

“He sent Yehudah before him to Yosef”

Yaakov Sent Yehudah the Paradigm of a Ba'al Teshuvah to Pave the Way to Yosef the Pillar of Torah

In this week's parsha, parshas Vayigash, we learn about the preparations Yaakov Avinu makes for his descent to Mitzrayim. There he will be reunited with his son Yosef, whom he has not seen for twenty-two years (Bereishis 46, 28): “ואת יהודה שלח לפניו” — אל יוסף להורות לפניו גשנה” — **he sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to instruct ahead of him in Goshen.** Rashi explains in the name of a Midrash aggadah: לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם “להורות לפניו, לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם” — **to establish a study hall from which instruction would be forthcoming.** Why did Yaakov Avinu specifically send Yehudah to join forces with Yosef to establish a place to study Torah in Mitzrayim? It would seem that it would have been more appropriate to delegate this task to Yissachar, since he represented the domain of Torah and instruction.

Additionally, it is worth examining a fascinating statement from the Midrash Tanchuma (Vayigash 6): “ואת יהודה שלח לפניו. ילמדנו רבינו, אימתי מברכין על הנר במוצאי שבת, כך שנו רבותינו אין מברכין על הנר עד שיאותו לאורו.” Regarding the words: “**He sent Yehudah ahead of him**”—the Midrash inquires as to the proper time to light the Havdalah candle at the conclusion of the Shabbas; it concludes that we do not recite the blessing until we are able to benefit from the torch's light. At first glance, it is difficult to comprehend the connection between these two events. What possible connection can there be between reciting the berachah over the candle on Motzaei Shabbas and this mission that Yaakov sends Yehudah on—to join forces with Yosef in Mitzrayim?

Yesterday They Were Attacking One Another and Now They Are Being Asked to Join Forces

Let us begin our enlightening journey by introducing an insight from Chazal regarding the tremendous difference between the two encounters between Yehudah and Yosef. At the beginning of the parsha, we read (Bereishis 44, 18): “ויגש אליו”

יהודה ויאמר כי אדוני ידבר נא עבדך דבר באזני אדוני ואל יחר אפך בעבדך כי “**then Yehudah approached him and said, “If you please, my lord, may your servant speak a word in my lord's ear and may your anger not flare up at your servant, for you are like Pharaoh.”** At this juncture, they are meeting to discuss Yosef's refusal to return Binyamin to his father, Yaakov. Yet, subsequently, they meet peacefully to carry out the mission their father Yaakov delegates to them. So, let us examine the words of Chazal in the Midrash Tanchuma (ibid.):

“ואת יהודה שלח לפניו, זה שאמר הכתוב (איוב כה-כ) המשל ופחד עמו עושה שלום במרומו, המשל זה מיכאל ופחד זה גבריאל, מיכאל מן המים וגבריאל מן האש, והן עומדין לפני השכינה ואינן מוזיקין זה את זה, הוי אומר עושה שלום במרומו... יהודה ויוסף, זה ארי (בראשית מט-ט): “גור אריה יהודה”], וזה שור (דברים לג-ז): “בכור שורו הדור לו”, אתמול מתנגחין זה עם זה, ועכשיו הוא משלחו אצלו, שנאמר ואת יהודה שלח לפניו, הוי עושה שלום במרומו.”

We have a passuk in Iyov (25, 2) that states: “**Dominion and terror are with him; He makes peace in His heights.**” “**Dominion**” refers to Michael; while “**terror**” refers to Gavriel. Michael emanates from water and Gavriel emanates from fire. They both stand before the Shechinah, without harming one another. This is the implication of the passuk: “**He makes peace in His heights.**” Similarly, Yosef and Yehudah stand together; Yehudah is a lion and Yosef is an ox. Yesterday, they were battling one another; now he (Yaakov) sends him (Yehudah) to work with the other. This once again demonstrates the dictum of: “**He makes peace in His heights.**”

Regarding the Midrash's statement that yesterday Yehudah and Yosef were attacking one another--“אתמול מתנגחין זה עם זה”—this is to be understood as Rashi explains in the name of the Midrash. First of all, Yehudah threatened Yosef: “**If you will antagonize me, I will kill both you and your master.**” Secondly, the Midrash (B.R. 93,2) elucidates the following pesukim in

Tehillim (48, 5) as depicting the first encounter between Yehudah and Yosef: **“כי הגה המלכים נועדו עברו יחדיו, המה ראו כן תמהו נבהלו נחפזו, רעדו אחזתם שם חיל כיולדה—for behold, the kings assembled, they came together; they saw and indeed were astounded; they were confounded and fled in haste. Trembling gripped them there, convulsions like a woman in birth travail.** Let us examine the Midrash:

“כי הגה המלכים נועדו, זה יהודה ויוסף, עברו יחדיו, זה נתמלא עברה על זה וזה נתמלא עברה על זה, המה ראו כן תמהו, ויתמהו האנשים איש אל רעהו, נבהלו נחפזו, ולא יכלו אחיו לענות אותו כי נבהלו מפניו, רעדו אחזתם שם, אלו השבטים, אמרו מלכים מדיינים אלו עם אלו אנו מה איכפת לנו, יאי למלך מדיין עם מלך.”

The kings assembled refers to Yehuda and Yosef; “עברו יחדיו”, they each filled with rage toward the other; “המה ראו כן תמהו”, the spectators were bewildered; “נבהלו ונחפזו”, his brothers were unable to respond to him because they were in shock; “רעדו אחזתם שם”, this refers to the shevatim who said: **“Kings are debating one another, what concern is it of ours, it is fitting for a king to confront a king.”**

Clearly, we must attempt to decipher our sage’s puzzling and enigmatic elucidation. Firstly, why did they characterize the first encounter as two opposing forces battling and going one another, requiring HKB”H’s intervention to make peace between them? This peace was accomplished by Yaakov sending Yehudah ahead of him to join forces with Yosef, in order to establish a study-hall.

Similarly, why does the second Midrash characterize this very same encounter between Yehudah and Yosef: **“For behold, the kings assembled, they came together”** as indicating that they became enraged with one another, startling the other shevatim and prompting them to remark: **“Kings are debating one another, what concern is it of ours”?** It should be obvious to any intelligent person that our blessed sages are conveying an important and lofty message. It behooves us to examine this encounter between Yehudah and Yosef more closely in order to comprehend their message.

Yehudah Who Confessed His Guilt Regarding Tamar Demonstrated for Yisrael the Paths of Teshuvah

Our holy sefarim teach us that Yehudah and Yosef represent two distinct ways to serve Hashem. Following their lead, we shall proceed to explain these two distinct paths. Let us begin with Yehudah. He demonstrated for Yisrael the path and mechanism of teshuvah. We learn this fact from the blessing Yaakov bestows

upon Yehudah prior to his death (Bereishis 49, 8): **“יהודה אתה יודוך—Yehudah, you your brothers shall acknowledge.** We find the following elucidation in the Midrash (B.R. 99, 7):

“הרי שמעון ולוי יצאו אף הם פניהם מכורכמות [שהוכיח אותם יעקב על שמכרו את יוסף], והיה מתיירא יהודה שלא יזכור לו מעשה תמר, התחיל קורא לו יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך, אמר לו הקב”ה [ליהודה], אתה הודית במעשה תמר, יודוך אחיך להיות מלך עליהם.”

Shimon and Levi, they too emerged with gloomy faces (because Yaakov rebuked them for selling Yosef); **Yehudah feared that he might remind him of the incident involving Tamar. He began addressing him with the words: “Yehudah, you your brothers shall acknowledge.”** HKB”H said to him (to Yehudah): **“You acknowledged your culpability regarding Tamar, so shall your brothers acknowledge you as their king.”**

We learn that Yehudah merited becoming King of Yisrael, because he performed teshuvah; he was not ashamed to admit publicly what had transpired with Tamar. The Torah attests to this as follows (Bereishis 38, 26): **“ויכר יהודה ויאמר צדקה ממני—Yehudah recognized them and he said, “She is right; it is from me.”** Furthermore, the Midrash (B.R. 98, 6) explains that in the merit of this confession, Yaakov blessed him that all of Yisrael would be named after him: **“יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך, אחיך מודים בך, אמך מודה בך, אני בעצמי מודה לך, אמר רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, יהיו כל אחיך נקראין על שמך, אין אדם אומר, ראובני אנה, שמעוני אנה, אלא יהודי אנה.”** **“Yehudah, you shall be acknowledged by your brothers.” Your brothers acknowledge you; your mother acknowledges you; I myself acknowledge you. Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai said: All of your brothers will be referred to by your name. A person does not say, “I am a Reuveini,” or “I am a Shimoni”; rather, he says, “I am a Jew (Yehudi: derived from the name Yehudah).”**

We find a similar comment in the Targum Yonasan regarding this passuk: **“יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך” - “יהודה אנת אודיתא על עובדא דתמר** Translation: **Yehudah, you confessed regarding the incident with Tamar. Consequently, your brothers will acknowledge you and they will be called “Yehudim” after you.** The reason for this designation is due to the fact that Yehudah demonstrated for all of Yisrael the path of teshuvah. He taught Yisrael that it is necessary to confess one’s sins to HKB”H. This emphasizes how dear the mitzvah of teshuvah and confession are to HKB”H. So much so that all of Yisrael are called “Yehudim,” named after Yehudah, who admitted his involvement in the incident with Tamar.

Yosef Sanctified Himself in Mitzrayim in the Merit of Torah-study

While Yehudah represents the path of teshuvah for Yisrael, Yosef HaTzaddik represents the path of Torah-study. In parshas Vayeishev it states (Bereishis 37, 3): **“וישראל אהב את יוסף מכל בניו—now Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his sons, since he was a child of his old age.** Rashi comments: **“Targum Onkelos rendered it: ‘He was a wise son to him’—because everything he had learned from Shem an Eiver he gave over to him.**

Thus, we can conclude that what enabled Yosef to maintain his kedushah in Mitzrayim was the merit of Torah-study; even in Mitzrayim, he continued to study the Torah that he had received from his father Yaakov. For, without Torah, it is impossible to withstand the yetzer hara, as we have learned in the Gemara (Kiddushin 30b): **“כך הקב”ה אמר להם לישראל, בני בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי “-- so said HKB”H to Yisrael: My children, I have created the yetzer hara and I have created the Torah as its antidote; if you engage in Torah-study, you will not fall prey to it.**

It appears that we can substantiate this fact based on what we have learned elsewhere in the Gemara (Yoma 35b): **“יוסף מחייב—Yosef obligates the wicked.** In the passage prior to this statement, the Gemara explains:

“רשע אומרים לו, מפני מה לא עסקת בתורה, אם אמר נאה הייתי וטרוד ביצרי הייתי, אומרים לו כלום נאה היית מיוסף. אמרו עליו על יוסף הצדיק, בכל יום ויום היתה אשת פוטיפר משדלתו בדברים, בגדים שלבשה לו שחרית לא לבשה לו ערבית, בגדים שלבשה לו ערבית לא לבשה לו שחרית.

אמרה לו השמע לי, אמר לה לאו, אמרה לו הריני חובשתך בבית האסורין, אמר לה ה' מתיר אסורים, הריני כופפת קומתך, ה' זוקף כפופים, הריני מסמא את עיניך, ה' פוקח עורים, נתנה לו אלף ככרי כסף לשמוע אליה לשכב אצלה להיות עמה, ולא רצה לשמוע אליה לשכב אצלה בעולם הזה, להיות עמה לעולם הבא.”

To the wicked person they say, “Why did you not engage in Torah-study?” If he says, “I was handsome and occupied with my yetzer,” they will answer him, “Were you any more handsome than Yosef?” They said about Yosef HaTzaddik: Each and every day the wife of Potiphar would attempt to seduce him with words. Clothes she wore for him in the morning she would not wear for him in the evening; clothes she wore for him in the evening she would not wear for him in the morning.

She said to him, “Surrender yourself to me.” He answered her, “No.” She threatened him, “I shall confine you in prison.”

He answered her, “Hashem releases the imprisoned.” She said, “I shall bend your proud stature.” He replied, “Hashem straightens the bent.” She threatened, “I will blind your eyes.” He replied, “Hashem gives sight to the blind.” She gave him one thousand silver bars, so that he would consent “to lie beside her, to be with her”; but he did not want to consent. He did not consent “to lie with her” in Olam HaZeh, because he did not want “to be with her” in Olam HaBa.

So we see that when the wicked come to judgment, they are asked: **“Why did you not engage in Torah-study?”** For, had you studied Torah you would have been able to withstand the persuasions of your yetzer hara. If he tries to justify his wicked behavior by claiming that his physical good looks caused women to pursue him, they say to him: **“Were you more handsome than Yosef?”** The implication is that despite his good looks, Yosef withstood his trying ordeal in Mitzrayim and maintained his kedushah in the merit of his Torah-study. Therefore, it is Yosef who obligates the “reshaim” to study Torah. Just as he overcame his yetzer by means of Torah-study, so too can they.

He Reviewed What His Father Taught Him

We find further proof in the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni parshas Vayeishev 146): **“ויבוא הביתה לעשות מלאכתו, רבי אליעזר אומר שבת היה, דכתיב (בראשת ב-ג) כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו, ומה מלאכה היתה לו, שונה וקורא “He came home to do his work.” Rabbi Eliezer says that it was Shabbas . . . And what work did he have to do? He would review and study what his father had taught him.** Thus, we have an explicit source stating that he studied the Torah that his father had taught him.

This provides us with a very nice explanation for what we have learned in the following Gemara (Sotah 36b): **“באותה שעה -- at that moment, the image of his father appeared to him in the window.** When Yosef withstood the difficult ordeal with his master’s wife, he saw the image of his father with whom he used to study Torah regularly. It was precisely at that time that he would study the Torah that his father had taught him. In the merit of the Torah’s kedushah he prevailed over his yetzer.

A similar explanation appears in the Zohar hakadosh (Vayeishev 190b): **“ויבוא הביתה לעשות מלאכתו, בגין לאשתדלא באורייתא “He came home to do his work”—to engage in Torah-study and to fulfill the mitzvos of the Torah, which are a person’s work in this world.**

This then is the message conveyed by the pesukim in parshas Vayigash (Bereishis 45, 25): **“ויעלו ממצרים ויבואו ארץ כנען אל יעקב: ויפג לבו כי אביהם, ויגידו לו לאמר עוד יוסף חי וכי הוא מושל בכל ארץ מצרים, ויפג לבו כי לא האמין להם, וידברו אליו את כל דברי יוסף אשר דיבר אליהם, וירא את העגלות אשר שלח יוסף לשאת אותו ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם, ויאמר ישראל רב עוד יוסף.”** **They went up from Mitzrayim and came to the land of Canaan to Yaakov their father. They told him, saying, “Yosef is still alive,” and he is ruler over the entire land of Mitzrayim; but he had a turn of heart, for he did not believe them. And they relate to him all the words of Yosef that he had spoken to them, and he saw the wagons that Yosef had sent to transport him, then the spirit of their father Yaakov was revived. And Yisrael said, “There is much! My son Yosef still lives! I shall go and see him before I die.”**

The following elucidation appears in the Midrash (94, 3): **He said to them (Yosef to his brothers): If he (Yaakov) believes you then fine. If not, say to him (in my name), “When I departed from you, wasn’t I learning the passage of ‘eglah arufah’?” This is the significance of that which is written: “And he saw the wagons (“agalos”; note the similarity to the word “eglah”). . . then the spirit (of their father Yaakov) was revived. And Yisrael said, “The strength of my son Yosef is great; he has experienced many hardships, and yet he remains righteous.”** Based on what we have discussed, Yosef intended to prove to Yaakov—by means of the wagons-- that even in Mitzrayim, he did not stop studying the Torah that he had learned from him.

Mashiach ben Yehudah in the Merit of Teshuvah Mashiach ben Yosef in the Merit of Torah

Now, we can begin to understand a revelation from our blessed sages. They teach us (Succah 52b) that the future geulah will be facilitated by two mashiachs—**Mashiach ben Yosef** descending from Yosef and **Mashiach ben David** descending from Yehudah. Thus, it becomes apparent that the future geulah depends on the two paths that these two kings paved for us—the path of teshuvah demonstrated by Yehudah and the path of Torah demonstrated by Yosef.

We shall begin by discussing the path of teshuvah. We have learned in the Gemara (Yoma 86b): **“גדולה תשובה שמביאה את הגאולה: --the merit of teshuvah is so great that it brings about the geulah.** Hence, the Rambam concludes (Hilchos Teshuvah 7, 5): **“אין ישראל”** **Yisrael will only be redeemed through the process of teshuvah.** Furthermore, we find the following elucidation in the Midrash (B.R. 2, 4) concerning the passuk

(Bereishis 1, 2): **“והארץ היתה תוהו ובוהו וחושך על פני תהום ורוח אלקים מרחפת: and the earth was chaos and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of G-d was hovering upon the surface of the waters.** **”רבי שמעון בן לקיש פתר קריא בגלויות, והארץ היתה תוהו, זה גלות בכל... ובוהו, זה גלות מדי... וחושך, זה גלות יון... על פני תהום, זה גלות ממלכת הרשעה שאין להם חקר כמו התהום... ורוח אלקים מרחפת, זה רוחו של מלך המשיח, היאך מה דאת אמר (ישעיה יא-ב) ונחה עליו רוח ה', באיזו זכות ממשמשת ובאה, המרחפת על פני המים, בזכות התשובה שנמשלה כמים, שנאמר (איכה 1: 20) ורוח אלקים מרחפת על פני תהום.”** Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish interprets this passuk as being a reference to the galuyot (exiles). **“Tohu”** is associated with galut Bavel, **“vohu”** with galut Madai, **“choshech”** with galut Yavan and **“tehom”** with the evil regime of galut Edom, which is like a bottomless pit. The passuk concludes by stating that the spirit of G-d hovered upon the surface of the water; according to the Midrash, this refers to the spirit of the Melech HaMashiach. It brings a proof to this allusion from the passuk in Yeshayah (11,2) which states: **“The spirit of Hashem will rest upon him.”** Then the Midrash asks in what merit will that spirit which hovers above the waters hurry and come before the designated time. It answers: In the merit of teshuvah, which is compared to water, as it states (Eichah 2, 19): **“Pour out your heart like water.”**

Based on what we have learned, we can comprehend why HKB”H arranged that David HaMelech from shevet Yehudah would also pave the way for all “ba’alei teshuvah.” Note the following Gemara (A.Z. 4b): **“לא דוד ראוי לאותו מעשה דכתיב (תהלים 138: 6) קט-כב) ולכי חלל בקרבי... אלא לומר לך שאם חטא יחיד אומרים לו כלך אצל יחיד... והיינו דרבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן, מאי דכתיב (שמואל ב כג-א) נאום דוד בן ישי ונאום הגבר הוקם על, נאם דוד בן ישי שהקים עולה של David HaMelech would not have performed that deed. It was ordained from above that David would fail in the matter involving Bat Sheva. As a result, he established the pathway of teshuvah — repentance — for all of Yisrael to emulate. He thus provided Yisrael with a form of atonement and rectification.**

Nevertheless, just as the geulah depends on teshuvah, similarly it will not come without the merit of Torah-study. The Ohr HaChaim hakadosh states this fact in the name of the Midrash in parshas Bereishis (opening passuk 22): **“והארץ היתה תוהו ובוהו וחושך על פני תהום ורוח אלקים מרחפת: and the earth was chaos and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of G-d was hovering upon the surface of the waters.”** **“רוחו של משיח, מרחפת על פני המים, אין מים אלא תורה, על דרך אומרים בזוהר (זוהר חדש פרשת בראשית דף טו ד’ ד”ה ויקרא) שלא יגאלו ישראל אלא בזכות התורה.”** Now, the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh brings this Midrash and its analogy to water not as an allusion to teshuvah but rather as an allusion to Torah. He cites the Midrash’s interpretation that this passuk is an allusion to the spirit of the Mashiach, hovering over the surface of the water. Then, however, he interjects that

there is no water other than Torah; in other words, the water in the passuk necessarily alludes to Torah. To corroborate this interpretation, he cites the statement in the Zohar that Yisrael will only be redeemed in the merit of the Torah, which is compared to water. This is astonishing, seeing as we find no such statement in the Midrash. We noted this discrepancy in our essay for Succos. So, here is a source for this notion from the Zohar hakadosh (Part 1, 263a): **“The spirit of G-d” refers to the spirit of Mashiach. When it will hover over the waters of Torah, the geulah will begin immediately. This is the implication of the words: “And G-d said, ‘Let there be light.’”**

Regarding the Ohr HaChaim’s statement in the name of the Zohar—that Yisrael will only be redeemed in the merit of Torah-study—he explains the matter himself at the beginning of parshas Tetzaveh by citing the Zohar Chadash cited above:

“אמר הקב”ה, בגלויות הראשונות חזרו בזכות אברהם יצחק ויעקב, עכשיו הם חטאו בתורה שנתתי למשה, כד יתובון ויתעסקון בתורתו, בזכות משה—HKB”H said: **The first exiles returned in the merit of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. Now, they have violated the Torah that I gave to Moshe. When they will sit and engage in the study of his Torah, I will redeem them in Moshe’s merit.** Based on this premise, the Ohr HaChaim concludes: **“ולזה נתארך הגלות, כי כל עוד שאין עוסקים בתורה ובמצוות, אין משה חפץ לגאול עם בטלנים מן התורה—this is the why the galut is so prolonged; so long as they do not engage in Torah-study and mitzvos, Moshe is unwilling to redeem a people who are remiss in Torah study.** We can suggest that this is alluded to by the following passuk (Shemos 13, 19): **“ויקח משה את עצמות יוסף עמו—Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him.** In other words, Moshe Rabeinu, who gave us the Torah, followed in the footsteps of Yosef, who demonstrated that it is imperative to engage in Torah-study in order to prevail over the yetzer hara. Therefore, Moshe is not interested in redeeming those who are remiss with regards to Torah-study.

Thus, we see that there are two ways to interpret this passuk: **“זרוח אלקים מרחפת על פני המים”.** According, to the Midrash, the spirit of Mashiach hovers and will be revealed in the world in the merit of teshuvah, which is compared to water—as it states: **“Pour out your heart like water.”** According to the Zohar hakadosh, the spirit of Mashiach hovers and will be revealed in the world in the merit of the study of Torah, which is compared to water. Based on our discussion, it is evident that both represent the divine truth. Mashiach ben David, hailing from shevet Yehudah, will come in the merit of teshuvah—the path paved by Yehudah. Whereas Mashiach ben Yosef will come in the merit of Torah-study—the path paved by Yosef.

We can now shed some light on the enigmatic words of our sages. Recall that they depicted the encounter between Yehudah and Yosef as follows: **“The kings assembled’ refers to Yehuda and Yosef; ‘עברו יחדיו’, they each filled with rage against the other.”** HKB”H orchestrated that they would meet and argue vehemently with one another, because each of them represents a different way to serve Hashem. Therefore, each one was enraged by the other. For, Yehudah, the predecessor of Mashiach ben David, was of the opinion that it is necessary to focus on teshuvah to hasten the geulah. On the other hand, Yosef, the predecessor of Mashiach ben Yosef, was of the opinion that it is necessary to focus on Torah-study to hasten the geulah.

Concerning this dispute, the Midrash says: **“Trembling overcame them” refers to the shevatim; they said, “Kings are debating one another, what concern is it of ours, it is fitting for a king to confront a king.”** By means of their “ruach hakodesh,” they perceived that it was not for naught that HKB”H arranged this epic confrontation. For, in truth, both represent divine truth; both methods of serving Hashem are effective and serve the same desirable purpose. Therefore, they proclaimed: **“Kings are debating one another, what concern is it of ours.”** After all, we require the magnificent combination of their two approaches. Hence, undoubtedly: **“It is fitting for a king to confront a king.”** We require both kings—Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben David.

It Is Imperative to Perform Teshuvah Prior to Torah-study

Following this line of reasoning, let us proceed to explain why HKB”H arranged their reconciliation in this manner—by Yaakov Avinu sending Yehudah to work in concert with Yosef. Recall the words of the Midrash cited above. In relation to the words **“He sent Yehudah ahead of him,”** the Midrash expounds on the passuk in Iyov (25, 2): **“Dominion and terror are with him; He makes peace in His heights.”** **“Dominion”** refers to Michael; while **“terror”** refers to Gavriel. Michael emanates from water and Gavriel emanates from fire. They both stand before the Shechinah, without harming one another. This is the implication of the passuk: **“He makes peace in His heights.”** Similarly, Yosef and Yehudah stand together; Yehudah is a lion and Yosef is an ox. Yesterday, they were battling one another; now he (Yaakov) sends him (Yehudah) to work with the other. This once again demonstrates the dictum of: **“He makes peace in His heights.”**

Let us suggest an explanation. Upon careful consideration, it is apparent that the two methodologies of Yehudah and Yosef are intimately related and inseparable. In fact, the passuk states explicitly (Tehillim 50, 16): “ולרשע אמר אלקים מה לך לספר חוקי ותשא” -- **but to the wicked, G-d said: “What advantage is there to you to recount My statutes and to bear My covenant upon your lips?”** With this understanding, it turns out that it is impossible to study Torah unless one has first repented for his transgressions. It is precisely for this reason that the spirit of Mashiach hovers and reveals itself only in the merit of two types of water. First, it waits for teshuvah, which is compared to water; then it waits for Torah, which is also compared to water.

This enlightens us as to Yaakov Avinu’s incredible wisdom: **“He sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to instruct ahead of him in Goshen.”** As Rashi explains in the name of a Midrash aggadah: “להורות לפניו, לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם תצא הוראה” — **to establish a study hall from which instruction would be forthcoming.** Yaakov Avinu, the pillar of Torah, determined that both methodologies are correct and both represent the will of G-d.

Therefore, he begins by sending Yehudah—who paved the path of teshuvah—to Yosef—who paved the path of Torah. By doing so, Yaakov wished to demonstrate Yehudah’s method comes first. It is essential to perform teshuvah and make amends for one’s transgression prior to engaging in Torah-study. This is implicit in the word’s of Rashi: “להורות לפניו, לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם תצא הוראה”—it is a vital lesson for all future generations—the two paths must be combined; first a person must return to Hashem by following Yehudah’s example and performing complete teshuvah; subsequently, he should follow the example of Yosef and engage in diligent Torah-study.

On Motzaei Shabbas We Recite a Berachah to the Light of a Candle Alluding to the Light of Torah

With great joy and satisfaction, we can now address the statement in the Midrash. Regarding the words: **“He sent Yehudah ahead of him”**—the Midrash inquires as to the proper time to light the Havdalah candle at the conclusion of the Shabbas; it concludes that we do not recite the blessing until we are able to benefit from the torch’s light. First of all, let us explain the reason for reciting a berachah over a candle on Motzaei Shabbas. We have a passuk that states (Mishlei 6, 23): “כי נר מצוה ותורה אור”--

for a mitzvah is a lamp and the Torah is light. On Shabbas, a Jew separates himself from all labors and concerns pertaining to Olam HaZeh. Therefore, at the conclusion of the Shabbas, when he resumes the labors pertaining to Olam HaZeh, he recites a berachah over the candle to remind himself: **כי נר מצוה ותורה אור**—that Torah-study is essential to protect oneself from the influences of the yetzer hara.

We can add another praiseworthy reason for reciting a berachah over a candle immediately at the conclusion of the Shabbas. After all, Shabbas is a time of teshuvah and atonement for sins. We find the following allusion to this fact in our holy sefarim: **שׁיבת ב׳ו ת׳שוב** is an abbreviation for the phrase **שׁיבת**—meaning “on Shabbas you should repent.” Furthermore, the observance of Shabbas is a “segulah”-- an efficacious practice-- for the atonement of sins. Recall the statement in the Gemara (Shabbas 118b): **כל המשמר שבת כהלכתו אפילו עובד עבודה זרה כדור**— **whoever observes Shabbas properly, even if he worships idols like the generation of Enosh, is forgiven.** Consequently, at the conclusion of the Shabbas, every Jew is clean of all transgressions.

This then is the meaning of the Midrash: **יְלַמְדֵנו רַבֵּינוּ, אֵימָתִי** “מברכין על הנר במוצאי שבת”. In other words, when is it possible to recite a berachah before Hashem regarding the candle of a mitzvah and the light of Torah? For, if a person is tainted by sins, **וְלִרְשָׁעִים אֵין מִצְוָה** HKB”H does not desire his Torah, as it is written: **וְלִרְשָׁעִים אֵין מִצְוָה**—**but to the wicked, G-d said, “What benefit is it to you to recount My statutes and to bear My covenant upon your lips?”** To this the Midrash replies: **כִּי שָׁנוּ** “רבותינו אין מברכין על הנר עד שיאותרו לאורו”. In other words, only after they are benefitting in the heavens from the light of his Torah—because his transgressions were forgiven on Shabbas—only then is it possible to recite a berachah before Hashem regarding the light of the candle, symbolizing Torah-study.

This ties in beautifully with the fact that Yaakov sent Yehudah down to Mitzrayim to join forces with Yosef. As we have learned, Yaakov was teaching us that it is essential to first follow the path of teshuvah, as exemplified by Yehudah, prior to embarking on the path of Torah, exemplified by Yosef. Both together are beneficial for hastening the arrival of the future geulah facilitated by the two kings—Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben David. May they come and redeem us swiftly, in our times. Amen.

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