

A Taste of Text: Source based learning for Shabbat

This weekly sheet is brought to you by Rabbi Dr. Moshe Freedman of Northwood United Synagogue in conjunction with Shapell's/Darché Noam

PARSHAT VAYEISHEV

DVAR TORAH: A KISS ON THE FOREHEAD, BY RABBI YITZCHAK HIRSHFELD

We read in Bereishit 37:25: "And they (Yosef's brothers) sat down to eat bread. They lifted their eyes and saw, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilad, their camels bearing spices, balsam and lotus, on their way to Egypt." Rashi wonders: Why is it important that we be informed of the exact nature of the merchandise they were carrying? And Rashi answers – to teach the reward of the righteous. Indeed, such a caravan of Arabs would normally be transporting foul smelling substances, such as kerosene and tar, but for Yosef's sake they were bearing sweet fragrances.

Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz asks: What was the point? Yosef was experiencing the darkest moment imaginable, to be sold into life-long slavery in the most profane and perverted environment. Would he care? Would he take notice if it was spices or kerosene he was inhaling?

And Rav Chaim answers: The miracle was intended to perform a far greater function than merely ensuring a pleasant traveling experience. The miracle was performed to let Yosef know that he was not abandoned. Yosef would surely realize that the Arabs were carrying an unusual load. He would recognize the Divine caressing hand, the Divine smile, warm and reassuring, which was accompanying him, even in the darkest moment.

Rav Chaim's message is relevant to us as well. *Hashgachah pratit*, personal Divine Providence, is all about us. But it is not only there to provide us with what we need. Sometimes Hashem's guiding hand is made apparent by providing us with something which we *don't* need, the kinds of things which, in Rav Chaim's words, are like the kiss on the forehead bestowed by a caring parent on his beloved child.

Our *avodah* (*work*) is to approach our service of Hashem with the child-like innocence, the *temimus* (simple innocence) and devotion which will enable us to experience and appreciate those precious moments when Hashem is giving us our own little kiss on the forehead.

SOURCE GUIDE: INSIDE-OUTSIDE, BY RABBI SHAYA KARLINSKY

This week's source guide, prepared by Rabbi Karlinsky, was inspired by a *ma'arachah* (which develops an idea through a wide range of sources) of his rebbe, Harav Chaim Goldvicht, zt"l. Rabbi Karlinsky recently gave it over to the students at Shapell's.

<p>1. Bereishith 37 (5) Yosef dreamed a dream and he told his brothers; and they continued to hate him ... (7) And behold, we were making sheaves in the field and my sheaf rose up and stood; and behold, your sheaves surrounded it and bowed down to my sheaf.</p>	<p>1. ספר בראשית פרק לו (ה) וַיִּחְלֹם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיַּגִּד לְאֶחָיו וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שְׂנֹא אֹתוֹ: ... (ז) וַהֲנִה אֲנַחְנוּ מְאֻלְמִים אֲלֻמִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וַהֲנִה קִמָּה אֲלֻמְתֵי וְגַם נִצְבָה וַהֲנִה תִסְבְּיָנָה אֲלֵמָּ תִיכֶם וְתִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְאֻלְמְתֵי:</p>
<p>2. Breishith Rabbah 84:10 "And Yosef dreamed, and he said... Behold we are binding sheaves." You gather produce and I gather produce. Yours decays and mine endures.</p>	<p>2. מדרש רבה בראשית פרשה פד:י (י) ויחלום יוסף חלום ויאמר ... והנה אנחנו מאלמים אלומים אתם כונסין פירות ואני כונס פירות שלכם רקובים ושלי עומד:</p>

1-2. What is the meaning of Yosef's claim that when they are "gathering produce in the field," that of the brothers' decays, while his endures?

<p>3. Yalkut Shimoni, Breishith, Ch. 29:125 I will work for you for seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter.... During the entire night, he was calling "Rachel, Rachel," and she (Leah) responded to him. In the morning: "And behold, she was Leah." He said to her: What is this, swindler, the daughter of a swindler! Didn't I call "Rachel" in the night, and you responded to me? She said: Is there a teacher that doesn't have students? Didn't your father shout to you "Eisav" and you responded to him?</p>	<p>3. ילקוט שמעוני בראשית כט:קכה אעבדך שבע שנים ברחל בתך הקטנה... כל ההוא ליליא היה צוח לה רחל רחל והיא עניא ליה. בצפרא והנה היא לאה א"ל מה רמייתא בת רמאי לאו בליליא הוה קרינא רחל ואת ענית לי א"ל אית ספר דלית ליה תלמידים לא כן הוה אבוך צוח לך עשו ואת עני ליה:</p>
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3. Leah's response to Yakov's serious accusation seems very childish. How does her response justify what she did?

<p>4. T.B. Bava Bathra 123a "And Leah's eyes were soft" ... She heard people speaking at the crossroads "Rivkah has two sons and Lavan has two daughters. The eldest to the older one, and the younger to the younger one," and she cried till her eyelids dropped.</p>	<p>4. תלמוד בבלי בבא בתרא קכג. ועיני לאה רכות ... שהיתה שומעת על פרשת דרכים בני אדם שהיו אומרים שני בנים יש לה לרבקה שתי בנות יש לו ללבן גדולה לגדול וקטנה לקטן... והיתה בוכה עד שנשרו ריסי עיניה:</p>
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4. Why would idle chatter of people on the street lead her to cry? Was there something fundamental in the proposed match?

<p>5. Breishith 25:27 And the lads grew up; and Eisav was one who knew hunting, a man of the field, and Yakov was a man of simplicity, sitting in tents.</p>	<p>5. ספר בראשית פרק כה (כז) וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ יָדַע צֹדֵד אִישׁ שְׂדֵה וְיִצְחָק אִישׁ תֵּם יֹשֵׁב אֶהְלִים:</p>
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5. Eisav is identified as a "man of the field." And in Yosef's dream, they are gathering sheaves "in the field." What is the significance of "the field?"

There are two systems by which service of G-d can be performed. The basic and primary system can be called "avodath pnim," service performed "inside," within the confines of holiness. This would include prayer, Torah study, ritual mitzvot, et al. The structure and purpose of each act is defined within parameters of sanctity, and does not exist outside of those parameters. The second system can be called "avodath chutz," activities performed "outside," beyond of the parameters of sanctity. This includes all the daily, mundane activities necessary to run our daily lives, as we interact with the physical environment. This service is performed through the implementation of the verse *בכל דרכיך דעהו*, connecting to G-d through every action that we do in building and maintaining a physical world. If we succeed in utilizing it for elevated purposes, commonplace activities are transformed and elevated, being brought "inside," within the boundaries of sanctity (see Ramchal, Derech Hashem).

Yakov, "a man of simplicity, sitting in tents," had the destiny and responsibility for the avodath pnim. The term "tents" represents the insulated environment of sanctity. The contrast to this environment is termed "field," representing an environment outside the boundaries of inherently sanctified activities. This was the role for which Eisav was destined, engaging with the outside world in ways that would sanctify it through his daily activities. Yakov, through his avodath pnim, was to serve as the spiritual anchor connecting Eisav to the world of sanctity, nourishing and enabling his worldly activities to be brought "inside."

Yitzchak saw Eisav's potential. Rivkah saw Eisav's reality. She knew that his activities in the "field" would in fact be completely disconnected from sanctity, utilizing the world purely for his own needs and interests. She realized that the avodath chutz would also need to be entrusted to Yakov, and she arranged for him to receive the blessings that had been reserved for Eisav. Yakov became responsible for both systems of service.

In the original plan, Rachel was to be Yakov's primary wife, the help-mate and mother of the role of avodath pnim. Leah was to play the role of the wife and mother of the avodath chutz. Her crying was due to the realization that Eisav was not going to perform his role.

When Yakov assumed the additional role of avodath chutz, there was a need for him to have an additional wife who would serve as a help-mate, spouse and mother for this additional responsibility. While Leah's original role was to be the help-mate for the avodath chutz, when Rachel allowed Leah to become Yakov's first wife, she transferred to her the primary role of avodath pnim. When Yakov accused Leah of having swindled him, her response was that Yakov had done the same to his father. Taking the blessings that were associated with the additional system of service created his need for two wives.

We therefore find the children of Leah associated with avodath pnim. Levi, served in the Temple and were teachers of Torah; Yehudah was the tribe of judges; Yissachar was the primary tribe of Torah study. Even Zvulun's business activities were not directed at bringing the business world in to the realm of sanctity, but simply to serve as a partner and resource to enable Yissachar to continue his Torah study. The imperative nature of those activities in support of Torah rendered those activities as essentially ones of pnim.

Yosef, on the other hand, goes down to Egypt, and interacts with the most mundane, even degenerate environment, elevating it and extracting from it the sparks of holiness and sanctity.

This highlights the fundamental dispute between the children of Leah, represented by Levi and Yehuda, against Yosef, a dispute, we should note, that persists to the present day. What is the superior method of service of G-d: avodath pnim, where every activity is inherently sanctified, performed in the protected environment of holiness; or avodath chutz, where interaction with the outside world, engagement in physical and mundane activities can be sanctified, elevated, and brought in to the realm of holiness?

Each has pros and cons. Avodath pnim takes place in a safe, protected environment. And being built on activities legislated by our eternal Torah, it remains forever. But it is limited in scope, for only those legislated activities are true service of G-d. And one who is not properly equipped to handle challenges that arise outside the confines of the "tent" will fail.

Avodath chutz presents unlimited possibilities of service, for every situation has the potential to become a sanctified activity, expanding beyond limited boundaries of sanctity. But this type of service is not eternal, available to us only when we are bound by limitations of a material world. Additionally, one not properly rooted in and connected to the core of spirituality cannot succeed. It is imperative that one involved in avodath chutz have previously built a foundation of avodath pnim, or at least be nourished by it. So Yakov had to spend fourteen years studying with Shem v'Eiver (pnim) before he could succeed during his twenty two years with Lavan (chutz). Yosef was the primary recipient of Yakov's Torah, as the Midrash teaches us: All that Yakov learned from Shem v'Eiver he transmitted to Yosef (Breishith Rabban 84:8). This was a prerequisite for Yosef's success in the challenges of avodath chutz.

Yosef's claim to the brothers of the superiority of avodath chutz over avodath pnim is illustrated in his dream by the endurance of the produce being gathered in the field, outside the protective environment of the "tent." When the brothers leave the confines of that "tent," the produce decays, the spiritual accomplishments they attempt are not successful. (Source 2). Only Yosef has the ability to reap produce of endurance. This is graphically illustrated in source 6:

<p>6. Yalkut Shimoni Breishith 38:145 “And Yehuda saw her, and thought she was a harlot”... Rebbe Yochanan said: He attempted to pass by, and G-d summoned an angel who is charge of desire. [The angel] said to him: “Where are you going, Yehuda? From where will kings arise? From where will redeemers arise?” “And he detoured to her on the road” unwillingly and not for his benefit.</p>	<p>6. ילקוט שמעוני בראשית לה:קמה, מדרש רבה בראשית פרשה פה פסקה ח ויראה יהודה ויחשבה לזונה ... אמר ר' יוחנן ביקש לעבור וזימן לו הקב"ה מלאך שהוא ממונה על התאוה א"ל להיכן אתה הולך יהודה מהיכן מלכים עומדים מהיכן גואלים עומדים. ויט אליה אל הדרך בעל כרחו שלא בטובתו:</p>
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When Yehuda passes Tamar in the guise of a harlot, he needed to quickly distance himself, avoiding any interaction. It was only because of transcendent, Messianic needs that he was “forced” in to a confrontation, and then was not able to resist the temptation. Yosef, on the other hand (source 7) was able to confront temptation in the most direct way and resist it.

<p>7. T.B. Sotah 36b And he went in to the house to do attend to his work (Breishith 39:11)... (referring to) his needs (intimate relations, Rashi).</p>	<p>7. תלמוד בבלי סוטה לו: ויבא הביתה לעשות מלאכתו רב ושמואל ... וחד אמר לעשות צרכיו: רש"י סוטה דף לו: צרכיו תשמיש:</p>
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Only a Yosef could face such a dangerous confrontation with the material and successfully transform it into spiritual accomplishment. It is interesting to note that the final conflict with Eisav will be waged by Yosef, (source 8) who is the tribe equipped to oppose the corrupted form of avodath chutz.

<p>8. T.B. Bava Bathra 123b Yakov saw that the descendants of Eisav will only be given over in the hands of the descendants of Yosef, as it is written “And the house of Yakov will be fire, and the house of Yosef a flame, and the house of Eisav straw...”</p>	<p>8. תלמוד בבלי בבא בתרא קכג: ראה יעקב אבינו שאין זרעו של עשו נמסר אלא ביד זרעו של יוסף שנאמר והיה בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש וגו':</p>
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The ideological conflict between the brothers can be seen in many periods of Jewish history, including our own: isolation vs integration – what is the correct path of the Jew?

In truth, the different paths in service of G-d are the matrix of the Jewish nation, represented and implemented by twelve tribes, all descendants of Yakov. Both on an individual level, as well as on a national level, the two kinds of service must coexist and complement each other. The individual needs to have the ability to engage in avodath chutz, requiring a rooting in avodath pnim. And the nation needs groups devoted to avodath chutz, who are connected and nourished by those involved in avodath pnim. The ultimate vision of the Jewish nation is described in Yehezkel (37:16,17,19, the Haftorah of Parshath Vayigash) bringing the “wood” of Yehuda together with the “wood” of Yosef, uniting them in the service of G-d, truly a picture of Jewish unity.

**This issue is dedicated in memory of
 Faige bat Yitzchak Isaac (Frances Gordon), ז"ל**

*This publication is compiled by the staff and Rabbonim at **Shapells/Yeshivat Darché Noam** for men and **Midreshet Rachel v'Chaya Seminary** for women in Jerusalem. Find out more about the **married couples' programme** and the **Pathways Israel** and **Pathways Plus** programmes offered at www.darchenoam.org +972-2-651-1178, 5 Beit Hakerem Street, Jerusalem.*

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