

Parsha Knowledge

TORAH THOUGHTS, STORIES, AND INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

פְּרַשְׁת וַיְחִי

י"ח טבת תשפ"ד

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...שָׂא נָא...

“Please forgive your sin of your brothers ...” (Bereishes 50:17)

In this week's Parsha Yaakov passes away. The brothers are now fearful of a vendetta from Yosef. They suspect that Yosef was only kind to them because their father was alive out of deference to their father. However, now that their father is gone, they thought that Yosef may retaliate against them. Therefore, they come to Yosef, and they tell him that our father commanded you before he died that you should forgive us. Yosef is magnanimous and benevolent, and he says *al tira'u* - don't be afraid, *vayenachem osam* - he comforts them, and he promises to sustain them. However, there is a problem here: I heard from Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita that the Rabbeinu Bachaye points out that Yosef never said I forgive you. He made his brothers feel much better, but he never said I forgive you. Therefore, says the Rabeinu Bachaye, later in history the brothers had to be reincarnated as the *Aseres Hashvatim*, the ten martyrs. They were subjected to great pain.

Even though it's hard we must learn to say the words I forgive you. Everyone may have family members and friends whom we may have grievances against, who may have pained us, and we pretend that we've forgiven them but deep down we don't. It's important to say the words I forgive you *belev shalom* (with a full heart). Especially in today's trying times, we don't want anybody to suffer negative consequences and repercussions. Therefore, we must all work on ourselves. It's hard but try to say I forgive you.

I would like to share with you a story about the importance of pursuing peace: In the 1600's There was a man named Herschel. He was about to get married, and he traveled to his bride's hometown. When he arrived the kallah's family put him up in a neighboring

house. Herschel was preparing for the wedding. He was ready for the biggest day of his life. On the day before the wedding, he looks out the window where he's staying and he sees, his kallah right there by her parents' home. She's in the kitchen with a chicken, she takes the chicken she is trying to prepare, and the chicken starts giving her a hard time. Suddenly, she angrily flacks and whacks the chicken. Now Herschel starts getting scared. He thinks to himself first it's a chicken and then it's me! What happens if I step out of line a little? Help! He's watching, and he sees that she's got a pretty bad temper. She's not the girl that he thought she was. Herschel says I can't marry this girl. She's too dangerous. He says, but what can I do? I can't break up the shidduch the day before the wedding! It will be so humiliating for the girl! I can't do that to her!

Herschel came up with a plan. That day he went into the shul, and went to the pushka (charity box). The pushka was full and Herschel pretended that he wanted to make sure no one was looking but he made sure that people saw. He goes to the pushke, and he starts pocketing the money. People see and they scream "*Ganef* (thief)! Get him!" Everybody pounds on him. Then when he has one second, he breaks out and runs. Then the girl's father comes in. He's an influential person there. He says what happened? So, they tell him that the Choson, He's not what they make him out to be. He's a *ganef*! We caught him stealing the money! We chased him out of town - Don't worry!

Can you imagine what Herschel did? He put himself through the greatest shame! Not one person realized what had really happened! Herschel did this so that the father should pronounce that shidduch is hereby over. Herschel ended the marriage in a way that would preserve the girl's dignity! Hashem always rewards those who think about and care for others. Herschel ended up becoming a great Torah giant, he was known as Rav Herschel of Krakow! Why did Hashem bless him with such *siyata deshmaya* (success)? Because he kept the peace. He was sensitive to other's needs. We must work on being more caring and forgiving people and in that merit may we all see the ultimate redemption in our days!

Have a Great Shabbos!

By Aryeh F.

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