

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of *Itta bas Yosef Mordechai* ע"ה And *Tzvi Daniel ben* ע"ה *David Ainsworth* ש"י
Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

Erev Shabbos Parshas Vayechi, 5782 – December 17, 2021

ערב שבת פרשת ויחי, י"ג טבת, ה'תשפ"ב

כתר שם טוב

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

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Fighting Over Sparks

Two people [appear in court] holding onto a garment (Tallis). One of them says, "I found it!" and the other says, "I found it!" One of them says, "It is all mine!" and the other says, "It is all mine!" ... Its [value is] divided [equally] between them (Bava Metzia, 2a).

This Mishna is studied in the heavenly academy [in Gan Eden] as follows:

Within everything that G-d created in this world there is a spark of holiness. When a person performs a mitzvah with something, he elevates its spark of holiness to its source—to the particular world from which G-d caused the spark to descend.

Through elevating the spark, he merits good reward in accordance with the Torah's ruling as to the [specific] merit of each mitzvah. If a mitzvah is accomplished through two people, then the reward for the mitzvah is divided between them.

It is concerning this [spiritual] law—whereby two people performed a mitzvah, and through the pair of them the spark within a particular thing was elevated—that the heavenly academy conducts their study:

Two people. There are two individuals, one of whom we will name Reuven by way of example. Reuven knows that Shimon strayed from the straight path and it is necessary to return him to the right path. Reuven informs Levi about Shimon. Levi then goes and involves himself with Shimon, and he returns him to the

right path. Shimon become a complete *ba'al teshuvah*.

Two people are holding. The sparks of holiness [that through Shimon's complete teshuvah] were elevated, all as a result of Reuven informing Levi about Shimon's situation, and as a result of Levi involving himself with Shimon. [Thus two people have a hold on the elevation effected by Shimon's teshuvah.]

Onto a tallis. The tallis refers to the actual sparks of holiness upon which they both have a grasp.

One of them says, "I found it!" and the other says, "I found it!" One of them says, "It is all mine!" and the other says, "It is all mine!" Reuven, for example, claims, "I am the one who informed Levi regarding Shimon, emphasizing that he needs to be brought back to the right path! All of it—the entire reward—is therefore mine!" The other person, Levi for example, claims, "I am the one who involved myself with Shimon and actually returned him to the right path! All of it—the entire reward—is therefore mine!"

It is divided between them. The halachic ruling is that they both merit the reward.

Living Conditions

And Jacob lived... (Vayechi 47:28)

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi wished to bless Rabbi Yekutiel Lepler with riches, but the chasid declined, explaining that the preoccupations of wealth would infringe upon his study of Torah and his service of the Almighty.

So the Rebbe offered to bless him with long life. Said the Rabbi Yekutiel: "But not with a peasant's years, not with the years of those 'who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear'; not with a life in which one sees not G-dliness and one

hears not G-dliness."

Asks the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory: is it not presumptuous for one who is offered a gift to say: "Okay, I accept, but only on the condition that you throw a few extras"? But to Rabbi Yekutiel, 'to see G-dliness and hear G-dliness' is not a matter of raised consciousness or an enhancement of the 'spiritual' quality of his life, but the very definition of life itself.

When Less Is More

"I know my son, I know. Also he shall become a nation, also he shall be great; but his younger brother shall be greater than he..." (48:19)

The wholesome simplicity of a simple Jew touches upon the utterly simple essence of G-d. (*Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov*)

The two men were among the privileged few to be granted an audience with the king. At the appointed hour the first man arrived at the palace; but as soon as he entered the anteroom he froze, awestruck. A wealthy man himself, he was in a position to truly appreciate the grandeur which lay before him. For hours he stood, reveling in the finery and opulence which intoxicated his rich-man's soul. For hours he stood, and the king... he never did quite see the king.

The second man also arrived at the same entrance hall, but he was a man unaccustomed to such riches. His impoverished taste failed to appreciate what so enthralled his more sophisticated

fellow. Much to the wealthy man's dismay, the pauper made straight for the king's door.

Says the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of righteous memory: A great man once said: "I pray with the mind of a child." A child's perception of G-d, he felt, is, in a way, truer and purer than the accomplished kabbalist's deepest comprehension of the Divine attributes and manifestations.

The spiritual connoisseur who approaches G-d with an eye to the 'experience' of this or that nuance of divinity, can lose sight of what the point of it all is. Only by acknowledging our basic spiritual illiteracy can we truly relate to the all-transcendent essence of G-d.

Moshiach in the Air

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from his descendants, until the Moshiach comes . . . (49:10)

Every soul possesses a spark of the soul of Moshiach (*Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov*)

After the passing of Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch in 1772, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok led a group of chassidim to settle in the Holy Land.

One day, a somewhat deluded individual

climbed the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and sounded a *shofar*. Soon the rumor spread that Moshiach had arrived, setting off a great commotion in the street. Rabbi Mendel went to his win-

dow and sniffed the air. “No,” he said, “unfortunately, the redeemer has not yet arrived. On that day, ‘the world shall be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea,’ and ‘all flesh will perceive’ the reality of the Creator. I do not sense the divine truth that will permeate the world in the era of Moshiach.”

Said the renowned *mashpia*, Rabbi Grunem Eshterman: “Why did Rabbi Mendel need to go to the window to sniff for the presence of Moshiach? Because the all-pervading truth of G-d was already a tangible reality within the walls of Rabbi Mendel’s room.”

לקוטי שיחות

A SICHA

By: ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org

Adapted from the works of the [Lubavitcher Rebbe](http://LubavitcherRebbe.org)

Behind The Concealment

The Midrash and Rashi:

Tradition mandates that each *parshah* in the Torah scroll is to be separated from the preceding *parshah* with a blank space. *Parshas Vayechi*, however, has no blank space preceding it. This is called “a closed *parshah*.”

Our Sages took note of this anomaly and explained it in the following manner:

“Of all the parshiyos in the Torah, why is this parshah closed? Because after Yaakov died, the Egyptians began to enslave Israel. Alternatively, it was because Yaakov sought to disclose when the End of the Exile would occur, but the matter was closed to him. Alternatively, it was because all the world’s misfortunes were closed off to him [i.e., after settling in Egypt, Yaakov enjoyed relative tranquility]” (Midrash Rabba, beginning of Parsha).

In his commentary, however, Rashi only cites the first two explanations and omits the third.

The Question:

It is strange that Rashi intentionally omitted the one explanation that sees the closed *parshah* as alluding to a positive development. The “closed” space puts the first verse of the *parshah*, “And Yaakov lived,” in direct proximity to the conclusion of *parshas Vayigash*, which describes the affluence and growth of Yaakov’s family, “they were fruitful and multiplied greatly” (*Bereishis*, 47:27). By omitting the space between these *parshiyos*, the Torah seems to imply that “Yaakov lived” is a direct continuation of the clause, “they were fruitful,” leading to the third explanation of the *Midrash*, “the world’s misfortunes were closed off to him.” Why, then, does Rashi only cite the first two, negative explanations?

The Explanation:

Commentaries note that according to the first two explanations, the “closure” should have occurred later in the *parshah*, in the section pertaining to Yaakov’s death, or to his forgetting of the “End of Exile.” Yet the “closure” was made at the beginning of the *parshah* because that is where it would be most noticeable, due to the fact that, usually, the space between *parshshiyos* are larger than the space between sections within a single *parshah*.

Thus, the closure really did belong later in the *parshah*, yet it was made at the beginning only in order for it to be blatant enough to make a point. Because the bulk of the *parshah* after the first verse deals with Yaakov’s passing and the onset of the Jews’ enslavement, Rashi cited the first two explanations that view the closure as alluding to these negative events.

Yaakov’s Life:

Since the *parshah* focuses on Yaakov’s death, why does it open with the verse “Yaakov lived,” which alludes to the best years of his life? This verse should have been the conclusion of *Vayigash*, which deals with the success and growth of Yaakov’s family in Egypt. Instead, the *parshah* of his demise is called “[Yaakov] Lived.”

True, eternal life only applies to G-d. Every other living thing is contingent on G-d, and has an “expiration date.” The Jewish people are called “living” when they are connected to G-d, the source of life. When we cleave to G-d through Torah and *mitzvos*, we partake of His eternality. But this “life” and connection with G-d is expressed most deeply in the face of challenges and setbacks. When we

remain strong in our connection with G-d despite challenges to our commitment, our spiritual “life” is revealed to be indestructible and deeply rooted within us.

Thus, Yaakov’s “life”—his relationship with G-d—is revealed when his children remain committed to his ideals and to G-d’s will and desire, despite the concealment that encroaches at the end of his life.

This is a deeper reason why Rashi cites only the

two negative explanations of the closed *parshah*:

This highlights the theme of the *parshah* that Yaakov’s life is cast into relief specifically against the backdrop of his death and the concealment of the End of Exile. At the moment when Yaakov passes and his clear perception of the Divine fades, we know that Yaakov is more alive than ever, for his children are alive.

Likkutei Sichos, vol. 15, p. 422ff.

גאולה

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by **Yaakov Paley**

A Good Wine

The phrase in this week’s *parshah*, “Red eyed from wine” (49:12), refers to the future era. Our redness of the eyes will derive from the intensity of G-dly love, passion, and pleasure that we will experience in the future era, as it is stated, “Then you will delight in G-d” (*Yeshayah* 58:14). This will result from our receiving access to the wine of To-

rah, its deepest secrets, referred to by our Sages as *yayin ha-meshumar*, wine that was guarded within its grapes from the start of Creation. Divinity that is presently unfathomable, regarding which it is stated, “No eye has seen it, except for You, G-d” (*Yeshayah* 64:3) will then be disclosed.

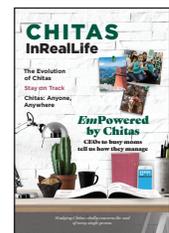
Ohr HaTorah

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

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Tehillim*	Chapters 72 – 76
Tanya*	Likutei Amarim # 9. עמ' 82 - כמשל הזונה שבזה"ק.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #70
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Avoda, – Hilchos Avodas Yom HaKippurim, Chapter 5
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