



The Path To Follow VAYECHI

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HEVRAT PINTO
Under Aegis of
RABBI DAVID HANANIA
PINTO CHLITA
11, rue du plateau
75019 PARIS
Tel: +331 42 08 25 40
Fax +331 42 08 50 85
www.hevratpinto.org
Responsible of publication
Hanania Soussan

Guard Your Tongue!

Revealing What Was Said in a Meeting

People in a management committee, or the members of institutions or corporations, often make decisions that are not accepted by everyone concerned, for there are always individuals who are not satisfied with decisions. In such a case, it is forbidden for anyone who participated in a meeting to reveal the names of those who supported or voted for any given decision. Furthermore, even without mentioning names, it is forbidden for anyone to say something along the lines of, "Personally, I agree with your opinion, but what could I do? The decision was taken by the majority of those present." This prohibition applies even if the contents of a meeting were not labeled as secret.

UNITY AND GENEROSITY: THE KEYS TO DELIVERANCE BY RABBI DAVID HANANIA PINTO SHLITA

Before Jacob's death, he summoned all his sons and said to them, "Assemble yourselves and hear, sons of Jacob, and hear Israel your father" (Genesis 49:2). Jacob very much wanted to reveal the end times to his sons as he said, "Gather yourselves together and I will tell you what will befall you in the end of days" (v.1). However to our great regret, the Shechinah was taken from him and he began speaking of other things.

When we examine what happened here, we will be greatly surprised. Jacob was part of the merkava, the "chariot" of the Holy One, blessed be He. The Shechinah rested upon Jacob, especially since he was the chosen one of the Patriarchs (Bereshith Rabba 76:1). Above all, the Shechinah returned to him once he learned that his son Joseph was still alive and that his offspring were righteous. Thus before speaking to his sons, Jacob could have certainly asked the Holy One, blessed be He, if he could reveal the end times to them. That being the case, why did he begin to reveal it, only to have the Shechinah leave him right away? He could have avoided this anguish if he had first asked the celestial academy if he could reveal the end times to his sons! We also need to understand the language of the verse. That is, why did he say "hear" twice, since it would have been sufficient to say, "Assemble yourselves and hear, sons of Jacob, Israel your father." It was precisely when Jacob saw that all his sons were standing around his bed – all of them righteous, G-d-fearing and upright men, the tribes of G-d and a testimony for Israel, all his descendants being without reproach – that he thought the end times had come at that point. This was because in a situation where everyone is righteous and G-d-fearing, deliverance is certainly close at hand. Hence there was no need to ask Hashem if it was possible to reveal the end times to his children, since the end was surely imminent; it was going to happen in the very near future.

However that was not the view of the Holy One, blessed be He, Who knew that the Jewish people were not yet ready for complete deliverance. The Jewish people were not yet worthy of such a swift deliverance, which is why Hashem immediately removed the Shechinah from Jacob. In this way he would be unable to reveal the end times to his children, and therefore he began to speak of other things.

There is still more that we need to understand. Were the things that Jacob said to his sons meant to replace the revelation of the end times? Was the statement, "Assemble yourselves and hear, sons of Jacob, and hear Israel your father" a substitute for the prophesy of the coming deliverance? We know the teaching of the Sages regarding the difference between Moses and Isaiah: Moses said, "Give ear, O Heavens...and may the earth hear" (Deuteronomy 32:1), meaning that the Heavens must give ear and the earth must hear. However Isaiah said, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear O earth" (Isaiah 1:2), meaning that the Heavens must hear and the earth must give ear. Why the difference?

We know that the word ha'azana ("to give ear") implies hearing from up close. When a person finds himself near someone who is speaking to him, he then "gives ear" (ma'azin). However the word "hear" (shemi'ah) signifies hearing from a

distance, when a person is far from the speaker. Therefore Moses, who was the closest person to the Heavens (since he was a "man of G-d"), used the word ha'azana (connoting proximity) with regards to the Heavens. However the prophet Isaiah, who was closer to the earth, used the word ha'azana with regards to the earth. What connection does this have to our verse?

Today the Jewish people find themselves in the time preceding the arrival of Mashiach. We are up to our heads in misfortune and calamities beyond description, with the curse of each day being worse than the day before. We are besieged by attacks within and without, and we have experienced all kinds of catastrophes. Widows and orphans cry out and ask for help. And as for us, where do we stand? The exile continues, and the son of David has still not arrived.

Furthermore, what is happening in our communities? From morning to night we hear of strife, individuals speaking Lashon Harah against one another, people demonstrating their certainty that whatever comes from others has no value. Everyone thinks that the other is worthless, that nobody else is useful. We can neither give nor receive help.

Only Jacob came to prepare the way for all the generations. Before his death, he wanted to teach his children the path for the generations to follow. Above all, he wanted to reveal to them the secret of the end times: How would the final deliverance come about? By what merit would the Jewish people be saved? This is why he said to them, "Gather yourselves together and I will tell you what will befall you in the end of days" (Genesis 42:1). In other words: If you want to know what will happen to you in the end times, the main thing is to "gather yourselves together and I will tell you" – gathering yourselves and forming a single whole with one another. This means acting harmoniously with and loving one another. It means helping the other person and being aware of his needs. It means not losing interest in other people.

Yet after all, how can the Jewish people reach the final deliverance, since many among us are filled with sins and transgressions that rise above our heads? How can the son of David save us if we are not ready to welcome Mashiach?

Here the Sages tell us, "The son of David will come only in a generation that is either altogether righteous or altogether wicked" (Sanhedrin 98a). This means that even in a generation such as ours, one in which we are all to blame, even in such a generation – and indeed, precisely in such a generation – Hashem will save us, for we no longer have the strength to endure more suffering. With his holy words, Jacob alluded to this by saying, "Assemble yourselves and hear [shim'u – denoting from a distance], sons of Jacob, and hear Israel your father."

Even when the Jewish people would be hearing from afar, when they would no longer be close to Hashem, if they would but gather themselves together in unity and mutual love, then "hear Israel your father" – they would still be with their Father in Heaven, even from a distance, and He will save them. Let us adopt the virtues of unity and generosity, for in this way we will hasten the coming deliverance, may it come soon and in our days. Amen.

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

The Blessing of the Sons

It is written, "By you shall Israel bless, saying: 'May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh'" (Genesis 48:20).

This is surprising to many people, for were Ephraim and Manasseh so much more special than the other tribes that they merited becoming a symbol and an example for the Jewish people in every generation? Rav Shlomo Bloch Zatzal stated that when Jacob told Joseph, "Your two sons, which were born to you in the land of Egypt, are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh, like Reuben and Shimon, shall be mine" (Genesis 48:5), this represented a witness and an affirmation to the fact that, although we normally see a decline in the generations (with each generation being more feeble and passive than the previous one), those years in no way detracted from the greatness of the tribes. That is, Ephraim and Manasseh had a level completely equal to that of Reuben and Shimon, and no decline in the generations occurred among them. Hence this is the perfect blessing by which to bless Israel. In his book *Eved HaMelech*, Rabbi Shmuel Hominer Zatzal explains as follows: Of all the tribal leaders, only Ephraim and Manasseh were born and raised in Egypt, a land immersed in impurity. In their house there were always government officials and magicians, as was customary for the viceroy's residence, and there in a foreign land they remained for many years. This did not happen with the other tribal leaders, for they had grown up and were raised in the house of Jacob, where his spirit rested upon them. When Jacob brought them from Haran to the land of Israel, they also merited finding themselves with their grandfather Isaac. Despite all this, when Jacob came to Egypt he realized that Ephraim and Manasseh had not let themselves be drawn to the impurity of Egypt in any way, nor had they been affected by the Egyptians, their leaders, or their customs. On the contrary, Jacob could see that the righteous Joseph had raised them in the paths of Torah and the fear of G-d, to the point that they were worthy of being among the twelve holy tribes of Israel. Such a lofty path was certainly not clear to see or easy to follow for Ephraim and Manasseh, and no doubt their way was strewn with numerous trials and difficulties. Nevertheless, they overcame these obstacles and impediments, and they walked exclusively in the holy ways of their ancestors, just as their righteous father had taught them to do. Everyone must think of this when blessing his sons, his students, and indeed every Jew.

Another explanation for this blessing is given by Rabbi Avraham Zalmans of Novardok. He notes that jealousy is one of the three sins that remove a person from the world. Here in our parsha, Manasseh saw that Jacob crossed his hands and placed his younger brother Ephraim before him, and not only temporarily, but for all time! Although the humiliation was intense, Manasseh still contained his grief as his younger brother become forever greater and more important than him, and he felt no hatred or jealousy with regards to his brother. In light of such greatness, we can understand why Jacob fixed the blessing of the entire Jewish people for all the generations as being: "May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh."

Do We Really Have The Time?

It is written, "The days of Israel drew near to die" (Genesis 47:29).

The Ohr HaChaim compared this to a king who gave his servants a diamond mine in order for them to provide him with beautiful gems. The king told his servants that he would return in 20 years to retrieve the gems. Naturally, nobody thought of going to work right away, since they could always begin in 10 or 12 years. After all, the king's deadline wasn't really pressing! The Ohr HaChaim said that this is why Hashem first gave man 1,000 years to live, while today most people barely make it to 70 or 80. Why the change? At first Hashem gave man hundreds of thousands of days in which to live, with each day being like a precious gem that had to be polished. What have men done? They said, "We have 1,000 years ahead of us! What's so pressing? We can start later!" Thus Hashem gave their children less days in which to live, and they saw that they had to work quickly because they had very little time. Concerning the expression,

"Blessed be the L-rd day by day" (Psalms 68:20), the Gemara states: "Every day we should give Him the blessing appropriate to the day" (Berachot 40a), each day giving Him something that corresponds to His blessings. Thus a great tzaddik such as Jacob arrived with all his days.

Removing the Nail, Yet Leaving a Hole

A certain student did not want to study, though his teacher was trying his best to teach him. What did he do? He summoned the boy and said to him, "You're not studying because you're young and you think that you have a great deal of time ahead of you. Let me teach you how days pass us by. Each day that you don't study, I'll hammer a nail into the wall." After a year, the teacher called the boy and showed him all the nails in the wall. "See how you wasted all 365 days of the year," he said to him. The boy understood and began to cry. Yet what could he do, and how could he fix what he had done? The teacher said to him, "If you start studying from now on, I'll remove one nail from the wall for each day that you study." After a year passed, he summoned the boy and said to him, "Look, no more nails, though the holes remain." Each day that we fail to study, a "hole" remains, and it is impossible to fill it. We must pay attention to performing our task each day in order to come before G-d, like Abraham, with all our days. As the Torah tells us, "Abraham was old, ba bayamim [literally 'come in days']" (Genesis 24:1).

A New Generation

It is written, "I will lie down with my fathers" (Genesis 47:30).

The gaon Rabbi Moshe Feinstein Zatzal said that sometimes we eulogize a great man by saying that as long as he lived, we saw and realized just what a great figure of the previous generation was like. Yet now that he is gone, the previous generation has vanished.

This is what the verse is saying. Jacob was a "father," and after him began the era of the tribes, as Jacob said: "I will lie down with my fathers." In other words: When I will be dead, my "fathers" will also be dead with me, for up to now you had an example of what a "father" is.

A Child's Blessing on the Day of His Circumcision

It is written, "By you shall Israel bless, saying: 'May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh,' and he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (Genesis 48:20).

Targum Yonatan states that on the day of a child's circumcision, we bless him by saying, "May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh."

Why are Ephraim and Manasseh singled out? Are they not like Reuben and Shimon? In that case let us say, "Like Reuben and like Shimon"! We know that Ephraim lived with Jacob and studied Torah. Manasseh, on the other hand, helped his father Joseph to govern the country, for near the end of the parsha we read: "The sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees" (Genesis 50:23). This is because Joseph taught Manasseh and his offspring how to manage the affairs of the state. Now when we bless our children, what should our preference be? Should they be like Ephraim, who is the ben Torah, or like Manasseh, who deals with the needs of the community? The Ketav Sofer said that Ephraim is the ben Torah, while Manasseh deals with the needs of the community. However Ephraim must come before Manasseh with regards to honors as well. There is more: Even when someone ventures into the world for the needs of the community, he must have studied Torah in a yeshiva during his youth. The Ketav Sofer said that on the day of a child's circumcision, when we do not yet know how he will turn out, we give him the blessing: "May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh." That is, may he be "like Ephraim" (a ben Torah) or "like Manasseh" – but if the latter, that he be a Manasseh whom we can tell was first an Ephraim.

Rav Dessler pointed out that there is a Manasseh who resembles Ephraim, and there is an Ephraim who resembles Manasseh. A person can be seated in the Beit Midrash like Ephraim, though his mind is still occupied with the concerns of this world just like Manasseh. There can also be a person seated in his store like Manasseh, though his mind is occupied with Talmudic problems and subjects dealing with the fear of Heaven, just like Ephraim. Even today we

see shopkeepers who play cards or other games in their spare time, whereas in Marrakech there were shopkeepers who spoke of Torah matters while at work.

Good and Pleasantness Belong to the One Who Sustains the World

It is written, "Issachar is a strong-boned donkey, resting between the boundaries. He saw tranquility, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant. Yet he bent his shoulder to bear and became a servant of taskwork" (Genesis 49:14-15).

Realistically speaking, the text should have stated something like: "He saw tranquility, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant. He took an easy chair and a good book, and he began to relax!" Once a person realizes that he can rest tranquilly in a peaceful environment, he goes and does just that. In contrast to this, our verse tells us, "He bent his shoulder to bear," meaning that he went out to work! What is happening here? The Ozrover Rebbe Zatzal explained that when Issachar saw the tranquility and pleasantness of the land, he decided to return these things to Hashem, and thus "he bent his shoulder to bear and became a servant of taskwork."

Hashem's Servants

It is said that the gaon Rabbi Moshe Feinstein Zatzal would stand completely still during the Amidah, not swaying back and forth. This is contrary to the decision of the Chafetz Chaim (Mishneh Berurah 95:7), who said that we must sway during prayer because of the verse, "All my bones will say..." (Psalms 35:10). Reb Moshe explained that when he was living in Russia, the Communists arrested and punished him by making him stand on his feet for hours without moving. For Reb Moshe, this was a tremendous humiliation. He then decided that he wanted this humiliation to count before Hashem, which is why he would pray without swaying back and forth during the Amidah. At the passing of Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein Zatzal, the Ponevezh Mashgiach, Rav Shach Zatzal eulogized him by saying: "I have never seen a greater servant of Hashem than the Mashgiach." Some students asked him, "But you have seen the Chafetz Chaim, Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, and other great Torah figures of the world. How can you say that you've never seen such a servant of Hashem?" The Rav replied, "Each tzaddik has a particular way of serving Hashem, and the way of the Mashgiach was to not do what he wanted to do, and to do what he did not want to do."

– Aish Dat

Overview of the Parsha

Parsha Vayechi ends the book of Genesis, which describes the world in which the formation of Jewish people progressed. The book begins with an account of Creation as a whole, including the origins of man, and continues until the lives of our Patriarchs come to an end. Joseph was also part of this chapter of the Patriarchs, his personality and the events surrounding his life having had a profound impact on the development of the Jewish people. Joseph is also considered as being a father of tribes, since his two sons (Ephraim and Manasseh) took their place among the tribes of Israel "like Reuben and like Shimon." As Jacob's death approached, he called for Joseph, who swore to his father that he would take him out of Egypt and bury him with his fathers. Jacob then blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, placing them in the same category as his own sons. Jacob called for his sons in order to tell them what would happen in the end times. Then as he was about to die, he ordered them to bury him with his fathers. After embalming him and observing a period of mourning, Jacob's sons went to bury him in the land of Canaan, being accompanied by Pharaoh's servants and the wise men of Egypt. Since Joseph's brothers were afraid that he would hate them, he clarified matters for them, and by the end of his life Joseph saw the fourth generation of his descendants.

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

When Can the Truth be Modified?

It is written, "Your father gave orders before his death, saying: 'Thus shall you say to Joseph: Please forgive the spiteful deed of your brothers'" (Genesis 50:16-17).

It is written, "Rabbi Ile'a further stated in the name of Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Rabbi Shimon: One may modify a statement in the interests of peace" (Yebamot 65b). He learns this from Joseph's brothers, who told Joseph that their father Jacob had commanded him to forgive them for what they had done. Although Jacob never left such instructions, the brothers modified the truth for the sake of peace. Elsewhere it is written, "Our Rabbis taught: How does one dance before the bride? Beth Shammai say: 'The bride as she is,' but Beth Hillel say: 'The beautiful and graceful bride!'" Beth Shammai asked Beth Hillel: If she was lame or blind, does one say of her: 'The beautiful and graceful bride,' for the Torah has said, 'Keep far from a false matter'? Said Beth Hillel to Beth Shammai: According to your words, if someone made a bad purchase in the market, should one praise it in his eyes or denigrate it in his eyes? Surely, one should praise it in his eyes. From here the Sages said: The disposition of man should always be pleasant with people" (Ketubot 16b-17a). Rashi explains the latter statement as meaning: Towards everyone as he desires.

The Chafetz Chaim writes, "If one is able, by word of mouth, to prevent harm befalling another, this also constitutes chesed. An instance of this would be if, by chance, someone happened to meet a group of suspected robbers. He believed that they intended to rob someone, since he overheard them discussing this person's wealth. It is his mortal duty to misrepresent – to say that the intended victim is poor – even though he knows in his heart that this is not true. All this is included in chesed" (Ahavat Chesed, part III, ch. 8). The reason behind this is that we do not provide the truth to those who would use it for an evil purpose.

Commenting on Orach Chaim 565:7, the Magen Avraham wrote that it is permitted to modify the truth in order to conceal one's good deeds. For example, if someone is undertaking a personal fast, it is an act of piety to deny that he is fasting. Similarly, when Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi was asked if he had seen a rainbow, he falsely replied that he had, even though he had never seen one in his life.

The Chafetz Chaim wrote that if someone spoke Lashon Harah, but it has not yet done any damage, he should not wait until it does and then ask forgiveness from the one he has harmed. Instead, it is better for him to quickly ensure that no harm occurs in the first place. He should go to the person to whom he related the Lashon Harah and say, "I was mistaken about what I told you about [so and so]. I now realize that what I said is completely wrong." Naturally, he should say this even if it is not true, meaning that the Lashon Harah he related was true (Be'er Mayim Chaim [footnotes] to the laws of Lashon Harah ch. 4, par. 48).

EISHET CHAYIL

Saved by the Merit of a Kind Woman

A fire once broke out in the town of Derokeret, but it did not spread to the district where Rabbi Huna lived. People thought that this was on account of Rav Huna's merit, but in a dream it was made clear to them that this was far too small a matter to need Rabbi Huna's great merit. Instead, the fire stopped on account of a certain woman who, on the eve of Shabbat, would heat her oven and permit her neighbors to use it. Since this woman had shown kindness to others through fire, Heaven responded to her measure for measure. Thus neither her home, nor the homes of her neighbors, was touched by the fire.

– From Taanith 21b

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi David Tebele – The Av Beit Din of Lissa

The gaon Rabbi David Tebele was great in Torah and famous in his generation, becoming the Rav and Av Beit Din of the great town of Lissa.

Rabbi David was born to the gaon Rabbi Nathan Neta Tebele, the Av Beit Din of Brody, and he descended from the great gaon Rabbi Zecharia Mendel of Belz, the author of Beer Heitev on the Shulchan Aruch. He was also a descendant of Rabbi Aryeh Leib Hagadol, the Av Beit Din of Krakow. In fact the mark of these gaonim was visible in Rabbi David early on in life, since in his youth people could see that he had been born for greatness. He was constantly studying the holy Torah, wherein nothing was hidden from him.

Rabbi David was the Av Beit Din of the towns of Horachow and Lissa, and his name became connected to these towns throughout his life. With his great intellect, he knew how to move mountains and break rocks using his hypotheses and arguments. However the essential part of his renown came to him as a Rav and Posek for the entire Diaspora. From all corners of the globe, people came to him for his judgments and to seek out Hashem's word, meaning the Halachah. If a litigant would not accept his decision, the hand of Hashem would come down on him. Rabbi David was once asked if he punished people, to which he candidly replied: "The word of Hashem is the Halachah, and if one fails to listen to Hashem, it is Hashem Who punishes."

During his lifetime, Rabbi David fought against those who wanted to introduce the ideas of the enlightenment to the Jewish people. For this purpose he often met the great Torah figures of the generation, including the Noda B'Yehuda (Rabbi Yechezkel Landau), Rabbi Meir Posner, and Rabbi Akiva Eiger. On Tevet 16, 5552, Rabbi David Tebele left this world for the celestial academy. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

Why He Waited

It is written, "Behold, with you is Shimei son of Gera. . . . He cursed me with a powerful curse on the day I went to Mahanaim" (I Kings 2:8).

When King David fled from his son Absalom, Shimei went out to meet him with a curse: "Come out, come out, you bloody man" (2 Samuel 16: 7). He even threw stones at King David and his servants. Abishai the son of Zeruiah wanted to kill him, but David forbid him (v.11). Before his death, however, David commanded his son Solomon to wisely ensure that Shimei would die. We need to understand why David reminded Solomon of the place and time that Shimei had cursed him. The book Kol Tzofayich states that David mentioned the specifics of the curse in order to concretize the great suffering and insult that Shimei had done to him. David wanted to highlight the gravity of his act by recalling the incident. When had Shimei chosen to shame and curse King David? It was precisely when he was weak, when he found himself in an extremely difficult and demoralizing position. He was being pursued and exiled, fleeing from his son and wandering from place to place with neither friends nor relatives, for almost everyone had turned their backs on him. It was precisely at that time that Shimei came and rubbed salt into David's wounds, and so he mentioned the time and place of that incident. David gave this order before dying, for up until that time he was afraid that taking action against Shimei would be driven by self-interest. Yet now that he found himself at death's door, this fear vanished. Hence he commanded Solomon to punish him as a rebel against the king.

A MATTER OF EDUCATION

You Shall Teach Them – Not Make them Confusing – To Your Children

On the verse, "Someone said to Joseph, 'Behold, your father is sick' " (Genesis 48:1), Rashi comments: "Some say... that Ephraim was accustomed to studying with Jacob." Near the beginning of Parsha Vayeishev, Rashi cites Onkelos in stating: "Whatever [Jacob] had learned from Shem and Eber, he gave over to [Joseph]." It is extremely important to learn Torah with one's son. There are many reasons for this, the first being the sheer importance of Torah study itself, for who cares more for the soul of a child than his parents? Thus the Shulchan Aruch states, "Whoever does not watch over his children and the members of his household by warning them and constantly observing their actions to verify that they are free of all sin, such a person is a sinner, as it is written: 'You shall examine your habitation and not sin' [Job 5:24]" (Even HaEzer 178:21). The Chafetz Chaim (at the end of his book Chomat HaDat) writes: "Just as it is a mitzvah for a man to fix times for Torah study, to observe the time for reciting Shema and communal prayer, and to perform all the mitzvot done publicly or privately, so too is it a mitzvah – and an even greater obligation – for a person to devote time to guiding the education of his children and to verify that they are following the paths laid out by their fathers and teachers from time immemorial." From what the Rambam says at the beginning of Hilchot Talmud Torah, and from the way his words are ordered, we understand that the main aspect of the mitzvah of Torah study lies in disseminating the Torah among the people through the education of their children, individual study being only a branch of this mitzvah.

Other than Torah study per se, studying the Torah with one's son or daughter is beneficial in another way. A parent's concern infuses a child with a moral foundation by which he can develop faith in G-d, thereby stimulating spiritual growth. However we must be careful as to the form that this education takes, and to proceed wisely so that there is neither pressure nor confusion for the child. Thus it sometimes happens that in the study of Torah, a person has an interpretation that differs from the one his child received in school. For a child who is easily bothered by multiple interpretations on a given subject, we must not give him one that differs from his teacher's, even if the latter is erroneous. If that turns out to be the case, the parent must address the teacher himself in order to correct the mistake. However even for a child who is open to various interpretations on a given subject, those provided to him by his father must ring more true to him than those of his teacher. Even then we must give the child an interpretation in such a way that it does not disparage his teacher, for then we are liable to lose more than we can gain.

A TRUE STORY

The Insight of the Imrei Emet

It is written, "Joseph went up to bury his father" (Genesis 50:7).

The Rebbe of Ger, the author of Imrei Emet, was once approached by a man who asked him how he could stop having a recurring dream. The man said that several times in the dream a voice said to him, "Your father is dead. Why aren't you saying Kaddish for him?" The man continued with his story: "At first I dismissed the dream, but when I continued having it, I went to the town where my father lived and saw that he was in fact safe and sound. Once I returned home, however, I continued having the same dream." The Rebbe of Ger told the man that he should try to find the woman who nursed him as a child and speak to her. The man therefore went looking for her, and he discovered that she was in fact still alive. When he arrived at her home, he asked her what had happened to him as a baby those many years ago. With a great deal of effort, he managed to get her to reveal the mystery of the dream as she recounted her terrible secret: "I nursed both you, whose father was poor, as well as another baby, whose father was wealthy. When the baby of the wealthy man died because of a mistake on my part, I was terrified of what he would do to me, and I felt obligated to make a switch. I went to see your father, the poor man, and told him that you had died, and then I brought you to the wealthy man and pretended that you were his son." Thus the man understood that his real father had actually died on the first day that he had his recurring dream.

– She'al Avicha VeYagedcha, Part III