

sincere desire to improve their status, but by the personal, insincere ambitions of certain individuals.

Next time you get the urge to complain, analyze your motive. Are the circumstances really that bad, or are you just not ready to push yourself to fulfill your obligations to your friend, family member – or even Hashem? This brief self-analysis will reduce your complaint quotient and increase your performance scores. It may even put a smile on your face when you realize how childish complaining can be. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

How Sweet it Is!

“The tongue is able to experience taste by means of very tiny, sensitive organs called taste buds, of which the average person has about 10,000. The taste buds send messages to the brain describing the taste of the food to which they are exposed. These messages answer questions like: How sweet is it? How salty is it?”

Connecting to Hashem through prayer, learning and other spiritual means causes messages to be sent to the brain. When the taste buds of the brain are stimulated, it becomes satiated and responds with How Sweet it is! (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

The Baby-sitter

In 1939, Rav Shach and his family were living in Vilna when tragedy struck. Miriam Raizel Shach, Rav Shach’s 14-year-old daughter, died suddenly. Miriam Raizel’s parents were utterly devastated by her death, completely overwhelmed with grief and shock. Although no one was able to offer appropriate consolation to Rav Shach and his rebbetzin, one incident provided some measure of comfort.

Before the funeral took place, Rav Shach met with Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, who was regarded as the foremost Torah giant of the time. He was already ill and would soon leave this world but he still had much work to do. The needs of the Jewish people were constantly on his mind; the world was in turmoil and would soon become even more chaotic. But when he met the devastated father he provided him with one penetrating thought of comfort. He told him that when he too had lost a young daughter, there was one thing that saved him. He looked at Rav Shach and told him what he had to do. “*Lulei Toratecha sha’ashu’ai az abadti b’onyi* – Had Your Torah not been my preoccupation, then I would have perished in my affliction.” It is Torah and only Torah that can help one navigate one’s way through tragedy. And that thought gave Rav Shach and his wife a great degree of comfort during this incredibly difficult time of their lives.

Those in attendance at the funeral were shocked that Rav Chaim Ozer did not attend. How could he not have come? Everyone else of importance was there to give the proper respect to the young *gadol* and to help him find some sort of comfort. Why would Rav Chaim Ozer not have attended?

The answer to these questions soon became clear. The Shachs had a young son, Efraim, who was left at home during the funeral, and Rav Chaim Ozer had offered to stay with him, to baby-sit. Efraim had a lot of questions to ask and needed the right answers, and this was a job that Rav Chaim Ozer would not entrust to anyone else.

Amazingly, when the parents returned from the funeral they found Rav Chaim Ozer playing with little Efraim, and telling him, “Don’t worry Efraim’ke, soon your daddy and mommy will come back from where they had to go...” The bereaved parents thanked the *gadol hador* for his help. He nodded and offered the appropriate words of comfort. And then he went back to leading *Klal Yisrael*. (One Shining Moment)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּרַיָּה

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SHABBAT VAYHI ☆ שַׁבָּת וַיְהִי

Haftarah: Melachim | 2:1-12

JANUARY 10-11, 2020 14 TEBET 5780

Friday Minhah: 4:31 pm	Shaharit: 6:19, 6:40, 8:10, 9:10 am
Candlelighting: 4:31 pm	Morning Shema by: 9:08 am
Evening Shema after: 5:29 pm	Shabbat Minhah: 4:10 pm
These times are applicable <u>only</u> for the Deal area.	Shabbat Ends: 5:30 pm (R"Y 6:02 pm)
	Shabbat Class after Habdalah
	Sunday Minhah: 4:35 pm

**This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Abe “Apples” Seruya
by his wife, Cookie Seruya.**

A Message from our Rabbi

”וַיִּשְׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה”

“May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Menashe” (Beresheet 48:20)

Our society has been labeled by some a “victim culture,” in which the greatest claim to fame is to have suffered some indignity or injustice. Discrimination, poverty, rich-but-absent parents, mental and physical abuse, over-employment, unemployment, old age and hundreds if not thousands of bad draws from the deck of life. These give people the only reason they need for doing less with their lives than they should.

In the *berachah* many of us give our children each Friday night, we take the opposite point of view. We bless our daughters that they emulate our matriarchs: Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, and we bless our sons that they should be like Ephraim and Menashe. Why do we choose these role models? The matriarchs are an obvious choice since they embody the most exemplary traits of a Jewish woman, but why Menashe and Ephraim for the sons? How are they parallel to the matriarchs?

Rabbi Avraham Newberger explains that each of these ancestors rose to spiritual greatness in unholy surroundings. All four matriarchs were raised by idol worshipers, and Menashe and Ephraim were raised in Egypt. As the sons of Yosef, second in command to Pharaoh, they were undoubtedly surrounded by all the immorality of Egyptian culture.

In our current society, there would be no expectations of any of these men or women becoming *sadikim*. Yet they all not only overcame the challenges they faced,

but flourished and brought the world their great gifts.

This trait to do what one believes in, even though it is contrary to the prevailing environment and trends, is in fact a uniquely Jewish trait – chutzpah! It may well be the driving force behind the innovations through which the State of Israel has become known as “the start-up nation,” but much more importantly, it empowers the Jewish nation to buck social trends of decadence and to live according to the dictates of *kedushah*.

So we bless our children: Whatever may come your way, you will not only survive, but shine and bring something holy into the world. We may live in an era of great *tum'ah*, but do not despair. You can still reach greatness. It's in your DNA.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

The Three Treasures

The *Talmud* [*Sanhedrin* 110a] tells that Yosef *Hasadik* hid three treasures while he was ruling Egypt. One of the treasures was found by Korah; one treasure was found by Antoninus (the Roman general and politician, contemporary of Rav Yehudah *HaNassi*); and one is hidden away for the righteous, in the world to come.

A fascinating *Pardes Yosef* has an entirely different take on this *Gemara*. According to his approach, the treasures that Yosef buried in Egypt had nothing to do with money, but rather, Yosef's life embodied three fundamentals of living that he figuratively hid away for future generations to rediscover.

The first “treasure” was the fundamental principle that if the Almighty wants you to be elevated to a position of leadership, you will achieve that position regardless of anyone else's attempt to halt your rise to power. You can have all the enemies in the world, but the plotters who are against you will not be able to stop you!

We see this for the first time, in the life of Yosef. He told his brothers that he prophetically saw in his dreams that they would bow down to him, and despite all the brothers' efforts to quash Yosef's rise to leadership, the Will of Hashem came to pass!

Korah discovered this treasure (the hard way)! He challenged the leadership of Moshe *Rabenu*. He tried his hardest to wrest power from his cousin Moshe. However, in his time it was again revealed from Heaven that if the Almighty wants someone (i.e., Moshe) to be the leader, his leadership is inevitable and inviolable.

The second “treasure” of Yosef's life has to do with anti-Semitism. Some think that what causes anti-Semitism is the fact that we act differently, and if we would act more like the Gentiles, they would not be anti-Semitic. We know that this is not true.

The righteous Yosef was a religious and observant Jew in Egypt. The Egyptians and their religious practices were diametrically opposed to the lifestyle practiced by Yosef. One would think, “How could he achieve a position of authority? He is a Jew.” Anti-Semites say, “We hate Jews. Jews are disloyal, pushy, aggressive. Jews are this. Jews are that.” The popular maxim of this philosophy is, “If you want to be successful in life, you need to give up your Judaism.” Yosef disproved this philosophy. He remained Yosef the Righteous in Egypt, and nevertheless rose to the very pinnacle of Egyptian authority. Pharaoh accepted him as he was.

This second “treasure” was revealed with the comradeship between Antoninus and *Rabenu HaKadosh*, who compiled the *Mishnah* and led the Jewish community. And yet, Antoninus, the head of Rome, respected and honored him! Rabbi Yehudah *HaNassi* acted like a “Jew” – why did Antoninus not hate him? It is because anti-Semitism does NOT stem from the fact that Jews act differently than Gentiles. One can achieve success in society at large, if one sticks to his religious principles.

The third “treasure” that Yosef showed us is that we think there is absolutely no

solution to the problem of “hatred between brothers” (*sin'at achim*). We have almost become resolved to the idea that inner-communal jealousies, rivalries, will always be with us. The story of Yosef proved that despite the tensions and the bitter events that transpired between them, it was possible to put those differences behind themselves, and reach a level of brotherly love (*ahavat achim*).

We look at the controversies and tensions that exist within the Jewish people today, and we ask ourselves “How is *Mashiah* ever going to come?” This “treasure” of Yosef, the *Gemara* admits, is still hidden away; it has not yet been “rediscovered.” However, the *Gemara* assures us that the *Saddikim* in the world of the future will one day find it, and then true brotherly love — Yosef's “third treasure” — will once again reign within our nation. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Overhead

Ya'akov asks Yosef to swear to him that following his passing, Yosef would take him from Egypt and bury him with his fathers (in the *Me'arat HaMachpela* in Hebron). At the conclusion of the narration of this episode, the *pasuk* says, “He said, ‘Swear to me,’ and he swore to him; and Israel prostrated himself toward the head of the bed.” *Rashi* comments on the words “toward the head of the bed”: “He turned himself in the direction of the *Shechinah* [the Divine Presence]. This is the source for that which the Sages say, “The *Shechinah* is present above the head of one who is ill.”

Why does the Divine Presence hover, so to speak, on the top of the bed of a sick person? I saw an interesting observation. When a person is sick in bed, he can think that the Almighty has abandoned him (My G-d, my G-d, why have you left me? [*Tehillim* 22:2]). A person thinks, “The *Ribono shel Olam* must be angry with me; He must have it “in” for me!”

The reason the *Shechinah* is above the head of a sick person is because Hashem wants us to know that even under these circumstances, He still loves us, and He is still with us. The reason we are ill is for whatever reason it may be, but it is NOT because He is throwing us away.

As the *Talmud* says in *Masechet Berachot* [10a], “this is my tradition from the house of my father's father — even if a sharp sword is resting against one's neck, one should not abstain himself from requesting Mercy.” No matter how desperate a situation may look, a person should never give up hope, and never stop praying for a salvation. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Why Complain?

It's okay to have an opinion. It's the American way. Businesses, politicians, and communities use polls, surveys, and head counts to determine what the people want and how to best satisfy their tastes. Your opinion is important!

But complaining may not be okay. Complaints are not necessarily healthy expressions of opinion. Very often, complainers do not want to improve the current situation – they are really looking for relief from responsibility. If they complain about someone, they rationalize that they are no longer obligated to that person. If working conditions are bad, then they don't have to perform for the boss. If dinner is not satisfactory, they don't have to fulfill the needs of the person who cooked it. If they don't have all the “toys” that their friends have, then they don't have to behave as their parents would like.

It's all really childish, isn't it?

In the forty years that the People of Israel traveled through the deserts they complained a number of times. Very often, the complaints were motivated, not by a