



Parashat Vayechi 5770

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**Be-Ezrat Hashem, Rav Aviner will be publishing his third book in a series of Hebrew children's books on Avri. Avri experiences the Exodus and wanders in the desert and faces the challenges which every child does.**

**The stories contain question(s) to explore with your children.**

**If you are interested in contributing (even smaller amounts help and payments can be made over time), please be in contact.**

## 10 Relationships between Maran Ha-Rav Kook and Various Gedolei Yisrael that the Yeshiva World Should Know

### Part 3

[Collected by Mordechai Friedfertig.

Ha-Rav Aviner Shlit"a encouraged spreading its message]

#### **5. Ha-Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer: We are Gedolim until we reach his doorknob**

Ha-Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, Rosh Yeshiva of Eitz Chaim in Jerusalem, said: "I was young when I arrived in Volozhin, and I looked with great respect at the greater students who sat on the eastern wall, and among them were prodigies who would become Gedolei Yisrael. But I remember well that looking at him [Maran Ha-Rav Kook] was completely different - even among the special he was distinguished by his uniqueness!"

[Tal Ha-Re'eyah p. 71, Shivchei Ha-Re'eyah p. 101 and the booklet "Az Nebabru Yirei Hashem" p. 13]

Ha-Rav Meltzer once visited Ha-Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, and Ha-Rav Meltzer said about Maran Ha-Rav: "We are Gedolim until we reach his doorknob."

[Mi-Toch Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet vol. 2 p. 170, Le-Shelosha Be-Elul vol. 2 p. 101, Shivchei Ha-Re'eiah p. 202, Bisadeh Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 274, Malachim Kivnei Adam p. 430 and the booklet "Az Nebabru Yirei Hashem" p. 22]

Ha-Rav Meltzer said many times: "If only I could daven during Ne'eilah on Yom Kippur, with awe of holiness and feeling, like Ha-Rav [Kook] davens during weekday Minchah."

[Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah #51, Le-Shelosha Be-Elul vol. 2 p. 102, Orot Ha-Tefillah of Ha-Rav Y. Epstein (student of Ha-Rav Meltzer) p. 26, Shivchei Ha-Re'eiyah p. 200, Malachim Kivnei Adam p. 256 and the booklet "Az Nebabru Yirei Hashem" p. 29]

In the eulogy which Ha-Rav Meltzer delivered for Maran Ha-Rav in the Churva Synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem, he said: "The True Torah was in his mouth" and "With the passing of Ha-Rav – the spine of Klal Yisrael is broken."

[Moadei Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 12, Le-Shelosha Be-Elul vol 2 p. 101, Shivchei Ha-Re'eiyah p. 15, Bisadeh Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 275 and Malachim Kivnei Adam p. 430]

See the booklet "Az Nebabru Yirei Hashem" from Amichai Kinerati for the close relationship between Ha-Rav Meltzer and Maran Ha-Rav.

## On the Parashah Why Efraim and Menashe?

[Tal Chermon based on Me'eina Shel Torah p. 208 in the name of Igra De-Kallah]

Yaakov Avinu blessed his grandsons: "He blessed them on that day, saying: Israel will be blessed through you, saying: May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe" (Bereshit 48:20). When we bless girls on Shabbat evening, we say: "May G-d make you like Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah," but we do not blessed our boys: May G-d make you like Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov." Instead we quote Yaakov: "May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe." Why is Israel specially blessed through Efraim and Menashe?

A fundamental principle of the Torah is that a person should not be arrogant and should not be envious of others. When Yaakov Avinu saw that even though he maneuvered his hands to place the younger Efraim before Menashe, the first born, Efraim was not overtaken by arrogance, nor was Menashe stricken with envy. Yaakov Avinu therefore said: All of Israel should be this way, without arrogance and without envy. Unfortunately, we see that this was not the case among the other brothers: "And his brothers were jealous of him [Yosef]" (Bereshit 37:11). Yaakov Avinu therefore blessed them and we follow in their footsteps: "May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe."

## Rav Aviner on... The Religious-Zionist Community

[Ma'ayanei Yeshua – Parashat Vayeshev 5770]

Question: How can we internally strengthen the Religious-Zionist community and increase its influence?

Answer: When we speak about a movement, i.e. a powerful historical process, we must identify the fundamentals of the movement which nurture and increase its strength. This movement was born a little over one hundred years ago and its purpose was to insert a spiritual soul into a powerful movement which then appeared and was growing: The national revival of the Nation in its Land. The Religious-Zionist movement therefore nurtures into strength from these two entities, the body and soul. Its beginning was quite modest but it grew stronger, both internally and in influence.

Regarding its quantity, it has reached ten percent of the Nation which dwells in Zion, and regarding its quality, it contains a much high percentage of those active in the government, army, economy, science, and more Bnei Torah, Torah scholars, yeshivot, women's high schools and seminaries.

Its influence on the Nation is incredible, and much greater than the ten percent it represents. One must obviously point out that the Religious-Zionist community has many shades and includes different streams: yeshivish, university types, those who are punctilious about the mitzvot, liberals, right-wingers, left wingers, etc. The common denominator between all of them is the belief in the revival of the Nation in its Land according to the Torah.

Besides the fact that this community is becoming stronger both quantitatively and qualitatively, it also has a major impact on the other two communities between which it mediates: the Non-Zionist Charedim and the Secular-Zionists. This influence is not a direct one but a natural one of absorption. The Secular-Zionists are coming closer to Torah, and are

much closer than they were before the establishment of the State. This is from being in contact with the Religious-Zionist community, in which it sees many sterling qualities in the area of education, family life, and in our relationship to the State and the army. Similarly, the Charedi community is coming closer to the State and the entire enterprise of the national revival, in that it unwittingly absorbs Torat Eretz Yisrael of the Religious-Zionists.

There is obviously much more work to be done, and there are certainly many deficiencies in our community, but this is not on account of a faulty foundation, but because we are still at the beginning of our path. It is the correct path and we must continue on it. The strengthening of the physical national revival is a natural process which feeds itself, and does not require additional action.

But regarding the national spiritual revival, we must exert much more effort, i.e. to increase Torah learning in our community. The more we learn Torah, the greater blessing will come to us and others.

This conclusion is not surprising. We know that the Torah is the Divine cure for everything, both communally and individually, as the Maharal wrote at the beginning of his work *Netivot Olam*, *Netiv Ha-Torah*, that the Torah provides the order of the world. The Netziv of Volozhin similarly wrote in his teshuvah "Yamin U-Semol" (Right and Left) regarding the different streams among the Nation of Israel, in which the solution is not separate communities but increasing Torah among the Nation, producing Torah scholars, and Torah learning among the masses (*Shut Meishiv Dvar* 1:44). Maran Ha-Rav Kook similarly wrote that the various spiritual ailments are a result of something disturbing the pure Israeli nature, which retains its purity by learning Torah, whether learning Torah in order to produce Torah scholars or Torah learning for the masses (*Orot Ha-Teshuvah*).

The main medicine is therefore to increase Torah among the Religious-Zionist community, from head-to-toe, in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and yeshivot for both men and women.

And we must also strengthen what must precede Torah, i.e. proper character traits of integrity, honesty, helping others, gentility, with guarding one's tongue at the center. Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook, did not want to force the yeshiva's schedule on the students, except for demanding that every day between 12:45-1:15 the students learn the book "Chafetz Chaim".

The general principle is that we must increase proper character traits and Torah learning among both individuals and the community as a whole.

## *Family Matters*

*Ha-Rav writes weekly for the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships*

Conversation between a father and son:

- "Abba, how much did Imma cost you?"
- "I don't remember! But I am still paying every day..."

This is correct. Marriage requires constant effort from both members of the couple. They therefore begin with a down payment: Behold you are betrothed to me with this ring – which must be worth a "perutah" (a minimal amount of money). And one must fulfill, throughout life, what is written in the Ketubah: to feed, cherish, love, etc...

To what is this similar? To an advertisement which boasts of an inexpensive product, but with major payments written in small letters. Similarly, the betrothal is just a "perutah" but the Ketubah contains lengthy payments.

Perhaps you will say that an ongoing payment can be cumbersome. Just the opposite is true! If you exert effort for someone, you will love him or her even more. A general rule of the world is nothing really good is free, and all the more so for the deep connection of marriage.

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