

When something goes “wrong,” remember that whether it will make you happy or sad depends on how you react to the situation. If you look at the total picture rather than one detail, you will develop a positive attitude. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### Our Carbon Footprint

“No two people have the same voice. Although there are billions of men and women. Everyone can be identified by their voice print. Hashem did an extraordinary and wondrous thing in making each person an individual being by giving him or her a unique voice.”

Hashem, in His kindness created each person with his own personal mission. It is up to us to discover our unique talent. To utilize it to serve Hashem with his own Carbon Footprint. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

### A Minyan in Tel Aviv

It was a rainy winter’s day. I needed to travel to an office in the center of Tel Aviv to have an important document signed. Having braved the rain and cold, I arrived at the reception desk and asked to see a certain government official. The reception clerk told me that I have arrived too early – the official was not expected for another half hour.

“No problem,” I said. “I will leave my document with you. You can have it signed for me when the official comes in, and I will return in half an hour to pick it up.” I left the papers with the clerk and went out in search of a *bet midrash* where I could sit and study for the next half hour.

I walked for a block or two until I saw a building with a small sign bearing the name of a *kollel*. I walked in, shook the water off my umbrella, hung up my raincoat, drew a glass of water from the cooler. And entered the *bet midrash*.

No sooner had I settled myself on a bench in the corner with a *sefer* than I noticed the men were getting ready to pray *Minhah*. I glanced at my watch. It could just barely be considered afternoon. It surprised me to see that they were going to pray so early; it was the earliest permissible time for afternoon prayers. By the time we finished praying, I realized it was time to return to the office to pick up my papers, which I did.

That evening I met a friend I had not seen for some time. In the course of our conversation, he told me he had a problem but doubted I would be able to solve it for him. He had just started commuting from the small settlement where he lived to the center of Tel Aviv, where he was teaching in the mornings. When he left Tel Aviv each day, it was still too early to find a *minyan* for *Minhah*. By the time he got home after the long ride, however, it was usually too late for him to find a *minyan*. He had always been particular about praying with a *minyan*, and he did not know what to do.

“You are not going to believe this,” I said. “Just today I was in the center of Tel Aviv, and I was not even thinking of praying *Minhah*. But I practically stumbled into the earliest *Minhah minyan* I have ever seen.”

I think I must have been sent to central Tel Aviv half an hour early that day especially to help out a fine Jew who would not forgo praying with a *minyan*. (There is no such thing as coincidence)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

## Congregation Magen Abraham

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SHABBAT MIKES  שַׁבַּת מִקֵּס

Haftarah: Melachim I 3:15-4:1

**DECEMBER 18-19, 2020 3 TEBET 5781**

Friday Minhah: 4:14 pm	Shaharit: 6:16, 6:40, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am
Shir Hashirim (midrash): 4:04 pm	Morning Shema by: 9:02 am
Minhah (midrash): 4:14 pm	Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 3:50 pm
Candlelighting: 4:14 pm	Shabbat Ends: 5:12 pm (R"Y 5:44 pm)
Evening Shema after: 5:12 pm	Sunday Minhah: 4:15 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

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

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאַה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

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

The fast of *Asarah Betevet* will be on Friday, December 25. Fast begins at 6:21 am and ends at 5:05 pm.

### A Message from our Rabbi

”כִּי אִם-זִכְרַתְנִי אֶתֶדָּ כְּאִשֶּׁר יִיטֵב לְךָ וְעִשִׂיתָנָא עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְהִזְכַּרְתָּנִי”  
“If only you would remember me with yourself when he benefits you, and please do me a kindness and mention me.” (Beresheet 40:19)

*Rabenu Bahya* explains that Yosef was punished because he placed his trust in the cupbearer’s ability to speak to Pharaoh and secure his release, and he didn’t put trust in Hashem alone. As a punishment, Yosef remained in prison for another two years, a punishment corresponding to the two request that he made to the cupbearer: “Remember me” and “mention me.” Yosef had such a great level of trust in Hashem that even the smallest fragment of personal effort in securing his own freedom was considered a grave sin deserving of severe punishment.

Although the level of personal effort that we are required to make is far greater than what Yosef felt was necessary for him, we are still not permitted to forget that ultimately Hashem is in complete control of our lives, as the following story relates.

In his later years, Rav Moshe Feinstein experienced an irregular heartbeat. His family took him to a world famous expert on the subject who immediately inserted a pacemaker. A few weeks later, the irregular heartbeat returned, and Rav Moshe was rushed to the local emergency room. This time he was seen by a junior doctor who diagnosed a pacemaker malfunction. He removed the defective model and successfully replaced it.

During his recovery, Rav Moshe related, “Here I am with a pacemaker inserted by a trainee and not as we planned by a *gadol hador* (referring to the first doctor who was world famous). This happened in order to teach me that it is important for a Jew to remember that while we must seek competent medical care, ultimately the outcome is in Hashem’s Hands, not ours, no matter how good one’s qualifications are.”

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

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## *False Appearances*

One of the very perplexing things in this *perashah* is the fact that Yosef appears to be taking revenge against his brothers. He is playing games with them. He torments them. He knows who they are and puts them through a long charade, accusing them of being spies and accusing Binyamin of being a thief. It goes back and forth like that. What is Yosef doing? We are speaking about ‘Yosef *haSaddik*’!

Also, Yosef was now second in command in Egypt. He certainly could have sent some kind of message to his father and told him, ‘I am alive. Come down and see me.’ Even if he has a grudge against his brothers and wants to torment and torture them, why was he apparently so callous regarding the emotions of his father? Why didn’t he send Ya’akov *Abinu* a message that he was alive and well?

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, in his *sefer Emet L’Yaakov*, writes that Yosef had to teach the brothers a lesson. The lesson, succinctly stated, is that things are not always as they appear, and that it is possible to jump to wrong conclusions. This is exactly what the brothers did. They falsely suspected their innocent sibling. That is what Yosef was trying to accomplish here. The brothers knew that they were not spies. They knew Yosef was a smart fellow. How could he make such a gross error and accuse them of being spies?

They did not learn the lesson the first time. Rav Yaakov points out that when they found the goblet in the sack of Binyamin, they accused him and said (Rashi brings this surprising *Midrash*) “You are a thief, the son of a thief (referring to the fact that his mother Rachel stole the ‘*Terafim*’ from her father Laban).” This was despite the fact that they were accusing Binyamin—whom they knew to be a *Saddik*.

There are some people that we all trust implicitly, such that come what may we know that they would never do such a thing. “Ay” – the ‘evidence’? There must be an explanation! But they did not do that. In spite of the fact that Binyamin was a *Saddik*, they said “You’re a *Ganav* (thief)!” Despite the fact that they knew Yosef was a *Saddik*, they said “You’re a *Rodef* (have intent to murder)!”

“I am going to show you” says Yosef, “that if people jump to conclusions—they look merely at the ‘evidence’—they can make serious mistakes.” That is why he had to put them through these trials and tribulations—so that they would finally see what they did wrong.

When Yosef says the words “I am Yosef—is my father still alive?” they were not able to respond to him “for they feared his presence.” The *Midrash* says that this was *musar* (rebuke, reprimand or chastisement) to them, for which they had no response. What was the *musar*? “We were wrong.” That is the biggest *musar*! It is

the hardest fact to face. They now realized that for twenty years they were making a mistake, they were living a lie. There is no greater *musar* than this.

That is the lesson he wanted to teach them: Things are not always as they appear.

(Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

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## *Cause and Effect*

The *perashah* begins, “And it was, *mikess*, at the end of two years, and Pharaoh dreamt”. The *Midrash* says, “*kess*, an end limit, was set for the darkness, an end limit was set for Yosef’s imprisonment. Once that time was reached, Pharaoh had his dream.” The *Bet Halevi* explains that the *Midrash* is teaching us a very powerful message in viewing life’s events. We would superficially understand the cause and effect of the *perashah*’s events as follows. Pharaoh’s dream, was the cause of Yosef being released from the prison. The same way that we would view a person who made a certain investment. If that investment would prove to be lucrative, we would say that the investment was the cause of his wealth.

The *Bet Halevi* explains that this *Midrash* is teaching us the correct perspective. There was a set time, two additional years, that Yosef was meant to be in prison. The cause of his release was that time having been reached. This cause triggered that *min hashamayim*, from the heavens, something had to happen to bring about that release. The result of this cause was Pharaoh’s dream. The dream didn’t cause the release. It was rather the release caused the dream. The investment didn’t cause the wealth. *Min hashamayim* the time had come for him to become wealthy. He, therefore, made that investment.

People go through so much anguish in life deeply regretting moves they failed to make. They often think to themselves that had they only made that investment, that decision, that phone call, their lives would have been so different. It is true that one event can have a tremendous influence on our life. However, we must recognize what really determines our fate is not our decisions. That investment could have greatly altered our financial standing. However, it would not have been the cause of our wealth. It would have been the result of a *min hashamayim* directive that this it is now in this person’s best interest to become wealthy. Although it is beyond us to determine and fully fathom those directives, we do know that those ‘little decisions’ that we’ve discussed earlier, do affect those directives. The fact that at times we don’t see the good in what’s happening, in no way indicates that it isn’t really good. (Rabbi Yisroel Ciner)

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## *Attitude Control*

One of the most elusive goals in American society is true happiness.

While researching his book “Gateway to Happiness,” Rabbi Zelig Pliskin asked a prominent Torah scholar to give him his thoughts on sadness. “The world is so beautiful,” he replied. “How can anyone be sad?” Another person (not a Sage) was interviewed. “How can anyone be happy?” he replied. “The world is full of so much suffering and assorted problems!”

We have a tendency to believe that some people are sad and some are happy because of the circumstances they are dealt by Heaven. The fact of the matter is, two people can live in the same town and experience similar difficulties, and yet one can be very happy and the other very depressed. It is a matter of perspective. It’s not the facts of life that determine the way you feel – it’s your attitude. Rabbi Pliskin explains that since we have the ability to control our attitudes and thoughts, we have the choice of making ourselves happy or sad.