

## Tehillim- Psalms for the Ages -Chapter 44 (Part 1)

WIT 12/16/15

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### 1. תהלים פרק מד

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מְשָׁכִיל: ב אֱלֹהִים | בְּאָזְנוֹנוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ־לָנוּ פֶּעַל־פְּעֻלָּתְךָ בְּיָמֵינוּ  
קִדְּםָם: ג אֶתְּךָ | יָדְךָ גוֹיִם הוֹרֶשֶׁתָּ וְתַטְעַם תִּרְעֵם לְאֻמִּים וְתִשְׁלַחֲם: ד כִּי לֹא בַחֲרָפָם יִרְשׁוּ־אֶרֶץ וְזִרְעָם  
לֹא־הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוֹ כִּי־יָמִינְךָ וְזִרְעֶךָ וְאֹר פָּנֶיךָ כִּי רָצִיתָם:

1. For the conductor, of the sons of Korah, a maskil. 2. O God, with our ears we heard, our forefathers told us; You performed a deed in their days, in days of old. 3. You-[with] Your hand You drove out nations and planted them; You inflicted harm on kingdoms and sent them away. 4. For not by their sword did they inherit the land, neither did their arm save them, but Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your countenance, for You favored them.

### 2. מלבי"ם תהלים פרק מד פסוק א

(א) לִמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי קֹרַח, מְשָׁכִיל זֶה הוֹסֵד ג"כ עַל הַגְלוֹת, מְזַכֵּיר הַנִּפְלְאוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה ה' לָהֶם בְּיָמֵינוּ קִדְּםָם וּמִבְקֵשׁ שִׁיּוּסִיף יָדוֹ שֵׁנִית לַהֲוִשִׁיעֵם כִּי רַק בּוֹ בִּטְחוֹ, וּמִסְפָּר כָּל הַצָּרוֹת שֶׁעָבְרוּ עֲלֵיהֶם בְּגִלוֹתָם, וְשֶׁבְּכָל זֹאת לֹא נִסּוּג לָהֶם אַחֲרֵי מְאֻמּוֹתָם, וְע"כ רָאוּ שִׁפְדָם לִמְעַן חֲסִדּוֹ, וּבָא אֵל הַתַּפְלָה תַּחֲלָה מִצַּד כְּבוֹד ה' לְבַל יִחֻלֵּל, וְאִח"כ מִצַּד גּוֹדֵל אֲמוֹנָתָם, וְאִח"כ יִדְבֵּר מִצַּד חֲסֵד ה', שֶׁכָּל הַשֶּׁפֶל יוֹתֵר יִגְדִּיל ה' עִמּוֹ חֲסִדּוֹ, כִּמ"ש כִּי שָׁחָה לַעֲפָר נַפְשָׁנוּ וּפָדָנוּ לִמְעַן חֲסִדְךָ, וְהֵם הֵג' דְּבָרִים שֶׁהִזְכִּיר לְקִמּוֹן סִי' קט"ו כִּי לִשְׁמֹךְ תֵּן כְּבוֹד עַל חֲסִדְךָ עַל אֲמִתְךָ:

### 3. אבן עזרא תהלים פרק מד פסוק ב

(ב) אֱלֹהִים בְּאָזְנוֹנוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ – וְהַמְסַפְּרִים הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁהָיוּ צָדִיקִים וְהֵם נֶאֱמָרִים וְעוֹד טַעַם אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁכָּל אֶב אוֹהֵב אֶת בְּנוֹ וְלַעֲוֹלָם לֹא יוֹרְנוּ רַק הָאֲמִת לְכַדּוֹ:

### 4. בראשית פרק מה

(א) וְלֹא־יָכֹל יוֹסֵף לְהִתְאַפֵּק לְכָל הַנִּצָּבִים עָלָיו וַיִּקְרָא הוֹצִיָּאוּ כָל־אִישׁ מֵעָלָי וְלֹא־עָמַד אִישׁ אִתּוֹ  
בְּהִתְדַּעַע יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו: (ב) וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־קִלְוֹ בְּכַבִּי וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ מִצָּרִים וַיִּשְׁמַע בֵּית פַּרְעֹה: (ג) וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף  
אֶל־אֶחָיו אֲנִי יוֹסֵף הָעוֹד אֲבִי חַי וְלֹא־יָכֹלוּ אֶחָיו לַעֲנוֹת אֹתוֹ כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפָּנָיו: (ד) וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו  
גִּשְׁוֹנָא אֵלַי וַיִּגָּשׁוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יוֹסֵף אֶחֱיָכֶם אֲשֶׁר־מָכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי מִצְרַיִמָּה: (ה) וַעֲתִידָה אֶל־תַּעֲצֹבוּ  
וְאֶל־יִחַר בְּעֵינֵיכֶם כִּי־מָכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי הִנֵּה כִּי לְמַחֲיָה שְׁלַחְנִי אֱלֹהִים לְפָנֵיכֶם:

1. Now Joseph could not bear all those standing beside him, and he called out, "Take everyone away from me!" So no one stood with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2. And he wept out loud, so the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard. 3. And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" but his brothers could not answer him because they were startled by his presence. 4. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me," and they drew closer. And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

### Approach #1: Welfare

#### 5. ר' חיים פלטיאל בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

(ג) אני יוסף העוד אבי חי. וא"ת והא כבר אמרו למעלה שלום לעבדך [ל]אבינו עודנו חי, ונ"ל דוודאי ידע דחי היה אך היה שואל אם היה בריא, לפי שידע שנצטער עליו שאל העוד אבי חי, כלומר אם בריא הוא,

R. Haym Paltiel b"r Jacob was born c. 1240 and lived in Felaise, France, relocating to Magdebourg, Germany. He was a disciple-colleague of R. Meir (Maharam) of Rothenburg, and corresponded with him on halakhic issues. Some of responsa have been included in the volumes of R Meir's responsa. He died c. 1300.

### Approach #2: Veracity

#### 6. הכתב והקבלה בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

(ג) העוד אבי חי. שאל להם זה, כי חשב אולי מה שאמרו עד הנה שימות אביהם ביגון היה כדי שישירו מבוקשם בהשבת בנימין, ובאמת איננו חי, ולזה רצה לדעת האמת

Rabbi Yaakov Zvi son of Rabbi Gamliel Mecklenburg was born in Germany, around the year 5545 (1785). In his youth, he studied under the tutelage of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, and later began a career in trade. Not until the 1831 did he receive his first rabbinic position in Königsberg, Prussia. He passed away in Königsberg in 1865.

#### 7. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Genesis 45:3)

... Is my father really still alive? ....

### Approach #3: Assurance

#### 8. ר' חיים פלטיאל בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

(ג) אני יוסף העוד אבי חי. ... א"נ סימן מסר להם שהיה יוסף כיון שקרא יעקב אבי דאי היה מצרי לא היה קורא אותו אבי כי גנות היה לו כי גם הלחם לא היו אוכלין המצריים עם העבריים כ"ש שלא היו קורין אותו אביהם, ועוד כי פי המדבר אליכם, ראו כי עד עתה היה לי מליץ ועתה אני מדבר בעצמי.

#### 9. תולדות יצחק בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

והתשובה, שאם יאמר מיד אני יוסף אחיכם אשר מכתם אותי, יחשבו שכוונתו להורגם, ולזה לא הזכיר המכירה מיד, אבל אדרבה עם אומרו אני יוסף אמר העוד אבי חי, לומר אפילו עשו הרשע לא אמר להרוג לאחיו עד שימות יצחק אביו שלא להוריד שיבתו ביגון שאולה שנאמר [בראשית כז מא] יקרבו ימי אבל אבי וגומר, וכל שכן אני בעוד אבי חי ....

### Approach #4: Rebuke

#### 10. ספורנו בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

(ג) העוד אבי חי. אי אפשר שלא מת מדאגתו עלי:

#### 11. הכתב והקבלה בראשית פרשת ויגש פרק מה פסוק ג

(ג) העוד אבי חי. ... ואפשר שהה"א ה"א התימה, אם אפשר הוא שיחיה עוד אבי אחר עברו עליו כל הצרות האלה?:

## Approach #5: Reconciliation

## 12. בראשית פרק לז

(ט) וַיַּחְלֶם עֹדֹל חֲלוֹם אֲחֵר וַיְסַפֵּר אֹתוֹ לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה חֲלֹמֹתַי חֲלוֹם עֹדֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶחָד עֶשֶׂר כּוֹכָבִים מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לִי: (י) וַיְסַפֵּר אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אָחָיו וַיַּגֵּד-בּוֹ אֲבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֶה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חֲלַמְתָּ הַבּוֹא נָכוּא אֲנִי וְאִמִּי וְאֶחָד לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לָךְ אֶרְצָה:

## 13. בראשית פרק לז

(יב) וַיֵּלְכוּ אָחָיו לְרַעוּת אֶת-עֵצָן אֲבִיהֶם בְּשָׂכָם: (יג) וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אָחִיךָ רָעִים בְּשָׂכָם לָכָה וְאֶשְׁלַחְךָ אֲלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲנִנִּי: (יד) וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֵךְ-נָא רְאֵה אֶת-שְׁלוֹם אָחִיךָ וְאֶת-שְׁלוֹם הָעֵצָן וְהַשְׁבֵּנִי דְבָר וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ מִעֲמֶק חֶבְרֹן וַיָּבֹא שָׂכָמָה:

## 14. Covenant &amp; Conversation (316)

Immediately afterwards, we read of Jacob sending Joseph, alone, to his brothers. It was there, at that meeting far from home, that they plotted to kill him, lowered him into a pit, and eventually sold him as a slave.

Joseph had many years to reflect on that episode. That his brothers were hostile to him, he knew. But surely Jacob knew this as well. In which case, why did he send Joseph to them? Did Jacob not contemplate the possibility that they might do him harm? Did he not know the dangers of sibling rivalry? Did he not at least contemplate the possibility that by sending Joseph to them he was risking Joseph's life?

No one knew this better from personal experience. Recall that

Jacob himself had been forced to leave home because his brother Esau threatened to kill him, once he discovered that Jacob had taken his blessing. Recall too that when Jacob was about to meet Esau again, after an interval of twenty-two years, he was "in great fear and distress," believing that his brother would try to kill him. That fear provoked one of the great crises of Jacob's life. So Jacob knew, better than anyone else in Genesis, that hate can lead to killing, that sibling rivalry carries with it the risk of fratricide.

Yet Jacob sent Joseph to his other sons knowing that they were jealous of him and hated him. Joseph presumably knew these facts. What else could he conclude, as he reflected on the events that led up to his sale as a slave, that Jacob had deliberately placed him in this danger? Why? Because of the immediately prior event, when Joseph had told his father that "the sun and moon" – his father and mother – would bow down to him.

This angered Jacob, and Joseph knew it. His father had "rebuked" him. It was outrageous to suggest that his parents would prostrate themselves before him. It was wrong to imagine it, all the more so to say it. Besides which, who was the "moon"? Joseph's mother, Rachel, the great love of Jacob's life, was dead. Presumably, then, he was referring to Leah. But his very mention of "the sun and moon and eleven stars" must have brought back to his father the pain of Rachel's death. Joseph knew he had provoked his father's wrath. What else could he conclude but that Jacob had deliberately put his life at risk?

## 15. בראשית פרק מא פסוק נא

וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־שֵׁם הַבְּכוֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי־נִשְׁנִי אֱלֹהִים אֶת־כָּל־עַמְלִי וְאֶת כָּל־בֵּית אָבִי:

## 16. Covenant &amp; Conversation (319)

Uppermost in Joseph's mind was the desire to forget the past, not just his brothers' conduct towards him but "all my father's house." Why so, if not that he associated "all my trouble" not just with his siblings but also with his father Jacob? Joseph believed that his father had deliberately put him at his brothers' mercy because, angered by the second dream, he no longer wanted contact with the son he had once loved. That is why he never sent a message to Jacob that he was still alive.

## 17. בראשית פרק מד

(כה) וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִינוּ שְׁבוּ שְׁכֵרוֹ־לָנוּ מִעֵט־אֶכֶל: (כו) וַנֹּאמֶר לֹא נוּכַל לָרֶדֶת אִם־יֵשׁ אֶחָינוּ הַקָּטָן אֲתָנוּ וַיֵּרָדוּ כִּי־לֹא נוּכַל לָרְאוֹת פְּנֵי הָאִישׁ הַקָּטָן אֵינָנוּ אֲתָנוּ: (כז) וַיֹּאמֶר עֲבָדְךָ אָבִי אֵלֵינוּ אַתֶּם יֹדְעִתֶם כִּי שְׁנַיִם יָלְדָה־לִּי אִשְׁתִּי: (כח) וַיֵּצֵא הָאֶחָד מֵאִתִּי וְאָמַר אֵךְ טָרַף טָרַף וְלֹא רָאִיתִיו עַד־הַנֶּה: (כט) וּלְקַחְתֶּם גַּם־אֶת־זֶה מֵעַם פָּנִי וְקָרְהוּ אֶסּוֹן וְהוֹרִדְתֶּם אֶת־שִׁיבְתִּי בְרָעָה שְׂאֵלָה:

[25](#). that our father said, 'Go back, buy us a little food.' [26](#). But we said, 'We cannot go down; [only] if our youngest brother is with us will we go down, for we cannot see the man's face if our youngest brother is not with us.' [27](#). And your servant, my father, said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two [children]. [28](#). The one went away from me, and I said, "He has surely been torn to pieces, and I have not seen him since." [29](#). Now if you take this one too away from me, and misfortune befalls him, you will bring down my hoary head in misery to the grave.'

## 18. Covenant &amp; Conversation (320)

At that moment Joseph realized that his fear that his father had rejected him was unwarranted. On the contrary, he had been bereft when Joseph did not return. He believed that he had been "torn to pieces," killed by a wild animal. His father still loved him, still grieved for him. Against this background we can better understand Joseph's reaction to this disclosure:

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" (45:1-3)

Joseph's first thought is not about Judah or Benjamin, but about Jacob. A doubt he had harbored for twenty-two years had turned out to be unfounded. Hence his first question: "Is my father still alive?"

### **19. Covenant & Conversation (317)**

*Joseph did not communicate with his father because he believed his father no longer wanted to see him or hear from him. His father had terminated the relationship. That was a reasonable inference from the facts as Joseph knew them. He could not have known that Jacob still loved him, that his brothers had deceived their father by showing him Joseph's bloodstained cloak, and that his father mourned for him, "refusing to be comforted." We know these facts because the Torah tells us. But Joseph, far away, in another land, serving as a slave, could not have known. This places the story in a completely new and tragic light.*