

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah insights translated and revised by Dovid Pinchas Rose, based on the Yiddish יהודה פארדס by Yehuda Zvulun Klitnick

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לעילוי נשמת אביו מרדכי בן ראובן ואמו שרה לאה בת אביגדור ע"ה

YAAKOV AND YOSEF: DIFFERENT PUBLIC ROLES

ויחי יעקב בארץ מצרים שבע עשרה שנה: (מ"ז כ"ח)
Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years
Yaakov Avinu and Yosef HaTzaddik were so tightly bound that if the Torah HaKedosha were a conventional history book, we might expect it to inform us of the length of Yosef's residing in Mitzrayim, as well as that of Yaakov Avinu. But it does not. While both were tzaddikim, needless to say, Yaakov, in light of his venerated status, was in a position to conduct a righteous Jewish life openly and publicly, for all to see. Yosef, on the other hand, was still Viceroy of Egypt. His *avoda* was more concealed from the masses, with the Targum (on 49:24) describing this as "he fulfilled the Torah in secret." Our posuk teaches that during his years in Mitzrayim, Yaakov was a visible tzaddik, with open and total Torah fulfillment. In other words, he led a publicly-visible Torah *life*, proudly and fully, the only kind of life a Yid can lead. The posuk tells us how long that enviable state endured, in keeping with Hashem's plans. Yosef's situation was different than his father's, owing to his public role. (אך פרי תבואה - לויסקא)

THE FOCUS OF YAAKOV'S BROCHO TO HIS GRANDSONS

המלאך הגאֵל אתי מפלגֵע בְּרַדְף אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים: (מ"ח ט"ז)
May the angel who redeemed me from all harm bless the youths, (48:16)

For Yaakov to apply the term "*na'ar*" is perhaps surprising, since it is usually pejorative in tone and carries a tone of foolishness or childishness. Proof is from Rashi on 37:2 והוא נער את 37:2 -- "He behaved childishly". The truth is that Yaakov's intention was solely positive, and coming from his mouth, the impact is undiluted brocho. The intent is that even in their old age, Yosef's sons should retain their youthful energy and strength. We see the same notion in the Gemara (Chulin 24b), "אמרו עליו על רבי חנינא שהיה בן שמונים שנה והיה עומד על רגלו" *Rav Chanina at age eighty retained the power of a man in his youth.* The continuation of the brocho likens the lads to fish, and a Gemara in Avoda Zara (30b) conforms well: "...שלושה כל זמן שמזקינין גבורה" Three creatures grow stronger as they age: fish [...]" Hence, the intention: "May the lads grow from strength to strength as they mature."

(חיי יצחק - יאסטמאן)

COULDN'T YOSEF SPEAK FOR HIMSELF?

ויעברו זמי בכיתו וידבר יוסף אלביית פרעה לאמר אסנא מצאתי הן בעיניכם דברונא באוגני פרעה לאמר: (ג ד)

When the days of his weeping had passed, Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's household, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak now in Pharaoh's ears..." (50:4)

The Medrash Rabbah (100:4) wonders quite naturally why Yosef, who in the past never needed a go-between in his conversations with Paroh, now dispatched emissaries to deliver an important message. The Medrash replies that it was not respectful for a bereaved mourner, even after the bitterest weeping had

ceased, to personally petition the ruler. Rav Michael Pressbuger, Rav of Papa, Hungary offers an insight from an earlier period of Yosef's career:

וישלח פרעה ויקרא אתיוסף ויריאהו מריהבור ונגלה ויחלף שמלתיו ויבא אלפרעה (מא יד)

So Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they rushed him from the dungeon, and he shaved and changed his clothes, and he [then] came to Pharaoh. (41:14)

Why did Yosef get personally groomed and respectably clothed? Rashi answers: מפני כבוד המלכות, "out of respect for the monarchy." Long hair would have been totally out of place, and Yosef had a very long growth, since seventy days had elapsed after Yakkov's passing during which, as a mourner, he was forbidden to cut his hair. Yosef's sackcloth garments would have also been problematic, according to the sefer פענת רזא, who recalls Mordechai HaTzaddik: אין לבוא אלשער המלך בלבוש שק (אסתר ד ב) *One may not enter the king's gate dressed in sackcloth.* (Esther 4:2) So we see that Yosef had two aspects of his personal grooming and wardrobe which combined to compel him to send a messenger to Paroh, rather than go himself.

(בית ישראל השלם למוח"ז האדמו"ר ממאטטערסדארף זצוק"ל)

THE BROTHERS FORESAW FUTURE TRAGEDY

כהתאמרן ליוסף אָנָּא שָׂא נָא פִּשְׁע אַחִיד גּוּר וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לְפִשְׁע עַבְדֵי אֱלֹקֵי אֲבִיךָ וַיִּבְךְּ יוֹסֵף יוֹסֵף בְּדַבְרָם אֵלָיו: (נ י"ז)

So shall you say to Yosef, "Please, forgive now your brothers' transgression Now please forgive the transgression of the servants of the G-d of your father." Yosef wept when they spoke to him. (50:17)

We notice, and seek to explain, a shift in terminology: at first the Brothers reference their own sin, and then "the transgression of the servants of the G-d of your father." Indeed, does it not seem presumptuous of them to enwrap themselves in the mantle of "servants of Yaakov's G-d"? In truth, the shift in reference teaches a lesson which totally escapes simple logical analysis. The Brothers were well aware that they had committed a grievous sin by selling Yosef, from whose punishment it would be difficult to escape. What is more, they foresaw the gruesome martyrdom of the Ten "Harugei Malchus" in Roman times, speciously attributed to the Sale. But they hoped that the Tzaddik Yosef, through the power of his forgiveness and prayer could effect at the very least, a more lenient punishment for themselves. At first, they begged forgiveness in their personal capacity as brothers. Then they beseeched Yosef to cancel or at least soften the decree against the future Ten Martyrs, who were most certainly in the category of "the servants of the G-d of your father." But alas, Yosef wept, בְּדַבְרָם אֵלָיו, seeing that there was forgiveness for the Brothers, but that the decree against the Martyrs could not be annulled. Tragically, the Piyut of *Eleh Ezkerah* of Yom Kippur Musaf reminds us what the judgement from Shomayim was, "You must accept this, my righteous, beloved ones..." וַיִּדְקִים וַיִּדְקִים (אמרי יצחק מהגאון ר' שאול הלוי אבי"ד קאברין)

For many years, the Holy Brothers Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk and Rav Zusya of Anipoli wandered from town to city "pravenen galus", that is, personally tasting the bitter experience of exile and homelessness, as a redemption for their self-defined "aveiros". They traveled in tandem, but when it came to Shabbos, they took different approaches. Rav Elimelech sought out a well-to-do host so as to conduct the Shabbos meals comfortably and fully. Rav Zusya, on the other hand, preferred a pauper as his Shabbos host.

One Shabbos, their paths diverged, Zusya remaining in a certain village, while Elimelech continued on to a different town where a wealthy householder resided. Zusya's reason for staying in the village was that he wanted to spend Shabbos there with one of the thirty-six hidden Lamed-Vav Tzaddikim, whose collective merit sustains the world. Zusya knocked on the Tzaddik's impoverished shack and asked the lady of the house if he might lodge over Shabbos. She gladly consented, but stipulated that they had not a scrap of extra food to share with him. Zusya assured her that he was carrying enough food in his pack to tide him over for Shabbos. Both agreed and Zusya took to preparing his place and himself for the Holy Day. The ba'al ha bayis returned home, disheveled and bedraggled, with torn clothing, little better than rags. He took not the slightest notice of Zusya, not even glancing in his direction. After davening that night, Zusya returned to the hut, hoping to observe the tzaddik's exalted divine service at his Shabbos table. Such was not to be. Not only did the host not so much as acknowledge his guest with a "Gut Shabbos!" greeting, but the meal passed without any special distinction. Zusya knew that the man was a tzaddik, but did not fathom the extreme degree of his concealment from the world. Matters took yet a more sobering turn at Shalosh Seudos time. Zusya's head began swimming. He felt that he had been transported to a large empty field, with no house or its master in sight, and also devoid of his food! Zusya felt crushed, since he had come to witness the divine service of a tzaddik but was left with nothing but the clothes on his back. In fact, he knew not even where he was. But with the firm belief -- no, knowledge -- that whatever the Borei Oilam sends his way is for his absolute good, he took to strolling around the field and exploring it. He stumbled upon a hole in the ground which led to a subterranean cave. Peering inside, he was astounded to view a circle of all Thirty Six Lamed-Vav-niks, with his host at the head as Rosh Chabura, dressed in splendid white garments l'kovod shabbos, his face aglow with transcendent shine. One of the Lamed Vav gestured to Zusya that he should wash and join their circle. The words of Torah drawn from the deepest hidden wells, together with the elevated zmiros drove Zusya to spiritual heights of which he had never dreamed. His simcha was indescribable. After Shalosh Seudos, the Rosh Chabura, his

**STORY OF
THE WEEK:
EVEN A TZADDIK LEARNS A LESSON
THE HARD WAY:
WHEN NOT TO SPEAK!**

host, for the first time, greeted him and the two spoke in learning. The tzaddik informed Zusya that immediately after Ma'ariv, they would be transported back to his lowly hut, but warned Zusya not to reveal to a soul what he had experienced, on pain of a stringent punishment. And thus it was, that Zusya took his leave of his host, from his shack, with wishes for a "Gute Voch." The traveling brothers resumed their journeys together on Sunday morning, but Rav Elimelech noticed a change in Rav Zusya. There was a palpable increase in holiness and refinement -- intermixed with glowing simcha -- which called out for explanation. Zusya remembered the warning the Hidden Tzaddik had delivered to him. Elimelech cajoled him repeatedly to share his Shabbos experience, but Zusya demurred. Finally, he could no longer hide the story from his closest confidante and told him everything that he saw in the course of that other-worldly Shalosh Seudos. The Holy Pair continued their wanderings and reached a kretschma/country inn where they could spend the night. Their practice was to rise before dawn, daven shacharis at the first permissible moment, and continue on their way. On that particular night, the inn had a wealthy visitor -- a poritz/gentile landowner from a neighbouring province who was traveling with a pouch of gold coins. Being a light sleeper, he heard the brothers stirring early morning and how they left quickly on their way. He rose and checked the hiding place where he had left the gold -- and found it empty. He raised a hue and cry that the two brothers had departed stealthily because they had absconded with his gold! He dispatched his servants to chase down the brothers and return them to the inn, forcibly if need be. The servants' horses were swift and well-rested, so they caught up with the two brothers on the road without much difficulty. Back at the inn, the poritz demanded that Rav Zusya return his pouch of gold. Of course, Zusya knew nothing of the matter. His denial enraged the poritz, who had him bound and beaten in an attempt to extract a confession. Nothing but denials, each one more pitiable than the last, poured forth from Zusya -- and caused more and harder thrashing. Suddenly, the door opened and in strode a second poritz, even better-dressed and formidable than the first, with a larger clump of servants. "What's going on here?" he thundered. When the first poritz told him in a nutshell of his "certain" suspicions, the new poritz looked Zusya full in the face and shouted, "You fool! This man is no thief. Untie him and send him on his way immediately!" Sheepishly, the accusing poritz complied. On his way out, the second poritz, Zusya's saviour, called him over to whisper in his ear. "**When they tell you not to reveal something, you don't reveal it. Period!**" Now Zusya understood well what had happened to him. Chastened, he and Elimelech resumed their travels.

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