



Dream On

Rabbi Yosef Dovid Rothbart, Rabbinic Administrator

ואלה תולדות יעקב יוסף (לו, ב)

In my child's pre grade-one yearbook, there is a cute page where each child is asked what he wants to be when he grows up. One child said that he wants to be a king, another that he wants to be a *Tzaddik*, and all the other children had great big plans for their futures. But so often it happens that when a child who dreamed of royalty grows up and becomes a baron, he remains satisfied and doesn't continue the effort. Becoming a monarch or even a prince no longer enters his consciousness.

This is not the way of a Jew. The *Rambam* teaches that a Jewish person must always dream. A Jew needs to constantly ask himself when will he become great. "מתי יגיעו מעשי למעשה" "מתי יגיעו מעשי למעשה"? When will my actions reach the level of those of my forefathers?

Indeed, even before the *neshama* descends to the world, a person takes an oath that he will never consider himself to be a *Tzaddik* (*Nida* 30b), but will always strive for perfection. This is the essence of the Jew; someone who dreams and works to achieve that dream.

The Rimonover Rebbe would say that this is the message in the *Pasuk*, "ואלה תולדות יעקב יוסף". Literally, and these are the generations of Yaakov, Yosef. In *Parshas Noach*, *Rashi* points out that the word "*Toldos*" can also be understood as "good deeds", for the

"*Toldos of Tzadikim* are their good deeds". Accordingly, the *pasuk* reads, "ואלה תולדות יעקב" – These need to be the good deeds of every Yaakov – referring to every Jew, because every Jew has within himself a spark of Yaakov – יוסף – lit. to add; to strive higher to attain more and more levels of perfection.

The *Sforno* (*Shemos* 40, 18) explains that when Moshe erected the *Mishkan*, he first put up the curtains and only then did he set up the beams that would support these curtains. What would ensure that the curtains would not fall until the beams were in place? Either someone held them up or this was a miracle.

Hashem performs miracles only when they are necessary. So why was it so critical that the *Mishkan* be erected this way when the construction could have just as easily started with the foundation and then built upward?

Perhaps the *Torah* is teaching us this essential principle. A Jewish person always has to be aware of the maximum that he can aspire to. Only if this paradigm is part of his consciousness can he begin to develop himself – striving to become synonymous with the greater picture, knowing that he won't be satisfied by just becoming a baron.



TIDBITS...

In this week's Parsha, Yosef is thrown into prison. Here are some interesting tidbits about prisons:

- Some prisons in Brazil offer prisoners a chance to reduce their sentence by 4 days (up to 48 days/year) for every book that they read and write a report on.
- In Mexico, escaping from prison is considered legal, since the law recognizes that all people have a fundamental desire for liberty.
- Prison labour is a low-cost alternative to offshore outsourcing. Companies in America can outsource call center duties to prisons. The prisoners make \$0.92 per hour to handle calls.

RIDDLE



What *Shaila* may not be asked to a *Rav* in shul?

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Questions from the H.I.T. HOTLINE

Mazal Tov, we bought a house! Both my wife and I are signed on the mortgage as co-borrowers for the entire loan. Do we need a Heter Iska?

Halachically, each of you is considered to be a borrower on half of the loan and a guarantor on the other half of the loan. If one of you would end up paying the entire loan and then go back to the other for reimbursement, halacha would consider the payment to be ribbis. Although this seems like an unlikely outcome, there are situations, such as divorce r'l, that may invoke an unlikely outcome. Therefore, each of you should say that "whatever I pay towards the loan is a gift, and I have no recourse to collect it from you anytime in the future".

I daven in an office which has an Aron Kodesh but in which the Sefer Torah is not left inside for security reasons. On a day when there is no krias haTorah (i.e. a day other than Monday and Thursday) do I put my head down during Tachanun?

Rav Shlomo Zalman (see *Ishei Yisrael* 25, 10, 36) writes that in such an office a person should put his head down during *Tachanun*.

Can I leave a hot challah which is wrapped with foil in an oven which was turned off right before Shabbos, in order to preserve its heat?

A person may not insulate food on *Shabbos* with any material. This is called *hatmana*. Before *Shabbos*, though, it is permitted to insulate food as long as the insulation does not add heat. The *Shulchan Aruch* (257, 8) rules that even when the heat does not emanate from the insulation itself, but rather from another source, such as an oven, it would still be forbidden to insulate, even prior to *Shabbos*. In your situation the preheated oven is not considered to be a heat source, since the oven is in the process of cooling down. Therefore, placing a wrapped *challah* into the oven prior to *Shabbos* is permitted. However, if the oven was set at a low heat setting, it would not be permitted to place a wrapped *challah* into the oven, even prior to *Shabbos*.

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The 650 Ruble Kvittel

In the heyday of the city of Krakow, Poland, prior to World War I, there stood a huge kosher wine and spirits manufacturing plant near the center of the city. Some of the finest kosher wines of the time were produced there. Most of the products were highly sought after and the company was extremely profitable. The famous "Avnei Nezer", R' Avraham of Socatchov ZT"L, while sitting with his Chasidim, once told them the story of this huge company's climb to success.

It must have been around the year 1800 – there lived in Krakow a Jew, R' Shachna, who decided to open up his own wine store after spending a few years working as a bartender in one of the local inns. Some of his best-selling and profitable wines came from the north-eastern region of Hungary, where he himself travelled to each year to make excellent deals for product and to arrange for shipment back to Krakow. It only took a few years for his store to achieve renown and his business eventually achieved great success.

R' Shachna felt like he was on top of the world. He was a good and honourable Jew, quite a learned Chasid, with a fine, proper and well-fed family. One day his life took a drastic and devastating turn. The man who previously could make no bad deal, who turned dust into gold, now began to make colossal 'mistakes'. One deal after another turned sour on the perplexed wine merchant. Whatever could go wrong did go wrong and within a few short months, R' Shachna had used up all of his money; even the sizable 'insurance' account that he had secretly stored away. Mystified

and somewhat dismayed, though he was, he never for one moment thought that this calamity was anything but *Hashem's* hand directing his life to where it needed to be. He continued on in the business, struggling to borrow money to purchase cheaper product and making substantially smaller profits. He and his family now faced problems like hunger and embarrassment; things with which they were not at all acquainted. Such a transition is hard for a family – they suffered as they tried to give each other strength and prayed for better days to come.

It was the year 1816. R' Shachna managed to borrow just enough money to purchase some wine at the Fair in Hungary. As he was about to leave Krakow for Hungary, he heard that following the passing of the holy R' Menachem Mendel of Riminov ZT"L and the appointment of the new Rebbe, R' Tzvi Hirsch "*meshores*" (the former '*shammes*' of R' Menachem Mendel) whose reputation as a tremendous *Tzadik* and 'miracle worker' was spreading throughout Poland and beyond. R' Shachna decided to make his way to Hungary via Riminov hoping to receive a *bracha* from the Rebbe.

R' Shachna stood anxiously in front of the Rebbe as he passed over the paper with the names of his family members written on it. Also written on the '*kvittel*', was his request for the Rebbe's *bracha* that he be restored to his former state of prosperity.

To be continued...

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