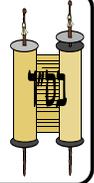




Kindert Torah

Parashas Vayigash



Embarrassment

"Saba, thank you so much for treating us to this beautiful dinner in the restaurant. You are so generous."
 "It is my pleasure, kinderlach. Just enjoy yourselves."

The waiter emerged from the kitchen with a large serving tray. Stacked upon it were plates of food for the whole family. He rested them on a serving cart. A young boy from another family stood close by. The waiter began placing the plates upon the table in front of the guests.

"Everything looks so yummy, Saba."
 "Bi'teavon (have a good appetite) kinderlach."

The young boy waited until he thought no one was looking. He quickly reached out, swiped a few French fries from one of the plates on the serving cart, and held them in his hand. The Saba saw this and jumped up.

"That's terrible! Did you see that?"

The family was a bit startled. What was the Saba talking about? What did he see?

"That's terrible! How could you do such a thing?"

The young boy froze in his tracks. He did not know what to do. The Saba continued.

"I never saw anything like that! What chutzpah!"

The family remained confused. The Saba stood up and began to walk towards the boy. He realized that he was trapped. He raised his hand, opened it, and dropped the French fries back onto the plate. Now everyone realized why the Saba was so upset.

"Baruch Hashem that boy has some busha (shame). He realized that he had done something wrong and returned the stolen object."

"Saba, we learned about busha in our parashas ha'shavuah class today."

"Please share what you learned with me, Chaim."

"We were discussing the story of Yosef. He finally revealed his identity to his brothers when he said, 'I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?' (Bereshis 45:3). What was the brothers' reaction? 'They could not answer him because they were bewildered.' Rashi adds - from busha. Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l explains the reason for their busha. The brothers originally thought that they were justified in selling Yosef as a slave. However, when their troubles began, they looked to this act as the cause. 'Indeed we are guilty concerning our brother. We saw his suffering and ignored it. That is why this misery has come upon us' (Bereshis 42:21). Yosef's revelation revealed, beyond the shadow of a doubt that their deed was totally against the Will of Hashem. This caused them terrible shame."

"Fascinating, Chaim. Did you know that busha is one of the three good middos

(character traits) that identify a Jew? We are called *rachmonim* (merciful), *bayshonim* (embarrassed to do wrong), and *gomlei chassodim* (kind) [Devarim Rabba]. The Orchos Tsaddikim devotes an entire chapter to the subject of busha."
 "Please tell me about it, Saba."

"Our sages compare busha to a person's seichel. It is the little voice in his heart that tells him what is right and wrong. If he listens to the voice, it prevents him from sinning. There are four levels of busha. The lowest one is not sinning in public, but sinning in private. The person is embarrassed in front of people, but not in front of Hashem. A higher level is not sinning in private due to fear of being discovered. At the third level, the sinner asks himself the following question. 'How can I do this terrible thing in private? Am I more ashamed in front of the servant than the Master? Am I not deceiving Him?' If this prevents him from sinning, he has achieved something wonderful. The highest form of busha is to feel Hashem's presence always and therefore be ashamed to sin in private as well as in public."



"Wow, Saba. That is really something."

"Yes, Chaim. This trait is inborn in every Jew. We just need to cultivate and develop it. If we do, it will save us from sin and protect us from terrible punishment."

"May we all succeed."

Kindertlach . . .

What stops people from doing outrageous things in public? Busha. What makes us follow the social trend? Busha - we are ashamed to be different. What causes even the most non-religious Jew to cover his head in front of the Kosel Ha'Maaravi? Busha. He realizes that he is in front of Hashem. Busha is a wonderful middah, kinderlach. Strengthen it by imagining your parents in front of you always. See your Rebbe looking over your shoulder when you are in the store. Feel Hashem next to you at all times. You will never sin. You will become a real bayshan.

Don't Hurt Back

"Ouch!"

"What happened, Sari?"

"Rivkie hit me, Imma."

"Why did you do that Rivkie?"

"Because Sari pushed me, Imma."

"Why did you push her, Sari?"

"If you would know what she said about me, Imma..."

"I see. Sari is hurting Rivkie because Rivkie hurt her. And Rivkie is hurting Sari because Sari hurt her."

"Right, Imma."

"Each one of you thinks that it is okay to hurt someone who has hurt you."

"Isn't it, Imma? After all, if my sister does not treat me properly, why should I be careful about her feelings?"

"Let us see what Yosef HaTsaddik has to say about that. His brothers hurt him terribly. At

first, they wanted to kill him. Then they left him in a pit to die. Finally, they sold him as a slave."

"That is truly horrible, Imma."

"Yes, girls. However, Yosef was a tsaddik. Hashem was with him. He did not stay a slave, but rose to become second in command of Mitzrayim. Twenty-two years after the sale, Hashem united Yosef and his brothers. He recognized them, but they did not know who he was. When he finally revealed himself they were shocked. What was his reaction?"

"He must not have treated them nicely after what they did to him."

"You might think so girls; however, Yosef was a tsaddik. He comforted and appeased them. Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l is in awe of Yosef's middos. We are all familiar with the obligations of the person who hurts someone else. He must apologize and repay the damage that was done. What about the obligations of the one who was hurt?"

"Obligations? He was wronged, Imma!"

"True, Sari, however, there are still mitzvos *bein adam lichaveiro* (between man and his fellow) telling us how to treat people. We may not insult them or hurt their feelings even if they wrong us. That is exactly what Yosef HaTsaddik did. He was careful with the feelings of his brothers. They felt so ashamed of what they had done. He could have hurt their feelings even more by telling them how much suffering they had caused him. Instead, he comforted them. 'And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, for having sold me here; for Hashem sent me ahead to be a provider' (Bereshis 45:5). Yosef knew that everything was *min HaShomayim* (from Heaven). The brothers were just agents to carry out Hashem's Will. Therefore, he appeased them."

"The greatness of Yosef is so compelling that it is frightening."

"That is exactly what Rav Yerucham says, Rivkie. We can take a big lesson from Yosef HaTsaddik - what *madraygas* a person can reach."

Kindertlach . . .

How do we react when someone hurts us? "I'll get him back!" Wrong! Besides transgressing two mitzvos in the Torah (bearing a grudge and taking revenge), you are showing very bad middos. "I won't hurt him, but I just won't be nice to him." Wrong again! You are still bearing a grudge, and you are hurting his feelings and not being nice to him. "I will realize that the hurt was min HaShomayim, forgive him in my heart, and attempt to speak to him about my feelings." Right! You have accomplished something truly awesome. You have shown a very good middah. You are on your way to being a tsaddik, just like Yosef.

Parasha Questions:

- How much of the land of Mitzrayim did Yosef buy for Paroh? (47:20,22)
- How much tax did they have to pay to Paroh? (47:24)
- Why did Yosef relocate the Mitzrim? (Rashi 47:21)

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