

CHEVRAH TORAH...5777

With HEART in MIND

MUSSAR Teaching to Transform the Text & Our Lives

Miketz—Genesis 43:15-34

MIYUT S'CHOK—Limiting Levity

...Key KOSHI...

HOW does the gamut of emotions play out in the exchange between Joseph & his brothers?
WHAT do we learn from the revealing/hiding of feelings about the family/God of Israel?



P'SHAT...Studying Torah—Encountering The Word—The Will—The ONE

The truly wise individual is not one who has achieved wisdom but a *talmid chacham*—a wise student...one who is constantly learning—including by observing and reflecting on what can be learned from other people.

<p>43:15] The men then took this offering, and taking in hand the double portion of silver, along with Benjamin, they got going and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. 16] When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the one in charge of his household, “Bring the men into the house and slaughter an animal and prepare [it], for [these] men are going to eat with me at noon.” 17] The man did as Joseph said; the man brought the men into Joseph’s house. 18] The men were frightened when they were brought into Joseph’s house; they thought: “It is on account of the silver that came back in our bags the first time that we’re being brought [here]—in order to fall upon us, to pounce on us, to take us as slaves, along with our asses.” 19] They therefore approached the man in charge of Joseph’s household and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, 20] saying, “By your leave, my lord, the last time we came down to buy food, 21] when we go to the night lodging and opened our bags, each one’s silver was in the mouth of his bag—the exact amount that had been weighed out, and we have brought it back with us. 22] And we have brought other money to buy food—we don’t know who put our silver in our bags.” 23] He replied, “You’re</p>	<p>43: 15 ויקחו האנשים את המנחה הזאת ומשנה כסף לקחו בידם ואת בנימן ויקמו וירדו מצרים ויעמדו לפני יוסף: [ששן] 16 וירא יוסף אתם את בנימן ולאמר לאשר על ביתו הבא את האנשים הביתה וטבח טבח והכן כי אתי לאכלו האנשים בצהרים: 17 ויעש האיש כאשר אמר יוסף ויבא האיש את האנשים ביתה יוסף: 18 ויראו האנשים כי הובאו בית יוסף ויאמרו על דבר הכסף השב באמת חתינו בתחלה אנחנו מובאים להתגלגל עלינו ולהתנפל עלינו ולקחת אתנו לעבדים ואת חמרינו: 19 ויגשו אל האיש אשר על בית יוסף וידברו אליו פתח הבית: 20 ויאמרו כי אדני ירד ירדנו בתחלה לשבר אכל: 21 ויהי כי באנו אל המלון ונפתחה את אמת חתינו והנה כסף איש בפי אמת חתו כספנו במשקלו ונשב אתו בינדנו: 22 וכסף אחר הורדנו בינדנו</p>
--	---

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה.
 Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'cizvanu laasok b'divrei Torah.
 Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to engage with words of Torah.

all right; have no fear. Your god and your father's god has given you a hidden treasure in your bags—your money reached me!” And he brought Simeon out to them.

24] The man then ushered the men into Joseph's house; he supplied water and they washed their feet, and he gave fodder to their asses. 25] They laid out the offering for the arrival of Joseph at noon, for they had heard that they would eat there. 26] When Joseph entered the house they presented to him the offering they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground. 27] He asked them how they were, and said “How is your aged father of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” 28] They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” And they knelt and bowed down.

29] He looked up and saw his [full] brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and he said, “is this your youngest brother you told me about?” And he added, “God be gracious to you, my son!” 30] Joseph hurried [out], for he was so deeply stirred with tender warmth toward his brother that he wanted to weep; he went into an [inner] chamber and there he wept. 31] He washed his face, and when he came out, he held himself in check and said, “Serve food!” 32] They served him separately and them separately and the Egyptians who usually ate with them separately, for the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, since it was an abomination to the Egyptians.

33] As they were seated before him, the first-born according to his seniority and the youngest according to his youth, the men looked at each other in amazement. 34] He presented portions [of food] to them from what was in front of him—Benjamin's portion exceeded all of theirs fivefold—and they drank and grew drunk with him.

לְשֹׁבְר־אֶכֶל לֹא יִדְעוּנוּ מִי־שָׁם בְּסַפְּנוֹ
בְּאֲמַתְחֹתֵינוּ : 23 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלוֹם לְכֶם אֶל־
תִּירְאוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם נָתַן לְכֶם
מִטְמוֹן בְּאֲמַתְחֹתֵיכֶם בְּסַפְּכֶם בָּא אֵלַי
וַיֹּצֵא אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־שִׁמְעוֹן : 24 וַיָּבֵא הָאִישׁ
אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף וַיִּסֹּף וַיִּתֵּן־מִים
וַיִּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיהֶם וַיִּתֵּן מִסְפּוֹא לְחֲמֹרֵיהֶם :
25 וַיִּכְנִינּוּ אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה עַד־בּוֹא יוֹסֵף
בַּצְּהָרִים כִּי שָׁמְעוּ כִּי־שָׁם יֹאכְלוּ לֶחֶם :
26 וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף הַבֵּיתָה וַיָּבִיאוּ לוֹ אֶת־
הַמִּנְחָה אֲשֶׁר־בָּדָד הֵבִיטָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ־לוֹ
אֶרְצָה : 27 וַיִּשְׁאַל לָהֶם לְשֵׁלוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר
הַשְׁלוֹם אֲבֹתֵיכֶם הֲזָקָן אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם
הַעוֹדְנֵנוּ חַי : 28 וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹם לְעַבְדְּךָ
לְאֲבִינוּ עוֹדְנֵנוּ חַי וַיִּקְדּוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ
[וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ] : 29 וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת־
בְּנֵי־מִין אַחִיו בְּר־אִמּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲזֶה אַחֵיכֶם
הַקָּטָן אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם אֵלַי וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
יַחַדְּ בְּנֵי : [שְׁבִיעִי] 30 וַיִּמְהַר יוֹסֵף כִּי־
נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמָיו אֶל־אֲחִיו וַיִּבְקֶשׁ לִבְכּוֹת
וַיָּבֵא הַחֲדָרָה וַיִּבְדַּךְ שָׁמָּה : 31 וַיִּרְחַץ פָּנָיו
וַיִּצָּא וַיִּתְאַפֵּק וַיֹּאמֶר שִׁימוּ לֶחֶם :
32 וַיִּשְׁימוּ לוֹ לֶבֶדוֹ וְלָהֶם לֶבֶדָם וְלַמִּצְרָיִם
הָאֹכְלִים אֶת־לֶבֶדָם כִּי לֹא יוֹכְלוּן
הַמִּצְרָיִם לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־הָעֵבְרִים לֶחֶם כִּי־
תוֹעֵבָה הוּא לַמִּצְרָיִם : 33 וַיִּשְׁבוּ לִפְנֵיו
הַבְּכֹר כְּבִכְרָתוֹ וְהַצְּעִיר כְּצַעְרָתוֹ וַיִּתְמָהוּ
הָאֲנָשִׁים אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ : 34 וַיִּשָּׂא מִשָּׂאת
מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֲלֵהֶם וַיִּתְרַב מִשָּׂאת בְּנֵי־מִין
מִמִּשָּׂאת כָּל־חֵמֶשׁ יָדוֹת וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ
עִמּוֹ :

D’RASH...*Helping the Heart feel what the Mind understands ...*

Alan MORINIS...

...Humor can be a safety valve for the pressures of life. It releases the tensions that come from living within restrictive boundaries...So is release from the strict parameters and the inevitable tensions a good thing?...The answer, it appears, is that a little is beneficial, while too much is dangerous...The caution is that release from boundaries has become a way of life in modern society...The media glory in every egotist who shows up on reality television to parade his or her further debasement of public standards...Humor works well in spiritual life when it is a pinch of spice added to the main course of serious endeavor...The sensitive soul recognizes the truth we find in Ecclesiastes 3:4: “*There is a time to weep and a time to laugh...*” The sensitivity comes in knowing which is which, and how to respond in a whole and holy way that is appropriate to the situation. [With Heart in Mind, pgs 107-108]

SOD...*Helping the soul-light shine...*

Practice focuses on recalibrating the soul-traits that are obstructing your soul’s light from shining into your life.

Prof LEON KASS

The brothers must now be thoroughly bewildered. First, they believed that they were being held as thieves. Now, reassured on that score and reunited with the liberated Simeon, they are treated as honored guests, yet for no apparent reason. ...When Joseph arrives home at noon, the brothers present their tribute and prostrate themselves before him.

And he asked them of their welfare, and he said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spoke? Is he still alive?”

Eleven brothers bowing down at his feet, in a position of worship. But where is his father? Did he really send Benjamin of his own volition, or did the brothers wait until he died: “Is the old man still alive?”

“Yes,” the brothers answer, “*our aged father is alive and well*. Though absent, he is your servant by proxy, a sender of tribute to your lofty self.” Joseph’s boyhood dream of domination has come true. Nothing is said about his feeling any relief at the news that his father is still alive and well. While his brothers look down, Joseph looks up and scans the group for the only person of real interest to him.

And he lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin, his brother, his mother’s son.

Seeing Benjamin, Joseph sees not only a brother, but his only full brother and alter ego, the son of his mother, Rachel, who died while giving birth to Benjamin when Joseph was himself but a boy. He does not wait for a confirming answer from the brothers—and addresses him with paternal, not to say god-like, solicitude. Though he had coolly manipulated the brothers precisely to deliver up Benjamin, the consummate master of the drama is unprepared for his own emotional response to the sight of his brother. His eyes grow misty and his sight grows dim. Joseph, for the second time, is overcome with the need for weeping and hastily removes himself to shed his tears unseen.

Joseph’s tears are, the text makes clear, born of compassion or pity, based on brotherly identification: *rachamim*, usually translated “*mercy*” or “*compassion*,” originally meant “*brotherly feeling*” (or “*Motherly feeling*”), based on its derivation (according to many scholars) from *rechem*, “womb”. But Joseph’s brotherly feeling is not directed to all of his brothers; he is not moved by their trustworthiness with Benjamin or the indication of their remorse and reform. Joseph’s compassion is rather reserved for the one brother born

from the same womb, from Rachel. But what inspires Joseph's tears? Is it merely that Benjamin is, as Joseph once was, in the hands of the ten unloved and unloving brothers? Or does Joseph weep, in addition, to see Benjamin suffering on account of Joseph's own actions...Could there be tears of tenderness mixed with tears of pity, as Joseph contemplates his next moves in a plan that could get Benjamin to stay with him, thus to complete the integration of the line of beautiful Rachel into the beauty-loving land of Egypt?

Whatever its cause, Joseph's impulse to tears makes clear, both to him and to the reader, that his feelings for Benjamin and his lack of self-command are incompatible with his lofty position as Egyptian viceroy and consummate manager of the present drama. Fittingly, Joseph must weep in private, shedding tears also for himself and the divisions within his soul.

His face washed to hide the evidence of tears, and struggling for self-control, Joseph returns and resumes command, giving an order to set on the food. But the meal that follows only corroborates Joseph's deep dilemma.

Imagining the scene, we see that Joseph eats alone, separated both from his native Hebrew brethren and his adopted Egyptian compatriots. Because of his elevated Egyptian status, he may not eat with his brothers. Yet despite his power, his Egyptian underlings will not eat with him, because he is a Hebrew, whose food is an abomination in Egypt.

Joseph, an Egyptianized Hebrew, is simultaneously both and neither. Because his relation to these Hebrew visitors is known only to Joseph himself, only Joseph feels the poignancy of his self-isolation and emptiness at the very moment in which he enjoys his long-dreamt-of-greatness *via-a-vis* his brothers. Joseph has what he wished for, but it turns out to be not exactly what he wanted. Joseph learns what the reader has learned from earlier stories in Genesis: supremacy and the equality of brotherliness are incompatible.

Joseph (and the reader) may very well remember the last time his brothers ate in his vicinity, when, after they had planned to kill him and claim that a wild beast had eaten him, they cast him into a pit without food and water and sat apart eating their lunch. Now, acting either from impulse or calculation, Joseph sends portions of food from his table to his brothers, seemingly confirming some kind of link between them. The brothers are delighted by this turn of events and conviviality reigns...Joseph, perhaps much in sorrow as in joy, leads the partygoers to lose themselves in drink, satisfying at once his desire both to forget and to celebrate. One can readily understand that he has much he would rather forget.

[The Beginning of Wisdom,, pg 588-590]

...PRACTICE...

Be AWARE of the feelings inside over the course of the coming week...

How often this week did you hide your feelings? To What end?

HOW did your emotions guide/impact/reflect your actions?

...Journal on: HOW your "laughter" & "tears" inform life-perspective?