

GREAT FOR SHARING  
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

# בשבת



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS  
VAYEISHEV

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT  
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS  
RABBI AVICHAI BENSOUSSAN

## DAILY CONNECTIONS

In the middle of our *Parshah*, Yosef finds himself as a servant to Potiphar. However, after Potiphar sees how Hashem has given Yosef fantastic success, Potiphar made him the administrator over everything in his house.<sup>1</sup> Though Yosef's success may have been obvious, what caused Potiphar to attribute it to Hashem?

The Mizrachi,<sup>2</sup> quoting the *Medrash*,<sup>3</sup> explains that before Yosef did anything he would say a small *Tefillah* to Hashem, asking Hashem for success. Even before serving a cup of water, Yosef would ask Hashem that it should be the correct temperature. Thus, Yosef was always whispering throughout the day, both for great undertakings and small tasks. Finally, Potiphar confronted Yosef, asking him what he was whispering. After hearing Yosef's explanation, Potiphar understood that indeed, Hashem is with Yosef, giving him success.

This Mizrachi gives us a thought-provoking insight into *Bitachon*. We are accustomed to thinking that *Bitachon* is 'used' when facing severe challenges. One just moved into a new community, a difficult test is coming up, or something similar. However, Yosef reached out to Hashem for every cup of water! Yosef was able to use every action in his life to strengthen his relationship with Hashem, to say, "I trust you Hashem."

The Chovos HaLevovos<sup>4</sup> says that one of the basic components of *Bitachon* is the awareness that Hashem is in charge of everything, whether great or small. Indeed, only if we truly feel connected to Hashem regarding the 'small things,' will we be able to rise to the occasion when facing a particularly painful situation.

Whether it's prior to taking a test, going shopping, running late to get somewhere, finding a parking spot, or any other menial function in our day, there are countless opportunities to strengthen our connection and trust in Hashem. Similar to Yosef, this can be accomplished by thinking or saying a short prayer in your own words. At the end of the day, we've connected ourselves to Hashem in a thousand little ways, building and deepening our relationship with our Creator.

**Yosef was able to use every action in his life to strengthen his relationship with Hashem.**

### Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

Speaking about *Bitachon* is easy, but applying *Bitachon* can be hard. This is true generally, but is particularly difficult when it comes to the 'small' things. When things seem to be so natural how do we truly feel that everything is run by Hashem?

There are many different strategies that can be employed, including focusing on our words during *Davening* (Hashem really does give me clothing!), reading about the amazing benefits of *Bitachon*, or focusing on instances in our lives where it was clear how Hashem intervened (whether for something we liked or otherwise).

Another approach may be to use the idea of self-defining. We tend to act according to the way we perceive ourselves. Thus, if we start to self-define ourselves as people who trust Hashem, and understand that He guides us even in the smallest areas, we will start to truly feel that way.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, by speaking as a person who trusts that Hashem is always there, we will affect our inner thoughts, and truly feel that Hashem is with us.<sup>2</sup>

1 *Medreigos Ha'Adom*, p. 181 note 25

2 *Chidushei HaLev* on *Bereishis* 22:12

1 *Bereishis* 39:3

2 *Mizrachi* s.v. שם שמים on *Rashi Bereishis* 39:3 s.v. 'כי ה'

3 *Bereishis Rabbah* 86:5 cf. *Medrash Tanchuma Vayeishev* 8:2 and *Naso* 30:1

4 *Sha'ar HaBitachon*, Chap. 3, s.v. והרביעי כי

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**To change one's nature from evil to good without Mussar is like trying to see without an eye and hear without an ear.**

- *Ohr Yisrael*, Letter 14

# JUST AT THE RIGHT TIME

A man told me\* that he recently traveled to London, and he took every measure to ensure that he would not miss *Davening* with a *Minyan*. This was within the year of his mother's passing, and he had not missed a single *Kaddish*. He scheduled all his flights for times that would allow him to pray with a *Minyan*, and he stayed in a hotel situated just a few blocks from a *Shul*. His first morning in London, he opened his eyes and realized that his alarm never went off. He had overslept. He quickly got himself ready, took his *Tallis* bag and rushed to the lobby, hoping that somehow he would be able to find a *Minyan*. It was not likely, he realized, as he hardly ever saw Jews with *Yarmulkes* because of the anti-Semitism in England. As soon as he reached the lobby, he saw an observant Jew jump up out of his chair and run over to him.

"Are you looking for a *Minyan*?" he asked. The man answered in the affirmative, and the other man then said, "You missed the only *Minyan* in the area, but if you take a taxicab right away, you can catch a *Minyan* 45 minutes away." The man quickly hailed a cab and made the *Minyan*.

The next day, these two men met again at the local *Minyan*. The man from the lobby went over to the man whom he had helped.

"Do you remember me?"

"Of course. I cannot thank you enough. I needed to say *Kaddish*, and if you weren't there, I probably would have missed it."

"I come to this hotel quite frequently when I travel for business," the man said. "I never have to wait for my room. I make sure to have everything arranged in advance so I can go straight to my room when I arrive. Yesterday, though, for whatever reason, my room wasn't ready when I came, and I had to wait for a long time in the lobby. I turned to Hashem and asked, 'Why are You doing this?' Then I saw you come to the lobby with your *Tallis* and *Tefillin*, and I figured that this was the reason why I was stuck in the lobby; you needed a *Minyan*, and I was able to help you."

The man told me that it was a great feeling to see how Hashem was looking out for him.

*\*Adapted from Living Emunah 2 by Rabbi David Ashear*

**The man told me that it was a great feeling to see how Hashem was looking out for him.**

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Hashem sustained *Klal Yisrael* in the desert for forty years in order to instill the trait of *Bitachon* in *Klal Yisrael*.<sup>1</sup>
- Hashem runs the most mundane aspects of our lives - if one attempts to put on a shirt only to find that it is inside-out, that too was intentionally ordained by Hashem.<sup>2</sup>
- Before eating, Rebbi Yesa Sabah would say a short *Tefillah*, asking Hashem to help him in preparing his meal.<sup>3</sup>

1 R' S. R. Hirsch on *Chumash*, *Devarim* 8:3 s.v. ויענך

2 *Arachin* 16b

3 *Zohar Beshalach* 62:b