

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In honor of our parents, Tuvia and Lea Schottenstein and Rabbi Yisroel and Chana Sirota

Erev Shabbos Parshas Vayechi 5781 – January 1, 2021

ערב שבת פרשת ויחי, י"ז טבת, תשפ"א

כתר שם טוב

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Experience Breeds Sensitivity

Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years (Genesis 47:28).

The mystical meaning of this verse is similar to that of “*In my distress You have relieved [hirschavta] me*” (Psalms 4:2). The distress itself is the cause of the expansiveness (*harchavah*)—the abundance of blessings that follow.

Tzaddikim are emissaries of the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence). Their role is to pray for the welfare of the *Shechinah*, which languishes in exile. When a *tzaddik* suffers from lack or from exile, he arrives at a fuller appreciation for the plight of the *Shechinah*. He is then in a better position to pray for the *Shechinah*.

This is alluded to in the Torah’s description of the years that our patriarch Jacob spent in Egypt: *Jacob lived in the land of Egypt...* The Hebrew name for Egypt, *Mitzrayim*, is related to *meitzarim*, dis-

tress and constraints. Through the exile and constraints that Jacob personally experienced, he understood how to pray for the equivalent experiences of the *Shechinah*.

This verse also alludes to the success of Jacob’s subsequent prayers. For the *Shechinah* is also referred to as “Jacob.” In that case, the phrase *Jacob lived* indicates that through his prayers, our patriarch Jacob caused the *Shechinah* (“Jacob”) to live—to unite with the supernal source of life. And all this occurred *in the land of Egypt*—as a result of his being forced to personally experience suffering.

Focus: Negative experiences prepare us to better assist others in suffering.

גאולה

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by Yaakov Paley

Do Not Get Comfortable

Last week’s *parshah* concluded with the verse, “*And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the land of Goshen, and they acquired property in it, and they were prolific and multiplied greatly*” (47:27). The Jewish people understood that they would spend several hundred years in Egypt, a land not their own, in fulfillment of G-d’s promise to Avraham. They therefore decided to build fine estates and to settle comfortably, and they did not actively anticipate their redemption. The next verse, the

beginning of our *parshah*, alludes to the fact that G-d prevented Yaakov from revealing the time of the final redemption. This was done to prevent the Jewish people from falling into the same trap of complacency. G-d does not want us to feel comfortable and permanently settled within the lands of our exile. He wants us to constantly yearn for the redemption, to seek G-d’s countenance and to seek the King Moshiach.

Kli Yakar

Chumash

Vayeichi, 7th reading: After they returned to Mitzrayim, Yosef continued to provide for his family while serving as viceroy of Mitzrayim. Before his own death, Yosef reminded the family of G-d's promise to return their descendants to the Land of Yisrael.

Tanya

Likutei Amarim Ch. 13: The Beinoni is not ruled by his evil inclination (or good inclination), rather his inclination is trying to get his point across like a judge giving his opinion, and it is a special spiritual energy from G-d which helps out the "good inclination" — like a third, deciding judge.

Takeaway: Your struggle is fierce, and at times may be challenging, but you are never alone. G-d stands on your right and is there with you every step of the way, not only encouraging you but also giving you strength.

Rambam (י)

Zmanim, Hilchos Shekalim Ch. 3 — How to Give the Half-Shekel: Two people giving together (a full Shekel) would add a changing fee called a *Kolbon*. Who is obligated, who is not, and how much is this fee. The laws of lost half-Shekels (by the owner or by a messenger), and when another half-Shekel needs to be donated. Erroneous donations. Money which was discovered at a collection area, to whom does it belong?

G-d's Banker

The money of the person who trusts in G-d will not disturb him from trusting in Him, and neither his wealth nor lack of it is cause for him to sin. This is because he will not rely on his money; rather, he considers it as a deposit, which he has been instructed to use in certain ways and for certain purposes.

If his wealth continues to remain with him, he will not rebel as a result of it, nor will he remind the one whom he has been instructed to be kind to of his kindness, nor will he ask to be repaid for his kindness, nor will he ask to be thanked or praised. Instead, he will thank his Creator, may He be blessed, Who put him in the position to be the means for the goodness of the recipient.*

Even if he loses his money,* he will not worry, nor will he mourn its loss. Instead, he will thank G-d for taking the deposit away from him, just as he thanked him when it was given to him in the first place. He will rejoice with his portion, will not seek that others be financially harmed,* and will not be desirous of other people's money.

Who put him in the position to be the means for the goodness of the recipient. A person who trusts in G-d does not consider his money to be his; rather, he sees it as G-d's money, which has been placed in his care. Therefore, he will not take credit or ask for appreciation when he uses his money to help others. Instead, he will thank G-d for being chosen to have the opportunity to help those in need.

If he loses his money, etc. G-d tests man in two ways—the test of poverty and the test of wealth. King Solomon asks of G-d to be tested with neither: *Give me neither poverty nor riches, just feed me my allotted bread. For, perhaps, I will be overly satiated and deny you, saying, 'Who is G-d?' Or I may become poor and steal, and swear in the name of my G-d* (Proverbs 30:8-9). Nevertheless,

if we were to be tested, the test of wealth would be obviously easier and more rewarding. Therefore, we must ask for (the test of) wealth and use it properly. This explains why King Solomon first asks that he not be tested with poverty, because if a man needs to be tested, his first request is that it not be the test of poverty, which is more difficult and causes more pain and stress. As our Sages teach, "Poverty makes a man lose his mind and rebel against the will of G-d" (see *Eiruvin* 41b; *Torat Menachem*, vol. 21, p. 275; vol. 23, p. 206).

Will not seek that others be harmed. A person's jealousy can easily cause him to wish ill on successful people, thinking that if the other person loses his money, the former will receive it in the latter's stead. For a person who trusts G-d, this is folly, because he knows that

no one can take away anything that is designated for another person against the will of G-d.

He therefore knows that the success of another

does not change his own lot, and that there is no need for jealousy or ill will towards others (*Nedar Bakodesh; Marpei Lanefesh*).

Bottom line: Money or lack thereof will not deter a person's trust in G-d.

ילקוט לוי יצחק על התורה

FROM THE REBBE'S FATHER

רב"ל Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson זצ"ל

By Rabbis Dovid Dubov & Yaakov K. Chaiton

In honor of Yaakov Ben Zina & Leah Bas Shlima

Learn Like A Donkey

יששכר חמור גרם רבץ בין המשפתיים
וירא מנוחה כי טוב ואת הארץ כי נעמה ויט שכמו לסבל ויהי למס עבד

Yissachar is a strong-boned donkey that crouches (only) between the boundaries.

He saw a resting place, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant, and he bent his shoulder to bear [burdens], and he became an indentured laborer. (Vayechi, 49:14,15)

The Talmud¹ points out that the verse² “Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between he who serves G-d and he who does not serve Him” is seemingly repetitive.³

In resolution, the Talmud explains that “one who serves Him” and “one who does not serve Him” are both referring to completely righteous people. But “one who reviews his studies one hundred times is not comparable to one who reviews his studies one hundred and one times.”⁴

To explain why one extra review of one's learning is of such great significance, the Talmud illustrates with a scenario:

“Go and learn from the market of donkey drivers. (The cost of a trip is) ten *parsa*⁵ for one *zuz*.⁶ (However, a trip of) eleven *parsa* (goes) for two *zuzim*.”

The Alter Rebbe in Tanya⁷ explains this as follows:

The eleventh *parsa* exceeded the regular and customary practice and therefore warrants an addition of a complete *zuz*.

The same applies to learning and serving G-d. “Therefore, this 101st revision, which is beyond the normal practice to which the student has been ac-

customed since his youth, is equivalent to all the previous one hundred revisions combined.

In fact, its quality surpasses them in its greater strength and power so that it is only this one extra revision which entitles the student to be called “he who serves G-d.”⁸

Driving Questions:

1. What is the significance behind the numbers 100 and 101 specifically?
2. Why is the example from donkeys and not any other animal?
3. Where are all these ideas hinted at in the Torah?

The Arizal⁹ teaches that there is an angel whose purpose and mission is to cause forgetfulness in Torah. The name of this angel is *Mas'* — מס.

With this in mind we can understand why learning something 101 times is the antidote to forgetting one's studies as brought down in the Talmud. The numerical value of *Mas'* — מס is 100,¹⁰ thus the way to combat him is by reviewing 101 times, essentially going beyond its reach.¹¹

1. Chagiga 9b.

2. Malachi 3:18.

3. Seemingly the former two types of people are identical with the latter two.

4. I.e. the former “does not serve” while the latter does.

5. A distance equivalent to approximately 4 kilometers or 2.5 miles.

6. Currency used in the Talmudic era.

7. Chapter 15.

8. This follows the translation of Lessons In Tanya.

9. Eitz Chaim Sha'ar 15, ch. 6.

10. (40) ג + (60) ס = 100.

11. In Ohr HaTorah the Tzemach Tzedek brings a Gematria that also brings out the significance of the numbers 100 vs. 101. The word in Hebrew for ‘remember’ is זכר which equals 227. The Hebrew word for ‘forget’ is שכח which equals 328. The difference between them is 101. This

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak connects the dots: In the blessing that Ya'akov gave to his son *Yissachar* he compares him to a hard working donkey carrying a heavy load, and concludes “*he became an indentured laborer* — וְיָהִי לְמַס עֲבָד.”

Rashi, quoting the Midrash, explains the deeper message of this blessing: He (*Yissachar*) bears the yoke of the Torah, like a strong donkey which is laden with a heavy burden.¹²

What was unique about the way they learned Torah?

They toiled in their learning of Torah in the way of ‘*Oived*’ — beyond the normal practice.

follows what the Talmud says that what stands between remembering and forgetting is reviewing 101 times (Ohr HaTorah, Nach, pgs. 533-4). See also Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 22:3 regarding how learning 101 times is קָם תַּיִם.

12. The Talmud (Avoda Zara 5a) states that a person ought to apply themselves to Torah study with great effort “like a donkey bears its load — כְּחִמּוֹר לְמִשְׁאוֹ”.

This is hinted at in the verse that discusses their blessing.

‘*Mas*’ — וְיָהִי לְמַס they didn’t learn only ‘*L’mas*’ within their natural capabilities (100 times), they exerted themselves like an ‘*Oived*’ — עֲבָד — learning 101 times.

As an outcome of this they didn’t fall prey to the angel of forgetfulness — ‘*Mas*’.

We now understand why the example which the Talmud employs is from a donkey. It alludes to the method by which we can retain our learning. Copy the model of *Yissachar* who are likened to donkeys and toil in Torah, beyond your natural ability.

*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Ho’oros on Tanya — Chapter 15, pg. 3.*¹³
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 3, ch. 149)

13. It is interesting to note that this explanation of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was written on the margins of his Tanya (in chapter 15 which discusses this idea), while he was in exile in Kazhakstan.

פרשת השבוע

PARSHA INSIGHT

By: **Rabbi Moshe Wisnefsky** From: **Daily Wisdom #3**

Based on the works of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

Our Essence Remains Intact

Joseph bound the sons of Israel by an oath, saying “G-d will deliver you, and you must take up my bones from here.” (Genesis 50:25)

The word for “bones” (עֲצָמוֹת) in Hebrew also means “essence” (עֶצְמוּת). Thus, allegorically, placing Joseph’s bones safely in a coffin, where they will remain intact throughout the Egyptian exile, alludes to how our Divine essence always remains intact, impervious to any corruption or dilution that might conceivably result from our prolonged stay in exile.

Our incorruptible Divine essence is, first of all, our promise that, like Joseph, we will ultimately leave exile and proceed to the Promised Land. But moreover, it is our inspiration to resist the enticements of materiality in order to remain true to our true selves, thereby hastening our own personal redemption as well as that of the entire world.

Hitva'aduyot 5752, vol. 2, pp. 114-115

IN HONOR AND MERIT TO

SHOLOM DOVBER BEN SIMA ESTHER

on his birthday 9th Cheshvon 5781 — October 27, 2020
May he see revealed blessings daily

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