

(*haGezeirah Emet*) and **efforts to thwart it were doomed** (*v'ha'Charitzut Sheker*).

This is the type of rebuke we will get in the future world. We all pay lip service to the famous *Gemara* that a person's annual income is fixed at the beginning of the year (*Betzah* 16a). We all believe—or at least we all say—that it was decreed in Heaven last *Rosh Hashanah* how much each of us will make throughout the year, to the penny. Now, if we are faced with a challenge in the middle of the year that we can make another ten or fifteen thousand dollars by doing something that is untoward or at least not on the up and up, we might think “This is a windfall. I am not going to let this opportunity slip by.”

So, do we believe that our income is fixed or not? In the future world, the *Ribono shel Olam* is going to have a list of all those situations where He said “This is the way I decreed it was going to be. You tried to outsmart me to get more than you deserved—or whatever it may be...” That is the rebuke we will face in the World to Come.

Hashem will have a whole lifetime of these type of things to present to us as rebuke. The immortal words “*Ani Yosef*” ring out for eternity with the message that the Almighty is going to make everything happen as He decrees. All human effort to circumvent those decrees will not make a hoot of difference. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Weekly Pele Yoetz

Each week we will offer a brief excerpt from the *sefer Pele Yoetz*. **This week's topic is: Eating and Drinking (Part II) – אכילה ושתייה**

A person should only eat when he is hungry and he should eat to satiation, but should be careful not to overeat. Overeating gives strength to the *yesser hara* to overpower him and cause him to sin. The *Ra'abad* states that if a person holds himself back from eating a food that he likes in order to atone for his sins, it is considered like he has completed a fast and brought a sacrifice of atonement. In addition, a person who eats with the correct attitude (to be healthy and strong to serve Hashem) will not be drawn to eat foods that are unhealthy for the body.

One must be extremely careful to avoid any food that has even a doubt regarding its permissibility, because any forbidden food that he eats become part of his body and creates a blockage between him and Hashem, preventing him from serving Hashem properly. This includes any insects or worms that are often found in fruits and vegetables.

A Pledge of Devotion

A man who was known to be a miser pleaded with his Rabbi for help. His wife had been tormenting him for years, and he simply could not tolerate living with her any longer. However, she refused to accept a divorce.

“I have a solution for you,” the Rabbi advised. “The *Talmud* warns that if a person fails to honor his pledges, he will be punished with the death of his spouse. So the next time there is an appeal for funds, make a commitment and refuse to pay it.”

The man followed instructions, and pledged a huge sum, but then threw the collectors out the door. Weeks later, he complained to the Rabbi that his advice was not working, because his wife was as healthy as ever.

“Don't you see,” the Rabbi chuckled, “this is supposed to be a punishment, not a reward! Do this. Buy your wife a gift each day, speak lovingly to her, try to soothe her, and then when she becomes compatible, the curse will certainly take effect.”

Again, the man did as he was told, and wouldn't you know it; gradually his wife began to be kind and caring, and their relationship improved daily. Weeks later, the man reported, “Rabbi, it is a miracle! We are in love now as though we were newlyweds.”

The Rabbi donned a look of terror. “Hurry then and fulfill your pledge!” he exhorted, “because the punishment can now take effect any moment!” (Smiling Each Day)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּרַיָּה

בס"ד

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שַׁבַּת וַיִּקַּשׁ * שְׁמַת וְיָעֶזְקֵנוּ

Haftarah: Yehezkel 37:15-28

DECEMBER 30-31, 2022 7 TEBET 5783

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **4:11 pm (upstairs)** Shaharit: **6:20, 6:45, 8:25, 8:30, 9:00 am**
Minhah: **4:21 (main shul)** Morning Shema by: **9:06 am**
Candlelighting: **4:21 pm** Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 4:00 pm**
Evening Shema after: **5:19 pm** Shabbat Ends: **5:19 pm, R" T 5:51 pm**
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Class: **3:40 & 5:19 pm**
Weekday Shaharit: **6:45, 7:10 am**, Sundays: **8:15 am**, Weekday Minhah: **4:25 pm**

This bulletin is dedicated by **Danny & Marilyn Safdieh**
in memory of **Lucy Safdieh** לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּרַיָּה

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of **Sarah Mizrahi**
לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת שָׂרָה בַּת אֶסְתֵּר
by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

Mabrook to Joey and Karen Serouya on the engagement of their daughter, Rachel, to Martin Cohen.

A Message from our Rabbi

“And he sent Yehudah before him” (*Beresheet* 46:28) וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוּדָה לְפָנָיו

Why did Yehudah go to Egypt ahead of Ya'akov? *Rashi* explains: To establish a place of learning Torah.

Rabbi Yaakov Bender explains, there is something about a yeshivah. The ideal yeshivah situation is when a young man lives in the yeshivah and visits his family on occasion. A certain spirit and life that emanates from within the *Bet Midrash* has the capacity to warm a person for life. There are those that are privileged never to leave, fortunate enough to live near the wellspring itself, able to draw from its source.

There is something about children who grow up breathing yeshivah air, those whose parents live near and pray in the yeshivah. A yeshivah is holy and brushes all those exposed to it with holiness.

There was an elderly *Talmid Hacham* who sat in the library at the *Yeshivah Gedolah* in Montreal, and learned Torah. Rav Yaakov Moshe Magid was an elderly student of the *Mirrer Yeshivah* in Europe. He was a retired *shochet* and continued to say classes to a group of devoted students, within the walls of the yeshivah until his final years.

Someone once asked him why he doesn't move to another *Bet Midrash*, which might be more spacious. He explained that in 1939 he was learning in the Mirrer Yeshivah and he traveled home to his family. The students were allowed to go home and be with their families as war was breaking out. His parents were overjoyed to see him. "But no," said his father, "Your place is with the yeshivah. Whatever fate will meet the yeshivah will be yours as well."

With tears in their eyes, his parents encouraged him to leave them and return to his place – the yeshivah, knowing that they might be saying a final goodbye.

That courageous decision would save his life, because that yeshivah – Mirrer Yeshivah – was miraculously spared, carried on an extraordinary journey to safety. He eventually landed in Montreal, a living testimony to the power to his father's advice. "Your place is with the yeshivah." Of course, he never left.

There was a young man who learned in *Ner Yisrael* in Baltimore, who was moving to Israel. He went to Rabbi Ruderman, the *Rosh Yeshivah*, for a *berachah*. The *Rosh Yeashivah* wished him well and made a suggestion. "Whatever you do, wherever you live, make sure to be connected to a yeshivah.

Years later this young man was called to do military reserve duty. The commanding office delivered a speech to his men. In his address he mocked the idea of G-d, speaking of the power of man and the might of the Israeli Army. The reservist was deeply hurt by his words. Bursting with rage, he could not find the courage to protest.

As he stood there seething with rage, a voice came from the other side of the room.

"*Kefirah!*" came the pained cry. "How dare you speak with such arrogance? There is a reality that there is a Master of the Universe. He is in charge, and not you!"

The protester, a Sephardic gentleman, kept shouting and was thrown into a military jail for several days. When he was allowed to rejoin the unit, the yeshivah graduate hurried to welcome him back and asked, "How is it that I, who learned in yeshivah and still learn seriously, could not bring myself to speak up, and you, who do not appear to be a *Kollel* man, did not even hesitate? What do you do for a living?"

The Sephardic man nodded, "I am the cook in the Ponevezh Yeshivah," he said simply.

In a flash, Rav Ruderman's advice of years earlier came back. "Remain connected to a yeshivah." There, one is able to be connected to life itself.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Seize the Moment

In this week's reading, we study the reunion of Ya'akov and his son Yosef after 22 years of separation. The Torah reports on this momentous occasion: "Yosef...appeared before him, and he fell on his neck." Note that it only mentions Yosef crying and falling on his father's neck, but it doesn't record Ya'akov doing the same to his son. Surely, after so many years of mourning and anguish, Ya'akov must have been overwhelmed with the happiness of seeing his son alive and well. Why is this absent from the narrative?

The *Midrash* tells us that Ya'akov restrained himself because he was reciting the "*Shema*" at that moment. Of course, this explanation is itself astounding. Why would Ya'akov, at what was a monumentally emotional, personal time, after decades of missing his favored son, Yosef, set aside his emotions and recite the *Shema*?

A father once had to discipline his little boy, and the boy began to cry. Strangely, the boy immediately, while still crying, took a prayer book and began to recite *Minhah*, the afternoon prayer. After the boy finished, his father asked him why he decided to pray at just that moment. "I was already crying, so I thought it would be good to cry while I pray too!" This precocious child eventually became the famed Jewish leader and Dean of the

Kaminetz Yeshiva, Rabbi Boruch Ber Leibowitz zt"l (1870-1939).

Rabbi Leibowitz may have learned this practice from our Patriarch, Ya'akov. As his heart began to well with emotion, Ya'akov too felt these precious feelings of longing and happiness should be dedicated to the One Who protected Yosef throughout the 22 years. Ultimately, it was Hashem Who orchestrated all the events that made this cherished moment possible, and now was the opportune time to reach out to Him.

As humans, we find it more natural to relate to events and encounters that affect us personally. More challenging is to sense emotions like sadness, happiness, and excitement, in our spiritual relationship with Hashem. Towards this goal, it helps to channel the emotions we already experience in our lives towards the spiritual. At a celebration of an achievement or a milestone, take a moment to thank Hashem at the same time. When mourning a personal loss, reach out to your Heavenly Father and know that He is mourning with you. No one loves and cares for you more than the Al-mighty, and these are treasured opportunities to feel His tangible embrace. (Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

The Ultimate Rebuke

When Yosef said to his brothers "I am Yosef," the *pasuk* says that the brothers could not respond to him because they were frightened of him. They were so stunned by this sudden revelation that they became tongue-tied.

The *Midrash Rabbah* comments: "Woe to us from the Day of Judgment! Woe to us from the Day of *Tochachah* (rebuke)." This is the way it is going to be when a person leaves this world and stands in front of the Throne of Glory. We will have the same experience that the brothers of Yosef had on that day. Yosef was the youngest of the brothers and yet his siblings were unable to withstand his terse rebuke. How much more so when Hashem appropriately rebukes every person for their misdeeds while on Earth!

The question everyone asks is that the *Midrash* refers to Yosef's words to his brothers as a rebuke. But all he said were the words "I am Yosef." Where is the rebuke?

Rabbi Eliyahu Diskin answers based on the *Ramban*, who says the whole story really does not make any sense. Too many people made too many egregious errors here. Ya'akov erred by favoring Yosef over the other brothers. Yosef made an error by suspecting that his brothers transgressed prohibitions. The brothers made a mistake by thinking that Yosef was out to kill them. Everyone was way off base despite the fact that they were "*Gedolei Yisrael*." How did they all fall into this mess?

Says the *Ramban*, "*Ki HaGezeira Emetv'ha'Charitzut Sheker, v'Atzat HaShem Hee Takum*," which means, this is what Hashem wanted to happen, and all the efforts that everyone made were not going to count for anything, because Hashem wanted it to happen this way (*Atzat HaShem Hee Takum*).

For example: Ya'akov said to Yosef "Go find your brothers." How is Yosef supposed to find his brothers? They are out there in the desert tending to their sheep!

Yosef goes off to look for his brothers. He can't find them. What should he have done? He should have gone home and said, "Daddy, I can't find them." End of story. Suddenly, he meets a person. Who is it? It is a *malach*! The *malach* takes him to his brothers. Why? Because this is the way it had to happen. *Klal Yisrael* had to go down to *Misrayim*. This is the way *Klal Yisrael* will be formed—"in a land that is not theirs."

People make this effort and they make that effort. It is not going to work. All their efforts are for naught. At the end of the day *Atzat HaShem Hee Takum*.

The reason why Yosef's saying the words "*Ani Yosef*" was a rebuke was because those two words sent the message, "You tried to sell me as a slave and now *ANI YOSEF* – I am the second most powerful man in the world. What happened to all your efforts to get rid of me? They were all for naught!" Why was that? Because the **decree was true**