



# THANK YOU HASHEM

## For Shabbos Kodesh!

### Parshas Vayigash

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לזכות רפואה שלמה מלכה בת רחמי, מיכאל בן שולמית, יעקב משה בן דבורה שירה ואברותי יחודה בן שרה רבקה

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#### HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

ויגש אליו יהודה ויאמר בי אדני ידברנא עבדך דבר באזני אדני ואל-יחר אפך  
בעבדך כי כמוך קפדנה...

And Yehuda approached him and said, "Please, my master, allow me to speak words in the ears of my lord, and let you not grow angry with your servant, for you are like Pharaoh..."

THE HOLY NOAM Elimelech reveals a heart-wrenching allusion in the opening verse of our parsha. Although the context makes it clear that the "him" to whom Yehudah draws close in this verse is referring to Yosef in the guise of Pharaoh's second-in-command, the tzaddik writes that the ambiguity of the wording allows us to suggest an alternative understanding. Because the pasuk does not explicitly state who it was that Yehudah approached, perhaps the Torah means to hint in this verse to the *Yehudi*, Jew, who draws close to *Hashem* in prayer. What is the Jew's most desperate prayer at a time when, like Yehudah in this *pasuk*, he feels as if all hope is lost? "*V'al yichar apcha b'avdecha*": Please, Master of the world, have mercy on me and do not be exacting about my lowly actions, "*ki kamocha k'Pharaoh*": because I am so confused, swept along by the stormy waves of a world gone insane that at times carry me to the height of delusion - making me think that I am a great tzaddik, permeated with Your Holiness ("*kamocha*"), and at others drag me down into the watery depths of despair - making me feel as if I am the most hopeless sinner ("*k'Pharaoh*"). Father in heaven, look upon the roller coaster of our

YOU DON'T ALWAYS  
NEED A PLAN.  
SOMETIMES YOU  
JUST NEED TO DAVEN,  
TRUST HASHEM  
AND LET GO.

-A

generation's complex and the erratic ups and downs that shake our world with so much force that it is difficult even to hold on, let alone to thrive, and see how valiantly we are striving to make it to the other side of this ocean. Please have mercy on us and help us make it to the finish line of history! 🙏

#### Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 👑 Yehuda approaches Yosef to plead for the release of Binyamin. He offers to take Binyamin's place as a slave to the Egyptian ruler. Seeing the bond between his brothers, Yosef reveals his true identity to them. "I am Yosef," he declares. "Is my father still alive?"
- 👑 The brothers are overwhelmed with shame and remorse, but Yosef comforts them. He explains that the entire episode had been arranged by Hashem to that they would all be saved from the famine.
- 👑 The brothers rush back to Canaan with the news. Yaakov comes to Egypt with seventy of his descendants and is reunited with Yosef after 22 years of mourning. On his way down to Egypt, Yaakov receives a divine promise: "Do not fear going down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down with you into Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again."
- 👑 Yosef gathers the wealth of Egypt by selling food and seed during the famine. Pharaoh gives Yaakov's family the county of Goshen to settle, and the b'nei Yisrael prosper there.

## P'nimiyus haParsha

### An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

וַיֵּרָא אֶת־הַעֲגֻלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח יוֹסֵף לְשֵׂאת אֹתוֹ וְתַחֵי רוּחַ יַעֲקֹב אָבִיהֶם...

*And he saw the wagons Yosef had sent to transport him, and the spirit of Yaakov was revived...*

THE TIKKUNEI ZOHAR teaches that if a Jew studies Torah without the requisite emotional foundation of love and awe, the Torah does not ascend above to the higher realms. However, when Torah is studied with the proper *ahava* and *yirah*, these emotions serve as wings that carry the letters above. This ability of the letters to escape the physical realm is associated with “*ruach*”, an animating spirit which becomes invested in the letters and enables them to rise. The source of this *ruach* is the verse which states, “*ruach chochmah u'binah*”, as it is these cognitive powers which foster the emotions of love and awe, respectively.

While the letters of a Hebrew word are likened to square chariots, the *nekudos* below the words are likened to the circular wheels which enliven the chariot, allowing it to move. The Zohar teaches that the cognitive powers are associated with the letter *Yud*, and the letter *Yud* is referred to as a “*nekudah*”. It is this *nekudah* of the mental powers which - like a wheel to a chariot - inspires *ahava* and *yirah* within the heart of a Jew and enables the square chariots of his Torah letters to rise to the heavenly realms above.

Commenting on a teaching from Chazal, “*Yaakov avinu lo meis*”, “Yaakov Avinu never died”, the Baal Shem Tov taught that this statement is referring to the eternity of the Torah which Yaakov Avinu, the *middah* of *Tiferes*, embodied. Interestingly enough, Yaakov Avinu is himself connected to the concept of *ruach* mentioned above, as Yaakov Avinu is associated with the letter

**Vav** of Hashem’s Name, the letter associated with the portion of the soul known as *ruach*. (The final “*Heh*” of Hashem’s Name is associated with *Nefesh*, “*Vav*” with *Ruach*, first “*Heh*” with *Neshama*, “*Yud*” with *Chaya*, and tip of the “*Yud*” with *Yechidah*.)

Based on these introductory ideas, the holy Degel Machaneh Ephraim reveals an astounding allusion hidden in our verse.

“*Vayaar es ha’agalos*”: This refers to the circular wheels of the wagons that allude to the *nekudos* of *Chochmah* and *Binah*, the cognitive source for the emotional powers of *ahava* and *yirah*. When Hashem sees a Jew studying Torah with such love and awe, “*asher shalach Yosef*”: sent as a love letter by one who yearns to grow closer and closer to Him each day (“*mosif*” - to add), “*laseis oso*”: this emotional foundation and the context of a relationship with Hashem within which the Torah study flourishes allows the words of Torah to be carried above this world, “*vat’chi ruach Yaakov avihem*”, and the “*ruach chochmah u'binah*” with which each word is invested brings vitality to the study of our eternal Torah associated with “*Yaakov Avinu lo meis*.”

May we merit to connect ourselves to the inner spirit of the Torah, reframing our Yiddishkeit as the deepest relationship with our loving Father in heaven and imbuing our Torah study with love and awe so it may become filled with vitality and rise to the loftiest spiritual levels! 🙏



*The emotional traits of love and awe, inspired by the cognitive powers of Chochmah and Binah, serve as wings which enliven our Torah study and enable the words we learn to rise to the heavenly realms above.*

## Tohameha

### Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

LAST WEEK, WE began to explore the Chernovitzer’s parable of a soldier who is invited by the king to the royal palace. As he is brought nearer and nearer to the room in which the king himself is sitting, the soldier’s awe grows and grows - to an ultimately unbearable degree. Finally, as they enter the courtyard of the throne room, the soldier is forced to stop as a result of the debilitating awe by which he is seized. Understanding that the soldier is unable to handle beholding his presence in the setting of the majestic throne room, the king sends the soldier home. A few days later, the king travels to the soldier’s house. In the comfort of his home, he is able to handle the presence of the king, and all of his mundane activities are imbued with the awesome awareness of his royal guest. The meaning of this parable is as follows. When one begins to serve Hashem in earnest, Hashem continually brings him further and further into His Infinite Light, granting him access to steadily increasing measures of *emunah* and spiritual perception. At the pinnacle of this process, the tzaddik is completely removed from his body and transcends physical necessities such as eating or sleeping. But alas, he is yet a human being, unable to become nullified within the Infinite Light, and he must return. Still, in His great love for the tzaddik, Hashem descends into his “home”, settling within his mundane activities as well. In this way, even while forced to engage with the mundanity of this-worldly matters, the tzaddik is able to maintain the same level of awe and God-consciousness. To be continued! 🙏

*This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)*

## Profiles of Tzaddikim

### Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

#### Reb Shmuel Shmelke Horowitz of Nikholsburg zy"א

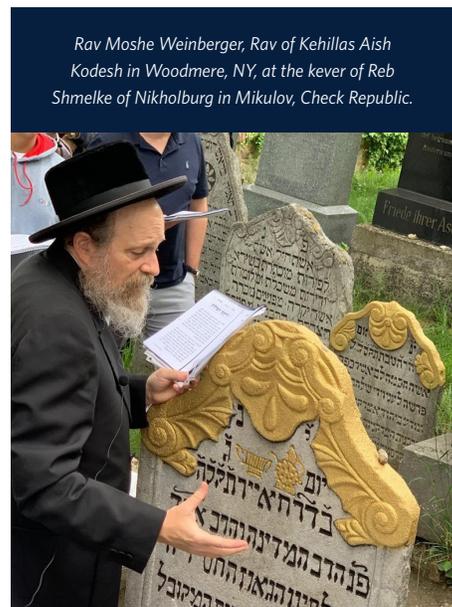
Reb Shmuel Shmelke HaLevi Horowitz was born in Poland in 1726 (5486). Like many of his future colleagues, Shmuel Shmelke possessed a sharp mind and a keen ability to decipher difficult concepts in his Torah studies from a very young age. Shmuel Shmelke and his younger brother Pinchos, who would later become renowned as the "Baal Hafla'ah", were both sent to study in the yeshiva of the Vilna Gaon. While there, they met Reb Avraham Kalisker, a prominent student of the Maggid of Mezritch, who convinced them to travel to Mezritch and join the growing circle of disciples of the Maggid.

After Reb Shmuel Shmelke's marriage in 1754 (5515), he took a position as the Rav in Rychwal. It was during this time that a handful of young Chassidim came to learn from him, most notably Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditshov, the Chozeh M'Lublin, as well as the Maggid of Kohznitz. Reb Shmuel Shmelke was a pioneer in spreading the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov and is considered to be one of the foremost figures in the development of Chassidus in cities and towns across Eastern Europe.

The tzaddik eventually established his court in the Moravia region, located East of what is now the Czech Republic, ultimately settling himself in the capital city of Nikholsburg. Although the movement of Chassidus was beginning to spread rapidly, Reb Shmuel Shmelke faced strong opposition from rabbonim of the surrounding towns and cities. He nevertheless continued to pump these life-giving teachings into the hearts of all those who sought his guidance and counsel.

Reb Shmuel Shmelke left this world in 1778 (5538). It is said that while on his deathbed, the tzaddik told his closest disciples that he was a *gilgul*, reincarnation, of Shmuel HaNavi, who similarly lived to the age of 52, cryptically adding, "The difference between us is that Shmuel HaNavi was known as Shmuel, but I have remained 'Shmelke'." Reb Shmuel Shmelke penned two *sefarim*, *Divrei Shmuel* and *Nezir Hashem*

*Zechuso Yogen Aleinu! This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press). 🕎*



Rav Moshe Weinberger, Rav of Kehillas Aish Kodesh in Woodmere, NY, at the kever of Reb Shmelke of Nikholsburg in Mikulov, Check Republic.

## Chassidus 101

### Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

*Tahara*, purification, is one of the central concepts in the Torah and *avodas Hashem*. While each person has their own perception of what purity means and represents, the tzaddikim teach that *tahara* is a means to an end, not an end itself. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov writes that *tahara* is a medium through which one ascends or elevates from *tumah*, impurity, into the realm of *kedusha*, holiness. Let's try to understand what exactly *tahara* is.

The Sefas Emes explains that all *tumah* stems from the sin of the *Eitz HaDaas*, Adam and Chava's eating from the forbidden tree. *Tahara*, therefore, is developed through *bittul hadaas*, nullifying our own calculations and desires, in order to fulfill that which the Master of the world wants from us. Once Adam and Chava ate from the tree, their connection to and understanding of *ratzon Hashem*, of what Hashem desired of them, was clouded by the *tumah* they had caused to come about. From that point on, our ability to perceive and tap into *ratzon Hashem* necessitates that we put aside our trivial, often temporal wishes for something greater, something eternal.

This idea is best expressed when seeking to understand Bnei Yisrael's eternal bond with Hashem. We are all familiar with the concept that there is a spark of holiness within each and every Jew, even in those Jews who seem so far removed from *Yiddishkeit*, that can never be tainted. Regardless of our mistakes, there always remains a part of us which is pure. The Sefas Emes explains that this purity stems from

*This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press)*

our natural instinct to draw close to Hashem. Even when our enemies enslaved and persecuted us time and time again, our *emunah* in the Master of the universe never died. This unwavering commitment to our Father in heaven, a commitment which is *beyond daas*, beyond understanding and comprehension, is what retains and nurtures that spark of purity imbedded within the Jewish soul.

This is why, throughout our history, even when faced with life or death, countless Jews have sacrificed themselves *al kiddush Hashem*. During those most difficult moments, the spark of *tahara* woven into the soul came to expression, revealing our eternal connection and dedication to Hashem. The term used by the Baal HaTanya to express this *emnuah* is "*ahavah mesuteres*", the "concealed love" for Hashem buried within the hearts of every Jew.

The tzaddikim write that our responsibility to elevate the world around us and bring Hashem into every experience and encounter requires *bitul hadaas*. In order to perceive Hashem in all that we do and nurture that recognition in others, we must first set aside our own preferences and desires and refocus our goals. When we face a given circumstance with the intention of being *megaleh k'vod Shamayim*, to make Hashem a greater part of our lives and our world, rather than to merely achieve personal gratification for our own purposes, we are actively purifying the world, elevating it into the realm of *kedusha* and bringing it one step closer to the arrival of Moshiach. 🕎

## A Quick Mayseh

*A Story to Warm the Heart*

THE HOLY CHOZEH M'Lublin once wanted to perform a certain mitzvah that required a great investment of his time. In order to make sure that he would have enough time to devote the nighttime hours to this mitzvah, the tzaddik asked his wife to prepare dinner earlier than usual.

When he arrived home for dinner with one of his students, the Chozeh found that, despite no extenuating circumstance, dinner was not yet ready. In fact, the meal was served even later than usual! While he must have been disappointed, the student noted that the tzaddik carried on as if nothing had happened, thanking his wife for the meal she had prepared without making any mention of the lateness of the hour.

Later, the student asked his Rebbe how he was able to remain so calm despite the frustration he was surely feeling. The Chozeh smiled. "It would be natural for me to become upset with my wife," he responded. "But why did I wish to eat early today? Only in order to gain time with which to perform the Almighty's will. Should I then have gone against His will by becoming upset?"

*This is an enormously important lesson. If we are invested in avodas Hashem for our own selfish purposes, it is easy for us to grow angry, frustrated, and upset when things don't work out as we thought they must for the purposes of our spiritual ascent. However, if our engagement with avodas Hashem is for Him, to do His will and bring pleasure to our Father in heaven, we will be able to handle any disruption to our service with grace, calm, and patience; proceeding with the awareness that, while perhaps less glamorous than the avodah we intended to accomplish, this, too, is avodas Hashem. 🙏*

## "THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM  
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"  
IS WRITTEN BY R' YAAKOV KLEIN,  
AUTHOR OF **SPARKS FROM BERDITCHOV** (FELDHEIM)  
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