

Parashas
Vayeishev

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כ' כסלו תשפ"ה
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י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הר"צ
רבי גמליאל הכהן
רבינובין שליט"א

טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

טיב המערכת

נכאת וצרי ולט

Spices and balsam and myrrh

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In a small village, there lived an old man who had a young son and a horse. One day, the horse ran away from the stable. The villagers came to the old man and said, "How terrible this is!" The old man replied, "How do you know it's terrible?" The next day, the horse returned, and along with it came an entire herd of wild horses. The old man and his son opened the stable doors, and all the horses entered. The villagers came to the old man and said, "How wonderful this is!" The old man replied, "And who said it's wonderful?" The day after that, the son tried to ride one of the wild horses and broke his leg. The villagers came to the old man and said, "How terrible this is!" The old man replied, "Who said it's terrible?" Later, soldiers came to the village and conscripted all the young men into the army, but they didn't take the old man's son because his leg was broken. Many of those soldiers who were taken never returned alive from the war. So, how can we truly know what is good and what is bad?

Yosef HaTzaddik was sent by his father 'לראות את שלום אחיו' - to 'see the welfare of his brothers,' (37:14) and on the way, "a tragedy befell him." At first glance, it seemed like something bad had happened to him. But the holy Torah tells us about the Arabs who took him (37:25): 'וגמליהם נושאים נכאת וצרי ולט' - 'And their camels were carrying spices, balsam, and myrrh.' Rashi explains, 'Why does the Torah specify what they were carrying? To inform us of the reward of the righteous: it is not customary for Arabs to carry anything but tar and pitch, which have a foul smell, but for Yosef, spices were prepared, so he would not suffer from a bad odor.' The question naturally arises: At the time when Yosef was sold into slavery, would he really care whether the Arabs' camels carried tar or spices? Would he even notice the difference? What difference does it make to him—tar or spices? He just wants to go home, to his father!

Hashem Yisbarach wanted to show Yosef HaTzaddik: "I am with you. Even if you think something bad is happening to you, know that this is not the case. Perhaps, if you look deeper, you will see, smell, and understand that this is not tar; it is spices."

Similarly, when we feel something bad is happening to us, let us always remember that behind everything stands our Father, who only wants what is best for us. No harm ever comes from Him, Yisbarach. And if we look closely, we will see that "it is not tar, it is spices."

Tiv HaTorah- Vayeishev

טיב הפרשה

מיעוט ההשתדלות בערך הבטחון

Minimizing Effort as a Principle of Trust in Hashem

The officer in charge of the cupbearers did not remember Yosef, and he forgot him. 40:23

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Rashi explains: 'And he forgot him – since Yosef depended on him to remember him, he had to remain in prison two more years, as it says (Tehillim 40:5) מבטחו 'אשרי הגבר אשר שם ה' – 'Fortunate is the man who has placed his trust in Hashem and has not turned to the arrogant ones.' This means 'and did not rely on Egypt' which is called arrogant ones (Yeshaya 30:7).

At first glance, it is difficult to grasp the essence of Rashi's words, as they seem contradictory. Initially, Rashi states that Yosef was punished and had to remain imprisoned for an additional two years because he placed his trust in the chief butler. However, he then cites a verse to support his explanation: "Fortunate is the man who has placed his trust in Hashem, and has not turned to the arrogant" (Tehillim 40:5), attributing it to Yosef, who did not place his trust in Egypt, referred to as "arrogance." How can this serve as proof when it seems to be a contradiction instead?

However, a closer analysis of Rashi's precise wording reveals the profound depth of his commentary. Rashi does not explicitly state, "because he trusted in the chief butler to remember him." This leaves room to interpret that the trust being referred to is not necessarily in the chief butler, but rather in HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself. Rashi, in his concise style, may be speaking elliptically, as if to say: "because he placed his trust in Yisbarach." This explanation aligns with the principle that brevity is sometimes used to convey what is self-evident. For example, when people say, "they are awaiting His salvation," it is clear that the reference is to Hashem, as only He has the power to deliver salvation. Similarly, when it is stated, "he placed his trust in Him," the implicit meaning is that the trust is directed toward Heaven.

However, Yosef believed that in addition to his trust in Hashem, it was appropriate for him to make some effort (*hishtadlus*), as Hashem Yisbarach desires human effort as well. Yosef reasoned that it was no coincidence that Hashem had arranged for him to encounter the chief butler—it must have been an opportunity provided by Hashem to allow him to take action through this

means. Thus, in Yosef's understanding, his effort was an integral part of his faith and trust in Hashem, as he believed that this effort was itself part of what Hashem desired from him. Based on this, Rashi's words can be interpreted as follows: "Because Yosef placed his trust in Hashem, combined with his effort to ensure he would be remembered." In other words, Yosef believed that his trust in Hashem was intertwined with making some effort so that he would remain in his Creator's memory and merit salvation.

However, the truth is that Yosef did not need to make any effort at all. Due to his exceptional righteousness and closeness to Hashem Yisbarach, he had already achieved a high level of trust (*bitachon*). This trust alone would have sufficed to bring about his salvation. Since this was the case, the additional effort Yosef made was considered a shortcoming in his trust, and for this, he was punished with an additional two years in prison. This also explains Rashi's proof from the *posuk* in Tehillim, which describes Yosef as placing his trust in Hashem and not in the Egyptians. Accordingly, Yosef was punished only for the two extra years because his trust was fundamentally in Hashem. Had he placed his trust fully in the Egyptian chief butler instead, his punishment would have been far more severe—and who knows if he would have ever achieved freedom at all? By the way, it is fitting to quote what is written in the *sefer* "Likutei Mahara" by Rebbe Aharon of Karlin, (Parashas Mikeitz, regarding the *posuk* (וייהי מקץ)), which explains how Yosef rectified this shortcoming after he was released from the pit.

His words are worth quoting, as they provide comfort regarding all spiritual failings. Divine Providence ensures that a person is given the ability to rectify their mistakes. Here are his words: "It is written in the holy Zohar (Part II, page 134): 'There is an end (*ketz*) and there is an end,' meaning that *ketz hayamin* ('the end of days') is from the side of goodness, while *ketz hayamim* ('the end of days') is from the side of impurity. It is known that when Yosef interpreted the dream of the

chief butler, he was tested in the trial of trust: Would his trust in Hashem alone be strong enough to save him from the pit? Because he faltered even slightly in this test and relied on the chief butler, saying, 'But remember me when it is well with you' (Bereishis 40:14), the *ketz hayamim* from the side of impurity had dominion over him, causing him to remain in the pit for an additional two years. This is the meaning of the verse, 'And it came to pass at the end (*miketz*) of two full years'—specifically referring to this delay."

"It is the way of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, that when a righteous person is tested and does not *chalilah* entirely withstand the test, and the righteous person deeply regrets not having passed the test, Hashem tests him again in the same matter, but this time with an even greater challenge."

Thus, when Yosef HaTzaddik realized that his previous actions were improper and deeply regretted them, Heaven immediately arranged for him to face a greater test, in the very same area of trust. This time, Yosef was summoned to stand before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and interpret his dream. If, *chas v'shalom*, Yosef had even subtly hinted at his personal situation to Pharaoh, he would have lost everything, as this test

was far greater than the first. Now, he stood before the king himself.

However, Yosef HaTzaddik maintained his course, strengthened his heart with unwavering trust in God, and faced this second test like a pillar of iron. He refrained from making even the slightest allusion to his own plight before the king. His trust in Hashem was absolute—he was certain that Hashem would help him.

At that very moment, all aspects of the negative forces (*kelipot*) associated with *ketz hayamim* ("the end of days" from the side of impurity) fell away and were distanced from him entirely.

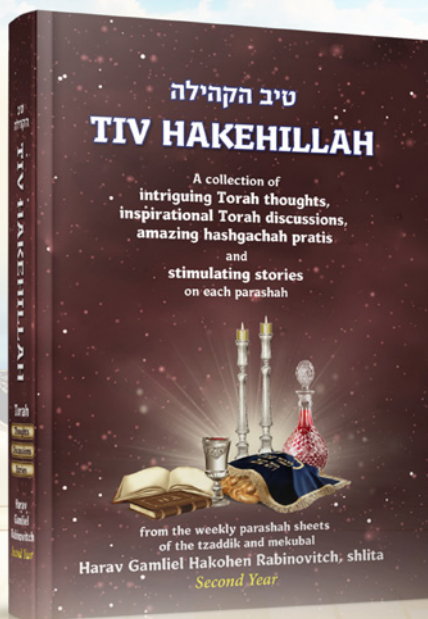
This is what the *posuk* states (Bereishis 41:38): "וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל עֲבָדָיו" - "And Pharaoh said to his servants..." Pharaoh, who is referred to as the head of the *kelipot* (impure forces), addressed his evil forces, saying: "Can we find anyone like this?" If you find a man whose trust is solely in Hashem Yisbarach, without any reliance on flesh and blood, you must know that this is "a man in whom the spirit of G-d is present." Therefore, distance yourselves from him, for you have no permission to approach him."

It emerges from all that was said that *hishtadlus* is sometimes a mitzvah and sometimes a sin, and everyone must determine for himself how much

hishtadlus he is required to do. In general, the greater the *bitachon* the less *hishtadlus* is needed, as told about the Baal Shem Tov who once needed money, and for *hishtadlus* he went to knock on the window of a supporter and left. The man realized that it was none other than the Baal Shem Tov, and he ran after him to see what he wanted. The Baal Shem Tov told him he needed money, and the man asked why he did not wait for the man to come out? The Baal Shem Tov replied that for his *hishtadlus* he needed no more than this, and since he did what he had to, he left.

It is also told regarding Rebbe Zusha of Anapoli, that he did nothing for *hishtadlus*, rather, he would only say a few words, "Zusha is hungry!" Thus, the amount of *hishtadlus* is different for each person based on his *bitachon*.

Enhance your Shabbos table
with the Torah lessons and stories of
Harav Gamliel Hakohen Rabinovitch, shlita



טיב ההשגרה

It was about 15 years ago, on my 20th birthday. My spiritual state was at a low point—I was wandering in the material world but yearning for something spiritual to hold on to. It had to be a commitment I could integrate into my daily life.

After much thought, a brilliant idea popped into my mind: **the mikveh**. After all, I take a shower every day, so why not purify myself spiritually at the same time? That way, at the very least, I wouldn't feel entirely disconnected, and maybe I would even merit some clarity and grow closer to Hashem.

I decided to follow through with this idea. Not a week passed, and my friends were planning a trip for *bein hazmanim* and wanted to spend Shabbos in the *yeshev* of Aloni HaBashan. I told them I was willing to give up good food and a comfortable bed, but **without a mikveh, I wasn't coming!** After some inquiries, they assured me there was a mikveh there, and it would not be a problem.

Shabbos morning arrived. I grabbed my towel and headed to the mikveh, but to my surprise, the door was locked. Frustrated, I returned to my friend who had made the inquiries and confronted him. He came back with an apologetic tone, explaining that the Rav of the settlement usually opens the mikveh for those who want to immerse, but this particular Shabbos, there was an unusual issue, and he absolutely could not open it. Of course, I was deeply upset. Had I known this, I would not have joined them. Left with no choice, I went to pray Shacharis, while my friends tried to calm me down, saying, "Why are you so hard on yourself? You're in a situation beyond your control! Your worries won't magically open a mikveh!"

But my heart was not at peace. How could I abandon such an important commitment?

As soon as Tefillah ended, I began searching for a spring or any water source. I asked everyone I could, but each time, the answer was negative. Finally, in complete despair, I encountered an old man and asked him, "By any chance, do you remember where there might be a spring in the area?"

He replied, "There isn't a spring in the immediate area, but you might try walking in a straight line from the cowshed. I seem to recall there's a water source somewhere there, but I'm not sure."

I calculated that to stay within the *techum Shabbos*, I could take up to 900 steps. I resolved to try. At step 700, there was no sign of water anywhere in sight. At step 890, I decided, with a heavy heart, to turn back. But then I told myself, "I'll complete the full 900 steps."

Just as I took the 900th step, I heard the sound of a frog croaking. I looked around and found myself standing on a broken roof, and in the corner was a circular opening, just wide enough for my body to enter comfortably. Beneath it were cold, crystal-clear waters, the likes of which I had never seen.

Overwhelmed with emotion at this incredible *hashgacha pratit*, I immersed in the water—a *tevilah* I will never forget.

This experience taught me a profound lesson: **"One who seeks to purify themselves is given Divine assistance."**

צ.ש.ח.

טיב המעשיות

The Greek's Battle Against Torah

יְיָ מִתְּתִיָּהוּ... כְּשֶׁעָמְדָה מַלְכוּת יוֹן הַרְשָׁעָה עַל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁכִּיחַם תּוֹרָתְךָ... וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים עָמַדְתָּ לָהֶם בְּעֵת צָרָתָם... מְסַרְתָּ... וְהָשָׁעִים בְּיַד צְדִיקִים וְזָדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תּוֹרָתְךָ

In the days of Mattityahu... when the wicked Greek kingdom stood against Your people Yisrael to make them forget Your Torah... And You, in Your abundant mercy, stood by them in their time of trouble... and You delivered... the wicked into... (the hands of those who are occupied in Your Torah...) (Al Hanissim

The decrees of the wicked Greek kingdom, as revealed by *Chazal* in their Divine wisdom, were aimed at one central goal: "to make them forget Your Torah." This was the ultimate intent of the spiritual impurity of Greece. And when there is no engagement in Torah the inevitable result is "to cause them to abandon the statutes of Your will." Without Torah, the spiritual oxygen of the Jew is cut off. His spiritual soul ceases to pulse until it fades and disappears into the darkness of the heart.

The spiritual spark, the Divine portion from above that lies at the root of the pure soul, becomes buried within and covered by layers of desires and indulgences, *chas veshalom*, by corrupted and distorted *middos*, and all other maladies that destroy the soul from within.

This was precisely the Greeks' goal. As explicitly stated in the Mishnah Berurah at the beginning of the laws of Chanukah (*Orach Chaim* 670:6), quoting the Levush, the essence of the Greek kingdom's decrees and Yisrael's salvation was rooted in this battle over Torah. Examine this teaching carefully and reflect on each of his holy words.

The spiritual impurity of Greece was aimed at making us forget Hashem's Torah. Without Torah there can be no Jew and no Judaism. As the righteous have taught, the evil inclination, *the old and foolish king*, will permit a Jew nearly everything—even enthusiasm in prayer or acts of *chesed*—so long as he avoids studying a folio of Gemara. For the moment a Jew internalizes and injects Gemara into his heart and soul, he repels and dissolves the grip of the evil inclination.

Thus, with Divine justice, measure for measure, those wicked Greeks were delivered "into the hands of those who study Your Torah." During Chanukah, the spark of the Oral Torah began to shine anew, filling the hearts of Yisrael with Torah as the Creator commanded us, "to be occupied in the words of Torah" with study and understanding. When one toils to comprehend learning deeply, one will taste the sweetness and truth of the Torah understood to its full extent.

By doing so, Jews quench their thirsty souls with the elixir of life, "Toras chayim"—a Torah learned with joy, comprehension, and heartfelt effort. This Torah, a true *etz chaim* (tree of life), has been planted deep within us.

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Obvilious to the Danger

Rav Shalom Schwadron, *zt"l*, the revered Maggid of Yerushalayim, recounted that during the fierce battles raging in the streets of the holy city, when the shells of the Jordanian Legion flew fearsomely over the homes of the Jewish people, causing loss of life, extensive damage, and above all, immense fear and panic from deafening explosions, he set out one morning with great *messirus nefesh* to attend *Shacharis* in the *shul*, determined not to miss *tefillah* with a *tzibbur* (davening with a *minyan*).

This was after a bitter and harrowing night, one of the darkest nights of the war when danger loomed outside, the sword devoured lives, and terror gripped homes. It was a night of relentless shelling and unceasing bombardment.

Upon arriving at the *shul*, he found only a few good Jews present—men who had never missed *davening* with a *minyan*. They were waiting for ten men to gather so they could quickly pray and return to the safety of the shelters.

In the corner of the *shul*, Rav Shalom saw his friend and colleague, Rav Yeshayah Wingotz *zt"l*, sitting bent over his Gemara, learning with sweetness and delight that made him oblivious to the war outside. It was as though there were no bombs, no shells, no chaos—only the Gemara before him, which he studied with a melodious tune.

Rav Shalom was astonished by this sublime scene. How was it possible to forget the turmoil and ignore the war and chaos that enveloped the city? Even more astonishing was that Rav Yeshayah appeared to be studying intensely, with great focus and calm, completely immersed in the discussions of Abaye and Rava, as though he were in a different world—the world of Torah.

Approaching Rav Yeshayah with emotion, Rav Shalom greeted him with a heartfelt “Good morning” and asked him innocently how he had managed during the dreadful night.

“It wasn’t so bad,” Rav Yeshayah replied with a smile.

“How can you say that?” wondered Rav Shalom. “I and my family couldn’t close our eyes the entire night. We wandered like sleepwalkers, shaken by the deafening noise and the shells falling around us.”

“I’m surprised at you, Rav Shalom,” Rav Yeshayah gently rebuked him. “From a *talmid chacham* like you, I wouldn’t have expected such a reaction. Why should you be so alarmed and worried? Yes, I, too, initially heard the heavy bombardment. But when I realized that this was the intent and purpose of these wicked Arabs—to torment us and rob us of our peace—I took a Rambam in my hands. I immersed myself in the depths of a complex discussion, exploring all its details, perspectives, and the views of the halachic authorities on it. Before long, I was submerged in the vast sea of our holy Torah.

“The commotion hardly bothered me anymore. On the contrary, precisely because of the challenge and effort required to concentrate on the *sugyah* during such difficult times, I came up with remarkable explanations and sweet, novel insights. As *Chazal* testify in *Pirkei Avos*

(end of chapter 5): ‘According to the effort is the reward.’”

The esteemed Rav Avish Eisen *zt"l*, the Rav of the Unsdorf neighborhood here in Yerushalayim, recounted that on several occasions, he observed Rav Yeshayah walking down the street, completely absorbed in the depths of a *sugyah*. So immersed was he in his study that he would sometimes speak to himself as he worked through the intricacies of the discussion, meticulously clarifying each point. Occasionally, he would even cry out loudly amid his learning, for his entire mind and focus were directed solely at resolving the *sugyah* before him. His singular preoccupation was: “What is the meaning here?”

“In him,” Rav Avish concluded, “we were privileged to see the true essence of *Toras chaim*—a Torah that fully encompasses all aspects of life, permeating one’s entire being, from head to toe, through all 248 limbs and 365 sinews.”

Once, while drawing water from the central well in the courtyard, as was customary in those days—before water flowed freely through faucets and the residents of Yerushalayim relied on central wells in the large courtyards—Rav Yeshayah was seen lowering his bucket into the well. Suddenly, he let go of the bucket, ran to the side, pulled out a pen and paper, and quickly jotted down several densely written lines. A sudden flash of insight had illuminated his brilliant mind, resolving a problematic question troubling him all along. Fearing that he might forget the brilliant resolution, he immediately sat down to record it in writing. He returned to drawing water from the well and retrieving the bucket only afterward.

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Rav Binyamin’s Diligence

Rav Mordechai Brim son of the righteous gaon Rav Chaim Brim *zt"l* shared a story during a *mussar shmuess* lecture about the diligence and dedication required for Torah study.

He recounted an event from his childhood that deeply impressed upon him the value of Torah study and persistence. As a boy, he would attend the Shabbos *kodesh* evening meal, *dechakal tapuchin kadishin*, at the home of his maternal grandfather, the righteous Rav Yisrael Tussig *zt"l*, the Rebbe of Mattersdorf, who at that time resided in the Batei Ungarin neighborhood

of Yerushalayim.

After the meal, his father, Rav Chaim, would customarily go to the *beis midrash* to learn Torah for several hours, savoring the sweetness and delight of Torah study. As has been commented on *Chazal’s* dictum, *sheinah beShabbos ta’anug*, (sleep on Shabbos is an enjoyment), the word *sheinah* is similar to *shinun* (revising one’s Torah learning), hinting that the true pleasure of Shabbos lies in repeating and learning Torah, for there is no greater delight than this.

During those hours, the family would remain at his grandfather’s home, putting the children to bed. Late in the night, when Rav Chaim returned from his studies, he and his righteous wife *zt"l* would wake the children and begin their walk home together in the holy stillness of Shabbos night.

On their way, they would pass through the famous Meah Shearim Market. As they walked past the central Yeshuos Yaakov Shul in the heart of the neighborhood, Rav Chaim would take young Mordechai inside and point out the renowned and righteous gaon, Rav Binyamin Rabinowitz *zt"l*. Rav Binyamin would be sitting and learning with passion and great diligence, even in the wee hours of the morning, well past midnight.

Rav Chaim would tell his son, “You must learn from Rav Binyamin’s love of Torah. His devotion is so strong that he cannot tear himself away from his studies.”

This image etched itself deeply into young Rav Mordechai’s heart. He resolved to emulate this path of constant diligence and commitment to Torah study.

Similarly, the righteous Rav Mendel Atik often took his *talmidim* and children to witness the extraordinary sight of Rav Binyamin Rabinowitz immersed in his continuous study until the early morning hours. It was well-known that Rav Binyamin’s study was infused with a unique sweetness of Torah that was almost unparalleled.

Rav Mendel testified that one year, on Yom Kippur, in the early hours before dawn, he passed by the *beis midrash* and saw Rav Binyamin sitting and learning Torah aloud with a melodic tone, deeply engaged in preparation for the sacred and awesome service of the holy day.

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