

טיב הקהילה

בס"ד
'יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בניד'
בנשיאות מורנו הר"ר גמליאל רבינוביץ שליט"א

English Edition

Mikeitz

5781

No.

546.444

טיב המערכת

ויכינו את המנחה – They prepared the tribute

In the old Jewish neighborhood, a very wealthy man posted a notice that he was looking for a dedicated, trustworthy worker, a job that came along with a large salary. Of course, the entire populace of the city ran to his office to try to get this coveted position. A few dozen people all sat together in the waiting room next to the office, they sat and waited. When the door opened, they were surprised to see that the wealthy man did not keep the Torah. Many of them began to find ways to endear themselves to the wealthy man, all of them except R' Zalman who did not change his appearance at all, he just waited his turn. Finally R' Zalman was called into the office, the wealthy man looked at him and asked, "Why didn't you change your appearance like the rest of the people?" R' Zalman firmly replied, "For a few ruble I should change my Jewish appearance?!" When the wealthy man heard this he immediately knew that he found the man he was looking for, one who clung to his ways and did not change his customs for a few pennies. He would be a dedicated and trustworthy employee, exactly what he was looking for.

Yaakov Avinu told his sons to take a tribute with them for the viceroy of Egypt. What was this tribute? 'מעט צרי ומעט דבש נכאת – ולט בטנים ושקדים' – 'a bit of balsam, a bit of honey, wax, lotus, pistachios, and almonds' (43:11), all these items were inexpensive, not respectable to bring as a tribute to the king. Also, this king was needed by all the countries and they all came to buy food from him, and they could be blamed for insulting the kingdom. But the *shivtei K-ah*, did not make any calculations, rather, they did as their father instructed them. Not only this, but when they waited in the king's palace, they prepared the tribute as Rashi HaKadosh explains, 'they prepared – they decorated it with pretty vessels'. They brought the plain tribute to the viceroy of Egypt in nice vessels, and only HaKadosh Baruch Hu knew how happy Yosef was with the gift he received.

These words encourage us and remind us that we must follow in the ways of the fathers, aside from protecting us this also pays us back. Even if it seems to us that sometimes the elders do not sufficiently understand what goes on today, in contrast, we understand quite well what is appropriate and proper. Still, we must nullify our thinking and follow the *Gedolim* and *Zekeinim* and we will only benefit from it.

- Tiv HaTorah - Mikeitz

טיב ההשגחה

I had a family event in Bait Shemesh, and I arranged ahead of time for a driver who usually takes me to Bait Shemesh. On that day, the driver informed me that he could not take me. I called someone who is always available for me and he was happy to take me wherever I had to go. While I was getting ready inside, he was outside taking care of business on his phone using the time for his livelihood.

While he was outside walking back and forth involved in his conversation on his cellphone, he heard a loud scream. He turned to the noise and saw an elderly man rolling down the stairs banging his head on stairs and on the landing. When he landed at the bottom of the stairs, he was bruised and beaten beyond recognition. He ran towards him to stop the bleeding from his head and to control him while he was having a seizure until Hatzolah could come to take him to the hospital to continue treating him. After a few days, the man's condition improved and within a few weeks he came home. He was grateful for the immediate first aid that saved his life.

See the hand of Hashem and how the Creator of the World thinks about every step. The first driver did not know how to administer first aid. Hashem wanted to save him. He caused the first driver to cancel and my right-hand man was available for the trip and every detail planned to save a Jewish soul. He was the only one in the area who knew how to administer first aid.

Another story: My son and the *chassan* were with me and they wanted to go with me to the *Av Bais Din* of Yerushalayim to invite him to the wedding. We tried to get a taxi but because of corona, taxis were not taking more than two passengers and we were three.

Suddenly, the grandson who was also with me said to call so and so, someone who had taken us in the past, and the grandson got his name. I said that if the grandson mentioned his name then we would try him, perhaps this idea came from Heaven. I called him and he had just finished *davening* Maari in Zichron Moshe. He was very happy to take us especially since he needed a great salvation, and he wanted a *beracha* from the *Av Bais Din*. On the way, he told me that he wanted to go to the graves of Tzaddikim but the friend who was supposed to go with him suddenly could not go. He came to the neighborhood to *daven* and now he was quite pleased to get a *beracha* from the Tzaddik in his time of distress.

- Moreinu HaRav shlit"a

אמונת העבריים מול כפירת מצרים
The faith of the Hebrews against the
heresy of Egyptians



ויאמר פרעה... ואני שמעתי עליך לאמר תשמע חלום לפתר אתו:
ויען יוסף בלעדי אלקים יענה את שלום פרעה: (מא:טו-טז)
And Pharaoh said... "Now I heard it said of you that you hear
a dream to interpret it." Yosef replied, "That is beyond me.
G-d will respond to Pharaoh's welfare." (41:15-16)

Here and as the passage continues, we see the discussion between Pharaoh and Yosef. In order to understand Pharaoh's view, we must first remember his nature as described by Chazal in the holy *seforim*.

Pharaoh was the symbol of arrogance, this is the one who was not embarrassed to say (Yechezkel 29:3) 'לי יאורי ואני עשיתני' – 'Mine is my river, and I have made myself powerful'. He also said (Shemos 5:2) 'מי ה' אדר אשמע בקולו... לא ידעתי את ה' – 'Who is Hashem that I should heed His voice... I do not know Hashem'. Even the letters of his name 'פרעה' when rearranged spell 'הערף' – the nape of the neck, meaning that he turns his back to the Kingdom of Hashem *Rachmana litzlan*, and he tried to take the credit for himself.

One we know the nature of Pharaoh we can then understand his conversation with Yosef. When Pharaoh saw Yosef, just by looking at him he saw that he was a very wise man and if he mingled with the officers of the kingdom he would be as one of them, he would have been a great asset to the entire kingdom.

However, there was one thing holding him back and it was not a simple thing, he was an 'Ivri' – a Hebrew. The Hebrews were very hated by the Egyptians. To the extent that the Torah testifies to this later on (43:32) where the Hebrews are described as 'loathsome' to the Egyptians.

They were as different from each other as east is from west. As mentioned, Pharaoh was the symbol of arrogance and his nation followed in his ways and they loved to demonstrate their strength to one another in order to best the other. The Hebrews were different, they did not look at this kindly, and even if they were strong, they tried to hide this attribute (see Sanhedrin 14a). The Egyptians could not stomach this. They felt that if there are people who would not brag about their physical prowess then it would be better if they locked themselves in their homes and cried about their bitter lot. But the Hebrews, did not care about this and walked about happy and cheerful. The Egyptians claimed that people like this are insane and rightfully categorized as loathsome.

In light of what was said, Pharaoh wanted the interpretation, for as long as Yosef humbled himself and did not gloat about his strength and talent, it was not possible to have him mingle among the officers of the kingdom. Therefore, he tried to bestow Yosef with honor and esteem to let them know that he was 'the best'. He began by saying (41:16) 'אני שמעתי עליך - לאמר תשמע חלום לפתור אותו, I heard it said of you that you hear a dream to interpret it.' That is, you are endowed with exceptional wisdom and when you hear a dream with your wisdom you know its interpretation, and so, I need a man like you. Now, hear my dream and give me its interpretation.

With these words Pharaoh wanted to give Yosef a taste of arrogance, that he should understand how they praise him, and through this he will realize that he is a somebody! He has talent! He has personal strength! Then he will remove himself from the 'Hebrews' who were low in their eyes, and he will be fit even to the officers of the kingdom and they too will want him to be among them as one of the officers.

But Yosef did not want to trade arrogance for humility. In his opinion, even if there was an advantage to the trait of arrogance, there was nothing to be proud about. The wisdom did not stem from himself, but rather, to the One Who endowed him with it. He is the One Who wanted him to be wise and He is also able to make one a fool, and it is shameful to take honor for something not his. Additionally, he saw no benefit from the honor the Egyptians were bestowing upon him. Therefore, he stood firm and answered Pharaoh (41:16) 'בלעדי' – 'That is beyond me' – It does not come from me. Even the wisdom that stood for me when I interpreted the dream of the '*sar hamashkin*' was not from me, but rather, from the One Whose wisdom is His, He enlightened me with the intellect to interpret it properly. Therefore, now as well 'אלקים יענה את' – 'G-d will respond to Pharaoh's welfare'. Whether through me or through someone else, Hashem Yisbarach will enlighten his intellect.

Not only did Yosef remove himself from the arrogant with his words, he also wanted to lower Pharaoh's view, which was that the more a person can be proud about himself, he should brag about it. Yosef showed Pharaoh that even his salvation was dependent on the wisdom of Above, and Pharaoh should not think that he will find the meaning of his dream through the wisdom of a flesh and blood person.

Even after Pharaoh related his dreams to Yosef, and Yosef understood their meaning, he first reiterated that the interpretation was not from him. Rather, 'את אשר אלקים עושה הגיד לפרעה' – 'What G-d is doing, He has told to Pharaoh' (41:25). That is, HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the *Maggid* – the teller – and the interpreter is only a service vessel of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Why praise the vessel? He repeated this after hearing the dreams (41:28) and after he interpreted the dreams (41:32), to inform Pharaoh that this was not his wisdom, and to explain the ways of the Hebrews, why they truly were not arrogant. Not because they have understanding and talent, rather, in their opinion wisdom or anything else does not stem from the person himself.

When Yosef finished speaking, Pharaoh and all his servants were amazed by his interpretation, and even more by his explanation. It was only now that they understood the nature of the Hebrews. Now they understood their nature is to lower themselves, but not because they were low, rather, because they were exceptionally smart, and they knew that their wisdom was not from them. These words had such an impact on Pharaoh that he was forced to admit that everything was dependent on the One Who said the world should exist and all wisdom was His. He himself illuminated faith in the hearts of his servants when he told them (41:38) 'הנמצא כזה איש אשר רוח אלקים בו' – 'Could we find a man like this, in whom is the spirit of G-d'. That is, true, this wisdom is 'the spirit of G-d' and this is only 'a man in whom is the spirit' and it is not from him. Still, there is no man like him who has this spirit of wisdom in him. This is only through the merit that he recognizes that everything is in the hands of heaven.

Pharaoh continues to say to Yosef (41:39) 'אחרי הודיע אלקים אותך כל זאת' – 'Since G-d has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise like you'. That is, true, this is G-dly wisdom that resides within you, still you have a part in it. Were it not for your humility, you would not merit this wisdom. Now that you recognize humility and that the wisdom is not yours, wisdom is given to you, 'there is no one as wise as you'.

This is why he immediately made him the viceroy over Egypt, and he said (41:40) 'אתה תהיה על ביתי ועל פיך ישק כל עמי רק הכסא אגדל ממך' – 'You shall be over my house and by your command shall all my people be sustained, only by the throne shall I outrank you.' Pharaoh was not afraid that Yosef would take over the kingdom because he saw that he was faithful and humble, and he knew that a man like this would not take praise for himself and would not want to take the kingdom for himself.