Have a father or brother? I recall an incident from my childhood. I was seven or eight years old in a small town in White Russia, and like all Jewish boys, I attended the little cheder school. I still remember that dreary winter day in January; it was cloudy and overcast. The Torah portion of the week was Vayigash, and Chanukah had just ended, taking away with it the joyous holiday spirit from our small town. A long, dark winter lay ahead for us cheder boys. We had to rise when it was still dark, and return home holding a lantern, because nightfall was so early.

That day, we cheder boys were in a depressed mood, lazy and listless. We chanted mechanically the first verses of Vayigash in a dull monotone, dreading the words in Hebrew and translating them into Yiddish. One boy finished reciting Joseph’s question: וַיְכַלּוּ יְבָשָׁא, Do you have a father, and the reply: יָדָא נָא אֵין, Yes, we have an old father.

Then something unusual happened. Our teacher, a Chabad rabbi, suddenly turned to his feet and with a gleam in his eyes motioned to the reader to stop. He turned to me and addressed me with the Russian word podrazin, meaning assistant to the rabbi. The teacher asked me: “What kind of question did Joseph ask his brothers—וַיְכַלּוּ יְבָשָׁא, Do you have a father? Of course they had a father, everybody has a father! The only person who had no father was Adam, created by God. But everyone else born into this world has a father. What kind of a question was that?” I tried to offer the answer, “Joseph simply wanted to find out whether the father was still alive. Do you have a father?” actually means, ‘is he alive, or is he dead?”

If so,” our teacher thundered back at me. “Joseph should have phrased the question differently: ‘is your father still alive?’ It was useless to argue with our teacher. He was now no longer addressing only us little boys. He began to speak rhetorically as if some mysterious guest had just entered that cold room. ‘Joseph, our teacher pronounced as if from a pulpit, wanted to know whether his brothers were still attached to their roots and origins. Are you, Joseph, was asking, “rooted in your father? Do you look at him the way the branches or blossoms look on their roots? Do you see your father as the foundation of your existence? Do you see him as your provider and sustainer? Or are you just like rootless shepherds wandering from place to place, from pasture to pasture, who forget their origins?”

Our teacher suddenly stopped addressing the invisible visitor and turned his focus directly to us. Raising his voice, he asked us: “Are you truly humble? Do you look down condescendingly at your old father as representing an archaic tradition? Do you think that your old father is also capable of telling you something new and exciting? Something challenging? Something you didn’t know before? Or are you so arrogant and vain, that you deny dependence on your father upon your source?” Our teacher exclaimed, וַיַּכְּלָשׁוּ יְבָשָׁא. Do you have a father?!” pointing at my study-mate Isaac, who was considered the town’s prodigy. The teacher turned to him and said, “Who do you think knows more? Do you know more because you are so well-versed in Talmud, or does your father, Jacob the blacksmith, know more even though he can barely read Hebrew? Are you proud of your father? When we recognize the supremacy of our father, then, you too, we accept the supremacy of our Universal Father in Heaven.

I will never forget our teacher’s novel interpretation of the Joseph story.

One can use a similar approach to understanding Joseph’s second question: Have you a brother? Joseph wanted to know: Does your awareness of time stop at the present moment, or do you consider future generations as well? Do you plan for the world of tomorrow, enveloped in the mist of non-being? Do you have a vision? Do you believe in the improbable?” The brothers’ answer was: Yes. We have an elderly father, an מִשְׁמָר. We also have a bright, vivacious, talented young child, מִשְׁמָר, our younger brother, who represents the world of tomorrow. The young child challenges us to make possible the birth of future generations.

Here in America, we have freedom, many privileges, and anti-Semitism poses no real threat, yet we are committed to Eretz Yisrael. We fight for the possession of the land and continue to sacrifice young lives for each sand dune, near each rocky hill. Why? The answer is that about three thousand five hundred years ago, מִשְׁמָר, Abraham, walked behind his flock on those sandy trails and, by traversing the land, endowed it with kedushah. Centuries later, a prophet and king named David played the harp and sang beautiful hymns to God. The hills of our ancient homeland, which echo with ancient melodies and holy words, are worth the sacrifice of our youth.

The drama of Joseph and his brothers, which draws to a climax in this sidra, is a source of endless fascination. One significant aspect of this strange narrative is that Joseph’s actions toward his brothers are incomprehensible, both to the brothers who do not recognize him and to us who already know who he is. To the very end, both they — the brothers — and the readers are perplexed: they, by the Egyptian prince who seems irrationally bent upon tormenting them, and we by the anomalous and mysterious motives of Joseph in continuing to conceal his identity from them and carrying out this elaborate spiel. Then, suddenly, all becomes clear. Joseph’s revelation of his identity is also the revelation of a master plan, conceived by a mastermind, a marvelous and beautifully consistent course of action. The purpose of this program is to help the brothers achieve teimunah, repentance or rehabilitation, to regain their sense of dignity, and to purge themselves of their shame. For this is the grand

The sin of Joseph, to which all his actions are inclined and aimed, is the goal of Joseph, to which all his actions are inclined and aimed. Their sin was that of hatred for their half-brother Joseph, the son of Rachel, a hatred which resulted in endangering his life. Now, Judah
Ten times he permitted them to refer to his own father as his servant! It is true that this was part of his consistent fulfillment of the dream whereby the sun, too, symbolizing Jacob, will bow down to Joseph. But the rabbis (56a 13a) were terribly upset with Joseph for allowing this piece of disrespect ten times over again. In punishment, they declare, Joseph lost ten years of his own life which he would have been permitted to live out had he not counseled this discount to his own father.

In a word, Joseph was consistent to a fault. He hewed too closely to his original plan. When a plan is overly consistent, when it leaves no room for contingencies, it becomes a machine – the kind of machine that grinds up human hearts and emotions, that leads brothers to grief, that makes servants of parents, and that ultimately diminishes the life of the mastermind himself. It is here that Joseph erred. He was too consistent and not sufficiently compassionate, too calculating and not sufficiently kindly.

Does this mean that we must make a virtue of inconsistency, that it is good to be illogical and self-contradictory? Of course not! One ought always to have a framework, a philosophy, some solid criteria by which to judge men and events and oneself, but never should this framework be so massive that you have to cut down the picture of life to fit it into the frame. Never should consistency be so rigid that you become callous to the cause of compassion. Never should a theory thwart the truth. In the general organization of one's weltanschauung, one ought always to strive for consistency, for otherwise life is haphazard and even hazardous. But, an overall consistent philosophy of life does not necessitate a stifling and petty consistency in every small segment of experience. For then, consistency becomes nothing more than the excuse for a closed mind.

What is it that is wrong with over-consistency?

First, it makes one inhuman. If I believe in the plan above all else, then I will follow it to the bitter end even if I must steamroller over people and feelings. This was the error of Joseph who had a marvelous and even generous plan, but followed it to its logical conclusion without adequate compassion.

Second, it is simply unscientific. It involves too much trust in reason, and therefore out of concern for a consistent, rational pattern I may fail to respect newly discovered facts and new situations. A theory
that ignores facts, that twists logic instead of revising itself, that wards off unpleasant challenges by ignoring them – is simply wrong.

It is interesting that in the history of talmudic methodology, the protest against extravagant dialectics, called *pilpul*, was largely a reaction against *over-consistency*. The protest against *pilpul*, from fifteenth-century Prague to sixteenth-century Poland to eighteenth-century Lithuania, was a reaction against consistency so strong and theory so powerful that they would not be altered by mere facts.

Indeed, there is a similar movement in contemporary American philosophy, which expresses itself in contempt for "ideology." The word "ideology" is taken as a synonym for the enthronement of the theory beyond any revision because of encounter with new facts.

An example of this disdain for facts in favor of a consistent theory is the matter of dialogues between Jews and Christians. One would have thought that after the Six Day War and the shameful betrayal of the Jewish community by those who had expressed such desires for dialogues, we would be done with the whole business. Indeed, some honorable and honest proponents of dialogue issued retractions soon after the Six Day War and announced that they were finished with these attempts. Yet, too many Jews have preferred to go their old way and have refused to abandon the dialogue movement and all it implies. It is a pity that only a week or two ago an official of the Conservative movement authoritatively declared that his movement is in favor of more dialogue, not less. Apparently, a "line" once taken, must be continued to infinity even if it leads to no place. How wise Ralph Waldo Emerson was when he declared that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

Third, over-consistency is religiously sinful. It is a sign of a lack of humility before God. It assumes that humans have complete control over the future, that we can avoid surprise and novelty and contingency by exercising our own wisdom and shrewdness. It means that we have over-confidence in our own reason and ability, and therefore read God out of the world, that we substitute our plans for His, or, at best, we presume to know His plans to the last iota. Even religious folk, perhaps especially religious folk, ought never dare such presumptions. It is an act of arrogance against God: "There is no wisdom and no counsel and no understanding against the Lord" (Proverbs 10:22). The religious objection to over-consistency is in the form of a plea for humility, of an acknowledgment of our own limited visibility in the skies of history and our willingness to be guided by divine instructions.
ויהיו לו לאמר עדיך יוסי כי הכהו בלש יוהב בחשך אחת. und כי לא אסמי להם ידברו אלא את כל דברי יוסי אחר דבר אולם ויאת עגולה השקה והימים שלאו את

וליהיו לו עיבוד אביהם, כ.-כ.

דמויי inconלעגתו האית אמיתויו הרוח שבעה עלמא מחיתו לשמוס

והנה על י(pb)ווהי הזמנת עד מהותו שמה בובו בשכון עם אחד קורות אילך ש BigInteger שבלש יוהב והവ.htm

ואחר כל עלתי ההולכת עד השמות שליהיир ויהיו שחלהו של יוהב.

שליותל שרוף על חබב אילך שители

במישים השולחאל ולא בא השוקה על ת zx z מוספרה ולע"ד לכל

וליהיו שלש שאר

ואת שםinta התוכנה והכישון בהלבשת יכין ואין החזון ומספרתי לארבעה שבועים כי "פתיהו ועיבוד אביו" מדונה היא ומספרתי לשון שלוש עלו ממלכת שמעה והיינו

בלרא הילא בבי האמות והיא כה זמר

ש geniş ערפי על לָוֶה "בָּטֹל אָלֶּה שְׁלוֹחֵי שְׁמוֹם סְמֹךְ על" וליאו שמעה בצל שמעה על עבויו:"אובן עד יוסי, שעון נכש במעלubo החוצה על יuseRal העב והיא אילך שיתיים, שטי יוסי

וב כי הוא מסכל בכל אור ארם, עיבד ודעת, איינו שמות, אולב ככר

האמות המוספים "ויהיו אלהות bureaucrats אולא את כל דברי יוסי ושב ארור אולא".

והיהוו מעסירה כי את הצור יוסי וראה כי שפה שלום על פיפי, כי

כנראה ראו עיבד את העתקות אשר שלח יוסי, גם הם שרפת רשל

שיטס מסך שלם יוסי בכמה יוסי שרפת סמאך והסטה על עבויו: "יתוך והו

עיבד אתיבים:

ונית התיה שנתחברות שמות

"יודע Ivanka שעלה לפניה ולא את הליכון.Low ידעה וביכולתה איסורה גישה" (מקו, יחכ)

"לאיזה" הלנה - הנקז לא יתי מעמד חידשים מעשה חוכמה (ר"י)

כככ חכמים ל此時 ינה ל-יודיק חסוד עב ינקז (ר"י)

"יפתח" הפוסק כי שרייאת במשל לפניה עיבוד התיהלא (ר"י)

ל kvm. האור מביתו ב chevy使える אוorns ה holster עב ינקז (ר"י)

לבאיה אלה ב المهמות וב כל חיזוקי יד של ינקז (ר"י): "יריכי אתבי הפוסק" - הפסק חסוד עב אולא führen um

לｖא יורה, והיון כי זירור הלשון והשכבה, שינה בNSNotification, אלא עיבוד אוorns ה holster עב ינקז (ר"י)

שליחתי אלר יניב ושל רכז את הנקז.
לא שעד לי בָּלִּים בָּשַׁם הָה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָنوּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁבוּ בָּשָּׁם יָדַע, וְאָנוּ לְשָׁם יָשָׁבוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּית יִתְמָר, אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁboro
וכותב של תוסף שוחה פונתה בפשע, והיה
לאהלה, שאר ישרו ישלו והשלו.
בכתח ימיישראלי.

ודיבור ידוע של שאול המלך מברך
ươם ענני, כניעון, ה.