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Parashat Vayigash 5771 - #167

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## On the Parashah... The Different Qualities of the Mashiach ben Yosef and the Mashiach ben David [Tal Chermon]

Yosef was unequalled in his ability to build the material basis of existence. This talent of the Messiah ben Yosef continued to unfold throughout history. It did not begin with Yosef, and it did not cease with his passing. Avraham Avinu had already displayed this ability in his victorious war against the four kings (Bereshit, chap. 14), in his successful discovery of fresh water in a well he had dug (ibid. 21:25), and in his great economic prosperity with his flock, silver, and gold (ibid. 13:2). This talent became apparent in Yitzchak also when he dug wells, and was blessed with an unexpectedly prolific crop, a hundred-fold more than others (ibid. 26:12). It reached its peak with Yosef as the viceroy of Egypt. Yosef's descendants demonstrated the same expertise. Two hundred thousand of his resourceful offspring from the tribe of Ephraim broke out of slavery and left Egypt earlier than the rest of the Nation (Shemot Rabbah 20:11). Later, G-d chose Yehoshua of the tribe of Ephraim to perform the miracle of halting the sun in its tracks (Yehoshua 10:12). Yehoshua became famous for this act. Shaul established both the army and the kingdom as a forerunner of the permanent kingdom of the Davidic line (Shmuel 1 14:47-52). Yoravam, an offspring of Yosef, was appointed as chief tax-collector of all the House of Yosef during King Shlomo's rule and finally became the king of Israel after the splitting of the Kingdom (Meleachim 1 11:28-31). Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook wrote that in these times of our national re-awakening, Herzl was a spark of the Mashiach ben Yosef, and he was thus a driving force for the rebuilding of our national entity (In his eulogy for Herzl called "The Eulogy in Yerushalayim," published in Ma'amrei Ha-Re'iyah, p. 98). Unfortunately, this spark is dimming because its connection with the Mashiach ben David is weakening.

## Rav Aviner on . . . The People of the Coin in the Empty Jar

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah – Miketz 5771 – translated by R. Blumberg]

The people of the "coin in the empty jar" are a large public the world over, transcending ethnicity, religion, and social status. Their slogan is: "A coin in an empty jar rattles" (Baba Metziah 85b). That is, shaking a small coin in an empty jar will make a lot of noise, as opposed to a jar full of coins, which is silent. Since these people are empty, they find consolation in making noise, putting on airs, and spouting their nonsense in every direction.

In every society they constitute a small but loud minority, and the media loves and nurtures them, seeking them out the way a fly loves dirt. Those noisemakers are a constant, never disappointing source of fascinating news at all times. They make news, but they don't make history. Those who make history are the mainstream, who eschew extremism, working steadily, quietly and assuredly, bringing the world a blessing. This being the case, they are happy with their lot and busy with their work.

The empty people however, since they will not produce, are sunken in anger. Surely, Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook taught us: "The source of danger derives from their lack of spiritual creativity." (Orot Ha- Kodesh 3:246). And therefore: "When we see any faction or party always expressing itself in anger, that's a sure sign of its mindlessness, of its having no content with which to fill up its emptiness, and it harbors sincere anger at itself. Nonetheless, its own ego emerges and forces it to impose its anger on others" (ibid. 245). The empty-jar rattlers are empty himself, so they make noise. Otherwise, nobody will know they exist. Perhaps they, themselves, will not know that they exist. So, they make empty noise.

Yet 99% of people make history. Obviously, not everybody is the commander-in-chief of the army, but every soldier has a place in history. Not everybody built the country, but if somebody lives in it and works in it, he has a portion in that great enterprise. Therefore, all those people feel good. They feel complete. They rejoice in the joy of doing mitzvot.

Still, the empty-jar rattlers earn no living for anyone but the newsmen, and, of course, themselves. Sometimes they cast a pall upon their whole group, which is composed of fine, upstanding people. For example, there are Charedim who express their bitterness by burning trash containers, to the chagrin of almost the entire Charedi public, which finds itself horribly blemished. Indeed, I am not a Charedi, but I appreciate Charedim and love them. As far as the burners of trash containers, however, I don't appreciate them.

But why should I be sorry about other people's coin rattlers, be they Charedim, secular, or leftists? Every public has its own rattlers. We, too, have got a few rusty coins spouting unending slogans in their empty jar: We are against the state (of the heretics), against the (criminal) government; against the (corrupt) army, we won't enlist, because in any event, the Army does nothing all day (except for uprooting settlements) and we shall refuse orders (true, we are not enlisting, but we will still find some way to refuse orders). I forgot the chronic opposition to the police (who behave like Nazis) and to the whole centrist stream (who are not serious people).

You've got to realize, however, that this is an unsolvable problem. There are always going to be people who rattle their coins in their empty jars. Since life is never going to be totally attuned to what we want, we have to understand that various reactions are likely.

Therefore, our relationship to the rattlers' party has to have two aspects: 1. Not to get excited. This is a childhood illness – albeit involving a prolonged childhood. 2. We have to love and respect our fellow Jew. After all, he is our flesh and blood.

## *Kitzur Tefilat Amecha - #21*

[adapted for middle-schoolers by Rabbi Shmuel Jablon from Rav Aviner's three-volume commentary on the siddur "Tefilat Amecha"]

In Mizmor Le-Todah we say to serve Hashem with "Simcha" and to serve Hashem with "Rinana". "Rinana" is outward joy and "Simcha" is the happiness that we feel inside. So it is really the most important. Only Hashem and I know if I am happy to serve Him. I can use outward expressions of joy to get closer to this true joy. But only Hashem knows what I truly feel. So I need to work on my love for Him so I will feel more and more joy at serving Him.

## **Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law**

### Unwanted Blessing

Question: Do all blessings given to you (by a Chatan or Sandak or Rebbe) have an effect even if you do not want the outcome of the blessing. For example, if someone was given a blessing to marry a certain boy, and there is no interest whatsoever to marry that boy, does the blessing have any affect?

Answer: The intention of the person's blessing was for the other person's benefit. And if it is not the other person's will, the blessing therefore does not work. Furthermore, when we recite a blessing, we leave the choice of what to do with the blessing to Hashem, and Hashem does what he wants. Therefore, there is no reason to be concerned.

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