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שבת קודש פרשת ויזי

Shabbos Parshas Vayechi
ט"ז טבת תש"ע - January 2, 2010

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

טיב התבלין

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ויאמר השבעה לי וישבע לו וישתחו ישראל על ראש המטה וגו' (מז-לא) – חיזוק גדול הוא לחולה שהבורא נמצא מעליו

ונוכר אני בבן משפחתי שהיה תלמיד חכם וצדיק, **הגה"צ ר' צבי קובלסקי זצ"ל**, ופעם כשביקרתיו בימי חוליו ראיתי, שכאשר אנשים הביאו לו פתקאות וקוויטלאך להזכיר את עצמן לפניו, לקח את הפתקאות והיה שם אותם על ראש מיטתו, והסביר את מעשהו שלקח זאת מדברי רש"י וחז"ל הנ"ל, שהשכינה נמצאת למראשותיו של אדם חולה, ולכך היה נחשב לו ראשו כביכול כמו הכותל המערבי, ולכך הניח שם אתהקוויטלאך.

עוד למדנו מהנהגה זו, כמה צריך האדם לחיות עם אמונה חזקה מאוד בכל דברי חז"ל לממש, וכן רואים איך שחיק את עצמו בימי חוליו ובמה היתה נתונה מחשבתו, שחשב אז על השכינה הקדושה הנמצאת אצלו, וחשב איך יוכל על ידי חוליו לעזור ולרפאות אנשים אחרים, והכל משום שידע והואמין שהבורא לידו ומראשותיו.

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
נ"ל בישיבת הגר"צ קושלובסקי

ויחי יעקב בארץ מצרים שבע עשרה שנה ויהי ימי יעקב שני חייו וגו' (מז-כח) – ניצול החיים לזכות לחיים הנצחיים

'יראת ה' תוסיף ימים', שימיו נחשבים לו כשנים, אבל 'ושנות רשעים תקצרנה', שגם שנותיו אינם נחשבים לו יותר מימים מועטים. והו הפירוש, 'ויהימיעקב שני חייו', היינו שימיו נחשבו לוכשנים. ותירץ בעל **ה"כף החיים** באופן אחר, בהקדם מה דאיתא במשנה סוף עוקצין, 'עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להנחיל לכל צדיק וצדיק, שלש מאות ועשרה עולמות, שנאמר (משל ח') 'להנחיל אוהבי יש וגו'". ומבאר **ה'תורת חיים** (בבא בתרא קל"ד. ד"ה לקיים) מדוע דוקא מספר זה, 'שזאת משום שבתורה יש תר"ג מצות ושבע מצות בנינח כמספר כת"ר עליון, וכנגדן יש תר"ג עולמות, וכיון שקיים האדם אותם עליו לנחול עולמות, אבל כיון שהוא נשלם רק ידי אשתו יש לה ג"כ חלק במצוותיו, ולכן הם מתחלקים בהם, ש"ל לוש"י לאשתו, ולכן כתוב 'לכל צדיק וצדיק', היינו 'לאיש ואשתו'". ומבאר שעל האדם לנצל את חייו לקיים מצוותה ולזכות לש"י עולמות נצחיים.

ולפי זה הוא מבאר את הפסוק באופן חדש, 'ויהי ימי יעקב', היינו שניצל את כל ימיו באופן שיזכה ל**שני חייו**, שהר"ת שלמילים אלו הוא ש"ח, וביחד עם שני האותיות-ש"י, היינו כדי לזכות על ידיהם לש"י עולמות נצחיים.

רעיונות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת השי"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובשתון מאת

פרש"י על ראש המטה - הפך עצמו לצד השכינה, מכאן אמרו שהשכינה למעלה מראשותיו שלחולה עכ"ל.

מקור דברי רש"י הוא מהגמרא (מסכת שבת דף יב ע"ב). ולכאורה מה נפקאמינה בזה שהשכינה נמצאת למראשותיו של חולה? ונראה דמונח בזה חיזוק גדול לחולה, שכן יכל החולה לחשוב לעצמו שהבורא יתברך כועס עליו, וכל ייסוריו באו עליו משום שהקב"ה אינו אוהב אותו ואינו חפץ בטובתו.

לכן באו חז"ל ולימדונו שלא נכון הוא הדבר לחשוב כך, והא ראיא, שהשכינה נמצאת מראשותיו של האדם החולה, וכשיחשוב כך - לא תיחלש דעתו עליו, וידע שכל הקורה איתו וכל חוליו - הכל לטובתו הוא, והראייה, שהרי זוכה הוא להשראת השכינה, ולא עוד אלא שהשכינה נמצאת היא על ראשו ממש!

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

א'קשה האוה"ח הק', "למה הוצרך לומר שני חייו, ולא הספיק לומר ויהי ימי יעקב". ותירץ, 'ואולי, כי לצד שכל ימי יעקב לא נח ולא שקט, כי משנולד נולד שטנו-עשו אחיו, ועדיין לא שקעה שמשו של עשו עמד עליו לבן והוסיף להרע לו, ואחריו הוקם על צערה של דינה, ועוד לו ויבא רוגז - אבידת יוסף, הוא שאמר הכתוב 'ויחי יעקב בארץ מצרים שבע עשרה שנה', אלו היו חייו ולא השנים שקדמו להם, והסביר זאת באומרו 'ויהי ימי יעקב שני חייו', שרק המה נחשבים ימיו, כיון שרק בהם היה לו חיות ושמחה כראוי, והיינו 'ויהי ימי יעקב', פירוש אותם י"ז שנה נחשבים ימיו, כיון שהם היו 'שני חייו', שהיה לו בהם חיות ושמחה. אבל **ה'תפארת יונתן'** (מר' יונתן אייבשיץ זצ"ל) מבאר אחרת "נראה לבאר, דכתוב 'יראת ה' תוסיף ימים, ושנות רשעים תקצרנה', ופירושו הוא, שהצדיק בכל יום מתקן כמה עולמות ע"י עבודתו, וכשהיום יפנה נדמה אצלו כשנה, שתיקן כמה עולמות ע"י מצוותיו, ואצל הרשע הוא להיפך, שהשנה עוברת כשהוא מרשיע עוד ועוד, ואינו מתקן את נשמתו, אלא הוא רק אוכל ושותה ומתענג בתענוגי בשרים, ואינו מנצל את זמנו לקנות הנצחיות כראוי, ונמצא שאצלו נדמה שנה כימים ספורים, וגם כי יציקן, נחשבים לו שנותיו כימים מועטים, וזה שכתוב,

גמשל: The Ben Ish Chai ZT"l writes that the two sons of Yaakov, Shimon and Levi, killed out the entire male population of Shechem, and no one fought back or came after them. They believed in their strength and felt secure in

A SERIES IN HALACHAH LIVING A “TORAH” DAY
Halachos Pertaining to the “Torah” Table (53)

The Beracha of Shehakol: During a Bread Meal - Dessert. The *beracha* of המוציא made on bread which is eaten as a filler, exempts all foods that are eaten as fillers such as meat or fish. Desserts that are not eaten as a filler need their own *beracha*. Some people mistakenly think that this is only by a fruit dessert which requires the *beracha* of הפי. The *Halacha* is that even האדמה or שחל desserts also need their own *beracha*. Therefore, if one eats chocolate for dessert, or at any other time during the meal, he must say שחל, since it’s not being eaten as a filler. Similarly, an ice cream dessert needs a שחל. (There are some who say that ice cream is like drinks during the meal that do not need their own *beracha*.)

During a Meal - Coffee and Tea. During a bread meal, one does usually make a *beracha* on drinks. Drinks are considered part of the meal because eating causes somewhat of a thirst and drinking goes hand-in-hand along with the eating. The **Chayei Adam** rules that coffee or tea that one drinks after the meal before *bentching*, has the status of a dessert and requires a שחל. He views it, not as an accompanying item to the meal, but rather as an extraneous item to the meal which helps a person after eating to digest the finished meal. The **Mishna Berura** is unsure about this and suggests that one should first taste some of his drink sweetener and say שחל on it to exempt the coffee or tea.

הוא היה אומר ...

The Mirrer Mashgiach, R’ Yeruchem Levovitz ZT”L (Daas Torah) would say:

“‘*Unstable as water, do not take more.*’ The *Torah* does not usually speak in metaphors. However, Yaakov is teaching Reuven, and all of us, the evils of impulsivity. Just as water flows quickly, so is the behavior of an overly impulsive person who acts quickly without thinking. One who does not weigh the consequences of his actions, will make harmful mistakes which can cause much damage. The *Torah’s* metaphor of water serves as a constant reminder of the dangers of being impulsive, so when one sees water he will know that he must slow himself down.”

R’ Meir Shapiro (Lubliner Rov) would say:

The double language of remembering (פקד), is meant to teach us that a prospective redeemer must fulfill his mission in terms of a double redemption - physical as well as spiritual. If redemption is promised only in a physical sense, but *Torah* and *mitzvos* are not a part of it - this can be nothing more than a lie and a false prophet. *Klal Yisroel* cannot have a true *geulah* which does not contain a spiritual dimension.”

A Wise Man would say:

“Do you want to succeed? No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up!”

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the fact that they were protecting the honor of their sister, Dina. It was only many years later that Yaakov revealed the source of their strength and success: "בחרבי ובקשתי" - which the Targum translates as: “*With my prayers and beseeching.*”

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
רב וקהל אהבת ישראל, קליבלנד הייטס

Water. Making (or not making) שחל on water has some special *halachos* with contemporary applications. Water does not have a taste but still gives pleasure when drunk for thirst, and then requires a *beracha*. Even if one doesn’t have a real thirst but his palate enjoys the drink he says a *beracha*. However if one drinks for another purpose, such as to help him swallow a pill, he doesn’t say a *beracha*. If he drinks for two reasons; to enjoy and to swallow the pill, he says a *beracha*. If he takes a tasty drink to help him swallow a pill he does make a *beracha*. **When No Beracha is Made on Water.** Drinking to: **1)** help swallow food or a pill, **2)** keep a diet that calls for a certain amount of water per day, **3)** dislodge something stuck in his throat, **4)** relieve burning after eating hot food, **5)** help one urinate or have a bowel movement, **6)** help a nursing lady produce milk, **7)** prepare for certain medical inner examinations, **8)** remove a bitter taste from his mouth, **9)** remove a kidney stone from his body. In all of the above and similar cases when he has no intention to drink for palate enjoyment, he recites no *beracha* before or after. If one drinks before a strenuous activity or a fast day in order to not get thirsty later the **Daas Kedoshim** rules that no *beracha* is said.

Variant Cases When One Says a Beracha. If one drinks hot water, the **Eglei Tal** writes that there is always some pleasure and he must recite a *beracha*. If one drinks carbonated soda water and enjoys the bubbling water he says a *beracha* ⁽¹⁾.

(1) כל ההלכות הנוכרות למעלה על פי המשנה ברורה ופסקי תשובות סימן ר"ד עיין שם

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויקרא יעקב אל בניו ויאמר האספו ואגידה לכם את אשר יקרא אתכם באחרית הימים וגו' (מש-א)

The *Medrash* famously recounts how *Yaakov Avinu* gathered together all his children by his deathbed and prepared to give them his final blessings and instructions. This included a revelation of the end of time - the advent of *Moshiach* - when all the pain and sorrow of the future exiles would cease. However, at that moment the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) left him and he was unable to say what he wanted to say. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise, for such knowledge could have brought about an overwhelming despair to all future generations who would not live to see the ultimate redemption.

When the Nazi war machine began its *blitzkrieg* against London during World War II, civilian sectors of the city were being heavily bombed. Terror reigned throughout the city, for casualties were everywhere and no one knew who would be next. The Battle of Britain was long and drawn out and it took a heavy toll on the mental psyche of the population. Many moved out of the city to the countryside while others attempted to leave the country outright. The esteemed *Rov* and *Rosh Yeshivah*, **R' Elyah Lopian ZT"l**, having moved to London in 1925, was in no less danger than anyone else but he never considered leaving the people who turned to him on a daily basis for advice and consolation.

Near his home in London lived a certain widow and her orphaned children. No matter how heavily involved R' Elyah was in his countless responsibilities, he always found time for her. He would always receive her politely, listen to her with great patience, and offer her his advice. He had left standing instructions that whenever this woman or her children came to his house they were to be shown in immediately. Others could wait, but not this woman. He would always stop whatever he was doing or interrupt any meeting, conference or activity in which he was involved, in order to give her his full attention.

Early one Sunday morning, during the height of the incessant bombing, the widow who lived nearby came to R' Elyah's home in great anguish. She had an urgent matter to discuss with the *Rov* and, as always, she was immediately escorted in.

Without preamble, she burst out, "Rabbi, there is a ship leaving this Wednesday morning for South Africa," she wailed. "I am afraid for my children and myself. Do you think I should arrange for passage on that ship in the hope of saving our lives? The bombs are falling everywhere. Who knows if we will all be killed?" The widow was extremely agitated, barely able to face the burden of responsibility for the safety of her household at so frightening a time as this.

An unusual silence settled on the room. Finally, R' Elyah looked up, and with a reply totally out of character, spoke with words she had never before heard from him. "I'm sorry," he told her curtly, "I cannot think clearly and I don't know what to tell you. I don't have time now! Please come back later." Surprised, but with little recourse, the agitated woman left the house, her mind unsettled and fearful. A few hours later, she returned and was again ushered in to R' Elyah, but again he explained to her that she had come at a bad time, for he was in the midst of preparing his *shiur*. He could not focus on her inquiry at this moment and she needed to return at a later time when he could give her proposal serious thought.

She came twice more on that day, and five times on the following day, but amazingly, each time, R' Elyah just could not find the time to discuss the matter with her. When she was turned away several times again on the next day, Tuesday, she stopped coming. Without a clear response from R' Elyah, she gave up the idea of leaving for South Africa, for she would never have made a decision without R' Elyah's sanction.

The ship set sail for South Africa on schedule Wednesday morning, filled with people who hoped to be saved from the Nazi bombs. On Thursday, the news reported the terrible tragedy: the ship had been sunk by a German u-boat that had been lurking in unsecured water. There were no survivors. The widow who, along with her children, was saved from tragedy because of her absolute faith in R' Elyah, was Rebbetzin Sternbuch, the mother of the *Av Beis Din* in Jerusalem today, **R' Moshe Sternbuch Shlit"a**.

משל' למה הדבר דומה

ואני נתתי לכם שכם אחד על אחיך אשר לקחתי מיד האמרי בחרבי ובקשתי וגו' (מח-כב)

משל' A man was once walking in the woods. As he made his way through a tangled cluster of trees, he suddenly saw a huge grizzly bear coming right at him!

There was no time to run for the bear had already seen him and began charging directly at him. The man quickly looked about for some sort of protection. There was nothing for him to use and his situation appeared hopeless.

Then, he suddenly realized that he was holding his walking stick in his hand. He thought to himself, "If I hold out my stick to look like a gun, maybe this will scare the

the bear. Perhaps it had once seen a gun being shot and will run away from fright, knowing what it can do!"

As the bear roared and stretched out its body in full attack mode, the man pointed his stick directly at the bear and pretended to shoot. Suddenly, he heard the loud crack of a rifle and the bear collapsed to the ground in a heap.

The man screamed out, "Hurray, I did it!" He looked at his miracle stick which had amazingly turned into a gun. Of course, he never noticed the professional hunter high up in a tree, who had taken out the bear with one shot!

הכלילי עינים מיין ולבן שינים מחלב וגו' (מש-יב)

TORAH GEMS

On this *posuk*, "הכלילי עינים מיין ולבן שינים מחלב," the *gemara* (כתובות קיא:) interprets as follows: "*The entire assembly of Israel said before Hakadosh Boruch Hu, 'Master of the World, light us up with Your eyes (happy face) - which is greater than the finest wine; reveal to us Your teeth (with a smile) - and this is better for us than milk.' This is proof of the words of Rav Yochanan who said, 'It is better to whiten one's teeth to his friend (to smile and show one's teeth) than to give him milk to drink.'*"

How important is a simple smile? *Chazal* teach us that all we need from the Almighty is a happy face and a smile. This is greater than the finest wine and the freshest milk! The encouragement that a person receives when he sees his friend smiling at him is immeasurable. How hard is it to make another Jew happy? Not very hard. Just smile!

A man once came to the holy **Baba Sali, Rabbeinu Yisroel Abuchatzera ZT"l**, to request a blessing for his son. In an effort to impress the *Chacham*, the man mentioned what a great *Talmid Chacham* his son was. He even told over a beautiful answer to a difficult question in the Rambam that his son had come up with.

The Baba Sali nodded when the man had finished and smiled in approval. The father beamed with pride and the *Tzaddik* offered a heartfelt blessing for the son.

When the man had left, the Baba Sali's son-in-law asked him about the Rambam. "The son seemed to have left out two words in the Rambam, and in fact, there was never a question to begin with." The son-in-law checked and it was true! "So why didn't you say something?" he asked.

The Baba Sali was surprised. "This man was so happy and proud of his son. I should take away his happiness?"

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

אחרות

דרגה יתירה

ויברכם ביום ההוא לאמר כך יברך ישראל לאמר ישימך אלקים כאפרים וכמנשה (מח-כ)

Parshas Vayechi is the *parsha* of *berachos*. It is the final words of a father to his children expressing his love, advice and blessing to each one individually according to his needs. "יחי" means to live, and we may add that the purpose of living is certainly to bless others and to count our blessings. From the first words of Yaakov we can learn what is the prerequisite of acquiring a *beracha*. We know that a *beracha* must be על something - meaning that a person has to make some effort in order to help himself so that the *beracha* be fulfilled. The *Bnei Yaakov* are told, "GATHER TOGETHER and hear" and we too are meant to internalize this message. If you want a *beracha* for yourself, your family, your community, the key is to GATHER TOGETHER. Make every effort to live with *achdus*, with true compassion and brotherly love.

When Yaakov blessed his grandsons, Ephraim and Menashe, he said, "*Through YOU all of Israel will be blessed.*" In many Jewish homes on Friday night, the father blesses his sons to be like Ephraim and Menashe, and not like the *Avos*, Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov, because more than anything else a father wants his children to love each other, and live with *achdus*. This is his greatest *nachas* - whereas his greatest *tzaar* is when his children fight! When Yaakov switched his hands and gave Ephraim the older son's *beracha* and Menashe the younger son's *beracha*, there was no jealousy between them! There was only pure love and peace between them. Their *achdus* was the source of their blessing's fruition.

May we all be wise enough to promote peace above all and may all the blessings we receive come true.

ויראו אחי יוסף כי מת אביהם ויאמרו לו ישתמנו יוסף והשב ישיב לנו את כל הדעה וכו' (ג-טו)

After Yaakov's death, Yosef stopped inviting his brothers to eat with him, which they construed as signaling a new attitude towards them now that their father was no longer alive. They reasoned that the entire ordeal that Yosef had put them through did not compensate for what Yosef saw as their intention to kill him, and their atonement was not yet complete. Therefore, they exclaimed, "לו" - "*Halevai (Let it be) that Yosef hate us.*" If Yosef is correct that we are guilty on this account, let him hate us and thereby afford us an opportunity to clean our slates for eternity. (**R' Zev Leff**)

Yosef, however, comforted them and explained that he did not think that they had intended to kill him. He stopped inviting them because while Yaakov was alive, Yosef sat at the end of the table where Yaakov placed him. But now that Yehudah had received the blessing of monarchy, Yosef felt it was improper for him to continue sitting at the head of the table. As the viceroy of Egypt, however, it would have been a slight to the Pharaoh if he did not sit at the head of the table. To avoid this problem, he stopped inviting his brothers.

Nevertheless, a blemish remained from the sale of Yosef precisely because Yosef told his brothers that they did not need to ask for his forgiveness. **R' Dovid Kronglass ZT"l**, (*Mashgiach* of *Ner Yisroel*), points out that a beneficial outcome is by itself no proof that atonement or forgiveness is not needed. The intention to sin, even where no sin was committed, still requires forgiveness. For this very reason, *Chazal* tell us, the great R' Akiva would weep. R' Akiva was one of the עשרה הרוגי מלכות (Ten Martyrs), whose deaths were the final atonement for the blemish left from the sale of Yosef. R' Akiva wept in premonition of the punishment yet to come because of Yosef's failure to extract full atonement from his brothers.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO