brothers of being spies, and Binyamin, of being a thief (both in this week's Parashah).

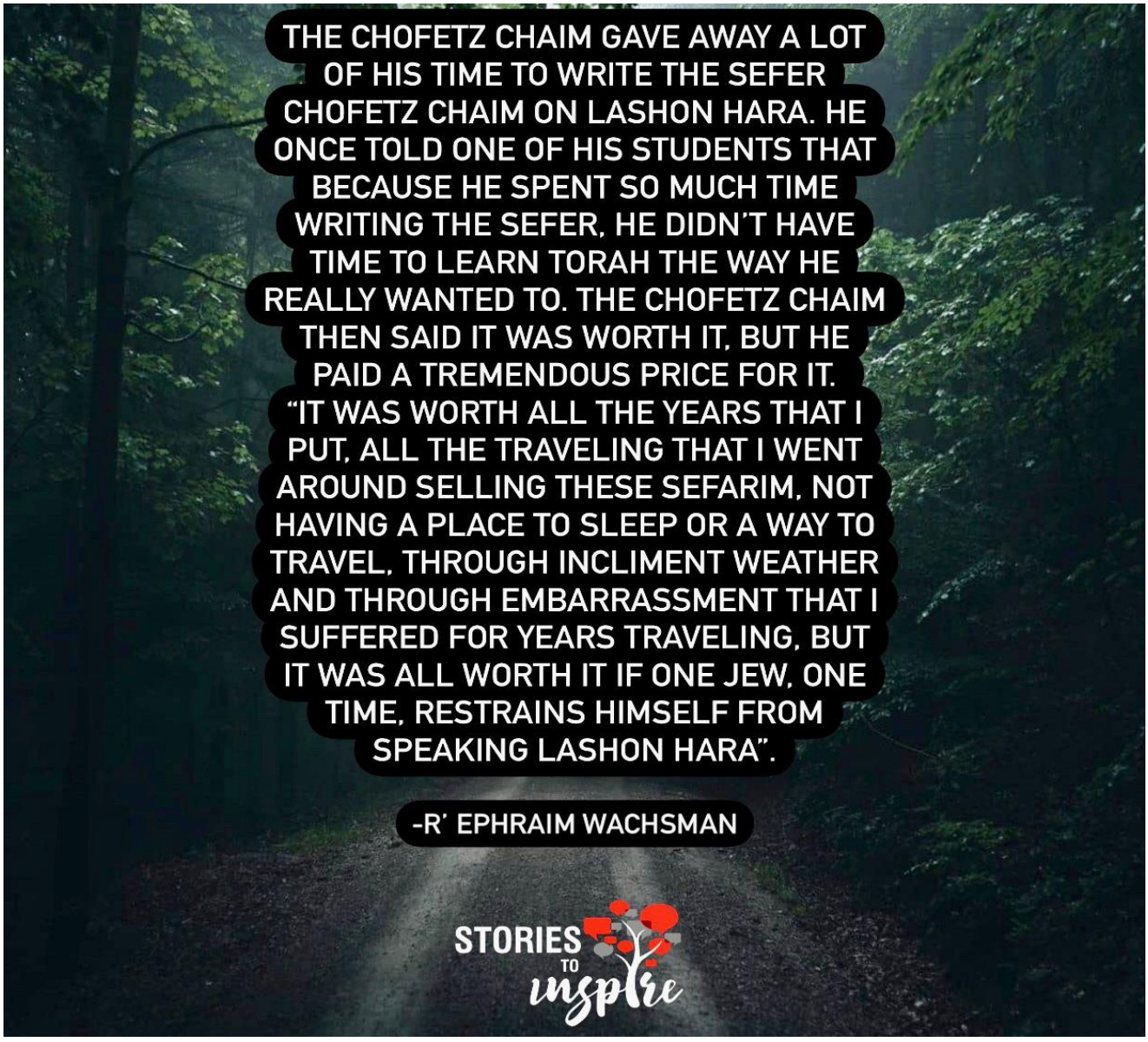
Yosef wanted to prove to his brothers that they were wrong to sentence him to death, and later to slavery, based on their belief that he was a threat to them, for appearances can, indeed, be deceiving.

Here, too, while there was sufficient evidence for King Shlomo to decide which claimant would be a better mother to the baby, he did not declare definitively that she was, in fact, the mother. (**Emet L'Yaakov**)

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ ***"Pharaoh called Yosef's name Tzophnat Pane'ach." (41:45)***

R' Shlomo Alkabetz z"l (1505-1584; author of the Friday night hymn Lecha Dodi, among other works) writes: Yosef's name had to be changed because, if his name had remained "Yosef," his brothers might have looked more closely at him and recognized him. [Had that happened, his dreams would not have been fulfilled.]

Similarly, R' Alkabetz notes, Mordechai (of the Purim story) gave his cousin, Hadassah, the Persian name "Esther" before she was taken to the king's palace. He did this in order to hide her Jewish origins. (**Manot Ha'levi 2:7**)







How should a private Jew react to the disputes between the Gedolim, or to the disputes between groups of Jews in Klal Yisroel?

Let's say that this gadol has a machlokes with another gadol. Or a certain group of Jews are in machlokes with another group of Jews. How should I react?

Stay out of it. Keep far away, so that you don't get burned. It's none of your business. You're not a gadol, so stay out of it. Now, if it's a matter of fighting against **רשעים** and **אפיקורסים**, that's a different story.

None of us can remain silent when we see what the Reformers are doing. When the Reformers say that when a Jew marries a shiksa without converting her, the children are Jews; there we should be fighting them.

If a Jew says that you can be a good Jew and still work on Shabbos, then we fight him. If someone is fighting against Hashem, against the Torah, that's when it's time to open your mouth.

There are times that you have to speak up, no question about it. But when frum Jews are fighting, we stay out of it. That's the only safe way. It's a tragic mistake to mix in because opening your mouth is playing with fire. And not just any fire. Many people have found their

way into the fire of Gehenim, because they were foolish enough to open their mouths.

There are many people, many good people, who are screaming in Gehenim right now, because they opened their big mouths. So why would you want to make the same mistake they did?!



What can we learn from the desecration of Kever Yosef by the Arabs?

We can learn that the Arabs are here to destroy everything that they can.

I'll tell you a little story: Once upon a time there was a rabbi who said that the Prime Minister of Medinas Yisroel is a rodef; by yielding so much to the Arabs he's causing us to lose a great deal of Jewish lives so he's a rodef. So somebody put one and one together and shot the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister of Medinas Yisroel was shot and killed by someone. And now the whole world was up in arms against this rabbi.

"Look what you did! You caused a man to shoot the Prime Minister!"

They don't realize, however, that the rabbi was right. At that time the Prime Minister had begun to yield to the Arabs. He was willing to give them certain concessions in order to appease them so that they shouldn't commit acts of violence against Jews, that they should make peace.

That was a terrible mistake. You don't make concessions with violent people in order to achieve peace.

Let the other side make the concessions. "First you behave," the Arabs have to be told. "If you behave, then we'll see." Don't make any concessions until they behave. But he made concessions and they

weren't behaving yet. And he went further and further and further and today they're willing to give away almost everything.

Barak is willing to give away parts of Yerushalayim. And therefore, today, the Arabs see that it pays to make trouble. The more they commit acts of terror, the more they can gain opportunities to bargain. And the goyim go along with this.

The goyim like the idea of taking away from the Am Yisroel and giving to the Arabs. Now, I don't say that you have to make a milchamah but you have a right to protect the security of your citizens.

I'm not a patriot of Medinas Yisroel but it's wrong to yield. Don't give away any land until you see that they, first of all, behave. If they behave, then we'll see what to do. But before that, while they are still committing acts of terror, there can be no kind of concessions at all.



Why didn't Hashem give the Torah to our Avos, Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, instead of waiting till Har Sinai?

And the answer is that the Torah is the Torah of a people, the Torah of a nation. It's not a Torah of an individual family. Only that this great family of the Avos were the foundation – it was their function in life to prepare themselves to be worthy of being the progenitors of a people that would accept the Torah.

That was their function. They didn't live for themselves. Like the **Rambam** says, the main purpose that the Avos had in mind in building a family was this function, to create a nation of servants of Hashem. Day and night the fathers and the mothers of our nation were thinking one thought, one intention, and that was **להעמיד אומה עובדת**

את השם – to raise up a nation that would serve Hashem. That's the language of the Rambam.

So the Torah was to be given to a nation, and the function of the Avos was to prepare for that eventuality. Now, if the Torah had been given to them and not later, the impact would have been dulled. Its impact would have been deadened if it had been given to a small family.

So Hakodosh Boruch Hu waited until we were already a numerous nation. Only then did they assemble together for that spectacular event of Matan Torah, and then, when this great nation accepted the Torah together, it made its most impressive effect.

Rabbi Leib Chasman related that he once ate a Friday night meal at the home of the Chofetz Chaim. He was very surprised that the song, Shalom Aleichem, which is usually recited before the meal, was not said until after they recited Kiddush and began to eat. Rabbi Chasman asked the Chofetz Chaim why he had reversed the order.

"Most probably you are hungry," said the Chofetz Chaim, "and I wanted you to eat right away. The angels (who are greeted with the recital of Shalom Aleichem) are not hungry, and they can wait." ~ Hameoros Hagdolim

"Emuna gives a person the will to live and the power not only to withstand though times, but to gain by them. Emuna resembles the deep roots of a tree that enables it to withstand wind, storm and drought." ~ R' Shalom Arush.

הרב עובדיה מברטנורא



There is a quote which claims **the Bartenura** mentions a minhag he witnessed on his way to Jerusalem where people would drink wine before going to shul on Friday night.

The claim is that Bartenura wrote this in his sefer Darkei Tzion, -- from Rav Ovadia Bartenura describing his travels in the land of Israel in the late 15th Century.

עוד מנהג ליהודים מארץ ישמעאל בערב שבת הולכים כלם לבית המרחץ ובשובם מביאות נשותיהם לפניהם יין ומרבים בשתיה ואחר מביאות התבשיל שהכינו לסעודת הערב אוכלים מבעוד יום עד שתחשך ואחר באים כולם לבית הכנסת במלבושיהם נקיים ומגוהצים ומתחילים בשירות ותשבחות ומאריכים בתפילת ערבית עד שתי שעות בלילה ובאים לבתיהם ומקדשין אוכלים כזית לחם ומברכים ברכת המזון ואין מתפללים תפילת המנחה של ערב שבת בצבור בכל גלילות ההם זולתי בירושלים לבדה נתבטל המנהג ההיא שבטלו אותו האשכנזים

"Another custom of the Jews of Muslim lands: on Friday they all go the bathhouse and upon their return their wives bring before them wine and they drink a lot and then they bring the cooked food which they prepared for the evening meal and they eat it whilst still daytime until it darkens, and after that they all come to the synagogue in their clean and pressed clothes and they begin songs and praises and extend the Arvit prayer until two hours in the night, and they come to their houses and say Kiddush and eat an olive's bulk of bread and bless the Blessings of Bread, and they do not pray the Mincha prayer communally on Friday in all those lands except only in Jerusalem where that custom had been abolished by the Ashkenazim."

He continues with a description of the practices of the Jews in Jerusalem:

They pray Mincha and Maariv as we do, and then they go to the evening meal. They never begin Maariv before the stars come out. They keep Shabbos much more carefully than do the Jews in our part of the world. No one leaves his house on Shabbos to take a walk or for any reason, unless he is going to do a mitzvah or to the synagogue or the beit midrash.]

Gaza: It is a beautiful city and as large as Jerusalem. I saw the building that according to the Jews there was pulled down by Samson. There are about 70 Jewish families and two Samaritan families.



הוצאת והוצאת לארגסרגס
www.hebrewbooks.org
ע"י חיים תשס"ט

ספר

אוצר י"ד החיים

בו נקבץ ונלקט דברים רבים למאות ולאלפים. מש"ס בבלי וירושלמי ומתרגומים ומדרשים ומספרי קדמונים שונים. יקרים מזז וממנינים. כל דבריהם כנחלי אש באור"ל. ומאורים כסמירים. ואף בו נמצא איזה דרושים קצורים ע"פ הקדמות אמתיים. שהם חיים וקיימים. מעשה ידי ולא להתפאר הוצאתי לאור בחמלת ד' עלי

הק' ישכר דוב באב"ד אבד"ק בוסקא יצ"ו.

בהרה"ג מוה"ר אברהם אבד"ק בוסקא

ואני דור תשיעי מרבן שכבה"ג רבי ר' העשיל בן אחר בן והשמות שלי עם השם של ר' העשיל הם שלשה עשרה תבות ישכר דוב ביר אברהם בהרב ר' יעקב בהרב ר' נתן בהרב ר' יצחק בהרב ר' יעקב בהרב ר' יצחק האביד דק"ק בראד בהרב ר' ישכר דוב פרנס דד' ארצות בהרב רשכבה"ג ר' אברהם יהושע העשיל זצלה"ה ותמכתי יסודותי בשלוש עשרה תבות.

לבוב, תרצ"ד.

נסדר בדפוס של יחזקאל זייף — זעליג לאנגשטיין לבוב, רחוב סטאראזאקאנגא 4.

Sefer Ojcer Jad Hachaim
Nakładca: Rabin I. B. Babad BUSK. (koło Lwowa).

Odbita w. drukarni „Renoma" Lwów, Rzeźnicka 16.

(תתעב) **עיין** כמס' מכשירין שטל ונסס טל תבואה בהיכם בג' ימים ואם נבלע בדבר ביעילו י"ב חודם ויש חומרים עדי בל' יום :

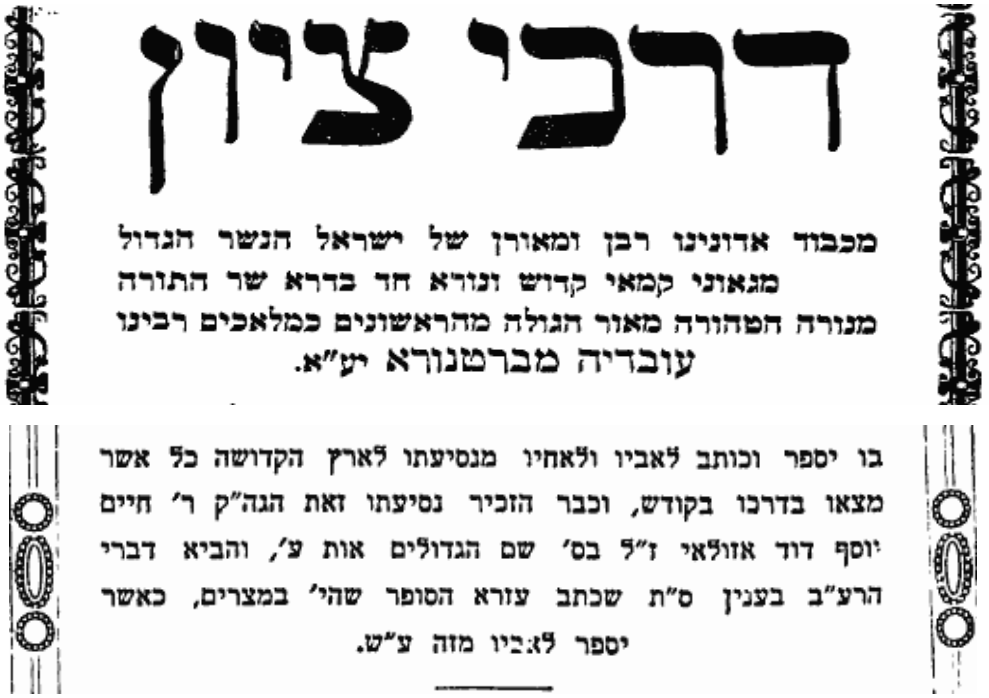
(תתעג) **עיין** רבינו בחיי פ' משפטים בלעתיד לבא יותר בשר בחלב והמעיין בחקוני חזכר הטעם בהוספרין בשר בחלב ולעתיד לבא יתוקן זאת :

(תתעד) **עיין** בספר דרכי ליון מהברעטורא שבשעת הנסיעה לירושלים רחה בדרך מנהג מקומות שבערב שבת קודם חשיכה שותין קלח עד שנעשו מבושמים קלח וחח"כ נכנסין לבתי כנסיות ומזמרין שירות ותשבחות וסיבח המנהג ההוח. והמעיין בירושלמי ברכות פרי' המנהג לבתות יין בטר"ם תחר המרחן :

(תתפ) **עיין** רם"י יחזקאל י"ב דמלת יומם הוח לטון יום יום ומלת יוכ הוח רק יום תחד:

(תתפא) **עיין** ר"מ פ' ב' דכלים משנה ח' שכלי נחר נעשה לשתות בו המילים לחלוטי הלעומכת מפני שהוח טריפה מחד וריחו טוב :

(תתעד) עיין בספר דרכי ליון מהברעטורא שבשעת הנסיעה לירושלים רחה בדרך מנהג מקומות שבערב שבת קודם חשיכה שותין קלח עד שנעשו מבושמים קלח וחח"כ נכנסין לבתי כנסיות ומזמרין שירות ותשבחות וסיבח המנהג ההוח. והמעיין בירושלמי ברכות פרי' המנהג לבתות יין בטר"ם תחר המרחן :





יַעֲשֶׂה פַרְעֹה וְיַפְקֵד פְּקִדִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְחִמֵּשׁ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשָּׂבָע
'***Let Pharaoh proceed and let him appoint overseers on the land, and he shall prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance***.' (41:34)



Yosef gave Pharaoh sound advice: Prepare during the seven years of abundance for a time in which food would be nothing more than a dream (or a nightmare).

We do not focus on the periods of adversity when we are surrounded by plenty. We are unable to imagine what it means to be hungry while we are eating a succulent piece of meat. That is human nature.

A chacham, has the vision to transcend his natural proclivity and see another time, another circumstance, when all will not be good, when every morsel of food will be considered a banquet.

The Baalei mussar, exhort us to take heed, to derive a powerful lesson from Yosef HaTzaddik's advice to Pharaoh. - While "today" – when we are young, healthy in body and mind – we can rise from our chair/bed and take on the world physically and spiritually, we should

store up our reserves. Who knows when the time will arrive – for some, with age; for others, suddenly, out of the blue – when these gifts which we take for granted will be nothing more than a dream, when even getting up from bed will be a difficult act, when cognitive interaction will be a daily challenge.

We must not take any G-d-given moment in our lives for granted. It is a Heavenly gift that, at any moment, can be put on hold, or chas v'shalom, Heaven-forbid, be removed. Seize the moment; seize the opportunity; store up your gifts while you are able.

It takes a perceptive person to realize, acknowledge and act. He is acutely aware that the "party" can end at any moment, and it would be prudent to eat while he can. Otherwise, he might be compelled to leave hungry.

During periods of abundance, we tend to ignore the little things, the extras on the plate, because we have so much from which to choose. When the waiters are cleaning up the tables, however, we might be in the position to grab whatever is available and savor it.

An individual who is in control of his inclinations is the type of person who perceives that the abundance is to be cherished and saved. He stores up whatever is available. Who knows when we will need it?

We have no guarantee of tomorrow – period, and we have no assurance that what is here today will still be available tomorrow. Seize the day! Seize the moment: Maximize the moment.

The Gaon, zl, m'Vilna writes that when the deceased is being taken from his earthly home to the cemetery for burial, the neshamah, soul, endures much pain. It is during those few moments that the stark realization of the truth in its unabashed reality settles in. The deceased yearns just to return for one moment to answer, Amen! Yehei Shmei Rabba! Just to smile to someone and make him feel good. Just to recite a brachah. Alas, it is too late.

It is well-known that shortly before he left this world, the Gaon wept because (he said) in this world, for a few pennies, one can purchase a pair of tzitzis, which he could wear. The reward is awesome. Once one leaves this temporary domain, however, it is all over. If he has invested wisely, he will enjoy the returns. If he has lived a life full of frivolity, wasting those precious minutes… oh well.

Two incongruous attitudes prevail: "Life is short. Enjoy it while you can." as opposed to: "Every second counts. Make the most of your life."

We have no dearth of stories which underscore the value of each moment and how it should be spent. One of the most meaningful scenarios, as described by the **Kelemer Maggid** (one of early twentieth century Europe's most inspirational speakers), is presented here with a chilling follow-up:

"A Heavenly voice declares, 'Hashem has decided to revive the dead for half an hour.' In other words, every neshamah, every loved one, those whom we knew and those who have been long gone, would all become alive for thirty minutes – no more – no less.

What do people do upon hearing this startling news? They all run to the cemetery and wait anxiously for their late family members to rise from the grave and greet them." - The ground rumbles, trembles and begins to erupt, as the deceased rise from their eternal rest for a thirty-minute visit in this world.

Everyone expects them to greet their families and talk about how life has been treating the living; and to ask about new babies, milestone celebrations, etc. But this does not happen. Instead, the deceased make a mad dash to the nearest shul, the closest bais hamedrash, a yeshivah, a kloiz, anywhere that they can learn, daven, recite Tehillim. Others search the streets for opportunities to perform a chesed, act of lovingkindness – anything that will earn them eternal reward, anything.

Each of them, with absolutely no exceptions, understands that these thirty moments are critical, that this is the only time in which they can accrue merit for Olam Habba, the World to Come. During those precious thirty minutes, every second counts. They watch the clock nervously, realizing that every second is precious. The last thing they want is to return to their graves with little merit. This is the chance of a "lifetime"!

The Maggid looked deeply into the eyes of the members of the community who had gathered to hear him speak and said, "Nu? What would be so bad if we had more than a half an hour left to live? On the other hand, who is to say that we even have a half an hour? - Every moment that is allotted to us by Hashem should be cherished for its value."

I write this Erev Rosh Hashanah, after I shared this story with a group of adults. I then posed a question which I am certain from the looks on their faces they had never thought about: "As you all prepare to daven on Rosh Hashanah for a shanah tovah, you ask Hashem for another year of life. Did you ever ask yourself what life means? What do you plan to do with the life Hashem grants you? Do you want another year of fun? Of travel? Of prosperity? Of health? For what? What aspect of life is worthy? How do you measure worthiness? Are you prepared to devote your life to living for Hashem?

To ask for life, without being cognizant of the meaning and value of life, has as much meaning as the life that we are praying for. When we realize the true value of life, we will appreciate the gift and we will be effusive in our praise of and, most important, gratitude to Hashem for granting us this gift.

"Wisdom is to the soul as food is to the body." ~ Ibn Ezra.

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ אֶת־אָסְנַת בַּת־פּוֹטִי פֶרַע כֹּהֵן אֹן לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם '***Pharaoh called Yosef's name Tzafnas-Paneach and he gave him Osnas bas Potiphera, chief of On, as a wife. Thus, Yosef emerged in charge of the land of Egypt***.' (41:45)

Pharaoh was confronted with a major policy decision. A brilliant young man stood before him, who had the ability not only to save the country, but also to fill Pharaoh's coffers with enormous wealth. The problem was that not only was he a slave – he was also a Hebrew. This would not sit well with his pagan populace. While they thought little of their slave population – they reviled Jews!

What was Pharaoh to do? How was he to concoct an extreme makeover of Yosef and transform him into an "acceptable" Egyptian?

The Torah gives us the answer when it juxtaposes Pharaoh's "naming" Yosef Tzafnas-Paneach upon his marriage to Osnas. (Pharaoh gave her to him.)

For all intents and purposes, Yosef was now Tzafnas. His wife was the daughter of the distinguished pagan priest of On. Yosef was no longer a Jew. He was now a member of Egyptian aristocracy!

Pharaoh could not take a chance that the people might balk at his choice for viceroy. True, he was good for the country. They needed him. However, שִׂנְאָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוּרָה, "***hatred distorts a straight line***." Animosity blinds, perverts, and causes one to lose the clarity of his perspective. - The Egyptians could never tolerate a Jew as ruler over them. It was necessary to change his identity.

Two and a half centuries ago, our secular brethren decided that they, too, must compromise their Jewish identities. They changed their names from Hebrew to German. They discarded their traditional garb together with their tznius, chaste dress code.

Once they looked and talked like goyim, it was easier to act like goyim, to adopt their lifestyle and culture. Thus, they could completely reject their traditional upbringing and centuries of

commitment to the Torah. Baruch Hashem, their dream of acceptance by the gentiles was never realized. The goyim's hatred of the Jew was stronger than the Jew's external alteration of self. - To the goy we were, and will always be, Jews.

אַתָּה֙ תִּהְיֶ֣ה עַל־בֵּיתִ֔י וְעַל־פִּ֖יךָ יִשַּׁ֣ק כָּל־עַמִּ֑י רַ֕ק הַכִּסֵּ֥א אֶגְדַּ֖ל מִמֶּֽךָּ 'You shall be in charge of my palace, and by your command shall all my people be sustained.' (41:40)

In Parashas Shemos (1:8), the Torah writes, וַיָּ֥קָם מֶֽלֶךְ־חָדָ֖שׁ עַל־מִצְרָ֑יִם אֲשֶׁ֥ר לֹא־יָדַ֖ע אֶת־יוֹסֵֽף, "A new king arose over Egypt."



Chazal debate the meaning of "a new king." Was he actually a new king? Or was he the same Pharaoh that had crowned Yosef as a viceroy over Egypt?

He suffered from "memory loss," quickly forgetting the benefits he had accrued as a result of Yosef's wise counsel.

Horav David Povarsky, zl, asks that if he was indeed the same Pharaoh who was so impressed with Yosef, why was it that the miracles and wonders of Moshe Rabbeinu and Aharon HaKohen did not impress him? - The "first" Pharaoh not only acquiesced to Yosef's advice, he practically gave him free rein over the country. Now this "same" Pharaoh listened to Moshe and Aharon – and ignored them. - How do we reconcile these conflicting reactions? How are the circumstances different?

The Rosh Yeshivah explains that the circumstances are as different as night is from day: When Yosef stood before Pharaoh, interpreting his dreams and advising him about how to move forward, Pharaoh had nothing to lose. His position would not change. He would now have a

viceroy who would run the country for him. He would permit a holy, spiritual man – who happened to be extremely wise and a brilliant organizer – to manage his country. - On the contrary, Yosef was making Pharaoh look good.

When Pharaoh met with Moshe and Aharon, the scenario had changed. The two Jewish representatives wanted Pharaoh to free the Jews. Pharaoh was not benefitting from their visit. He was about to lose millions of slaves. This would affect him personally, striking him where it hurt him the most – his wallet.

Now, the decision to be impressed by the miracles would be mitigated by Pharaoh's vested interests. It becomes increasingly difficult to see with clarity when one is personally affected.

The same Pharaoh who was inspired by Yosef's extraordinary demonstration of Hashem's power was not moved by Moshe. The reason was simple: Now Pharaoh had something to lose.

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים '***It happened at the end of two years to the day***.' (41:1)

So begins the salvation of Yosef HaTzaddik, which would have commenced two years earlier had Yosef not shown a deficiency in his bitachon, trust in Hashem. After all has been said and done, Yosef truly suffered as a slave and a prisoner. He spent a good portion of his formative adult life away from family, alone in a pagan, immoral world.

How did he do it? How was he able to maintain his extraordinary fidelity to Hashem amidst the multitude of tzaros, troubles, that accompanied him for thirteen years? This was followed by nine more years during which he was viceroy of Egypt but had still not been reunited with his father.

Twenty-two years of separation leave a scar. Apparently, Yosef weathered his travail incredibly well. What was his secret? What is the distinction between joy and happiness?

Happiness is a description of life as a whole. Joy means celebrating the moment. - Every time a challenge arises, one should experience joy. How?

When one delights in the knowledge that he is here by the grace of Hashem, that every minute of his existence is powered by the Almighty, he becomes joyous.

One needs neither wealth nor power in order to feel joy. He experiences it via the realization that this moment is "sponsored" by Hashem; that He cares; that the pain is Heaven-sent for a designated purpose. - When we live the "moment" and experience Hashem's Presence within this moment, we attach ourselves to eternity. Can there be a greater reason for joy?

This is how Yosef lived. This is how we should live – every moment, every breath, every experience: if we experience Hashem, we feel joy.



וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף רְאֵה נְתַתִּי אֹתְךָ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם' ***Then Pharaoh said to Yosef. "See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt.***" (41:41)

Hakoras hatov, recognizing a favour and paying gratitude, is a defining middah, character trait. One who is an ingrate is not a mentch, decent human being. Nonetheless, some individuals who, although not by nature ingrates, find themselves hard-pressed to recognize that (a) they owe something to someone, (b) that they have sufficient reason to show their appreciation. In other words, they seek every excuse to justify their lack of gratitude. They owe no one for anything.

We all know people who seek excuses not to show their gratitude. We observe another form of character deficiency. A person helps; he is acting on someone's behalf, be it a job, a marriage partner, or simply an act of lovingkindness. Once he has performed his good deed, he expects constant recognition. "Remember how you got here and who helped you along the way."



If, Heaven forbid, a day passes and the beneficiary neglects to pay his respects and laud his benefactor for everything – then he is an ingrate. - Yes, there are people like that. They thrive on and need constant recognition.

Indeed, **Horav Sholom Schwadron, zl**, suggests that Pharaoh was like that. He elevated Yosef from slavery to monarchy, which was certainly no simple feat. No one other than Pharaoh (with a "little" manipulation from Hashem) could have achieved this transformation. If so, why does Pharaoh say to Yosef, "See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt"?

A few pesukim later, Pharaoh "reminds" Yosef, "I am Pharaoh." Obviously, he is Pharaoh and, undoubtedly, he is the only one who has the power to elevate Yosef. Why does Pharaoh have to issue these "subtle" reminders?

Rav Sholom explains that Pharaoh was intimating to Yosef, "Remember who gave you this job. I am not asking for anything from you -- no accolades, no gifts, nothing – but that you remember how you got here and who helped you along the way. Do not ever lose sight of the fact that, regardless of what you have become, I am still Pharaoh. Never forget! I will not!"

Pharaoh represents the classic example of the fellow who simply will not let go. He has benefited others, and, in return, he wants

recognition. Indeed, he thrives on recognition. If a day goes by and he does not receive his recognition, he will be hurt and upset.

One must always show his appreciation by expressing his gratitude. On the other hand, the benefactor should keep it to himself and just feel good that Hashem "allowed" him to be His conduit for helping another Jew.

כֻּלָּנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ־אֶחָד נָחְנוּ '***All of us, sons of one man are we.***' (42:11)



The Egyptian viceroy (Yosef) had a hard time believing that ten brothers, an entire family, were required to come down to Egypt to purchase food. If it was a question of assistance, one or two brothers could have gone with a few servants. Why did all of the brothers leave their individual families if the job could have been carried out by a few brothers?

Ramban explains that being brothers, their father, Yaakov Avinu, wanted them to remain together. It was not a matter of strength in numbers; it was just that Yaakov did not want the members of his family separated from one another. This was despite the danger of traveling and spending time away from their usual learning sessions. Apparently, family harmony, in which the brothers remain closely bonded to one another, took precedence.

Horav A. Henach Leibowitz, zl, derives from here the overriding importance of achdus, unity, love among members of Klal Yisrael. It

is worth putting oneself into a sakanah, danger, and even allowing him to minimize the time devoted to learning Torah, as long as achdus is not impugned.

Achdus is a defining criterion for success in Torah. One who does not get along with others or does not really care about others has difficulty achieving success in Torah. Torah belongs to Am Yisrael, a collective gift to the entire nation. We are all members of this august group. To negate or be selective in whom one considers "worthy" of his friendship is a strike against his success in Torah. The Rosh Yeshivah goes on to teach an important lesson with regard to achdus.

There are those who claim to be committed to achdus and ahavas Yisrael, but care only about the totality of Klal Yisrael. When they are asked to assist the klal – they are ready. What about the "little guy," however, who is also a part of klal Yisrael? Do they care about each individual as part of the whole – or do they care only about the whole?

The mitzvah of ahavas Yisrael is to love each individual Jew. The mitzvah of achdus Yisrael is to care about each individual Jew as part of the whole Am Yisrael. Having said this, we should ask ourselves: Are we fulfilling this mitzvah correctly?

In an alternative exposition, **Horav Elimelech Biderman, Shlita**, cites the **Divrei Yisrael (Modzitz)** who explains that the brothers all traveled together to Egypt so that they could be assured of having a minyan, quorum, for tefillah. Tefillah b'tzibbur, communal prayer, transcends the prayers of an individual.

The Bais Aharon (Karlin) teaches that when one prays with a minyan, the Shechinah, Divine Presence, is present, thus elevating and granting greater efficacy to one's prayers.

The Zohar HaKadosh observes that when one prays alone, the supplicant is scrutinized by Hashem as to his worthiness. A communal

request does not pass through such a demanding channel. An individual's tefillah as part of that of the community will be accepted.



The Yismach Yisrael wrote in a letter to his chassidim, "I request from those who are involved in business to always daven in the bais chassidim (the bais hamedrash) – and never miss. Even if there is no minyan and they will be compelled to wait for one, they should wait. (Obviously, they should recite Tehillim or learn Torah.) - I guarantee this will not cause them a loss. On the contrary, it will engender blessing in their parnassah, livelihood. This will also train their children… to go twice daily to the bais hamedrash."

The Kaminetzer Mashgiach (Eretz Yisrael), **Horav Moshe Aharon Stern, zl**, was meticulous concerning tefillah b'tzibbur. He would instruct chassanim, prior to marriage, never to pray alone at home, claiming that this was the first step on the path to deviating from a Torah lifestyle. Even if there is no minyan, one should make the effort to pray alone in the shul, because: A) the shul's ambiance is more conducive to prayer, thus causing the supplicant to express greater devotion and feeling; B) if one prays alone at home, it will lower his esteem in the eyes of his wife.

He once inquired of a six-year-old child how his abba puts on Tefillin. The child proceeded to demonstrate how his father puts on Tefillin. Rav Moshe Aharon then went over to the father and rebuked him

for davening at home. How else would a six-year-old boy know how his father puts on Tefillin?

Rav Moshe Aharon Stern once said (concerning a young married man whose presence at minyan was, at best, sporadic), "If my daughter was engaged to a boy, and I was informed a week prior to the wedding that he did not regularly pray with a minyan – I would not break the engagement. Had I known from the outset that this was the case, however, I would never have agreed to the match in the first place. A boy who does not come to the yeshivah to pray is not serious."

Incidentally, his attitude concerning late arrival at minyan was no different: "How can a person be late for prayers? If the Kohen Gadol who came to serve in the Kadosh HaKodoshim, Holy of Holies, would have tarried for even an instant, the consequences would have been devastating." Apparently, for some, the designation talmid chacham/ben Torah, embodies more than purely Torah erudition. It defines the entire demeanour of the individual.

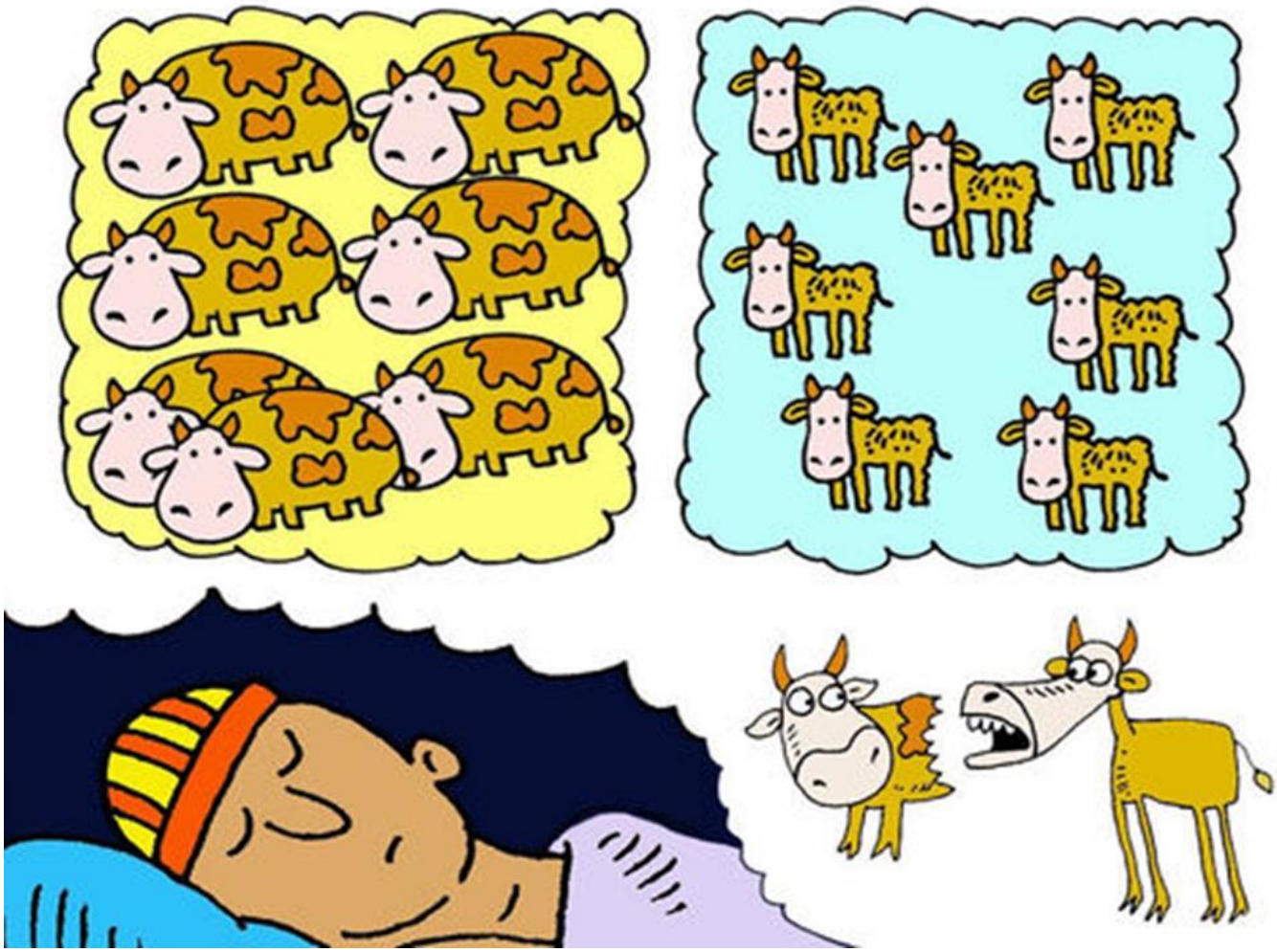


וַיִּיטַב הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי פַרְעֹה '***The matter appeared good in Pharaoh's eyes***.' (41:37)

Pharaoh accepted Yosef's interpretation of his dreams. It is not as if Pharaoh did not have his own wise men who were quite articulate in interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. He heard what they had to say, but it was not to his liking. The dreams were not speaking to him personally. After all, he was a king, an individual responsible for an entire country. Instead, Pharaoh was enamoured with Yosef's interpretation.

A clever king understands that the vision which he sees is not personal. It must embrace an entire country and must influence the lives of his subjects. Yosef told Pharaoh that he was fortunate to be privy to Hashem's plans for the future. They were being revealed

to him, so that he could make provisions for the future. The wise man is one who sees the unfolding of G-d's purpose in the general scheme of things and shapes his life accordingly and must influence the lives of his subjects.



Yosef told Pharaoh that he was fortunate to be privy to Hashem's plans for the future. They were being revealed to him, so that he could make provisions for the future. - The wise man is one who sees the unfolding of G-d's purpose in the general scheme of things and shapes his life accordingly.

Furthermore, Yosef interpreted Pharaoh's dreams with a sense of foresight concerning the future. Pharaoh dreamt of seven well-fed cows, followed by seven lean cows, who quickly swallowed up their predecessors. Then he dreamt again, a similar dream, but with different players. Seven full ears of corn were being devoured by seven withered ones.

Pharaoh's advisors saw seven daughters to be born to Pharaoh, but these daughters would die. His advisors, like so many people, thought in terms of the past, with no message for the future. That was the thinking in the decadent Egyptian society of the time: live and die and be forgotten; no legacy for the future – no thoughts about tomorrow. - Yosef was a Jew. We do not live in the past. We never forget the past, but we always think of the future.

In his wisdom, Yosef taught Pharaoh a new way to view life, a rich, new philosophy, a philosophy which thinks of – and prepares for – the future. He understood the importance of not ignoring any opportunity to prepare during the good years for the lean years that are certain to come. He emphasized that tomorrow must go hand in hand with yesterday. Do not live in the past; take the past with you as you look toward the future. You will not survive tomorrow unless you prepare for it today. "Today" is the link between "yesterday" and "tomorrow." Today determines whether there will be a tomorrow. Today must carry over from yesterday, or we will have no tomorrow.

Of the three Avos, Patriarchs, Yitzchak Avinu is described as the one who represents and exemplifies the middah, attribute, of gevurah, strength: not Avraham Avinu, who was the founder of the Jewish faith; nor Yaakov Avinu, who triumphed in his battle against Eisav and Eisav's angel. It is Yitzchak, who succumbed to Eisav's guile and was "deceived" by Yaakov (who came in dressed as Eisav). Yitzchak is portrayed as holy, the Olah Temimah, perfect sacrifice, but not as strong. Yet, he symbolizes gevurah. Why?

Dayan Moshe Swift, zl, explains that, in a chain, the middle link must be strongest, because it holds together the first and last, the front and back. Yitzchak was able to accept the Mesorah, Tradition, from Avraham and transmit it to Yaakov. He succeeded in imbuing his son, Yaakov, with the emunah tehorah, pure faith, of his father, Avraham. This took enormous strength.

Hillel and Shammai debated concerning the lighting of the Chanukah menorah. We decide the halachah like Hillel, who says that we kindle one light on the first night and then recite the blessing. On the second night, we kindle two candles, one for today and one for yesterday. On day three, we light three candles, two for the days gone by and one for today.

We progressively increase the candles by working our way backwards, today, yesterday, the day before, k'neged yamim ha'yotzim, corresponding to the days "gone by." This is because we cannot make a blessing for today unless yesterday accompanies it. There is no Judaism for the Jew unless he considers the past.

Why did Hashem have to create a miracle whereby the oil from the past continued to burn? He could have sent down fresh oil from Heaven or new olive oil from the earth. Such a miracle would probably have had more impact. Why use an old flask of oil that would only suffice for one day?

The lesson is obvious: Better one drop of the good "old" oil than all the new. New does not always last; the old lasts. Indeed, it is still here.

Chanukah's message is to seek out the old, keep it, learn from it, and build upon its "shoulders." There were those, however, who refused to light the "old" menorah. They sought a new menorah. They slowly extinguished the light of the menorah of the past, replacing it with a new, more modern menorah – one that sadly has been unable to withstand the winds of change, ignorance and neglect.

Yosef insisted on keeping yesterday's light burning. Allow it to inspire you as you transmit its glow to your children. Then your children will follow you by carrying the flame and passing it to their children – until we are able to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu with it.

וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־שֵׁם הַבְּכֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי־נַשַּׁנִי אֱלֹקִים אֶת־כָּל־עֲמָלִי וְאֵת כָּל־בֵּית אָבִי
'***Yosef called the name of the firstborn Menashe, for "G-d has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's household.***'" (41:51)

Is forgetting one's youth, his home, his parents, something to be happy about? Yosef seems to have emphasized "forgetting" to the point that he named his firstborn Menashe.



Horav Yosef Nechemiah Kornitzer, zl, Rav of Cracow, explains that educating children is not about rebuke and pointing out what to do and what not to do. Children learn best when they have a positive role model in their parents. Seeing how a father speaks, his choice of words, how he interacts with others, his total demeanour, is probably the most effective manner of teaching a child how to act.

Our actions speak to our children. They teach them the way we want them to act and live. Thus, we must take great pains to see to it that the lessons we teach are worthy of emulating.

Yosef HaTzaddik was musing: "During all this time away from home, I was compelled to constantly reiterate the lessons of my youth in my mind. In order to protect myself from the vile Egyptian influence, I was not allowed for a moment to forget who I am and my background. Growing up with my brothers in my father's home kept me spiritually alive – because I never forgot my home. Now that I have my own home, my own son, I have my personal responsibility to imbue my family with the proper values. I have to serve as the

example. I finally can 'forget' my home, because, Baruch Hashem, now I have a home of my own. This will be my motivation."

This is a powerful lesson which we should all take to heart. Growing up, many of us do not pay heed to the lessons we learned at home, the lessons imparted to us by determined parents, hopeful that their children will follow suit. - It did not always work.

We get a second chance when we marry and start a family of our own. Whatever we were able to get away with in our youth will not stand up to our children's scrutiny.

Indeed, the most powerful deterrent to negative behaviour is when one sees his children mimicking him.



וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם '***Yaakov perceived that there were provisions in Egypt***.' (42:1)

When the **Baal HaTanya, zl**, was taken to prison in St. Petersburg, he asked one of his Chassidim to take a kvittel, written petition asking for a blessing, to his mechutan (father of child's spouse) and close friend, **Horav Levi Yitzchak Berdichever, zl**.

The Berditchever asked the messenger for Rav Shneur Zalman's mother's name. The chasid did not know. - Rav Levi Yitzchak took out a Chumash and made a goral, lot, a means of turning pages in such a manner that the last page will have a pasuk which reveals the answer to one's question. Obviously, only a Torah scholar of great repute is qualified to employ the goral. The pasuk which appeared to him was the pasuk above: **וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם**.

Rav Levi Yitzchak said, "The word **שֶׁבֶר** – shin, beis, raish is an acronym for **S**hneur **b**en **R**ivkah. Probably, the Baal HaTanya's mother's name was Rivkah."

The messenger asked, "Perhaps her name was Rachel?" The Berditchever replied, "The pasuk is coming to 'help.' The word shever

has two letters – bais and reish of the name Rivkah, while it only has one letter of the name Rachel." - The purpose of the above is only to demonstrate the various ways in which the Torah's verses may be interpreted.

Indeed, in Chassidic literature, the word שֶׁבֶר, which is the root of מַשְׁבִּיר, is interpreted as "to break," rather than "food." In pasuk 6 it says, וְיוֹסֵף הוּא הַשַּׁלִּיט עַל־הָאָרֶץ הוּא הַמַּשְׁבִּיר לְכָל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, "***Now Yosef…he was the provider to all the people of the land***."



Horav Avraham, zl, m'Slonim says that, through the power of Yosef HaTzaddik, with the power generated by one's righteousness, the individual is able to break himself before Hashem. The Almighty seeks a person with a broken heart, a heart that realizes the effects of sin. A tzaddik reaches up to Hashem via his broken heart.

The Kotzker Rebbe, zl, was wont to say, "***There is nothing so whole as a broken heart***." The tzaddik stands before Hashem, broken, lost, entreating His favour, yet feeling unworthy of His kindness. The attitude defines his "wholeness."

The holy **Horav Menachem Mendel, zl, m'Vitebsk** once said, "When I arrived in Russia, I met people with torn garments and whole hearts. During my tenure, I saw to it that they had whole clothing, but torn hearts."

What the Vitebsker meant was that, in order for a Jew to beseech Hashem, he has to feel broken hearted, lost without the Almighty. He realizes that his behavior leaves much to be desired and that he is unworthy of Hashem's favor. It takes a holy man, a tzaddik, to "break" someone's heart, by teaching him what it is that Hashem asks of him, and what his shortcomings are.

A tzaddik imbues a person with humility by showing him how distant he is from achieving closeness with the Almighty. It is through the power of Yosef HaTzaddik, the power of the righteous, that a person is able to be mashbir, break the hearts of his fellow Jews, so that they can properly turn to Hashem and succeed in their entreaty.



עַל־כֵּ֛ן בָּ֥אָה אֵלֵ֖ינוּ הַצָּרָ֣ה הַזֹּ֑את '***This is why this anguish has come upon us***.' (42:21)

Yosef challenged his brothers, declaring that they were spies. They, of course, denied his allegations. As proof to their insistence that they were all brothers, Yosef demanded that they leave one brother in Egypt as "security," while the rest would return home and come back with Benyamin. - The brothers now realized that all was not well. Something was wrong. Hashem was sending them a message.

The word אֵלֵינוּ, which is translated "upon us," really means "to us." The pasuk should rather have been written with the word עָלֵינוּ, which means upon/on us.

In his Lekutei MoHaran, **Horav Nachman Breslover, zl**, explains that Hashem sends us messages in the guise of occurrences, incidents. Things do not "just happen" as the popular maxim of contemporary, secular society would have us think. Everything that occurs concerning a person is all by design – Hashem's design. He is to use his head to discern why this is happening to him: What does Hashem want of me?"

The brothers knew that the issue concerning Yosef was no simple occurrence. This was obviously retribution for something. They were being judged for something that they had done. They immediately began to think: "What could we have done; how far back does it go?

They decided that the issue was their lack of compassion concerning Yosef. They erred and their inaction now required reparation. Thus, they said אֵלֵינוּ – "***to us***." - It is a message that Heaven sent to us. עָלֵינוּ, On us/upon us, would not accurately define their feelings. Hashem speaks to us all of the time. Alas, we are not always listening.

At times, it is just simple incidents which occur, observations to be made, which make the difference in our lives. These, too, are messages – to those who take "time off from their busy schedules to listen."



Horav Aryeh Levin, zl, was reverently known as the Tzaddik of Yerushalayim. He distinguished himself in his empathy for all Jews, regardless of religious persuasion, background, or financial portfolio.

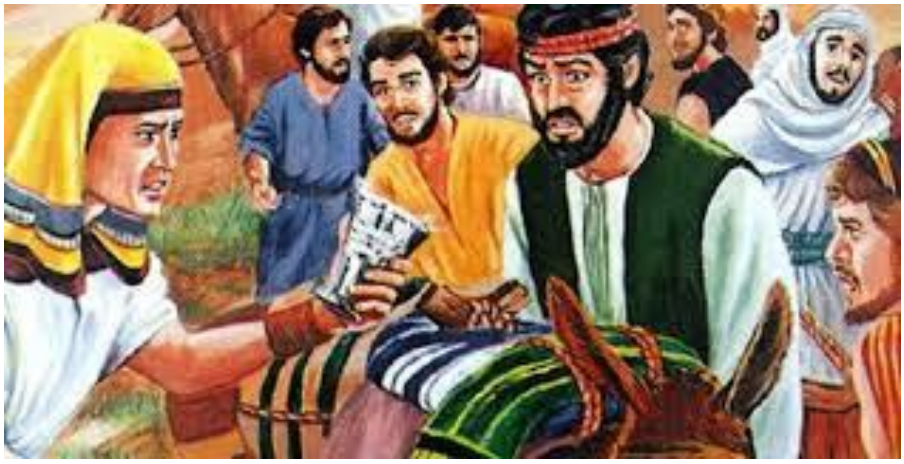
Rav Aryeh was known for his perpetual smile. Once queried concerning the origin of his "smile," he said, "When I came to the Holy Land, I was utterly alone – and quite hungry. [Being alone and hungry can have a seriously depressing effect upon a person.] I went to the Kosel, put my hands firmly upon the massive stones and said, 'Hashem, Ribbono Shel Olam, I am so lonesome here. Please, I beg of You, be with me.'

"At that moment," he continued, "I had a strong, clear feeling that Hashem was really with me, and I returned home with a smile on my face."

That smile never left his visage. His countenance was a trademark. When an individual came in contact with him, he would feel the smile on Rav Aryeh's face permeate the visitor. After all, the smile represented Rav Aryeh's recognition that Hashem had listened to him.

Hashem speaks to us; it is a pity that we do not take the time to listen. Hashem listens to us; we unfortunately, do not always pay attention to Him. As the saying goes, "***Wake up and smell the roses***," but one must first open up his eyes and see the roses.

וַיְחַפֵּשׂ בַּגָּדוֹל הֵחֵל וּבַקָּטֹן כִּלָּה וַיִּמָּצֵא הַגָּבִיעַ בְּאַמְתַּחַת בִּנְיָמִן 'He searched; he began with the oldest and ended with the youngest; and the goblet was found in Binyamin's sack.' (44:12)



Stealing represents a character defect – if the thief is an adult. The mere fact that a person is not affected by the pain he inflicts upon another person is in and of itself an indication of a flawed, even perverted, personality.

When the thief is a young child, it is usually an indication of a lack of ethical values which were not inculcated in him by a responsible mentor. We will soon discern exactly who the responsible mentor is.

While I often include a story only for the purpose of buttressing the lesson which the dvar Torah teaches, in this instance, the story

is so compelling and the lesson so powerful, that I take the liberty of quoting it without an accompanying dvar Torah.

The story is quoted by **Horav Shlomo Levinstein, Shlita**, in the name of **Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita:**

Horav Avraham Pam, zl, venerable Rosh Yeshivah of Torah Vodaas, was asked to be mesader kedushin, perform the marriage ceremony, for a young man. (The story does not mention if the chassan, groom, was a student of Rav Pam.) Shortly before the chupah, the chassan broke down in bitter weeping.



Rav Pam asked everyone to leave as he spoke softly to the young man. "Tell me, what is wrong?" the Rosh Yeshivah asked. "What provoked your sudden outburst of weeping?"

The chassan related the following heartrending story: "I was fourteen-years-old and studying in elementary school. One of the boys in the class had a trinket to which I helped myself. The victim of the theft was noticeably upset and complained to the rebbe. The rebbe immediately closed the door, not permitting anyone to leave, and then began to search everyone's pockets.

I was quick with my hands, and I placed the trinket in the jacket pocket of another student. A few minutes later, the rebbe discovered the lost trinket in the pocket of the "innocent" student and declared him to be the thief!

"The rebbe did not leave well enough alone by simply sitting down with the student and talking about his lamentable disregard for

another person's property; rather, he proclaimed that this student was a thief, mercilessly shamed him before the class, called his parents, and took him to the principal.

The parents were devastated and terribly angry, refusing to believe their son's claim of innocence. Sadly, the cards were stacked against the boy. No one believed his innocence. After all, the trinket had been discovered in his possession. The strong punishment which the boy received, coupled with the horrible humiliation that he experienced, catalyzed a downward spiral in his mitzvah observance.

He was angry that no one believed him, disappointed by the behavior of frum, observant, people, who should have been serving as an example for others to emulate.

Eventually, he left Yiddishkeit and now is about to marry out of the faith! All of this is my fault. How can I go to the chupah knowing that I am the cause of another Jew marrying a gentile?"

Rav Pam looked the chassan in the face, and -- in his calm, soothing voice -- said, "There is no doubt that you committed an act of theft, which is no simple matter. It is a maase chamur, egregious (sinful) act. You may not blame yourself, however, for the spiritual demise of your friend. The primary guilt lies squarely on the shoulders of his parents and rebbe for not believing him when he claimed innocence."

Veritably, what kind of parent turns a deaf ear to a child's plea of innocence? How can a person call himself a mechanech, educator, if he acts so heartlessly and does not attempt to ferret out the truth?

When a child cries out, we should at least lend a compassionate ear and look for a reason to believe him. Otherwise, we are not worthy of the lofty title of parent or rebbe!

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַּרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֕הוּ עַל־אֶ֖רֶץ מִצְרָֽיִם *'Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt.'* (41:33)

Yosef was asked to interpret Pharaoh's dream – not to add his personal opinion concerning its implementation. Yet, when he rendered the interpretation, he rendered free, unrequested advice. Why did he do this?

Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita, explains that the advice was part of the dream's interpretation. He quotes a vignette which he heard from his father concerning the **Chofetz Chaim, zl**.

A man came to the venerable sage, complaining bitterly that, at one point in his life, parnassah, earning a livelihood, had been no problem for him. He did well, and he had money to spare. Now, regrettably, he was barely eking out a living, and he was often subject to counting pennies for his Shabbos preparations.



The Chafetz Chaim explained to him that his lot in life had not really changed. It is just that a person must realize that Hashem sends us His gift in various ways. Some receive a steady income; it might be a lower lump sum, but it is steady and timely. Others receive a one-time lump sum, and it is up to them to be astute in its management. If they spend it all immediately upon receipt, they will be left penniless down the road of life.

The Chafetz Chaim explained, "You, my friend, received one large gift from the Almighty. Sadly, you spent it all in a short amount of time. Now, you are complaining that Hashem is not good to you. - He

was very good to you; you, however, squandered your gift by spending it all right away."

In a similar vein, Yosef explained to Pharaoh that, indeed, he was receiving a wonderful gift – seven years of plenty. He must, however, be aware that this is a one-time gift. If he were to spend it all in "one place," he would starve during the years of hunger. - Thus, Yosef was not really rendering advice; he was explaining the dream.

This idea applies likewise to us. We rarely look back in time when we "had it all." Little did we realize then that we were supposed to apportion it in such a manner that it would last.

Some are fortunate to receive a large bulk, which replaces the usual steady income. Others are provided with sustenance on a regular basis. In any event, we see that it is not always the size of the gift, but how one uses it, that counts.

A large gift, over a long period of time, may not be that large, while a smaller gift, which is consistent and timely, can make all of the difference in the world.



וַיְמַהֵר יוֹסֵף כִּי־נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמָיו אֶל־אָחִיו וַיְבַקֵּשׁ לִבְכּוֹת וַיָּבֹא הַחַדְרָה וַיֵּבְךְּ שָׁמָּה
'***Then Yosef rushed because his compassion for his brother had been stirred***.' (43:30)

Yosef's conversation with his brother Binyamin was an emotion-laden experience. Yosef asked Binyamin if he had a brother from the same mother as he. Binyamin responded in the affirmative, but he did not know his whereabouts.

When Yosef asked Binyamin concerning his own family, the latter replied that he had ten sons – each one named in a manner commemorating the loss of his brother.

When Yosef heard how far Binyamin had gone in perpetuating his memory, his emotions were stirred.

Two powerful lessons can be derived from here. First, the greatest tribute one can make to the memory of a person is to name someone close after him. While the departed is no longer here, his namesake is, and whenever one comes in contact with the namesake, he recalls the memory of the departed.

Binyamin did not know what had taken place concerning Yosef on that fateful day. The family had no clear proof indicating that he had died. He could quite possibly still be alive – suffering in some miserable place, which had been the case for many years. Binyamin did not want to lose sight of his brother's plight. He did not want to forget that he had once had a brother. He was not an only child. He had a brother. Furthermore, we see the incredible love that Yosef harbored for Binyamin.

Horav Gamliel notes that the Torah writes that Yosef was compelled to leave, for his compassion for his brother had been stirred. Yosef was filled with emotion only because he felt bad for Binyamin. He was causing him pain with every minute that he did not reveal himself to him. - It was not about Yosef; it was only about Binyamin.

The love for one another that permeated the hearts of Binyamin and Yosef should be a standard for others to emulate.

"We have been put into a world where Hashem's constant providence is unseen. Our task is to rouse ourselves to see, in the midst of this obscurity, that 'Nature' has no power – everything is from the hand of Hashem. No event, large or small, occurs without His decree." ~ Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler Zt'l.

"More important than who one's grandparents were, is who one's grandchildren will be." ~ R' Shlomo Riskin.

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר *'It happened at the end of two years to the day: Pharaoh was dreaming that behold! He was standing over the River.'* (41:1)

We all know the rest of the story. Seven healthy cows were swallowed up by seven meagre cows. Seven healthy ears of grain sprouting on a single stalk were swallowed up by seven ears of parched, thin, weather-beaten grain.

These were strange dreams which disturbed the Egyptian king. Clearly, these dreams had to have a profound meaning.

Finally, Yosef interpreted the dreams, referring to two sets of seven years – years of plenty swallowed up by years of hunger, a hunger that would be so overwhelming that the years of plenty would be totally forgotten.

The Torah does not write fictional stories. Pharaoh's dreams had a purpose. Yosef told Pharaoh what to do to circumvent the disaster that loomed over Egypt. What about us, those who study the Torah, to whom the dreams have Providential meaning? What does the story teach us?

Horav Moshe Mordechai Shulsinger, zl, writes that the episode of the dreams and their interpretation was not meant only for Pharaoh. It is included in the Torah to teach us how to act: to listen, to learn, to take heed.

When one is young and healthy, in the prime of his life, vigorous and filled with enthusiasm, he is in the midst of his years of plenty. Arise from bed in the morning, go to shul with energy, daven, learn, take in as much as possible, because one never knows when the years of hunger will begin. - Pharaoh knew; we do not.

We traverse this world as if we will never leave. We stake our claim to life and all the good that it offers, never realizing how quickly and irrevocably it can all be taken from us. One can have great wealth stored away in his bank vault; he can have serious investments that

total large sums of money, but if he does not have the "years" to spend it, what value is it worth to him?

We have time for everything, except that which is really important. When the years of hunger arrive, we had better have stored away the necessary sustenance or we will starve.

There is a classic story which the **Steipler Gaon, zl**, would relate. We could easily change the dates, places and subject matter, and this would be meaningful to any period of time. The lesson, however, remains unchanged:

The Steipler was a student in the Novardoker Yeshivah. He visited home for a Shabbos shortly before the outbreak of World War I. As he prepared to return to the yeshivah, the father of one of his friends asked if he would be so kind as to take back a letter for his son. The Steipler acquiesced with pleasure.

The father of the boy said he would bring the letter later that day. The Steipler left with the letter safely in his pocket. Regrettably, he did not make it to the Yeshivah, because World War I had broken out and traveling between countries was suspended. The Steipler was stuck somewhere between his hometown and the yeshivah, with nowhere to go. - True to his word, he kept the sealed letter in his bag for the duration of the war.

Eight years later, the Steipler met the student to whom he was to deliver the letter. The student's father had already passed away, so it was understandable that reading his father's letter at this point was a very emotional experience.

The young man opened the envelope, removed the letter, and, with tears streaming down his eyes, read his father's last communication to him: "*My dear son, how are you? How are your studies? I hope that you are doing well in the yeshivah. I am writing to ask a favor of you. When you return home from the yeshivah, can you please bring along a few salty herrings? As you know, in our town, they are*

hard to come by and quite expensive. Thank you. With utmost love, Your Father."

This is what the young man had left from his youth. It was a simple, innocuous letter. No one had any idea that: a war would break out; time would stand still; eight years would go by without any communication; parents would die; life would change; and all that would remain would be – the salty herrings.

Hashem has sent us down to this world to amass Torah and mitzvos. Imagine, if we return with not much more than the equivalent of some salty herrings!

How does one motivate himself to save every minute of the years of plenty, not to waste, to make the most of every opportunity.

To further illustrate this point, we view another "letter," written by a different father, also to his son in yeshivah. I once quoted this letter, but it is so precious that a repeat performance will only enhance its desired inspiration.

Horav Aizik Sher, zl, was Rosh Yeshivah in Halusk, Poland. This was the beginning of his career as a mechanech, educator, par excellence. He related that this yeshivah consisted of a group of young men who were totally devoted to learning. Nothing else but Torah crossed their minds. The world around them played no role in their lives. It was all about Abaye and Rava, the Shach and Taz.

There was a student who, in designated intervals, would receive a short letter from his father. The letter would invariably always end with the same last sentence, "*My dear son, in every subject/issue, every question/situation in life that confronts you, think to yourself how would you respond if this was the last day of your life.*"

The letter was signed, "Nosson Tzvi." Yes, this letter was written by the venerable **Alter m'Slobadka, Horav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, zl**, to his son, **Horav Eliezer Yehudah Finkel**, founder and Rosh Yeshivah of Mir in Eretz Yisrael.

This was the way the future Rosh Yeshivah was raised, to never lose sight of the value of time; to never lose sight of the larger issues.

When one thinks about salty herrings, he is left with nothing of value to remember, and nothing of value to bring to the "table" when he suddenly realizes that the years of plenty have gone by, and he now confronts the years of hunger.

If his thoughts are of a loftier nature, if he realizes that the decision that he is now about to make could quite possibly be his last mortal resolution, he will take great care in expressing his conclusion.



In Chayei HaMussar, Horav Yisrael Yaakov Lubchenski, zl, explains the urgency of Yosef's "suggestion" that Pharaoh immediately appoint a wise and discerning man to oversee the distribution of food during the seven years of plenty. Only a wise man, one who has powerful insight and imagination, a visionary who can see and even sense the images of ravaging hunger overtaking the country – only such a person can be entrusted with preparing the country for the worst.

We go through life without thinking, dreaming all the time, conjuring up images of greatness and success. We think that the dream will last forever, until we wake up and realize that, while we have been dreaming, our dreams have turned into a nightmare.

אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל־אָחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְנוֹ אֵלֵינוּ "***Indeed, we are guilty concerning our brother inasmuch as we saw his heartfelt anguish when he pleaded with us***." (42:21)

If we peruse the preceding parsha, which relates the story of the sale of Yosef to the Yishmaelim, we notice that there is no mention of Yosef pleading with his brothers. It is only from their vidui, confession, that we are able to derive that he pleaded with them not to sell him.



Horav Yosef Konvitz, z.l., observes, that it is implicit in the brothers' statement that this pleading must have taken place only at the moment that they decided to sell him to the Arab merchants. Why? Why did he not implore them earlier, when they were throwing him into the pit? Was his life not in danger then? What delayed his plea?

Horav Konvitz explains that as long as the danger was concentrated on his physical well-being, Yosef was prepared to accept the pain and suffering as yesurim shel ahavah, pain inflicted by Hashem out of deep love. Yosef was willing to accept Hashem's decree, as long as his spiritual status-quo remained intact.

When his brothers decided to sell him to the Arabs, Yosef became afraid. He was experiencing a clear and present danger to his neshamah, soul. If he were sold to the pagans, there was the distinct possibility that by living among them, he would slowly acculturate and eventually assimilate. Now he began to beg. He implored his

brothers, "Please do not sell me. Please do not cast me off to live among the nations of the world."

This is implied by the brothers' statement when they said, "We saw tzoras nafsho," translated as heartfelt anguish, but quite is possibly referring to the anguish of his nefesh, soul, the fear that his soul would now suffer.

As long as the danger was only to his physical being, Yosef accepted his fate. However, when his neshamah hung in the balance, he poured out his heart to them to listen to him. Regrettably, they did not.



וְשָׁם אִתָּנוּ נַעַר עִבְרִי עֶבֶד לְשַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים וַנְּסַפֶּר־לוֹ וַיִּפְתָּר־לָנוּ אֶת־חֲלֹמֹתֵינוּ אִישׁ כַּחֲלֹמוֹ פָּתָר "***And there, with us, was a Hebrew youth, a slave of the Chamberlain of the Butchers***." (41:12)

A wealthy man once took ill, and no one was able to provide a cure for his malady. The finest physicians that money could buy could not alleviate the illness.

A man came along who told the wealthy man, "I know a doctor, a general practitioner who will be able to cure you."

"How is that possible?" questioned the wealthy man. "I have had the most prominent specialists in the world at my side, and none of them has been able to provide a cure. Do you expect me to believe that some unknown doctor can accomplish what has eluded the best doctors?"

The next day, another person came with a strange suggestion: He knew a doctor – well, he was not really a doctor, but he had successfully treated a number of seriously ill people. Perhaps, he might succeed in treating the wealthy man's illness.

The wealthy man quickly responded affirmatively "By all means, let him attempt to cure me," he said.

What is the difference between the simple practitioner and the non-doctor? Why is one acceptable, while the other is not? Should not the doctor take precedence over the one who has practiced with potions?

The answer is simple: If the most distinguished physicians have not been successful, chances are that this person will also not succeed. The second person, however, did not suggest a doctor. Apparently, conventional medicine could do nothing to help him. Why not try something different?

Horav Yitzchak, z.l., m'Volozhin explains that the same idea applies to the sar ha'mashkim's, wine steward's, suggestion. He knew that if he would tell Pharaoh that he had met a young man in prison who had the ability to interpret dreams, Pharaoh would scoff at him. After all, he had access to the wisest men. Why would he need an itinerant prisoner?

Therefore, the sar ha'mashkim referred to Yosef as a naar, youth, who because of his age had not yet been able to study much. He was also an eved, slave, who really had no access to study how to interpret dreams. Last, he was an Ivri, Hebrew, who did not believe in magic. Thus, his interpretation of the dream would not be based on the same impure powers from which the Egyptian "wise men" drew their ability to interpret dreams.

No, Yosef was a Hebrew slave, who served the Almighty. Therefore, he was blessed with a unique ability to understand the depth of dreams and interpret the message it conveyed. His wisdom is of a profound nature and is G-d given. He can therefore "go" where Pharaoh's pagans do not have access.

Pharaoh accepted this suggestion and was prepared to listen to Yosef's new approach.

וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר... בַּחֲלֹמִי הִנְנִי עֹמֵד עַל־שְׂפַת הַיְאֹר **"*Behold! he was standing over the River… 'In my dream, behold! I was standing upon the bank of the River.'*"** (41:1, 17)

In Pharaoh's dream, he sees himself standing **over** the river. When he relates the dream to Yosef, he tells him that he was standing **on** the bank of the river. What is the significance of this discrepancy? The commentators suggest reasons for the change.



Horav Yaakov Neiman, z.l., takes a somewhat different approach. He gives the following analogy: In America, during the cold winter rivers and lakes freeze, due to the subzero temperatures. When these rivers freeze, they become rock solid. One can even drive over these frozen "highways."

Someone who comes from a warm climate and sees this "highway," will not think twice about building a house on this hard ground. If he does so, we understand that as soon as the weather warms up and the thaw begins, he will have a house on the water.

The analogy is obvious. One who builds in this temporary world is like he who builds on the frozen river. When the day arrives that he leaves this world, everything that he has built will crumble and disintegrate. This world is temporary, so that whatever one invests in Olam Hazeh, if it has no spiritual value will dissipate with time.

The Torah alludes to this in our parshah. When Pharaoh slept, when his dreams became confused with reality, he thought that he was standing over the river. Everything is in his hands; he is in charge; he is the boss.

As soon as his "wake-up" call comes to prepare him to leave this world, he realizes that what he had was nothing more than a figment of his imagination. He has nothing! He is not over the river; rather, he barely touches the shore.

When a man enters this world as a little infant, his hands are clenched as if to imply that he is prepared to grab hold of everything that he can. When he leaves this world, however, his hands are wide open, demonstrating that this world contains nothing. One leaves empty-handed. He only takes with him those deeds that have enduring spiritual value.



וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים "***It happened at the end of two years***." (41:1)

The Torah seems to preface the ensuing order of events with the phrase, "At the end of two years." What is the significance of the two years? Could the Torah not have begun by simply stating that Pharaoh had a dream? After all, is that not how it all began?

The Bais Ha'Levi posits that it's this case of misdirected cause and effect that the Torah seeks to circumvent. We might think that Pharaoh dreamed, and Yosef was released from prison because of his G-d-given ability to interpret the dream. In such a scenario, Pharaoh's dream is the cause and Yosef's release is the effect.

This is not true! Hashem ordained that Yosef remain in prison for ten years, which was later extended to twelve years. At the end of this time, Yosef was to be released. To facilitate this, Hashem arranged for Pharaoh to dream his dreams, which Yosef interpreted.

Once the end of Yosef's imprisonment approached, Hashem prepared the stage. - We must remember that everything has a preordained time for occurring. When that time arrives, everything will just "seem" to fall into place.



וַיֹּ֣אמֶר גַּם־עַתָּ֔ה כְּדִבְרֵיכֶ֖ם *'He replied, "What you say now is also correct."'* (44:10)

Rashi explains that Menasheh was told by the brothers that if one member of a group has stolen an object, the entire group is held liable, just as the brothers themselves had said. "Nevertheless," he said, "I will be lenient with you and make only the one in whose possession the silver goblet is found my slave. The rest of you can go home."

This statement is enigmatic. No law holds an entire group accountable for the actions of an individual. Even if Yosef and his brothers had agreed to abide by such a rule, it certainly was not the law.

Horav Moshe Feinstein, z.l., posits that while according to earthly law it is the individual who is culpable, according to Shomayim, Heavenly law, all of them share in the blame. If all members of a group are properly fastidious regarding the sin of theft, the aversion they have for the sin should be so clear that no one associated with them would ever think of stealing from someone. The fact that a member of the group performed an act of theft is a reflection of a lack of scruples in that regard and points the finger at all of them. Indeed, only through Hashem's benevolence is the rest of the group spared.

What a powerful statement this is. By implication, Rav Moshe is telling us that anyone who notices a friend or relative acting lax in any of the mitzvos, regardless of its origin or level of severity, must view himself also to be responsible. He must review his actions to see how he has failed to serve as a proper example of fear of sin for those around him. - We do not live in a vacuum. What we do is watched constantly and emulated. Our actions are not our own. They leave an impression on others. We, therefore, must act in a positive manner, so that the effect will be similar.

The Gaon m'Vilna compares this to the first question we will all be asked when we reach the gates of Heaven. "Did you deal/carry out your business endeavours with integrity? Were your dealings above reproach?" - It is regarding the money that we are first brought before the Heavenly Tribunal.

וְקֵל שַׁדַּי יִתֵּן לָכֶם רַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי הָאִישׁ "***And may A-lmighty G-d grant you mercy before the man***." (43:14)

The Chofetz Chaim, zl, notes the vast power and lasting effects of every word that one speaks.

Yaakov Avinu teaches us a profound lesson in the care one must exercise to guard every word that exits his mouth.

We note that when Lavan accused Yaakov of stealing his terafim, idols, Yaakov countered by saying, "*With whomever you shall find your gods, he shall not live*." (Bereishis 31:32) - The unintentional curse which Yaakov uttered had a disastrous effect. Rachel had actually taken the idols. As a result of this curse, Rachel died prematurely.

When the brothers returned from Egypt, they recounted their entire debacle with the Egyptian viceroy. They retold how he accused them of being spies and later imprisoned Shimon. They reported that he now desired the presence of the beloved Binyamin.

One might think that Yaakov would have cursed the viceroy. Not only did he not curse him, but he also even sent along a small token for him. The only words he said were in a prayer, imploring Hashem to guard the brothers that they may find favor in the viceroy's eyes.

Imagine the tragedy if Yaakov had inadvertently cursed the viceroy. He would have been responsible for killing his own son! Yaakov's deliberate act of weighing each word averted a tragedy.

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֕הוּ עַל־אֶ֖רֶץ מִצְרָֽיִם "***Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt***." (41:33)

After successfully interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, Yosef offered his unsolicited advice. He counseled Pharaoh to appoint a unique individual who possessed an acute mind and an uncanny ability to organize the entire country during the seven years of plenty.

Horav Eliyahu Lopian, z.l., questions the need to appoint someone who is unusually perceptive. This is an undertaking for an individual who is endowed with excellent organizational and administrative skills, not someone who is astute.

He responds that it takes one who is especially gifted to "see" the years of hunger at the very moment that he and everyone else are enjoying the years of plenty. It is not sufficient for one to visualize the future; one must also be able to foresee the debilitating hunger that will challenge the people in the future.

Horav Lopian compares the years of plenty and the years of hunger to man's existence on this world and his ultimate home in Olam Haba, the World To Come. - During our short tenure in this world, we are availed every opportunity for mitzvah observance, every chance for spiritual development. During our "years of plenty," we must gather our spiritual accomplishments and store them away for the future "years of hunger." In the future we will leave this world for a much better one, one in which spiritual achievement is no longer possible. What we bring to Olam Haba will sustain us.

If we arrive with a vast inventory of mitzvos and good deeds, we will have a comfortable sojourn. Alas, if we reach our destination with a small amount of spiritual achievements, we will "starve" from hunger!

Every one of us is encouraged to acquire the characteristics of "אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם." - We should develop our ability to be discerning, wise

and perceptive, so that when the period of "hunger" arrives, we will have provided for our ultimate destination.

Horav Lopian recounts a story which he uses as an analogy to help us reflect upon the importance of never losing sight of our life's mission: Two countries were constantly at war with each other. Obviously, the toll of this war wore heavily on both sides. One day the king of one of the warring countries announced that he would offer a substantial prize to anyone who could devise a viable solution to this long war.

The prize consisted of five minutes of access to the king's private treasury. The winner would be able to keep anything he could gather in those few moments.

One day a man appeared who had arrived at a solution for ending the war. To the excitement and joy of both sides, the plan was acceptable. In due time, it proved to be practical. The king announced that the winner of the prize would have his special moments in the treasury on a designated day.

As that auspicious time was drawing near, the king began to worry lest this resourceful prizewinner succeed in emptying a large portion of his coffers. Realizing that he could not retract his prize, the king turned to his trusted advisors for a strategy by which he could circumvent the possible loss of a substantial portion of his fortune.

One of his advisors said, "I have an idea which would permit the prizewinner to enter the treasury at no risk to the king's fortune. It so happens that the man is obsessed with music. On the day that he is to claim his prize, we will pipe a symphony of beautiful music into the treasury which will be so compelling that it will subdue his desire to gather the king's treasures.

On the designated day, the "lucky man" donned his finest clothes and was accompanied by his entire family to the gates of the palace. Their conversation revolved around one subject -- his soon to be

acquired wealth. Indeed, he and his wife were planning to buy a new home, to fill closets with clothes, to plan exciting trips, and to accumulate all the things which had previously been only a dream. Our hero awaited his moment of destiny with great anticipation.

Suddenly, the doors to the treasury were flung open, and he was summoned to enter and collect his prize. As he entered the room, he was immediately overwhelmed by the vast array of jewelry, precious stones, and gold that was assembled before his eyes.

As he was about to begin collecting the treasures, he became aware of the most beautiful music he had ever heard. The harmony of sound was a perfect blend of soothing, relaxing music and it gradually overpowered him. The beautiful and tasteful compositions distracted him from his intended goal. Every time he "freed himself" to pursue his goal, he fell prey to the sounds of the music.

Finally, he cleared his mind and began the task of gathering treasures. Suddenly he felt the hands of the king's servant on his shoulder, forcefully removing him from the treasury. "Please, I beg you, let me remain here for one more moment. I have not had the opportunity to gather my treasures. I became engrossed in the beautiful music. Please give me one more chance," cried out the desperate man. - His heartrending pleas fell on deaf ears. His time was up!

This is life. We are allotted a period of time in this world to gather treasures by performing mitzvos and good deeds. We, however, fall prey to the blandishments of the yetzer hara, who entices us with his assortment of "music." For some it is a relaxing "medley" of laziness, while for others it is a "cacophony" of excitement and raucous sound. In the final analysis he who is discerning and wise, sees the treasure beyond the music and puts his mind to work. This type of individual succeeds in gathering the King's treasure.

וַיַּכֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכִּרֻהוּ "***And Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.***" (42:8)

The nature of Yosef's encounter with his brothers for the first time after many years of estrangement is truly enigmatic. True, it had been many years since they had last seen one another. In addition, the circumstances by which they had been separated were unpleasant to recall. The fact that ten brothers who were exemplary in wisdom and perception did not recognize their lost brother seems difficult to accept.



Horav Meir Bergman, Shlita, cites **Horav Yecheskel Levinstein, z.l.**, who explains their meeting: Man has the ability to see and perceive, recognize and remember, only by virtue of siyata d'shmaya, Heavenly assistance. If it is not Hashem's will that we see a given object, then even though it may be directly in front of our eyes, we will simply not see it!

We readily accept that two plus two equals four only as a direct result of siyata d'shmaya. Hashem, the source of all wisdom, enables us to understand and accept the reality of this axiom.

Horav Bergman relates an innovative response to a simple question posed to him by his rebbe in elementary school. - It was prior to Chanukah, and the students had all made little menorahs. Affixed to each menorah were eight little cups to hold the oil and the wick which would serve as the candle. - The rebbe asked the class, "Why

do you place the cup with the rim facing upward? Why not affix the cup to the menorah upside down?"

When the boys responded that the oil would leak out, the rebbe retorted that they were wrong. "It is not because the oil will leak out, it is because the oil could never have been poured into the cup if it had been affixed upside down!" declared the rebbe.

The same is true concerning Yosef's encounter. Hashem did not create a situation in which the brothers could not recognize Yosef. Rather, Hashem had withdrawn the special assistance which He ordinarily bestows upon us -- the ability to see and perceive. Consequently, the brothers could not recognize Yosef. They had been temporarily relieved of the Divine gift of visual perception.



וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֕הוּ עַל־אֶ֖רֶץ מִצְרָֽיִם **"*And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man*."** (41:33)

Rashi interprets Pharaoh's question literally, "If we were to seek such a unique individual, could we possibly find one such as he?"

The Satmar Rebbe z.l., questions Pharaoh's attitude. Even if Yosef appeared to be the "best man" for the job, why was Pharaoh so reticent to search for someone who might better qualify for the position? He should first have searched for a great and capable leader. Afterwards, he could have offered Yosef the position by default.

The Rebbe offers a novel response. Yosef was proficient in all seventy languages. The angel Gavriel had taught them to him. If this had not been the case, Yosef would never have had access to such an esteemed position.

Pharaoh presumed that Yosef had achieved his degree of amazing proficiency as a result of actually studying the various languages and sciences which had been written by the pagans. He inferred that

Yosef's exposure to secular knowledge had not only educated him intellectually, but also would have destroyed him spiritually.

Yosef, however, maintained his spiritual integrity. Consequently, Pharoah believed that he would never find someone else like Yosef -- an accomplished intellectual who still maintained his "ruach Elokim," his lofty spiritual nature. Pharaoh decided that Yosef was the only person who truly qualified for the position.

Horav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld z.l., posits concerning Yosef's accomplishment of mastering seventy languages in one night. He said that the possibility of attaining a level of expertise in seventy languages in one night is understood from Yosef, but to become a talmid chacham, Torah scholar, in one night is impossible.

This achievement can only be accomplished through diligence, determination, and unwavering devotion over the course of many years, until one merits the mantle of distinction to be referred to as a "gaon."



וַיְהִ֣י מִקֵּ֔ץ שְׁנָתַ֖יִם יָמִ֑ים "***And it came to pass at the end of two years***." (41:1)

Rashi cites the Midrash in Parashas Vayeishev which states that these two years refer to two extra years that Yosef was incarcerated. Since Yosef put his trust in the butler by asking to remember him upon his release from prison, he was forced to be confined for two additional years.

This Midrash is vexing. While we are commanded to have bitachon, trust in Hashem, we are, nevertheless, implored to employ the usual forms of hishtadlus, endeavor. Indeed, wasn't Yosef simply resorting to hishtadlus?

The Chazon Ish explains that Yosef's requesting that the butler 'remember' him was an improper form of hishtadlus. This

inappropriate form of hishtadlus was, therefore, a blemish in Yosef's level of bitachon.

Yosef knew that one must trust only in Hashem and not rely on his own efforts. Nonetheless, Yosef asked the butler to further his cause, since he perceived this to be an act of hishtadlus. What then was the error in judgement?

Yosef should have known that it is not in the Egyptian nature to be kind and remember another person's favor. Thus, Yosef's trust in an Egyptian was a vain endeavor which would not be blessed with success. Yosef's act of hishtadlus was, in reality, an act of desperation. Only a non-believer clutches at every possibility to save himself. A true baal-bitachon, firm believer, does not act out of desperation. He will not attempt an act of futility.

Yosef's act of hishtadlus was actually an act of futility, indicating a lack of faith on his part. - Our sense of bitachon in the Almighty must emanate indomitable faith, not desperate pessimism.



הֲלוֹא אָמַרְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם לֵאמֹר אַל־תֶּחֶטְאוּ בַיֶּלֶד **"*Did I not speak unto you saying: Do not sin against the child*."** (42:22)

The Gerer Rebbe (Bais Yisrael) suggests that the words, "Do not sin against the child," allude to another form of "sin" against a child. He is referring to a parents' responsibility to provide their children with a quality Torah education. Parents who neglect to give their children the opportunity to have a Torah chinuch are placing them at a disadvantage. They are themselves sinful.

As parents, it is our moral obligation to transcend our personal prejudices and vested interests in order to provide for our children's eternity.

There is an interesting story regarding the **Bais Ha'Levi**, who was confronted with a communal problem in the city of Slutzk, Poland: A

substantial number of distinguished families in the city refused to send their children to the Torah school. Rather, they sent them to the secular school, which provided no Torah studies. Furthermore, the student body and faculty were obviously not conducive to spiritual development.

He promptly called these individuals to his "office," attempting to dissuade them from continuing in this outrageous manner. He did not achieve his goal, however.

When the Bais Ha'Levi saw that his pleas fell upon deaf ears, he called a communal meeting in the shul to rebuke these irresponsible parents.

He began his admonishment by citing the Talmud in Kesubos 54a, which states that a widow is supported from the inherited property of the orphans. This halacha is applicable only as long as she retains her status as a widow, demonstrating fidelity to her first husband. Once she has begun to beautify herself, she indicates that she is interested in remarrying and no longer has any allegiance to her first husband. The same concept applies to Klal Yisrael in galus, exile. We are like a widow, who looks to Hashem Yisborach for sustenance and support.

When we begin to accept the blandishments of the gentile nations and adorn ourselves with the multifaceted feathers of gentile persuasion, we indicate a schism in our relationship with Hashem. No longer can we entreat Hashem to have pity on us during our exile. By venerating the secular and relegating Torah to a demeaning second place, we are unfaithful.

His heartfelt words made an enormous impression upon his audience, and they immediately enrolled their children in the community Torah school.

וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־כָּל־חַרְטֻמֵּי מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת־כָּל־חֲכָמֶיהָ וַיְסַפֵּר פַּרְעֹה לָהֶם אֶת־חֲלֹמוֹ וְאֵין־פּוֹתֵר אוֹתָם לְפַרְעֹה "***And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was anxious, and he sent and called all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men, and Pharoah told them of his dream***." (41:8)





Pharaoh's attitude towards his dream demands explanation. Does dreaming about cows and ears of corn warrant immediate interpretation by the wisest men of the country? To the average person, these dreams seem to be nothing more than the inane musings of the subconscious. What impressed Pharaoh to the extent that he was shaken by its covert message?

Horav Shimon Schwab, z.l., suggests that these dreams had an underlying message which gave Pharaoh a rude awakening. Pharaoh followed the atheistic perspective that in any altercation the minority will inevitably fall into the hands of the multitude. Similarly, the weaker party will surrender to the stronger adversary. Consequently, Pharaoh reigned in comfort, confident about the future and what it held for him. Was he not the most powerful ruler of that time? Did he not control the largest most ruthless army? Could anyone succeed in deposing him from his position of power?

What Pharaoh saw in his dreams disconcerted his delusions of grandeur and "awakened" him to reality. He saw the weaker, thinner cows/corn devouring and overshadowing the fatter, stronger ones.

This spectacle stunned Pharaoh and shook the very foundations of his "imaginary" stability. He began to realize that despite the size and power of his army, he could be defeated.

These dreams that challenged his purported sense of success required immediate interpretation.

Horav Schwab adds that it is no mere coincidence that Parashas Mikeitz "coincides" with Shabbos Chanukah, the festival which celebrates the defeat of the "mighty in the hands of the weak and the many in the hands of the few."

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם "***And now let Pharaoh look for an understanding and wise man***." (41:33)



It is interesting to note Yosef's boldness in taking the initiative to offer Pharaoh advice. Pharaoh was searching only for someone to interpret his dreams, not one to direct him in the administration of the country! Why then was Yosef so brazen to volunteer his gratuitous suggestions?

Horav Nissan Alpert Z"l explains that Yosef's attitude was not only appropriate, but necessary, for his acceptance in the Egyptian hierarchy.

When Pharaoh chose to designate Yosef as viceroy over Egypt, his intimate advisors were concerned that he appointed a lowly servant to a powerful position. There was no precedent in Egyptian history for such a sudden change in position.

Pharaoh's response was that he had observed in Yosef a demeanor befitting royalty. How did he notice this from Yosef's conduct?

Obviously, it was inherent in Yosef's dignity which was inconsistent with that of a common servant. A servant neither makes suggestions nor offers advice to a king. Rather, he cowers in obedience waiting for the next command. Yosef's ability to conduct himself in a princely manner characterized indicated his qualification for the position of viceroy.

We may further suggest that as Bnei Yisrael, we must also maintain ourselves on a level befitting the name Yisrael. Our name reflects Yaakov's state of serenity and strength when he was walking with Hashem.

As the descendants of the Patriarchs, it is our mandate not to grovel to anyone. Rather, we should stand tall and erect, replete with pride in the glory of our noble heritage.



וְהָיָה הָאֹכֶל לְפִקָּדוֹן לָאָרֶץ לְשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הָרָעָב '***The food will be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine***.' (41:36)

The concept of taking moments of "abundance" and storing these moments so that they may be later utilized during moments of "famine" may be applied in our daily life.

We often come upon moments of "famine", when our spiritual strength is strained, and we are in need of spiritual support to overcome the trials of the hour. How we have utilized our moments of "abundance" will decide how successful we will be when we face these rough times.

The daily Tefillos are prime sources of spiritual sustenance.

The Kuzary compares the three daily Tefillos to the three daily meals. Just as each meal provides the nourishment necessary to

sustain us till the next meal, each Tefilla provides us with the necessary spiritual strength until the next Tefilla is recited.

In truth our whole life includes both years of abundance and years of famine. The degree to which we have dedicated ourselves during our formative years of opportunity and abundance will decide how well sustained we will be when we are faced with the various trials of life.



וְאֲנִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁכֹלְתִּי שָׁכָלְתִּי "***And as I am already bereaved (of my child), (so also) I am bereaved*** (43:14)

Yaakov thought that he was sending Binyamin into a perilous place; in reality, he was sending him to his loving brother, who wielded great power in Egypt. Perhaps no place was more secure for Binyamin than "Yosef's" Egypt.

The entire narrative demonstrates that those circumstances which are seemingly hopeless can be in actuality beneficial. Yosef's afflictions were necessary to his attaining the highest power in Egypt.

His brothers however, who feared the dreaded vice-regent of Egypt, were in error, for that dreaded and evil Egyptian was none other than their loving brother, Yosef.

The lesson to be noted is that men fear imaginary enemies, while all we should really fear is Hashem. - All circumstances of life are in themselves meaningless, except for Hashem's favour or disfavour.



"When we serve Hashem beyond our limitations, we merit miracles beyond the rules of nature." ~ The Ksav Sofer.



Parshah Pearls *(Adapted from the Ba'al ha'Turim)*

It's In the Hands of the Interpreter

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר־לָנוּ כֵּן הָיָה *'Just like he interpreted them, so it was'* 41:13.

Our sages have taught us that dreams follow their interpretation. In that case, the **Ba'al ha'Turim's** comment, that the words "**כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר**" has the same numerical value as **שהחלומות הולכים אחר הפה** should hardly come as a surprise.

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ (41:45).

"Tzofnas Pa'nei'ach" means 'the revealer of hidden things', as Rashi explains, and what's more, it has the same numerical value as Megaleh Nistorim, which also means 'the revealer of hidden things' (**Ba'al ha'Turim**).

Missing One, כֻּלָּנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ־אֶחָד נָחְנוּ *"We are all sons of one man"* (42:11).

The word for 'We' ought to have been "**אנחנו**". Yet here the Torah misses out an 'Alef' and writes "**נָחְנוּ**".

The brothers were referring to themselves, and indeed, says the **Ba'al ha'Turim**, bearing in mind that 'Alef' is equivalent to one, there was literally one missing – Yosef.

Or perhaps, without realizing what they were saying, they were hinting that all those present (Yosef included) were sons of one father, and the missing one was – Binyamin (absent because his father had not sent him with his brothers).

Three for Three, וַיֶּאֱסֹף אֹתָם אֶל־מִשְׁמָר שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים *"And he placed them under arrest for three days"* (42:17).

The three days, explains the **Ba'al ha'Turim**, corresponded to the three things that his brothers did to him: 1. They stripped him of his shirt; 2. They cast him into a pit: 3. They sold him into slavery.

Parsha Points to Ponder by Oizer Alport

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ. The Torah does not waste an unnecessary word or relate any extraneous details, telling only what is necessary for all generations to know. Why was it necessary to record (Bereishis 41:45) that Pharaoh changed Yosef's name to Tzafnas Paneiach?

The Chizkuni and Rav Chaim Kanievsky explain that this information is necessary to answer a very practical question: Even if Yosef's brothers did not recognize him now that he had a beard (Rashi 42:8) and did not recognize his voice since he was speaking a different language, shouldn't it have been a giveaway when they heard everybody calling him Yosef?

To prevent this from happening and interfering with His Divine plan, Hashem caused Pharaoh to change his name to one that would disguise his identity.

Which object is mentioned 15 times in Parshas Mikeitz, but nowhere else in all of Tanach?

The **אמתחת** (sack) that Yosef's brothers used to transport their grain is mentioned 15 times in Parshas Mikeitz, but this term does not appear anywhere else in Tanach.

Excruciating Choices: Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg and the Israeli Hostages by Rabbi Elie Mischel

How far should we go to save a life?

After a week-long ceasefire and the release of 110 Israeli hostages, Hamas broke the ceasefire and Israel resumed its war against Hamas. Still, with 137 hostages still under Hamas control, the Israeli government's decision to negotiate with Hamas remains highly controversial and emotionally fraught.

Should Israel do whatever it takes to obtain the release of the hostages, even if doing so may endanger many lives in the future? Is it morally acceptable to release three Arab terrorists in exchange for every innocent Israeli?

Any discussion of this fraught question will be informed by the remarkable story of Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg. Born in Germany around the year 1215, Rabbi Meir suffered from antisemitism throughout his life. In 1240, while Rabbi Meir was studying under the tutelage of Rabbi Jehiel of Paris, Pope Gregory IX ordered Louis IX of France to seize all Jewish texts in his realm.

Though Rabbi Jehiel publicly defended the Talmud against spurious charges of blasphemy, the antisemitic French government condemned the Talmud and publicly burned 24 wagonloads of Talmudic manuscripts on June 17, 1244. Rabbi Meir, an eyewitness to this tragedy, wrote a powerful elegy describing the pain of this loss that is recited annually by Jews worldwide on the 9th of Av.

Rabbi Meir was imprisoned and held for an exorbitant ransom.

Following this tragedy, Rabbi Meir returned to Germany, where he served as the rabbi of several large communities, ultimately settling in Rothenburg. Universally acknowledged as the leading European authority on Jewish law, he established a yeshiva, at his own cost, and trained disciples who would later become the leading rabbis and scholars of Europe.

In 1286, the German ruler Rudolf I designated the Jewish community as servi camerae regis, or "serfs of the treasury," which meant Rudolf could directly tax the Jewish community on top of the heavy taxes already imposed by local nobles. Together with his family and students, Rabbi Meir decided to leave Germany and move to the Land of Israel. Tragically, as the group traveled through the mountains of Lombardy, an apostate Jew accompanying the archbishop of Mainz recognized him.

Rabbi Meir was arrested and brought back to Germany, where he was imprisoned and held for an exorbitant ransom in the fortress of Ensisheim in Alsace, by orders of King Rudolf.

The Jewish community immediately set about raising great sums to free Rabbi Meir from captivity. But as Rabbi Solomon Luria (1510-1573) later wrote, Rabbi Meir refused to be ransomed:

"I heard about our teacher and Rabbi, Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg… who was held captive in the fortress at Ensisheim for several years, and the king demanded from the communities a preposterous ransom. The communities wished to pay but Rabbi Meir would not allow it, saying that it is not permitted to ransom captives for more than their worth.

I am flabbergasted, as he was an exceptionally great Torah scholar, and there was none like him in Torah and piety in his generation, and it is permissible to ransom him for all the money in the world…

"Clearly, his opinion was that if they ransomed him, the rulers would take the greatest Torah scholar of each generation into captivity for ransom so great that the Jewish communities of the diaspora would not be able to ransom them, and the Torah would be forgotten from Israel. I also heard that the same evil ruler wanted to seize his student, [Rabbenu Asher].

He heard about this and fled to Tulitila and was saved by G-d's compassion and mercy. Because of this, the pious one [Rabbi Meir]

said that it is better that a little wisdom be lost from Israel than the total loss of all Torah scholarship. And this is the sign [that he was correct], that at that time they ceased seizing the sages of the diaspora." (Yam Shel Shlomo, Tractate Gittin).

For seven years, Rabbi Meir remained a prisoner, until his death in 1293. His body was only returned to the Jewish community 14 years later when a wealthy Jew, Alexander Suskind Wimpfen of Frankfort, paid a large ransom.

Redeeming Captives

If he were alive today, what would Rabbi Meir say about Israel's hostage exchange with Hamas? Would he approve or disapprove?

Maimonides writes: "There is no greater mitzvah than redeeming captives. For a captive is among those who are hungry, thirsty, and unclothed and he is in mortal peril. And one who averts his eyes from redeeming them transgresses 'Do not harden your heart or shut your hand,' and 'Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor,'... and nullifies the commandments of 'You shall surely revive your brother' and 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Maimonides, Laws of Gifts to the Poor 8:10).

Now that some of the hostages have been freed, we know that Hamas terrorists tortured and starved them while they were in captivity. Every moment the remaining hostages spend in captivity under the control of Hamas is a danger to their lives, and they are almost certainly suffering from trauma, hunger and medical problems. Redeeming captives as quickly as possible is a matter of life and death. Surely Rabbi Meir would agree!

Nevertheless, as Rabbi Meir's own experience shows, there are complicating factors. The sages explain that we "must not ransom captives for more than their value, for the good order of the world" (Babylonian Talmud, Gittin 45A). If Jews are willing to pay any price, no matter how exorbitant, to free their loved ones who have been

taken hostage, the enemies of our people will only be encouraged to kidnap more Jews in the future.

The people of Israel learned this truth the hard way on October 7. In 2011, Israel released 1,027 convicted terrorists in exchange for Corporal Gilad Shalit, a soldier who was kidnapped by Hamas six years earlier. Though the price was unquestionably exorbitant – 1,207 terrorists for one soldier – the deal was supported by a majority of Israelis, including 26 government ministers, who desperately wanted to bring Shalit home, at any price.

As Rabbi Meir understood, a lopsided deal like the Gilad Shalit exchange only encourages antisemites to abduct more Jews. Among the terrorists released in 2011 was Yahya Sinwar, the now infamous leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip and the mastermind of the October 7 massacre and abduction.

Significant Differences

Though Rabbi Meir's case is instructive, there are significant differences between his story and the current situation. During his seven-year ordeal, it does not appear that Rabbi Meir's life was at any point in danger. The same, sadly, cannot be said of today's hostages, several of whom have already been murdered by Hamas.

Some rabbis argue that when hostages' lives are stake, the normal rules forbidding exorbitant ransom fees do not apply.

Some rabbis argue that when hostages' lives are stake, the normal rules forbidding exorbitant ransom fees do not apply, for Jews are required to break almost of the rules of the Torah in order to save a life. Others, however, argue that we must not pay exorbitant fees even to save a life, for doing so will only endanger the lives of other Jews in the future.

When grappling with the demands of terrorists like Hamas, a critical distinction must be made. Whereas Rabbi Meir's case was deeply traumatic and potentially dangerous to the Jewish community, the

kidnappers were motivated by financial considerations. By contrast, Hamas is fighting a genocidal war against Israel in which the very survival of the Jewish nation is at stake. During wartime, the normal rules of redeeming captives are suspended, for any concession to the enemy is likely to be perceived as a dangerous sign of weakness.

Should Israel negotiate another ceasefire with Hamas to release more hostages? It's hard to imagine a more painful dilemma.

When the Canaanite king of Arad attacked the Israelites as they wandered through the wilderness, his armies took captives from Israel. The rabbis explain that only one prisoner, a handmaid, was taken prisoner. Nevertheless, Moses did not enter into negotiations for her release. Instead, the people went to war and freed the hostage by destroying the enemy.

On September 6, 1970, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a Palestinian terrorist organization, hijacked a TWA flight with 310 passengers. The non-Jewish passengers were freed, but the terrorists held 56 Jewish passengers in custody, including Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner, one of the great rabbis of the generation. As the drama played out, some rabbis argued that due to Rabbi Hutner's unique status, the hostages should be redeemed even at an exorbitant price.

But Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky (1891-1986) disagreed, arguing that the standard rules of redeeming captives only apply during a time of peace. During a time of war, he asserted, it is forbidden to redeem hostages for financial payments, for doing so actively assists and strengthens the enemy that is trying to destroy the Jewish people.

In the deal with Hamas, Israel was required to allow large amounts of "humanitarian aid" to enter Gaza which was soon confiscated by Hamas terrorists. Will these supplies assist and strengthen Hamas in their genocidal war against Israel and endanger the lives of Israeli soldiers? Though we cannot answer with certainty, the answer is likely yes.

Should Israel negotiate another ceasefire with Hamas to release more hostages? It's hard to imagine a more painful dilemma. May Hashem give Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israeli government the wisdom and strength to choose correctly and may all of the hostages soon be freed and returned to their families, in good health.



Rabbi YY Jacobson - To Die as a Jew

A soldier in an elite IDF unit who was not Jewish spent the last ten months studying Torah and Judaism in order to undergo a conversion. On October 7th, in the morning, he and his unit were sent to Kfar Gaza. Fierce battles erupted, and it took them two days to clean out the village of Hamas terrorists. In the coming days, the soldier who was identified with a name beginning with an A was sent with his unit to northern Israel, where Israel faces the threat of Hezbollah at the border of Lebanon.

A few weeks ago, the soldier visited the military rabbinic court in charge of conversion in the army. He asked the judges to expedite the process, which he began more than ten months ago. Standing in front of three judges of the rabbinical court, he was asked many questions about Torah, Judaism and his commitment to Jewish observance to see if he was indeed eligible for a conversion according to Jewish law. But then one of the rabbinic judges turned to him and asked him, "Why now? Why are you so eager in middle of a war to expedite the conversion process?"

The soldier, in a voice choked with tears, said this:

"I really wanted to come here today and complete the conversion process because I know that I may die in battle. And if that happens, G-d forbid, I want to die as a Jew."

No eye remained dry in the room. On that very day, the conversion process was completed. Today, he's a full Jew.

Times of adversity bring out the worst in some people and the best in others. Some people now are screaming from the river to the sea, Palestine shall be free, calling essentially for the genocide of Jews. Yet others say, "I wish I can be a Jew."

The clarity of the soul in such challenging moments is awe-inspiring. At these times, you and I realize that all my soul and your soul really wants this to be a channel for truth, light, love, redemption, and oneness. All I really want is to truly be connected to the source of all truth and love. All we really want is to dveikus, oneness with Hashem. All we really want is a world filled with Divine love.

The world of Moshiach.

How Does One Earn the Tile "Tzadik"? by Rav Yissochor Frand

I heard the following beautiful thought in the name of the Ba'alei haTosofos. It is short and sweet.

There are two people in Tanach and Chazal who are referred to as "Tzadik" (righteous). The first is Noach (Bereishis 6:9). The other person, as mentioned in the Talmud (Yoma 35b), is Yosef.

Chazal never speak ofAvraham Avinu haTzadik or Yaakov Avinu haTzadik. The term is not used to describe Moshe Rabbeinu or Dovid haMelech. The Rabbis do, how-ever, speak of Yosef haTzadik.

The Ba'alei haTosfos say the commonality between Noach and Yosef is that both sustained the world. Someone who sustains the world earns the title Tzadik. The proof of the matter is the pasuk **פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן** "***Open Your Hand and satiate all living creatures with favour***." (Tehillilm 145:16) What is the next pasuk? **צַדִּיק ה' בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו** "***The L-rd is Righteous in all His ways and pious in all His Actions***."

Someone who opens his hand and provides satiation to all life with favour earns the title Tzadik. Therefore, Noach and Yosef are both referred to as Tzadik because they each had the unbelievable merit of keeping the entire world alive.

Facebuker Shabbos Table Talk

הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֵשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם רְדוּ־שָׁמָּה *"Behold, I have heard that there is grain being sold in Egypt. Go down there*.' (42:2)

When the famine took hold, Yaakov sent his sons to Egypt to buy food. He said, "Go down there…" In Hebrew, the word for "go down" is רְדוּ, whose gematria is 210. Rashi says וְלֹא אָמַר לְכוּ - that Yaakov chose this word instead of the more common, לְכוּ, meaning go, to hint to the 210 years the Jews would be in Egypt before the exodus.

The Sifsei Chachomim says that the word רְדוּ, meaning go down, is logical, since Israel's elevation is higher than Egypt's, and to go to Egypt they would have to "go down." He therefore suggests that since it also said the word, "there," it meant the Jews would be "there [for] 210 years." In truth, though they would have to "go down" to Egypt, Yaakov would normally have used the more positive and elevated syntax, "go" to Egypt. - He opted for this language even though it was not as pleasant, in order to convey to his sons that they would return from Egypt after 210 years.

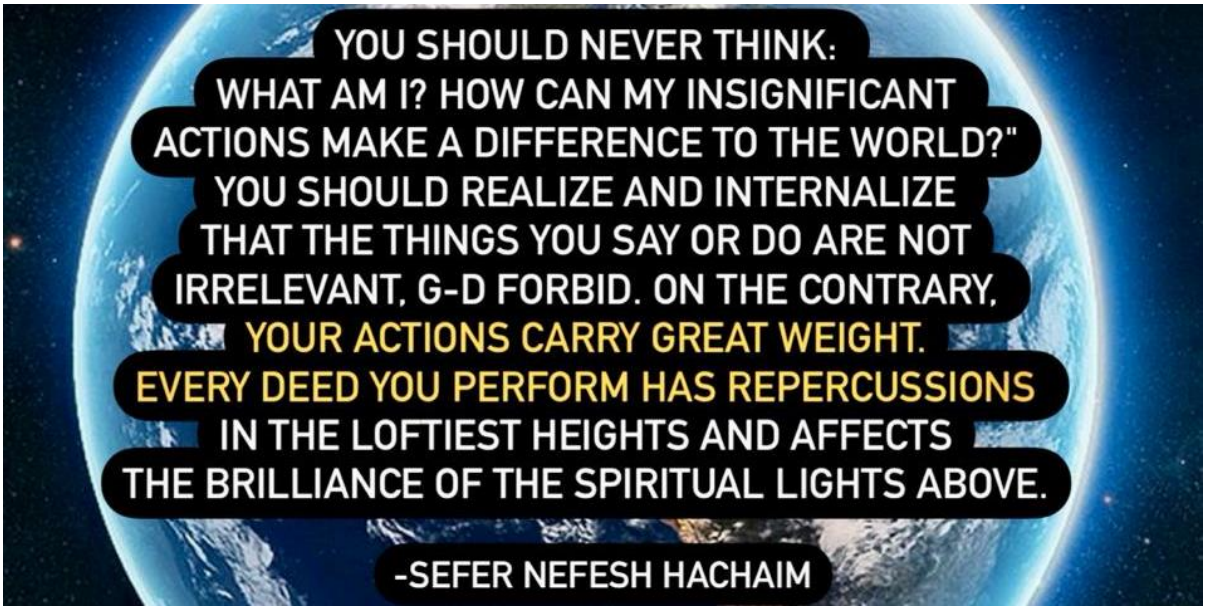
What a marvelous lesson from our grandfather Yaakov, that we should always seek to use happy, pleasant speech, and not reference things that are sad or negative unless we absolutely must.

In fact, even now, Yaakov's reference to the going down was actually a positive, because there was a set end to their exile! How thoughtful we should be with our words, and how much joy we can bring with them.

It says in this week's Parasha... **וַתִּכְלֶינָה שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשָּׂבָע אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם** "***The seven years of abundance ended...*** **וַתְּחִלֶּינָה שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הָרָעָב לָבוֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף** ***- and the seven years of famine began to come as Yosef had said.***" (41:53-54)

Why does it state **כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף** - "as Yosef said" regarding the seven years of famine, but not in relation to the seven years of abundance?

Much of the non-Jewish world hates the Jew and envies his success. Thanks to Yosef, the people in Egypt experienced great affluence, but they did not want to give credit to a Jew. When the troubles started, however, suddenly everyone began accusing the Jews of causing the Egyptians' suffering. - Alas, this is a recurrent pattern in Jewish history.



זָקֵף גָּדוֹל – Reb Faivish Feingold Zt'l (Manchester)

זָקֵף גָּדוֹל is a cantillation mark that is commonly found in the Torah and Haftarah. It is represented by a vertical line on the left and two dots one on top of the other on the right. This is a

stand-alone cantillation. The Hebrew word זָקֵף translates into English as *upright*. גָּדוֹל translates as *large*.

This week's sedra is one whole closed parsha. The Trop זָקֵף גָּדוֹל occurs 26 times in our parsha famously corresponding to the שם **יהוה – השם**.

From the first word until the last pasuk (2 occurrences) the whole parsha is encapsulated by this trop to show us that Hashem completely surrounds us and is with us at all times – as was the case with Yosef Haztaddik. (As heard from Anthony Harris)



Short And Sweet Story of The Week by R'Yoni Schwartz

Once the **Chofetz Chaim, ZT"L**, was visiting a certain town for Shabbos. He carried with him a very large sum of money. As time for Shabbos was getting closer, he realized that he had nowhere to keep it, so he entrusted the money into the hands of the local town Rav.

After Shabbos was over, the town Rav noticed something very strange. He saw the Chofetz Chaim boarding the carriage with all his personal belongings (about to depart) without collecting the money he entrusted him with.

The Rav ran towards the wagon to tell the Chofetz Chaim that he forgot to pick up the money he left with him. The Chofetz Chaim responded by explaining that he was well aware of that. The Rav asked him why he didn't pick it up. He explained that his reason for

doing so was that there is a halacha which states one is not allowed to entrust money to another person without witnesses. He added that since he didn't have time to get witnesses, as soon as he handed over the money he declared it ownerless. He then told the town Rav, "It's not mine, you can keep it."

The Rav tried to convince the Chofetz Chaim to take it back but he wouldn't budge until finally, once the carriage started moving the town Rav threw the money into the carriage and declared, "I declare it ownerless in return!" What an outstanding example of honesty!

Comment: In this week's parsha, Yehudah is put to the test to see if he will uphold his promise to Yaakov to bring Binyamin back. Tricked by Yosef's cunning with the goblet, Yehudah remains honest and upright, even sacrificing himself to keep his promise. That took great courage and confidence.

Similarly, it takes courage to be honest in life and sometimes the person it is most difficult to be honest with is ourselves. However, by being honest ourselves we learn to be honest with others and by being honest with others, we learn to be honest with Hashem.

It's often not easy keeping our promises but just as self-confidence is built by keeping the promises we make to ourselves, so too are relationships, whether with Hashem or the people He put in our lives, built by keeping our word.

In Judaism, words are not mere sounds, they are the building blocks with which we use - "**לתקן עולם במלכות השם**," - "***To rectify the world under the sovereignty of Hashem***."

A warm smile is the universal language of kindness.

Splendid Quote with Rabbi Menachem Lomner

"While we may not notice, Hashem secretly puts money into our account".

The "man in charge" of Yosef's house told the brothers- **אַל־תִּירָ֣אוּ אֱלֹקֵיכֶ֗ם וֵאלֹקֵי֙ אֲבִיכֶ֔ם נָתַ֥ן לָכֶ֛ם מַטְמ֖וֹן בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵיכֶ֑ם** ***"that the hidden money found in your bags was put there by your G-d."*** (43:23)

We must realize that this is how we actually get all our money. Hashem puts everything that we need in the places that we need.

Parsha Thoughts by Mordechai Sapoznick

When Yosef sent his brothers back home to get Binyomin, he kept Shimon as a hostage. Why didn't he keep Reuven as a hostage? Reuven was the oldest, so it would've made more sense to keep him instead of Shimon!

The Even Ezra answers that Yosef had tremendous hakoras hatov to Reuven because he had tried to save Yosef and return him to Yaakov. Therefore, Yosef didn't keep him hostage when he sent his brothers to get Binyomin. [Artscroll interlinear **חמשי חומשי תורה**]

Horav Avrohom Yaakov Pam זצ"ל needed surgery on his gallbladder. Rav Pam picked a surgeon who was shomer Shabbos, and Baruch Hashem the surgery was successful.

A few years later, this surgeon wanted Rav Pam to be mesader kiddushin at his daughter's chasunah. Rav Pam wasn't feeling well, but he insisted on going to the wedding, because he had tremendous hakoras hatov to the surgeon for saving his life by performing the surgery.

The Weekly Vort

● **ואין פותר אותם לפרעה** – ***And there was none that could interpret them to Pharaoh*** (41:8). Rashi explains that there were some magicians who did interpret the dreams, but not to Pharaoh's satisfaction.

Rabbeinu Efraim poses the following question: According to the well-known Gemara in Brachos (55b) that dreams are fulfilled according to the interpretations of the interpreter, why didn't the magicians' interpretations come true?

It may be that this applies only when the interpretation convinces the dreamer as being plausible and well-founded, either for good or ill. Thus, the ominous interpretation of the baker's dream, sounding credible to him, came true. However, since Pharaoh had misgivings about the magicians' interpretations, theirs did not come true. [Chomas Anoch] (Torah Treasures)

● **ויגלח** – ***And he cut his hair*** (41:14). Rashi, quoting from Bereishis Rabba, explains that Yosef cut his hair in deference to the king.

The significance of Rashi's comment may be traced to the Gemara in Shabbos (139), which expounds the *pasuk* in Bereishis (49:36), "*And the crown of the head of the most abstentious of his brothers…*" - From the time Yosef was separated from his brothers, he did not taste wine. The *halacha* states that anyone who, as a *nazir*, abstains from wine, must observe all the laws of *nezirus*. Thus, Yosef could not cut his hair. He only did so in deference to Pharaoh. [Devash Vechalav]

"The determination of a masmid (diligent learner) is not how many hours he learns a day, but how many minutes he learns an hour." ~ Rabbi Jonathan Rietti.

בס"ד

למודי משה

מקץ - גליון קצ"ח

A Nice Chanukah Idea, Especially Applicable to Women

There are many lessons to learn from the story of Chanukah, but I would like to concentrate now on one that is especially applicable to women. There is something called Medrash Ma'aseh Chanukah, at the beginning of the Medrash it says:

The Greeks said to each other, "Let's decree on the Jews decrees that will make them angry with their g-d and they will come and worship our gods. So they decreed, "Any Jew that will have a closed or locked door will be killed with a sword".

Why did they do this? In order that the Jews shouldn't have dignity or tznius, because any home that doesn't have a door doesn't have any dignity or tznius, and anyone who wants to enter by day or night can.

When the Jews heard this, they removed all the doors from their homes, and they couldn't eat or drink or do other private things, because of the goyim and robbers of the Greeks. They couldn't sleep not by day or by night. And they said to Hashem, how much can we bear?

He told them, it is because of the mitzvah of mezuzah, but still, you will benefit from this decree. They managed with this for 3 years. When the Greeks saw this, they decreed on them, "anyone that has an ox, or a lamb should inscribe on its horns that I don't have any part in the G-d of the Jews…".

We see from this that the first line of attack that the Greeks used to dig their claws into the Jews was to attack the *kedusha* [sanctity] of the Jewish home. Our home is the greenhouse where we can build

our holy world and live our lives the way Hashem want us to, it is the fortress where we gather our strength to withstand the temptations and lifestyle of the *goyim*. And it is the door that is what keeps the negative ideas of the *goyim* outside of our homes and our lives.

Of course, this doesn't only mean the actual door, rather the door represents the attitude, that our homes are to be separated from the *goyim* and the street.

When the Torah describes the difference between Yaakov and Eisav, it says that Eisav was an "*ish sodeh*", man of the field - everything about him is open, everything is exposed. He doesn't have anything of value that he has to hide and protect. However, when the Torah describes Yaakov on the other hand it says "*ish tom yosheiv ohalim*, a complete person who sits within the confines of his home.

The Jewish home is full of values, *emunah*, *yiras shomayim*, *midos tovos*, respect for others, and for parents. It is full of *bitachon*, of *mesorah*, and of building our portion in *oilam haboh*. It is the place where we can raise our children with all of these values, and the greenhouse where we can create the right "climate", for us to raise our children.

It is interesting that we see that wherever Yaakov went the Torah makes a point of telling us that he built a *bayis* [house]. When he came to Shechem, he built a *bayis*, and when he went down to Mitzrayim, he sent Yehuda to prepare a *bayis* for him. And it is Yaakov who is the one who all of his children came out alright.

This is extremely important nowadays. In our generation, we need to do a lot more than just have a front door, there are many other ways that the *yetzer horah* has to bring bad things into our home and minds, television, internet, magazines, newspapers. It is our job to make sure that we filter out anything that is not on the level of what we want our children to see and be influenced by.



What was the reason for this terrible decree? It was because they weren't careful with the mitzvah of *mezuzah*.

What is so hard about the mitzvah, we just get a hold of one and nail it to the door?

I think the idea here is that they were lax in the message of the *mezuzah*. What does it say in the *mezuzah*? There are two *parshiyos* in the *mezuzah*, the first one is *Shema,* which teaches us to have *emunah* in Hashem, and that Hashem is the only source of everything.

The second one is *V'Hoya Im Shomo'a,* the acceptance of the *mitzvos*. When we attach the *mezuzah* to our doorpost we are making a statement, "this area is governed by the Ribbono Shel Olam, and it runs according to his rules, because in this area He is the boss". The *mezuzah* is like the sign on the door of who lives here – Hashem!

The woman of the home is the one who gives the home it's life, she is the one who takes care of it, and she is attached to her home much more than the man is. For example, when a woman talks about the refrigerator or stove, she will say, my stove, my refrigerator, my towels, my silverware etc. However, the man will often say, the fridge, the stove etc. This is not because women are possessive, just the opposite, they are full of *chesed*. It is because a man sees his home merely as the place that he lives whereas a woman relates to her home as an extension of herself.

I once heard from a *gadol*, that although women don't officially have the mitvah of *tefillin*, but their *tefillin* is the mitzvah of *mezuzah*! What is the mitzvah of *tefillin*, to take the *parsha* of *Shema* and

V'Hoya Im Shomo'a (and two others), and to tie it to our body, and bind ourselves with the ideas of these *parshiyos*.

When we attach a *mezuzah* to the door of our home, being that the woman is the home, when we attach the *mezuzah* to the door, we are attaching it to her, and now she is bound to these ideas, just like our *tefillin*. (Just the woman has this mitzvah 24/7, much more than a man's *tefillin* which is only by day and not on Shabbos.)



The *mezuzah* is the protector of the Jewish home. We write Hashem's name on the outside of the *mezuzah*, we write **ש-ד-י**, this name stands for **שומר דלתות ישראל** - "***The protector of the doors of the Jews***".

Similar to the *mezuzah*, the woman is the protector of her husband, (although on a superficial level it may look like the opposite). The Gemara in *Yevamos* (62b) teaches: "One who doesn't have a wife is like one who doesn't have a wall, like the *pasuk* says, 'like a woman who surrounds the man'". By the way, this is the reason the *kallah* walks around the *chosan* 7 times, like a wall that protects. It is the woman who protects her home from unwanted influences. Sorah was the one who understood that Yishmoel wasn't good for Yitzchok, and it was Rivka who understood who Eisav was.

Chanukah is a mitzvah on the *bayis*, on the home. The main mitzvah is *ner ish unaysoi*, a candle for the whole house. A person that doesn't have a home for whatever reason, i.e. he is traveling through the night, is not obligated to light the *menorah* because he has no home. Also, the *menorah* is to be placed opposite the *mezuzah*.

The *menorah* is also especially applicable to women, as it is the women's *minhag* not to do *melacha* during the half hour that the candles are burning. This gives them extra time to think about this idea; that the original decree was to get us to assimilate, and remove the door, our protector from the outside influences, and that is her job to protect herself, her husband, and her family.



The Microsoft Meeting

Kivi Bernhard wrote a book on "Leopardology," learning from leopards the trade how to make money, which made Kivi one of the most sought-after speakers around. One day, he got the offer of his life: to be the keynote speaker at a Microsoft gathering, where hundreds of the top vendors from around the world, including Mr. Bill Gates, would be in attendance.

However, when Kivi heard that he was being asked to speak on Shabbos, he immediately turned down the offer. The rep thought that Kivi was refusing so that he would get them to pay him to speak. "How much is it going to cost us to get you to speak?" he asked Kivi.

"It's not about money," Kivi explained. "It's about religion."

The rep tried to offer him double, triple, even a blank check! No matter the amount, Kivi still refused. In the end, Microsoft changed the date of the convention to Sunday so that their keynote speaker, Kivi Bernhard, would be there.

A few months later, Kivi received a call from the President of Microsoft. He told him how he had been with Bill Gates on his private

jet when Kivi was mentioned. "I told Mr. Gates that you weren't willing to give in and speak on Shabbos for any money in the world.

When he heard that, he said, 'That is what happens when you have something that money can't get. It's something greater than money, and that is intrinsic, meaningful life.'" (Heard from R' Yoel Gold)

The Devoted Child

At times, we may feel that our mitzvos don't have such value, whether it's because there were times that we used to do them so much better, or because other people do those mitzvos much better than we do, and thus we think Hashem doesn't need ours. Here's an incredible story that shows the fallacy of this belief:

There's a man who currently raises funds for soldiers fighting in the Israeli army, reaching out to donors to contribute to the soldiers' many needs. One Erev Shabbos, as he was making calls in his office, he saw his nine-year-old dragging a table from the back of his house to the front, and in his hand was a stack of papers and some tape. He didn't make much of it and went back to his work.

An hour later, his son knocked on his office and handed him $87.50. "Totty," he said, "I see how much you're doing for the soldiers, so I decided to do the same. I called out to the cars that were passing our house, handed them a cup of soda or cookies, and told them that I'm raising money for soldiers in the Israeli army. Many of them gave me five dollars and told me to keep the change. Here's what I've raised!"

Now, let's think for a moment: This father was dealing with wealthy individuals for donations of much more than five dollars. And yet, here he gets $87.50 from his son. Which of those donations do you think will make a permanent impression on him? The six-digit ones from the philanthropists or his nine-year-old's best efforts?

The answer is simple. His son's donation has a special place in the father's heart because his son's gesture was sincere.

This serves as incredible *chizuk* for us. Our *madreigos* might not be as great as those of the previous generations, but a father knows when his son does according to the best of his ability. That takes precedence over those previously "greater" efforts because these are being done out of sincerity and devotion.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

Moving Music



1) **R' Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz** would explain that each of the instruments mentioned in the final chapter of Tehillim with which to praise Hashem—shofar, harp, flute among others—arouses a different emotional response: one arouses tears while another arouses happiness, and another encourages deep reflection. Taken as a whole, the message is that one must serve Hashem with every emotion.

2) The chapters of Tehillim were intended to be sung with musical accompaniment. In fact, each chapter had its own designated instruments and melody so that they would elicit the desired thought, comprehension and emotions that Dovid Hamelech sought

to evoke with that particular passage. **The Redak** writes "It was with instrumental accompaniment that the songs, melodies and praises were 'said,' each one according to its tune, which was known to them. It was a great wisdom and it was to arouse the wise soul."

Building on the Redak's words, **R' Matisyahu Solomon** cites the words of a certain old man: "One can never fully understand a chapter of Tehillim with clarity until one knows this wisdom and understands and recognizes the distinct sounds of the musical instruments and how each specific instrument fits a specific paragraph unlike any other. For it is the musical instruments and the tune that gives the requisite flavor and understanding to comprehend the matters with their desired depth."



R' Kalonymus Kalman Shapira of Piaseczno, also known as the Aish Kodesh, would tell his students each day when lessons were over, and they were about to go home:

"My dear boys, never forget that the greatest thing in this world is to treat other people with kindness. Always remember that you are not doing a favour to those in need, they do you a favour by turning you into a benefactor."



R' Yaakov Galinsky *zt"l* (Vehigadeta) would say: " **כִּי אָמַר פֶּן־יִקְרָאֶנּוּ אָסוֹן** - (42:4) The word **'יִקְרָאֶנּוּ'** seems to imply that it was pre-ordained. Yet, when Yehuda retells the story to Yosef, he uses the words **וַיַּגִּידוּ לוֹ אֵת כָּל־הַקֹּרֹת אֹתָם** - ***'and they told him all that had befallen them'***, (42:29) which implies circumstance and coincidence.

A Jew has a responsibility to know that nothing in life is circumstance and happenstance. Hence, Yaakov told his sons that perhaps it is pre-ordained. However, Yehuda spoke to the *'Tzafnas Paneiach'* - the viceroy of Egypt - and used the word 'coincidence' because he assumed that a non-Jew couldn't fathom something incredible and miraculous like this being pre-ordained."

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO דרגה יתירה

אִם־כֵּנִים אַתֶּם אַחֵיכֶם אֶחָד יֵאָסֵר בְּבֵית מִשְׁמַרְכֶם וְאַתֶּם לְכוּ הָבִיאוּ שֶׁבֶר רַעֲבוֹן בָּתֵּיכֶם - Before sending them off, Yosef told his brothers to take sustenance with them to their homes. He was in charge of all the storehouses in Egypt and he gave them food. But the expression he used, *"Go bring grain for the hunger* (**רַעֲבוֹן**) *of your households,"* teaches us an important lesson about the proper way to eat.

The **Shla"h Hakadosh** uses these very same words to describe exactly how much a person should eat. It should be "**שבר רעבון**" - enough food to break your hunger. Not more and not less!

In today's world there is such a stress on food consumption and many, if not most, people have some sort of eating disorder - either they eat too much or they eat too little! Either way it is a "disorder" for it disrupts a natural, healthy lifestyle.

In *bentching*, we mention the three keys to successful eating. We say: **וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבָעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ** - You shall eat. You shall be satisfied (in other words, "Stop eating!"). Last, but certainly not least, you should thank *Hashem*! The Hebrew word for satisfied is **שָׂבֵעַ** which is the same letters as **שֶׁבַע** - the number seven. Seven represents **טבע** - the natural order of the world.

Since the world was created in seven days, the number seven also represents completion. Thus, "seven" and "satisfied" have the same connotation, as a person feels complete when he has eaten his fill.

Now, the word for FAT is **שָׁמֵן**, which, not coincidentally, is the same root as the word **שְׁמוֹנָה** which is the number eight. The number eight represents **למעלה מן הטבע** - going beyond nature, which also means eating beyond what is necessary and healthy in the physical world.

And wouldn't you know? The word for oil is **שֶׁמֶן**. During the eight days of *Chanukah*, we used lots of *shemen* for our *Menorahs*. Why?

Because it reminds us to stay away from the philosophy of "Greece" which is to stress the physical without proper boundaries.

Chanukah is over but we must still fight the Greek mentality and not fall prey to overindulgence! We all need to eat, that is simply a matter of survival. But how? Well, we must eat, become satisfied (STOP) and then ... THANK HASHEM!

"Do you know what chassidus is? It is to be cautious with what you say and with what you see." ~ Reb Shalom of Shotz zt"l.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

זֹאת אֹמֶרֶת זֶה־בְּנִי הַחַי וּבִנֵךְ הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֹמֶרֶת לֹא כִּי בִּנֵךְ הַמֵּת וּבְנִי הֶחָי

Usually *Parshas Mikeitz* falls out on *Shabbos Chanukah* and a different *Haftorah* is read, but this year, we are privileged to examine the rarely read *Haftorah* (which has only been read four times in the past fifty years) of the brilliant **twelve-year-old** *Shlomo Hamelech* rendering his first court decision.

The case was between two women living in the same house. Both had given birth to sons, and one unfortunately smothered her child in his sleep. The distraught woman swapped her dead child with the other woman's live one, claiming it was her own.

Shlomo ordered that the child be cut in half and be divided equally amongst the two women. The imposter agreed while the true mother cried and pleaded that the child be spared and given to the imposter.

Shlomo immediately ruled that crying woman who had expressed compassion for the child was the true mother.

R' Meir Leibish *zt"l* (Malbim) notes the different priorities in the women's statements. The true mother argued that her son was the live one while the imposter's child was dead, while the imposter claimed that the dead child was the other woman's while the live one was hers.

This subtlety reveals the true intention of the imposter in that the child's mother prioritized the life of her son while the imposter prioritized the death of her friend's son. What disturbed her most was that the live child belonged to someone else while her own child had died.

Even in tragedy, a Jew must never lose focus on his priorities and what the A-lmighty wants from us.



Working on our Middos

A businessman once approached a grandson of the **Steipler Gaon**, zt"l, gave him $20,000, and asked him to give it to the Steipler Gaon to distribute to various Tzedakah purposes. However, when the money was brought to the Steipler, he refused to accept it. He said that the money was not Kosher, and he wouldn't use it.

The grandson called the businessman and told him what the Steipler had said. The man replied that he would call back soon. About an hour later, he called back the grandson, and said he could give the money again to his grandfather. This time, the Steipler accepted the money as if nothing had happened, and he instructed his grandson to send his thanks to the businessman.

The grandson called the man back with the message and asked for an explanation.- The man said that he and his brother were partners in various businesses. Each year, they brought a large amount of money to the Steipler Gaon for Tzedakah. Lately, however, they had a falling out, and they hadn't spoken to each other in a long time.

He said, "I brought the money to you as I did every year, but I did not consult with my brother about it. The Steipler sensed this, and he did not accept the money.

When you told me that he said the money is not Kosher, I called my brother to reconcile with him. Once I did that, the money became Kosher again!"

Pearls of Wisdom…A Word for the Ages



Rav Shimshon Pincus, zt"l, taught his students, "When an architect draws up plans for a building, he will already have the final draft of it completed, well before the first brick is even cemented. Only once the plans are in place can the construction begin.

This idea applies to us in respect to our growth in Ruchniyus. We need to be the architects in our lives! We need to focus from the very beginning on what it is that we would like to accomplish at the end.

When we say Modeh Ani in the morning, we need to think about how we want our day to evolve!"

The Siddur Speaks

The Sefer Tiferes L'Moshe writes about the grandfather of **Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, Rav Shlomo Elyashiv, zt"l**, the great Mekubal known as **the Leshem**, that he would learn Kabbalah with a young man into the very late hours of the night.

On the last night that they learned together, as they left each other, the Leshem said to his Chavrusah, "Chazal say that when someone has a problem on his mind, he should talk it out with his friend. What should someone do if he doesn't have any friends? Who should he talk to?"

The Leshem answered, "The Pasuk in Tehilim (145:18) says, קָרוֹב ה' לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶּאֱמֶת '***Hashem is close to those who call to Him***'. - When we turn to Hashem, we Kaviyachol, become His friend, as it were, and therefore, Hashem is the Friend that we should be turning to. - Hashem is our greatest Friend!"

The Leshem then returned to his home, and that night, he departed to the next world.

He taught that we are given a great opportunity in that we are able to have a personal connection with Hashem, and therefore, we can turn to Hashem with all of our concerns!



Dreaming for Two Years

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם '***And it was at the end of two years that Pharaoh is dreaming***.' (*Bereishis* 41:1)

Yosef was languishing in Pharaoh's dungeon for two full years. It did not have to be this way. *Hashem* could have released him from imprisonment earlier that that, but Yosef 's release depended on Pharaoh having a prophetic dream that neither he nor his wise men could solve, which is why they called for Yosef.

Now, it does not say that Pharaoh dreamed, it rather says that "Pharaoh is dreaming." - **The *Ohr Hachayim*** learns from here that Pharaoh had this dream over and over for two years straight, but he

kept forgetting it. At the end of two years, he dreamed and did not forget.

Chazal say that during the course of these two years, Yosef remained in prison, as punishment for relying on the promise of *Sar Hamashkim* to mention him to Pharaoh.

This implies that Pharaoh's dream, which caused Yosef to be released from prison, really should have occurred two years earlier. In fact, Pharaoh did have the dream during these two years, but *Hashem* caused him to forget it, so Yosef would remain imprisoned.

When the time arrived for Yosef to be released, Pharaoh remembered the dream.



This maamar talks about the outlook that Greek culture brought into the world, and the maamar relates also to the parsha, which centers on the argument that developed between Yosef and his brothers regarding Malchus Shamayim. This piece is totally relevant, both because of Chanukah and because of parshas hashavua.

The mitzvah of Chanukah has a fascinating aspect. The Gemara says that the basic mitzvah is for each household to kindle a single light, but adds that people who want to do it the "mehadrin" way will kindle a light for each person in the household, and people who want to do it "mehadrin min hamehadrin" will kindle each day the number of lights corresponding to that day.

No other mitzvah has a "mehadrin" way and a "mehadrin min hamehadrin" way. For instance, mishloach manos on Purim doesn't have various levels of mehadrin.

But Chanukah lights do, because the miracle of Chanukah was unlike any other. Since enough pure oil to light with for seven days was not found, they could have used impure oil, because **טומאה הותרה בציבור**.

Alternatively, they could have used thinner wicks that would make the oil last longer.

But Hakadosh Baruch Hu, in His great love for His people, worked a miracle so they could light the Menorah of Beis Hamikdash in the best possible way. This miracle was not technically necessary. It was just to show Hashem's love for us. So, we too, show our love for Hashem, and do more than the minimum, if we can. Technically, we could fulfill our obligation with just one candle each night, but we show our love of Hashem and add hiddur on top of hiddur.

Chanukah is thus a time of love and affection between us and Hashem. Perhaps this is why the **Rambam** writes that kindling Chanukah lights is a **מצוה חביבה עד מאד**, because it is a mitzvah that is all about ahavah and chibah. Everyone knows that when love bursts out, it goes beyond bounds. Therefore, these are days of Hallel and Hodaah, but also of Tefilah and Bakashah. Because this is a special time to daven for everything we need.

It says in the Seforim Hakedoshim that the time of Chanukah lighting has a special segulah for Tefilos to be answered. So don't miss out on this special opportunity to daven for everything you need. And, of course, daven for Am Yisrael. We need a big yeshu'ah, we need the Geulah Sheleimah.

May you have a freilichen Chanukah, and may we be zocheh to take proper advantage of these wonderful days!

Wishing you all the best, with all my heart

Harav Yosef Dov Pincus - Kollel Nefesh Shimshon. Beit Midrash for Torah and Mussar. In memory of Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi Shimshon Pincus zt"l

Harav Yosef Dov Pincus | Rosh Hakollel

Harav Shmuel Pincus | Head of Institutions



Yosef Blessed Binyamin

אלקים יחנך בני- "**May Hashem grant you *chen*, my son.**" 43:29

The Yismach Yisrael says that Binyamin received *chen* because **בני** , which means child, alludes to young and humble. He felt humble, and humility is mesugal for chen.

The Kli Yakar discusses Hashem's name **הוי״ה** and shows that these letters have the smallest gematriya when spelled out in full. **ה״א** for example, is gematriya 6. **וא״ו**, is gematriya 13. **יו״ד** is gematriya 20. All other letters have a much higher gematriya. Take **אל״ף**, for example. The gematriya is **111 . בי״ת** is 412, **גימ״ל** is 83, **דל״ת** is 434, and so on.

Hashem's name is comprised of the letters with the smallest gematriya to indicate that Hashem resides among the humble.

Chanukah lecht are lit lower than ten tefachim; one must bend to light the lamps.

The Bas Ayin says that this is because miracles come from the Chanukah lecht, and the miracles begin when one bends over and is humble.

The Shach al HaTorah says that the **פך** - jug of oil that was found by the Chanukah miracle was the same **פכים קטנים** - small jugs, that Yaakov Avinu went back to retrieve (see Rashi Bereishis 32:25).

The key word is **קטנים** - small.

Reb Moshe Leib Sassover zt'l says that the jug was small, and Hashem performs miracles for the small and humble.

One aspect of humility is to be mevater.

Reb Moshe Goldish and his wife z'l came from Romania. They came to America on the last ship that left Romania before the Nazis invaded. They were both niftar in Williamsburg on the same day. As soon as Reb Moshe's levayah was over, his wife was niftarah.

This is their story:

Mrs. Goldish's maiden name was Rosenberg. She was orphaned at a young age, and her older brother, Avremel, moved from Romania to America so he could earn enough money to support his siblings and provide them with a dowry.

Avremel himself got married only after setting up all his brothers and sisters. One of his sisters married Moshe Goldish, and Avremel took care of all the wedding expenses. In addition, he gave them a large sum of money as a dowry to help them begin their lives together.

Moshe rented a dilapidated house in Romania and renovated it with the money from his dowry. He didn't do this to live there. He planned to sublet it at a much higher rental rate. The problem was that when the owner saw the beautifully renovated home, he wanted the Goldish's to pay more rent.

Reb Moshe could have fought in court. After all, he had a contract with the owner and agreed on a price. Furthermore, he could have demanded that the owner pay for the house's increase in value due to his investment.

But Reb Moshe didn't want a fight and decided not to go to beis din. He preferred to be mevater and suffer the loss. But he needed money. - He sent a letter to his brother-in-law Avremel that he needed financial help. Avremel replied, "I see you don't know how to take care of your money. If you want more money, come to America, yourselves. I'll help you here."

Not having much of a choice, they boarded a ship to America – the last boat to leave Romania. The war began. Many Yidden in Romania were murdered immediately after the invasion.

This is a lesson in vatranus, in living with humility and being extremely careful not to raise machlokes. This approach granted them life. Boyaner chasidim said, "Moshe Goldish was mevater, and the merit of the vatranus pushed off his death by sixty years."

Parsha Pearl

וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־כָּל־חַרְטֻמֵּי מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת־כָּל־חֲכָמֶיהָ
'***And it was in the morning, and his spirit was worried; And [thus] he called all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men***…' (41:8)



It seems a bit odd on Pharaoh's part to call at once **all** of the magicians and **all** of wise men of Egypt for the task of interpreting his dream. What caused him to make such a drastic move?

Well let's see what the Torah says right before this action - **וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ** : Rashi explains that the word **וַתִּפָּעֶם** comes from the word **פעמון** -"bell", as these words share the same root.

The dibble in a bell moves restlessly back and forth inside the bell. Thus, the expression **וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ** means – 'and Pharoh's spirit was restless like a bell'. Hence, it's the lack of calmness that made Pharaoh make such a strange move.

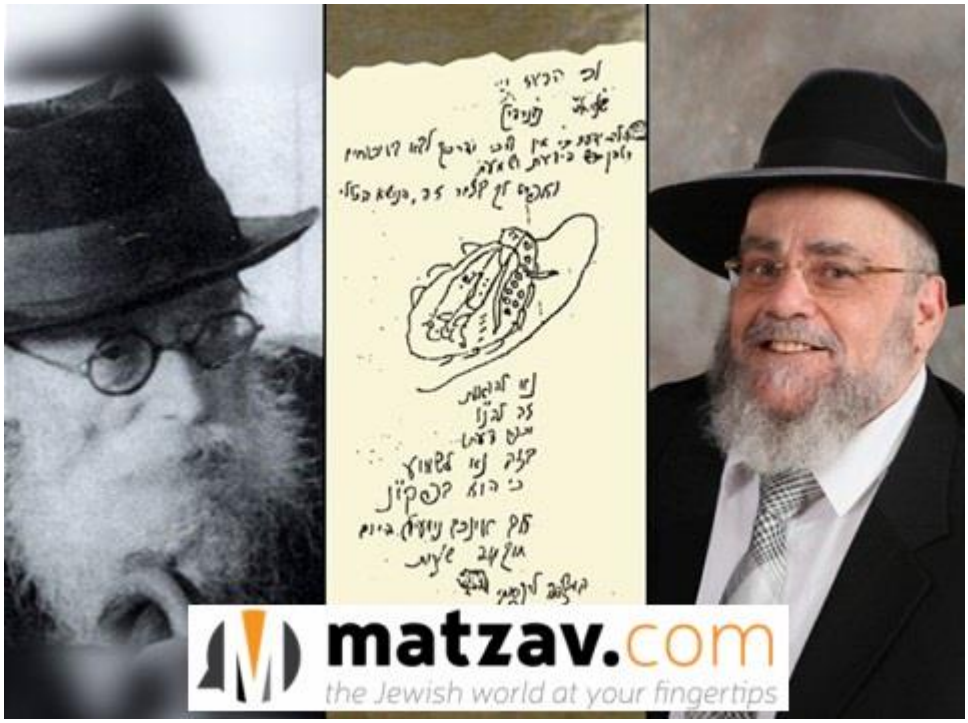
We should learn from here an important lesson: First calm down, and only then make a decision.

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ *'And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Tzafnat Panei'ach.'* **(41:45)**

As Rashi explains, צָפְנַת means "hidden things," and פַּעְנֵחַ means "he reveals" - i.e., Yoseph was able to explain things that were hidden. Why, then, didn't Pharaoh call Yoseph פַּעְנֵחַ צָפְנַת, which would have been more logical?

To teach us that the real reason Yoseph was able to interpret dreams was as a reward for concealing his righteousness. Because Yoseph conducted himself in a humble and unassuming manner, "צָפְנַת," he merited the gift of "פַּעְנֵחַ." ***(Sefas Emes)***

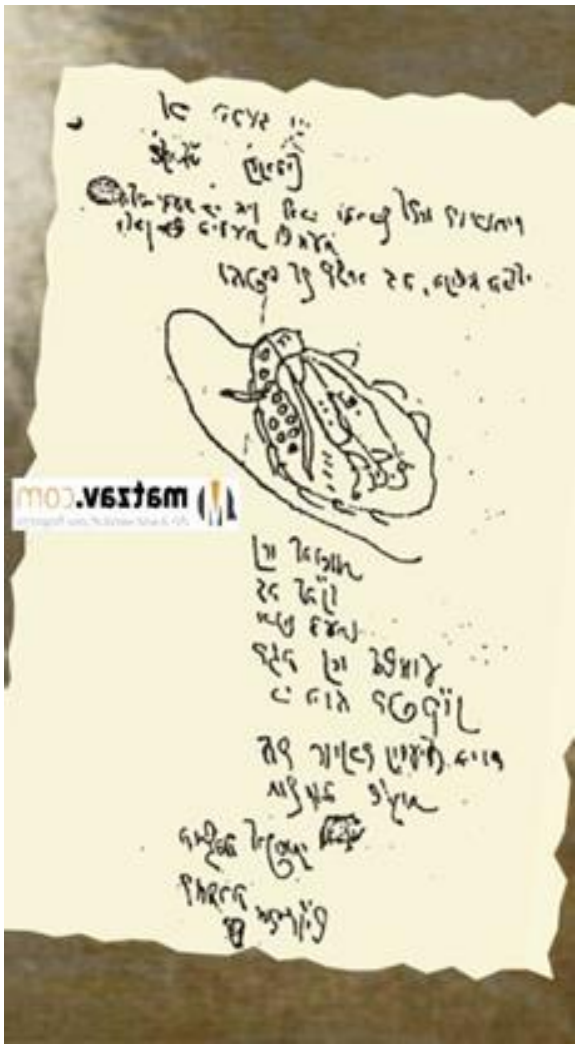
When the Chazon Ish Drew a Brain Diagram for a Doctor



This week marks the first *yahrtzeit* of Rabbi Meir Shmuel Katz *zt"l*, who served as the *menahel* of Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael for many years. His family revealed how a sketch from the *Chazon Ish* guided a physician on how to perform a cranial surgery on their late father.

One of his sons recounted, "A few days before he passed away, my brother told him something about the *Chazon Ish*, and my father quietly said, 'I, too, had something with the *Chazon Ish*.' He then sealed his lips and said nothing more. During the *shivah*, a son of Rabbi Avraham Rein shared what he had heard from his father.

Rabbi Meir Shmuel Katz was born with excess fluid in his head, and doctors said that if he were to undergo surgery, he would die. Even if not, the chances were not high for him to survive. His mother traveled to the *Chazon Ish* together with Rabbi Rein, who was very close to the *Chazon Ish*. When they presented the case to him, the *Chazon Ish* said to proceed with the surgery. The doctor who heard this was visibly upset, questioning, "An old man who never studied medicine will give me advice?"

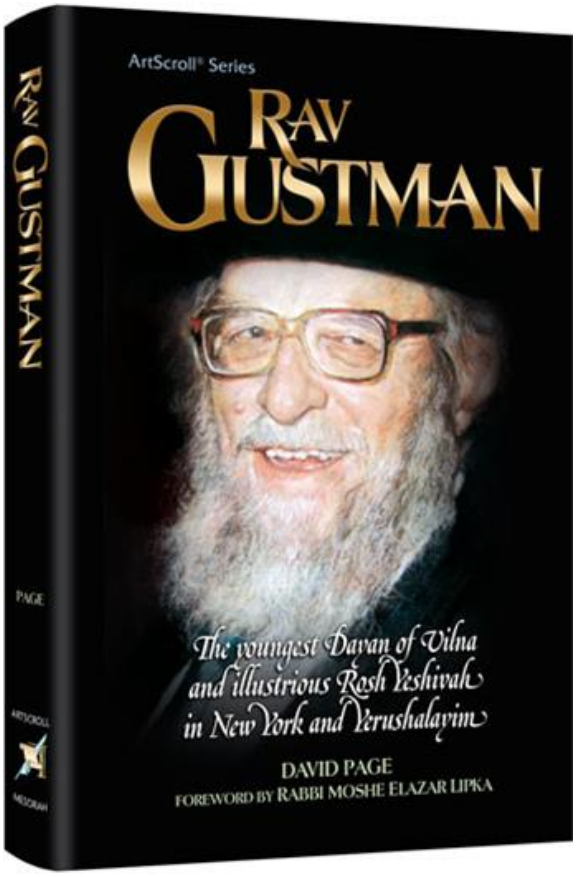


Following the mother's pleas, the reluctant doctor traveled to Bnei Brak to meet with the *Chazon Ish*. During their meeting, the *Chazon Ish* drew on a page, illustrating the brain and how to perform the dissection, where to enter, and so on. However, the doctor claimed that he was afraid to take responsibility for such a surgery. The *Chazon Ish* told him, "No one asked you to take responsibility. They asked you to perform the dissection."

The surgery was carried out, and with the help of Hashem, Rabbi Katz lived another 75 years until his passing a year ago.

After the above story, the doctor became a follower of the *Chazon Ish*, consulting with him several times on additional surgeries. It is known that at least once, the *Chazon Ish* drew the surgical procedures for him. Rabbi Rein, who shared the story with the family, instructed Rabbi Schwartz not to have it revealed until after his passing.

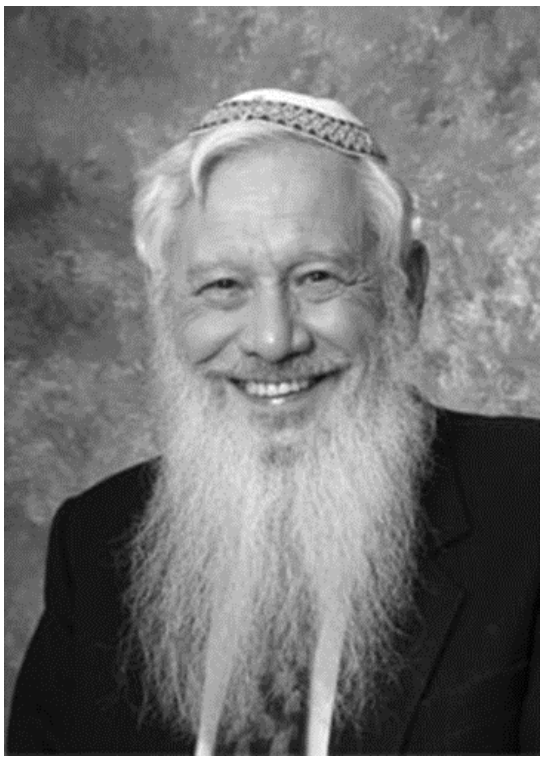
A Shliach Tzibbur by Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn



Rav Yisroel Zev Gustman *zt"l* was a brilliant Torah giant of the previous generation, so much so that he was appointed by **Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski *zt"l***—the *gadol hador* in Vilna in the early 1900s—as a *dayan* (judge) in his early twenties.

But unfortunately, Rav Gustman suffered terrible times in Vilna. He did indeed survive the Holocaust with his wife and daughter, but he was not without his sorrows.

After Rav Gustman came to America and then later to Israel and established in both countries the yeshiva *Netzach Yisrael*, the following took place.



Every day he would give a *shiur* specifically to students, though each Thursday he gave a *shiur* which was open to the public. The audience was comprised of an eclectic bunch, including mathematicians, scientists, professors and judges. One of the attendees was a well-known figure, Professor Robert Aumann, a Nobel Prize winner in Economics in 2005. He was very fond of Rav Gustman, and Rav Gustman was equally fond of him as well.

Tragically, in June 1982, Israel was involved in a war with Lebanon. Professor Aumann had a son, Shlomo,

who was a lecturer in a yeshiva in Jerusalem. Shlomo himself had a young child, and his wife was expecting their second. During that war, Shlomo was called up to serve in the army and lost his life. He never had the opportunity to see the birth of his second child—a son who was born soon thereafter.

Of course, it was heartbreaking. Rav Gustman, hearing this news, had his entire *yeshiva* attend the funeral of Shlomo, who was buried in a cemetery reserved for Israeli soldiers. After the funeral, Rav Gustman headed to the area where other Jewish soldiers were buried and broke down himself in tears. "Every one of them is holy," he remarked.

Professor Aumann then returned to his home to begin sitting *shiva*. But within mere hours, Rav Gustman showed up. Noticing this, Professor Aumann asked why Rav Gustman hadn't yet returned to his students at the *yeshiva*. He had already made the trip to attend the funeral; wouldn't it make more sense for him to return to pay a *shiva* call a different day?

"No," replied Rav Gustman. "I want to be here. I want to sit next to you." Rav Gustman then retold a story that had transpired years before.

"When the Germans entered Vilna, they caught me one day holding my son. He was my little boy, named Meir. But, with complete disregard, the Germans grabbed him out of my hands and shot him and killed him right before my eyes.

"We were so hungry and so starving that I needed to take my son's shoes and barter them for food. But to tell you the truth, I could never eat that food because I knew I had exchanged my child's shoes for it.

"I must tell you I never had the opportunity to sit *shiva* for Meir. So, I would like to sit *shiva* now, here, with you.

"My son is in the highest places in Heaven right now. He died only because he was a Jew, and he is a *kadosh*, just as are all other Jews whose lives were snuffed out because they were Jewish.

"But your son died defending Jewish people, and in that sense, he is like a *shliach tzibuur*, and he is on a different level. Your son represented the Jewish nation and protected and defended them with his very life. My son was never able to do that, but your son did. And that makes your son very, very special."

Professor Aumann looked up at Rav Gustman with tears in his eyes. "Rebbe, I never thought that I could be comforted for the loss of my child. But you comforted me."

Every single Jewish soldier is a *shliach tzibbur* because he or she is protecting and defending the Jewish nation.

May Hashem, measure for measure, protect them all.

The "Humiliated" Challos by Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn





Rabbi Dovid Leibowitz (left) and the Chofetz Chaim

R' Dovid Leibowitz, founder of Yeshivah Chofetz Chaim in New York, was molded in the Slabodka tradition of mussar. In one of his early mussar shmuessen, R' Dovid depicted a scene that could occur in any Jewish home on any Friday night:

"Imagine a father and his children coming home from shul on Friday night. They walk into their home where they are greeted by the rest of the family. The table is bedecked with the glowing Shabbos candles and the sparkling wine which will soon be used for Kiddush. Everyone gathers around the table, ready to sing Shalom Aleichem.

However, as the father takes his place, he notices that the decorative challah cover is lying flat on the table before him. Someone – either his wife or one of the children – had forgotten to put out the challos! The father gets angry. 'Who was supposed to bring the challos to the table?' he snaps.

He then goes on to admonish sarcastically, 'Is this the first time we have made Shabbos in this house?' His wife is embarrassed, the children feel humiliated, and any guests present squirm in their places. But what the father does not realize is that the challah cover is beckoning to him with a message of great significance.

The Mishnah Berurah (written by the Chofetz Chaim, who was R' Dovid's uncle) notes that we cover the challos **שלא יראה הפת בשתו**, so that the bread (challah) does not see its humiliation. Customarily, when one is about to eat a meal which will include both wine and bread, the blessing on the bread is made first. This is because in the Torah's listing of the Seven Species, wheat is mentioned before grapes.

At the Shabbos table, though, because of the significance of making Kiddush on wine, the blessing on wine takes precedence over the blessing on challah. The challah, therefore, is covered so that 'it does not observe its shame' of being bypassed for the moment.

But in reality, does challah actually have sensitivities? Does it have feelings? Of course not! Yet Chazal instructed us to behave in a manner that conveys consideration and sensitivity to the challos. How much more important is it for us to show sensitivity to human beings who have feelings!

Thus, the inconsiderate man, in denigrating his family members in the presence of the challah cover, is actually blind to what lies right in front of his eyes."

The yahrzeit of R' Dovid Leibowitz zt"l is on 15 Kislev (1941). May his merit protect us. (**In the Footsteps of the Maggid**)

A Lesson Can Be Learned From.....



A Din Torah was once held in the town of Rimanov, over a business matter between a man and a woman. The Beis Din, led by a young Gaon who would later become the Rav of Tarnow, considered both sides of the dispute and ruled in favour of the man.

The businesswoman was very upset by the Psak and came to **R' Tzvi HaKohen of Rimanov** to complain, sobbing uncontrollably. After the Rebbe listened to her and looked into the matter himself Halachically, he sent a request to the Beis Din, asking that they provide him with the basis for their Psak, as it appeared to him that they might have made a mistake.

The Dayanim came to the Rebbe and they all studied the relevant sections of Choshen Mishpat together, until the Dayanim realized that the Rebbe was correct – they had misunderstood the Shulchan Aruch.

The future Rav of Tarnow asked the Rebbe what had caused him to suspect their Psak. The Rebbe replied: "The Posuk says **תורת ה' תמימה משיבת נפש**, - '***the Torah settles the soul***'. - If this woman could not be calmed, there was a strong possibility that your Psak was not Torah-true". (**Pleasant Ridge Newsletter**)

Toras Avigdor Snippets - Hashem Guides History



When Yosef was being pulled on the chariot through the streets of Egypt it was the result of a long chain of wondrous events. Yosef recognized that! That was the greatness of the moment – not to be mishneh l'melech, but to study the ways of Hashem and see how it happened.

"Ohh," thought Yosef as the Egyptians crowded the street to pay homage to the new vice-regent, "now I have the answer. The mystery of all those bumps in the road, all of those seemingly chaotic events – my dreams and my brothers and Potiphar and his wife and the Sar Hamashkim, many other things too – all of it is now explained! Everything was Hashem Echad!"

The history of Yosef serves as a model for every person's life. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is yosheiv b'seiser, He's sitting in secrecy and He's manipulating all the affairs of our lives and we're expected to look back and see how one thing is connected with the previous, all the way back to the beginning.

I'll tell you a little story about myself. I was thrown out of the Hebrew school — when I was a little boy I was sent to the Hebrew school, the old-time Talmud Torah, and something happened that I was thrown out. All the other boys in the school were good boys; they weren't thrown out and all of them graduated and they succeeded in becoming nothings. Nothing came of them. But because I had some trouble I was thrown out and I had to look for another place. I found a private Rebbi who wanted to teach me, and he made a mentch out of me. And finally, he sent me to a real yeshivah.

I look back now, and I understand that it was the hand of Hashem that was sending me on to a career of Torah. When I was fourteen, I wanted to apply for a job in a factory. There was very little money at home and I thought I'd help. So, when I saw an ad, "Boys Wanted," I went downtown to the factory to take a job. And as I turned the corner, I saw the man come out of the factory, take the "Help Wanted" sign off the door and take it inside. He had hired his last boy just before I came!

I wouldn't be sitting here tonight if I had gained that job. When I was twenty-one, I thought, "I'm not a public speaker. I'm a bashful boy; I'm not the type to talk to people in public. I won't be able to get a rabbanus. What should I do?"

I decided I'll try to become a public-school teacher. An einfal! I'll teach in the public school. So, I went to the Board of Education and I applied. The man sitting at the desk said, "What are you doing now?" I said, "I'm a rabbinical student." He said, "Go back to your business; go back."

A goy told me to go back. I listened to him. A malach min hashamayim. When I was twenty-four, I was already going out in the world; in those days you were a finished man at twenty-four and I wanted to find a job teaching in a yeshivah.

Now, I had a rebbe when I was a young boy, and I was his favorite talmid and this rebbe had now become the head of all the talmud

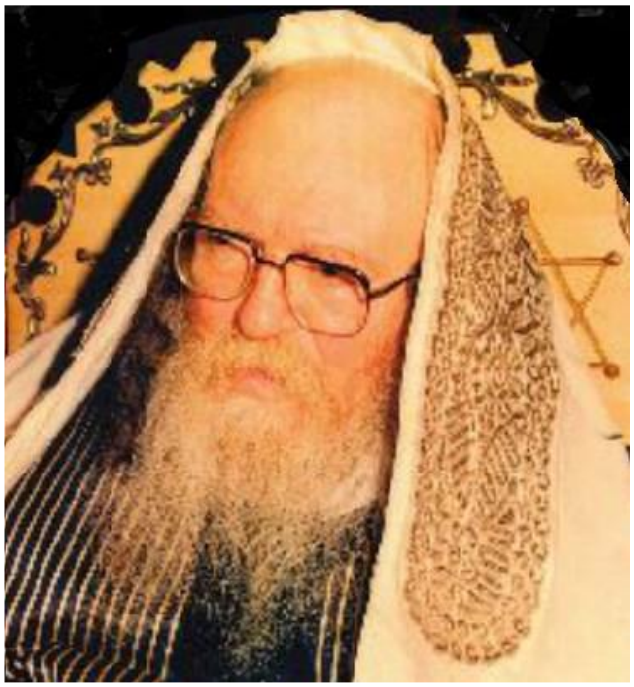
torahs. I knew that if I would go to him, he'd give me a job for sure. I sat in the waiting room to interview. There was another person who came there for the same job. I knew him from my days in the yeshivah. This person never learned. He played ball all the time. I learned Tanach while he played ball. I knew Tanach well when I was a boy. I knew lashon hakodesh well. This boy didn't know anything. He was a ball player. He got the job, not I.

It was beyond my comprehension! But boruch Hashem because of that I went to Slabodka! I look back and I thank Hashem that it turned out that way. Hakodosh Boruch Hu rescued me again and again and again.

There are more stories like that in my life. And it's by means of these schemes He rescues each one of us. What about you? What happened that you're here tonight? Hakadosh Baruch Hu guided your footsteps. You'll find some little quirk in the history of your life that saved you. And then another one and another one. It's all from Hashem! Hakadosh Baruch Hu has tricks, and we're expected to study them as much as possible.

The Chozeh of Lublin once wanted to arrive early in the morning to take care of an important matter. The day before, he asked his wife to prepare his evening meal earlier than usual. But it turned out that the meal was prepared much later than usual.

He commented, "It would be natural for me to become angry now. But the only reason I wanted to have the meal early was to do the will of my creator. This too is the will of my creator that I should not become angry." ~ Niflaos HaRebbe



Towards the end of his life, **ר׳ אַבְרָהָם אַבָּא לַייפְעֶר זַצַ״ל** visited Antwerp. His Chasidim arranged to take the Rebbe for a medical examination by one of the top doctors in the world, planning to pay his exorbitant fee.

After the exam, the doctor refused to take payment for his efforts, saying, "Any man in his sickly condition should be depressed with such pain, yet I never met a happier person in my life! - If he can be so happy while being so sick, then he must be a very holy person. I can't take a penny from such a holy man!"

The Pittsburgher Rebbe,**ר׳ אַבְרָהָם אַבָּא לַייפְעֶר זַצַ״ל**, devoted many years of his life to the mission of bringing Jews back to Yiddishkeit.

When asked why he moved to Newark rather than New York, he explained, "The Hebrew spelling of these two cities is identical except that Newark lacks the letter **יִ.** - I wanted to put the **יִד** back into Newark!"

By the time he left Newark, he had been Mekareiv hundreds of families and even opened a Chassidishe Yeshivah.

It is a mistake to think that the yetzer hara's purpose is to merely cause a person to sin; its true goal is to destroy a person completely. Once he tricks someone into sinning, it does not even let him enjoy his act, but rather consumes him with remorse. It is terrifying to think what kind of enemy each of us carry within ourselves. ~ R' Itzele Petersburger zt"l.

Divrei Torah, Ba`er Heitev באר היטב פרש"י בע' לשון. דברי תורה, שמחה וחיזוק.
בס"ד פרשת מקץ - תשפ"ד
PARSHAS MIKEITZ 5784 Vol. 15 No. 10

Shabbos "Noch " Chanukah

Tzadikim expounded on this expression in a dual fashion. Practically it is Shabbos "Noch - after" Chanukoh. But "Noch", has a dual meaning, "is yet" Chanukoh. Furthermore, in the Medrash it says, that Shabbos is not to make less, rather whatever it was before Shabbos, it continues and is more so on Shabbos.

With this in mind we must take into action the greatness of "Zos Chanukoh – the eighth day of Chanukoh" and then the immediate following of Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz. It is interesting to note that Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz is usually "Shabbos Chanukoh", if so, it is even more so a semblance to the greatness of Chanukoh.

As we want to hold on and retain the greatness of Chanukoh, it is very appropriate to mention the words of the **Sheloh Hakodosh** who expounds on how to "hold on" to the greatness of a Yom Tov.

Firstly, we must yearn to stay with the Yom Tov. Secondly, we must take something along from the Yom Tov.

With all the above in mind, we shall be Zoche to continue the greatness of the Yom Tov of Simchoh, Hallel and Hodoh [happiness, praise, and thankfulness] of Chanukoh to the whole year. And to be "Mamshich – acquire" all of the great "Hashpa'os – Bounty" that we attained on Chanukoh.

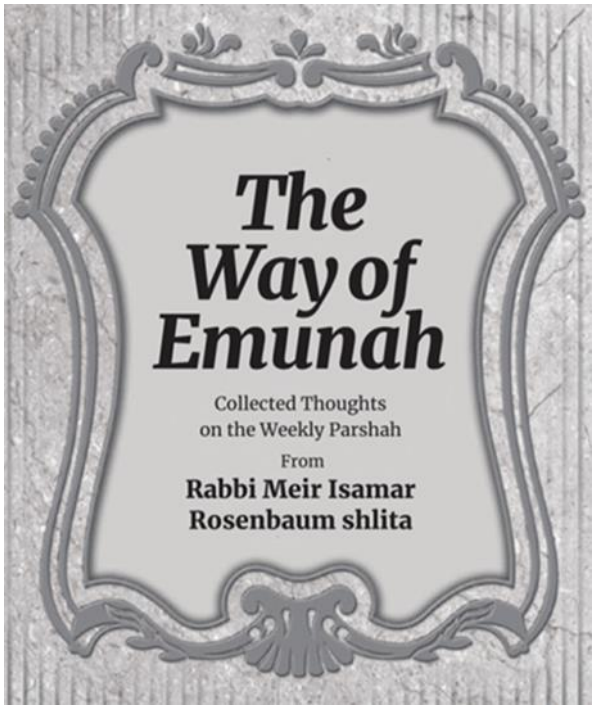
May we be Zoche to see the lighting of the Menoroh by the Kohein Godol in the Beis HaMikdosh, in Yerusholayim Ir HaKodesh, Omein kein Yihi Rotzon.

'And it was in the end' -ויהי לשון צער- 'And it was', is a language of pain **ויהי מקץ**.

The pain is that the end is withheld - the Geuloh - Redemption has not yet come. [**The Chozeh of Lublin - Sefer Pininei HaTorah**.]

'It came to pass at the end of two full years.' **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים**

If a person awakes from his spiritual sleep, he can rectify **שְׁנָתַיִם** his years, **יָמִים** in counted days. [**Reb Boruch of Mezibuzsh**.]



The Proof That It Was a Dream

וַתִּבְלַעְנָה הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַדַּקּוֹת אֶת שֶׁבַע הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַבְּרִיאוֹת וְהַמְּלֵאוֹת וַיִּיקַץ פַּרְעֹה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם ***'And the thin ears of grain swallowed up the seven healthy and full ears of grain; then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, a dream.'*** (41:7)

The Chida zt"l (Sefer Pnei Dovid) quotes the **Nimukei HaRid** as asking why in regards to the dream about the cows, it is not stated that "***behold, it was a dream***", while these words are used in regards to the dream about the stalks of wheat.

He answers that the dream about the cows was not so unusual. One animal eating another is something found in nature; therefore, it was not clear that it was just a dream and could possibly be explained as something that was actually seen. However, it is naturally impossible for one stalk to eat another stalk. Therefore, this was clearly a dream that had some significance.

Rosh Hashanah Frees the Imprisoned

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף שִׂמְלֹתָיו וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה *'And Pharaoh sent and they called to Yosef and they hurried him from the pit.'* (41:14)



The Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 10B) says that Yosef was freed on Rosh Hashanah.

The Chidushei Harim zy"a (quoted in Yalkut Yehuda) asks why it is important to tell us what day it was?

He answers that this is meant to be a lesson for all future generations. He explains that "Yosef" is symbolic of the "inner Jew" that is found within us all, and this is what goes free on Rosh Hashanah.

In other words, there are some Jews who are imprisoned within themselves. They are trapped by their yeitzer hara and cannot escape from this jail. Still and all, on Rosh Hashanah, they are able to go free.

That is why this month is called "Tishrei", which has a root of "shari", free. - During this month, everyone can free themselves from their personal prison.

"A long life is not good enough. But a good life is long enough." ~ A quote that Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis found from her late husband following his death as told by R' Paysach Krohn.

They Grazed with Brotherliness



וְהִנֵּה מִן־הַיְאֹר עֹלֹת שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת בְּרִיאוֹת בָּשָׂר וִיפֹת תֹּאַר וַתִּרְעֶינָה בָּאָחוּ

'And behold, from the river came up seven cows…and they grazed in the marsh.' (41:18)

Sefer M'Zekeinim Esbonen quotes the tzadik, **Rav Hirsch Michel zt"l**, as explaining the word "**בָּאָחוּ**" (in the marsh) to mean "achvah", brotherliness. Thus, the pasuk is saying that the cows grazed with achdus.

He adds that this why it says that they were of beautiful appearance and healthy – because when there is love and unity, all blessings will be present.

The Reward for Those Who Give Tzedakah

וַיִּפְתַּח הָאֶחָד אֶת־שַׂקּוֹ לָתֵת מִסְפּוֹא לַחֲמֹרוֹ בַּמָּלוֹן וַיַּרְא אֶת־כַּסְפּוֹ וְהִנֵּה־הוּא בְּפִי אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ

'And one of them opened his sack…and he saw his money. And behold, it was in the mouth of his sack.' (42:27)

The Slonimer Rebbe zy"a (Sefer Divrei Shmuel) states that we see a hint from this verse that if someone opens his wallet to give money to tzedakah, then it will be "by the mouth of his bag (wallet)", meaning that Hashem will reward him by ensuring that he always has the money that he needs.

Everyone Has Their Own Burden

וַיְהִי הֵם מְרִיקִים שַׂקֵּיהֶם וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ צְרוֹר־כַּסְפּוֹ בְּשַׂקּוֹ וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת־צְרֹרוֹת כַּסְפֵּיהֶם הֵמָּה וַאֲבִיהֶם וַיִּירָאוּ ***'And it was when they were emptying their sacks and, behold, each one's bundle of money was in his sack…'*** (42:35)

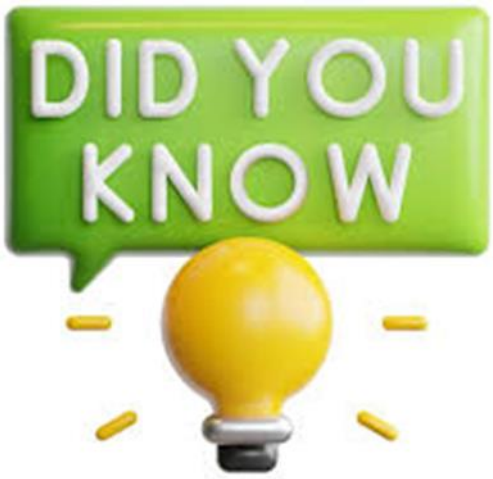


Sefer Likutei Yehuda writes that he heard from his grandfather, the **Imrei Emes zy"a** in the name of **Rav Bunim of Peshischa zy"a** that every Jew has his own "pekel". Everyone has their own bundle of challenges and difficulties that they are going through.

In the future, all of the "pekelach" will be mixed together and everyone will be given a choice to take whichever one they want – and every individual will choose his own pekel. Everyone will realize that his challenges were easier for him than anyone else's would have been.

This is hinted to in this verse, where it is stated that "***each one's bundle was in his sack***". This is as is stated in the **Sifrei Mussar** that a person should never think that things would be better for him if his circumstances would be different. Rather, every detail of a person's life is perfect for him. Everything is as it should be.

Just like a person shouldn't say that he'd be able to see better if he has three eyes – as it is obvious that having two eyes is the will of Hashem – so too, one should not think that someone else's challenges would be better for him than the one's he has – as whatever Hashem gave him clearly is what is best for him.



Now You Know!

When the famine hit Egypt, Pharaoh told everyone to go to Yosef. Yosef opened all the storehouses and showed the people how much grain he had; enough for all of them. Then the Torah tells us the famine got stronger in all the land.

It seems odd that the famine would intensify immediately as Yosef was showing them how much food there was. One would have assumed that the famine would have been staved off a bit, since it was now known they would not starve.



Some commentaries explain that the famine got worse for everything but bread, but there's another insight for us here.

Chazal tell us the famine began with the rich people. This seems unusual. Those are the people who likely had storage houses of their own, but their food spoiled, and though Yosef had food for everyone, they would now all be equal - something the rich people couldn't handle. They were used to having more than others, and when this was no longer the case, even if they had food to eat, they felt they were penniless and deprived.

We should take a lesson from this to focus on being satisfied with whatever Hashem gives us, and not need to need to have nicer things than others. All that does is put us at bigger risk for poverty, even just in our own minds.

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM
Lights Of Our Righteous

Gedolim Be'Masayhem
Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Avrohom Abba Leifer Pittsburgher Rebbe, Emunas Avraham (Teves 10, 5750 / 1990 - 34th Yahrzeit)





It is hard to believe that 30 years have gone by since the Rebbe, zy'a was niftar on Asara B'Teves in 1990. As one who was born and raised in Irvington, New Jersey near Newark, our family were recipients of his warmth and hospitality. It is awesome to describe the impact the Rebbe had on Jewish life in Newark and its environs, where he implanted his Chassidishe warmth for over 20 years.

At that period in his life, prior to the passing of his revered father, the Pittsburger Rebbe, Rav Yosef Leifer, zy'a, he was known as the Chernovitzer Rebbe.

How does one describe his strong Torah roots, fiery faith, noble character and love of Eretz Yisroel. His mesiras nefesh to walk

almost an hour to be toivel in a kosher mikveh before Shabbos Shachris.

Our family had the zechus to daven at his first Bais Hamedresh on Hobson Street, near the Irvington border. Later when he built his beautiful new shule on one of the main boulevards of Newark's Yiddishe area, my teenage friends and I would walk over half an hour each way to enjoy the sound of his heartfelt Tefillos on Shabbosim and Yomim Tovim.

His Rebbe, HaRav Avraham Abba Leifer, zt'l (known as the Emunas Avraham) was born in Kroli, Hungary in 1918 to his father, Rav Yosef Leifer, The Tzidkas Yosef, who was the son of Rav Bertche of Satmar, the son of Rav Mordche of Nadvorna, zy'a. During his youth, the Rebbe learned under his father in his hometown. While Rav Avraham Abba was still a child, his father travelled to the USA to raise money to marry off his sisters, who had been orphaned at a young age.

Among other places he visited Pittsburgh, where he found a large warm kehillah of observant Jews who were yirei shomayim. They urged him to settle in their city and be their leader; The Tzidkas Yosef agreed and brought over his entire family to settle in the city.

Concerned for the chinuch, the Tzidkas Yosef sent his children away to yeshivas. Rav Avraham Abba learned in the Rachover Yeshiva under HaRav Shloma Zalman of Rachov, zy'a, where he excelled in his studies and received semicha on Yora Deah from his rebbi, when he was a mere 17 years old. From there he went to learn in Sekelheid under HaRav Yehuda Segel-Rosner, zy'a, the Imrei Yehudah, which was considered to be the crowning glory of Hungarian yeshivas. He became one of the most outstanding students , and in time, Rav Isamar of Nadvorna, zy'a chose him as a chosson for his daughter.

During the teenage years that he spent in Europe, far away from his family, he often travelled to various Chassidishe Rebbes. He also went to his uncle, HaRav Eliezer Zev of Kretchnif, zt'l , who displayed

unusual affection towards him and had deep Torah discussions with him. His countless sefarim are testimony to his profound proficiency and brilliance in all facets of the Torah.

The Rebbe and Rebbitzen lived a life of true chessed. The Shabbos Seudas always had extra guests and the Rebbitzen would cook and distribute food to needy families.

When tragedy befell a local family, the Rebbe and the Rebbitzen took them in and gave them an apartment on the top floor of their home. They also took on the responsibility of marrying off their children- and what beautiful shidduchim they made.

A friend of mine became a baal-teshuva as a teenager and left his home because it was not possible to keep Torah there. The Rebbe quietly took him in and acted as an intermediary with his parents, who refused to accept his new way of life. Today he lives in Meah Shearim and is surrounded by many beautiful grandchildren, ka'h. Like the Rebbe, he constantly has guests at his Shabbos Tisch, and when we see each other, we reminisce about the powerful and ongoing influence of the Rebbe and the Rebbitzen on all of us.

In 1970, he decided to move to Israel. He chose the coastal city of Ashdod for his new base, though at the time the city had very few religious Jews and almost no chassidim. He chose this city based on a dream which he had, in which a man who identified himself as Hasdai ibn Shaprut (the foreign minister of the caliph of Córdoba some 1000 years earlier) appeared to him and asked him to establish his court in Ashdod, promising him success.

In Ashdod the Rebbe established Torah schools for children, bringing in teachers from other cities, and began monthly shiurim for adults. He also established a kollel for avreichim from Bnei Brak yeshivas and founded Yeshivas Tzidkas Yosef in memory of his father. During the last 20 years of his life, he brought thousands of Jews back to full Torah observance and drew countless families closer to the Chassidus.

The Rebbe became known throughout Eretz Yisrael for his great yiras Shamayim and ahavas Yisrael. His son, Rabbi Mordechai Yissachar Ber, the current Rebbe, testified that his father detached himself from worldly pleasures and did everything for the sake of fulfilling the mitzvos of the Torah. Yet he also displayed a genuine simcha shel mitzvah and would engage others with humorous vertlach.

The Rebbe was niftar before dawn on Sunday, January 7, 1990 (10 Tevet 5750) at the age of 72. He was buried in Chelkas HaRabbanim on Har HaMenuchos in Yerushalayim. His son, Rabbi Mordechai Yissachar Ber, who succeeded him as Rebbe, has built on his programs and expanded the Chassidus. The Rebbe left behind a large number of unpublished manuscripts and his published work, Emunas Avraham.

One evening some years ago I accompanied my friend, the noted author and speaker, Rav Pinchus Jung, shlita (popular Monsey Mevaser columnist) to Philadelphia, where he gave one of his 'Change The Way You Daven' shiurim. On the trip home, he said "I have a treat for someone who davened with the Rebbe in Newark."

As the recording began to play I recognized the Rebbe's heartfelt Hoshanah Rabbah tefillos- 'Tayereh Tatte in Himmel', as he pleaded with the Ribboino Shel HaOlam on behalf of Klal Yisrael.

As Rav Jung explained: In the last years of his life, the Rebbe, zy'a travelled from Eretz Yisrael to London for medical treatments. At the suggestion of Rav Chune Halperin, zt'l, Rav Jung (then a resident of London) often went to visit the Rebbe in the hospital. He became close to the Rebbe and realized what a special person he was. He had the opportunity to be mispallel with him and learn many of his unforgettable sweet nigunim.

The Rebbe was a song writer: everything he spoke had a lyric quality. I remember his 'Od Yishama' and 'Hadudaim' compositions. I can still visualize the heartfelt singing at the Simchas Bais Hashoeva in his

Sukkah. He loved music and song, but the most magnificent music he ever composed was his own life. Every smile was a lilting melody, every word an enchanting note. His image will linger in our minds, an inspiration and a challenge.

The Rebbe was a phenomenal Baal Tefilah and composer of many nigunim. Through the koach of neginah, he attracted the youth and brought back many holocaust survivors to their roots. As young American yeshiva bochurim, he gave us a taste of the warmth of pre-war Yiddishkeit. Those who were privileged to daven with the Rebbe were emotionally elevated by his fiery pleas. I vividly remember the electrifying moments of Yomim Noraim, when before the Aron Hakodesh, he would virtually bring alive the Tefillah of Shemah Koleinu. He made us feel that we were in the divine presence.

The story is told of a Holocaust survivor, who was driving a taxi on Shabbos and was stuck in a traffic jam outside the Rebbe's shul. Except in extreme weather conditions, the Rebbe had the custom of leaving the front doors of the shul open to the street. This Yiddishe taxi driver heard the sweet sound of the Rebbe's davening and it sparked memories of his pre-war years. He got out of his taxi and stood outside the shul door listening until Musaf was over. The Rebbe was mekarev him, and in time he was 'chozer b'tshuvah'.

How we looked forward to Simchas Torah at the Chernovitzer Rebbe's shul. It was the best place to be, with young and old dancing in circles around the Rebbe, who vibrantly danced in the center clutching his small Sefer Torah. It seemed like the whole Jewish community of Newark converged in joyous song and dance until the wee hours of the morning.

The Pittsburger Rebbe's talent for composing heart-rending melodies sung worldwide is well known. Here is the story behind the niggun Yismechu HaShomayim: The Rebbe was always involved in the fight against assimilation and when a Jew from Florida appeared before the Pittsburger Rebbe and cried that his daughter was

engaged to be married to a goy, the Rebbe was so moved and distressed by his plight that he pledged to stop at nothing to rescind the harsh decree.

He flew to Florida and against all odds fought and used all his ways and means until succeeded, in an almost supernatural manner, to cancel the marriage and avert the decree.

When the Rebbe returned to Ashdod, he thanked Hashem for his successful endeavour and that his efforts to cancel the intermarriage had borne fruit. As a thanksgiving, he composed the well-known niggun for Yismechu HaShomayim, which is still sung to this day among Pittsburger Chassidim and others who appreciate heartfelt Yiddish gezangen.

As I reflect on the Rebbe's whole life, I think of it as one beautiful and sweet nigun. Surely he sits in Gan Eden near the Kissei HaKavod, where along with Dovid Hamelech, he sings Hallel- songs of praise- and together they are Melitzei Yosher for Klal Yisrael.

May the Rebbe's legacy remain fresh and alive for future generations. Zechuso Yagen Aleinu V'al Kol Yisrael.

Rav Gershon Chanoch Henoch Leiner Radziner Rebbe, Orchos Chayim, Ba'al HaTecheiles (Teves 4)

When Rav Gershon Henoch came up with his new formula for reintroducing the techeiles with which to dye the wool of tzitzis, he created a huge stir. He went from rebbe to rebbe trying to get their approval for his method.

Among those he approached was Rav Yehoshua of Belz who turned him down. The Rebbe didn't approve of his dye.

"Let me explain my refusal," Rav Yehoshua said. "If you wish to argue with me using your Talmudic skills and erudition, you will surely defeat me because your intellectual prowess in Torah is certainly

superior to mine! However, I will tell you a story that explains why I simply cannot agree with you.



"Once, my saintly father, the tzaddik, the Sar Sholom of Belz, woke me at dawn and asked me to come outside with him. He pointed upward to the heavens and said, 'Do you see the colour of the sky? - This is the colour of techeiles'.

Now, unfortunately, the colour you show me here does not match the colour my father showed me." (Otzar Yisrael in the name of Mordechai Hirsch p.119)

In 1839, Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner departed Kotzk and established his own court and unique brand of *chassidus* in a small town southeast of Lublin named Izhbitz (Izbica), which was 95% Jewish. When the Izhbitzer's son Rav Yaakov Leiner moved to Radzyn, north of Lublin and near Kotzk, the dynasty then assumed the name of that town. When Rav Yaakov passed away in 1878, he was succeeded by his son Rav Gershon Henoch Leiner (1839–1891) who would emerge as one of the most brilliant, charismatic, and 'colourful' chassidic leaders of the 19th century.

With a disposition similar to that of his grandfather Rav Mordechai Yosef, Rav Gershon Henoch combined strong leadership, boundless energy, creativity, and a proclivity for bold stances against the consensus. Taking pride in his somewhat iconoclastic positions, he maintained "*Oseh chadashos baal milchamos*!" (Roughly translated, "an innovator is prone to war.") He discarded outer trappings common

to chassidic leaders of his day, donning regular attire and traveling without an entourage or escort.



He served as the rabbi of Radzyn long before he assumed the position of Rebbe and was the publisher of his grandfather's landmark work *Mei Hashiloach*. As a young man, he published his own work *Sidrei Taharos*.

This monumental project attempted to organize all passages in Chazal relevant to Mishnah *Keilim* and *Ohalos* in a compendium, with page layouts modeled on that of a standard Shas, with Rav Gershon Henoch's commentaries framing it on either side.

Though his brilliance was acknowledged with this audacious project, it generated controversy. Some were concerned that this was an attempt at a new addition to Talmud Bavli. It nevertheless earned the approbations of many leading Torah scholars, including Rav Yosef Shaul Nathansohn (*Shoel U'meishiv*), Rav Shimon Sofer, Rav Chaim Berlin, and Rav Chaim Elazar Wachs (*Nefesh Chayah*).

An autodidact in the natural sciences, the Radzyner Rebbe was a linguist and proficient in engineering, medicine, and chemistry. This was acknowledged by local pharmacies, who'd honor prescriptions he wrote for medicinal treatments. His many seforim cover halachah, *chassidus*, Kabbalah, and the entire gamut of Torah literature.

Perhaps his greatest renown came from his attempt at rediscovering the identity of the elusive *chilazon*, which would provide the dye necessary for the production of *techeiles*. To that end, he studied the relevant chemistry and zoology, embarked on several trips to

Italy to personally observe marine life, and even learned additional languages to familiarize himself with the literature on the subject.

In 1887 he published his sefer *Sefunei Temunei Chol*, wherein he presented his findings that the cuttlefish was the source for the *techeiles* dye. This was followed by the works *Pesil Techeiles* and *Ein Techeiles*, in which he substantiated his claim with scientific findings and answered his many detractors with additional proofs. Though he faced significant opposition with his innovation, he refused to back down.

At the helm of a flourishing community of thousands of Radzyner chassidim, Rav Gershon Henoch (known as the Baal HaTecheiles) passed away in the prime of his life in 1890 at 51 years of age, and is the sole leader of the dynasty to be buried in Radzyn.

The great *posek* **Rav Sholom Mordechai Schwadron** (Maharsham) was said to have surreptitiously worn *techeiles* on his tzitzis under his garments. He left instructions in his will that his family bury him in the *tallis katan* that had *techeiles*.

In addition, Rav Avraham Chazan, the prime *talmid* of **Rav Nosson of Breslov** [author of *Biur Halikutim* on *Likutei Maharan]*, met with the Radzyner Rebbe while on pilgrimage to Uman, and accepted the Radzyner *techeiles*, which became a mainstay among Breslov chassidim.

Rav Gershon Henoch was likely the only chassidic tzaddik in history to bear arms. When traveling long distances, he'd carry a pistol in his boot. Citing the fact that it protected him, he referred to it as his "*kamaya*" (amulet).

"When you are asked a question and do not know what to answer, be not ashamed to say: "I know not!"" ~~ Mivchar Hapeninim

The Lifesaving Rashi Flash by Rabbi Yosef Weiss Zt'l



Avraham Krupnik was among the thirty students in the Kaminetz Yeshivah who managed to escape Shanghai with the students of the Mir.

Young Avraham was in Moscow with friends, trying to obtain travel visas. A sudden knock on the hotel door one evening turned out to be two intimidating NKVD officers. Avraham was whisked to headquarters.

"Do you speak Russian?" asked the interrogator harshly.

Avraham didn't know what to say- which answer would please the officers? The words of Rashi suddenly flashed through his mind. When the ten brothers appeared before Yosef, there was an interpreter between them. Rashi explains that the interpreter's presence indicated that Yosef did not understand their language, so the brothers spoke freely before him.

Avraham realized that if he feigned ignorance, the officers would reveal secrets in their native tongue. "I do not know Russian," he answered.

The NKVD officers discussed their next question- conversing in Russian. "Let's ask him what he's doing in our country. If he's just passing through, we'll scream at him for his gall to leave such a beautiful country. If he says he's here to stay, we'll tell him 'You're a foreigner! Who invited you to come?' Whatever he says, we'll trap him."

Thanks to Rashi's foresight, Avraham was prepared. When they shot the question at him, Avraham responded, "Doesn't Comrade Stalin write that Russia is a light to all nations, that everyone should come see its beauty? I listened to Stalin!"

The surprised officers were forced to admit the accuracy of his response.

And so, the interrogation continued. The two officers discussed the next question and Avraham answered accordingly. Eventually they were forced to release him.

"You're back?" his friends asked in astonishment when he returned to his hotel room. He reported the evening's events, and his friends congratulated him on a well-played game of chess: "Krupnik won that round!

But Avraham knew that if they came once, they would come again. He needed to get out of the danger zone. Early the next morning, he headed to the travel office to purchase a train ticket to Vladivostock.

No one was at the desk. Avraham banged loudly until a grumpy man appeared from the back. "Why are you making so much noise?" he screamed at the young visitor.

"I want to buy a ticket to Vladivostock," Avraham said urgently. "I have money."

The man wrote out the papers and threw them at Avraham. "Take it and go!"

When Avraham returned to his hotel, the two NKVD officers were waiting for him. "We have a one-way ticket for you - to Siberia."

"But I already have a ticket to Vladivostock," protested Avraham.

Taking the ticket from his hands, the officers laughed cruelly. "We are the NKVD! We tell you where to go."

And then one officer noticed the signature on the papers. "Do you think he knows who signed these?" he asked his comrade in Russian. The second officer studied the official signature. "It's a fellow NKVD officer," he muttered.

Avraham listened carefully to the conversation. "Excuse me," he interrupted them. "Do you realize who signed my ticket?"

The officers looked up in surprise and disgust. Take your ticket and get out of here. If you're still here in a couple hours, we're coming back for you!"

Avraham fled, heading for Vladivostock. His friends joined him shortly afterward, and the entire group escaped to Shanghai- where they survived the war. - The words of Rashi had saved Rav Avraham Krupnik's life. (Excerpted from "**Visions of Greatness IX**")

The Miraculous Mincha – Rabbi Shlomo Landau



This is Malkiel ben Yoseph. He is a reservist in active combat in Gaza. Just a few days ago, after a full day of fighting, the IDF reached an area that they considered safe. It had been bulldozed, and the group lay down for some well-deserved rest.

Malkiel suddenly realized that the sun was already setting, yet he had not yet had the chance to daven Mincha. He quickly figured out the direction to Yerushalaim, stood up and davened with his back towards his fellow soldiers, who were all lying on the ground asleep or resting.



Shortly after he started Mincha, all of a sudden he saw in his peripheral view the tip of an RPG emerging from a tunnel right in front of him, that had clearly been overlooked! Malkiel quickly shot in that direction. This alerted the other soldiers, and together they were able to eliminate the threat.

After everything had calmed down, they all jumped upon Malkiel, and they thanked him from the depth of their heart for saving their lives. Also, his whole battalion – every last soldier committed to praying Mincha the very next day! – It was Mincha that had saved their lives! - **עַל נִסֶּיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל יום עִמָּנוּ. וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוּבוּתֶיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל עֵת**

Rabbi Paysach Krohn- Project Mesorah

In this week's parsha, we have a famous expression. It is surprising, as it was uttered not by a Tzadik, but by the **שַׂר הַמַּשְׁקִים**. He says - **אֶת־חֲטָאַי אֲנִי מַזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם** - "***I call to mind my faults today***." (41:9)

Many people, when they admit that they did something wrong, they will say this expression.

The Ohr Hachaim appears to ask two questions on this: Why does he say **חֲטָאַי** – My sins? We don't even know what the original sin was let alone the second sin? And why does he say **אֲנִי מַזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם** – I remember today? Why specifically today? Why not just say that 'I remember the Aveiro that I did'?

The Ohr Hachaim is saying something very interesting. The **שַׂר הַמַּשְׁקִים** would have never really admitted that he erred, had it not been in his interest to do so at this juncture. He could now tell

Pharoah <"Hey, I know about this fellow… Yosef". So he admitted his guilt now, because it was convenient, and to his benefit.

This is the wrong way to behave, because if there is something that you have done wrong to somebody, you shouldn't wait until it is convenient for you to spill the beans and own up, but you should apologise right away. – And that's why it is חֲטָאַי – because regardless of what the first sin was, the second sin is for waiting so long and not apologising and owning up right away!

When you do something bad to somebody else, and you hurt somebody, you have got to admit it right away.

How do I get to Rechov Jaffa?

Rav Elya Lopian zt"l once asked **Rav Moshe Aharon Stern zt"l** to accompany him to mincha on Shabbos afternoon to Yeshivas Chevron. As they walked, they witnessed cars driving down the roads in flagrant violation of Shabbos. Rav Elya, in clear agitation, said to Rav Moshe Aharon, "Woe, a rachmanis on these people, for no one has taught them the severity of the prohibition. Let's turn back to avoid seeing all this chilul Shabbos."

Rav Moshe Aharon replied, "We're already more than halfway to the Yeshiva. Rather than turn back, isn't it better to just walk quicker and get there faster? We'll probably encounter less chilul Shabbos this way." Rav Elya agreed but emitted a heartbreaking sigh.

Just at that moment, a car pulled up and the driver poked his head out the window. "How do I get to Rechov Jaffa?" he asked.

Rav Elya burst into tears. "How can I tell you something that you are forbidden to do – drive on Shabbos? Yet, how can I refuse to answer you and decline a Jew's request for help?" Rav Elya continued to cry.

The man stopped his car, turned it off and got out. He blurted out, "Rabbi, I never before heard sincere rebuke like this. My mother

also observes Shabbos and every week she screams at me for my lack of observance, but never have I seen her cry. I see that you really care for my benefit. Rabbi, I promise you, that from today on I will never again drive on Shabbos."

Chabad.ORG

From our Sages

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם – *'Pharaoh was dreaming.' (41:1)*

Should it not say, "and Pharaoh dreamed"?

This is to teach us that for those two years Pharaoh would see this dream each and every night, but would not remember it, until the time came for Joseph to come out of prison; that morning, he woke up and remembered it. ~ (**Midrash HaGadol**)

וַיַּרְכֵּב אֹתוֹ בְּמִרְכֶּבֶת הַמִּשְׁנֶה אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְפָנָיו אַבְרֵךְ וְנָתוֹן אֹתוֹ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם. וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם – *'[Pharaoh] had him ride in the second chariot which he had. . . . And Joseph . . . passed through all the land of Egypt.' (41:43,45)*

What is the meaning of the verse (49:22), said in regard to Joseph, "The daughters strode upon the ramparts"?

As Joseph rode in the chariot across the land of Egypt, the daughters of Egypt were walking atop the walls and throwing golden rings to him, hoping that he would look at their beauty . . .~ (**Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer**)

וַיֶּאֱסֹף אֹתָם אֶל־מִשְׁמָר שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים – *'He put them all together into custody for three days.' (42:17)*

Corresponding to the three days in which they had plotted and executed the destruction of Shechem.

They had convinced the inhabitants of Shechem to circumcise themselves in order to kill them. Joseph had done the very opposite: he compelled the Egyptians to circumcise themselves, and then proceeded to sustain them and save their lives. ~ (**Zohar**)

וַיִּקַּח מֵאִתָּם אֶת־שִׁמְעוֹן וַיֶּאֱסֹר אֹתוֹ לְעֵינֵיהֶם – *'[Joseph] took Simeon from them, and bound him before their eyes.' (42:24)*

Only before their eyes did he bind him; but as soon as they left, he brought him out, gave him to eat and drink, and bathed and anointed him. ~ (**Midrash Rabbah**)

וַיִּשָּׂא מַשְׂאֹת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֲלֵהֶם וַתֵּרֶב מַשְׂאַת בִּנְיָמִן מִמַּשְׂאֹת כֻּלָּם חָמֵשׁ יָדֹות וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ – *'Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs, and they drank and became intoxicated with him.' (43:34)*

Why did the brothers, who had no way of knowing that they were united with their lost brother, drink?

When they saw that they had no feelings of envy toward Benjamin, who had received preferential treatment from Joseph, they understood that they had overcome the root cause of Joseph's sale and had fully repented their sin. ~ (**Kav Chen**)

"Without Hashem's help, one cannot cross the doorway; with Hashem's help, one can cross the sea." ~ R' Mordechai of Lechovitz zt"l.



Kol Dodi on the Torah (Rabbi David Feinstein) - Seeing Hashem's Role In Events.

Why was Yoseph punished for relying on the butler to plead his case to the Pharaoh? Aren't we supposed to do whatever we can to improve our lot, rather than merely rely on Hashem's miracles?

Yoseph, in his greatness, should have known that in a country such as Egypt, the butler would have taken all of the credit and Hashem's role would have gone unnoticed to Yoseph and to others. Hashem had to wait two years in order to allow Yoseph (and others) to see His role in the sequence of events.



Rabbi Shlomo Kluger zt"l

● **Why does the Torah use the present tense "Pharaoh was dreaming"?**

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר (41,1) "***And it came to pass at the end of two years that Pharaoh was dreaming, and behold, he was standing by the river.***"

On careful examination we notice a subtle but significant difference in the Torah which needs to be understood. Here by Pharaoh it says "Pharaoh was dreaming", using the present, continuous tense, whereas by Yosef it says "Yosef dreamed", using the past tense. And we also find the same with Ya'akov.

But this fits with what Chazal taught in the gemora in Berachos 14a on the posuk in Proverbs 19:23 "…he will rest satisfied and not be visited by evil" - someone who satisfies himself with words of Torah and goes to sleep, will not be visited with bad tidings. From this we see that a person who serves Hashem, does not dream all the time, but rather he dreams only infrequently. But a wicked person dreams constantly of all types of nonsense.

Therefore, Ya'akov and Yosef who did not normally dream, when they did dream, it was truthful and prophetic. Therefore the Torah uses by them the expression "they dreamed", to teach that it was a singular event. But Pharaoh even before now had many dreams, and so the Torah now relates that at the end of two years he was dreaming yet another dream about the cows. Such is the precision of the Torah.

● **What did Yosef recognise about his brothers?**

וַיַּכֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכִּרֻהוּ (42,8) "***And Yosef recognised his brothers, but they did not recognise him***."

It seems to me that the explanation of this posuk is that in the previous posuk Yosef only asked them a single question "Where do you come from?". They however replied to him two things - "From the land of Canaan, to buy food". Granted if had asked them both where they came from and why they came, then it would have been correct to answer both points. But since he had asked them only from whence they came, they should have answered only that they came from the land of Canaan, and not more than that.

But with this they revealed what was in their hearts. Because it is natural for a person who is afraid that he will be suspected of something to provide information before he is questioned about it, in order to remove himself from suspicion. Therefore, when a person comes to be judged before the court, the judges examine very

carefully his words, and if he says something which is unnecessary, it will be clear that he has something to hide.

Here also, behold, Chazal taught in the Midrash on the posuk "Yosef's ten brothers went down to buy grain" - that they were nine for their brother and one to buy grain. That is, nine of them went to seek Yosef, perhaps they will find him, and one of them went to buy the grain. Thus, their main reason for going down to Egypt was because Yosef had been taken there. - Rashi explained similarly in a later posuk, when Yosef said "this is what I said, that you are spies". And so, since they were afraid of being suspected of this, they preceded to answer that they had come to buy grain, even though he had not asked them about this, so that Yosef would not suspect them of what was in their hearts.

However, on the contrary, because they answered more than what they had been asked, Yosef recognised their great love for him, and that their main intention in coming to Egypt was only for his sake. Therefore our posuk says "Yosef recognised his brothers" - he already recognised in them that they were his brothers and that they loved him, but "they did not recognise him" - his love for them.

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Futerfas z"l was one of the early refusniks in Russia in the 1960's, not only refusing to give up Torah and Mitzvos, but also in teaching many other people. He was eventually arrested by the KGB and sent to Siberia. I cannot describe how one survived in such bleak conditions, having to fend for himself in the vast expanse of land, in the middle of 'nowhere', the cold was also a problem. But all this didn't compare to the problem of it being continually dark (night) for months on end, for Reb Mendel didn't have a clock, so could not know when it was 'day' or 'night', and consequently could not work out when it was Shabbos

or Yom Tov. As I say, how anyone can keep one's sanity whilst being deprived of much of one's physical, emotional, mental and spiritual essentials, is incomprehensible. But, somehow, individuals like our Rabbi Mendel Futerfas, managed.

Living in this vast area of nothingness and stillness, one day, Reb Mendel heard in the distance the sound of someone singing. He ascertained that its source wasn't from an animal or bird, because none existed in that region. He, therefore, deduced that the singing was from a human voice. In this quite dark atmosphere, it is possible for sound to carry for a long distance. Reb Mendel decided to make his way towards that sound. He eventually arrived at a little hut from where the sound was coming from. He gently pushed the door open only to find another Yid sitting on the floor with his eyes tightly shut, singing **ידיד נפש אב הרחמן** over and over again. He stood memorised by the door, watching this other Yid for a considerable time.

Eventually, the Yid opened his eyes and noticed Reb Mendel standing by the door. Surprised, he enquired of Reb Mendel as to how he had got here, to which Reb Mendel retold how he had been in Siberia on his own for a long time, and today, he heard the singing from a distance and had made his way here. The Yid looked at Reb Mendel and said, "I have no wine for kiddush, no Challas, nor anything else to make a Shabbos Seudo, so I spend all Shabbos singing nigunim. But what about you, don't you know today is Shabbos?"

"No, I didn't know." Reb Mendel explained that he had no clock and had no way of knowing when it was day or night or which day of the week. "How do you know its Shabbos today?" Reb Mendel asked

The Yid explained that when the KGB came to take him away, the only thing he could grab to take with was a watch, and with that he kept a cheshbon of day and night and days of the week etc. "What did you manage to grab at that moment before the KGB took you away?" asked the Yid.

"Tephilin shel Yad"

"You have a Tephillin shel Yad? Where is it? I haven't been able to wear Tephillin at all, in the years I have been here. Wait here till after Shabbos, then I will help you retrace your steps back to your place, so that I can, at long last, put on Tephillin again.

They spent the rest of Shabbos singing and sharing Torah thoughts. After Shabbos they started the long trek back to Reb Mendels 'abode' following the footsteps in the snow.

Next morning, the Yid put on Reb Mendel's Tephillin shel Yad and proceeded to say Shema with immense concentration and with tears flowing down his face. No sooner, had he finished, then he collapsed to the floor and passed out.

[I heard this story from Reb Yossi Green in an interview he gave describing what motivated him to compose a niggun for **ידיד נפש**]

In 1975, the then Prime Minister of UK, Harold Wilson (known as a Labour Socialist) travelled to the USSR to meet with Brezhnev, the Soviet leader. Prior to that trip, many groups opposed the visit due to the human rights record of the host country. He refuted those arguments by claiming that he planned to challenge the Soviet authorities about such claims, but to be able to do so effectively, he required names of people who were languishing in prison etc due to soviet subversion. The only group who could actually supply the names of such people where the Chabad. One of those names was of Reb Menachem Mendel Futerfas.

Mr Wilson went to Russia, and on his plane on the way back was Reb Mendel. He lived for a short time in London, with his daughter, and later moved to Kfar Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, were he carried on being Marbitz Torah.

Good Shabbos

Parsha Knowledge

STORIES & INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

The Big Reveal!

In this week's Parsha (42:8), Yosef ascends to great power becoming the viceroy over all of Egypt. In this role, he encounters his brothers who come to Egypt during the famine looking for food. As they stand facing their long-lost brother, they have no idea it is him. They do not recognize Yosef.

I heard from Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita that the Tur asks, why not? Why don't they recognize their brother? Chronologically, they were all within the same age range. They were raised together. They should have known precisely who it was. They should've looked at him and realized that he was Yosef – their brother.

The Tur answers that while physically they should have recognized him, mentally they could not. They were unable to fathom or conceive that their brother – the young man who was thrown into a pit and sold into slavery could now become such a great prodigy and success, they weren't able to envision that his fortune could change so remarkably. Why is this so?

Because Yosef dreamt about opportunities and possibilities, and they mocked him for being a dreamer. Yosef was a dreamer, and they were not. We must dream about people; we must dream about their potential and the opportunities that can come their way. We must dream about a brighter future for the Jewish people. This is our obligation. Because if we don't dream then we will never recognize our dear brothers!

It is vital for us to realize that each and every person that we encounter is a universe! When you look at another person, realize that he is like a star. He might seem small to you. However, in reality, he is huge! One must gain an awareness of the great potential of

each person. One must view each person as an entire world! This can give someone the encouragement he needs to live up to his potential greatness.

A man once saw the great tzaddik of Yerushalayim, Rav Aryeh Levin zt"l talking to someone who wasn't wearing a yarmulka. The person was secular with no connection to Judaism. Rav Levin was talking to him with much respect and honor. The man who was observing this conversation, later went to Rav Levin and asked him, "Rabbi why were you showing that man so much respect? He wasn't wearing a yarmulka!

Rav Aryeh Levin replied, "I'm very short and I couldn't see his head, but I was able to see his heart – and he has a Jewish heart. He has a Jewish soul, and he has so much potential in him. And hopefully one day he will wear a yarmulka!" We can learn from this story that our perception of people must be to always see their potential. We must dream about their potential and the opportunities that can come their way!



A typhus epidemic was raging through the city of Yerushalayim where an untold number of new cases were admitted on a daily basis to the old Shaarei Tzedek hospital. -Before the days of antibiotics, no cure existed and those with typhus had a poor prognosis.

In a single room at the end of a long, narrow corridor, a young girl - Shayna Chaya - lay in her hospital bed with the devastating sickness slowly taking over her body. The doctors gravely told her family, "There is very little we can do as typhus has no known cure."

Shayna Chaya was a shadow of her former self, too weak to stand on her own two feet and struggled even with sitting up. Her family visited often and prayed fervently for her recovery, but they knew Shayna Chaya remained in critical condition.

One day during that long period of uncertainty, the family received an unexpected guest - an old family friend. Shayna Chaya's father welcomed his visitor and waited to hear the purpose of his visit. "I've come to suggest a shidduch for your daughter, Shayna Chaya. You know my only son well, and he is the one I wish to suggest as a shidduch for your worthy daughter."

He couldn't believe his ears, "What? Every day I approach the hospital with trepidation not knowing if I will find my daughter alive, and you are asking me to consider her as the wife for your only son? Even if my daughter does recover, I have no idea what her condition will be!"

The old family friend was adamant, "Please give me your word that when your daughter recovers, you will agree to the match. My wife and I believe wholeheartedly that Shayna Chaya is destined to be our son's wife." - By the end of the conversation, he eventually agreed to the shidduch.

When his daughter fully recovered several weeks later, **Rav Aryeh Levin - the tzaddik of Yerushalayim** - gladly organized the shidduch between his daughter Shayna Chaya and his friend's son- **Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv** - who grew to become the sage of the generation.

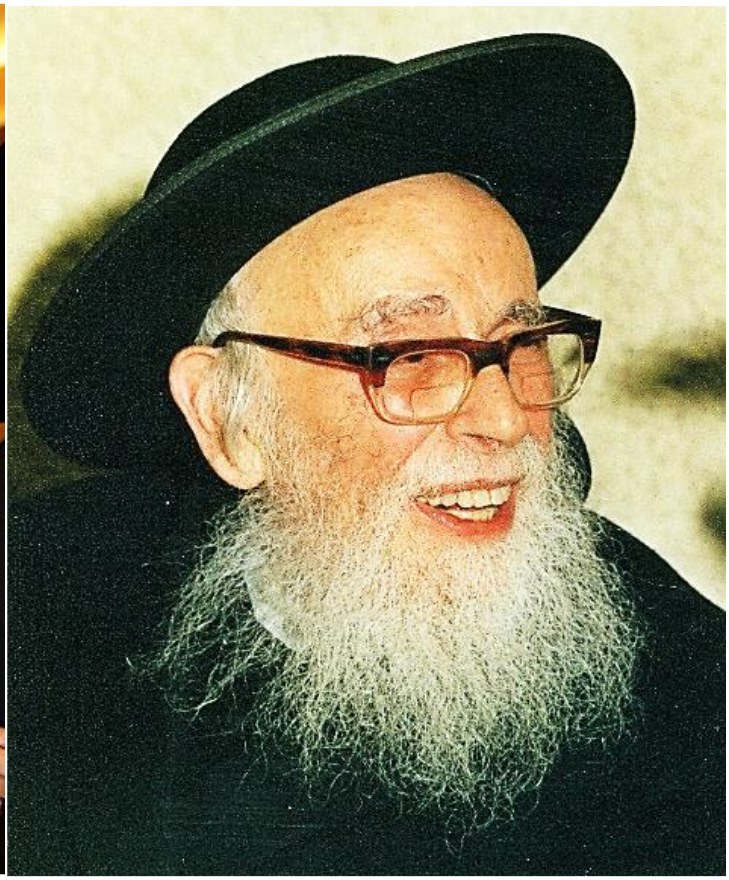
When R' Chaim Kanievsky was sitting shivah for his father, the Steipler, he was visited by the doctors who had treated him.

R' Chaim said, "so many prayers were offered for his recovery. And prayers are never in vain. Who knows how much suffering was prevented for others in the merit of those heartfelt prayers!"



Become A Leader





Harav Avigdor Nebenzahl שליט״א, was a talmud muvhak of his great rebbe **Harav Shlomo Zalmen Aurbach זצוק״ל**.

Harav Nebenzahl was once asked by **Rabbi Paysach Krohn** shlita what his favorite story about HaRav Shlomo Zalmen was and HaRav Nebenzahl shlita told him the following story that he personally said by the levaya of Rav Shlomo Zalmen.

There was an older girl in Yerushalayim who had a broken engagement, and she was so devastated. She asked her father to take her to Rav Shlomo Zalman for a bracha. Her father was always busy, and he never got around to taking her. Finally, on Purim, she

begged her father to please take her, and late Purim day, he finally got his act together and brought her to Rav Shlomo Zalman.

Rav Shlomo Zalman was already sitting with his family eating the Purim seuda. The father was really embarrassed to interrupt the gadal hador's seudah. However, he went in to ask Rav Shlomo Zalman if he could bring in his daughter, who had a broken engagement, for a bracha. - Rav Shlomo Zalman said, "Absolutely not, I'm coming outside to the door." (Imagine the gadol Hador coming outside to speak to someone, let alone in middle of his purim seuda). The father tried to refuse, but Rav Shlomo Zalman was insistent, and he came to the door.

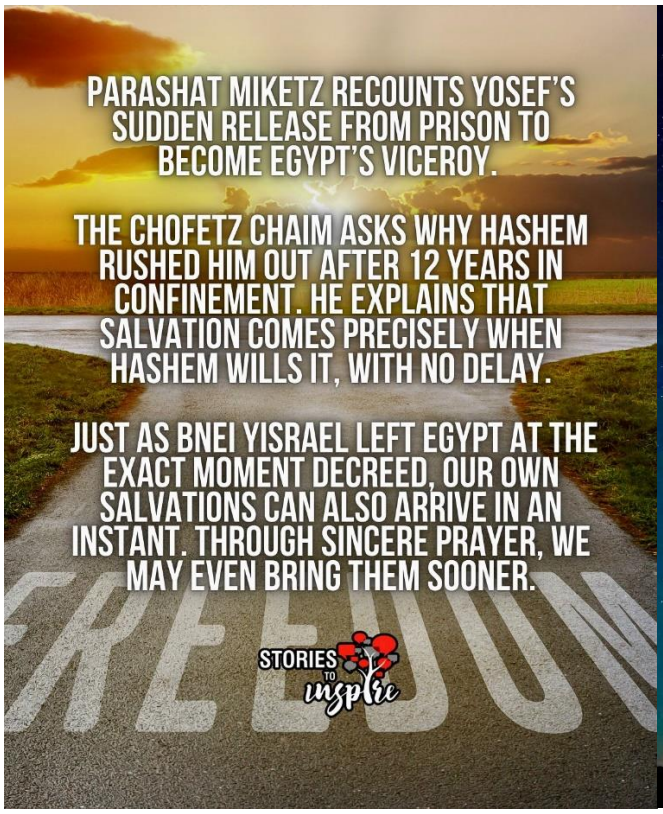
Rav Shlomo Zalman, with his big, kind and warm smile, came to the door, and he listened to the girl. Then he gave her a warm bracha, and he told her not to worry, she will find the right one, and she will build a bayis ne'eman biyisroel. For whatever reason, she had to go through what she went through, and he finished with another warm bracha.

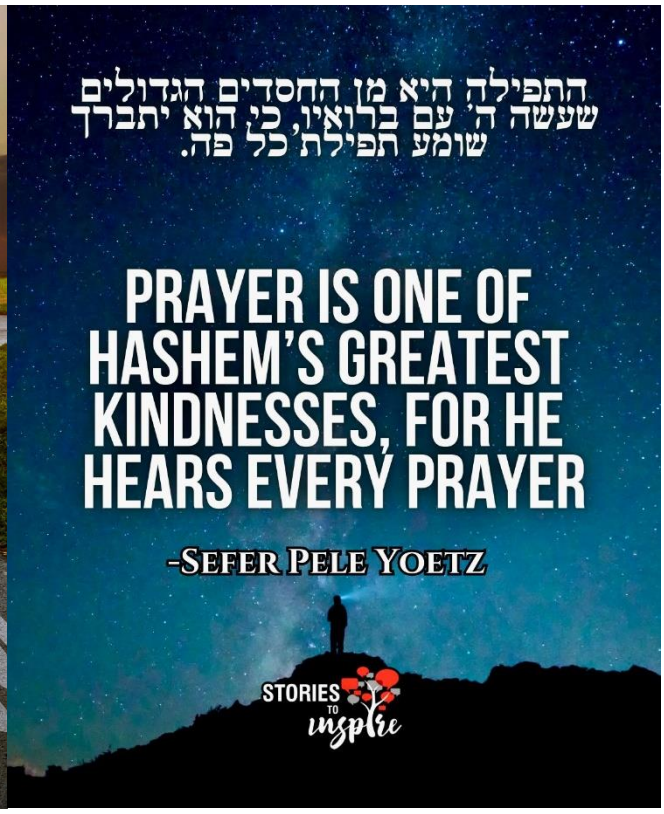
The girl was overwhelmed by Rav Shlomo Zalman's warmth and kindness, that she burst into tears.

Rav Shlomo Zalman turned to her father and asked, "Now do you understand why I didn't want her to come into the dining room? I understood that if I give her a bracha, she might be so overwhelmed that she will begin crying, and if she would start crying in front of my whole family, it would be so embarrassing to her."

This is the bein adam sensitivity and ahavas Yisroel Rav Shlomo Zalmen had for another Yid.

"Hashem and I play a constant game of hide-and-seek… I find Him everywhere!" ~ Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev.





"Touched by their Tears" by Rav Yechiel Spero

The Satmar Rav, Rav Yoel Teitelbaum, was mocked mercilessly by the Israeli media, but he stood his ground when it came to his beliefs. It once happened that one of the non-observant journalists who had written disparagingly about the Rebbe was forced to travel to America with his wife, who was deathly ill, for medical help. The couple made the trip and stayed with observant family members in New York.

During their stay, it became painfully clear that the couple could not afford all the expensive procedures. Their own health insurance did not cover everything, and they found themselves deeply in debt. Not knowing what to do, he asked his relative to suggest someone who might help cover the extra costs. There was no hesitation: "The Satmar Rav."

The journalist looked at his relative as if he had lost his mind. '*Do you have any idea how much fun I have made of the Satmar Rav in*

the columns I write? The second I walk in there and introduce myself, they will throw me out!'

The debts continued to accumulate and the columnist's attempted plans to cover the costs came up short. He knew his wife had to continue the treatments, but he also knew that there was no way he could pay the hospital bills.

Left with no choice, he decided to meet with the Satmar Rav and felt very uneasy as he was escorted into the inner chamber of the Rav's home. He was overwhelmed by the angelic glow that emanated from the Rav's face. In person, he seemed…so…holy. Then came the moment he had been dreading: the Rav asked him his name. He answered, and the Rav looked up and smiled. *Now he's going to lace into me,* he thought. *This is what I was worried about.*

Shockingly, that is not what happened. Instead, the Rav looked at the journalist and asked him how much he needed for his wife's treatments. The writer hemmed and hawed and finally blurted out an exorbitant number. The Rav did not flinch. "And how much would it cost you to stay with your wife in a hotel right near the hospital? "It must be difficult for her to make the trip every day for treatments. I'm sure she would be much more comfortable if she were able to stay right near the hospital."

The man did not know what to say. He was never so ashamed in his life. The Rav called in the Gabbai and whispered something into his ear. Within moments, the Gabbai came back with a check for the entire amount, and then some. The Rav warmly gave the check to the journalist, then held onto his hand and gave him the sincerest wishes he had ever received. The Rav told him to go to the best doctors, never let money determine treatment, then blessed him fervently and wished a full recovery.

"Just do me one more favor, please. Right before you return to Eretz Yisroel, make sure that you come visit me once more." The man understood quite well what the Rav wanted. He was amazed that the

Rav had not scolded him for his behavior, and he appreciated that. But he knew before he went back home, he would need to return to the Rav and accept a dressing-down.

Over the next six months, he racked up bills of over $100,000, but they were completely covered by the extra funds he had received and his insurance. He owed the Rav the visit and traveled to Williamsburg once more. After having written the most degrading remarks about the Rav, he braced for the worst.

The Gabbai escorted him into the Rav's office. He figured he would thank the Rav for saving his family, and then he would receive his rebuke.

The Rav smiled again and asked how his wife was. Then he told the cynical writer something he would never forget. "I am sure that while you have been out of the country, it's been hard for you and your family. Without your income, you probably had a hard time making ends meet." - The Rav extended an envelope with $10,000. "This should help you to get back on your feet."

Trembling, the man took the gift and thanked the Rav profusely as tears of relief and remorse filled his eyes.

A man told the Chazon Ish zt'l that doctors gave him only four days to live as there was no cure for his illness. The Chazon Ish asked, "what did Hashem create on the first day?"

They went through each of the first four days of creation. The Chazon Ish then Said, "If Hashem created so much in four days He can create a cure for you too."

Within those days, penicillin was discovered, sent to him, and he was cured!

Toras Avigdor Snippets

A sampling of previous Toras Avigdor booklets



Learning Bitachon

When we left at the conclusion of last week's *parsha*, Yosef seemed to be quickly nearing the end of his long stay in prison, the light at the end of the dark tunnel. After having languished there for ten years, and for a crime he didn't commit no less, Yosef could already taste the sweet savor of freedom. His fellow prisoner, a cellmate who had taken a liking to him, was now being released from prison to be reinstated to his former glory as the cupbearer of Pharaoh. And there was no better *protektzia* for Yosef, no greater hope than this. It was more than he could have ever dreamed of, the chance of a lifetime – the *sar hamashkim* for whom he had just interpreted a dream *l'tovah*, would have the ear of Pharaoh, and he had given his commitment to Yosef to speak to the king on his behalf. Help was on the way!

And then everything stops. A deafening silence! Between the end of *Parshas Va'yeishev* and the beginning of our *parsha*, we don't hear anything for two years. For two long years Yosef is sitting in prison and waiting. And waiting. Here he had believed that he was standing on the precipice of achieving his freedom, and yet he hears nothing at all. Silence. It's only day after day of waiting, two years of bitter disappointment.

Yosef In The Palace

And now our *parsha* begins two years later and we are standing with the *sar hamashkim* in the palace of the king. Pharaoh is frantically gathering together his advisors as he searches for someone to interpret his puzzling dreams. And then suddenly, the *sar hamashkim* remembers his old prison buddy, the friendly man who had proven himself more than capable of interpreting dreams. And so he finally tells Pharaoh about his old friend from two years back, the *eved ivri* in prison who might be able to help. And within no time at all we are being told of the climax of Yosef's career. Yosef is standing before Pharaoh about to be crowned vice-regent of all of Egypt.

And so, we will begin the subject for tonight by studying the words that the Torah uses to introduce the story of Yosef's exit from prison: **ויהי מקץ שנתיים ימים** – "And it was at the end of two years" (Bereishis 41:1). Now the words "And it was at the *end* of two years," seem conspicuous for those familiar with *lashon kodesh*. We would have expected the more familiar phrase, **ויהי אחרי שני שנים**, "And it was *after* two years." That's what we would have said if we had been writing the *possuk*. And the medrash makes note of this unusual phrase and tells us that there must have been an "end" to something here. The choice of the word **מקץ**, is meant to imply "the end" of a set period of time, the culmination of a specific event.

The *medrash* (Medrash Rabbah 89:1) says: **קץ שם לחושך** – "Hashem sets a time-limit for darkness (Iyov 28:3), – Hashem fixed an amount of time for Yosef, for how many years he would have to sit in the darkness of prison. The two years had to run its course, and at the end of that, "At the end of those two years," that's when Yosef was able to finally leave prison and achieve the climax of his career.

A Lack of Bitachon

But the question is what two years are we talking about? Because we know that he was imprisoned there in that dungeon for much more

than two years! The *possuk* cannot be referring to the "the end" of his years in prison, because Yosef spent ten years before these last two years in the same prison. And so we have to understand why these two years would be any more significant than the first ten, that the Torah should say that it was only upon the culmination of these two years that Yosef was set free.

Now the *medrash* offers us an answer: – Because Yosef said to the cupbearer of Pharaoh, 'Remember me,' and 'Mention me,' Hashem added on two years to his internment in prison" (Bereishis Rabbah 89:1).

After helping the *sar hamashkim* by interpreting his dream for him, Yosef made the following request from him: **כי אם זכרתני אתך... ועשית נא עמדי חסד והזכרתני אל פרעה והוצאתני מן הבית הזה** – "*If only you will remember me… and you will please do me this kindness and mention me to Pharaoh, and you shall take me out of this house of prison*" (Bereishis 40:14). And the *medrash* is telling us that it was two years after his conversation with the *sar hamashkim*, **מקץ שנתיים ימים**, that Pharoah finally summoned him from prison to interpret a dream and to become the *mishneh lamelech* in Mitzrayim.

What the *medrash* is telling us here is that that Yosef was punished with having to spend an extra two years in prison because of this error of relying on a *basar v'dam*, on a human being. This lack of *bitachon*, the lack of faith in Hashem, that his request of the *sar hamashkim* revealed, was the cause for an added two years of languishing in prison. And only when those two years came to their *keitz*, was Yosef set free.

"A Jew must believe that every darkness has an end, and it will be replaced by light." ~ The Kobriner.

102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar



Paid Back

Every kid in Haifa could tell you about old Mr. Donat's "automobile," a vehicle that was a cross between an old-fashioned jalopy and bus. But Mr. Donat's automobile was testimony to a man who had realized his dream.

Mr. Donat's car spent more time in repairs than cruising the streets of Haifa, and its distinct growl as it bumped itself along the streets caused the neighborhood kids to laugh and point. Yet it contained a special secret that was only revealed after its owner's passing, and the friendly old man returned his soul to Shamayim.

Shachar was the name of the first public transport company Eretz Yisrael, and old Mr. Donat had received a share in the company as a bequest from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption as part of his immigration privileges. For Donat, this was a marvelous stroke of luck.

In those days of austerity, when poverty and hunger were rampant in the developing company, a share in a company as profitable as Shachar was a priceless asset with potential to earn dividends that would cover the cost of another few slices of bread from the family. And in those days, every slice of bread was tantamount to health and life.

In time, Shachar merged with Hamekasher, another transportation company, forming the iconic Egged bus service, and shares

skyrocketed. The dividends earned from shares in Egged were sufficient to support an entire family comfortably.

Yet the company merge resulted in an unforeseen problem for Torah- observant shareholders when the newly founded Egged began operating a large number of bus lines on Shabbos. While the company didn't force of its members or drivers to desecrate Shabbos, anyone who owned a share in the company was essentially profiting from chillul Shabbos.

Fearing the halachic ramifications, Donat approached the legendary rav of Haifa, Rav Avraham Yitzchak Klein, with his dilemma and asked for guidance. The rav mulled over the issue for a long hour, since in those days of privation, this was not a question of parnassah, but of pikuach nefesh. Forfeiting his income from Egged would compel Donat to collect money on the streets in order to feed his family, and there was no telling how long the country would continue to suffer from paucity and dearth.

Unable to reach a decision on his own, Rav Klein advised Donat to approach the Chazon Ish with his question, as only the gadol hador could answer such a critical question.

The journey from northern Haifa to central Bnei Brak took over a half day, and after a long and wearying bus ride, Donat finally arrived at the famous address in Bnei Brak. When he knocked on the door, he was devastated to hear that the Chazon Ish had taken ill and was unable to receive any guests. Mr. Donat approached the gabbai and explained that he'd traveled from afar to see the gadol, and the gabbai told him that he would be allowed to see the Chazon Ish after Minchah.

The Chazon Ish lay in his bed, weak and pale. Mr. Donat presented his question, and the gadol hoarsely responded with but two words: "Ein efsharut." Impossible.

Mr. Donat heard the gadol's reply and his heart plummeted. He secretly wondered if in his compromised physical state, the Chazon Ish hadn't accounted for all aspects of his she'eilah and the consequences of such a decision. Despite his reservations, heartache, and fear, he was determined to accept the ruling of the gadol hador. Before he could lose his resolve, he immediately set out for Egged's main offices, requested the deed of his share, and promptly ripped it into pieces, forfeiting his share in the company and its considerable returns.

In that second, Donat was reduced from a man of means to a pauper. Instead of living in comfort, he became a regular, low-wage vendor. With a heavy burlap sack filled with a block of laundry detergent, he went door to door offering his soap to housewives. When someone was amenable, he would lay the heavy sack on the floor, remove the large block of detergent, and cut off the requested size, swapping his merchandise for measly coins.

This continued for many years-in the heat of the scorching summer and in the freezing rain and wind of the winter. Despite the heavy burden weighing upon his shoulders-literally!-he walked with his chin up and his head held high, knowing he'd sacrificed a life of wealth and comfort for the honor of Shabbos.

After years of scrimping and saving, Donat finally saved up a sum large enough to purchase an old rattletrap, substantially lightening his load and making the job almost bearable. More than just a car, the jalopy served as a place to store his merchandise-as the days that it spent in the garage for repairs almost outnumbered the days it spent on the road.

Donat turned sixty, seventy, and then eighty. While his friends were reaping the benefits of their pensions and living off their savings, old Mr. Donat was still working. His menial job had never provided him with sufficient funds to put away for the future, and he was thus forced to work until his last days.

In his later years, when his chosen profession was already superfluous, with most people purchasing their detergent from stores, he found work as a maintenance man at Yeshivas Nachalas Halevi'im in Haifa. It was a physically taxing job, especially for a man at his stage in life, yet it was his only means of supporting his family.

One day, Mr. Donat was seen entering the yeshivah beaming, a broad smile splitting his wizened features. He greeted every passing bachur with a luminous smile, piquing the boys' curiosity.

One brave bachur finally dared to ask the elderly maintenance man why he appeared so happy that day. The man didn't reply, yet the bachur heard him mumble under his breath, "What will he understand of true spiritual pleasure, anyway? All these kids know is the fleeting physical pleasure of This World. What do they know of the infinite pleasure of Olam Haba?"

The bachur listened closely, trying to make sense of the old man's mumblings. Intrigued, he followed him and begged him to explain.

Mr. Donat turned around and gazed into the bachur's eyes. "Listen, young man. This morning I was walking in one of upscale neighborhoods on Mt. Carmel, when I bumped into an old acquaintance of mine, a former colleague from my days in Egged. He recognized me and said, 'You see here? See all these splendid houses all around you? They all belong to the veteran Egged shareholders. You see what you lost out on when you foolishly forfeited your share? That one share would be worth millions today! We're all living the high life now, with private houses, pools, cars, and generous pensions. And what've you got today? You're still toiling away like a workhorse!'

"I didn't answer him," Mr. Donat continued, "because what will he understand when I tell him that today I'm going to attend my son's Siyum HaShas? And it's not just any siyum that he's making after reading through the Gemara once. My son knows Shas b'al peh! Tonight I'll be sitting at the head table with rabbanim and talmidei

chachamim. The room will be filled with my children, children-in-law, and grandchildren, all of whom are replete with Torah and yiras Shamayim!

"You see, son, Shabbos paid me back tenfold with nachas!" - (Rav Yechiel Meir Tzuker)

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hoff Shlita

There is a lot of discussion amongst the meforshim as to the connection between parshas Mikeitz and Chanukah.

The pasuk says - **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם** – '***It came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh was dreaming***.'

Pharaoh was very perturbed about his dream. He caused the whole medina to be in a tumult because of it.

It's a little bit strange, as people often have dreams but don't get so carried away to the same degree as Pharoah did.

The Or Ha'Chaim Hakadosh suggests that the pasuk says that **וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם** – '***Pharoah was dreaming***'. – It doesn't say that he dreamed! - He dreamed the same dream continuously for two years! This is why he perhaps took it so seriously.

In the sefer **Imrei Pinchos**, (Rav Pinchos Koritzer) he mentions this Or Hachaim and asks, why was it that Pharoah dreamed this dream continuously for two whole years?

He brings a chasidisher story: Nu, lechovod Chanukah I will tell you a chasidisher story: There was a story once with the Baal ShemTov who went on a journey with the maggid – Reb Mendel'e. Reb Mendel'e was extremely thirsty, but there was no water to drink. The Baal ShemTov said to him, "If you will have real bitachon and emunah, you will have water. - He strengthened himself, and shortly after, a goy came along who had been searching for his missing horses for the last three days.

The goy said to Reb Mendel'e, "have you seen my horses?"

Reb Mendel'e said, "No, but I don't suppose you have any water, because I'm very thirsty?"

He replied, "Yes, I've got plenty of water" – and he gave him some.

Reb Mendel'e turned round to the Baal ShemTov and said, "This man lost his horses for three days. He lost them because I was thirsty in order that he should search for them and end up giving me water. So why did he have to lose his horses three days ago?"

The Baal ShemTov said to him the following: "Three days ago when you started to get thirsty, The Ribboino Shel Olam already had water prepared for you, but at that time, you didn't fully trust in Hashem. Your Emunah and bitachon was somewhat lacking. He was waiting for you to rely on Him, and then the water came along. – The water was already prepared from the time that you needed it, but for three days Hakadosh Baruch Hu waited for your bitachon."

Says the Imrei Pinchos, that for two years Pharoah had this dream because we were waiting for Yosef's geulah to happen. As soon as Pharoah had his dream he would have been able to come out of prison, but his release from prison was delayed for two years because as Chazal tell us, Yosef still relied on the Sar Hamashkim, neglecting his full bitachon in The Ribboino Shel Olam. – Eventually, Yosef reached the stage of full Emunah after two years when the Sar Hamashkim had forgotten him.

The geulah of Yosef didn't need to take two years. It could have occurred straight away – only it was waiting for Yosef's total Emunah in Hashem. The geulah had been put in place two years earlier.

With us as well, sometimes there is a darkness **לא עלינו**, but we must know that there is a Yeshua there in the waiting. It's not something that has to be created anew – it's waiting for our bitachon and Emunah in order for it to reveal itself.

The B'nei Yisaschar writes about the famous question of the Beis Yosef – why do we celebrate 8 days of Chanukah when the miracle was for 7 days?

He says, against the whole nature of the uprooting and defilement of the Beis Hamikdash, [comparable to the precision and wickedness carried out by the Nazis Y'S] finding this **פח שמן טהור** was certainly a miracle in itself. It had been there all along waiting for **מתתיהו כהן גדול** to come and find it.

However, this **פח שמן** had been put away at the time when the Yidden were still doing aveiros! They weren't yet ready or fitting for this miracle to take place, and yet, it was already in place awaiting the right time.

The B'nei Yisaschar says, that's why we have 8 days of Chanukah, 7 days for the experience of the miracle, and the extra day for the preparation of the hidden **פח שמן**.

We now see something in common with the message of Chanukah and this week's sedra. In both, the geula was ready and waiting for us for the opportune time – when our trust and bitachon in Hashem was perfectly strong.

The **פח שמן** is to be found within all of us. We just have to look for it and find the purity that we all have inside us, and enlighten our lives.

Timeless Truths – Rabbi Moshe Bamberger

When a guest comes to your home, you are able to provide him with food, but not appetite. Only Hashem can provide the will to eat. Umasbia l'chol chai ratzon. Harav Zusha of Anapoli



This week's Parsha opens by describing to us Paroh's dream and his extensive search for an interpretation for that dream. The Torah continues by telling us Yosef's satisfactory interpretation of that dream and how the seven skinny cows represented the seven years of famine that were to come.

One of the strange factors in this dream was the fact that the seven skinny cows swallowed the seven fat ones. It is not the normal bovine behavior for one cow to swallow another and even though Yosef gave an explanation for this action, it still seems like a strange form of expression. Similarly, it was strange that the skinny cows showed no sign of change after they swallowed the fat ones.

The Sefas Emes makes a very fascinating observation from these anomalies. The Sefas Emes says that the episode of the cows is supposed to teach us that in general when one witnesses evil in this world, one finds it almost impossible to see the goodness that exists in that evil and even more so, finds it challenging to see the fact that the hard and "bad" times could only exist if they ultimately had good in them.

By definition, the evil has to have good in it because Hashem allowed it to happen. Similarly, the bad cows which symbolized the bad years, had (swallowed) within them the "good" years even though they could not be outwardly seen.

The Sefas Emes continues to tell us that when one is successful in viewing the good which lies within, he will eventually be overtaken by that realization of goodness until he gets to the point where there is no evil left in his life because of his positive outlook. Paroh, who

was a superficial individual, and only saw things from their outward appearance was physically unable to see the "good" inside the skinny cows and therefore noticed no change in the outward appearance of the skinny cows even after they swallowed the corpulent ones.

This explains why when the Torah is telling over Paroh's dream, it omits the detail of the skinny cows showing no outward signs of the swallowing. - The Torah is testifying that Paroh was completely incapable of noticing that there may be something beyond the surface.

The Sefas Emes concludes by explaining Yosef's interpretation of the dream. Yosef tells Paroh that the two dreams are really one. The simple understanding of these words is that the two dreams are repetitive and have the same explanation. But the Sefas Emes says that Yosef was subtly hinting to Paroh that the bad times that one goes through and the good times "Are really one" – in that the bad in life can only exist because of the fact that it was Hashem's will, and this fuels it to subsist and without this "goodness" present, it would cease to exist instantaneously.

This time should be a time of spiritual growth and purification for the Jewish people in which we renew our commitment to this concept of depth and profundity.

They once asked the **Kotzker** why it is true that when an impure thing touches a pure thing, the pure thing becomes impure and not vice versa?

He answered that impurity is on the surface, and therefore more readily available to contaminate, whereas purity is found deep within, and therefore has no ability to affect something which touches its surface.

May we all merit utilizing these holy days to purify ourselves!

Torah Tavlin



R' Meir Premishlaner zt"l would say: **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים** - Sometimes a person comes to 'the end' of his years, the conclusion of his life, and, from the proper perspective, he finds that he only really lived for two years - he was asleep the rest of the time!"

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַּרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֙הוּ֙ עַל־אֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֔יִם 41:33 ***So now, let Pharaoh seek out an understanding and wise man and appoint him over the land of Egypt.***

When Pharaoh could not find a satisfactory interpretation for his dreams, Yosef was called from prison to interpret them. Not only was Yosef able to interpret the dreams, but he gave Pharaoh advice as well: "Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt .. and he shall prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. And let them gather all the food of those approaching good years." Pharaoh and all his servants were very pleased with Yosef's advice and Pharaoh appointed Yosef to fill the role of the **נָבֹון וְחָכָם**- ***"discerning and wise man."*** He became the second most powerful person in Egypt, right after the Pharaoh himself.

The Tur Ha'aruch writes: "The attribute **נָבֹון** is mentioned here before the attribute **חָכָם** whereas in Devarim (4-6), the nations of the world as described, are describing the Jewish people as **חָכָם וְנָבֹון** - in the reverse order of these attributes. Here, insight was the

first attribute required in order to understand the dream, whereas wisdom was required in order to deal with the challenge presented by fulfilment of the dream. When it comes to understanding words of Torah, the first requirement is חכמה *a certain common sense*, before one penetrates below the surface of what the text conveys to us."



On Erev Chanukah, the 24th day of Kislev, the world lost a great luminary, with the departure of the Gadol Hador, **R' Aharon Leib Steinman zt"l**. In the truest sense, he was both a "Navon" and a "Chacham" and his immense wisdom, coupled with his intuitive insight could only be matched by his overriding care and concern for the welfare of every single Jew. People came from far and wide to seek his guidance and advice and they all left with a new appreciation of a Tzaddik who understood another Jew's problems and knew how to remedy them. On top of that, his humility, graciousness and consideration for others was what set him apart.

A number of years ago, a young couple was blessed with a son. The day before the Bris was to take place, the mohel came to check the baby and noticed something was wrong. He told the father that he believed there was a problem with the child and told him to go to the hospital to check it out.

After extensive tests and examinations, the doctors informed the parents that the tiny baby had a serious defect in his heart, which would require a special kind of surgery. Unfortunately, they told him, there is no doctor in Israel who has the experience or capability to perform this surgery and there is only one hospital in the world - in

Boston, MA - that can do it. However, they doubted if the baby was well enough to endure the long trip to Boston and it was probably not worth their while.

The devastated parents ran to the home of R' Aharon Leib Steinman in Bnei Brak to ask him what they should do. R' Aharon Leib listened carefully and then told them that they should definitely go ahead with the trip no matter how gruelling it may be, and they should schedule the surgery in Boston right away. He offered his blessings for a speedy recovery and a safe journey.

Fortified by the Tzaddik's blessings, the father now turned to a number of askanim in the medical field who could help him with the arrangements, both the travel plans and the surgery. He told them what the doctors said and what R' Steinman said, but somehow they were not convinced. The baby sounded too sick for such a journey, just as the doctors had indicated, and they immediately went to the home of R' Steinman to clarify the matter with him.

R' Aharon Leib explained to them, "The doctors here have stated that this is a rare defect and they do not have the expertise to deal with it. If so, there is no 'chazaka' (presumption) that the baby will die, and therefore, the parents have an obligation to make every effort and hishtadlus to save their baby - which includes traveling to Boston!"

The trip was arranged and the baby, with his father, made it to Boston, where the surgeons operated on him and declared the surgery a total success. They repaired the defect in his heart, as well as mended the father's broken spirit. As per their orders, the baby remained in convalescent care for three months, before he was cleared to go home.

The trip back to Israel was a triumphant one and it was now time for the child to have the Bris Milah he was denied months ago. The young father came to R' Aharon Leib and told him the wonderful news, and

then asked the Tzaddik if he would grace the simcha by being the Sandek at the Bris.



R' Aharon Leib's response was indicative of the Gadol that he was. "When you came to me the first time, it was the day before your child was scheduled to have a Bris. Surely at that time, you had already asked someone - a father, grandfather, rabbi - to be the Sandek. Now, think about it. This person has been sitting and waiting for more than three months, crying his eyes out in prayer for your little son, imploring the Ribbono shel Olam to issue the baby a speedy and healthy recovery, so that he can finally sit and hold the baby at his Bris. Can I now go ahead and take that zechus away from him ...?"

וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִין אֲחִי יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶחָיו כִּי אָמַר פֶּן־יִקְרָאֶנּוּ אָסוֹן 42:4



It was well known that one of the things that **Maran R' Elazar Menachem Mann Shach zt"l** was very makpid about was that a chosson should have a "shomer" a protective guard accompanying him wherever he went, from at least after he received his aliya, the Shabbos before his wedding. He explained the reason why he was so stringent on this practice. R' Shach recalled that when he was a bochur learning in Lithuania, he was once a guest at a wedding. In the middle of the wedding seudah, the chosson stepped outside for

a moment in order to use the restroom (there was an out-house as the hall did not have indoor plumbing).

Some time went by and people realized that the chosson hadn't returned. A few went outside to look for the chosson, and they found him lying in a deep ditch, groaning incoherently in pain. Apparently he had fallen into the pit sight unseen and hit his head quite significantly that he could not even recall how he got there.

The father of the kallah came running outside and rather than feel sorry for the groom who was injured and in pain, he began screaming that there is something wrong with the boy and had his daughter known about this, she never would have gone through with the marriage. Obviously, said the worked-up father of the bride, there is some sort of "bad mazel" here and this is grounds for a divorce. He insisted that his daughter must be allowed to break off the marriage.



An urgent query was sent to **R' Chaim Ozer Grodzensky zt"l**, the Posek Hador, about the state of this marriage. R' Chaim Ozer answered immediately, "There is no 'bad mazel' here or any sort of negative 'siman.'

Chazal tell us that three people need protection - a sick person, a chosson and a kallah. If the chosson wasn't being watched, of course, something bad could happen. This terrible fall that occurred to the chosson has nothing to do with bad mazel or simanim - it is a result of not following the words of Chazal. This tragedy could have been avoided if they had simply followed the words of the Gemara, and kept better watch over the chosson!"

Yaakov Avinu was afraid to send his youngest son Binyamin with the rest of his brothers down to Egypt, for he feared that perhaps misfortune will occur. Rashi asks: "And at home misfortune cannot occur? Rather Yaakov was concerned that bad things can happen while one is traveling.

We see that the Satan is looking to cause harm during dangerous times." A person must be on guard lest bad things happen to him, and especially when our Sages tell us that certain people and certain places and certain times are considered "dangerous," we must listen and protect ourselves to the best of our ability. Not doing so is not a result of bad luck, but rather a result of not heeding the words of the Sages and the dinim of the Torah.

R' Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev zt"l (Kedushas Levi) would say: וַיָּבֹאוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ אַפַּיִם אָרְצָה 42:6



Yosef knew how humiliated his brothers would be if they learned that the man before whom they were bowing "with their faces to the ground" was Yosef, whom they had ridiculed when he had revealed to them his dream that they would all bow to him someday. Yosef did not make himself known to them immediately to spare them this humiliation. Someone else in Yosef's position might have taken advantage of this opportunity to have his revenge, to force his enemy to feel defeat. Yosef did the opposite. When his brothers bowed to him, he immediately recognized them, but he made himself a stranger to spare them the shame of defeat."

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר 41:1

It came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh was dreaming, and behold, he was standing by the Nile.





Parshas Mikeitz begins with the dreams of Pharaoh, which neither he nor his astrologers could interpret satisfactorily. It is interesting that they disturbed Pharaoh so intensely that "his spirit was troubled." Why should he have been troubled by the antics of cows and ears of corn?

R' Moshe Weinberger shlit'a explains that the Egyptian empire based its supremacy on physical might, material resources and intellectual superiority. The strong ruled over the weak, the rich over the poor and their knowledge of sorcery enabled them to overwhelm those un-versed in the occult.

Those dreams, however, told a different story. In this vision, he was shown the exact opposite - strong, fat cows being swallowed by physically inferior ones, well-nourished corn falling prey to thin, feeble ones. For Pharaoh this presented a new and disturbing concept. - It appeared to indicate that a kingdom based on brute force and material ascendancy is not secure. It can be vanquished and even obliterated by frailer opponents who are able to draw upon

a mysterious source of strength as yet unknown to Pharaoh, and it was a shattering thought. His wise men were just as puzzled because they shared his secular outlook. It was left, therefore, to Yosef HaTzaddik to disclose this hidden source. There exists a Divine authority, Creator of the world, who directs the destiny of mankind, and even the strongest are powerless to oppose His will. way to the supernatural force of the Creator (Kochvei Asher). What is true on a national level is equally valid for every individual. It is not paradoxical to assert that the real strength of a Yid lies in the knowledge of his weakness!

The more we recognize our human frailty and the need to depend on Hashem for literally everything, the more we will prosper. This belief is the cornerstone of Yiddishkeit, and those who deny it do so at their peril.

Concepts in Avodas Halev- R' Chaim Yosef Kofman

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף שִׂמְלֹתָיו וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה 41:14 ***So Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they rushed him from the dungeon, and he shaved and changed his clothes, and he [then] came to Pharaoh.***



The posuk says that as soon as the time arrived for Yosef HaTzaddik to be redeemed, he was summarily rushed from the jail, cleaned up and presented before Pharaoh. Chazal say the same will be true when Moshiach arrives. It will take place "K'heref Ayin" - in the blink of an eye. In Parshas Vayeshev, we learned that Yosef performed an act of kindness which served as the catalyst for his redemption.

We, too, have an opportunity to help bring about our ultimate geula, which I will bez"H get to shortly. Yosef was falsely accused and thrown in jail. The posuk says that Yosef saw that Pharoah's imprisoned servants were depressed. He asked them if all was well. They proceeded to recount their dreams to him which led to his own salvation. But what, exactly, was the root cause of this yeshua?

The answer is Yosef saw another human being looking troubled, and though he too was in prison and facing his own crisis, he made the Herculean effort to empathize with him. That is a trigger for geula!



Similarly, in the story of Purim, we find this same concept. Mordechai HaTzaddik would come to the palace daily, "L'daas es sh'lom Esther - to check on Esther's welfare" - to see how she was faring as the lone Jewess in a palace full of of Goyim. Haman became infuriated at Mordechai's refusal to bow down to him. He wanted him hanged. Mordechai, who had overheard and reported the plot of Bigsan and Seresh was chronicled in the Sefer Hazichronos of Achashveirosh. By being rewarded for saving the king, this led to Haman's demise, thus saving the Jews of Persia. How did this all come about?

It all arose because Mordechai was "checking on Esther's welfare" - because he was caring for another person's well-being. By being concerned for others, we do indeed bring about redemption. So if we want to hasten the arrival of Moshiach, or at least earn a zechus for our own personal salvation, let's make it our business to care for the good of a friend, neighbour, or even a stranger in need.

R' Avraham Moshe of Pshischa zt"l would say: **וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מְרַגְּלִים אַתֶּם** 42:9 - Of all the possible crimes, why were the brothers accused of espionage?



In order to prevent them from asking about the whereabouts of their brother Yosef. Yosef was afraid that his brothers, knowing that he had been sold into Egypt, might decide to search for him. By accusing them of being spies, he effectively barred all of Egypt's sources of information to them, since people suspected of espionage wouldn't dare make inquiries about the ruler of the land to which they have come as strangers."

R' Aryeh Leib Torchiner zt"l (Pnei Aryeh Zuta) would say: **וּטְבֹ֤ח טֶ֙בַח֙ וְהָכֵ֔ן כִּ֥י אִתִּ֖י יֹאכְל֣וּ הָאֲנָשִׁ֑ים בַּצָּהֳרָֽיִם׃** ***[give orders] to slaughter an animal and to prepare, for the men will eat with me at lunch."*** *43:16*

The Rishonim find a remez to Chanukah in these words, for if you take the last letter of טֶ֙בַח֙ and add it to וְהָכֵ֔ן it spells out **חנוכה**. But even more than that, we find that the large feast that Yosef made for the brothers was really a Seudas Chanukah. How so? Because when Yaakov Avinu arrived with his 70 souls in Egypt, it was Rosh Chodesh Nisan. Chazal tell us he was 130 years old when he arrived and he lived there for 17 years, and we have a tradition that the Avos were all born and all died in the month of Nisan.

The Gemara tells us that from Chevron to Mitzrayim was 400 parsa, which is a 40-day journey. When the brothers came back and brought their father, it took a total of 80 days. But since they didn't

travel on Shabbos, add another 11 days. The total amount of the trip was 91 days. Now, work backwards and count 91 days from Rosh Chodesh Nisan and it comes out to the 27th of Kislev. Thus, we find that the large seuda that Yosef hosted for the brothers in Egypt was none other than a Seudas Chanukah!"



וַיַּ֥עַן יוֹסֵ֖ף אֶת־פַּרְעֹ֣ה לֵאמֹ֑ר בִּלְעָדָ֕י אֱלֹקִ֖ים יַעֲנֶ֥ה אֶת־שְׁלֹ֖ום פַּרְעֹֽה 41:16

Parshas Miketz tells of Pharaoh's unusual dreams and his quest to find a satisfying interpretation. The wine steward recalls the successful interpretation that the young Hebrew slave had suggested to his own dream while in prison, and in response, Pharaoh calls for Yosef to come interpret his dream. Yosef appears before him and the king says to him, "*I have dreamed a dream, but there is nobody who can interpret it, and I have heard about you that you can hear a dream and interpret it.*" In reply, Yosef says, "*It is not me; G-d shall answer to Pharaoh's satisfaction.*"

The Medrash Tanchuma views Yosef's response as reflecting his extraordinary humility: "He attributed the greatness to its Master. The Almighty said: You did not want to boast about yourself; I swear that for this you will rise to greatness and kingship!" Yosef here attributed his talents to Hashem, to the "Master." He resists the tendency to take full credit for his achievement, announcing to Pharaoh, "It is not me." And for this self-effacing humility he is rewarded with power and kingship.

R' Avraham Pam ZT"L draws a parallel between Yosef's remark to Pharaoh and the response of the Chashmonaim to the events of Chanukah. Although they had achieved a remarkable and unlikely victory, they made a point of downplaying their role and underscoring Hashem's intervention. This likely explains what otherwise would appear as the disproportionate emphasis placed on the miracle of the oil, which might seem, at first glance, to have been far less consequential and noteworthy than the stunning victory of the

Chashmonaim. In fact, the Talmud focuses almost entirely on the miracle of the candles, leaving precious few words that make mention of the mighty victory that the Jewish people accomplished over the Greeks.

R' Pam explains that in their effort to shift the credit from themselves to the Almighty, the Rabbanim of the time drew the people's attention toward the miracle of the oil, which clearly signified the hand of G-d and demonstrated that it was He who had enabled the Chasmonaim to prevail.

Concepts in Avodas Halev - R' Chaim Yosef Kofman

וַיִּסֹּב מֵעֲלֵיהֶם וַיֵּבְךְּ 42:24 ***And he turned away from them and wept.***



We find that Yosef Hatzaddik cried a lot. When he sees his brothers for the first time; when he sees Binyamin; when he reveals himself to his brothers; when he meets his father in next week's parsha, and again in Vayechi, when his father is niftar. It is quite remarkable that a grown man, a brilliant thinker and operator, a leader in charge of an entire Egyptian empire, who could do anything and have anything he wanted - this person cries quite a bit. How are we to understand this?

The instinct to cry first shows up in a person when he is a baby. When a baby needs something, is unclean, or in pain and unable to help himself, Hashem set up a mechanism whereby the baby cries out, "I need help," and a parent or caretaker will tend to the baby's needs and take away his problem and quiet his cries. As a baby grows, he finds ways to satisfy his needs and crying is then minimized. When a person is sick, ר"ל, and doctors say there is nothing left to

do - that is incorrect. There is something left to do and that is to CRY. Hashem hears all the cries, cries which are basically tefillos to Hashem: "Ribono shel Olam, please help me, I am inadequate and unable to solve this problem. Only YOU can do it for me!"

For this reason, Chazal tell us that **שערי דמעות לא נגעלו** - ***the gates of tears are never locked,*** because these "gates" must always be open for a person to reach Hashem when he is desperate need!

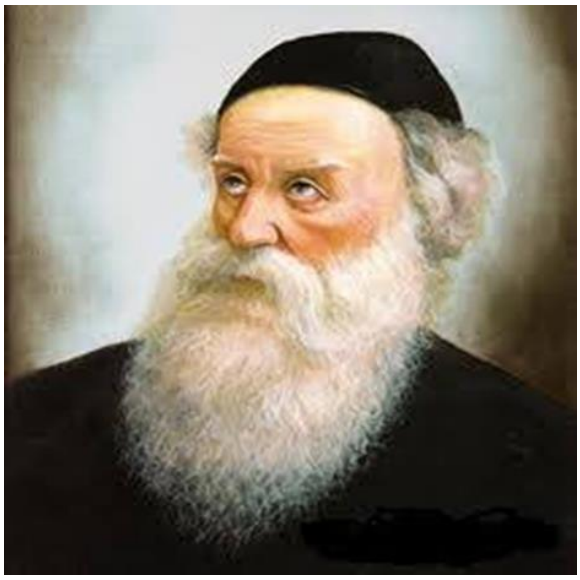


With this machshava we can get a greater insight into Yosef's crying. Since anyone else in his elevated and prominent position, would believe that he could get and have everything and there is no need to cry; Yosef, on the other hand, understood and recognized that everything he went through was, **מאת ה' היתה זאת** - *all from Hashem*. Thus, he cried in the form of a tefillah to reach Hashem!

When Yosef Hatzaddik cried, this did not reflect his weaknesses - on the contrary, it shines a light on his greatness in Emunah. Even in his elevated position, he only turns to Hashem and begs Him, "Please listen to my cries and answer me!"

At every funeral, the constant refrain is a famous posuk from Yeshaya: **ומחה ה' דמעה מעל כל פנים** - ***when Moshiach will come, Hashem will wipe away all the tears*** - even those of happiness. Until then, let us all remember that if at first you don't succeed, CRY CRY CRY again!

42:1 וַיַּ֣רְא יַעֲקֹ֔ב כִּ֥י יֶשׁ־שֶׁ֖בֶר בְּמִצְרָ֑יִם וַיֹּ֨אמֶר יַעֲקֹ֜ב לְבָנָ֗יו לָמָּה֙ תִּתְרָ֣אוּ



In the dark days that marked the rule of the Czar of Russia, a terrible misfortune befell the Jewish people. Under false pretences and with little regard for the sensitivities of the people, the Czar's soldiers arrested the renowned **Baal HaTanya, R' Schneur Zalman of Liadi zt"l**, and had him thrown into a dungeon in the capitol city of Petersburg. Immediately, the Rebbe's chassidim mobilized their resources and began the arduous process of getting their Rebbe released. One chasid managed to ask R' Schneur Zalman what course of action they should take.



After a moment's thought, he told him to travel to Berditchev and inform **R' Levi Yitzchok zt"l**, the Kedushas Levi, to seek his blessing. Wasting no time, the chasid hired a wagon and hurriedly travelled to Berditchev, where he breathlessly entered R' Levi Yitzchok's chamber and described to him the plight of the Baal HaTanya. The Kedushas Levi was terribly distraught. He cried out in a voice heavy with sorrow and became so overcome with emotion that he literally fell off his chair. After a moment, though, he composed himself and inquired as to how R' Schneur Zalman was handling the situation. "I can only say this," replied the chasid. "The Rebbe was taken from his home so quickly that he forgot his boots! Yet, even in that short time, he did not forget to take his Talis and Tefillin with him into that dungeon!"

R' Levi Yitzchok was amazed by what the chasid had observed and smiled. "This, my young chasid, is quite a good sign. I will daven on his behalf and with Hashem's help, the Rebbe will be released in due time." He then asked for R' Schneur Zalman's mother's name, in order to write out a kvittel, but the chasid had no idea. He had forgotten to ask for it when he left Petersburg and now he was unable to provide this information for R' Levi Yitzchok. The Berditchever thought for a moment. Then, he took out a chumash and opened it up at random. The page that it turned to was in Parshas Mikeitz, dealing with the ten sons of Yaakov Avinu going down to Egypt to purchase grain for their families back in the Land of Canaan.

Without another word, R' Levi Yitzchok began to read the following words from the posuk: **וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם** - ***"And Yaakov saw that there were provisions in Egypt."*** His face lit up as he turned to the chasid. "This posuk is the key. Don't read the word **שֶׁבֶר** with a 'shin' which means provisions, rather **שבר** with a 'sin' which is an expression of hope and anticipation.

Go tell the Rebbe that just as Yosef Hatzaddik was saved from imprisonment in Mitzrayim, so too, will he be released from his imprisonment very shortly. Hashem put these words in front of my eyes for a reason.

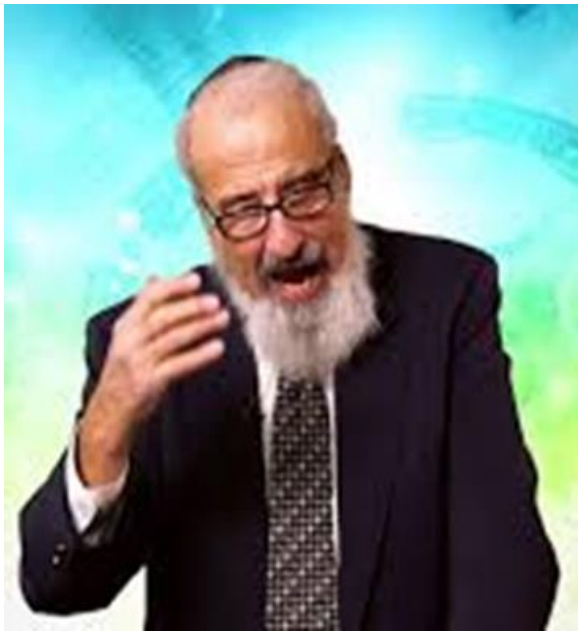
The word **שבר** stands for **שַׁניאור בַּן רַבקה**, and now that I have the Rebbe's mother's name, I can personally daven for his safe and speedy release." Indeed, it was not long - on the 19th of Kislev - before R' Schneur Zalman was released from jail and till this very day, chassidim celebrate the anniversary of this joyous day of redemption.

We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do.



R' Aharon Perlow of Karlin ZT"L (Bais Aharon) would say: "Pharaoh dreamed about seven fat cows and seven skinny cows. Yaakov Avinu (in Parshas Vayeitzai) dreamed about angels going up and down a ladder. Both were unusual dreams. The difference is that when Yaakov awoke, his first words were: 'How awesome is this place.'

When Pharaoh awoke, the first thing he did was ... go back to sleep!"



R' Yosef Chaim Schwab Shlit'a (Niflaos HaTorah) would say: "Parshas Miketz is the only parsha for which the Gaonim list the number of words, 2025, at the end.

Why did they do this? This is so the calendar makers can check their work, because Parshas Miketz must fall out on Shabbos Chanukah (98% of the time; the other 2%, it falls out right before or after). The word **נר** has a gematria of 250. If we multiply this by the 8 nights that we light the Menorah, we total 2,000. Add 25, since Chanukah falls out on the 25th of Kislev (**חנו כ"ה**), and we arrive at the number 2025 - a remez to Parshas Miketz on Shabbos Chanukah."

וַיַּכֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכִּרֻהוּ 42:8

The Pressburg Yeshivah, was the largest and most influential yeshivah in Central Europe in the 19th century. It was founded in the city of Pressburg, Slovakia, by the great **Chasam Sofer, R' Moshe Sofer ZT"L** and was considered the largest organized yeshivah since the time of the Babylonian Talmud.



Upon his passing, the mantle of leadership was passed to his oldest son, the **Ksav Sofer, R' Avraham Shmuel Binyamin Sofer ZT"L**, who led the yeshivah for thirty-two years - just as his father had before him - through the tumultuous "Age of Enlightenment" and surge of the Jewish Haskalah movement, that was wreaking havoc on communities all throughout Europe. Traditional Torah Jewry was under attack on a daily basis, and many yeshivos suffered for lack of funds. Students did not receive proper nourishment or medicine and buildings lacked basic heat, plumbing and other necessities. The Pressburg Yeshivah was forced to hire a dedicated fund-raiser to travel about and collect sorely needed funds to keep the yeshivah going.

On one occasion, the fund-raiser came running to the Ksav Sofer, his face beaming with joy, a letter waving wildly in his outstretched hand. "Rebbe, a huge donation has arrived!" he declared exultantly. R' Avraham Shmuel looked at the amount and his eyes widened in shock. Indeed, the donation was huge, enough to cover expenses for

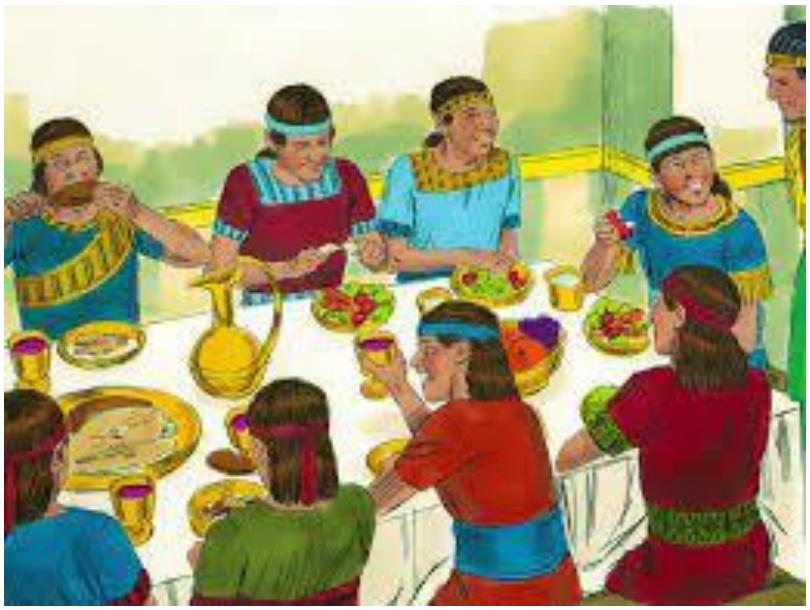
an extended period of time. Attached to the cheque was a letter which contained one short sentence. It was a posuk from Parshas Miketz, written in Hebrew: *"And Yosef recognized his brothers."*

The Ksav Sofer scrutinized the cheque carefully, turning it over and looking at it, front and back. Suddenly, his face turned white. The donor, a man by the name of Yosef, was a former student who had thrown off the yoke of religion and refused to adhere to the traditions of his fathers and teachers. He had become quite wealthy, but his attitude toward religious observance was equally famous. Apparently, he had sent a cheque to his former yeshivah, hoping to prove that he was not a rebel, that he had not forgotten his brothers, the students of the yeshivah, and still considered himself as one of them, despite his misdeeds.



"It is forbidden to flatter the wicked," the Ksav Sofer ruled. "We cannot accept this cheque. If we accept his contribution, he will think we approve of his deeds." The fund-raiser, who had been so excited just a moment before, was aghast. He could not believe it possible to pass up such a large sum of money especially when the students' were learning under such harsh conditions. With regretful trepidation, he watched as the Rosh Yeshivah picked up his pen and wrote a short sentence on the reverse side of the attached letter. Then, he was handed the cheque and letter back and given instructions to return the envelope. When he left the Ksav Sofer's study, he glanced at the letter and read the words. Under the rich man's handwritten text, "***And Yosef recognized his brothers,"*** the Rosh Yeshivah had added the remainder of the posuk: ***"And they did not recognize him!"***

וַיִּשָּׂא מַשְׂאֹת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֲלֵהֶם וַתֵּרֶב מַשְׂאַת בִּנְיָמִן מִמַּשְׂאֹת כֻּלָּם חָמֵשׁ יָדֹות וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ: *And he had portions brought to them from before him, and Benjamin's portion was five times as large as the portions of any of them, and they drank and became intoxicated with him.* *43:34*



The Torah relates how Yosef HaTzaddik invited his brothers to sit and partake in a meal with him. He knew who they were, but they didn't know who he was. Yosef served each brother one portion of food and gave Binyamin five times as much as the other brothers. Then they drank wine together. Rashi says in the name of the Medrash: **וישכרו ומיום שמכרוהו לא שתו יין, ולא הוא שתה יין, ואותו היום שתו עמו:** - ***"Since the day that they had sold him, neither they (the brothers) nor he (Yosef) had drunk wine, but on that day they did drink wine."***



The question is obvious: Yosef drank because he knew that he was reuniting with his brothers. He was happy and this was a cause for celebration. But why did the brothers drink? The brothers were stuck in Egypt, being framed for the crime of espionage that they did not commit, and their father, Yaakov Avinu, was still in aveilus) from losing his beloved son! They had no reason to drink or celebrate!

I believe the answer is as follows: If we think about what brought about the entire episode of selling Yosef, we see that it was the jealousy of the shevatim, who were upset that Yosef received the Kesones Pasim and they didn't. The brothers were conscious of this fact and knew that their jealousy was to blame. But now, when the Egyptian leader gave their brother Binyamin five times as much as them, they were not jealous - in fact, they were happy about it! They realized that with regard to what their brother got, they had eradicated the middah of jealousy, and they were prepared to celebrate this fact.

Thus, וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ - they drank with him joyously! When a person sees there is no jealousy in his family, this is the biggest beracha he could hope for. It is now time to celebrate and drink wine together.

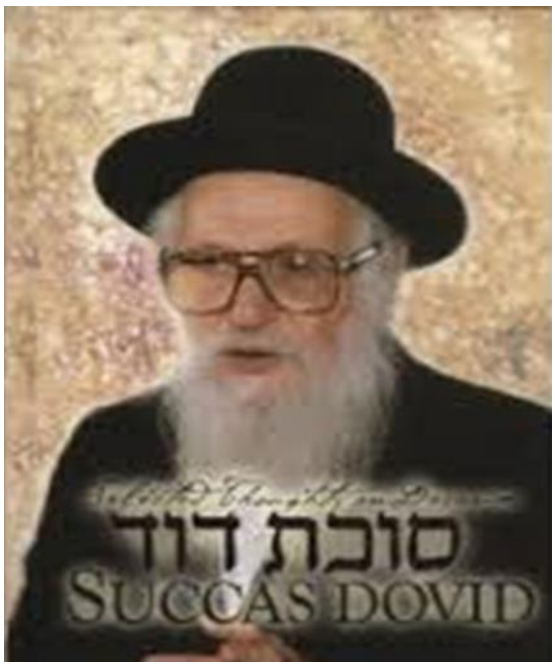
R' Eliyahu Meir Bloch ZT"L (Pninei Daas) would say:



"'The wicked lord over their gods, as it says, 'Pharaoh dreamed and he was standing over the (Nile) river.' The righteous allow their G-d to Lord over them, as it says, 'And behold Hashem was standing over him (Yaakov).' (Medrash) A Tzaddik constantly strives to grow closer to Hashem, and since Hashem is always above him, he rises in levels of understanding in order to follow the will of Hashem. The wicked, however, control their Gods, their ideologies and their beliefs, until they make it conform to their will and desire. Thus, they 'lord over their Gods' and control them."

וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם רְדוּ־שָׁמָּה וְשִׁבְרוּ־לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת וַיֵּרְדוּ אֲחֵי־יוֹסֵף עֲשָׂרָה לִשְׁבָּר בָּר מִמִּצְרָיִם 42:2-3 ***And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain being sold in Egypt. Go down there and buy us [some] from there, so that we will live and not die." So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.***

When the shevatim went down to Egypt, the Torah refers to them as "Yosef's brothers" rather than "Yaakov's sons." Rashi explains that they regretted selling Yosef; their brotherly feelings had finally reawakened, and the Torah emphasizes this by calling them Yosef's brothers. What happened all of a sudden to make them regret their actions? Why had they not had regret until now? Furthermore, when the brothers sold Yosef originally, they formed a beis din and found him guilty of being a rodef (pursuer) to which they were legally permitted to kill him. They mitigated his punishment and sold him as a slave rather than put him to death. So how could they revoke their judgment now?



R' Dovid Kviat ZT"L (Succas Dovid) answers that when Yaakov told his sons to go down to Egypt for food, they heard him say something unusual. He said, "*Behold, I have heard that there is food* **שבר** *in Egypt."* Rashi explains that what he was really saying was that there was "hope" in Egypt (the word **שבר** can also mean hope). Rashi explains that Yaakov did not have a clear-cut prophecy, or he would have known that Yosef was there. Rather, he had what might be described as Divine intuition and thus he felt that there was hope in Egypt. When the brothers heard this, they realized something their father did not: this "hope" was none other than the expectation that Yosef might be alive in Egypt. Once they saw that Hashem had hinted to their

father that he had hope in Egypt, they realized the time was right for them to go and redeem Yosef. Since the brothers felt they had sinned by selling him, they were glad to atone for this sin by redeeming him even for very great sums of money. Hence the Torah says, "And Yosef's brothers went down." At that moment, they were only Yosef's brothers. Their brotherly feelings were reawakened, and they wanted to work on feeling fraternal love towards him again.

The Gulf War



During the Persian Gulf War, the enemy fired 39 missiles at Israel, and only one person, a man who was known to publicly desecrate Shabbos, was killed. Soon after the war began and the threat became imminent, **R' Chaim Kanievsky Zt'l** let it be known that no missiles would hit the city of Bnei Brak. The Torah learning there would protect it. One erev Shabbos during the war, a person asked R' Chaim if he should bring his brother to Bnei Brak for Shabbos. R' Chaim asked what the brother's profession was. The man replied that his brother sat and learned in a kolel in Tel Aviv. "Then he can learn in Tel Aviv also. Nothing will happen to him," R' Chaim replied. The man then asked about his parents, who were not very religious. R' Chaim answered that the man should bring them to Bnei Brak immediately. The man brought his parents to Bnei Brak just before Shabbos. Friday night, a missile fell directly on his parents' house and completely destroyed it - but they were not in their house; they were in Bnei Brak!

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־פַּרְעֹה חֲלוֹם פַּרְעֹה אֶחָד הוּא 41:25



To the students of Yeshivas Knesses Chizkiyahu, in Kfar Chassidim, attending to the famed Mashgiach, **R' Elyah Lopian ZT"L**, was an undeniable privilege. One of the students who had the good fortune to be able to serve as R' Elyah's "bochur" personally saw to his needs. This afforded him many opportunities to speak with the tzadik privately about matters that concerned him.

After dinner one evening, he mentioned to R' Elyah that he had had a disturbing dream the previous night. The Mashgiach's immediate response was, "Do you think the Almighty has nothing better to do than to come to you in a dream? There is no prophecy today; all dreams are nothing but nonsense!" His own words seemed to send him into a silent reverie for some ten minutes.

Then, without warning, R' Elyah began to speak about his youth in Kelm, Lithuania. He and his rebbetzin had had 19 children, 13 of whom survived beyond infancy. Rebbetzin Lopian bore the responsibility of managing the house and the children, saw to R' Elyah's needs, and was heavily involved in matters that concerned the yeshivah. Exhausted, she was the first in the family to retire each night.

It became R' Elyah's official chore to put all the children to bed each evening. He drew up a full plan, including a list of where and how each child was to sleep, and how he was to perform each part of the task. Having finally changed each child into his or her nightclothes, placed them in the beds specified by his list, read shema with them and

tucked each one into bed, R' Elyah would turn off the lights and pursue his own learning schedule before retiring himself.

One night, he had completed his routine as usual and had gone to sleep when he was suddenly awakened by a dream in which he saw his house on fire. Opening his eyes, he understood immediately that there had been no actual fire. The house was absolutely dark and quiet. However, his dream provoked great anxiety, so he rose to check on all his sleeping children, one by one. He found his son Hershel blue in the face from near suffocation. In his sleep, Hershel had somehow twisted his bedsheets tightly around himself and could not breathe.

R' Elyah quickly untangled the sheets and began artificial respiration, saving young Hershel's life. When a revived Hershel began to cry, R' Elyah realized beyond a doubt that he had been awakened by Hashem in order to save his son's life. The child calmed down and was soon peacefully sleeping, and his father tucked the sheets under Hershel's mattress so that they could not become twisted around him again. R' Elyah spent the remainder of that night in Torah study and prayer, thanking Hashem for the miracle that had enabled him to save Hershel.



Unfortunately, R' Elyah's story did not end there. "Years later," Reb Elyah recounted, "the identical dream of my house being on fire woke me once again. This time there was no one for me to check on when I opened my eyes. All my children were away from home, either married or studying at various yeshivos. My rebbetzin was no longer

alive, and I found myself totally alone in the stillness of the night. At the time I had no inkling of what the dream meant. "It was only several days later that I was informed that the Nazis had exterminated the entire Jewish community of Telshe in Lithuania.

The Telshe Yeshivah, where my son Hershel had been learning, was gone as well. I soon found out that the period of time in which the terrible carnage had taken place coincided with the time in my dream. I understood then that my dream had heralded the great tragedy of the destruction of Telshe, which so intimately touched my family, including my precious Hershel."

"There is no prophecy today; all dreams are nothing." While Reb Elya's words were entirely applicable to the bochur, they hardly held any relevance to his own life!

שֶׁבַע פָּרֹת הַטֹבֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה... וְשֶׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת הָרַקוֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה 41:26-27

Pharaoh dreamed of seven fat cows and seven skinny cows. Eventually, when no one could correctly interpret his dreams, he sent for Yosef in jail to come and interpret them. Yosef told him about the seven years of plenty and the seven years of hunger that were to take place in Egypt. And then he offered unsolicited advice, advising this absolute ruler what he must do during this crucial time.



R' Avrohom Hakohen Pam ZT"L explains that Yosef foresaw the terrible catastrophe that would ensue if the seven years of plenty would be under-appreciated and squandered away. An extra kernel of wheat during

a time of surplus is no big deal, yet during a period of hunger it is more precious than valuable stones. Yosef could not keep quiet and presented his life-saving plan to Pharoah - with a deeper message for all of us as well.

The seven years of plenty symbolize **עולם הזה** - this world. The seven years of hunger represent **עולם הבא** - the next world. Every tiny mitzvah, moment of kindness, and word of Torah learning is so precious in this world, yet we often squander away our time and leave it unappreciated. Many opportunities are lost or wasted away. Only in the next world will each "kernel" of accomplishment be fully recognized. But by then it will be too late to do more.

וַיִּישָׁן וַיַּחֲלֹם שֵׁנִית... וַיִּיקַץ פַּרְעֹה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם 41:5-7



How could Pharaoh have trusted Yosef to such a degree that he appointed him to be the main administrator of the plans to save Egypt from the shortages of the forthcoming famine? True, Yosef was understanding and wise, but what was it that Pharaoh saw that made him hand over the reins of Egypt's economy to someone who was just released from prison and was previously a slave?

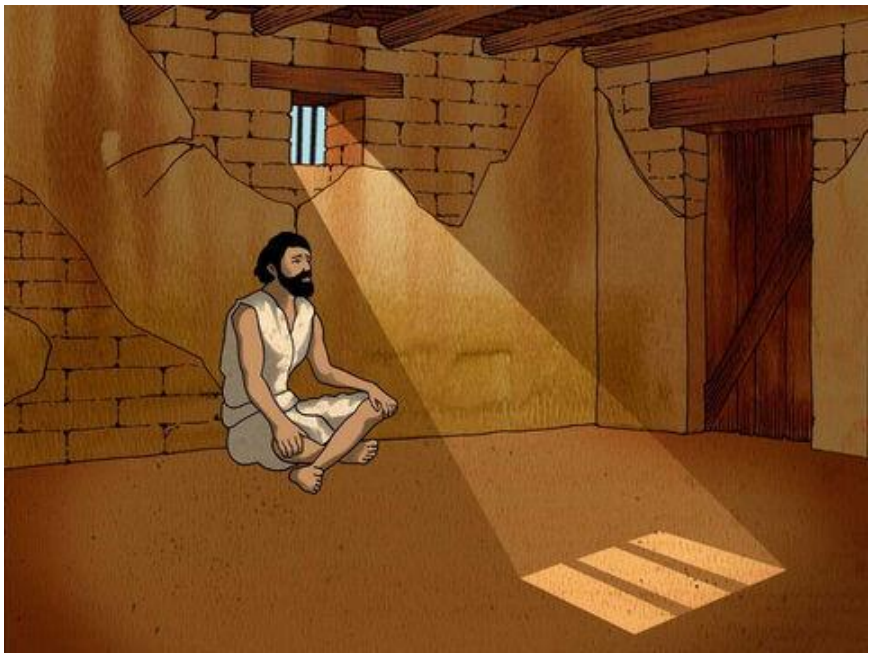
R' Shmuel Primo ZT"L answers that Pharaoh's two dreams in reality constituted a single dream. The posuk states, "Pharaoh awakened. And he fell asleep and dreamed again." This means that in his dream, Pharaoh woke up and then immediately fell back asleep. As a result, only at the end of the "second dream" does the posuk make it clear: "Pharaoh awakened, and behold it was a dream." At that point Pharaoh woke up and realized that it was all one big dream, including his having woken up in the middle. Since that, too, was in essence

part of Pharaoh's dream, Yosef, through the wisdom of Ruach Hakodesh, interpreted the "awakening" as well, urgently suggesting Pharaoh to "wake up" - to take action and appoint a wise man to arrange the storage of grain. It was then that Pharaoh realized the clear wisdom of this young man and the need to get to work if he was to save the economy of Egypt and the surrounding countries.

He made the monumental decision right then: who better to sort out all the future issues and potential problems, then the one who figured it all out in the first place! Let us learn the lesson from Pharaoh: When an important decision comes our way, wake up and spring into action - don't sleep through life!

From The Wellsprings of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר 41:14



Yosef was languishing in prison for years at the mercy of his captors. He thought that by asking the wine steward to mention him to Pharaoh, it might hasten his release. To his dismay, not only did it not hasten his release, but it prolonged his agony. However, at the very moment that Hashem decided that Yosef should go free, he was rushed out of jail with an urgency that contrasted to the humdrum daily existence that was his constant companion in the depths of the Egyptian dungeon.

The Chofetz Chaim ZT"L remarks that this is the way Hashem brings about redemption. The moment it is meant to take place, not

a split second is lost! This, says the Chofetz Chaim, is the way the final redemption will come as well. When the time is right, we will all be rushed to greet Moshiach and our lives will suddenly and without warning be changed.

On a personal level, every individual is locked up in situations of pain, sadness or difficulty. There are times that we almost give up hope that the situation can improve and therefore our prayers and relationship with Hashem is stilted, rather than strengthened, which is usually the reason for the difficulty in the first place! But a yid should NEVER lose faith that his salvation can come in the blink of an eye! It can happen so suddenly that he won't even know what hit him! As much as we feel that our situation is difficult, we must believe that Hashem can do anything - and do it QUICKLY!

This is the lesson of Yosef being rushed out of jail. Similarly, the days of Chanukah, which is a time of great miracles and redemption, is uniquely effective for collective redemption and personal salvation. May we all be zoche to realize them.



This past summer, a yeshivah bochur was driving without a driver's license, and caused a dreadful car accident on the Ramot Road. Not long after that, another bochur was caught with the same irresponsible behaviour and was threatened with imprisonment.

The bochur decided to seek a blessing from **R' Chaim Kanievsky Zt'l** before his trial proceedings. The bochur stood before R' Chaim and said, "I have a trial in another week. They want to put me in prison.

Would the Rov please bless me so I'll be saved from it." R' Chaim inquired, "What is the trial about?" The young man replied, "They caught me driving without a license, after I crashed into a wall."

To the great surprise of the bochur, R' Chaim said unequivocally, "So you're truly a murderer! On the contrary, let them put you in prison. Very good." This was totally unexpected. R' Chaim Kanievsky is not known for issuing such statements, and the bochur became excited. He even began shouting, "What? Chalila, I didn't kill anyone. I didn't wound anyone, either. I just had a small accident with a wall involving only myself."

R' Chaim was unimpressed. "But you drove without a license, right?" "Yes," replied the boy. "Nu, so you're considered a real murderer. You could have caused an accident with other people too." The bochur realized that he was not getting any sympathy from theRov. "But I know how to drive well. Besides that, (being in prison) might ruin things for me with shidduchim and yeshivah." "There is no such thing as 'I know.' You drove without a license. Without a license, one does not know how to drive."

R' Chaim added as an afterthought, "Concerning shidduchim, whoever doesn't want you is right. It's dangerous!" At this point, the bochur broke down. "I'm so sorry. Please ... just let the Rov bless me that I be saved in the trial." But R' Chaim refused to accede. "What do you mean, you're sorry? If you're given a car tomorrow, you won't drive? Of course, you'll drive! So, perhaps the best thing is for you to sit in prison and learn not to be a murderer!"

The bochur was now frantic and made one last request. "Please," he begged, staring tearfully at R' Chaim, "can the Rov assure me that I'll be saved if I will be careful from now on?" R' Chaim responded, "I cannot give a blessing. May Hashem help that they sentence you to what will really be good for you!" And with that, the audience was over.

It is rare that R' Chaim Kanievsky speaks in such extreme language, but obviously he understands the danger that is prevalent on the roads and this is how he views a person who is caught breaking traffic rules or drives without a license. R' Chaim refused to bless the bochur and did not hesitate to say that he is no less than a murderer.

וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיַּכִּרֵם וַיִּתְנַכֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם קָשׁוֹת 42:7

First, Yosef accuses his brothers of being spies. Then, he allows them to return to their father but not before he slips their money back into their sacks, to make it look as if they hadn't paid for their provisions. Then, when they come back to pay and bring their youngest brother Binyomin to stand before the ruler,Yosef plants his royal goblet in Binyomin's saddlebag and later detains him for "stealing" his precious vessel.

Is this a game? Was Yosef purposely teasing his brothers as a means to exact revenge against them for what they had done to him? What, indeed, were Yosef's intentions?



R' Alter Weinberger ZT"L answers based on the gemara (Eruvin 65b): "*With three things is a person's (character) determined; by his cup (intoxication), by his pocket (money dealings), and by his anger (temper).*" Being away from his family, Yosef was acutely aware of the reputation that the sons of Yaakov maintained. They were known as people who would sell their own flesh and blood for a few

coins just to rid themselves of an adversary. This bothered him and as part of his ultimate revelation as Yosef, Viceroy of Egypt, he decided to build up his family name in the process.



Thus, he put their money back into their bags knowing full well that they would make every effort to return it. This would make a great impression on the Egyptians who could not believe that any person would not just simply "take the money and run." This denotes their **כיסו**-"pocket." Planting the royal goblet was intentional, since this depicted their **כוסו** - "cup"; drinking with the ruler without getting drunk or unruly. The fact that through it all they never lost their temper was an indication of their **כעסו** - "anger." Yosef's "game" was only a way to repair his family's reputation.

וַיִּישָּׁן... וַיִּיקַץ פַּרְעֹה



At a convention of neurologists, one of the topics was the phenomenon of people fainting upon getting up from bed. One speaker gave a lengthy speech on this issue. After years of study and investigation, she came to the conclusion that the fainting is caused by the sharp transfer between laying down and standing up. Since it takes 12 seconds for blood to flow from the feet to the brain, when a person quickly stands upon waking up, blood flows to the brain too quickly and the result is fainting. She suggested that each person, upon waking up should sit on the bed, and count to 12 to avoid dizziness and fainting.

Then, another professor, an Orthodox Jew, got up to speak. He said: "We have an old Jewish tradition, thousands of years old, to say a prayer of thanks to the Almighty every morning when we wake up. The prayer is said upon waking, while one is still on the bed, sitting down. There are 12 words in this prayer and if one says it slowly with concentration, it takes exactly 12 seconds to say these 12 words." He said the prayer slowly in Hebrew: **מודה אני לפניך מלך חי וקים שהחזרת בי נשמתי בחמלה רבה אמונתך** - ***"I thank You, O living and eternal King, because You have graciously restored my soul to me; great is Your faithfulness."*** The auditorium burst into a roaring standing applause, an ovation by scientists for the true Creator of the World!

Pharaoh slept; then awoke. Then slept again; then awoke. A Jew doesn't just sleep for his own sake. He does so to strengthen himself to serve Hashem with Torah and Tefillah. Thus, a Jew starts his day by thanking Hashem!



R' Pinchos Menachem Elazar of Piltz (Sifsei Tzaddik) would say:

"Rashi says that Yosef closely resembled Yaakov. If so, why didn't the brothers recognize him as Yosef, their brother, when they came before him in Egypt? The answer is that Yosef at that time was 39 years old and thus resembled a 39 year-old Yaakov. However, the brothers had never seen Yaakov when he was that age, since they were born only after he was in his eighties. As a result, they didn't recognize Yosef!"



R' Simcha Bunim of P'shischa ZT"L would say: "A Jew must be as careful of his actions in life just as a person playing chess thinks carefully before his next move. Weigh what you're planning to do to see if you might end up regretting your move."

Torah Anytime - Dr. Jack Cohen The Great Change



I am forty-four years old, from the age of ten, I was out on the street and never wanted to go to school. I in fact ended up spending a good number of years in jail. In the world of the mafia in Israel, I am well-known. It would be easy for me to come up with many excuses as to why I didn't grow up to be an honest person and I can tell you all about the lack of opportunities in my life.

But ultimately, if you break the law, you are a criminal and that is exactly what I was. Over the years, I was involved in small crimes, such as thefts and break-ins. I also got caught for committing an armed robbery, which sent me into jail for a long sentence.

Shortly after I completed my last jail sentence about six years ago, I began planning the robbery of a jewellery store in Jerusalem. I received the information that a lot of money and a large amount of jewellery was kept in the store. Since the store was situated on a

quiet side street, I knew I could walk in, hold up the owner and carry off the goods without drawing too much attention. I wanted to be well prepared for this kind of crime, and that would necessitate visiting it a few times, getting to know the store well, and casually chatting with the salespeople. I would then be ready to perform the robbery.



Early one evening, shortly before closing time, I went to get a good look at the store. The storeowner, a friendly and polite older gentleman, was alone in the shop. I asked to see what options he had for a necklace for my wife, which was an outright lie. I was not married and had no interest in buying a necklace for anyone. He proceeded to show me all kinds of necklaces, and even opened the safe to bring out different styles.

"What a reckless thing to do!" I said to myself. "Why would the owner turn his back and leave me here with all these goods? I could have easily ransacked the safe and grabbed whatever I wanted!" This storeowner proceeded to ask me a little bit about my wife's interests in jewellery. I began to fabricate a story. I came up with the tale that I had recently gotten married, and we were a young couple without a penny to our name. I had managed to scrape together a few dollars to buy her a surprise birthday gift, however. This really seemed to touch the old man. He asked what type of job I have, and I replied that I was unemployed. The storeowner then began pitying me and tried offering me encouragement.

I then decided it was time to get out of there before I started to like him. But before I could, he looked me straight in the eye and said, "Young man, you look like a talented fellow who just needs a little help in life. I am willing to lend you some money so you can invest in a little business, maybe jewellery, and provide for yourself and your family.

My mouth dropped open, and before I could utter a sound, he hurried to the safe, took out some money and slapped a big wad of bills on the counter. "Here is $10,000! Go start a business!" "Are you crazy? I asked him. "How can you lend money to a complete stranger? What do you know about me?

"Listen, he said, "I have been in business for forty-eight years, and I have a good eye for judging people. I can see that you are a decent person with a good heart, and I trust you to return the money when you can."

I was shocked. In my entire life, no one had ever trusted me, even with a dollar, and here this storeowner was trusting me with $10,000." "Now listen, my friend," I said to him, "you are getting carried away. How do you know you will ever get it back?" "Young man," he said, "stop asking questions. I can see straight through your heart, and I see you have a heart full of gold, just like my necklaces. You are an honest man, and I don't have the slightest doubt that you will return the money."

I started thinking to myself, "Wow, this man is unbelievable! I don't even have to risk a robbery. I can just stand here, get the cash and run for it. What could be better than that?" Yet it wasn't so simple. If he was willing to trust me, then he was a friend, and could I really steal from a friend who trusted me? I decided that it would be better to refuse the money and simply come back next week and steal the money. But the speed at which he handed me those dollars simply confused me and I just took it.

When I returned home, I broke down and cried like a child. Had anyone ever believed in me before today? Had anyone ever trusted me? True, in the mafia they knew I kept my word, but what does it mean that thieves trust each other? All they trust each other is to divide the goods they steal. And here was an honest and kind man, who was never a part of my life, yet he trusted and respected me. I was determined to pay him back to the very last cent. I bought some goods with the money and sold it for a profit, until I tripled my initial investment.

Four months later, I returned to the store and placed $10,000 on the counter. I once again asked him, "How could you be willing to give so much money to someone you don't even know?" "As you get older," he said, "you get to know more about life. As soon as I looked at you, I knew you were a good guy who wanted to earn an honest living. I could tell that you didn't have an easy life and I just wanted to give you a chance. Now young man, go make a living and support your family! And make sure you always come back here to buy jewellery for your wife!" "What a man!" I told myself. "I left the store with tears in my eyes, and joy in my heart.

Now I knew what I wanted to become: an honest, decent person. I thought about how to go about this, and I decided to enrol in a yeshiva. I began studying Torah and over the course of time I became a baal teshuvah. This was no easy task, but I managed to get on track. Eventually, my rabbis in the yeshiva found me a wife.

We were complete opposites. My wife was innocent, modest and bashful with no demands. I felt as if Hashem was sending me the gift of happiness straight from Heaven. The wedding ring was bought from my friend, the jeweller. One year later into our marriage, we celebrated the birth of our daughter. I bought my wife the gift of a beautiful necklace purchased from my jeweller.

Every now and then, my past criminal friends would visit me and ask if I wanted to join them to commit a crime. But I would say, "I am

done with that life. No more crime." They eventually accepted my new way of life and realized it was all over. My wife never asked me about my past, but I think she was clever enough to understand what had happened. Every once in a while, my old friends would knock on the door, and she would see exactly who they were and what they were like.

Two years later, we were blessed with the birth of our first son. We made a big celebration for his bris, inviting several big rabbis in Jerusalem. My friends came from the past and the present. But one friend was not invited. I was too afraid to invite my jeweller lest someone blurt out how long I was married. The jeweller would then realize that I had lied to him years earlier.

Nevertheless, the next day, I went to his store to buy my wife a present upon the birth of our new baby boy. As soon as I stepped into the store, I knew something was wrong. The owner didn't look healthy. He looked like he had aged greatly. "What's the matter Papa?" I asked. He began to cry and couldn't speak. I put my arm around him and tried calming him down.

He finally managed to tell me a few words. "You don't want to know what happened. There was a break-in last week and my safe was ransacked. Everything is gone. A lifetime of my savings, all the jewellery that I purchased on credit, and jewellery that people had brought in to be prepared that wasn't mine. Thousands upon thousands of dollars in cash is gone. I'm ruined! I will be in debt as long as I live. Take a look at me. I'm an impoverished old man."

As I watched him cry, I was filled with anger at the person who was capable of committing such a despicable act. How could he ruin the life of an old man? But then it struck me that this was exactly what I planned on doing to him five years before. I was also a heartless person then.

I went on to buy one other piece of jewellery and told him, "Be strong." As I left the shop, I thought about what he said, and decided to take a plan of action.

I went to pay a visit to some of my old friends in the underground mafia. They were surprised to see me with my kippa and beard. They had long gotten used to the idea that I was not involved in the world of crime. In a strong tone of voice, I told them that in one week I wanted to know who robbed the jeweller.



Two days later, I received the information. I spoke to him in the professional language of the mafia and informed him that I expected that the stolen goods would be returned to their owner before Shabbat. Otherwise, he would need to deal with me. It sounded as if I was declaring war, which means very serious business in the mafia. I told him, "Think whatever you want to think, but I expect the goods to be returned before Shabbat."

The arbiter ruled that the robber would need to return everything to the storeowner. The robber then promised to return the goods and the cash before Shabbat. That is exactly what happened. Two messengers showed up at my house with two suitcases containing the diamonds and cash before Shabbat.

I went to the jeweller with two suitcases and a note, rang the doorbell and ran away. From a distance, I saw him open the door and take the suitcases. When I returned home my heart was overflowing with joy as my wife waited for me. "I have just done true teshuva for all my past deeds," I said to her.

She didn't need to ask me anything, but the look on her face showed that she believed me. May Hashem bless her. I don't know why I deserve such a special and fantastic wife. I now work steadily, have a wonderful family and make a good living. Although it is not as much as I made in the old days as a criminal, I am so happy with my life. I thank Hashem for my beloved wife and beautiful children, and especially for those five minutes when somebody believed in me. Those few moments changed my life.

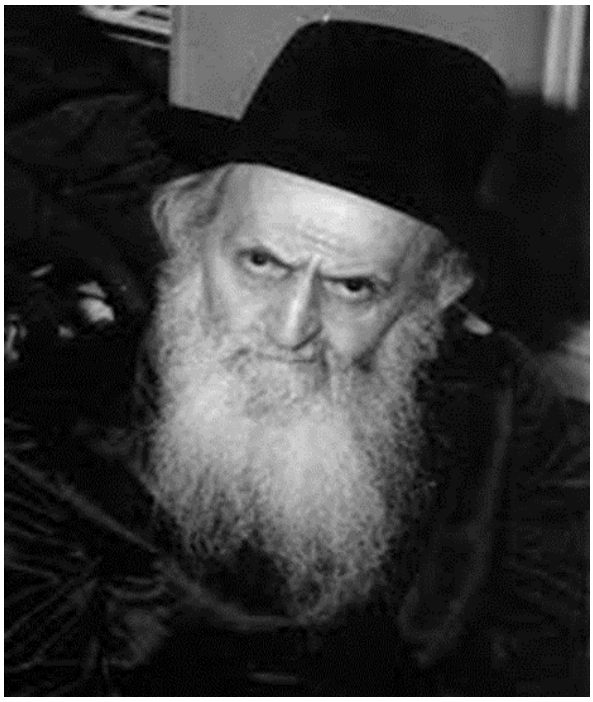
Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis a"h - Using Your Gifts

והנה מן היאר עלת שבע פרות יפות מראה And behold, out of the River emerged seven cows of beautiful appearance… (Bereishit 41:2)

Parshas Miketz begins by relating how Pharaoh had been disturbed by troubling dreams. With no one to interpret them to Pharaoh's satisfaction, he remained disconcerted and upset. However, all that changed one day. Two years after Yosef requested of the Minister of the Butlers to put in a good word for him to Pharaoh, he was finally remembered. The Minister mentioned to Pharaoh that perhaps Yosef could be of assistance in construing the message of his dream. And indeed, Yosef was of tremendous help.

What was the dream? As Pharaoh stood on the banks of the Nile River, seven fattened cows emerged and began pasturing on the marshland. Subsequently, famished cows ascended from the River and consumed the robust cows. Nevertheless, the undernourished cows remained as emaciated as before. Yosef explained these events to mean there will be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine and economic recession. In order to circumvent the crisis of food shortage, Yosef recommended setting aside provisions during the years of plenty in preparation for the future years of deprivation. With such a system in place, the detrimental repercussions of starvation would be eschewed.

As with everything in Torah, this passage applies even to us today. The Torah is teaching us that when life is going well and times are plentiful, we must take advantage. We must always make certain that we do whatever we can before it is too late.



I remember years ago asking my father, of blessed memory, to take me to **Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin *zt"l*** for a blessing. At the time, he was the oldest sage of the generation and I anxiously wished to receive a blessing from him as he was getting on in his years. And so, my father took me to his apartment on the Lower East Side.

After arriving there, we were met by Rav Henkin's secretary who told us that he would bring out Rav Henkin to see us. Rav Henkin at this time was nearly blind in both eyes and was attached to all sorts of intravenous. As Rav Henkin made his way into the room, the secretary said to him, "Rabbi Jungreis is here!" Hearing that a good old friend had come to visit, Rav Henkin and my father embraced. After hugging each other, my father mentioned that he had also brought me along to receive a blessing.

Looking at me, Rav Henkin said words I will never forget: ***"You will be very successful, my child. I give you a blessing that you will be able to return Jewish children to Yiddishkeit. You will bring back Yiddishe neshamos to their roots.*** But I ask you a favour: tell everybody what I am about to tell you." He then pointed to his eyes and continued, "You have to learn Torah when your eyes can see. There will come a time when you will be unable to do so. Utilize your gift of sight when you still have it." Upon saying this, he pulled out a *sefer* from the bookshelf, placed it on the table and with his nearly

blinded eyes began turning the pages until he finally found what he was looking for. And with that, he began to engage my father in a Torah discussion.

This is the lesson we are to learn from the dreams of Pharaoh and their interpretation. When you have energy, you have to use it. There will eventually come a time when you will no longer be able to do what you could before. It will be too late to store away food or easily study from a *sefer*. Yosef understood that one must maximize the present moment and appreciate it before it is gone. Now is the time to take advantage of the gifts of life and accomplish everything you can.

Torah Anytime - Rabbi Bentzion Shafier

"***Success consists of going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm.***" If you haven't figured out who said this quote, let's take a little hint. It was a college professor, a statesman, someone who wrote a treatise which won the noble prize, and a world leader who was knighted by the Queen of England.



He was the prime minister of England, Sir Winston Churchill. Yet let me share with you just exactly who Sir Winston Churchill was. Historians credit him with saving the free world. If not for his galvanizing strength and energy, Nazism would have won the war. It was Churchill's strength of character which brought the Allies together. Yet in May of 1945, Germany surrendered, and in August of that year, Churchill found himself voted out of office. England viewed him as a great wartime president and man of

battle, but it was now a different era which called for a different leader. After bringing England to its finest hour and saving the free world, he found himself unemployed and on the streets without a job.

But that was his life. Going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm. If you ever find a human being who has succeeded in any endeavours in life, you will find a person who has failed many times. Such is the key to understanding life and understanding what is required for a human being to reach greatness.

Peninim on the Torah – פנינים על התורה

וַיִּמָּצֵא הַגָּבִיעַ בְּאַמְתַּחַת בִּנְיָמִן *and the goblet was found in Binyamin's sack.* *(44:12)*



Stealing represents a character defect if the thief is an adult. The mere fact that a person is not affected by the pain he inflicts upon another person is in and of itself an indication of a flawed, even perverted, personality.

When the thief is a young child, it is usually an indication of a lack of ethical values which were not inculcated in him by a responsible mentor. We will soon discern exactly who the responsible mentor is.

While I often include a story only for the purpose of buttressing the lesson which the dvar Torah teaches, in this instance, the story is so compelling and the lesson so powerful, that I take the liberty of quoting it without an accompanying dvar Torah.

The story is quoted by **Horav Shlomo Levinstein, shlit"a**, in the name of **Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlit"a. Horav Avrohom Pam, zt"l**, venerable Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaas, was asked to be mesader kiddushin – perform the marriage ceremony, for a young man. (The story does not mention if the chassan – groom, was a student of Rav Pam.) Shortly before the chuppah, the chassan broke down in bitter weeping. Rav Pam asked everyone to leave as he spoke softly to the young man. "Tell me, what is wrong?" the Rosh Yeshiva asked. "What provoked your sudden outburst of weeping?" The chassan related the following heart-rending story:

"I was fourteen-years-old and studying in elementary school. One of the boys in the class had a trinket to which I helped myself. The victim of the theft was noticeably upset and complained to the rebbe. The rebbe immediately closed the door, not permitting anyone to leave and then began to search everyone's pockets.

I was quick with my hands, and I placed the trinket in the jacket pocket of another student. A few minutes later, the rebbe discovered the lost trinket in the pocket of the "innocent" student and declared him to be the thief! "

The rebbe mercilessly shamed him before the class, called his parents, and took him to the principal. The parents were devastated and terribly angry, refusing to believe their son's claim of innocence. Sadly, the cards were stacked against the boy. No one believed his innocence. After all, the trinket had been discovered in his possession. The strong punishment which the boy received, coupled with the horrible humiliation that he experienced, catalysed a downward spiral in his Yiddiskeit. He was angry that no one believed him, disappointed by the behaviour of frum – observant people, who should have been serving as an example for others to emulate.

Eventually, he left Yiddishkeit and now is about to marry out of the faith! All of this is my fault. How can I go to the chuppah knowing that I am the cause of another Jew marrying a gentile?"

Rav Pam looked the chassan in the face and in his calm, soothing voice said, "There is no doubt that you committed an act of theft, which is no simple matter. It is a maaseh chamur – egregious (sinful) act. You may not blame yourself however, for the spiritual demise of your friend. The primary guilt lies squarely on the shoulders of his parents and rebbe for not believing him when he claimed innocence." Veritably, what kind of parent turns a deaf ear to a child's plea of innocence? How can a person call himself a mechanech – educator if he acts so heartlessly and does not attempt to ferret out the truth?

When a child cries out, we should at least lend a compassionate ear and look for a reason to believe him. Otherwise, we are not worthy of the lofty title of parent or rebbe!



The Meshech Chachmah asks why was Yosef offering counsel? Paro asked Yosef to decipher his dreams; he didn't ask him for advice. The Meshech Chachmah answers that Yosef's counsel was part of the dream's interpretation. Because Yosef explained each detail in Paro's dream, but there seems to be a part which wasn't explained.

It is written, "Seven other cows were coming up from the Nile after them; they were ugly in appearance and they were thin. They stood next to [the healthy] cows, on the riverbank" (41:3).

Why did the unhealthy, thin cows stand next to the healthy ones (before devouring them)? What did this imply? Yosef understood that this meant that the antidote for the famine was when they stood next to, and were supported by, the prosperous years. Therefore, he told Paro to store the produce of the seven good years for the hunger years. He was permitted to offer this counsel,

because he was called to decipher the dream, and this is part of the dream's explanation.

Parsha Pshetel – Rabbi Yankie Shechter וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים – אברבנאל 42:1



Yaakov saw all of the merchants headed to Mitzrayim, and return with grain. Yaakov's children did not want to go down to Mitzrayim so they purchased the grain from those merchants who had gone to Mitzrayim. These merchants were selling the grain to the Shevatim at a very inflated price. Yaakov told his children that they should go down to Mitzrayim and purchase grain directly from there, and not purchase the grain from the merchants. For by purchasing the grain at an inflated price, they were boasting that they were wealthy and did not mind paying exorbitant prices for grain.

Besamei HaTorah - R' Shmuel Winzelberg

הם יצאו את העיר לא הרחיקו ויוסף אמר לאשר על ביתו קום רדף אחרי האנשים "***They had left the city, they had not gone far, and Yosef said to the one in charge of his house, "Arise, chase after the men"*** (44:4)

Why didn't Yosef let them get too far? **The *Peninei Kedem*** explains that he wanted to catch them before they were able to recite *Tefilas HaDerech* – The Traveller's Prayer – and this *Tefilah* could only be recited after travelling the distance of a *Parsa*.



וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים - נר השכלים 42:1

Yaakov saw with Ruach Hakodesh that Klal Yisroel would be "broken", under the hand of the king of Mitzrayim.

That is why Yaakov used the word, **שבר**, for what would occur to Klal Yisroel in the future.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchov Wished His Kehillah Blessings for The New Year on December 31st



It was late at night one New Year's Eve, December 31, and the beis medrash of **Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchov** was still filled with his chasidim who were sitting and learning. Close to midnight, the door to the private office of the Rav, which was adjacent to the beis medrash, opened, and the Rav shouted out to his Chasidim: **לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו**, 'May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year!' He then returned to his office and closed the door behind him.

The chasidim were mystified. Didn't the Rav know that this was the secular New Year and not the Jewish New Year? A short time later the same thing happened and the Berditchover Rebbe came out to bless them. And then this happened again for a third time.

The chasidim were totally baffled! As not just anyone could approach the Rav, the men asked an elderly chasid to approach him and ask for an explanation. The Rav told the elderly man the following: The previous Rosh Hashanah, the tefilos and shofar blowing of the city of Berditchov were especially beautiful and heartfelt and went directly to Heaven. Hashem was so taken by these tefilos that He immediately inscribed the entire city in the Book of Life and bestowed on each and every one of them a year of health and wealth.

When Yom Kippur came, Hashem was so taken by their fasting and crying. The people poured out their hearts into their prayers. Hashem was about to seal the inscription that He had written on Rosh Hashanah, when suddenly the Satan spoke up.

"True, the people have been praying fervently, but this is only one day! How can You inscribe them favourably for an entire year based on their actions of only one day?"

Hashem therefore held back, and the inscription was not sealed. Immediately after Yom Kippur, the people started to build their succos in preparation of the upcoming Yom Tov. The defending angel spoke up, "Hashem, see how Your people are involved in doing the mitzvah? Even the poor people are building their succah to the best of their abilities!"

The Satan was not to be deterred. "Again, I object! True, they are building succos for You. But, look at the houses they live in, permanent structures of brick, stone and glass. But for You, Hashem, they merely build temporary shacks that can barely last the week!"

Again, Hashem held back from sealing the inscription. Simchas Torah came and the shuls were filled with dancing and joyful happiness. Again, the defending angel came to Hashem and spoke up. "Hashem, don't You see how your children are rejoicing for Your Torah? Shouldn't the inscription be sealed?"

Hashem was about to seal the inscription when again the Satan spoke up. "I object yet again! True, they are rejoicing with the Torah tonight. But, how can You inscribe them favorably based on their actions of one night? When Yom Tov is over, they will go back to their old ways! They are undeserving!"

Hashem once again held back from sealing the inscription. So it was that the inscription that was written on Rosh Hashanah remained unsealed through Yom Kippur, Succos, Hoshanah Rabbah, Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

Tonight, on New Year's Eve, however, the defending angel spoke up. "Hashem, King of the Universe! Do You see how non-Jews celebrate the New Year? Shouting and drinking in the streets, and all manner of carrying on! Do you remember how your children celebrated their New Year? They did it with prayer, atonement and holiness."

"This time the Satan had no response. Rav Levi Yitzchak concluded, "Therefore, after all this time the inscription was finally sealed! I felt it appropriate to bless everyone with a Shanah Tovah!"

ויאמר הנה שמעתי כי יש שבר במצרים, רדו שמה ושברו לנו משם ונחיה ולא נמות - אמרי שפר 42:2

Yaakov had many slaves and people who worked for him. Why did Yaakov send his sons as opposed to sending one of his servants? Mitzrayim was known for the necromancer and magicians who used black magic. They were also adept at performing what appeared to be magic, but were nothing more than sleight of the hand – tricking one's eyes to believe that they see something that is not really there.

The Gemara in Chulin 7b says that Rebbe Chanina did not fear witchcraft for he believed **אין עוד מלבדו**, there is no one but Hashem. One who has the Koach Hatorah and the proper Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu need not fear witchcraft, nor can he be fooled with

sleight of hand. Yaakov did not send his slaves for fear that they would be tricked into thinking that they had purchased grain, but in fact would come back with nothing.

Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages

Once, the ***Chasam Sofer*** saw a group of his *talmidim* walking outside with unclean clothes and unpolished shoes. He said to them, "A person who is particular about his appearance and not about his *neshamah*, is like a garbage bin covered with roses. A person who is worried about his *neshamah* and not about his appearance is like a vase of roses covered in garbage. Anyone can clearly see the garbage and will be disgusted and turn away.

A true *Ben Torah*," the *Chasam Sofer* taught, "Worries about his *neshamah* while also taking care of his appearance."

41:14 וישלח פרעה ויקרא את יוסף ויריצהו מן הבור – בן איש חי



"Yosef's brothers sold him for 20 silver coins. Why only twenty when Yosef seemed to be very marketable, as the Torah tells us that Yosef had a very pleasant and nice appearance?

The brothers were jealous of Yosef that he was the "**בכור**" in the thoughts of Yaakov Avinu (for Yaakov saw Rochel Imeinu as his main wife, and Yosef was the oldest of Rochel's children). If the "thoughts" were followed, that would mean that

Yosef should have received the Meluchah, for the king is called, **בכור**. Tehillim 89:28

אף אני בכור אתנהו – "Also a firstborn I will make him."

The brothers did not want this to happen, and they wanted the **בכור** to have a negative connotation, instead of meaning that Yosef would receive the Malchus. Therefore, they placed him in a **בור** , which leaves over the letter **כ** from the word **בכור**.They were Mekayeim the **כ** by selling him for twenty, thereby stating that Yosef being the **בכור** was not something good.

The brothers took the **בכור** which represented Malchus, and broke it into two parts. Here, the Posuk tells us that Paroah, **ויריצהו מן הבור**– **יריצוהו** from a Loshon of **צירוף** –to connect – Paroah was going to reconnect the **בור** and make it back into one word of **בכור** representing that Yosef was about to receive Malchus, that Yosef would rule over the land of Mitzrayim.

Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos

When we meet others on Shabbos, we shouldn't greet them in the same way that we would on the weekday, rather, we should use greetings that are special for Shabbos. This can even be done in any language, not only in Hebrew.

The *Mishnah Brurah* teaches (307:5) that by saying *'Gut Shabbos!'* to someone, it is a way to do the mitzvah of *zachor es yom ha'Shabbos*, remembering Shabbos.

"Whether you do little or much, let it be out of good intentions." ~~ Talmud, Shavuot

Rabbi Yehoshua Alt- Tears that Tear

We are taught that Tefila stands at the pinnacle of the world (**עומדים ברומו של עולם**) but people treat it lightly. Why is the term **עומדים** used? What does it mean that Tefila stands at the height of the world?

The Gemara says that from the day the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, the heavenly gates of Tefila were locked but the gates of tears weren't locked. The Divrei Yoel explains that when a Jew cries by Tefila, the gates are opened and the Tefilos of everyone that are standing at the height of the world enter. This is why it says **עומדים ברומו של עולם** because Tefilos stand and wait to enter, waiting until the tears of a person open the gates.

This can be compared to the door of a public building that is locked where when someone opens it with the key, everyone that was waiting there now can get in.



When the construction of the men's section of the Belzer Beis Midrash in Europe in the 1800s was finished, **R' Shalom Belzer** didn't allow Tefilos there until the women's section was completed. He explained that since only "the gates of tears are not locked," how will their Tefilos ascend. They need the Tefilos of the women because they are more inclined to cry. Their tears will open up the gates for everyone's Tefila.



Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages

Whoever seeks Divine mercy for his friend and *davens* for him while he is also in need of that very same thing, he will be answered first by Hashem and have his need fulfilled. (*Bava Kamma* 92a)

A gentle word, a kind look, a good-natured smile can work wonders and accomplish miracles.

"Consumerism In Our Communities"

Writer Avrohom Birnbaum penned a sharp article entitled" We Have Been Hijacked," first addressing that fact that a "large percentage of our community of *chareidim l'devar Hashem* are prisoners…to our phones and devices. Nothing is sacrosanct, not *davening*, not learning, not talking to our spouses, not focusing on our own children."



Rabbi Birnbaum then address "consumerism in our communities" that is "so powerful that if you would ask a child or a teen in today's world what *Chanukah* is all about, he could not be blamed if he answered that it was all about gourmet donuts and meat boards!"

What we are seeing, says Rabbi Birnbaum, "is the legitimization of a lifestyle that is the antithesis of everything for which a Torah *Yid* stands." He asks, "A groaning meat board with more than ten cuts of succulent meat, highlighting the color, the 'marbleizing,' the oozing of gravy that would put the *matamim* that Eisav enjoyed to shame…is that shameless pursuit of one more fantasy to tickle one's well developed palette not a *nevalah*? Why is that breach tolerated and lionized in some quarters of our

community? It is obscene. There is no more charitable word that I can think of."

Displays of Unfettered Pursuits of Gashmiyus

These displays of unfettered pursuits of *gashmiyus* at a level of "sophistication" that would have been simply unheard of or even unthought of as recently as ten years ago, or even five years ago, are the new normal, he says. A teen today doesn't even think of it is a "new" normal. It is just normal.

"Do we realize where we are? Where are we going? Ads for 'encrusted' and 'infused' cuts of meat and steaks that cost $40 and $50 a pound are in our publications. We are putting the *Yevonim* to shame. I am almost certain that even Antiochus couldn't get his hands on a charcuterie that any *bochur* can get if he knows the right party to crash.

Why are we not equally *ekeled*, or disgusted, by that shameless show of indulgence as we would be disgusted by, and would rightfully protest, reprehensible images? This is not a *kedoshim tihiyu* issue. It is far worse. It is a *nevalah b'Yisroel*, nothing less, and we have to say it the way it is. Again, I am speaking about the shameless way it is promoted, not about what meat one eats in the privacy of his home."

Rabbi Birnbaum goes on to address one final issue: weddings in Dubai. "These weddings are extremely upscale affairs featuring well-known singers, *roshei yeshiva* being *mesader kiddushin*, and every indulgence that you can't even think of. Top it off with white-robed, *kafia*-wearing waiters obsequiously serving the Jewish masters of the affair… How do we unpack so much at once? Yes, it is wonderful that there is peace with more Arab countries, but *rabbosai*, are hotels in the Virgin Islands, the Swiss and Austrian Alps and the French Riviera not enough for us?

A New Danger of Assimilation

Now we have an unending stream of visibly *frum Yidden* going to Dubai, Bahrain and who knows where else. Have we forgotten the *pereh adam, yado bakol…*? Do we now have to add the threat of assimilation with Arab nations to the problems that we already have?"

"…These images of obsession with self-indulgence make their way around the groups, where it is even more normalized and it becomes less shocking for anyone who has a *Yiddishe hergesh*. Then it starts to show up on what are ostensibly '*frum* websites,' and when they are even more normalized, they begin to appear in *frum* print publications.

The more responsible *frum* print media outlets have a very difficult time maintaining standards, as the bar is collectively lowered and people get accustomed to the 'new normal.' What is the final stop? These items, whether they are bottles of wine worth hundreds of dollars or cuts of meat that until recently you never heard of, become so normalized that they end up being served at the parlor meeting for a *mosad*, while the speakers lecture about the beauty of *hachzokas haTorah*."

How, Rabbi Birnbaum asks, are we supposed to bring up children who are *ovdei Hashem* in this environment when everything about it screams *Yovon*? "We have been hijacked by a vocal, glossy, shameless minority." He concludes, "It is time to fight back."

We have no idea what power our prayers hold. Hashem has more pleasure from the praises of one single Jew than from all the praise of all the heavenly angels combined, - The Chofetz Chaim.

"Give every man the benefit of the doubt." ~ Pirkei Avos 1:7

A Most Unusual Haftorah – The Haftorah Mikeitz

It only happens seldom, and this year is one of them. Chanukah almost invariably falls on Shabbos Mikeitz. This year, as on ten other occasions in the past century, it falls on Shabbos Vayeishev alone.

Consequently, this Shabbos we read the haftorah of Mikeitz, not the haftorah of Chanukah. Let us, therefore, take advantage of this rare opportunity to focus on the fascinating story which appears in this week's haftorah.



As the story unfolds (I Kings 3), two women ask King Solomon to settle a dispute between them.

"Your majesty," the first woman begins tearfully, "this woman and I live alone in the same house, and we both gave birth to little boys at about the same time. One night, she rolled over onto her infant son and suffocated him. When she discovered that her son was dead, she took my son from my bed while I was sleeping and left me her dead son in his place.

"And when I awoke in the morning, I found a dead child in my bed – but he was not my son! This woman has stolen my son!"

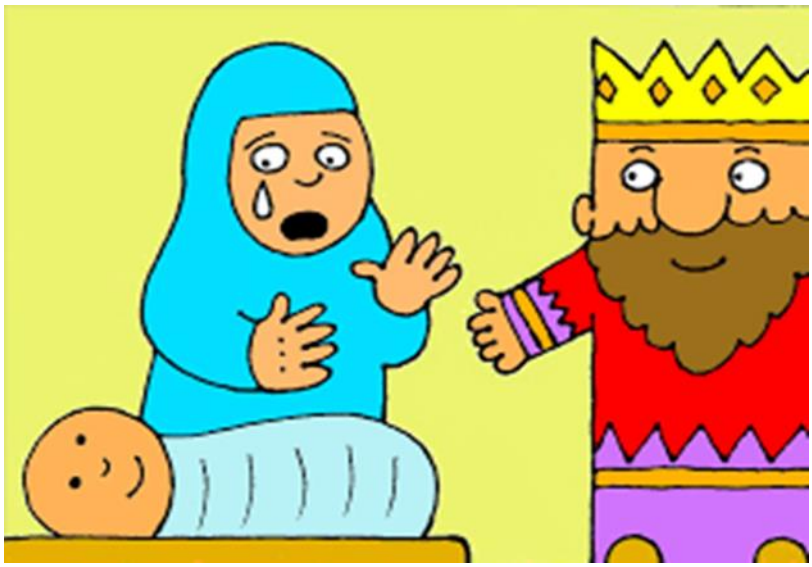
"Not so!" the second woman protests. "The living child is mine, and the dead one is yours. I am the real mother. The exact opposite of what you said is true!"

King Solomon mulls over this problem, then he calls for a sword, which is quickly brought and placed before him. "This is my ruling," the king declares. "We will make a compromise. I will have my guards take this sword and cut the child in half. One part will be awarded to the first woman and the other part to the second." "Oh, please, your majesty," the first woman cries out. "Don't let them do this thing. Give her the child, but do not cut him in half."

"No, it is only fair," the second woman says, "that we share the child, part to me and part to you. Cut him in half!"

"There is no need to cut the child in half," says King Solomon. "Give him to the first woman. She has shown herself to be the real mother!"

His Ruling Gained Him a Wide Reputation for Wisdom



King Solomon's ruling in this case gained him a wide reputation for being imbued with "the wisdom of the L-rd." The Jewish people looked up to him with increased awe and respect, and people began to come from the distant corners of the earth to hear his words of wisdom.

But let us think for a moment about this celebrated ruling. Did King Solomon really expect them to believe that he was actually going to slice the child in half? Was is possible that this wise and just king would take the life of an innocent baby? Where did the people see in this "the widom of the Lord"?

Furthermore, why was the second woman willing to have the child cut in half? She had exchanged her dead child for a live one under cover of darkness. Why was she now willing to settle for half a dead child?

The answer to these questions reveals King Solomon's insight into human nature. Of course, everyone knew that his decision to cut the child in half was only a psychological ploy, that he would never do such a thing.

Therefore, the second woman challenged him. "Cut him in half!" she said, knowing full well that he wouldn't do it. In essence, she was

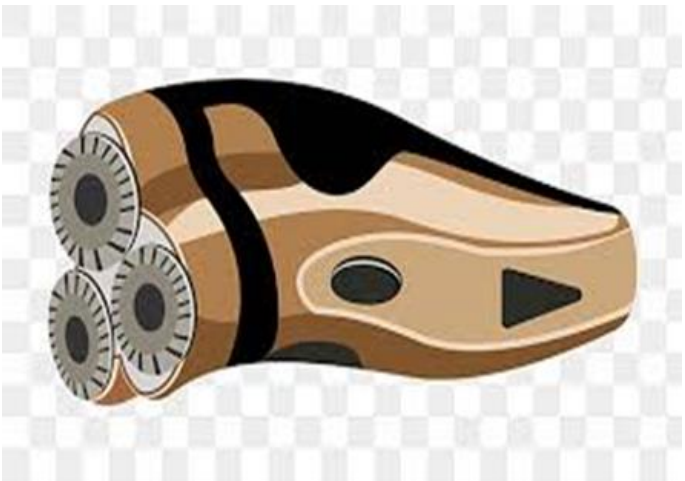
saying, Let us see where this psychological game you are playing is going to lead us. She was preparing to match wits with the king and prevent him from discovering her deception.

Did Not Have the Heart for Such Games

But the first woman did not have the heart for such games. She couldn't bring herself to utter the words, "Cut my child in half!" This was the real mother!

Such extraordinary insight could only be "the wisdom of the L-rd"! All too often, we disregard our children's feelings in moments of anger and frustration. We fail to realize how damaging this may be to their emotional health. In truth, however, a child is a precious gift from Heaven entrusted to the parents for safekeeping; child-rearing is a sacred trust that takes precedence over just about everything else.

In the Torah view, the quintessential parents love their child so deeply that they are incapable of uttering a word that could be harmful to the child. Children brought up in this spirit and by these values will surely have enough self-esteem to pursue the fulfillment of their full potential. Such children will surely enrich the lives of their parents beyond measure. (Rabbi Naftali Reich and Torah.org)



וישלח פרעה ויקרא את יוסף

בראשית רבה

Yosef shaved and changed his clothes before entering Paroah's presence in order to accord honour to royalty.

L'Maaseh… A Tale to Remember

When a fundraiser for the Navardok Yeshiva came to Karlin Pinsk, he visited the home of one of the *Gedolei Ha'dor*, the famous ***Bais Dovid***. At that time, the *Gadol* was already over 90 years old. His memory was rapidly failing, and his eyesight was weak, however, he reviewed *Shas* daily from memory.

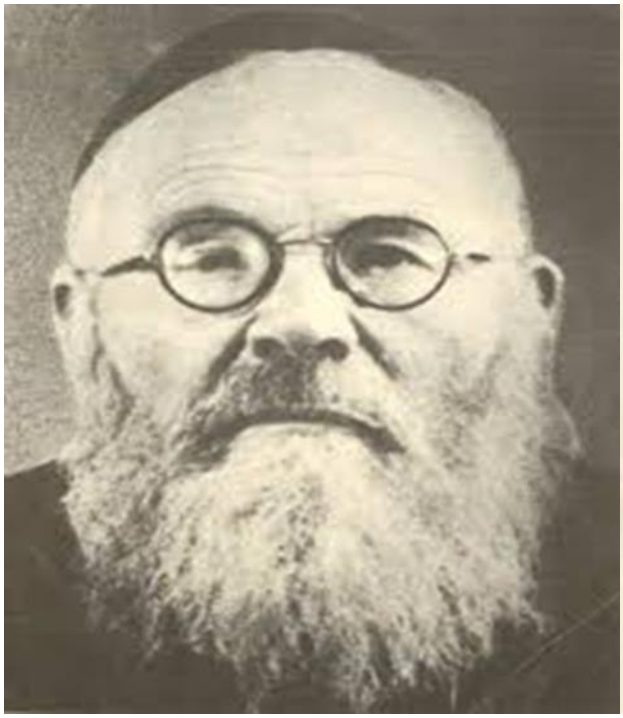
The *Bais Dovid* gave the fundraiser a warm *Shalom Aleichem*, and asked what he could do for him. The fundraiser replied, "I came to collect needed funds for the Yeshiva of Navardok, as I do every year." The *Bais Dovid* asked, "How much do I give you every year?" The fundraiser told him, and the *Bais Dovid* took out his wallet, gave him his contribution, and immediately resumed his learning by heart.

Inspired in the presence of the *Bais Dovid*, the fundraiser did not immediately leave, but took a seat to observe the *Gadol's* shining face as he learned, and to listen to his voice reviewing the *Gemara*, *Rashi* and the commentaries as he amazingly proceeded from page to page by heart. At one point the *Bais Dovid* looked up and noticed him. He asked, "Can I help you?"

The fundraiser realized that the *Bais Dovid* did not remember that he had just given him money so he gently reminded him of his contribution and noted that he just wanted to bask in the *Gadol's* presence for a while. The *Bais Dovid* remarked, "My forgetfulness is getting worse each day— and it's something that no one should experience, but I do remember the entire *Shas* as if I were still a young man."

The fundraiser was astounded and when he later encountered the ***Chofetz Chaim***, he related what had happened. Shortly thereafter, the *Bais Dovid* passed away, and the *Chofetz Chaim* requested that the fundraiser recount this incident when the *Bais Dovid* was eulogized in Radin.

Once, Reb Eliyahu Lopian zt"l went to the Sfas Emes, with a kvittel. The Sfas Emes read the kvittel and asked, "A yungerman who saw Eliyahu HaNavi, should come to me with a kvittel?" Reb Eliyahu Lopian responded wisely: "If there is a rebbe who knows who saw Eliyahu HaNavi, it is definitely proper to go to him…" What is the story with Reb Eliyahu Lopian and Eliyahu HaNavi?

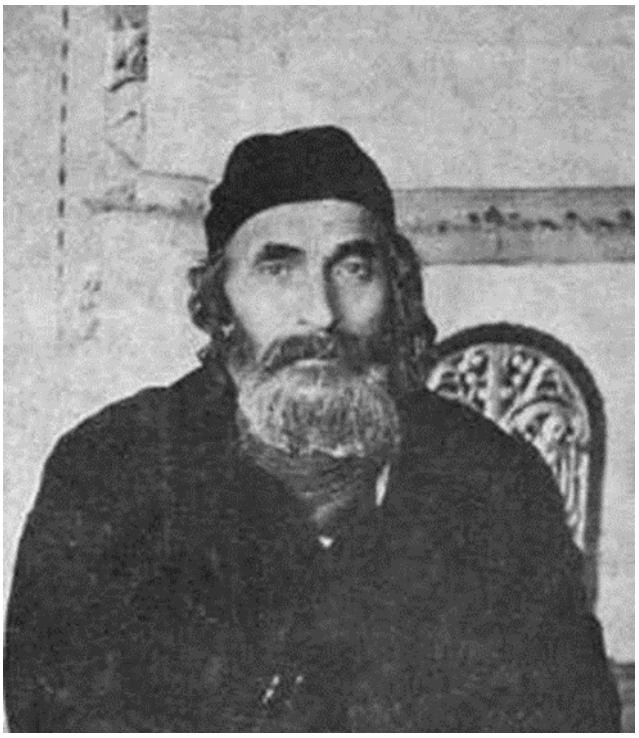




It is said that Reb Eliyahu Lopian's wife was ill, and the doctors gave up on her life. The family stood around her, crying. A stranger knocked at their door and asked, "Why is there so much crying here?" They told him that the woman of the house was ill and the doctors lost hope. "Don't worry," the man told them. "Go to place ploni and pick vegetable ploni. Cook it and let her drink the water. This will heal her."

They did this; she drank from the water, and began to feel better. This is how she was cured with the appearance of Eliyahu HaNavi.

"That we live is a gift from the Almighty. How we live is our gift to the Almighty!"



The parents of Rebbe Meir Yechiel from Ostrovtze zy"a were simple people. Once, the Ostrovtze Rebbe was at a gathering together with several other rabbanim, and each one was saying something that they learned from their father. When it was Rebbe Meir Yechiel Ostrovtze's turn, he said, "My father was a baker, and I learned from my father that fresh bread is better than dry, old bread." He meant to say that more important than who one's parents were, is who he is. People pride themselves for having this great-grandfather, and for being a descendent from this tzaddik. He told them that even more important, is the individual himself (represented by the fresh bread).



Then, the Ostrovtze Rebbe said, "My father also taught me that when one wants to bake bread, he should fill the oven with wood, and seal it hermetically, because even the slightest draft can affect the heat of the oven. When it is very hot, one can put bread inside." We understand from this, that if one desires to have good children, he must first be very warm himself. One first needs to heat up his own spiritual oven with joy and eagerness for the mitzvos, and then he can influence his children and others as well.



Parsha Pshetel – R' Y Shechter

וישלח פרעה ויקרא את יוסף ויריצהו מן הבור - ר"ח פלטיאל- "Why does it say that Yosef was taken out of the Bor when the Torah stated numerous times that Yosef was in a Bais Hasohar, a prison? At the time that Paroah called for Yosef, they placed him in a Bor so that Potiphar should not be upset at the prison warden. (Potifar would have been upset had he known that Yosef was treated well in prison and was actually placed as the warden of the prison.They therefore threw him in the Bor, so that Potiphar would hear that Yosef was removed from a Bor, a pit).

Parsha Pages – Torah Temimah

בראשית מב,ח וַיַּכֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶת-אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכִּרֻהוּ Yosef recognized the brothers, but they did not recognize him

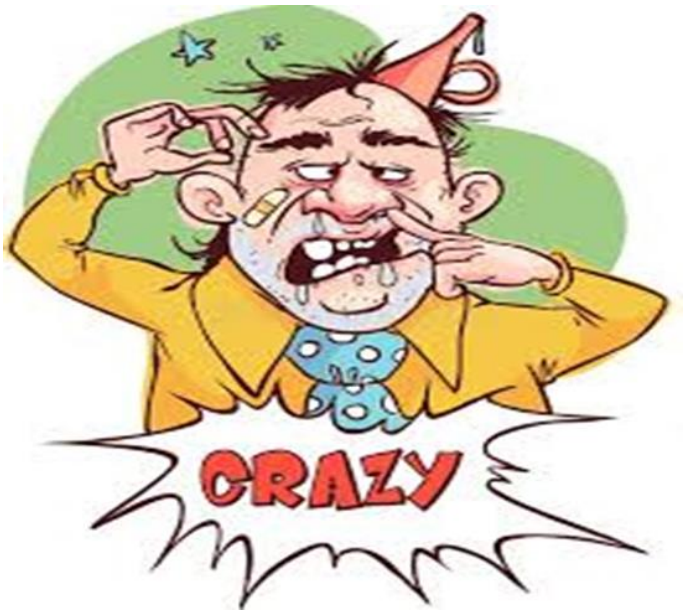


Since the older brothers already had beards when Yosef last saw them, he was able to recognize them. However, when they last saw Yosef, he did not have a beard (too young) and now they did not recognize him. Ramban asks what about the younger brothers, Yissachar and Zevulun who were practically the same age as Yosef, how did Yosef recognize them?

First, since Yosef recognized the older brothers and they came to him as a group, he was able to recognize all of them.

Further, Yosef had the city guardians providing him with descriptions of all entering the city, and thus, he had more time to adjust to recognize the brothers.

Rabbi E Biderman- Torah Wellsprings



When Yaakov and his family went down to Mitzrayim in the royal carriages that Yosef sent them, it seemed to be very good – they were travelling with honour – but this was the beginning of the galus. So what appears to be good may actually be bad, and what appears to be bad, can actually be good. There is never reason to complain, **למה הרעותם אותי**.

In the Yiddish language, when you want to say that someone is very hungry, you say, **עהר איז גוט הונגעריג** . Also in English people say, "He's good and hungry." Similarly, people say **גוט מיד** good tired **גוט נערווייז** good nervous and even **גוט משוגע** good insane). Because Yidden know that no matter what, it's all for the good.

"The best inheritance parents can give their children is a few minutes of their time each day."

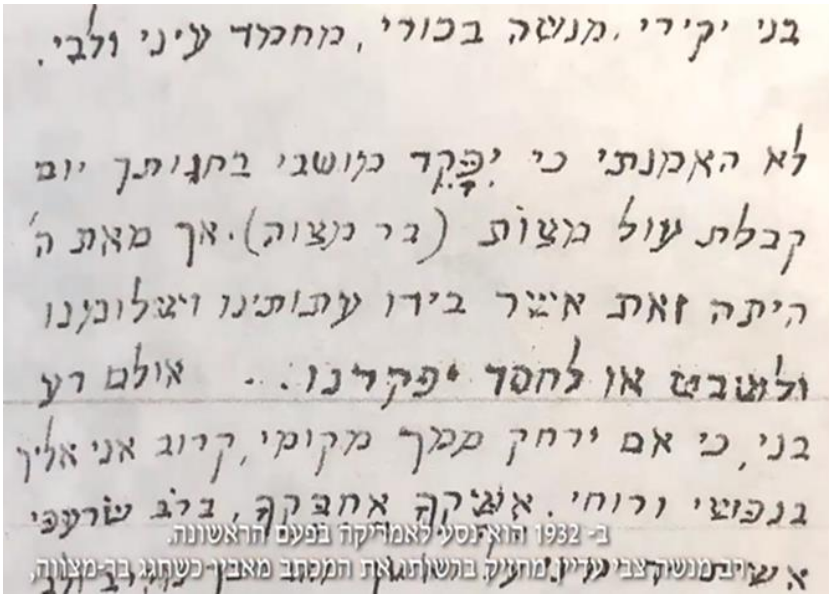
The Smuggler's Cup – Hashgacha Pratis from Kos to Coast by Rabbi Yoel Gold



When I first met Reb Menashe Zvi Winkler, 100 years old, born in 1919 and I shook his hand, I felt as though I was touching the past. He learnt in Radin. He met the Chofetz Chaim. He was so pleasant and calm and extremely patient, at 100. It was a privilege just to sit with him and listen to some of his experiences and his story…



I was born in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark in 1919. There was a Jewish community of about 7000 Yidden. My father was the Rabbi of Machzikei Hadass. He was a talmid of Rav Yoseph Chaim Sonnenfeld from Yerushalayim.



His father would often travel abroad to raise funds for the poor people in his kehillah. In 1932, he travelled to America for the very first time. Menashe Zvi still has the letter from his father wishing him a Mazeltov for his Bar Mitzva,

saying, how he wishes to be there and participate in the simcha, and he can't wait to see him when he gets back.

But unfortunately, he never actually saw him again, because his father – Michoel Sholom Winkler passed away in America from a sudden heart attack. He was buried in the Old Carmel Cemetery, in Long Island. Menashe Zvi's mother was devastated. She had to raise her son on her own, and she didn't know what to do.



Two months later, there was a fund-raising event to raise money for the yeshiva in Radin. The meshulach was eating lunch at Menashe Zvi's house. His mother said to him, "I am so concerned, my son is an orphan. I am an almanah , I don't know what to do with my child. I want him to become a Ben Torah".



He said you are worried about your child. Send him to Radin yeshiva. I was only 14 years old at the time I arrived, and the first thing I said was, "I want to see the Chofetz Chaim". At that time, he was not in Radin. He was in a small village, not far from Radin. He used to sit in a deckchair for his vacation. Reb Menashe Tzvi traveled to meet the

Chofetz Chaim where he was staying in a village in the middle of a pine tree forest close to Radin. This was three weeks before the Chofetz Chaim was niftar and he was very weak. Reb Menashe Tzvi shook hands with him. He was sitting in a beach chair covered with netting to protect him from the flies. The Chofetz Chaim greeted Reb Menashe Tzvi and bentched him: "Shalom Aleichem. Zei gezunt… Shteigen in lernen…"

Three weeks later the Chofetz Chaim was niftar and I was at his Levaya. Then I learnt in Radin Yeshiva for three zmanim. Radin was for mature students and Berannovitch was more for teenagers. So, I belonged in Berannovitch Yeshiva.



What was very special during the interview was that as he spoke about Reb Elchonon (Wasserman) HYD, you could feel that he remembered it so vividly, how Reb Elchonon gave shiur, how he interacted with him. When he spoke about his murder by the Nazis,

he would repeat over the posuk again and again – **אל תתנו בידי אכזרים** . He was in a trance.

Reb Elchonon, Reb Elchonon Wasserman - **אל אל תתנו בידי אכזרים תתנו בידי אכזרים** . (sighs) . He was transported back in time. Just watching him, as he talked to me, repeating that posuk, was very moving. He shared with me of how Reb Elchonon was like a father to him.

I was living in a forest in a building where the windows let in a lot of draughts and cold. I caught Pneumonia.

Reb Elchonon came to visit him and telegraphed his personal doctor in Vilna to come to Berannovitch to check on Menashe Zvi. He even sent a letter to his mother, letting her know that he was sick, and she could come to visit if she wanted. He remembers that Reb Elchonon was as concerned about him like he would about his own son. There are very few pictures that we have of Reb Elchonon today. One of the famous ones is of him on the boat, traveling back from America to Europe, knowing that his days are numbered because the Nazis were invading Poland but he travelled back purposely to be with his talmidim.


תמונה נוספת היא תמונה מפורסמת של הרב אלחנן מדבר עם הרב קוטלר,

Another picture that is very famous is of him talking to Reb Aaron Kotler in learning. But Menashe Zvi took out a picture that I had never seen before. It was of Reb Elchonon davening at a kever. He had travelled to America to fundraise for the Berannovitch Yeshiva. The first thing that he had done was hire a driver and

photographer, and gone to the Old Carmel Cemetery, in Long Island, so that he could daven at the kever of Michoel Sholom Winkler (Menashe Zvi's father). Develop the photo and send it back as a postcard to Menashe Zvi and his mother, so that they could have some sort of tangible artifact that will help them remember Michoel Sholom's final days. This is how much Reb Elchonon loved and cared for his talmidim. He was extremely sensitive to each and every one of them.



In 1938 Menashe Zvi travelled back to Copanhagen. He was older at the time, almost ready for Shiduchim. His mother didn't want to go back to Poland, because she knew that the clouds of war were descending on Poland.

This decision ended up saving their lives. In 1940 the Nazis marched into Denmark. Luckily for the Danish Jews, it wasn't dangerous to be there at that time, as at the beginning of the war, the Danish Government was protective of them. They didn't allow the Nazis to harm them.

Eventually, we had to also flee from Denmark, as it was totally occupied by the Germans.

By 1943, they started deporting all the Jews to Auschwitz. Many tried to escape to the nearby country of Sweden. Sweden was one of the only countries in Europe that remained neutral throughout the war. There was a body of water separating Denmark from Sweden. People hired fishermen to attempt this escape route. The Winkler family hired a fisherman called Mr Rasmusen.

The fisherman brought us over on his boat.



(daughter) My mother-in-law was placed in the lower deck, and my parents on either side. He covered them over with fishing nets, and told them, "you might hear me speak in German, but do not get scared, it is all part of my act". Sure enough there were Germans patrolling in these waters, and he calls out to one of the boat crews in German " You want to join me for a beer?" He was laughing and joking with them. They were all terrified but kept silent until the danger passed. He would stop occasionally to fish, and zig zag the route to make it appear that he was not heading towards Sweden. Thank G-d, they eventually made it safe to Sweden. They were very thankful to the fisherman. My father was so relieved and thankful, that he just took whatever he had of value on him and gave it to him. He gave him a Kiddush cup that had his name engraved upon it.

75 Years later

A couple of months ago, Menashe Zvi's daughter gets a phone call from a cousin that lives in Belgium, in Antwerp. Her name is Mrs Bresbader. She was on a bus that morning. She usually takes the tram, but that day, there were construction works in progress, so

there were no trams, so she was forced to take a bus that she never usually takes. By mistake, she got onto the ***wrong bus,*** and she is beating herself up in her mind as to how stupid she was. She would have to get off and take another bus. As she is having all these thoughts, there is a woman ***sitting next to her*** on the bus whose name is Miya.



Miya says, "Do you read Hebrew?" Mrs Bresbader said, "Yes". So she took out of her bag, a silver becher. And she says, "Can you please tell me what is says on the cup?" She looks at it and says, "That is my great uncles name!!"

So immediately Mrs Bresbader takes out her mobile and calls the Winkler family in Lakewood and says, "You are not going to believe this. I was on this bus ***'mistakenly'***. This woman takes out a silver becher, and it has engraved on it, the *feter's* name, Menashe Zvi ben Michoel Sholom Winkler.

I was sitting outside on the bench with my father and my cousin called me and told me the story. I couldn't believe it. It blew my mind.

She tells her father, and he said, " yes, that is probably my Kiddush cup that I gave to Mr Rasmusen – the fisherman, seventy-five years ago when he helped us to escape from Denmark to Sweden. Ask her, how did she get that cup." So Miya says to Mrs Bresbader, "I have a friend that lives in Copenhagen in Denmark, and his name is Dan Rasmusen, and he inherited this cup from his father. His father passed away fifty years ago and he left this silver cup.

(Dan Rasmusen) We didn't know what it was. It was always situated on the cupboard. We understood that it was a cup that he had been given by a man called Mr Winkler.

He was curious to know what it said on it. He met Miya about a year ago and he knew that she was from Antwerp. Where he lived in Denmark there were no Jewish people to ask. So he asked her to take it to Antwerp to find out what it said.

(Miya) It had gone out of my mind and I had it on my shelf for one and a half years. But suddenly , when I needed some driving lessons, which happened to be in the Jewish quarter, I remembered the cup. I took it with the intention of popping into a synagogue to find out what it says. I got on the bus and there was a Jewish woman sitting next to me. So, I thought, why not ask her. The chances that I would accidently bump into someone related to the owner of the cup are non-existent. When this happened, I thought that there is an angel that caused this to occur.

When I was interviewing Miya and Dan Rasmusen, I was blown away by their sincere goodness and their desire to do what is right.

I always saw my father as a nice and kind person. That he should have done what he did, I couldn't imagine. I am very grateful that he was my father.

Dan wrote a beautiful letter saying that he wants us to have the cup, as it belongs to us. It is not a coincidence; it is from a higher power and it gives him so much joy that this cup is going back to its original owners.

A person should never give up their possessions in exchange for their lives. I hope nobody has to give away their things in order to be saved.

When I was interviewing Menashe Zvi and his daughter, I noticed off to the side was Menashe Zvi's grandson. His name is Michoel Sholom, named after Menashe Zvi's father. I asked him if he would

like to speak about how this story has impacted him, as the becher has got your name on it. This is what he said:



(grandson) I have always looked up to my grandfather a lot. He always had a soft spot for me, as I was named after his father, who he admired very much. I often davened in Israel, in the name of my grandfather and great grandfather, that I should succeed in my journey, to find the right path and eventually come back and get married.

He came back to America. The first girl he dated- shidduch- got engaged, and he said he is getting married in three weeks and just now they found the kiddush cup, the becher that has the name Menashe Zvi ben Michoel sholom Winkler engraved on it.



Both Zaides that he asked in the zchus that he should get married, and that cup will be used for the very first time at his chuppah.

It is clear that this was all divinely orchestrated by Hashem. It is amazing how the whole story unfolded. To have the becher with both my grandfather's name and my great grandfather's name on it at my wedding, I see this as his way of his sharing the simcha and being with me.

After I first heard this story, I was making Kiddush Friday night and I thought to myself, isn't it interesting how Hakodosh Boruch Hu revealed himself in such an incredible way- through a cup/Kos. It is appropriate that when we make Kiddush, we declare Hakodosh Boruch Hu's mastery over creation- Zecher L'Maaseh B'raishis. How He runs the world, every detail of our lives – Zecher L'yetziras Mitzraim. We do it over a Kos, a becher. Because that is the tool that Klal Yisroel uses to declare and proclaim Hakodosh Baruch Hu's hashgocho in this world.

Reb Menashe Tzvi passed away Tuesday, 11 Av 5781 July 20th aged 102!

The Niftar was one of the last people alive to have seen the Chofetz Chaim, learned in the Mir in Poland, in Baranovitch under Reb Elchonon Wasserman HY"D, and in Kaminetz under Reb Boruch Ber Leibeowitz ZT"L.

He was Zoche to shake the Chofetz Chaim's hand and receive a Bracha from him to succeed in shteiging in yeshivah with simchah, serve Hashem in good health, and merit arichus yamim.

Smile For The Redemption Flash - Written By D Fine

We are told that when Pharaoh asked for Yosef to be taken out of prison to interpret his dreams, they 'quickly' brought Yosef out (41:14). **וַיָּרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר** Why do we need to know that Yosef was granted his freedom so speedily?

The Chofetz Chaim answers with two points. Firstly, it's important to note that the removal of Yosef from prison was actually the start of the redemption of the Jewish People from Egypt. For Yosef coming out of jail led to his interpreting of Pharaoh's dream, which in turn guaranteed Yosef's rise to power – and thus the ultimate safety and separation of the Jewish People in Egypt was sorted even before the brothers came down to Egypt.

This is why Rashi (Pesachim 108a) writes that the four cups of wine on seder night represent the four cups in the butler's dream. Why the butler's dream; what does that have to do with the Exodus? For, as we have said, Yosef's being freed from prison was the first step in our redemption – which was facilitated by the butler's dream. For Pharaoh only knew about Yosef's dream-interpreting skills from this butler who had seen Yosef successfully interpret his dream two years earlier.



Based on this, the Chofetz Chaim writes that the reason we are told that Pharaoh's officers hurried Yosef out of prison, is to teach us that when the time for the redemption comes, HaShem will not delay it by even a second – just as the time of Yosef's redemption was calculated and precisely on time, so too will our ultimate geulah not be delayed by an instant; bimheirah beyomeinu – literally…



Timeless Truths – Rabbi Moshe Bamberger

View the world as a forest, and man as a tree that stands in it alone - believing that he is all Hashem has in His world. ~ Harav Simcha Bunim of Peshischa.

ויגלח ויחלף שמלתיו ויבא אל פרעה - מזרחי



Yosef was called out of prison, yet he did not know why. He did not know if he was being released from prison as a free man, or was temporarily being released, but would return to prison.

One being in this situation would not bother to shave and don clean clothing, for he may be returning to prison. Yosef acted differently, for it did not matter to him whether he was going to return to prison or not. He shaved and donned clean and proper clothing, for he wanted to show the proper honour to the Malchus, which was a fraction of the Malchus Shomayim. He wanted to show the proper honour, for that was showing that he sought to have the proper honour for the Malchus Shomayim.

Tefillah b'Tzibur



וַיֵּרְדוּ אֲחֵי־יוֹסֵף עֲשָׂרָה לִשְׁבֹּר בָּר ***"Yosef's ten brothers went down [to Mitzrayim] to get food…"*** *(42:3).* Rashi asks, **מה תלמוד לומר** why does the Torah tell us that they were ten brothers? We can figure this out on our own?

The Divrei Yisrael of Modzitz zy'a answers that the passuk emphasizes that it was important for them to travel to Mitzrayim with ten people, because

they wanted to have a minyan in Mitzrayim. The purpose of their trip was לִשְׁבָּר בָּר, to earn parnassah, and they knew that the success of their mission was dependent on their tefillos.

The first word of the passuk is וירדו. **The Divrei Yisrael** teaches that this also alludes to tefillah, because the person who davens at amud is called in Chazal, **יורד לפני התיבה**.

A Change of Tone? - Written by D Fine

Chazal (Gemara Megillah) tell us that there is a difference between the words 'Vayomer' and 'Vayedaber,' even though both seem to mean 'and he said.' Vayomer denotes speaking with calmness/kindliness, whilst Vayedaber means speaking with harshness/a firm expression.



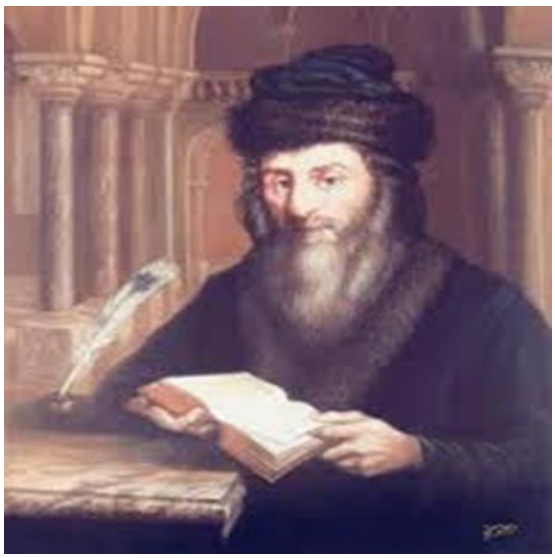
In our sedra, when Pharoah first asks Yosef to interpret his dream, the Torah uses the Vayomer term, וַיֹּ֤אמֶר פַּרְעֹה֙ אֶל־יוֹסֵ֔ף 41:15 but after Yosef tells him that all his dream-interpreting powers come from HaShem, Pharoah moves to the Vayedaber term in telling over his dream. וַיְדַבֵּ֥ר פַּרְעֹ֖ה אֶל־יוֹסֵ֑ף 41:17 Why the switch? Perhaps one can suggest that Pharoah did not want to hear about HaShem's Powers at this point – he wanted his dream interpreted and nothing else. Therefore, he was slightly angered by Yosef's response of piety and so then spoke harshly; hence the use of the Vayedaber term.

The love of family and the admiration of friends is much more important than wealth and privilege.

Rav Avigdor Miller, *zt"l*, related: "I once saw an individual who was eating in the street. I approached him and asked, "Don't you know what *Chazal* say regarding one who eats in the street?! *Chazal* compare such an individual to a dog who eats in the same manner!" This person responded defensively and said, "But Rabbi, it's only a cookie!" I replied, "Ok, so you're only a puppy!"

It's All In The Wording!! - by Benjamin A Rose

When the brothers appeared before Yosef the pasuk says **וַיִּזְכֹּר יוֹסֵף אֵת הַחֲלֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר חָלַם לָהֶם**; 42:9 Yosef remembered the dreams and only then did he accuse the shevatim of being spies and put them in jail for three days. Why does the Pasuk need to preface the accusation with the fact that he remembered the dreams?



The Chasam Sofer answers this with another question. How did Yosef have the gall to hold his brothers in jail for three days while his father Yaakov was starving for food in Eretz Yisroel? He answers that Yosef knew that Yaakov still had food left. How? From his dream.

In the first dream which represented the first time the brothers would bow down to him, he dreamed that each had a bundle of wheat and his was in the middle. He understood that this meant that they still had wheat in the house but nevertheless came to get more food from him.

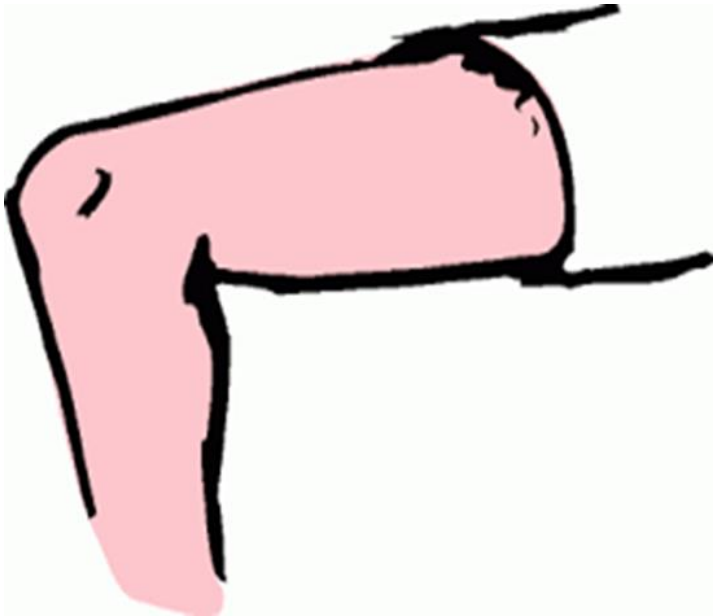
Therefore, only after he remembered the dream did he accuse them of being spies. He then kept them in jail three days knowing that there was still food in the house.



Praying for a refuah sheleimah isn't called praying for a miracle, even when doctors have given up. Doctors were given permission to heal, but they weren't given permission to cause people to despair.

Similarly, one can pray for parnassah, shidduchim, nachas, and all other kinds of yeshuos. Never lose hope. The Gemara teaches, "If one davened and his tefillos weren't answered, he should pray again. As it states (Tehillim 27:14), **קוה אל ה' חזק ויאמץ לבך וקוה אל ה'**, ***'Trust in Hashem, strengthen your heart, and trust on Hashem.'"***

וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְפָנָיו אַבְרֵךְ *And they cried before him "Avrech"* *("Bend the knee")* (Gen. 41:43)



The Hebrew word "avrech" comes from the same root word as "bracha" alluding to the drawing down of G-dly light from the supernal spheres into our physical world and frame of existence. Thus Joseph, the righteous person of the generation, was addressed as "avrech," for his role was to draw G-d's beneficence down into our material world. (*Ohr HaTorah*)

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

Everything is from Hashem

The Sfas Emes teaches, "A Yid must know that everything happens through Hashem's hashgachah pratis. Nothing happens by chance.



When Yosef went down to Mitzrayim…he knew that Hashem was sending him there… When he went to jail, he knew that Hashem sent him there…"

Once, two men came to **Rebbe Uri of Strelisk zt'l** and told him they wanted to become his students. Rebbe Uri said to them that he only accepts students who possess clarity in emunah. He asked them, "When some straw falls off a wagon to the ground, do you believe that the place they fall when they fall, the amount of straw that falls, and even which straw falls, are all because of Hashem's hashgachah pratis and not by chance?" The men admitted that they weren't on that level. They couldn't imagine that it made a difference to Hashem which straw falls where and when. Why should the Creator of the world be interested in such matters?

The Rebbe told them, "If you don't believe, then you aren't ready to join our group." A few days later, the men returned. "We thought it over, and now we believe that Hashem's hashgachah pratis is even on a straw that falls to the ground." "What made you change your mind?" They replied, "Chas v'shalom, if a tragedy were to occur, we would believe without a doubt that it's from Hashem. Something so significant can't happen by chance. We had trouble recognizing that even seemingly minor, insignificant matters, such as straw falling,

should be governed by Hashem's hashgachah. Then we thought: Compared to Hashem's greatness, everything is ultimately small and insignificant. If Hashem has hashgachah pratis over matters we consider significant, then why shouldn't Hashem also have hashgachah pratis over matters that seem trivial to us?"

The Noam Elimelech zt'l was once speaking to his chassidim about how everything is governed by Hashem's hashgachah pratis. The Rebbe said, "Even where a horse drops its dung is by Hashem's hashgachah pratis!" One talmid thought the Rebbe was going too far. How could such a mundane thing be by hashgachah pratis? Soon afterward, this student was walking near a cliff, and he slipped on the ice. If nothing stopped his fall, he would fall off the ridge to the abyss below. There was something under the snow, which made a small mound, which broke his fall and saved his life. The student looked to see what saved him. It was frozen horse dung, under the snow. The next time he was together with Rebbe Elimelech of Lizensk, the Rebbe asked him, "Nu? Now, do you believe that everything happens by hashgachah pratis? And even where a horse drops its dung is' by Hashem's hashgachah pratis."

The Dreams Weren't for Pharoah!!- Benjamin A Rose



Two extremely wealthy people once came before the **Noda B'Yehuda** to settle their argument. What happened was that a musician stood in the street exactly between both their homes and played the most beautiful music. Each person claimed that this was done in his honor and they wanted the Noda B'Yehuda in his brilliance to decide who was right. Before rendering

the psak they jointly paid the Noda B'Yehuda a large sum of money for his services. The Noda B'Yehuda answered that apparently the musician did not come in honor of either one of them. Rather he came so the he, the Noda B'Yehuda, should receive the handsome payout that the two rich people gave him.

The Shaar Bas Rabim says this is what happened to Pharoh. At first he was sure that the dreams and forewarning of the impending hunger was for his benefit. After Yosef suggested that he appoint a person to oversee the land to help it survive the hunger he realized that the only reason he was privy to these dreams was not for his benefit, rather as a way for Hashem to make Yosef the ruler of Mitzrayim.

Sometimes life isn't so obvious as it seems, many times we have heard about Hashem's hand manipulating world events with His Divine Plan. This is just another example.

The Mishnah teaches: "Be brazen like a leopard, light like an eagle, swift like a deer, and strong like a lion to do the will of your Father in heaven."





Why does the Mishnah express itself with animals? It could have written in brief, "Be brazen, light, swift, and powerful."

We can answer that animals act according to instinct. The deer doesn't *decide* to run fast, and the lion doesn't make a decision to be brave and powerful. They do so instinctively. This is how one should serve Hashem. He should be swift like a deer, powerful like a lion, and almost instinctively do Hashem's will. In *parashas Vayeira*, when the angels came to visit Avraham, they asked him, "Where is Sarah, your wife." (18:9).

The Ksav Sofer explained *bederech tzachus* that the angels said, "It is known that women are stingier with their guests than men are. Since you have prepared a very generous meal for us, we assume that she probably isn't home. Is that correct?" Avraham told them that she was





home, in the tent. The angels replied, **חדל להיות לשרה אורח כנשים**, Sarah is different than all other women. The angels promised that she will bear a son. This is because she went beyond her nature, and that brings miracles.

The Kesav Sofer tells us that he is writing this *bederech tzachus*, however, he adds, the lesson is true. When one serves Hashem beyond his limitations, he will merit miracles beyond the rules of nature.

Tzaddikim tell us: The way to earn miracles throughout the year is to serve Hashem beyond nature. Everyone has their comfort zone, the level they are accustomed to serve Hashem. If a person can go beyond this limit to serve Hashem, he will merit miracles. This rule

applies to every day of the year, and especially on Chanukah. If you serve Hashem beyond your limitations, Hashem will perform great miracles for you. around. It is the world of eight, where the rules of nature don't apply.

People were discussing the miracles some chassidic Rebbes performed. One person said, "Whatever my Rebbe asks for, Hashem fulfills." The son of the **Chofetz Chaim** was present, and he said, "I don't know whether Hashem does everything my father requests, but I do know that my father does everything Hashem requests."

When one has this approach, even to go beyond the rules of his nature to do Hashem's will, he will merit miracles, beyond nature, and Hashem will indeed do for him everything he requests.

Tattoos of Pride

R' Eliezer Silver (1882-1968) was asked about removing the tattooed numbers from the arms of Jews after the Holocaust. He said not to remove them. He said further that through the numbers, they are fulfilling the mitzva of Zechiras Maaseh Amaleik (recalling Amaleik's attack on the Jews).




R' Yitzchak Zilberstein received a letter which was accompanied by a picture of an Arab looking man whose hand was tattooed with a Magen Dovid (Star of David). His mother who was Jewish was

abducted…and was forced to marry a Muslim. To prevent her Jewish son from marrying a Muslim woman…the mother tattooed a Magen Dovid onto her son's hand so that he would know he is a Jew and not marry a Muslim. The man who lived in an Egyptian village had to conceal the tattoo on his hand so that he wouldn't be murdered… The question that arose was the following: Was it permissible for this mother to tattoo her son's hand (which the Torah prohibits) to prevent him from intermarrying?

In his response, R' Zilberstein applied what the Chikrei Lev says elsewhere where he permits that which is forbidden to avoid a bigger prohibition. The same applies here. Also, since it is a great mitzva to prevent a Jew from intermarrying it would be permitted for the mother to have the tattoo placed on her child. This was especially true because the tattoo of the Magen Dovid was an image, not written with letters.

Amen – An Abundance in All Worlds

ויוסף הוא השליט על הארץ הוא המשביר לכל עם הארץ (מב ו)



The Shelah writes regarding the virtue of answering amen as a means to opening the gates of blessing (Maseches Tamid, 80): "And one who concentrates on each and every brachah that emerges from the one making a brachah, and answers amen with kavanah as is the din, causes much holiness Above, and brings down an influence of abundance and good to all the worlds, because he opens the Upper Source, the mekor mayim chaim, just like one opens a well

to water all that needs watering. And a Voice descends from Above and announces that all this good and happiness is caused by so and so, the servant of the Holy King."

An allusion to this can be derived from the passuk - " **וַיוסף הַוא הַשליט עַל הַארץ**" : the acronym of this passuk is numerically equivalent to **'אמן'** 91 to teach you that the merit of answering amen is "the mashbir lechol am ha'aretz."

V'Chol Maaminim - "Do This" and Be Spared from Decrees

ויאמר אלהם יוסף ביום השלישי זאת עשו וחיו מב: יח



The Chida explains: In this passuk we find an allusion to the words of Chazal (Koheles Rabbah 5 6): "Three things annul bad decrees, and they are: tefillah, tzedakah, teshuvah." The word **זאת** is numerically equivalent to **קול** tefillah, **ממון** tzedakah and **צום** teshuvah. If "zos ta'asu", you do this, then every bad decree that is cast upon you will be nullified, and "you will live."

Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages

Whoever learns extra Torah not in a designated time set for learning gets a thousand times the reward for it. (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 6:14)

Bedikas Chometz Is Like the Search for the Goblet

ויחפש בגדול החל ובקטן כלה וימצא הגביע באמתחת בנימן (מד יב)



From the fact that the words "and he searched…and he found" are written next to each other, Chazal learn (Pesachim 7b) that only something that is searched for can be defined as a "metziah," a find. Based on this, we learn the obligation of bedikas chometz before Pesach from the words of the passuk (Shemos 12:19): "Shivas yamim se'or lo yimatzei beveischem" – which indicates that we need to search for the chometz before Pesach in order to find it and burn it.

The Rema (Orach Chaim 432 2) writes: "It is customary to place pieces of chometz in a place where the searcher will find them, so that the brachah [al biur chometz] should not be in vain." Many have asked about this custom: Can't the searcher easily find out where the pieces were placed? How does he carry out the mitzvah of bedikas chometz with this search?

The Tchebiner Rav brings beautiful answer to this question: As noted, the obligation of bedikas chometz is derived from the "search" described in this passuk. In this search, the one searching knew that the goblet was in Binyamin's satchel, because he put it there. Likewise, the 'search' for chometz that we learn about from him can be fulfilled in a way that the searcher knows where the chometz is.



Parsha Pshetel – Rabbi Yankie Shechter

ויסר פרעה את טבעתו מעל ידו ויתן אתה על יד יוסף וילבש אתו בגדי שש וישם רביד הזהב על צוארו 41:42 ***"Paroah removed his ring from his hand and put it on Yosef's hand, had him dressed in garments of fine linen and put the golden chain around his neck."***

Yosef went from languishing in prison, to receiving the royal ring of Paroah and being clothed with royal linen clothing and a gold chain being placed around his neck. Why does the Torah need to tell us details of Yosef's clothing? Why didn't the Torah just tell us that Yosef became the viceroy in Mitzrayim – that is really all that matters? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic and support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.



ויסר פרעה את טבעתו– רש"י 41:42 – ***"The giving of the king's ring is a sign for the receiver of the ring that he is to be second to the king, regarding his position of greatness."***

ויסר פרעה את טבעתו מעל ידו ר' שמשון רפאל הירש- 41:42 Paroah told Yosef that he made him ruler over all of the land of Mitzrayim, for the welfare of the whole land. As a sign of this, he removed his ring from his hand and placed it on Yosef's hand. A ring is a distinctive mark of human activity, a crowning of the hand. By putting his ring on Yosef's hand, Paroah made him his representative – he transformed Yosef's hand into his hand.

רבינו יואל – וילבש אתו בגדי שש *"And he clothes Yosef with linen clothing."* 41:42. Who clothed Yosef?

It was Hakodosh Boruch Hu Who clothed him – for it was Hakodosh Boruch Hu Who gave Yosef this position of great power and honour.

וילבש אתו בגדי שש 41:42 **בן איש חי** "And he donned him with **בגדי שש**. The name **יוסף** is the Gematria of 156 which is equal to the Gematria of the Shem Havayah 6 times (26x6=156). That is why Yosef was Zoche to the clothing of **שש** – six. Yosef had a great Nisoyon with the wife of Potifar. His Yetzer Hara was working diligently in an attempt to convince Yosef to sin with her. Yosef overpowered his Yetzer Hara and did not sin with her. Yosef turned his Yetzer Hara into good, meaning that he used both of his Yetzers, his Yetzer Hatov and his Yetzer Hara, in his Avodas Hashem. The Gematria of **יצר** is equal to **300 ש**. Being that Yosef used both of his Yetzers in his Avodas Hashem, he was Zoche to clothing of **שש** .

וילבש אתו בגדי שש - מהר"י שטייף. **שש** is a Remez to the **ששה סדרי משנה** – that in the Zechus that Yosef learned the **ששה סדרי משנה** from Yaakov Avinu, he was Zoche to the **בגדי שש** the royal garments.

Now we can understand why the Torah gives us details of what apparel Yosef was given. The Torah is telling us that it is not enough to perform Mitzvos and not sin. Rather we must also do them in the proper manner. Hakodosh Boruch Hu takes everything into account. Did we perform the Mitzvah with joy, with desire, or did we do so with resentment? We must know that our attitudes in our service to Hashem is a key ingredient. If one has a good attitude and puts as much into the Mitzvah as he can, that shows all the more devotion to Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and one will be rewarded accordingly. If one does the Mitzvos, and refrains from sin, but does not do so with the proper attitude, while he will receive reward for what he did do, he will be missing much.

Yosef put everything he had into his Avodas Hashem. The Torah stresses all of the items that Yosef received, for he deserved each one for what he did. When one is faced with a challenge to transgress a sin and refrains from doing so, that is a Kiyum of that Lo Saseh. Yosef Hatzaddik faced a daunting challenge. Yosef rose to the challenge using his Yetzer Hatov and Yetzer Hara and said that he will not sin. Yosef knew that refraining from this sin may cause him much Tza'ar in the future, but he was prepared to endure all the pain for the sake of Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

It was in the Zechus of Yosef Hatzaddik that the entire world received nourishment. We must seek to emulate Yosef Hatzaddik. We must serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu with every fibre of our being. Our service to Hashem is not meant to be perfunctory, but rather we must do so with the recognition that it is what brings nourishment to ourselves and to the rest of the world. May we be Zoche to rise to our own challenges, to refrain from sin, and serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu in the most optimal manner.

The Jew Who Loved the Mitzvah of Hahnasas Orchim



Reb Eliezer, the father of the great Baal Shem Tov, loved performing the Mitzvah of Hachnasas Orchim, welcoming guests. He used to send people out to look for anyone who needed a place to eat, so they could come to his house and have a warm meal.

Before sending guests on their way, he would give them a package of food so they wouldn't get hungry on the road before they got to their destination, and he would also give them gifts, so they had

everything they needed. Hashem saw how exceptionally he did the Mitzvah and decided to test him so he could earn a great reward.

The Satan jumped at the chance, and said, "I'll go test him!" But Eliyahu HaNavi said, "Perhaps it is better if I go."

Hashem Allowed Eliyahu HaNavi to Test Reb Eliezer

Hashem allowed Eliyahu HaNavi to test Reb Eliezer. It was Shabbos afternoon when Eliyahu HaNavi appeared at his door. Eliyahu HaNavi was disguised as a very poor man. He was holding a walking stick and wearing a backpack, and he gave the impression that he was being Mechalel Shabbos, desecrating Shabbos, by carrying in a place without an Eiruv. Eliyahu HaNavi knocked at the door, and after he was welcomed, said "Gut Shabbos," and entered Reb Eliezer's house. Reb Eliezer was very careful not to embarrass his guests and always tried to make them comfortable. He controlled himself and didn't say anything about his guest being Mechalel Shabbos.

He made a great effort to serve Shalosh Seudos with happiness, and after Shabbos, he served the Melaveh Malkah Seudah to his guest. Reb Eliezer wouldn't hear of letting his guest leave at night, and insisted that he remain overnight. The next morning, Reb Eliezer gave the poor man a large package of food and a nice amount of Tzedakah, so he could buy himself some new clothes.

He didn't say a word about how the man was Mechalel Shabbos, and wished him farewell. It was then that the man revealed to Reb Eliezer that he was really Eliyahu HaNavi! "Hashem sent me to test you on the great Mitzvah of Hachnasas Orchim," he said. "Because you passed the test so well, and didn't embarrass me when I came to your door, Hashem will Bentch you with a very special child who will shine brightly in Klal Yisroel!"

Soon after, the benevolent Reb Eliezer had a child who grew up to be the famous Baal Shem Tov!

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld-*Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*

The Parsha begins **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר**

Pharaoh had a dream which disturbed him greatly. Eventually he called for Yoseph, who he was told was someone who could interpret dreams as his own interpreters did not do a good job. They release him from prison, and lo and behold, Yoseph does a great job of interpreting Pharaoh's dream. He was very pleased with the results, and it eventually leads to Yoseph Ha'Tzaddik becoming second in command.



What an ***amazing*** turn of events! If you think about it, here is Yoseph Ha'Tzaddik languishing in prison. Pharaoh has a dream, Yoseph is called to interpret the dream. Not only does Yoseph become a free man, but he is promoted to Viceroy of Egypt, one of the most powerful nations in the world!

The way that we learn this Parsha and the way we think is, isn't it amazing? The Medrash tells us that this is not the way to look at it. The Medrash says **קץ לחשך**. Explains the **Ohr Gedalyahu** pshat, that we are looking at it in the wrong way. The Medrash is telling us not to look at it that Pharaoh had the dream, and that caused Yoseph to be released. But, it is the other way round. Yoseph needed to get out of prison, **therefore** Pharaoh had the dream.

The way that we have to look at the events in the Torah and the events in our own lives, is that everything happens with a plan. The

Riboino shel olam plans everything. When we look at ourselves, we may say that we made a good business deal, or we made a great shidduch. All sorts of situations that occur. Isn't it amazing, I happened to be there and met this guy who told me about a business deal and "bang"- I made money. No, no, this is not how it works. It is the opposite, explains the Medrash. The Riboino shel olam wanted you to have the money, business deal or shidduch, therefore He engineered it in such a way as for you to get it. It is a totally different way of looking at life.

In Bnei B'rak a number of years ago it was a busy day, and all of a sudden there was some screaming from an old lady that had been run over by a bus.



The ambulances were called, and the medics came. Unfortunately, she was killed instantly. They were trying to figure out who she was, did anybody know her? There were no identifying documents to say who she was. Nobody knew where she came from. They put up signs and went around with loudspeaker trying to find out her identity. Nobody knew who she was. Shortly after, they went round the streets with loudhailers calling out a **מת מצוה**. ***Unbelievable.***

Thousands, upon thousands of people showed up for this Levyah, for a woman they didn't know. But it was a **מת מצוה** – she had no relatives. Just as the Levyah was finishing, an old lady starts running and gesticulating to the crowds, and they stop her and say "What are you doing?" She said, " I need to get to the Levyah, this lady was my friend." They said, "Oh, you know her, maybe you can give us some

information about her?" She said in front of thousands of people, "I will tell you. I met this lady in the Warsaw Ghetto. At that time, there were terrible thing going on. People were literally falling dead on the streets. It was a great danger to even attempt to collect the bodies and bury them. This lady risked her own life to carry out this important and dangerous duty of giving them a Kosher Jewish burial. Now I can see that the Riboino Shel olam has paid her back Middo K'negged Middo. Thousands of people have turned up, even though nobody knows her."

It is an amazing turn of events, but we must look at our own lives in a similar way. Chazal tell us that **חשך זו יון**. The Greeks wanted to uproot exactly this Hashgacho Pratis. The fact the the Riboino Shel Olam runs the world. This is why we light the Menorah. The purpose of lighting the Menorah in the Beis Hamikdosh was to prove to us and give us the *chizzuk* that Hashem runs the world, orchestrating everything that happens. It's not just random occurrences.

This is what this weeks Parsha tells us. The reason that Pharaoh had a dream, was because Hashem wanted Yoseph out of prison.

Have a wonderful **שבת** and a great **חנוכה** !

Parshah Thoughts - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Yosef took personal responsibility to distribute the food during the years of hunger (42:6). Why did he not just dole out the responsibility to others?

Rev Beinish Mandel, *zt"l*, quoted **Rav Refoel Shmuel Birnbaum**, who explained that Yosef understood what it meant to experience hunger. Therefore, he took care of this himself. He recognized the needs of the people, and he was the best one that could care for them.

Torah Sweets



"A year is made of opportunity-filled days." - After Yosef Hatzaddik spent ten years in jail, Hashem added two more years to his sentence. In the first words of this week's Parsha, the Pasuk (Bereishis 41:1) says "mikeitz shinasayim yamim," literally translated as "at the end of two years of days."

Just like our Sages teach that Sarah maximized her years (due to the repetition of the word "years" in the Pesukim) it seems to indicate a similar idea with Yosef and how he took advantage of every day of his life. Let us emulate Yosef's (and Sarah's) examples to also grab every day's opportunity to strive in becoming greater.



Reb Baruch of Mezibuzh, OB"M, was raised in the home of the saintly Reb Pinchas of Koritz. Even after Reb Baruch married and established a home of his own, he'd often visit Reb Pinchas. On one such visit, Reb Baruch lay asleep in Reb Pinchas' home. "Gather around Reb Baruch's bed," Reb Pinchas told the members of his household, "and I will show you something you've never seen before." The family stood near Reb Baruch's bed and watched as Reb Pinchas approached the mezuzah on the doorpost and covered it with his hand. Reb Baruch immediately began to stir. Reb Pinchas then removed his hand from the mezuzah, and

immediately Reb Baruch resumed sleeping peacefully. Reb Pinchas repeated this "experiment" a few of times with the same results. "See how great is Reb Baruch's holiness," Reb Pinchas said. "Even in his sleep he is not distracted for a moment from his strong attachment to Hashem!"

Comment: We see from this story how Tzaddikim are always connected to Hashem, even during their sleep! When Yosef Hatzaddik was summoned to Pharoah to explain the dreams that he had in our Parsha, he gave all of his credit to Hashem, relating that Hashem was the One Who gave him all of his insights and interpretations, not himself. He was always thinking of the Creator, and that nothing comes from our own intuition. Let's remember that it is Hashem guiding us in everything we do.

Vedibarta Bam - A Compilation of Torah Insights in Question & Answer Format By Moshe Bogomilsky

"ותרב משאת בנימן ממשאת כלם חמש ידות" ***"And Binyamin's portion was greater than the portions of all of them fivefold."*** **(43:34)**

In the *Al Hanissim* prayer, the word *"yad"* — "hand" — is mentioned five times: " **מָסַרְתָּ גִּבּוֹרִים בְּיַד חַלָּשִׁים וְרַבִּים בְּיַד מְעַטִּים וּטְמֵאִים בְּיַד טְהוֹרִים וּרְשָׁעִים בְּיַד צַדִּיקִים וְזֵדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ** " — ***"You delivered the mighty into the hand of the weak, the many into the hand of the few, the impure into the hand of the pure, the wicked into the hand of the righteous, and wanton sinners into the hand of those who occupy themselves with Your Torah."***

A hint for this may be found in the *pasuk* "Binyamin's portion was *chameish yadot* — *five hands* (times) — as much as theirs" (43:34).(**ר' נפתלי מראפשיץ זצ"ל**)

"שבו שברו לנו מעט אכל" ***"Go back buy us some food."*** **(43:2)**

A hint to forty-four [candles] is in Yaakov's command to his sons.

The word "*lanu*" (**לנו**) has the numerical value of eighty-six. The word "*shivru*" (**שברו**) also means to break. Thus, Yaakov was telling them "*shivru lanu*" — "break the word *'lanu'* [in half], and add to the half (forty-three) *'me'at ochel'* — the numerical value of the letter *'alef'* (**א**) which is *'me'at'* — least in numerical value among the letters of the word *'ochel'* (**אכל**)" — the total is forty-four. (**פרדס יוסף בשם אוהל מועד ח"א**)

"ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים" ***"And it came to pass at the end of two full years." (41:1)***

According to *halachah,* the *Menorah* is placed on the left side of the doorpost, opposite the *mezuzah*, which is on the right. In the *Pasuk* **ויהי מקץ שנתים**, the word **שנתים** is an acronym for **שמאל נרות תדליק , ימין מזוזה** (On the left kindle the candles, on the right place the mezuzah). (**שלטי הגבורים**)

Vedibarta Bam

"וחמש את ארץ מצרים" ***"And he shall prepare the land of Egypt."*** **(41:34)**

According to the Midrash, the Syrians-Greeks forbade the Jews to have a calendar based on the lunar system so that they would be unable to observe *Rosh Chodesh*. They also wanted the Jews to cease observing *milah* — circumcision — and *Shabbat*. The word "*chimeish*" (**חמש**) — "prepare" — is an acronym for these three edicts. The "*chet*" is for "*Chodesh*" (**חודש**) — month — the "*mem*" is for "*milah*" (**מילה**) — circumcision — and the "*shin*" is for *Shabbat* (**שבת**).

These three *mitzvot* are conduits for Hashem's presence to be among the Jewish people. Cognizant of what these mitzvot accomplish, Yosef wanted to make sure that even when the Jews would be in exile, Hashem's presence should be in their midst. Therefore, as the first Jew to go into exile, he paved the way for them by putting a special emphasis on observing the three *mitzvot* hinted in the word "*chimeish*" (**חמש**). (**ראש דוד להחיד"א ועי' בני יששכר חדש כסלו מאמר י"ג**)

It is interesting to note that from Yosef's descent to Egypt until the Jews left Egypt there was a total of 232 years. (The interval from Yaakov's coming to Egypt until the redemption was 210 years, and Yosef was separated from Yaakov for 22 years.)

The numerical value of the words "*Yehi ohr*" (**יהי אור**) — "Let there be light" (*Bereishit* 1:3) — is 232. Thanks to Yosef's efforts for 232 years in behalf of these three *mitzvot* to assure that the Divine presence was with the Jewish people while they are in exile, they merited years later that "*Yehi* ohr" — "Let there be light" — the light of *Chanukah*. (**בני יששכר**)

"קמ"ו פסוקים" *"There are 146 pesukim in Parshat Mikeitz."*

The names of Hashem are an expression of His attributes. The holy four letter Name the Tetragramaton (**י-ה-ו-ה**) connotes *Rachamim* - Mercy. The Name *E-l* (**א-ל**) connotes *Chesed* - kindness, as King David says (Psalms 52:3) "Chesed *E-l kol hayom*" — "The kindness of Hashem is all day long."

The word **חנוכה** together with the two Holy Names (**א-ל, י-ה-ו-ה**) add up to 146. As a hint that the miracles of *Chanukah* were effectuated by His Holy Names, the Parshah in which *Chanukah* always occurs contains 146 *pesukim*. (**בני יששכר**)

Vedibarta Bam

"ותיבות אלפים כ״ה" *"There are 2025 words in Parshat Mikeitz."*

Throughout the Torah, the number of *pesukim* in the *parshah* is written at the end of every *parshah*.

At the end of *Parshat Mikeitz*, besides the number of *pesukim*, we are also told that the *parshah* contains 2,025 words.

Why is it necessary to know the number of words?

Parshat Mikeitz is usually read during the week of *Chanukah*. The 2,025 words in the *parshah* can serve as a hint for the *Yom Tov* of *Chanukah*. During *Chanukah* we light candles for eight nights. The *mitzvah* can be fulfilled with only one candle each night for the entire household.

The word for candle is (נר) which has the gematriah of 250. Eight times 250 equals 2,000. The event of lighting candles starts on the 25th day in the month of *Kislev*. Thus, 2,025 alludes to the 25th of Kislev and eight candles. (תורה תמימה)

Fascinating Insights- Rabbi Yehoshua Alt Historical Hijackings

A hijacking that targeted Jews took place in 1970. On September 6, 1970, **R' Yitzchak Hutner**, his daughter, and son-in-law R' Yonasan David were on a flight from Eretz Yisrael to New York that was hijacked by Palestinian terrorists. The terrorists freed the non-Jewish passengers and held the Jewish passengers hostage.

R' Hutner was held alone in an isolated location while Jews around the world prayed for his safe release. In the United States, there was talk about raising money to ransom R' Hutner, but **R' Yaakov Kamenetsky** ruled against the move. Although there is a halachic basis for paying an exorbitant sum to save a great Torah leader, R'

Yaakov ruled that this applies only during peacetime, and Israel's ongoing struggle with terrorism constitutes war.



There were young children travelling alone on this flight—ten-year-old Yosef Trachtman and eight-year-old Tziporah Moran. As soon as passengers realized the plane was being hijacked, R' Hutner's two students on the flight—Yaakov Drillman who later became the Rosh Yeshiva of Beis Yosef Navordok and Meir Fund who later became the Rav of Beis Medrash Sheves Achim—moved from their own seats to sit next to the two unaccompanied children.

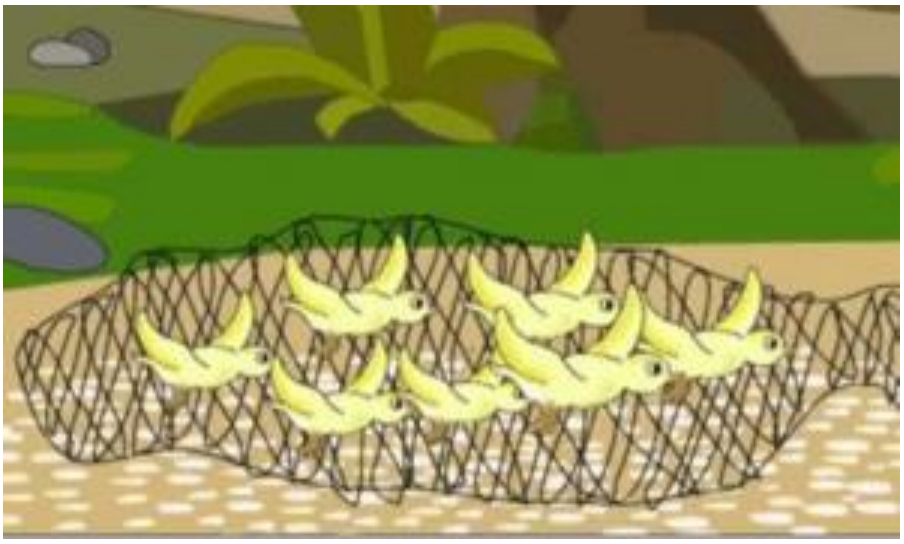
Eight-year-old Tziporah was carrying documents from both the United States and Israel. Yaakov Drillman knew that signs of Israeli citizenship would put the girl in danger. He therefore ripped her Israeli documents into tiny shreds and swallowed them.

Here is another anecdote. When Chacham Yosef Harari-Raful, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Ateret Torah, was given a cup of water on Erev Shabbos, on this hijacked flight, he dipped his shirt into it to cleanse his clothing, in order to do something l'kavod Shabbos, for the honour of Shabbos!

Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer once said, "If someone would come and tell me that the Chazon Ish is Moshiach, I would believe it!"

When the **Chazon Ish** heard this, he smiled and said, "Oy! See how badly Rav Isser Zalman wants Moshiach to come!"

Jewish Education Program [JEP] Together We Can!



"We are all one man's sons…" (42:11)

*Once, there was a flock of doves that flew in search of food. After flying for a long time, they found some rice scattered beneath a tree. All the doves landed and began to eat. Suddenly a net fell over them. They were all trapped. The doves desperately fluttered their wings trying to get out, but to no avail. The leader of the doves had an idea. He advised all the doves to fly up **together**. He said that there was strength in unity. Each dove picked up a portion of the net and together they flew off carrying the net with them. The hunter looked up in astonishment but could not catch them. The doves were saved.*

A man was on his deathbed. He wanted to teach his sons a very important lesson before he died. He called his sons together and gave each of them a stick. He asked them to break the stick in half which they did easily. Then he gave each of them a bundle of sticks that was tied together.

He asked his sons to break the sticks, but they could not. He told his sons, if they go their independent ways, as symbolized by the solitary twig, then they won't be as strong. However, if they are unified, as symbolized by the bundle of sticks, then they would be strong. There was strength in unity.

There was a world-wide famine. Yaakov sent his sons to Egypt, the only country that had plentiful food. The Egyptian government had so much that they even sold it to others. Yosef, who was now second

in command to Pharaoh, accused his brothers of being spies. Yosef's brothers did not recognize him. They said that they were not spies and they had only come to buy food for their family. They said, "We are all one man's sons…". The **Ramban** explains what they told Yosef. They said that we are all brothers. Our father did not want us to separate from each other. Therefore, he sent us all, <u>together</u> to buy food rather than sending just one of us with some servants.

Rav Alter Henach Leibowitz zt"l questions Yaakov's actions. Each brother was so strong that he could have brought back all the needed food by himself. It wasn't <u>necessary</u> for Yaakov to send all ten brothers. Furthermore, it was <u>a bad idea</u> to send all the brothers. Had only brother gone to Egypt, the remaining brothers would have been able to remain with Yaakov, learning Torah from him. They would have continued to grow spiritually. Why did Yaakov sacrifice all that Torah learning?

Rav Leibowitz zt"l says we see from here the importance of *achdus*. Yaakov felt that the unity of the brothers would be strengthened if they would all go on this mission together. Yaakov felt that this unity was more important (at this time) than the growth in spirituality and the Torah learning that would have been gained by the brothers who remained behind.

Klal Yisroel has strength in unity. Regardless of what part of the world we come from, regardless of our different customs, and regardless of how observant we are, we are all am echad, one nation! We have strength in unity! Our combined prayers, our combined mitzvos, our feelings of love and peace for each other, make us so strong.

It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive. Forgive everybody.

Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky - Mechiras Yosef

The story of Mechiras Yosef begs so many obvious questions. Why did Yosef not send a message to his father that he was alive and well once he became viceroy? Why did he torment his brothers and hence his father for an extended period of time? Most of all how could the Shivtei Kah the Kedoshim and Tehorim do what they did to their brother?

Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky answers that the Shevatim truly believed Yosef deserved to be killed and their treatment of him was not borne out of any desire to kill him. The greatest proof is that when Reuven raised the idea of throwing him into a pit and convinced the others that justice would still be served, they instantly agreed. And when Yehuda suggested they spare him and sell him to slavery, again there was no objection. Their treatment of Yosef was a sacred duty carried out with pure intentions and without a shred of personal bias.

Yosef knew this and because of it he didn't contact his father. Since the Shvatim believed he needed to be put to death, upon hearing that he rose to prominence in Mitztrayim they would have immediately gone down to kill him. For this reason he couldn't reveal himself to his brothers. His treatment of them had one purpose in mind, to convince them of the error of their ways. Only when he heard them say (Mikeitz 44:16), "Elokim Matza Avon Avdecha", Hashem has found wrongdoing in us, only then was it finally safe after all these years to say, "Ani Yosef!"

Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.

How Did All Paroh's Interpreters Miss An Easy One?



Paroh's dream about fat cows and skinny ones, healthy stalks and wind beaten ones, seem obviously to be referring to feast and famine. How is it that the best they could come up with was something far off like Paroh's seven daughters?

The Satmar Rov in Divrei Yoel answers that the dream showed seven years of famine. In reality the famine stopped after two years when Yaakov came to Mitzrayim and were eventually made up centuries later in the time of Yechezkel.

The Ramban (Devarim 18:9) writes that Mazalim and Sheidim can tell the future but only the immediate future and not the distant future. Therefore, Paroh's Chartumim only saw two years of famine and could not reconcile this with the dream of seven bad years. Only Yosef, who interpreted with Hashem's help, could see how the whole dream would be played out.

Torah Thought

A bachur* from Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer's yeshiva once said an innovative Torah thought. *Reb Isser Zalman requested mashkeh, and the entire yeshiva drank lechayim because of their joy from this bachur's discovery in Torah. That bachur remembers studying diligently for the next half year because of this episode.



Spies Don't Drink Wine

וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ (43:34) When Yosef invited the Shvatim to dine with him upon their second arrival, they drank wine with him. Rashi says this was the first time since the sale of Yosef twenty two years prior, that either Yosef or the Shvatim drank wine. Yosef drank wine because he had his brothers with him, but why did the Shvatim allow themselves to indulge in wine when nothing changed to their knowledge with regard to Yosef?

The Iturei Torah says that the Shvatim were still under the accusation of being spies. A spy cannot allow himself to become intoxicated as he must always be on guard--careful of what he says and how he acts in order not give himself away. Had the Shvatim refused to drink with Yosef, they would be furthering his suspicion. For this reason, they went along and agreed to drink wine.

Vedibarta Bam

ותכלינה שבע שני השבע...ותחלינה שבע שני הרעב לבוא כאשר אמר יוסף *"The seven years of abundance ended...and the seven years of famine began to come as Yosef had said."* (41:53-54)

Why does it state "as Yosef said" regarding the seven years of famine, but not in relation to the seven years of abundance?

The non-Jewish world hates the Jew and envies his success. Thanks to Yosef, the people in Egypt experienced great affluence, but they did not want to give credit to a Jew. When the troubles started, suddenly everyone began accusing the Jews of causing the Egyptians' suffering. Alas, this is a recurrent pattern in Jewish history .

Vedibarta Bam

"ויכר יוסף את אחיו והם לא הכרהו" ***"Yosef recognized his brothers but they did not recognize him."*** **(42:8)**

Yaakov and Yosef looked exactly alike (Rashi 37:3). Why didn't they recognize him as their lost brother since he resembled their father?

It is true that Yaakov and Yosef looked alike, but there was a big age difference. Yosef was now only 39 years old. Yaakov married at the age of 84 and was now 130 years old. The brothers had never seen their father as a young man. Therefore, though Yosef's countenance now was exactly the same as Yaakov's when he was 39 years old, he did not resemble their father, now 90 years older. (**שפתי צדיק**)

V'halachtah B'drachav - The Ways of Hashem



Rabbi Aryeh Levin once described how when he came came to *Eretz Yisroel*, he went to visit **Rav Kook**, and they would talk together in learning.

One day after *davening Minchah*, Rav Kook went out, as was his custom, to stroll a bit in the fields and gather his thoughts, and Rav Levin went along. As they were walking, Rav Levin plucked a branch off a tree, and Rav Kook was taken aback. He gently said, "In all my days I have taken care never to pluck a blade of grass or a flower needlessly, when it had the ability to grow or blossom. The Sages teach us that there is not a single blade of grass here on earth, which does not have a heavenly force (or angel) above it telling it to grow! Every sprout and leaf of grass says something and conveys

some meaning. Every stone whispers some inner hidden message in the silence. Every creation utters its song in praise of the Creator."

Rav Levin later said, "Those words, spoken from a pure and holy heart, engraved themselves deeply on my heart. From that time on I began to feel a strong sense of compassion for everything, and I realized that if each blade of grass and every stone has meaning to it, then even more so does each person!"



"The principal of the eternity of Torah bestows upon us the promise that it is possible to study Torah and to observe it not only at home or in the ghetto but everywhere in the world, be it the modern home, the laboratory, the campus or the industrial plant, in public as well as in private life. " ~~ Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik.

Besamei HaTorah …Beneath the Surface R' Shmuel Winzelberg

וימהר יוסף כי נכמרו רחמיו... ויבקש לבכות ויבא החדרה ויבך שמה

Then Yosef rushed because his compassion had been stirred… he wanted to weep, so he went into the room and he wept there. *(43:30)*

Rebbe Zalman Sorotzkin, author of *"Aznayim LaTorah"* says that Yosef was driven to tears because through his conversation with his brothers he was informed that Yitzchak had passed away. He went to his room to cry and mourn for him. How did Yosef learn this?

Yosef asked his brothers (43:27): " **השלום אביכם הזקן** ", "Is your elderly father at peace?", hinting with the word " **אביכם** ", "your father", to Yaakov Avinu, and the word " **הזקן** ", "elderly", to Yitzchak. The brothers replied (43:28) **שלום לעבדך לאבינו**, "Your servant our father is at peace", but they did not mention elderly at all, so from this Yosef understood that Yitzchak *Avinu* had passed away. (*Umatok HaOhr*)

Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages



There is a story told about **Rav Aharon Yehuda Leib Shteinman, *zt"l***, that after his *Rebbetzin* passed away, there was a small change in the Rav's *Shabbos Seudah*. For years, Rav Shteinman would always request from his wife a second serving of fish at the *Seudah*, which he stopped doing after his wife's passing. Even when the family members would offer him a second portion, he refused to accept it.

When asked why he stopped doing this, Rav Shteinman explained, "The truth is, I don't really enjoy eating fish, but I would always ask for a second serving out of respect and appreciation for my wife, who worked so hard to prepare the fish every *Erev Shabbos*."

It was out of his desire to give her satisfaction that he devotedly asked for extra fish each week for over 60 years!

לע"נ: ר' אהרן יהודה לייב בן ר' נח צבי שטיינמאן זצ"ל

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages



Once, one of the students of the ***Baal Shem Tov*** was disturbed by a mosquito in the middle of the night. Instead of getting frustrated, he realized that it was sent to him from *Shamayim*, as nothing happens by itself. He sat up to wash his hands, and the *Negel Vasser* that was set up on the floor next to his bed spilled all over the floor.

Again, instead of getting upset, he said that this was all planned from Above. He washed his hands with the remaining water and got out of bed to see what damage the water had caused. However, instead of damage, he saw that the water had put out a hot coal that was burning on the floor, near his clothes. If he hadn't spilled the water, his clothing would have caught fire, and his entire house could have burned down. He thanked and praised *Hashem* for the miracle.

On his way back to bed, a heavy rafter fell onto his bed, right where he was lying just moments before, and had he been there, he would have gotten hurt. He thanked *Hashem* for the two miracles, and in the morning, he told the *Baal Shem Tov* what had happened.

The *Baal Shem Tov* said that he merited these miracles because he kept in mind that everything comes from *Hashem*, and that nothing is a coincidence!

A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love.

SHABBOS STORIES FOR PARSHAS MIKEITZ

The Muddy Path to Paradise By Asharon Baltazar



A certain chassidic rebbe had a custom of visiting various Jewish communities, where he would stay in the homes of his wealthy chassidim. In one of the cities that the rebbe would visit, there lived a wealthy chassid. Although he considered himself a follower of the rebbe and owned a large mansion with many rooms, whenever he heard of the rebbe's arrival in his city, he made sure that his mansion was locked.

Well aware of his rebbe's tendency to stay at the homes of the wealthy, where there was ample room to welcome the masses who clamored to consult with him, the chassid would hurriedly leave his mansion, disguising his aversion to hosting as a last-minute business trip. He preferred that *his* house be left alone.

The suddenness of the rebbe's appearance in his city caught the chassid, along with his wide-open mansion, off guard. Left with no choice, he reluctantly surrendered his house so that it could serve as the rebbe's accommodation.

A few days later, the rebbe asked the chassid a very frank question: "Tell me the truth, are you not happy with the fact that I am here?"

"Nonsense, Rebbe. You are my most esteemed guest," replied the chassid earnestly. "I am thrilled to be hosting you and delighted that you chose to stay at my house. The problem I have does not lie with you but rather with the chassidim.

You see, when you come, they come. And when they come, along comes the muck from the streets. The very thought of all that grime on my clean floors and furniture just horrifies me. "It was never because of you, G-d forbid. But the idea of the mud has always been off-putting to me."It was never because of you, G-d forbid. But the idea of the mud has always been off-putting to me."

Instead of addressing the man's complaint directly, the rebbe responded with a story:

"There once lived a pharmacist who, as an avid sinner, managed to transgress almost all of the Torah's prohibitions. After a long life of pleasure, the pharmacist was greeted in heaven by the horde of prosecuting angels that he managed to create throughout his lifetime of sins. Their loud, emphatic accusations and protests challenged the heavens to find a sliver of virtue for his poor soul.

"Suddenly, an angel appeared before the heavenly court and began to tell an account of kindness that transpired in the pharmacist's youth: It once happened that a man's wagon, overloaded with merchandise, keeled over in the road. The horse was pinned to the ground and the wagon driver, unable to raise the upended wagon by himself, stood by helplessly as he waited for aid that did not seem to come.

"However, continued the angel, the young pharmacist happened to be traveling down the same road. And when the wagon driver's misfortune met his eyes, the pharmacist stopped to assist the grateful man. Only after the two successfully managed to turn the overloaded cart so that it was upright on its wheels, did the pharmacist continue on his journey.

"Immediately after the angel concluded his story, a horse and wagon overloaded with merchandise were placed on the empty pan dangling from the supernal scale, which had been tilted heavily on the side of sins. Helped by the new weight, the balance shifted towards the centre. But the lifetime of sins still outweighed the single good deed.

"'We demand that the mud and soil be added to the scale as well,' chorused the good angels. 'After all, he had to extract the wagon from the muck, didn't he?' But the prosecuting angels vehemently insisted that the pharmacist had nothing to do with the mud, which had no direct relevance to him. The heavenly court therefore decided to send the pharmacist's soul back to this world to determine whether mud holds any significance for his soul. If so, mud would be placed on the heavenly scale

on the side of merits. But if not …"

The rebbe paused his story and fixed his gaze on the chassid. "You possess the soul of that pharmacist, and your evil inclination is working overtime not to allow that mud into your house."

Upon hearing these words, the chassid ran to the door and began pleading to the chassidim waiting outside. "Come in, come in," he cried. "Come as you are and greet our honored guest."

The Desire of a Holocaust Survivor to Continue Her Dead Family's Heritage by Jack E. Rahmey.

There's an amazing story from the book "Small Miracles for the Jewish Heart" that took place in the early 1900's. It became common for Eastern European Jews, tired of pogroms, poverty and despair, to send their children to the United States, where there were opportunities for a better life. Because it was very expensive, the parents usually sent their children one at a time as the money for passage became available. The children would stay with relatives in America until the rest of the family arrived.

In 1930, Anya Gold, the oldest of eight children, was sent by her parents to the United States. Having saved only enough money for one ticket, her parents told her they would all soon follow, but they never did. It took them years to accumulate enough money, but by that time, the Holocaust had already begun. Anya was raised by her

aunt in Baltimore. Eventually, around the year 1946, a few stray survivors from her hometown in Poland arrived in Baltimore and brought with them the news that she dreaded to hear: Her entire family had been wiped out.

It was hard for her to go on. She knew, however, that the best way to commemorate her family's legacy was to build a family of her own. She wanted to get married, have a lot of children, and name them after her family members.

Shortly afterward, she married her wonderful husband, Saul, and they began to build their lives together. A couple of years went by, and they were still childless. The doctor informed them that there was a problem that would make it impossible for them to ever have children. They began to contemplate adoption, but Anya was hesitant. She had so hoped to raise her own children to continue her family's legacy.

Finally, they decided to adopt. The Jewish agency they contacted in New York told them that an infant had just been put up for adoption. They became very excited and travelled to New York. When they arrived, their hopes were shot down; the family had reconsidered and taken their baby back.

"We travelled all this way," they pleaded with the agency official. "Isn't there something else you can do for us?" The agent said, "Yes, we do have a wonderful little girl named Miriam, who is in desperate need of a home." Miriam was adorable, but she was already eight years old. Anya and Saul really wanted a newborn. Dejectedly, they returned home.

Another year passed with no prospects. They contacted many agencies across the United States, but an infant was very hard to find. Anya's intense longing for a child consumed her.

"Let's see if we can still adopt that little girl, Miriam," she told her husband. They called the agency, and the official said the girl was

not yet adopted. "Not too many people want a nine-year-old," she admitted. "But now there is a bit of a complication. Her little brother has been found in Europe and has joined her in our home for war orphans. The siblings are inseparable, and we promised them that they will be adopted together."

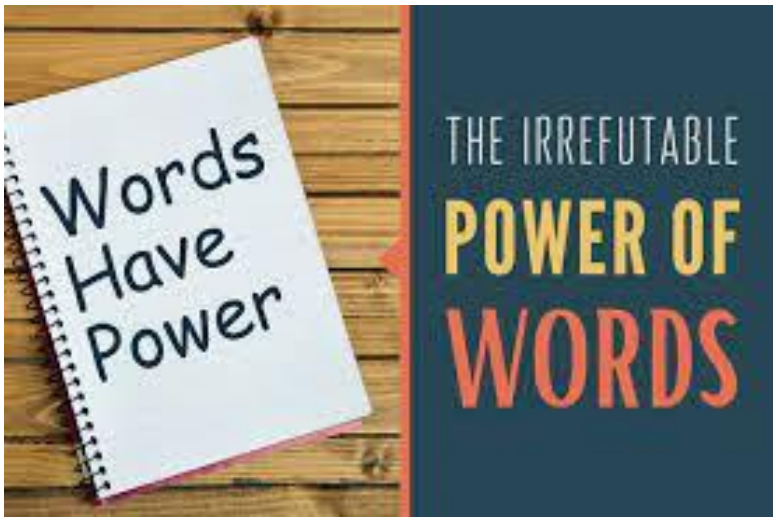


The couple went to New York and saw the children. Miriam had a sweet demeanour, and her six-year-old brother, Moshe, was adorable as well. Anya and Saul brought them home to Baltimore, happy to finally fill their home with children. Miriam looked around her new home. Suddenly, she pointed to a picture on the piano and asked Anya, "why do you have a picture of my grandma here?" Anya stared at the picture of her deceased mother. What was the child talking about? Miriam ran to her suitcase, took out a faded picture and showed it to Anya. "See?" she cried. "I have that picture, too. That's my grandma" Then she took out a picture of her mother. Anya was shocked to see that it was Sarah, her own sister!

Unknowingly, she had adopted her sister's two children! She did have the merit to continue her own family's legacy. Anya and Saul had a difficult life, but they clearly saw the Yad Hashem guiding them which brought them much comfort.

The most worth-while thing is to try to put happiness into the lives of others.

Being Careful of the Power Of The Words One Utters By Rabbi Shmuel Choueka



אִם־לֹא הֲבִיאֹתִיו אֵלֶיךָ וְהִצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים "If I don't bring Binyamin back, I will be a sinner forever." *(43:9)*

Yehudah wanted to convince Yaakov to allow Binyamin to go down to Egypt with them. Otherwise, the viceroy would not allow their other brother out of prison. Yehudah therefore told Yaakov, "If I don't bring back Binyamin I will be considered a sinner my whole life, including Olam Haba, the Next World."

The Gemara says that because of these words, Yehudah was not allowed into Olam Haba for many hundreds of years, until Moshe Rabeinu prayed fervently, and got Yehudah into Olam Haba.

We see from here how careful we have to be when using words, even about ourselves. Although Yehudah said these words for a noble purpose of reuniting the family, nevertheless, his words affected his future in a very drastic way.

We should never utter words which can have a dangerous effect on ourselves or on anybody, even when just joking or playing. Saying things like, "I could die from embarrassment," or, "I'm going to kill you for that," or, "You're dead," and the like, should be avoided at all costs.

Although we don't mean these things literally, words uttered have a powerful force. We should train ourselves to say words of berachah even when upset or angry. Many people from the old generation used

to say, "You should be blessed," or the like, when they got upset with that person.

This way, not only did they not say anything negative during an argument, but by saying nice things they made the arguments shorter. Think about this to train ourselves to do.

A Monument to Caring By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach

"I feel so terrible that I can't sleep at night," cried the widow to **Rabbi Aviezri Auerbach**, the rav of the Jewish community in Halberstat, Germany. "Not only did I lose my husband, but I couldn't afford to put a marble monument on his grave and had to settle for a simple gravel one."

The rabbi thought for a moment how he could comfort this broken widow so upset at not having properly honored her husband. In a flash of inspiration, he took a sheet of his rabbinical stationery and wrote on it a Will instructing his children to place on his own grave after his death a monument made of gravel and not of marble.

He then read this document to the heartsick widow and thus assured her that her husband's memory would suffer no dishonour.

The rabbi's instructions were faithfully followed when he passed away. When the residents of the city, Jews and non- Jews alike, expressed wonder at seeing such a simple monument atop the grave of such an illustrious spiritual leader, they learned what a Torah leader was ready to do to comfort a widow.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Peninim on the Torah - Va'ani Tefillah

פתח לבי בתורתך ובמצותיך תרדף נפשי

May my heart be wide open to your Torah, may my soul pursue Your mitzvos.

"Wide open" is explained by ***Horav Shimon Schwab, zl***, as a request that we are availed (and make use of) the opportunity to study every nuance and detail of our Torah.

Superficial knowledge is just that: superficial. One cannot appreciate the beauty and depth of Torah unless he plumbs its depths. Torah must be studied with unquenchable thirst, an insatiable hunger to know more and delve deeper.

Likewise, our desire to perform *mitzvos* should be on the level of *tirdof*, pursue, literally to run after and expend energy in order to perform *mitzvos*. This means that we should run after any and every opportunity which avails us a *mitzvah* which we can perform. Furthermore, when one runs, he exerts himself. Our pursuit of *mitzvos* should be on the scale that we exhaust all our energy in order to perform a *mitzvah*.

Fascinating Insights - Rabbi Yehoshua Alt

A Junior Senior

For many, as they reach old age, they wither. Others, however, just get better with age. They fulfil **עוד ינובון בשיבה דשנים ורעננים יהיו** , they will still be fruitful in old age, vigorous and fresh they will be. It has been said, "You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." In this way we can interpret **אל תשליכני זקנה לעת** , do not cast me off in old age.

If you keep an active life, you stay young. Someone once said, "Staying young means being willing to learn, evolve and be open to life."

Ever since the 1960s, **R' Dovid Kviat's** (1920–2009) hands would shake. Yet, he overcame this physical impediment and continued to write his own chidushim. However, very few people were able to decipher his handwriting, and therefore were unable to type them up.

Undeterred, R' Kviat was able to locate someone in Yerushalayim who could still read his writing. However, a few years before he died, R' Kviat's handwriting deteriorated further. Now, no one could decipher his handwriting—not even R' Kviat himself.

Undaunted, he continued to write, because writing helped him crystallize his Torah thoughts. It helped him further his understanding of the *sugya*. Then, someone suggested that he learn how to type on a computer. His initial reaction was that he was too old to learn a new skill. He was almost eighty and the shaking in his hands was significant, not to mention his eyesight was now quite poor. Nevertheless, he tried his hand at typing, and in a matter of a few days, he was typing a few thousand words per day. A few months and a few *sefarim* later, he called the person who taught him how to type and said, "I want a laptop!"

Pinnacle for the Prophet

The Tur writes that on Motzai Shabbos it is customary to mention Eliyahu Hanavi. The Baal Hamanhig explains the reason: because he will be the one to herald the geula ("redemption"), and the Gemara says that Eliyahu will not arrive on Erev Shabbos or Erev Yom Tov. Therefore we daven, now that Shabbos has passed and he is able to come, that he should come and herald the redemption.

The Aruch Hashulchan suggests that because Shabbos is **מעין עולם הבא**, a semblance of the Next World, it brings us great joy. The sadness we feel when it departs needs to be blunted. Singing songs

with inspiring words filled with hope for the redemption achieves that goal.

The Avudraham says the reason Eliyahu is associated with Motzai Shabbos is because chazal connect the proper observance of Shabbos with freedom from subjugation with geula. We therefore wait until after we have concluded a proper day of rest to beseech Hashem—"we have just faithfully observed Your Shabbos as You have commanded us. Now please, in that merit, send us Eliyahu Hanavi."

A Holocaust Love Story by Rabbi Yosef Wallis



A powerful true story of Jewish heroism.

Rabbi Yosef Wallis, director of Arachim of Israel, talks to Project Witness about his father, Judah Wallis, who was born and raised in Pavenitz, Poland.

While he was in Dachau, a Jew who was being taken to his death suddenly flung a small bag at my father, Judah Wallis. He caught it, thinking it might contain a piece of bread. Upon opening it, however, he was disturbed to discover a pair of *tefillin*. Judah was very frightened because he knew that were he to be caught carrying *tefillin*, he would be put to death instantly. So he hid the *tefillin* under his shirt and headed for his bunkhouse.

In the morning, just before the *appel* [roll call], while still in his bunkhouse, he put on the *tefillin*. Unexpectedly, a German officer appeared. He ordered him to remove the *tefillin*, noted the number on Judah's arm.

At the *appel*, in front of thousands of silent Jews, the officer called out Judah's number and he had no choice but to step forward. The German officer waved the tefillin in the air and said, "Dog! I sentence you to death by public hanging for wearing these."

Judah was placed on a stool and a noose was placed around his neck. Before he was hanged, the officer said in a mocking tone, "Dog, what is your last wish?"

"To wear my *tefillin* one last time," Judah replied.

"The officer was dumbfounded. He handed Judah the *tefillin*. As he put them on, he recited the verse that is said while the *tefillin* are being wound around the fingers: **וְאֵרַשְׂתִּיךְ לִי לְעוֹלָם, וְאֵרַשְׂתִּיךְ לִי בְּצֶדֶק וּבְמִשְׁפָּט וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים: וְאֵרַשְׂתִּיךְ לִי בֶּאֱמוּנָה, וְיָדַעַתְּ אֶת־ה׳** – I will betroth you to me forever and I will betroth you to me with righteousness and with justice and with kindness and with mercy and I will betroth you to me with fidelity, and you shall know G-d."

It is hard for us to picture this Jew with a noose around his neck, wearing *tefillin* on his head and arm – but that was the scene that the entire camp was forced to watch, as they awaited the impending hanging of the Jew who had dared to break the rule against wearing *tefillin*. Even women from the adjoining camp were lined up at the barbed wire fence that separated them from the men's camp, forced to watch this horrible sight.

As Judah turned to watch the silent crowd, he saw tears in many people's eyes. Even at that moment, as he was about to be hanged, he was shocked. Jews were crying! How was it possible that they still had tears left to shed? And for a stranger? Where were those tears coming from? Impulsively, in Yiddish, he called out, "*Yidden*, I am the victor. Don't you understand, I am the winner!"

The German officer understood the Yiddish and was infuriated. He said to Judah, "You dog, you think you are the winner? Hanging is too good for you. You are going to get another kind of death."

"Judah, my father, was taken from the stool and the noose was removed from his neck. He was forced into a squatting position and two huge rocks were placed under his arms. Then he was told that he would be receiving 25 lashes to his head – the head on which he had dared to put on his *tefillin*. The officer told him that if he dropped even one of the rocks, he would be shot immediately. Because this was such an extremely painful form of death, the officer advised him, "Drop the rocks now. You will never survive the 25 lashes to the head. Nobody ever does." Judah's response was, "No, I won't give you the pleasure."

At the 25th lash, Judah lost consciousness and was left for dead. He was about to be dragged to a pile of corpses , after which he would have been burned in a ditch, when another Jew saw him, shoved him to the side, and covered his head with a rag so people didn't realize he was alive.

Eventually, after he recovered consciousness fully, he crawled to the nearest bunkhouse that was on raised piles and hid under it until he was strong enough to come out under his own power. Two months later he was liberated.

During the hanging and beating episode, a 17-year-old girl had been watching the events from the women's side of the fence. After liberation, she made her way to Judah. She walked over to him and said, "I've lost everyone. I don't want to be alone any more. I saw what you did that day when the officer wanted to hang you. Will you marry me?"

My parents requested that the **Klausenberger Rebbe** perform the marriage ceremony. The Klausenberger Rebbe, whose *Kiddush Hashem* is legendary, wrote out a *kesubah* by hand from memory and married the couple. I have that handwritten *kesubah* in my possession to this day.



Rebbe Shaul Yedidyah of Modzitz *zt'l* always had a joyous smile on his face, even in Poland during the Holocaust. People asked him how he managed to be so happy, and why he isn't worried like everyone else.

He replied, "I'm also worried, only I keep my worries tied up and stored away. Once a day I take out my worries to look at them, and then I immediately tuck them away until the next day. That's how I am able to maintain a happy disposition…" (*Imrei Shaul*).

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

On Chanukah we read parashas Mikeitz, and there are indeed connections between the parashah and Chanukah.

Yosef advised Pharaoh to appoint (41:33) **איש נבון וחכם** a wise, clever person to store the grains during the seven years of plenty for the seven years of famine. But why does he need to be ,**נבון וחכם** wise to do that? Storing wheat doesn't seem so hard to do?

The answer is that when there's an abundance, people tend to be lax, and don't save every kernel. Only the wise can understand that there will be a time when every seed will be precious and that they should save up for that time.

This is read on Chanukah because we must remember that although now it's Chanukah, soon Chanukah will pass, and we will be back to navigating plain winter weekdays. So remember this now, draw as much *kedushah* as you can, so Chanukah will shine for you the entire year.

Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos

In the *tefilah* said after lighting the Shabbos candles we mention many important and great things. We ask Hashem to show favour to us and our family. We also ask for a good and long life, to be remembered for good and blessing, and that Hashem will shower us with many great *brachos*! May the *Shechinah* rest among us! Please Hashem let our children love You and fear You! Let them be people of truth, holy and attached to Hashem, illuminating the world with Torah and good deeds! (*Tefilah* said after *Hadlakas Neiros*)

The *Zohar* teaches us that all *brachos* flow from Shabbos. **The *Chayei Adam*** explains (*Hilchos Shabbos* 1:1) that the *kedushah* of Shabbos is carried over to each day of the week. This shows us that the more we honour Shabbos and delight in it, the more *brachos* we will have during the rest of the week!

L'Maaseh



Rav Aryeh Levine, *zt"l*, the *Tzadik* of Yerushalayim, cared deeply for those who were wrongly jailed and condemned to death by the British, and went great lengths to try and save them. Rav Aryeh once related to Yitzhak Agassi of Israel's Ministry of the Interior:

One of the underground fighters, a young man of Yerushalayim, was caught by the British and sentenced to death. Time was short, and as he generally did in such cases, Rav Aryeh made his way to the official quarters of the British high commissioner, the supreme officer in the land, to plead with him and spare the boy's life.

The guards at the gate, however, would not let Rav Aryeh in, stating that he had no official appointment and could not just come as he

pleases. Rav Aryeh thought hard about what to do, and finally came up with a plan. He went a good distance down the road and waited. He was not quite sure how long he waited for, but at last his patience was rewarded. He saw the high commissioner come out of his house and get into his limousine, to be driven off by his chauffeur with an escort of attendants.

Rav Aryeh went into the middle of the road, and laid down directly in the path of the approaching limousine. The driver of the limousine saw this and applied his brakes instantly, causing the large car too screech to a stop with just enough time to not hit the Rav. In great excitement, the high commissioner and his entourage came out of their vehicle. They asked, "What happened? Is anything the matter with you, Rabbi? Were you hit? Are you not feeling well?"

He told the high commissioner that he was desperately trying to speak with him about an important matter, but the guards refused to allow him to enter to see him, and he proceeded to explain about the young man who was soon about to lose his life and pleaded for the high commissioner to please intervene and save him.

The high commissioner was moved by Rav Aryeh's sincerity, and that very day he issued an order sparing the young man's life!

Parshah Pearls - Keeping Body and Soul Together,

רְדוּ שָׁמָּה וְשִׁבְרוּ לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת ***"... purchase from their corn, so that we shall live and not die"*** (42:2).

In time of famine, says the **P'ninei Torah**, it is forbidden, even for someone who is wealthy, to eat luxuriously, as that will evoke bitterness on the part of the starving people.

That is why Yaakov said ***'We will purchase food in sufficient quantity to keep ourselves alive, and no more'.***

The Jewish Weekly



The Torah in this week's Parsha, tells us, that Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. What does that mean? Why did they not recognize him? How did they not know it was him?

Perhaps, some will say that they never imagined their kid brother, who they sold to Egypt, would become the Second in Command of the entire country. However, when he asked about their younger brother, and then when Binyamin came down and he asked about their father and how is he feeling, showing much concern about their father, and then when seating them, he seats them in age order, how did they not catch on that this was Yosef!?!

R' Matityahu Solomon explains that they did not recognize him because Hashem did not want them to, because Hashem wanted the story to play out as it did. When Hashem does not want you to see, something could be right in front of your nose and you would not notice.

Chanukah, is just one example of this sort of miracle, the salvation was right in front of their eyes, it just needed the children of Matityahu the Kohen Gadol to realize that all they needed to do was start to fight the war, and Hashem just showed them success the entire way.

Friends, at times we feel lost, and things are simply not going the way they could, or the way we feel they should, whether it is

financially, emotionally, or spiritually. We must remember there is a solution sitting right under our nose, and at the right time, Hashem will open our eyes and we will see that it came at the perfect time and not a minute too early.

We need to daven to our Father in Heaven and beg Him to "open our eyes" and to have the intellect to understand all that is happening around us.



Some say that the oil they found was from the oil Yaakov Avinu used when he poured it on the Even Shesiya after he woke up from his dream, yet no one found it until Chanukah, simply because Hashem did not want them to find it until the right time.

Friends, we need to remember this, whenever we are in dark times, we need to remember that there is an end, it is perfectly planned, this long exile has an end date, we may not know it but it could be right there in front of our nose.

So may Hashem open our eyes to always see His Yeshuot V' Nechamot and let's pray with all our hearts, for the recovery of all the sick and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual Shabbat, happy Chanukah and Chodesh Tov.

One of the secrets of a long and fruitful life is to forgive everybody everything every night before you go to bed.

SEFAS TAMIM
FOUNDATION • Emphasizing Everyday Emes

Chizuk - Inspiration

וַיְצַו יוֹסֵף וַיְמַלְאוּ אֶת־כְּלֵיהֶם בָּר וְלָהָשִׁיב כַּסְפֵּיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־שַׂקּוֹ וְלָתֵת לָהֶם צֵדָה לַדָּרֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם כֵּן 42:25



The late **Brisker Rav, Reb Velvel** asked, "The brothers bought food from Yosef in Egypt during the famine in Eretz Yisrael. Yosef detained Shimon and sent the rest of the brothers on their way back to Yaakov with a request to bring Binyamin to Egypt. What prompted Yosef to return the money to his brothers that they rightfully paid him for the food they bought and place it back in their sacks?"

Reb Velvel answered, "Because he wanted to make sure that the brothers would return to Egypt." Someone present at Reb Velvel's Shiur asked him, "Wouldn't Yosef's brothers come back to Egypt anyway? Considering the famine, their need for more food would cause them to return. And besides, wasn't their brother Shimon taken captive? They would surely return to redeem him?"

Reb Velvel answered, "As the forbearers of the 10 tribes, we cannot begin to understand the depths of the brothers' faith in Hashem (Bitachon). Yosef thought that perhaps the brothers would not return and decide to ride out the famine, having Bitachon that Hashem would save them. Similarly, they would have Bitachon that

Hashem would eventually cause Shimon to be released from prison. However, Yosef was certain of the honesty and integrity of the brothers and knew one thing for sure: They would certainly come back to Egypt and return the money in their sacks that did not belong to them." (**Reb Shimon Schwab in "The Ethical Imperative" – Rabbi Nisson Wolpin**)

Etz Hachaim





A grandson of Harav Avrohom Ginechovsky זצ"ל remembers that when he was a child, he went together with his grandfather to visit someone. On their visit, their children were playing a game called 'pick up sticks'.

The way the game goes is that one holds the stack of sticks together in their hand, and then they open their hand and let them fall. The aim of the game is to pick them up one by one without moving any of the other sticks.

Rav Avrohom said to the young children who were playing together, "Do you know my dear kinderlach, what life lesson we can learn from this game?

Even if we are in a place where there are many people, it is crowded and very squishy, it is still possible not to be **פוגע** on another.

Va'ani Tefillah רצון יראיו יעשה

*'**He will do the will of those who fear Him**.'*

During the Gulf War, when anxiety for personal safety was a primary concern, ***Horav Chaim Kanievsky, zl***, assured people that they need not worry. He promised that no missile would fall on the city of Bnei Brak, the city of Torah and *chassidus*.

He cited the *pasuk* in *Melachim* II 6:17, where Elisha prayed that the fearful eyes of his attendant be opened, so that he could see beyond the natural limitations of this world. Hashem granted the *Navi's* request, and suddenly his attendant saw an army of fiery horses and chariots surrounding Elisha, protecting him from harm.

Rav Chaim declared, "If only people could see the vast wall of fiery words of Torah surrounding Bnei Brak, they would harbour no fear whatsoever. They would be confident that the *z'chus*, merit, of Torah would protect them from harm. Indeed, no missiles fell on Bnei Brak.

Rav Chaim added that the words/assurances of a *tzaddik* apply not only during his lifetime, but even after his *neshamah*, soul, has left his physical body. Thus, as when the ***Chazon Ish*** had promised years earlier that no explosion (bombs) would occur in Bnei Brak, this assurance continued to hold in our present time. There is nothing to fear. We have the Torah as our protection.

"The Jewish people are an eternal flame. You can try to smother it, but it will always reignite. Faith is our oxygen, and as long as we hold onto it, we will never be extinguished." ~ Based on the teachings of Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin (1749-1821)

Sparks Of Shabbos

HaRav Matisyahu Solomon explains that Shabbos is the litmus test to see if a person is really waiting for moshiach: The [correct] reason why we look forward to Moshiach's coming is so that we will be free to focus our time and attention on spiritual pursuits.



Shabbos is a window into olam ha'ba and if we dedicate it to learning, davening, chesed, and avodas Hashem, then this demonstrates that this is our true desire. However, if a person spends his time pursuing physical indulgence or trying to pass the time until Shabbos is over, then he shows this isn't his true desire. The way we spend chol ha'moed and other "off days" are also similar opportunities to demonstrate our true desires.

The Favour

When someone did a favour for **Reb Aharon of Belz *zt'l***, he would thank him personally. His *gabai'im* asked, "Why do you make the effort to thank them yourself?

For more important matters, you send your *gaba'im*. Why can't you send us to thank those who help you?"

He replied, "When the *chazan* says **מודים**, the congregation says modim together with him. This is because when it comes to thanking, one must do so himself. It isn't enough to send a shliach!"

A Caring Rebbe

By **הספדים** given about **הרב שלמה זלמן אויערבך זצוק״ל** one of the **מספידים** said over the following story.

"I once entered Rav Shlomo Zalman's room, right before he was about to give **שיעור**, and I found him sitting and learning from the sefer **שערי תשובה**. I was very puzzled, and I asked Rav Shlomo Zalman, "Rebbe, does this have any connection to the topic of the **שיעור** that you are about to discuss?" Rav Shlomo Zalman, with his heart of gold, replied, "Yes, it has a very close connection to the **שיעור** itself, for sometimes there can be a situation that a **תלמיד** asks questions that aren't very connected to what's going on in the **שיעור** at all, and one has to be so careful to watch over himself and still, to only answer them very patiently and calmly."

Emunah

Once, at *shalosh seudos*, the **Chofetz Chaim *zt'l*** told his students, "The entire world is filled with heresy and denial of Hashem. I'm not only referring to the goyim or the non-religious Yidden. I'm referring to the *ehrlicher Yidden*. - Listen to the way they speak, and you will hear *kefirah*. When they discuss business or politics, they talk as though everything is in our hands, and they forget that everything is in Hashem's hands.

"Therefore," the Chofetz Chaim concluded, "in my opinion, everyone must strengthen himself with *emunah* for an hour each day."

The students were startled. Who has a free hour during the day? An hour is a long time.

The Chofetz Chaim said, "I see this is hard for you. So, I have another plan for you. When you daven, think about what you're saying, and you will have a daily lesson in *emunah*."

Hagaon, Harav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zt"l, said that the gematria of the passuk in Yeshayahu (1:27) **צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפָּדֶה** (Zion will be redeemed with justice)" is equal to that of Talmud Yerushalmi, and the gematria of the rest of the passuk, **וְשָׁבֶיהָ בִּצְדָקָה** (and her penitents through righteousness), is equal to that of Talmud Bavli.



When the **Brisker Rav** heard this, he said, "Although the scholars of Brisk did not learn from gematria, this one is true and correct and was said with the spirit of holiness,"

The Brisker Rav added that the reason the two Talmuds are called by those names and not by other names is precisely because they equal, the gematria for the above cited verse.



The Brisker Rov's Memory

The Brisker Rov (Rabbi Yitchok Zev Soloveitchik, 1886-1959) once lent a man a not-inconsiderable amount of money. When the time for repayment arrived, the man did not have the money and was ashamed to come to the Rov for an extension. He avoided him for some time but since the Brisker Rov never mentioned it again, he assumed the Rov had forgotten.

He relaxed and waited until he was able to repay the loan. When that time came, he approached the Brisker Rov with a slightly sheepish smile on his face. "I'm sure the Rov doesn't remember," he began,

"but some time ago you lent me money, and I am here to repay the loan."

"Not remember?!" exclaimed the sage. "Of course, I remembered! There are two ways to walk from my home to the Bais HaMidrash. The shorter way gets me there faster but takes me past your house, while the longer way is quite circuitous but does not pass your home.

"Since the day I lent you the money, I have taken the longer way so as to avoid the issur of appearing demanding. I went out of my way to make you comfortable in borrowing the money and thus lend properly. I did not forget about the money, but neither did I forget about you."

How to Give Charity

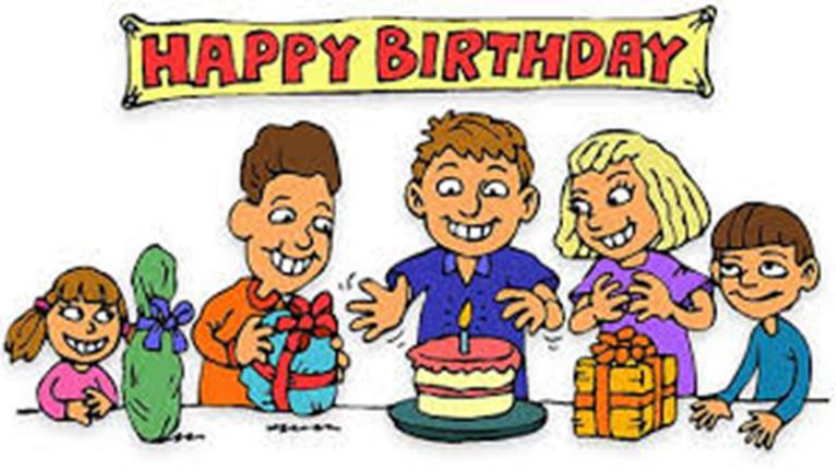


One who wishes to give charity intelligently will make sure the recipient will feel as though he is the giver. There is a story about a man who purchased stacks of wood and placed them on his porch in the front of his house. When he would meet a poor person, he would hire him to move the wood for him to the back of the house.

When he would then upon another person in need, he would hire him to move the stacks back to the porch.

In this way, he provided financial assistance to those who so desperately needed it, while preserving their dignity by having them feel that they earned the money, rather than receiving a handout.

The Best Birthday - Rabbi Yechiel Spero



This is a story that happened in Lakewood. I heard it from Reb Leib Klyne. He told me that there was a fellow that lived in his neighbourhood - we'll call him Bernie. A loner, he didn't have family, very overweight, was not mobile and suffered from various ailments.

Every once in a while, he would send one of the kids from the neighbourhood to go and pick up some groceries from the local store and put it on his bill.

One Friday he asked Reb Leib's daughter to do this errand and drop the shopping off at his house. - Friday night, Bernie was niftar!

On Sunday morning as they are preparing for the leviyah, Reb Leib realises that Bernie is going to the Olam H'Emmes- "I had better go to the grocery store to settle his bill."

He quickly goes to the grocery store, and asks the cashier, "Can I please settle Bernie's bill?"

He said, "You people are amazing! We only opened less than an hour ago, and you are the seventh person to ask that question and to pay his bill!"

This is what it is to think of others!

Reb Leib also told me, that one year he decided to make Bernie a birthday party. Roshei Yeshivos, Rabbonim, magidei Shiurim, Yungerleit all over the age of 50 prepared a real birthday party. With a party hat, streamers and balloons, and a real birthday cake with 'Happy birthday Bernie' on it!

Reb Leib said to a friend, "Are you sure you don't want to do this in your house, you've got a much bigger house?"

He answered, "Nah, let's do it here in yours."

Now it's time to get Bernie over. They all hid in various places. They brought him across the street. Bernie walks in, and they all jump out from their hiding places – "Surprise!, Happy birthday Bernie!" – Just like you would do for 8- or 9-year-olds, except these were 50/60 year old men!

Bernie hobbles over to the table, starts to cry, and he says, "This is the nicest thing anybody has ever done for me – in my entire life!"

Reb Leib's friend turns to him and says, "I can't believe I gave you my Olam Habah!"

There's a lot of Bernies out there. They may not announce it, they may not look the part, but imagine that every person you look at and perhaps have a dislike for, you could find something nice to say to them, or do for them – celebrate the victory, because it could change the world!

L'Maaseh

Rav Shlomo Heiman, zt"l, once came to visit **Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz, zt"l,** and found Rav Baruch Ber dancing around the table with some of his Talmidim.

As it was an ordinary weekday, Rav Heiman was curious as to why they were dancing. A Talmid explained to Rav Shlomo that for the past few days, their Rebbe had struggled to understand the meaning of a comment of the Rashba, but he was unable to fully comprehend exactly what the Rashba was trying to say. Then, during a conversation with a student, Rav Baruch Ber was able to understand the Rashba. He was ecstatic! He was so excited that he grabbed hold of his students' hands and started dancing around the table.

R' Baruch Ber's Simchah left a strong impression on Rav Shlomo. He would often say that he was Zocheh to witness Rav Baruch Ber's joy in Torah knowledge. No joy in the world could ever compare to the spiritual joy Rav Shlomo had seen on that day.

However, it has been taught from this story that the lesson we learn from it is not limited to learning Torah. It extends to any matter that one struggles to achieve a goal. When there are difficult obstacles encountered along the way, one should realize that his success will be far greater, specifically because of all the difficulty he has come across!

The Power of Many – Rabbi YY Jacobson



If you go to San Fransisco, you can see the Sequoia trees, also known as 'The Redwoods'. It is fascinating, these trees can live for up to 4000 years! These trees date back to a time before Moshe Rabeinu! They come from the times of Yoseph, Yaakov and Yitzchok- from the time of Mesushelach and Noach!

It's incredible. You look at and touch these trees that literally come from a different time and part of history. When scientists began to study the power of these trees, especially their longevity, they searched for the reasons how they weathered every storm, every tsunami, every forest fire, bacteria, infections, germs, virus's – How?

They were certain that the roots of the Sequoia trees must extend deep into the ground to enable it to ensure its longevity. However, when they looked at the scientific instrument findings, that looked at the subterranean view, they were shocked and astonished to find that not only were the roots not deep, but they were particularly shallow! So how, they couldn't understand?

They realised that what the sequoias lacked in depth, they more than make up in breadth. You see, the roots of a sequoia tree goes down searching for sustenance, but they don't go deep, they go wide, searching for the roots of another sequoia tree. When they find the roots of another sequoia, they interlock their roots.



They can do this with another 50 or 100 trees! So above ground, it appears that there are 100 individual trees, but in reality, if you go underground, you will find that they are all interlaced and interlocked together. A storm might fell a few of them, but not 100 that are interconnected to each other! This is the secret of the sequoia tree!

When I heard about this, it reminded me of the verse in Yeshaya (65:2) **כִּי־כִימֵי הָעֵץ יְמֵי עַמִּי** – '***the days of the tree are the days of My people***' The Yidden are compared to the (sequoia) tree. They are the sequoias of history! We are the Redwoods of history! So what' the secret of the longevity of the Jewish People?

The answer is, - look at the sequoias. On the surface we have different personalities, each person with his own unique character,

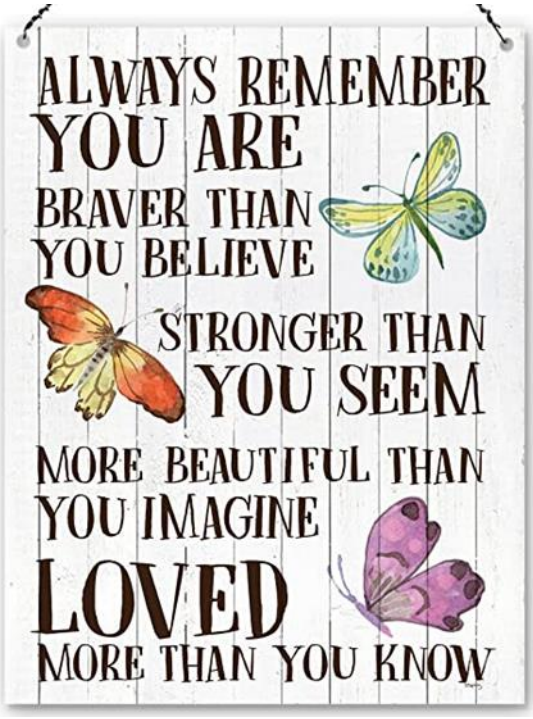
flavour and own unique dimension. But if you go deep down, **כאיש אחד בלב אחד** We are all interlocked and interconnected with each other. This is an innate oneness, an innate power that nobody can destroy.



The Sefas Emess says that we say in the Haggadah, **שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו לכלותנו** – the only thing that threatens to destroy us, is **שלא אחד** – when we are not unified!

[**The Maharal** says that **אחד** is gematria 13 which is the same as **אהבה**.]

We don't always have to agree with each other, but we must support each other and respect each other. That is the oneness- the secret of the Sequoia – The secret of the Jewish people! The secret of our eternal indestructibility!



Your Perspective By R' Shlomo Farhi

There was a man in Eretz Yisrael. Unfortunately, he had a terrible accident. He had intense pains in his hands and legs, and he couldn't work. He was constantly forced to sit down. He unfortunately had to rely on the kindness of the community to help make ends meet for his family.

One day, I met him in shul, and I asked him, "How are you doing, how's everything?"

He answered me, **'הוֹדוּ לַה' כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ'**. Many people say this, but to hear it with meaning from a guy who is obviously in a lot of pain, and must collect money to survive, was incredible.

I asked him, "How can you say this statement with such Emunah? With such a smile and happy countenance, with everything that is going on in your life?"

He answered something that has stuck with me till this day.

He said, "Look at the words of the Pasuk - **הוֹדוּ לַה' כִּי־טוֹב** ***Thank Hashem because He is good*, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ *because His kindness is forever.*** Most people understand this Pasuk to be a statement of time. You thank Hashem **כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ** -because His kindness endures forever and ever. But a person like me has come to understand in my life, that there is another interpretation to the Pasuk. **הוֹדוּ לַה' כִּי־טוֹב** - praise Hashem, because in every single instance in my life, all I can see is goodness -**חַסְדּוֹ** . Every morning when I wake up, it is **חַסְדּוֹ**. I am still capable of coming to Shul – that is **חַסְדּוֹ**. Having a smile on my face and being a happy person, that is **חַסְדּוֹ**.

Look at that other guy over there also collecting money. He has hands but he looks so miserable. Hashem took my hands and feet and gave me a smile. **הוֹדוּ לַה' כִּי־טוֹב** Praise Hashem, because **כִּי לְעוֹלָם** in everything **חַסְדּוֹ!**"

One Kidney, Three Lives by Rabbi Shlomo Landau

One woman's selfless act of donating her kidney has unforeseen reverberations.

It takes a special type of person to be a kidney donor. Donating a piece of oneself and exposing oneself to risk represents a whole new level of giving. Yet most kidney donors I've spoken to insist that they wouldn't hesitate to do it all over again if they could!

Tamar is one such special person. In our town, everyone knows that Tamar is always willing to help anyone in need. Then she announced that she was in the process of being cleared for kidney donation. A physician herself, Tamar knew that a person only needs one kidney, but for many of us, the thought of not having a spare is unsettling. But Tamar was grateful for the unique opportunity to literally save someone's life.

On a beautiful fall morning, Tamar went under the knife at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City. Her kidney was given to a woman who was desperately trying to hold on despite total kidney failure. Thankfully, the transplant went well and the young mom got a new lease on life.

Over the next few months Tamar had less energy, but her strength eventually returned and she was back to her old self in less than half a year.

A few months later, Tamar was invited to be a guest speaker at a weekend retreat where she was asked to share her experience of donating her kidney, with the hope of inspiring others to amplify their generosity as well. One of the participants at the retreat was a middle-aged man by the name of Jonathan. He was at the retreat because his wife had dragged him along. Yet when Tamar began talking about her experience, Jonathan was mesmerized and captivated by her tale of kindness.

When he got home, Jonathan went to the website of Renewal, the non-profit organization that facilitated Tamar's kidney donation. He read the testimonials, perused the website and was further inspired. A short while later he contacted Renewal to begin the screening process to become a kidney donor. Within the year, Jonathan had surgery and donated his kidney to a young man who had been suffering renal failure. Tamar's kidney donation had saved a second life. But the saga was not yet over.

Six months after Jonathan donated his kidney, he went back to Mt. Sinai for a post-op follow-up. During this routine examination, doctors identified a suspicious growth on his thyroid, which was subsequently diagnosed as an early stage of cancer. The tumour was promptly removed and Jonathan was given a clean bill of health. The doctors informed him that had he not donated a kidney and required a post-op examination, in all likelihood his tumour would not have been discovered until a much later stage, which could have had a very different outcome, G-d forbid.

Tamar's kidney donation had now saved a third life!

Each of us can choose to be givers in our own small or grand way. And we never know the ultimate impact our act of kindness may have.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series [לעילוי נשמת ר׳גרשון בן ר׳אריה ליב ע״ה]

Yosef Hatzadik was in prison when the Sar Hamashkim '***remembered him***!' There is a medrash that says that he tried to remember Yosef to Pharoah by various methods. However a malach came and made him forget. Ultimately, he really shouldn't have forgotten himself.

It came to a point where he did remember, and he went and told Pharoah that there is somebody languishing in the jail who can interpret dreams. However, we still see what a *rasha* he was by the derogatory terms that he uses to describe Yosef- **וְשָׁם אִתָּנוּ נַעַר עִבְרִי עֶבֶד** - He is immature, He is a Jew and can't rule, he doesn't speak our language etc.

That night, a malach came and taught Yoseph the 70 languages of the world which Pharoah also knew aside from lashon Hakodesh, which he knew over and above Pharoah.

The Pasuk then says **וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף שִׂמְלֹתָיו וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה** Pharoah sent for Yoseph.(41:14) ***They***

rushed him out of the pit. And then the Pasuk continues **וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף שִׂמְלֹתָיו** – And ***he*** shaved, and ***he*** changed his clothes.

Who rushed him? Who shaved? Who was doing what here?

The Meforshim say that what took place here was as follows:

They said to him, "Quickly get out of prison, Pharoah wants to see you." Their intention was that he should appear before Pharoah as a disheveled and stinking person after having been incarcerated for years, and as such, wouldn't find favour in Pharoah's eyes.

Yosef delayed them, and said, "This is not befitting the king. I can't go like looking and smelling like this."

They refused to clean him up.

The **Talmidei Arizal** say that the same malach that taught him all the languages, came and spruced him up. That's why the Pasuk says **וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף** – it was the malach who did it. The **HE** is referring to the malach!

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

The Bnei Yissaschar (Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov (1783-1841) brings a beautiful connection of Parshas Miketz to Chanukah.

Right at the end of every parsha is a *siman* from the Baalei Mesorah. This tells us how many pesukim there are in every parsha. This is done with a word or *siman* that has the same gematria as the number of pesukim.

Our parsha is unique in that it doesn't only tell us how many pesukim there are, but it also tells us how many words there are. **קמ"ו פסוקים** -There are 146 pesukim, and then it says **והתיבות אלפים כ"ה** - 2025 words. Parshas Miketz almost always falls on Chanukah. It is approximately once in 35 years when Miketz does not fall on

Chanukah, so there is obviously a strong connection between the pesukim to Chanukah.

כה obviously refers to the fact that they rested on the 25th – **חנו-כה**. The **אלפים** - 2000 refers to the 8 days of Chanukah that we light a **נר** which is the gematria of 250. We light 8 days x 250 = 2000.

This is very nice, but the problem is, that if you actually counts the words in the sedra, there are only 2022, and not 2025! We are 3 short!

There is a **Sifrei** that says Pharoah called Yosef 'Avreich'. This word can be split into two words – 'Av' and 'Rach'. So now we are only short of two words.

The Vilna Gaon says that Potipher is called in our parsha **פּוֹטִי פֶרַע** – two separate words, meaning he fattened cows for avoida zara, and he was also the chief executioner of Pharoah. His name is mentioned twice in this week's sedra, which gives us the missing two words.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

Pharoah said, **וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָֽם** "***We need to find an understanding and wise man and appoint him over the land of Egypt***." 41:33

What is the difference between **נָבֹון וְחָכָם**?

נָבֹון is someone who has **בינה** - understanding. Someone who can extrapolate information from what he sees and studies, and to make it relevant to others.

חָכָם is someone who has the wisdom to utilise what was understood, and how to use this information for the best in any given situation.

I once heard from my father-in law, (**Rabbi Gershon Lopian Zt'l**) that he heard from his father – **Reb Leib Lopian ZT'l**, that he once

said that "How do we know who is a Navi is in Klal Yisrael?" "From the *nevuah* that he says over."

"How do you know who is a chacham?" "From what he doesn't say!"

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף רְאֵה נְתַתִּי אֹתְךָ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם Yosef was going to be the one that Pharoah chose to look after Egypt. 41:41 - Why does he need to be a **אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם** You need somebody organised who is good with figures and accounting, who will be able to plan for the future?

Pharoah was telling Yosef, that in order to plan for the future during times of plenty (an abundance) for times of famine, this would require a special person who was clever, astute, and wise. **איזהו חכם הרואה את הנולד** (Daf **לב** in Tammid). It needs somebody who has got chochmo in their **heart**, to know how to plan for the future.

Pharoah says, "there is no one better qualified to do this then Yosef – why? Because everyone knew that the whole situation in Potiphar's house was setting Yoseph up. And yet, Yosef survived. Why? Because he was **הרואה את הנולד** – He understood the choices and decided to make the right choice.

We all go through different periods of time, where sometimes it's good- **שָׂבָע** and sometimes it's bad -**רָעָב** . The most profound time when we experience **שָׂבָע** is in in our own lives, in Olam Hazeh. Because once we get to Olam Haboh, there is **רָעָב** -We can no longer do Torah and Mitzvos. The only time when we can accumulate mitzvos and the rewards, is in this world!

Plan wisely!

Not By Force Or Power But By My Spirit

וַתֹּאכַלְנָה הַפָּרוֹת רָעוֹת הַמַּרְאֶה וְדַקּוֹת הַבָּשָׂר אֵת שֶׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת יְפֹת הַמַּרְאֶה וְהַבְּרִיאֹת "*And the cows that were ugly in appearance and thin in flesh ate the seven cows that were beautiful in appearance and healthy*" (41:4)





In Chasidus, it is said that the Jews once complained to the angels: "*The Most High promised us that we would be an eternal people, and here he has given powerful weapons in the hands of many nations, But he didn't give us anything! How will we manage to survive like this?*"

Upon hearing this claim, one of the angels responded and said: "When the Almighty created the animals, He gave each of them a certain weapon. To the lion He gave great strength in his paws; to the tiger He gave strong claws; to the eagle - wings that soar on; for a snake - teeth with venom in them. But he didn't give anything to the little sheep.

"The sheep asked: 'And what will you give me?' The angel answered her: 'Your weakness is your strength'. 'What does that mean?' The sheep asked: 'Look at this cedar tree,' explained the angel, 'Look how tall and strong it is! And now look at the cane that grows on the edge of the lake - how small and weak it is! But when a storm rages - what happens then? So the cedar is uprooted, on its roots, while the end reed bends in the wind and remains, intact, in its place. This

means that it is not always the strength and dimensions that determine the ability to survive."

So the Jews understood: Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Rome - each of which was, in its time, a great power - went down and staggered until they collapsed; And the helpless Jews, who had neither a homeland nor an army, survived.

In Parshat Maketz, it is told about Pharaoh's dream, in which he sees seven thin cows swallowing seven fat cows. This parasha is always recited during the week of Hanukkah, and for that reason it is always relevant, since the holiday of Hanukkah tells the story of the Maccabees, which is the story of the victory of the weak over the strong and the few over the many. History reveals to us that the weakness of the Jews became the source of their strength, and they balanced their numerical minority by developing resilience, devotion to purpose and spiritual depth.

לֹא בְחַיִל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אָמַר ה׳ צְבָקוֹת "***Neither by force nor by might, but by my Spirit, said the L-rd of hosts***" (Zechariah 4:6).

מָה־רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ ה׳ כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ - A Possible New Insight by Rabbi Yair Hoffman



It is a pasuk found in Tehillim chapter 104, the 24th pasuk. ***How great are Your works, O Hashem! You have made them all with wisdom; the earth is filled with Your creations!***

The following imaginary situation, based upon Ed Yong's recent book, "An Immense World," gave this author a thought. The thought was that, perhaps, this concept is alluded to in Dovid HaMelech's pasuk that we recite daily.

Imagine a fairly large room that, for now, contains an elephant and a mouse. A bird, a robin, joins in. Then an owl and an upside-down bat come along. There is now a rattle snake on the floor and a spider with its web in the corner. There is a mosquito in the room, and a bumblebee on a potted plant. And then there is a human, we will call him Ralph.

The elephant lifts its trunk to perceive its world, it smells nothing significant. The rattlesnake, however, through flicking its tongue, detects the mouse's recent pathway. "Hmm, it thinks, supper is nearby."

The mosquito smells the CO2 just emitted by Ralph's breathing out and the delicious aroma of that which Ralph's skin now evaporates. It lands on Ralph's bare arm. "Food! At last," it thinks. But Ralph swats away at it.

The slap on Ralph's arm now disturbs the mouse. It squeaks, severely frightened. The bat hears it. The elephant does not – to the elephant the squeal is inaudible.

And speaking of our elephant, it now wishes to communicate with its shidduch, who is a little over six miles away – that's from Boro Park to JFK as the crow flies. It produces a very low-frequency noise between 1 and 20 Hertz called an infrasound in order to do this. We only discovered these infrasounds in the 1980's.

Ralph, however, hears no mouse's squeal and no Shidduch lament of the elephant. Ralph hears only the beautiful sound of the robin. Ralph does not fathom the complexities of that which is encoded in the robin's tune.

Ralph sees the robin's chest as red. The elephant just sees different shades of blue and yellow. The bumblebee is also does not perceive red – but can detect ultra-violet hues, shades and colours. It is sitting on top of sunflower plant which as an ultra-violet bulls-

eye – invisible to Ralph but can be seen by the bumblebee as well as the robin. There is more, much more, but we get the picture.

And now, onto the new insight.

Each of these creations of Hashem is wonderous. It's perception of the world around it – is particularly suited to its own particular needs. They have all been created with uncanny wisdom – a Divine wisdom. And they all occupy the same space, and the world is filled with these creations of Yours – Hashem.

מָה־רַּבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ!



**When the Gemara says
don't sit in your parents' seat,
it also means
don't sit in our
Father in Heaven's place;
Let Hashem run the world!**

- Sfas Emes

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

Peninim on the Torah – פנינים על התורה

וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר לַאֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ קוּם רְדֹף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהִשַּׂגְתָּם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם לָמָּה שִׁלַּמְתֶּם רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה Yosef said to the one in charge of his house, "Arise, chase after the men; when you overtake them, you shall say to them, "Why do you repay evil for good?" (44:4)



One would have expected Yosef to instruct his agent to simply ask the brothers, "Why did you take the cup? Why did you repay evil for good?"

This is not the first question one asks of someone who has just stolen his silver cup.

The *Zera Shimshon* explains that Yosef asked this question by design, in order to send home a message to the brothers. He intimated, "When our father made me a multi-coloured coat, you became jealous. You became so jealous that it was sufficient reason for you to sell me as a slave.

"If, however, you were to take the time to examine the relationship between my mother and your mother, indeed, you will note that what you did was in stark contradistinction to the manner that my mother treated your mother. You conveniently forgot that our father was destined to marry my mother.Knowing that our grandfather's word left much to be desired, our father gave our mother special signs. Becoming aware that a switch would take place, manifesting extreme sensitivity that your mother not be embarrassed, my mother gave your mother the coveted *simanim*, signs."

This is why Yosef told his aide to ask the brothers, "Why do you repay evil for good?" This is why the *Midrashim* which record

Yosef's admonishment to his brothers use the expression, "You sold the son of Rachel," rather than, "You sold Yosef." This is to underscore Yosef's critique of their behaviour:

It is one thing to act callously to a brother; it is a totally unforgivable act to ignore the life-altering favour that this brother's mother had done for their mother.

We have no shortage of *hakoras hatov*, gratitude, stories. Our *gedolei Yisrael*, Torah giants, excel, not only in their knowledge of the length and breadth of Torah, but they also embody the finest *middos*, character traits. To them, gratitude was the prerequisite to *mentchlichkeit*, human decency. One who does not appreciate and pay gratitude to those who benefit him is simply not a *mentch*.

The following story inspired me due to its unique approach to *hakoras hatov*.

Horav Bentzion Felman, zl (one of Bnei Brak's prominent *poskim*), had an unusual practice: he would write his *chidushei Torah*, novella, and *p'sakim, halachic* decisions, on the back of invitations. *Bnei-mitzvah*, weddings and other celebratory occasions became his venue for writing his thoughts. When he was *niftar*, passed away, his family discovered a cabinet filled with thousands of invitations which had been used for this purpose. (Many of these cards were transcribed and included in the *Sefer Shalmei Todah*.)

During the *shivah*, seven-day mourning period following his *petirah*, his sons revealed the reason for this practice.

One of *Rav* Felman's students noticed his *Rebbe* writing on the back of an invitation. He said, "*Rebbe*, I would be honoured to buy notebooks for the *Rebbe* in which to write his *chiddushim*. This way the *chiddushim* could be arranged in order and kept together."

Rav Felman replied, "Do you think that I lack paper? I have many blank notebooks. However, I write on the backs of invitations by design. I am invited to numerous *simchos*, joyful events. My time is

limited, preventing me from attending. I am so busy that I am even unable to respond properly to each invitation (with a proper blessing and good wishes). The least that I can do is be *makdish*, sanctify/designate, the *z'chus*, merit, of the learning that went into preparing and writing the *chiddushim* on the card, so that it become a source of success and good will for the *bar-mitzvah* boy or young couple. In this manner, I am at least able to show some *hakoras hatov*, appreciation, to them for inviting me."

Peninim on the Torah – פנינים על התורה

וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַּרְעֹ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ נָבֹ֖ון וְחָכָ֑ם וִישִׁיתֵ֙הוּ֙ עַל־אֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֔יִם ***Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt****. (41:33)*

Pharaoh had asked Yosef to interpret his dreams. Nowhere do we find him asking for advice. Yet, after Yosef paints a picture of prosperity followed by hunger, doom and gloom, he adds that Pharaoh should immediately appoint a wise and discerning man to administrate the country.



Horav Yitzchak Volozhiner, zl, explains that Pharaoh's dream occurred on *Rosh Hashanah*, as *Chazal* (*Rosh Hashanah* 10) teach that Yosef was taken out of prison on *Rosh Hashanah*. Yosef wondered why Pharaoh had his dreams on this auspicious day. Indeed, *Chazal* (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a) teach that four times during the year Hashem judges the world for certain needs. On *Pesach*, he grants *tevuah*, grain, produce. On *Rosh*

Hashanah, the entire world passes by Him like sheep going through the pen. In other words, this is when Hashem decides who will live and who will not.

Therefore, one would think that a dream which addresses and conveys a vital message concerning *parnassah*, livelihood, would occur on *Pesach* – not *Rosh Hashanah*, when human life is decided.

This question prompted Yosef to think about and analyse the dream, its message and specifically the time in which it took place. Yosef surmised, that on *Rosh Hashanah* the question is *Mi yishafeil u'mi yarum*, "Who will be demoted, and who will be elevated."

Thus, when Yosef encouraged Pharaoh to seek a wise, discerning man to manage the country, he was intimating that this was part of the dream. Why would the dream have occurred on *Rosh Hashanah*, if not to elevate Yosef from the pit of despair?

Yosef understood that everything that occurs in our lives is a Heavenly message. We must make every attempt to seek to interpret that – objectively, rationally and with sincerity. After all, Hashem is speaking to us.

Flattery

Once, someone introduced **R' Avraham Pam**, the Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath, with all sorts of flattering comments, including calling him the Gadol HaDor. R' Pam got up and gave his speech with making any remarks about the introduction.

Afterwards, a close disciple approached him and asked his normally humble Rebbi why he did not protest or at least deflect any of the comments and compliments made about him. R' Pam answered that if he had, the only thing it would have accomplished is that people would say, "And he is so humble as well!"

Working on our Middos



Rav Avraham Pam, zt"l, excelled at the Middah of Hakaras HaTov, being appreciative and thankful for the good and the favours that others have done for him. When he would attend a convention, he made a point to thank the cooks for their work. He did not call for them, but rather, he went to the kitchen to personally tell them how good their food was.

When Rav Pam was approached in the early 1970's to become the Rosh Yeshivah of a prominent Kollel in Eretz Yisroel, he turned it down, despite the fact that it would be a promotion in his status, both in Ruchnius and financially. When he was questioned about this, he responded, "How can I leave Yeshivah Torah Vodaath? I owe so much to the Yeshivah! I learned here, and the Yeshivah gave me a position when I needed one."

Rav Pam was in great pain during the last five years of his life. Yet, he never complained about his situation. At a Seudas Hoda'ah, a Seudah of thanks, he strengthened himself to speak to the people there. He said, "A Seudas Hoda'ah is a time for everyone to reflect on the gratitude that they owe Hashem. I myself know how much appreciation I owe Hashem for everything that He does for me. We should be ashamed of our complaining over small problems when we have so much for which to be grateful!"

This was amazing to everyone who heard it, because it was coming from an individual who was suffering from constant pain!

Towards the end of his life, when it became too difficult for him to walk to the Yeshivah Minyan for Davening, a small group of people

would come to make a Minyan for Shabbos in Rav Pam's home. After Mussaf, Rav Pam would publicly thank the Baal Korei, the Baalei Tefilah, and all those who had come to take part in the Minyan. This was even though everyone who had come felt privileged just to be there and have the opportunity to observe Rav Pam up close. Rav Pam lived his entire life with an attitude of gratitude!

Rabbi Yehoshua Alt- Davening in the Dark



We know Yaakov had lots of troubles — Lavan, Esav, Rachel, Dina, Yosef, Shimon and Binyomin. It is especially in times of pain that one should daven. This is akin to what the Shulchan Aruch writes that just as the public fasts and davens on the communal pain, so too each individual should fast and daven on his personal pain. It could be that Hashem sent the suffering in order for the person to daven, similar to what the Midrash says that Hashem made the matriarchs barren because He yearns for their tefilla.

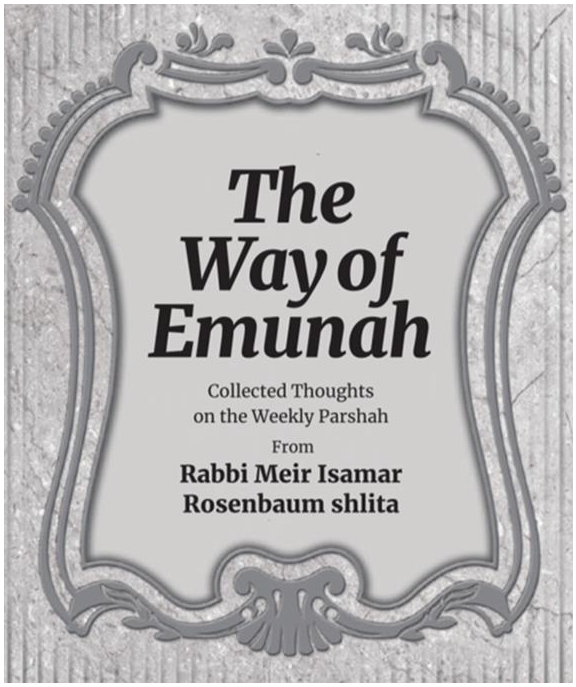
Which tefilla did Yaakov institute? Maariv, the night-time tefilla. This also refers to the tefilla for the dark times in a person's life, as was the case with Yaakov, the person that endured immense trouble in his life.

Tefillah Brings Abundances

אַתָּה֙ תִּהְיֶ֣ה עַל־בֵּיתִ֔י וְעַל־פִּ֖יךָ יִשַּׁ֣ק כָּל־עַמִּ֑י רַ֕ק הַכִּסֵּ֥א אֶגְדַּ֖ל מִמֶּֽךָּ *You shall be over my household, and through your command all my people shall be nourished*. (41:40)

Targum Onkelos translates the pasuk to mean: "*Through the words of your mouth, all of my nation will eat.*"

This hints to the fact that tefillah that comes from a person's mouth creates an abundance of livelihood in the world.



Yosef's Bitachon

וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח פַּרְעֹה֙ וַיִּקְרָ֣א אֶת־יוֹסֵ֔ף וַיְרִיצֻ֥הוּ מִן־הַבּ֖וֹר וַיְגַלַּ֑ח וַיְחַלֵּ֖ף שִׂמְלֹתָ֣יו וַיָּבֹ֔א אֶל־פַּרְעֹֽה *And Pharaoh sent and he called Yosef. And they hurried him from the pit. And they cut his hair and they changed his clothing. (41:14)*

Sefer Agra D'Kallah asks why it is necessary to mention that they hurried or that Yosef was given a haircut. What does the Torah want to teach us with this?

He answers that this teaches us the tremendous righteousness of Yosef and how much bitachon he had in Hashem. It says that Pharaoh "called Yosef" ("vayikroh"). Rashi says that the word "kriyah" always indicates importance and fondness. Pharaoh was calling to give honour to Yosef. However, his attendants were wicked who did not do as he asked. Instead, they rushed him from the pit and treated him with disrespect as they hurried him to go to Pharaoh.

This should have caused Yosef to be afraid. When someone is rushed in front of the king, it usually is because he is about to be treated

harshly. Yosef should have thought that he was now going to be judged for his crime and he was about to be punished.

One would imagine that a person in this situation would be terrified. But Yosef was not scared. He was calm enough to get a haircut and change his clothing because he trusted fully in Hashem and was confident that He would help him in miraculous ways.

A Person's Plans Are Worthless

וְיוֹסֵף הוּא הַשַּׁלִּיט עַל־הָאָרֶץ הוּא הַמַּשְׁבִּיר לְכָל־עַם הָאָרֶץ

And Yosef was the ruler over the land; it was he who provided grain to the entire populace of the land. (42:6)



The Shlah Hakadosh (Derech Chaim Tochachos Mussar) explains as follows: The Navi said in the name of Hashem (Yeshaya 55:8): "***My thoughts are not your thoughts***."

A person's thoughts and plans are worthless. A person may think something is good for him when in reality it is bad, and a person may think something is bad when it is actually beneficial for him.

An example of this is how the Shevatim sold Yosef to be a slave in Egypt (Tehillim 105:17). They thought they would never hear of him again. However, they actually caused him to become king.

For this reason, one should always serve Hashem simply (Devarim 18:13) and annul one's will to Hashem's will (Avos 2:4). When someone thinks something is bad, he should recognize that it is not really bad because Hashem only does good.

Whatever Happens to a Person Needed to Happen

וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ צְרוֹר־כַּסְפּוֹ בְּשַׂקּוֹ וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת־צְרֹרוֹת כַּסְפֵּיהֶם הֵמָּה וַאֲבִיהֶם וַיִּירָאוּ

***And behold, each one's bundle of money was in his sack. And they saw the bundles of their money, they and their father, and they became frightened.* (42:35)**

Sefer Likutei Yehuda writes that he heard from his grandfather, the **Imrei Emes zy"a** in the name of **Rav Bunim of Peshischa zy"a** that every Jew has his own "pekel". Everyone has their own bundle of challenges and difficulties that they are going through.

In the future, all of the "pekelach" will be mixed together and everyone will be given a choice to take whichever one they want – and every individual will choose his own pekel. Everyone will realize that his challenges were easier for him than anyone else's would have been.



This is hinted to in this verse, where it is stated that "***each one's bundle was in his sack***." This is as is stated in the Sifrei Mussar that a person should never think that things would be better for him if his circumstances would be different. Rather, every detail of a person's life is perfect for him. Everything is as it should be.

Just like a person shouldn't say that he'd be able to see better if he has three eyes – as it is obvious that having two eyes is the will of Hashem – so too, one should not think that someone else's challenges would be better for him than the one's he has – as whatever Hashem gave him clearly is what is best for him.

Speaking to The Mezuzah

וַיִּגְּשׁוּ אֶל־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו פֶּתַח הַבָּיִת ***And they approached the man who…and they spoke to him by the door of the house***. (43:19)

Rav Pinchos of Koretz zy"a (Sefer Imrei Pinchos) asks why the Shevatim specifically spoke to the man who was in charge of Yosef's house next to the door.

He quotes **Sefer Sifsei Cohen** (written by a student of the Arizal) as giving the following answer: Yosef fulfilled all of the mitzvos of the Torah and he definitely had a mezuzah on the door of his house. When the Shevatim stood by the door, they did not speak to the man who was standing there at all. Rather, they spoke to the mezuzah, which has the name "Shakai" on it, as this name was used by their father when he blessed them and said that "Keil Shakai" would provide for them.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages



Rav Yisroel Hager, zt"l, the Ahavas Yisroel of Viznitz, would say that one must be good to everyone, but not with everyone. Meaning, one must be friendly to everyone, but not be friends with everyone.

One should take care to be there for others, no matter who they are, but one should be very careful with who he allows to be his friends!

Why Do We Need a Word Count at the End of Parshas Miketz? By Rabbi Yissocher Frand

The number of pesukim in each weekly parsha is recorded at the end of virtually every parsha. The end of Miketz, as is typical, contains the notation that the parsha contains 146 pesukim.

However, it is very atypical that following this notation there is a further notation that the parsha contains 2,025 words. This is the only parsha that contains a word count as well as a pasuk count. What is the significance of this?

I heard a beautiful interpretation in the name of the **Vilna Gaon.** The pasuk says in Parshas Miketz, "And he (Pharaoh) had him (Yosef) ride in his second chariot, and they proclaimed before him, 'Avrech!' And he appointed him over all the land of Egypt." [Bereishis 41:43].

There is a dispute in the Sifrei as to the meaning of the term 'Avrech'. One opinion says it is a condensation of two words: Av (father) in wisdom and Rach (soft; tender) in years. Yosef was all of 30 years old. He was running Egypt. He was very wise while still being a young man.

That is why young Kollel students in Eretz Yisrael today are given the title Avreichim. It means the same thing – they are young in years but wise beyond their age.

The other opinion in Sifrei is that Avrech comes from the root word berech meaning 'knee'. Whenever Yosef would appear, his assistants would announce to everyone 'Avrech' – bend down (as a show of honour to the ruler).

The Gaon explains that a derivative of this dispute in terms of the meaning of 'Avrech' is whether the term is a single word (as would be the case if it comes from berech) or two words (a combination of Av and Rach).

The Gaon says that the notation at the end of the parsha tells us that there are 2025 words in the parsha, this only works out if one counts AvRech as two words, indicating that we are of the opinion that AvRech is a term connoting the two aspects of 'Av' (maturity in wisdom) and 'Rach' (youthfulness).

A Penetrating Analysis of The weekly Haftorah by R' Tzvi Hersch Hoffman

וְהִנֵּה־מְנוֹרַת זָהָב כֻּלָּהּ... וְשִׁבְעָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה מוּצָקוֹת לַנֵּרוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ (Zechariah 4:2)



The Levush, R' Mordechai Yoffe zt"l, writes that when Rosh Chodesh falls out on Shabbos Chanukah, we read the Haftorah of Shabbos Chanukah (not Rosh Chodesh) which details the vision of Zechariah HaNavi and the seven-branched golden Menorah in the second Bais HaMikdash.

The reason, he says, is because acknowledging Hashem's miracles through the mitzvah of **פִּרְסוּמֵי נִיסָּא**, trumps all.

R' Gamliel HaKohen Rabinowitz shlit'a (Tiv Haftoros) explains that the very concept of **פִּרְסוּמֵי נִיסָּא** is one that should not only be highlighted during the days of Chanukah. Rather, Zechariah's vision of the golden Menorah and its intricate, nature-defying workings, underscores the fact that the very root of our existence in this

corporeal world is due to the Almighty's never-ending kindness and benevolent nature, performing daily miracles which keep us alive and sustained. And without them we would not only cease to exist, but we would have never even existed in the first place.

Chanukah is an exciting time of the year, and with all the fun and games of the celebration, it is easy to lose sight of the reason for our celebration. We tend to get excited when Hashem performs an "abnormal" event which gets labelled as a miracle, but the truth is that just as the amazing events of Chanukah which took place many years prior need to be publicized year after year, we too, must acknowledge and publicize the miracles Hashem does for us day in day out – namely our very existence.



Torah Tavlin

וַיֹּאמֶר לַאֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ הָבֵא אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבָּיְתָה וּטְבֹחַ טֶבַח וְהָכֵן כִּי אִתִּי יֹאכְלוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בַּצָּהֳרָיִם 43:16 ***Bring the men into the house and [give orders] to slaughter an animal and to prepare, for the men will eat with me at lunch***.

The Torah relates how Yosef HaTzaddik invited his brothers into the royal palace to sit and partake in a meal with him. Yosef served each brother one portion of food and gave Binyamin five times as much as the other brothers. Then they drank wine together. Rashi says in the name of the Medrash: "**מיום שמכרוהו לא שתו יין**" - "***Since the day that they had sold him, neither they (the brothers) nor he (Yosef) had drunk wine, but on that day they did drink wine***."(43:34) Furthermore, the Gemara (Chulin 91a) tells us that Yosef had all the food prepared according to Jewish tradition and it was all kosher. He personally saw to it that the animals were ritually slaughtered (Shechita) and the Gid Hanashe was removed (Nikur).

For decades, there has been a strong and warm connection between the Royal Family of England and the British Jewish community. Both the new King, Charles, and his son, the new Prince of Wales, have visited Israel on a number of occasions, while a long list of British Prime Ministers have visited Israel, displaying a clear warmth towards Israel.

On one occasion, **Chief Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jakobovits zt"l** received an invitation to a celebratory dinner at the Queen of England's residence in Buckingham Palace. Rabbi Jakobovits, who was close to England's ruling circle and especially to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, wrote back to say that while he valued the invitation, he could not attend due to his dietary restrictions. He was surprised to receive a response a few days later that said that since his presence was very much desired, the palace staff was going

to make a special effort to supply his needs and provide him with kosher food.

When Rabbi Jakobovits and his wife arrived at the palace, they were met by a waiter who showed them the arrangements that had been made for them, going so far as to show them the special dishes that the palace kitchen had bought for their meal. They were identical to the dishes from which the rest of the guests were going to be eating, but there was a tiny sticker on each dish attesting to it being kosher.



Rabbi Jakobovits was happily surprised as to the extent the royal palace went to see to his needs. The hall was soon full of the "Who's Who" of British elite, including celebrities and numerous individuals who were famous for their contributions in various areas of society.

Rabbi Jakobovits took his place next to his wife and was enjoying his kosher appetizer when something strange happened: after the first course, all the guests stood up and changed places! Seeing the surprise on Rabbi Jakobovits's face, the man sitting next to him explained that this is how it was done at such events. After each course, everyone switched places, so that they all had a chance to meet and converse with more people.

This put Rabbi Jakobovits in a difficult position - his dishes were the only kosher dishes in the entire room. It was unlikely that the palace staff would serve him on special dishes in each new seat he decided to sit in. So, with little choice and head held high, after each course Rabbi Jakobovits picked up all his forks, knives, spoons, plates and cups, and carried them to his new seat.

The other guests were astonished, and his behaviour was even deemed "offensive" to an assimilated Jew who was also present. This

Jew announced loudly that Rabbi Jakobovits was going too far and embarrassing the Jewish people. Rabbi Jakobovits paid him no heed. Kashrus was kashrus and it had to be adhered to - even in Buckingham Palace.

At the end of the evening, when all the guests were preparing to leave, Prince Charles approached Chief Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, shook his hand, and announced, "Ahhh, here is the Jew with the plates!"

Rabbi Jakobovits explained his behaviour and the conversation soon turned to a detailed discussion of the laws of kashrus, in which the prince took such an interest in Jewish dietary laws, that he even brought his mother, Queen Elizabeth herself, into the discussion.

The public display of closeness between the Orthodox rabbi and the royal family roused the jealousy of the assimilated Jew who had rebuked the rabbi previously. Feeling left out, he rudely pushed his way into the tete-a-tete - "I, too, am a Jew," he announced - intending to show the prince that there was another kind of Jew, a more "enlightened" and "cultured" one.

Prince Charles shot him a look of surprise and asked, "***You're a Jew? If so, where were your plates?***"

Torah Temimah

אמר רבא אמר רב ששת [כל שאינו מונע הלכה מפי תלמיד] זוכה לברכות כיוסף שנאמר (משלי יא:כו) וברכה לראש משביר ואין משביר אלא יוסף שנאמר (בראשית מב:ו) ויוסף הוא ... המשביר לכל עם הארץ - סנהדרין צב.

Yosef sustained the entire country by supplying its people with all of their material needs. Certainly then, one who gives his students their spiritual needs by answering all their questions and doubts, will merit at least the same level of beracha that Yosef merited.

Sparks Of Shabbos



HaRav Matisyahu Solomon explains that Shabbos is the litmus test to see if a person is really waiting for moshiach: The [correct] reason why we look forward to Moshiach's coming is so that we will be free to focus our time and attention on spiritual pursuits.

Shabbos is a window into olam ha'ba and if we dedicate it to learning, davening, chesed, and avodas Hashem, then this demonstrates that this is our true desire. However, if a person spends his time pursuing physical indulgence or trying to pass the time until Shabbos is over, then he shows this isn't his true desire.

The way we spend chol ha'moed and other "off-days" are also similar opportunities to demonstrate our true desires.

"Nefesh Shimshon" – From the Teachings of Rabbeinu Shimshon Dovid Pincus Zt"L - Surprise Find

וַיֵּצֵא לִבָּם וַיֶּחֶרְדוּ ***Their hearts sank, and they trembled.42:28***

Said R. Levi: The Tribes came upon a surprise find, and it is written, "Their hearts sank, and they trembled." Surely it should be so with us, as we have lost R. Simon bar Zavdi. (Yalkut Shimoni, Miketz 148)

Yosef 's brothers found something that ostensibly should have made them happy. They found money in the mouths of their sacks. Yet, "Their hearts sank, and they trembled." The loss of a great Sage such as R. Simon bar Zavdi should surely bring people to fear. This is what the Midrash is saying.

However, it is very hard to grasp the point of this Midrash, because the surprise find of Yosef 's brothers was not a very happy event at

all. On the contrary, when they found bags of money at the top of their grain sacks, they were naturally afraid for their lives, as the Egyptians would likely accuse them of stealing their money. So why does the Midrash construe this find as a happy event?

When Hakadosh Baruch Hu brings a decree upon a person, He sends him warning signals. When a person performs an act, and something happens to him, this is a sign of what will happen in the end.



Yosef 's brothers found money in their sacks. But Yosef could just as well have hidden the body of an Egyptian child in their sacks, and then they would have been in much worse shape. Whereas when a person finds a sum of money, he is naturally happy, it gives him a good feeling, even if he knows that it could potentially lead to trouble.

Yosef 's brothers learned a wonderful lesson from the fact that money was placed in their sacks, and not something else. It still spelled trouble, but since the trouble was arising from a "happy" find, this indicated that it was a completely different kind of trouble. It showed the nature of the trouble that was brewing up.

This explains the Midrash. If a find like this, which contains a joyful element, brought Yosef 's brothers to tremble, then the loss of a great man such as R. Simon bar Zavdi should surely make us fear.

Throughout the parshah we see an interesting thing: Yosef treated his brothers very carefully from beginning to end. He could have done a lot of very unpleasant things to them. He could have beaten them, harassed them in various ways, etc. But all he did was put money in their sacks, something which caused them no damage at all. Not only that, but when they wanted to return the money, he refused, saying it was their money.

Also before, when he asked them to bring Binyamin to him, what "terrible" things did he do to them? He held Shimon in prison for a few minutes, until they left. What happened to Shimon? Nothing. Yosef gave him five-star treatment until his brothers came back.

This was a sign of Yosef 's true intentions toward his brothers.

"Nefesh Shimshon" - Yosef the Tzaddik

אֱלֹקֵיכֶם וֵאלֹקֵי אֲבִיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם מַטְמוֹן בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵיכֶם כַּסְפְּכֶם בָּא אֵלָי

Your G-d and the G-d of your father gave you a hidden treasure in your sacks. Your money came in to me. (43:23)



Why did Yosef return their money, putting it in the mouths of their grain sacks? Ostensibly it was just to cause them consternation and was part of the process Yosef was putting them through until he revealed his true identity. Because here they are, trying to return the money to him, and, as we see from the continuation of the story, he could very well have accepted it, and given it back to them at a later point.

Why did he insist on refusing the money, offering a strange and untruthful excuse? He told them, "Your G-d and the G-d of your father gave you a hidden treasure in your sacks. Your money came in to me." This is such a bizarre claim. The money in your hands must have fallen from Heaven; I already received your payment.

Yosef really went out of his way not to take money back from them so he must have had a good reason for this.

Chazal call Yosef by the name of *Yosef Hatzaddik*. *Tzikdus* is his special trait. *Chazal* say about the *tzaddik*:

The whole world stands on one pillar, and it is called "*tzaddik,*" as it says: **וצדיק יסוד עולם** – "The *tzaddik* is the foundation of the world."

It says also about Noach that he was a *tzaddik*: **נח איש צדיק** – "Noach was a righteous man." He supported and fed the whole world on his own during the *Mabul*.

It seems that Yosef had a similar desire. He wanted to uphold his special *midah* and support the whole world. Noach, who was a small *tzaddik,* supported a small world, within the *Teivah*. Yosef, who was a great *tzaddik,* supported and fed the whole wide world.

However, as long as Yosef sold food to people for money, it was not really the act of a *tzaddik*. Only when the whole world ran out of money, as *Chazal* say, and he still supported and fed them, then it was truly the act of a *tzaddik*.

Yet, the trait of *tzaddik* was still incomplete, because his brothers came to him with money to buy grain. This is why it was important to Yosef to return their money to them. He wished to fulfil his role and trait of **צדיק יסוד עולם**.

Rav Yitzchok Zev Soloveitchik ZT"L ("Reb Velvel") raises the following question on this week's Parsha: "The brothers bought food from Yosef in Egypt during the famine in Eretz Yisrael. Yosef detained Shimon and sent the rest of the brothers on their way back to Yaakov with a request to bring Binyamin to Egypt. Why did Yosef place the money back in the brothers' sacks that they rightfully paid for the food that they bought?"

Reb Velvel answered, "Because Yosef wanted to ensure sure that the brothers would return to Egypt."



Someone present at Reb Velvel's Shiur asked him, "Wouldn't Yosef's brothers come back to Egypt anyway? Considering the famine, their need for more food would surely cause them to return. And besides, wasn't their brother Shimon taken captive? They would surely return to redeem him?"

Reb Velvel answered that the brothers, who were to be the future forebearers of the tribes of Israel, had an unfathomable level of faith in Hashem (Bitachon). Yosef knew this and thought that perhaps the brothers would not return to Egypt and decide to ride out the famine, using the great level of Bitachon that they had to trust that Hashem would save them.

Similarly, they would use their Bitachon to trust that Hashem would bring about Shimon's release from prison. However, Yosef was certain of the honesty and integrity of the brothers and knew one thing for sure: They would certainly come back to Egypt to return what they believed to be an ill-gotten gain. Therefore, he placed the money back in their sacks to ensure their return. (cited by **Rav Shimon Schwab ZT"L**).

We also find later in the Parsha (42:13-14) the following exchange: "And they [the brothers] said, 'We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is gone.' And Yosef said to them, 'This is just what I have spoken to you, saying, 'You are spies.'"

The Siach Yaakov (Rav Blau) quotes a Rashi who cites the Midrash Rabbah (91:7) and says that there was additional dialogue between

Yosef and the brothers as follows: Yosef said, "And if you were to find him [the one that was gone], and his captors would demand an extraordinarily high ransom to release him, would you pay it? They answered, "Yes." Yosef continued, "And if his captors would respond, 'We shall not return him for all the money in the world,' what would you do?"

The brothers responded, "We would either kill or be killed [to get him back]."

Yosef responded, "This is what I have been telling you. You have come to kill the residents of this city. I have divined with my magic cup that two of you alone [Shimon and Levi] have destroyed the entire city of Shechem."

The response of the brothers is rather perplexing. Why would the brothers tell the governor and ruler of Egypt what they had planned to do, "Kill or be killed?" Such a response would quite likely cause them to be further suspect in the eyes of Egypt's governor to prove his allegation that they are, in fact, spies (and this is indeed what happened). Why did the brothers need to admit their true intentions?

The brothers were holy individuals, and the Middah of Emes permeated their very essence. Although they must have assuredly tempered their words to Yosef with, "You seem to us to be a just ruler who would not do such a thing," they would not lie and continued with, "…but if we were to encounter such a situation, we would either kill or be killed." The brothers felt that they had to be truthful despite the subsequent consequences that would occur with revealing their true intentions.

Treat others as you wish to be treated. Don't just be nice but be kind to other people. That can be so rewarding.

Parsha Thoughts By Mordechai Sapoznick

Don't forget to say Tefillas Haderech

When the Shevatim left Mitzrayim to return to Yaakov, Yosef hid his special becher in Binyomin's sack and wanted it to look like Binyomin stole the becher.

Yosef asked his servants how far his brothers had travelled, and they told him that the brothers had not gone too far. Yosef then told his servants to chase after the brothers and bring them back.

Horav Chaim Vital explains that Yosef wanted to make sure that his brothers had not gotten too far because otherwise they would've already said tefillas haderech, and the tefillas haderech would have protected them from Yosef's plot. [**ספר טללי אורות**]



Tefillas Haderech

Horav Elchonon Wasserman זצ"ל was traveling by boat from France to England. As the boat was sailing, there was a big storm and many of the passengers got seasick.

Rav Elchonon noticed that **Reb Aharon Goodman ז"ל** the executive of Agudas Yisroel of Europe, looked a little seasick. Reb Goodman asked Rav Elchonon how he was feeling and Rav Elchonon said that he felt fine, and if anyone felt seasick, they must have not had the proper kavanah when they said tefillas haderech!

למודי משה

We Are Guilty

In this week's *parsha* the brothers proclaim to each other: **אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל־אָחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְנוֹ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא שָׁמָעְנוּ עַל־כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת** - "***We are guilty about our brother, whose suffering we saw when he pleaded to us, and we paid no attention. Therefore, this trouble has come upon us***." (42:21)

In 1929, the infamous massacre occurred in Chevron. The Chevron Yeshiva had come from Slabodka in Europe to Chevron. In a premeditated attack, the Arabs attacked the Yeshiva and the Jewish quarter of Chevron and killed 67 students and wounded another 58.

After this incident in August 1929 the survivors of the Yeshiva moved to Yerusholayim. That is why the Chevron Yeshiva today is in Yerusholayim. They left Chevron.

After this incident, some people came to **Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld** and asked why this happened to Chevron. They suggested to him "It happened because in Chevron they play soccer (football) on Shabbos."

Rav Yosef Chaim, who was no softy, got up from his table. He held onto the table and said "Who are these people who play soccer on Shabbos in Chevron? These are people who came from Russia. They were drafted into the Czarist army. They were forced to eat *treife*. They were forced to desecrate Shabbos. They had no connection with their parents. They made *aliyah*. They don't know any better. So, they play soccer on Shabbos. Why would you expect them to know any better with that type of background?".

He said, "The soccer players are not guilty because they don't know any better. *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANACHNU*! (But it is we who are guilty). It is our fault because we know better, and we are not

behaving properly. These were the very words uttered by Yosef's brothers in this week's *parsha* – *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANACHNU*.

The Brisker Rav used the same concept. When Yonah was on the boat in the middle of the terrible storm at sea and the boat was about to go under, the *Navi* relates that everyone took out their idols and began praying to their idols. Yonah said "It is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." (Yonah 1:12).

The Brisker Rav asked – what did Yonah mean by this? All the other sailors and passengers were taking out their *avodah zorah* and worshipping their idols, yet Yonah *HaNavi* was saying "It's my fault!" How are we to understand this?

The answer is: The Ribbono Shel Olam holds the people who know better, accountable. No one knows why specific tragedies occur. But when confronted with such questions, our reaction has to be what Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld said back then and what the Brisker Rav said in his time.

The answer is אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ. We need to point the finger at ourselves. Don't blame "them." Most of "them" don't know any better. The people who know better are the people that should be held responsible. That is the message of אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ.



"Your Servant, Our Father"

Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer says (Ch.38): In the dialog between the brothers and Yosef, Yosef heard his brothers utter the phrase "your servant, our father" 10 times and he did not protest even once. They thought they were speaking to the Viceroy of Egypt and everyone is the Viceroy's servant so they referred to Yaakov as

"your servant, our father". But Yosef knew that they were talking about his father who clearly was NOT his servant. The Medrash comments that "silence is like acquiescence" and therefore for this disrespect to his father, 10 years were deducted from Yosef's lifespan. (He died at age 110 rather than age 120.)

The Vilna Gaon points out that this is an appropriate ("measure for measure") punishment. Inasmuch as the reward for honoring one's parent is "In order that your days be lengthened" [Shemos 20:12] (i.e. – you will have a long life), it makes sense to have one's life shortened for dishonor shown to one's parent.

The problem with this Medrash is that if one listens to the Torah reading this Shabbos, one will discover that we do not find the phrase "your servant, our father" ten times. It only appears 5 times!

The Vilna Gaon explains that Yosef had to pretend that he did not understand Hebrew, so he had an interpreter repeat the remarks of the brothers to him in Egyptian. Thus, he did hear the expression 10 times – 5 times in the original Hebrew spoken by the brothers and five more times in the Egyptian language translation spoken by the interpreter. - However, Yosef could not have objected to the expression "your servant, our father" because that would have blown his cover. He needed to play the charade that he was NOT their brother and that Yaakov was not his father. Had he objected the charade would have been over! How then, can Chazal fault Yosef for keeping quiet?

Rav Yitzchak Sortzkin says: True, when the brothers were speaking and said "your servant, our father," Yosef could not have objected. However, when the interpreter in Egyptian said "your servant, our father," Yosef could certainly have indicated in Egyptian to the interpreter (his son Menashe) to not speak like that. When Yosef had the opportunity to object and he did not object, then he was even punished for the brothers' mention of that phrase in the situation where he really was not able to object. There was some

kind of a lack of respect for his father by allowing himself to repeatedly hear this phrase in a situation where he could have objected without blowing his charade.

The fact that Yosef did not object when he heard those words from the interpreter when he could have objected, tells us that he was not totally faultless when he heard those same words from his brothers and could not have objected.

Different Missions In Life Require Different Techniques of Living

As Yosef predicted to Pharaoh, a terrible famine gripped the entire land. People from everywhere descended upon Egypt to buy the food that Yosef had wisely stored away during the years of plenty. Yaakov too saw that soon he would need to send his sons down to Egypt to acquire food for the family.

The pasuk says [Chapter 42 Verse 1]: "And Yaakov saw that there were provisions in Egypt, and he told his sons "**לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ**" [why do you make yourselves conspicuous]?" The interpretation of the words "**לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ**" is not immediately obvious. Rashi says he asked them "Why are you conspicuously showing off in front of the children of Eisav and Yishmael that you still have food? For at that time, Rashi says, they still had food.

The Ramban questions Rashi's comment: The descendants of Eisav and Yishmael did not live in the land of Canaan! They had their own places where they lived. So where, he asks, was this contact between the children of Yaakov and their cousins, the descendants of Eisav and Yishmael, supposedly taking place? The Ramban notes that it is perhaps more logical to interpret the instruction "Lo tisra-u" in regards to not showing off in front of the local Canaanite inhabitants.

Ramban suggests — in defence of Rashi's interpretation — that the sons of Eisav and Yishmael had to travel from their own countries down to Egypt to get provisions from Yosef and they passed through the Land of Canaan en route. Yaakov told his sons not to give the impression to their cousins that they had plenty of food and were not suffering along with them during the famine. If they would see that Yaakov and his family had food they might invite themselves in to dine with them. Yaakov did not want the sons of Eisav and Yishmael coming into his house to share meals with his family.

Ramban paints Yaakov as a person who would warn his children to fake poverty so that their cousins would not come looking for a meal -This does not sound like a grandson of Avraham Avinu. Avraham had four entrances to his house so that all wayfarers could drop in any time for a meal. Would we expect Avraham's grandson to pull down the shades so that their own cousins will not know that they are home? How are we to understand this Ramban?

Rav Simcha Zissel Brody gives a very interesting interpretation, which teaches an important lesson. Rav Simcha Zissel says that everyone needs to know his own particular mission in life. One person's mission is not necessarily that of another. Avraham Avinu's mission was to introduce the concept of monotheism to the world. To accomplish this, Avraham felt the proper approach to have an effect on the people of the world was to bring them into his house and let them sit down at his table. Avraham would then feed them, talk with them and win them over to the concept of monotheism. Avraham knew that in order to fulfill his mission, he would need to have a lot of dregs of society at his table — pagans, idol worshippers, people who had less than sterling character. However, that was his mission in life. He welcomed the challenge, and felt confident that he could handle it.

Yaakov Avinu was also a baal chessed, but his primary mission was something else. His mission was to raise 12 sons to be the future

progenitors of Klal Yisrael. In raising those children, Yaakov recognized that he needed to protect them from the horrible and decadent influences of outside society. In order to accomplish his own mission, Yaakov did not want the sons of Yishmael and of Eisav sitting at his table. That would have had a terribly adverse impact on his children. It could undermine his life's mission.

'There were noble acts that were appropriate and meritorious for my grandfather, but for me, because of my different mission in life "I cannot do these things now.' This is a novel idea, which has practical applications.

Avraham's mission was "bring as many people under the fold as possible". Yaakov's mission was "bring up 12 righteous children". That which Avraham needed to do to accomplish his mission would not necessarily work for Yaakov and indeed might be counter-act his mission. Yaakov felt that he could not have his own cousins dine at his table, lest they become a bad influence on his children.

Rav Simcha Zissel continues by stating a further novelty. Rav Simcha Zissel asks why it was that Avraham did not father Yitzchak until he was 100 years old and Sarah did not have a baby until she was 90 years old. Rav Simcha Zissel answers that if Yitzchak had been born when his parents were younger, they would not have been able to host half the world at their table. If they needed to concern themselves with raising a young son in a wholesome atmosphere, they would have had to be very particular about whom they invited into their tents.

Once Yitzchak was born, indeed Avraham's priorities changed and he now had to protect his son. Once Avraham became a father, Rav Simcha Zissel implies, his table was perhaps less open to outsiders and outside influences. G-d did not allow him to have a son until after he first accomplished his life's mission with the rest of society.

If You Have It, Don't Flaunt It

One of the overriding themes of the book of Bereishis is the concept that "the actions of the fathers foreshadow events that will happen to their descendants". In other words, the book of Bereishis is like a blueprint for a building. Our Patriarchs instructed us how to act in future times through their actions and deeds, as described in these parshiyos.

As Yaakov is about to send his sons down to Egypt, he says, "Why should you show yourselves?" (לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ) [Bereishis 42:1]. There are a number of interpretations of this expression. Rash"i says that Yaakov was telling them that they should not make themselves appear "full" to the children of Eisav and Ishmael.

The entire world was starving. Yes, Yaakov and his family may have had food, but it was not appropriate to give the appearance that they had more than everyone else. That would not be a smart thing to do.

The Kli Yakar explains the verse [Devorim 2:3] "it is enough for you dwelling by this mountain, begin traveling towards the north (penu lachem TZAFONA)" by teaching us that the word TZAFONA comes from the root TZAFOON (as in Tzafoon by the Afikomen on Passover), meaning hidden. If you achieve some degree of material success, you should hide it from the view of Eisav. In other words, "If you've got it, don't flaunt it!"

The Kli Yakar continues and says that Eisav has a long memory and always believes that if Yaakov achieves wealth — money, real estate, nice clothing — it is all because Yaakov stole the blessings from him. That mentality remains with the descendants of Eisav. Eisav has never forgiven Yaakov.

The Kli Yakar concludes that unfortunately in his generation, Jews did not learn this lesson. If they had wealth, they did indeed flaunt it.

This, my friends, is something that we must never forget. Living in the United States people do indeed forget it. We live in a country that is so unbelievably liberal and so unbelievably good to us that sometimes we think that we do not live in the Exile anymore! This is not true. We are living in exile, and it is not worthwhile to flaunt wealth. One doesn't need to listen too intently to hear rumblings about "New York bankers," and more explicit references to a "Jewish conspiracy."

This is a lesson that Jews have failed to learn time and time again in the various countries in which we have found ourselves. Whenever Jews have had a little money, they ensured that everyone knew about it. That was a tragic mistake.

This is the "action of the forefathers" that is advice to the children: Yaakov our Patriarch told his children "Why do you show yourselves?" Why should others have to think that we have more than enough? It is not only stupid; it is even dangerous as well.

Aval Asheimim Anachnu

"The brothers proclaimed one to another 'We are guilty about our brother, whose suffering we saw when he pleaded to us, and we paid no attention. Therefore, this trouble has come upon us.'" (42:21)

I would like to relate another story, this one involving **Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld** (1848-1932). In 1929, the infamous massacre occurred in Chevron. The Chevron Yeshiva had come from Slabodka in Europe to Chevron. In a premeditated attack, the Arabs attacked the Yeshiva and the Jewish quarter of Chevron and killed 67 students and wounded another 58.

(I once met a Jew in Far Rockaway who was a very heavy fellow. During the massacre, he stood at the door of the Yeshiva trying to block the entrance so the marauding Arabs could not enter. All of

his fingers were cut off in that incident because the door was slightly open. He survived but he lost his fingers.)

After this incident in August 1929 the survivors of the Yeshiva moved to Jerusalem. That is why the Chevron Yeshiva today is in Yerushalayim. They left Chevron.

After this incident, some people came to Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld and asked why this happened to Chevron. They suggested to him "It happened because in Chevron they play soccer on Shabbos."

Rav Yosef Chaim, who was no softy, got up from his table. He held onto the table and said "Who are these people who play soccer on Shabbos in Chevron? These are people who came from Russia. They were drafted into the Czarist army. They were forced to eat *treife*. They were forced to be *Mechalel Shabbos*. They had no connection with their parents. They made *Aliyah*. They don't know any better. So they play soccer on Shabbos. Why would you expect them to know any better with that type of background?"

He said, "The soccer players are not guilty because they don't know any better. *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANACHNU*! (But it is we who are guilty.) It is our fault because we know better and we are not behaving properly. These were the very words uttered by Yosef's brothers in this week's parsha – *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANACHNU*.

The Brisker Rav used the same concept. When Yonah was on the boat in the middle of the terrible storm at sea and the boat was about to go under, the *Navi* relates that everyone took out their idols and began praying to their idols. Yona said "It is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." (Yona 1:12).

The Brisker Rav asked – what did Yona mean by this? All the other sailors and passengers were taking out their *Avodah Zarah* and worshipping their idols, yet Yona, the prophet of G-d was saying "It's my fault!" How are we to understand this?

The answer is, yes. The *Ribono shel Olam* holds the people who know better, accountable. I am not suggesting anything about any current event. No one knows why a specific tragedy occurs. But when confronted with such questions, our reaction has to be what Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld said back then and what the Brisker Rav said in his time. The answer is *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANANCHNU*. We need to point the finger at ourselves.

What exactly we are doing wrong is not for me to say, and I don't know if it is for anybody to say short of a *Navi*. But we can say one thing: Don't blame "them." Most of "them" don't know any better. The people who know better are the people that should be held responsible. That is the message of *AVAL ASHEIMIM ANACHNU*.

Pharaoh Delivers A Not So Subtle Reminder: I Made You Who You Are

After hearing Yosef's interpretation of his dream, Pharaoh acknowledges: "You are the wisest man in all of Egypt. You shall be over my house and by your command shall all my people be sustained; only the throne shall outrank you." [Bereishis 41:39-40] Then the very next pasuk says: "Then Pharaoh said to Yosef, "See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt." [41:41]. What is this pasuk adding? What does it come to teach us?

I saw a very interesting insight from **Rav Shalom Schwadron**. Normally, even the best of human beings feel the need to remind people of the fact that they have done them a favor. However, the less one reminds a person of a favor he had done for him in the past, the closer he is to being angel-like.

In Sefer Shoftim (Chapter 13 the Haftorah of Parshas Nasso) we learn the story of the angel who appeared to Manoach and his wife announcing the birth of their son, Shimshon. After the long narration when the angel first came to announce the birth to Mrs.

Manoach and then the angel's second appearance to repeat the message to Manoach himself, the Navi writes: "The Angel of Hashem did not continue anymore to appear to Manoach and his wife, then Manoach realized that he was an angel of Hashem." [Shoftim 13:21]

That was the proof! Had he been a human being, after Shimshon was born, he would have returned and said "Nu? How is the little boy?" He would somehow or another try to remind the childless couple of his own role in their present great joy and the "debt they owe him" for the role he played.

The behavior of an angel is the far end of the spectrum. We cannot aspire to be angels. But if we want to know the opposite end of the spectrum, the "zero" on the scale, it is right here in Parshas Miketz: "Then Pharaoh said to Yosef, 'See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt.'" That is what this pasuk is saying. Without subtleties, without social grace, Pharaoh is clobbering it over his head: "Don't forget: I am the one who made you who you are — always remember that!"

Even we may never reach the scale of the Angel of G-d, nonetheless, we should not be Pharaohs either! When we do a person a favor — get him a job, help him find a shidduch, give him a loan – do not go looking for gratitude. It is hard enough to be the recipient of a favor; we must avoid constantly "rubbing it in".

"When the path seems steep, it means the summit is near:- Keep pushing forward." ~ Based on the teachings of Rabbi Aharon Kotler (1892-1962)

The Sar HaMashkim's Reward for Confessing

Pharaoh had troubling dreams. None of his sorcerers or dream interpreters could satisfactorily explain them. Finally, the *Sar HaMashkim* (wine butler), who had been released from prison a couple of years prior, popped up and told Pharaoh "*Es chata'ai ani mazkir hayom*" ("I remember my iniquity this day…")

He related the story of how he and the royal baker had been thrown into prison, and how they each had dreams that were interpreted by a Hebrew lad in prison. Yosef's interpretations came true 100%. Pharaoh summoned Yosef from prison and gave him a shot at interpreting the dreams.

The precise translation of the words "*Es chata'ai ani mazkir hayom*" is actually not "I remember my iniquit**y** this day" because the word *chata'ai* is plural! The correct translation is: I remember my iniquit**ies** today. Now, according to the well know Medrash, this *Sar HaMashkim* had but a single *aveira* (sin) – namely serving to Pharaoh a wine goblet, into which a fly had fallen. What then is the implication of the plural *chata'ai*?

The Alshich shares a very interesting idea: This *Sar HaMashkim*, as despicable of a character as he may have been, will go down in history as having a tremendous *zechus* (merit)—because of him, Yosef was released from prison. People received great reward for a lot less throughout *Tanach*. We have a principle that *zechus* comes to those who merit it (*Megalgelim zechus al yedei zakai*). What prior *zechus* allowed the *Sar HaMashkim* to gain the additional *zechus* of being the one to free Yosef from prison?

The Alschich quotes the Riva that the "two *aveiros*" mentioned by the *Sar HaMashkim* were (1) the incident of the fly falling into the royal goblet and (2) that it took two years for him to remember the fact that Yosef asked him to mention his plight to Pharaoh. The Alshich writes it was for the sense of guilt that he felt for his

negligence in not mentioning Yosef to Pharaoh for two years after his own release that the *Sar HaMashkim* was rewarded by being able to be the enabler for Yosef getting out of prison.

The *pasuk* in Mishlei states: "He who covers his sins will not succeed, but one who confesses and abandons them will receive mercy (from *Hashem*)." (Mishlei 28:13) The *Sar HaMashkim* was rewarded for his sense of submission and his confession to Pharaoh of this dual negligence, and in that *zechus*, he was the enabler who was able to cause Yosef to be released from prison.

Yosef Was Rushed From The Pit

When Pharoah had his famous dream, he asked for interpretations from all his advisors. The Sar HaMashkim [chamberlain of the cup-bearers] remembered Yosef and advised Pharoah that Yosef had a good track record for interpreting dreams. The pasuk [verse] records that when Pharoah sent for Yosef, "they rushed him from the pit" [Bereishis 41:14].

Nowadays, no one is taken out of prison quickly. There is a tremendous bureaucracy. There is always a lot of paperwork. In the case of Yosef, there apparently was a "paperwork reduction act". They rushed him through.

The Chofetz Chaim inquires as to what the Torah is teaching by telling us this detail, that they rushed. The Chofetz Chaim says that we are being taught an important lesson here. The lesson is that the salvation of G-d comes in the blink of an eye. Sometimes a person finds himself in a situation in which he cannot imagine how the situation is going to be rectified, but a moment later the light appears at the end of the tunnel.

Yosef was in prison. He had no friends or connections in the country. Two years earlier he had seen a potential way of getting out, but those hopes were dashed when nothing became of his request to the

Sar HaMashkim to help him out. He must have been thinking to himself, "I am stuck in prison. Nothing is happening and nothing is going to happen."

Suddenly, Yosef was speedily rushed out of the pit. G-d had decreed that Yosef must remain in jail for two years, but once those two years were over, he had to be out in the blink of an eye. That is the way G-d works. Salvation comes in a flash.

All too often, people have terrible problems. They cannot imagine how these terrible problems will ever be resolved. They need to realize that the salvation of G-d comes in the blink of an eye.

There are so many times in life when salvation of G-d comes in the blink of an eye. We can bang our heads against the wall and wail "What's going to be! What's going to be!" But things suddenly turn around. That is why the Torah emphasizes "they RUSHED him out of the pit". Things can turn around on a dime.

Why Show Yourselves as Being Satiated?

The *pasuk* says, "Yaakov saw that there was grain in Egypt; so Yaakov said to his sons, 'Why make yourselves conspicuous?'" [Bereishis 42:1]. Rashi here makes an interesting comment: "Why show yourselves before the descendants of Yishmael and Eisav as being satiated (for at that time Yaakov's family still had grain)."

This is an amazing Rashi. Although a famine was raging in the land, for some reason Yaakov and his family still had food. However, Yaakov was planning for the future. He heard that food was readily available in Egypt, and he advised his sons to go down to Egypt, stand in line with the others, and procure food for the family for the time in the future when their current supply would run out. Rashi explains that the reason he did this was because he did not want to give the appearance that they were wealthier than the other nations.

Giving such an impression accomplishes nothing except to incur the wrath and the jealousy of the nations of the world. It was worth it to Yaakov to send virtually his entire family down to Egypt — a journey fraught with danger — to wait in "food lines" with people from all over the middle east, for the sole purpose of not allowing the *Bnei Eisav* and *Bnei Yishmael* to say "Hey, look at those Jews. They are sitting pretty on fleshpots of meat while we go hungry."

Yaakov commanded his sons not to appear satiated in the eyes of Bnei Yishmael and Bnei Eisav when the latter were suffering from the prevailing food shortages.

When you possess something that your neighbor does not possess, do not flaunt it. Do not provoke his jealousy. This applies even with respect to showing off in front of one's fellow Jew — how much more so should it not be done in front of the nations of the world!

The Kli Yakar expands on this idea. He says it twice — here, in the same *pasuk* that Rashi comments upon — and again in Parshas Devorim. Do not show off your wealth in front of the Bnei Eisav. He writes that those with intelligence will understand that this (advice of Yaakov to his sons) is wise instruction to all future generations as well, regarding how the Jews in Exile should conduct themselves vis-à-vis the gentile nations.

I recently received a sefer containing **Rav Pam's** teachings on the weekly parsha. On Parshas Miketz, Rav Pam cites an interesting idea. We light Chanukah candles and put them in the front window — *pirsumei nisa* [publicizing the miracle] — which is an integral part of the *mitzvah*. Obviously, it is necessary to part the curtains or the shades (otherwise, the menorah would be a fire hazard). However, he advises, as soon as the candles go out — pull down the shades and pull closed the curtains! There is no mitzvah for the *goyim* to see that the Jew has a chandelier in his living room that can light up Yankee stadium! There is

no mitzvah for them to see all that silver or the marble floors or the granite counter tops. There is no mitzvah to flaunt our wealth before the eyes of the nations of the world. That is what this teaching of Chazal is instructing us.

Some *kehillos* have learned this lesson; but in most of our communities, we unfortunately have not yet learned it. Non-Jews look at us all the time and know very well what we have and how we live. Yaakov instructs the Children of Israel — for all future generations as well – "Do not act conspicuously!"

How Does One Earn the Tile "Tzadik"?

I heard the following thought in the name of the **Ba'alei haTosofos**.

There are two people in *Tanach* and *Chazal* who are referred to as "*Tzadik*" (righteous). The first is Noach (Bereishis 6:9). The other person, as mentioned in the Talmud (Yoma 35b), is Yosef. Chazal never speak of *Avraham Avinu haTzadik* or *Yaakov Avinu haTzadik*. The term is not used to describe *Moshe Rabbeinu* or *Dovid haMelech*. The Rabbis do, however, speak of *Yosef haTzadik*.

The Ba'alei haTosfos say the commonality between Noach and Yosef is that both sustained the world. Someone who sustains the world earns the title *Tzadik*. The proof of the matter is the *pasuk* "Open Your Hand and satiate all living creatures with favor." (Tehillilm 145:16) What is the next *pasuk*? "*Tzadik Hashem*(the L-rd is Righteous) in all His ways and pious in all His Actions."

Someone who opens his hand and provides satiation to all life with favor earns the title *Tzadik*. Therefore, Noach and Yosef are both referred to as *Tzadik* because they each had the unbelievable merit of keeping the entire world alive.

Why Do We Need a Word Count at the End of Parshas Miketz?

The number of *pesukim* in each weekly parsha is recorded at the end of virtually every parsha. The end of Miketz, as is typical, contains the notation that the parsha contains 146 *pesukim*. However, it is very atypical that following this notation there is a further notation that the parsha contains 2,025 words. This is the only parsha that contains a word count as well as a *pasuk* count. What is the significance of this?

The **Vilna Gaon** says that the *pasuk* says in Parshas Miketz, "And he (Pharaoh) had him (Yosef) ride in his second chariot, and they proclaimed before him, '*Avrech*!' And he appointed him over all the land of Egypt." [41:43]. There is a dispute in the Sifrei as to the meaning of the term '*Avrech*'. One opinion says it is a condensation of two words: ***Av*** (father) in wisdom and ***Rach*** (tender) in years.

Yosef was all of 30 years old. He was running Egypt. He was very wise while still being a young man. That is why young Kollel students in Eretz Yisrael today are given the title *Avreichim*. It means the same thing – they are young in years but wise beyond their age. The other opinion in Sifrei is that *Avrech* comes from the root word ***berech*** meaning 'knee'. Whenever Yosef would appear, his assistants would announce to everyone '*Avrech*' – bend down.

The Gaon explains that a derivative of this dispute in terms of the meaning of '*Avrech*' is whether the term is a single word (from *berech*) or two words (a combination of *Av* and *Rach*). The Gaon says that the notation at the end of the parsha tells us that there are 2025 words in the parsha, which only works out if one counts *AvRech* as two words, indicating that we rule in accordance with the opinion that *AvRech* is a term connoting the two aspects of '*Av*' (maturity in wisdom) and '*Rach*' (youthfulness).



Happy with a Part, Rich in the Whole

The mishna Avos 4:1 says **איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו**, who is wealthy, he who is happy with his lot.

As R' Dr. Joseph Breuer (1882–1980) grew older and began to lose some of his abilities, he would explain **איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו** to mean: Who is wealthy? - One who rejoices in part of himself, meaning one who is still happy with whatever abilities and faculties function, finding contentment in the faculties and strengths that remain.

The Weekly Vort

■ **ויכרם ויתנכר אליהם – *and he recognized them, but he acted like a stranger toward them*** (42:7)

Why did Yosef conceal his identity from his brothers?

Kedushas Levi sees this as an expression of Yosef's sensitivity toward their feelings. People are rarely good losers. The feeling that one is compelled to be subservient to someone else is a bitter pill to swallow. Certainly, one dreads that such an experience be witnessed by a close friend or family member.

Had the brothers known that Yosef was the one to whom they humbly bowed and that he was witnessing the fulfillment of the dream they had scorned, they would have felt deep mental anguish and suffering. In order to save them from such anguish, Yosef concealed his identity. (The Torah Treasury)

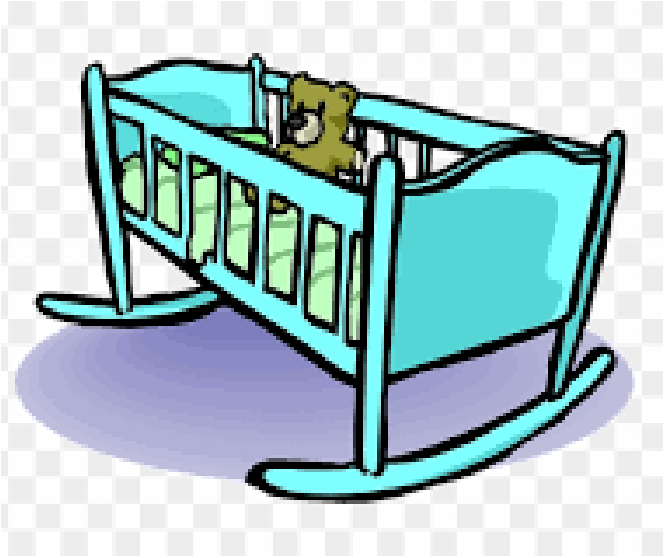
Trusting in Hashem is the highest form of prayer

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

Zerizus

Avraham Avinu excelled in the trait of zrizus, as Chazal (Pesachim 4a) say, **זריזין מקדימין למצוות** – that the *zrizim* are quick to perform mitzvos. We learn this from Avraham Avinu, as it states (Bereishis 22:3) **וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר** - "*Avraham woke up early in the morning.*"

For these reasons, Avraham taught his children and descendants the important trait of *zerizus*. The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabba 10:5) states, **כל מעשיה של צדיקים בזריזות** - "All deeds of the tzaddikim are with *zerizus*."



This is the reason Avraham developed the rocking crib. Before Avraham, cribs were stationary. But Avraham understood that a rocking crib will develop *zerizus* in his offspring, and *zerizus* will result in hislahavus. [Later, the rocking crib became a universally accepted standard. **קרן אור פני משה** writes that many things became the custom of the goyim, without them knowing that their origin comes from kedushah. The goyim saw that Yidden rock a crib, they thought that this helps the child sleep, so they adapted this custom. But the real reason was to train children in the trait of zerizus!

Beneyahu ben Yehodah is praised as being a **בן איש חי** (Shmuel 2, 23:20) and Rashi (Divrei HaYamim 1, 11:22) writes, **כי כן מנהג בני האדם כשרואים אדם זריז אומרים זה כולו חי** - "This is the custom of people. When they see a person with zrizus, they say, 'This person is fully alive.' - " Benayahu was called **בן איש חי** - alive, because he had zerizus.

Hashem told Noach to take into the teivah **מכל החי** live animals. Tosfos (Avodah Zarah 6, **ד"ה אלא**) writes that this means **שיהא כולו בריא וזריז**, the animals should be entirely healthy and with zrizus.

From these sources, we see that people, and l'havdil, animals, when they have zrizus, are considered alive. Otherwise, they are not considered alive.]

The Maharal of Prague (Nesiv Zerizus, ch.1) explains the pasuk (Malachim 1, 2:2) **וחזקת והיית לאיש** - "Be strong and become a man," that if a person doesn't have *zerizus*, he isn't a man. He isn't a human being.

From the lowest level, one reaches the highest. As it states (Tehillim 113:7) **מְאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן**, '*Hashem raises people from the lowest depths*.'

Rebbe Tzaddok HaKohen (Pri Tzaddik, Mikeitz, 5) teaches that on the final night that Yosef was in prison, he contemplated his deeds and found them to be lacking. He determined that his deeds (according to his level) weren't good enough, and he was being punished by Heaven. He became very sad and depressed, and he almost lost hope.

But then Yosef HaTzaddik strengthened himself with his emunah in Hashem and with thoughts of hope. In that merit, he was freed from prison and was placed on the throne as the second to the king.

For the first few years after his chasunah, **Reb Meir of Apta**, the author of Or l'Shamayim, and his wife were extremely poor. There were days when there was literally nothing to eat, and they went hungry.

Once, the rebbetzin had some porridge, but she didn't have a pot in which to prepare it. So she went to a neighbor and borrowed a pot.

She was happy that her holy husband would finally have something to eat to satisfy his hunger. - The problem was that the food was still in the pot when the neighbor came to take it back, and the rebbetzin didn't have a dish to pour the food into.

She asked the neighbor to wait a few minutes until her husband came home from his learning, but the neighbor insisted that she needed the pot immediately.



During these moments that she was pleading with the neighbor, the pot fell, and all the porridge spilled on the ground. Everything was ruined. There was nothing edible to eat.

This was the proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back". The Rebbetzin broke down and cried bitterly over her sad financial situation, which they have endured for several years.

Just then, her holy husband came home. He heard her cries and saw her tears. He asked her what happened, and she told him the entire story.

Reb Meir calmed her down and told her, "This was the last test.. For now on, we will be eating from silver dishes."

A few days later, the leaders of the city of Stavanitz came to their home to invite Reb Meir to be their rav. On Pesach, a wealthy person from Stavanitz gave them a present: silver dishes! (Gedulos HaTzaddikim). - When they came to their lowest place, that is when they received their salvation.

Once, Reb Shmuel Minkus *zt'l* felt that he needed *chizuk* in *avodas Hashem*, so he went to the marketplace to seek out someone who could take him to Liadi, where his rebbe, the Baal HaTanya zt'l, lived.



A merchant of hard drinks (vodka, etc.) told him he was traveling in that direction, but he only had space in the wagon's uncovered section next to the spirits' barrels. Reb Shmuel agreed and got on. - It was cold in the uncovered wagon, and Reb Shmuel asked for permission to drink some vodka from the barrels to warm up. Permission was granted.

When Reb Shmuel came to the Baal HaTanya, he said *shalom aleichem* and *tzeischem l'shalom* simultaneously.

"You just came!" the Baal HaTanya said. "Why are you leaving already?"

"I came because I needed *chizuk* in *avodas Hashem*. However, I got my inspiration on the way here. Therefore, I can go home now."

The Baal HaTanya asked, "What inspiration did you get?"

Reb Shmuel said, "I sat among barrels of alcohol, but the barrels didn't warm me up. I only warmed up when I drank the alcohol. - I learned from this that it isn't sufficient to learn chassidic ideas. To warm up, one must allow these ideas to seep in and become part of his being."

The Maharal of Prague (Nesiv Zerizus, ch.2) writes: "Someone who is lazy, it's like he isn't in the world at all…"

JEP 50 OVER 50 YEARS
Jewish Education Program
Queens

Go For It All The Way!

"*Yosef harnessed his chariot, and went up to greet his father, Yisrael in Goshen. [When] he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept, on his neck, for a long time.*"



After 22 years, Yaakov found out that his beloved son, Yosef, was still alive and was a ruler in Egypt. Yaakov went to Egypt to see Yosef. Rashi says when Yosef heard that Yaakov was approaching, Yosef harnessed the horses to his chariot. He did it himself even though he had many servants because he was so eager to show honor to his father.

Rabbeinu Bachya, quotes Midrash Tanchuma (Vayigash 7) that Yaakov was about to be honored in a special way. As soon as the Egyptians saw that their ruler, Yosef, had harnessed his chariot to go to welcome his father, the entire nation accompanied Yosef.

As Yosef was nearing Yaakov, the pasuk states, "*he appeared before him*". Rashi explains that Yosef appeared before his father. The commentaries wonder what Rashi was adding. Of course, Yosef presented himself to his father.

To answer this question **Rav Chaim Shmulevitz z"l** gives a beautiful insight. Rav Chaim Shmulevitz z"l (Sichos Mussar) describes the emotions that Yosef must have felt as he was about to see his father. Yosef yearned to see his father whom he had not seen in 22 years. Yosef had an especially strong bond of love with his father.

As the pasuk tells us, "And Yisrael loved Yosef more than any of his sons…."(37:3) Yaakov taught Torah to all his children. In addition, Yaakov taught the Torah of Shem and Ever only to Yosef and not to his other children.

Da'as Zekainim adds that the pasuk says, **וַיַּעַל לִקְרָאת־יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו** (Bereishis 46:29) -"He (Yosef) went up to meet Yisrael."

The reason that the word **וַיַּעַל** is used is to teach us that for Yosef it was tantamount to a spiritual ascent to go and greet his father and to pay him this honor.

These were Yosef's feelings as he was about to see his beloved father. But Yosef had mixed emotions. Yosef also understood his father's emotions. He knew of Yaakov's anguish at not seeing his son for so long. Seeing Yosef again would bring Yaakov feelings of extreme joy and happiness. It would be a moment of unsurpassed excitement for Yaakov. In fact, Yaakov had said, "It is too much! My son Yosef still lives. I will go and see him before I die" (46:28). And, after seeing Yosef, Yaakov said to him, "Now I can die, after I have seen your face that you are alive." (46:30).

Yosef was feeling both these emotions. He had an overwhelming desire to see his father. Yet, Yosef also understood the great desire that Yaakov had to see him, his long lost, beloved son.

This conflict in emotions is what Rashi is addressing. Rashi is teaching us that Yosef suppressed all his emotions and yearning to see his father. He went to see Yaakov solely to bring Yaakov happiness.

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz zt"l asks the obvious question. Why did Yosef have to suppress his own, personal feelings? Why couldn't he have gone to see his father with both emotions simultaneously? Why couldn't he go with the idea of bringing his father happiness as well as bringing happiness to himself?

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz's answer gives us an insight into the greatness of our illustrious ancestors and serves as a lesson for us as well.

Had Yosef gone to see Yaakov with the thought of also satisfying his personal feelings, that would have had a slight degree of "selfishness". Yosef's act of going to see his father would have then lacked some degree of purity in the mitzvah of honoring his father. Yosef sought to act TOTALLY to honor his father. Thus, he suppressed his own feelings and desires to see his father. Of course, once Yosef appeared to his father, then he allowed his feelings and emotions to be expressed.

Rashi says that Yosef wept copiously when he saw his father. **Chizkuni** also says that Yosef continued weeping while embracing his father. This gives us an insight into the ideal way that we should be performing a mitzvah with a total and complete heart, with 100% purity.

Shalom Bayis By R' Yitz Greenfield – Intentions Behind Our Words

In this week's Parsha the Sa'ar Hamashkim (butler) relayed to Pharaoh, Yosef's ability in interpreting dreams when he said (Bereshis 41:12): "*And there, with us, was a youth, a Hebrew, a slave, we related it to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; each in accordance with his dream did he interpret.*"

It is interesting to note all the details the Sa'ar Hamashkim made sure to include in his description of Yoseph, a youth, a Hebrew, and a slave. Rashi tells us that he included these details because he was trying to demean Yosef in Pharaoh's eyes. When he called Yosef a youth, he pointed out that he was a fool and not f it for a position of greatness. When he called him a Hebrew, he wanted Pharaoh to know that Yosef was not even familiar with the Egyptian language. When he called him a slave, he was trying to bring Pharaoh's

attention to the fact that it was written in the protocols of Egypt that a slave may not rule and may not wear royal garments.

What does this Rashi have to do with Shalom Bayis?

Rashi is pointing out to us that the innocent descriptive words that the Sa'ar Hamashkim used were not so innocent. We can take this message and apply it to ourselves because it is human to say things in a nonchalant way but really have a pejorative message that is sitting behind our words. Sometimes we can make a comment, and if we just take a moment to think, "do we really want to bring a whisper of negativity into our homes?" we can change what we say ever so slightly, and it can stay innocent. - For example, if we are sitting at a Shabbos table with our spouse instead of saying, "The house looks great - it's amazing what you can do when you want to!"

Let us take a moment and think of what is behind our words. Let's focus on effort instead of results, that sounds like "The house looks great!" or "I appreciate how hard you worked to make Shabbos special for us." Instead of commenting on a D'var Torah, "That was beautiful - you really kept it short tonight!"

Let us leave out the hidden message and just keep the positivity with "I enjoyed your D'var Torah." There is a place in our marriages to communicate our preferences, but let us try to communicate at the right time when we are relaxed and can speak to our spouse privately - and with respect.

Let us learn from the Sa'ar Hamashkim what NOT to do when speaking to our spouses. It takes paying attention, being honest, and sometimes changing what we were about to say, but the dividends are worth the effort. May Hashem shine the light of Shalom Bayis into our homes. Happy Chanukah!

Buying a Raffle Ticket

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein ruled that whether maaser (tithe) money could be used to purchase a raffle ticket from a charity depends on whether there is a **fixed number of tickets being sold**.

The Distinction

Fixed Number of Tickets: If there is a fixed or limited number of tickets available, then each ticket has a quantifiable monetary value based on the probability of winning the prize. In this scenario, purchasing the ticket is considered a regular commercial transaction for an item (the chance to win) with a specific value. One may use maaser money only for the amount that exceeds the actual (probabilistic) value of the ticket, which is the pure donation part.

Unlimited Number of Tickets: If there is no fixed limit to how many tickets will be sold, the value of any single ticket cannot be fixed or calculated because the probability of winning is constantly changing and undefined. Since the amount paid cannot be assigned a clear commercial value, the entire payment is considered a donation to the charity, and thus the full price of the ticket may be covered by maaser funds. In practice, because most charity raffles have no fixed limit on the number of participants, Rabbi Feinstein generally permitted using maaser money to purchase the tickets in such cases.

Winnings

According to Rabbi Feinstein, if one purchases a ticket with maaser money and wins a prize, the winnings essentially belong to the individual, but it is proper to return the initial cost of the ticket to the maaser fund. The winner would also need to give maaser from the net gain of the prize value itself.

Other authorities, such as **Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky and Rabbi Yisrael Yaakov Fisher**, held a stricter view, requiring the entire

prize to be turned over to the maaser fund if the ticket was bought with maaser money.

The Secret of Seven - Rabbi Eliyahu Maksumov

Everything we do on Shabbos should bring us back to one central idea: this day is holy, set aside for the honor of Shabbos. Shabbos, of course, comes on the seventh day, the number that represents completion, holiness, and Divine perfection. And if you look closely, you'll notice something remarkable: nearly everything on the Shabbos table—every dish, every item we use in honoring Shabbos—somehow circles back to the number seven.

We begin with Kiddush, made on wine. In Hebrew, *yayin* is spelled *yud-yud-nun*. The numerical value is 70. Remove the zero, and what remains? Seven.

Next comes fish in Hebrew, *dag*. *Dalet* equals 4, *gimel* equals 3. 4 + 3 = 7.

Then we have meat, basar. Bet (2), shin (300), reish (200). Together, that's 502. 5 + 0 + 2 = 7. How about baksh, the traditional slow-cooked Shabbos dish. Bet (2), chaf (20), shin (300). That's 322. 3 + 2 + 2 = 7.

We light Shabbos candles, nerot. The word ner equals 250. 2 + 5 + 0 = 7.

Then there's kugel. Kuf (100), gimel (3), lamed (30). Add them up: 133. 1 + 3 + 3 = 7.

And of course, challah. Chet (8), lamed (30), hey (5). 8 + 30 + 5 = 43. 4 + 3 = 7.

Everything on the Shabbos table carries within it a hint of seven.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

The 43 Secret

We know that Hashem's name **אלה-ים** is associated with *Middas Hadin*, strict judgement. Now, **אלה-ים** has a gematria of 86. **R' Tzvi Hirsch of Zidichov** explains that the way to "sweeten" or diminish and weaken the force of judgement is with the pasuk **טוב ה'**, Hashem is good.



The gematria of **טוב ה' (טוב י-ה- ו-ה)** is 43. This is half of 86, which is symbolic of splitting the *din* in half.

Now, the longest pasuk in Tanach is found in Megilas Esther 8:9. This pasuk contains 43 words! And what does it discuss? A matter that is good for the Jews **טוב ה'**, as it speaks with the reversal of the decree of Haman and Achashveirosh!



With this we can explain the secret contained in the name **נחום איש גם זו**, whose name comes from his response to adversity: **גם זו לטובה** - this too is for the good.

Noting that the word **גם** has a gematria of 43, we can understand it as **גם**, which can weaken the force of judgement (as we mentioned earlier), and helps us recognize that its **זו לטובה** - all for the good.

"The essence of our existence in this world is to strengthen our connection with Hashem." ~ Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto.

"Astounding Torah Insights About the Human Body" by Rabbi Yehoshua Alt

How do we come to appreciate the workings of the body, as mentioned in Asher Yatzar, and that it all comes from Hashem?

The Chasam Sofer teaches that Asher Yatzar is a bracha achrona to show our appreciation for what Hashem has done for us: allowing our bodies to perform their functions.

Most people give little thought to their digestive system because it isn't visible. If you study the intestines, you'll appreciate them. Additionally, if we speak about the wonders of the body, we will come to a deeper appreciation. This is what Dovid Hamelech instructed when he wrote (Tehillim 116:10), "הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר," which can be understood that as you speak about something, you come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of it.

Fingernails and Fire

Pirkei D'rebbi Eliezer tells us that before Adam's sin, his body was covered with the same material as our fingernails which acted as the ultimate protection from harm. Just as evil was external to man at that time, so too was he physically protected from all external negative forces. However, after the sin, Adam became vulnerable to evil, both spiritually and physically. The protective material was removed, remaining only on his fingers and toes as a lasting reminder of what once was—and the spiritual level we strive to return to.

At the conclusion of that first Shabbos (although Adam sinned on Friday, Hashem allowed him to remain in Gan Eden until after Shabbos), darkness descended for the first time. Adam was frightened, suddenly grasping the gravity of his transgression and its consequences. Darkness and evil were now mixed in and a part of his world.

At that time, Hashem provided Adam two flints, with which he created fire. Upon doing so, Adam recited the bracha of *borei me'orei ha'eish*. This was the first fire, and its creation marked a pivotal moment in humanity's adaptation to a post-sin reality. The fire of havdala and its bracha are reminiscent of Adam at creation.

Each Motzaei Shabbos, as we recite this same bracha during Havdalah, we gaze at the light reflected off our fingernails. This gesture recalls Adam before the sin—when his entire body shone with that protective brilliance—and the ideal we yearn to return to.

As we distinguish between the kodesh and chol, sacred and the mundane, *kodesh* and *chol*, we express our longing to return to the state of *yom shekulo Shabbos*.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְּבַר־ה' אֶל־זְרֻבָּבֶל לֵאמֹר לֹא בְחַיִל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי



In the vision of *Zecharia HaNavi*, (4:6) he describes a beautiful golden *menorah* with seven branches and multiple olives dripping into each branch. The *Navi* exclaimed that his vision led him to understand that the success is *"not with an army and not with strength ... but only with the spirit of Hashem."*

The question is, what does the vision have to do with that understanding?

R' Dovid Aharon Wishnewitz *zt"l* (Imrei Daas) explains that *Chazal* teach us repeatedly that *Klal Yisroel* is the light unto the nations of the world, and it is our solemn responsibility to uphold that light. *Torah* Jews know that but so do non-religious Jews, and even those who despise us.

Thus, the connection that *Zecharia HaNavi* made serves as a reminder to all that the survival of *Klal Yisroel* hinges on our understanding that we must maintain the purity of our nation. The *shemen zayis zach* used for the *menorah* is made through many olives - to which *Klal Yisroel* is compared to. It does not come about through brute force but rather through a painstakingly delicate process of squeezing olives.

Thus, the *menorah* which represents light is comparable to the light unto the nations of the world - *Klal Yisroel* - and it is our duty to maintain the purity of the world - not through brute force, but with the spirit of *Hashem* and through the study and dissemination of His holy *Torah*!

May we merit to see the holy *menorah* once again be lit in the *Bais HaMikdash* speedily and in our days.

מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

The amazing story before us happened in Russia in 2017 (exactly 8 years ago) regarding a Jewish woman named Irena Dislevsky, who studied medicine for seven years, and then another seven years, specializing in head surgery.

The law in Russia states that those who study medicine and complete their studies are entitled to receive a certificate, their medical degree. The certificates are handed out on a specific day, and those who do not come to receive their certificate will have no further opportunity to receive it. Anyone who does not come to pick up the degree on that date loses eligibility for the certificate and must complete another seven years in order to receive a new certificate.

Everyone in Russian medical school knows that if he or she does not come to pick up the earned certificate, they lose their chance to become a practicing doctor. Nobody failed to come on the appointed

day to pick up their certificate. However, the date set for receiving the certificate for Irena Dislevsky fell out on *Shavuos* 2017.

It was precisely at that time that Irena Dislevsky began to become stronger in observing *Torah* and *mitzvos*, and for several months she had been observing *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. She was at a loss as to how she could get her certificate. In her distress, she turned to the Chief Rabbi of Russia, **R' Berel Lazar *shlita***, to ask him what to do.

The rabbi said to her, "Rent a room in a nearby hotel, and then you can walk over and pick up the certificate."

She told the rabbi, "But I will have to sign all kinds of documents and paperwork confirming that I received the certificate."

The rabbi told her, "If so, then I don't see any halachic solution to allow the certificate to be picked up on *Yom Tov*."

Her heart was broken within her; many years of hard work were about to go down the drain. But Irena refused to let the evil inclination break her. She became stronger and said to herself, "I have decided to keep *Torah* and *mitzvos* without compromise. I will not desecrate the sanctity of the festival for the sake of the certificate."

The holiday arrived and the certificates were distributed. Irena Dislevsky did not go to receive her degree, and of course, she lost her opportunity. The day after the holiday, she tried to talk to the Russian Ministry of Education to request her certificate, but her pleas fell on deaf ears. She was told that she had lost her diploma, and to get a new one, she would have to go back and study for another seven years. She accepted it with love because she knew it was *Hashem's* will.

In December 2018, a large conference was held in honor of the Hanukkah holiday at the Kremlin, the Russian parliament. On this important occasion, Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar lights the *menorah* and offers a few words about the holiday. President Vladimir Putin, who

respects all religions, arrived at the lighting ceremony just as Rabbi Lazar was speaking.

The rabbi spoke about the self-sacrifice of the Hasmoneans, the few against the many, and the significance of self-sacrifice for the sake of Judaism. He added: "I want to tell you a story about one contemporary Hasmonean woman, who took upon herself the yoke of *Torah* and *mitzvos* with self-sacrifice, and stood up for the principles of Judaism, even at a great personal loss."

He told of a woman who studied medicine for years, and all the labor of the past and all the hope of the future she gave away in order not to desecrate a Jewish holiday. He concluded by saying: "Do you have a greater devotion than this for the sake of Judaism?"

President Putin heard this and was very moved. He called Rabbi Lazar over and asked him, "Is the story you told true? And if so, what is the name of that woman?" Rabbi Lazar answered in the affirmative. "Irena Dislevsky is her name."

The president bid farewell to Rabbi Lazar and left the scene. He immediately called the Minister of Education and said, "I ask that you bring me the medical certificate of Irena Dislevsky who was to have graduated back in June of this year."

Of course, a minister in Russia who receives such an order immediately carries out the president's request. President Putin received the certificate and asked that Irena Dislevsky be brought to him. Startled and scared, she arrived and was handed her certificate.

To date, she is the only person in history to receive such a certificate from the Russian president. Shortly afterwards, she immigrated to the Holy Land and was hired to work as a deputy director of surgery in one of the large hospitals in Israel.



Parsha Reflections for the Shabbos Table - Dayan Yehoshua Posen

'The **ישועה** might be right around the corner, even though we can't see it!' - **בימים ההם בזמן הזה!**

Every year, **שבת חנוכה** falls on **פרשת מקץ** and the question is asked, is there a connection between the two?

The **שפת אמת** answers that there is a common theme which runs between the two. At this juncture, **יוסף הצדיק** was in the lowest possible position, he had been through so many **נסיונות** and challenges. One may have thought that **חס ושלום** he would despair. Instead, **הקב"ה** brought him out of prison. He was elevated to **מלכות**, where he was ultimately able to save the **שבטים** from famine.

The same is true of **חנוכה**. As a nation, we were at our lowest. It was only a **נס** which came and saved **כלל ישראל**. The battle was won by **כלל ישראל** with **רבים ביד מעטים**. We then had the **מנורה** in the **בית המקדש** which continued to burn for 8 days.

The **שפת אמת** teaches that the lesson which we are meant to take from this is that the **ישועה** is there; it is just that we don't see it.

In this particular year, **כלל ישראל** have had such a tragedy with the massacre in Australia. The biggest **עליה** we can give to the **נשמות** of those **קדושים** is to learn this lesson, to be **מוסיף והולך** the **נר** of **חנוכה**, to keep the light burning larger and larger, to be **מאמינים בני מאמינים** that the **ישועה** is there. It is just round the corner, and **אם ירצה ה'**, with that we should be **זוכה** to a good **שבת**, a good **חנוכה** and to all see our own **ישועות**.



Dream Big And Achieve Big - וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת 42:2

When the famine struck the land of Cana'an and food became scarce, Yaakov Avinu tells his sons: "Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Mitzrayim. Go down there, and buy for us from there; that we may live, and not die".

However, a question comes to mind: What does Yaakov add by saying both "we may live and not die"? Either of the words explains what he means; what is the purpose of mentioning both?!

The Seforno gives a simple answer. He explains that Yaakov wished to buy whatever type of food at whatever amount so they could survive. Whether the food is high or low quality, they should buy as much as possible. Because the objective is to live through the years of hunger and famine.

However, the **Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh** provides a deeper and more profound explanation. - He writes: The phrase "so that we may live and not die" is interpreted - in order that we may live **comfortably**, a life without anguish, or so that we may at least not die even if we have to live with anguish. (It would all depend on the amount they were able to buy from Mitzrayim).

Yaakov wanted **לכתחילה** to thrive and not just survive. Yaakov wished **לכתחילה** to achieve the extraordinary. Even though there was famine throughout the world, Yaakov wished to prosper and flourish. He was determined to live a life with energy, passion, and intention.

Although there was a lack of food, Yaakov still looked for ways to improve and advance his goals. Deep down, Yaakov was driven to actualize his potential and make the most of his life.

The Ohr Hachaim's profound lesson is the message of Chanukah. Darkness must not become our norm despite the days getting shorter and the nights growing longer. Rather, we light an additional candle each night to provide more light and dispel the darkness.

In our daily life, it is imperative to understand that we are not created to stay stagnant but rather to continually grow and improve. To become better and develop our unique identity each day.

This mentality gives us hope when times are bleak and the confidence to achieve the improbable. We all can achieve the extraordinary. We need to free ourselves from any limitations, dream big and achieve big. Think big and dream bigger.

Parsha Reflections - Chanukah

The avos foresaw the future of the Jewish nation and davened for their success in each situation. **The Meor Einayim** (Miketz) writes, "It is known that the avos davened during their lifetime for what will occur in the future up to when Moshiach comes, may it be speedily in our days."

The avos davened for every generation. For example, at Akeidas Yitzchak, Avraham said (Bereishis 22:5), **ואני והנער נלכה עד כ״ה**, and **כ״ה** hints to **כ״ה כסלו**, the date of Chanukah. The Meor Einayim explains, "Avraham davened that the Yiden should win the war against the Yevanim in the days of Matisyahu.

"Yosef HaTzaddik spoke to Binyamin and said (Bereishis 43:29), **אלקים יחנך בני**. The word **יחנך** hints to **חנוכה**. Yosef davened that Hashem should perform miracles on Chanukah.

The avos davened for each of us, too. The Meor Enayim writes, "Our ability to be strong with Torah and mitzvos is all because our forefathers davened for us…"



Rav Dovid Ashear Shlita

As we mourn the tragic loss of sixteen pure neshamot who were killed in Sydney, Australia, we are reminded once again that in every generation they rise up against us. We are reminded that we are still in galut, yearning for the coming of the Mashiach, when we will no longer experience terror or sadness.

Those who were murdered al kidush Hashem are now in the highest realms of Gan Eden, basking in the radiance of the Shechinah. Their friends and families, however, are left reeling from the tragedy, struggling to understand how their loved ones could be taken in such a horrific way.

As we begin the holiday of Chanukah, we must internalize that although it is impossible for us to comprehend the ways of Hashem in this world, we know this is yet another part of His master plan. Hashem is the One who takes lives, and He is the One who will restore them. He has always protected us throughout the generations, though at times we needed to experience forms of affliction beforehand.

He is the One who obliterated the Egyptians after they enslaved us for centuries. He saved us from Amalek when we were caught off guard. He saved us from Balak and Bil'am when we did not even know how much danger we were in. He saved us from Sanheriv's army, killing 185,000 soldiers in a single night without us lifting a finger. He saved us from the hands of Haman and Ahashverosh.

The Greeks issued decrees to tear us away from our Torah. They, like all the other nations, were jealous of our connection to Hashem and sought to destroy it. And once again, Hashem sent heavenly assistance to His people to defeat the strongest empire in the world.

The celebration of Chanukah was not that we were physically saved. The celebration was that the light of our Torah and mitzvot was going to continue shining brightly. To make it clear that it is our Torah and mitzvot that are the most precious things we have in this world, Hashem made an additional miracle and kept the flames of the menorah burning for eight days and nights.

Our nation is eternal. Our adherence to Torah and mitzvot are the keys to our success. - Our response to tragedy must be to redouble our efforts in the performance of mitzvot. A small amount of light can push away a large amount of darkness. Right now, a thick cloud of darkness hovers over us. We ache for our brothers and sisters who are deeply affected by this devastating event. A time of joy has turned into one of grief.

We must empathize with those in pain, pray for the injured, and beseech Hashem to console the mourners. We must also use this moment as a personal calling to come closer to Hashem. It will be our collective efforts that bring about the greatest day in history—the day of **בִּלַּע הַמָּוֶת לָנֶצַח וּמָחָה ד׳ אֱלֹקִים דִּמְעָה מֵעַל כָּל פָּנִים**. - '***The day when there will be no more death, and Hashem Himself will wipe away the tears of all who have suffered***.' (Yeshayahu 25:8)

For now, we are still in the dark. But the candles we light on Chanukah will pierce that darkness. Every mitzvah we perform and every word of Torah we learn adds more light to the world. Let us linger a bit longer by the nerot Chanukah, praying for those who are suffering. Let us devote more time to our families, offering chizuk and inspiration to help them grow in the ways of Hashem.

Our Torah and mitzvot are our greatest tools. May we be zocheh to witness the greatest light of all—the Or of the Mashiah. Then all the nations of the world will recognize the glory of Hashem and understand that we are His treasured children.

A True Concern for One's Former Colleagues By Yoni Schwartz



Rabbi Uri Zohar, zt"l (1935-2022)

The kiruv journey of Rabbi Uri Zohar, ZT"L, is one that has inspired tens of thousands. He went from being Israel's most famous actor to becoming a tremendous mashpia (influencer) and talmid chacham.

Later in his life, he was interviewed by one of the most ferocious and feared interviewers on Israeli television. She asked him, "Isn't a big part of religion caring about your neighbors and friends? How could you just turn your back on all your colleagues, your fans, and all those who invested in your acting career? Is that what these Chareidim teach - to turn your back on your fellows? Is turning your back on everyone in your past life proper?" - To make this even more difficult, he was being broadcast live to the entire nation.

Rabbi Zohar responded, "I actually care and do things for my former colleagues on a regular basis. I care enough to take practical steps to help them out - that is more than most others care about them."

With a look of arrogant intrigue on her face, the interviewer squinted her eyes and said, "If you don't mind me asking, what exactly do you do?"

On the spot, he took out a little notebook. The camera zoomed in as he opened it to show the interviewer a list of all the names of his former actor colleagues.

He said, "Most of my former colleagues have passed without leaving behind anybody to say Kaddish for them. I make it my business to

run around getting every single one's Hebrew name and yahrtzeit. I carry this around every day so I can always be prepared to elevate the souls of my former colleagues, whom I cared so deeply about, should the situation call for it." This story influenced Israel's non-religious community, bringing many back to Yiddishkeit and making a tremendous kiddush Hashem.

The Dream of the BMG Mashgiach



Rabbi Nosson Meir Wachtfogel zt"l

The following story is a testament to the power of Tefillah, a touch of ruach hakodesh, a unique depth of spiritual sensitivity, and the quiet heroism of those who live with emunah.

Years ago, a young man from Beis Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, was in the "Shidduch Parsha". After concluding a date with a young lady in New York City, and seeing her back to her home, he was preparing to head out on his journey to New Jersey. The streets were bustling, the air was thick with the hum of traffic and city life.

As he waited at a traffic light, his car idling quietly, two black men suddenly cranked opened the back doors and jumped into his vehicle. Their expressions were tense, their voices sharp. They demanded money. The young man, startled but composed, explained that he had no cash on him. He had come to New York for a date, not for shopping or errands. But the men were insistent. Even frantic. They demanded cash - or else!

One of them reached into his coat, and the young man sensed the situation could turn deadly. Thinking quickly, he said, "Look, I don't have money on me, but I do have a very valuable jewel back in Lakewood, New Jersey. If you come with me there, I will give it to you."

The two assailants paused. They whispered to each other, loudly, agitatedly, weighing their options. One suggested they kill him and take the car. The other hesitated. After a tense moment, they agreed that one of them would accompany the young man to Lakewood to retrieve the jewel and steal the car. The other would stay behind. It was decided. The remaining invader kept his gaze trained on the bochur's neck. As they drove south to Lakewood, the young man's heart pounded. He didn't know what would happen next. He prayed silently, hoping for a miracle.

Meanwhile, back in the dormitory building of the Lakewood Yeshivah, something extraordinary was unfolding. R' Nosson Meir Wachtfogel zt"l (1910-1998), the revered Mashgiach of BMG, typically slept in a room in the dormitory throughout the week. That night, however, he awoke suddenly.

Known for his deep spiritual sensitivity, he quickly aroused a group of talmidim. "One of our bochurim is in danger," he said urgently. "We must say Tehillim right away."

The bochurim, still groggy from sleep, didn't question him. They gathered together and began reciting Tehillim with fervor, their voices rising in heartfelt prayer. They didn't know who was in danger or what was happening, but they trusted their Mashgiach.

Back on the road, the young man continued driving, accompanied by one of the assailants who had settled in for the long drive. He tried to remain calm, speaking gently, avoiding any sudden movements. As they approached Lakewood, he directed the car towards the dormitory building. Inside, the students were still davening when the

bochur entered the dormitory building - with a tall, black stranger beside him. The hall fell silent.

Some students recognized the bochur and rushed to his side. Another discreetly called the police. The rest surrounded the black man and detained him. Within minutes, law enforcement arrived and apprehended the assailant. The young man was safe.

The story spread like wildfire among the students, though the Mashgiach himself remained humble and reserved. It was clearly a Divine miracle. As time went on, the bochur continued dating and was soon engaged. (For all those who will surely ask, I do not know if it was the same girl! Ed. Note) Of course, he invited the Mashgiach, R' Nosson, to the wedding.

On the day of the wedding, he approached R' Nosson with deep emotion. "Rebbi, how can I ever repay you for what you did for me that night?" he asked.

The Mashgiach smiled gently and replied, "There is one way. You can repay me by not telling the story to others."

The young man was taken aback. "Everyone knows the story. But how did Rebbi know I was in danger?"

R' Nosson hesitated for a moment. Then he shrugged softly. "Maybe ... I had a dream," he said. Those who knew him understood that this was no ordinary dream. It was a moment of ruach hakodesh, a divine whisper that reached the heart of a tzaddik. His response wasn't meant to mystify, it was a reflection of his humility. He didn't seek recognition or praise. He simply acted. Salvation doesn't always come with thunder and lightning. Sometimes, it arrives in the form of a gentle nudge, a midnight awakening, and a room full of men reciting Tehillim with deep emotion. (Ish L'Rayahu)

Parsha Potpourri, by Rav Ozer Alport

41:1 ויהי מקץ שנתיים ימים

ותאכלנה הפרות רעות המראה ורקות הבשר את שבע הפרות יפות המראה והבריאות 41:4

The Shelah HaKadosh writes that the parsha read on each Yom Tov is linked to the themes of that festival. Parshas Mikeitz is traditionally read on Chanuka. What is the connection between them?

The Chida points out that the letters comprising the first four words in the parsha are an acronym for **שמונה**= **וכאשר יוחנן השמיד יוונים מבית קדשינו צוונו שנדליק נרות תמניא יומי מחנוכה, יניחנה מצד ימין מהיוצא**– When Yochanan banished the Greeks from the Holy Temple, we were commanded to light candles for the eight days of Chanuka, and to place the menorah on the right side of the door.

Additionally, **Rav Shimon Schwab** suggests that Pharaoh's dreams, in which the weak cows and thin stalks swallowed the strong cows and healthy stalks respectively, hint to one of the main themes of Chanuka, that Hashem delivered giborim b'yad chalashim v'rabim b'yad me'atim – the mighty and numerous Greek army into the hands of a few weak Chashmonaim.

Rav Moshe Wolfson notes that there is a famous question often discussed on Chanuka which is attributed to **Rav Yosef Karo**. Rav Karo is best known for his commentaries on the Tur and the Rambam, which are respectively entitled Beis Yosef and Kesef Mishneh. The names of these works appear rarely in Tanach, but both are mentioned in Parshas Mikeitz (43:12, 43:19), alluding to his prominent connection with the holiday.

Additionally, the latter pasuk ends with the phrase pesach habayis – the entrance to the house, which is where we light the menorah (Orach Chaim 671:5).

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

When Yaakov sent his sons to Egypt to buy food, they were accused of being spies and held captive. They ended up being released, with the exception of Shimon, until Binyamin would be brought to Egypt.

When the situation got so bad that Yaakov agreed to send Binyamin, he also sent along a gift for the ruler of the land. Like when he sent a present to his brother to win his favor, Yaakov prepared a gift in order to find favor in the Mishne L'Melech, who he didn't realize was Yosef.

He sent along items from the land of Canaan, including two which had been the very same items the merchants selling Yosef had been carrying when he was taken to Egypt. [He listed: "a little **balm** and a little honey, spices and **myrrh**, pistachio nuts and almonds" (43:11).

Perhaps Hashem was sending Yosef a message that the reason he had been sent to Egypt was about to come to fruition, and the trip would come full circle.

Sometimes we don't understand why we face such challenges, but Hashem sends us signals to help us recognize that He hasn't forgotten us – and we should not forget about Him.

The Sfas Emes says we read Parshas Mikeitz on Chanukah because it discusses how Mitzrayim prepared in years of plenty for the subsequent hunger years.

We should take this as a lesson and fill ourselves with spirituality and blessings on Chanukah so that the inspiration and brachos remain with us throughout the winter months after Chanukah passes.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn - Rising To the Top

There is a striking verse in the book of Yirmiyahu. The prophet compares the Jewish people to "*Zayis ra'anan yefei peri to'ar—A* flourishing, beautiful olive tree" (*Yirmiyah* 11:16).

Chazal ask why the Jewish people are compared specifically to an olive tree. The Midrash offers two explanations, one of which is especially poignant.

If you were to try a simple experiment at home—take a glass of water and pour in orange juice, or milk—you would see that the liquids blend together. But if you pour in oil, something remarkable happens: the oil rises to the top. It refuses to blend in. No matter the environment, oil remains distinct.

This, the Midrash teaches, is the nature of the Jewish people. Wherever Jews find themselves, under any circumstances, they rise. Not out of arrogance, but out of identity. We all have the opportunity not only to grow in Torah learning, but to rise in *middos* and become role models for our families and communities.

But what does it truly mean to "rise to the top"?

Many times, I have traveled to Poland. People often ask me, "Why do you go there? So much Jewish blood was spilled on that soil. Why return to a place of such pain?" My answer is always the same. I do not go to Poland to see how Jews died; I go to Poland to see how Jews lived. I go to show that even in the darkest, most brutal moments of history, Jews held on to *mitzvos* with unimaginable courage.

Take a look at these two ordinary forks. At first glance, there is nothing special about them. Each fork has four prongs; eight prongs total. But in the concentration camps, Jews did something extraordinary. They melted wax and placed a small amount on each prong. They used cotton or even a shoelace as a wick, lit it carefully, and suddenly, they had eight flames.

From two forks, they fashioned a Chanukah menorah.

Who could imagine such ingenuity, such determination, such *mesirus nefesh*? And yet, that is exactly what happened. Even there, stripped of dignity, freedom, and safety, Jews found a way to fulfill a *mitzvah*. That is what it means to rise to the top.

That is why Chanukah is not only a story of ancient history. It is a timeless message. The Jewish people have endured hardship, persecution, and exile, but again and again, we rise.

Let me share a remarkable story.



Reb Elimelech Tress, known as Mike Tress, has a full book written about his life. He was a truly great *tzaddik* and a central figure in Agudas Yisrael. My cousin, Stuart Tress, once told me the following remarkable story.

He was in Miami, standing in shul during davening. As many people do, he had his name embroidered on his tallis bag: *Stuart Tress*. Suddenly, a Satmar chassid approached him. He had curly *peyos*, a *bekisheh*, and a deeply emotional expression. The man asked him, "Your name is Tress?" "Yes," my cousin replied. "Do you know a man named Elimelech Tress?" "Yes," my cousin said. "That was my father." At that moment, the man took my cousin's hand, held it tightly, and began to cry.

My cousin was startled. "Is everything okay?" he asked gently. "Why are you crying?" The man said, "I need to tell you something."

He explained that he had arrived in America in the late 1940s, broken and penniless after the war. He had no job and no money and no way to provide food for Shabbos for his wife and children. Living in Williamsburg, he went door to door asking people if anyone could

help him find work. Each person answered honestly: "We're struggling too. We don't have anything to offer."

But again and again, people told him the same thing: "There is one man you must go to—Elimelech Tress. He works for the Agudah. He loves helping people. Go to him." Eventually, he found his way to Mr. Tress's office on Bedford Avenue. He walked in not knowing who he was, and Mr. Tress greeted him warmly. "*Shalom Aleichem*. How can I help you?" "I need a job," the man said. "What do you do?" Mr. Tress asked. "I'm a glazier," he replied. "I fix windows inside homes, stores, cars."

Mr. Tress smiled. "You're in luck. I know a glazier on Marcy Avenue who just told me he needs help." He took out a piece of paper, wrote a short note, and handed it to him. "Give him this." The man walked a few blocks to Marcy Avenue, gave the note to the shop owner, and was hired on the spot. Every Friday, he was paid. And every Friday, he was able to bring food home for Shabbos. For the first time since arriving in America, his family had dignity and stability.

After four months, his employer called him in and said, "Tell Mr. Tress he no longer needs to cover your salary. I'll take it from here."

That was when he learned the truth. Mr. Tress had written on that note: "*Hire this man. I will personally pay his salary for as long as necessary.*" Once the employer could manage on his own, Mr. Tress quietly stepped aside.

That is what it means to rise to the top.

Imagine that level of chessed. Imagine taking responsibility not just to help someone once, but to carry them until they can stand on their own feet. That is Jewish greatness.

We have it in so many forms: the forks turned into a menorah in the camps; the quiet heroes who lived with dignity under impossible circumstances; and the life of Mr. Tress.

And here's one more point.

One of the most important lessons of Chanukah is found in a well-known *machlokes* between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel (*Shabbos* 21b).

According to Beis Shammai, we light eight candles on the first night, followed by seven on the next night, and then six, five… until one. According to Beis Hillel, we begin with one and increase each night.

The Gemara explains why we follow Beis Hillel: "*Ma'alin bakodesh v'ein moridin*—In matters of holiness, we always go higher."

That is the message of Chanukah.

If you learn one Mishnah a day, make it two. If you give a dollar to tzedakah, make it a dollar fifty. If you never said *korbanos*, start saying them. If you don't bench from a siddur, start benching from a siddur. I never bench without one. Even for an Al HaMichya, I take it out and say it inside. Voltaire already knows; he brings it to me automatically.

Everyone here has to ask: what will I do more this Chanukah than I did last year?



A young boy from a very poor family was sent by his mother to the grocery store to buy fruits and vegetables. He picked up a tomato and an apple and went to the counter to pay. The store owner looked at him and said, "*Yingele*, is that all you're buying? I saw you staring at those cherries. Why don't you take some?" The boy said, "I'd love to, but I can't afford them."

The owner said, "I'm the owner. I'm telling you; you can take some." The boy refused. "I can't. It wouldn't be right." So the owner said, "Then I'll take them for you." The boy went back, looked again at the

cherries, his mouth watering, but still didn't take any. He returned with only the tomato and apple. The owner smiled, walked over, took a large handful of cherries, and put them into the bag.

When the boy came home, his mother saw the cherries and said, "Where did you get these? You didn't steal them, did you?" The boy told her the entire story. She paused, then asked him gently,

"When the man told you twice that you could take the cherries, why didn't *you* take them yourself?" The boy answered, "Because he has a bigger hand than me."

That, said Rabbi Meir Shapiro, is why we say in Ashrei, "*Pose'ach es yadecha*—Open Your [Hashem's] hand." Anything we truly need, only Hashem can give, and His hand is bigger than anyone else's.

That is *ma'alin bakodesh*. Just like that boy got more cherries by letting the one with the bigger hand give them, so too when we do a little more for Hashem, He gives back more. - *Middah k'neged middah*. You take one step up and Hashem will lift you higher.



Rabbi YY Jacobson - The Two Fathers in Heaven

Hanan Amar was a beloved barber in Ashkelon, known to everyone for his warmth, generosity, and boundless heart. On the morning of October 7th, 2023, Simchas Torah, Hanan was brutally murdered at the Nova Music Festival. In his final moments, he was not running. He was not hiding. He was physically shielding two young girls with his own body. - Hanan was only 38 years old.

He was survived by his wife, Miri, and their three beautiful children: Avishag (13), Noam (11), and Eitan (five and a half). Friends described Hanan as a man with "the biggest heart you could ever encounter," a person who loved people, loved his family endlessly, and was deeply in love with life, kindness and connection.

More than two years passed after that dark day.

A few months ago, as Noam approached his thirteenth birthday, his mother gently began speaking with him about his Bar Mitzvah. But to her shock and heartbreak, Noam told her he did not want one. The pain of entering this milestone without his father was simply too overwhelming.

Miri was stunned. "Every Jewish boy has a Bar Mitzvah," she said. "You go to shul, you're called to the Torah, you put on *tefillin*. Jewish boys have been doing this for thousands of years." "No, Mommy," Noam replied. "No Bar Mitzvah for me."

Trying to understand, she asked, "So what *would* you like to do instead?" "I want a vacation," he said. "I want to travel to the United States." Miri's heart sank. "My dear son, I would love to give you that, but we simply can't afford it. I'm so sorry." "You asked me what I want," Noam said quietly. "That's what I want."

Then this extraordinary mother, this *Yiddishe Imah*, said something that changed everything. - "My precious son," she told him, "you have two fathers in Heaven. Your biological father is there. And your Creator, Hashem, is there. Go talk to them. Tell them what you want. Because this is far beyond anything I can arrange." Noam took her words to heart.

Later, he told me: "I went to the synagogue. I spoke to Hashem, and I spoke to my father. I asked my dad to intercede for me. And I asked Hashem to please arrange a trip to America."

Life went on. Then, a few weeks later, Miri received a message on her phone. - An organization called *Menucha V'Yeshua*, founded by

my dear friends, Mendy and Bracha Kenig, had reached out. The organization supports bereaved families after the October 7th massacre and the Gaza war. They were arranging a ten-day, all-expenses-paid vacation in the United States for grieving families. - Miri looked at the dates. It was the exact week of Noam's Bar Mitzvah.

"I thought I was hallucinating," she later told me. "I thought I was dreaming." She called immediately. "Of course," they said. "Come. Bring your children. Your family will have a beautiful time."

When Mendy Kenig heard the story, he said without hesitation: "We are going to arrange your son's Bar Mitzvah in the most beautiful hotel in the United States. Hundreds of Jews will celebrate with him. We will take care of everything." I joined them too.

And so, weeks ago, Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, I stood at the Oceanfront Berkeley Hotel in New Jersey, surrounded by hundreds of Jews, as Noam Amar was called up to the Torah. He was lifted onto shoulders. We danced, we sang, we showered him with candy. Widows, orphans, bereaved parents, donors, benefactors, people who had come thinking they were simply on a vacation, were suddenly united in something far greater.

I was asked to say a few words, and I said the following. - "Noam, my dear. Everyone in this room thought they came to America for a getaway. Nearly two hundred tickets were sponsored so these families could have joy again. But the truth is, none of us knew why we were really here.

This entire trip was arranged by your *tefillos*. By the prayers of a child who spoke to Hashem, and to his father in Heaven. You brought all of us together."

I then noticed another man standing nearby, Achiya Eliyahu, who had been preparing Noam for his Bar Mitzvah.

He said to me quietly, "I had a son, Ariel. He was a tank gunner. On the morning of October 7th, he drove his tank to Be'eri. He eliminated dozens of terrorists and saved countless lives, until he was killed at the age of twenty." Then he added, with trembling voice: "My son also celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on this very Shabbos—Parshas Chayei Sarah."

Souls connected across generations.

Later that night, after Havdalah, as we were sitting together eating pizza, Noam looked at me and said: "I took my mother seriously. She told me to pray. She told me I had two fathers in Heaven. That's what I did." - Such is the power of a pure heart in prayer.

Rabbi's Message - Rav Yochanan Zweig shlita, the Rosh Yeshiva of the Talmudical University of Miami Beach.



וְהִנֵּה מִן־הַיְאֹר עֹלֹת שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת יְפוֹת מַרְאֶה וּבְרִיאֹת בָּשָׂר וַתִּרְעֶינָה בָּאָחוּ

'Behold, there came up from the river seven cows good looking cows and fat; and they fed in the reed grass.' (41:2)

Rashi (ad loc) makes an extraordinary comment on this verse;- **סִימָן הוּא לִימֵי שׂבַע, שֶׁהַבְּרִיּוֹת נִרְאוֹת יָפוֹת זוֹ לָזוֹ, שֶׁאֵין עֵין בְּרִיָּה צָרָה בַחֲבֶרְתָּהּ** - "this (the seven nice looking cows) represents the seven years of satiety whereupon all creations look kindly at one another, no one begrudging anyone else."

Rashi seems to be changing the very meaning of the *Pasuk*. Instead of translating "nice looking cows" literally, *Rashi* explains that it means **they look kindly at each other.** Additionally, it is commonly understood that Pharaoh's dreams represented that there were going to be seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine. Yet *Rashi* translates the "good years" as years of satiety not years of plenty or abundance.

Rashi characterizes the good years as years of satiety for a simple reason; having an abundance doesn't mean that one is happy or even satisfied. In other words, abundance and famine aren't really antonyms as having a lot doesn't necessarily mean you have enough. The Torah is promising that the seven years will be years of satiation; everyone will appreciate what they have and it will be enough. But this is a difficult standard to achieve. In fact, many people don't even know if they are satisfied let alone happy with what they have.

Rashi gives us a stunning life lesson for knowing if you're happy person. The years of abundance weren't measured in quantity but rather in perspective. If you want to know if you're happy, examine your reaction when you look at other people's successes. Are you happy for them or are you a little bitter? When your neighbor gets a new car and you need one as well, are you happy for them or do you begrudge them a little? If the latter, then you aren't happy or satisfied with your own life.

For the most part, being happy has very little to do with how much you have, it has to do with how you feel about yourself. The path to becoming a happy person is found totally within oneself. This is the deeper meaning to the *Mishna* in *Pirkei Avos,* "Who is a rich man? He that is joyful with his lot." - Personal satisfaction leads to joy and ultimately to a lasting happiness.

Project Mesorah – Rabbi Paysach Krohn



Rabbi Paysach Krohn delivers a heartfelt and insightful message during Shabbos Parshas Miketz and Chanukah, reflecting on a personal loss and a profound spiritual lesson.

A guten erev Shabbos, my dear friends of Project Mesorah. This is your friend Rabbi Paysach Krohn speaking to you erev Shabbos, Pashas Miketz and Shabbos Chanukah.

Rabbi Paysach recalls the passing of **Rav Shalom Shwadron**, his Maggid (spiritual mentor and teacher), who profoundly influenced him for 32 years. This event coincided with Shabbos Parshas Miketz, marking a significant moment of personal and spiritual transition.

The phrase "**וְאֵין מַגִּיד לִי**" appears in Parshas Miketz, referring to Pharaoh's frustration when his wise men could not interpret his dream. Rabbi Paysach uses this as a metaphor to express his own sense of loss after Rav Shalom's passing, indicating that he no longer had his trusted Maggid to guide him!

Rav Shalom emphasized the importance of recognizing and verbalizing gratitude for the blessings in life, not only the miraculous events but also everyday goodness. This teaching is particularly relevant during Chanukah, a time traditionally focused on miracles.

Practice of Gratitude

Rabbi Paysach encourages saying **כְּדֵי לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל** the specific verse in **הַנֵּרוֹת הַלָּלוּ** at least five times daily (as taught by Rav Shalom), which is part of the Hallel prayers recited during Chanukah. **הוֹדוּ לַה' כִּי טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ** - This practice fosters an attitude of gratitude

by noticing and appreciating daily positive experiences alongside miraculous ones.

Beyond celebrating the historic miracles of Chanukah, the holiday should inspire ongoing thankfulness for the continuous, often overlooked, blessings in life. Rabbi Paysach stresses that adopting this mindset will deepen one's connection to Hashem.

Rabbi Paysach urges men, women, and all listeners to adopt this practice of gratitude, especially during Chanukah, to enhance spiritual awareness and closeness to the Divine.



Yosef was languishing in prison for years at the mercy of his captors. He thought that by asking the wine waiter to mention him to Paroah might hasten his release. To his dismay, not only did it not hasten his release, but it prolonged his agony. However, at the very moment that Hashem decided that Yosef should go free, he was rushed out of jail with an urgency.

The Chofetz Chaim remarks that this is the way Hashem brings about the redemption. The moment it's meant to take place, not a split second is lost. - When the time is right, we'll all be rushed to greet Mashiach. And our lives will suddenly, and without warning, be radically changed.

On a personal level, too, every individual is locked up in situations of pain, sadness, or difficulty. There are times that we almost give up hope that the situation can improve, and therefore our prayers and relationship with Hashem are stunted rather than being

strengthened, which is usually the reason for the difficulty in the first place.

Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia, December 13th, 2025.



During a mass shooting at a busy public Chanukah event, gunfire erupted and chaos spread to the crowd. Amidst the terror, 3-year-old Giggy became separated from her parents and was in serious danger. A woman named Jess, a complete stranger, saw the child in the chaos. Rather than flee, Jess physically shielded Giggy with her own body, covering her and protecting her from the bullets. When Giggy's father finally found her, Jess told him, "The blood on her is mine, not hers."

Jess herself had been shot in the process, but Giggy survived with no gunshot wounds, protected in that moment by another human being's courage and self-sacrifice. Jess didn't think twice. Her immediate response saved a child's life.

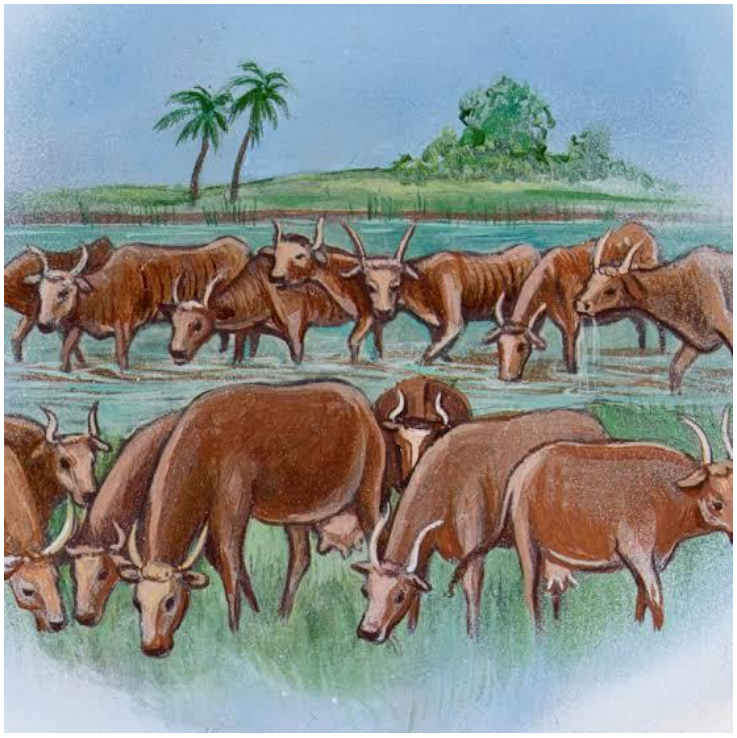
What we learn from the story of Yosef's exit from jail is there is no situation that's too difficult for Hashem. He can do anything and do it quickly, in a matter of seconds. We just have to hold on until the end, especially now during Chanukah, which is a time of greatness and miracles and redemption, and is uniquely effective for both collective redemption and personal salvation.

We should all be zocheh to our own redemption both on a personal and national level in a blink of an eye.

Wishing you all a wonderful Shabbos and a lechtigen Chanukah.

TORAH TAVLIN

והנה שבע פרות אחרות עולות אחריהן מן היאור ותעמודנה אצל הפרות ... ותאכלנה הפרות



חז"ל learn from here that the "seven thin cows" is a **רמז** to the **יצר הרע** and that when he attempts to take control over a human being, he acts passive at first, then like a guest, and finally like a master, ruling over him and his household.

The Sefas Emes writes that we see this clearly from the story of the seven fat and thin cows. The thin cows behaved toward the fat cows in the same manner as the **יצר הרע** acts - first they came up behind them "**עולות אחריהן מן היאור**", slowly and inconspicuously. Then they stood by them "**ותעמודנה אצל הפרות**" - like guests in their pasture, and finally they just ate them up "**ותאכלנה הפרות**" - without leaving a trace.

ויכר יוסף את אחיו והם לא הכרהו וגו' (מב-ח)

Many commentaries ask the following question; How was it possible that the brothers did not recognize Yosef? After all, he was their brother and they knew him well for the first seventeen years of his life. So even though he now had a beard and over twenty years had passed since they had last seen him, shouldn't his own brothers have at least been able to recognize him?

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser Shlit"a explains that the posuk is actually referring to a very different kind of recognition. The brothers surely noticed the strong physical resemblance between the mighty man sitting before them and their own brother Yosef, but what they

couldn't understand or even fathom, was how a person could rise so high in stature, becoming viceroy to the king, and still remain on Yosef's exalted spiritual level.

The shevatim could not reconcile these two phenomena and they were, therefore, convinced that the viceroy before them could not be their brother, even in spite of the resemblance. But Yosef had indeed proven that it was, and remains to this day, within the realm of human possibility to maintain elevated spiritual standards, even in a corrupt and immoral environment. - We must learn from Yosef how to act in our society.

Torah Gems

כלנו בני איש אחד נחנו..... לא היו עבדיך מרגלים וכו' (מב-יא)

The **Ramban** writes that Yosef's brother's response to the question of why all ten brothers needed to journey down to acquire food, was that "We are sons of one man" - our father wanted us to foster our feelings of brotherhood and unity, by being together and travelling together to Egypt.

Yaakov's decision reveals a new dimension in the significance of **אחדות**- unity. However, the journey to Egypt was a dangerous one and the risks were great. Shouldn't this concern also have prevented Yaakov from sending nine additional sons beyond the one necessary? Why did he subject them to needless danger?

R' Henoch Leibowitz answers that brotherly love is not merely an admirable attribute, but rather, the basis of Torah life and the cornerstone of Judaism. Loving our fellow man as ourselves is the fundamental principle of the entire Torah. To encourage this essential trait, Yaakov deemed it necessary to even put his sons into a situation of possible danger.

R' Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz ZT''L (Chazon Ish) would say:

"Yes, one must help himself and not rely on miracles. However, Yosef was asking for help from a person, the butler, whose nature was not to help. Yosef's act was a sign of desperation, which is a sin, not the act of a person who simply is acting because such is the way of the world.

