

“Amuta hapa’am – I am prepared to offer everything” – including my precious life, for Hashem, if the need arises. (Rav Schwab on Chumash)

Out of the Picture

Insults! They really get to you, don't they? Most of us get quite emotional when we are on the receiving end of one. But rather than reacting in a negative manner when affronted, try working on yourself to see things objectively. Leave your ego out of it.

It is easy to be objective about others and to understand why they should not get excited about a barb. (“So what if someone said that about you?” you may coolly ask.) Next time you are the victim, treat the insult as if it were directed at someone else. I know it's difficult, but it is achievable.

It might be easier to avoid reacting emotionally if you could focus on what is really happening and put the whole scene in perspective. Look at the person saying those nasty things about you. If that individual is a fool, you can comfortably ignore the hurtful comments. And if the person is wise, or someone whose opinion you generally respect, just say thanks for pointing out an opportunity to improve yourself. Focus on the real situation, and don't react emotionally.

Try it. It is a trick that can add years to your new, calm life. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Gone in a Second

Yechezkel was only five years old when his mother died. The years that followed were difficult times for the orphaned boy and his father. Just supplying the basic needs for the family was a challenging task. Soon after Yechezkel's *Bar Mitzvah* his father decided that although the young man showed much promise, he had to help support the family; staying in yeshivah was no longer an option. Instead, Yechezkel had to take a job, as a flower delivery boy. And although it was not a glorious job, in the early 1900's it was considered a decent first job for a young man.

The work was routine – he delivered flowers, accepted payment from the customers and returned to the store with the money. Routine, that is, until one incident which changed Yechezkel's life forever.

It was a Friday and there were many orders to be delivered. Yechezkel had his hands full, quite literally. After delivering all the flowers, he saw that the hour was quite late, and assumed the store would be closed by that time. Realizing that he should not walk around with the cash, he decided to go home. But instead of heading straight home, he stopped at the *mikveh*.

When he came out to get dressed he discovered, to his great dismay, that the money was missing! He searched all over, but soon realized that it had been stolen. All that work and all that effort – and now in one moment it was gone.

That Shabbat, Yechezkel thought deeply about the implications of what had happened. If, he pondered, one can put in so much effort to do something and then lose it in a moment, then perhaps, just perhaps, those efforts are not worth very much at all. It doesn't make sense to spend one's life doing something that can be lost in a second. At that moment, he knew what he had to do; he decided to pursue the only thing that is truly worthwhile, that can never be taken away: He made up his mind to go back to learning Torah!

Yechezkel was grateful for having had the opportunity to discover what in life is worthwhile and what is not. That Yechezkel, that simple, poor flower delivery boy, was to become a world-famous *meshgiah* and guide to thousands – the incomparable Rav Yechezkel Levenstein. (One Shining Moment)

The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition

ט"ףחפח, X ט♦טכ, ♦v♣α↔°β ηΥκη□γ□κ

σ□ξχ

Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444
West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764
(732) 870-2225



SHABBAT

VAYIGASH ☆ ♁≥Δ°H≥υ, □X♥↑

Haftarah: Yehezkel 37:15-28

DECEMBER 22-23, 2017 5 TEBET 5778

Friday Minhah: 4:16 pm	Shaharit: 6:16, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am
Candlelighting: 4:16 pm	Morning Shema by: 9:04 am
Evening Shema after: 5:14 pm	Shabbat Class: 3:30 pm
	Shabbat Minhah: 3:55 pm
	Shabbat Ends: 5:14 pm (R" T 5:46 pm)
	Sunday Minhah: 4:20 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

This bulletin is dedicated by Danny & Marilyn Safdieh
in memory of Lucy Safdieh

ט"ףחפח, חפח ט♦טכ, ♦v♣α↔°β ηΥκη□γ□κ

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Sarah Mizrahi

לעילוי נשמת שרה בת אסתר

by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

Mabrook to Sam & Rebecca Kassin on the engagement of their son, Jacob, to Frieda Benun.

Mabrook to Eddie & Jeanette Ebani on the birth of a baby boy. Mabrook to the grandparents, Sam & Simone Ebani.

A Message from Our Rabbi

“Then Yehudah approached him.” (Beresheet 44:18) “וַיִּגַּשׁ יְהוּדָה אֵלָיו”

Yehudah confronts Yosef in defense of his brother Binyamin. He tells Yosef, “For you are like Pharaoh.” *Rashi* explains, “Just as Pharaoh decrees but does not fulfill, so too do you. Is this what you call watching over him (Binyamin)? The *Sifte Hachamim* explains that Pharaoh had a law that a slave cannot rule. Nevertheless, he made Yosef the ruler even though he was a slave. Therefore, Yehudah meant to say to Yosef, on whom do you rely? On Pharaoh? He himself is unreliable since he didn't uphold his own decrees!

In short, Yehudah was saying you cannot rely on Pharaoh because he didn't adhere to his own laws. However, asks Rabbi Henschel Lebowitz zt"l, it seems that Yehudah's logic is flawed, because the reason Pharaoh lied and went around his own law was for the benefit of Yosef. How does this show that he will lie to hurt Yosef?

The answer is that Yehudah is proving Pharaoh a liar from the fact that he didn't even bother to change the law nor did he show any regret that he lies. This shows that Pharaoh is a liar by nature and therefore it's possible that at any time he will lie and hurt even the ones he loves.

The lesson is awesome. We learn from here that it's possible for a man to do someone a favor and that favor itself is a cause and a sign that afterwards he will hurt him. For this is what was feared regarding Pharaoh. From the fact that he helped Yosef in violation of his laws showed he lacked the trait of honesty. If he lacked honesty he cannot be trusted.

Honesty is the foundation of all of our relationships with our fellow man.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

A Refreshing Attitude

After Yosef made the dramatic admission to his brothers, telling them who he was, he told them "And now, be not distressed, do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here, for it was as a supporter of life that G-d sent me ahead of you." Yosef tried to put them at ease and convince them that he did not harbor resentment against them, by assuring them that what happened to him was all part of Hashem's Grand Plan.

If we were to put ourselves in Yosef's position, we might not have been so generous. Yosef had suffered horribly because of what his brothers did to him. We might expect that when Yosef makes this emotional revelation and tells his brothers "I am Yosef" that he would sit there, wait, and say "Okay. Now let me hear your profuse apology." "I want you to get down on your knees and beg for forgiveness." Yet Yosef does not do this. Yosef takes a very gracious approach to them and tells them not to be upset. "Everything came out for the best. G-d sent me here to provide food for you."

How does a person have the capacity to do that? After all, Yosef is human. He is entitled to human feelings and emotions. It is perfectly understandable for a normal human being to maintain a legitimate grudge in such a situation. Not only does Yosef not bear a grudge, but also he is so gracious about it.

The answer is that Yosef is teaching us a secret about how we need to deal with people who may have harmed us in the course of our lives. If a person has a sincere and profound belief in *Hasgachah Peratit* [Personal Divine Providence] and believes that Hashem rules the world then there is really no reason to be angry with a person who may have done you harm.

Those are precisely Yosef's words. I do not have a complaint against you, because this was obviously the Almighty's plan. Had this not all have happened, the world would have starved.

"I look at all of this," Yosef implied, "as if we are all puppets in a Grand Plan in which the Master of the Universe is the puppeteer and He is literally pulling the strings". With such an outlook, a wronged individual can sincerely say to the one who harmed him "I have no complaint against you, because this was all *Hasgachah Peratit*."

The *Baal HaTanya* interprets the Rabbinic statement "Anyone who gets angry is as if he worshipped idols" as follows: We get angry because we think things are not going our way. If a person had a true belief in *Hasgachah Peratit*, he would realize that when things do not go our way, it is because Hashem wants it that way. When we get angry,

we are denying that Hashem rules the world. This is exactly the philosophy of *Abodah Zarah* - the belief that there are other forces in this world besides Hashem.

This is obviously much easier said than done. However, fundamentally, philosophically, that is what is happening. "Why are you getting angry? This is what Hashem wants!"

The *Sefer HaHinuch* expresses the same idea. If we would all take his words to heart it would do a lot to improve the complaints people have about one another. In *Misvah 241* – the prohibition against taking revenge (*Lo Tikom*) – the *Hinuch* writes: "The reason for the *misvah* is that a person should know and take to heart that everything that happens to him whether good or bad comes upon him from Hashem.

"Therefore, when a person causes you pain or anguish – you should know in your soul that your own sins are the cause and Hashem decreed upon you that this should happen. You should not let your thoughts be misplaced to take revenge against the person who harmed you, because he is not the cause of your misfortune, rather sin is the cause."

The analogy we should think of is that if someone hits us with a stick, we do not get angry at the stick. We realize the stick is not the cause of our pain, but rather the one who swings the stick. So too – even the one who swings the stick is not the ultimate cause of our pain. Ultimately, Hashem punishes us for our sins. Hashem just uses certain individuals on earth as His "stick".

Certainly, the person who harms you is responsible for his actions and has his own *Teshubah* to do. This is not a *carte blanche* to say, "I can get away with whatever I want – It's G-d's Will!" No. The "stick" too will have to face Divine Judgement for his deeds; but we should not direct the anger at him. It is a mistake to take out our anger upon that person.

Admittedly, this is not an easy level of self-control to achieve, but if we had that attitude, we would get into far fewer fights with people. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Precious Life

"וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יֹסֵף אֲמוֹתָהּ הִנֵּנִי אֹתְךָ מֵת וְעַתָּה כִּי עֹדֶךָ חַי" "And Yisrael said to Yosef, 'Now I can die; after I have seen your face that you are still alive.'" (*Beresheet* 46:30)

Regarding this *pasuk*, I heard a beautiful explanation from my Rebbe, Harav Shlomo Breuer, in Frankfurt. When Ya'akob *Abinu* finally met his beloved son Yosef after twenty-two years, during which period he thought Yosef had died, the Torah, in describing their first meeting, tells us (*Beresheet* 46:29): "He fell on his neck, and he continued to cry on his neck." *Rashi*, quoting *Hazal*, explains that it was only Yosef who hugged and kissed his father, but Ya'akob at that moment, instead of embracing his son, was saying *Keriat Shema*. And then Ya'akob speaks (46:30): "Now I can die; after I have seen your face."

To explain this remarkable *Hazal*, Rav Breuer said as follows: During the twenty-two years when Ya'akob *Abinu*, dressed in sackcloth, mourned and cried over what he thought was the loss of his beloved son Yosef, his life was not worth much to him. Like the other *Abot*, Ya'akob kept all the *misvot* before they were given, including the daily saying of *Keriat Shema*. And when he said the words, "*Ve'ahabta et Hashem Elokecha bechol...nafshecha*," it was not very difficult for him to offer his life for Hashem. In this state, he would not be giving up very much, as life was almost worthless to him. However, after seeing that Yosef was not only alive, but wearing the Egyptian crown on his head, surrounded by the trappings of royalty, Ya'akob's life

took on new meaning. Now that he was reunited with his beloved son, his life had become precious again. And it was precisely at that exalted moment, when his life had taken on such great value, that he offered to give it to Hashem, if the need arose. Now he was really offering his most precious possession: his life in its most exalted state! It was therefore necessary for him to recite *Keriat Shema* at that moment, and say,