

# Parsha Press

## PARSHAT VAYESHEV

### A SPECIAL SCENT Hanna Berger

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This week's *parsha*, *Vayeshev*, contains many fascinating episodes. Figuring prominently amongst them is the sale of *Yosef* and the many hardships he endured. *Yosef* was first thrown into a pit filled with snakes and scorpions. From there he was sold to *Yishmaelites*, who in turn sold him to *Midianites*, who sold him down to *Mitzrayim*. In *Mitzrayim* he was bought by a family where he rose to prominence but, based on the false accusations of the woman of the household, he was imprisoned for years. We can only imagine the emotional agony that *Yosef* must have endured, his own brothers tearing him away from his beloved father and his subsequently being subjected to such humiliation. However, the *passuk* teaches us that it wasn't all that bad. "And behold, a caravan of *Yishmaelites* was coming from *Gilad* and their camels were carrying spices, balm and ladanum (a grass root) down to *Mitzrayim*. [37:25]" Why did the *passuk* deem it necessary to detail the merchandise of the caravan that carried *Yosef* down to *Mitzrayim*? *Rashi* explains that such caravans were usually carrying malodorous loads. However, Hashem made sure that this group would be carrying fragrant spices since they would be transporting a *tzaddik* such as *Yosef*. As such, *Yosef* wasn't harmed or bothered by any bad smells.

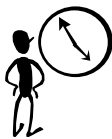


Yes, something bad was happening to *Yosef*. It had to happen in order for the following events in Egypt to take place. This was the whole start of *Galut Mitzrayim*! But *Hashem* made it as tolerable as possible for *Yosef*, even if it was a little detail like making the caravan smell good. Here we see the kindness of Hashem even when things seem bad.

### Growing from Life's Experiences Mrs. Taib

Parshat *Vayeshev* opens with the words "*Vayeshev Yaakov...*" (*Breishit* 37:1). *Rashi* explains that *Yaakov* "*bikaish laishaiv b'shalvah*". After all the difficulties *Yaakov* had experienced throughout his life, he now wished to live in tranquility. But this was not to be. At precisely this time in his life when he hoped to live

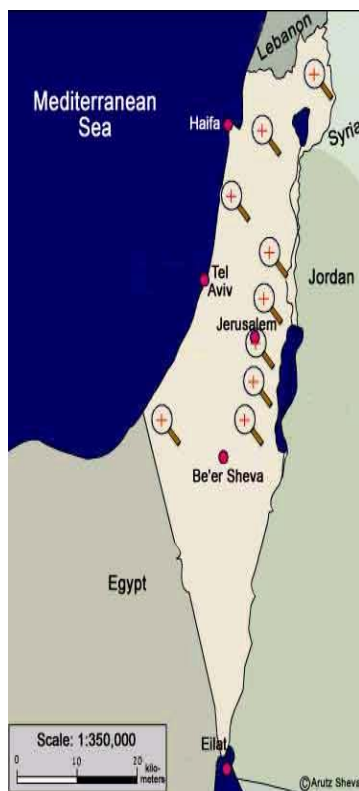
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Shabbat Starts:  
4:11

## News From Israel

*December 2-*  
IDF troops operating in Judea and Samaria during the night arrested four PA residents suspected of terrorist activities. Arrests were made Ramallah, Dohaisha, Tzourif, and in Um Alis. Suspects in custody include Fatah and Hamas terrorists



## Growing from Life's Experiences (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

in peace, *Yaakov* was beleaguered with the troubles of *Yosef*. Rashi continues: “*Tzadikim* wish to dwell in tranquility. *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* says “Is it not enough for the *Tzadikim* that they receive their reward in *Olam Haba* that they wish to dwell in peace in *Olam Hazeih* as well?”

Clearly this Rashi requires elucidation. Why is *Yaakov Avinu* taken to task for wanting to live in serenity? Furthermore, the serenity that *Yaakov* wanted was surely desired in order to help him increase his service to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* and not for his own personal pleasure. What could be wrong with this noble request?

Harav Yeruchem Levovitz ZT”L in his *Sefer Daas Torah* explains that herein lies an important lesson regarding the purpose of man in *Olam Hazeih*. *Olam Hazeih* is a world of tests and difficulties meant to prepare us for *Olam Haba*. Each of these tribulations is designed to help elevate us in our own spiritual level. If *Tzadikim* request *shalva* in *Olam Hazeih*, it is as if they are requesting the *zechut* of *Olam Haba* without passing through the required tests for acquiring it.

Every life situation provides us with an opportunity for growth. In his *Sefer*, Rav Levovitz ZT”L urges us all to look for these opportunities. With this perspective, one will approach life’s challenges with a new outlook. She will learn to reflect upon her behavior before, during, and after incidents that occur. She will ask herself, “Am I a different person now than I was before?”

May we all be blessed with the clarity to truly grow from all of life’s experiences and to continue to reach higher *madraigot* in serving *Hashem*.

Shabbat Shalom!

Based on an article from Sefer “Lekach Tov”

## Outside Influence Deena Klein

“And she grabbed him by his garment saying, “Lie with me,”... and he fled and ran outside (*hachutza*)” 39;12

*Yoseph* did all he could to resist the advances of *Potiphar’s* wife. He even pleaded with her saying “how can I do this evil thing?” (39;9) but she still persisted. One day she grabbed him by his garment, and he “fled and ran outside (*hachutza*)”.

There is a well known *Midrash* in *Tehillim* (114;3), “the sea saw and it fled”. What did the sea see? And what caused it to flee? The sea actually saw *Yoseph’s* coffin, and “fled” (split) when it saw the one who fled

(*Yoseph*). What is the connection between these two instances of fleeing?

The word “*hachutza*” appears four times in the story of *Yoseph*’s ordeal. This word is strongly reminiscent of the *Brit Ben Habitarim*, when *Hashem* takes *Avraham* “*hachutza*”, to show him the stars (15;5). The *midrash* comments that *Hashem* was telling *Avraham* to step outside of his normal sphere of experiences and rise above the restrictions of the laws of nature. Therefore, *Avraham* would no longer be under power of natural law. Even if the natural was that he couldn’t have children, he would still be the father of great nations.

The word “*hachutza*” indicates the ability to rise above nature. This is exactly what *Yoseph* did when he fled “outside”. He overcame his natural tendency to succumb to her advances.

When the Jewish people came to the *Yam Suf*, the waters were not ready to split and interrupt their natural flow. The sea “fled” in the merit of one that overcame his nature.

## Story of a Gadol

Reb Aryeh Levin of Jerusalem was once attending the funeral of Reb *Eliezer*, a man who compassionately distributed charity. Reb Shmuel, the closest friend of Reb *Eliezer*, participated in the funeral procession. When they passed a florist, Reb Shmuel left the funeral procession and entered the florist. He left the shop with a clay pot and resumed his position at the funeral.

Reb Aryeh was quite distressed by this apparent lack of sensitivity to the deceased and reproached Reb Shmuel for his actions. Reb Shmuel explained that for years he visited a Jewish man who had been stricken with leprosy. The day before, he died. The doctors at the hospital, all non-Jews, were afraid the leprosy would be contagious so they ordered all of this Jewish man’s possessions to be burned. Reb Shmuel begged the doctors to spare this man’s *Tefilin* and the doctors agreed on the condition that they be buried before noon of that day. An earthenware pot would be the only container that would satisfy both *halachic* and medical requirements, so Reb Shmuel left the funeral procession and bought the clay pot from the florist.

Reb Aryeh learned the lesson of *B’Tzedek Tishpot Amitecha*, you shall judge your fellow man with fairness from this story. May we be able to see the good of each man’s actions so that we too judge everyone with fairness.

### “Quote of the Week”

**“All that is thought should not be said, all that is said should not be written, all that is written should not be published, all that is published should not be read.”**

-Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenshtern of Tomashov (the Kotzker Rebbe)

### SHMIRAT HALASHON

What might be high praise in one context, could be *loshon hora* in a different context

It is natural for people to take offense when negative comments are said about their relatives

**Chofetz Chaim:  
A Daily Companion**



