

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

VAYHI

DECEMBER 14, 2013

11 TEBET 5774

**DEDICATIONS: In memory of my Grandmother Esther Bibi and in memory of Molly Jemal
And of Rachel Bat Victoria, Rachel Sutton
In memory of Rabbi Ezra Labaton, Ezra ben Nizha
Eddie Haber, Ezra ben Sarah
And Ruth Gindi, Rachel bat Mazal**

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Editors Notes

It was a crazy week. So many people passed away. So many people were sitting. Last Thursday morning when we traveled to the Magen David on 67th Street from the Misvah of the levaya of my aunt Rachel Sutton, we drove the entire way in tremendous fog. That fog reflected our thoughts and emotions. We were in a fog of confusion and that fog seemed to settle on us for the entire week. I still feel it. It's a thick fog I recall from my many trips to Venice. One that begs you to do nothing and simply wait for it to pass. Going into today's fast day which is so unusual as it occurs on a Friday and we fast going into the Shabbat, I am hopeful that with Shabbat this mental fog will lift. Then they're promising snow. Lets hope it's a happy snow.

I had been studying the blessings that Jacob bestowed on his children. Each Friday night a parent blesses his or her daughters – May G-d bless you to be like Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah – the mothers of the nation of Israel. But we bless our sons based on this week's portion with the words – May G-d bless you to be like Ephraim and Menashe.

I found a number of beautiful thoughts, some kabalistic, some philosophical, some sermon like, and some which I couldn't relate to. I wondered how to give it over in a meaningful way and then read the following from the Rabbi of the Kotel, Rabbi Shemuel Rabinowitz. So rather than trying to write something while impaired by this fog, lets look at what Rabbi Rabinowitz writes.

“Who were Ephraim and Menashe that they were privileged to be included in the lexicon of Jewish blessings? They were the sons of Yosef, born to him in Egypt. This version of the blessing was created by Ya'acov Avinu in his old age, when he met the grandsons he had not known since he had been living in the Land of Israel, then Canaan, and they were born and lived in Egypt. He conveyed his appreciation for them using the following words: “With you, Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh.’ (Genesis 48:20) The question that arises when we read about Ya'acov's blessing of his grandchildren is deep and leads us to take a closer look at this pair of brothers. Why did Ya'acov not bless his sons with “May G-d bless you to be like Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'acov” – the forefathers of the Jewish nation? Why were Ephraim and Menashe chosen to be the symbol and example whom a father wishes his sons to emulate, rather than Ya'acov's other sons? We get the answer to this question when we read the verses that come before this one and discover that before the blessing, Ya'acov ran a little test on his grandchildren Ephraim and Menashe.

“Yosef, their father, placed his sons in front of Ya'acov with Menashe, the firstborn, standing across from Ya'acov's right hand, and Ephraim, the younger son, standing across from Ya'acov's left hand. This was done purposely so that Ya'acov would place his right hand, symbolizing strength and courage, on the head of Menashe, the oldest son, during the blessing. But Ya'acov surprised everyone by purposely placing his right hand on the head of the younger brother and his left on the head of the firstborn.

“Yosef could not understand why his father was behaving this way, and he tried to put Ya'acov's hands back to the natural order in which the firstborn is the one who continues the family legacy. But Ya'acov insisted on switching the order. Also in the text of the blessing, Ya'acov changed the order and did not say “May G-d make you like Menashe and Ephraim,” but had the younger brother precede the older.

“Why did Ya’acov do this? He was testing his grandsons to see if they were worthy of his blessing. Are they unified? Is the older brother capable of surrendering his place to his younger brother? When Ya’acov saw that they did not begin to fight, he recognized the value of these grandchildren whom he had not met since their birth, and put them into the text of a Jewish father’s blessing of his sons.

“Since the dawn of humanity – the days of Cain and Abel – brothers were high on the list of disputes and arguments.

“Brothers, who are among the closest to each other biologically, tend to be competitive and jealous of one another, resulting in hatred. It is human nature, and we see it around us every day. Family disputes are the most difficult, since the closeness and similarity act as a stimulus for hatred and separation.

“The father about to bless his children thinks about what the most appropriate blessing would be. What could he wish them that would benefit them the most? What would contribute to their future in the most efficient way? Ya’acov Avinu taught us that the best things we can wish our children are unity, peace and compromise. These are what we wish to pass on to the following generations, and in this way, we convey our love for our sons.”

I hope you enjoyed that.
Shabbat Shalom

David Bibi

This Shabbat is the Yahrzeit of my grandmother Esther Bibi and I am writing this at 4AM on Monday. I had been thinking of what to write and kept coming back to what we read last week about the 22 year gap between the sale of Joseph by his brothers and his revelation to them as he stood on the throne of Egypt. I imagined how crystal clear the memories of the sale of Joseph must have been to the brothers at that moment. It must have seemed like only minutes passed between the events. How strange and wonderful is the mind that Hashem has given us.

As I sat and began typing the dedication my mind wandered (as it is prone to do at this hour). Focused on memories, I remembered back to the day my grandmother passed away as if it were yesterday. It amazed me how relative time could be and how I could recall the events moment by moment.

The evening before I was on a 6PM flight to Milan. With the time change I arrived 7 hours later at 7 in the morning. A car was waiting for me at the airport

and I drove the 2 hour trip (at drive as fast as you can Italian speed limits) to Verona. I remember the snow along the road and the fog in the distance as I drove on the highway towards Venice. I worked at the factory all day and I can recall the exact pieces of furniture and paperwork we were reviewing. At about 8 we drove to the factory managers house for some dinner and then to the hotel in Lenago. I was so looking forward to a good night’s sleep making up for the night I had missed.

As I entered the lobby, the receptionist of this small hotel told me that there was a phone call from New York at that very minute. Nobody spoke English in that hotel. In fact I don’t think anyone in that town spoke English then. They thought that the call was probably for me. And it was.

My brother Ruby told me that he felt terrible being the one to bear bad news, but our grandmother had passed away. He told me that it would be important to my father for me to get back. I said that I would do my best. I hung up and phoned Alitalia. The earliest flight out of Italy was on an Alitalia flight out of Rome the next morning. But to get to Rome would be an all night drive and there was no way I could do it. I called my manager who volunteered to join me. I apologized to the receptionist, tipped him and left. When I arrived back at my manager’s house, he told me that it was still possible to catch an over night express train to Rome. We drove to the station and arrived just as the train pulled in.

I remember that I couldn’t fall asleep because I would need to change trains in an hour. I sat and read Tehilim as I watched the countryside go by. And again I can still recall my thoughts on the train as my mind played the video of memories of my grandmother.

I arrived in Rome, took a taxi to the airport, paid for my ticket and boarded the plane. All with almost no time to spare. And then we were delayed on the ground. When I arrived in New York I realized it would be too late to make the funeral so I went to my grandmother’s house. The men had not returned from the cemetery yet. When they did get back and my father saw me, he was shocked. He would never have asked nor expected me to get back. But I’m sure my presence brought him some comfort.

Now that I have finished typing this story, I wonder what it has to do with the Perasha? Do I go back up and delete the story. Nah! I figure that my father will enjoy it and I owe him.

Well let's go back to Joseph and his brothers for a moment. Try to imagine the paradigm shift that they must have experienced. Suddenly everything changed. All the confusion of the past year, of their first trip to Egypt, the accusation that they were spies, the imprisonment of Shimon, the replaced money in their bags, the return home and the response of their father. Think of the months that passed with the knowledge that their brother Shimon remained in an Egyptian dungeon, that without Benjamin they could not return, that remaining in Canaan with the famine meant certain death. And then off they go with Benjamin. All goes well. They are treated royally by the Viceroy. They are free to go with their food. And then from that joy they are stopped. They are accused of theft. They deny the accusation. The seconds must have seemed like years as the Egyptians inspected sack by sack from oldest to youngest.

And then they are plummeted into shocking grief when the chalice of the Viceroy is discovered in the sack of Benjamin. Back to Egypt with thoughts of confusion. What is happening? By their own word they have agreed to give themselves as slaves and have their brother executed. Perhaps they can negotiate their way out. But the Viceroy is fair and will allow them all to leave with the exception of Benjamin. How could they face their father. Perhaps they can battle their way out. What emotions must have played through them and then suddenly everything changes with two words. Ani Yosef. I am Joseph!

Did they ever overcome the shock of that moment? Perhaps not. We see this week that even after living with Joseph for 17 years in Egypt, they still are affected. After Jacob is buried, they come to Joseph and make up a story still afraid that he hasn't forgiven them. I wonder if over the next fifty years of Joseph's life if things changed much. Perhaps they did as his final wish is made not to his own children, but to his brothers asking them to promise to take his body to the land of Israel when they leave. That final request from a regent who never needed anything and only took care of everyone, teaches us a huge lesson. We all, no matter who we are, depend on each other.

Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading:

1st Aliya: In the year 2255, Yakov was 147 years old and Yoseph was 56. Yakov had been living in Mitzrayim for 17 years. (Note that Yoseph was 17 years old when he was sold into slavery and that the numerical value of the word "Vayichi" is 34.) Yakov

summoned Yoseph to his bed-side. Yoseph came with his 2 sons. Yakov greeted them and appointed Menashe and Ephrayim to the status of "Tribe". Yakov then insisted that Yoseph "swear" that he would bury him in Canaan, and not in the land of Mitzrayim.

2nd Aliya: The parsha relates the famous scene of Yakov crossing his arms in order to place his right hand on the head of Ephrayim (who was standing to Yakov's left) and his left hand on the head of Menashe. Yakov blessed his grandchildren with the renown blessing of Hamalach Hagoel. (48:16)

3rd Aliya: Yoseph attempted to straighten Yakov's hands. Yakov resisted and told Yoseph that, although Menashe was destined for greatness, Ephrayim would be even greater. The classic blessing of a father to his son is stated. (48:20)

4th & 5th Aliyot: Yakov summoned his twelve sons and blessed each one.

6th Aliya: Yakov instructed all of his sons to bury him in Canaan, next to his wife Leah, and then passed away. Mitzrayim mourned Yakov for 70 days. Yoseph arranged with Pharaoh to bury Yakov in Canaan. After sitting Shiva (50:10) and the burial, the 12 sons returned to Egypt. Following Yakov's death, the brothers expressed their concern to Yoseph that he would now take revenge against them for having sold him into slavery. Yoseph cried as he heard their concerns and assured them that he bore no grudges against them.

7th Aliya: Yoseph ruled over Egypt for another 54 years. He made his brothers promise that at the time of their exodus from Egypt his bones would be transported for re-burial in Canaan. Yoseph died in the year 2309 at the age of 110.

M'lochim I 2:1 - The Talmud in Bava Matzia 87a tells us that Yakov Avinu [our father] was the first person to "get weak" prior to dying. In fact, he asked Hashem for this "gift" so that he would have the time to put his affairs in order. This week's Haftorah is from Kings I Chap. 2 which relates Dovid Hamelech's final instructions to Shlomo prior to his death. Just as Yakov arranged his final affairs with his children, so too Dovid finalized his personal affairs with his son.

Dovid's unfinished business dealt with situations of personal loyalty and treachery. In order for the succession of the throne to be secure and peaceful, Dovid identifies two key individuals who had betrayed him during his 40 years as King - King David's General, Yoav ben Tzeruah, and Shlomo's own Rebi,

the great scholar Shimi ben Gera. In addition, he set apart the family of Barzillai the Gileadite for special royal consideration and reward.

Dovid Hamelech was not interested in revenge. Dovid, the father of Mashiach, was not consumed with anger. Dovid, the sensitive poet and magnificent singer, was interested in justice and the future well being of his nation. It was essential that he teach the young Shlomo the meaning of strong leadership and how to care for a problem, before it becomes a crisis.

Undoubtedly, it would have been easy for Dovid Hamelech to forgive those who had betrayed him, especially at the very end of his life; but that isn't the quality of leadership, which brings eventual redemption, and the building of the Bais Hamikdash. As the King, Dovid and Shlomo had to be devoted to Hashem's Torah, social justice, and the eternity of the nation

EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

“And the tenth fast shall be for the house of Yehudah happiness and joy and good holidays.” (Zechariah 8:19)

This coming Friday is the fast of the Tenth of Tebet. It is unusual to have a fast on Friday and we will fast until 5:00 and break our fast with the Friday night Kiddush. We know that we never fast on Shabbat. If Tish'ah B'Ab falls out on Shabbat we delay the fast until Sunday. Yet if the fast of the Tenth of Tebet were to fall on Shabbat, we would fast on Shabbat just like we do for Yom Kippur. While our calendar, established by Hillel, ensures that the Tenth of Tebet does not fall on Shabbat, it can occasionally fall on Friday. That is the case this year. This seems a strange halachah. If Tish'ah B'Ab would fall on Shabbat we fast on Sunday, but if the Tenth of Tebet would fall on Shabbat we would fast on Shabbat. What is different about the Tenth of Tebet?

The primary reason for this fast is that on this day the siege of Yerushalayim by the Babylonians began. Two and a half years later the siege culminated with the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash. Why indeed do we fast on this day even on Shabbat if that would still be possible?

The Hatam Sofer offers the following powerful explanation. The day the Babylonians began this siege in this world was the day that the fate of Yerushalayim was decided in Heaven. The Heavenly court weighed the evidence with the prosecuting angels calling for destruction and the

defending angels pleading for mercy. The former won the argument and the judgment of destruction was handed down.

Our Sages teach us that in every generation that the Bet Hamikdash is not rebuilt, it is as if it was destroyed anew. Thus, every year on the Tenth of Tebet the Heavenly court weighs whether the Bet Hamikdash shall be “destroyed” again or, at long last, rebuilt. Now we can understand why we don't fast on Tish'ah B'Ab if it falls on Shabbat (even though the fast is more strict) but we would if the Tenth of Tebet would fall on Shabbat. On Tish'ah B'Ab we mourn for the past and therefore we don't fast on Shabbat. But, on the Tenth of Tebet we fast in an attempt to influence the future. Were it possible for this day to fall on Shabbat we would fast because preventing a repeat destruction of the Bet Hamikdash would be an Oneg Shabbat (a pleasure on Shabbat) for us. It is a momentous, pivotal day on our calendar. It is a day with enormous repercussions for our people and the entire world. May we merit the geulah speedily in our time. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

The Gemara (Sotah 13a) tells us that when Ya'akov's family took his coffin to the Me'arat Hamachpelah to bury him, Esav appeared and protested that the last spot in the cave belongs to him, Esav, and not to Ya'akov. The sons of Ya'akov began to argue with Esav, trying to prove that the right to burial in that cave was sold to their father with the birthright. Esav argues that this was not included, so they decided to send Naftali, who was as swift as a deer, to Egypt to bring the original document. Ya'akov had a grandson named Hushim (the son of Dan) who was deaf, and didn't hear all the give and take. When Hushim saw that Ya'akov was not being buried he asked (in some form of sign language), "Why is there a delay?" When he was told that Esav was blocking the burial, he took a weapon and chopped Esav's head off, saying, "How could we leave our grandfather, Ya'akov, lying in disgrace while we wait for a document?"

The Rabbis ask why only Hushim, the grandson of Ya'akov, had the inspiration to do such a courageous act. Where were all the sons of Ya'akov themselves? Surely they loved and respected their father at least as much as Hushim ben Dan!

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz says that we see from here what happens when we get used to something. The brothers were already involved in the negotiations with Esav so they didn't perceive it as such a disgrace for Ya'akov to be lying around since they were already somewhat accustomed to the situation. Hushim, however, was deaf, and didn't hear all that was going on. He therefore saw the

situation in all of its stark reality, and reacted by killing Esav.

The lesson to be derived from this is that we all too often get accustomed to situations. Many times this is beneficial, so that we wouldn't always be shocked by things. Sometimes, however, being used to certain situations, we don't react the way we are supposed to. We become too accepting of things which should be corrected or spoken about. We should try to talk things over with an outsider who will see the situation from a fresh point of view, thereby getting an objective opinion. Sometimes, our spouse can be objective enough when he or she is not involved too deeply in whatever is bothering us. One way or another we should try to look at situations from a new, fresh perspective, which will help us in doing the right thing. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

RABBI ELI MANSOUR
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True Kindness

In the beginning of Parashat Vayehi, Yaakov summons Yosef shortly before his death and has him make an oath promising to bring his remains back to Eretz Yisrael for burial. Yaakov here asks his son to perform "Hesed Ve'emet" – "kindness and truth" (47:29). Rashi famously explains that the kindness performed with the deceased is "true" kindness because there is no expectation of reciprocity. Generally, even when we perform favors out of a sincere desire to help somebody, we also think in our minds that "what goes around comes around," and that by doing favors for others we put ourselves in a position where we can expect favors from them. Such thoughts are perfectly legitimate, and it is indeed a sign of a healthy society or community if people do favors and feel comfortable asking for favors. Nevertheless, the kindness performed for a deceased person is special, in that it is done out of complete, pure sincerity, as one does not expect anything return. And for this reason, Yaakov refers to the favor he requests from Yosef as "Hesed Ve'emet."

There is also an additional reason why Yaakov used this term specifically in this context. In the next section, we read that Yaakov tells Yosef about the circumstances surrounding the death and burial of his mother, Rahel. He explains that Rahel had died on the road, as Yaakov was journeying, and he felt compelled to bury her along the roadside, rather than give her a proper burial in the family plot in Hebron. Rashi explains that Yaakov conveyed this information

to Yosef because he suspected that Yosef may have harbored hard feelings toward him on account of this perceived slight to his mother's honor. Yaakov explained to Yosef that the roadside burial was necessitated by circumstances, and, moreover, in the future, when the Jewish people would be driven into exile, they would pass by Rahel's grave along the road and pray. Her soul would then petition G-d on their behalf, and it will be in Rahel's merit that the Jews will ultimately return. Yosef therefore had no reason to feel slighted over Rahel's roadside burial, as it was specifically arranged by G-d for the sake of her descendants.

With this in mind, we can return to the phrase "Hesed Ve'emet." Yaakov anticipated some uneasiness on Yosef's part with regard to this request he is now making. Yosef might think to himself, "Why is my father asking me to do for him what he did not do for my mother? Why should I go through the trouble of bringing his remains from Egypt to Canaan if he did not bring my mother's remains to Hebron?" Yaakov therefore emphasized that he was requested "Hesed Ve'emet" – true kindness. When one performs true kindness, he does not try to rationalize whether the favor is "deserved." He does it solely out of a desire to fulfill the wishes of another person, without making calculations. This is the kind of "true kindness" that Yaakov was asking Yosef to perform, and this is the type of "true kindness" that we should aspire to perform for other people.

Rabbi Wein

Our father Yaakov lived for seventeen years in the Goshen area of the land of Egypt. These were undoubtedly the most peaceful, serene and happiest years of his long and troubled life. He is reunited with his beloved son Yosef who has risen to power and greatness, albeit in a strange land. No Eisav, no Lavan, no Shechem, no Canaanite neighbors are present to disturb his peace and security. And, with his family in all of its many generations surrounding him, at peace with him and, superficially at least, with one another, Yaakov is content.

Yaakov is finally vindicated in his life's work and can enjoy the last years of his life. In effect we can understand why the parsha begins –vayechi Yaakov – for it is in these seventeen years that Yaakov truly lived, finally achieving satisfaction and harmony.

The Talmud records for us that the great Rabi Yehuda HaNassi –Rabi – lived in the city of Zippori for seventeen years and the Talmud explicitly

connects Rabi's seventeen year sojourn in Zippori with Yaakov's seventeen years of life in Egypt.

Aside from the apparently magic number of seventeen being involved in both instances, what connection is there if any between these two events, especially since they took place millennia apart? The seeming word games of the Talmud, linking like words that appear in the Torah, always have deeper meaning attached to them. There is an underlying motif and relevant message to all generations in this Talmudic assertion. It certainly should demand our attention and study.

Rabi was the editor and publisher of the Mishna, the one book that guaranteed the survival of the Jewish people throughout the long exile that stretched forth and that he saw in his mind's eye. Rabi saw himself, as did his ancestor Yaakov, ensconced in a rare bubble of serenity and opportunity, freed temporarily from the constant persecution of Rome due to his personal friendship with the Roman emperor.

He grasped the moment and exploited the opportunity to codify the Oral Law of Sinai and preserve it for all eternity amongst the Jewish people. Those seventeen years of serenity in Zippori afforded him the opportunity to do so. Yaakov's seventeen years of family harmony and spiritual strengthening in the land of Goshen enabled him to provide the necessary guidance and insights to his family that would enable them to weather the long night of Egyptian bondage and exile.

The last seventeen years of Yaakov's life were the preparation for the centuries of hardship that would follow. Yaakov's ability to shape and guide his family so that they would remain loyal and true to God's covenant with them was matched by the seventeen years of the development of the Mishna by Rabi in Zippori many millennia later.

The actions of the forefathers became the instructional template for the later generations. Thus the lives and patterns of behavior and events of Yaakov and Rabi are bound together over the vast passage of time. Just as Yaakov lives so does Rabi live. And this living is not constricted by years or time but is endlessly eternal.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

Bereishit ends on a sublime note of reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers. His brothers were afraid that he had not really forgiven them for selling him into slavery. They suspected that he was merely delaying his revenge until their father died. So after

Jacob's death they express their fear. Joseph however insisted:

"Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. (Gen. 50: 19-21)

This is the second time he had said something like this to them. Earlier he had spoken similarly when he first disclosed that he – the man they thought was an Egyptian viceroy called Zophenat Paneakh – was in fact their brother Joseph:

"I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no ploughing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God." (Gen. 45: 3-8)

This is a crucial moment in the history of faith. It marks the birth of forgiveness, the first recorded moment at which one person forgives another for a wrong they have done. But it also establishes another important principle: the idea of divine providence. History is not what Joseph Heller called it, "a trashbag of random coincidences blown open in the wind." It has a purpose, a point, a plot. God is at work behind the scenes. "There's a divinity that shapes our ends," says Hamlet, "rough-hew them how we will."

Joseph's greatness was that he sensed this. Nothing in his life, he now knew, had happened by accident. The plot to kill him, his sale as a slave, the false accusations of Potiphar's wife, his time in prison, and his disappointed hope that the chief butler would remember him and secure his release – all these events that might have cast him into ever deeper depths of despair, turned out in retrospect to be necessary steps in the journey that eventuated in his becoming second-in-command in Egypt and the one person capable of saving the whole country – as well as his own family – from starving in the years of famine.

Joseph had in double measure one of the necessary gifts of a leader: the ability to keep going despite opposition, envy, false accusation and repeated setbacks.

Every leader who stands for anything will face opposition. This may be a genuine conflict of interests. A leader elected to make society more equitable will almost certainly win the support of the poor and the antagonism of the rich. One elected to reduce the tax burden will do the opposite. It cannot be avoided. Politics without conflict is a contradiction in terms.

Any leader elected to anything, or more loved or gifted than others, will face envy. Rivals will say, "Why wasn't it me?" That is what Korach thought about Moses and Aaron. It is what the brothers thought about Joseph when they saw that their father loved him more than them. It is what Antonio Salieri thought about the more gifted Mozart according to Peter Shaffer's play Amadeus.

As for false accusations, they have occurred often enough in history. Joan of Arc was accused of heresy and burned at the stake. A quarter century later she was posthumously declared innocent by an official court of inquiry. More than twenty people were put to death as a result of the Salem witch trials in 1692-3. Years later, as their innocence began to be perceived, a priest present at the trials, John Hale, admitted, "Such was the darkness of that day ... that we walked in the clouds, and could not see our way" (quoted in Robert A. Divine, T. H. Breen, George M. Fredrickson, R. Hal Williams, America Past and Present, Volume I, Pearson, 2001, 94). The most famous false accusation of modern times was the trial of Alfred Dreyfus, a French officer of Jewish descent accused of being a German spy. The affair rocked France during the years 1894 and 1906 before Dreyfus was finally acquitted.

Setbacks too are part of the life-story of the most successful. J. K. Rowling's initial Harry Potter novel was rejected by the first twelve publishers she sent it to. Another writer of a book about children suffered twenty-one rejections. The book was called "Lord of the Flies," and its author, William Golding, was eventually awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

In his famous commencement address at Stanford University the late Steve Jobs told the story of the three blows of fate that shaped his life: dropping out of university, being fired from Apple, the company he founded, and being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Rather than being defeated by them, he turned them all to creative use.

For twenty-two years I lived close to Abbey Road, North London, where a famous pop group recorded all their hits. At their first audition, they performed for a record company who told them that guitar bands

were "on their way out." The verdict on their performance (in January 1962) was: "The Beatles have no future in show business."

All this explains Winston Churchill's great remark that "success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm."

It may be that what sustains people through repeated setbacks is belief in themselves, or sheer tenacity, or lack of alternatives. What sustained Joseph, though, was his insight into Divine providence. A plan was unfolding whose end he could only dimly discern, but at some stage he seems to have realised that he was one of the characters in a far larger drama and that all the bad things that had happened to him were necessary if the intended outcome was to occur. As he said to his brothers, "It was not you who sent me here, but God."

This willingness to let events work themselves out in accordance with providence, this understanding that we are at best no more than co-authors of our lives, allowed Joseph to survive without resentment about the past or despair in the face of the future. Trust in God gave him immense strength, which is what we will need if we are to dare greatly. Whatever malice other people harbour against us – and the more successful you are, the more malice there is – if we can say, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good," we will survive, our strength intact, our energy undiminished.

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

"And he (Yaacob Avinu) kissed them (Efraim & Menashe) and he embraced them ". (48:10)

The love of one's children is expressed by the love of the children's children. Especially when the children's children are young, the parent experiences a repetition of the love that he had felt for his own children when they were younger. The love that Yaacob had always had toward Yosef, and the love for Yosef's mother Rachel who had died prematurely, was expressed in the love for Yosef's sons.

We see from the conduct of this family that they expressed their affection by kissing and embracing, just as did Esav and Yaacob (33:4) and as did Yosef and his brothers (45:14-15).

Instead of being cold philosophers ("Stoics") that are ashamed of emotions, our Fathers expressed their love by acts of demonstrative affection, and they thus served Hashem by encouraging the feelings of

kindliness and love which cause Perfection of the soul.

We see that this family expressed their love of kin in a highly emotional manner and we learn therefrom that it is an excellence of the soul to love one's kin with powerful emotion. By loving one's kin, one comes to love one's kin's kin and eventually he attains the feeling that the entire house of Israel are his kin.

The perfection of character toward one person tends to spread and is subsequently broadened to include others.

The Rav's advice regarding raising children included that we should always talk to our children.

By talking to them with a voice full of emotion and love we make a very strong impression which will eventually bear fruits.

Tell them that Hashem loves, cares for and is protecting them. Tell them how much their mother and father love, care for and are proud of them. But always remember to caress your child's very tender cheek while you are saying these loving and encouraging words to them.

This is the Key we learn from our great Family.

COVER UP **One Minute With Yourself –** **Rabbi Raymond Beyda**

Saul was not the most popular guy in the office. He was not out to perform; rather, he was fixated on impressing the boss. Like all employees, Saul had some shortcomings, but he would never acknowledge his areas of weakness. Instead, he would try to sell the boss on how good his performance was and how well he completed his tasks.

This alone would not have made him so unpopular. What annoyed his co-workers more than anything was Saul's tendency to shirk the truth. Whenever he erred or performed poorly, Saul would say or do something to cover up the facts. His co-workers could not tolerate his approach. Sometimes Saul would even tell an outright lie to make the boss think he was the perfect employee. One untruthful statement very often led to another as Saul spun his tangled web of deceit, trying to transform his weaknesses into apparent strengths.

Approval seeking can ruin lives. People who spend time concealing their faults in order to win the esteem of others will eventually trip up, and all that they worked so hard to hide will be revealed.

Falsehood, in any case, does not last. The truth eventually wins out. The Hebrew word for lying, sheker, has three letters. Each of the letters does not have a base. Each letter cannot stand.

The Hebrew word for truth, emet, has three letters as well. Each of the letters has a base. Truth can indeed stand.

Constantly making an effort to hide your faults will make you feel like a spy in enemy territory, tense and nervous about the possibility of being caught. But being honest with others about yourself will help you be more relaxed. Of course, it is not smart to "tell all" to everyone you encounter, but being less defensive about your imperfections is definitely less taxing.

Catch yourself when you are about to cover up a fault or mistake, and tell the truth instead. Then bask in how good it feels to know that you don't have to deal with the pressure of covering up one lie with another. It only takes a moment of honesty, and could eventually become a habit that serves as a great "tranquilizer" in your already overly tense world. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

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