

א ביסל תורה!

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י"טבת תשפ"ה · ויחי

Making Peace

By Menshi Trachtenberg '26

Is there a connection between the words שלום (peace) and אעשה (I will do)? In בראשית נ' and all of his sons come together to bury him. After they finished burying him (the way he wanted), they all went back to Egypt. In פסוק י"ז, יוסף's brothers sent a message to him in the name of his father, saying "אָנָּא, פֶּשַׁע אֲחֵיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי־רָעוּ גָּמְלוּךָ" "Forgive, I urge you, the offense and guilt of your brothers who treated you so harshly". בראשית רבא says that the brothers lied to יוסף to make peace. Where did it ever say that יוסף wanted to tell יוסף to make peace with his brothers? This shows us that peace is even more important than the truth. (I am not suggesting that lying is a good thing, this situation is a special case).

The reason making peace is important here is because יוסף is very high up in power in Egypt, and they were in the middle of a famine, so if he decided not to give them any food, they would be in big trouble. יוסף's response to his brothers, "אַל־תִּירְאוּ אֲנֹכִי אֶבְלָל אֶתְכֶם, וְיָנַחְסוּ אֹתְכֶם וְיִדְבַּר עֲלֵיכֶם" "Don't worry, I will sustain you and your dependants. And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them", so the brothers message did work as a peacemaker.

Going back to my main question, we can learn from יוסף, that it is really important to not only hope for peace, but you should also try to create peace. Furthermore, I don't think that it is just a mere coincidence that the words שלום and אעשה have the same גימטריה (a way of assigning a numerical value to Hebrew words), of 376. True peace is not passive; it's

not a state of being we simply arrive at. It's something we create. Peace isn't a destination, but a journey. שלום is the culmination of countless acts of kindness: helping each other, forgiving, telling the truth, and more. Every act of חסד that we do, every moment of forgiveness as a community, are the 'bricks' to building the eventual house of peace.

יוסף is a really good example of a person actively trying to achieve peace. A lot of people, if they were in the same situation as יוסף, would want to take revenge, but instead of taking revenge יוסף decides to forgive his brothers, even after they tried to kill him. All he did was say that it was all for the good, הכל לטובה. By doing so, יוסף alleviates his brother's fears, and he mends the relationship with his family. What would have happened if יוסף didn't forgive his brothers? He was very powerful in Egypt, he could have taken revenge in many different ways, but that would completely ruin his relationship with what matters most, his family.

I pray that next time you get into an argument with somebody, or you are mad at somebody for a different reason, you say to yourself אעשה שלום instead of breaking the peace. Even a tiny tear can cause a lot of damage. שבת שלום.

יעקב's Final Blessing

By Avishag Salzman '27

In this week's פרשה ויחי, פרשת יעקב lives the last seventeen years of his life in Egypt. Before he dies, he asks יוסף to bury him in Israel. He also gives blessings to his sons and יוסף's sons. When he calls his children to give them the blessings, the פסוק says, "וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל-בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֶסְפוּ וְאֶגִּידָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֲתֶכֶם אֶל-בְּנֵי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֶסְפוּ וְאֶגִּידָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֲתֶכֶם." יעקב called for his sons and said, "Gather and I will tell you what will happen to you at the end of days" (בראשית מ"ט:א).

Rav Hirsch notices that instead of using the שורש (root) "קרה" that means happened or befall, the פסוק uses the word קרא-call. Rav Hirsch explains that this is to teach us that anything that happens to us should be understood as a call from ה'. Anything we go through, ה' made happen for a specific purpose.

Another lesson we can learn from this פסוק comes from רש"י, פסחים נו. Following the מדרש quoted in רש"י says that יעקב wanted to share the time משיח will come with his sons. But all of a sudden the רוח הקודש that gave him this knowledge went away. He became scared that maybe one of his kids was not worthy of this information. Just as אברהם fathered an unworthy son, ישמעאל, and יצחק also fathered an unworthy son, עשו, so too, or so יעקב thought, one of יעקב's own sons was just as unworthy.

יעקב's sons quickly reassured him and answered, according to the מדרש "שמע ישראל ה' אלוהינו ה' אחד" "hear O ישראל (their father's name) ה' our G-d is one." And then they told יעקב, "Just as there is only one God in your heart, so too, there is only one in our hearts. As if to tell him, 'We don't need to know when משיח will come, we have ה' in our hearts.' יעקב then responded to them, "כבוד שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד",

"blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom forever."

יעקב realized that ה' did not want the date of משיח to be known, that בני ישראל would find comfort not in the deadline of משיח, but in loving and serving ה' every day. From this, we can learn that we should not wait for a certain deadline, but enjoy serving ה' every day.



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