

# ONENESS OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

RABBI GABRIEL SASSOON 01/10/2017 YUD GIMMEL TEVES 5777 SHIUR 39

In this week's parsha, Parsha Vayichi, Yaakov Aveinu is dying. He gathers around his 12 sons and he is moved by their oneness. Because he is moved by their oneness, he wants to tell them the 'katze' the end, when Moshiach will come. Why? Because Moshiach can only come when there is oneness in Klal Yisroel. Since he saw oneness by his sons, he wanted to tell them the 'katze'.

Rabbi Sassoon mentioned that Yaakov Aveinu had been depressed for 22 years when Yosef was missing. It wasn't that he was depressed because he didn't know where his son was, it was more than that: he knew that the world was created for the Jewish People. And he knew the Jewish nation would be formed through 12 tribes, who were to be his 12 sons. While Yosef was missing, there were only 11 tribes, so Moshiach would definitely not be able to come.

So Yaakov sees the brothers are all getting along, there is oneness and he wants to tell them 'when the end of days will come.' But then the shechana leaves him and he forgets and can not tell them. This worries him immensely; maybe this 'oneness' is not real. His sons answer him, "Father do not worry, Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokainu Hashem Echod." 'Hear, O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One. 'And he answers his children, "Boruch Shem Kovod Malchuso L'olam Voed.' 'Blessed be God's Name and glorious kingdom forever and ever.'

So the question is, how does Yaakov answering Boruch Shem Kovod Malchuso....'answer the question of the oneness among his children?

What was Yaakov worried about? He knew that Avrohom Aveinu had 2 sons-a Yitzchok and a Yishmael. Yishmael was the negative side of Yitzchok. He was the 'tumah' of Yitzchok. Yitzchok had 2 sons-Yaakov and Eisav. Eisav was the negative side of Yaakov.

Till now Yaakov had always thought that all his sons were holy and pure. And he did not have sons, who represented tumah as his father and grandfather had. But when the shechina left him and he couldn't remember 'the end of days' then he thought that it meant that some of his sons, might also be on the negative side, thus they could not be united as one, and Moshiach wouldn't come. The sons understood their father's fear and therefore they answered him, "shema Yisroel..." telling him, "Father, have no fear, we are all pure and good, and we are one.'

Avrohom Aveinu started the Jewish nation. He represents 'chesed'-kindness. Yitzchok was the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation, he represents 'gevura' strength. He went willingly onto the mitzbach-the alter. He was willing to give up his life.

What do these 2 qualities represent? Chesed is the power of expansion. There is a border around each of us and we overcome this border by giving of ourselves to others.

Gevura represents the exact opposite. It is 'din' judgement. There are borders. One constricts himself within these borders. These 2 actions are represented by mitzvos asa and mitzvos lo taasah. Mitzvos asa are mitzvot of giving, positive mitzvos-chesed. Mitzvos lo taasah are maintaining our borders: don't steal, don't be jealous, etc. This aspect of Yitzchok, gevura represents the opposite

of chesed which is din. Mitzvos lo taasa is the power of constriction. There is room in Yiddishkeit for both.

Hashem created the world with chesed, but then he had to constrict the world with din. So too the Jewish people, we started with Avrohom Aveinu, with chesed, and then it needed some constriction and we had Yitzchok. The constriction could only come after the expansion.

Yaakov comes along and he is the synthesis of both of these middos. He takes the power of chesed, and the power of gevura which are 2 polar opposites—one of expansion and the other of constriction and fuses them together to create 'tiferes'. Yaakov balances the 2 forces and creates a new element which has the quality of 'oneness.'

Yishmael is the negative of chesed. Taava-desire is the negative side of chesed. He goes over his borders where he should not. He steals, he is immoral—he has absolutely no restrictions. Eisav is the negative side of Yitzchok. Eisav had the quality of gaava-of haughtiness, of total selfishness. If taava and gaava get together—if Eisav and Yishmael come together, chas v'shalom, this is terrible for the Jewish people.

This explains why Yitzchok loved Eisav so much and wanted to give him the bechira. He saw in his first-born son that quality of gevura that he possessed.

What was supposed to happen is the following:

Yaakov and Eisav were twins. They were supposed to work together in building the Jewish nation. Together they were to synthesize the middos of chesed and gevura—Yaakov taking Avrohom's midda of chesed and Eisav taking Yitzchok's middah of 'din' that he possessed and together creating 'tiferes', oneness together.

Eisav was to marry Leah and have 6 children. Yaakov was to marry Rochel and have 6 children and that is how we would have the 12 tribes which would form us into a nation.

Eisav was to use his abilities to go into the field and deal with olam haza. Work, make parnasa. He was supposed to subdue evil. Yaakov was to stay in the Bais HaMedrash and work on kedusha. Eisav would support him, like Yissachar and Zevulun. Eisav had a choice. He did not have to choose to go down the wrong path. Even when in the womb, and the Torah writes, that he got excited when passing by avoda zora—what it means Rabbi Sassoon explained, is that he preferred the world of olam haza because his job in this world is to deal with the outside world. So the outside world, represented by the avoda zora of that time, spoke to him. Yaakov, on the other hand got excited when passing yeshivas because his job was to live in the Bais HaMedrash. Eisav's angel is the Soton and Eisav's job was to overcome the Soton, have the Soton listen to him, but instead, the Soton overcame him and he rules over Eisav.

So now Yaakov has 2 jobs, Eisav's job of dealing with the world around us and his 'tafkid' calling in life which is to be involved in spiritual matters. How was he going to do this? Before he went to Lovon's house, he learned in Yeshivas Shem V'Ever. While living in his parents house, he had attended yeshiva, there he learned holy seforim, but now he went to a different type of yeshiva, yeshivas Shem V'Ever where he would learn how to deal with the outside world through the prism of Torah. Shem V'Ever were old, had been alive since the Mabul. They know how to deal with the outside world. Yaakov spent 14 years in here learning how to deal with the Lavans in this world, so he would not get influenced.

When he returns to Eretz Yisroel and meets up with Eisav, what does he tell him? I lived in Lovon's house, 'yim lovon garti..v' taryag mitzvos shomarti' and I still kept all 613 mitzvos. I have both powers now-Olam Hazah and Olam Haboy-so Eisav don't start up with me.

Rabbi Sassoon says, that till today, we have both types of people among us-we have the Yaakovs, who love to sit in the Beis Medrash all day and learn and we have the Eisavs-who love working , being part of the outside world (in a Toradik fashion.)

Eisav had red hair-red represents din. Dovid Ha'Melech was also a red-head like Eisav. He was also din, but he used his 'abilities' for Hashem. That is what Eisav was supposed to do as well.

Sodom and Gammora were punished with fire. Why? Fire is red- represents 'din.' Their motto was 'what is mine is mine and what is yours is yours.' No chesed at all. No giving, no helping one another. Everyone had to fit into the rules, 'din' was supreme. If you were shorter than allowed, they stretched you out 'to fit'. If you were taller than was allowed, they cut your feet 'to fit'. So they were punished with fire, which represents 'din.'

In the Mabul, the people were punished with water. There the problem was taking from someone else, stealing, the opposite of chesed. Water was used as the punishment because it made everyone, everything into one. It was middah k'neged middah-you didn't keep your boundaries, so now the water makes it that there are no boundaries.

In order for Moshiach to come, we have to have these 2 opposing personalities unite. We will have 2 Moshiachs-Moshiach ben Yosef-Yosef representing chesed, and Moshiach ben Dovid-from Shevet Yehuda which represents Din. They have to come together and then we can have the final redemption.

What is the geuala, the redemption? Explains Rabbi Sassoon, it is to realize that everything in this world has a place, has a purpose. Even evil has a place. Each person's challenges are part of the total picture. When Moshiach comes, we will look back and laugh. What we thought was so hard, so horrible, was really good and brought Moshiach closer.

The brothers told Yaakov, have no fear, Father, we are one 'Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem ECHOD.' Yaakov answers, "Boruch Shem Kovod Malchuso L'olam Vo'ad". Why is this an answer to the sons? Because when Yaakov was giving his sons their brochos-he saw their future generations. He saw Shimshon from Shevat Dan and he thought for sure Shimshon would be Moshiach. He is the 'one. 'But then Yaakov saw the Shimshon died. How could Moshiach die? That makes no sense. So then Yaakov came to the realization that Moshiach doesn't depend on one person. What creates Moshiach? The yearning for Moshaich brings the redemption. The world has to have hope, a vision and the knowledge that there is a higher purpose to everything everyone goes through. Each person's challenge is bringing the redemption closer. We need to understand that each person's suffering is part of the bigger picture. All that happens in Jewish life has a place in the bigger scheme of things. Every episode brings the redemption closer-the good,the bad,the pain.

If we realize this, then we have hope and gives our lives purpose. We yearn for Moshiach and thus create a vessel within us to accept Moshaich. If we anticipate the redemption coming, if it is real to us, then it will come. This yearning will bring Moshiach.

Shema Yisroel is saying Hashem is one. Boruch Shem is saying there is hope. Before this Yaakov Aveinu thought it would be one person who would come and be Moshiach. When he saw Shimshon die, he realized it is Boruch Shem Kovo Malchus L'olam V'ad-it is the hope for Moshiach, the longing for Moshiach that will bring the redemption. We need to realize we are all one. The Jewish people is a reflection of each and every one of us. So we have to be compassionate, to give and also to constrict ourselves where necessary to have 'din.'

If we unite as one and long for the redemption, surely it will come speedily and in our time.