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Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayigash 5774

1. I would like to share with you today a Vort on the beginning of the Parsha, a Vort on the end of the Parsha and if there is time something in between. The Vort at the beginning of the Parsha has to do with an important Yesod. I would like to start with a Gemara in Maseches Sanhedrin on 111b. There we find that Rav Yochanan and Reish Lakeish argue regarding the rules of Chalukas Ha'aretz, the rules of dividing Eretz Yisrael. The dispute there is whether it is permissible to divide a single city between two Shevatim. Or do we say that each city has to belong to an independent Sheivet. There is a difficulty. How could anyone hold that a city can't be split, if you read Sefer Yehoshua and you read the chapters that explain which parts of Eretz Yisrael went to each Sheivet, you find that the city of Yerushalayim in 15:8 fell to the Cheilek of Yehuda right at the edge of his boundary. Later in 18:16 it fell to the Cheilek of Binyamin. The same city yet it belonged to two Shevatim. Now don't tell me but Yerushalayim was different because Yerushalayim was not different. It is another over 400 years for Yerushalayim to be singled out as a city where the Bais Hamikdash would be built. At the time that Yehoshua divided the land there was a Mishkan in Shiloh. Yerushalayim was not known as a unique city. Yet they divided the city between two Shevatim. This appears to be a Kasha on that Gemara in Sanhedrin on 111b.

This Yesod is something which I had heard many times in the name of Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky although I don't know where it might be printed. Rav Yaakov pointed out that we find in Tanach that Binyamin and Yehuda are called one Sheivet. The most striking place is in Melachim I 11:31 when the Navi Achiya Hashulani predicts that the 12 Shevatim would be divided into two kingdoms. He says to Yeravam, V'nasati Lecha Es Asara Hashevatom. V'hashevatom Ha'echad Yiyeh Lo. You will get ten Shevatim and one Sheivet will go to Rechavam the son of Shlomo. $10 + 1 = 11$. Where is Sheivet Binyamin? The Sheivet Ha'echad Yiyeh Lo is Yehuda and Binyamin together. An interesting Yesod, that Yehuda and Binyamin are consistently counted as one. From where does this come? It comes from this week's Parsha and last week's Parsha. Yehuda said to Yaakov Avinu regarding Binyamin in 43:9 Anochi Ervenu Miyadi Tevakshenu, I will guarantee Binyamin's safety. Im Lo Haviosiv Eilecha V'hitzantiv L'fanecha V'chatsi Lecha Kol Hayomim. He guarantees his safety. He doesn't just say it, in this week's Parsha he does it. In 44:33 Yehuda says V'ata Yeishev Na Avdecha Tachas Hanar Eved Ladoni, he is willing to take the place of Binyamin. We

call that Arvus. The word Arvus, Kol Areivim Zu Lazu comes from the Shoresh of Areiv, a guarantor. Someone who guarantees a loan. Arvus is connected to the word Iruv or mixture, to mix. We find in Shas most prominently in Maseches Kiddushin 7a a concept of Din Areiv. An Areiv is somebody who is considered combined with another person in a sense. In the Gemara's case a woman says give money to Ploni (my friend) and it will be as if I accepted it and I will be married to you. That is called Din Areiv. There is an Iruv. This woman and the one she wants to give the gift to are combined as if they were one person. When the other person took the money it is as if she took the money, that is the Din Areiv and she can get married in that manner.

Yehuda and Binyamin are like one Guf. When someone guarantees someone else and follows through on it, that creates an Iruv, a combination, a connection. So Yehuda and Binyamin in many aspects were considered two Shevatim, but really one Sheivet.

This concept is found in the Sefer Tomer Devora which is a Sefer from the Ramak, Rav Moshe Cordeviro one of the great Baalei Machshava of the Mekubalim in Tzefas. He talks about a Midah called She'aris Nachalaso in the first Perek. That HKB"H has a Midah of considering himself Kavayochel like Guf Echad with Klal Yisrael, one body with Klal Yisrael. Klal Yisrael was supposed to emulate that and be Areivim Zu Lazu, be as if they are mixed as one. The most prominent Arvus was Yehuda and Binyamin who became one.

With this I would like to comment on a mystery. Klal Yisrael has a legend. It is a well-known legend taught to children, brought in books with no known Mekor. It is a legend that there were two brothers and the two brothers shared a field on a mountain in Yerushalayim. One brother had a family and the other did not. Since they were Shutfim they divided their wheat. In the middle of the night one brother with the family said to himself you know my brother has nothing, he has no family at least let him have some more money to give him some comfort. In the middle of the night he would go bring sheaves of wheat to his brother's side of the field and give it to him. The other brother who had no family said to himself I don't need money as much as my brother, he has to support a family. In middle of the night he would carry wheat to his brother and deposit it by him. This is what each one did. One night they met and they embraced each other and in Shamayim they said on this spot the Bais Hamikdash should be built. The legend has no known Mekor at least to my knowledge, however, based on what we are saying today it does have some sort of Mekor. It is the Arvus of Yehuda and Binyamin. The combination, the connection of Yehuda and Binyamin that exists at that boundary line where the Bais Hamikdash stands and it is Yehuda's dedication to his brother which is the love that is perhaps the source of this legend and Mekor for the Makom Hamikdash. That is the beginning of the Parsha.

From: **Rabbi Dr. Nisson E. Shulman**

May 20, 2001

[YEHUDA AND YOSEPH]

[SUMMARY OF SHIUR BY RAV YOSEPH DOV HALEVI
SOLOVEITCHIK ZT"L]

Dedicated to the memory of "The Rav",

Rav Yoseph Dov Halevi Soloveitchik zt"l

For a number of years Rabbi Soloveitchik would teach Jewish Philosophy or Hashkafah during the summer months. This was not a course in philosophy per se. It was a philosophical analysis of concepts or mitzvot of Judaism. Thus one summer was devoted to the philosophy of prayer. Another to the philosophy of the mitzvah of tzedakah. The closest he came to actual philosophy was in the title of one year's summer lectures on "Philosophical Symbolism in the Story of the Patriarchs". Even then, it was halachic, aggadic, musar symbolism, rather than philosophical, even though he was quite capable, were he to have desired, to clothe his thoughts in the mantle of philosophical language. But he did not choose to do so in these particular courses. And what emerged were beautiful and profound insights

deep in the hidden meanings of halakhah, of history and of the Torah narrative.

On occasion, some of the thoughts of those classes would re-emerge in his halakhah or agaddah shiurim. One of these was given in Moriah Synagogue, approximately 1950. I rely only on my notes made during the summer course and during the shiur, and others who were there might remember what I have omitted.

KEDUSHA UMALCHUT

Bas hayta leAvraham, u"Bakol" shema, says the Midrash. The Midrash means that the community of Israel is composed of all attributes, all powers, or midot, such as hod, netzach, rahamim, din. No attribute can stand by itself. There must be a blending of all these powers, and the blend yields tiferet, glory; and when that comes about, it is called, "bakol". That is why the community of Israel is called "kallah".

The heritage of Abraham came through individuals, Isaac and Jacob. Only in the house of Jacob was there a community formed of twelve unique individuals, and each of them represented a different and separate power of the attributes, Reuben pahaz kamayim, Yehudah, gur aryeh. The bakol of Avraham was divided into twelve parts, or powers, and had to come together again. Thus the narrative teaches how the Hashgachah guided all their steps to bring a great schism to the fore, so that each of the two great protagonists should develop his own particular character and power, until ultimately they would come together again fully formed as the Knesset Yisrael. And that is why the sale of Joseph had to happen.

Ultimately, all the powers were crystallized into two main streams of conflict, Judah and Joseph, Joseph and Benjamin in this regard are interchangeable, and in these two tribes we see especially the development of conflict and the resolution of that conflict which would shape the destiny of Israel. And the symbol of all this is that the Chamber of Hewn Stones were set the Sanhedrin is in the portion of Judah, while the alter and Holy of Holies is in the portion of Benjamin.

Judah on the one hand, and the two brothers Joseph and Benjamin on the other, stand for the two mothers, Leah and Rachel. Each symbolizes a certain characteristic bequeathed to their representative child.

The Almighty decreed that Jacob should take two wives even though Isaac and Abraham each took one. Why? And why did the Hashgachah decree the very strange manner in which these two wives were taken: by trickery? Furthermore, Vatzete Dina bat Leah. It does not say bat Yaakov. Rashi points out that al shem yetzieata niret bat Leah, sheaf hi yatzanit hayta, sheneemar (Bereshit Rabbah) vatzete Leah likrato. Vealeha nimshelu mashaal, keima, kebata (Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin, 2:6). Of course the Torah did not mean to suggest that Leah acted improperly when saying to Jacob "I have hired you for the mandrakes of my son", for that night Yesaschar was conceived. But rather it suggests that Leah had a strong and steadfast character. Sometimes hutzpah; the attribute of umilu et haaretz vekivshuha. Leah's chief characteristics were steadfastness and initiative. Vatomer lah, hameat kachtech et ishi, ulekachtech gam et dudaey beni? (Bereshit 30:39).

The Midrash points out Veeynei Leah rakot; yafot hayu, as Unkelos translated yain hayu. Particularly because they were red and spoiled they were beautiful, for she spoiled them with weeping lest she be given to Esav for whom she heard she had been destined. She fought against that lot and won. So Leah symbolized the attribute of gevurah.

Rachel had a different character altogether. She sacrificed herself for her sister, giving over the signs of identification Jacob needed to identify his bride as the right one. She was gentle as a lamb, and so her name connotes. She loved Jacob with all her heart and yet sacrificed herself for her sister. She symbolized Kach et mincha, et yehidcha, asher ahavta, et Yitzchok, velech lecha el eretz Hamoriya, vahaalehu sham ola al achad heharim asher omar elecha (Bereshit 22:2). And the greatest sacrifice of all came with her early death. Why? Because her death was a consequence of her effort to empty her father's house of its idols. Nor could she be buried with Jacob in the grave of the forefathers, but on the road to Efrat, in the region of Bet Lechem, all alone. While Leah was buried with Jacob.

Joseph had the character of Rachel, Judah had the character of Leah.

This does not mean that Joseph was reconciled to his role. He had two dreams. The first was the produce of the brothers - the results of their labour - bowing down to his produce, the sheaves bowing down to sheaves. The connotation is that he will be all-powerful in wealth and blessing of plenty. There is no indication in this dream of bowing down to Joseph himself, but only to his sheaves. But in the second dream the sun and moon and eleven stars of heaven are bowing to Joseph himself! Joseph was not satisfied with wealth, he wanted Jacob to bequeath to him the kingdom malchut! For this it would be necessary for Jacob himself to bow to him, and Jacob would never do so willingly, so Joseph in Egypt thought if Benjamin were detained, the father would be forced to descend, and without knowing who he was bow to him. That would be the symbol of malchut, for only to the king would Jacob bow. That is the meaning of Vayizkor Yoseph et hahalomot asher chalam lahem (Bereshit 42:9). He remembered both dreams, and that one came true; and now was the time for the second one. That is why he insisted that Benjamin be brought down to him.

It was not to be. The Hashgachah did not permit Joseph to be the king. So immediately after he was sold, events began to prepare Judah for that role.

Vayehi baet havi vayered Yehuda meieit echav ... Vayaker Yehuda vayomar, tzadka mimeni (Bereshit 38:1-30).

And ultimately the great struggle between Judah and Joseph climaxed in their confrontation: Vayigash elav Yehuda vayomer, bi adoni, yedaber na avdecha davar beazney adoni. Says the Midrash Rabbah, Hahu diktiv, hine hamelachim moadu, avdu yachdav. Hine hamelachim ze Yehuda veYoseph. Avdu yachdav, ze nitmale hema al ze veze nitmale hama al ze (Bereshit 44:18).

On the result of this struggle depends the future of the Jewish people. Joseph could not contain himself. He lost the battle because he allowed his emotions to overcome him, and confessed who he was before his plan could be carried out. Behold, I was sent to be the provider, to give you life, to be the ruler in all of Egypt, all this, but not the kingdom of the people of Israel, that is denied me, for the second dream will now never come true and it doesn't.

So when Jacob descends to Egypt he refuses even to kiss Joseph, but recites Kriat Shema instead, lest by means of a kiss there be somehow an attribution of malchut. And in the blessing at the end of his life he gave the malchut to Yehuda, Yehuda ata yoducha acheycha; yadcha beoref oyevecha; gur arye Yehuda, miteret beni alita, kara ravatz kearye, ulekavi mi yekimenu. Lo yasur shevet miYehuda umehokek miben raklav, at ki yavo shilo velo yikhat amim (49 8-12).

Joseph on the other hand, receives Birchot shamayim meal, birchot tehom rovetzet tachat. (49:12); Everything in the world, but not malchut.

Yoseph, like Rachel, does not change. He is the same Yoseph in his father's house as in Egypt. Like Rachel who gave the signs to her sister, Joseph yielded the kingdom to Judah. Joseph was like Rachel, symbolic of hesed. He therefore merited kedushah, and was called Yoseph Hatzadik, characterized as nezir echav. That is not the stuff malchut is made of, for malchut is made of gevurah. So Yoseph and Yehudah comprise Kedushah Umalchus, and that is the essence of Knesset Yisrael, the Bakol of Abraham. Ki lecha naeh Hashem Eloke avotenu, shir ushevacha, halel vezimra, oz umemshala, netzach ugevura, tehila veteret... Vekulam nichlalim be"Kedusha uMalchut".

Why did Judah merit Malchut? Because like Leah his mother, he has a power that could change the world, and he used that power to change himself.

Rambam in Shemone Perakim talks about two kinds of human greatness: one is the hasid hameuleh, the other is the gibor umoshel benefsho. The first yearns to do good and pursues it as part of his very nature. The second is not righteous by nature, and in fact can do evil things, but rises above them and harnesses his character and his soul's power and becomes a righteous person. Yoseph was the former, Yehudah the latter.

From Vayeshev till after Vayehi Yoseph's character does not change, except perhaps at the very beginning, until some childish characteristics are lost. Even those was for the sake of seeking good and doing good, however mistaken he was to tell his father about the brothers - Vayave Yoseph et dibatam ra el avihem. He was always the Nazir, and perhaps that is also part of why the brothers could not stand him. Veyoseph haya beMitzrayim. Says Rashi, Lehodiah shevacho shel Yoseph; hu Yoseph haroeh et tzon aviv, hu Yoseph hamoshel bechal eretz Mitzrayim. His righteousness is seen in that the father sends him to the brothers. He knows they hate him, yet he goes anyway, because of obedience. When a man finds him in the desert and warns him that "They have departed from brotherhood, beware", he goes to them anyway. That is the type of the personality born to sanctity, and which is steady throughout life without change. Jacob's blessing and Moshe's is identical in substance for Joseph alone. Nothing changes.

But with Judah everything changes. He recreates his character and rises from the depths. Judah is the symbol of Teshuvah. 1. Ma betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo (Bereshit 37:26). He knows it is wrong, but compromises with the evil. "At least, only sell him". Rav Meir omer, kol hamevarech et Yehuda harey ze menaetz (meharef umegadef) sheneemar botzea berech nietz Hashem (Sanhedrin 6a). 2. His episode with Tamar, tzadka mimeni. 3. And in Egypt the Yehudah of "Let us sell him to the Ishmaelites" is gone, and instead we have the Yehudah of Vayigash elav.

Gur Aryeh Yehudah, because he moulded himself miteref beni alita, you raised yourself from the sale of Joseph symbolized by tarof toraf Yoseph, to become a different person.

Joseph did not receive malchus because he was nezir echav. The king cannot be divorced from reality and from his people. He cannot be a nazir. A king cannot be a hasid. He who has not passed through personal purification in the crucible of changing one's very soul, cannot lead the people. Only such as Yehudah, who could understand failings and failures, and could recognize how it is possible to rise from them and become a new person, could be the king.

In all of our history we find these two archetypal personalities. It is illustrated by the tradition that Mashiach ben Yoseph will pave the way for Mashiach ben David.

Many leaders in every generation wore the crown of nezirut they inherited from Joseph. They were formed from the womb for righteousness. They are the Kedoshim, and their destiny was similar to that of Joseph. Other leaders came from Judah, the symbol of gevurah. Like him, they conquered their inclinations and shaped their personalities. They had to struggle mightily to achieve their righteousness. And their lives were full of contradictions.

The Rov's maternal grandfather, Rav Elya Pruzener, was of Rachel and Joseph's type. From childhood he walked the golden road. His life was created from and completely enveloped by chesed.

The Rov's paternal grandfather, Rav Chaim Brisker, was full of contradictions. There was no order in his life except in learning where there was strict order. He not only revolutionized halachah and the method of learning, but he revolutionized himself as well.

The Mesorah can be divided into two parts; that which you see by example and that which you learn intellectually. The former is symbolized by the Joseph character. The great Hasidim of our history in every generation, did not gather many students. They did not teach publicly. Like Joseph the nazir of his brothers, separated from them, they too desired aloneness. The Hasid hides himself. His sanctity is separated from everyone. Joseph, on the outside, appeared like the mighty ruler of all Egypt, nevertheless, vayavo hachadra vaveyk sham (43:30). To find out his true character, one must spy on him, go step by step after him, as Rabbi Akiva. But one who did approach near a Yoseph, found themselves inexorably drawn to them, Bein porat Yoseph, bein porat aley ayin, benot tzaada, aley shur (49:22). Not every woman saw Joseph, but those who did could never forget him.

The second stream of mesorah is characterized by Yehudah. Yehudah's

characteristics are public, the teaching of Torah in the open, Berov am hadrat melech. They seek to communicate themselves to everyone. Yehudah cannot be alone. They wish for Yoseph's second dream, Vehine hashemesh vehayareach veachad asar kochavim mishtachavim lo. This is the bowing of a student to the master. And that is why Sanhedrin behelko shel Yehuda, Kodesh Kodoshim behelko shel Binyamin.

Which quality is more important for the future of our people? This is not answered.

The Talmud relates: Rabi Elazar ben Shamua mikatnuto ad sof yamav lo shama adam shehotzi tiftut mipiv velo hitkotetu alav chaverav. Haya ani veyoshev betaanit shemonim shana. Veoto yom shemet, Yom Hakippurim hata. Amru lo talmidav: Ma ata roeh? Amar lahem, roeh ani at rabi Yehuda ben Baba umitato, umitat rabbi Akiva semucha etzlo.

Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua was the man of kedusha vahasidus. Rabbi Yehudah ben Baba was like him, a hasid hameule. Rabbi Akiva was a man of malchut. He was a gibor hamoshel benafsho. The whole story of his life teaches this, his beginning to learn at 40 years, before which he would say, "Show me a Talmid Chacham and I will split his head open". His departure from home, his overhearing his wife saying if he stayed another twelve years I would be happy and his turning around without a word, his ascent to greatness, his acknowledgement, like Yehudah said, tzadka mimeni. he said, shli veshelachem shela. He was the son of proselytes, and he conquered all, especially himself. And his teaching was for everyone, 24,000 students, and no surprise that he sought a Jewish meluchah and led the revolt. Both beds were together: malchut with kedusha. Both are necessary for our people. The ancient debate continues through the present, and is the heart of Judaism. Who decides which is the more weighty and important? There is no answer. Both are important. Both are crucial for the working out of our people's destiny.

from: Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>

to: Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com>

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subject: **Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum** - Parshas Vayigash

And now: it was not you who sent me here, but G-d. (45:8)

Veritably, on the surface, to the unlearned reader, it appears that the brothers catalyzed Yosef's descent into Egypt. Yosef underscores the fallacy of such a viewpoint. Hashem pulls the strings; He manipulates events from behind the scene. We think that we are in charge, but we must be aware that we are not. We might make decisions, but Hashem's Will stands and is always executed. Hashem wanted the Jewish People to go down to Egypt as part of His Divine Plan. Thus, he manipulated events in such a manner that Yosef was the first to go down, with Yaakov Avinu and the rest of the family to follow. When a person has the good fortune to look back, to employ hindsight as a perspective on how to discern events, he is granted an enviable opportunity on seeing the Yad Hashem, Hand of G-d, at work, guiding the events around him toward a specific goal. We then realize that man is unable to lift up his finger without it having been originally decreed by Hashem. This is neither the place nor the forum for entering into a deep philosophical discussion concerning cause and effect. Let it suffice to say that Hashem is in control. If we would only open our eyes, we would see that man is nothing more than a puppet with the strings being controlled by the Master.

It was the summer of 2001, and a Jewish businessman from America went to Eretz Yisrael for a number of business meetings. Prior to starting the workday, he decided to stop at a nearby restaurant on King George Street to have brunch. He was annoyed to see that there was a fairly sizable line of customers waiting in line ahead of him. As he waited, he constantly kept glancing at his watch, while making little noises with his mouth expressing his impatience. A number of times he began to leave his place in line, only to return immediately, in the hope that it would now move faster.

Suddenly, the man in front of him turned around and said, "You seem to be in a hurry. I am not. Why not switch places with me? It does not bother me to wait another five minutes." The man was at first surprised that someone would give up his place in line, but then he figured, who was he to complain? He readily and thankfully accepted his place in line. As soon as he received his breakfast, he sat down to eat quickly - and left the restaurant.

The businessperson walked about 200 feet, when he heard a loud bang. He turned around to see the Sbarro Restaurant, where he had moments earlier been having breakfast, engulfed in flames. This was the infamous Sbarro Restaurant terrorist

bombing that snuffed out the lives of fifteen Jewish souls and left hundreds of others injured, some seriously. It took a few moments for the enormity of the tragedy to settle into his mind, and, even more so, that the Jew who had changed places with him was probably a victim - in his place! Yes, he should have been having a meal at that moment. By trading places with him, the kind man possibly paid the ultimate price. He immediately went searching through the rubble, following the first responders as they searched for victims. It took the American businessman two days of searching, visiting all the hospitals until he finally found the kind man. He lay in a hospital bed seriously injured, accompanied by his adult son. "Your father saved my life!" he began. He followed up with the son, relating to him the entire story about how his father had changed places with him. As tears rolled down his face, the American businessman took out his business card and said, "I am a successful businessman in America. My offices are located on the 101st floor of the Twin Towers. I am returning home; this is my number. If there is anything I can do whatsoever to help your family, please let me know. Trust me. You gave me my life. I would like to help you." Three weeks later, the American businessman received a call from the man's son. Apparently, his father's injuries required surgery that was beyond what could be provided for him in Eretz Yisrael. He required a specific surgery which was performed proficiently in Boston. Could their newly-acquired American friend help? Within a few hours it was all arranged - from start to finish. Surgery was scheduled for mid-September, and he would meet them in Kennedy Airport when they landed and be with them from there throughout the process. On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, the American benefactor left his office on the 101st floor of the Twin Towers at 8:00A.M. At 8:31, the first plane that took down the Twin Towers struck the 93rd floor. The Yerushalmi Jew had twice been the catalyst for saving the American businessman's life. We are all puppets on the world stage with roles in the play called "life." Hashem pulls the strings. How great! My son Yosef still lives!

I shall go and see him before I die. (45:28)

True greatness is measured by how much one empathizes with the pain and joy of his fellow. At its simplest, empathy is the awareness of the thoughts and emotions of others, it is the ability to see the world through the eyes of others. It is the link between ourselves and others, because it is how we as individuals understand what others are feeling, as if we are feeling it ourselves. In cognitive empathy, one understands the thoughts and emotions of others in a very rational, rather than emotional, sense. We try to get into their minds, to attempt to understand why they feel the way they do. Then we can become emotionally attached to the point that we feel their pain. We must then act on these feelings to alleviate the pain that our fellow man is experiencing. We must learn to see the world through the eyes of our fellow man who is not as fortunate as we are. Sometimes it is necessary to "walk a mile in someone else's shoes in order to understand them." It is so easy to criticize when one does not know what the subject of his critique is experiencing. When a Rav issues a psak, renders a halachic decision, he must take into consideration the emotions of the people who stand before him. This does not mean that halachah is altered due to emotion. It is just that how one presents the halachah can make a difference. Furthermore, in the event that the halachah is not clear, it is then based upon the common sense and discretion of the Rav. It is at such a juncture that empathy plays a powerful role. The following story emphasizes this truth.

The joy evinced by Yaakov Avinu, upon hearing the news that Yosef was alive, was palpable. On the other hand, the joy is a strong indicator of the enormous pain that our Patriarch must have experienced when he was informed of the loss of his dear son. The pain suffered by a parent, chas v'shalom, Heaven forbid, over the loss of a child, is immeasurable. Therefore, one who has Baruch Hashem not suffered such a loss might find it difficult to understand what such a parent feels. Each and every time that a person or situation alludes in some way to their loss, it opens up the floodgates of pain and emotion, releasing a fresh torrent of tears and misery. Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita, related the following story to his revered brother-in-law, Horav Chaim Kanievsky, Shlita. A couple who had just been blessed with their first son came before Horav Shlomo Zalmen Auerbach, zl, with a shailah, question, concerning what they should name their son. The husband had just recently lost his father, so it was natural that he would want to name his son after his father. His wife refused to give that name because, a

short time earlier in their apartment building, a young child with that name had died an untimely death. The mother feared that it was a bad sign to give her son that name. The husband argued that Kibbud Av, honoring the memory of his late father, was more important than her concern about a negative omen. She responded that under no circumstances would she put her son's life in "danger" by giving him that name.

Rav Shlomo Zalmen gave the matter some thought, then rendered his decision in favor of the mother - but for another reason. He said, "The baby should not be named after his paternal grandfather, but not because of the mother's fears concerning a bad sign. It is just that a few years down the road, when her son will go out to play, and his mother will call out from the window, 'Yankele,' and her neighbor (who lost a child by the same name) will hear the name of her late child called out; she will be hurt. One cannot give such a name that quite possibly will cause pain to another Jew." When Rav Chaim Kanievsky heard this psak, tears welled up in his eyes. This is what is meant by sensitivity in rendering a halachic decision. To most people, the halachic response to the dispute between husband and wife was "black and white"; to Rav Shlomo Zalmen, however, it was not.

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 reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

VAYIGASH

As the dramatic story of Joseph and his brothers comes to its climax in this week's Torah reading, one is struck by the comparison between Judah and Joseph, the main antagonists in this final act of the biblical narrative. Joseph is the righteous one, the person who lives by dreams, the one who resists temptation and pays a dear price for so doing. The brothers did him wrong, very wrong. Even though there are many justifications for their behavior towards Joseph, the simple narrative of the story as portrayed for us in the Bible - and their own admission that they were cruel towards their brother - places them in an awkwardly guilty situation. And Judah is the brother that advises selling Joseph as a slave. As such, he appears to have a special burden upon him in the whole story of the disunity in the family of Jacob. And his behavior with Tamar raises questions of morality and probity. So, from the reading of this narrative alone, one could easily come to the conclusion that the future of the Jewish people lies with Joseph and not with Judah, that the greatness of the piety of Joseph should certainly override the leadership qualities and strength of Judah. Yet we find from the blessings of Jacob onwards that Judah is the leader of the Jewish people through the dynasty of King David. The Jewish people are called by his name and he and his descendants are the catalyst of survival, which has characterized Jewish life throughout the ages. Why is this so? The Talmud indicates to us that leadership does not necessarily belong to those whose closets are bare of skeletons. Somehow, in order to be a truly successful leader one must first have tasted failings and defeat, physically and even spiritually. The perfect person, the most righteous of people, is not necessarily the right choice for leadership. Because the nation and the people are never perfect, therefore the leader must clearly understand what the failings and shortcomings are, and work one's leadership through that framework of imperfection. This does not mean that we should overlook shortcomings and previous sins of those who aspire to leadership currently. But it does mean that past errors are not necessarily fatal to the cause of current leadership and even national greatness. Judah's greatness lies in his willingness to assume the burden of his actions and words and to attempt to rectify past wrongdoings. We see that in his reaction to the judgment of Tamar, where he vindicates her at his own expense and shame. We see that in his defense of Benjamin and his willingness to allow himself to become a slave in order to save his brother. He had vouched for him and personally guaranteed to return him to his father. Leadership is taking responsibility and owning up to commitments and situations that are difficult and taxing but inescapable. That becomes the

true test of leadership and that is what defines Judah as the leader of the brothers and eventually the leader of Israel through all of its generations. Shabbat shalom Rabbi Berel Wein

<https://ots.org.il/tag/vayigash/>

Parshat Vayigash (Genesis 44:18-47:27) Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel — “And Joseph fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on [Joseph’s] neck.” [Gen. 45:14] The poignant moment when these two brothers are reunited after a separation of twenty-two years is one of the most tender scenes in the Torah. After a long chronicle of difficult sibling relationships – Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Joseph and his brothers – we finally come across two siblings who truly love each other. What made these two bond together so deeply?

Apparently, since Joseph was isolated by the children of Jacob’s other wives, it was logical that he would seek companionship from the only other sibling born of his own mother, Rachel. After Rachel died in childbirth, we can feel assured that Joseph drew Benjamin close to him, protected him, and shared with him the precious memories of the mother Benjamin never knew. Indeed, their exclusive relationship must have made their eventual separation even more painful and traumatic. But I am still left wondering: Where is the joy, the elation, the celebration? Why does the Torah only record the weeping of the brothers at this dramatic moment of their reunion? Rashi cites and explains a midrashic interpretation suggesting that these tears relate to the future destruction of the two Temples allotted to the portion of Benjamin, and to the destruction of the sanctuary in Shilo allotted to the portion of Joseph. Rashi stresses that Joseph’s tears are for Benjamin’s eventual loss, and Benjamin’s tears are for Joseph’s eventual loss. But why does Rashi assume that the tears are tears of pain for future tragic events, rather than tears of joy over their reunion in the here and now? And why does each brother weep for the loss of the other, rather than for his own? I believe the answer lies in what Rashi wants us to learn from this meeting in future generations, in accord with the rabbinic principle that “the events of the fathers foreshadow the history of the children.” Our Sages rightly believed that all tragedies that befall the Jewish people have their source in the sale of Joseph as a slave. This sin, the foundation of causeless hatred between Jews, has plagued our people throughout our history. The Talmud [Gittin 55b-56a], in isolating the cause of the destruction of the Second Temple, reports an almost mundane, personal event. A wealthy man had a party and wanted to invite his friend Kamtza. Inadvertently, his avowed enemy, Bar-Kamtza, was invited instead. Thrown out from the party and publicly shamed, Bar-Kamtza took revenge. He went to the Roman authorities and slandered the Jews in order to implicate them in crimes against the state. The rest is history. Josephus writes that even as the Romans were destroying the Temple, Jews were still fighting amongst themselves. To this very day, we find the Jewish people split in enemy camps politically and religiously, with one group cynically and sometimes even hatefully attacking the other. Indeed, during the Yom Kippur Musaf prayer, the author of the mournful Eileh Ezkera hymn of doxology, links the Temple’s destruction and the tragedy of Jewish exile with the sin of the brothers’ sale of Joseph. Now Rashi’s interpretation assumes profound significance. In the midst of brotherly hatred, the love between Joseph and Benjamin stands out as a shining example of the potential for unconditional love. Indeed, it foreshadows the eventual healing of the sibling hatred, amongst the Jews themselves, and how that hatred can be removed. Rashi links their tears during their meeting to the destruction of our Sanctuaries – the result of jealousy and enmity between Jew and Jew. And so they each weep for the future tragedies that will befall their descendants. However, although each brother will be blessed with a Sanctuary on his allotted land, the brothers weep not for themselves, but each for the other. Their love is truly “other”-directed, selfless and not at all self-serving. This act of selfless weeping and unconditional love becomes the only hope against the tragedies implicit in the sale of Joseph into slavery. The only thing that can repair that sin – and by implication the sins of all the causeless hatred between factions down the

long road of Jewish history – is nothing less than a love in which the other comes first, cause-less love, when one weeps for the other’s tragedy rather than for his own. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook, z”l, taught that since the Temples were destroyed because of causeless hatred, the Third Temple will only be rebuilt because of causeless love, exemplified by the tears of Joseph and Benjamin. Rashi is providing a prescient lesson for our fateful times. Shabbat Shalom

From: Mordechai Tzion toratravaviner@yahoo.com to: ravaviner@yahoo.com <http://www.ravaviner.com/> Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a

Rav Shlomo Aviner Davening on an Airplane

Q: Is it permissible to Daven with a Minyan on an airplane, or should each person Daven on their own in order not to disturb others? A: It is permissible to Daven with a Minyan on condition that one coordinates it with the head of the airplane crew (Many Poskim write that it is forbidden to Daven with a Minyan if it disturbs others. Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach [Halichot Shlomo p. 95. Shut She'eirrit Yosef of Ha-Rav Shlomo Wahrman 7:3], Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein [Shut Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 4:20] and Ha-Rav Ovadiah would Daven on his own and not together with a group so as not to disturb others, for fear of robbing another person's sleep. [Halachic Guide for the Passengers of El Al 9:1]. However, when Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg was asked about Davening with a Minyan on an airplane, he said one should, adding that he does it all the time. While strictly speaking it might be permitted to pray at your seat, Rav Scheinberg prefers that one pray with a Minyan, but quietly in a way that doesn't disturb others). Q: If I Daven in my seat, am I obligated to wear a Talit? It is difficult to wrap it. A: Yes, you are obligated to wear it. Be careful, however, not to smack other passengers with your Tzitzit when putting it on. Q: If I am Davening on my own, is it preferable to Daven Shemoneh Esrei while sitting or standing? A: Standing, under three conditions: 1. It does not ruin your concentration. 2. Your eyes are not facing something which is immodest. 3. The "Fasten Your Seat Belt" sign is not on. Q: If one is in the middle of the Shemoneh Esrei and the "Fasten Your Seat Belt" sign lights up what should one do? A: He should sit down and continue to Daven the Shemoneh Esrei in his seat. This is based on two reasons: 1. It is a case of a life-threatening situation. 2. Walking in the middle of the Shemoneh Esrei without speaking is not considered an interruption. For example, if one is Davening the Shemoneh Esrei and a child is bothering him and he cannot concentrate, he can move to another place. Or if he is Davening by heart on Rosh Chodesh and cannot remember "Ya'ale Ve-Yavo," he can go and get a Siddur. Speaking is forbidden, but there is no problem of moving if there is a need (see Mishneh Berurah 104:2. Piskei Teshuvot ibid. Shut Be'er Moshe 3:13. Ha-Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein answers similarly since if one does not obey, there is a fear of perform a Mitzvah through a transgression and as a result, one does not fulfill his obligation. Furthermore, it causes contempt for the Torah as well as a desecration of Hashem's name. The booklet of El Al regarding Halachot of air travel)

From: **Rabbi Yochanan Zweig** <genesis@torah.org> to: rabbizweig@torah.org subject: Rabbi Zweig

Rabbi zweig Insights Parshas Yayigash Tevet 5777 Yeshiva Beis Moshe Chaim/Talmudic University Based on the Torah of our Rosh HaYeshiva HaRav Yochanan Zweig

This week's Insights is dedicated in loving memory of Rav Shmuel Ben Rav Usher Zelig HaLevi z"l, father of Kalman Finkel. "May his Neshama have an Aliya!"

True or False?

Yosef could not endure the presence of all those that stood before him and he commanded; "Remove everyone from before me!" Therefore there was no one with him when Yosef revealed himself to his brothers (45:1).

In this week's parsha, the Torah describes the climactic confrontation between Yosef and his brother Yehuda. This dramatic scene is the conclusion of a three parsha story line; one that leads to the somewhat uneasy reunion of Yosef and his brothers, and later, an emotional reunion with his father who thought him dead for twenty-two years.

Rashi (ad loc) explains that Yosef could not bear the thought of Egyptians present when he revealed himself to his brothers because they would be embarrassed by their shame.

Maharal, in the Gur Aryeh (ad loc), is bothered by Rashi's assumption that Yosef was concerned about their embarrassment once he revealed himself to them. The Torah never even introduced the concept of Yosef revealing himself! If Rashi is right, the Torah should first discuss that Yosef intended to reveal himself and was therefore concerned for their shame and embarrassment in front of the Egyptians.

Remarkably, Maharal seems to conclude that Rashi is wrong. Instead, Maharal suggests an alternative reason for their embarrassment, and why Yosef asked all the Egyptians to leave. Looking back on last week's parsha, we see that Binyomin was accused of stealing Yosef's "magic" goblet. Maharal therefore concludes that their embarrassment was rooted in the accusation that they were common thieves. It is for this reason, he explains, they were embarrassed, and therefore Yosef ordered all the Egyptians out of the room.

Still, if possible, it is important to try to understand Rashi's perspective and why he didn't agree with Maharal's conclusion.

When it comes to gossip, stories generally fall into two categories: 1) Stories that are essentially true, if perhaps somewhat embellished and 2) stories that are patently false. In halacha, these two categories are known as 1) Loshon Hora and 2) Motzi Shem Ra.

One would naturally assume that it is more wicked to spread stories that are patently false than to simply relay stories that are essentially true. In fact, this is exactly what the Chofetz Chaim says; Motzi Shem Ra is worse than Loshon Hora (Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Loshon Hora 1:1).

Still, it is a little puzzling that in the Gemara, and countless Chazal, much more attention is given to the evils of Loshon Hora. The Gemara actually compares the sin of Loshon Hora to the three cardinal sins of murder, adultery, and idolatry. How are we to understand this dichotomy?

Perhaps the answer lies in looking at these sins from two different perspectives; that of the perpetrator and that of the victim. To completely make up a terrible story about someone (Motzi Shem Ra) requires real malevolence; one has to have a real character flaw to fabricate stories about someone in order to hurt them. From the perspective of the perpetrator, it is a critical failing of one's humanity and is positively evil; this requires a complete overhaul and rehabilitation of one's character.

On the other hand, when it comes to the emotional harm to the victim, Loshon Hora is a far greater sabotage. In other words, if one is accused of something false, one may feel outraged and wronged, but he can still hold his head up high because he knows the story isn't true. But if one's innermost vulnerabilities and failings are exposed to all, there is simply nowhere to hide; everyone knows exactly what you have done - there is no defense. This is quite devastating; in this sense, Loshon Hora is far more sinister and damaging.

Perhaps that is why Rashi didn't agree with Maharal's assessment of what happened with Yosef and his brothers. Being accused of stealing the goblet, while terribly unpleasant and outrageous, wouldn't lead to embarrassment. After all, they knew they didn't steal it. However, being faced with their treachery to Yosef when he revealed himself would lead to an incredible shame and they would be very embarrassed if anyone else were present. That's why Yosef asked the Egyptians to leave.

Daddy Duty

It wasn't you who sent me here, rather it was Hashem. He has made me as a father to Pharaoh... (45:8). Yosef, upon revealing his identity to his brothers, seeks to lessen the burden of their betrayal to him. He explains that his coming down to Egypt was really all part of Hashem's plan; and that he

had been uniquely placed in a high position in the Egyptian hierarchy. Yosef asks that they convey his stature in Egypt to his father, along with his request that Yaakov and his entire family come down to Egypt to join him. The initial way that Yaakov describes his position within the hierarchy is that of a father to Pharaoh.

Rashi (ad loc) gives us a remarkable definition of what it means to be a father: "a friend and patron." As Yosef expects his brothers to convey his position to Yaakov - without any elaboration on what he means by "as a father to Pharaoh" - Yosef is obviously using Yaakov's own definition of fatherhood.

Different cultures have very different definitions of what it means to be a proper father. As an example; the mid-20th century European definition of how fathers should relate to their children was very different than the American definition of fatherhood.

Rashi's description of what Yosef understands Yaakov's definition of fatherhood to be is very instructive. According to Rashi, the first role of a father is to treat his child as a colleague, not an indentured servant. Secondly, one has to recognize that a child cannot survive on his own, therefore one has to be a patron to his child - that is, provide unwavering support.

Perhaps most remarkably is that, in the entire Torah, the only father who has absolute success with children is Yaakov. The Torah makes a special note of the fact that all of his sons were equal and righteous (see 35:22 and Rashi ad loc). There is no other model in the Torah for successful fatherhood; not in Adam Harishon, Noach, Avraham, Yitzchak, Moshe, or Aharon. It is therefore crucial that we take special note of what Yaakov's definition of fatherhood was, and try to incorporate those principles into our own families.

Did You Know...

In the beginning of this week's parsha, Yehuda tries reasoning with Yosef in regards to the imprisonment of Binyamin for stealing the goblet. During this discussion Yehuda says, "You are the same as Pharaoh." The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 93:6) explains he meant that he was going to kill Yosef, after which he was going to kill Pharaoh.

Upon hearing this, Yosef signaled to Menashe, who stamped his foot against the floor and caused an earthquake throughout the palace. Yehuda then yelled with so much spiritual power that Dan's son Chushim (who was actually deaf) heard it from Canaan. Chushim then appeared next to Yehudah in an instant (using Kefitzas Haderech), and together they continued yelling. As a result, 300 Egyptian nobles collapsed with their faces contorted in terror - this expression stayed with them for the rest of their lives. Furthermore, two cities near there, Pison and Rameses, were also destroyed by their yelling.

Taking the hint, the other brothers began stomping the floor, breaking it into pieces and causing Yosef to fall off his throne. The force of their stomping was so strong that even Pharaoh, in his own palace, fell off of his throne.

Yosef saw that Yehuda was preparing for battle, and he became scared. However, when Yehudah tried to withdraw his sword he was unable to do so and said, "The man before me is obviously very righteous." At which point, Yehuda resumed reasoning with Yosef.

from: TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org> to: weeklydt@torahweb2.org
subject: TorahWeb www.torahweb.org/thisweek.html

TorahWeb.org Rabbi Benjamin Yudin If You Appreciate the Small You Will Get the Big

Now that Chanukah is behind us, I'd like to begin with a thought that continues its theme into Parshas Vayigash. The B'nei Yissaschar notes that the four letters on the dreidel do not only spell "neis gadol haya sham - a great miracle occurred there", it also spells Goshna - meaning to Goshen, the city that Yaakov chose for his family to live when they went into exile in Egypt. Yaakov wanted a strong cohesive Jewish community with its own resources and educational system, enabling survival for the Jew in exile. Thus, we read (Bereishis 46:28) "He sent Judah before him, to instruct ahead of him in Goshen." Rashi cites from the Medrash Tanchuma that Yehuda was to establish a house of study. Thus on Chanukah, when our Jewish identity was threatened by the Greeks, one of the messages of the dreidel was that especially in galus we must realize the importance of a Jewish community.

This Sunday is the fast of the tenth of Teves. We are taught (Melachim 2 25:1) that "in the ninth year of the reign of King Tzidkiyahu on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nevuchadnetzer, King of Bavel, put a siege around Jerusalem." This marked the beginning of the end of the first Beis Hamikdash. The Prophet Yechezkel (24:1) was in Bavel at the time, and without CNN or any way to be informed he told the people in Bavel "record this date, this exact day, for this very day the King of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem." The Avudraham (a Rishon), in his commentary on the siddur teaches that were the fast of Asara B'Teves to fall on a Shabbos, we would fast on Shabbos. The reason being since the Prophet used the words "b'etzem hayom hazeh - on this very day" regarding Asara B'Teves, just as is found regarding Yom Kippur (Vayikra 23:29), and if Yom Kippur comes out on Shabbos we fast, so too would be the din if Asara B'Teves came out on Shabbos. Our calendar has been established in such a way that while this fast can occur on a Friday and indeed we fast then, it cannot fall on a Shabbos. The Chasam Sofer z"tl, in his commentary on Selichos for Asara B'Teves, gives a fascinating reason we would fast on Shabbos. He quotes from the Sefer Karnayim (a Kabbalistic work) that on that tenth of Teves that the siege was laid, the Heavenly Court was convened and it was determined on that day that the Beis Hamikdash would be destroyed. Subsequently, every year on the tenth of Teves, the Heavenly High Court is called into session to determine if the Beis Hamikdash will be rebuilt this year. Thus we are not only fasting to relive a significant moment in our historical past, but a crisis that is facing us in the immediate present.

The Chasam Sofer continues that if one has a practice to fast on a *yahrzeit* and it falls on a Shabbos, one would not fast since that is *aveilus yeshana* - a day of mourning marking an event of the past. However, if one has a most disturbing dream on a Friday night he is permitted to fast on Shabbos as that is considered an *aveilus chadasha* - a day of mourning for the present. It is for this reason that were Asara B'Teves to fall on a Shabbos we would fast, since its consequences reflect a current crisis.

The Talmud (Megillah 29a) teaches that Yechezkel (11:16) charged the Jewish nation that even after the Beis Hamikdash is destroyed, "though I have removed them far away among the nations, and though I have scattered them among the lands, yet I have been for them a small sanctuary in the lands where they arrived." Even in the darkest exile the Jew can find the Shechinah - Divine Presence in their mikdash me'at, their synagogues and study halls. Moreover, the Bach in his commentary on Hilchos Chanukah writes that because the Jewish people at that time did not properly honor and revere the Beis Hamikdash they lost it. The upshot and lesson is most charging, namely, for us to petition the return and rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash we must demonstrate our appreciation and respect for the mikdash me'at.

I truly believe that if we show how much we appreciate and revere our mikdash me'at then we can petition an upgrade. To say that one is not to talk during davening is but half a statement. The law states (Orach Chaim 151:1) that one is not to speak "devarim beteilim - small talk" in shul, even when davening is over. If one is interested in buying his neighbor's car he should arrange, "I'll meet you in shul for mincha and ma'ariv", meaning in the lobby, a meeting room, but not in the sanctuary, even if it is not during davening. Some Rabbanim over the years were reluctant or refused to perform a marriage ceremony in the shul sanctuary. In addition, if one has to enter the shul to either call someone out or deliver a message, unless it is a medical emergency, they should first sit down, recite either a verse or halachic teaching and only then deliver the message. In his introduction to his sefer Chofetz Chaim, he cites the Yereyim and other Rishonim that the Biblical mitzvah of morah hamikdash (Vayikra 26:2) applies today to our mikdash me'at.

I strongly recommend that just as many have the practice of knocking on the door of their home before entering, allowing them not to startle the ones inside, but more importantly to pause and reflect upon the privilege of entering one's home, and not bringing any negativity of the day into the home. Similarly, before one enters the sanctuary they should pause and say

ma tovu, how privileged I am to enter your sanctuary. Copyright © 2017 by TorahWeb.org

From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand <ryfrand@torah.org> reply-to: do-not-reply@torah.org to: ravfrand@torah.org date: Thu, Jan 5, 2017 at 6:09 PM subject: Rav Frand - A Guarantee To Minimize Fights / The Gates Of Tears **Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Vayigash A Guarantee To Minimize Fights / The Gates Of Tears A Refreshing Attitude Guaranteed To Minimize Fights**

After Yosef made the dramatic admission to his brothers, telling them who he was, he told them "And now, be not distressed, do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here, for it was as a supporter of life that G-d sent me ahead of you." [Bereshis 45:5]. Yosef tried to put them at ease and convince them that he did not harbor resentment against them, by assuring them that what happened to him was all part of Hashem's Grand Plan. If we were to put ourselves in Yosef's position, we might not have been so generous. Yosef had suffered horribly because of what his brothers did to him. When we read the story in the Torah between Parshas VaYeshev and Parshas Vayigash, it transpires in a mere three weeks' time. Yosef is in the pit; he is out of the pit; he is in the dungeon, he is out of the dungeon, and then he is viceroy in Egypt. It did not go so quickly for Yosef. He suffered in prison for 12 years. This was not a modern prison as we think of today - with air conditioning and cable television. This was a dungeon and he suffered mightily.

We might expect that when Yosef makes this emotional revelation and tells his brothers "I am Yosef" that he would sit there, wait, and say "Okay. Now let me hear your profuse apology." "I want you to get down on your knees and beg for forgiveness." Yet Yosef does not do this. Yosef takes a very gracious approach to them and tells them not to be upset. "Everything came out for the best. G-d sent me here to provide food for you." How does a person have the capacity to do that? After all, Yosef is human. He is entitled to human feelings and emotions. It is perfectly understandable for a normal human being to maintain a legitimate grudge in such a situation. Not only does Yosef not bear a grudge, but also he is so gracious about it. The answer is that Yosef is teaching us a secret about how we need to deal with people who may have harmed us in the course of our lives. If a person has a sincere and profound belief in Hasgocha Pratis [Personal Divine Providence] and believes that the Ribono shel Olam rules the world then there is really no reason to be angry with a person who may have done you harm.

Those are precisely Yosef's words. I do not have a complaint (*tayna*) against you, because this was obviously the Almighty's plan: "...for it was as a supporter of life that G-d sent me ahead of you" [Bereshis 45:5]. Had this not all have happened, the world would have starved. You would have starved and I would have starved.

"I look at all of this", Yosef implied, "as if we are all puppets in a Grand Plan in which the Master of the Universe is the puppeteer and He is literally pulling the strings". With such an outlook, a wronged individual can sincerely say to the one who harmed him "I have no complaint against you, because this was all Hasgocha Pratis."

The Baal HaTanya interprets the Rabbinic statement "Anyone who gets angry is as if he worshipped idols" as follows: We get angry because we think things are not going our way. If a person had a true belief in Hashgocha Pratis, he would realize that when things do not go our way, it is because the Almighty wants it that way. When we are getting angry, we are denying that the Ribono shel Olam rules the world. This is exactly the philosophy of Avoda Zarah. Avoda Zarah is the belief that there are other forces in this world besides the Ribono shel Olam.

This is obviously much easier said than done. However, fundamentally, philosophically, that is what is happening. "Why are you getting angry? This is what the Ribono shel Olam wants!"

The Sefer HaChinuch expresses the same idea. If we would all take his words to heart it would do a lot to improve the complaints people have about

one another. In Mitzvah 241 – the prohibition against taking revenge (Lo Tikom) – the Chinuch writes:

“The reason for the mitzvah is that a person should know and take to heart that everything that happens to him whether good or bad comes upon him from HaShem, Blessed be He.”

“Therefore, when a person causes you pain or anguish – you should know in your soul that your own sins are the cause and HaShem, Blessed be He, decreed upon you that this should happen. You should not let your thoughts be misplaced to take revenge against the person who harmed you, because he is not the cause of your misfortune, rather sin is the cause. As Dovid, Peace be upon him, said: “Let him curse, for G-d told him to do so” [Shmuel II 16:11]. He attributed the matter to his own sin and not to Shimi ben Geyrah.”

The analogy we should think of is that if someone hits us with a stick, we do not get angry at the stick. We realize the stick is not the cause of our pain, but rather the one who swings the stick. So too – even the one who swings the stick is not the ultimate cause of our pain. Ultimately, Hashem punishes us for our sins. Hashem just uses certain individuals on earth as His “stick”. Certainly, the person who harms you is responsible for his actions and has his own Teshuvah to do. This is not a carte blanche to say, “I can get away with whatever I want – It’s G-d’s Will!” No. The “stick” too will have to face Divine Judgement for his deeds; but we should not direct the anger at him. It is a mistake to take out our anger upon that person.

This is what King Dovid realized – as the Chinuch cites above. “My problem is not with Shimi ben Geyrah; my problem is with myself.” Admittedly, this is not an easy level of self-control to achieve, but if we had that attitude, we would get into far fewer fights with people than we do.

Tears of Joy? The Gates Of Tears Have Not Been Closed

The pasuk says that when Yosef and Yaakov finally meet “...and he appeared to him, he fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively.” [Bereshis 46:29] The father and son embrace and cry. Rashi clarifies the meaning of the pasuk: Yosef fell on Yaakov’s neck and cried, but Yaakov did not fall on Yosef’s neck and cry, nor did he kiss him. Rashi quotes “Raboseinu” (the Rabbis) who teach that Yaakov did not do so because he was reciting Shema.

All the commentaries discuss this teaching. They ask – why was only Yaakov reading Shema at that moment and not Yosef? The premise of this question is that if it was the normal time for Krias Shma, they would both read it as soon as possible. There are different approaches to answer this question.

The Maharal in his Gur Aryeh writes that this has nothing to do with the twice daily mitzvah to read Krias Shma. We presume that Yaakov and Yosef each already fulfilled their daily obligation to recite Shma. However, the Maharal writes that Yaakov felt such overwhelming gratitude – that he now sees his beloved son – who he had given up for dead – alive and well as a righteous person. Yaakov had such pain and anxiety for so many years thinking that Yosef was dead. The joy that a person experiences when he transitions quickly from darkness to great light, from the depths of depression to the heights of ecstasy magnified his love for the Almighty who did him this great kindness. Yaakov thus seized the opportunity to reaccept the Kingship and Reverence for the Almighty with even greater depth and intensity than he had been able to every do in the past.

Yaakov channeled his great emotion of love and reverence for the Holy One, Blessed Be He, by instinctively reciting with great emotion the proclamation of “Hear of Israel Hashem Elokeinu is Hashem in Unity”. So explains the Maharal.

Rabbi Yehoshua Hartman, on the bottom of the printed Maharal, notes that Yaakov’s joy was greater than that of Yosef. The Simcha [joy] that comes after a great pain (tza’ar) is superior to a Simcha that does not come because of pain but comes “out of the blue”.

Therefore, Yaakov, who had suffered mightily and was now reunited with his son, experienced a greater happiness than Yosef experienced and it was therefore he who recited Shma and not his son.

Rav Hartman further quotes an observation of Rav Hutner in his introduction to the Pachad Yitzchak on Shavuot. This observation answers a question I have had for years and years. My question was “How do we explain the phenomenon ‘tears of joy’”? We cry when we are sad and we cry when we are happy. This ostensibly does not make any sense. Yet, we see that people do cry when they are happy. What is the meaning of this?

Rav Hutner offers an interesting idea that I believe is accurate. If I find out tomorrow that I won the lottery and now I am \$340,000,000 richer, I will be very happy but I do not think I will start crying out of joy. Why?

Why do we cry at our children’s weddings? Why do we cry at the birth of a child? Why do we cry at our son’s Bar Mitzvah? The answer is that we put so much effort into raising a child to bring him to Bar Mitzvah or to bring a daughter down to the Chuppah. Similarly, when someone has a baby, it is preceded by months of difficulty.

Rav Hutner says that tears of joy are always the product or the offspring of the difficulties that preceded them. The “Gates of Tears” that were shed during the period of difficulty leading to this happy stage “have not been closed”. They have not yet been turned off. Therefore, when in fact the simcha occurs, the tears continue. The Shaarei Dema’os of the pain and the travail are still active. However, Simcha that comes out of the blue is not the type of occasion that triggers tears.

Transcribed by David Twersky; mailto:Jerusalem DavidATwersky@gmail.com
Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org

from: Rabbi Chanan Morrison <chanan@ravkooktorah.org> to: rav-kook-list@googlegroups.com subject: [Rav Kook Torah]

Rav Kook Torah Anticipating Redemption

There are six measures, the Sages taught, by which we are judged:

“When brought for heavenly judgment, one is questioned: ‘Were your business dealings honest? Did you set fixed hours for Torah study? Did you engage in procreation? Did you anticipate redemption? Did you discuss wisdom? Did you discern new insights?’” (Shabbat 31a)

Most of these questions indeed are the cornerstones of a life well-lived. But the fourth one — “Did you anticipate redemption?” - why is that so important? Don’t we all hope for the best? What does this trait reveal about how one has lived one’s life?

Part of the Nation

It is important to understand that this anticipation is not simply hoping that our personal difficulties will quickly be resolved. Rather, it means that we should anticipate the redemption of Israel and all of humanity. As Rashi explains, one should look forward to the fulfillment of the visions of the prophets.

This demand is not a trivial one. As individuals we are easily caught up with our own personal problems and issues. In truth, we should feel that we are like a limb of a great organism. We should recognize that we are part of a nation, which, in turn, is part of all humanity. The betterment of each individual contributes to the life of the larger community, thus advancing the redemption of the nation and the universe.

The question “Tzapita leyeshu’ah?” is an important measure of one’s life. It is the yardstick that determines whether our lives have acquired a selfless, universal quality. By anticipating the redemption of the greater community, we demonstrate that we were able to raise ourselves above the narrow concerns of our private lives. We strive not just for personal ambitions, but also for the ultimate elevation of the nation and the entire world. We are part of the nation; its joys are our joys and its redemption is our redemption.

The Sentry

It is instructive to note that the heavenly tribunal does not ask about our hopes (tikvah) for redemption, but rather our anticipation (“tzipiyah”) of redemption. The word tzipiyah indicates a constant watchfulness, like a soldier posted to the lookout (tatzpit), serving at his observation post for days and even years. The sentry may not abandon his watch, even though he observes no changes.

We, too, are on the lookout. We should examine every incident that occurs in the world. With each new development, we should consider whether this is perhaps something that will advance the redemption of Israel and the entire world.

However, tzipiyah leyeshu’ah is not merely passive observation. Woe to the army whose sentries perceive a threat but fail to take action. The moment there is some development in the field, the soldiers must respond swiftly, to defend or retreat. Our tzipiyah also includes the readiness to act promptly. While these two traits — constant watchfulness and rapid response — may appear contradictory, they are both included in the obligation of tzipiyah leyeshu’ah. (*Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Olat Re’iyah vol. I, pp. 279-280; Ein Eyah vol. III on Shabbat 31a (2:164).*)

<https://www.ou.org/holidays/months/page/3/> *OU Asarah B'Tevet The Translation of the Seventy February 13, 2014*

At the beginning of the period of the Second Beit Hamikdash, the Second Temple, the people of Israel lived under Persian dominion. After the fall of the Persian Empire, Greece inherited her place, and Israel was subjugated to Greece. Ptolemy, one of the Greek Kings who succeeded Alexander (The 'Great') of Macedonia, wanted the Jewish Sages to translate the Torah into Greek.

The way he went about it, however, proved his motives were highly questionable. He did not assemble the Jewish scholars all in one place so that they might consult each other on the translation. In the Talmud it is related:

'King Ptolemy once gathered 72 Elders. He placed them in 72 chambers, each of them in a separate one, without revealing to them why they were summoned. He entered each one's room and said: 'Write for me the Torah of Moshe, your teacher.' God put it in the heart of each one to translate identically as all the others did' (Tractate Megillah 9).

Ptolemy found that each translation was exactly the same as the other. Even in places where the Sages intentionally altered the literal translation, the results were still identical; this constituted an "open miracle" and public sanctification of God's Name. If the interpretations of the Elders had varied widely, it would not blemish either the Torah or its interpreters in Jewish eyes, since we know that the Torah is open to different interpretations. To non-Jews, however, any dispute in interpreting the Torah would cast blemish on the Torah, and on the Torah Scholars who interpret it. G-d in His infinite mercy, allowed all 72 scholars to translate the Torah identically, thereby foiling (touche!) the evil plan of Ptolemy.

Examine additional aspects of this incident: A true miracle of translation.

A Troubled Day

The day on which the 72 Elders concluded their Greek translation of the Torah, the 8th of Tevet, was a day of sorrow for Israel, despite the clear hand of G-d in the events of the day. Although God's Providence on behalf of His people was made manifest that day, and though the matter evoked general wonder in non-Jewish eyes, the day was nevertheless a very tragic day. The sages call it as tragic a day for Israel as the day on which the Golden Calf was made. In Megilat Ta'anit, the Sages described the event as follows:

On the 8th of Tevet, the Torah was rendered into Greek during the days of King Ptolemy, and darkness descended upon the world for three days.' To what may the matter be likened? To a lion captured and imprisoned. Before his imprisonment, all feared him and fled from his presence. Then, all came to gaze at him and said, 'Where is this one's strength?'

Likewise the Torah, as long as the Torah was in Hebrew and was interpreted by the Sages, it evoked reverence, and many feared to cast blemish upon it. Even the non-Jews who desired to study the Torah, had no contact with the Torah until he or she had acquired a knowledge of the Holy tongue and the prescribed ways for understanding the Torah.

Once the Torah was imprisoned in the Greek translation, it was as if the Torah were divested of reverence. Whoever wished to, could now gaze at the Torah. Anyone who wanted to find fault with its logic, could now do so, based on the translation. The Sages, therefore, likened the event of this day, to the day on which the Golden Calf was made. For just as the Golden Calf had no reality, and yet its servants regarded it as having real substance, likewise the translation, devoid of the true substance of Torah, allowed non-Jews to imagine that they already knew the Torah. *Orthodox Union*

From: Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff <ymkaganoff@gmail.com> to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com from: Yeshiva.org.il <subscribe@yeshiva.org.il> reply-to: subscribe@yeshiva.org.il

How are we mechaneich? By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: Chinuch and Chanukah Dr. Edward Ucater, Ed. D, asks me: "I know that teaching requires a lot of dedication, but what does chinuch have to do with dedicating the mishkan, chanukas hamishkan?"

Question #2: One School Fits All? This question was submitted by Dr. Cyrus Kologist, Ph. D: "Why do so many schools require that you send them all of your sons or all of your daughters? Don't different siblings sometimes thrive better in dissimilar educational environments?"

Origins of chinuch Although the word chinuch is used in modern Hebrew to mean "education," this is not the word's correct translation. Teaching is limud or shinun -- limud is the general word for "teaching" and shinun, which does not have a simple literal translation into English, means teaching something until the student knows it thoroughly. However, the root of the word chinuch appears in Tanach most frequently referring to the dedication of the Mishkan or of its vessels. Since it is difficult to "teach" these appliances, the word chinuch is usually translated in those contexts as dedicated and dedication. This leads us directly to our first question above, that of Ed Ucater. "I know that teaching requires a lot of dedication, but what does chinuch have to do with dedicating the mishkan, chanukas hamishkan?" Rashi (Bereishis 14:14 and Devorim

20:5) explains that the word chinuch refers to a beginning. Other early commentaries emphasize that chinuch means to become accustomed to doing a particular activity (Rambam, Commentary to Mishnah Menachos 4:4; Rabbeinu Yonah and Metzudas Dovid, Mishlei 22:6). According to the Rambam (ad loc.), the primary meaning of the term chinuch is the training of people, and using the word chinuch in reference to items is a borrowed usage. Just as we say that chinuch is to accustom a person to perform certain activities, we "accustom" the utensils of the Beis Hamikdash to perform their jobs. Rav Hirsch adds that the word chinuch includes dedicating something for a lofty, holy purpose. Chinuch does not mean book knowledge. It means training. And "training" means doing the mitzvos. Chanukas hamishkan and chanukas hamizbei'ach mean to use them for the first time. Only twice in Tanach is the word chinuch used in reference to people, and only once in chumash. That place is in parshas Lech Lecha, where the Torah refers to Avraham's followers as chanichav, "Those he had trained." The other Biblical place where the word refers to people is in Mishlei, Chanoch lana'ar al pi darko; gam ki yazkin lo yasur mimenu, "Train the young man according to his way! Even when he gets older, he will not diverge from it" (Mishlei 22:6). These are the immortal words of Shlomoh Hamelech explaining the basics of Chinuch. All proper chinuch must be based on understanding the lessons of this pasuk and our Chazal. This verse functions both as a halachic and advisory directive on how to train youth, and also provides a guide to see that a child will develop and mature to fulfill his potential. Understanding Mishlei Let us see how the traditional commentators explain the pasuk, Chanoch lana'ar al pi darko. Among the classic commentaries, we find two basic approaches to understand what Shlomoh Hamelech was emphasizing. (1) According to Rashi, the pasuk is simply an observation of human nature. (2) According to most commentaries, the pasuk also includes a commandment. Allow me to explain the difference in translation:

Rashi's approach "However you train a young man according to his way, we know that when he gets older he will not diverge from it" (see Rashi ad loc.) The verse is not an instruction, but an observation, and applies whether one is taught to be good or to be bad. However someone is trained when young, this is the way he will likely act as an adult, provided that he enjoys the direction in which he is going. Rashi points out that at times a person could act inappropriately or even wickedly, as a result of having been given faulty education as a child. As a matter of fact, most people retain some shortcomings in their personality because they enjoyed pursuing undesirable behaviors as children and were not trained to act correctly. Most authorities understand that Mishlei is providing instruction and not just observation (Metzudas Dovid, Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz, Hirsch, Malbim). The word "chanoch" in the pasuk is a command -- this is how you are required to train your child! Train the young man according to his way!

His way What does the pasuk mean by emphasizing al pi darko, according to his way? How do we do this correctly? The requirement is to assess the specific strengths and needs of each particular child and to train him to serve Hashem in a way that fits his nature (Rabbeinu Yonah, Malbim, Hirsch). Thus, this adage establishes the most important criterion of Torah education -- that each child is a different world -- and that he must be trained and directed in his avodas Hashem keeping that in mind. Rabbeinu Yonah explains that darko means his unique path -- and that the mitzvah of chinuch is to get him used to this path. Train him to follow the proper midos and practices that fit his personality, to develop and improve himself by doing things that are easy for him because they emphasize his tendencies and personality and they utilize his strengths (Rabbeinu Yonah). Darko means that these are things that come naturally to him and that he learns to do them because he wants to, not because he is forced (Meiri). Train him to do mitzvos that fit his nature and his desire (Meiri). This means that he does mitzvos without being disciplined, and the behavior pattern therefore becomes part of his nature (Meiri). Based on the Gemara (Shabbos 156a), the Gra explains that one should identify the child's personality traits, his mazel, and train him to use them for Torah. If you force him to squelch his mazel, to repress his natural penchants, the result is that, as soon as no one is watching, he will do what his mazel inclines him to do, without developing it to use for Torah. One whose mazel inclines him to bloodshed can be trained to become a mohel or a shocheit; these inclinations are trained to be used for mitzvos and other positive purposes. This makes him an oved Hashem. However, if he is not trained to use these inclinations for mitzvos, he will use them for the opposite. The Gra compares this to Dovid Hamelech, whose nature was inclined toward violence, yet, because he was taught when young to use his nature to serve Hashem, he became the poet of Israel.

How to train Some early authorities emphasize the following: If the child is gifted with skills important in Torah learning, do not train him in other things. However, if he is not a "learner," train him in an appropriate trade (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz). Again, this way he will learn to use "his way" in a Torah framework. On the other hand, if you attempt to train a child for something that is against his nature, it will not last (Malbim; Hirsch). He may go through the motions of keeping mitzvos as long as an adult is supervising

him closely. But once he is old enough to free himself from supervision, he will likely use his talents in a non-Torah or an anti-Torah direction.

Tailor-made chinuch Clearly, there is no “one size fits all” approach to education. One must first identify the appropriate way to educate this particular child, and then provide it. At times, I have been told that these rules apply only to parents, but not to schools and other chinuch mosados. Unfortunately, this is an error. These cardinal rules of chinuch apply to all chinuch situations without any exceptions. Chinuch must be tailored to the student or child, or it is not chinuch. Obviously, a school cannot create 500 learning programs for 500 students, but insisting that a child attend an educational program not suited for him or her violates chinuch and constitutes abuse of authority. No single method of education is suitable for all children. An education system that assumes that all children should be educated the same way is destined to fail for a large percentage of its students.

Like father? A parent should recognize that, usually, a child shares the same interests and inclinations as his parent -- but not always. Recognizing this requires much judgment and analysis (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz). Even when the child's approach to serve Hashem manifests itself in a different way from that of his parents, the goal of Torah education still remains that our children follow the example of their parents' commitment to Torah values (Hirsch, Devorim 21:18). It goes without saying that one should not pressure a child to follow the educational or life path of an older sibling. For those who disagree with me, I refer you to Rav Hirsch's excellent essay at the beginning of parshas Tolados and also to Volume VII of his Collected Writings.

Life without luxury Some extend the lessons of chanoch lana'ar to other areas. For example, even if one is fortunate to be wealthy, train your child to live without luxuries, since luxuries quickly become necessities (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz). One very great talmid chacham praised his mother for having been careful not to buy him more than he needed. Although his parents were financially comfortable, and able to purchase him whatever he wanted, she was careful not to spoil him, though it would have been only natural for them to do so, all the more so since he was an only child. When, in adult life, he was faced with serious challenges, he was able to meet them and grow as a person and a talmid chacham, only because his parents had trained him to use his own strengths and not to rely on outside help when he was young (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz, quoting the Maharam Chagiz). A child should be taught to observe mitzvos out of joy and not out of fear of punishment. All this is part of the education that children should receive and see in the example provided by their parents (Hirsch, Devorim 21:18). The most important part of chinuch is training in ahavas Hashem, loving G-d, and yiras Shamayim, fear of Heaven. The parents, themselves, must manifest these qualities. One can educate properly only by example.

Age appropriate Certainly, all chinuch must be appropriate to the age of the child (Meiri; Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz). Expecting a child to sit at the Shabbos table when he is too young to do so is clearly a violation of chanoch lana'ar al pi darko, as is any other expectation that is unrealistic for a child of his age. One should start the training process slowly and gradually get a child in the habit of acting with the proper midos that are appropriate for his personality. He will learn to internalize these midos, and they will become part of him. Gradually, one can increase the requirements and lessons, and he will grow to absorb them (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz).

Lana'ar Mishlei emphasizes that we are educating a na'ar, a young man. Habits are easier to change when one is young, and training a child accomplishes a lot in his proper moral and ethical development. Speak to your child softly, and make sure that you are teaching him in a way that is appropriate to his temperament and to his age (Yalkut Mei'am Lo'eiz). If we examine the halachos of the ben soreir umoreh in parshas Ki Seitzei, we see a very important lesson. As Rav Hirsch explains, the Torah regards the first three months after a boy turns thirteen as the critical age that determines his moral future. The Torah expects a young man to obey his parents and turn to spiritual values. For this reason, he is called a bar mitzvah -- the son of the mitzvah duty assigned by Hashem. The Creator of man ordained that this period awaken within a child a spirit that inspires him to do enthusiastically what is morally noble (Commentary to Devorim 21:18).

Training adults Notwithstanding that one should begin training a child when he is young, we should note that the word chinuch includes the training of adults. As we noted above, the one example of the use of the word chinuch in Chumash refers to those individuals whom Avraham Avinu developed and educated, who were adults when they came under his influence. Chazal also refer to the obligation to train and influence one's adult children (Kiddushin 30a).

When he gets older... The entire pasuk in Mishlei reads, Chanoch lana'ar al pi darko gam ki yazkin lo yasur mimenu, “Train the young man according to his way! Even when he gets older, he will not diverge from it.” Having figured out the best approach in training each child for his goal, the long-term results should be that one sees the child develop into an adult who makes the decisions that are consistent with Torah values.

Torah chinuch Although most of our discussion has revolved around explaining the pasuk in Mishlei, one should not think that the ideas of chinuch were first invented by

Shlomo Hamelech. Indeed, there are numerous places where the Torah itself teaches these lessons. For example, the mitzvah of the Hagadah on Seder night, transmitting the experience of yetzias Mitzrayim, the Exodus from Egypt, is mentioned four times in the Torah, each time in a variant way -- because different children have different needs. As the compiler of the Hagadah demonstrates, offering alternate approaches teaches that we are to take into consideration the individual needs of each child. I will share with you that, upon this basis, I recently answered a question that had bothered me for years. Four different times, the Torah describes the mitzvah of Hagadah, teaching your son about the Exodus from Egypt on the night of Pesach, and this detail is explained during our Seder with the story of the four sons. Yet, there is very little halachic literature explaining how one should fulfill this mitzvah. Compare this to other mitzvos for which there is extensive discussion among the halachic authorities defining the responsibility of the mitzvah. My suggested answer is that there cannot be rules for the mitzvah of Hagadah. Since it is a mitzvah of chinuch, it must be tailor-made to the needs of the child involved and, therefore, formal rules are downplayed.

Ben soreir umoreh We mentioned above that the purpose of the Torah's parsha of ben soreir umoreh is to teach many of the rules of education. In this context, I encourage our readers to read Rav Hirsch's comments on the parsha and his essays on education in Volume 7 of the Collected Writings. There, he analyzes many of the halachos of ben soreir umoreh, and, in his typical style, he develops brilliant insights into proper Torah education. Here is one example: The Torah rules that the law of ben soreir umoreh applies only when the parents disciplined their son “with the same voice.” What does that mean? Obviously, this cannot mean that their voices sound the same, since the voice of a typical woman is much higher pitched than that of a typical man. Rav Hirsch explains: “Only if the parents worked together in complete harmony did they discharge their task as educators” (Commentary, Devorim 21:18). If each pulls in a different direction, they are making it impossible for the child to know what is expected of him. This teaches a very deep lesson in education: “These words hold the key to the secret of proper child-raising. A father and a mother united as one in their love for their child and in complete agreement on the principles by which he should be raised... But such unity can be achieved only if the child's father and mother are united also in their own subordination to the Will of G-d. If they view the sacred function of child-rearing as their most sacred task, to be performed for Hashem and in keeping with His holy Will... If His judgments serve as a matter of course to resolve any disagreements” (Collected Writings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, Volume 7, Page 348).

Conclusion It is incumbent on any educator to study the commentaries to the pasuk and practice them. I find it highly surprising that many people who consider themselves educators have never bothered to study the verse Chanoch lana'ar al pi darko with the classic commentators. In fact, one does not require the classic commentators; but a simple reading of the pasuk sets every parent and educator on his or her way.