

and free us. But then we get the news that instead of redemption, we are to have a more comfortable *golus*, with civil rights and a friendly ruler." R' Moshe gave out a loud sigh. "All this means is that *Hashem* is not ready to redeem His people yet! Should I not cry?!"

TORAH GEMS

**ויאמר יוסף אל אביו בני הם ויגש אתם אליו
וישק להם ויחבק להם וגו' (מח-ט,י)**

When Yosef traveled to Goshen for the last time to see his father Yaakov, who lay ill on his death-bed, he brought along his two sons, Ephraim and Menashe. The *posuk* tells us that Yaakov "*kissed them and embraced them.*" Presumably, Yaakov had seen his grandchildren many times before - Ephraim would even sit by his side and learn *Torah* with him. Why, then, must the *Torah* explicitly discuss Yaakov's kisses and hugs?

R' Avrohom Kelman Shlit"a derives a beautiful message from Yaakov's actions. This is the first time in the Torah in which we find a *zayde* - grandfather, enjoying an intimate moment with his *einiklech* - grandchildren. As Chazal inform us: "מעשה אבות סימן לבנים" - "*The deeds of the fathers are a sign for the children*" (סוטה לד). While the Torah includes many exemplary interactions between children and parents, here it teaches us about the relationship between grandchildren and grandparents.

Unlike parents, whom we are commanded to fear and respect, grandparents are simply to dote upon their grandchildren. Children who feel deeply loved will more likely respond to the guidance of their elders. Fortunate is the child who, when rebuked by his parents, finds solace in an understanding *zayde* and *bubby*, who can restore his self-worth with a hug and kind word. The beauty of the Jewish family and the manner in which the different generations live with and for each other, are found in our *Torah* if we read it carefully.

ויברך אתם איש אשר כברכתו ברך אתם וגו' (מט-כח)
We Jews have inherited our forefathers' "spiritual

genes." *Chazal* term the Jewish people "רחמיים בני רחמים" - *"merciful (children) descendants of merciful ones."* Thus, the *gemara* (פסחים ד.) depicts a hothead eager to take others to court, as from the tribe of Dan, whom Yaakov described as *"judging his people,"* while a man who constantly dreamed of building his home near the sea turned out to descend from Zevulun, the seafaring tribe!

Moreover, after blessing each of his sons individually, Yaakov blessed all twelve of them collectively that they should share in each other's *berachos*. Thus, today, each Jew embodies the qualities of all the *shevatim*. For instance, since Yehudah represents pure *Torah* study, perhaps his genes account for our great thirst for *Torah* throughout the centuries of *golus*. Likewise, Binyomin, the "*ravaging wolf*," must have infused *Klal Yisroel* with the courage and power to defeat our enemies, thanks to *Hashem's* intervention. And after helping to wipe out an entire city, Levi's destiny-defying repentance must have inspired our unprecedented *Baal Teshuvah* movement.

Writes **R' Yitzchok Goodman Shlit"u**, we have been blessed with great *poskim* (from Yissachar), outstanding supporters of *Torah* (Zevulun), swiftness to perform *mitzvos* (Naftali), and individuals who maintain their Jewish identity even as tiny minorities in alien surroundings (Yosef).

Unfortunately, we've inherited national flaws, as well. Are Reuven's "unstable" genes responsible for the impulsiveness exhibited by some? Can episodes of Jewish violence be traced to Shimon? Or the heartless disregard of some for their fellow brethren stem from the same genes that permitted ten brothers to sell one of their own into slavery? Perhaps Yaakov's parting words to his sons are the key to understanding much of our history.

במעשה, אלא גם במחשבה שלו. לכך ארז"ל יוסף משלו נתנו לו במחשבה שלא חשבה בעבירה תקרא חכמה, "ויקראו לפניו אברד" - דהיינו אב בחכמה. וכן פרעה אמר לו "אין נבון וחכם כמוד".

ולזה אמרינן "בן פרת יוסף" - שלא נכשל בעבירה במעשה, "בן פרת עלי עיני" - ר"ל גם במחשבה שהיא במוח למעלה מן העין, שנתקדש שם בקדושת המחשבה שתגבורת שלה היא למעלה מתגבורת העין.

במראה עיניו לבלתי יסתכל באשה. ולכן תגבורת זו שמתגבר גם בעיניו שעוצם עיניו מראות ברע היא יותר גדולה מתגבורת שמתגבר במעשה. והשלישי גדולה מכולם הוא, אם מתגבר האדם גם במחשבה שבמוחו לבלתי יחשוב מחשבה רעה של ניאוף, כי יש גובר במראה עיניו אבל אינו יכול להתגבר גם במחשבה. וא"כ זה היה שבחו של יוסף הצדיק ע"ה, שגבר על היצר הרע בדבר זה של ניאוף עם אשת פוטיפר לא רק

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאִסְפּוּ וְאָגִידָה לָכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים וְגו' (מט-א)

Throughout the centuries, Jews lived at the mercy of the gentile governments of the countries in which they settled. Periods of time that did not see an oppressive regime were few and far in between. Thus, in the early-nineteenth century, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire, granted civil rights to the Jews of the vast empire, there was widespread rejoicing. Such an astonishing accomplishment was unknown to the Jews of Europe - to the Jews of practically any country for that matter - and many believed that this was a turning point in Jewish history, an event whereby Jews would be allowed to live and practice their religion in peace and harmony, without the ever-present threat of anti-semitism, hatred and repression. Many *Rabbonim* and lay leaders of the hundreds of Jewish communities expressed their profound gratitude and satisfaction over the turn of events, however, when the news reached Pressburg, the students of the holy **Chasam Sofer, R' Moshe Schreiber ZT"l**, found him in a saddened state, overcome with emotion, his eyes filled with tears. "*Rebbe*," they asked incredulously, "Why are you crying when the news is so good?"

R' Moshe lifted his red eyes to look at them. "Let me give you a *moshol* - parable, and maybe then you will understand. A king had a minister of whom he was very fond. This minister was a loyal subject, until one point when, for whatever reason, the minister joined a rebel group. The plot against the king was eventually foiled and he was arrested along with the other rebels and sentenced to death. However, because of their previously close relationship, the king mercifully commuted the minister's sentence to life-imprisonment, and even offered that he may eventually pardon him.

"The minister was thrown into a dungeon where he suffered from deplorable conditions. Lack of decent food and bedraggled clothing, his bare feet scraped the cold, stone floor. One thing, though, kept his spirit alive. He lived with the hope of a pardon from his former mentor, the king. And then, the day came when he was told that the king had sent several people to see him. His spirits soared, for he believed that this was the moment he'd been waiting for, the moment when he was to receive his long-awaited pardon. But when they came to him, they said, 'The king has sent you new clothes, a fine mattress, and instructed the jailer to give you better food.'

"The minister broke down crying. 'Why are you crying?' the men asked. 'Aren't you happy that the king is making your life here much more comfortable?'"

The Chasam Sofer sobbed a bit at this point, before he continued. "Just like that imprisoned minister, I, too, was hoping for a release from this bitter and harsh exile. It's about time that *Moshiach* should come