

Parshas Mikeitz

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Sponsored by: *Terri and Andrew Herenstein in honor of the bar mitzvah of their son Zachary*

1. The Basis for Yosef's Success

The Torah states, **“Hashem was with Yosef and he became successful. And he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.”** We already know that Yosef was purchased by Potiphar to be his slave so why does it now say, “and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.” It would have been sufficient to say, “Hashem was with Yosef and he became successful as the slave of Potiphar.” Seemingly, the Torah is telling us that despite the evil influences of living in the same environment as his master, Potiphar, *Hashem was with Yosef*.

The Torah states, **“His master perceived that Hashem was with him. And whatever he did Hashem brought success to his hand.”** Potiphar understood that the basis for Yosef's success was his intimate involvement with G-d. Yosef continuously attributed all happenings in his life to G-d. Yet, it is surprising that Potiphar, a heathen, and an Egyptian, who was part of a depraved society, should recognize and appreciate that the reason for Yosef's success was that Hashem was with him. How is this possible? The Egyptian people rejected the belief of a monotheistic Universal G-d and believed that everything was bound to the physical realm. Therefore, it was only through Yosef's personal conduct that Potiphar was exposed to G-d and to spirituality.

Rashi cites Chazal who explain, “G-d was with him (Yosef)” means “the Name of Hashem was always in his mouth.” Yosef's essence reflected spirituality in every way. There was never a moment where he believed or expressed the view that he was the cause of his own success. Continuously, he outwardly praised Hashem and his very existence was a Kiddush Hashem (Sanctification of G-d's Name). This is why even the pagan Potifar was able to recognize and understand that the basis for Yosef's success was because “G-d was with him.” He established an atmosphere in the house of Potiphar that was a testament to the existence of Hashem and to Yosef's relationship with Him.

The question is why would a pagan such as Potiphar tolerate his slave espousing monotheistic beliefs? When Avraham advocated monotheism in a pagan society, Nimrod, the king, had him thrown into a fiery kiln. As Rambam states in the Laws of Chametz and Matzo regarding the Positive Commandment of telling over to one's son the story of the bondage and redemption, that we should point to the lowly slave in the household and say, “This is what we were in Egypt. We were looked down upon as lowly and despicable.” Clearly, a slave in Egypt was at such a low social level that he was regarded as a non-entity. If this is the case, then why did Potiphar tolerate Yosef's expression of Godliness?

The answer is that in every sense of the word, Yosef was a reflection of his father Yaakov. Yaakov was an embodiment of Emes (Truth) and his son reflected that characteristic. This means that regardless of the circumstances or consequences one cannot compromise Truth so Yosef could not express himself in any other way. He was continuously compelled to acknowledge Hashem because of his belief. He internalized Truth to his core and experienced existence only as a means to accommodate the spiritual. Therefore, when Yosef was in prison and asked the pagan wine steward to intercede on his behalf, Hashem considered it a breach of faith. There was no need for him to take any initiative. Because of who he was, Yosef should have relied on Hashem alone. Because he did not, it was considered a claim against him. This would not have been the case regarding anyone else.

We learn from Yosef's behavior that if one conducts himself openly as a Jew and does not attempt to conceal his beliefs, he will not only succeed in his life but will be a positive source of influence to those around him.. If a man such as Potiphar, who was a pagan and rejected all spirituality, perceived the source of Yosef's success, then how much more so can those with whom we interact be influenced by our behavior.

2. Appreciating the Right Moment

Portion of Mikeitz, we read that the wine steward said, **“My transgressions do I mention today... We dreamt a dream on the same night, I and he; each according to the interpretation of his dream did we dream. And there with us, was a youth, a Hebrew, a slave of the chamberlain of the butchers; we related it to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us... and it was that just as he interpreted for us so did it happen...”**

When the wine steward informed Pharaoh about Yosef's ability to interpret dreams, he referred to him in the most denigrating and demeaning manner. He referred to Yosef as **“a youth, a Hebrew, a slave of the chamberlain of the butchers,”** which was unnecessary. The Midrash tells us that when the wine steward used the term “a youth,” he meant that Yosef was a fool and not fit for any position of greatness. “A Hebrew” meant that Yosef was not even familiar with the Egyptian language. When the wine steward referred to Yosef as a “slave”, he meant to say that it is written in “...the protocols of Egypt that one who was a slave may not rule and may not even wear regal garments”. The wine steward discredited Yosef at every level.

After Yosef interpreted the dreams of the baker and wine steward, he requested the latter to “remember” him and to communicate to Pharaoh that he was an innocent youth who was stolen from his homeland and sold into slavery. After his release, the wine steward immediately forgot Yosef and did not even consider addressing his request. Two years later, when Yosef's assistance to interpret a dream for Pharaoh was needed, the wine steward informed the Pharaoh of Yosef's ability. Consequently, he was immediately released from prison and brought before Pharaoh. Pharaoh said to him, **“Now I heard it said that you comprehend a dream to interpret it.”** Yosef responded to Pharaoh saying, **“That is beyond me; it is G-d Who will respond with Pharaoh's welfare.”** Yosef said to Pharaoh that he himself did not have the innate ability to interpret dreams, but rather he is only the conduit for G-d's communication. One would think that after being imprisoned for twelve years, Yosef would have taken advantage of this unique opportunity to be valued in the eyes of Pharaoh. Yet, Yosef passed on this chance and had no interest whatsoever in attributing the ability to himself.

After Yosef interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, he immediately presented a viable solution to deal with the upcoming bounty and to prepare for the devastating famine depicted in the dreams. The question to ask is if Pharaoh, the monarch of the most advanced civilization of the time, asked him to interpret his dreams, why did Yosef feel it necessary to also present a solution without being asked. Seemingly, this could be viewed as the ultimate in brazenness – a slave, released from prison only moments earlier, feels qualified to advise the king of Egypt. How do we understand this?

After Pharaoh had heard Yosef's strategy for dealing with the forthcoming situation, he said to his courtiers, **“Could we find another like him (Yosef) – a man in whom is the spirit of G-d?”** Pharaoh recognized that Yosef's genius was beyond human intellect – it was Divine.

Regarding the first question, Yosef did not capitalize on the opportunity to take credit for the innate ability to interpret dreams because he had learned a lesson while in prison. After being there for ten years, he asked the wine steward to “remember” him and “mention” him to Pharaoh. This was considered a lack of faith. Because of Yosef's spiritual failing, he spent another two years in prison – a year for each of the words that he used when he asked the wine steward for his assistance (“remember” and “mention”). Therefore, when Pharaoh asked Yosef to interpret his

dreams, he responded by saying, **“That is beyond me; it is G-d Who will respond with Pharaoh’s welfare.”** This statement was an expression of Yosef’s faith in G-d.

Regarding Yosef taking the opportunity to advise Pharaoh on the upcoming bounty and famine, he understood that this was his only chance to take the initiative. It had been two years since he had requested the assistance of the wine steward and it was only now, after this hiatus, that he was called before Pharaoh to interpret his dreams. Yosef understood with absolute clarity the wine steward’s concern that if his interpretation of the dreams found favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, Yosef would rise to power and then extract revenge on him for his lack of consideration and appreciation. Therefore, Yosef had the insight to understand how the wine steward had presented him before the king. It had to have been in the most derogatory and demeaning manner - **“a youth, a Hebrew, a slave of the chamberlain of the butchers.”** Knowing this, Yosef did not want to attribute the ability to interpret dreams to himself, because Pharaoh would believe (after the wine steward’s depiction of Yosef) that his ability was only an anomaly. Yosef was merely a savant, who had the ability to interpret dreams. Therefore, after the interpretation of the dreams, Yosef took the initiative to advise Pharaoh and demonstrate to him his great genius. It was only in this context that Yosef would have a chance to be released from prison and rise to a position of power.

Yosef understood that being summoned at this moment by Pharaoh was a result of Divine intervention. He needed to be released from prison and assume a role of leadership. He understood from his experiences that in every situation in which he had found himself, he had risen to a position of dominance. When he was in the house of his master Potiphar, Yosef was appointed the head of the household. When he was imprisoned, he assumed the responsibility of warden. Now, he realized that when Pharaoh summoned him that he would once again rise to the highest level of government, and assume the position of the Viceroy. Thus, this would guarantee the future of the Klal Yisroel.

3. Seeing G-d’s Hand in Existence

Every day during the festival of Chanukah, we insert in the *Shemona Esrei (Silent Prayer)* the paragraph of *Al Haneesim* (on the miracles). It recounts how the Jews were able to defeat the Greeks although they were few in number. It is mentioned there how Hashem had delivered the multitudes into the hands of the few, the mighty into the hands of the weak, the impure into the hands of the pure, and the wanton into the hands of the diligent students of Torah. The Maharal of Prague asks (in his work *Ner Mitzvah*), why is the miracle of the lights of Chanukah not mentioned in the *Al Haneesim*? It seems that the festival of Chanukah revolves around the miracle of the lights demonstrated through our kindling of an additional light for an eight-day period.

The Maharal answers that the primary miracle of Chanukah was the victory over the Greeks as it is depicted in the paragraph of *Al Haneesim*. However, in order for us to understand that the victory was only able to come about through Divine Intervention and not through the military prowess of the family of the Chashmonaim (Yehudah Ha Maccabee and his brothers), Hashem needed to bring about a revealed miracle (of the oil) to elucidate that the victory itself was also a miracle. The lights of Chanukah provide us with the clarity to be able to understand the events of the festival correctly. Its essence is that the Jews were able to vanquish their enemies and reestablish Judaism.

The Talmud tells us that all Rabbinic enactments are “fences” which are intended to protect the Torah. The Rabbis can only enact and legislate laws that protect the Torah because in any other context it would be considered “bal tosef – adding to the Torah,” which is forbidden. The question is how is the Rabbinic obligation of kindling the Chanukah lights classified as a fence whose purpose is to protect the Torah?

Ramban tells us in his commentary on the Portion of Bo that the exodus from Egypt is a much repeated theme in the Torah – “*zaycher l’yetzias Mitzrayim.*” The exodus from Egypt is mentioned in many instances such as – reciting the Shema, Kiddush, the parchments of tefillin, etc. Ramban asks – why is the exodus from Egypt such a fundamental theme and brought up so

often? Ramban answers that not every generation is worthy of revealed miracles. A revealed miracle is an event to which one cannot deny G-d's Divine Hand in existence. Just as G-d is involved in the obvious, He is also involved in every aspect of existence, i.e. natural events (the laws of nature). Therefore, unless we continuously recall the revealed miracles of the exodus, which we experienced at the time of redemption, we will ultimately forget that Hashem is involved in every aspect of existence. Pagan belief is that G-d initially created the world in its entirety, then removed Himself and gave over control of existence to the hosts of heaven (various deities).

The Miracle of Chanukah occurred during the Second Temple Period, which was long after the era of revealed miracles of the First Temple Period. After the destruction of the First Temple, Hashem said that He will interact with existence in a concealed manner – "*Hester panim* – concealed face". During this period, there was no longer prophecy – an open communication between G-d and man. Hashem saw that during the period of Chanukah the Jewish people were becoming Hellenized and subsumed by the Greek culture. Hashem wished to give a clear sign to the Jewish people that despite it being an era of concealment, He performed a revealed miracle (of the oil) to inform the Jews that He is involved in every aspect of existence. He communicated to the Jewish people that despite our bleak state in exile, He is still with us.

Reb Meir Simcha z'tl of Dvinsk, in his commentary on the Portion of Vayeshiv, cites Avudraham (who is one of the Early Commentators) that if one experiences a personal miracle in a certain place, when he returns there he is obliged to recite the blessing, "Blessed is Hashem who performed for me a miracle in this location." The Avudraham explains that this blessing can only be recited on a miracle that cannot be understood in any context other than the miraculous; it must be the equivalent of a revealed miracle, even though it occurred in a private setting.

Reb Meir Simcha cites the Midrash, which states that when Yosef went to bury his father Yaakov in Canaan, he passed by the pit he was thrown into by his brothers. As he approached that location, he recited the blessing, "Blessed is Hashem who performed for me a miracle in this location." As explained in the Midrash, the Torah states, "The pit was empty and it had no water." This means, however, that it contained snakes and scorpions. Surviving a pit filled with snakes and scorpions is in itself a miracle. Therefore, Yosef recited the blessing when he passed it.

After his brothers pulled Yosef from the pit, he was sold into slavery to Egypt and ultimately rose to the position of Viceroy. If one were to compare the miracle of surviving the snake pit with becoming the Viceroy of Egypt after being a slave, one would think that the greater miracle was becoming the Viceroy - since it had eternal ramifications on the Jewish people. However, Yosef only recited the blessing when he passed the snake pit. Not being bitten by a snake was an obvious miracle that could not be understood in any other context; yet, rising to the position of Viceroy does not have the obviousness of a miracle because it could have been attributed to destiny.

Based on the principle of the Avudraham, one can only recite the blessing of "She Asa Nissim etc. – He has performed miracles" on the kindling of the Chanukah lights and not the victory over the Greeks. The miracle of the oil was an undisputable, revealed miracle. However, the victory over the Greeks could be attributed to the military prowess of the Jews.

The Rabbis enacted the obligation of kindling the Chanukah lights as a fence to protect the Torah. By acknowledging and appreciating the miracle of the vial of oil, which was a revealed miracle, the Jewish people will never forget that despite the gloominess and bleakness of exile Hashem is still with us and is continuously performing miracles for us.

4. The Ability to Ignore the Negative

The Torah states, "And to Yosef were born two sons – when the year of famine had not yet set in...Yosef called the name of the firstborn Manasheh for, "G-d has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's household.'" On a simple level, one can say that by referring to "my father's household" Yosef was thanking Hashem for causing him to forget the hardships he

endured that were brought about by his brothers. However, not only does the verse seem to refer to Yosef's brothers, who sold him into slavery, but also to Yosef's father Yaakov. What hardships did Yaakov cause Yosef so that he should thank Hashem for allowing him to forget them?

With the passage of time, it is natural for one to forget events, especially if they were not pleasant ones. The Torah is telling us that the trying events to which Yosef is referring are not ones that can be forgotten naturally with the passage of time. Rather, they are experiences that one would not forget because of the depth of pain and suffering which they caused. Therefore, Yosef named his first-born Manasheh to acknowledge that the pain caused by his hardships was forgotten only because G-d caused him to forget. Yosef's ability to forget his hardships was the equivalent of a miracle. The question to ask is – why was it so important for Hashem to intervene and bring about a miracle to cause Yosef to forget?

Yosef understood that his function was to prepare the way for the Jewish exile and to create an insular environment to guarantee the spiritual and material survival of his family in Egypt. In order for Yosef to fulfill his role, he needed to perceive everything in the most positive light. He could not be distracted by feelings, which stemmed from his past hardships. He could not succeed if he felt any negativity towards his brothers or father. If one is consumed with feelings of negativity towards individuals or events, one cannot focus on accomplishing. Yosef understood that it was meant for him to become the Viceroy of Egypt and be the provider for Klal Yisroel. Since Yosef's focus was imperative for the future of Klal Yisroel, Hashem made him forget what would have interfered with his potential. Yosef acknowledged his thankfulness by naming his firstborn Manasheh.

The question remains – what claim could Yosef have had against his father Yaakov who he loved so dearly? Before Yaakov passed away, he summoned Yosef and asked him to fulfill his wishes and bury him in the tomb of Machpelah. Seemingly, this was a request that Yosef would have been happy to fulfill. However, it is evident from Yaakov's statement to Yosef that there was an issue between them. Rashi cites the Midrash in the Portion of Vayechi that Yaakov said to Yosef, "Although I know that you have a difficulty with me in your heart, because I did not bury your mother Rochel in the Tomb of Machpelah, but rather along the way to Bais Lechem, etc..." It was only before Yaakov's passing that he explained to Yosef the reason his mother was not buried in the Tomb of Machpelah. However, up until that moment this was a claim, which Yosef harbored in his heart against his father. Therefore when Hashem caused Yosef to forget his past hardships He also caused him to forget the ill feelings that he felt towards his father. Thus, Yosef acknowledged Hashem by naming his eldest son Manasheh because – **"G-d has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's household."**

Often people become distracted by feelings of being victimized or wronged in some way. While these feelings may be justified, their negative affect causes distraction and does not allow the person to focus and have the positive outlook to succeed in life. Although one understands the debilitating effect of such feelings, one is not able to forget and move on.

We say in our daily prayers, "Hashem gives fortitude to the humble." The question is why do the truly humble need fortitude? If the humble person sees life clearly, regardless of how much he is not given his due, his sense of self should not be diminished. However, this is not the case. When a person is continuously ignored and not valued, it is difficult for him to survive. Therefore, Hashem must give fortitude and encouragement even to the humble. We all must pray to Hashem to assist us to be positive about life and towards our mission, despite the negativity that affects us. It is only through this outlook that we can succeed and not be distracted.

5. Can One Contend with Conflict of Interest?

The Torah states that when Yosef's brothers arrived in Egypt, **"Yosef saw his brothers and he recognized them...but they did not recognize him."** Rashi cites the Gemara, which explains that when Yosef's brothers sold him into slavery he did not have a beard (he was seventeen years old). When Yosef's brothers came to Egypt years later, Yosef had a beard and therefore he could not be

recognized. The Torah refers to Yosef as “Ben Zikunim – (literally a child of his old age).” However, Rashi cites Chazal who explain “Ben Zikunim” means that Yosef’s facial features resembled those of his father Yaakov. One would think that since Yosef was a younger version of their father Yaakov, the brothers would have easily recognized Yosef. In addition, Yosef’s brothers lived with him for the first seventeen years of his life. So, how is it possible that one brother does not recognize the other because his face is concealed with a beard?

The Commentators explain that when Yosef’s brothers sold him into slavery they convened a *Bais Din* (Jewish court) which was the equivalent of the Sanhedrin (the High Court of Israel). They ruled that Yosef was a *rodef* (one who pursues another to take his life). The law dictates that if one rises to take your life you must rise to take his. Because of the intimate relationship that Yosef had with their father Yaakov, they were concerned that all of the tale bearing that Yosef had engaged in against them, would ultimately undermine their existence. They felt that if Yaakov believed Yosef’s tales that he might curse them – which was a fate worse than death. Therefore, Yosef’s brothers ruled that he should die. Rather than killing him, they decided to sell him into slavery. There was no question in their minds that they had given a proper ruling.

The Gemara in Tractate Sanhedrin tells us that if the Bais Din is qualified and their objective is to mete out truthful Justice, then the judges see through “G-d’s Eyes”. When Yosef’s brothers ruled that he deserved to be put to death, they believed that it was the equivalent of a Divine decision. Thus, they felt based on their personal integrity that their judgment was correct.

The Gemara tells us that if a person has a conflict of interest regarding a particular case, he is disqualified from being a judge or a witness, even if he is a tzaddik (unquestioned integrity and above reproach). If there is even a slight conflict of interest, he is disqualified because as a human being one’s objectivity is compromised.

The question remains – how is it possible that Yosef’s brothers did not recognize him? In addition to his facial resemblance to their father, Chazal tell us that Yosef was able to recount to his brothers intimate details of their childhood, which only a family member could have known. Despite the fact that Yosef claimed that he knew these details through divination, one would think that his brothers would attribute this knowledge to the fact that this was indeed Yosef.

When a person makes a decision which has profound consequences, if it is determined at a later time that his decision was wrong, he will have great difficulty accepting that fact. Yosef rose to the position of Viceroy of Egypt. His responsibility was to sustain the world in a time of famine. Yosef’s brothers came to Egypt to purchase grain. When they entered the presence of the Viceroy they bowed to him. What was actually taking place was a throwback to the dreams that Yosef had years earlier as a young man. If in fact they had acknowledged that the Viceroy was their brother Yosef, this would have been a condemnation of themselves. It would have meant that their initial understanding of Yosef’s behavior was incorrect and their perception of him was the result of their intense jealousy. They would have had to admit to themselves that their ruling to kill Yosef was the equivalent of murder. For a person to admit to himself that he was so wrong, when he believed that he was so right, is nearly impossible – especially if the admission implies that he sentenced someone to death unjustly.

As much as it was blatantly evident that the Viceroy of Egypt was their brother Yosef, they did not recognize him because they said to themselves, “Our brother Yosef did not have a beard, and this man does. Therefore he could not be our brother.” They did not want to recognize Yosef despite the resemblance to their father and the intimate details, which he shared with them. The Torah is teaching us that when a person has a serious conflict of interest he does not want to see reality because that reality is undesirable to him.

With this understanding, we can understand the principle stated in the Gemara, “In the place that Baali Teshuvah (a repentant) stand, even an absolute Tzaddik does not stand.” In order for a person to become a Baal Teshuvah, he must recognize and admit to himself and acknowledge that he has failed in many areas of his life. The Baal Teshuvah’s acknowledgement and admission of

his spiritual failings is nearly an unattainable accomplishment. For a person to admit to himself that he was so wrong and be willing to take responsibility for his failings is something that even Yosef's brothers were not able to do. Until Yosef openly revealed himself to them by saying, "I am Yosef, your brother who you sold to Egypt," his brothers would not recognize him. Despite the fact that Yosef's brothers were spiritual giants, they were not able to overcome their own conflict of interest.

Now we can appreciate the difficulty of becoming a Baal Teshuvah due to conflict of interest. In fact, the Gemara tells us that it is not possible for one to do teshuvah without Divine assistance. Teshuvah is a miracle. Rabbeinu Yona states in his work Shaare Teshuvah (the Gates of Repentance) that teshuvah is a Chesed (Kindness) of Hashem. One could say that the Chesed of Hashem is to give the person the ability to overcome his conflict of interest and to recognize his failings.

6. How to Understand One's Own Predicament

The Torah states, **"Yosef said to them, 'It is just as I have declared to you, 'You are spies!' By this shall you be tested: By pharaoh's life you will not leave here unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother while you shall remain imprisoned.'" After Yosef, the Viceroy of Egypt, imprisoned one of the brothers despite all of their claims of innocence they said to one another, "Indeed we are guilty concerning our brother (Yosef) inasmuch as we saw his heartfelt anguish when he pleaded with us and we paid no heed; that is why this anguish has come upon us."**

Sforno in his commentary explains that Yosef's brothers realized that their cruelty towards their brother was unjustified. Although they believed that they had initially rendered a proper ruling concerning their brother, as a *rodef* (one who pursues another to take his life), they nevertheless should have had mercy on him when he pleaded not to be sold into slavery. Yosef's brothers understood that because they demonstrated cruelty towards their brother, Hashem was treating them with a similar level of cruelty through the hand of the Viceroy of Egypt – measure for measure.

When Yosef's brothers were subjected to this experience, they immediately understood and acknowledged it to be as a result of their own failing. This was a punishment for what they had done to their brother Yosef when he had pleaded for his life. Until this moment they believed that their insensitivity was not as a result of cruelty but rather it was the proper course of action. However, now that they themselves were experiencing a similar level of harshness, through the hand of the Viceroy, they immediately understood in retrospect that their decision was unjust. Evidently it was only as a result of their intense hatred for Yosef that they did not listen to his pleas for mercy.

The Gemara in Tractate *Bava Metzia* tells a story about a calf that was about to be slaughtered. The calf fled towards Reb Yehudah HaNassi (Judah the Prince) and buried its face in his royal cloak – as if it were pleading for mercy. Reb Yehudah HaNassi said to the calf, "Go to your slaughter because that is what you were created for!" The Gemara tells us that soon after this incident, Reb Yehudah HaNassi developed a stone in his urinary tract and suffered for thirteen years. His pain was so intense that when doing his bodily functions his screams of pain could be heard over all the herds and flocks. Thirteen years after he developed his malady, Reb Yehudah HaNassi saw his maidservant sweeping a litter of newborn cats into the street. Feeling compassion towards them, he retrieved them. As a result of this act of compassion, his ailment was cured. The fact is, what Reb Yehudah HaNassi had said was correct. If so why was he punished so severely?

The answer is that regardless of the factual correctness of one's statements or actions one must have a sensitivity regarding the context of the situation. Often we do things that are legally permitted; however they do not conform to the criteria of sensitivity. When we experience difficulties in life do we take the time to introspect and try to link our difficulties to our actions

and behavior? Hashem metes out punishment and reward measure for measure based on our actions and behavior.

The fact is that even when Hashem punishes measure for measure, there is an aspect of Chesed in this punishment because it is through this punishment, which mirrors the failing, that we are able to understand where we went wrong. Through introspection and reflection we are able to make the linkage between the punishment and our actions.

The Gemara in Tractate *Berachos* tells us that if one sees difficulties coming upon him, he must introspect and reflect to discover the cause of his problem. When one experiences difficulties, rather than looking for a scapegoat, one must reflect on his own behavior and understand if this is a consequence of a previous failing. We see this in the behavior of Yosef's brothers. It was only when they experienced personal anguish and cruelty, through the hand of the Viceroy that they realized they had acted cruelly towards Yosef.