



8 years of Points to Ponder on

Parashas Vayigash

**Learning in the Shul this week is graciously sponsored by:**

**Nachi Feit to commemorate the 3rd yahrzeit of his mother, Mrs. Shelly Feit Rachel Leah bas Noach**

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**וַיִּגַּ֨שׁ אֵלָ֜יו יְהוּדָ֗ה Yehuda approached him (44:18)** - Why is Yehuda offering such a long winded explanation of the history of his family. He should just plead for Binyamin. That is exactly why he came to Mitzrayim? **Rav Elya Dushnitzer ztl** explained that it is important to place things into context in order to fully grasp their impact. This is exactly Yehuda’s point. He was not simply pleading because he got caught, he wanted the entire Parasha perspective to be brought out in order to clarify his position. In life and in Limud Hatorah, knowing a context makes a difference.

**ַיִּגַּ֨שׁ אֵלָ֜יו יְהוּדָ֗ה And Yehudah came close to him (44:18)** – The ensuing debate between Yosef and Yehuda highlights a major difference between two approaches to Avodas Hashem. **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** notes that Yosef represents the individual Jew who, when in struggle with the outside world comes up big – as a Tzaddik Yesod Olam who sustains the entire world. A Tzaddik is a title that one earns when s/he faces outside challenges and passes them. Yehudah represents the Jew. One does not pass tests to earn the title Yehudi. One IS a Yehudi based on internal commitments and Kedusha that are inborn. **Rav Pinchas Teitz ztl**. (whose Yartzeit is Shabbos by the way), noted that while Yosef is an individual – it takes family to build a nation. Hence when establishing the Yeshiva in Goshen, it was Yehudah who had to go and make it so. By making a place independent of outside influence, the Yeshiva would be the incubator of tomorrow’s Jewish nation.

**ַיִּגַּ֨שׁ אֵלָ֜יו יְהוּדָ֗ה And Yehuda sprung forward (44:18)** – The **Baal Haturim** explains that he leaped forward in battle stance. **Rashi** too, adds that his words were supposed to be interpreted as strong. But the **Alshich, Ohr HaChaim and Nachalas Yaakov** all ask how Yehuda could have leaped so strongly when it was his words that were being followed. Then, when upping the ante to mention that all the brothers would be slaves, Yosef politely answers that he would only take the one who kept the cup. Where was Yehuda’s gratitude? The **Otzros Hatorah** explains that until the point that Yosef only wanted Binyamin, the brothers believed that everything that befell them was direct retribution for having sold Yosef. Only when the one brother not involved at all was destined to be punished – only then, did the brothers, led by Yehuda, realize that the Cheshbon was not for their selling of Yosef. That being the case, Yehuda sprung forward to act.

**בִּ֣י אֲדֹנִי֒ יְדַבֶּר־נָ֨א עַבְדְּךָ֤ דָבָר֙ בְּאָזְנֵ֣י אֲדֹנִ֔י  And Yehuda approached him and said, 'Please, sir, let your servant speak a word in the ears of my master.'" ( 44:18) - Rashi** explains that he spoke with Yosef harshly. This is troubling. We just left Yehuda in a conciliatory and almost pleading tone. Where does one see or expect such a dramatic shift? **Rav Amital ztl.** explains that while it is obvious that when trouble befalls the community, it represents a punishment which comes as a result of the evil deeds of the community, in the case of the individual this is not always so. Citing **Ramban**at the beginning of Iyov as a proof, Rav Amital explains that when Yehuda believed that the decree fell on all the brothers, he thought that the predicament was a punishment sent from God for which they would accept their fate. But when it became apparent that Yosef sought to apply his verdict to Binyamin alone, then it became possible that this was not a Divine decree at all but rather a regular, incidental event. If this was the case, then possibly the situation could be changed, and this prompted him to deliver his speech before Yosef.

 **כי כמוך כפרעה    For  you are like פרעה (44:18**) – Why does Yehudah begin his discussion with this point? Rav Mattisyahu Strashun ztl. explained that Yehuda saw through Yosef’s charge that Binyamin should be charge more criminally than he would have for having taken money – because he took Yosef’s divining cup. Yehudah argues that Yosef is no different than פרעה. After all, Yosef had to ask if the brothers had a father or brother. If the cup worked then he would not have had to ask.

**And it will be when he sees that the child is not there and he will die (44:31)** – Usually V’Haya implies a language of contentment. What contentment is there in death? **Rav Chaim Kanievski Shlita** suggested that there is a certain aspect of the certainty and finality of death that allows a closure that Yehuda and the brothers saw torturing Yaakov for the previous 22 years. That finality earned the word V’Haya.

**And Yosef could not hold back (45:1) – Rav Yisrael of Modzitz ztl**. would often explain that every Jew has a power to affect the masses. This is one of the great powers that a Jew can use to fight the Yetzer HaRa. Thus, he explains, wheb Yosef said “Lo Yachol – I cannot continue” he was reminded “Yosef l’Hisapek – he should continue to hang in there”. **Rav Shmuel Brazil** **Shlita** adds that this is evident even within the Peshat: For at that moment, Yosef’s brothers were debating destroying the entire land of Egypt. Still, he held back long enough to remove all extra people in the room – so as not to embarrass the brothers. When naturally, one cannot hold back any long, there is a superhuman strength that comes from doing the right thing. Giving in to one’s impulses is not a Jewish trait – Reishis Goyim Amalek is Rega.

**I am Yosef, is my father still alive (45:3) – The Midrash** quotes the famous statement of Abba Kohein Bardala who notes that if Yosef’s brother’s could not stand before him, what will we say on the day of great judgement? The Beis HaLevi adds that Yosef’s Tochacha was especially strong because he took their words and he focused it onto their actions to demonstrate the inconsistency. The result was more powerful than the most inspiring of Mussar Schmoozin.  It is similar to the Yalkut Shimoni (Netzavim 940)’s comment about Eliyahu and the fisherman who was shown that if he could learn the art of fishing and its intricacies, he could study Torah too. **Rav Noach Weinberg ztl.** added that we tend to rationalize to get ourselves out of uncomfortable conditions and situations. But our job is not to be complacent and to choose to struggle with the challenge of the human condition – and honestly note who and how we are what we are.

**I am Yosef, is my father still alive – and the brothers couldn’t answer him since they were stunned by his face (45:3**) – There is a famous Midrash which quotes Abba Hakohein Bardala who said woe on to us for the day of judgment, woe onto us for the day of rebuke. **Rav Chaim Dov Keller Shlita** once asked what the Tochacha of Yosef was. He explained that the concept of Tochacha is not about yelling at someone that s/he is wrong. Rather Tochacha means that you demonstrate that what the other person thought and did in earnest was actually errant. By stating Ani Yosef to the brothers who had thought this whole time that they were correct in judging Yosef unfavorably, Yosef showed them that everything they thought about him and his dreams was wrong. In the future Hashem will show us the same thing. All that we thought at this time was important in life was actually not really that big a deal.

 **אֲנִ֣י יוֹסֵ֔ף הַע֥וֹד אָבִ֖י חָ֑י The brothers couldn’t answer him (45:3)** - The Midrash notes that we need to be fearful of the day of judgement and Tochacha because when the brothers heard “I am Yosef” they couldn’t answer him and the same will be said of us on judgement day. The **Beis HaLevi** asks where do we find Tochacha in the words of Yosef? Why double the words of Tochacha and Din? The.  **Beis HaLevi** answers that Yosef was demonstrating the inconsistency in their words — on the one hand they argued that they were worried about what would happen to Yaakov but at the same time they didn’t care when he was sold. The same will be demonstrated to us. **Rav Abraham Erlanger ztl** adds that the reaction of Yosef is also inconsistent. He gives them Mussar  but immediately sets out to calm them. Why? He answers that the Busha has the power to be michaper. Once it was achieved there was no longer a reason to bring it back up.

 **וְלֹא־יָֽכְל֤וּ אֶחָיו֙ לַֽעֲנ֣וֹת אֹת֔וֹ כִּ֥י נִבְהֲל֖וּ מִפָּנָֽיו: The brothers could answer him because they were blown away from him (45:3) - Rav Schachter Shlita** would often remind us that because Yosef’s brothers were missing one piece of information, they couldn’t understand what was going on. The same occurs to in the history of the Jewish people -- there are so many things that occur in Jewish history that we do not understand. Sometimes we need to understand that we don’t understand. The Haftara also reminds us that in the future after all of Jewish History will be unfolded then we too will understand everything in context.

**And now do not be sad that you sold me here (45:5)** – Why does Yosef give the brothers a free pass? **Sforno** explains that in Dinei Adam you are exempt but you are liable in Dinei Shomayim. Why would that be a Nechama? Is Yosef offering a useless consolation? **Rav Kalman Ber  Shlita** (Chief Rabbi of Netanya and previously Ram at Kerem B’Yavne) quoted the **Ramchal**who explains that in running the world on a grand scale, Hashem has plans that have to happen and it is a small insignificant part that the brothers play in making it so. Rav Kalman added that the entirety of this episode is a microcosm of the future – as Yaakov saw Geula in the Agalos – may we see it Baagala U’B’Zman Kariv.

 **כי למחיה שלחני אלקים לפניכם  For it was to support life that Hashem sent me ahead of you (45:5**) – Yosef seems to comfort his brothers with the ever-popular “all’s well that ends well” argument. The problem is that the Talmud seems to derive the opposite from the Torah vconcerning the woman whose husband revoked her Neder but she did not know. The Talmud there calls for her to engage in a Kappara process. Why is it different here? **Rav Schachter Shlita** suggested that when it comes to בין אדם למקום then each step in the process must be pure and unblemished. However in בין אדם לחבירו  the situation is judged based on how it results in the end.

 **וישבת בארץ גשן והיית קרוב אלי And you will live in Goshen and be close to me (45:10**) – Why didn’t Yosef have Yaakov live with him? The **Akaidas Davar** explains that there is a Halacha that one is not supposed to outdo his father’s fame in the city. By being viceroy, Yosef feared being disrespectful to his father’s deserved honor and as a result, did not live in the same city.

**וְהִגַּדְתֶּ֣ם לְאָבִ֗י אֶת־כָּל־כְּבוֹדִי֙ בְּמִצְרַ֔יִם Tell my father about all of my Kavod in Egypt (45:13)** - It is strange that Yosef would want to have Yaakov know about his glory? Why is Gaava important to him to share? **Rav Moshe Sternbuch Shlita** explains that Yosef wanted Yaakov to know that despite the glory he had, he was still consistently a believer and an Oved Hashem.

**וַיִּפֹּ֛ל עַל־צַוְּארֵ֥י בִנְיָֽמִן־אָחִ֖יו וַיֵּ֑בְךְּ He fell upon Binyamin’s neck and cried and Binyamin did the same (45:14) - Rashi** notes that each cried over the destruction that the other was destined to feel for the Mishkan and the Battei Mikdash. **Rav Mottel Katz ztl.** Added that we need to pause and recollect that despite a 22 year absence from one another, the only thing that led the brothers to cry was the impending destruction in the future. Great people always keep their eyes on the future.

 **וּבִ֨נְיָמִ֔ן בָּכָ֖ה עַל־צַוָּארָֽיו: And Binyamin cried on his neck (45:14) - Rashi** explains that Yosef cried for the 2 Battei Mikdash that he saw destroyed and Binyamin cried for the destruction of Shiloh. Why does the crying need to be explained? After all, the 2 brothers hadn’t seen one another for 22 years! And why can’t the tears be tears of joy!? **Rav Elya Svei ztl.** answers that the main purpose of having a Beis HaMikdash was for the entirety of Bnei Yisrael to have a place to come together and seek Rachamim from Hashem. Beis HaMikdash needed Achva (that’s why it could only be built in Binyamin’s Cheilek -- he was the only brother who was not involved in the sale of Yosef.) . When Yosef and Binyamin reunited, they certainly felt that sense of Achva but were suffering because their awareness that the Achva was not enough to fend off destruction was crushing to them. Thus, they cried for the destructions and the lack of Achvah that was the reason behind it.

**וּבִ֨נְיָמִ֔ן בָּכָ֖ה עַל־צַוָּארָֽיו: And Binyamin cried on his shoulder (45:14)** - The Gemara (Megillah 16b) notes that they cried for the destruction of the different Batei Mikdash. Why couldn’t we assume that they cried tears of joy for the emotions of the present? **Rav Shimon Schwab ztl.** explained that the Beis HaMikdash is the source of Simcha. Upon its destruction, true Simcha has been lost to the world and was replaced with Tzaar (pain). Hence, even in moments of Simcha we cry as we still feel the Tzaar that accompanies it.

**And this is what you are commanded to do – Take wagons from the land of Egypt (45:19)** – Pharaoh seems to be quite generous here. It does not match the stinginess and evil of his ways. Why? **Rav Gamliel Rabinovich Shlita** pointed out that if you follow the rest of the development of Pharaoh’s plans, he had ulterior, personal motives in bringing the brothers down. He was interested in seeing how indebted to him they could be and how that sense could be used to enrich his personal goals. Rav Rabinovich added that this is one of the terrible Middos of our generation – when even the Bnei Torah ask “What is in it for me?”  We are supposed to do things because they are right and L’Shem Shomayim – not because there is something in it for us personally.

**And to his father he sent the best of Egypt (45:23)**- The Gemara (Megillah 16b) notes that Yosef sent old wine that calms the elderly. What was the point of the gift? Did Yosef think that Yaakov needed old wine**? Rav Yehuda Tzedaka ztl.** explained that to the rest of the world, when people get old, they become more useless. The Jew learns that wisdom grows with age. Our leaders ripen as they age. Lest Yaakov be fearful that Yosef had so assimilated that he would disrespect Yaakov, Yosef sent him old wine that revives the elderly for it reminds them that some things improve with age.

 **וַיַּרְא֙ אֶת־הָ֣עֲגָל֔וֹת  He saw the wagons (45:27) - Rashi** explains that Yaakov was convinced by the sign that Yosef sent. But what is the connection between an Eglah and an Agala? **Rav Nissan Alpert ztl.** explains that the wagons were an indication of what Yosef was all about -- taking responsibility for the family. When Yosef would speak badly about the brothers, it was because he thought that was his responsibility (albeit not a popular one). When he went to check on them, it was because of his sense of responsibility. And now, when Yaakov saw the wagons, he knew again that Yosef was taking responsibility for the family and he was relieved.

 **וַיַּרְא֙ אֶת־הָ֣עֲגָל֔וֹת My son Yosef is still alive (45:27) - Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** noted that to Yaakov there was no honor in the fact that Yosef had achieved power and wealth. However, that he was Chai -- that he was alive with the spirit of Torah -- THAT was important to him. He knew, so to speak, that now someone could say Kaddish.

**וַיַּרְא֙ אֶת־הָ֣עֲגָל֔וֹת  He saw the wagons (45:27) - Rashi** explains that there was a sign between them insofar as the last thing that Yaakov had studied with Yosef was the section of Eglah Arufa. **Daas Zekanim** ask why were they learning that section at this time? They explain that at first it seems to be due to the fact that Yosef tried to stop Yaakov from accompanying him and Yaakov corrected him**. Rav Elya Svei ztl** adds that when you accompany someone you are stating that s/he is important and his life is important. If someone rises up against you, fight back and stand up for yourself because you are definitely worth it. This is also why the Nesiim brought 1 wagon per 2 Nesiim, it was to show the brotherhood between them and that they mattered to one another.

**And he saw the wagons that Yosef sent for him and the spirit of Yaakov was revived (45:27) – Rashi**notes that when Yaakov saw the wagons he recalled that the last section that he and Yosef had studied was that of Egla Arufa. **Daas Zekanim** adds that they had debated whether Yaakov should have accompanied Yosef on his road to go visit the brothers – Yosef thought it was improper while Yaakov taught him that it was imperative. Daas Zekanim notes that Egla Arufa highlights the critical responsibility that people have in escorting guests which is the impetus for the Zekanim’s need to wash their hands of the murder that had been committed (See Sotah 45b**). Rav Yehuda Amital Ztl**. added that today’s motor travel has made Leviya almost obsolete but the message – that the traveller is not alone, is a message that remains a strong responsibility even today. No matter where a Jew goes, s/he has a responsibility not to be left out all alone.

**And he saw the wagons (45:27) – Rashi notes** that Yosef was reminding Yaakov of the last section of Torah that they had studied together just before Yosef’s disappearance – that of Egla Arufa. What is the significance of that PARTICULAR mitzvah that made Yosef want to highlight it for Yaakov? **Rabbi Lamm** once noted that Egla Arufa is a reminder of the value of a single life within the rules of the greater Jewish community. Yaakov worried that Yosef, in his role of viceroy might have forgotten what a single human being is. When he saw Yosef’s wagons, he knew that Yosef had not forgotten.

**וַיַּרְא֙ אֶת־הָ֣עֲגָל֔וֹת  And he saw the wagons (45:27) - Rashi** explains that Yosef was sending a sign to Yaakov about the lesson of Egla Arufa -- the final lesson that they had shared together before they separated. What is the significance of the message of the lesson? **Rav Amital ztl.** explained that the message of escorting a guest is a lesson in creating a feeling of security in the mind of the traveler. By accompanying him part way, you help the guest feel that he is being attended to, that he is not alone. This strengthens his self-confidence, thereby making it easier for him to face the dangers of the journey. Even in today’s motor travel, every person deserves our attention; we must not allow a situation in which a person feels alone.

 **וירא  את העגלות  And he saw the wagons (45:27) – Rashi** comments that Yosef had sent a special sign to clarify his existence – it was the wagons that reminded Yaakov of the place that their learning became interrupted – Eglah Arufa. Why do wagons symbolize that Yosef was alive? The Talmud (Bava Metzia 86b) notes that whatever Avraham did himself, Hashem returned to him by Himself. Anything that Avraham relied on a messenger for, Hashem too, only utilized a messenger. This included Yishmael’s involvement in Hachnosas Orchim. Yet, one must ask why giving an opportunity for Chinuch in Hachnasas Orchim should be punished? **Rav Shach ztl**.  explained that one can can have the child have an opportunity to do a Mitzva but the importance of the Mitzva becomes more imprinted on the child when s/he sees the parent  performing the Mitzva himself. **Rav Betzalel Rudinsky Shlita** explains that this is exactly what Yosef was telling Yaakov here . Citing **Kli Yakar**, Rav Rudinsky explains that Yosef’s sending of the wagons was not merely the sending of wagons but rather that he was actually involved in the Mitzva of לויה – he was still very much “alive” in his Mitzva service and Torah existence.

**וַיָּבֹ֖א בְּאֵ֣רָה שָּׁ֑בַע And he came to Be’er Sheva (46:1) - Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl** highlights the fact that Be’er Sheva is the place that the Avos went to get calm and comfort. It was the place that Avraham planted the wood for the Beis HaMikdash and where Yaakov uprooted them to bring with them into Galus as a testament to the children that Hashem would come and redeem them.

**And he offered Korbanos to the God of his father Yitzchak (46:1) –** **Rashi** comments that Avraham is not mentioned for this teaches us that one needs to be careful with the of his father more than his grandfather. For although one needs to honor his grandfather, he needs to honor his father more. But why do we not apply the principle of She’Hu V’Aviv Chayavin B’chvod Avi Aviv – that both he and his father must respect the grandfather and thus the grandfather’s respect should take precendence? **Rav Chaim Kanievsky Shlita** is reported to have commented that the whole reason he must respect his grandfather is through his father’s obligation vand even according to the Sefer Chareidim who argues that it is because of Bnei Banim Harei Heim K’Banim, it is still only because of the Banim that the grandchildren are obligated to respect the grandparents and therefore the respect to the middle generation takes precendence. **Rav Nebenzahl Shlita** adds that based on this, there is no Chiyuv of respect for a grandparent – as a grandparent – once the linked parent has passed. (See Sdei Chemed for the total analysis of this idea)

**Do not fear going down to Mitzrayim (46:3)** - Why was Yaakov afraid to go to Mitzrayim? **Ramban** explains that in Galus Yaakov knew that he would not have Hashraas HaShechina as he did in Eretz Yisrael. The Geulah from that Galus was the creation of the Mishkan and the Hashraas HaShechina (hence these Parshiyos about the Mishkan are in the Chumash HaGeulah). **Rav Schachter Shlita** explained that Hashem was telling Yaakov that he was with us in the Galus as well. **Chida** explains that this is the idea of Galus HaShechina and is similar to Ir Miklat where the Rebbe would need to go with him. However as soon as the Kohein dies, the Rebbe does not need to be with us in Galus -- we should take the ideal for ourselves.

**וַיִּשְׂא֨וּ בְנֵֽי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֜ל אֶת־יַֽעֲקֹ֣ב אֲבִיהֶ֗ם וְאֶת־טַפָּם֙ וְאֶת־נְשֵׁיהֶ֔ם בָּֽעֲגָל֕וֹת Bnei Yisrael carried Yaakov in the wagons Pharaoh sent (46:5) - Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztl** noted that when walking throughout Eretz Yisrael, Yaakov walked by foot but once he was going to Chutz La’Aretz, Yaakov traveled by wagon. Despite his age, Yaakov considered it a Zechus to walk in Eretz Yisrael. Rav Eliyahu added that he told his son to appreciate the rain of Eretz Yisrael, the roads of Eretz Yisrael and the opportunities that every step there provides.

 **בעגלות אשר שלח פרעה לשאת אותו  In the wagons that פרעה sent to bring him (46:5)** – Why the stress on the wagons? And why only AFTER the conversation between Hashem and Yaakov? **Rav Chaim Kamil  ztl**. explained that Yakov assumed that the wagons were sent to Yaakov by פרעה for use only if Yaakov were coming to live. At the beginning of the trip, Yaakov was only going to see Yosef but not to stay. Hence he did not want to steal from Egypt. Once Hashem spoke to him, Yaakov knew he was there for the long haul and was willing to accept פרעה’s gesture.

 **בניו ובני בניו וכל אשר לו הביא אתו מצרים  His children and grandchildren…he brought with him to Mitzrayim (46:8-27)**– The Torah highlights how the Shvatim came down to Mitzrayim separately. Why the stress of their separation and not their unity? **Rav Amital Ztl.** explained that the parsha  teaches us that each person and each group must be allowed to make its own contribution. The greatness of the Jewish people is that each individual and each group complements the others. Anyone who accepts the basic principles of Judaism, such as the divinity of the Torah, should be allowed to operate independently and contribute to the whole. Once you have this basic common ground, the rest is just details, and should be treated that way.

**מֻפִּ֥ים וְחֻפִּ֖ים  Mupim and Chupim (46:21**) - The Gemara (Sotah 36b) notes that the names refer to the fact that neither Yosef nor Binyamin was at each other’s wedding. **Rav Chaim Shmuellevitz ztl.** asked why it was important and painful that Binyamin missed Yosef’s wedding? After all, that was a turnaround moment in Yosef’s life? He answered that when one gets a chance to rejoice with destiny and cannot, it is worth noting in the name of a child. There is no purpose of a Simcha in this world if one cannot rejoice with destiny.

**All of the souls were 66 and the children of Yosef made 70 (46:27)** – After counting all of the 70, the Torah returns to highlight that 66 actually went down to Mitzrayim with Yaakov and together with Yosef’s family made 70. Why are Yosef’s children included in the count and then excluded only to be included again? **Rabbi Bernard Weinberger (Shemen HaTov)**  points out that the only thing that allowed the other 66 to come down to Mitzrayim was that Yosef and his family managed to be there first and to be Torah-true Jews there.

**וְאֶת־יְהוּדָ֞ה שָׁלַ֤ח לְפָנָיו֙ אֶל־יוֹסֵ֔ף לְהוֹרֹ֥ת לְפָנָ֖יו גּ֑שְׁנָה And he sent Yehuda first to Goshen (46:28) - Rashi** notes that Yehuda was sent to establish a Yeshiva. Why? **Rav Pinchas Teitz ztl.** noted that while it might be ok for a Yosef to live without a Yeshiva  to light the way for the people, it does not work for the masses. Therefore, when establishing a Jewish community, one needs to establish a Yeshiva in order to make sure that there is a place where the entire community can grow spiritually.

**And Yaakov sent Yehuda first (46:28)**–**Rashi** notes that Yaakov sent Yehuda to establish a Yeshiva from within which there would be Horaah. **Rav Gershon Edelstein Shlita** asked what the point of the learning was. After all, prior to Matan Torah there was no Chiyuv to learn? **Rav Edelstein Shlita** answered that in fact there might not be a specific chiyuv but there is an obligation to lead a focused life. We find that in Yeshivas Shem V’Eiver, with the Avos, with Yosef in refidim etc. the Torah Jew lets his life revolve around Torah. Every episode in life is seen through a lens of Torah and that gives a life and spirit to the existence. Yaakov wanted to be sure that this would not change when the family and nation would be in Mitzrayim and thus he sent Yehuda first.

**And Yaakov sent Yehuda ahead to Goshen (46:28)** – Why did Yaakov select Yehudah? **Rashi** tells us it was so that Yehuda could set up a Beis HaMedrash. However, wasn’t it Levi’s job to be Rosh Yeshiva? If so, it should be Levi, not Yehuda setting up the Yeshiva? **Rav Moshe Tzvi Neriah ztl.** explains that Yehuda was the first *Arev* -Guarantor in the Torah. Yaakov wanted the Yeshiva to be established on the principles of responsibility for one another (Areivim Zeh LaZeh) and so he sent Yehuda who best represented the ideal of responsibility which would keep the people together even in the most trying times.

**And Yaakov sent Yehuda ahead to Goshen (46:28)** – Why did Yaakov select Yehudah? **Rashi** tells us it was so that Yehuda could set up a Beis Horaah. Why was it necessary to set up the Beis Horaah first? **Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that when the Klal establishes itself in a new place, the Chachamim of the generation need to review Kol Hatorah Kulah and inspect its application in the new times. That is, not that Chalilah Torah changes but that the stress on certain areas might need to be reevaluated due to the new circumstances which might require new ways of handling the current challenges within the accepted practice of the Torah. **Rav Pinchas Teitz ztl.** noted that he felt that this was one of the great challenges facing the European Jews who came over from Shtetl life in Europe to the openness of America. If the Rabbonim are not ready to engage  the challenges, then they will lose Neshamos as they try to play catch up.

**And Yosef set up the chariot and went to greet Yaakov his father and he appeared before him (46:29) -Rashi** adds that it was Yosef who appeared before Yaakov. What exactly is Rashi’s addition? **Rav Eliyahu Schlesinger Shlita** explains that Yosef had two purposes in greeting his father: The first was the child who wanted to see his father after 22 years of separation. The second was the desire to have his father, who had been deprived of seeing the son he loved for the same time, see him. Rav Schlesinger explains that Rashi wants us to know that it was the second motivation that was primary to Yosef. Despite the self-motivation to rush to see his father, Yosef understood that it was even more important to BE SEEN than just to go for his own needs.

**וַֽאֲמַרְתֶּ֗ם אַנְשֵׁ֨י מִקְנֶ֜ה הָי֤וּ עֲבָדֶ֨יךָ֙ מִנְּעוּרֵ֣ינוּ וְעַד־עַ֔תָּה Tell him that you are shepherds and have been from youth until today (46:34) - Rashi** highlights that Yosef wanted his brothers to highlight their sheep herding in order to get them to separate from the main area of Egypt. **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ztl.** explained that this is based on the ideas of Shemaya and Avtalyon not to be too well known to the government. Sometimes, being too close to the government and right under its direct influence is dangerous to the Jewish people.

**וְאִם־יָדַ֗עְתָּ וְיֶשׁ־בָּם֙ אַנְשֵׁי־חַ֔יִל If you know that there are warriors among them (47:6)** - The Talmud (Berachos 63) notes that in the same manner that Pharaoh is credited with bringing the Jews close for his own purposes, one who invites Talmidei Chachamim into his home, respects them and takes care of their needs is certainly to be lauded. **Rav Dov Yaffe ztl.** Asked what the comparison is? The one inviting the Talmid Chacham is selfless. Pharaoh only acted in his own self-interest! Rav Yaffe answers that even when something is done for one’s self interest, if it benefits you, you need to offer Hakaras Hatov

**How old are you? (47:8) –** What kind of question is that to ask a person? **Rav Zilberstein Shlita** notes that Pharaoh had constructed a door into his chambers that was small – so that anyone entering it would have to bend in front of him as they entered his presence. When Avraham went to Pharaoh to take Sarah back, the doorway expanded and Avraham did not have to bend. The story was legendary. Thus, when Pharaoh saw it happen with Yaakov, he thought that he was Avraham. He was blown away and asked him how old was he.

**מְעַ֣ט וְרָעִ֗ים Few and bad (47:9) - Ramban** asks why Yaakov seems to be giving up on the remaining time that he had. Why**? Rav Mattisyahu Solomon Shlita** answered that Yaakov was not able to see the Roeh in the Raah -- that Hashem Roee Lo Echsar. **Rav Asher Weiss Shlita** suggested that when Yaakov talked about life, perhaps it was in comparison to the lives of Avraham and Yitzchak who, he felt, live better lives of Sheleimus, Limmud and Avodas Hashem.

**מְעַ֣ט וְרָעִ֗ים הָיוּ֙ יְמֵי֙ שְׁנֵ֣י חַיַּ֔י וְלֹ֣א הִשִּׂ֗יגוּ אֶת־יְמֵי֙ שְׁנֵי֙ חַיֵּי֣ אֲבֹתַ֔י  And I did not achieve the years that my forefathers did (47:9)** - How did Yaakov know what he would achieve? His life wasn’t over yet? (See Ramban) **Rav Asher Weiss Shlita** explained that Yaakov felt that he was not living like his forefathers -- with Sheleimus and learning and Avodas Hashem.

**Yosef amassed all of the money in the land of Mitzrayim and Canaan (47:14)**– amassing wealth seems antithetical to Torah values. Why does the Torah want us to know what Yosef amassed? **Rav Schachter Shlita** notes that the **Chazon Ish (Y.D. 72:2**) disagreed. He explained that money is never a goal in life but rather a means to a greater goal – keeping the Mitzvos. The Midrash (Koheles Rabbah 5:8) distinguishes between two types of observant Jews: one who merely observes the mitzvos, and one who loves mitzvos. The one who observes, but does not love, mitzvos will be satisfied with keeping the mitzvos which come his way. But the one who loves mitzvos will always be on the lookout for additional miztvos. He will never be satisfied with the miztvos that he may have fulfilled already - "ohev mitzvos lo yisba mitzvos". Rather than love money, or love food, we should all develop a love for mitzvos.

**And Yosef purchased all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh (47:21**) – Why does the Torah spend so much time on the purchase of the land of Egypt**? Ramban** notes that the Torah was highlighting that although Yosef was incredibly powerful, he was an honest worker and turned his labor in for the boss – Pharaoh. According to this idea it is a response to the oft used anti-Semitic slur about the dishonest Jew. **Rav Menachem Genack Shlita** suggested that there might be an additional reason as well. Yosef was identified as the reason the Shibbud happened. How this was so, is a bit indirect in the Torah. However when one realizes that it was Yosef who changed the political, religious and economic landscape of Egyptian politics so that it would only base itself on one man – Pharaoh, it became easier to enslave the Jews on his say so. The Torah expands its thinking here in order to demonstrate how the Shibbud began.

 **ואת העם העביר  And the nation was moved from one end of the country to the next (47:21**) – Why did Yosef need to do that? The **Rogatchover ztl.** explained that  Yosef was concerned lest the rules of Chazaka allow the original owners to reclaim their sold lands (See Eruvin 68b). By moving the people and giving them different lands, Yosef removed the chance they would have to be מבטל  the sale. Ergo he protected the sale to פרעה.

**And Yisrael settled in the land of Goshen and they took a hold there and were quite fruitful and multiplied a lot (47:27) – Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev ztl.** notes that when a Tzaddik lives in an environment that can harm him, he must utilize the temptations and dedicate those to Avodas Hashem. If Egypt was the land of Ahava Raah – of lust then a Jew needs to turn that energy to Ahavas Hashem – for trying to not think of something guarantees that you will think about it. Bnei Yisrael held onto the land of Egypt – meaning that they did not try to push away the bad thoughts of Egyptian lifestyle but chose to utilize it in order to thrive for Hashem.

Haftarah:

**Connecting Parsha and Haftara: Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that there is a strong connection between the Parsha and the Haftara.  In Parshas Vayigash the brothers were missing an important piece of information (that the man that they were talking to was Yosef) and that's why they couldn't understand what was happening. Once they were told that he was it all made sense. Similarly, in the haftara we are told that in the future, after all of Jewish history will be unfolded before us, everything will be understood in context.

**ועתה בן אדם קח לך עץ  אחד   Now son of man, take a stick and write Yehuda and friends and another and write Yosef and friends and place them together in your hands (Yechezkel 37:15-28)** – Why is this an ideal Nevuah? It sounds as if putting two sticks together will create Achdus? **Rav Baruch Simon Shlita** once noted that Achdus is not a concept that is created by speeches. It is created when one really feels the needs of the Tzibbur as one. Nowhere is this actualized more than when the people put themselves together by working together B’Yadayim.

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**וְלֹ֚א יִֽהְיוּ־  עוֹד֙ לִשְׁנֵ֣י גוֹיִ֔ם And they will no longer be 2 nations (Yechezkel 37:22**) **- Rav Medan Shlita** notes that there was a well known tension between the leadership in Chutz La’Aretz and the leadership in Eretz Yisrael even in the times of the Galus of Yehoyachin. That tension continued well into the period of the second Beis HaMikdash including hitting a crescendo at the time of Rav Saadiah Gaon and Rav Aharon Ben Meir about the calendar wherein the diaspora Jews kept Yom Kippur and Pesach were observed in different days for a year and a half because of the debate concerning leap years and who has the right to declare it. The ultimate solution is the bringing of the leadership of Eretz Yisrael (Yehuda) and Galus (Yosef) together with Dovid HaMelech serving as king forever.

**And Dovid my servant will reign over them (Yechezkel  37:25)** – If the whole goal of the uniting of the people in the Haftorah is to create a fusion, why not establish a reign of rotation between Malechei Yisrael and Malchei Yehuda in the future? **Rav Gideon Weitzman Shlita**noted that the future will not be a function of democracy in the running of Am Yisrael. The fusion will need to come first – in the time of Mashiach Ben Yosef when the physical leader will redeem the people from the physical famine in the land. After that, Mashiach ben David will bring about the spiritual redemption. This is consistent with the will of Hashem that Hayisa Yehuda L’Kodsho.

**And my servant Dovid will be the leader on them forever (Yechezkel 37: 25) – The Lubavitcher Rebbe ztl**. explained that the entire Haftorah’s stress on oneness helps one appreciate the need of every personality to bend for the purpose of the glory of Hashem which can be found throughout the world. Yehuda, who bends in order to recognize Hashem (Yehuda Hoda V’Lo Bosh) becomes the principle leader in the way we function both in this world and into the days of Moshiach when it will not be the individual who will be significant for his own ego but rather the fact that we work together to serve Hashem which will serve as the ultimate leadership in the future.