



דרכים בפרשה

וישב



ויהי בעת ההוא וירד יהודה מאת אחיו

It was at that time that Yehudah went down from his brothers (38:1)

The Midrash (Rabba 85:1) relates: **ויהי בעת ההוא, רבי שמואל בר נחמן פתח (ירמיה כט, יא): כי אנכי ידעתי את המחשבת, שבטים היו עסוקין במכירתו של יוסף, ויוסף היה עסוק בשקו ובתעניתו, ראובן היה עסוק בשקו ותעניתו, ויעקב היה עסוק בשקו ובתעניתו, ויהודה היה עסוק לקח לו אשה, והקדוש ברוך הוא היה עוסק בורא אורו של מלך המשיח** - during the time in which the brothers were involved in the sale of Yosef, Yosef himself was busy doing teshuvah; Reuven also busied himself with teshuvah, and Yaakov as well. At the same time, Yehudah went out to find a wife, and HaShem was “occupied” with creating the light of Moshiach. Although it would seem strange that Yehudah chose this moment to look for a wife, the Midrash relates that HaShem knows the thoughts of man (Yirmiyah 29:11) and why Yehudah chose this moment. As a result, HaShem responded by creating the light of Moshiach (which indeed came from Yehudah).

The Rebbe R'Binim of Pishischa (with Kotzker Rebbe's explanation) explained that at each every moment of a person's life, he must make a *cheshbon hanefesh* to see what can be rectified. Yehuda could have just given up, but rather than throwing in the towel, he understood that he must begin anew. How does one make a fresh start? The

Torah is the guiding light offering constant instructions and how one shall live. Yehuda went and renewed his commitment beginning with the very first mitzvah in the Torah of *peru u'revu* – getting married and having children. Upon “seeing” this, Hakadosh Boruch Hu “busied” Himself with creating Moshiach.

We can add to this an idea that is based on Chazal quoted by Rashi at the end of Parshas Toldos: On the day that a couple gets married, there is complete forgiveness for their *aveiros* (Basmah, daughter of Yishmael is called Machlas to teach us about the *mechila*). This may have been Yehudah's motive in getting married at that point. His brothers were busying themselves with teshuva, and in a sense, by getting married, Yehuda was as well. Furthermore, now that he was armed with a wife as an *eizer kinegdo*, she would help to keep him in check. He would now be ready to begin anew with a clean slate and actually maintain it.

In Parshas Vayeira, we learn that when the wife of Lot turned back to look at Sedom, she became a pillar of salt. She was specifically told, **המלט על נפשך אל תביט אחריך** - *Flee for your life! Do not look behind you (19:17)*. However, she was unable to control herself. During their escape, **ותבט אשתו מאחריה ויהי**

נציב מלח - *His wife peered behind him and she became a pillar of salt (19:26).* The Nesivas Shalom explains that she was given the opportunity to close the book on her previous chapter in life. It was time to move on and not look back. A new chance was being given. But she was unable to make the best of it; she could not make a clean break with her past. She just had to look back again.

As we stand just moments before Chanuka, let us allow ourselves to think about an incredible opportunity that we are about to experience. The most famous question regarding Chanukah which is attributed to the Beis Yosef is of course: why do we commemorate the miracle of the oil lasting for eight days by celebrating for eight days? If there was enough oil for one day, than the actual miracle was only for seven days. There are literally hundreds if not thousands of answers that have been offered over the years. We shall focus on the Kotzker Rebbe's: When the Chashmonaim entered the Beis Hamikdash, they were met with a terrible sight. Everything was in ruins and the *mizbayach* was literally cut up in pieces. The loss seemed insurmountable and the willingness to pick up and begin anew normally would not have been there. The very fact that they were willing to search for even one solitary cruse of undefiled oil was in itself a tremendous miracle which is the first day's celebration. Any regular person would have just given up, but the Chashmonaim continued searching. On top

of that there was the second miracle of the oil remaining lit for seven extra days.

Bayamim Haheim- in those days, Klal Yisroel was given a chance to start anew amidst their lowest point. Sure there were many excuses to just give up, but instead, the Chashmonaim grabbed the opportunity, and for this we have the Yom Tov of Chanukah.

Bizman Hazeh- There are different times in our lives that HaShem throws opportunities our way for a clean break. Chanukah is one major time during each year that such a chance is given. The sefarim Hakedoishim tell us that Chanukah is a Rosh Hashana of sorts. It is chance for each person to make a break and start brand new. May we be zoche this Chanukah to rededicate ourselves to HaShem Yisborach in the same manner that the Chashmonaim did. No matter how low a person is, a new chance is being offered.

מרדכי אפפעל, Good Shabbos,

