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SPREADING LIGHT AND
TORAH TO OUR AMAZING
BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN
AM YISRAEL



Vayigash — I've Got a Feeling

The Healing Power of Now

The Pasuk That Starts It All

So I want to quote you a Pasuk, and that's how we're going to start today. The Pasuk says, "And Yosef said to his brothers, come close to me"

He says, I am Yosef, your brother. That you sold me down to Egypt.

Seven Words

Let's look at Yosef's Musar speech. This is the ultimate Musar speech. 7 words. That's the whole of the speech.

Now, to me, that is a very effective speech right there. To be able to give over Musar on that level. And to be fair, none of you guys sold me ever, so I don't have that springboard to work off of, right? But 7 words.

Now, I want to read you the next Pasuk. So he gives them 7 words of Musar, and as we explained yesterday, the Musar that he gives them is epic. Super powerful. With those 7 words, they can't answer, they're like stumbling backwards.

How do we know they're stumbling backwards? Because he needs to tell them to come close. So his Musar was very strong. He was very effective.

But let's look at the next Pasuk right after that. So he delivers the killer blow and they're stunned, speechless.

The Ta'amim Stop Signs: Pasek, Sof Pasuk, Atnah

And now what's that called? When you have a ta'am like that, when the sound, we say the Torah in that language, huh? Pasek. Pasek.

What does pasek mean? What does pasek do? It makes you stop in the middle of the pasuk. In fact, these are the most important parts of the ta'amim in the Torah.

If someone makes a mistake in the song, in the sing-song notes of the Torah, we don't correct them. There's one major exception when a person blows through the stop sign at the end of the Pasuk. But really also you're supposed to correct them when they blow through the stop signs in the Taamim.

What other stop signs are there? Suf Pasuk, Pasek, end of the verse, Pasek with the line. What else? Atnah. So what looks like a horseshoe, a wishbone, or the turkey, you know that one? That's Atnah.

So all 3 of those, it changes the Pasuk, because you didn't put the pause in the right place. Okay?

“Don't Be Sad” and “Don't Be Angry”

So, What does mean? Do not? Be sad, don't be depressed. From Lashon, Ezev. Okay? Atsuv. What does it mean? Don't be angry.

It's interesting. The Chachamim point out that there's a difference between Charon Af and when it doesn't say Charon Af, it just says Charon. Right? There's a difference between the 2.

Like, it says that by David HaMelech, when they were bringing back the Aaron, so David HaMelech asked someone to bring it. And who brings it back? A man whose name is Uziah.

Anyway, Uziah puts the ark on a wagon. It's not what you're supposed to do. You're not supposed to put the ark on a wagon. It's supposed to be held by human beings. But they put it on a wagon led by animals.

That wagon hits a ditch. Everything on the wagon bumps up. Uziah is scared that the Aaron is going to fall. So he reaches out with his hands to catch it. That was a disrespect to the Aron because the Aron was the thing that carried its carriers. It didn't need anybody.

When the Kuanim would come, when the Levim would come, and they would put the Aron on their shoulders, what would happen? It would lift them. So if it could lift the carriers, it's not going to fall on the floor.

But because it went like this, so all of a sudden, like a lightning bolt, okay, it gets killed immediately. To the point that they call that place Peretz Uziah, like the outburst of Uziah.

But what does it say about King David when he found out? What did David Classically, people think that that means that David got very angry at God. But Rashi differentiates that Vayichar, Charon Af and Vayichar are not the same thing. Charon Af is anger. Charon without Af is very bothered.

You see the difference?

So let's say your wife, you know, you come home and your wife didn't do, you agreed that you were going to do something, you're going to go ready on time, we're going to go to this place. So the person might get angry.

But as an example, what if, barmanan, they came home, and instead of seeing that their wife did something, changed the plans, they

see their wife fainted on the floor. They're not angry that she wasn't ready on time. They're not angry that now they have to go to make a new plan. They're bothered. They're worried. There's a huge difference in those 2 things.

However, we're going to see in just one second. We're going to see just one second something very interesting from the Ur Haim.

So he tells them, don't be depressed. And don't be deeply bothered. That you sold me here. Because God had sent me to bring life, specifically through Mechia, through food. God sent me to save our lives by bringing food.

Why? Because the famine is only 2 years in. There's another 5 years where they're not going to be plowing and they're not going to be reaping anything. So imagine you didn't have a friend in the palace. It would be a disaster.

Okay, that's Yosef's speech.

The Or HaChaim's Questions

I want to read you the words of the Ora Haim and then I want to take it apart with you a little bit today.

Says the Ora Haim HaKadosh, What do you mean, and now? What do you mean to exclude? What do you mean to communicate when you say, and now?

You're in the middle of talking. Anything you say is, and now.

Like, I'll give you an example. I walk into a, what's it called, into a Best Buy. I look at a phone I want to buy. I tell the guy, and now I want to buy the phone. Obviously, you want to buy the phone now? You're here now. We're talking now.

Yosef is like, you sold me. Go back to Israel. Don't be upset. What do you mean? Now don't be upset. What is he adding with the words? So, that's his first question.

His second question is, that seemingly, these 2 things are not the same. Such a orachayim item, this one. Why do you say these 2 things? What's the double? Don't be sad, don't be depressed, and don't be bothered. These are 2 different things. That are the opposite.

Sadness, depression speaks to brokenheartedness. Okay? Pay attention. Okay? And anger speaks to arrogance. So anger is rooted in arrogance. Sadness and depression is rooted in not a high heart, but a broken one. Okay? So how is he telling them, don't have this and don't have this, they're 2 opposite things.

So number one, what's the 2 things? Number 2, they're opposites. Okay?

And then he ends with his last question is, why did he say, you sent me here, henna, here.

The Or HaChaim's Answer

So, I want to read you the answer of the Orach Haim, and then we're going to get into it.

It says, Orach Haim, What it means to say is like this, I know you're depressed, you're sad about selling me. Because they had

said earlier, we're guilty because we sold him. So he knows because he speaks Hebrew. They didn't realize he speaks Hebrew. They were speaking freely in Hebrew in front of him. So they said, why is all this happening? Because we're guilty that we sold him. So he knows that they feel bad about selling him. Okay.

And now. Pirush, to explain, You guys were so sad about the selling, you actually wanted to come down, you wanted to try and buy me back for a huge amount of money. You regretted it to the point that you were ready to fix it. So now that I'm here, you don't have to worry about that anymore. You already have me back.

He's also trying to communicate to them. He knows that they feel close to him. That they're upset about it until now. Through that, they'll be able to understand and appreciate and feel that he's with them because he's telling them, I know your heart, I know you're with me.

What's the second part? Don't worry, I'm going to explain everything. I just need you to see it inside first. What a strange expression.

I know that you guys saw things in a certain way, came up with a plan, and now the whole plan that you came up with actually backfired and made everything much worse. So that makes a person angry. I did all of these things. And what did it do? What did it bring me? The exact opposite.

So the first part, the sadness is what you did to me. The anger is what you did to yourself. He gave them a reason. Don't be angry that everything you did made everything worse. Because look, actually it made things better. Because now I'm in a

position to be able to help you. You should not be worried about the matter anymore. Okay?

That's how the Ora Chaim explains the situation.

He says, I don't want you to be sad about what you did to me. I don't want you to be mad about what you did to yourself.

So first of all, clearly the Ora Chaim is learning, means anger. Because he quotes it and says, Remember I told you that there's a difference between Charon Af and Charon. David was not angry at God. All right?

The Core Human Challenge: We Can't Hear Our Own Heart

Now, listen to this because to me this is everything.

I think one of the biggest problems that we have as human beings is not dealing with other people. I think one of the biggest problems we have as human beings is not about our desires and our challenges and our limitations. I think one of the biggest challenges that we face as human beings is that we can't hear our own heart. We can't hear our own heart.

We don't understand, never mind anybody else, we don't have a proper working understanding of ourselves. And if we did, it would dramatically change everything.

I want you to be impressed here, not with me, but with what the Ora Chaim is expressing, Yosef is communicating. And look at the sensitivity that Ora Chaim

HaKadosh is teaching us when it comes to the feelings we feel and the emotions we go through.

Yosef says to them, don't be sad and don't be mad. What's wild is, says the Urah Haim, what do you mean? How can we even talk about these 2 things together? Sadness comes from having a broken heart. Anger comes from having a heart which is too high, which is too filled with arrogance.

Just the pinpoint accuracy. in understanding the source-driven feelings that give us the emotional outcomes that we are experiencing.

Therapy, Understanding, and Freedom

You know, the classic joke is that you go to a therapist and you pay him a lot of money for him to ask you, and how did that make you feel? People get very frustrated, especially men, by the way. Women find that as an invitation to share emotions, they love it all day, fantastic.

Men who hate sharing their feelings, like, I hate this, I won't do it for my wife for free, that's why we're in therapy, now you want me to come to you and do it with you, I pay you for it? How am I feeling? Angry, by the way. I'm feeling angry right now.

Oh, really? What is the source of your anger? You, that I'm paying you. I'm not fooled by your comfortable couch.

So, really, the therapeutic element of going to a therapist is really not from the edge and out, it's from the edge and in. So you think that your life is messed up. Well, let's translate what that looks like, feels like.

Where's it come from? Where are you experiencing, you know, that pain? Let's understand it. And the crazy thing is that the irony is as soon as they understand it, it goes away.

The largest amount of work is not like changing your behavior. You punch someone, you think, I need to tie my arm down with a rope. No.

If we allowed you to understand why this guy makes you so angry, then the next time he does it and you feel triggered, your anger rises again, you want to punch him again, you understand that actually I'm not angry at this guy. I'm angry because he's very successful and very wealthy and he looks down on me.

And I have so much pent-up anger because in second grade, some guy used to beat me up all the time, you know, and make fun of my family because we were poor. And now every time this guy says something, does something, I'm reacting, overreacting.

Now the minute you understand that, there's freedom in understanding.

Freedom of Information Act

In America, there's a concept called the Freedom of Information Act. Anyone know what that is? I have a man here from government. What's the Freedom of Information Act? Anyone know? Yeah. You can apply to get sensitive information. Like you could apply to get the Epstein files. Freedom of Information Act. I want to know. I want to know what's going on. It's supposed to be about transparency.

So, I'll tell you, in Judaism we don't believe in freedom of information. The laws governing Lashon Hara say, no, information is not free. Information is actually very damaging and quite costly. very expensive. The less you know, sometimes the better.

But listen to this. I don't know if I believe in the freedom of information But I believe in the freedom that having information gives you, not about anybody else, but understanding yourself.

Stockholm Syndrome (And IKEA)

Let me give you a simple example of this concept. Super simple. My favorite example, we've discussed this before.

There's something called Stockholm Syndrome. So what's Stockholm Syndrome?

Stockholm Syndrome is when you see items in your life and you feel the need to label and call them silly names just so that Americans don't know how to make it and order it on your catalog, Ikea. No, that's not a Stockholm Syndrome.

What is Stockholm Syndrome that insists on calling a chair Blorgen, right? Or something like that. Sometimes I just feel like going in there and making up like a sound and asking them where they stock it. No, I can see an evil smile spreading across Jack's face. You know, guy, I'm trying to find the flubenshlaben. Yes. Only IKEA can do this to you, by the way.

What color are you looking for? I'm looking for black, brown. Why would you name it 2 colors? You'd think as you're differentiating

between black and brown. Incorrect. They have neither black nor brown. It's black-brown, red lacquer, or white.

So what is Stockholm Syndrome?

Stockholm Syndrome was an observation that we looked at, that we realized, that identified, that there was a bunch of people taken hostage in a bank in Stockholm. And what happened is, all these people in the bank, and these bank robbers are holding them hostage to get whatever it is that they want. It's a very long standoff with the hostage negotiation with the cops.

In the meantime, these people holding them hostage, They're giving them food. Why? Because they need the hostages alive. Right? They ask to go to the bathroom. They're like chained to each other. Horrible things are happening to them.

But over time, what happens? They realized that when the cops were breaking in, the hostages warned the captors that the police were coming. They're trying to protect them.

Here's the crazier part. After they were released and saved and the captors were charged, the hostages got together and raised money to pay for the legal defense of the people who held them hostage.

Does that make any sense? Sorry? Paddy Hurst came up with a theory.

The theory was that when you're in an enclosed environment, you're in this place, you have no certainty about your life, you don't know if you're gonna live or you're gonna die, you're not sure how anything's gonna go, in this closed circuit, in this system that I've got over here this person is

taking care of me They could not give me a sandwich, but they gave me one.

And you start to redefine all of your values and your understandings built around the fact that you're in this limited context, square, and from within there, the guy gave me a sandwich. You know something? They let me go to the bathroom. What a nice guy. He didn't have to let me go to the bathroom.

By the way, Stockholm syndrome is very similar in nature, I believe, to battered wife syndrome. Why people stay in emotionally and in physically abusive relationships. Why when you leave? The answer is because from within that context, they start to say, he's hitting me, but he gives me food. He's yelling at me, screaming at me, breaking me down, but it puts a roof over our head. And you start to redefine, and you can't see things clearly from within that space.

Says Patty Hearst, there's one condition for Stockholm Syndrome to grow and to thrive. For a person to have a distorted sense of values and understanding of their life. And what is that? That they do not have contact with the outside.

The moment that wall, kind of with this new environment, outside of this environment, the guy's kidnapping me. Inside this environment, like I'm already here now, he's giving me a sandwich, only works if there's no contact with the outside world.

Because the minute your brain understands I could be out there, Out there, I don't get a sandwich from the guy. I get to buy whatever I want. I have freedom.

The brain is capable. It's really one of the brain's strongest abilities to be able to

recreate a new narrative within which I'm able to live. Isn't that fascinating?

So you have a person, they lose everything in the Holocaust, they come back over here, and they're able to rebuild. That's the same ability of the brain, to be able to reconstruct. It's true, they lost this one, this one, this one, but within my new reality, look, at least I have a second wife. At least I have new kids, never mind the ones that were lost. You see that? That's the brain's ability.

But look at this idea. The minute you talk to the outside world, it breaks the hold of Stockholm Syndrome on you. That concept is the Freedom of Information Act.

Applying It to Machloket

Yosef Atzadik says to his brothers, and I want everyone who's dealing with a machloket, with family, or anyone who knows anyone who's dealing with machloket and family. I want anyone who's struggling to understand someone in their life and they're finding it very difficult to be able to communicate with them. They don't see why they would behave in a certain way.

The only question you need to be dealing with is If this situation is so distorted, they must see things in a different way to me. How could I understand the way that they are perceiving and seeing this situation? And if I could see it through their eyes, the whole problem could go away.

Are there people that are mentally unwell to the point where, yes, it's not fixable, you're not gonna be able to do anything? Yes, there are. But the vast majority of the cases are not that. They're not that.

Yosef Stops the Spiral: Ve'ata

So look at this together with me. What does Yosef say? Yosef says, you're broken right now. You can't speak. Let me help you understand yourself.

And what do you need to do in order to stop that spiral of sadness, of shame, of anger at yourself, of anger at each other, of blame. We shouldn't have listened to you. Shimon, you know, Levi, what are you doing? You take us down the wrong path.

What does Yosef do? And now, just stop. This whole whirlwind you're feeling, it's based on incorrect information. So just stop.

The first thing that needs to happen is, we need to stop the whirlwind, the direction of that person's thoughts. So what are they feeling right now? How are they experiencing or perceiving where we are? Just get them to stop for a minute, thinking in that manner. If I could do that, then I could write over a very different story.

Shame: "I Know Your Heart"

Yosef says, your shame, right? That you were terrible brothers? I know that you wanted to fix it. I know how desperately you want me to know that the brothers that sold me are not the brothers in front of me right now. I know brothers, I know.

You're forgetting but I heard you say, that you would have done anything to pay anything to be able to get me back. I know your heart, I know. When you didn't know I

was listening to you, I heard you say those things.

So that shame, you don't need to feel it. It's inappropriate. I know that your heart is not there.

Anger: "I Wasted So Much Time"

And as to the anger, the frustration, you know, sometimes a person is going through a relationship that goes sour. You know what the strongest feeling is in that, in those moments? Not heartbreak the person left. Not upset at myself like I should have done it differently. You could have a smattering of those.

But you know what you hear almost always overarching everything? And I wasted so much time. I took one year, 2 years, 6 months, 8 months, 3 months, whatever the number is. And I threw it in the garbage. I wasted this time.

I was trying to get closer. I'm just adapting the words of Or Haim here. I was trying to get closer to relationship, to marriage or to whatever. And where did I get? I got further.

The strongest feeling oftentimes is this feeling of anger at oneself for having wasted my own time. And where am I now? As far as I was when I started, or sometimes because of the trauma, further. All this thing that we did to make it worse. That's what the brothers are feeling, that feeling of anger.

Yosef says, here's the secret, let me find a way for you to understand that you did not waste your time. L'mechiyah shelachani aleichem. It's true that this put your plans

back. You were trying to get me to not be a ruler and actually it got you closer. But is that such a bad thing?

The Healing Power of Now

So how do you get a person to stop? How do you get a person to think differently? Says the Pasuk, brilliant. All of your thoughts live in the past. The shame and the blame and the anger, they live in the past.

You know how I'm going to get you to stop, Pasek? With the word Ve'ata. Let's recalibrate. What's in front of us right now?

You're so upset at yourselves, but that's not who you are right now. You're so angry that you damaged yourself with all these plans and shenanigans. Where are we right now? You're in front of me here trying to get food and I have food to sustain the family.

I wasted my time in this relationship. No. You learned what you need from the relationship. You learned how important this element was to you. So much so that I was willing to blow up something that meant so much to me. I didn't even know that that's how much it meant to me.

And now I see that my own value system is very different. The next person I date is very different because of that information. I also don't waste anybody's time because I'm much more sure of myself. So although it took me a year, 3 months, 6 months, whatever to learn that about myself, where am I now? I'm closer, not with this person, but I'm closer to the goal. I'm closer to what I want to build.

So the challenge is the challenge of now. And if a person could shift into now mode, they could stop their thoughts and recalibrate. And the blame and the shame and the anger actually seem to dissipate with only what? Just with honestly and truthfully understanding where you are now because of those decisions that you made.

What is the positive thing that has come about because of those decisions, because of the way things crumbled? Maybe it wasn't a benefit in the way that I thought But maybe I got something else which was much more valuable.

You're worried about Yosef being in charge because Yosef is in charge, you're alive. Right? Look at how Yosef manages to be able to shift the narrative with one sentence. Wow, wow, wow. The power, the healing power of now.

Key Takeaway

Yosef's masterful reconciliation with his brothers teaches us the profound healing power of "now." By addressing their deep sadness (for harming him) and their anger (for harming themselves), Yosef uses the word "ve'ata" – "and now" – to force a full stop on their spiral of shame and regret. He helps them recalibrate to the present reality: their regret shows true change of heart, and their failed plans actually positioned him to save the family. The greatest conflicts – in families, relationships, or within ourselves – often persist because we remain trapped in past narratives. Shifting to an honest perspective of "now" reveals unexpected

blessings and frees us from unnecessary emotional burdens.

Five Shabbat Table Discussion Questions

1. The Or HaChaim explains that Yosef addressed two opposite emotions in his brothers – sadness (from a broken heart) and anger (from arrogance). Have you ever felt both regret and frustration toward yourself at the same time after a mistake? How did those feelings affect you, and what helped you move past them?
2. Yosef overheard his brothers expressing genuine remorse when they thought he couldn't understand Hebrew. How does knowing that someone truly sees and understands our inner regret change the way we relate to them? Can you think of a time when feeling truly "seen" helped heal a strained relationship?
3. The shiur compares our negative emotions (shame, blame, anger) to living in the past. When something difficult ends – a relationship, a job, a dream – we often feel we "wasted time." How can looking honestly at where we are "now" reveal hidden benefits or growth from that experience?
4. Using the Stockholm Syndrome analogy, the shiur suggests that many conflicts persist because each side is trapped in their own limited perspective. When you've been in an argument with a family member or friend, what would it look like to sincerely try to understand how they are seeing the situation? Has that

ever helped resolve a disagreement?

5. Yosef shifts the entire narrative with one sentence by focusing on the present reality. At your Shabbat table or in your life, how might saying "and now..." (ve'ata) help interrupt cycles of guilt, resentment, or worry and open the door to healing and gratitude?