



Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Vayechi 5786

1 – Topic – A Ha'ora on what Yaakov Avinu wanted to tell the Shevatim about Acharis Hayamim

As we prepare for Shabbos Chazak, Shabbos Parshas Vayechi, B'ezras Hashem Yisborach. A ha'ora and then the Dvar Torah. The ha'ora, as you know, Yaakov Avinu said to the shevatim gather around me as it says in 49:1 (וְאָנֹכִי לָכֶם, אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם, בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים). I'll tell you what'll happen b'acharis hayamim. The Gemara in Pesachim 56a says and of course Rashi brings it, that what did he want to tell them about acharis hayamim? He wanted to talk to them about Yemos Hamashiach. However, the issue here is that it was (וְנִסְתַּלְקָה מִמֶּנּוּ שְׂכִינָה וְהִתְחִיל אֹמֵר דְּבָרִים אַחֲרִים), and he could not tell them about acharis hayamim so he didn't.

The issue is I don't understand, what exactly did he want to tell them about acharis hayamim? We're always taught that according to the game plan that Moshe Rabbeinu was going to take Klal Yisroel into Eretz Yisroel as we find in Devarim 1:2 (אֲהֶה עִשָּׂר יוֹם מָחָר), when it was going to be just 11 days from Har Sinai they would have gone in, the Beis Hamikdash never would have been destroyed and Klal Yisroel would have stayed in Eretz Yisroel. Because it didn't happen that way, so Hakadosh Baruch Hu as they say (הַשֹּׁפֵיךְ חֲמַתּוֹ עַל עַץ וַאֲבָנִים) and the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed.

So I don't understand, ba'asher hu sham, this was before the cheit hamiraglim. So what was he going to tell them about acharis hayamim? What's acharis hayamim? Moshe Rabbeinu is going to go into Eretz Yisroel and that's how I always understood, that was going to be the already sort of the acharis hayamim. So very hard to understand.

Now, I understand that Yaakov Avinu knew b'nevuah that everything would happen. But we have a rule that nevuah about the future doesn't contradict bechirah until it's spoken. Once it's given over, then it contradicts bechirah. So the nevuah could not yet be said that the miraglim would sin. Very confusing what exactly Yaakov Avinu meant to tell his children.

There's another nekudah: Yaakov Avinu didn't just schmooze with his children and just tell them news of the future. It must have been some tachlis in his telling them (אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם, בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים). And I guess maybe one thing answers the other, if we can understand what exactly he would have told them. Not the history of the future. But you should know that when there's an acharis hayamim such and such has to happen. Maybe one answers the other. Right now it's a tzarich iyun.

2 – Topic – A Thought from Rav Hutner in the Pachad Yitzchok

Let's move on to a broader and more yesoidisidike thought. 48:20 (וְשָׁמַךְ אֲלֵרִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה). Yaakov Avinu gave a bracha that (כִּדְּ יִכְרֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל) that Klal Yisrael are going to give brachos with Menashe and Ephraim. The kasha which is asked is why? 48:5 (וְיִמְנָשֶׁה--כְּרֵאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן, יְהִי-וְיִי-). Menashe and Ephraim are going to be like Reuven and Shimon, not greater than Reuven and Shimon. Mi nitla b'mi? We always say katan nitla b'gadol. The smaller one is compared to the gadol. So if anything (כְּרֵאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן, יְהִי-וְיִי-לי) means they'll manage to reach the madreiga of Reuven and Shimon.

So why do we say (וְשָׁמַךְ אֲלֵרִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה)? Why don't we say (וְשִׁמְעוֹן וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה)? Say it straight out! They're both exactly the same thing, (מה נפקא מינא ביניהם)? It needs something of a biur.

In order to get to a biur, I'd like to share with you something that it says in the Pachad Yitzchak, Chanukah maamar tes zayin. Rav Hutner shtells avek a very interesting geder of the generations. Rav Hutner said there's a generation that's considered the dor re'iyah. Dor re'iyah is the dor that actually saw things happening.

Lemashal, Klal Yisrael stood at Har Sinai, it's a dor re'iyah. Klal Yisrael went out of Mitzrayim, it's a dor re'iyah, they're a dor that saw. Later, the next generation would come and they'd be told b'mesorah that there was Yetzias Mitzrayim, that there was a Mattan Torah. That generation is called a dor mesorah. The dor didn't see it but the dor accepts a mesorah that this is what took place. So Moshe Rabbeinu's dor for Mattan Torah is the dor re'iyah. The dor that went into Eretz Yisrael was the dor of mesirah. (משה קיבל תורה מסיני ומסרה ליהושע). Afterwards it was given over. So it went from one to the other. There's a dor re'iyah and there's a dor mesirah. Fascinating.

Rav Hutner says that the dor re'iyah is koveia, it sets up the understanding for all time of the thing that it sees. Meaning to say, that Klal Yisrael stood by Mattan Torah (באימה ביראה ברדת ובזיע). Klal Yisrael stood (באימה) and mimeila the reflection of Mattan Torah, the understanding of Mattan Torah, the havana of Mattan Torah that we all have, that nekudah of that havana of Mattan Torah is still a hemshech of the original. So it is k'ilu, since they were mekabeil (ביראה) in generations it goes that way. That's the hashpo'ah of the dor re'iyah on the future generations.

Zagt Rav Hutner, it says in Vayikra 23:44 (וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה, אֶת-מִצְוֵי יְרֹר, אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל). Moshe told the moadim to Klal Yisroel. It's an unusual pasuk. We're so used to the pasuk we don't realize it. But actually, it's a very strange expression: (וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה). Usually it's (וידבר משה אל בני ישראל לאמר). It doesn't say (וידבר משה ענייני שמיטה אל כל). It doesn't say that. (וידבר משה את מצוות מזוזה אל בני ישראל), no. (וידבר השם אל משה לאמר) and it says a parsha. What does it mean (אֶת-מִצְוֵי יְרֹר)?

Rav Hutner explains that moadei Hashem are k'neged Yetzias Mitzrayim and Matan Torah and the Ananei HaKavod. And this was the dor re'iyah. (וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה, אֶת-מִצְוֵי יְרֹר, אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), he told them: you're responsible for the moadei Hashem, you're the dor re'iyah. However you undertake the havana of the dor re'iyah, that is what really is going to last for all generations. So, there's a

certain achrayus of a dor re'iyah. On the other hand, the dor mesora, has to be able to accept it, to take it and to pass it on.

Yaakov Avinu said I'm going to give a brocha. What's the brocha? The shevatim they sat in bais Yaakov, they were in Yaakov's house. They understood what it means to be in the batei ha'avos. It's a dor re'iyah, it's a dor that saw the original kedusha. Menashe and Efraim grew up in Mitzrayim. They're a dor mesora. There's no dor mesora like them. We have a mesora, we're part of a community, a community of Yidden. They didn't grow up in a community, they grew up with one father. Okay, not just any father, Yosef HaTzadik, but they grew up with a father who handed down the mesora to them. But it was a dor mesora. The bracha for future generations is (ישימך) (אלוקים כאפרים וכמנשה) like the dor mesora that was mekabel from the dor re'iyah even though they were so disconnected from it and they still were mekabel, they became bnei mesora. So, that would explain why we tell people in future generations to be like Menashe and Efraim.

When I saw this, I was thinking about another nekuda. In generations, there are times that a generation has the opportunity to be a dor re'iyah. My generation, we saw those who built up after the Holocaust. We saw when we went to shul men and some women also who had tattoos on their arms from the concentration camps. We saw people who had suffered so much rebuild. We saw HaKadosh Boruch Hu allow the rebuilding of Eretz Yisroel of millions of Jews to come to Eretz Yisroel. We saw all of this, we're the dor re'iyah, we're the dor that saw it. It's soon going to be the dor mesora.

The next generation, it's already going to be like when we talk about the Spanish Inquisition, when we talk about Gezeiras Tach veTat, when we talk about even World War I. It's history, that's the way we look at it. In the next generation, all this is going to be history. What is their impression going to be? You know Klal Yisroel by Matan Torah were mekabeil (באימה וביראה ברתת ובזיע). So, it remains for generations when we talk about Matan Torah there's a certain fear.

Sukkos is the Ananei HaKavod. It seems to me Klal Yisroel did not in the first place express its awe properly on the Ananei HaKavod. So, here we have a case where the doros it didn't remain with that level of appreciation.

Same thing is true about Eretz Yisroel, same thing is true about the post-Holocaust experience. We are responsible that it should remain that way depending on how we appreciate it. If we don't appreciate it, then we're going to cause that it doesn't remain l'doros an appreciated idea. We're the dor re'iyah, we have to make something out of it.

3 – Topic – Shimon's disagreement with Yosef about being the Bechor to Rachel

One last thought. A pilpul in the sefer Dover Tov, it's a beautiful sefer on the parsha. He asks: why Shimon had a sinah for Yosef? It says in 49:5 (שָׁמְעוֹן וְלֹוִי, אֶחָיִם--כְּלִי חָמָס, מְכַרְתִּיהֶם). Chazal say that it came from Shimon. That Shimon was the one that Rashi says (הוא השליכו לבור). Shimon was the one that threw Yosef into the pit as Rashi says in Parshas Mikeitz. Rashi says in dibur hamas'chil Shimon in 42:24: (הוא השליכו לבור). Shimon did it. Who's the one that said to Levi in 37:19 (הִנֵּה, בָּא בְּעַל הַחֲלָמוֹת הַלְזָה--בָּא). Why? Why was Shimon so anti Yosef? Yosef was a bechor le'imah. He

deserved to have a kesones pasim. He was a bechor le'imah, and we all know that Yaakov wanted to marry Rachel. So he got something special. Why so much kinah?

This sefer Dover Tov says a beautiful shtikel Torah. He says Chazal tell us that Leah was going to have a seventh shevet. But she realized that meant that Rachel would have only one. She davened. According to the explanation of the Maharsha, quoting the Poneach Raza on the Gemara in Niddah 31a, Dinah was actually formed in Rachel's womb, and Yosef was actually formed in the womb of Leah. And then they switched places. Shimon knew this. Because later Shimon would marry Dinah. How could he marry Dinah? It's a sister, even Bnei Noach don't marry sisters.

The answer is that he didn't marry his sister, he married a half-sister, which is muttar to Bnei Noach, and therefore, it was something that was muttar. But it's only a half-sister if you accept the idea. Really, to everyone's eye, Dinah and Shimon were born from the same mother and the same father. The only thing is if we accept the Maharsha that conception was back in the womb of Rachel.

Now to Shimon, this was a very important thing because Shimon married Dinah. So now Yosef gets a kesones pasim. Everyone's saying, you know why? Because he's the bechor le'imah. Not really the bechor le'imah, says Shimon. Really there was a switching of places. Therefore, it wasn't really a bechor le'imah, and he very much disliked the idea that Yosef should be treated as a bechor le'imah.

Beautiful shtikel Torah, and it turns out I left you with a short question on Acharos Hayamim. I left you with a nice vort and an issue as I end up. With that I would like to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful fantastic Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Vayechi 5785

1 – Topic – Yosef's Generations

As we prepare for Shabbos Chazak, Shabbos Parshas Vayechi, the Berachos of Yaakov Avinu. I'd like to share with you a couple of thoughts on the Parsha, but to begin with, as I was being Mavir Sedra, there's a question that disturbed me that I don't think I've ever thought about it before, and it's something that's just a technicality that seems to be a little strange, and I'll explain.

I'm talking here about the life of Yosef. Of course, Yosef, at the age of 17, went down to Mitzrayim, and 22 years later was reunited with his father and his brothers, at the age of 39. By that time, when he was 39 years old, we're aware that he already had two sons, Ephraim and Menashe, and they weren't little babies because we're told by Rashi that Menashe was the interpreter when the Shevatim came, so we would guess that at the very least he had to be 5 or 6 years old to be an interpreter in the king's palace. So let's say if Yosef at that time was 39, that he had Menashe when he was 33. So he has his first son at the age of 33, the second son shortly thereafter. Yosef lived until 110, meaning that when he passed away, his oldest son Menashe who was born when Yosef was 33, then at that time he was 77 years old. 77 plus 33 is 110. So Menashe was 77 years old at the time. Yosef lived to see Menashe at 77 years old.

How many generations did Yosef see? Well, I would think a 77-year-old man, certainly in those generations when they apparently got married younger, would have had certainly grandchildren B'e'zras Hashem. Under normal circumstances today a man can be a grandfather by the time he is 60. And by 77, usually 77 years later, a person would have great-grandchildren already. So if Menashe had children shortly thereafter, and if Menashe was 25 years old when his oldest child got married, and then his oldest child was 25 years old when he got married, and his oldest child was 25 years old when he got married, he should have really seen great-great-great-grandchildren. All right. So Yosef sees Menashe at 77 years old.

What's surprising to me is that at the end of the Parsha, the Parsha says a Chiddush after Maftir as is found in 50:23 (וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם, בְּנֵי שְׁלֹשִׁים; גַּם, בְּנֵי מְכִיר בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה--יְלָדָיו, עַל-בְּרָכֵי יוֹסֵף). The Posuk is telling us that Yosef had a Zechus that he saw a third generation, and even the children of (מְכִיר בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה), which is his great-grandchildren, he got to see. It's a Chiddush that the Torah would say it as a surprise that he got to see great-grandchildren if he lived 77 years. It's just a Ho'ara of thought about the chronology of that which took place.

Perhaps that's why Rashi really changes the Pshat and the Pasuk. It says (יְלָדָיו, עַל-בְּרָכֵי יוֹסֵף). The Posuk says that they were born on (בְּרָכֵי יוֹסֵף) that he was the Sandik for a great-grandson. As I said this wouldn't be a Chiddush. Maybe this is why Rashi, the last Rashi in Sefer Beraishis, says (גְּדֹלָן בֶּן-בְּרָכִי). Why does Rashi say he raised them? That's not what the Pasuk says. The Pasuk says they were born. It may be that it bothered Rashi the question that I'm asking, that the chronology of the whole story is not a Chiddush that he was a Sandik, or that he saw the birth of a great-grandson if his son was 77. It's not such a Chiddush. Why would the Torah say it? It may be that it tells you this aspect, that he was Zoche to raise (בְּנֵי שְׁלֹשִׁים), raise great-grandchildren, and that would be a Chiddush. Okay, anyway, that's a thought.

2 – Topic – A Thought from the Seforna

Let's go back to the beginning of the Parsha. I'd like to share with you a thought from the Seforna. It says as is found in 48:10 (וַעֲיֵנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּבְדוּ מְזֻקָּן) that the eyes of Yaakov, they got old because he was old. I mean, as an aside, it's a little strange. It's saying, like, it was natural. Big deal. You know, he couldn't see well because he was old. (לֹא יוֹכֵל לִרְאוֹת). We understand that there was some Shamayim Cheshbon that he couldn't see. But at any rate, so what happened? (וַיִּגַּשׁ אֹתָם אֱלֹיוֹ), Yosef said, well, my father can't see my children. Even though he saw, he said, (מִי-אֵלֶּה), but he didn't see them, I guess, clearly. (וַיִּגַּשׁ אֹתָם אֱלֹיוֹ, וַיִּשָּׁק לָהֶם וַיַּחֱבֹק לָהֶם). So he brought them close and he kissed them. Why is that important? Okay. Why does his not being able to see have to do with this part of the story? I don't know.

The Seforna says an incredible thing. He says (לֹא יוֹכֵל לִרְאוֹת), he says that for Beracha to be Chal from a Tzaddik, the Tzaddik looks at the Mis'bareich, looks at him with a good eye, looks at him in a favorable way. And that's how a Tzaddik is Zoche to give over Beracha. A Tzaddik gives Beracha by looking at someone in a positive way, in a favorable way.

The Pachad Yitzchak writes that it says by Ma'aseh Bereshis between the different days, (וַיֵּרָא), Hashem saw that it was good. Hashem put in the Bri'a of Vayar Ki Tov, that when you look at things and you see them as good, that it gives Beracha.

So the Seforna is saying that. He's saying, (וַיֵּינִי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבָדוֹ מִזֶּקֶן, לֹא יוֹכֵל לִרְאוֹת), So he couldn't see to give Beracha. So what did he do instead? (וַיִּשָּׁק לָהֶם וַיַּחֲבֹק לָהֶם). Says the Seforna, (כְּדִי שֶׁתִּדְבֹּק בְּנֶפֶשׁ), (בהם ותחול עליהם ברכתו). Through a kiss from an Adam Gadol, a Beracha is Chal. It's an important idea to understand, that when the Ahava of an Adam Gadol and specifically the kiss of an Adam Gadol is on a person, it brings Beracha.

I remember of Rav Elyah Svei speaking at the Shloshim of Reb Yaakov. He said that he was once sitting with Reb Yaakov and a Bachur, an immigrant Bachur from Russia who had been part of the effort of Be'er Hagola, and he became a Ben Torah. And he was there. So he said, Reb Yaakov said to Rav Elyah Svei, that when he came, I gave him a kiss. Who knows, maybe from that kiss he became a Ben Torah. Reb Yaakov said that. Reb Yaakov said it's not just a mechanical kiss, it's the Ahava that he had. And the Ahava of an Adam Gadol that comes in such a way, it brings Beracha.

I once saw in the Siddur Yaivitz on Leil Shabbos Kodesh, he talks about the Nechitzus of Neshika. Reb Schwab talks about this idea at the end of Parshas Toldos (page 70-71 on 28:5). He says an incredible thing. He says, (לדאבון נפשו), to our sorrow, there are people among the Jewish people, even Frum people that are crooked, that are not so straight. (ישנם רמאים בכלל ישראל). How could it be? How could it be the children of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, who embodied Emes? How could it be that people, descendants of those who served at Har Sinai, could be crooked in their interaction with other people? Zagt Reb Schwab, that comes from the kiss of Lavan. Lavan runs after Yaakov, and he complains to Yaakov. You didn't give me time. 31:28 (וְלֹא נָטַשְׁתָּנִי, לְנִשְׁק לְבָנִי). He knew, he understood quite well Yaakov's Kavana. Yaakov wanted to run away before he gives them a kiss. 32:1 (וַיִּנָּשֶׁק לָבָן כְּבָנָיו וְלִבְנוֹתָיו). He insisted on giving them a kiss. Rav Schwab brings from one of his Rebbeim, that someone once heard the Chafetz Chaim when he was learning the Parsha of Parshas Toldos. And he heard that when the Chafetz Chaim got to the Pasuk (וַיִּנָּשֶׁק לְבָנָיו וְלִבְנוֹתָיו), he said in Yiddish, (אבער דער באנדיט האט נישט געקענט קושען יעקב ווייל), (יעקב איז מדה אמת). He called Lavan the bandit. So this bandit could not kiss Yaakov. Yaakov is Middas Emes.

So that, the idea, the kiss of Lavan was a kiss that had the negative Hashpa'ah. The idea being that a kiss of Ahavah is able to be Mashpia, in a proper way, when it's the right time. When it says, the Ribbono Shel Olam talked to Moshe Peh Al Peh Adabeir Bo, I speak to him mouth to mouth. It should have said Peh El Ozen Adabeir Bo. Why does it say Peh Al Peh? It's because the Midda of Peh Al Peh, the Midda of mouth to mouth is the Midda of tremendous Beracha. It is a Dveykus.

When somebody dies in the best way possible, when Miriam, Aharon, and then Moshe Rabbeinu die, we call them Misas Neshika, the Misah of a kiss, the Misah of Neshika. Don't underestimate that the Ahavah you could have for somebody, The Ahavah you could have for somebody, a Yiddishe Ahavah that you have, an Ahavah that's based on a person Shtayging. You give a Bachur a kiss, a kiss on his head, you don't kiss Bachur on the mouth. A kiss on his head, you give him a

kiss with an Ahavah, a pride, that could be a Mashpia. And so, this is the idea of Neshika that the Seforno learns in a couple of words, here from the Pasuk by Yaakov Avinu.

3 – Topic - The Berachos

Let me turn, and with the couple of minutes left, mention something about the Berachos of the Shevatim. 49:13 (וְזֵבֻלָּן, לְחוּף יָמִים יִשְׁכֵּן). One of the Berachos is that Zevulan has a Cheilek (לְחוּף יָמִים), he has a Cheilek at the beaches. And many people understand, erroneously so, that Zevulan had a beachfront property. The truth is that Asher had a beachfront property. Asher lined the Mediterranean. There's a Pasuk, similar to Zevulan (לְחוּף יָמִים יִשְׁכֵּן), somebody pointed it out to me this week. It says regarding Asher in Shoftim 5:17, (אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁב לְחוּף יָמִים). This is in the Haftorah of Beshalach in Shiras Devorah. Asher was the one who really had a beachfront property. There obviously were Shevatim who were by the (לְחוּף יָמִים), who had property at the edge of the Mediterranean. Zevulan had the smallest of all those that had Chalakim at the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, Yehuda and Asher. Zevulan was the smallest. What's going on with Zevulan? (לְחוּף יָמִים יִשְׁכֵּן) It's a Davar Pele.

When I was being Mavir Sedra, I saw in the Netziv, the Beracha is not that he had a beachfront property. The Beracha was that he went out and he was a businessman. He was a person who did shipping. They weren't fishermen. Fishermen were Asher. The Sheivet of Zevulan were people who traded. They were importers, exporters. They were people who did business (לְחוּף יָמִים). Why is it mentioned Tzidon? Because Tzidon was a very busy commercial city. From then until today, Tzidon is still on the Mediterranean Sea. The idea of the Beracha of Zevulan is not that he had property by the edge of the water, but that he was a boater and he was a shipper.

This fits well with those who understand that the Chilazon is not a shallow water creature. If it was a shallow water creature then Asher could catch him just like Zevulan could catch him. It's a deep water creature. Like the Radzina held that it's a deep water creature. Why? Because if it's Zevulan that had it, then it means you need boaters, you need people to go out in boats to catch the Chilazon. It doesn't seem to be a snail in the shallow water, which Asher could catch just as well as Zevulan. It seems more something that you need somebody who goes out in boats, a deep water creature. That's what it's Mashma from the understanding of this Beracha of Zevulan. Be that as it may, these are a couple of thoughts for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi.

Tomorrow is Asara B'Teves, a fast day. Long Pshetlach are written about when Asara B'Teves has come on Friday. I'll give you the short version. When Asara B'Teves falls on Friday, two things are different. Number one, you don't say, Avinu Malkeinu by Mincha. Number two, you are allowed to take a hot shower. Normally, on a fast day, the Mishnah Berurah says, Ashkenazim have a Minhag not to take hot showers on a fast day. But on Erev Shabbos, you're allowed to. That's it. You don't need to read a five-page piece on Asara B'Teves She'chal B'Erev Shabbos. Everything else is the same.

You break the fast the same time you would otherwise. You Daven first and make Kiddush at the Zman, whatever Zman you normally keep, for the end of a Yom HaTaanis. And with that, and with the Tefilla that Asara B'Teves should be turned quickly to a Yom Tov again, as it was, between the Churban Bayis Rishon and Churban Bayis Sheini. All those Tzomos were Yomim

Tovim, they should turn back to Yom Tov B'karov Mamash. Wishing everyone a meaningful fast, a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh, and a Chazak Chazak V'Nischazeik. Kol Tuv!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Vayechi 5784

1 – Topic – Something for the Shabbos Table

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi a Parsha of Chazak Chzak V'nischazeik, Klal Yisrael needs a lot of Chizuk. Every day there are Nebach Korbanos. We don't see a way out. Only the Ribbono Shel Olam can help us out of this terrible Tzarah that we are in now. We have to double down on our Davening, we have gotten Upkekilt already from it but you see pictures of young men that are Korbanos every day Kim'at Rachmana Litz'lon.

Let's talk about the Parsha. I want to tell you, we have a game that we used to play every once and a while at the Shabbos table and that is that I used to ask certain questions that had to do with the names of Parshios. One of my favorite questions was to come up with names of Parshios that have the same Shoresh. In other words, you have two different Parshios and they have the same Shoresh, like Lech Lecha and Vayeilech. They are two Parshios that have the same Shoresh. So we used to play this game. Of course there are two sets of three. There are places where you have three Parshios with the same name and that I leave for you to figure out together with your family at the Shabbos table.

One of the doubles that people often miss was Vayechi and Chayei Sarah. Now of course the word Sarah is not part of it, but Chayei and Vayechi have the same Shoresh. They both have a Shoresh that have to do with life. What is interesting to note, is that the two Parshios whose Shoresh is Chai or Chaim, life, both Parshios are about the Petira of Sarah and about the Petira of Yaakov Avinu, in this week's Parsha. It is fascinating that the names that have to do with Chaim, they are the Parshios that have the Petira of great people, of Sarah and Yaakov Avinu. Maybe it is a Remez that Tzaddikim even when they are no longer alive are called living.

2 – Topic – Are Ephraim and Menashe Independent Shevatim or Part of Sheivet Yosef?

There are two aspects of the Parsha that call into something that I am learning independently and I will take the liberty of sharing each one with you. Yaakov Avinu tells Yosef as it says in 48:5 (ועתה שני-בניך הנולדים לך בארץ מצרים, עד-באי אליך מצרימה--לי-הם: אפרים, ומנשה--כראובן ושמעון, יהיו-לי). He says that the children born to you in Mitzrayim they are going to be Shevatim and with that Yosef got some sort of a double Cheilek in the Shivtei Ka. What is (ועתה) and now? In English there is an expression and now what are we going to do. What is now? Why does the sentence start with (ועתה)? What does it have to do with now?

Zagt the Meshech Chochmo beautiful. (ועתה שני-בניך הנולדים לך בארץ מצרים, עד-באי אליך מצרימה--לי-). Ephraim and Menashe are two Shevatim now in Olam Haze, but when it comes the Geulah Ha'asida, Eretz Yisrael will be divided all over again. It says this B'feirush in Yechezkel that the old Chaluka in Eretz Yisrael will be Bateil and there will be a new division of Eretz Yisrael, and there Ephraim and Menashe will be one Sheivet, Yosef. At the very end of

Yechezkel it says in 48:32 (וְשַׁעַר יוֹסֵף אֶחָד). It says Yosef has a gate and there are 12 gates to the old city of Yerushalayim L'asid Lavo and the 12 gates are 12 Shevatim. Levi has a gate and Yosef has a gate, not Ephraim and Menashe. Ad Kan. This is what the Meshech Chochmo says.

Independently, I am learning Perek (יש נוחלין) (in Bava Basra) Shabbos afternoon in our Gemara Seder and we are up to Daf 122a to which the Meshech Chochmo alludes. Tosfos there Tak'e says (שַׁעַר לוי אֶחָד הָא מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם נָמִי לֹא יִטְלוּ אֵלָא חֶלֶק אֶחָד כְּדַכְתִּיב הֵתָם שַׁעַר יוֹסֵף אֶחָד). It is all wonderful.

Unless you learn Sefer Yechezkel. Even if you never learned Sefer Yechezkel. If you look at the Maharsha who learned Sefer Yechezkel, if you look in the Rashash who learned Sefer Yechezkel, they are both Matmia. If you learn Sefer Yechezkel which is 48 Perakim long, the 48th Perek describes the division of Eretz Yisrael in the Yemos Hamoshiach. In the beginning of the Perek it says that there will be 13 strips of land. L'asid Lavo Eretz Yisrael will be divided with strips of land that go from the Mediterranean Sea all the way to the right, to the east as far as Eretz Yisrael extends, and every Sheivet will get a Cheilek that runs across Eretz Yisrael and every Sheivet will get an equal Cheilek. As it is described each of the Chalakim will be across Eretz Yisrael and it is the width of the land, and there are 13 strips. In the 13 strips Ephraim and Menashe are separate. It is a Davar Pele Meod. How could the Meshech Chochmo and Tosfos say that Yosef gets one Cheilek? Therefore, it is really a Davar Pele. Now I mention this not just for this Kasha but because in general it is strange that the last Perakim in Yechezkel are not known.

The Rashash there after he asked a Kasha on Tosafos he says Agav I want to tell you something else. L'asid Lavo Yerushalayim and the Beis Hamikdash will be separate. The Beis Hamikdash will not be in Yerushalayim. The city of Yerushalayim I believe he says will be 45 Mil which is about 30 miles south of the Makom Hamikdash. The Beis Hamikdash will be on a high mountain. The Har Habayis will be one mile square which is much bigger than the Har Habayis today. There is no room for a one mile square Har Habayis on Har Hamoriah. All this is so not known, it is a Davar Pele. There are Shtiklach Torah and Vertleach said about the Bayis Hashlishi. There are speakers who describe standing by the Kosel and IY"H the Beis Hamikdash will come down behind the Kosel. That is not true. That is not where the Beis Hamikdash is going to come.

I had this investment opportunity. When Moshiach comes I would like to do is have busses right by the Kosel. People are going to come there to see the Bayis Hashlishi and they will be 30 miles to the north. I will make a mint. Everyone is going to come there and I'll tell them you want to see the Beis Hamikdash? Pay for a seat on the bus. I'll bus the people to the Makom Hamikdash. It is so not a Davar Ye'dua, it is a Pele. The moral of the story is that you have to learn Yechezkel. Even if you don't want to learn the whole Yechezkel, learn from Perek Lamed Daled to Perek Mem Ches which describes the Bayis Hashlishi which is not so easy and you have to work on it. Today there are excellent Seforim and some even have diagrams. So much for my advertisement but this has to do with what I'm learning in Perek Yesh Noch'lin.

3 – Topic – Is it better to have the Geula Mitoch Rachamim or Mitoch Din?

In the Parsha it says in 49:1 (וְהָאֲפִקֹּפוֹ וְאֶגְיֵדָה לָכֶם, אֵת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֲתֶכֶם, בְּאַחֲרֵי־הַיָּמִים). Yaakov Avinu wanted to tell Klal Yisrael what would happen by (אַחֲרֵי־הַיָּמִים) and he was unable to. HKB"H sealed it from before him and he forgets it and he can't tell Klal Yisrael. There are two difficulties.

1) Why was it revealed to Yaakov if he wasn't allowed to say it over? 2) Why wasn't it just told to him don't tell. He has to say to the family I am about to tell you what will be by (אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים) and then it is Nistar from him. Why?

The Tzlach (Nod'e B'Yehuda) in Pesachim Nun Vav where this Chazal is found and he says something that is not typical of the Tzlach. It sounds more like a Vertel than a Nod'e B'Yehuda Shtickel Torah. He says the following. He says Yemos Hamoshiach is called Keitz Hayamin which simply in Aramaic is (אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים).

I happen to be learning Sefer Micha in our Hakhel Shiurim and IY"YH Monday morning I will be giving a Shiur on Perek Daled of Micha in Agudas Yisrael of Madison at 9 AM where you will have an opportunity to learn parts of Nach that you never learned. Anyway, there it also says the expression of (אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים). The Targum is Keitz Hayamin. Now obviously in Targum it is spelled with an Ende Nun. Zagt the Tzlach there are two Geulos, the Keitz Hayamin and the Keitz Has'mol. The right sided Geula and the left sided Geula. Do you believe it? This is what he says. Keitz Hayamin is B'rachamim, with mercy. Keitz Has'mol, the left hand represents Din.

What is better to have a Geula with Rachamim or with Din? The Tzlach says that it is better to be Zoche to the Geula with Din. Klal Yisrael should deserve the Geula. It is better than a Keitz B'rachamim where we are really not deserving.

Zagt the Tzlach, the Keitz Hayamin was revealed to Yaakov, if Klal Yisrael won't be Zoche to Din, won't deserve it then the Geula will come with Rachamim. That was revealed to Yaakov. If Hashem wanted that Yaakov should tell them I know the Keitz Hayamin but it is hidden from me and I can't tell it to you. This is because it is not what we want Lechatchila, it is not our preference. Our preference is the Keitz Has'mol where you should get it Al Pi Din. So the revelation to Yaakov and then the subsequent hiding it from Yaakov in it of itself had a message. The message is that B'rachamim it was revealed to me that there is a time of Rachamim. Klal Yisrael should know there is a time B'rachamim, however, it is not optimum. Optimum is you should be Zoche B'din.

This is a message for life. We say Asher Ani Oheiv Ani Mochiach. The Ribbono Shel Olam gives Tochacha and Yissurim to people who He loves. What do you mean that you love someone and you give them Yissurim? No! It means the ideal is for a person to face challenges, serve HKB"Y Mitoch challenges and then be Zoche.

So that, if someone faces challenges it doesn't mean that G-d doesn't love him. It means that G-d does love him. It means that the Ribbono Shel Olam wants you to be Zoche to a true Zechus and that involves lifting heavy weights in this world. You don't get muscles without lifting heavy weights. It involves lifting heavy weights. Sometimes the challenges are great. IY"YH we will be Zoche, that is the true Zechus. Klal Yisrael is going through such a challenging time. It is a heavy weight to bear. Wishing one and all an absolutely wonderful Shabbos.

Please Daven for my brothers who are in Gaza. There should be a Yeshua, there should be protection. Ribbono Shel Olam let it go over a Shabbos with no Korbanos. It is not a Neis Nigleh, it is a Neis Nistar and there should be no Korbanos. Please Ribbono Shel Olam help Klal Yisrael. Kol Tuv!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Vayechi 5783

1 – Topic – A Dikduk Point at the beginning of the Parsha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi. The week of Chazak Chazak, the week that we finish Sefer Beraishis and go on to the Sefer HaGeulah. Before I begin, I do want to make a Dikduk point. Near the beginning of the Parsha we have Yaakov Avinu telling Yosef as is found in 47:30 (וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתִּי, עַם-אֲבֹתַי). (וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתִּי, עַם-אֲבֹתַי) means I died. Obviously Yaakov was not saying he died. When you pronounce it Mil'ail (וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתִּי, עַם-אֲבֹתַי) it means I died. (וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתִּי, עַם-אֲבֹתַי) with the emphasis on the (תִּי) means I will die. And I will return to my forefathers. So the Baal Korei has to be careful to put the accent on the (תִּי) as opposed to (שְׁכַבְתִּי) as it certainly changes the meaning, and therefore, is a Davar Ham'akeiv. It is very important to point it out to your Baal Korei.

2 – Topic – A Thought About Ephraim

When you learn the beginning of the Parsha you read about Ephraim. Ephraim is very special. Ephraim wasn't a Shevet and Ephraim and Menashe were bumped up to be Shevatim which is a tremendous Madreiga. Then within Menashe and Ephraim, Ephraim was given precedence to Menashe which also indicates the level of Ephraim, the level of his stature and his position among the Shivtei Ka.

What is troubling is that in Tanach Ephraim is synonymous with the failure of the 10 Shevatim. As a matter of fact, the 10 Shevatim are called Ephraim. Typically speaking when you have a Posuk with Ephraim's name in Tanach, like in Hoshea 12:15 (הַכְעִיס אֶפְרַיִם, תְּמָרוֹתַיִם). Ephraim has caused bitter anger against the 10 Shevatim. As Yeshaya says at the beginning of Perek 28 (הוֹי, עֲטָרֹת גִּזְאוֹת שְׂכָרֵי אֶפְרַיִם). The drunkards of Ephraim. Ephraim is really in Tanach the symbol of those who failed. It is interesting because coming from this week's Parsha to switch over to Tanach and see that Ephraim is the name of the part of Klal Yisrael that failed, that disappeared to a great extent, is somewhat confusing.

On the second day of Rosh Hashana we learn the Haftorah from Yirmiya. There, Yirmiya Hanavi says in the name of Hashem as is found in 31:19 (אִם יֶלֶד שְׁעֵשְׁעִים--כִּי-מִדֵּי דְבָרֵי בּוֹ,). (זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד). There, the Ribbono Shel Olam speaks very fondly of Ephraim. (הִבֵּן יִקִּיר לִי אֶפְרַיִם). He speaks of Ephraim as his dear son. (אִם יֶלֶד שְׁעֵשְׁעִים). The child with whom I played. (כִּי-מִדֵּי דְבָרֵי). (זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד). It makes me think that there is something wonderful about Ephraim. The Ribbono Shel Olam is talking about Ephraim after the Churban and after the 10 Shevatim went to Galus. This is the way He is talking about Ephraim. Ephraim is the rebellious 10 Shevatim? Halo Davar Hu! Isn't it a little strange?

I was learning this during the summer in Ohr Sameach and it was the afternoon probably in middle of second Seder time like 4 pm or so and in front of me was a young man who must have been 20 or 21 who was reading from the Siddur to one of the Frum Bachurim or YungeLeit from the neighborhood. He was reading and he wanted the friend to correct him in order to be able to read properly. A lot of Baalei Teshuva struggle with it. Here is someone who didn't learn Aleph Beis

until he was 20 years old, and he is sitting there like a child reading the Siddur and he wants to be able to pronounce the words like a regular person does. He is sitting there reading. I am thinking to myself, that he is the one that the Neviim talk about in Yirmiya 2:2 (לְכֹתֵךְ אַחֲרֵי בַמִּדְבָּר, בְּאַרְצָא לֹא (וְרוּעָה). I very often think about the boys who come from backgrounds that have no Shaychus to Torah, and they really give up everything in a great degree it is (לְכֹתֵךְ אַחֲרֵי בַמִּדְבָּר, בְּאַרְצָא לֹא וְרוּעָה). They come with no background and they go out.

Once in the summer I had about 20 Bachurim from Ohr Sameach for a Shabbos Seudah and they were singing (לְכֹתֵךְ אַחֲרֵי בַמִּדְבָּר, בְּאַרְצָא לֹא וְרוּעָה). I looked at their faces and my heart pulled. Some of them I know personally and some I don't know personally. They are literally like Klal Yisrael leaving Mitzrayim, they leave everything behind and they go to a place where there is nothing, where there is no support, where they have to find everything themselves. That is Ephraim.

The Navi says in Yirmiya 31:17 (אֶפְרַיִם מִתְנוּדָד, יִסְרְתֵנִי וְאַנְסֵר). Ephraim (מִתְנוּדָד) struggles, he travels. (יִסְרְתֵנִי) He is given Nisyonos and Yissurim. (וְאַנְסֵר) and he responded to them. Ephraim is Davka the (יִלְדֵי שְׁעֵשְׁעִים). Ephraim is the one who struggled, who failed and can pick himself up and come back.

What are the 10 Shevatim? The 10 Shevatim failed and they went to the Galus of the Aseres Shevatim. The 10 Shevatim were sent out to exile before the Churban, and Yirmiya brought some of them back. He brought the remnants back. Gemiri D'lo Kala Shivta. We have a Kabbalah that no Sheivet died out. Yirmiya brought back some of them. It may be that 80 or 90% disappeared but 10% came back. HKB"Y says it is worth it for me. The (יִלְדֵי שְׁעֵשְׁעִים), the beauty of this (בֶּן יָקִיר), the beauty of those who come back.

That Ephraim, that is us. What do we have in Galus America? We also Rachmana Litzlon, we are also losing 80%, we are also losing a tremendous percentage of Klal Yisrael, but look at those in this land that pulls you away from religion at all and certainly pulls people away from a religion that requires discipline, that requires a person to watch what he eats, watch what he drinks, watch what he looks at. The beauty.

The Nesivos Shalom brings from someplace that the Baal Shem Tov said that it is impossible to explain to a non-Jew what the discipline of a Jew is. E Efsheir L'hasbir L'goy Ma Hu Yehudi. His grandson said to him, Zaide a Yid doesn't understand Ma Hu Yehudi, what it means to be a Yid. It is just an incredible different universe that we live in. People embracing Torah and Avoda and Yir'as Shamayim.

In the struggle over the control of the Yeshivos, somebody was writing an affidavit. A professor who is a genius of a person, well written, well spoken, well respected. He wanted to explain in the affidavit what it is that boys learn in Beis Medrash. He started to explain the first Sugya of Hamafkid, the idea that when you give a Pikadon and it gets stolen and the Shomer is Patur but if he pays anyway then the Daled and Hei goes to him. He was explaining something that 7th graders learn. When he wrote it up and I looked at it I thought they are not going to understand this, the lawyers and judges won't understand it. It is too complicated for them. But what do you mean we have 12 and 13 year olds learning this?

(הקעים אפרים, תמרורים). (אפרים מתנווד). The Ephraim that rebelled and then they had grandchildren who came back. (הבן יקיר לי אפרים, אם ילד שעשעם). That is the Ephraim of this week's Parsha, the Ephraim that grew up in Mitzrayim. The child who grew up in Mitzrayim and he was an Ephraim. He went to be Charusos with Yaakov Avinu. What a beauty of Ephraim. What a beauty of Klal Yisrael in our generation.

3 – Topic – Yosef's Middah of Anava

Yosef is begged by the Shevatim to be Mochel them. Yosef is a king, Yosef is the Melech, Yosef is the one that is close to his father, Yosef is the one that was wronged. Yet, Yosef doesn't get angry. Yosef expresses surprise, you think I am not Mochel you?

50:20 (אֶלְקִים, הַשְׁבָּה לְטֹבָה). HKB"Y meant it for good. The example of humility, humility in the face of people who wronged you, humility in the time that you are the king, that you are in control. That humility is a big lesson of this week's Parsha.

There are two types of Anava, there are two ways that a person could be an Anav. 1 – A person can understand that it is all silliness, Shtuyot. All the petty grievances that people have are silly. Get on with life, what are you worried about. Someone said something not nice to you, he didn't give you a Kibbud, he embarrassed you, get on with life, don't be busy with it. Look forward, don't look backward. Like Dovid Hamelech says in Tehillim 90:10 (גִּזְרֵי חַיִּים, וְנִצָּעְפָה). life ends quickly. (חַיִּים, וְנִצָּעְפָה). Quickly it speeds away from you. Say (וְאֵנָּה מֶה) what are we. It is all silliness. That is one way to practice humility.

2 – The second way to practice humility is that is when a person looks at himself as not Rau'i. Compared to his friend he is a nobody and his friends are better than him. He sees the Maalos of his friend and he considers himself nothing as compared to his friend. He sees himself as less than his friend. (וְאֵנָּה עֵפֶר וְאֵפֶר).

Which is the correct way of Anava? It is all Narishkeit, it is all Shtuyot, there is no place for Gaiva, or that others are better than me? It would seem to me that the first way is correct, the first way is Emes. It is all Shtuyot, it is all silliness. The second way is not Emes. If I practice humility and I say I am less than the other guy and the other guy says about me that he is less than me, one of us is wrong.

It is interesting, that the Aruch Laner in Rosh Hashana 17a where the Gemara brings from Micha 7:18 (מִי קֵל כְּמוֹדִי, נִשְׁאָר עוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל פִּשְׁעִי, לִשְׁאָרִיתִי, נִחְלָתוֹ). The Gemara says on the top of the Amud Beis who does HKB"Y forgive? (לְמִי שִׁמְשִׁים עֲצָמוֹ כְּשִׁירִים). (לְשִׁאֲרִית נִחְלָתוֹ). To someone who practices humility.

The Aruch Laner says there that Middas Anava B'emes, the true Middah of Anava, is the second way. I don't understand that. What is lacking in the first Middah of Anava? Why does a person have to see himself as, nothing? A person has to see himself that way? It is silliness, it is Shtuyot, the whole thing is silly. I don't know. I don't really understand it. I look in the Shaar Anava in the Orchos Tzadikim and these things confuse me.

It seems the fact that everything is silly it doesn't pay to make a fuss that is a Davar Pashut, it is a Davar Sichli. That is not working on yourself. Working on yourself is seeing Mailos Chaveiro. It seems that is more working on yourself. I am not sure. But one thing I am sure. In our fast paced loud world, we really need to practice humility. If we can't do the Middas Anava Amiti of the Aruch Laner at least the first one, the basic one. It is all silliness. Think about the things that bother you. Stop for a minute. Shtuyot. Silliness. Hevel Havalim. If we understand that, then we have a path. We have a path towards humility. And so, the message of Ephraim and the message of Yosef and his humility. Two lessons from this week's Parsha. It is appropriate that after you learn these lessons that you say to yourself Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik! Let us strengthen ourselves in the Middah of Anava and the Middah of bouncing back and the Middah of doing all we can. With that, I wish everybody an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh, a Gevaldige Shabbos of Hischazkus.

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Vayechi 5782

1 – Topic – A thought on Yaakov Avinu bowing down to Yosef

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi and in Flatbush it is the Torah Vodaath Shabbos. Torah Vodaath Shabbos is our preparation for our major fundraiser of the Zman and that is B'ezras Hashem an online Rayze It fundraiser this coming Monday and Tuesday. I hope that one and all will participate. I speak to you every week from the office of the executive director of our Yeshiva and I am very grateful to him for all of the responsibility he takes for the Yeshiva, and he has asked me to ask everyone here to please participate this coming week by contributing. I certainly hope that you will be part of it.

For this week's Parsha let's start from the beginning. In the beginning of the Parsha in 47:31 (תעלא בעידניה סגיד) (וישפחו ישראלי, על-ראש המטה). Yaakov Avinu bows down to Yosef. Rashi says (תעלא בעידניה סגיד) (ליה). That when it is a person's time of Hatzlacha show deference to him. That is what we learn from here. (תעלא בעידניה סגיד ליה), an expression. A few Pesukim later in 48:2 (וישפחו ישראלי, וישב), (על-המטה אמר אף) (על פי שהוא בני, מלך הוא ואחלוק לו כבוד. מכאן שחולקין כבוד למלכות). To give Kavod to the Malchus. Even though it was his son he gave Kavod to the Malchus.

There is a difficulty here. There is a Kasha that many Meforshim ask and the Brisker Rav the GRI"Z asks that it says the same thing in two Pesukim. (וישפחו ישראלי, וישב, על-המטה) that maybe that is because of (תעלא בעידניה סגיד ליה). How do you know that it is Als Kavod Malchus? The reverse (וישפחו ישראלי, על-ראש המטה). Maybe that is Als Kavod Malchus, how do you learn two things from here. Maybe he did both Als Kavod Malchus or maybe he did both because of (תעלא בעידניה סגיד ליה). Tzorech Bi'ur.

I would like to share with you an important Yesod, a general Yesod for Derashos from Pesukim. The Netziv in his introduction to Hameik Shaila writes that very often we Darshun a Posuk not because of what took place but because the Torah wrote it out. In other words, the reason to Darshun for example the Posuk by the Akeida where Avraham told Eliezer and Yishmael as is found in 22:5 (וְאַנִּי וְהַנֶּעֱר, גִּלְכָּה עַד-כֹּה). Yitzchok and I will go alone and the two of you (שְׁבוּ-לָכֶם פֹּה).

(עם-החמור), sit here with the donkey. So we Darshun Im Hachamor Am Hadom'e L'chamor that they were compared to a nation of donkeys L'gabei whatever Drasha it is.

Said the Netziv do you think that Avraham Avinu meant that when he said sit here with the Chamor that you are Dom'e to a Chamor? Certainly not. The Drasha is not from what Avraham said, but the Torah doesn't write every word that a person said. For example, Moshe Rabbeinu was by the Sneh for 7 days. If you read the Pesukim in the Torah that tell you what happened by the Sneh, it would take you three minutes. The Torah writes what is appropriate to be written, what is appropriate to learn something from.

Coming back here. A Drasha is not from the fact that Yaakov Avinu sat up (וישכב, ישראֵל, ויָתְסֹבֶה). It could be that he did that because (תעלה בעיניו סגיד ליה). Our Drasha is from the fact that the Torah says it, the Torah spells it out. Why does the Torah tell it to us twice that Yaakov Avinu showed deference to Yosef? It must be that each one is coming for its own lesson. The general rule is that the smaller lesson goes first and the bigger lesson goes second. So (תעלה בעיניו סגיד ליה) is a Middah Tovah and K'vod Malchus is an obligation. From the first one we learn out the smaller Chiddush (תעלה בעיניו סגיד ליה) and from the second one the bigger Chiddush.

My point here is that it is important to know generally speaking this is the way Derashos of the Torah work because the Torah spelled it out.

2 – Topic – A Thought on (וימת יוסף).

At the end of the Parsha the Posuk tells us in 50:26 (וימת יוסף). The Gemara tells us in Sotah 13b (18 lines from the top) (מפני מה מת יוסף קודם לאהיו). Why did Yosef die first (מפני שהנהיג עצמו) (ברבנות) because he acted like a boss, he acted like a king, he acted like a Rav. I guess a Rav is more than a King. He acted like the person in charge. That is what the Gemara says. It begs a question, he was the king. I guess that Pashut Pshat is that maybe he did it too much.

The Maharal in the Chiddushai Agaddos on Sotah says something incredible. He says no there was no punishment here to Yosef. Yosef was supposed to live 110 years. He died first (מפני שהנהיג עצמו ברבנות). Meaning, says the Maharal the Metzios of this world, of Olam Hazei is that when human beings attach themselves to other human beings they have a continuity, they have a Hatzlacha. They are Gezunt. When a human being separates himself from others he becomes a hermit, when he doesn't involve himself with other people that causes a person to have a shorter life span, causes a person to have less health, less Mazal. Why? The Maharal explains already in the introduction to the Nesivos Olam that Hashem created this world for human beings to interact with other human beings. Every attribute of this world, every physical fact of this world requires other people.

He gives an example. He says nobody could by himself provide everything he needs. You can't be the farmer who plants, and miller who mills, the baker who bakes, and at the same time raise sheep, and with those sheep shear the wool, clean the wool, dye the wool and make the clothing. You can't do everything. People need people. It is a practical matter. Olam Hazei was created for human beings to interact with each other.

He compares it to a drop of water. If the water is in the river then it is going to be powerful, it is going to be strong, it is going to be forever. If a drop of water sits by itself on a table, it is going to evaporate, it is going to disappear. The same thing with a person. Human beings are created to interact in a positive way with other people. When a person has to act B'rabbanus, he has to be a king, he has to act a person separate from other people, it is just going to happen that way that he won't live as long, he won't be as successful, his health won't be as good. We see that very often. People who interact with people and are involved with people are vibrant. People who for good reason whatever the reason might be are loners and are by themselves, don't interact, they generally have health problems. It is not something comfortable to talk about but it is that way. You would think that somebody with a big family and busy would have heart problems, somebody who is alone will be Gezunt because he doesn't have the stress. It is not that way. People who interact, who Hashem blessed with the ability to interact, are vibrant. Yosef was not blessed with that. He had to be king, he had to in many ways be aloof from other people. It is a Metzios.

There is a Gemara in Bava Metzia 105a (14 lines from the top) that says (מזל דבי תרי עדיה). The Mazal of something owned by multiple people is better. If you are buying a lottery ticket you might win you have good Mazal. If you buy it together in a partnership with someone else does that make your Mazal better or worse? The Gemara says that (מזל דבי תרי עדיה). Where there are numerous people it is better. So when you buy a lottery ticket, when you pick it up have in mind and say I am being Kon'e it not just for myself. Half of it is for Rabbi Reisman and in that way IY"H we will all be happy because the Mazal will be better.

What a lesson from the Maharal. Interaction with other people, sometimes is a burden. You get involved in other people's needs it is hard, it is a Chessed. Even if it is not someone who has needs, just to interact to show someone you care, so guess what? That is Gezunt, that is healthy for you. It is a positive thing.

3 – Topic – Moshiach Tzidkainu

As you know as brought in Rashi to 49:1 Yaakov Avinu (בקש לגלות את הקץ). Yaakov Avinu really wanted to reveal the end of days and it was hidden from him. Many Meforshim discuss why it was hidden from him. I wanted to discuss why Yaakov Avinu felt that it was important to tell Klal Yisrael the Keitz. Maybe he wanted them to have bigger faith, bigger Emunah. If there is a date does it give people bigger Emunah? I don't know. Maybe that is the Pshat. I am not certain.

However, I would like to share with you the words of Rav Tzvi Hersch Kalisher. Rav Tzvi Hersch Kalisher lived in the 1800's. He passed away in 1874. He was one of the original Chovevai Tzion. One of the original who tried to gather Klal Yisrael together to go up to Eretz Yisrael en masse. He wanted very much to put up a Mizbaiach and bring Korbanos which is Muttar without a Beis Hamikdash. (שמקריבין, אף על פי שאין בית).

He in a letter to Rav Yaakov Ettlinger (the Aruch Laner) which is printed in the Aruch Laner's Teshuva Sefer Binyan Tzion Siman Aleph, a beautiful letter where Rav Tzvi Hirsch Kalisher's letter is quoted and then Rav Yaakov Ettlinger's response [1]. They talk about whether we could be Makriv Korbanos Biz'man Hazeh. But the point I want to bring to you is the following. That Rav Tzvi Hirsch says that the Posuk in Yeshaya which is known to all of us, the beautiful Posuk

which we say in Selichos from 56:7 (וְהָבִיאוּתִּים אֶל-הָרַקְדָּשִׁי, וְשִׁמְחָתִים בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתִי). He says that it is a four step process for Moshiach to come.

First (וְהָבִיאוּתִּים אֶל-הָרַקְדָּשִׁי), first Klal Yisrael has to be brought to Eretz Yisrael. Before Moshiach comes. (וְהָבִיאוּתִּים אֶל-הָרַקְדָּשִׁי). You have to come back to Eretz Yisrael to Yerushalayim. Mind you he is writing this in the 1860's when there were 10 – 15 thousand Jews in the whole Eretz Yisrael. The first step is (וְהָבִיאוּתִּים אֶל-הָרַקְדָּשִׁי).

The second step is (וְשִׁמְחָתִים בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתִי) when the Jews come to Eretz Yisrael they will set up Mekomos Hakedoshim, the holy places to Daven. He is speaking about the Kosel, Kever Rochel, Me'oras Hamachpeila.

The third step is (עֹלֹתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם לְרָצוֹן, עַל-מִזְבֵּחַי). They will bring Korbanos on a Mizbai'ach because (מִקְרִיבֵינוּ, אִף עַל פִּי שְׁאִין בֵּית).

Then finally the last step is the building of the Beis Hamikdash (כִּי בֵּיתִי, בֵּית-תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא לְכָל-הָעַמִּים). He Darshuns this Posuk with a vision. He says this is what happened in Sefer Ezra. You are not learning Sefer Ezra? We learn it every Motzoei Shabbos. This Motzoei Shabbos we will be starting Ezra Perek Gimmel and guess what we are up to the building of the Mizbai'ach before the Beis Hamikdash 18 years before the Beis Hamikdash was built. The Mizbai'ach was built and Korbanos were brought.

He said this is the progression when Moshiach is coming you have to be prepared, you have to be ready. Yaakov Avinu told them Moshiach will come in a year, I don't know what year he said but I assume it was Taf Shin Pei something. Be ready. Go up to Eretz Yisrael first, Daven in the Mikomos Hakedoshim, get ready to bring Korbanos IY"H B'karov Mamash and we will see the complete Geulah. What a beautiful way of Darshuning a Posuk. It is a Posuk that has meaning to every Yid and if you see it as the four steps of Geulah wow it has even more meaning. May it be Mekuyam B'mihaira B'yameinu.

In the meantime Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik! We don't just say it in Shul, we mean it. There is a message to everyone. We are announcing it. When you hear in Shul say Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik they are talking to you. They are telling you to strengthen yourself, improve your night Seder, improve your day Seder, improve your being Mavir Sedra and of course improve your attendance at the Thursday night Mishmar. I hope to see you all this evening. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5781

1 – Topic – A Beautiful Bi'ur on the word (הִנָּה)

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi I would like to start with something that touches on one of my favorite rules. (Ed. Note: This topic was discussed in Parshas Vayeishev 5780 as well). We have in this week's Parsha that the Gemara tells us that until Yaakov, people were not sick prior to the time that they died. In other words, it was a new thing with Yaakov Avinu that as is

found in 48:1 (הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה). The Gemara says in Maseches Bava Metzia 87a (11 lines from the bottom) (עַד יַעֲקֹב לֹא הָיָה חוֹלֵשׁ אֶתָּא יַעֲקֹב בַּעַל רַחֲמֵי וְהָיָה חוֹלֵשׁ שְׁנֵאמַר וַיֹּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף הִנֵּה אֲבִיךָ חוֹלָה) that before Yaakov there were no Cholim. Yaakov is the first Choleh we find anywhere.

The Kasha of course is how do you see that from the Posuk. Maybe the Posuk doesn't mention that there were Cholim before because there was no opportunity, there was no need. The Torah doesn't mention everything that went on in the world. So there was no need to mention it so it didn't mention it. Mai'haicha Tai'si that until Yaakov there were no Cholim?

In Derech Sicha they asked this question to Rav Chaim Kanievsky and he answered (הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה). The word (הִנֵּה) what does that mean? Usually (וְהִנֵּה) behold. What does behold mean? The word (הִנֵּה) means surprise, something unexpected. This is a rule that has been mentioned here in the past and one Shavuot evening we were learning Rus Perek Daled which begins in the first Posuk that Boaz comes to the Beis Din (וְהִנֵּה הִגָּאֵל עֹבֵר). The one man he needs to meet before he could marry Rus which is a man named Tov who is the Go'el, he is the close relative. (וְהִנֵּה הִגָּאֵל עֹבֵר). Surprise, just then who is walking past the Makom of the Shaar of the Beis Din? That man that they need. (וְהִנֵּה) is surprise.

So what we did, after all it was Shavuot night and there was plenty of time, I took out a Beraishis Chumash and we went through the (וְהִנֵּה) in Beraishis and it always fits. (הִנֵּה) means surprise. 29:25 (וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר, וְהִנֵּה-הוּא לֵאָה). Surprise, you thought you married Rochel, it is Leah. Or 38:27 (וַיְהִי, בַּעֲתָהּ). When there are twins born it was a surprise. It seems that the Avos didn't have sonograms or maybe they just weren't covered for the sonograms. But (וְהִנֵּה) surprise. So (וְהִנֵּה) always means surprise. So Rav Chaim Kanievsky says (הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה) means surprise your father is sick because people did not get sick. That is the UpTeitch of (וְהִנֵּה).

I have to tell you a PS an addendum. Shavuot night someone asked on the Posuk in Tehillim in 121:4 (וְהִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם, וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר, יִשְׂרָאֵל). A Gevaldige Kasha. HKB"H doesn't sleep. Of course HKB"H doesn't sleep. That is not a surprise. What is (וְהִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם, וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר, יִשְׂרָאֵל)? It needs an explanation. I was asked this on Shavuot night and I said Tzorech Iyun.

On Shavuot I was looking in Rav Schwab's Sefer and I found that he Toch Devarav, in Parshas Va'eschanan on page 397 says what is (וְהִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם, וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר, יִשְׂרָאֵל)? He says Dovid Hamelech is talking to people in middle of a Tzarah Lo Aleinu. People in middle of their suffering. There is something going on in their lives that is difficult. It really does feel like HKB"H where are you? What is going on? Where are you Ribbono Shel Olam? It really does feel that way. Maminim Bnei Maminim, Ehrliche Yidden, but when you are in a Tzarah it feels that way. So Dovid says (הִנֵּה) surprise, (לֹא-יָנוּם, וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר, יִשְׂרָאֵל). HKB"H is on top of the case even now when you think Rachmana Litzlon that a person has to go to doctors, he has to go to hospitals. Where is the Ribbono Shel Olam? (הִנֵּה) surprise, (לֹא-יָנוּם, וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר, יִשְׂרָאֵל). He is there, don't worry. A beautiful Bi'ur. (הִנֵּה) surprise.

2 – Topic - A Thought from the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh on the end of the Parsha

Moving on in the Parsha the brothers are afraid that Yosef will take retribution against them for what they did and they tell him our father said you should be Mochel. The response of Yosef is

interesting. He says as is found in 50:20 (וְאַתֶּם, חֲשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה; אֲלֵרִים, חֲשַׁבָה לְטָבָה). You planned something evil, something bad, and HKB”H planned it for something good. The implication is that you don’t need a Kapara. That is what the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says (Ed. Note: this was discussed Parshas Vayechi 5769) (וְהִרֵי זֶה דּוּמָה לְמַתְכוּן לְהַשְׁקוֹת חֲבִירוֹ כּוֹס מוֹת). Like someone who wants to give his friend poison (וְהַשְׁקָהוּ כּוֹס יַיִן) and he gave him actually something very good. (פְּטוּרִים וְזִכָּאִים גַּם בְּדִינֵי שָׁמַיִם).

So Yosef is saying it is all good. When I learned this it troubled me. We could say the same thing L'havdil about Haman. Haman needs a Kapparah? Haman Ata Chashavta Alai Ra'a, you wanted to do bad to Klal Yisrael, Aval Elokim Chashava L'tovah. The Ribbono Shel Olam said it is the best thing. Chazal say that the Asaras Taba'as in the time of Haman was the best thing that happened to Klal Yisrael because they did Teshuvah. Did Haman do something wrong?

I would like to share with you the following. The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says it is (דומה למתכוון (להשקות חבריו כוס מות). Someone who wants to give his poison to his friend and gives him something good Patur B'dinai Shamayim. It is a Pele!

The Pardes Yosef on the Posuk brings from a list of Achronim who wonder about this Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh. The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says if you are Mechavein to do an Aveira and it doesn't happen you don't need Kapparah. The Velt says that. That if you meant an Aveira the Machshava doesn't count. But the Gemara doesn't say that. The Gemara is in Nazir 23a (13 lines from the top) (מי שנתכוון לעלות בידו בשר חזיר ועלה בידו בשר שלה). If somebody wanted to eat Chazir Rachmana Litz'lon, and instead he ate Kosher he needs a Kapparah. That is what the Gemara says. The Gemara says of course Machshava L'ra Ain HKB"H Mitztarfo L'maiseh. If somebody wanted to do bad it is not like he did do bad. G-d doesn't count it like he did it. Of course. But you need a Kapparah for a bad Machshava too. So it is the opposite of the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh?

In the Pardes Yosef he brings a number of Achronim who ask the Kasha. One of the approaches is the following. There are two parts to an Aveira. There is the intention and the L'mayseh. Sometimes a person wants to do good and his thinking is warped and then what he is doing is bad. Just in his thinking he is warped. (ושנאה מקלקלת את השורה). He hates someone so he is thinking wrong. His desire is to serve Hashem and he has a warped thinking. If he does an Aveira he needs a Kapparah. Warped thinking is not an excuse at all.

Sometimes you have a person who is evil and he wants to do bad like Haman and HKB”H doesn’t let the bad happen. There is a very big difference. When the Maiseh Ra happens you always need a Kapparah, it doesn’t matter what your intention was. Warped thinking doesn’t help you if you did an Aveirah. However, if the Maiseh never happened and we are judging you only on Machshava, so then the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh is saying the correct thing. That if a Machshava is totally L’ra then it needs a Kapparah. But if there is warped thinking and a person thinks he is doing good and he is not rebelling against the Ribbono Shel Olam, he thinks he is doing the Ratzon Hashem and he does something bad, so if it remains a Machshava then the Machshava doesn’t need a Kapparah. That is the answer.

The Gemara said (מי שנתכוון לעלות בידו בשר חזיר) then he needs a Kapparah for that Kavana because wanting to eat (בשר חזיר) is going against the Ratzon Hashem. The Ohr Hachaim

Hakadosh doesn't say that. He says he had Kavana to kill somebody and it didn't happen. If his Kavana was in his warped thinking, the Shevatim had a mistaken thinking. They thought they had a right to kill Yosef, but they weren't rebelling against Hashem, so therefore, it does not need a Kapparah because it didn't come L'mayseh.

I should add, the Nesivus in his Hakdama to his Pirush on Megillas Esther asks why do Jews say Boruch Haman? Guess what he says. He says this thinking. He says we say Boruch Haman because from Haman came the best thing. The Nesivus says, imagine someone wanted to do you bad and instead he made you win a lottery, he made you win a treasure. How angry could you be at him? You will say Boruch Haman. The Nesivus actually uses this type of thinking to explain the Boruch Haman. And so, we have one thought regarding the beginning of the Parsha, the part of the Parsha of (הַנֶּחֱמָה אֶבְיָדָה חֶלֶה) and one thought regarding the end of the Parsha where Yosef says (וְאַתֶּם, הַשְׁבַּתֶּם) (עָלֵי רַעְיָה; אֱלֵרִים, הַשְׁבָּה לְטֹבָה).

3 – Topic - A Thought on the Middle of the Parsha

49:21 (נַפְתָּלִי, אֵילָה שְׁלֵחָה--הַנֶּחֱמָה, אֶמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר). Naftali was swift, he ran. Now these Berachos are not really Berachos to the Shevatim they are Berachos to the generations. It is hard to know if this is a Beracha for the generations of Naftali that they will be fast or swift people? It could be yes, they could be the fast runners by Klal Yisrael and maybe it Takeh is that way.

But I heard a beautiful Bi'ur in this Posuk B'sheim Rav Chaim Palagi (1788 - 1868). Rav Chaim Palagi was one of the Gedolei Sfarad who wrote multiple Seforim. His name is Palagi but it is spelled in Hebrew with a Gimmel because there is no "G" sound.

Anyway, he said beautifully. (נַפְתָּלִי, אֵילָה שְׁלֵחָה). Naftali is swift. (הַנֶּחֱמָה, אֶמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר). What does that mean? Usually someone who rushes, is in a Behala, in a state of tumult. When someone rushes he doesn't do things with a clear thought. He does it without a clear thought because he is busy rushing.

The Beracha given to Naftali was not that he is fast, it is a nice Beracha to be fast so that he could run quickly. A Gevaldige thing. The Beracha was that Naftali is (אֵילָה שְׁלֵחָה), he is a swift person (הַנֶּחֱמָה, אֶמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר) who gives words in a fine way. Who doesn't let the rushing cause him Behala. Ah! That is an extraordinary Middah that our generation needs Bnei Naftali desperately. We are stressed, we are rushing. We do things in a rush and in a state of Behala. There is a Middah of Zerizus, of rushing and doing things with your brains and the Middah of Behala of rushing and doing things without your brains. That is a beautiful Beracha, the Beracha of Naftali.

4 – Topic – A Question of the week

Back to the end of the Parsha. At the end of the Parsha the Shevatim are afraid. They say maybe Yosef will hate us and they say to Yosef as is found in 50:16 (אֶבְיָדָה צָוָה, לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ) that our father commanded that you should forgive us. It wasn't true. Rashi there brings that (שִׁינוּ בְּדִבְרֵי מִפְּנֵי הַשְּׁלוֹמִים). That they were Meshaneh because of Shalom.

I don't get Rashi's Lashon of (שינוי). (שינוי) means they changed. We find for example that Sarah said as is found in 18:12 (וְאֵלֶי זָקֵן). I am going to have children? My husband is old! So when HKB"Y repeated that to Avraham He said as is found in 18:13 (וְאֵנִי זָקֵנָה). He said (צָחָקָה עָרָה) that Sarah said I am old. We learn out that HKB"Y is Meshaneh Mip'nei Hashalom. He changed the language. Shinui means to change.

What is going on? The Shevatim were (שינוי בדבר מפני השלום)? They made up a whole new story? It should say Shikru Mip'nei Hashalom! (שינוי בדבר מפני השלום) They were Meshaneh? What did they change? It is very hard to understand the language of Rashi that this was a Shinui. This is a question for your Shabbos table. It should be a wonderful Shabbos to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5780

1 - Topic - A Diyuk in the First Incident in the Parsha.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi which is a Chazak Shabbos. In the beginning of the Parsha, Yosef comes to Yaakov Avinu two times. The first time Yosef comes to Yaakov is in 47:29 (וַיִּקְרָא לְבָנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף). Yaakov summons Yosef and tells him that I would like to be buried in the Me'oras Hamachpeila. Immediately after Perek 48 begins (וַיְהִי, אֶחָד הַדְּבָרִים). This is Yosef's second visit to his father and it starts with (אֶחָד הַדְּבָרִים). It is not so clear after which (הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה), after what, because Yosef visited once and after he visited once he went to visit again. What is the significance of these (הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)?

I saw an extraordinary Pshat in the Tosafos Beracha which is the Torah Temimah's Sefer on Chumash. He says the following. He says that the first time that Yosef came to Yaakov, Yaakov did not reveal to Yosef that he feels like a Choleh or that he is close to the time that he is going to die. (וַיִּקְרָא לְבָנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף). He didn't tell him that he doesn't feel well and that he feels ill, nothing. He talked to him in a normal way, like a very normal visit. The visit with which he would bless his grandchildren, that he left for a second visit. Why? If it was (וַיְהִי, אֶחָד הַדְּבָרִים) then why not do it all in the one visit? When Yosef comes and he tells him where he wants to be buried and at that time he should give Berachos to his Einiklech?

The answer is that there is a Sugya in Masseches Nedarim and in Shulchan Aruch Yor'e Dai'a in Siman Reish Chaf Ches called Nidrai Onsin. There are rules of oaths and promises that a person makes and a person is obviously obligated to keep his word. There are four categories of exceptions, and one is called Nidrai Onsin. That is that if a person is dying and he calls in a relative and asks him to swear about something, that oath is not binding. It is obvious to all that he is just trying to calm down the dying or ill person. Such an oath is not a binding oath, it is Nidrai Onsin which don't need to have Hataras Nedarim.

Yaakov Avinu of course had learned Masseches Nedarim and Shulchan Aruch Hilchos Nedarim. He wanted the Shevua to be binding, so when he called Yosef the first time he said I am getting old and getting closer to the day of my death. I command you where I want to be buried and make a Shevua.

At that time he did not tell him that he fell ill. (אֶחָדִי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) Davka after these things passed, then (וַיֵּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף, הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה). It doesn't say (וַיֵּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף, הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה) after that Yaakov got sick. No. Yaakov was already sick before, but Yosef didn't know. (וַיֵּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף, הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה). So that the first oath should be binding, Yaakov Avinu did it in such a way. What a beautiful Halachik insight and a Diyuk in Pesukim. It separates the two visits with (וַיֵּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף, הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה) K'ilu it is significant, it is important that it be (אֶחָדִי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה). So that is a Vort for the first incident in the Parsha.

2 - Topic - Rav Schwab on an Apparent Contradiction in Two Rashi's.

Let's try a Vort on the first Rashi in the Parsha. (This topic was also spoken about in Parshas Vayechi 5777). I would like to read to you two Rashi's and you tell me if they are contradictory or appear to be contradictory or not. I am going to read the Rashi in 47:28 (למה פרשה זו סתומה, לפי (שכיון שנפטר יעקב אבינו נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל מצרת השעבוד שהתחילו לשעבדם)). Why is there no space between the Parsha of Vayigash and that of Vayechi? As soon as Yaakov Avinu passed away, the eyes and the heart of the Jewish people became clouded and darkened by the difficulties of the Shibud, because at that moment the Shibud began. Very clear Rashi.

Now I will read you another Rashi from a couple of weeks from now in Parshas Va'eira 6:16 (למה נמנו שנותיו של לוי, להודיע כמה ימי השעבוד, שכל זמן שאחד מן השבטים קיים לא היה שעבוד, שנאמר (שמות א ו) (וימת יוסף וכל אחיו, ואחר כך (שם ח) ויקם מלך חדש, ולוי האריך ימים על כולם)). Why is Levi's age mentioned? To tell you how long the Shibud of the Jews in Mitzrayim was. As long as one of the Shevatim were alive, there was no Shibud in Mitzrayim. The contradiction is obvious. The Rashi in Parshas Vayechi says that the Shibud started with Yaakov's death and this Rashi says that the Shibud started after all of the Shevatim died. It is a clear Stira.

Rav Schwab here in this week's Parsha (page # 112 on 47:28) says something which is significant for contemporary or current events. Let me tell you what Rav Schwab says. To answer this contradiction Rav Schwab asks another question on a Posuk at the end of the Parsha. Yosef requests from the Bais Pharoh as it says in 50:4 (אם-נא מצאתי חן, בעיניכם) if I have found favor in your eyes, (דברו-נא, באזני פרעה לאמר) please go speak to Pharoh saying that I want to bury my father in Mitzrayim. So apparently Yosef didn't have direct access to Pharoh or he felt that it wouldn't work and he had to speak to members of Bais Pharoh. (וידבר יוסף, אל-בית פרעה לאמר). The Medrash says that he spoke to the hairdresser of the queen who in turn spoke to the queen who in turn spoke to the king and requested that Yaakov be buried in Mitzrayim.

It is a Pele Freigt Rav Schwab. As it says in 41:40 (ועל-פיה ישק כל-עמי; רק הפסא, אגדל ממך). Yosef was the boss. He was the head of the country. 42:6 (ויוסף, הוא השליט על-הארץ). What happened all of a sudden that he has to come on to the queen's hairdresser to influence. (וידבר יוסף, אל-בית פרעה). He has to beg (אם-נא מצאתי חן, בעיניכם--דברו-נא). Two times Na (באזני פרעה לאמר)? What is going on? What happened to Yosef all of a sudden?

Says Rav Schwab, when Jews are in Galus, their oppression is gradual. It begins with political influence waning. Things change. The members of government don't look at the Jewish people like they did before. That is a beginning of a time of Tzarah. It is a hint of a difficulty. It is true that the Jewish people were not made to work until after all of the Shevatim had died. But you

should now, that the Tzaros Hashibud began after Yaakov Avinu died. When Yaakov died there were hints already, there were hints that the Jewish people should have seen that there is trouble on the horizon.

(פרשה זו סתומה). The hint is that Parshas Vayigash is Sasum, there is no break between Parshas Vayigash and Parshas Vayeichi. The pauses in the Torah are for what purpose? The Gemara says to give a person time to think, time to reflect. There was no reflection. The people didn't realize that a change is taking place and something is going on in the world around them. And that slowly the decline of the Jewish people in Mitzrayim having been seen in a favorable way all of the time, suddenly the decline started. The decline began.

It would be wise to realize when the decline begins, to somehow have a less antagonistic profile, to be more gentle, to be more peaceful with the people around us, to be more careful about Chilul Hashem even for the small things in life. Not to be so ostentatious, not to show off what we have. There is a warning sign on the horizon when suddenly the influence of government is not favorable to a Jewish lifestyle. It is a time to step back. It is time to realize. It is a time to walk carefully. That is what Rav Schwab says about Mitzrayim. V'hamaivin Yavin and we understand the message.

There are two Shibudim. The Shibud of the death of all of the Shevatim was obvious and oppressive but you should know that it started somewhere. It began years earlier when Yaakov died that was the beginning of the Tzoras Hashibud although it was not recognized at the time.

3 - Topic - A Vort from Rav Pam on the Beracha to Yehuda Regarding White Teeth.

Let me end with a Margila D'puma of my Rebbi Rav Pam. It was something that he mentioned in this week's Parsha. Yehuda gets a Beracha, a long Beracha and part of the Beracha is as is found in 49:12 (וְלִבְּךָ-שָׁנִים, מְחֻלָּב). The teeth are going to be so white from drinking milk. Yasherkoach! You will have white teeth from drinking milk. You won't need whitening strips. Beautiful!

The Gemara in Kesubos 111b says (close to the bottom of the Amud) that it is not that his teeth will be white but (טוב המלכין שינים לחבירו יותר ממשקהו חלב). Yaakov Avinu told Yehuda that you will have white teeth, smile at people. You will be in a position of leadership, you are a Melech. When you smile at a person it brings a person happiness. When you meet a person who is sour all of the time, you are not happy. When you meet a person who is joyful and smiling, the joy spreads and the joy goes beyond. It is an ultimate Hachnosas Orchim.

Rav Pam would quote from the Ahavas Chesed, the Chofetz Chaim says that to fulfill Hachnosas Orchim it has to be B'saivor Panim Yafos. It is in Perek 3 Halacha 2. It has to be with a joy. The Gemara says that Chazal says and the Medrash says somebody who gives his friend a happy embrace even if he is not giving him anything else, it is like he gave him everything. Joy and Happiness.

Rav Pam would cite the example of Rav Yechiel Mordechai Gordon (1882 - 1964), the Lomze Rosh Yeshiva who was stuck in the United States when WWII broke out. He was actually rescued but he was away from his family. The day that he was told that his family had perished in Europe,

shortly after somebody walked in and the Lomze Rosh Yeshiva greeted that person with a big smile and spoke to him. When the person left, he turned back to his grief of what had happened. Someone remarked, how did you do that? How can a person do that? The Lomze Rosh Yeshiva said, that person is not responsible for my sadness, why do I have to throw the sadness on him?

We do it all of the time. When we are sad we throw the sadness on everybody. When we come home after a day at work or after a day in Yeshiva and we walk in with a sour face. You have to walk in with a happy face. How was your day? Great! Wonderful! If there is a problem to discuss you discuss it. But how are things? Wonderful! That is the first answer.

A person should learn to be Mekabeil Panim B'savor Panim Yafos. The world would be such a better place if people would take this lesson to heart. You want to be a Melech? (מֶלֶךְ-שָׁנִים, מְחֻלָּב). The blessing is not that you will have white teeth, the blessing is that you show your smile to people which is better than giving them milk.

Let us smile and let us be grateful for what we do have and B'ezras Hashem we should be Zoche. Joy brings Beracha. The Maharal says that it is not that when you have a Beracha you are happy it is that when you are happy it brings Beracha. This is what the Maharal says in Parshas Ki Seitzei. Let everybody have a wonderful, joyful and meaningful Shabbos Parshas Vayechi. Chazak Chazak Venis'chazeik, Chizuk to continue with the Blatt of the Daf Yomi and IY"H first to the end of Berachos which is the first job and then beyond!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5779

1 - Topic - A thought on the beginning of the Parsha from Rav Druk.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Vayechi. Let me start with a Vort on the beginning of the Parsha. At the beginning of the Parsha we find in 47:31 (עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמָּטָה, וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, לוֹ; וַיִּשָּׁבַע, לוֹ; וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמָּטָה). That Yaakov Avinu calls his trusted son Yosef and asks him to make a Shevua, to take an oath that he would bury him in Eretz Yisrael. (וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמָּטָה). Poshut Pshat in the Posuk sounds like Yaakov Avinu gave thanks that Yosef agreed.

Rashi is obviously bothered by this because he knew that Yosef would agree. So Rashi brings a Pshat that he bowed because he gave thanks to HKB"H that (וְעוֹד שְׁנֹשְׁבָה לְבֵין) שהרי יוסף מלך הוא, והרי הוא עומד בצדקו (הגוים, והרי הוא עומד בצדקו). He was giving thanks that all of his children were Tzadikim. Yosef was the one who went out among the non-Jews, he was the one who was a king in a foreign nation and he is still Omed B'tzidko, he is still righteous, so he gave thanks to HKB"H. That was his thanks.

Freigt Rav Druk in Darash Mordechai (page # 307 and this topic was discussed in 5778 as well, Ayin Sham as it is expanded upon there), Yaakov had known him now for 17 years, he came to Mitzrayim and this was his son. He certainly knew what was going on with his son, so didn't he know he was a Tzaddik? Now he gives thanks that Yosef is a Tzaddik? It needs an explanation.

Rav Druk answered in something that was characteristic of his style. There are many people that are Tzaddikim when everyone is looking. There are many people who Daven sincerely when many people are looking. What do they do when they are alone at home?

Do they take out a Sefer over dinner, or do they do something else that is less worthwhile. The true measure of a person is what he does when he is himself, just him and the Ribbono Shel Olam. It is hard to know. How can anyone else know?

When Yosef swore, when he took an oath, Yaakov Avinu was able to see the sincerity, the Yir'as Shamayim with which he promised. Yosef could have promised in an easy going style. He could have said you want me to swear, I swear. He was able to see the Aimah and the Yir'a that a Tzaddik has when he swears. It was something that was not done in the public eye. Since it was something that was not done in the public eye, it wasn't even done for Yaakov Avinu.

There are moments when you see the real sincerity of a person, and then you say wow this is a real person, this is an Eved Hashem, this is a Yir'ai Shamayim. So the Posuk says (וישבע לו; וישתחו) (וישבע, לו; וישתחו). They were connected. He swore to him, (על-ראש המטה) (על-ראש המטה) and then he gave thanks to the Ribbono Shel Olam.

Rav Druk demands of us, the barometer of how much a person is connected to HKB"H, has to do to with what he does in private. Micha 6:8 (והצנע לכת, עם-אלריך). Says Rav Druk, Hatznei Leches, what you do B'tzin'a, what you do privately, Im Hashem Elokecha tells us how close you are to the Ribbono Shel Olam. And so, a beautiful thought for the beginning of the Parsha.

2 - Topic - A thought on the end of the Parsha from Rav Hutner.

Let's move to the very end of the Parsha. In the second to last Posuk in Sefer Beraishis is a Posuk that is an introduction to Shemos. Shemos is Sefer Hageulah, and therefore, it is an appropriate introduction, Posuk 25 at the very end of the Parsha (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹדִים) (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹדִים). Hashem will redeem you and at that time (והעלתם את-עצמתי מזה) (והעלתם את-עצמתי מזה). Chazal say (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) Hashem will redeem you, that this was a Siman (סימן זה מסור בידם). Rashi brings in Shemos 3:18 that there was a Siman that was given over to Klal Yisrael that when the Geulah will come it will come with a Lashon of Pekida. (סימן זה מסור בידם מיעקב ומיוסף שבלשון זה הם נגאלים).

Freigt the Ramban (in Shemos 3:18), what kind of Siman is this? A Siman means that you want to know is this person real or is he faking. You want to know if it is true or not true that he is somebody who comes to redeem Klal Yisrael. If the Siman is known publicly then it doesn't help. What does it help, the Siman of (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹדִים) (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹדִים) if everyone knows the Siman?

Rav Hutner in Pachad Yitzchok on Pesach, Maimar Pei Beis answers the question and more fundamentally he gives us a Yesod for the learning of Nach, which is of course something that we all enjoy.

In Navi, particularly Sefer Yirmiya, but also in Sefer Melachim we find Nevi'ai Sheker. We find Neviim that come and they lie, they are not truly Neviim and they say things in the name of Hashem and G-d never spoke to them. We are worried that they fooled many people. We find in the times

of King Yehoshafat that there were Nevi'ai Sheker and he wasn't sure if they were telling the truth. There has to be some kind of explanation.

Who is a Navi Sheker? Usually a kook. I remember once in Yeshiva, that one day a gentleman if I can use that word, came into Yeshiva in the morning and went and sat up front during first Seder in one of the Rosh Yeshiva's seats, and sat there for a few minutes while the whole Yeshiva was abuzz. Then stood up and announced that he was Moshiach. Naturally he was taken out. They are the type of people that walk around saying that they are Moshiach or Neviim. How could the king Yehoshafat be fooled, how could the people of a generation be fooled. Look at the person, people know him, could he be a Navi? It is a Pele!

Zagt Rav Hutner, there were Neviim that really thought that they were Neviim. There were Neviim who for one reason or another thought so. I think that I saw this in the Ohr Yechezkel as well. They were sincere people who became so involved in their desire to see a Geulah that they convinced themselves that they were Neviim. There are people like that today. There are people who do things that are totally off the wall. They call people in and they do strange rituals to help people. But they are so Ehrlich. There are people like that. There are individuals who in their sincerity, in their desire to do good, fool themselves into thinking that they are Neviim.

Zagt Rav Hutner, there are people like that. Yosef gave a Siman to Klal Yisrael. Siman Masur Lahem. When a person finds out and they believe that he is a Navi, he is not sure if this is a Nisayon or is this real. It is a very difficult thing. (סימן זה מסור בידם). If the Nevua comes with the Lashon of (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) Hashem guarantees that the Nevua will not come B'lashon (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) unless it is real. This is not a Siman for other people to see if this is a true Navi. It is a Siman for a person who thinks he really has Nevuah and to figure does he really have Nevua. This is a Havtacha from Shamayim that (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) will not come as a Nisayon. If there is a (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד) then it is something that will be a real Nevuah of Geulah.

3 - Topic - A thought from the middle of the Parsha from the Sichos Mussar.

One thought from a little earlier in the Parsha which comes from the Sichos Mussar. The Sichos Mussar has a second edition which has at the end of it some additional Mamarim and in those additional Mamarim this is Siman Gimmel. These are Sichos that were written during the '67 war and there in Siman Gimmel he talks about Chushim Ben Dan. Why is it that Chushim Ben Dan out of all of the descendants of Yaakov Avinu was the one that killed Eisav. The Gemara says in Sotah 13a (towards the top of the Amud) that when Eisav challenged the right of Yaakov Avinu to be buried in Me'aras Hamachpeilah the Shevatim sent Naftali back to Mitzrayim to bring documents to prove that it is his. Chushim got up and said (עד דאתי נפתלי מארעא דמצרים יהא אבי) (אבא מוטל בבזיון) until Naftali goes and returns should my grandfather just be unburied in Bizayon, and he killed Eisav.

Zagt Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz, human beings get used to things gradually. Human beings get used to even inappropriate things gradually. That is the style of the Yeitzer Hora. One day he says do this and the next day do that, one click and another click and eventually a person is trapped.

All of the people who came, Eisav challenged them and it was a discussion. Slowly they were lulled into that the right thing is to send Naftali back. Chushim was deaf. Chushim knew nothing. Chushim says what is going on? In sign language they told him that Eisav is preventing the burial. He wasn't lulled into it slowly. He suddenly realized that they are not burying Yaakov and he understood that Eisav has to be removed and then we will bury Yaakov appropriately.

In life it is that way. We get lulled into things and we don't see the Gadlus of something. Rav Shmuelelevitz brings from Parshas Beshalach, we find that Klal Yisrael went out on the first Friday that the Man fell as it states in 16:22 (וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי, לָקְטוּ לֶחֶם מִשָּׁנָה). They said to Moshe what is this, we have a double portion of Man?

Moshe Rabbeinu said that is L'kavod Shabbos. Freigt Rav Chaim Shmuelelevitz, Moshe Rabbeinu knew that there would be Lechem Mishneh as Hashem had told him. Why didn't he tell the people ahead of time? The answer is the shock value. He tells them and they will get used to the idea. Here they saw the Kedushas Shabbos B'poel. They saw that from heaven a double portion falls today so Shabbos you don't have to collect, it made an impression.

Be careful. We get lulled into it and it turns into Naaseh Lo K'heter. When people actually walk into Shul during Pesukai D'zimra and first put on Tallis and Tefillin. What kind of Davening is that? The putting on of Tallis and Tefillin is not a Davening. You can't say L'sheim Yichud at that time. The Pesukai D'zimra is not a Davening. The huffing and puffing during Birchas Krias Shema is not a Davening. What is it?

We get lulled into it because you see people come a little late, a little later, a little later than that. Sometimes I see people come 15 minute late to the Minyan. I would love to say, wow you are early for the next Minyan. It is an example. An example of Naaseh Lo K'heter. Something that we have to watch out for. So a lesson from the beginning, a lesson from the end, a lesson from the middle.

4 - Topic - A puzzling thing to note from a Mispaleil of the Shul.

I want to tell you something puzzling. We have a fellow in Shul R' Tzvi who always tells me very interesting things and you will agree that the following is interesting. Although to be honest I don't know what to make of it. We find that Yosef says as is found in 48:9 (בְּנֵי הֵם). Yaakov at first was shocked that there were Reshaim like Yerovam and Yeihu that would be descendants of them and afterwards (בְּנֵי הֵם) Yehoshua was going to come and Tzaddikim will come after them. The point was made as follows. Yerovam Ben Nevot, the Rasha that Yaakov saw would come, Yeihu Ben Nimshi. Yerovam Ben Nevot is Yud Bais Nun which is Osios (בְּנֵי). Yeihu Ben Nimshi are Osios (בְּנֵי) Yud Beis Nun. Yehoshua Ben Nun is again Osios Yud Beis Nun is (בְּנֵי). All three people referred are Yud Bais Nun which is the Osios of the word (בְּנֵי). Fascinating and these things are certainly not a coincidence. What Chashivus to make of it and what the message of this is, for that I leave to you to figure out over Shabbos. Have an absolutely wonderful upcoming Shabbos! Kol Tuv!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5778

1 - Topic - A thought from the Ramban

As we prepare for Parshas Vayechi, Parshas Chazak Chazak Venischazeik the Parsha where we finish Sefer Beraishis. Let me tell you a Kasha I had as I was being Mavir Sedra and a lesson I learned from the answer. As I was being Mavir Sedra I read about the instructions that Yaakov Avinu gives to Yosef, the instructions for his burial. Yaakov describes the Meoras Hamachpeila as the place as it is found in 49:31 (וְאֵת רַבְקָה , וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק , אֶת-לֵאָה ; וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרָתִי , אֶת-לֵאָה (אֲשֶׁתִּי) . I said to myself one minute (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרָתִי , אֶת-לֵאָה) there I Yaakov buried Leah I understand. (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק) it was (קברתי), didn't Yaakov bury Yitzchok? Sure enough I looked back at Parshas Vayishlach at 35:29 and it says that Yaakov and Eisav buried Yitzchok (וַיִּגְנוּעַ יִצְחָק וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל-עַמּוּי , זָקֵן וְשֹׁבַע יָמִים ; וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ , עֶשָׂו וַיַּעֲקֹב בְּנֵי) (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק)? So what is (קברתי) why not (קברתי)?

Subsequently I took a look at the Ramban and indeed the Ramban asked the Kasha and he says two Teirutzim. He says 1) (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק) he did not want to say (קברתי) I buried as then he would have to mention Eisav and he didn't want to bring Eisav's name into the conversation so he just said (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק) and he did not get into details.

The second Teretz he says (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק , וְאֵת רַבְקָה) it would not be respectful to start to say a whole long Parsha that I buried my father Yitzchok and I didn't bury my mother and then he has to explain. It is not so nice that he buried his father but he didn't bury his mother so to avoid a long discussion he just was Mekatzair and said (וְאֵת רַבְקָה) (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק , וְאֵת רַבְקָה). Alright a simple Teretz.

From this Teretz I learned a Yesod. We often wonder when someone says to you how do you feel and you say fine. It may not be true. You may have a headache and a sore throat and be freezing. Yet people answer in order to avoid long discussions, so they answer very briefly. Is that a problem of Sheker, of being not true and you are supposed to speak Emes. Here we have a Mekor, a Bifeirush Ramban and he is talking about no less than Yaakov Avinu the man of Emes. Titein Emes L'yaakov. We learn from here that to be Mekatzair Bid'varav, not to get into side discussions it is appropriate to say (וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ) they buried even though the Emes is Shamah Kavarti. A nice Mar Makom.

2 - Topic - A thought on Sheivet Naftali

Let's move on to a second thought with a second idea on this week's Parsha. This thought has to do with the Berachos and specifically the Beracha that Yaakov Avinu gave to Naftali. 49:21 (נַפְתָּלִי ,) Naftali is a swift gazelle (הַנֶּחֱמָן , אֶמְרִי-שֹׁפָר) many different Peshatim. (הַנֶּחֱמָן , אֶמְרִי-שֹׁפָר) The Pshat that is closest to the simple meaning of the words (הַנֶּחֱמָן , אֶמְרִי-שֹׁפָר) who gives over words of Torah. The question is where do we find something special about Naftali giving over Divrei Torah. Halo Davar Hu! It is something that needs an explanation.

The Sheivet of Naftali interestingly enough is most often relegated to the last place in the list of the Shevatim especially in Parshas Bamidbar. If you look at the beginning of Bamidbar where it counts the Nesiim the last Nasi is from the Sheivet of Naftali.

If you look at the Degalim and the setting up of the different places of encampment in the Midbar, the last Degel is the Degel Machane Dan and within Degel Machane Dan was Dan, Asher and Naftali. Naftali is last.

If you look at the Nesiim that we have on Chanukah at the end of Parshas Naso and you look at each Nasi bringing (their Korbanos) in order, the last Nasi is from the Sheivet of Naftali.

If you look at the end of Sefer Bamidbar where it talks about dividing the land of Eretz Yisrael and appointing people in charge, the last one is Naftali. Interesting, in the order of the birth of the Shevatim Naftali is actually 6th and yet he is very often relegated to last place. What is the characteristic of Naftali?

We find in Shir Hashirim that Naftali was a Sheivet that is involved in business. Where do we find that Naftali was involved in business? So listen to the words of Shir Hashirim. Halomed Torah B'tzaar, someone who learns Torah in difficulty situations where it is hard, he takes a thousand portions. Zu Shivtei Naftali.

Halomed Torah Shelo B'tzaar Masayim, Zu Shivtei Shel Yisacher. The Medrash compares Naftali to Yisacher. Yisacher's job was to sit and learn, they were the Melamdei Torah, they were the Sanhedrin, they were the people that Paskened. But when they sat, they went into a Geshmake Bais Medrash with Seforim and well-lit and sat and learned. They get a certain amount of Schar, certainly a lot of Schar.

Zagt the Medrash Shir Hashirim incredibly. Naftali was the Sheivet that went on business trips. Where did they learn? Not in the Geshmake Bais Medrash, they were sitting on the train and taking out a Sefer and sitting and learning between all kinds of people and different odors that permeate the subway system of NY. There they learned. Halomed Torah B'tzaar, they were on business trips and they came home late at night.

I have an incredible Yid who is a Talmid Chochom but he does business and he works. One night he came to the Mishmar after midnight and he said that he came straight from the airport. I had to go on business and I came straight from the airport after midnight to the Mishmar. Incredible! I am a Rav, a Rebbe, I am Lomed Torah Shelo B'tzaar in a Geshmake Bais Medrash so Notal Masayim. He is Naftali so he is Noteil Eleph.

It says Halomed Torah B'mikomo Noteil Masayim. Yisacher is in his place. Halomed Torah Shelo B'mikomo, he is in a strange city and at night he comes into his hotel room and he pulls out a Sefer, Noteil Eleph. A gigantic difference.

Sheivet Naftali are the last in what appears to be the Chashivus. When there is a Siyum Hashas who goes up to speak? Sheivet Yisacher, the Manhigei Hador. Who are the ones that make it possible in the audience? Sheivet Naftali. Whose Schar is more in the Olam Ha'emes? The Schar

of Naftali. (נפתלי, אֵילָה שְׁלֵחָה) is swift. Naftali runs. (הַנֶּחֱמָ, אֶמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר) His Divrei Torah have the beauty of (אֶמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר). What a lesson for everybody especially on a cold night to go out and learn. Halomed Torah B'tzaar Noteil Eleph.

3 - Topic - A Mussar thought from Rav Druk and Rav Schwab

We have at the beginning of the Parsha 47:31 that Yaakov Avinu gives Hoda'a to the Ribbono Shel Olam. As it says in the Posuk that Yosef came to Yaakov and swore to bury him in the right place (וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמִּטָּה). Yisrael bows. Why does he bow? Rashi says wow my son is in Mitzrayim and he remained a great person. 17 years passed and then he gives Hoda'a. Why doesn't he give praise right away?

Rav Druk (in his Sefer on Chumash Darash Mordechai on page # 307) asked this question. Rav Druk answers with a Yesod. A person is not measured by what he does publicly, a person is measured by what he does privately. Yosef Hatzaddik publicly was of course a great person, however, if you really want to know you have to see what he does secretly. (אדם נמדד רק מה שעושה). Yaakov Avinu had no way of knowing what Yosef did secretly. He didn't give a full Hoda'a except for that he came. Of course he gave praise but it is a different praise when you see his Penimios.

As I am reading Rav Druk I was wondering where did Yaakov Avinu see Yosef's Penimios in Parshas Vayechi. Zagt Rav Druk (וַיִּשְׁבַּע, לוֹ) that Yosef swore. When a person swears it is noticeable in the person his Aima, his Yir'a, his Penimios. This is what it says in Rav Druk that from swearing it was Nikar.

To tell you the truth, when I read this it didn't strike me as an extraordinary Vort. The idea that when did Yaakov give Hoda'a, when he saw the Penimios of Yosef. Gevaldig! But when did he see the Penimios of Yosef, you are telling me here when he swore. Alright. Mai'haicha Taisa.

Then I saw that Rav Schwab asks the same Kasha (in his Sefer on Chumash Mayan Beis Hashoeva on page # 113). He also says that Yosef was as it says in Micha 6:8 (וְהִצְנֶה לֵבָת), Yosef was a person who was as it says in 49:24 (וַתִּשָּׁב בְּאֵימָתוֹ קִשְׁתּוֹ) quiet and didn't show his Gadlus publicly. Zagt Rav Schwab, when Yosef swore and took a Shevua then Yaakov Avinu saw his greatness. So we have from two Gedolim, Rav Schwab & Rav Druk that are saying something that I wouldn't appreciate. From this I learned some Mussar.

By us giving our word, is something that we take lightly especially if we are promising and we mean it truthfully, so we make a promise and we really mean it. Yosef made a promise to bury his father in Eretz Canaan and of course he planned to do it. We take such things lightly. Apparently, the reason I didn't appreciate it, is because I lack an appreciation of the Aima, Yir'a, Reses and Zai'a of Lo Sisa Shema Shav, of being truthful and honest in everything a person says. The Aima, the fear to make sure that everything you say that you are going to do something that Hashem should give you the Koach, the energy to be able to do it. That Aima was something that Yosef understood, Yaakov understood and I have to work on understanding. How valuable, how meaningful, how important it is that when you give your word it should carry the proper weight.

And so, three Gevaldige lessons on this week's Parsha. Of course the moral of them all is to make it to the Beis Medrash whether it is for Mishmar night or a day of January 1st which is a day off from work for many of you. This extra time that you have, use it in the Beis Medrash. Serve the Ribbono Shel Olam with Aima, Yir'a, Reses and Zai'a, with every word you say and with a Geshmak (הֶנְתֵּן, אִמְרֵי-שֹׁפָר) with every word you learn. A Gutten Gevaldige Shabbos to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5777

1 - Topic - A reason why the Parsha is Stuma (closed)

Rashi in the beginning of Parshas Vayechi (the very first Rashi says) why is Parshas Vayigash Stuma. Meaning between every two Parshios in the Torah we consistently have a break, a Hefseik of either a Pei or a Samech, however, Vayigash goes straight into the next Parsha without any break. Rashi answers that question and says that the reason for that is because (לפי שכיון שנפטר יעקב) when Yaakov Avinu passed away (נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל מצרת השעבוד שהתחילו לשעבדם) (אבינו). The Shibud began after Yaakov Avinu passed away and the Parsha is Stuma, it is sealed. There is no space between it because the Torah wants to tell us that after Yaakov Avinu passed away the Tzaros of the Shibud began.

The problem is that Rashi appears to contradict a Rashi in Parshas Va'eira 6:16 where Rashi says (שכל זמן שאחד מן השבטים קיים לא היה שעבוד). That as long as one of the Shevatim was alive they did not work for Mitzrayim. Rashi says it is a Posuk Shemos 1:6 (וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף וְכָל-אָחָיו, וְכָל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא וְאָח"כ) (ויקם מלך חדש). So therefore, this seems to be a contradiction, because Rashi says that here says the Shibud started with Yaakov's Petira and there Rashi says that the Shibud began with the death of all the Shevatim.

Rav Schwab here in this week's Parsha (page # 112 on 47:28) says an extraordinary Teretz. Rav Schwab says that the actual work for Mitzrayim indeed did not begin until all of the Shevatim passed away which was many years later. However, the Tzara did not begin with working for Mitzrayim. The Tzarah actually began with a slow decline of the honor of Am Yisrael. A slow descent.

Originally Yosef is Mishneh L'melech, in charge of the whole land as it says in Beraishis 41:40 (רק הכסא, אֲגִדֵּל מִמֶּךָ) only Paroh is above him. How did it turn into Klal Yisrael being forced to work? The decline begins earlier, with Yaakov's passing. The proof to this is that after the 30 days of Aveilus, the 40 days of Chanita and 70 days of Yaakov's Petira had passed, the Posuk says when Yosef asked permission to bury Yaakov Avinu in Eretz Canaan it says in Beraishis 50:4 (וַיִּדְבֹר) (אם-נא מצאתי) (דברו-נא, בְּאָזְנִי פְרֹעָה לֵאמֹר) (חן, בְּעֵינֵיכֶם) if I find favor in your eyes (דברו-נא, בְּאָזְנִי פְרֹעָה לֵאמֹר) go talk to Paroh for me. Why did Yosef need protection in order to be able to get permission? Yosef is the one who as it says in Beraishis 41:44 (וּבְלִעְדִּיהָ, לֹא-יָרִים אִישׁ אֶת-יָדוֹ וְאֶת-רִגְלוֹ--בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם) he is in charge of the whole land, who is higher than him?

Rav Schwab says that we see that the problem began here. Sort of like when a person Lo Aleinu has a disease. The disease is discovered at a certain time. But the first germ that caused the disease came a while earlier, but he wasn't aware of it at the time. The same thing here. The Shibud started later, but Klal Yisrael only in hindsight could see that it started with Yaakov's Petira.

Says Rav Schwab, that is what it means that the Parsha between Vayigash and Vayechi is uninterrupted it is a Parsha Stuma. What is the significance of that?

When you take a look in the Sefer Torah you don't know where the Parsha begins. You have to search. You have to be Misbonein, you have to think into where does the Parsha begin. It is not like every other Parsha that you can find easily. The same thing in life's events, where you need Hisbonenus. If there is a problem, where did the Parsha begin? It is hard to know where the Parsha began. So Rashi's language is that (נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל) the eyes and heart of Klal Yisrael were sealed, they didn't detect, they didn't realize, they didn't sense exactly where the problem began. It probably began when they lost Yaakov Avinu.

In 1986 Klal Yisrael suffered the Petira of the Steiper, Rav Yaakov and Rav Moshe all in a short period of time. We shuddered to think that 3 Gedolei Hador should pass away in such a brief period of time. When the year passed without any disaster we breathed a sigh of relief. But who knows when looking back if the Intifada when the Palestinians started to rebel which began in 1990 or 1991, if really the seeds of it didn't start with the Petira of these Gedolei Yisroel. Sometimes we need to stop and appreciate the meaning of things that happen and look back where they may have begun.

In this week's Parsha there is a Ramban and the Ramban says that when Yaakov promises Shechem Echad to Yosef which he captured B'charbi Uv'kashti. Later when Yehoshua was able to capture Eretz Yisroel, that was because Yaakov Avinu had set the seeds by his small amount of conquest of Eretz Yisrael in the case of Shechem.

When you see something you need to think B'hisbonenus of where it came from. It comes from the Manhigai Yisroel, the Gedolei Yisroel, the great people in Klal Yisrael. What a beautiful thought.

2 - Topic - Yehuda is praised for owning up to his misdeed

49:8 (יְהוּדָה, אֶתָּה יְיָדוּנָה אֶחָיָה). Yehuda is praised. The Targum says (את אודיתא ולא בהיתתא) you were Modeh and conceded in the incident with Tamar because you said Tzadka Mimeni. and you didn't hesitate. Targum Yonason says the same thing. Yehuda's praise on his long life of serving Hashem is that when he did something wrong he was Modeh. The nature of a person is that when someone shows you that you did something wrong you try to defend yourself, to answer yourself, to explain yourself. Even if later you will accept responsibility it comes with great delay. Yehuda was Mekabeil Achrayos immediately. He did something wrong and he said Tzadkah Mimeni. As soon as he realized it, he responded it is true. That is the sign of a Melech Yisrael. Jews are called Yehudim because of Yehuda and Yaakov Avinu tells us that his greatness was that he accepted responsibility.

We find this idea in Yirmiya 2:34. (גם בכנפיה נמצאו, דם נפשות אביונים נקיים). Yirmiya tells Klal Yisrael, you looked away and caused the death of innocent poor people and the Navi says (הנני) (נשפט אותך, על-אמרך לא חטאתי). I am going to judge you because you say you didn't sin. It is a Pele because we are talking about Retzicha. What is the Tevia? The Tevia is that he said Lo Chatasi. Could it be that someone who is guilty of causing the death of another person? Kabbalas Achrayos is so significant that the Mussar is why don't you accept it. Doesn't that pale by comparison?

Zagt Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz and this is a Shmuz printed in the Sefer Chochmas Chaim (not the regular Sichos Mussar). Yes, accepting responsibility is extraordinary and we learn that from the first murder in the world where Kayin killed Hevel. The Posuk says as can be found in Beraishis 4:9 (ויאמר יהנה אל-קונו, אי הקל אחידך) where is Hevel?

Says Rashi (להכנס עמו בדברי נחת). Even though Kayin was a murderer HKB"H began by talking to him calmly. (אולי ישיב ויאמר אני הרגתיי וחטאתי לך). Maybe he will own up to his responsibility for doing such a terrible sin. That means that whatever sin a person does, the greatness of a person is that he is able to own up to it, to be Mekabeil Achrayos and take responsibility for his misdeeds. What a Mussar. We all make mistakes. To take responsibility for our misdeeds, that is greatness.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz brings another place in Beitzah the second Perek (17a on the bottom to 17b). It talks about someone who forgot to make an Eiruv Tavshilin. B'issur he cooked or baked on Yom Tov for Shabbos. The Gemara says are you allowed to eat the food? The Gemara brings a proof from someone who forgot to make an Eiruv Tavshilin and when he cooked on Friday he pretended that he was cooking for Yom Tov and he did a Harama, as he was really cooking for Shabbos. We say that you are not allowed to eat the food. So we see that if you cook on Yom Tov for Shabbos without an Eiruv Tavshilin that the food becomes prohibited.

The Gemara says no (הערמה קא אמרת) someone who pretends (שאני הערמה דאחמירו בה רבנן טפי ממזיד) somebody who pulls off a trick and pretends that what he is doing is Muttar that is worse than someone who is out and out doing an Aveira. Rashi says Maizid is a Rasha. Someone who deliberately did an Aveira is a Rasha but others won't learn from him. Not only that, he will do Teshuva. Someone who makes excuses, he will not do Teshuva and just make excuses for himself and others will learn from what he did. (לעולם עבר ואפה מותר והערמה אינה ראייה לכאן). שאני הערמה כו'. דשאני הערמה ממזיד דאיכא למימר אחמור בה רבנן בהערמה טפי ממזיד דאלו מזיד רשע הוא לעבור על דברי חכמים ואין אחרים למדים הימנו והוא עצמו משים אל לבו ושכח הלכך לא מעקרא תורת עירוב אבל מערים סבור לעשות בהיתר (הלכך לא ישיב אל לבו לחזור בו ואחרים למדין הימנו ומעקרא תורת עירוב הלכך קנסוהו רבנן).

The point being that someone who does an Aveira and makes excuses for himself is far worse than someone who does an Aveira and then owns up to it. Ad Kan. These are the words of Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz and with this we have an insight into what we who Daven Nusach Sfarim say by Tachanun. (אָבֱל). (אָנְחֵנוּ וְאֵלֵינוּ צְדִיקִים אָנְחֵנוּ וְלֹא חֲטָאנוּ. אָבֱל). (אָנְחֵנוּ וְאֵלֵינוּ חֲטָאנוּ). We say we are wonderful, we don't say that we are Tzaddikim, of course we don't say that we are Tzaddikim. What is the meaning of this? Why would say that he is a Tzaddik if he is not a Tzaddik?

The answer is that it is a greatness to own up to something that you did wrong, to accept responsibility for what you did. It is no small thing. That is the idea, the lesson over he

3 - Topic - Bentsching our children

In Beraishis, Parshas Lech Lecha it says as is found in 12:3 (וְנִבְרַכְוּ בָּךְ, כָּל מְשִׁפָּחַת הָאֲדָמָה). Hashem says that people will bless their children by comparing them to Avraham. Says Rashi (אדם אומר). So there we learn that when you bless your children it is to be like Avraham.

In this week's Parsha Avraham is usurped by Ephraim and Menashe as is found in 48:20 (בְּךָ יִבְרַךְ). Avraham being the one is taken away. We don't say Yesimcha Elokim K'avraham we say (יְשַׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמְנַשֶּׁה). Halo Davar Hu! Isn't that such a strange thing that the grandchildren should take away the promise to Avraham Avinu.

Now, when I heard this Kasha I said what do you mean? In Lecha Lecha it says (וְנִבְרַכְוּ בָּךְ, כָּל מְשִׁפָּחַת הָאֲדָמָה). It talks about the nations of the world. Indeed even now many nations trace themselves back to Avraham. However, while Klal Yisrael is Ephraim U'menashe which itself needs an explanation. Why should we lose the Simcha Elokim K'avraham and change it to (יְשַׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמְנַשֶּׁה). This certainly needs an explanation.

Rav Hutner in Maamarei Sukkos 69 has an Arichus that B'kitzur I would like to share with you. The greatness of Klal Yisrael is that we are Talmidim, Banim, Bnei Banim. The greatness of the continuation of Torah to those before us that is the greatness that we have for generations. Yesimcha Elokim K'avraham is appropriate for the nations of the world because they don't have the Mesorah that we have. They should be like Avraham who came to Torah without Mesorah. For us Avada we should be as great as Avraham, Halevai. Every Jew says Masai Yigiu Maasai K'maasei Avosai. I would like to be a little bit like Avraham Avinu. However, the Beracha we give our children is (כְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמְנַשֶּׁה). To be a continuation, a jumping of Doros, going back like Ephraim and Menashe jumped up a Dor because they were Mekabeil Mesorah from grandparents. (Ed. Note: the rest of the Shiur was cut off).

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5776

1. It is Shabbos Chazak, a week of strengthening ourselves. I would like to share with you some ideas on the Parsha and perhaps they can Takeh serve as Chazak, to strengthen and give us Koach. I would like to start with a question. One of the themes of the Parsha, certainly at the beginning of the Parsha is Yaakov's decision to elevate Ephraim and Menashe as is found in 48:5 (כִּרְאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן). To elevate them to the status of Shevatim. It is an incredible thing to take two grandchildren and elevate them to the status of Shevatim and as you know, this was at least in part because Reuven lost the Bechorah and Yosef received the Bechorah. Yosef would get Pi Shnayim which included getting two Shevatim. Still it is a major event in the Parsha.

If Yaakov Avinu wanted to elevate Ephraim and Menashe to have the status of two Shevatim, why is it that immediately thereafter he gives Berachos to the twelve Shevatim and he gives a Beracha to Yosef. He doesn't split the Berachos between Ephraim and Menashe? He gives Berachos to Ephraim and Menashe earlier. Why? If he is elevating Ephraim and Menashe to be Shvetai Kah, the Berachos should be all together with all Shvetai Kah right before his Petirah, and it would seem

to be inconsistent. The beginning of the Parsha says that Ephraim and Menashe are like Reuvain and Shimon and then immediately thereafter we find the twelve Shevatim were given Berachos without Ephraim and Menashe being counted separately. It certainly begs an explanation.

I would like to share with you an idea that I saw B'sheim Rav Zalman Volotziner (1756 - 1788) and this is quoted in the Mamarei Pachad Yitzchok of Sukkos, Maimar Pei Aleph. We find at the end of Sefer Yechezkel that Shaar Yosef Echad. When Yechezkel talks about the twelve Shevatim he talks about a Shaar Yosef. He doesn't talk about a Shaar for Ephraim and Menashe. He talks about Yosef specifically.

Rav Yisrael Salanter (1810 - 1883) asks in the name of Rav Zalman Volotziner why it is that way that in Yechezkel's Nevuah which is a Nevuah on L'asid Lavo where Yechezkel has a Nevua of the division of Eretz Yisrael after Moshiach comes, why there are Ephraim and Menashe not together?

Rav Yisrael Salanter answers that in the Parsha Yaakov said (וַעֲתָה שְׁנֵי-בְנֵיךָ הַנּוֹלָדִים לְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, (עד-בְּאֵי אֶלֶיךָ מִצְרַיִם--לִי-הֵם: אֶפְרַיִם, וּמְנַשֶּׁה--כְּרֹאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן, יְהִי-לִי (וַעֲתָה), it is only B'olam Hazeh, however, when Moshiach will come it will revert back to being Shaar Yosef Echad, one for the entire Shaar of Yosef. Ad Kan Divrei Rav Yisrael Salanter as quoted in the Pachad Yitzchok. He says that this Beracha (כְּרֹאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן, יְהִי-לִי) is only an Olam Hazeh Beracha.

Naturally, that would answer our original Kasha. The Kasha was why is the Beracha of the twelve Shevatim not giving Ephraim and Menashe Berachos separately, why is it that their Berachos were independent. The Teretz is that the Berachos of the Shevatim are inherent in the Sheivet forever and ever. Even when Moshiach comes, the Shevatim will stand as an independent group within Klal Yisrael. The Beracha of Nitzchiyos was given to Yosef. The Berachos for Olam Hazeh, for the duration of time until Moshiach comes that was given to Ephraim and Menashe. So it answers our question. Still, it does not answer or explain why it should be so. If Yaakov is elevating them, what is the importance of limiting that elevation only to the time Moshiach comes?

Perhaps we can find in this a Remez for an idea that is well-known but doesn't have a good original source. There is an idea that L'asid Lavo the Avodah will return to the Bechorim. The idea is attributed to the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh in words that he says in Parshas Acharei Mos. It doesn't really seem to have an earlier Mekor or any Mekor that carries it through. Why should we say that the Avodah will return to the Bechorah L'asid Lavo?

According to Rav Yisrael Salanter we find a Remez to that here. The Bechora was taken away from Reuvain. It is a punishment and the punishments end by Yemos Hamashiach. Punishments are for the duration. When the punishments end the Bechora of Reuvain will return to Reuvain and therefore, that which was given here to Yosef as a double Cheilek is only temporary, it is for Olam Hazeh. L'asid Lavo it returns. This idea that even the Onshim that happen L'olam Hazeh are only Olam Hazeh Onshim and not L'asid Lavo perhaps can serve to give us a deeper understanding into many of the Pesukim that we say when we talk to the Ribbono Shel Olam, (like in Tehillim 13 or 74) Al Tishkacheini Lanetzach. We talk about punishments not being Nitzchiyos. Even when there are punishments they are Olam Hazeh punishments not the Nitzchiyos, they don't touch on the

permanence of Klal Yisrael. That is this idea (עד-באי אליה). So Rav Yisrael Salanter is the source and whatever else I have added in my conjecture. Ulai, perhaps it is so. From this idea regarding Ephraim and Menashe we turn to a second aspect of the beginning of the Parsha.

2. In the beginning of the Parsha we find as Rashi brings in 47:31 (מכאן אמרו שהשכינה למעלה). That we learn from Yaakov Avinu that the Shechinah stands over the head of the Choleh. There is a Gemara in Maseches Nedarim 40a (5 lines from the bottom) that says when one comes into the home of a Choleh, it is not clear how sick the Choleh has to be in order for this to apply, however, it is certainly the case if one goes to the hospital for a severely ill person Lo Aleinu that he has to realize that the Shechinah is there. The Gemara brings a Minhag not to sit in the presence of the Choleh because the Shechinah is there (תניא נמי הכי הנכנס לבקר את החולה לא ישב). לא על גבי מטה ולא על גבי כסא אלא מתעטף ויושב ע"ג קרקע מפני שהשכינה שרויה למעלה ממטתו של (חולה). That seems to be a Minhag that has fallen by the wayside.

The question is that in the beginning of Parshas Vayeira we learn as is found in 18:1 (וירא אֵליו). Rashi says (לבקר את החולה). Hashem came to Avraham to be Mevakeir Choleh. It sounds like a special idea because of the special greatness of Avraham Avinu. Guess what? It is not only Avraham Avinu and not only Yaakov Avinu. (מכאן אמרו שהשכינה למעלה מראשותיו של חולה). It seems to be true about everyone. What is special about Avraham Avinu that we are told there that Hashem came to be Mevakeir the Choleh? I think here we see a Klal Gadol, an important idea.

There are sometimes in a person's life where a person feels the Shechinah more. There are sometimes during the year like for example as is found in Yeshaya 55:6 (דְּרֹשׁוּ יְרֹנָה, בְּהִמְצְאוֹ; קְרָאֵהוּ). During the ten days of Teshuva a person can feel the presence of the Shechina more. Certainly by Yom Kippur Neilah a person feels the presence of the Shechina more. The Shechina is always there, yet there are sometimes that are more of an opportunity to feel the Shechina. Similarly, there are some places that you feel the Shechina more. Someone who goes to the Kosel and takes seriously his visit to the Kosel has a Hergish of (Beraishis 28:17) (אֵין זֶה, כִּי אִם-בֵּית אֱלֹדִים). Wherever Yaakov Avinu went he felt the presence of the Shechina. There are some places that are special. The Har Habayis is special and there, Yaakov Avinu felt the presence of the Shechinah more. (Yeshaya 6:3) (מְלֹא כָל-הָאָרֶץ, כְּבוֹדוֹ). Hashem's presence can be felt anywhere. Different times, places, opportunities that are special. The idea that (שהשכינה למעלה). It is true because it is a time in a person's life where if he chooses he can feel the presence of the Shechinah.

I once saw a Maishe about one Rebbe (I don't remember which one). Someone came to him with Sefaikos in Emunah, he had questions about believing in G-d. The Rebbe told him to come back a week later. He Davened that this person should have an open heart to recognize Hashem. At the end of the week the person came back. He said Ani Mamin. So the Rebbe asked what happened to you. He replied that during this week I had a terrible stomach virus and there were many moments when I felt, what is going to be with me, Hashem you are the only one that can help me. I felt that it is to the Ribbono Shel Olam that I have to turn. To that the Rebbe replied you see Lo Emunah Chosarta Ela K'aivim Chosarta. You weren't missing faith you were missing the belly ache, you were missing the pain.

There are times in a person's life where he has the opportunity to feel the Shechina because he feels the weakness of a human being. The fact that a human being is so frail and imperfect, that a human being can't be the purpose of the entire creation. When a person is strong and feels (Devarim 8:17) (כָּחִי וְעֵצָם יָדִי) he feels differently. When a person realizes his frailty, he turns to the Ribbono Shel Olam.

(הפך עצמו) (וישתחו ויִשְׁרָאֵל, על-ראש המטה) Says Rashi on 47:31 (שהשכינה למעלה מראשותיו של חולה) (לצד השכינה). Yaakov turned himself toward the Shechinah. It is hard to know what it means as if the Shechina is over your head how do you turn towards the Shechinah. But figuratively (הפך עצמו) (לצד השכינה). When people are sick the Shechina is there, they don't see it, they don't recognize it. A person has to be (הפך עצמו לצד השכינה) turn to the Shechinah. A person has to recognize that the Shechina is there.

I asked before how sick does a person have to be to have (שהשכינה למעלה מראשותיו). The answer is it depends on you. It depends on when you will recognize the Shechina. (מלא כל-הארץ, כבודו). The Shechinah is always there to be recognized. There are opportunities in life. Just like there are times, there are places, there are moments in a human beings life where you have the opportunity. Avraham Avinu had the Shechina visiting him just like every Choleh. For Avraham Avinu it was real. He sat with the Shechina. He excused himself when he stepped away from the Shechina, it was real. We are not Avraham Avinu and we are not Yaakov Avinu but it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity of recognizing the presence of the Shechina when a person has his moments of Choli Lo Aleinu. And so, a message from the Choli of Yaakov and a message from the Beracha to Ephraim and Menashe.

3. Finally, this week's Parsha reveals to us a Chiddush that before a person's death he has a special opportunity to give a blessing to his children. Yitzchok gave a Beracha to Yaakov and Eisav it wasn't immediately before his death but Rashi tells us that because his mother had passed away at the age of 127, as he approached that milestone, he gave a Beracha thinking that his life may be cut short as well. The point being from both places that when a person is close to death, there is a special time to give a Beracha. Why is that?

The Chasam Sofer comments in numerous places that when a Tzaddik leaves the world his Talmidim have a special opportunity for growth. When a father leaves the world those who he influenced have a special opportunity to grab the influence that he had. When Rabbeinu Hakadosh died, the people who were with him were Mizuyaim to Chayei Olam Habo. They took the opportunity to grab from that moment. Eliyahu tells Elisha when I am taken from the world if you will be there then you will have Pi Shnayim Ruchacha Alai. How can someone give twice what he has?

The answer is that when a Tzaddik is taken from this world he does have more. His life is finished and special. It is unique. The Kedusha is complete. When someone leaves the world it is a very special moment. The Chasam Sofer writes that he wishes that he would have had the Zechus to be there at the Petira of his Rebbi Rav Nassan Adler, who knows to what he would have been Zoche. He writes that Yitzchok didn't have Nevua until after Avraham's Petira. Yaakov didn't have Nevua until he left his father's house when he was sent away by Yitzchok. When one leaves the source of

the Kedusha, and the source of Kedusha takes leave of him, it is a special moment to grab, to Chap, and take from the influence that he had and then it is gone.

It is a Limud. The same thing is true on Yom Kippur when Yom Kippur leaves is Neilah, a special moment, a time to grab an opportunity. When Shabbos leaves, Seudos Shlishi time between Mincha and Maariv is a very special moment. People are in Shul for Mincha and Maariv is perhaps 45 minutes later, people go home and come back. It takes 20 minutes or more to walk back and forth and to walk around in circles. It is a special time, Shabbos is leaving. When Kedusha leaves it has a Pi Shnayim, it is an opportunity that a person has. Between Mincha and Maariv, a person will come L'asid Lavo and the Ribbono Shel Olam will say, you work all week why don't you learn on Shabbos? Perhaps he will say that he is tired and it was a short Shabbos. The Ribbono Shel Olam will say what about between Mincha and Maariv what did you do then? There is nothing else to do but learn. You are in Shul for Mincha and for Maariv what else is there to do? It is a special moment when Shabbos is leaving.

A special moment when a person finds a time in his life where spiritually a change is taking place. It is a time to grab, a time to Chap, a time to grab Pi Shnayim. Yaakov Avinu's lesson is that when a father passes away it is a very special moment for the children. They can make something of it. Perhaps we understand why children observe twelve months of Aveilus. To be reminded that it is a time of opportunity, make something of it.

And so, Beraishis comes to an end, the Tekufah of the Avos comes to an end, the Tekufah of Maiseh Avos Siman L'banim come to an end. Try to grab and take our last lessons. Just as when Shabbos ends, Yom Kippur ends, when a person's life ends, it is an opportunity. When Chumash Beraishis ends or any Chumash ends we say Chazak Chazak, it is an opportunity. Why Chazak Chazak at the end? When something ends it is an opportunity to grab, to take something from there that is meaningful.

With that I wish one and all an absolutely wonderful Shabbos. Chazak Chazak! Be stronger. Keep to your Sedorim and Limud Hatorah which is what the Satan wants to fight the most. Make it happen, grow. IY"H It should be a Shabbos of Chizuk for all of us.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5775

Let me begin with an insight into the Berachos and in particular the Cheilek of Yehuda in the Berachos of the Shevatim. As Yaakov Avinu starts to give Berachos to the Shevatim he begins with Reuvain and he tells him as it says in 49:4 (פָּחַז כְּמִים אֶל-תּוֹתֵר). You will not get the Cheilek that a Bechor is entitled to because of this Midda of (פָּחַז כְּמִים) and therefore, you have forfeited your right to be the king and have the Kesser Malchus which by all rights should go to the king and you are not going to get it.

So imagine, the brothers are around the bed of Yaakov and they hear that Reuvain that they thought would be the Melech is not the Melech. What do you think went through their minds? Who will Yaakov choose to be Melech? The Shevatim are all there and certainly one must have thought that the Melech would be Yosef. After all, Yosef is a Bechor to Rachel while Reuvain was the Bechor

to Yaakov and Leah, Yosef was the Bechor at least to Rachel. In addition, Yosef as you know was a king already. He was practicing Malchus. Chazal say that when he was (מתקן בשערו) as it says in Rashi to 37:2 he was practicing Malchus. I would imagine that the Shevatim around the bed would have assumed that Yosef would be Melech. That is not what happened. As you all know, when Yaakov Avinu comes to Yehuda he designates Yehuda as it says in 49:8 (יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָךְ, בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ) as the one who would be the king and the others would bow down to. Not only will he be king but 49:10 (לֹא-יָסוּר שִׁבְט מִיְהוּדָה, וּמִחֶקֶק מִבֵּין רֵגְלָיו). Yehuda will be the king forever and Moshiach Tzidkainu will come from Sheivet Yehuda. This needs an explanation because what did Yehuda do to deserve Malchus and where is Yehuda in head of Yosef.

Rav Tzadok in his Sefer Takanas Hashavim on page 52b has an extraordinary explanation and this is vintage Rav Tzadok. It is Rav Tzadok's style as you shall see. Rav Tzadok explains. Yosef had a big Zechus. What was his big Zechus? He was enticed by Eishes Potiphar to sin and he was tempted to sin. The Gemara teaches that it was a big Nisayon (test) for Yosef. Yosef ran away and he withstood the Nisayon and for that he is forever labeled Yosef Hatzaddik, the righteous Yosef. Yosef that was able to separate himself from a difficult Nisayon. Not only that, but the Gemara says that we find in Navi that Yosef is called Yehoseif with an additional letter Hei, which is an additional letter of Hashem's name because of what he did. Yosef was great.

What about Yehuda? Yehuda too was tested. He was tested with a similar Nisayon by the test of Tamar. Yehuda failed. Yehuda did not run away. Yehuda succumbed. Whatever it means because we are talking about a man as great as Yehuda but he did succumb and as he himself said later it was a Bizayon, it was a shame to the name of Yehuda, it was a stain on his name. Nevertheless, Yehuda picked himself up and retained his position as one of the Shivtai Ka. Says Rav Tzadok, in the Dor that Klal Yisrael will deserve the redemption it will not be the generation of Yosef, of people who withstand the tests, but a generation of Yehuda of people who are tested, fail and pick themselves up. That is the greatness of Yehuda. While Yosef had a few of the letters of Hashem's name in his name, Yehuda had all four. The essence of Yehuda is someone who fell and was able to raise himself back up. The essence of Moshiach is a Dor that falls and can pick itself up again. That is Malchus Bais Dovid in general. We know that Dovid Hamelech comes from a difficult lineage. The episode of Lot and his daughters, Yehuda and Tamar, Rus and Boaz, and ultimately Dovid and Basheva are all incidents which are strange and are difficult to understand and from that comes Moshiach. People who can pick themselves up and correct what needs to be corrected, from that comes the Dor Shel Moshiach.

This is the depth of what Chazal say. They say that Shaul couldn't be king and only Dovid could be king because we don't appoint a king unless there are "problems hanging from his neck". Shaul was too great. The Posuk says that Shaul was like a one year old child in that he didn't have sin. So Shaul couldn't be king because he was too clean. Dovid could be king because Dovid had Nisyonos and Dovid withstood them. Yehuda is chosen because that is the Darga, that is the level, that is the great power of Yehuda himself and the Sheivet that he founded. It is an ability to fail, to fall, and to pick oneself up and to get back to where a person was originally.

For example, it is a tremendous test of our generation because it is a generation of enticements and tests of young people being tested who fall especially to the Znus which is so attractive in the street and then to pick oneself up and get back that is Malchus, that is kingdom.

We say about Dovid Hamelech in Shmuel II 23:2 (וְנָאֵם דָּוִד בֶּן-יִשִּׁי, וְנָאֵם הַגִּבֹּר הַקָּמָה עָלָיו) Ashrei Hagever Hukam Ol. Praised is the man who set up the yoke. The Gemara says that it is the yoke of Teshuva. The Gemara is in Moed Kattan 16b (13 lines from the bottom). The question is Adam did Teshuva. Reuvain did Teshuva. Shaul did Teshuva. The generation of the Maasei Eigel did Teshuva. What does it mean that Dovid set up Teshuva?

The answer is Adam did Teshuva but he didn't get back to the place that he was before he sinned which was Gan Eden. Reuvain did Teshuva but he didn't get back to the title of Bechor. Shaul did Teshuva but he didn't get back to Malchus which he could have had. The generation of the Eigel did Teshuva but they didn't get back to where they wanted to be to enter into Eretz Yisrael. They did a meaningful Teshuva but not a Teshuva of Dovid, not a Teshuva of Melech Hamoshiach. Not a Teshuva of getting back to where a person used to be. All the others who did Teshuva did a Teshuva that was incomplete. Dovid's Teshuva was unique and that is the Malchus of Yehuda. That is where his Malchus is from. Ashrei Hagever Hukam Ol.

If so, then that is the message from this week's Parsha from Sheivet Yehuda. The message of (לֹא-יָסוּר שִׁבְטִי מִיְהוּדָה) that a person has to be able to pick himself up afterwards and do the things that he would have been worthy of doing had he not fallen.

Each of the twelve Shevatim has his own message. While Yehuda's message is a message for our generation so is the message for Sheivet Dan. Let us learn a little bit about the Beracha that Dan receives. 49:16 (דָּן, יָדִין עַמּוֹ--כְּאַחַד, שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל). Dan immediately in his Beracha is described as (וְעַל שִׁמְשׁוֹן נְבִיא נְבוּאָה זֶה) which as Rashi brings is (שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) Shimshon Hagibor who came from Dan is the example of Dan. We find something unusual. In the Beracha of Dan Yaakov says 49:18 (לִישׁוּעָתְךָ, קִוִּיתִי יְרֵךְ). The brothers are around their father and he is giving Berachos to them and one son he gives a Beracha and says Oy G-d should help you. It is certainly out of place and certainly quite depressing. That is what Yaakov sees in the future for this Sheivet? Very difficult!

What is Sheivet Dan? Sheivet Dan is the Sheivet that can serve HKB"H even from a difficult or lowly position. How so? Dan is called the one that is last, the one who follows all of the Machanos. His job was to pick up things that others had dropped as they traveled through the Midbar. If someone dropped their pacifier or another dropped their sock, that was Dan's job. Not exactly the most attractive job or the job that you would apply for. But Dan's job was to serve HKB"H from a period of difficulty. From a position that is not an attractive position and from that position he was given the job of being the one in Klal Yisrael that can serve HKB"H and be in the back. Later in Parshas Vayakhel we find that Dan has a great honor. Who is going to be in charge of the Mishkan? Betzalel of Sheivet Yehuda and Oholiav of Sheivet Dan. Sounds great. Rashi there says (Shemos) 35:34 (מִשְׁבֵּט דָּן, מִן הַיְרֹדִיִּן שְׁבַשְׁבִּטִים). That Dan was from the lowest of the Shevatim. Rashi continues (וְהַשְׁוֵהוּ הַמָּקוֹם לְבִצְלָאֵל לְמַאֲלַכְתּוֹ הַמִּשְׁכָּן, וְהוּא מִגְדּוּלֵי הַשְּׁבִטִים, לְקִיּוֹם מֶה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (אִיּוֹב לֵד יֵט) וְלֹא נִכְרָ שׁוֹעַ לִפְנֵי (דָּל)). The Posuk that Rashi brings says that the great and the lowly will work together. So here Dan is given the honor of that the great and the lowly will work together. Again, Dan is seen as a low one, as somebody who is low. Dan's Avoda is to serve Hashem Mitoch Mirirus. When life is difficult and when life is bitter...that is Shimshon. Shimshon did everything for Klal Yisrael. His

whole life was for Klal Yisrael. His marriages were for Klal Yisrael. He didn't leave children because of Klal Yisrael. But Klal Yisrael did not appreciate it.

After one episode of Navi the Pelishtim come looking for Shimshon and he is hiding in a mountain. A delegation of Jews come to Shimshon. You have to imagine, Shimshon just did battle against the Pelishtim and Jews come. He must have thought they are coming and they are going to join me and I will have an army. They come to Shimshon and you know what they say? They say Shimshon can we please turn you in to the Pelishtim because they threatened us. How bitter? How difficult? Life sometimes has difficult moments. Sheivet Dan is the Sheivet that serves Hashem Mitoch Mirirus. (לִישׁוּעָתָהּ, קִוִּיתִי יְרֵנָה). Oy, you need to be helped. Dan is in the back at the end of the Machanos. Our generation is in the back at the end of the generations. We are all the way at the end. Sheivet Dan. We live in a generation where there is a lot of Mirirus, a lot of difficulty, and a lot of bitterness. We don't understand much of what HKB"H challenges us with. Our Avoda is the Avoda of Dan.

Turn to Rav Tzadok. Rav Tzadok points out that Yehuda is a lion. 49:9 (גִּיּוֹר אֶרְיָה יְהוּדָה). Later Moshe Rabbeinu calls Dan a lion as well. Devarim 33:22 (דָּן גִּיּוֹר אֶרְיָה). Why? Says Rav Tzadok, when Moshiach comes Jews will make a circle and will dance in a circle as is mentioned often in Tehillim. In the Midbar they traveled in a line Yehuda at the front and Dan at the end. When Moshiach comes there will be a circle. Dan and Yehuda will hold hands and will be next to each other. Each served HKB"H from the position that he was and as beautiful as it is to be a Melech and serve HKB"H properly as a Melech it is beautiful to serve HKB"H as the one who has to pick up the socks. As the one who is at the end of the line, as the one about whom it is said (לִישׁוּעָתָהּ, קִוִּיתִי יְרֵנָה). That is our generation. A generation of Avoda Mitoch Mirirus, of difficulty and a lot of challenges. And so, Sheivet Yehuda has the lesson of Malchus and Sheivet Dan has a lesson of Avoda Mitoch Mirirus.

The question of the week is: This question is regarding Sheivet Naftali. Yaakov Avinu gives the Berachos in the order of the way the Shevatim were born more or less. He puts Yissachar and Zevulan with his brothers. Zevulan ahead of Yissachar as the Meforshim explain. But for the most part it is all in the order of the way that they were born. Except for Dan, Gad, Asher which is the order of birth and then Naftali should have been earlier. The question is why Naftali alone among the Shevatim is out of order. It must have something to do with the uniqueness of Naftali but at this moment I don't know what that uniqueness is. Have a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5774

1. A few comments on the Parsha beginning with a beautiful insight which I just heard from Rabbi Yisroel Belsky the other day. Everyone is Matmia on Yaakov Avinu. Here he is coming to give Berachos to his children and he gives Reuvain, Shimon, and Levi rather strong words of rebuke. This is at the same time that he was giving his other children words of blessing. It would seem to be inappropriate, certainly inappropriate for someone like Yaakov Avinu who is the one from whom we learn not to treat children differently. Certainly that needs an explanation.

Rav Belsky offered an explanation by way of the following Kasha. We find that Shimon and Levi are criticized in 49:7 (אָרור אַפֶּם כִּי עָז) for being people who have a powerful anger. Shimon lived in different places of Eretz Yisrael because he was Milamed Tinokos, he was a Rebbe. Is that appropriate, that Shimon someone who has the Midda of (אָרור אַפֶּם כִּי עָז) should be a Rebbe? The Shulchan Aruch says that Ain Hakapdan Melamed, that a Kapdan is not allowed to be a Rebbe.

Rav Belsky answered that Yaakov Avinu understood that the Shevatim were able to take his rebuke, they were able to take his Tochacha. As a matter of fact of all of the Shevatim the greatest Beracha went to Reuvain, Shimon, and Levi because they heard Yaakov Avinu's rebuke, they took it, and they repaired their misbehavior. So that Shimon who had this Midda of (אָרור אַפֶּם כִּי עָז), the Midda of anger took Yaakov Avinu's rebuke of Yaakov to heart, worked on it and he became a Melamed Tinokos. He became among all the Shevatim the one who was most careful not to be a Kapdan. He was the one who had this nature, and worked on it and was able to change himself.

Regarding Reuvain we find in Shiras Devora, at the moment that Devora was complaining that Reuvain did not come and help to do battle, Reuvain uses the expression as it says in Shoftim 5:16 (גְּדוֹלִים חִקְרֵי-לֵב) Gedolim Chikrai Leiv Lama Yashavta Bein Hamishposoyim. Why didn't you come to do battle Devora says, that Reuvain is (גְּדוֹלִים חִקְרֵי-לֵב). They are people who think well, they debate, and look at two sides of an issue before they do something. This is the same Reuvain who Yaakov said in 49:4 (פָּחַז כְּמַיִם), you are quick to pass judgment and act.

We find not too much later that the very same people are described as (גְּדוֹלִים חִקְרֵי-לֵב). Again the message is that Sheivet Reuvain took the Mussar to heart and Sheivet Reuvain on the contrary turned their behavior to be just the reverse.

The Gemara says in Eiruchin 16b (17 lines from the top) (א"ר טרפון (תמיהני)אני אם יש בדור הזה ז') (שמקבל תוכחה), I wonder if in our generation there are really individuals who accept and take rebuke. We find it very hard to take rebuke. We react by defending our positions. That is human nature. The Shevatim were great. The Shevatim were on a different level. Yaakov Avinu knew that the best Beracha he could give Reuvain, Shimon, and Levi would be a Beracha of a harsh word, the Beracha of a rebuke at a moment like this where they would be able to change. And so this was at the end the greatest of all Berachos. A beautiful Vort and what a strong Mussar.

2. I would like to move on to one of the Berachos and to discuss with you 49:14 (יִשָּׁשְׁכָר חָמֵר גֹּרֵם) Yissachar Chamor Gorem, the Beracha of Yissachar who is a bony donkey as opposed to a fat heavy donkey who doesn't work. He is Chamor Gorem a donkey who is able to work. We find in the wonderful Posuk of Beracha something that appears to be a contradiction. (וַיֵּרָא מְנַחֵם כִּי טוֹב), Yissachar is called a Sheivet who understands the importance of rest. On the other hand it says further in the same Posuk (וַיֵּט שָׁכְמוֹ לְסִבְלָה) that the Midda of Yissochor is that he bends his shoulder to carry a heavy weight like a Chamor. These are opposite ideas. One is the idea of Menucha needing its rest and the other is (וַיֵּט שָׁכְמוֹ לְסִבְלָה) to be able to take on big challenges and heavy weights.

Rav Hutner in the Pachad Yitzchok on Shevuos has a beautiful explanation of this Beracha and it is not only an explanation of these words but the explanation of the key to being like Yissachar.

Yissachar, the Sheivet that goes and spends its time with Ameilus B'torah, working on learning. Rav Hutner begins with the idea that the Torah is Nikneh with the key of Ho'amida B'veis Hashem Baleilos. Standing in Hashem's house at night, going out at night to the Bais Medrash and spending many hours in the Bais Hashem working on Torah. Of course Rav Hutner doesn't need to mention that Thursday night is Mishmar night which is a very opportune time to do such a thing. At any rate he explains the following. He says that there are people who are Amailim B'torah, they work, they don't have Menuchas Hanefesh, they work hard at their learning. That is a good Midda. There is a better Midda. The Midda of Yissachar. The Midda of a Sheivet that understands that if a person doesn't use his muscles then he becomes weak. If a person doesn't put himself to the task of learning Torah then learning Torah becomes foreign to him. Vayar Menucha Ki Tov Vayeit Shichmo Lisbol. The greatest Midda is a Midda of a Lomed Torah an Amal Batorah who puts his shoulder to the task, who works. (וַיֵּרָא מְנוּחָה כִּי טוֹב) he understands that being able to do it is his Menucha, is his rest, is his Menuchas Hanefesh, Shleimus. He feels Shalva when he learns for a long stretch in the Bais Medrash, of working on learning and understanding the Geshmak of the learning.

Rav Hutner compares it to the Midda of a man who has a wife who is an Eizer K'negdo, his helper and against him. Here again you can say that they are opposites. K'negdo she is against him. Eizer, she is his helper. Fortunate is the man who understands that when someone comes against him, when someone comes with good intentions to give him rebuke, to give him Mussar, Eizer that is his best help and then he does what he needs to do. He doesn't react violently to being rebuked by a wife. But rather Eizer, sees it as a help. The same thing here. A person who sees his learning, his Ameilus, as something hard it is a wonderful Midda and a person can do it anyway. However, there is a higher Darga, a higher Madreiga and that is (וַיֵּרָא מְנוּחָה כִּי טוֹב). Someone who can see the peace in it and he is really at peace when he works on his learning. Such a person goes out to learn at night as a routine. It is not a battle every time. It is his Menucha and at the same time that it is his (וַיֵּט שְׂכָמוֹ לְסִבְלָהּ).

I remember seeing this idea regarding something else. We know that there are seven Middos, Chessed, Gevura, Tiferes, Netzach, Hod, Yesod and Malchus made famous by the seven weeks of the Sefiras Haomer. These Middos are K'negged Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov, Moshe, Aaron, Yosef, and Dovid. Moshe's Midda is the Midda of the one who teaches Torah, is Netzach. What is Netzach? Netzach in Hebrew has two different meanings. Netzach means victory. Nitzachon to be victorious, to win. The idea of Netzach is also used to mean eternity. Two seemingly different meanings. There are two types of victories. There is someone who wins a battle and gets up the next day to fight the battle again. He fights to wake up in the morning and then the next day he has to fight the battle all over again. He is a victorious warrior. There is a higher Madreiga of victory. Nitzachon, where a victory is eternal. Where someone battles and conquers and wins. There is no new battle the next day. There may be a new battle on a different front but in this war the war is over. Moshe Rabbeinu's Midda is the Midda of an Omeil Batorah, he fights to get to the Bais Medrash, it is a battle but he reaches a point of (וַיֵּרָא מְנוּחָה כִּי טוֹב) where it is a given, it is a Nitzachon, the battle is for eternity. It is won for eternity. Now a person should never feel sure, nevertheless that is the goal that it should be for eternity. It is a given that it comes Thursday night and he goes to the Bais Medrash for an extra Mishmar. It comes morning he heads out to Minyan. It is not a battle every day. This is the true Midda of Netzach.

There is a third place I had once seen this Vort which is in the explanation of the Machzor. In the Machzor for the Yomim Noraim we say Vadai Shemo Kain Tehiloso, Hashem's name is Vadai and that is his praise. What is this name or Midda of Vadai and how are we supposed to emulate the Midda of Vadai? It is this which we are discussing today. Vehalachta Bid'rachav, there has to be an attempt to be a Vadai. We know with certainty that Hashem responds with kindness to everything that comes his way. The Middos of Hashem are Vadai, are certain. We have to emulate that. We have to try to conquer, to reach a Darga of Vadai, a Darga of (וַיִּנָּחֵם מִנְּהָה כִּי טוֹב). Now of course it is true that a human being always has a Yeitzer Hora and when you win one war there is another war with the Yeitzer Hora coming over the horizon. Nevertheless, in each battle whatever we conquer that is us, that makes us, that is an emulation of Vadai Shemo.

3. My third Vort will be a short one but a sharp one. In Parshas Vayechi we find in Rashi in 47:29 the idea of Chessed and Emes. (חסד שעושים עם המתים הוא חסד של אמת, שאינו מצפה לתשלום גמול). Chessed She'osim Im Hameisim Hu Chessed Shel Emes. When someone does Chessed with someone who has passed away that is true Chessed because he knows that he will never be able to be paid back. Why does Rashi say it here, the idea of Chessed and Emes is found earlier in the Torah in Parshas Chaya Sara where Eliezer says in 24:49 (וַעֲתָה אִם-יִשְׁכְּם עֲשִׂים חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת, אֶת-אֲדֹנִי). When he asks that Rivka be given as a wife to Yitzchok he says that is (חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת). Again, it seems to be a Chessed that is Emes. How does that fit with what Rashi says here? Rashi's words seem to only fit in the case of a Meis and not otherwise.

Ulai when it comes to making a Shidduch and it comes to choosing a Shidduch for your child there are many parents who are making a Shidduch for themselves, they are looking for honor, they are looking for money, they are looking for things to work out for them. Eliezer the perfect Shadchan said no, when you are choosing a Shidduch (אִם-יִשְׁכְּם עֲשִׂים חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת, אֶת-אֲדֹנִי), look for the one that is the perfect one for your child, that fits your child, that suits your child. It is not a Shidduch for you it is a Shidduch for your children. This is a beautiful lesson in the (חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת).

With that I want to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, Parshas Vayechi. An easy fast tomorrow on Asara B'teves and IY"H a fast which we hope in short order will turn to Sason V'simcha. Good Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5773

I would like to share with you two short thoughts and then one major idea. First let's start with the short thoughts. Parshas Vayechi has of course as its major event the Berachos to the Shevatim. When one reads the Parsha and you come to Reuvain your heart goes out. As it says in 49:4 (פָּחַז) Reuvain is criticized. On the other hand Yehuda as it says in 49:9 (גִּיּוֹר אֲרִיָּה יְהוּדָה), (מְטָרָף בְּנֵי עֲלִיָּה) he is commended for his greatness. Here it is something which would trouble any thinking person. What is the praise of Yehuda? (מְטָרָף בְּנֵי עֲלִיָּה) from Yosef's death or what Yaakov had thought was Yosef's death you have risen. Rashi says (בטרף טרף) (לעיל לו לג) (בטרף טרף). Yehuda you are a hero. I thought you were guilty with the incident of Yosef, (עֲלִיָּה) you have gone up in Darga. You are wonderful, you are great. One minute. That is not the way that I remember the story. The way I remember it, it was Reuvain who saved Yosef's life. It was Reuvain who said as it says in 37:22

(וַיֵּד אֶל-תְּשֻׁלְחוֹ-בִּו). Reuvain was the great one. The Gemara in Maseches Makkos 10a says (11th wide line) א"ר תנחום בר חנילאי מפני מה זכה ראובן לימנות בהצלה תחלה מפני שהוא פתח בהצלה תחלה שנאמר (וישמע ראובן ויצילהו מידם). The Gemara here credits Reuvain for the rescue of Yosef. By Yehuda it says in 38:1 that after the incident of the selling of Yosef (וַיֵּרֶד יְהוּדָה) that Yehuda went down. Rashi says (ויהי בעת ההוא: למה נסמכה פרשה זו לכאן, והפסיק בפרשתו של יוסף, ללמד שהורידוהו אחיו מגדולתו כשראו) (מִטְרָף בְּנֵי) that his brothers separated from him. What is going on here? Reuvain is criticized, Yehuda is commended, for what? (מִטְרָף בְּנֵי) and in fact it was Reuvain that did the Hatzalah. Yehuda had a small hand but Yehuda was not the Matzil. It is really a Pele Atzum.

The Kasha is a strong Kasha. Ulai (perhaps), the Kavana is the following. What happened with the selling of Yosef was not wonderful for anybody. Not for Reuvain not for Yehuda, it was not an incident for which any of the Shevatim are to be commended. (מִטְרָף בְּנֵי עֲלִית). After you had a disastrous involvement in the selling of Yosef (עֲלִית) subsequently you went up in Darga and became greater. As Rashi says Yehuda was commended for the Maiseh of Tamar as well. (Not for the Maiseh of Tamar of course) but (עֲלִית) from the fact that after Yehuda was knocked down and after Yehuda was (וַיֵּרֶד יְהוּדָה) then (עֲלִית).

The Gemara says regarding Yehuda that Yehuda was Chozer Biteshuva Techila, that Yehuda went up in Darga. As the Gemara says in Maseches Makkos 11b (8 lines from the top) (מי גרם לראובן) (כי עֲלִית מִשְׁכָּבִי אָבִיד; אִזְּזִי חֲלִלְתִּי), (שִׁיּוּדָה יְהוּדָה). Who caused that Reuvain should be Mode on his Cheit of (יִצְעִי עֲלֶיהָ), Yehuda. It was Yehuda's actions. So that it is true that in the incident of selling Yosef the greatness was not in Yehuda. If anything it was in Reuvain. Yaakov was not commending them for what happened then, he was commending Yehuda (מִטְרָף בְּנֵי עֲלִית) from the shameful incident, later you went up. If you like this Teretz good. If you don't like the Teretz you have to come up with something else because this certainly is a Kasha which is problematic.

Thought # 2. At the end of the Parsha we are told that Klal Yisrael will be redeemed as it says in 50:25 (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹקִים אֶתְכֶם). Rashi says Siman Misura B'yadam. The Siman was given over to the Jews that the Goel (redeemer) will come with the language of (יִפְקֹד). That is the key word.

The Ramban says one minute if that is a sign and everyone knows about it then it is not much of a sign. Anybody who wants to be a phony Goel can just use the language of (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד). This is the Ramban's Kasha.

The (original) Pachad Yitzchok in Ma'amarei Pesach, Maimar 82 answers this Kasha. He answers it with a Hakdama of an important Yesod for anyone who learns Nach. That is in regard to the Navi'a Sheker among Klal Yisrael. The Navi'a Sheker were not out an out hoodlums that came and said they were Neviim. Who is going to believe them anyway? Someone who is not a Baal Madreiga who will believe that someone is a Navi? The Navi'a Sheker were people who really believed that they had Nevua. They thought they had Nevua. The Gemara in Maseches Sanhedrin 89 as Rav Hutner brings says that it is possible to be a Navi Sheker B'ones. Where a person is guiltless because he really thinks that it is so. Those were the Nevi'a Sheker. Here, this Siman was not made for total frauds that were going to come along. This Siman was made because of the fear that there would be people in Klal Yisrael who so desired the Geulah that they would imagine, they would think that they were the Goel and they would come as Navi'a Sheker. HKB"H

guaranteed that that type of Ones will not happen with the Lashon of (פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד). These are two ideas related to the Parsha.

For the third discussion of the day I would like to talk about something absolutely fundamental to the learning and understanding of the words of Tanach. In the Sefer Peshutai Shel Mikra he calls it Shaila Hamatrida Kol Lomdei Tanach. A question with which anybody who learns Tanach should be busy. This has to do with the formation of certain words in the Torah. We have just gone through Parshios Vayeitzei, Vayishlach, Vayeishev, Vayigash, and Vayechi. 5 of the last 6 Parshios which began with words that are in the past tense and start with the letters Vav and Yud. Let me explain.

Everyone knows that Vayomer means and he said. As in Vayomer Hashem El Moshe, it is in past tense. We also know that the word Yomar or Yidabeir or Yechi is Lashon Asid (future tense). Like in Yitzei or Yishlach or Yeishev. These are all future tense. The Vav is called a Vav Hamihapeich, the Vav which changes the word from future tense to past tense. That Vav will always have a Patach under it like in Shemos 1:8 (וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ-הַדָּשׁ). The word Yakam is future and the word Vayakam is past tense. The point is in Hebrew there are past tense words which are future tense which by the Vav become past tense. The Torah uses this type of form for past tense most of the time. Now there are words which are past tense which are very simple like Yoda, Yashav, Yatza, Shalach. There are words in past tense that are simple words, which we will call Avar Pashut (simple past tense words). Then there are past tense words which have in it a Vav and Yud like Vayomer, Vayidabeir, Vayishlach, Vayeitzei, Vayigash, Vayechi. What is the difference between them? The answer can be found in Rashi in many places. The simple answer is the following. When we are talking about the distant past, we are talking about something that happened a while ago which is called in English past-perfect. If prior to the last incident it happened a while ago you use Avar Pashut like Yoda or Amar. When we are describing something which just happened, it happened right now and we say Vayomer or Vayidabeir whatever the narrative is, it just took place.

I will give you a perfect example. In Maseches Bava Kamma 92a (11th wide line) (מִנָּה הָא מִלְתָּא) (דאמור רבנן כל המבקש רחמים על חבירו והוא צריך לאותו דבר הוא נענה תחילה מהכא ויתפלל אברהם אל האלקים וירפא) (ויררן פֶּקֶד אֶת-שָׂרָה, כִּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר) Avraham Avinu prayed and Hashem healed Avimelech and his wife. That was from Beraishis 20:17. In the beginning of Perek 21 it says (ויררן פֶּקֶד אֶת-שָׂרָה), Hashem remembered Sarah and she is carrying a child. It doesn't say Vayifakeid Es Sarah it says (ויררן פֶּקֶד אֶת-שָׂרָה). So the Gemara says (הוא נענה תחילה) that Sarah was helped before Avimelech. One minute, it says (וירפא אלקים את אבימלך ואת אשתו) and then it says (ויררן פֶּקֶד אֶת-שָׂרָה). How do you know that Sarah was answered first? The answer is (וירפא) is the Vav Hamihapeich (past tense). That means that it happened now in the narrative. (ויררן פֶּקֶד אֶת-שָׂרָה) that is past perfect, it is the distant past before the (וירפא אלקים את אבימלך ואת אשתו).

If you are careful and look at Rashi in Chumash you will see that Rashi says this in Chumash on numerous occasions. For example, 4:1 (וַהֲאָדָם, יָדַע אֶת-חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ) It should say Vayoda Adam Es Chava Ishto, however, it uses the simple past tense. Rashi explains (כבר קודם הענין של) (והאדם ידע). What is being explained in Perek 4 happened before what happened in Perek 3. It is further back in time. So Yoda the simple past tense means it took place much earlier. Vav Yud the future

tense which is switched to past means it just happened, just now. This is something which really answers Kashas in a number of places.

I will read you from the Meshech Chachamim in Devarim 10:10. The Posuk says that Moshe Rabbeinu tells Klal Yisrael after they sinned (וַיִּשְׁמַע יְרֹנָר אֱלִי, גַּם בַּפֶּעַם הַהוּא). Hashem listened to me. (לֹא-אָבָה יְרֹנָר, הַשְּׁחִיתָהּ). Hashem did not want to destroy you.

The Gemara in Masseches Berachos 32a (8th wide line) (משל למלך שכעס על בנו והיה מכהו מכה גדולה) והיה אוהבו יושב לפניו ומתירא לומר לו דבר אמר המלך אלמלא אוהבי זה שיושב לפני הרגתיך אמר דבר זה תלוי בי brings a Mashal to a king that is angry at his son and did not want to punish his son. So he begged his friend to intervene and beg for mercy first. So too Hashem did not want to destroy Klal Yisrael and he used Moshe to be the one to beg for mercy. The Meshech Chochmo asks how do you know, maybe HKB"H would destroy Klal Yisrael and it was Moshe Rabbeinu's prayers which intervened? Answers the Meshech Chochmo based on our rule. (וַיִּשְׁמַע יְרֹנָר אֱלִי, גַּם בַּפֶּעַם) it is taking place now as the narrative is being told. Hashem listen to me at that time. (לֹא-אָבָה יְרֹנָר, הַשְּׁחִיתָהּ), that is the distant past. (אָבָה) is the simple past expression. Hashem did not want to destroy you (לֹא-אָבָה יְרֹנָר, הַשְּׁחִיתָהּ). Going back into the past even before my Tefilla.

Another example is found in Parshas Chaya Sarah where we find that Eliezer said as it says in 24:23 (בֵּת-מִי אַתָּה) whose daughter are you. One minute, he had already given her gifts. Rashi says (לפי שהיה) (ויאמר בת מי את: לאחר שנתן לה שאלה). After he gave her the gifts he asked her who she was (בטוח בזכותו של אברהם שהצליח הקב"ה דרכו). He was sure that this was the right one. Later when Eliezer relates the narrative to Lavan and Besueil he switches the order as it says in 24:47 (וְאֶשְׁאַל אֹתָהּ, (וְאָשַׁם הַנָּעַם עַל-אִפְּהָ, וְהַצְמִידִים עַל-יָדֶיהָ) first I asked who are you and then I gave her a gift. Rashi has to say that Eliezer lied (ואשאל ואשים: שנה הסדר, שהרי הוא תחלה נתן ואחר כך שאל, אלא) (שלא יתפשוהו בדבריו ויאמרו היאך נתת לה, ועדיין אינך יודע מי היא). He switched the order because otherwise they would not believe him.

The Ibn Ezra is Matmia on Rashi. Why does Rashi need to do this? Why not say that Eliezer did things in a normal natural order, in the regular order and as Rashi says many times what was said later had taken place earlier like it says (וַיִּרְוֹר פָּקַד אֶת-שָׁרָה) and we say that it took place earlier. Like it says (וְהָאֲדָם, יָדַע אֶת-חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ) and we know it took place earlier. This is the Ibn Ezra's Kasha.

L'fi Divarainu it is very good. It is explained in the beautiful Sefer Peshutai Shel Mikra Cheilek 2 page 34 and on where there is an Arichus on this topic. He says since the Posuk says (וְאֶמַר בֵּת-מִי) it couldn't have been in the distant past before the previous Maisheh. It had to be in the immediate past. So what I am telling you today is just a rule in Dikduk. Amar is past tense which means a while ago, while Vayomar and Vayidabeir is taking place now as the story is told.

Naturally, the question that begs an answer is why is the Hebrew language set up this way, why are there two forms and for that there is an extraordinary insight, however, it is not for today. For today I would like you to know the rule and I think as you look around you will see that there are many Parshios in the Torah and many occasions in the Torah which work out absolutely well based on this rule. For example in Shemos 24:1 and 24:14 there is twice that this rule will be helpful.

The question of the week: In this week's Parsha Ephraim and Menashe merit a tremendous Beracha. What is the blessing of Ephraim and Menashe? As it says in 48:20 (בְּךָ יִבְרַךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאָמֵר , (וְיִשְׁמְךָ אֲלֵרִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה). Jews will forever bless their children to be like Ephraim and Menashe. I agree that it is a wonderful thing for Ephraim and Menashe but I don't understand. When we bless our daughters we say Yisimaich Elokim K'sarah, Rifka, Rachel, V'Leah. We bless them that they should be like the Imahos. Were it not for this week's Parsha we would say to our sons Yisimcha Elokim K'avraham, Yitzchok, V'yaakov. Let me ask you, isn't it better to bless your children that they should be like Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, they were greater than Ephraim and Menashe. Here because Ephraim and Menashe have the Zechus we are knocked down and we have to say (וְיִשְׁמְךָ אֲלֵרִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה). Why should we suffer, to give them the Zechus? Wow! Someone commented that Ephraim and Menashe were the first brothers not to fight and the parents want to bless their children to not get into a fight. Tongue in cheek it is an interesting possibility but somehow it is not a satisfying answer. If you have an answer please share it with me.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5772

This morning Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave me the Zechus to be Machnis L'briso Shel Avraham Avinu twin grandchildren. My son, the Avi Haben was Mechabeid his great grandfather to be Sandek for both children. When he said it to me I didn't respond but I was thinking that it doesn't fit in with the Rama.

The Rama says that a person should not give 2 of his children to the same Sandek. Yet I felt it is the only great grandfather and it is appropriate.

Towards the end of the Parsha we have the fact that Yosef was Zoche to see great grandchildren and the expression the Posuk uses is found in 50:23 (וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף לְאַפְרַיִם, בְּנֵי שְׁלֹשִׁים; גַּם, בְּנֵי מִכַּיִּיר בְּנוֹ-) (מְנַשֶּׁה--יְלָדוֹ, עַל-בְּרִכֵּי יוֹסֵף) that his great grandchildren were born on his knees. The Targum Yonasan understands this to mean that they had a Bris Milah on the knees of Yosef. The Mefareish (the one who explains it) says that Yosef was the Sandek for all of his great grandchildren.

The Yad Shaul in his notes to Yore Dai'a 265 asks that the Rama says that 2 children should not be given to the same Sandek. If so, why was Yosef Sandek for multiple children from the same parent? He answers that we see from here that a great grandfather is different. He actually says a grandfather or a great grandfather is different in that if someone is Zoche to have a great grandfather he can be Sandek even for more than one child from the same family. A very appropriate Vort to see on the day of such a Simcha.

We see at the very beginning of the Parsha that we have multiple discussions between Yosef and his father Yaakov Avinu. At the end Yaakov says 48:23 (וְאֶנִּי נֹתֵמֵי לָךְ, שְׂכָם אֶחָד--עַל-אַחֶיךָ). As Rashi explains (וְאֶנִּי נֹתֵמֵי לָךְ: לְפִי שְׂאֵתָה טוֹרָח לְהַתְּעֶסֶק בְּקִבּוּרֹתַי, וְגַם אֲנִי נֹתֵמֵי לָךְ נַחֲלָה שְׁתִּקְבֵּר בָּהּ, וְאִי זוֹ, זוֹ שְׂכָם,) (שְׂנֵאמֵר (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כֹּד לֵב) וְאֵת עֲצֻמוֹת יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר הָעֵלּוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם קִבְּרוּ בְּשִׁכְמִי). Yaakov was saying since I am bothering you to be involved in my burial so therefore, I will give you a reward, the city of Shechem which will fall to your Sheivet.

Rav Druk in his Sefer Darash Mordechai on page # 310 asks a Kasha. He says that it is not a great deal to have the city of Shechem. The city of Shechem is called by Chazal a place prepared for problems and difficulties. It was in the city of Shechem that Dina was kidnapped, it was in the city of Shechem that Yosef was sold, it was in the city of Shechem that the Malchus Bais Dovid was divided, it was in the city of Shechem that golden calves were set up in the time of Sefer Melachim to dissuade people from being Oleh Regel.

More than that, the Gemara in Maseches Makkos 10a (5 lines from the top) says (אמר אביי בשכח) (נמי שכיחי רוצחים) that Bishchem Shichichi Rotzchim it was a city in which the Bain Adom L'chaveiro was not ideal. There were many murderers in the city. So this is the city chosen by Yaakov Avinu as a gift to Yosef. That needs an explanation.

Rav Druk in the Sefer digresses a little and says that Rav Pam had once told him that in the Haftorah of Rosh Hashana there is one Posuk that stands out in Rav Pam's mind. One that is a most special and meaningful Posuk. The Posuk says in Yirmiyahu 31:5 (כי יש-יום, קראו נצרים ביהר אפרים;) (קומו ונעלה ציון, אל-ירנר אלרינו). The Posuk describes that in the days of Moshiach there will be a call in Har Ephraim to come and be Oleh Regel. Rav Druk says that at the moment he didn't see why that Posuk stood out. There are some memorable Pesukim in the Haftorah. There is the famous Posuk of (ולא-יוסיפו לדאבה עוד) in 31:1. Or the promise in Posuk 11 of (מץא חן במדבר, עם שרידי חרב). There are Pesukim there that are seemingly much more significant. The question is why this Posuk was so significant to Rav Pam?

Rav Druk explains that Har Ephraim is the city of Shechem. Shechem is the city in which the golden calves were set up for Avoda Zorah and to dissuade people from going to be Oleh Regel. As Rav Pam would often say that this is a Haftacha (promise from the Navi) that the day will come that in the very spot and the very place that people stood up and taught Kefira and taught Apikursus and taught against being Oleh Regel, in those very locations in Eretz Yisrael, will stand up one day people that will say (נעלה ציון, אל-ירנר אלרינו).

Rav Pam would speak about the public schools in Israel where they teach Kefira and teach denial of Torah from Sinai. He said in those very buildings, in those very stadiums there will come a day when Torah will be taught. This for Rav Pam was the dream. He used to say to us maybe not in my days but in your days.

Coming back to the promise of the city of Shechem to Yosef. Rav Druk reflected, he said now he reflects the significance of (שכם אחד--על-אחיד). Because Shechem indeed was a city that had the most Puranios the most difficulties. To be successful there and to turn it around you needed someone like Yosef. Someone who had the Zechusim of Sheivet Yosef who was able to live in Mitzrayim and raise children Bikedusha. Therefore, Shechem is not an ordinary gift that gives a benefit in this world it is a gift that comes with Achrayos and responsibility. I will give you the city of Shechem with the Achrayos, the job of taking the city of Shechem and someday being able to turn that around. This was a Matana that was given that makes us think about the coming of Moshiach. Something that is very appropriate for Asara B'teiveis.

In the Berachos that Yaakov gives the Shevatim we find that when Yaakov speaks to Sheivet Shimon and Levi he says a Tefilla which is found in 49:6 (בסדם אל-תבא נפשי, בקהלם אל-תחד כבדי).

Which we understand to mean that in the incidents that involved Sheivet Shimon and Levi the Tefilla is that Yaakov's name shouldn't be mentioned. As we know this was Mikuyam. The Chumash does not mention the name of Yaakov in the Parsha of Korach.

Rav Pam used to explain that it didn't matter to Yaakov if his name was mentioned. The point was not his name. The Midda of Yaakov, the trait of Yaakov is the Midda of Emes. Yaakov Davened that when there are those who rebel against the Torah and there are those that rebel against Moshe Rabbeinu and they make a Machlokes, we want that the Machlokes should be as short lived as possible. Therefore, the Tefilla was that there should be no Emes in their arguments. Even if there is a bit of Emes it gives permanence to the Machlokes. That was his Prayer that Korach's Machlokes should be one based on Sheker totally and that is why it did not last.

A thought comes to mind with the present situation in the land of Israel. Where unfortunately there is once again hatred for those who are Shomrei Mitzvos. Unfortunately there are Jews who are far far from an appreciation of what Judaism (Yiddishkeit) is about. They are spouting hatred again at Frum people. We have seen this before maybe multiple times with different political parties aimed at Frum people. They didn't have permanence because they were based on Sheker. We need to introspect in our own community and make sure that there is no Emes mixed in to the venomous hate that they have. That there is no opportunity for them to have legitimate complaints. I am fearful that this time around some of their complaints may be legitimate, may be right. Therefore, we need to be extra careful in our dealing with the outside world especially with Jews who are not observant. To be Emes ourselves, to be truthful, not to be extreme in ways and present Torah in ways which are not truthful which are not really Torahdig. B'sodom Al Tavoï Nafshi, let us pray that in this Machlokes too, the Korach of this generation, that they not be able to grab on to the Midda of Emes in their Machlokes. If that happens then certainly the Machlokes will not have a Kiyum.

The final Vort that I share with you is from Rav Sholom Schwadron. In his Sefer Leiv Shaleim he makes a very beautiful point. If you look carefully at the first part of this week's Parsha from the beginning of the Parsha until Revii we have Yaakov and Yosef having two discussions. Discussion number one in the beginning of the Parsha discusses where Yaakov will be buried. He asks Yosef to promise to bury him in Eretz Yisrael. Then 48:1 (וַיְהִי, אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה), a great deal of time passes. We know that Achar means a short period of time and Acharei means a long period of time. So a long period of time later there is a second meeting between Yaakov and Yosef. The subject here are his two children Menashe and Ephraim. This is found in 48:5 (וַעֲתָה שְׁנֵי-בָנֶיךָ הַנּוֹלָדִים) (לֶךְ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, עַד-בֹּאִי אֵלֶיךָ מִצְרַיְמָה--לִי-הֵם: אֶפְרַיִם, וּמְנַשֶּׁה--כְּרֹאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן, יְהִיוּ-לִי). This is regarding the elevation of (אֶפְרַיִם, וּמְנַשֶּׁה) to regular Shevatim. And that is what the second discussion is about including the Beracha which Yaakov gives to (אֶפְרַיִם, וּמְנַשֶּׁה).

Strangely mixed into this second discussion is a single Posuk regarding burial, again. This is found in 48:7 (וַאֲנִי בָבְאִי מִצְדֵּן, מֵתָה עָלַי רַחֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּדֶרֶךְ, בְּעוֹד כְּבָרְתָּ-אֶרֶץ, לְבֹא אֶפְרַתָּה; וְאַקְבְּרָהָ שָׁם בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרַתָּה,) where once again we are talking about burial. This belongs in the first discussion that has to do with burial. What is this doing here mixed in with the discussion of (אֶפְרַיִם, וּמְנַשֶּׁה)? It certainly needs a good answer.

Rav Schwadron says beautifully. He says that here Yaakov Avinu was telling Yosef that Reuvein lost the Bechora and will have only one Sheivet, you on the other hand will have the Bechora, as the Bechora is being given to you and you will have two Shevatim. (וּמִנְשָׁה--כְּרֹאֲבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן,). (וְהָיִינוּ לִי). Why, in what merit?

He explains, when Reuvein saw that his mother Leah was treated which was in his eyes inappropriate, he behaved 49:4 (פָּחַז כַּמִּים), he rushed and he did something which itself was inappropriate and that is why he lost the Bechora. Well in order for Yosef to deserve the Bechora he would have to pass the same test to see if he did any better. So Yaakov Avinu says 48:7 (וְאֵיךְ יָבֹא מִפְּדוֹן, מִתָּה עָלַי רְחֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּדֶרֶךְ, בְּעוֹד כְּבֵרֶת-אֶרֶץ, לְבֹא אֶפְרָתָה; וְאֶקְבְּרָהּ שָׁם בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָת, הוּא בֵּית לָחֶם). Rochel died at the side of the road and I buried her on the side of the road and did not take her to be buried in Meoras Hamachpeila and you said nothing and you didn't complain even though I never explained the reasoning behind it to you. This is the merit that you have to be the Bechor because you passed the test that Reuvein failed. What a beautiful explanation B'derech Hapshat of Yaakov's words to Yosef.

The question of the week is: when Yaakov speaks to Yosef at the beginning of the Parsha he says to him I would like you to promise 47:29 (וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת), do with me kindness and truth. Rashi is bothered that Chesed and Emes are two different things. (חסד ואמת: חסד שעושים עם המתים). So Rashi explains that Chesed that you do with someone who is not alive is Chesed Shel Emes because you know that you will not be repaid. This is somewhat problematic in that the words Chesed and Emes together have appeared in the past, this is not the first time. Why does Rashi bring this explanation here this is not the first time that Chesed and Emes come together.

One occasion that comes to mind is in Parshas Chayei Sarah. There Eliezer comes and asks for Rivka to get married to Yitzchok and he asks in a language as can be found in 24:49 (וְעָתָה אֲם-יִשְׁכֶּם) (עֲשִׂים חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת, אֶת-אֲדֹנָי--הַגִּידוּ לִי). Do Chesed and Emes for my master. Certainly this is not Chesed Shel Emes. This was Chesed V'emmes. So it is difficult to understand what bothered Rashi in our Parsha when we find this expression mentioned elsewhere.

Another question of the week is: We find often in Tanach including in this week's Parsha the idea that as long as the Tzaddikim (Shevatim) were alive the Shibud didn't begin. The difficulties began later. We are told that the merit of a Tzaddik is greater in his death than in his life. Very often we are taught that when a Tzaddik is no longer here he can be Poel (he can accomplish more). It is difficult to understand why we find here and in numerous places that a Tzarah begins after a Tzaddik dies if he was able to stand as a merit in his life than why in his death does his merit not stand. Something which needs a good Marah Makom for an explanation.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5771

This week we have the Birchas Yaakov, the Brachos that Yaakov gave to the Shevatim. I would like to talk a bit about a couple of the Berachos. Let us first be Makdim that we know that each of the Berachos that a Shaivet got represented not only a specific blessing that he got, but more

importantly represents a path a Derech in Avodas Hashem. Each Shaivet's job was to serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu in a specific way and a specific manner that was suitable for that Shaivet.

The most obvious example would be that of Yissachar and Zevulan. Each had his role and so too with all of them. This is Merumaz in the Posuk 49:33 (וַיִּשְׁכַּר, חֹמֶר גָּרָם--רִבִּיז, בֵּין הַמְשָׁפְתִים;) (וַיִּגְנֹעַ, וַיֹּאכֶל אֶל-עֲמִי). At the end of the Berachos it says that Yaakov finished issuing a command to his children. It should have ended that Yaakov finished blessing his children instead of (לְצִוֹת). By using the word (לְצִוֹת) we understand that it is a command to the Shevatim, it is a moral will, telling each Sheivet what its path is in Avodas Hashem and of course there is a Berachah to hopefully make it easier for each Shaivet to do its job.

I would like to talk about Sheivet Leivi and Sheivet Yissachar who seem to have very similar roles in Klal Yisrael. In 49:14 we find Yaakov's blessing to Yissachar, (יִשְׁשַׁכָּר, חֹמֶר גָּרָם--רִבִּיז, בֵּין הַמְשָׁפְתִים), Rashi says, 49:14 (יִשְׁשַׁכָּר חֹמֶר גָּרָם: חֹמֶר בַּעַל עֲצָמוֹת, סוֹבֵל עוֹל תּוֹרָה כַּחֲמֹר חֹזֵק שֶׁמִּטְעִינִין אוֹתוֹ מִשְׁאֵי כֶבֶד). Meaning that Yissachar is a donkey with strong bones. The idea of the Beracha is that Yissachar carries the Ol Torah. That Yissachar has his job to be for Klal Yisrael the learners. We know that Laivi has the same role. In Parshas Zos Habracha it says 33:8 (וְלֵוִי אָמַר, תְּמִידָה וְאוֹרֵידָה לְאִישׁ חֹסֶדָה,) (אֲשֶׁר נָסִיתוֹ בְּמִסָּה, תְּרִיבָהוּ עַל-מִי מְרִיבָה יוֹרֵוֹ מִשְׁפָּטִיד לִיעֲקֹב, וְתוֹרֵתָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל; יְשִׁימוּ) and in 33:10 it says (קִטְוָה בְּאַפָּה, וְכִלִּיל עַל-מִזְבְּחָה) That the role of Leivi is to Pasken for Klal Yisrael. Yissachar and Leivi therefore seem to have very similar roles. In Maseches Yoma it says any Jew can become excellent in Limud Hatorah, however, then he is taking on the role of Leivi or Yissachar whose role it was to teach and learn.

The question of course is what is the difference between them? In the Sefer Be'er Torah there was a beautiful explanation as follows. The role of Shaivet Laivi is to be totally Mukdash L'hashem like Kodosh Kodashim. The Rambam in the end of Hilchos Shemittah asks why didn't Leivi get a Cheilik of the land in Eretz Yisrael? He answers that because his job is to be Kulo Torah, Kodosh Kodashim, totally involved in learning. That is the job of Shaivet Leivi. Now the Rambam does go on to say that anyone who wants can serve Hashem in that role. The primary point is that the role of Shaivet Laivi is this role of serving Hashem totally and to be devoted to learning.

Yissachar is a Shaivet that has Toraso K'va Um'lachto Arai. Really everyone should be that way, but Yissachar's goal and image is to have land in Eretz Yisrael and who works. As a matter of fact, on the Posuk of (יִשְׁשַׁכָּר, חֹמֶר גָּרָם) which Rashi says refers to carrying Torah, the Targum Unkelos says Yissachar is wealthy in Nichasim, Yissachar has property. Later in Parshas Zos Habracha as well in 33:19 (כִּי--שָׂם, יִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי-עֹדֶן: כִּי שָׂפַע יָמִים יִינָקוּ, וּשְׂפָנֵי טְמוּנֵי חוֹל) Rashi says (כִּי--עָמִים, הָר-יִקְרְאוּ--שָׂם, יִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי-עֹדֶן: כִּי שָׂפַע יָמִים יִינָקוּ: זְבוּלָן וַיִּשְׁכַּר הֵימָּה נֹתֵן לָהֶם מִמּוֹן בְּשָׂפַע) That Yissachar did have income. However, Yissachar is a Shaivet that has Toraso K'va Um'lachto Arai.

As a matter of fact, Rav Moshe writes in his Teshuvah regarding Yissachar and Zevulan, that the Yissachar and Zevulan arrangement is not Tzedakah. The Rambam doesn't bring it in Hilchos Tzedakah. He brings it in Hilchos Talmud Torah. Yissachar and Zevulan is an arrangement of Shutfus. When someone is not willing or is not able to spend so many hours learning, it creates a Shutfus so that he should have a Schar of Limud Hatorah. So that Yissachar is something else, it is Toraso K'va Um'lachto Arai.

The Nefesh Hachaim in Shaar Aleph Perek Ches writes, that not everyone can be a Leivi. Not everyone can spend so many hours a day learning. That is what Rav Shimon Bar Yochai meant when he said Harbei Asa K'rav Shimon Bar Yochai V'lo Also Bli Adam, that not everyone is capable of learning all day. These are two Shevilim in Avodas Hashem. Leivi to be Kodesh Kodashim, Kulo L'Hashem, Kulo Torah and Yissachar who is Toraso K'va Um'lachto Arai. This too is a road in the Derech Hashem.

I might add that people who are working today, the goal of being a Yissachar is a real thing. We think of your job as being a Zevulan, someone who just supports Torah. Well it is good that you should support Torah. But to be a Yissachar, (I don't know if there is anyone who is willing to support you), but to be a Toraso K'va Um'lachto Arai that is a goal that everyone should have. To be able to be someone for whom the Keviyos, the Zemanim that he has set aside for Torah are the Ikkur that a person has in his life.

Here is an important lesson from Yissachar and Leivi and we have here a Chiddush that Ain L'cha Mora Hora'a Mi'yisrael Ela Omed La Leivi Yissachar. That someone who is working could be on the level of a Mora Hora'a. A working person should learn the Hakdama of the Chayei Odom. He writes that people will ask why is this person writing a Sefer, he is a businessman. He owns a smelting company, they smelted iron. That was the Chayei Adam's company. So why is he writing Sefarim as a Mora Hora'a?

He writes Chai Nafshi, B'lashon Shevua, that whenever I was at work my Daas was to go back to learn. Whenever I was involved in business decisions my thinking was always in learning. It is almost amusing that he writes that at the end of his life his business failed and only then did he take a job as a Dayan. Towards the end of his life he was reluctant to live off of payment for his learning. What is interesting is that he writes that whenever he was involved in business he was thinking in learning and then towards the end of life his business failed. That is Leivi and Yissachar.

Now to turn towards Yehuda. 49:9 (מִי יִקְיָמֶנּוּ) I would like to make a point for the people who Layn. The Posuk is usually translated as Rashi says (מטרף: ממה שחשדתיך (לעיל לז לג) בטרף טרף יוסף היה רעה אכלתהו, וזהו יהודה שנמשל לאריה) that Yehuda was accused in Yaakov's mind of being the one that killed Yosef, so (מִטְרָף בְּנִי עָלִיתָ) from the ripping of my child, you rose. That idea is correct but the translation of the words is incorrect, at least according to the Rashbam and Rashi and according to the Trop. It should not be (מִטְרָף בְּנִי) it should be (מִטְרָף, בְּנִי עָלִיתָ) that it does not refer to Yosef, it refers to Yehuda. So the translation is as follows, from the killing of my child Yosef, you Yehuda showed your greatness. Rashi says as quoted above on the word (מטרף) and בני עליית: סלקת את עצמך, ואמרת (שם כו) מה בצע וגו'. וכן מהריגת תמר שהודה (מ"א ה ה) איש תחת גפנו וגו' (לעיל לח כו) צדקה ממני, לפיכך כרע רבץ וגו' בימי שלמה (מ"א ה ה) איש תחת גפנו וגו' Choshed you originally of having killed Yosef and Yehuda's greatness came from his actions in the Maaseh Yosef.

This is Shver for various reasons. First of all because it was Reuvein who saved Yosef it was not Yehuda. The Gemara says that it was Reuvein who saved Yosef and that he got Schar for that. The Gemara in Maseches Makkos 10a (20 lines from the bottom) (א"ר תנחום בר חנילאי מפני מה זכה ראובן) (לימנות בהצלה תחלה מפני שהוא פתח בהצלה תחלה שנאמר (בראשית לו) וישמע ראובן ויצילו מידם Secondly, it

says in Parshas Vayeishev 38:1 (וַיֵּרֶד יְהוּדָה מֵאֵת אֶחָיו) that Yehuda went down. Rashi says, (וַיֵּרֶד בְּעֵת הַהוּא: לְמַעַן נִסְמְכָה פֶּרֶשָׁה זוֹ לְכָאן, וְהַפְסִיק בְּפִרְשָׁתוֹ שֶׁל יוֹסֵף, לְלַמֵּד שֶׁהוֹרִידוּהוּ אֶחָיו מִגְדוּלָתוֹ כִּשְׂרָאוֹ) (בְּצֵרֶת אֲבִיהֶם, אָמְרוּ אֶתְּהָ אִמְרַת לְמַכְרוֹ, אֲלוֹ אִמְרַת לְהַשְׁבִּיר הֵינּוּ שׁוֹמְעִים לָךְ) That because of the incident of the selling of Yosef, Yehuda went down a Madreiga because had he advised them not to sell Yosef, the Shevatim would have listened to him. So isn't it amazing that (וַיֵּרֶד) means to go down, meaning that Yehuda's role in the sale of Yosef caused him to go down and here it says (בְּנִי עָלִיתָ) my son you went up, you rose because of your behavior in the sale of Yosef. This is certainly a difficulty.

I saw a beautiful Biur in the Sefer B'air Hatorah. He says that in the selling of Yosef it is true Yehuda did not show greatness. Yehuda failed in the selling of Yosef. He brings a Chazal that Kol Hamivaraich Yehuda is wrong because his action was inappropriate. So what does it mean (בְּנִי עָלִיתָ)?

He says the Pshat is in his reaction in what he did afterwards. He failed in the Mechirah but afterwards he picked himself up and from that he became the one (וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו יְהוּדָה) he is the one that saved Binyamin. His growth came from picking himself up after his failure.

He brings a Raya because when Rashi says B'ni Alisa he brings two examples. (בְּנֵי עָלִיתָ: סִלְקַת אֵת) עֲצֻמָּךְ, וְאִמְרַת (שֶׁם כּוֹ) מֶה בָּצַע וּגו'. וְכֵן מִהֲרִיגַת תָּמָר שֶׁהוּדָה (לְעִיל לֹחַ כּוֹ) צָדָקָה מִמֶּנִּי, לְפִיכָךְ כָּרַע רַבִּץ וּגו' בִּימֵי שְׁלֹמֹה ('מ"א ה ה) אִישׁ תַּחַת גִּפְנוֹ וּגו' He brings the Maaseh of Mechiras Yosef and also in the Maaseh of Tamar, Yehuda had in his Madreiga, a failing. Then afterwards he picked himself up and said 38:26 (וַיֹּאמֶר צָדָקָה מִמֶּנִּי). So the greatness of the Middah of Yehuda is that after falling he was able to pick himself up and to rise.

If fits beautifully with what the Gemara says that we need a king from Yehuda. Why? Shaul was to perfect to be king. A king shouldn't be a perfect person, he should be an imperfect person, a person who picked himself up after failure and from that became a leader. That is an example of the Hamon Am of Klal Yisrael of a typical Jew. That is Yehuda, Lo Asa Shaivet MiYehuda. Therefore, the lesson of Yehuda is, Miteref, B'ni Alisa (בְּנִי עָלִיתָ). You picked yourself up. You were able to achieve greatness despite having been imperfect in your behavior in Mechiras Yosef. So we learn here something about the Middah of Shaivet Yehuda a beautiful lesson for everybody.

I once saw a Rashi on the beginning of the Parsha with a similar idea. Rashi says 47:31 (עַל רֹאשׁ) (הַמָּטָה: הַפֶּךְ עֲצֻמוֹ לְצַד הַשְׁכִּינָה, מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ שֶׁהַשְׁכִּינָה לְמַעַל מִרְאשׁוֹתָיו שֶׁל חוּלָה) We learn from Yaakov that the Shechinah is above the head of a Choleh. Maybe it was because Yaakov was so great and the Shechina would not be at everyone's head when they are a Choleh?

The answer is that (שֶׁהַשְׁכִּינָה לְמַעַל מִרְאשׁוֹתָיו שֶׁל חוּלָה) means that when a person Lo Aleinu becomes ill he has an opportunity to achieve greatness and to connect to the Shecina. When a person is not well he thinks about life. Some people just complain and are broken. Some people have Bitachon, have faith and rise and become great from it. (שֶׁהַשְׁכִּינָה לְמַעַל מִרְאשׁוֹתָיו שֶׁל חוּלָה) it is an opportunity to become great. What does Rashi say? You have to (הַפֶּךְ עֲצֻמוֹ לְצַד הַשְׁכִּינָה) turn yourself towards the Shechina. You have to notice the Shechina in moments of challenge and from that a person can be great.

The question of the week is: It says 50:3 (וַיִּבְכוּ אֹתוֹ מִצְרַיִם, שָׁבָעִים יוֹם) they cried for 70 days. Ok, people cry for 70 days. Rashi says (ויבכו אותו מצרים שבעים יום: ארבעים לחניטה, ושלושים לבכיה, לפי שבאה שכלה הרעב, והיו מי נילוס מתברכין) 40 days for embalming of Yaakov and 30 days for crying. Why couldn't they weep during the days of embalming? A few people were doing the embalming not the whole Mitzrayim. Why did they cry first after the 40 days of embalming, it makes no sense to me? Crying is something that is done spontaneously when someone dies. Why did it have to wait until after the (חניטה)? That is a tough Rashi.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayechi 5770

ויחי יעקב: למה פרשה זו סתומה, לפי שכיון שנפטר יעקב אבינו נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל מצרת השעבוד 47:28 שהתחילו לשעבדם. דבר אחר שבקש לגלות את הקץ לבניו ונסתם ממנו

Rashi explains that every other Parsha has either a Pei or a Samech between them, however, Parshas Vayechi is closed from the previous Parsha, Parshas Vayigash. The velt asks a Kasha on this. There is no M'kor that there should be a break between the 2 Parshiyois. We only break up the Parshiyois in order to finish the whole Torah once a year for Simchas Torah. Maybe the end of Parshas Vayigash and the beginning of Parshas Vayechi is one Hemshech?

The B'chor Shor which is located in the back of the Tevu'os Shor says the Gemara tells us a rule that Ein Mukdam U'muchar Ba'Toirah. That 2 Parshiyois don't have to be in chronological order. When do we say this rule of Ein Mukdam U'muchar Ba'Toirah, only in separate Parshiyois (which doesn't mean B'reishis and Noach but a section of the Torah that has a break before and after it). However, within each Parsha everything will be in chronological order. The last Posuk in Parshas Vayigash says Vayifru Vayirbu M'oid that Klal Yisroel multiplied in Mitzrayim. The first Posuk in Parshas Vayechi is Vayechi Yaakov B'ereitz Mitzrayim that Yaakov is alive in Eretz Mitzrayim. We know from Parshas Shemos 1:12 that V'cha'asher Y'anu Oiso Kein Yirbeh V'chein Yifroitz, that as much as the Egyptians oppressed, the more the B'nei Yisrael increased and spread. If so, the Vayifru Vayirbu M'oid of Parshas Vayigash took place after the death of Yaakov Avinu. Because, when Yaakov was alive there was no Shibud. So it must be that Ein Mukdam U'muchar Ba'Toirah. Ai, we had the Gemara that in one Parsha there is no Ein Mukdam U'muchar Ba'Toirah. So it must be that they are separate Parshiyois. So Vayifru Vayirbu M'oid ends one Parsha and Vayechi Yaakov starts a new Parsha. So if so, why is there no Hefseik between them? That is why Rashi asks why is this Parsha Situma there should be some sort of Hefsek between them.

נפתלי אֵלָה שְׁלָחָה הַנֶּחֱמָן אִמְרֵי שָׁפָר 49:21

There is a Medrash in the Yalkut on Tehillim, Perek 89 which Teitches Hanoisen Imrei Shofeir to refer to Torah that is Nitna Al Yidei Shofar. Naftali had a special Cheilek in learning the words of Torah. Where do we find that Naftali had any special Cheilek in Limud Hatoirah? We find that Levi and Yissachar had a special Cheilek in Limud Hatoirah, however, we never find this by Naftali? We find it in Shir Hashirim Rabbah in Perek Ches Ois Yud we find a Medrash that says, Rav Chiya B'rei D'rav Abba D'yaffo says, someone who learns Torah B'tzar gets 1,000 Chalakim of Schar. If he learns when it is not difficult than he takes 200 Chalakim of Schar. How do we know this? From the Shevatim of Yissachar and Naftali. Naftali that was Oisek in business got

1,000 Chalakim of Schar when they learned. Yissachar that learned Sheloi B'tzar got 200 Chalakim of Schar. Naftali would travel for business and still took time out of their schedule to learn. They were the ordinary working person of Klal Yisrael. So their Schar was much greater than the Poiskim from Sheivet Yissachar and Levi.

We can add to this that which is says in Maseches Sanhedrin 20a שקר החן זה דורו של משה ויהושע והבל היופי זה דורו של חזקיה יראת ה' היא תהלהלל זה דורו של ר' יהודה ברבי אילעאי

This is going on the fact that Eishes Chayil refers to our connection to Limud Hatoirah. By Sheker Hachein and Hefel Hayoifi, that means the Toirah came to them easily and that is not considered a great accomplishment, however, Isha Yir'as Hashem refers to a Doir that learns with Mesiras Nefesh. That is the special Darga of Naftali. Someone who is able to take time out in middle of a working day or in middle of traveling takes time out to learn. That is the very special beauty of Limud Hatoirah.

וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת יָמִינוּ וַיָּשֶׁת עַל רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא הַצָּעִיר וְאֵת שְׁמַאלוֹ עַל רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה שְׁכָל אֶת יָדָיו כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה 48:14
הַבְּכוֹר

Typically the Bechor is the one who takes Pi Shnayim and is the father's replacement so to speak. Punkd by Yosef his greater Yoireshe is Ephraim? We also find later that when Reuvein and Gad want land Mei'eiver Hayardein that Moshe sends half of Sheivet Menashe to join them to be a good influence on them. So Menashe did have a very special role if Moshe Rabbeinu sent Dafka them. Yet somehow his Darga was less. Why was that so? The Ba'alei Machshava write that the right hand represents the Mitzvois Asei the Asei Toiv and the left hand represents Sur Mai'ra our obligations to avoid Loi Sa'seis. The author of Toimer Devoira writes in Sefer Pardes Rimonim, Mitzvois Asei Mitzad Yemin, Chesed. Mitzvois Loi Sasei Mitzad Simoil, Gevurah. It is a basic idea. The right hand represents doing wonderful Mitzvois and the left hand represents the ability to avoid doing Aveirois. Logically, a person first has to work on Sur Maira and then he can work on Asei Toiv. For example, let's say you have a silver Becher that is tarnished, the first thing you must do is remove the tarnish or dirt and then you can polish it. Or if you have shoes that are muddy. First you take off the mud and then you polish the shoes. Sur Mai'ra get rid of the bad and Asei Toiv and do good. People on the Madreiga such as us, if we would start with the Sur Mai'ra we would never get to the Asei Toiv. We don't feel good doing the Sur Mai'ra, the Geshmak comes from doing the Asei Toiv. That's why our Avoida is to do Asei Toiv first and Sur Mai'ra second. This is even though Sur Mai'ra is what should take precedence. Ai, how can you polish the shoes before you take off the mud? Hakadoish Baruch Hu says that Teshuva removes the Aveira L'mafrei'a. So if you do Asei Toiv and it leads to Teshuva and Charatah on your Aveirois, it takes away the mud from before you polished the shoes so to speak. At any rate, the main Yesoid is this idea of the right and the left which is a very basic concept. Yosef's Koiach is Sur Mai'ra, avoiding temptation. This is a very basic idea in Yosef. He past that Koiach onto his Bechor, Menashe. This is why in Yosef's eyes Menashe was greater than Ephraim. This is because Menashe excelled in Sur Mai'ra. Ephraim excelled in Asei Toiv as Yehoshua was going to come from him, and he led Klal Yisrael into Eretz Yisrael. Yaakov Avinu said in Oilam Hazeh the Asei Toiv is the leader. So Ephraim is going to be the leader and Menashe will be the follower. The right hand that is the Asei Toiv goes on Ephraim, while the left hand goes on Menashe. For himself Menashe was greater, he was the Bechor and he took his father's Sur Mai'ra. That is why we find later by Gad and Reuvein

when Moshe Rabbeinu needed a Sheivet to watch Reuvein and Gad in the Sur Mai'ra area, he Dafka sent Menashe who was the king of Sur Mai'ra. The lesson at any rate is, our Avoida when we have temptations to do Aveiros that pull us down is to throw ourselves into the Asei Toiv and into Toirah, Tefillah, and Mitzvois Aseis and from that Geshmak and feeling of Aliya we will succeed in the Sur Mai'ra and that really is the lesson of the crossing of the hands of Yaakov Avinu, the right hand on Ephraim and the left hand on Menashe.

אל נא תקברני במצרים: סופה להיות עפרה כנים (ומרחשין תחת גופי) 47:29

When Yaakov requests that he should not be buried in Mitzrayim Rashi says as his first reason why Yaakov doesn't want to be buried there because of the Makkah of lice. Yaakov didn't want lice going underneath his body. We don't know what Maisim (dead people) feel, however, if Yaakov Avinu says this is not pleasant we can trust him. So Mimeila Yaakov didn't want to be buried in Mitzrayim. This reasoning doesn't make sense at all. When the Makkah of Kinim came, there were Yidden in Mitzrayim who were in the 49th Darga of Tummah and yet, the Kinnim did not affect them. We know that all of the ten Makkos didn't affect the Yiddin. Even a Yid who was a Rasha was not affected. Yaakov Avinu was also a Yid. Why did Yaakov think the Kinnim would affect him when it didn't affect any other Yid? If Yaakov knew B'nevua that there would be a Makkah of Kinnim he certainly knew that it wouldn't affect Klal Yisrael? Why was Yaakov Avinu afraid that the Kinnim would go under his body, as if that is something that is painful to a Meis then it wouldn't happen?