

R. EFREM

GOLDBERG

PARSHA NOTES

VAYECHI 5783

Breishis 47:29

וַיִּקְרָבוּ יְמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא אֶל בְּנֵי לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מָצְאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שְׂיָם־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת אֶל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרָיִם:

And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt.

What is going on between Yosef and Yaakov?

Rashi

PUT, I PRAY THEE, THY HAND — and take an oath.

R. Yerucham Levovitz

Why did Yaakov make Yosef swear?

There is a law that one cannot eat blood, yet the Torah tells us that one needs to strengthen oneself to not do so. Rashi says there that the Torah tells us this in case where we have no desire, all the more so do we need to strengthen ourselves in cases in which we have a desire.

Our great Avos did not trust themselves or others when it came to such important and definitional things.

Otzar Peleos HaTorah

There is debate about the importance and necessity of being buried in Israel.

Why did Yosef need to be told his father was sick?

Otzar Peleos HaTorah

The Maharam MiRutenberg did not want to see his father when he became a leader as he did not want to enter into a case of doubt about who would stand for whom, since the Maharam was his father's rebbe.

The Daas Zekenim say that this was the calculation of Yosef.

Notes:

Breishis 48:7

וַאֲנִי בָּבְאִי מִפָּדָן מֵתָהּ עָלַי רָחֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּעוֹד כְּבֵרֶת-אֶרֶץ לְבֵא אֶפְרַתָּה וְאֶקְבְּרָהּ שָׁם בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרַת הוּא בֵּית לֶחֶם:

I [do this because], when I was returning from Paddan, Rachel died on me, to my sorrow, while I was journeying in the land of Canaan, when still some distance short of Ephrath; and I buried her there on the road to Ephrath”—now Bethlehem.

How could Yaakov say that Rachel 'died on me'?

R. Yosef Sorotzkin

Yaakov needs to tell Yosef that he had no choice but to bury her at the side of the road.

Yaakov was saying that Rachel was his other half. The most piercing pain, as the gemara notes, is felt by the widower.

Otzar Peleos HaTorah

The Chizkuni said that Yaakov buried her there as since she passed away due to hemorrhaging, she needed to be buried right away.

Ramban noted that it would have taken too long due to his entourage. He provided another reason was that he couldn't bury her in the family plot due to the prohibition of marrying sisters.

R. Chaim Shmuelewitz

Rashi says that Yaakov is providing a reason for why he needed to bury Rachel on the side of the road. It was due to the word of Hashem.

When Yaakov first heard the word of Hashem, he could have made an excuse. Yaakov was double checking it was due to Hashem's will.

Notes:

Breishis 48:15

וַיַּגֵּר אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הֹא' אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְכֹּוּ אִבְתִּי לִפְנֵי אֲבָרְהָם וַיִּצְלַק הֹא' הָרַעָה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדִי עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

And he blessed Joseph, saying,
“The God in whose ways my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has been my shepherd from my birth to this day—

When did Yaakov bless Yosef?

R. Moshe Sternbuch

Yaakov's blessing to Yosef's children is itself a blessing.

Our greatest blessing is having children and grandchildren who follow the proper path.

Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Breishis 48:22

וְאֵלַי נָתַתִּי לְךָ שָׂכָם אֶחָד עַל-אַחֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְתִּי מִיַּד הָאֹמְרִי בְּחַרְבִּי וּבִקְשָׁתִי: {פ}

And now, I assign to you one portion more than to your brothers, which I wrested from the Amorites with my sword and bow."

What is Yaakov saying?

R. Soloveitchik

Since there is no record of Jacob ever having done battle with the Amorites, the Targum translates these two words metaphorically as "בְּצִלוֹתִי וּבִבְעוֹתִי" with my prayer and with my plea." The distinction between the sword and the bow is that the sword is used for close combat, while the bow and arrow are utilized from a distance. Correspondingly, צִלוֹתָהוֹן, prayers, are our requests for immediate personal needs, such as wisdom, health and sustenance, while בְּעוֹתָהוֹן, pleas, are the supplications that relate to Jewish destiny and the ultimate redemption.

R. Yisrael Meir Druck

Yaakov is teaching us the importance of prayer in the time of war.

The Meshech Chochma notes that Yaakov is talking about set prayers and prayers that are not set and fixed.

Notes:
