

# פרשת ויגש

חלק ד' – גליון 13

ז' טבת תשפ"ג

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

## *Master and king!*

In these פרשיות we see in the פסוקים how יוסף deals with his brothers, the שבטים knew יוסף was messing them around, they knew very well that it was יוסף who planted the goblet in the sack, they knew it was one big ploy, trying to cause them trouble.

יהודה tell us very clearly that together with the other שבטים had the כח to wipe out מצרים, they had super כוחות, they weren't afraid physically of anything, they weren't scared of the מצריים.

Usually when one starts with somebody who is much stronger, he displays straight away his power and how strong he is, he doesn't start speaking nicely בדרך ארץ.

But if we look in the פרשה with its פשוטו "ויגש אליו יהודה ויאמר בי אדני" של מקרא (מ"ד, י"ה), *stepped forward and said, "Please my master!"* "ידבר נא עבדך" *please let your servant*

*speak a word in my masters ears*, as the גמרא in ברכות writes, "אין נא אלא לשון", *again he repeats himself*, דרך ארץ בקשה, "באזני אדני" – he's called his "אדון" twice in the same sentence! Continues the פסוק, "ואל יחר, אפך בעבדך", *let not your anger flare at your servants!* "כי כמוך כפרעה", explains "חשוב אתה בעיני, פשוט פשט רש"י "מלך, *I consider you like a* מלך", This is what he said to יוסף, "I treat you and respect you like a king!"

The פסוקים continue, "אדני שאל את עבדיו", *My master has asked his servants!* Then again, "ונאמר אל אדני... ותאמר אל עבדיך... אל", *again and again he gives to* עבדך אבי... "the greatest respect.

Let us imagine it: In יהודה's brain this man was trying to wreck their lives! He was going to ruin and destroy everything! יהודה has the atomic power; he could destroy the whole מצרים! He's much more powerful than all of them, he has no physical fear, and yet he behaves

like a *moridicker mench* – like a *moridicker* בעל דרך ארץ, he retained his respect, the way he spoke and the way he treated יוסף, there was no difference in the way he spoke now than to all the previous conversions he had with יוסף, he retained his composure and he retained his respect even in the most trying of times.

I want to bring this out with the following.

### ***Keep warm***

The משנה in (ב', ט"ו) teaches, "ר" אליעזר אומר, והוי מתחמם כנגד אורן של חכמים, *Warm yourself by the fire of the sages, but beware of their glowing coal lest you be burnt.* A person should warm himself and stay in close contact with the חכמים, however on the other hand, be careful, don't get too close to the point where you get casual and disrespectful, remain always careful as they are like burning coals, don't get burnt and hurt, as the בערטנורא explains, "שלא תיענש על ידן", *don't get punished through them*, meaning by not treating them with the required respect .

It's a משנה in פרקי אבות, on the one hand try and get close, but at the same time remember your position, don't get too

close, don't overstep the line, remember very clearly who you are dealing with.

There is a *moridicker* דיוק here in the משנה – "הוי מתחמם כנגד אורן של חכמים", משנה – "אורן" means the fire – the flame, yet in the same line the משנה continues, "הוי" "גחלתן" refers to a coal, a coal is not a fiery flame, if you blow it may turn back into a flame. If the משנה begins, "הוי מתחמם באורן של חכמים", the משנה should then continue, "והוי זהיר" – be careful with that flame that you should not be burnt! The משנה changes from "אורן" to "גחלתן"?

### ***The three problems***

Explains the תפארת ישראל: The תנא is teaching us a נקודה here, when a person is מתחמם באורן של חכמים, after time a person will no longer look at the תלמיד חכם like fire. There are three changes that happen over time, firstly one becomes very familiar, when interacting with the same person – even with a Rebbe for a continuous period of time, a person becomes familiar.

Especially in today's day and age where the atmosphere of "תלמיד רב" connection is much more open. גדולים always promoted this connection, הרה"ג אסיפת רבנים once went to an שך זצ"ל



mind a person looks at it with his changed perception – the flame eventually only looks like a coal, but we must retain our original respect, keep the דרך ארץ, we mustn't allow the דרך ארץ to be diminished because of these three reasons.

ל tell us about יהושע בין נון as it says, "והנער לא ימוש מתוך האהל", the תורה refers to him as a "נער", he was so great, but he was still משה רבינו of מתאבק בעפר רגליו, there was no such thing as familiarity, casualness or disrespect.

It's known about the בעל שם טוב that throughout his life he would always give tremendous כבוד to his Rebbe who taught him "א' – ב'", he passed his Rebbe by far – he passed him by billions of miles, yet he gave him tremendous דרך ארץ.

This is what we find in the פרשה by יהודה, were not speaking about a Rebbe here, יוסף wasn't his Rebbe, but what we see here is: because יוסף was a – מלך I treat you like a מלך, although יוסף was being unfair, he was being nasty, but that doesn't make a difference, to a מלך one must have דרך ארץ, nothing is allowed to change that, and remember ל say מאן מלכא רבנן that תלמידי חכמים are compared to kings.

It's a משנה we must remember, remember the דיוק here, the change from the fiery flame to the coal, this happens after one becomes close, one must retain in his mind the picture we had in our minds when we came to ישיבה, how we looked at the ראש ישיבה, how we looked at the משגיח and the מגידי שיעור, retain that image in your brain and don't let that image be diminished whatsoever. It's a נסיון, it's a great challenge, especially for בחורים who are learning with a *shtark-kite* רבה, who are davening properly, this is one of the challenges that we must work on.

### חי בצדקתו

I would like to bring out the following נקודה which has a שייכות to what we have spoken about.

"ויגידו לו לאמר עוד, יעקב יוסף חי וכי הוא משל בכל ארץ מצרים" (מ"ה) (כ"ו), *And they told him, "יוסף is still alive and he is the ruler over מצרים*.

Nevertheless, יעקב, "לא האמין להם", did not believe them at first that יוסף was still alive.

The שבטים wouldn't lie, he knew they weren't trying to make more aggravation, however, when the שבטים exclaimed, "עוד יוסף חי", "חי" obviously

meant בצדקתו חי, he was still a צדיק, had he become a רשע the שבטים would not have called "חי" because רשעים בחייהם נקראו מתים.

However, in the same breath they said, "וכי הוא משל בכל ארץ מצרים" this is what caused, "ויפג לבו כי לא האמין להם", how is it to be עומד בצדקו and at the same time be מושל בכל ארץ מצרים?

Explains the מדרש (מדרש רבה צ"ה, ג') that יעקב then asked the שבטים, "אם אתם יודעים, שבטים יעקב" *'If you can tell me what פרק we were up to when he separated from me I will believe you that he is עומד בצדקו.'*

Continues the מדרש that יוסף knew יעקב would ask such a question and that is why he sent the "עגלות", once "וירא את" "ותהי רוח יעקב אביהם" only then *the spirit of their father was revived*, as יוסף writes this was the רמז which יוסף had sent to his father, "סימן מסר להם במה" "היה עוסק כשפירש ממנה בפרשת עגלה ערופה" *this was a סימן to the סוגיות of עגלה ערופה which they discussing when they separated.*

### ***Invention of the wheel***

The אברבנל writes: The Egyptians invented the wheel, they didn't allow the wheel to go out of מצרים for hundreds of

years, it was a secret weapon this wheel, when they had carriages going out to war, they would cover the wheels so that the enemy would not see them, nobody else had the wheel, nobody else had carriages on wheels, it was the only country which had carriages. Therefore, it was forbidden for carriages to be taken out of מצרים.

This is why in the פסוקים we find how יוסף had to ask permission from פרעה to take the עגלות up to his father, it was a whole עבודה to get those carriages out of מצרים, backwards and forwards with פרעה, they made a big deal out of it, this was the secret weapon of the מצריים.

But יוסף was determined, he knew it was important for his father to see these wagons, he fought to get the permission from פרעה, because when "וירא את" "עגלה ערופה" of סוגיות – he saw the "ותהי רוח יעקב אביהם" only then.

But how did he know he was עומד בצדקו because of this? Just because he sent these עגלות?

I was once sitting on a bench in Lucerne and an old man who I assumed was a גוי passed by and sat down next to me, he looked around eighty-five years old to me, then he said to me, "I am Jewish and

I learnt for six years תורה in a Yeshiva in America!"

He says to me, "test me on what I learnt!" I was learning בבא קמא at the time so I started asking him questions, he knew it all, the משניות and the גמרות, he learnt until he was twenty-five and then left the path of *Yiddishkeit*.

What's the big deal that יוסף remembered that they learnt ערופה? Why does this show that he is still עומד בצדק?

***One question he could not answer***

There is a well-known story which took place in the times of the ווילנא גאון.

There was *nebech* an אשה in Vilna whose husband disappeared shortly after the התונה, twenty-five years she was left an עגונה.

ויהי היום after twenty five years, a man turns up in town and he says, "I am the husband!" he's already an older person, he looks different, and they start asking him questions, they ask him on every פרט, every small detail that they expect the husband to know, he knew it all, he gave an answer to everything.

However, the wife didn't know what it was, but she felt just something wasn't right, something didn't fit together.

Although he knew every פרט and every small נקודה, every detail of the משפחה, where and when they got married, etc, he knew everything, but she said, "I don't believe he is my husband!"

They went to the Gaon and asked him what they should do, "He insists he is the husband! What should we do? He wants to continue the marriage!"

The Gaon told them the following, "On שבת take him to שול and ask him where his place is."

They took him to שול and asked him where his place is.

He didn't know!

He went white and they straight away *chapped* he was an imposter, and they threw him out of town.

The Gaon knew, if the אשה herself felt he wasn't her husband then she is probably right. But he knows every single detail?! He must have been a real רשע, a terrible and evil fellow. An evil person is going to find out all the details, the bank account numbers, where they lived, the numbers, he's going to find out everything, he must of met the husband and asked him all the information. However, he is not going ask, "Where was your place in שול?!"

A man who is thinking evil, a man who is a lowlife doesn't think to ask where his davening place was, the Gaon knew if the man doesn't know where his place in שול is, he is not the husband, and that he will forget to ask, and if he doesn't know this means he *taka* isn't the husband.

By מושל בכל ארץ, יוסף הצדיק, he was the מוצר, מצרים, יעקב was afraid, "Who knows? Being alone in מצרים all these years, being a משל there, he could have become a wicked man, perhaps money has got to his head, and he has left *Yiddishkeit*?"

"Do you know what פרק he is עוסק in?" he asked them.

When he saw the עגלות, this is what revived him, he realised that יוסף had sent him a message here, he sent the פרק of his learning, if this is what is on his head, if it's the תורה which he uses as a סימן, this is what he is still thinking about, it must be he has remained strong – חי בצדקתו. He could have sent יעקב so many other more signs, he could have sent a כתונת פסים, he could have sent other private details to prove he is יוסף, but when he sends him the עגלות – to remind what they learnt, "I know now this is יוסף הצדיק! If he is a רשע not

keeping תורה and מצוות he would not be able to think of such an idea to be used as a סימן."

Even in his trying times in מצרים, he retained how he was when he left to מצרים, nothing changed, he is still עוסק in תורה.

But the עיקר נקודה we spoke about today is what we mentioned earlier, the longer one is in a מוסד, the longer one is in a שול, the more familiar one becomes, the more one *shtiegs* and we feel the gap closes to a degree, however we must continue to retain the initial דרך ארץ we had originally.

About this, the משנה is telling us to be careful "שלא תכזה", if a person becomes too familiar, he can be punished, a person must always look at the תלמיד חכם as an "אורן" and not to look at him as a "גחלתן", stay with the "אורן". We must always look at the Rebbe and a Rov as a fire, not to ה"ו look at him as a piece of coal.

We see this יהודה by מידה, he could have let loose, "Who do you think you are? I can turn the place upside down!" but he treats יוסף the מלך with the greatest דרך ארץ, it makes no difference what he does to me, I must retain my דרך ארץ.

Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן





# פרשת ויגש

חלק ג' – גליון 15

ז' טבת תשפ"ב

## מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

### 33 words-33 years

When פרעה met with יעקב for the first time, פרעה asked a rather personal question, (מ"ז, ח'), *How many are the days of the years of your life?* יעקב replied, *"ימי שני מגורי שלשים"* *The days of the years of my sojourns have been a hundred and thirty years, few and bad have been the days of the years of my life.* פרעה spoke to יעקב about the hard and difficult years he had experienced.

teach us that he lost 33 of his years of his life because he

complained to פרעה about his life, the מדרש explains that for each word he said to פרעה he lost one year of his life. Including in the 33 words is the פסוק, *"ויאמר פרעה אל יעקב כמה ימי שני חייך"*. Why did he lose years of his life because of the question which פרעה asked him? That was פרעה's question – what's it got to do with יעקב?

יעקב: ר' חיים שמואלעביץ זצ"ל explains looked ancient, פרעה had never seen anybody so lined and looking the way he looked, that's the reason why פרעה asked יעקב this question. It's a תביעה on יעקב that he looked like that. If a person worries and lets his צרות get to him, there's a תביעה on him. Therefore even for the words of the question, he was punished losing one year of his life for each word.

How is this נוגע to us?

**"This itself is for the good!"**

***Don't catch a cold***

גמרא (כתובות ל'). The "הכל בידי" tells us,

מן *everything is* שמים חוץ מצינים ופחים", *except for colds*. The only illness we can control is צינים ופחים, and the גמרא adds, "שומר נפשו ירחק מהם" – one who guards himself from צינים he will be saved from them. ר' לייב גורביץ זצ"ל) would say, "חז"ל... were most probably not referring to Gateshead..." and we can say the same about Manchester.)

There is an obligation on every single person to conduct himself in a manner which guards him from becoming unnecessary ill through צינים ופחים.

As ר' מתתיהו שליט"א would say, "The main suffering a person has when he has a cold is the עבודת השם and his ביטול תורה, there's not much pain, you know it will end soon, but the real suffering boils down to the ביטול תורה..."

### ***Wear a coat!***

What hit me was the following: It's been very cold the past few weeks, but there are בחורים going outside without a coat, perhaps sometimes even without a jacket. It's a great זלזול the way we go out on the streets, we make as if it's no difference whether it's twenty degrees out or two degrees, it's possible that we are causing ourselves to catch a cold. This is certainly a lack in our חיוב to guard ourselves from צינים ופחים.

Perhaps, you will ask: Who says such a thing causes colds? The answer is: Could be you're right, it's not definite if such a thing causes a cold, but let me share with you a story:

### ***Maybe they are right?***

A בעל תשובה wrote a story about himself, when he was growing up as a child in a

secular school in Tel Aviv, where the school employed a חומש teacher, they told her teach, "without חז"ל and the מדרשים, just say it over as a history lesson..."

It once happened when she mentioned the word "גיהנום", one of the boys picked up his hand and asked, "מורה! What's גיהנום?!"

"Oh..." the teacher replied, "גיהנום is a place where they burn you and they torture you... it's not a very nice place to be..."

Perhaps she elaborated on גיהנום a little too much, so the boy then asked, "So why should somebody go to גיהנום? Who would want to go there?!"

"If you do עבירות you go there..." she replied.

It was then when another boy spoke up and asked, "And what's עבירות?!"

She tells them, "Driving on שבת! Eating חזיר! Eating בשר וחלב..."

One of the boys screamed out, "But we do all these things!! We're going to burn in גיהנום!!" The classroom let loose; all the kids started screaming.

She was lucky the bell rang then, because she had already lost control of the class.

The boy who made the biggest fuss ran out of school to meet his sister who was waiting there to fetch him. When he came home, he was screaming, "Help! I'm going to גיהנום! The whole family are going to גיהנום! We're going to burn!!"

The boy was hysterical, eventually his mother calmed him down. Once he was calm, his mother asked him, "What was that all about?! What happened?"

The boy explained to his mother what had happened and what his teacher in school had told him.

The mother told him, "Don't worry! That's what they believe but we don't believe in גיהנום! We believe differently so what's the problem!?"

The ten-year-old boy screamed, "But Mummy! What happens if they are right, and we are wrong?! What's going to be then?" The mother had nothing to answer.

Even if perhaps some of you think and believe that such things don't cause colds, but perhaps these people who've studied these ענינים, maybe they are *taka* right, שומר נפשו ירחק מהם.

We are obligated to avoid situations where we can cause ourselves to catch a

cold. If we cause any harm to our health, it's תביעה on us, we will be held responsible.

### ***This is for the good***

I would like to speak about another important נקודה: יעקב lived a hard and difficult life, a life full of hardships, צרה after צרה; at the end of the day, it all turned out alright, whether it was with יוסף, לבן, דינה, or עשו.

But what was the תביעה on אבינו? At the time he experienced difficult צרות!? He was a broken person. Why was there a טענה on him that he looked upset and harmed his health?

The שו"ע או"ח סימן ר"ל סעיף ה' writes, "לעולם יהא אדם רגיל לומר כל מה דעבד רחמנא" "לטב עביד", *A person should become accustomed to say, everything הקב"ה does is for the good.*

The שו"ע there on חכמת שלמה argues with the מחבר and writes: A person shouldn't say this, he should rather say גם זו "גם זו – *this is also for the good.*

What's the חילוק between כל מה דעבד רחמנא לטב עביד and גם זו לטובה?

The ספר דרוש אמונים (חלק א' דרוש הבטחון) explains: The גמרא (ס':) tells us about ר' עקיבא who came to a town where nobody gave him lodging, a

place to stay. He had to sleep outside the town in a field. He had a few possessions with him, "בא אריה" – a lion came and ate his donkey, "בא חתול" – a cat came and ate his chicken, suddenly "באה רוח" – a wind came and blew out his candle, and about all these incidents he exclaimed, "כל מה דעבד רחמנא לטב עביד".

The next morning, he woke up and he saw that the town was empty. In the night, villains had come, rounded up the whole town and sold them all to slavery. All the צרות turned out well for him, he was saved from being sold as a slave by not lodging in this town, and if not for the other צרות, the villains would have heard his animals or seen his candle burning.

This is the מדריגה of כל מה דעבד רחמנא לטב עביד, to understand that from this צרה I am going to benefit.

However, the מדריגה of גם זו לטובה is a higher מדריגה; a person comes to the realization that what's happening is not a צרה, this itself is good.

When found the box filled with earth he said that this itself is good. As the משנה in ברכות tells us, "חייב אדם לברך על הרעה כשם שמברך על הטובה" (נ"ד:), this is a מדריגה which is higher than כל

צרה itself is good, not that it's for a good reason or that it will turn out good, but it's more than that: this itself is good.

A מעזריטשער once came before the מגיד and asked him, "Please teach me how I can come to a מדריגה of חייב אדם לברך על הרעה כשם שמברך על הטובה?!"

The מגיד told him to go to a certain town and to a certain בית המדרש where he will find a ר' זושא איד who will be learning there... he will explain to you this חייב אדם לברך על הרעה כשם, משנה, שמברך על הטובה."

As it's well known, the Rebbe ר' זושא was an עני ואביון כל מיני צרות כל ימיו.

He travelled to this town, came into the בית המדרש and said to ר' זושא, "The מגיד sent me here so that you should explain to me the משנה which tells us לברך על הרעה כשם שמברך על הטובה."

ר' זושא told him, "You're making a mistake... it must be a different זושא you are referring to... Me?! Everything is *gevaldig* in my life!"

This is what the מגיד wanted to teach him. A person must try to reach such a מדריגה, it's not just that the צרה might lead to something good and there will be

a good purpose, it's more: everything which happens is good, everything alone is good.

R' אליהו חיים כהן נ"י writes: This was the תביעה on יעקב, we cannot fathom the מדריגות of the אבות הקדושים, when we speak about יעקב אבינו we don't understand who we are speaking about, but לפי מדריגתו הגבוה there was a פגם in this נקודה.

Of course, יעקב knew that everything was for a good purpose and a good reason and was on the מדריגה of גם זו, yet he didn't reach the שפיץ of מדריגה טובה. Because he didn't look at every צרה as being something completely good, he looked worried, his face displayed all his דאגות, he aged, and therefore there was a תביעה on him, because of this פרעה asked him his age, and therefore he was punished.

There was a תביעה on יעקב, because the highest מדריגה is to appreciate that גם זו -this itself is good.

When we experience our challenges in our life, it's not about, "It's going to be good, it's going to work alright, it's for my benefit, all will be good." We must understand that this itself is good! The צרה is a good thing!

This is the מדריגה we must strive to reach, as the saying goes if we reach for the stars, we won't get mud on our hands.

### *The tripping itself is good*

R' Moshe Scherer זצ"ל would tell a story about himself when he was ten years old. *Nebech*, at the age of ten, he was diagnosed with strep, a serious illness in those days.

Medicine in those days was very expensive, his mother gathered all the money she had in the house and went to the pharmacy to buy the right medicine for her child.

When she came to the store, the owner had left an assistant who looking after the shop. The money she brought didn't reach the amount the medicine costed, but she pleaded and pleaded to the assistant, exclaiming, "My child is dying at home! It can save his life..." The assistant had רחמנות and handed over the medicine.

The mother ran home as quick as she could to bring the medicine to her son, but on the way, she tripped... and the medicine smashed all over the floor, lying on the floor she felt all was finished.

She then decided not to give up, she ran back to the pharmacy with the broken bottle, and by the time she returned the owner was there. She explained to the owner what had happened showing him the broken bottle of medicine, and she pleaded again in tears – begging to save her sons life.

The owner looked at the medicine which his assistant had given her, “I don’t believe it! My assistant gave you the wrong medicine! That medicine would have been poison for your child!”

The owner was so inspired he gave her the right medicine and gave her back the money she gave earlier!

When she fell on the floor – she must have thought that this was her worst move she could possibly do in her life. Why did I have to fall when I’m holding a bottle of medicine which can save my son!

But in fact, the moment when she tripped was the greatest טובה she could have experienced! It saved her sons life! The צרה itself is goodness.

### ***שידוך The right***

The אמרי אמת was a גאון עולם, it’s known about the אמרי אמת how he valued and appreciated every single second of his

time, that is why he would say it’s a good thing to give a חתן a gold watch to teach him that time is precious like gold. He was once delayed on the way home from שול on סוכות, when he came home, he exclaimed, “...on פסח by night we are going to be eating מצה two minutes later...” that’s how precious his time was, he had made a חשבון for every second of his life.

One of his חסידים would ask him again and again for a ברכה to become rich, however, the אמרי אמת never gave him the ברכה. – after a few years of asking and pleading for the ברכה, eventually the אמרי אמת gave him a ברכה to become rich.

– וכך הוה – very quickly he became a tremendous גביר, his business started to flourish, and he became exceedingly wealthy.

He had a boy who was about to go into שידוכים, and *nebech* he was involved in a serious accident, becoming a cripple for life.

His cv went right down, and the father wasn’t happy with the names which were being suggested, nothing sounded good, the type of girls he was looking for his son weren’t coming up.

He came before his Rebbe the אמרי אמת exclaiming, "Rebbe! What should I do? No good שידוכים are coming up for my son!"

The אמרי אמת told this איד a frightening thing: The שידוכים which are being suggested for your son – those are the exact שידוכים you are supposed to be getting which the קול בת called out before he was born. You weren't supposed to be rich, you messed around with the יוצרות, you were always meant to be getting simple שידוכים, not שידוכים befitting for a גביר and a wealthy man like yourself. These are the right שידוכים for your children, you twisted things around, you decided to receive עשירות which wasn't really destined to you.

בדרך אגב, it's a יסוד for שידוכים, a שידוך is a match made in שמים, it's not always going to be like your imaginary dreams who you thought you were going to get. After a person gets married, he suddenly realises that nobody is perfect in this world. It's who Hashem puts you together with, that's who you are supposed to *shtieg* with, and you're supposed to grow with and that's who you are supposed to live your life with.

But I want to bring out from this story: A person must understand that his *matzev* in life is good! It's the best *matzev* possible – every צרה is for the good. However bad and however bleak it may seem, it's not פשט that it's for my benefit or that it's going to work out well, this itself is good for me. This איד was supposed to be an עני – that was good for him – that's what he needed in this world, that was the way it was supposed to be, and his son would of gotten his right shidduch without an accident.

About 15 years ago in ישיבה there was a בחור who became very ill and they realised he was diabetic. But I remember when the father of the boy called me up to tell me what had happened, he said to me these words which gave me a tremendous inspiration, "Now he will get his true שידוך...."

מדריגה לפי מדריגתו only had יעקב אבינו of כל מה דעבד רחמנא לטב עביד, and this was a תביעה, it was because of this that פרעה asked him his question, and therefore he was punished for this as well.

This is a מדריגה we must try and strive to, a מדריגה of גם זו לטובה – this is good, it's

not just that it's going to work well, it's not just that it's for my good, but the mindset should be this is good.

Not always do we see the goodness, but we must believe it.

### ***The price he paid!***

The ברוח קדשו הפך היים would say a story about a איך who came to שמים, a חשוב'ער - an *airlicher* איך, he should have gone straight to גן עדן. There was one thing he did wrong in his life, he gave someone a slap, and because of this he was told he would have to go to גיהנום for a short while.

The נשמה didn't want to go to גיהנום.

They gave him another option: to go down as a גלגול again to this world, and sometime through his life he will have a נסיון to give someone a slap, and that will be the determining factor if he will have to be punished for his previous גלגול.

The נשמה begged the בית דין של מעלה to help him, he asked to be born without a right hand, so that the נסיון won't be too difficult.

The מלאכים told him: No! that's not the way it works! It has to be בחירה.

"You know what," he said, "in my previous גלגול I did so many מצוות, I'm

prepared to use all my מצוות as payment to take away my right hand."

The מלאכים agreed – he paid a heavy price to be born without a hand.

*Nebech*, very soon, a child was born in this world, without a right hand, a tragedy. The child grew up – the first few years he didn't know the difference, but eventually as he grew older, he realized that he was disabled. As he grew older it bothered him more and more.

It once happened when he thought to himself about his difficulties and asked, "Why did הקב"ה do this to me?"

He went that night to the ארון הקודש in the Shul where he Davened and he started crying, "הקב"ה! Why?! Why am I different from everyone else?!"

The הפך היים said over this story and said: The מלאכים came to hear him and they started to laugh, if he would only know the price he paid to be born without a hand! He gave up all his מצוות! He prayed a heavy price, in the עולם השקר we don't understand anything.

This צרה was the greatest טובה for him it would help him in his life's Nisoyon. The צרה itself, whether it's the toothache or the other things which are bothering



us, the attitude shouldn't be that it's going to turn out well or that it's for my benefit, it should be: this is good, כשם שמברך על הטובה כך מברך על הרעה, this is good, and when we have this mindset, it elevates us it takes away our despair and דאגות.

### ***Interested in other peoples lives***

Let me just conclude with another *vort*: יוסף came out of the בית האיסורים. How did he get out? Because he interpreted the dream to the שר המשקים.

The פסוק describes to us what made the שר המשקים and the שר האופים tell over their dreams, because he asked them, "מדוע פניכם רעים היום" – why are you looking upset today!?

Why does the תורה tells us this bit of information? What's the difference how he got to hear their dreams?

The תורה is teaching us a *moridicker* יוסף is in prison, sent away from his father and his brothers, in an Egyptian prison, for no reason, he's innocent

The תורה is telling us: Do you know how his ישועה came about? Because he was interested in how other people were feeling.

We see from here: When a person looks after another, cares about another, and he's interested about the feelings of others, he will see tremendous ישועות.

We see from here that the תורה is telling us that we should be on the lookout – we should be interested about other people's feelings. However difficult my life is – but I can still see that someone is also suffering, I still must be interested about the lives of those around me. Can I help you? Do you need anything? Is something bothering you? Go and give them an encouraging word.

### ***Be בשמחה the whole time***

We also see here: If יוסף noticed their פנים רעים, he obviously understood that there should be no reason to be walking with a פנים רעים. This is גם זו לטובה, there's no bad faces, there's no bad feelings, he was walking round with a smile, he couldn't understand why somebody was walking around without a smile.

"למה נפלו פניך", קין said to הקב"ה – Why are you looking upset? What question is that? הקב"ה just rejected his קרבנות, isn't that a reason to be upset?

No! Even after an עבירה, we must be

בשמחה. One must have הרטה – do a sincere תשובה, but there's no place for עצבות. קין asked הקב"ה, "Why are you looking upset!?" Even after what had happened – it's no excuse to be upset, no עצבות, even for an עבירה.

A איד always has to be happy – Hashem loves you, שמחה has to be there the whole time, and about this, the תוכחה tells us, "תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' אלקך בשמחה", on שמחה the רבש"ע has a great תביעה. שמחת ההיים is very high on the agenda of our religion, we shouldn't ever allow ourselves to become upset.

I will just conclude with a story: There was once a competition of speakers. There was one guy who took the mike and he said that he was in such a hurry to get here that as he ran out the front door he tripped on a step and fell flat on his face.

He wanted to show the audience how he

fell, so he fell flat on his face in front of everyone watching.

No one could see him – he was lying on the floor with the mike in his hand, and like that he continued his speech.

He carried on speaking, and the audience were wondering, "What's he thinking? Why doesn't he get up?!"

After five minutes he exclaimed, "You most probably are all thinking that I stayed on the floor longer than I need to... why didn't I get up? But don't you in life sometimes stay down longer than you need to?!"

People are often upset, perhaps one has been in a fight, or he's done an עבירה, and one falls on the floor, "...do you not stay on the floor flat on your face longer than you need to?!" We have to get back up – don't stay on the floor for too long. Get up and move on.

....and he *taka* won the competition.



# פרשת ויגש

גליון 12

י"א טבת תשפ"א

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

## ***Make another miracle?!***

When **יעקב** left his homeland at the beginning of **פרשת ויצא** – to flee from his brother **עשו**, he lay down in **הר המוריה**, as the **תורה** relates, **"ווישכב במקום וילן שם..."** ויקח מאבני המקום וישם מראשותיו... (כ"ה), *He encountered the place and lay down there... he took from the stones of the place and he put them around his head.* חז"ל

***"Being angry with somebody is like drinking poison to harm him."***

teach us, **"התחילו מריבות זו עם זו"**, *The stones began to quarrel with one another*, **"זאת אומרת"**, *this would say*, **"עלי יניח צדיק את ראשו"**, *upon me shall the righteous one lay his head*, **"וזאת אומרת"**, *and this one would say*, **"עלי יניח"**, *upon me he shall lay his head.*

**הקב"ה**, **"מיד עשאן הקב"ה אבן אחת"** *immediately made them into one stone*, **"וזהו שנאמר"**, **"ויקח את האבן"**, *and this is as it is stated, 'he took the stone,'* בלשון יחיד, using the singular – **"אבן"**.

**הקב"ה** preformed a **נס**, a miracle took place, as the **גמרא** in (צ"א:) describes

that one stone swallowed the other stones!

If **הקב"ה** is making a **נס**, why couldn't **הקב"ה** at the same time soften the stone and make it into a pillow?! If miracles are happening, why let **יעקב** sleep on a hard stone?

וויילנא גאון Says the

**"From a מחלוקת – from an argument or dispute, a נאה**

cannot be produced." A מחלוקת cannot bring about something good – something useful.

## ***They would squabble***

**וכי**, asks, **פרשת נח** (י"א, ט') in **רש"י** הקדוש **"איזו קשה?"** *Now, which sin is more severe?* **"של דור המבול או של דור הפלדה?"** *that of the דור המבול or that of the דור הפלדה?* **"אלו לא פשטו ידם בעיקר"** *The דור did not go against the הקב"ה by not believing in Him, but rather by failure to control their תאוות, however, ואלו פשטו* *the דור הפלדה was a*

*direct sin against belief in ה"קב, to wage war against Him.*

Nevertheless, "ואלו נשטפו, ואלו לא נאבדו", *The דור המבול were washed away, whereas the דור הפלגה were not destroyed. Why was this so? "שדור המבול" דור "For the דור היו גזלנים והיתה מריבה ביניהם" דור were robbers and there was hostility between them, "לכך נאבדו", that is why they were destroyed, ואלו היו "דור דור, נוהגים אהבה וריעות ביניהם." דור would behave with **love and friendship** amongst themselves.*

The דור הפלגה – the generation which sinned more than the דור המבול, were saved because they had שלום. שלום can be מציל from גזירות, whether it's saving a יחיד or whether it's saving the רבים.

This is the power of שלום – the power of peace. Peace stops and prevents destruction from happening.

### ***The עגונה of an מחילה***

In 1967 when the מיר ישיבה were in the bunker, sheltering from the bombs of the Jordan's, suddenly a bomb hit the building, shaking the entire building. A bunker can save people from an indirect hit, however, a bunker – a bomb shelter is not built to save people from a direct hit.

However, when this bomb hit the building, the bomb did not explode, a true miracle, saving hundreds of אידן.

ר' חיים שמואלביץ זצ"ל would say, "With what did we merit to receive this miracle?"

At the time when the building shook, I heard one of the women who would work in the ישיבה kitchen exclaim, "I'm מוחל him שלם בלב!!" She was *nebech* a woman who had been an עגונה for twenty years – her husband ran away. We can imagine how angry and upset she must have been all these years! Her husband just ran away from one day to the next!

However, there and then when the building shook, she was מוחל her husband.

"It's clear to me that דבר ברור לי" – because of this," concluded ר' חיים זצ"ל, "we were all זוכה to be saved."

### ***The tools***

מחלוקת is rampant, it's running through our lives constantly. It happens when we are upset at others. It's this quarrel here and that argument here. How are we supposed to escape from this מידה – a מידה which clutches onto us very often? What tools do we need to get out of this מידה? What are these tools which we can

hopefully use which can help us in our constant squabbles and arguments which we constantly have with our friends and siblings?

### ***The journey to slavery***

In פרשת וישב when the שבטים sold יוסף to the תורה describes, "והנה ישמעאלים, אורחת ישמעאלים באה מגלעד, נשאים נכאת וצרי א, ולט הולכים להוריד מצרימה." (ל"ז, כ"ה) *A caravan of ישמעאלים were coming from גלעד, and their camels were bearing spices, and balsam, and birthwort – on their way to bring them down to מצרים.* "אין דרכן של ערביים לשאת, חז"ל teach us, "אלא נפט ועטרן שריחן רע" *It's not the way of Arabs to carry anything but petroleum, whose smell is bad,* "אלא" *but rather to inform us about the reward of the righteous,* "נזדמנו בשמים", *for יוסף the arranged spices – with a pleasant smell,* "שלא יוזק מריח רע", *so that he should not be harmed by the bad smell.* ה looked after יוסף הצדיק to make sure he travelled in comfort.

### ***Who really cares??***

The all ask: What's going on here?! יוסף was just about to be killed by his brothers. Instead they take him and sell him to some Arab merchants. He's

traveling to slavery, a land of strangers and dangerous people. He doesn't know if he will see his father and family ever again. He must be fuming – really *koching* at his brothers for putting him through all this torture. He must be feeling really bitter, going through such anguish and pain. Is he really in the frame of mind to notice whether the Arab merchants are carrying petrol or בשמים?! He's probably sitting at the back of the wagon tied in ropes. What's the difference if there's בשמים there or not?

### ***The pair of shoes***

The פרשת הפטרה of נביא tells us in the "על שלשה פשעי ישראל... על מכרם, וישב" *For three rebellious sins... for their having sold a righteous man for silver, and a destitute one for the sake of a pair of shoes.*

Clearly, we see that הקב"ה had a תביעה on the way they sold יוסף הצדיק – they made him feel like a pauper, the lowest of the lowest. Something wasn't right there לפי מדריגותם.

### ***Like a brother***

"אני יוסף אחיכם אשר" יוסף told his brothers, *I am your brother who you sold,* מכרתם" (מ"ה, ד) אור החיים הקדוש, "מתנהג עמכם" יוסף was telling his brothers,

"I will treat you all like a brother – with love, as if all that happened never happened!" A פלא! He's their brother with brotherly love as if nothing happened!

"אשר מכרתם" means, writes the אור החיים "אפילו בזמן המכר לא כהתה עין האחוה, הקדוש ממני", "Even at the time when you sold me, the love didn't diminish at all, I loved you like brothers are supposed to love each other, there were no הקפדות."<sup>1</sup> How was it possible? From where did he get this strength – this phenomenal power?

### ***It's part of a plan!***

The answer is: יוסף tells his brothers after he reveals himself. "ועתה אל תעצבו, ואל יחר בעיניכם כי מכרתי אתי הנה, כי למחיה שלחני (מ"ה, ה) *And now, be not distressed, do not reproach yourselves for having sold me, for it was a supporter of life that God sent me ahead of you.*

<sup>1</sup> In fact, the תורה tells us, "ויתן לו את אסנת בת פוטי פרע..." – פוטי פרע – the daughter of פוטי פרע – (מ"א, מ"ה) – the woman who made him be sent to an Egyptian prison for twelve years! אשת פוטי פרע caused יוסף to go through a real mess, and yet he obviously does not hold any

יוסף is telling his brothers, "Don't worry! Everything is fine! I have no טענות against you! There's a plan here – everything is planned out."

Again, in פרשת ויחי after the שבטים bury their father, יעקב יוסף, exclaims, "אלקים חשבה לטובה, למען עשה כיום הזה להחיות עם (נ', כ) *Hashem intended it for good; in order to accomplish – it is as clear as this day – that a vast people be kept alive.* "There's a plan! There's a reason! It's all from Hashem! I have nothing against you," says יוסף to his brothers; what must we learn from here?

### ***The big punch***

I want to share an important יסוד which we learn from here and if we internalise it, we can be helped throughout our life. Let's imagine the following scenario: You're walking down the corridor or you're walking down the street, and somebody gives you a punch on your back. 'What did I do wrong?! I didn't antagonise anyone??' you think to yourself.

hard feelings against her! He marries into her family, אשת פוטי פרע becomes his mother-in-law! How he manage this?

Before you turn around, your blood is already boiling – blood pressure is going up, you're about to explode, "*How dare someone do this! The nerve he has...!!*"

You turn around and you see it's a kid – an ill kid, who has a big cheeky smile on his face.

What do you do next?

You smile back, make the kid happy.

What do you expect from such a kid! He has the enjoyment of going round and giving people punches and slaps!

Let us analyse what's happening over here: You receive a punch on your back – a big patch, and you're fuming – about to hit the roof. Suddenly, you turn around and it all changes from one second to the next, it's only a joke – you have a laugh.

### ***Processing everything***

We must understand in life: The moment you thought somebody gave a patch for no reason – you processed thoughts of anger preparing to explode, however, the moment you see it's only a kid who doesn't know any better – your thoughts change, it's all okay, just leave it with a giggle.

You've reprocessed what happened, continue your walk down the street, and

after two minutes you have completely forgotten what happened.

It's not what happens to us which makes us angry, it's how we process it.

This is what we learn from this weeks "כי למחיה, פרשה יוסף says to his brothers, "שלחני ה' לפניכם..." "sent me to provide you in the years of famine – there was a plan for everything!" This went through his mind from the moment he was sold; everything is with a השבון – everything is part of a plan.

They gave the greatest torture one brother can give to another brother. Nevertheless, יוסף הצדיק processed it all in such a healthy way, it's all the רבש"ע – all the mess up – all he has been through equals to one thing, to smile – to remain happy.

No anger, no hatred, no hard feelings, יוסף is happy – he moves on, he processed his feelings wisely.

As the "כאילו לא" אור החיים הקדוש writes, יוסף told his brothers, "היה הדבר", "Nothing happened..." because he processed it all in a healthy and right way.

### ***He's calm***

We can now answer the difficulty we had earlier. יוסף is traveling down to

with the Arab merchants, smelling pleasant smells, smelling בשמים. If it would be us, tied up there about to be sold as a slave, would we notice the pleasant smells?!

But יוסף הצדיק was different, he was calm – he was happy, he had processed everything in a good light, without having any hard feelings or being upset or annoyed at his brothers.

He had none of it – no anger and no hatred. Rather he was sitting there relaxed with יישוב הדעת, as if he was sitting in a first-class carriage on the way to London for his brothers החונה לא כאילו לא היה הדבר – nothing was happening, he proceed his thoughts in such a way, not having any bad feelings toward his brothers.

He removed those who did bad to him from the scene!

Certainly, he then enjoyed and appreciated the good smelling בשמים on the carriage, the journey was smoother, it made it more *geshmak*.

### ***It's about the mind***

It's quite often when we have these little fights – these little arguments and squabbles, this friction happens constantly. We must train ourselves to

process what happens in a healthy way. When we process what happens to us in a healthy way, the answer to the equation in our brain won't be the way we would have usually seen it. It's all dependent on how the mind processes what happens.

Often, we get angry with a person, you fall out with the fellow and you're not on talking terms. Truthfully, the only person suffering is yourself! As in English there is a saying, "Being angry with somebody is like drinking poison to harm him." What a fool he is! He's drinking the poison to harm yena! How's that supposed to help??

Being angry, it doesn't help us at all – not the slightest, it's us who suffers.

We must learn how to process our mind. When anger comes our way we must learn and train ourselves to move on, forget and forgive.

I would like to share just a few simple thoughts we can have to help us process our brain with the right thoughts, thoughts which could prevent an argument.

### ***Everything is Hashem***

Of course, the first way to approach your feelings of anger or hatred, is understanding that all events happening



in life is all being orchestrated by the רצון השם, nothing happens without the רצון השם.

Even without reaching this level of אמונה וביטחון, there are many basic questions which we can answer to our feelings of anger.

### ***It's not 'I don't care'***

Often, we believe, "I can't just forgive someone's behaviour because this will just give them permission to do it again!"

This is the warp way a person may think. However, it's not true, we can certainly do whatever is necessary to ensure it doesn't happen again. It's no contradiction to the forgiveness. Forgiving and forgetting does not mean we allow the person to do it again.

We shouldn't mistakenly think that the message of forgiveness is, "I don't care what you did..."

Forgiveness is not surrender, admitting as being the wrong and yena being the right. It's a great myth. People think that when forgiving this indicates that they are admitting they are wrong. Forgiveness is not a confession of wrongdoing on our part.

### ***Blame the right person!***

Another problem, ר' שלמה וולבה זצ"ל writes which people suffer from is: Often we feel that if we don't blame other people for our problems, we will end up blaming oneself. If life is not going well, 'maybe it's me who's not doing the right things, perhaps it's my fault and I'm to blame,' why are you blaming somebody else?? This one blames the מוסד that one blames it on the Rebbe; by shifting the blame onto somebody else we try free ourselves from any feeling of guilt.

We must reprocess our brains every time, "Am I simply just shifting the blame onto somebody else when it's really myself to blame??"

### ***We all do it***

Now let's say – לית מאן דפליג – it's very clear that the fellow did something really nasty, something which really makes you feel angry. But let's remember: We also make mistakes – we are also not perfect.

Mistakes are not excusable at all for anger.

Going to forgive should not make us feel weak or vulnerable in any way.

Often, we feel it's to *bilig* to go apologise! In fact, *yena* will respect you when you come and apologise!

### ***It's everyone***

Sometimes you hear the excuse of people why they are angry is because "Everyone has enemies – I'm joining the club... there has to be somebody I don't talk to... there has to be a שול which I don't *daven* in..." It doesn't make sense – if we really process our thoughts before becoming angry, we wouldn't look at things the way we usually would. We all have to work on ourselves when these situations come to mind, don't think you'll be able to work on it when you're older – it doesn't change if you don't start now.

It's vital for our daily life – to process what happens to us in a healthy way.

And as we mentioned earlier, the true and real way to process our thoughts is understanding that it's all from הקב"ה, "...כי למחיה שלחני ה'!" – Hashem is arranging all of this; these were just some small thoughts, some advice to help us along the way.

### ***It will continue forever***

Anger against other people can last for decades, the longer you leave it, the

harder it is to make peace and to move forward. Anger is an emotion which resides in the limbic part of the brain where the seat of all emotions are, and it remains there for a long time. It can be twenty years later, and the fellow is still angry – he's still not on talking terms.

Does the insult really matter anymore?! Why you still going on about it?

And as the ספרים הקדושים teach: Anger doesn't just remain in this world, when you go up there it won't change, you will still remain with those feelings of anger, the מחלוקת continues up there. He's embarrassed – up there it's too late to change your מידות, because it's the way he made himself down here is how he will remain up there.

### ***They remain***

ר' היים מוואלאזין זצ"ל was once caught by bandits, and he was given five minutes for his final prayer. As loud as he could scream, he exclaimed, "רבש"ע" I forgive everyone! I'm even מוחל the bandits for what they have done to me, how do I know where they are holding, perhaps they have been through a hard and difficult life?"

They *taka* were inspired and let him free.

He didn't want to go to the next world with טענות on other people, because these טענות will remain when he gets up there.

***It goes both ways***

We must also remember, "כמים פנים אל פנים" – how we treat and look at others, that is how others will look at us.

It once happened when a קהילה were suffering from terrible מוסר, causing much trouble to the town and the Rov.

The Rov of the town accompanied by two other people, were traveling to the next town to be סנדק at a ברית. Opposite them – on a horse, the מוסר was coming. They went through a tremendous פחד, this מוסר was dangerous – their lives were in great danger, who knows what he's capable of doing.

To their surprise, as they reached within a few yards of each other, the מוסר greeted them with tremendous כבוד and respect.

After the מוסר passed, the Rov related, "I brought into my heart a tremendous אהבה and אהבה towards him... As it says by "עד, עשו, יעקב אבינו before meeting with עשו, "עד, גשחו עד אחיו" (ל"ג, ג) *until he reached his brother*, he instilled into himself a tremendous love toward his brother עשו – he brought the love to his brother into his heart, and like that עשו did not kill him, כמים פנים אל פנים."

It's כמים פנים אל פנים – it's how we look at others, they will look at us.

So let us remember that when we go through these תקופות, whether it's an argument or טענות we have, we must know: It's not what yena did to me why I am angry, remember the משל about the ill child, it's about how we process what happens. We must learn to process what happens in our lives in a healthy way, and by doing this we can live a life – a life of שמחה and true happiness.



Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.

# פרשת ויגש

גליון 15

ז' טבת תש"פ

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

The סדרה begins with telling us, "ויגש אליו יהודה...", *Then יהודה approached him – stepped forward.* When we look into the מדרשים the story begins to get quite exciting. יהודה prepares with a battle plan to destroy the entire מצרים! יהודה is not standing any more nonsense – he is turning over מצרים.<sup>1</sup>

For those who remember the end of last weeks סדרה - right at the end, there, יהודה was very calm. After finding the כוס in בנימין's sack, the מצרים return to יהודה. יהודה tells יוסף, "מה, יוסף, נאמר לאדני, מה נדבר, ומה נצטדק? האלקים מצא את עון עבדיך, הננו עבדים לאדני."

*my lord? How can how can we justify we are: We are slaves to my lord.*

**The fellow gets really frustrated, "Listen here mate: either you gave me the ten million pounds or give me back my pound."**

*we speak? And ourselves? Here ready to be*

יהודה at the end of פ' מקץ clearly had nothing to justify for himself. He settled affairs and agreed for all them to be slaves for יוסף. "We submit," he declared.

"חלילה לי! מעשות זאת האיש אשר נמצא הגביע בידו, הוא יהיה לי, הוא יוסף was very nice and responded, "עבד ואתם עלו לשלום אל אביכם." *It would be unseemly for me to do this; the man in whose possession the goblet was found, he shall be my slave, and as for you – go up in peace to your father.* [This is the last פסוק of פ' מקץ.]

Suddenly now at the beginning of the פרשה, "ויגש אליו יהודה" – יהודה exploded! He submitted to be slaves. יוסף kindly concentrates the slavery to only one out of the 11 brothers! What's the whole explosion now all about?

This reminds me of the story about the שוטה who goes into the side shop in the small village and buys the lottery ticket for a pound. Lo and behold, her wins ten million pounds! He can't believe his luck!

<sup>1</sup> The שמעוני teaches: יהודה screamed so loud that his voice was heard 400 פרסה (1000 miles) away. When חושים בן דן heard the screams, he jumped to מצרים and began screaming together with יהודה. The screams were so loud that the entire מצרים was about to turn over. The שבטים then began stamping their feet until the entire מצרים was shaking from side to side. They screamed and yelled ready to chop off יוסף's head...

He goes back to the booth where he bought the ticket and says, "Give me ten million pounds!"

"What do you mean," replies the teller, "I'm very happy you won, but I can't give you the ten million pounds! You have to travel 50-60 miles away to the central office to claim your prize!"

"I don't understand," screams the customer, "I bought from you a ticket. If it says I won ten million pounds, then give me ten million pounds! Why are you messing me around?"

"I'm sorry my friend, ten million pounds cash doesn't even fit into this little booth! You have to go to the central office to claim your prize," replies the teller.

The fellow gets really frustrated, "Listen here mate: either you gave me the ten million pounds or give me back my pound."

What's going on here? יהודה submits, "We are all עבדים!" יוסף responds, "I'm a nice guy. All I am taking is בנימין, the rest of you may go home." Suddenly now יהודה is about to turn over מצרים?!

I once heard the following explanation from הרב ביטון שליט"א: When we learn these פרשיות about the שבטים we must understand that regarding the שבטים everything was done with a חשבון. Not only everything they did was with a complete חשבון – everything done to them too, was with a complete חשבון.

When they opened up the sack and found the money, they didn't announce, "Oh wow! Look at the this – we got our money back!" On the contrary, (מ"ב, כ"ה) "ויאמרו איש אל אחיו" "האֱלֹקִים מצא את עון עבדיך" – *What is this that God has done to us?* Everything is from הקב"ה. Everything was thought about with a complete חשבון. Nothing happened *stam*, like we would look at things.

The next time, they found the כוס in בנימין's sack. Said יהודה again, "האֱלֹקִים מצא את עון עבדיך" (מ"ד, ט"ז), *God has found the sin of his servants*. Accordingly, יהודה then submitted, "We have sinned. We submit to הקב"ה's will to be עבדים." הקב"ה does everything – they were fine with that. Obviously, הקב"ה wants us to be עבדים.

When יוסף responded, "I'm only taking בנימין," the שבטים thought to themselves, "Wait one second! The king here is *stam chepering* us. בנימין never sinned! בנימין was one of the six people who never sinned! You're *stam* messing us around!"

Therefore, "ויגש אליו יהודה" – "You are messing with the wrong guy, we will turn over מצרים! If you are *stam chepering* בנימין we will sort you out good and proper."

Everything was with a חשבון.

I saw a *moridiker* insight last week in the פסוקים which I had never noticed before. On the way back from מצרים, it is stated, "ויפתח האחד את שקו לתת מספוא לחמרו במלון, וירא את כספו..." (מ"ב, כ"ז), *The one opened his sack to give feed for his donkey at the inn, and he saw his money!*

Later in פסוק ל"ה, once they reached their father יעקב and told him exactly what happened in מצרים, only then did the other שבטים open their bags and find the money in their bag too. Then again, on the journey itself only one of them opened their bag.

It's beautiful: They were different people than we are. Different dimension completely. They were so great. If ten of us would go to a shop and on the way home one of us looks into his bag and sees the money is back in the bag. What would everybody else do? Start searching in their bag if they also were given the money back!

The שבטים were nothing like that. The פסוק says one of the שבטים opened his sack. Why did he open his sack? To feed the donkeys. He found the money there – "מה זאת אלקים לנו", but they weren't people like us. The rest of the שבטים didn't then react, "Ah! Let's see if the money is also in my bag..." NO! THEY DON'T MOVE! They don't do nothing without a חשבון. There is no reason to look. What's the נפק"מ? *Stam* to be curious?! The שבטים weren't curious people like us!

They didn't move their fingers or hands without a חשבון, without a reason.

The Manchester ראש ישיבה זצ"ל every year before נוראים ימים wrote new קבלות for the upcoming year. For the last year of his life his קבלה was to be מכון before moving his hand whether it's the רצון ה' or not to move it! A מדריגה of a איד who lived not too long ago.

But for the שבטים it was פשוט. They didn't do anything without a חשבון. The תורה tells us why he opened his sack. Not *stam* to see the food, but rather to feed the animal! Just because he found the money it doesn't mean all of us need to now open our sack!

Everything was with a חשבון.

Certainly, concerning יוסף הצדיק himself, everything was with a חשבון.

Let me share with you a *moridiker* נקודה – a מוסר השכל – which explains to us what exactly יוסף was doing here. What *game* was he playing with the שבטים? What's the *shphiel* here? Why didn't he tell his father already that he was alive? Why does he want בנימין?

In the מדרש it is clear what יוסף was trying to achieve: יוסף knew his brothers were not simple people. They פסקנד יוסף with a חיוב מיתה and they פסקנד to sell him to מצרים. This wasn't a game. If יוסף would have written a letter home, "Hello there... I'm king in מצרים live and well," the שבטים would have simply come to kill him! Nothing's changed just because he is king in מצרים. If they פסקנד him מיתה חייב they will go kill him.

The only way he can undo the פסק דין is to prove them that they had made a big mistake. Or even if they didn't make a mistake, he had to prove them they could not פי דין because of special circumstances.

He wanted to get the brothers into a position where they פסקנד that בנימין is חיוב מיתה. יוסף and בנימן were brother's from the same mother, and therefore יוסף had to create the same scenario which he was in, and see what happens.

He succeeded in bringing בנימין down to מצרים and planting the כוס in his sack. תז"ל teach us that the שבטים *taka* thought בנימין stole the כוס. Accordingly, they פסקנד that בנימין is חיוב מיתה – a בן נח who steals is חיוב מיתה. He should be put to death.

יהודה however comes to complain. What's he complaining about? Why can't you kill him? Why not?

"והיה כראותו כי אין הנער ומת... אבינו ביגון שאלה... כי איך אעלה אל אבי והנער איננו אתי..". – All about the יעקב, *for how can I go up to my father if the youth is not with me*. Again and again he repeats to יוסף about the pain of יעקב. Till שני he is giving his דרשות about יעקב אבינו!

That's the way it works in court. A taxi driver is caught speeding. The judge wants to take away his licence, but the taxi driver and his lawyer respond, "But you can't! He needs it for his business. It's his job!"

"Fine," replies the judge, "I will give you a fine instead."

There is always the דין and the circumstances around the פסק דין. A מלך takes into consideration the circumstances around the פסק דין.

יוסף was trying to get them into a situation where they פסקנד a חיוב מיתה on בנימין but the שבטים claimed they couldn't do it because of the circumstances, because of their father יעקב.

That was the position יוסף wanted them to be in.

"ויאמר אליהם אני יוסף" – He said to them, "I am יוסף," "העוד אבי חי?" – is my father still alive? What sort of question is this?! יהודה just gave דרשות all about יעקב his father! Why is יוסף asking if he is still alive?

The מדרש teaches: He was trying to contradict them, "אני יוסף" – when you sold me, העוד "אבי חי" – was my father alive then, i.e. did you take his צרות into account?!

"Then, you פסקנד מיתה and you didn't care about the circumstances of יעקב, now, suddenly you care about יעקב's צרות? It's a סחירה! Maybe there was a נגיעה?"

This מדרש teaches, he tuka succeeded in contradicting them, and continues the מדרש, we must learn from this incident not to make contradictions and excuses in our life.

When we come to שמים the רבש"ע will ask you, "Why were your תפילין not so black?"

"What can I do..." you reply, "I was a wishy-washy guy... I was lazy... I didn't mind having a few white patches on my straps..."

"Ah...if that's the case," says הקב"ה, "let me have a look at your shoes! You spent thirty minutes every week polishing them! Let's look at your hat. You brushed your hat every week! You scrubbed it clean!"

As the מדרש (ב"ר צ"ג, י') teaches: "אבא כהן ברדלא אמר, אוי לנו מיום הדין, אוי לנו מיום התוכחה" – (*Woe is to us from the day of judgement, woe is to us from the day of proof*). יוסף, קטן

"ולא יכלו אחיו לאנות אתו, כי נבהלו מפניו" (מ"ה, ג') – *as it is stated, "שנאמר" – ("His brothers could not answer him because they were disconcerted before him.")*

"לכשיבוא הקב"ה ויוכיח כל אחד ואחד לפי מה שהוא, שנאמר" "אוכיחך ואערכה לעיניך" (תהלים נ'), "על אחת כמה וכמה!" – (*When a person will come before the הקב"ה and He will be מוכיח every person according to what he is,*) – (*even more so...!*)

הקב"ה will find us full of סתירות. "You say you can't get up early in the morning?! Whenever you had a flight to catch you were always up long before the flight (even waking up early with enough time to spend in the lounge...)"

We must make sure to narrow down the סתירות we have in our lives. A איד once came to ר' Halberstham מצ"ל, and asked if he can buy an אתרוג in a closed box, "as I will save so much more time like that..."

He answered so cleverly: "If you buy your Borsalino hat in a closed box - off the shelf, you can buy an אתרוג in a closed box." When it comes to buying a hat you try on twenty hats in



three different mirrors on all ten angles, till you know which one suits you! Suddenly when you come to buying an אתרוג you are too busy; you don't have any time!<sup>2</sup>

That is the מוסר of the פרשה. יוסף was trying to show them that they made a mistake. There's a contradiction here. Only by showing them the contradiction and agreeing to it, only then can he say "אני יוסף" – I am יוסף. Now they understood they made a mistake. Earlier, regarding יוסף's חיוב מיתה, they should have also taken into consideration the circumstances of צרות יעקב.

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תנא דבי ר' יעקב גלינסקי זצ"ל<sup>2</sup> brings down the story about the fishermen from the תנא דבי ר' יעקב גלינסקי זצ"ל<sup>2</sup> – "פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך ממקום למקום". אליהו (זוטא, י"ד) from place to place, "ומצאתי אדם אחד שלא היה בו לא מקרא ולא משנה", rather "מתלוצץ ומלעיג בדברים" – he was a לץ who was making fun, "ובא כנגדי", and he was coming towards me.

"My son, what will you answer to your Father in heaven on the day of judgement?" – "ואמרת לו: בני, מה אתה משיב לאביך שבשמים ליום הדין?"

"Rebbe, I will have what to answer, for I was not given knowledge and intelligence," he replied.

"My son, what is your work?" I asked. – "ואמרת לו: בני, מה מלאכתך?"

"I am a fisherman," he replied. – "ואמר לי: דיג אני"

"My son, who taught you to bring flax and weave it into nets to which you will throw into the water to bring forth the fish?!" – "ואמרת לי: בני, מי למדך ואמר לך שתביא פשתן, ותארגנו מצודות, ותשליכהו למים, ותעלה דגים מן הים!"

"Rebbe, for this I was granted knowledge and understanding from heaven," he replied. – "ואמר לי: רבי, בזה נתנו לי בינה ודעת מן השמים"

"מה להביא פשתן ולארוג מצודות ולהשליך לים ולהעלות דגים נתנו לך בינה ודעת מן השמים, ולדברי תורה – שכתוב בה: "כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד... (דברים ל', י"ד) לא נתנו לך בינה ודעה מן השמים! !!" – "For bringing flax to create nets which will bring up the fish – you were given the knowledge and understanding from שמים; for the תורה הקדושה which is very close to you, were you not given the knowledge and understanding from שמים!!?"

– he raised his voice and cried and wept. מיד, immediately, says the מדרש, "הרים קולו ובכה והתאנח"

Said בני, אל ירע לך, אלא כל שאר בני אדם באי עולם הם משיבים תשובה זו, אבל מעשיהם מוכיחים עליהם: אליהו הנביא – Often, a person's own acts can prove the right in a person.

There is another מדרש which explains differently to the previous one: When יוסף said "אני" "יוסף, the שבטים said, "No! There is no סתירה. We have an answer to your contradiction." בקשו להורגו – They took a sword and they wanted to kill him! After 22 years they didn't even want to say hello! No! They were on a different planet than we are. The מדרש תנחומא explains: The שבטים held he was still מיתה. They went to kill him! "We sold you as a slave... now you are a king?! We're killing you right now!"

Came a מלאך and made an explosion – they all flew to the four sides of the palace. They couldn't kill him. הקב"ה didn't let.

The ספרים הקדושים explain: They were shown from שמים that this is all a plan to get כלל ישראל down to מצרים. It wasn't in their hands. [If we look in חז"ל, the תביעה on the brothers was not because they sold him. We needed him sold to get כלל ישראל down to מצרים. The תביעה was on the way they sold him, as the נביא in the הפטרה of וישב וירשת וישב teaches, "על שלשה, פשעי ישראל... על מכרם בכסף צדיק ואביון בעבור נעלים" *For three rebellious sins... for their having sold a righteous man for silver, and a destitute one for the sake of a pair of shoes.* It's the way they did things. However, the עצם פסק דין was אמת.]

We have two מהלכים here in the מדרש. However, let us stop and think for a second and see what's going on here. It wasn't a game and that he was trying to take revenge. He was fighting to get them to undo the פסק דין! According to one מדרש he took succeeded - they agreed to the סתירה, whereas, according to the second מדרש there was no mistake here, יוסף wasn't successful, they wanted to kill him until a מלאך came to show that which had happened until now was השמים מן.

We read the פרשיות and begin to get watery eyes, "ולא יכול יוסף להתאפק" *could no longer endure...* חז"ל teach us: He couldn't control himself. Immediately after this he cried on חורבן הבית's neck for חורבן הבית. Why suddenly did he cry for חורבן הבית?

The ספרים teach us, יוסף trying to antagonize the שבטים and cause them anguish so that they should have a כפרה for the חטא of מכירת יוסף. "ולא יכול יוסף להתאפק". מכירת יוסף couldn't control himself! He couldn't bear watching his dear brothers suffer so much. Had he waited a few more minutes the שבטים would have suffered enough and there wouldn't have been a חורבן הבית!

Now after revealing himself, immediately he had cry over the חורבן הבית because he didn't succeed in giving them enough צרות to wipe out the sin completely.

I once heard from R' Dovid Ashear שליט"א, "When הקב"ה gives us צרות, He is יכול להתאפק." *A moridiker vort!* "ולא יכלו יוסף להתאפק" – יוסף, a מלך בשר ודם couldn't control himself, but when הקב"ה gives us צרות – He can control himself. הקב"ה gives us them לטובה. When we have to suffer until our bitter end, הקב"ה controls Himself because it's only for our good. משל למה הדבר דומה, you see a kid running on the train tracks! A train is coming, you have to take him off. You start pulling him off, but the kid is holding onto the rails with all his might screaming, "I'm not coming off... I'm like a train..." You're pulling and pulling and there is a blood already all over. You will do all you can to *shlep* him off the tracks. You'll break his bones!

You're saving his life. It's לטובה. A nine-month old puts a piece of Lego in his mouth! You'll fight till he opens his mouth.

That is how we must look at it when הקב"ה gives us צרות. הקב"ה is giving us צרות because He loves us and it's for our good. Life is not always a picnic. Sometimes it goes from bad to worst. But we must always remember, it all לטובה. הקב"ה is taking the Lego out our mouth, He's preventing the train from running us over. הקב"ה is יכול להתאפק when giving us צרות, since they are there to help us ultimately, and to save us.

Transcribed by אברהם דוב הכהן כהן - Avrohom Dov Kohn.

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.