



The Master of the world watches over the honor of the just

"And Joseph dreamed a dream and told his brothers, and they continued to hate him"

(Bereishit 37:5)

Further on it is stated, "And he again dreamed another dream, and he related it to his brothers, and he said, 'Behold, I have dreamed another dream, and behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were prostrating themselves to me.'"

Yosef the Tzaddik dreamed two dreams that greatly incited his brother's hatred toward him, as it is stated, "And they continued further to hate him." In his second dream, he saw the sun, moon and eleven stars bow before him. This dream is very significant; he predicted that one day the Tribes with his father and mother would prostrate before him, and consequently this caused the Tribes to hate him intensely.

Yakov Avinu seemingly did not believe this dream, as it is stated (ibid. 10), "And his father rebuked him," and he added saying to Yosef that it could not be true because his mother had already died, so how could his dream be fulfilled? But the truth is that Yakov Avinu really did believe the dream, as it is written, "But his father awaited the matter." However, since Yakov saw how much the brothers hated Yosef, and how much the dreams increased their hatred, he reproached Yosef, arguing that the dream could not be true. But in his heart he anticipated the fulfillment of the dream.

We need to explain the matter, since Yakov's argument is correct. Rachel Imeinu already died and therefore she could not bow down to him. The answer is that Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, who took her place as Yakov's wife, would come and bow before him, and the dream would thus be fulfilled.

This can be understood in a deeper sense; a tzaddik is referred to as a "king," as Chazal state (Gittin 62a) "Who are called kings; the Rabbis." Yosef was a tzaddik – the foundation of the world. In the merit of his righteousness and greatness in Torah, he acquired the qualities of a king; becoming master of the Torah and master over his Yetzer Hara. And therefore Yakov Avinu anticipated subjugating himself before Yosef's Torah and righteousness.

Moreover, Yakov Avinu passed on all the Torah he learned at the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever and throughout his life to his son Yosef. It is truly incredible that a seventeen-year-old boy was so gifted that he was capable of learning everything that his father had worked hard to master over eighty years. This is only possible since Yosef the Tzaddik was outstandingly lofty, and because of this Yakov Avinu interpreted the dream to mean that Yosef would grow up to be a king – meaning a master over the Torah. He would even surpass his father and brothers in his exalted level of Torah. But Yakov Avinu rebuked him, so that he should not become arrogant over his greatness in Torah. However, in his heart he awaited the matter when he would witness the greatness of his son in Torah as a "king of the Torah."

In the end both interpretations were fulfilled in him. He became both a king who ruled the world, as well as a master of the Torah. The vision of his parents bowing before him was an allegory, signifying that his parents would be proud of their son.

This also explains why his parents are not also mentioned in the first dream. When a person dreams a dream twice, it means that the dream is true. For example, Yosef the Tzaddik told Pharaoh when he dreamed twice that his dream would be fulfilled quickly because it was a true dream. If Yakov would have understood that Yosef would become a king literally, it would have caused him great sorrow that his son, who was learning diligently in the tents of Torah, would become a king over the gentiles. The honor that he would be accorded held no appeal to a tzaddik like Yakov Avinu. Therefore, Hashem intentionally caused there to be a difference in the two dreams, in order to avoid bringing sorrow to Yakov, and in this way he would interpret the dreams slightly differently, since the two dreams were not exactly the same. And so it was. Yakov understood the vision of Yosef as king to mean that he would be a master of the Torah, signifying his righteousness. And only after hearing from his sons that he had also become a king literally, but nevertheless remained a righteous tzaddik, he was reassured. From this we learn how much Hashem considers the feelings of tzaddikim.

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25 – Rabbi Avraham ben David The Ravad

27 – Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Hacohen Kahn
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Walking in their Ways

*Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon
Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita*

A Word from the Wise

On a visit to Miami, a woman came to see me in a most emotional state. She excitedly related that she was born in the merit of my grandfather's blessing. This is her story:

Many years ago, my father came to your grandfather, zy"a, weeping bitterly. All of his sons had passed away at a young age. His wife was expecting a child, and the couple was most concerned that this baby, too, would be taken from them. He asked for a blessing to guarantee that his child would merit a good and long life.

The tzaddik keenly felt my father's pain and promised to bless my mother and the newborn, on the day she gave birth. My father was surprised at these words. His wife was only in her second month of pregnancy. How could the Rav promise to visit in another seven months? The tzaddik

assured him that he would, indeed, come at that time to bless the new mother and child.

After a few months, the tzaddik came to visit my parents. It was just when my mother was in labor. He blessed her with all things good.

I am the baby born through that blessing. I have merited a good, long life in the merit of the tzaddik.

This incident taught me the greatness of my holy grandfather. He was concerned with each detail of his fellow Jews, to the extent that he could guarantee to come at the exact time of a birth, many months away.

There is no doubt that my grandfather's notable siyata di'Shemaya stemmed from the fact that he shed materialism from himself. He was so lofty that he could see into the future. He was sure Hashem would help him keep his word.



Words of Our Sages

Gems on the Parashah From the Torah Sages

Now it came about after nearly three months, that it was told to Yehudah, saying, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is pregnant from harlotry." So Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned" (Bereishit 38:24)

A practical lesson that we learn about not embarrassing our fellow, whose severity we learn from Tamar the tzedeket, who preferred to be burned in order not to embarrass Yehudah in public, is discussed in the sefer "Derech Sichah" as follows:

Once it happened in the Beit Haknesset on Shabbat that a Bar Mitzvah boy was called up to the Torah, but read the haftarah very quietly. The gaon Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky was consulted if the congregants had fulfilled their obligation in hearing the haftarah, and Rabbi Chaim said that if not for the prohibition of embarrassing one's fellow in public, it would be a mitzvah to read the haftarah again. However, in retrospect the obligation was fulfilled, since although the majority of the congregants did not hear it, but since there were a few who did, they fulfilled their obligation.

Rabbi Chaim added:

"Once it happened that a young boy read the haftarah and no one heard a thing, and also then the congregants did not fulfill their obligation. But because of the severe prohibition of embarrassing one's fellow, and in this case it meant not embarrassing the father and son, I kept quiet. Perhaps in this case it would be best to go to a different Beit Haknesset to hear the haftarah."

The Haftarah

"So said the Lord: For three transgressions"

(Amos 2-3)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah alludes to the sale of Yosef the Tzaddik, as the prophet Amos says: "For selling an innocent man for money," which is the subject of the parashah discussing the sale of Yosef the Tzaddik in detail.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

It is also forbidden to accept

Just as it is forbidden to accept Lashon Hara, even if it is told in front of the subject, so too is the law regarding Rechilut. For example, if a person relates Rechilut in front of the subject: "You spoke about him so and so;" even if the subject remains silent when the gossip is repeated about him, it is still forbidden to accept it. Even if his nature is not to remain silent about other matters, but in this case he is silent, nevertheless, it is not considered sufficient evidence to decide that it is true.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

The paramount importance of the commandment “Love your fellow as yourself,” is learned from one sentence, a most compelling statement that was made by the holy Tanna, Rabbi Akiva. The statement appears in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Nedarim perek 9 halachah 4): Rabbi Akiva said: “Love your fellow as yourself – this is a fundamental principle of the Torah”!

From all the 613 mitzvot we do not find another mitzvah that Chazal describe as “a fundamental principle of the Torah”... not the mitzvah of Shabbat, not the mitzvah of blowing the shofar, not the mitzvah of Sh-emittah; in fact, not one other mitzvah is referred to as a “fundamental principle of the Torah”... only the mitzvah of “love your fellow as yourself,” which was chosen for this awesome definition!

Thus, let us consider: What is the significance of the expression: “A fundamental principle of the Torah”?

The Hebrew term for “principle” is “klal”. The word “klal” also means a collection. If the mitzvah of “love your fellow as yourself” is a fundamental “klal,” this implies that it includes within it the entire collection of mitzvot. It is not only all-inclusive, but it is of central importance, since all the many fine points of the Torah are dependent upon this principle and included in it.

The paramount importance of the mitzvah of loving our fellow Jew, as a central part of our service of Hashem, is learned from the amazing story brought in the Gemara in the tractate Shabbat (31:1):

“It happened that a certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, ‘Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one leg.’ Thereupon he repulsed him with the builder’s cubit which was in his hand. When he went before Hillel, he said to him, ‘What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it.’”

Incredible!

A gentile standing before Hillel Hazaken asks to convert and gives a prerequisite: He is willing to convert – on the condition that Hillel teaches him the entire Torah while standing on one leg. This is shortly after he came out of the Beit Midrash of Shammai Hazaken, who repulsed him with the builder’s cubit which was in his hand. Surprisingly, Hillel welcomed him with open arms... He was willing to accept the condition and teach him the entire Torah while standing on one leg!

The gentile looked at Hillel expectantly and waited to hear the brilliant words which would perfectly summarize all the 613 mitzvot, so that they would all be presented to him while he stood on one leg. Perhaps Hillel would resort to coding all the mitzvot through gematria? Or perhaps he would use acronyms?

But no. Hillel Hazaken summed up everything in one sentence to convey the essence of the entire Torah to the convert. This phrase, based on the commandment “Love your fellow as yourself,” encompasses the entire Torah. The rest, as Hillel explained to the righteous convert, is just commentary, and the commentary takes a longer period of time to study.

We may wonder: Could this be so? Is this the entire Torah – “What is hateful to you do not do to your fellow?”

Where are the 248 positive commandments?

Where are the 365 negative commandments?

Was Hillel, G-d forbid, misleading the convert? But didn’t the convert clearly stipulated that his conversion was contingent upon Hillel’s ability to teach him the entire Torah while standing on one leg?

The answer to this question will be discussed, with the help of Hashem, in the next issue.

Treasures

Based on the teachings of
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik
Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlit'a



In the observance of mitzvot one must persevere without limit

“But Reuvain heard, and he saved him from their hand[s], and he said, “Let us not deal him a deadly blow.” And Reuvain said to them, “Do not shed blood! Cast him into this pit, which is in the desert, but do not lay a hand upon him,” in order to save him from their hand[s], to return him to his father”

(Bereishit 37:21-22)

The Midrash states regarding the pasuk, “The mandrakes have given forth [their] fragrance, and on our doorways are all manner of sweet fruits” (Shir HaShirim 7:14), that there is a connection between Reuvain protecting Yosef and the Chanukah candles. How can we understand this comparison?

We may explain that Reuvain realized that when his mother gave the mandrakes to Rachel, she manifested great inner strength. The mandrakes exemplified the character trait of mastering one’s desires, since Reuvain did not succumb to his desire to eat them. Furthermore, he was cautious not to transgress in stealing them (Sanhedrin 99b). In this act he served as an example to his brothers of self-control and restraint. Leah did not simply wish to eat these mandrakes, but she wanted to bask in the immense pleasure of what the mandrakes symbolized about her son – the self-control and restraint that her son demonstrated. However, she forewent this pleasure and gave the mandrakes to her sister Rachel.

Yakov rebuked Reuven when he moved the bed of his father from Bilhah’s tent to the tent of Leah. Yakov’s rebuke was that he did not use the great self-control he possessed in this case as well, the way he had demonstrated his self-control regarding the scented mandrakes, since now he acted impulsively because of his anger. The lesson to be learned is that one should consistently persist in his good character traits and conduct himself accordingly all the time in every situation.

“The mandrakes have given forth [their] fragrance,” implies that you Reuvain have the power to overcome your natural instincts in giving in to your passion to eat the scented mandrakes, and also in overcoming other temptations. “And on our doorways are all manner of sweet fruits,” regarding the Chanukah candles, signifies mitzvot within the reach of every Jew and that can be fulfilled constantly, as Chazal say (Makkot 23b), “The Holy-One, Blessed Be He, desired to make Israel worthy, therefore gave them the law [to study] and many commandments [to do].” In this way we can constantly be engaged in mitzvot and good deeds. “The mandrakes have given forth [their] fragrance,” implies that when a person succeeds in overcoming his evil inclination in order to fulfill a mitzvah, he should be aware that “on our doorways are all manner of sweet fruits,” meaning that this results in endless number of mitzvot, and he must persevere in his self-control.

This is also symbolic of the Chanukah candles, signifying another mitzvah and another candle, until one achieves perfection of the mitzvah. This lesson that Reuvain learned from the rebuke of his father Yakov penetrated his very being, as we see that he again excelled in his trait of self-control when he saved Yosef. Yakov showed preference and loved Yosef most. Yosef seemed to have taken Reuvain’s place as the first-born, but yet, Reuvain overcame his evil inclination and he protected him and saved Yosef. When Leah gave away the mandrakes to Rachel, Reuvain had no grievance, not against Rachel, nor against her son Yosef. Also in this way he demonstrated his tremendous self-control, and despite everything he saved Yosef from the pit.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



A favor done to you do not forget it

Yosef Hatzadik refused to sin with his master's wife on surprising grounds: "Now how can I commit this great evil, and sin against God?" Rabbi Ovadia Seforno explains his reasoning in the following way: "How can I commit this great evil – to repay bad for good?" This is like what Chazal say that "anyone who denies the kindness of his fellow will ultimately deny the kindness of G-d."

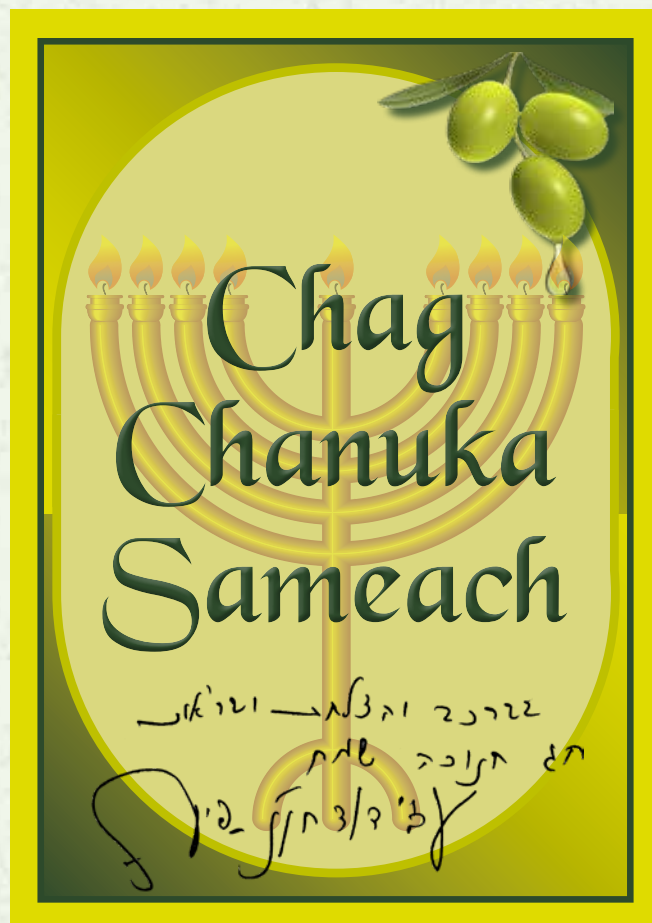
This feeling of loyalty to one who greatly benefitted him, and to repay him rightly, fortified Yosef with the resilience not to cause any harm to Potifar.

It is told about Rabbi Yakov Neiman, zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva of Ohr Yisrael, that in his old age, when walking was very difficult for him, he was seen straining with great self-sacrifice to join in the celebration of one of the yeshiva students.

To everyone's amazement, Rabbi Yakov explained the reason behind it with serenity:



"Forty years ago, the grandfather of that yeshiva student honored me with his presence at the Bar Mitzvah of my son, so I also felt obligated to make an effort to participate in the celebration of his grandson..."



Men of Faith

Excerpts from the book *Men of Faith on the lives and deeds of the House of Pinto*

A Faithful Guardian

Once, Rabbi Chaim Hakatan met Mr. Kadosh in the street and asked him to donate some of his money for tzedakah. Mr. Kadosh told him that he did not have any money in his pocket. This was not true; he was carrying a wallet full of money.

Not long after, Mr. Kadosh lost his wallet with all his money. All efforts to locate the wallet were to no avail. Tearfully, he approached Rabbi Chaim and asked him to help him out.

Rabbi Chaim gazed at him and said, "Hashem gives a person money so that he should be a guardian over it and utilize it for mitzvot and good deeds. However, if he is not a faithful guardian, then Hashem takes the money away from him and gives it to another person who is more faithful."

Ultimately, Mr. Kadosh never found his wallet.

On another occasion, when Rabbi Chaim went to

collect money for a poor kallah, fulfilling the mitzvah of hachnasat kallah, he entered the store of a Jewish silversmith. He asked him to donate tzedakah to participate in this precious mitzvah.

The silversmith told Rabbi Chaim, "I have no money to give the honorable Rabbi."

Upon hearing these words, Rabbi Chaim immediately admonished him, "You do not have? You are not allowed to say that you do not have!" He added, "I will wait here until a woman will come and buy from you all the jewelry that you have in your store. Then, from the money that you will earn, you will give me tzedakah."

Just as the tzaddik had predicted, a few minutes later, a prominent looking woman entered the store and bought his entire stock at full price.

When the woman left, Rabbi Chaim told the silversmith, "Now you have money to give me for the mitzvah of hachnasat kallah..."