

# Torah Wellsprings

*Collected thoughts  
from  
Rabbi Elimelech  
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Shlita*

*Vayigash*



# Torah WELLSPRINGS

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# Torah Wellsprings - Vayigash

## It Seems Bad, But it isn't

The Bobover Rebbe zt'l used to say that during the second world war, there was a time when it was possible to receive a passport to travel to Costa Rica and thereby be saved from the Nazis. The Rebbe paid a lot of money ordering passports for him and his family. On the designated date, he went to pick up the documents but when he arrived, he was told that they had stopped doing this service. For whatever reason, they had stopped giving out passports. The Rebbe was very broken. In addition to the great expense he had paid for the documents, this was the only way he had found to escape from the Nazis. He didn't want to return home empty-handed, so he went to a beis medresh to learn something, hoping to find an idea that would give him chizuk. He opened *Tiferes Uziel*, and he found a commentary on Tehillim (ch.22:2-3): רְחוּק מִיִּשׁוּעָתִי, דְּרַבִּי שְׁאֵגְתִי לִי, אֱלֹהֵי אֲקָרָא יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא דוֹמְיָה לִי "...far from saving me, from the words of my roar. O Hashem! I call out by day, but You answer not; and by night, but there is no respite for me."

He explains this pasuk with the Shlah HaKadosh who explains (Tehillim 69:14) תְּפַלְתִּי לְךָ, "As for me, may my prayer to You, Hashem, be at an opportune time; O Hashem, in Your abundant kindness, answer me with the truth of Your salvation."

Sometimes, a person davens for something that he thinks is good for him, but it is not good for him. Therefore, one should daven that if Hashem knows that what he is asking for isn't for his benefit, Hashem shouldn't listen to his tefillah, and he shouldn't fulfill his request. This is the meaning of עֲנֵנִי בְּאֵמֶת וְיִשְׁעֶךָ, give me only that which is truly good

for me. If it isn't good for me, (Eichah 3:8) גַּם כִּי אֶזְעַק וְאֶשׁוּעַ שְׁתֵּם תְּפַלְתִּי, "Though I cry out and plead, He shut out my prayer."

This is the meaning of the pasuk רְחוּק מִיִּשׁוּעָתִי, if the matters that I am asking for are distant from my salvation, then I request אֱלֹהֵי אֲקָרָא יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה Hashem shouldn't answer my tefillos.

The Bobover Rebbe saw this vort and it gave him a lot of chizuk and consoled him. He understood that it was bashert that he didn't receive the passports that he tried so hard to obtain. It was for his good and his family's good, although now, it seemed terrible to him. With this idea in mind, he returned home.

Later it became known that all the people who received documents to Costa Rica were killed by the Nazis. The Bobover Rebbe's family was saved because they didn't get the documents. (Imrei Kodesh Admor m'Bobov Shlita, Naso, (תשס"ט).

There are many situations in life that we think are bad, but they are all for the good.

It states in this week's parashah וַיֹּאמֶר (46:2) "And Hashem said to Yisrael in night visions...", לַיְלָה, nighttime, represents hardships. מַרְאוֹת הַלַּיְלָה tells us that it is merely a vision. It is a vision, an imagination, and not reality. Everything is always bright and good.

The same idea can be said on the pasuk (Tehillim 94:18) אִם אָמַרְתִּי מַטָּה רָגְלִי חֹסֶדְךָ ה' יִסְעֲדֵנִי "If I said, 'My foot falters,' Your kindness, Hashem, supported me." It is only אָמַרְתִּי מַטָּה רָגְלִי, I say that my feet falter, but it isn't ever the reality. This is how it appears to me, but not how it really is.<sup>1</sup>

1. It states (Tehillim 90:15) שְׂמַחְנוּ כִּימוֹת עֲנִיתֵנוּ שְׁנוֹת רָאיֵנוּ רַעָה "Gladden us according to the days You afflicted us, the years when we saw bad."

When we say Shema, we cover our eyes. This indicates that there are things that don't appear good to us, but our eyes are limited. We close our eyes and proclaim that everything is from Hashem and for the good.

Hashem said to Yaakov Avinu (46:4) אֲנִי אֶרְדֵּךְ מִצְרַיִם וְאֶנְכִי אֶעֱלֶךְ גַּם עִלָּה וְיוֹסֵף יִשִּׁית יָדוֹ עַל עֵינֶיךָ,

"I shall descend with you to Mitzrayim, and I shall also surely bring you up, and Yosef shall place his hand on your eyes."<sup>2</sup>

The Meshech Chochmah explains that Yaakov was worried about going down to Mitzrayim. He didn't understand how it could be for his good. Hashem told him, וְיוֹסֵף

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Rebbe Hershele Spinka zt'l asks two questions:

- 1) How does one see bad? Isn't bad something one experiences?
- 2) The opposite of afflictions is kindness. So, why does it state שְׂמַחְנוּ כִּימוֹת עֲנִיתֵנוּ "Gladden us according to the days You afflicted us"? It should say, "Bestow kindness upon us according to the days that You afflicted us."

But the answer to both questions is that everything is for the good. Even things that appear bad are indeed good. Therefore, we say, שְׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ רָעָה, "the years we saw bad." We saw bad, but it wasn't bad. We request, שְׂמַחְנוּ כִּימוֹת עֲנִיתֵנוּ, "Gladden us according to the days You afflicted us." We ask for joy; we don't ask for chesed because chesed was always there. The affliction was also chesed. We request that now Hashem should give us chesed that we can accept with joy.

The Ramban had a student who was niftar young. The Ramban wrote a kameia, put it in his student's hand, and had him buried with it. The Ramban said, "When you go up to heaven, find the chamber called כְּסֵאוֹת לְמִשְׁפַּט, Thrones of Justice. In that chamber, ask why you died so young. Also, ask why the Jewish nation in this generation suffers so many tzaros."

Sometime later, the Ramban was learning Torah near the window. Suddenly, the window opened, and he saw his student as though he were alive. The student reported, "With your kameia in hand, I went from chamber to chamber, and none of the malachim stopped me. I reached the chamber called כְּסֵאוֹת לְמִשְׁפַּט. But I didn't ask the questions you instructed me to ask because Hashem's kindness is evident in that chamber. Even matters that seem bad here are all solely for the good. So I had nothing to ask."

As a bachur, Reb Binyamin Zev Deitsch (later the Manahel of Yeshivas Ponevezh) lived in Hungary, and he and another forty-nine bachurim were called up to serve in the Hungarian army. Their parents put together a large sum of money to bribe a doctor to "find" illnesses in the fifty bachurim, that would exempt them from military service. Reb Binyamin Zev's parents and the parents of one other bachur contributed the lions-share of the funds because they were wealthy and could afford it.

The doctor's documents, attesting to each bachur's "illness," arrived on the morning they were ordered to present themselves to the army. The problem was that the doctor only sent forty-eight documents. He accidentally didn't write a letter for Reb Binyamin Zev and for one other wealthy bachur. (Although they paid the most for the letters, it was their letters that were forgotten.)

Without an exemption in hand, they had to flee as quickly as possible. Reb Binyamin Zev remembers not having time to say goodbye to his family as he promptly packed up and ran to the port to escape to Eretz Yisrael.

Reb Binyamin later said that he considered that day a "dark day, a bad day." He was jealous of his friends who were able to remain with their families while he had to escape like a thief.

Living in Eretz Yisrael, alone, without family, was also very difficult. However, it was all for his benefit. The war broke out, and only these two survived from the original group of fifty bachurim. Reb Binyamin married and had children and grandchildren, some famous roshei yeshiva. Let this remind us that even when something seems bad, it is good in disguise. With time, be'ezeras Hashem, you will understand how.

2. The Zohar writes דָּא רִזָּא דְק"ש "This is the secret of Shema."

ישיית ידו על עיניך, "Yosef shall place his hand on your eyes." What happened to Yosef will say to you that even those matters that seem bad, are for the good. It didn't appear good when Yosef went down to Mitzrayim, but it turned out to be good. So, it will be for Yaakov. Even if it doesn't appear good right now, it will be good in the end.

We quote the Meshech Chachmah: "Yaakov shouldn't wonder what purpose and benefit will come from going down to Mitzrayim... Hashem said, יוסף ישיית ידו על עיניך, what happened to Yosef will close your eyes from thinking about this matter and from trying to understand Hashem's hashgachah, which is beyond us. Who would think that good things would come from Yosef's tzaar? Yet, Yosef became the ruler of Mitzrayim, and he taught the people of Mitzrayim his righteous ways. The entire land was under his influence. This episode is sufficient to place a hand over your eyes from thinking about Hashem's ways and trying to understand matters with your logical mind..."<sup>3</sup>

The Torah (45:27) tells us that when Yaakov saw the עגלות, the wagons that Yosef sent to bring him to Mitzrayim, ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם, "Yaakov's spirit was revived." The Kedushas Levi writes, "Yosef hinted to Yaakov that he shouldn't worry about going into galus because the galus will bring about redemption." The Kedushas Levi explains that the עגלות represents an עיגול, a circle. A circle represents the route and the means (the סיבה) of how Hashem sends us His chesed. The עגלות were a hint to Yaakov that good will come from going down to Mitzrayim.

After revealing himself, Yosef cried on Binyamin's shoulders for the two Batei Mikdash that would be built on Binyamin's portion and would be destroyed, and Binyamin cried on Yosef's shoulder for Mishkan Shilo that would be built on Yosef's portion and would be destroyed (see Rashi 45:14). Yosef and Binyamin met after years of separation. We would expect a more joyous meeting. Why was it that the first thing they did was cry?

It is because the root of the churban happened just then. Yosef revealed his identity to his brothers early. It would have been better had Yosef waited a drop longer. Only, (45:1) ולא יכל יוסף להתאפק "Yosef couldn't restrain himself..." The Sfas Emes notes that it seems that if Yosef had contained himself a drop longer, it would have been better for the future of Klal Yisrael. The churban Beis HaMikdash wouldn't have occurred. But Yosef couldn't contain himself any longer, watching the distress of his brothers.

This is a reminder that things aren't the way they appear. We think yesurim are only bad, but every difficulty has a purpose. Every tzaar and hardship saves us from much greater troubles. If Yosef could have concealed himself a drop longer, the tzaar of his brothers would be greater, but it would have been so good for them and Klal Yisrael.

When Yaakov was traveling to Mitzrayim, he brought korbanos, as it states (46:1) ויסע ישראל וכל אשר לו ויבא בארה שבע ויזבח זבחים לאלקי אביו יצחק, "Yisrael set out with all that he had, and he came to Beer-Sheva where he sacrificed korbanos to the G-d of his father,

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3. Hashem said (46:3-4) אל תירא מרדה מצרימה... אנכי ארד עמך מצרימה ואנכי אעלה גם עלה, "Do not be afraid of going down to Mitzrayim... I will go down with you to Mitzrayim, and I will bring you up, and even up." The Sfas Emes (5632) zt'l explains that the double expression אעלה גם עלה, "I will bring you up, and even up," was a message to Yaakov that due to his going down to Mitzrayim, he will reach even higher levels than before. This is the way of the world, ירידה לצורך עליה; descents result in ascents even greater than before the fall. A lot of good comes from the descents."

The Sfas Emes (Vayeitzei, 5637) teaches the same lesson regarding the yetzer hara. "When a person merits to improve and to overpower his yetzer hara, afterwards, he will see that due to the yetzer hara, he is now at a higher place. This is why Hashem says about the yetzer hara טוב מאוד, that it is very good."

Yitzchak." Rashi and the Ramban ask why specifically Yitzchak is mentioned in this pasuk. The pasuk could have stated, "He sacrificed korbanos to the G-d of his fathers," and both Avraham and Yitzchak would be implied.

The Be'er Mayim Chaim answers that Yitzchak represents the attribute of harsh justice. At this time, Yaakov discovered that harsh justice is also a form of Hashem's kindness. Yaakov suffered immensely when he lost Yosef, but now he realized that it was all in his favor so that he could be supported during the hunger years. Chazal say, that if it weren't for Yosef being in Mitzrayim, Yaakov would have been brought down to Mitzrayim in chains, like a slave. Yosef's stay in Mitzrayim enabled Yaakov to arrive in Mitzrayim with honor. Therefore, Yaakov praised Hashem, לאלקי אביו יצחק, the G-d of Yitzchak. He realized that the din and hardships were also for his good.

### Suffering Has an End

It states (Iyov 28:3) קץ שים להשיג, "He made an end to darkness..." The Midrash says that Hashem puts a limit to how long hardships and suffering will extend. This is for the individual, the community, and Klal Yisrael. When the time is up, the tzaros will end, and there will be happiness and joy.

A *baal darshan* told this story:

The innate nature of a Yid is to seek pleasure. The irreligious man in our story obviously didn't know about the joy of studying Torah and performing mitzvos; his *pleasure* came from being very involved in soccer games. He was a fan of a particular soccer team. Baruch Hashem, we don't know much about these games, but to explain the game's main points, a product of the old Greek culture: The game is played by two teams competing against one another. They play like children in kindergarten during recess. The spectators watch each move of the players with awe and passion. They watch how the players invest all their strength, concentration, and energy to catch

the ball again and again without any purpose. The people watching are united, body and soul, with either one of the teams. When their group wins, they rejoice immensely. When their team loses, they become sad as though it were Tisha b'Av. In the privacy of their homes, they cry over the loss.

The person in our story was also deeply interested in this sport. One day, he heard about an important, big upcoming game. He was about to buy a ticket to the game, so he could be in the stands to watch the event, but then he remembered that his *only* brother was making a wedding for his *only* son on the night of the game.

The game was much more important to him than this momentous wedding, but for the sake of his elderly parents, he knew he had to be at the wedding. Disappointed, he resigned himself to his bitter fate of missing the game.

He couldn't eat or sleep for several days because it bothered him so much that he would miss this game. But then he came up with an idea. He asked his friend (who was foolish like himself) to take a camera and film the entire game, from beginning to end. That way, he could watch the game the following day, and not be completely disconnected from his life source.

The morning after the wedding, he awoke early and quickly hopped over to his friend's home to receive the disc of the game, so he could enjoy watching yesterday's game. (A game that intelligent people have absolutely no interest in. Yesterday's snow is more interesting to them.)

His friend poured salt on his wounds. He said, "Ay! Ay! You missed a great game! You have no idea how good this game was. But here's the disc. Our team won."

He returned home, gathered his wife and children around a table filled with refreshments, and watched the game. It was a disappointing game because the opposing team scored goal after goal. The family began mourning over the game, which they

thought would end in a loss. Tears fell like water. But he sat at the table, totally calm, as he ate the sweet and salty refreshments on the table in abundance. It was as if the losses had nothing to do with him. His wife (who was like him) couldn't understand how he could be so calm when their team was losing the game. She said, "How can you just sit there nonchalantly when our team is losing? Don't you have a heart?" He didn't even answer her. His wife began to cry, "Don't you see what's happening? In ten minutes, the game is over, and we lost!"

The man replied, "Why don't you understand? My friend told me that today is a happy day because our team won. Wait a drop more and you will see that everything will turn around for our benefit. That's the reason I am not worried."

It states מאיבי תחכמי, we can learn lessons from the yetzer hara. From this story, we learn that when a person knows the future and that everything will be good, he isn't worried about the present. Sometimes things appear dark, such as when one loses money, suffers humiliation, has difficulty with shidduchim, has health problems, etc. He doesn't find respite. But if he knew that everything was being led from Above and there will be a happy ending, he wouldn't be upset and worried at all. He will remain calm and wait to see Hashem's salvation. He will wait to see how everything turns around and becomes good.

The Kobriner zt'l would say, "A Yid must believe that the darkness has an end. The darkness will dissipate, and in its place, there will be light."

He also explained the pasuk (Tehillim 116:10) הַאֲמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מֵאֵד in the following way:

In the past, when I was poor, הַאֲמַנְתִּי, I believed כִּי אֲדַבֵּר, that the time will come when I will tell people about my past, and I will them אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מֵאֵד, that I used to be very poor.

Chazal say that one of the primary questions that will be asked when one goes up to heaven is צְפִיתָ לְיִשׁוּעָה, "Did you hope for salvation?" Most people understand that this means, "Did you wait for the coming of Moshiach?" Reb Nosson Wachtfogel zt'l (Mashgiach of Lakewood) said in the name of the Chofetz Chaim zt'l, that the question isn't solely about the coming of Moshiach. The question is also for each individual. He will be asked whether he waited for the time that his problems would disappear and everything would be good for him (Kobetz Sichos vol.1 57).

The Gemara (Taanis 8.) says, "Whoever is happy with yesurim, this brings ישׁוּעָה, salvation to the world." How can a person be happy with his yesurim? The Ben Ish Chai (Ben Yehoyada) explains that when a person thinks that the yesurim is solely for a short time, and then it will pass, he can be happy with yesurim. This is hinted in the word ישׁוּעָה because this word is made up of two words: יוֹ שְׁעָה, which means the יוֹ, the tzarah, the woe, שְׁעָה, is just for an hour, for a short time, and everything will pass. Chazal are saying that when one is happy with his yesurim because he believes יוֹ שְׁעָה, that the problem is solely for a moment and it will soon go away, he merits that there will be ישׁוּעָה, salvations for him and for the entire world.

The Chareidim (21:31) teaches, "We are obligated... that even when a person sees trouble approaching, he shouldn't lose hope from Hashem's *rachamim*. He should trust in Hashem's salvation."<sup>4</sup>

4. In birchas kriyas Shema, we say בּוֹרָא רְפוּאוֹת, Hashem "creates healing," and it is written in the present tense. We don't say it in the past tense, בּוֹרָא רְפוּאוֹת, "created healing." The Noam Eliezer (Skulen) zt'l explained that this teaches us that Hashem is presently creating new refuos and medications to heal people. Therefore, if doctors tell someone there is no cure for his illness, he shouldn't lose hope. Hashem can create a new cure for him. Hashem is בּוֹרָא רְפוּאוֹת, constantly creating new refuos, and Hashem can create a refuah to heal this person from his illnesses.

Rabbeinu Yonah (Mishlei 3:26) writes, "The obligation of bitachon is that a person should know in his heart that everything is from heaven. Hashem can change nature and change the mazel. There isn't anything preventing Hashem from bringing salvation. He should trust in Hashem at all times of distress and know that Hashem saves from all tzaros in a moment, with the blink of an eye. Therefore, he should hope for His salvation. Even if a sword is on his neck, he should trust Hashem... This is the meaning of the pasuk (Tehillim 62:9) *בְּטַחוּ בּוֹ בְּכֹל עֵת*, trust in Hashem at all times, even when the tzarah is near and he doesn't have a plan or way how to save himself from it..."<sup>15</sup>

It states (45:27) *וַיֵּרָא אֶת הָעֲגֹלוֹת אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח יוֹסֵף לְשִׂאת אוֹתוֹ וַתַּחֲי רוּחַ יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם*, "[Yaakov] saw the wagons that Yosef had sent to carry him, and the spirit of their father Yaakov was revived." Shem Mishmuel (45:27) explains that *עגלות* also means round, or wheels. "When a section of a wheel is down, it isn't considered down because it will go up again. And then it will do another circle. This is a great hint and mashal that whatever happens to a person, all yeridos (descents) aren't yeridos. The wise understand that it is the beginning of an ascent, and he should trust in Hashem that soon he will go back up. And when he goes up, he shouldn't be haughty because he

will soon go down. This is the correct counsel that a Yid should never forget.

"This is what Yosef haTzadik sent to Yaakov. He sent him the *עגלות* to show him that even if he goes down to the bitter exile, in Mitzrayim - which is the root of all future exiles until Moshiach comes - it isn't a yeridah. It is *לצורך עליה*. Great benefits will come from it. Yosef sent wagons *לשאת אותו*, to raise Yaakov's spirits.

Yaakov understood that Yosef was constantly thinking these thoughts, all the time that he was in Mitzrayim. He understood that when Yosef was in Mitzrayim, he reminded himself that there would come a time when he would be on top again. *ירידה לצורך עליה*, the descent will result in an even better time in the future. Yaakov understood that such thoughts gave Yosef chizuk all these years in Mitzrayim, and with these thoughts, he survived there, although there was no hope in sight. Therefore, *ותחי רוה יעקב אביהם*, this gave Yaakov hope, as well, to know that even if going down to Mitzrayim is a descent, it will result in an ultimate ascent.

### ***Kedushah***

In parashas Netzavim, it states (Devarim 29:9) *אתם נצבים היום בקרבם לפני ה'... כל איש ישראֵל, טפכם*, "You are standing today before

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Someone told the Chazon Ish zt'l that doctors told him that he only had four more days to live because there was no cure for his illness. The Chazon Ish asked, "What did Hashem create on the first day of creation?" The man told him. "What did Hashem create on the second day?" The man told him. In this manner, they went through the first four days of creation. Then the Chazon Ish said, "If Hashem created so much in four days, he can certainly create a cure for you in four days, too." During those days, doctors discovered penicillin. His family from London sent him the medication, and he was cured. (Maaseh Ish vol.2 159).

5. It states (Tehillim 126:1) *בשוב ה' את שיבת ציון היינו כחלמים*, "When Hashem will return the captivity of Tzion, we will be like dreamers." The pasuk refers to the era of Moshiach. At that time, we will look back at all the years in galus and consider them like a long, bad dream. When a person wakes up from a bad dream a moment earlier, he was going through the worst problems, but it is all over in a moment. He wakes up and all is well. The Midrash says (Tehillim 126:1) *היינו כחלמים*, means that when Moshiach comes, we will be like Yosef HaTzaddik, who was called (Bereishis 37:19) *בעל החלומות*, the person who dreamed. Yosef was sold into slavery in Mitzrayim, he was imprisoned, etc. He suffered immensely. But then Yosef became the leader of Mitzrayim, and all of his problems disappeared in a moment, and he was able to provide for his entire family during the hunger years. Initially, it seemed bad, but it was for the good, and the past was now viewed as a bad dream.

Hashem... all the men of Yisrael, your small children, your women..." The Chasam Sofer zt'l (Toras Moshe) says that for the sake of tznius, the children were placed between the men and the women.

The Chasam Sofer's grandson, Reb Yosef Nechemyah Kornitzer zt'l, said the same could be said in this week's parashah when Pharaoh sent wagons to Yaakov. It states (45:19) *וְעֲגָלוֹת לְטַפְּכֶם וְלִנְשֵׁיכֶם*, "wagons for your young children and for your wives. Why did Pharaoh have to mention exactly who would come? He could have said he would send wagons to bring Yosef's family. That would be sufficient, and everyone would understand that it is for the men, women, and children. But it is because everyone in Mitzrayim was influenced by Yosef HaTzaddik's holy ways. Being aware of Yosef's ways, Pharaoh knew that Yosef's family wouldn't want to travel in a manner that lacked tznius. So, he said that the children can serve as a mechitzah and separation between the men and the women. This is the reason he mentioned the children before the women.

When the brothers arrived with the wagons, they said to Yaakov (45:26) *עוֹד יוֹסֵף חַי*, "Yosef is still alive and he is ruler over all the land of Mitzrayim." They said that Yosef is *חַי*, which implies that he is a tzaddik. *וְכִי הוּא מוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם*, his influence has affected the entire nation of Mitzrayim.

Eishes Potiphar said to Yosef, "I will limit your parnassah if you don't listen to me" (Bereishis Rabba 87:10). Reb Yechiel m'Mush said that every person has this test. The yetzer hara tells him that he will lose parnassah if he doesn't compromise his boundaries of kedushah. When he overcomes the yetzer hara, he discovers it was just a hoax.

In our times, the yetzer hara comes with the same enticement. He says that if you

don't have access to the internet, you will lose parnassah. You won't be able to buy at cheaper prices, and you won't be able to do jobs that need open internet, r'l.

A person should have bitachon and not be afraid, and Hashem will support him in another way. He won't lose anything because he is cautious with the kedushah of his eyes.

Towards the end of the parashah, the Torah tells us that Yosef gave parnassah to his brothers. It states (47:12) *וַיַּבְלִיגַל יוֹסֵף אֶת אֲבִיו וְאֶת* *אָחָיו וְאֶת כָּל בֵּית אָבִיו לֶחֶם לְפִי הַטָּף*, "Yosef sustained his father and his brothers and all of his father's household with food according to the children."

Yosef also gave parnassah to the Egyptians, as it states (47:17) *וַיַּנְהִלֵם בְּלֶחֶם בְּכָל* *שְׁנָתוֹ*, "He provided them with bread for all their livestock during that year." But the word used for giving parnassah changes. When the Torah discusses Yosef supporting his brothers, it states (47:12) *וַיַּבְלִיגַל* *יוֹסֵף*, "Yosef sustained," and to support the Mitzrim it states *וַיַּנְהִלֵם בְּלֶחֶם*. One of the translations of *וַיַּנְהִלֵם* is led.

Reb Zalman Sorotzkin zt'l (Oznayim l'Torah) explains that a Yid doesn't sell his neshamah to earn some bread. Therefore, it states *וַיַּבְלִיגַל*. Yosef supported them.

But goyim are prepared to sell all their morals and religion for their parnassah. This is like Eisav, who sold the bechorah for a bowl of soup, and like the Mitzrim, who agreed to circumcise themselves (see Rashi 41:33) to receive their portion of bread, although they never saw circumcision from their parents. About them the Torah says, *וַיַּנְהִלֵם*. With a few dollars, you can lead them wherever you want, and they will follow.

But the Jewish nation isn't weak, and they don't sell out their *neshamos* for money.<sup>6</sup>

6. Rashi (45:14) teaches that when Yosef and Binyamin met, they cried on each other's shoulders. They were crying over the churban beis HaMikdash that would occur on their portions. The Chasam Sofer zt'l (Vayechi)

Reb Gamliel Rabinowitz Shlita says that he sees many old bachurim, but he hasn't seen any old חתנים. He meant that after one is engaged to get married, the chasunah takes place on the date originally planned. We don't hear of a chasunah being pushed off because the mechutanim couldn't come up with the money to cover the expenses. This is because when something has to be done, people find a way. They borrow money, they do something, but the chasunah takes place as planned.

The same applies to guarding one's eyes, words, etc. If a person realizes that he must guard himself and watch his words, he will figure out a way to do so.

### Teshuvah and Improvement

It states (Mishlei 26:14) הַדֶּלֶת תִּסּוּב עַל צִירָהּ וְעֵצָל עַל מְטִיתוֹ. "The door turns on its hinges, and a lazy person on his bed." Reb Shimshon Pinkus zt'l asks about the connection between the hinges and a lazy person.

Let's say there's a yeshiva where one thousand bachurim study. The door of the beis medresh opens more than ten thousand times each day. (There are three sedarim daily, three tefillos, and one has to wash his hands before the tefillah. And sometimes one has to go outside for some other reason, so it can easily reach 10,000 times a day, and probably more than that.) But how far do the doors get after opening and closing so many times? How many miles do they travel? Not far at all, the doors remain in their original place. This is because they are connected with hinges and

don't detach from them, so they stay where the hinges are. The same is true for a lazy person. He is attached to the bed, from all sides, top and bottom, and he can't get out of the bed. The same applies to all matters that a person is attached to, such as bad habits or the foolish pursuits of this world. He is connected to something and remains in the same place. One must remove the hinges and allow himself to change and improve his ways.

There once was a person who lived in Berdichev and was on a very low level in ruchniyus, making bad choices in life. The Berdichever Rav zt'l would go to him and urge him to do teshuvah. The man would reply, "Rebbe, I will do teshuvah later. Now I don't have time for that."

Eventually, this man became very ill, and the Berdichever Rav visited him and said, "Now is your last chance. Do teshuvah."

The man replied, "Oy, Rebbe! The Rebbe sees that I don't have the strength to do teshuvah now."

The Berdichever Rav told him a story: There was a poritz who had many animals on his estate. He asked one of his workers to construct a barn for the animals so they wouldn't be harmed by the rain, snow, and cold when the winter came. The worker said, "It is still summertime. When winter arrives, I will build a shelter for the animals."

Winter came; there was rain, snow, and cold. He told his worker, "Just look at how

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asks that it was Shabbos, and it is forbidden to cry on Shabbos!

The proof that it was Shabbos is that it says (43:16) וּמִבְּהַמֵּי טֹבַח וְהָגוּ, "[Give orders] to slaughter an animal and to prepare," and the Midrash (Bereishis Rabba 92:4) says that this occurred on erev Shabbos. Yosef revealed himself to his brothers the next day (as seen in the pasukim). So, since Yosef revealed himself on Shabbos, how could they cry and mourn over the churban?

The Taz says that one is permitted to cry on Shabbos from joy. So, we can explain that Yosef and Binyamin were crying from joy. They saw with their ruach hakodesh that although the Beis HaMikdash will be destroyed, nevertheless, two thousand years afterwards, Yidden will still keep the Torah with mesirus nefesh, with emunah and bitachon, and serve Hashem with all their might. They cried tears of joy and admiration that the Yidden will be so strong and pass such great tests, and such tears are permitted on Shabbos.

much damage you caused me because you didn't build a shelter for the animals!"

He replied, "It is winter now. What does the Poritz want from me? How can I build a barn in the winter?"

The ill person understood the message that the Berdichever Rav was telling him. He cried, and he died amidst his crying. The Rav said that he died while doing teshuvah.

Hashem asks a person to do teshuvah, and the person replies, "I will do teshuvah later. Elul is coming. I will do teshuvah when it is Elul..." After Elul, he says, "I will do teshuvah on Yom Kippur." And when these dates arrive, he says he doesn't have the strength to do teshuvah. But a person should know that every day is a good time to do teshuvah. When he is inspired to do teshuvah, that is the best time for teshuvah. He should break away from the hinges holding him back and improve his ways.

A bachur in his thirties was 97% blind, r'l, due to an illness. He underwent two operations on his eyes, and he traveled with his parents to America for the third operation, which was a few months ago. On the day of the operation, his father woke up his son and told him that they must rush to the hospital so they wouldn't be late. The son said that he wanted to daven first. The father said that there wasn't time for that. If he wants, he can daven in the taxi, on the way to the hospital.

The family belongs to the Stoliner chassidus, and the custom in Stolin is to daven loudly because it helps to have kavanah. The bachur wanted to daven according to their tradition so he could daven with kavanah. The father told him that if he davens loudly in the taxi, the taxi driver will likely drop them off in the middle of the way.

The taxi driver who arrived to pick them up was deaf! He communicated with people in writing. It is rare to find such a driver, especially a taxi driver who is deaf. But Hashem arranged it so this bachur could

daven with kavanah, loudly, as usual, in the taxi as they drove to the hospital for his operation.

## Happiness

Reb Yankele Galinsky zt'l would say that he is always happy because he is short, so he only sees the half of the cup that is full.

Reb Tzvi Meir Zilberberg shlita added that when someone *feels short* because he humbly thinks that he doesn't deserve much, he is also happy with his portion because he doesn't believe that he deserves more than the little he has. He is satisfied with his half-cup.

Reb Moshe Leib Sassover and Reb Yisrael of Pиков (son of the Berdichever Rav) zt'l, were collecting money for pidyon shevuyim (to free a prisoner from jail), and they stayed one night in the home of a poor villager. But it was winter, and there were holes in the roof. When they turned on the oven to warm up, the ice on the roof melted, and water dropped on their beds. Reb Yisrael *krechzed*, saying that he wasn't accustomed to such conditions. Reb Moshe Leib wanted to give his partner some joy, so he said, "I have thirteen reasons to be happy." He began listing them: (1) "Baruch Hashem, my right side doesn't hurt, so I can sleep on my right side. (2) Baruch Hashem, my left side doesn't hurt either, so I can sleep on my left side, too. (3) My back doesn't bother me, either..." In this manner, he counted thirteen reasons to be happy. They became very happy; they praised Hashem and began to dance joyfully. (Maamar Mordechai, from Reb Mordechai Chaim Slonim, vol.2 p.117).

Rebbe Zusha of Anipoli was once seen dancing while lifting his feet a tefach or two above the ground. People asked him why he was so happy. He replied that he thought about his deeds and decided he didn't even deserve to tread on the earth. "Who am I that I should tread on the earth?" Reb Zalman Brizel zt'l said about this story, "We learn that when a person is low, he should jump higher." Implying that he, too, has reason to be happy. He recognizes that everything he

has is a gift from heaven; he doesn't deserve anything, which is a reason to be satisfied with his portion.

Once a year, Rebbe Naftali of Ropshitz zt'l would make a trip to visit tzaddikim. On the first Shabbos of this trip, he was in Lublin, together with the Chozeh of Lublin zt'l. Also, on the final Shabbos of his journey, he was with the Chozeh of Lublin. It was very happy in the court of the Chozeh of Lublin, and the Ropshitzer said that a Yid must begin with simchah and end with simchah. This is a lesson for all of us. We should wrap ourselves around with simchah.

The Beis Avraham said that the chapter (30) in Tehillim begins with simchah because it begins with *מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר הַנְּגִיטָה הַבְּיַת לְדָוִד*, and the roshei teivos spell שמחה, and towards the end of this chapter, simchah is mentioned again, as it states, *פִּתְחָהּ שְׂקֵי וַתֵּאֱהָרְנִי שְׂמָחָה*, and in between, there are tearful requests because a Yid should begin and end with simchah, and in between, he pleads, and he cries to Hashem for salvation.

### Judge Favorably

When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, they couldn't say anything. The Torah writes (45:3), *וְלֹא יָכְלוּ אַחֲיוּ לַעֲנוֹת אוֹתוֹ*, "His brothers could not answer him..." The pasuk says that the reason they couldn't answer Yosef is *כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפְּנֵי*. The translation of these words might be that they were afraid. They were worried that Yosef might harm them. Rashi however writes that *כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפְּנֵי* means *מִפְּנֵי הַבּוּשָׁה*, they were embarrassed.

The Maharal (Gur Aryeh) explains *כִּי נִבְהָלוּ* means they were embarrassed by Yosef's face.<sup>7</sup>

They saw a new face, a new Yosef. For the first time, they saw Yosef as he indeed was - a loving brother. A brother who doesn't want to harm them. They realized that they had judged Yosef wrongly all along. They thought Yosef was against them, and that is the reason they sold him. They discovered that Yosef was loyal to them, and his love for his family was always there.

It states (45:4) *אֲנִי יוֹסֵף אַחֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר מִכְרַתֶּם אוֹתִי מִצְרַיִם*, "I am your brother Yosef, whom you sold into Mitzrayim." The Or HaChaim explains that Yosef was telling them, "I considered you my brothers, even when you sold me to Mitzrayim." This is a very high level. Even when he was being sold, his love and loyalty to his brothers continued.

The Midrash (Tanchuma 5) tells, "Yosef placed himself in a great danger when he was alone with his brothers to reveal to them that he was their brother. If his brothers would kill him, no one would know. So why did Yosef say *הוֹצִיאֵנוּ כָּל אִישׁ מֵעַלִי*, that no one should be in the room when he reveals himself to his brothers? Yosef thought to himself, 'I prefer that they kill me rather than embarrassing them in front of the Egyptians.'" We see from this Midrash the extent of Yosef's love for his brothers despite everything they did to him. He preferred to die than to cause them embarrassment.

The Midrash tells at length the great danger Yosef was in then. They wanted to kill him, and a malach came and sent the brothers to the four corners of the house. Yet, Yosef risked his life for his brother's sake.

Now they saw Yosef as he truly was, a caring, devoted brother, and they were embarrassed to face him.<sup>8</sup>

7. The Maharal explains that if the pasuk were discussing that they were afraid, it would state *כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִמּוֹנוּ*, "They were afraid of him." *כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפְּנֵי* means they were embarrassed by Yosef's face.

8. It states (45:15) *וַיִּנְשֶׂק לְכָל אַחֲיוּ וַיִּבֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם*, The Shlah writes, "See how much a person must forgive and be maavir al midosav. They sinned to Yosef, and Yosef cried and kissed them."

There are many lessons here. One primary lesson is that we must love our fellow man, especially our family. We will elaborate on this later. Another lesson is how we must judge our fellow man favorably.

A little over a year ago, a *menahel* (principal) hired a magid shiur to teach in his yeshiva. It was a yeshiva for American bachurim who came to Eretz Yisrael to study Torah. The menahel said he would contact him when to begin giving shiurim.

The year began with yeshivos opening, but the menahel didn't contact this magid shiur. The magid shiur was quite insulted. He was hired for a position and never contacted, which means that the menahel probably found someone else to be the magid shiur. He also lost money. Other yeshivos wanted to hire him, but he turned them down because he thought he was secure with a job. But he controlled his anger and didn't rebuke the menahel for what he thought was a terrible deed.

At a later date, the *menahel* and the *magid shiur* met. The magid shiur asked the menahel what was happening with his position. The *menahel* replied, "When applicable, I will call you."

At this point, the magid shiur could not contain himself any longer. He said, "Didn't we make a contract that you would hire me at the beginning of the year? Why did you back down from the contract?"

The menahel replied, "Don't you know, due to the war (which began on Simchas Torah), the bachurim from America didn't yet return to Eretz Yisrael? The yeshiva didn't begin yet."

The magid shiur repeats this story and says that until that moment, he thought that the menahel mistreated him and that he caused him financial loss. He thought he was the tzaddik for controlling his anger and not rebuking the menahel. But as it turned out, he was the one who was wrong because he didn't judge his fellow man l'kaf zechus.

## Chesed

The Brisker Rav zt'l escaped the war on a ship from Odessa to Eretz Yisrael. He brought along food so he and his family wouldn't have to eat questionable or not kosher food on the boat. But the trip took a long time, and he ran out of provisions. One of the sailors said to the Brisker Rav, "There are new pots on board; no one ever used them. I will cook some vegetables for you so you and your family can have food to eat." The Brisker Rav was pleased with the offer and asked Reb Simchah Kaplan (later Rav of Tzefas) to go with the sailor to light the fire. As they walked to the ship's kitchen at the bottom of the boat, the sailor said, "I know why you are coming with me. You don't want me to light the stove. But you should know that you have nothing to worry about. I am a religious Jew." Reb Simchah Kaplan returned to the Brisker Rav to tell him. The Brisker Rav said, "You just answered a great question that I had. Chazal (Yevamos 79a) tell us, "This nation has three signs: (1) They are compassionate, (2) they have shame, and (3) they do deeds of kindness.' I understand from this rule that goyim do not have these three traits. So, I couldn't understand why this sailor had compassion on me. But now I understand. It is because he is indeed a Yid."

The Chazon Ish zt'l would say, "Every day, we say the brachah שלא עשני גוי, he praises Hashem that he isn't a goy. He isn't a goy, but how much is he a Yid? That is measured according to the amount of kindness he does for others."

We wrote above that Yosef HaTzaddik always loved his brothers. He said (45:4) אני יוסף אחיכם אשר מכרתם אותי מצרימה, "I am your brother Yosef, whom you sold into Mitzrayim," and the Or HaChaim explains, I considered you my brothers, even when you sold me." Let us learn from Yosef HaTzaddik's ways to love all our brothers of Bnei Yisrael and to seek to do chesed for them.

The nature of a Yid is to do favors. Indeed, we should do favors for our brothers and our fellow man.

### *Achdus*

The Shlah HaKadosh taught, "One machlokes banishes a hundred parnassos."

The Chasam Sofer brought a hint to this from this week's parashah. It states (44:28) ויצא האחד מאתי ואומר טרף טרף, "The one went away from me, and I said, 'He has surely been torn to pieces.'" The word טרף means torn, but it can also be translated as parnassah (see Tehillim 111:5, טרף נתן). Therefore, we can translate the pasuk, ויצא האחד מאתי, when achdus leaves me, ואומר טרף טרף, I will say that the parnassah is torn. The parnassah is lost when there isn't *achdus*.

The Chasam Sofer said that this is also alluded to in the pasuk (Tehillim 147:14) השם גבולך שלום חלב חטים ישיביעך, "Within your borders He makes peace; with the best of the wheat He will satiate you." The Chasam Sofer explained, השם גבולך שלום, when peace is very important to you, חלב חטים ישיביעך, you will have parnassah in abundance.

The Gemara (Moad Katan 28.) says, "Parnassah isn't dependent on one's merit. It is dependent on one's mazal." If a person was born with a mazal that isn't conducive for parnassah, is there no hope of having parnassah? Is there a way he can become wealthy? Tosfos (Shabbos 156.) says that when one has a great merit – a very great mitzvah – his mazal can change. Increasing peace is a great merit. Therefore, when one increases peace among Yidden, his mazal can change, and he can have parnassah and wealth. Therefore, השם גבולך שלום חלב חטים ישיביעך, when there is peace, there is parnassah and wealth.

The family of Reb Moshe Betzalel zt'l hy'd (brother of the Imrei Emes zt'l) once complained that they didn't have parnassah. Reb Moshe Betzalel told them, "The first thing we must be careful of is that there shouldn't be any anger or machlokes in our home because one machlokes banishes a hundred Parnassos.

Beis Yaakov (a student of Rebbe Bunim of Peshischa zt'l) writes, "I heard from my rebbe that if a person is having trouble with צער גידול בנים, raising his children, it is a segulah to be cautious from machlokes and to seek peace, and to be from the people who accept the humiliation of others and they don't answer back. This will be his cure."

Rav A. Y. Steinberg Shlita from Lakewood tells the following incident that happened to him a few years ago. His daughter got an infection on her leg. Matters became serious, and she lost consciousness. The doctors said that she wouldn't live until the morning. Baruch Hashem, she survived, but she was unconscious for several weeks. One day, Reb A. Y. Steinberg was very tempted to say lashon hara (what people call "a juicy lashon hara"), but he held back. Then, he immediately said a tefillah: "Ribono Shel Olam, I closed my mouth from saying lashon hara. In this merit, allow my daughter to open her mouth."

Ten minutes later, his wife called him from the hospital. She said that their daughter was crying. This was a good sign; it was the beginning of her recovery.

I heard the following remarkable story from the baal hamaaseh. There was a couple who didn't have children for ten years. They davened and tried many segulos, but the doors of heaven remained sealed. The husband went to one of the gedolei hador, who advised that they should seek whether they need to rectify something in the matters of ben adam l'chaveiro.

The wife remembered that when she was a girl, it was very *lebedig* (in a negative way) in her class. She and her classmates caused their teacher a lot of aggravation and tzaros. She called up her classmates from years ago and discovered that half of the class was suffering from great yesurim. Some weren't married yet, some didn't have children, etc.

All these women came to the home of the teacher whom they caused so much trouble and told her about their tzaros and that they

thought that perhaps it was all because of their bad behavior in the classroom years back... The teacher cried when they spoke to her, and she said, "You have no idea how much I suffered that year!" She told them some of the pain that she had then, and she told them that, in some ways, she still suffers from what they did to her. She said, "I forgave you immediately when you caused me the tzaros, but the pain hasn't left me until today. It feels like it happened just a few days ago, although it happened several years ago."

The girls asked *daas Torah* from one of the gedolim of our generation. He ruled that they should give her money, as much as she requested, to appease her for what they did.

The teacher forgave them on the condition that the story becomes known so people will know how severe it is to cause harm to others.

Remember: Causing pain to others has consequences, and peace and unity bring many brachos. Choose the latter.