

Parashas

Vaytze

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י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הר"צ  
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## טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

## טיב הפרשה

סגולת הענוה לכל ההצלחות

The Segulah of Humility for All Successes

ויפרץ האיש מאד מאד (ל, מג)

"And the man spread out exceedingly" (30:43)

The well-known statement of the Ramban (in Parashas Lech Lecha) is that "the actions of the fathers are a sign for the children," and for this reason the Torah wrote all their deeds, so that their children after them may contemplate them and understand from the *posukim* also the reasons for all of their actions, and through this they too will understand the path in which they shall go and succeed in the service of the Creator, and then they too will be pleasing to their Creator.

Even when the Torah tells of the material success of the *avos hakedoshim*, it intended that we examine its words in order to understand what matter it was through which they merited this, because if we merit it, this will also be a cause for our own success. The Torah tells us that each one of the *avos* merited great wealth, and there is no doubt that the Torah hinted in its letters and its words what the cause of each one's wealth was. However, we require Heavenly assistance in order to grasp its allusions, and here, regarding Yaakov Avinu, we have indeed merited to understand that he merited this through his humility. The *posuk* may therefore be interpreted as follows: "And the man spread out," and the reason for this was "exceedingly, exceedingly" – humility. For the words "exceedingly, exceedingly" allude to humility, as we see in the language of Chazal, that when they spoke of humility, they also doubled this expression and said (Avos 4:4): "Be exceedingly, exceedingly humble of spirit." We also find that the word 'מאד' – "exceedingly" alludes to humility, for it has the numerical value [gematria] of 'מה' – "what," [45] which indicates nullification and nothingness, and as we say in the teffilah "לעולם יהא אדם" when we wish to express our nothingness before the greatness of the Creator Baruch Hu we say, "What are we, what is our life," and so forth. Also, with Moshe Rabeinu we see that when he wished to lower himself he said (Shemos 16:8): ונחנו' – "And we are what." And to this the Torah alluded here, that through the "what" alluded to in "exceedingly" Yaakov Avinu merited that the *posuk* "And the man spread out" was fulfilled in him.

Indeed we see within Yaakov that the trait of humility was deeply implanted in his soul, as we see later at the beginning of Parashas Vayishlach (32:11), where he said: קטנתי מכל' – "I have become small from all the kindnesses and from all the truth," and Rashi explains: "My merits have diminished because of the kindnesses and truth

## טיב המערכות

ואשא עיני וארא בחלום

*I lifted my eyes and I saw in a dream*

A man wakes up in the morning, and with a sense of mission, he goes out to do his work for the day. His livelihood is difficult, but he has no choice; he must bring sustenance to his home. He has small children who need a house, food, clothing, and many other things that cost a lot of money, and it is his responsibility to care for them. So, he works hard, but in his mind, a question nags at him: "Is this the will of the Hashem Yisbarach?" Does HaKadosh Baruch Hu want me to work so hard that I have no time or strength left to see my children at the end of the day? Does HaKadosh Baruch Hu not want me to sit and learn at least one *daf* of Gemara without falling asleep?

Yaakov Avinu had to deal with the greatest of deceivers, who was also his father-in-law—Lavan the Aramean. He used sophisticated tricks to ensure that the sheep would produce spotted, speckled, and striped offspring, thereby increasing his wealth. Have we ever heard of someone trying this trick again in history, and succeeding? The answer is no! So what was special about this case? The answer is revealed by Yaakov himself after several years, when he tells his wives that he had a dream (31:10): 'על הצאן עקודים וברודים וראא בחלום והנה העתודים העולים' – "And I saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leapt upon the flock were striped, speckled, and spotted," and Rashi explains: "And behold, the rams—although Lavan separated them so that the sheep would not mate in the same way, the angels would bring them from the flock under Lavan's control to the flock in Yaakov's hands." Yaakov Avinu did his part in making an effort (*hishtadlus*), but it was not that effort that caused the sheep to produce striped, spotted, and speckled offspring. Rather, it was that HaKadosh Baruch Hu sent His good angels who brought Lavan's flock to Yaakov, and in this way, Yaakov's portion grew, and his wealth expanded.

The Holy Torah tells us these things so that we know that there is no connection between the amount of effort and success. We are meant to know and believe that livelihood is in the hands of Heaven, and all our efforts are merely part of the "obligation to make an effort," nothing more. Sometimes, excessive focus on effort can be harmful, because in Heaven, they see that a person really wants to succeed on his own, so they let him try to manage by himself. But when a Jew places his trust in HaKadosh Baruch Hu, knowing that He is the One who sustains and provides for the entire world—from the horns of the wild ox to the eggs of lice—and that all his efforts for his livelihood are only part of the "obligation to make an effort," he will see the blessing of Hashem, who makes him we

- Tiv HaTorah – Vayeitzei

that You have done with me.” [It was difficult for Rashi, for HaKadosh Baruch Hu had promised him so much good at the beginning of our parashah, so how could his merits have diminished because of the kindnesses he had thus far received, since these were few compared to the abundance of good that had been promised to him. Therefore, Rashi explains that Yaakov meant to say:] “Therefore I fear lest since You promised me, I have become soiled in sin, and it will cause me to be delivered into the hand of Eisav.” From these words of Yaakov you learn how humble of spirit he was. For there is no doubt that his twenty-year stay in the presence of the cunning and impure Lavan was filled with many difficult trials, and there is also no doubt that he withstood them all. The Torah also hints to this when it states (33:18): ויבוא - “And Jacob came whole,” and Rashi explains: “Whole in his Torah, that he did not forget his learning in the house of Lavan.” And despite all that he suffered for the sake of his Creator Yisbarach still his deeds were not pure in his own eyes, and he feared that perhaps he had done so much wrong that the essential good promised to him had already been lost. This testifies also regarding all the days of his life that they were all in humility, and it was this that drew down his successes and his wealth.

This matter, as stated, is also a sign for the descendents of Yaakov in every generation: if they too conduct themselves with humility, they too will merit wealth and success in all their matters. Humility prepares them for the fulfillment of their desires. And if you ask why, the answer is that from the outset HaKadosh Baruch Hu desires to give every Jewish person all of his desires in spiritual and material matters. However, His desire is not that these gifts be guarded for his harm and bring him through them to arrogance, for aside from arrogance being a great sin, it also pushes away the Shechinah, *Rachmana litzlan*. As the Gemara states (Sotah 5a): “Rav Chisda,

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and some say Mar Ukva, said: Any person who has arrogance, HaKadosh Baruch Hu says: I and he cannot dwell together in the world.” Therefore, as long as humility is not deeply ingrained in a person's heart, he is not prepared to receive the good that they desire to give him, lest it be a cause for his heart to become haughty. Only after he accustoms himself to humility, by contemplating his lowliness and by understanding well that all the good that a person is granted is only a free gift and is no cause for arrogance, then he becomes a proper vessel to hold blessing, and he merits that Heaven grants success through him.

You will find a similar idea written several times in the writings of the holy Chozeh of Lublin, and one of them is in his introduction to his book *Zichron Zos*, where it states that were it not for the trait of arrogance, it would be within the capability of every Jew, including even the most insignificant among them, to request his desires and to be answered, for the very fact that he is a “Jew” already renders him worthy, as it is written (Iyov 22:28): ותגזור - “You shall decree a matter and it shall be established for

you.” But in Heaven they fear lest signs and wonders be aroused through their prayers, and as a result they come, *chas v'shalom*, to arrogance; therefore, many salvations are delayed from Israel.

It is possible that this is the intent of the Gemara (Chullin 89a), which elaborates on the difference between Israel and the nations in the matter of arrogance and lowliness: that the people of Israel, the more the Creator Baruch Hu elevates them, the more they diminish and humble themselves. And the opposite is among the nations, who become arrogant because of the greatness granted to them. And the Gemara elaborates there, proving from all seven shepherds, who were righteous, that when they merited greatness, it was a cause for adding humility upon their already existing humility. For, as stated, Bnei Israel are only worthy of greatness if they diminish themselves, and it is difficult to find such a thing, and those who merit it are usually the righteous. But among the nations, upon whom HaKadosh Baruch Hu does not rest His Shechinah, arrogance is not an impediment to their greatness, and therefore they can merit greatness even as their arrogance increases.

Say now that if a person desires to be a vessel that holds blessing and to merit greatness and wealth and success and the acceptance of his prayers, it is upon him to contemplate deeply the recesses of his soul until he indeed recognizes with great precision his own lowliness.

And the sign of true humility is that if he does indeed merit some degree of greatness, he will be very ashamed of his stature. For one who merits this trait knows in his soul that due to his lowliness he is not worthy of that greatness and is like a simpleton who dresses in the garments of princes, making himself a mockery and ridicule before people. As a result of this feeling, he adds humility upon his humility. This is the sign that he truly holds the trait of humility. And a person should beg for mercy from Hashem that he indeed merit this.



## In a Stroller and on Time

"Ribono shel olam!!! What shall we do now?! I forgot the stroller and the pacifier of the baby at home, and now we are more than an hour away from home at a family event, how shall we manage?"

We had already arrived at the hall in honor of the bar mitzvah celebration of my beloved son. Some of the guests were already trickling into the hall to rejoice with us and to wish mazal tov, and the stroller and the pacifier that is attached to a fixed cloth diaper had remained behind. We arranged for a babysitter to care for him during the celebration so that we would be free to receive the guests with joy, but without basic means such as a stroller and a pacifier, it is impossible to manage... I thought at least to buy pacifiers in a nearby store, but the pacifier without the diaper that is attached to it would not achieve its purpose.

I lifted my eyes to heaven in a request for salvation, although I did not see any possible salvation on the horizon.

Suddenly I noticed a message from a friend from my city who said in his message: "I am leaving shortly for the bar mitzvah, and if you forgot something at home, I would be happy to bring it to you." I called him and told him that I had forgotten a stroller and a pacifier. But then I remembered that the house was locked and I had not left a key with anyone... He suggested bringing his own stroller. I thought that was half a consolation. But then he called again and asked: "Perhaps it is possible to jump through one of the porches?"

It was uncomfortable, but I answered affirmatively...

My friend drove to my building, knocked by the neighbors, jumped through the porches, and went inside. I guided him by phone where the items were and where the key was, which I had entirely "by chance" forgotten in the pocket of the vest. With it he opened the door and was able to take the stroller out of the house to the car. There is no need to describe the relief and the salvation that we merited from Hashem, and it completed the perfect event!!!

I asked him what made him even think to even ask such a question about whether we had forgotten something. And he answered that he himself did not know, and even felt a little foolish asking such a question, but something inside him pushed him to ask nevertheless.

I felt that in the merit of the fact that I accepted it with love and did not say a single word to my wife about the fact that we had forgotten the stroller, but instead calmed her and took the blame upon myself, perhaps in that merit I merited the salvation...

ד.מ.ח

## The Great Mitzvah to Be Constantly Joyful

"וְשָׁבְתִי בְּשָׁלוֹם אֶל בֵּית אָבִי, וְהָיָה ה' לִי לְאֵלִיקִים" (בר, כא).

**And I will return in peace to my father's house, and Hashem shall be my God** (Bereishis 28:21).

It is known and well explained in the holy *sefarim* that the word וְהָיָה always connotes joy. When a person is joyful, he dwells in peace and serenity — both between man and his fellow, and between man and his Father in Heaven.

This is the allusion in the *pasuk*, וְשָׁבְתִי (I will return) — this refers to *teshuvah* (repentance). בְּשָׁלוֹם אֶל בֵּית אָבִי (in peace to my father's house) — meaning, to my Father in Heaven; for after a person returns in repentance, peace is restored between him and his Father in Heaven.

Thereby he merits the attribute of *simchah* (joy), through which strict judgment is transformed into mercy. Thus the *pasuk* continues, וְהָיָה ה' — the word וְהָיָה signifies joy, and when joy enters, there is peace and serenity with one's Father in Heaven. By its power, judgment is turned into mercy, as it says, וְהָיָה ה' — that is the attribute of mercy — לִי לְאֵלִיקִים — this is the attribute of judgment. The meaning is: I will be able to master and elevate the judgments, transforming them into mercy, so that Hashem — which denotes the attribute of mercy — shall rule and convert all judgments into goodness and blessing.

This accords with the interpretation of the holy Rav Nosson Dovid of Shidloltza *zt"l* on the *pesukim* (Bereishis 6:6-7): וַיִּחַן ה' כִּי עָשָׂה אֶת הָאָדָם בָּחָרָץ וַיַּחְעֲזֵב אֶל לִבּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר - וַיִּחַן ה' כִּי עָשָׂה אֶת הָאָדָם בָּחָרָץ וַיַּחְעֲזֵב אֶל לִבּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר - Hashem regretted that He had made man upon the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And Hashem said, I will blot out man... Initially, it was not possible to execute the decree of the Flood in the world, because at the onset of creation there was such abundance of goodness that all creatures were in a state of joy — and where joy reigns, the attribute of judgment cannot take hold, nor can any harsh decree be fulfilled.

Therefore, it was necessary first to remove joy from the world — as it says, and it grieved Him at His heart — thereby sadness descended into creation, and joy was withdrawn. Only then could the *pasuk* continue, And Hashem said, I will blot out man..., for the attribute of judgment could now prevail.

As it is written in the holy Likkutei Moharan (*Mahadura Basra*, 24): "It is a great mitzvah to be in a constant state of joy and to strengthen oneself with all one's might to drive away sadness and melancholy. All illnesses that come upon a person come only from a corruption of joy... Even the wise physicians have written at length that all ailments come through melancholy and sadness, while joy is a great remedy."

I heard a wonderful explanation from my father and teacher, the *gaon* and *tzaddik* Rav Levi *zt"l*, author of *Ma'adanei HaShulchan*, on the Gemara in Berachos (7b) concerning the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* (3:1): מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד בְּבִרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֲבִשָׁלוֹם בְּנוֹ - A psalm of David when he fled from his son Avshalom.

The Gemara asks: It should have said, A lamentation of David, not A psalm of David. It answers that when Hashem said to David (*Shmuel* II 12:11): הִנְנִי מָקִים עָלֶיךָ רָעָה, וְרָעָה - See, I will raise up evil against you from within your own house, David was saddened and said, Perhaps it will be a servant or a mamzer who will have no compassion upon me. But when he saw that it was Avshalom, he rejoiced, and therefore he said, a psalm.

Yet, the wonder remains: how could David sing and rejoice at such a time, when he was fleeing for his life from his own son who sought to kill him?

My father explained this with fine explanation: When David Hamelech *a"h*, saw that his son Avshalom had rebelled against him, and that evil had arisen within

his own household, he felt a profound heartbreak. Therefore, to strengthen himself in his distress, he sang to himself — for it is known that song fortifies a person's heart in times of sorrow, to prevent the loss of joy even in the darkest moments.

He explained this through a story concerning the holy Rav Moshe Leib of Sassov zt"l. Once a very wealthy man came before him, presenting a *pidyon nefesh* (petition for the soul) and requesting salvation, for he had fallen into a deep and grave melancholy. The greatest physicians could find no cure, nor even identify its cause. The man poured out his anguish before the Rebbe: despite his wealth and his fine, successful children, he could derive no pleasure from them, and felt no joy in life.

The holy Rebbe of Sassov said to him: The *pasuk* says, *A psalm of David when he fled from his son Avshalom*. How can it say a *psalm* — a term of joy — at such a time of bitter distress?

Rather, continued the Rebbe, I have received from my master and teacher, the great Maggid of Mezeritch zt"l, that whoever faces sorrow, pain, or grief must strengthen himself in joy and gladness — and by this merit he will be delivered from all troubles, as it is said (Yeshayahu 55:12), *כִּי צֵאתֶם בְּשִׂמְחָה תֵּלְכוּ* - *For you shall go out with joy* — meaning, through joy you shall depart from all afflictions.

Therefore, the *pasuk* specifically says, *A psalm of David* — an expression of joy — to teach that precisely in that terrible time, when he was compelled to flee from his son who had become one of his greatest enemies, he took up the harp and lyre and sang to himself with joy, and thus was lifted from his sorrow.

The holy Rebbe then exhorted the man earnestly to abandon all sadness and to exert every effort in the world to remain constantly joyful. Indeed, the man obeyed the Rebbe's counsel; and when he immersed himself in joy, in song and melody, with beautiful musical instruments, he was freed entirely from his malady and soon returned to complete health, in goodness and pleasantness.

In the days when the world's foundations seemed to be collapsing, when the terrible Holocaust reached the gates of the holy community of Galanta in Hungary, the devoted disciples of their revered teacher, the saintly Rav Yehoshua Buxbaum zt"l (*Hy"d*), *av beis din* of Galanta, arranged for him a safe, orderly rescue — visas and a passage ticket to the United States were ready — and they pleaded with him with all their strength to take the opportunity. By then they already knew clearly the true purpose and end of the deportations, and after expending great effort and large sums to secure his escape from the abyss of slaughter, they were certain he would be glad to save his life.

But the holy Rebbe refused to listen. He said he could not leave his students, "Where my disciples go, there I will go as well." For it is impossible to separate the Rav from his disciples (*Makkos* 10a). "If there is no salvation for the students, there can be no salvation for the Rav."

When the accursed Gestapo burst into Galanta and deported everyone at once on the death trains to Auschwitz, the holy Rebbe descended from the train with dignity, filled with blazing faith and complete trust in Hashem. When the wicked monster Dr. Mengele saw his majestic bearing and fine garments and perceived that he was a great Rav, he snarled at him with satanic hatred: "*Du bist der hoicher vunder Rabbiner?* (Are you the exalted wondrous rabbi?) Very good; I have been waiting for you!"

The holy Rav answered firmly and loudly, "As for what awaits you, I will not put it upon my lips — it shall be a most bitter and grievous end." Immediately the murderers, enraged by his steadfast faith and courage, cast him to the side to be murdered *al kiddush Hashem* — together with all the members of his congregation and his holy students.

His beloved students cried and wailed bitterly as they witnessed their master led to slaughter in such seeming disgrace. But he rebuked them sternly and said, "In such a fateful hour one must be filled with great and boundless joy! For we are privileged to fulfill the greatest mitzvah in the Torah — to offer our souls for the sanctification of His Name, to fulfill the *pasuk*, *וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ* ... *And you shall love the Lord your God... with all your soul* — even if He takes your soul" (*Berachos* 54a).

Then he and the students and the holy

members of the community danced with fierce, burning joy — heart and soul — at the threshold of the fiery furnace. That dance and the mighty joy of that hour echoed throughout the camp and were engraved forever on the hearts of those who witnessed it; it was a spectacle of awe and heroic valor, and they merited to sanctify the Name of Heaven in a lofty and exalted measure.

One venerable elder of Jerusalem, a man of great stature and tranquil understanding, once fell in his home. Alone and unable to rise, he lay there for a long while, afflicted with severe suffering and sharp pain.

After some time, a visitor came to see him and, finding him lying helpless, was much alarmed and hastened to help. To the visitor's amazement, the elder was calm and serene. When asked how he felt, he answered with a smile and joy: "Baruch Hashem, I am alive and present. My hand hurts a bit, but I thank Hashem for every breath."

Noticing that the man could not move his arm, the visitor feared it might be broken, and he took him at once to the hospital emergency room. The chief orthopedic surgeon listened to the account and at first dismissed the notion of a fracture, "This surely is not a break."

"How can you be certain — have you taken an X-ray?" the visitor asked. The doctor replied, "We have not yet done a full X-ray, but when I see this elderly man so calm and smiling, even joking with us, it is clear he is not suffering a fracture — a man with a real break would not be able to rejoice so."

Still, they performed the X-ray. To the doctor's astonishment, it revealed a serious fracture. The orthopedist left amazed, saying, "This is no ordinary man! I cannot understand how someone can smile, laugh, and be joyful while bearing such a terrible fracture and great pain."

The elder's son, summoned to the hospital, found his father full of joy and tranquility. When the son offered him a steaming cup of coffee, the father recited the blessing aloud with deep feeling: "*Shehakol niyah bidvaro*." Then he turned to his son and taught him what the pious have taught in the Mishnah — that the *phrase* "for all" (as in the teaching about the blessing) truly means for all that may befall a person. If one declares that "everything came to be by His word" — that nothing is accidental and all is the decree and will of Divine Providence — then one is delivered from the troubles of the world. (*Berachos* 40b).