

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלתר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישיא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה



שבת קודש פרשת ויחי

Shabbos Parshas Vayechi

י"ג טבת תשס"ח - December 22, 2007

הדלקת נרות שבת – 4:13 (Monsey, NY)	מנחה גדולה / שבת – 12:25
זמן קריאת שמע/מ"א – 9:01	שקיעה של יום השבת – 4:31
זמן קריאת שמע/הגר"א – 9:37	צאת הכוכבים / מעריב – 5:21
סוף זמן התפילה / להגר"א – 10:23	צאה"כ / לשיטת רבינו תם – 5:43

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
נו"נ ביישיבת הגר"צ קושלבסקי

מאצרותיו של המגיד

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

ויחי יעקב בארץ מצרים שבע עשרה שנה ויהי ימי יעקב שני חייו שבע שנים וארבעים ומאת שנה וגו' (מז-כח)

חומרי, ומחפש נוחיות ותענוגים חומריים, כשיטול עליו להישמר מחטאולקיים המצותשהרבה פעמים מתקשה הוא לקיימם, ירגיש כאילו שמו עליו עול כבד, וינסה כל הזמן ליפטר ממנו, ורק ישראל שקבלו התורה הרוחנית, שכשעמלים בה מזדככים ומתרוממים, וניעור בהם חשק עצום להתקרב לה', כשיקיימו המצות למרות הקשיים, לא ירגישו שהם עול, אדרבה ישמחו בהם שמחה גדולה, בידעם שהם מקרבים אותם אל האושר הנצחי, אלה'.

ולפי זה מבואר הסדר, שכתוב קודם "הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים", ואח"כ כתוב "ואשבור מטות עלכם", שאין כוונתו לשעבוד מצרים, אלא שלא הרגשתם שעבודתי היא עול כבד שמוטל עליכם, כיון שקיבלתם התורה ועמלתם בה והתרוממתם. (וע' אור החיים [במדבר כג' כא'] בפסוק "ולא ראה עמל בישראל")

ולפי זה מבאר החת"ס דברי רש"י, ש"כשנפטר יעקב וכו' מצרת השעבוד" - הכוונה שהרגישו ששמירת דרך ה' היא עבורם עול ושעבוד בלתי נסבל, שכל זמן שיעקב שהוא עמוד התורה חי, והאיר באור עמל תורתו, זה איך וקידש אותם, להתחשק אך ורק לרוחניות, ושמירת המצות והימנעות מתענוגי ושעשועי מצרים החומריים, לא נחשב עבורם כשעבוד ועול המפריע להם, אבל משנפטר התבטל אור תורתו ונהיו חומריים, והתחילו להרגיש ששמירת דרך ה' היא עול כבד ושעבוד.

כתב רש"י: "למה פרשה זו סתומה, לפי שכיון שנפטר יעקב אבינו, נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל, מצרת השעבוד".

והקשה במזרחי: "ואע"פ שיוסף חי אחר פטירתו של יעקב נ"ד שנה, ולא היה שייך לשעבודם בחייו, שהיה מושל בכל ארץ מצרים, וגם כתוב במדרש (שמות רבה א' ח') שכל זמן שהיה אחד מן השבטים קיים, לא שעבדו המצריים בישראל! יש לומר, שלא היה שעבוד ממש, אלא דרך בקשה ופיוס, כמו שאמר 'בתחלה בפה רך ואחר כך בפרך', שזה לא היה יכול יוסף למנוע, מפני שגם המצריים היו עושים זה ברצונם, להראות חבתן למלך, אלא שעם כל זה היו ישראל מצירים על זה, מפני שהיו רואים בשכלם שזה יהיה סבה לשעבודן בסוף שלא ברצונם, וכ"ש בהיות שקיבלו מאבותיהם שהם עתידים להשתעבד למצרים, ולכן כתוב 'צרת השעבוד', היינו שלא היה עדיין שעבוד ממש".

ובתורת משה תירץ בדרך הדרוש, בהקדם ביאור פסוק בפי' בחוקותי (כו' יג), שכת': "אני ה' אלוהיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים, ואשבור מטות עלכם". ויש להקשות, הלא הסדר הוא הפוך, מקודם הופסקה השעבוד - "ואשבור מטות עלכם" - ואח"כ יצאו ממצרים - "אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים"? וביאר החת"ס, שאין הכוונה לביטול שעבוד מצרים, אלא שלא יחושו שהם משועבדים תחת עול כבד בקיימם מצות ה', שהרי מי שהוא

A SERIES IN HALACHAH
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

הלכה למעשה

Laws of Zmanim - Halachic Time Parameters - Cont.

Most Preferred Time to Recite Shema: Vasikin Last week we discussed the earliest times for saying *Shema* in the morning. We will now explain the most preferred time.

The *Gemara* praises those who *daven* "כותיקין" - like the *Vasikin* (devoted and humble people who try to fulfill *mitzvos* in the best possible manner). They say *Shema* right before sunrise and begin *Shemona Esrai* just as the top portion of the sun appears on the east horizon. There are 2 opinions on how to understand the conduct of the *Vasikin*.

1) **Shulchan Aruch** holds that the purpose of *davening* at that time schedule is to start *Shemona Esrai* as the sun rises. Since one must connect *Geulah* (giving thanks for the redemption from Egypt in the *beracha* after *Shema*) to the *Shemona Esrai*, one must say the *Shema* before sunrise in order to start *Shemona Esrai* as the sun appears.

2) **Rabbeinu Yonah** writes that the main point of the *Vasikin* is to say *Shema* before sunrise with its *berachos*. Since one must connect *Geulah* to *Shemona Esrai*, he has no choice but to *daven Shemona Esrai* at sunrise.

Practical Difference. There is a practical, although not very well-known difference between the two opinions that many people can take advantage of. The ideal way for one to *daven* like the *Vasikin* is to both say *Shema* before sunrise and begin *Shemona Esrai* at sunrise. Yet, if one finds it hard to do so, he can still fulfill the concept of *Vasikin* according to the second opinion by just saying *Shema* before sunrise.

הוא היה אימר...

R' Mottel (Chaim Mordechai) Katz ZT"l (Rosh Yeshivas Telz) would say:

"*With their anger they killed men.*" The word 'באפם' can also translate as '*with their nose.*' Quite often, just by turning up one's nose, belittling and humiliating another person, it can cause that person great harm. Even if he is not present, turning up one's nose at the mention of a name implies derogatory attributes and can cause someone to lose a job, to lose respect or even to lose a *shidduch*!"

R' Moshe Feinstein ZT"l would say:

"A person must be aware that there exists very high spiritual levels, and that he must strive to reach such zeniths. If he does so, he will certainly attain at least some measure of spirituality. However, if one begins his search for spirituality with the view that he can only achieve a very low spiritual level, there is no guarantee that he will have any success whatsoever."

A Wise Man would say:

"Laziness grows on people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in iron chains. On the other hand, the more one has to do, the more he is able to accomplish."

ז"י MAZEL TOV TO MR. & MRS. AMI SCHWAB IN HONOR OF THE BAR MITZVAH OF THEIR SON DOVID
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his exhausted soul and quietly informed him that there was one possible solution. A man had just passed away that evening and his room would not be cleaned out until the following morning. If he absolutely needed a place to sleep, he could use the deceased man's room for the night. Reluctantly, and with exhaustion dictating his judgment, he agreed and within moments was plunged into a deep sleep.

In the morning, before he left the room he looked around and noticed that the name of the previous resident had been David Schwartz. This struck him as odd, since the nursing home was not Jewish in any way and it was strange to find that a man with a Jewish name had been living there. He went down and spoke to the administrator of the home and learned that indeed David Schwartz had been Jewish, but with no relatives to see to his burial, he was scheduled to be laid to rest in the small Christian cemetery behind the home which was used for exactly these types of situations. The businessman felt that it was clearly Divine Providence that had led him to this particular nursing home and he believed it was his sacred duty to see that this Jewish man receive a proper Jewish burial.

At first, the administrator wouldn't hear of it, but after offering to take the dead man's corpse, as well as the responsibility, effort and expense of a private internment upon himself, the businessman succeeded in having the body released to his ward. He and the late Mr. Schwartz drove out of the Christian nursing home in that rural suburb of Albany, later that morning.

The question now was what does one do with a dead body in one's car? He drove all the way back to Brooklyn tossing this dilemma about in his mind. Back home, he made some inquiries and learned that in Washington Heights, there was a small area in the cemetery that was set aside for the burial of ten **מתי מצוה**; people who have no one to attend to their internment needs. He contacted the head of the *Chevra Kadisha* in Washington Heights and told him the story of how he came into possession of one such case.

The *Chevra Kadisha*, of course, would not accept the corpse until they were able to verify the Jewish identity of the man and the fact that he had no other burial alternatives. A few phone calls later, however, and they were convinced. The businessman now brought the remains of Mr. Schwartz to Washington Heights in order to perform the *Tahara* (ritual cleansing of the body) and the burial.

As the process began to unfold, the head of the *Chevra Kadisha* peered into the face of the deceased and scratched his head. He had seen this man's face before but was having trouble placing it. Then, a flush of excitement hit him and he dashed off to check some records. In a flash, he was back. Holding up some papers, he announced, "Well over twenty years ago, a man came to me and asked what is done with the corpses of Jews who have no one to care of them. At that time, we had no such contingency plan and the man immediately offered to pay for the plots and burials of ten such individuals. I knew I recognized this man's face here. The man who paid for the ten burial plots is none other than our very own David Schwartz!"

משל למח הדבר דומה

ויאמר אליהם יוסף אל תיראו כי תחת אלקים אני וגו' (ג-יט)

משל: There was once a *badchan* who was renowned for entertaining his crowds by imitating voices of well-known *Rabbonim* and *Chassidishe Rebbes*. Of course, he was always respectful, but his dead-on impersonations were a guaranteed crowd-pleaser.

He was once asked to perform at a wedding where the holy **Satmar Rebbe, R' Yoilish Teitelbaum ZT"L** was present. Before he began, he went over to the *Rebbe* and asked permission to impersonate the *Rebbe*, all in the name of being **משמח** the bride and groom. The *Rebbe* gladly consented. The *badchan* got up and began imitating the Satmar Rebbe's voice, his hand gestures, every nuance down to his

famous heart-wrenching groans. The crowd loved it. But the *Rebbe*, he noticed, had tears coursing down his cheeks. Immediately, he ran over to apologize.

The Satmar Rebbe waved him away. "I am not upset at you. I was just thinking, that if you can imitate me so well - maybe I am just imitating myself!"

במשל: People often fool themselves into believing that they are something that they are not or have the power to do things that they cannot. *Yosef Hatzaddik* had no such pretensions. Although his brothers were afraid that he might now take vengeance on them, he reassured them. "Am I instead of *Hashem*?" You may have intended me harm, but *Hashem* saw it for good.

ויאמר השבעה לוי שבע לו ושתחו ישראל על ראש המטה וגו' (מז-לא)

TORAH GEMS

בך יברך ישראל לאמר וישימך אלקים כאפרים וכמנשה וכו' (מח-ג)

Although *Yaakov Avinu* was old and on his sickbed, he nevertheless expressed his pleasure at seeing his son, Yosef, by prostrating himself on the edge of his bed. Rashi writes: "'Towards the head of the bed' - (*Yaakov's*) bed was whole (מטתו שלימה) and there was no wicked ones (from among his children), for Yosef was the ruler (of Egypt), and furthermore, he had been taken captive among the heathens, yet, he remained righteous throughout."

The **Meshech Chochma, R' Meir Simcha Hakohen of Dvinsk ZT"L**, brilliantly calculates the source of Yaakov's delight; the fact that not only was Yosef a *tzaddik* and a righteous ruler in the present, but that he would remain so for the rest of his life. Yosef was 30 years old when he was brought out of the dungeon as a lowly slave to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. Seven years of abundance and two years of famine passed immediately after this. Yaakov then descended to Egypt with the rest of his family and this brought the famine to an end. Thus, Yosef was 39 years old when Yaakov was reunited with him. Yaakov, we know, was 130 years old at the time and remained in Egypt for the last 17 years of his life, before expiring at the age of 147 years. Add 7 years of abundance, 2 years of famine, and the last 17 years of Yaakov's life, which leaves a total of 26 years. Thus, Yosef was 56 years old when he appeared in front of his father at this time.

The *gemara* (יזמא לז:) says that if the majority of a person's years pass, and he has remained righteous, we can rest assured that he will remain righteous for the rest of his life. Yosef lived to be 110 years old; Fifty-six years was the majority of his life!

Why will the Jewish People be blessed through Ephraim and Menashe, and not any two of the other *shevatim*? Surely, the *kedushah* of Levi, the royalty of Yehudah, or the *Torah* scholarship of Yissochar (to name just three) is worth emulating?

Rabbeinu Azaryah Figo ZT"L (Binah L'itim) expounds on the reason why Yosef objected to his father having placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim - the younger son - and his left upon the older son, Menashe. Yosef was alluding to the suffering he experienced on account of being preferred by his father over his older brothers. He did not want the same thing to happen to his children. But Yaakov answered, "*I know my son, I know*" - meaning, I know all that you experienced, and yet I am not concerned. Menashe, too, will emerge as a great tribe; only the younger son, Ephraim, will be "*greater from him*" - he will be greater due to his completeness of character. As *Chazal* comment; Ephraim was the *Rosh Yeshivah* of Yaakov's *yeshivah*. He did not become great through the lowering of his brother, but rather by lifting himself. Even Menashe will acknowledge his younger brother's greatness, and not experience any jealousy.

Thus, when the *posuk* states, "*He put Ephraim before Menashe*," it is an explanation of the blessing, "*May Hashem make you as Ephraim and Menashe*." *Bnei Yisroel* will give blessings in the name of Ephraim and Menashe because Yaakov's placing Ephraim before Menashe did not kindle conceit in Ephraim or jealousy in Menashe. קנאה (Jealousy), תאוה (Desire), and כבוד (Conceit) is what destroys a person, yet Yosef's sons displayed no such tendencies and thus are timeless transmitters of *Bnei Yisroel's* blessings. (אגרא זכלה)

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

וישאו את בניו ארצה כנען ויקברו אתו במערת שדה המכפלה וכו' (ג-יג)

A businessman from Brooklyn, NY, found himself stranded one night in a little town near Albany, NY. His business dealings had brought him to Albany, but when the proceedings lasted much later than he expected and a great tiredness fell upon him heavily, he had no choice but to cut his return drive home short, and look for the nearest lodgings. This presented a problem, since the late hour combined with the rural roads (he had already left Albany some time earlier) left him with no place to stop in order to spend the night.

After inquiring at the first gas station he came to, he was told that the only building in the immediate area was a nursing home. He was so weary at this point that he could barely function and with what little strength he had left, he dragged himself into the nursing home and asked if they had a room where he could spend the night. Unfortunately, he was told, they didn't have any place for him, but one of the caretakers took pity on