



THE RABBI BINYAMIN KAMENETZKY
TORAH LEGACY FOUNDATION
לזכרון של הרב בנימין קמנצקי זצ"ל

אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

Parsha Mikeitz - Chanukah

This week, after arriving in Egypt, the brothers of Yosef are put through an ordeal. They are accused of spying and locked up by their brother Yosef, the viceroy of Egypt, who asks for to see Binyamin. This parsha is read every single year on the Shabbos of Chanukah. Much has been written correlating Chanukah and the parsha.

Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l had his take: After the brothers languished in prison for three days, they commiserated saying, "This is happening to us because we heard our brother crying to us, begging for mercy, and we ignored him." "I told you not to harm the child!" Reuven added. "You did not listen to me, and now, his blood is being avenged!" Chilling words.

Rav Binyamin asked, The selling of Yosef happened twenty-one years prior! So much happened since then. The brothers were raising their families, preparing their children to be the next generation of the Chosen Nation. Much soul searching and introspection surely was done by the 10 holy shevatim! Why now did they think back to an event that happened so long ago?

A friend of mine recently told me a story illustrating this point. Shlomo, a real estate investor, purchased a property as an investment, but after a few months, he realized that there were many problems with the property. He did not see how he would turn a profit after all the additional expenses. He decided to sell the building, even if he would take a small loss. After a short while, he went to contract with an Italian businessman for a higher price than he himself paid for it! He was overjoyed. Not only did he not lose on the deal, but he would walk away with a few dollars.

A few weeks later, before the deal closed, guilt started settling in. He doubted his decision to sell the property, as the buyer too, would inevitably suffer a loss. He was selling damaged goods, and blind sighting the buyer. He thought about the fact that Hashem gives him parnassa, and will surely take care of his needs, without him bending the rules. He approached a Rav to present his dilemma. The Rav advised him to be honest and open, for after all, it is Hashem who closes the deal. If he has he proper trust, he will be safe in the hands of Hashem.

At the meeting, Shlomo sighed, took a deep breath and informed the buyer of the problems with the property and gave him the opportunity to back out of the contract. They agreed to touch base again in a week as the buyer reviewed this new information.

The next day, Shlomo received a phone call from the gentile buyer. "We must close on the deal now! I have cash for the deal. When can we close?" Shlomo was stunned but did not ask questions. They set a date for later that week, and in turn, closed the deal.

After the closing, the Italian businessman turns to him and says, "I know why you told me how many problems this building has. You wanted me to back out of the deal, so you can sell it for more! After I assessed the building, I saw a lot of potential, so I wanted to make sure that I close on it as soon as I can. I'm glad that I was able to close at the original asking price!"

Rav Binyamin, (who did not use this story) explained, that people of faith live constantly with Hashem on their mind. Through every occurrence in their lives, they see messages from Hashem, and opportunities to exercise faith. The brothers, sons of Yaakov, were content with their lives, knowing that they were to be the ancestors of the great Nation of Israel. But as soon as they were faced with a challenging situation, they lift their eyes heavenward, and proclaim, "We have sinned! It is our fault! This is a message from Hashem!" Only a true believer in "hashgacha pratis" - Divine providence - can utter such words, and truly believe them.

The Chashmonaim were in a situation where victory was virtually impossible. They were just a few weak and untrained talmidei chachomim, fighting against the most powerful army in the world! Yet, they fought. What gave them the strength? My grandfather explains, that they too, were powered by their unwavering belief in Hashem. They felt Hashem's presence every waking moment. They too realized that there is a Devine providence guiding their lives, and they too, saw the hand of Hashem leading them through their every move. They had nothing to fear, as they knew that Hashem is guiding their every move.

Indeed The lessons of Parshas Mikeitz dance in sync with those of Chanukah. Keep Hashem's Providence in mind and you will prevail.

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