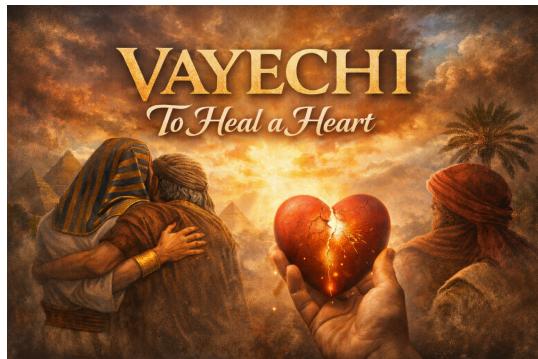


Rabbi Shlomo Farhi.com

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



The Brothers Fear Yosef After Yaakov's Death

So, let's begin.

In the end of Parashat Vayechi the brothers approach Yosef.

Yaakov has passed away, he's given them his final blessing and let's share the pesukim that express a very poignant moment in the unfolding of the Jewish the Jewish people's first family's relationships.

The brothers of Yosef saw:

ייראו אחיו יוסף כי מת אביהם

that their father had passed.

Vayomru and they said:

Lu yishtemenu Yosef, maybe Yosef will hate us now.

וַהשְׁבֵב יִשְׁבֵב לְנוּ אֶת כָּל הַרְעָה אֲשֶׁר גַּמְלָנוּ אֹתָנוּ
He's going to revisit upon us, he's going to pay back all of the bad that we did to him.

וַיֹּצְאוּ אֶל יוֹסֵף לְאמֹר

and they commanded that it should be told to Yosef saying:

אָבִיךְ צָהָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתָה

your father commanded before he died that we should tell you:

Ko tomru l'Yosef

so should you say to Yosef:

אַנְּאָ שָׁא נָא פְשָׁע אֲחִיךְ וְחַטָּאתָם

please forgive the sin of your brothers and their iniquity.

Ki ra'ah gemalucha

for they have done you bad.

וְעַתָּה שָׁא נָא לְפְשָׁע עֲבָדֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲבִיךְ

forgive, carry the sin of the servants of the God of your father.

Yosef Weeps

וַיַּבְךְ יוֹסֵף בְּדִבְרָמָם אֲלֵיכֶם

So first of all in this in this fake last will and testament that the brothers deliver to Yosef, they say our father Yaakov said to tell you after he passed away, forgive your brothers and forgive, listen to this expression it's very interesting:

וְעַתָּה שָׁא נָא לְפְשָׁע עֲבָדֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲבִיךְ

the servants of the God of your father.

Can anyone figure out what are they saying?

Forgive your brothers and forgive the servants of the God of your father.

I think what they're trying to communicate is even if they you don't forgive your brothers

because they didn't act like brothers, even if you don't see them as brothers, you see them as fellow Jews, *avdei elohei avicha*, forgive them because they share the same faith as you, because they practice the same mitzvot as you.

Let that be enough.
Anyway Yosef hears this command and he starts to cry.

Please only answer amen if you're listening to this live.

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם שככל נהיה בדברו.
Amen.

Sorry, there's so many private jokes that are going on, it's unbelievable.

Okay. Anyway, they see him crying, they bow to him,

ויאמרו הננו לך לעבדים.

We present ourselves as servants to you.

Yosef avoids his father once he comes down to Egypt so that the topic of where he was can't come up, because he doesn't want his brothers to get thrown under the bus and that Yaakov should curse them, God forbid.

So Yosef puts in all this effort to not have Yaakov find out about it.
And then the brothers come and say that Yaakov, yeah, dad asked that you forgive us for our sin because we did bad to you.

He's crying, I think, not only because the brothers are asking him for something emotional, but at I think maybe he's thinking also, "Wow, so all this time that I didn't engage, I held myself back from having this relationship and letting it be what it could have been with my dad was for nothing?"

Right?
That's one of my interpretations of why he's crying.

Yosef's Emotional Layers

You know?
And I want you to focus with me on this moment, because it's a very dramatic moment, right?
They've faked a command from their father to Yosef.
Yosef is crying.

Why is he crying?

Maybe he's crying because he thought to himself,
"Wow, my father found out."

Just so you know, we're going to visit this later in the week.

Why Else is Yosef Crying?

Another idea about why he's crying is like the Mishna that we mentioned in the beginning of *Masechet Yoma*, that they suspected the Kohen of being a Tzadoki.

They would tell him:
"Promise us, swear you're going to light the fire for the *ketoret* in the *Kodesh HaKodashim* — for the incense in the Holy of Holies.
Don't do it outside and come in with the cloud. Remember that? Do it inside."

And then the Mishna says:
הוּא פּוֹרֵשׁ וּבָכוֹתָה וְהֵם פּוֹרְשִׁים וּבָכוֹתִים
He would separate himself from them and cry, and they would cry.

Why is he crying?
— that they suspected him of being someone like that.

Maybe this is why Yosef is crying.
After all these years, we've been living together, I've been supporting the whole family.
That's what you think of me?

And maybe if he didn't see through the scam, that's what dad thought of me?
That I was just biding my time until he'd pass and then I'd take revenge?

That's what he... he thinks I'm Esav?
Like Esav says about Yaakov:
קָרְבָּו יְמִי אָבֵל אָבִי וְאַהֲרָגָה אֶת יַעֲקֹב אָחִי
Let my father pass away, and then I'm going to go kill my brother Yaakov.

That's what Yaakov thought of me?
So we have many layers of emotion over here.

Yosef Responds with Compassion

But listen to this.
They bow in front of him:
"We'll be your slaves."
Vayomer aleihem Yosef — and Yosef says:
Al tira'u — don't be afraid.

— **כִּי הַתְּחַתְּ אֱלֹהִים אָנִי**
Am I... am I God that I should be judging you and punishing you?

וְאַתֶּם חָשַׁבְתֶּם עַל רִעה
You had bad intentions for me.

אֱלֹהִים חָשַׁבָּה לְטוֹבָה
God intended it for the good.

לְמַעַן עֲשׂוֹת כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְחַיּוֹת עִם רַב
In order that I should be in this position to keep everyone alive.

וְעַתָּה אֶל תִּירְאָו
Don't be afraid.

אַנְכִּי אַכְלַל אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת טִפְכֶם
I'm going to support you, and your children.

יִנְחַם אֹתָם וַיַּדְבֵּר עַל לְבָם
And he comforts them and he speaks to their heart.

Yosef Comforts Those Who Hurt Him

First of all, what an amazing thing.
They're coming heartbroken on the ground:
"We're your slaves,"
they're making up stories about Yaakov because they're so afraid —

Yosef is comforting them.

They ruin his life to the worst possible...
Vayinachem otam Yosef — Yosef is comforting them.

By the way, sometimes you see this in a shiva house.
A guy comes, he's crying to the *avelim* about their loss.

And the *avel* is giving them *chizuk*.
No!

I always think to myself, "Get out!"
You're supposed to come in to bring them...
right?

People sometimes a little selfish.
I hate to say it, sometimes a little clueless.

You know?
Is... are there times when it would be helpful
for...
Remember that I think also that's part of the
reason the Gemara says we learned in
Masechet Moed Katan, we learned in the
end of *Moed Katan* — it's all about *avelut*.

And the Gemara says:
**You don't speak in a *beit avel* until the
avel speaks.**

Knowing Where Someone Is Emotionally

So there's different reasons for that.
I think this is one of the reasons.

**How will you know where to pitch
yourself until you know where he is?**
So if he doesn't open his mouth, if he tells
you,
"I'm devastated, I feel like nobody cares,"
then cry with him.

If he tells you,
"I can't cry anymore, I need already
someone to give me some *nechama*, I need
a pick-me-up,"
and then you're going to cry —
you're going to ruin it.

So don't speak until he speaks.

Well Yosef is comforting them.
Vaydaber al libam — and he's speaking
words to conquer their hearts.

Now this to me is everything.
These words:
Vaydaber al libam.

Words That Enter the Heart

Rashi says — what does this mean, *he
was speaking to their hearts?*

דברים המתקבלים על הלב
Words that are accepted on the heart.

Now Rashi goes on and finishes the
midrash.
I'm not going to finish the *midrash* because
there's too much in the words of Yosef and
they'll sidetrack us from what I want to
communicate, at least for today.

But Yosef is telling them — he's speaking to
them words of the heart.

Connection to Dinah and Chamor

By the way, we had these words almost
exactly.
Anyone remember where we had these
words?
Speaking to the heart —
in a maybe very different scenario.

Anyone remember?

After Chamor kidnaps Dinah and he literally
—
he rapes her.

Vayishkav otah vayanah.

Vattidbak nafsho bedinah

and he becomes obsessed with her,
he loves her,
he has to have her.

Vaye'ehav et hana'arah

וַיֹּאמֶר עַל־לֵב הַנָּעָרָה

What does Rashi say?

True to form:

על־לֵב הַנָּעָרָה, דְּבָרִים הַמִּתְּשִׁבְבִּים עַל־לֵב

Words that are accepted in the heart.

"Yes, I did something terrible, but I really
love you, I want to be with you.
Maybe my intentions in the beginning were
not so good, but now I know better."

He said a lot of things I'm sure like that.
Vaydaber al libah over here,
vaydaber says the pasuk al libam.

What Did Yosef Actually Say?

What are these words that Yosef says?

We could imagine what Chamor might have
said:

"I was such a chamor. I should have taken
you to Reserve Cut instead of kidnapping
you.

I didn't check out the website for where
people go on their first date.

I didn't know, I thought this was a normal
thing to kidnap people."

You can imagine what Chamor said.

"Now I got to know you, you're so special, I'll
treat you like a queen," whatever he would
have said.

What Did Yosef Say That Got Through?

What did Yosef say that was **al libam**?

That got through to the heart of his
brothers?

So I want to share with you something that I
think is **unbelievable** in this *pasuk*.
Unbelievable.

We have a theme that runs through
Vayigash and *Vayechi*.

And that is that Yosef says to the brothers
something.

He says like we said last week,
"You didn't send me here.

You sold me, but you didn't send me here.
Because no one could affect someone
else's life unless God has those plans and
effect for this person.

You can make your choices, you could do
your thing —

if those things will actually hurt me is not up
to you.

It's up to somebody else.

You might be able to get me fired, but I
might get a better job.

So you tried to get me fired, it actually
backfired on you because now I have a
better job than I had before."

Yosef's Language Changes

Yosef says the same thing here. He says, "You thought to do bad to me, **va'elohim** — and God **chashavah letovah** — thought for the good,

"**למען עשה כיום הזה להחיות עם רב**"

Now here it's interesting — because Yosef does **not** say: **לא אתם שלחתם אותי הנה**. ("You didn't send me here.")

Last week when we read about it, Yosef said:
"You did not do this."

You did what you did — **you did not do this.**

Yosef doesn't say that here.

Yosef said,
"You had bad intentions."
אתם חשבתם עלי לרעה
אלוקים חשה לטובה

Why Doesn't He Repeat the Same Message?

What is the **vaydaber al libam** here? If he wants to make them feel better, what should he double down on from the speech from last week?

He should say:
"You didn't do anything.
Nothing bad happened.
Look at where I am."

But Yosef Sees What They Need

Here's the kicker.

Yosef is looking at his brothers, and like I said when it comes to *nechamah*, **first you have to see where the person is.**

Yosef looks at his brothers — and what does he see?

He sees people that do **not** need to hear that it was not their fault.

Because what have they said to him this week that they did not say to him last week?

They said — at least through the words of their father —
שא נא פשע אחיך וחתאתם.
Forgive their sin.

Levels of Sin: Pesha and Chet

What is *pesha* and what is *chet*?

We use different words:
Chatanu, avinu, pashanu.

What are we saying?
What's *chet*? What's *avon*? What's *pesha*?

- **Chet** is a sin that you did *beshogeg* — there's an element of a **mistake** in it.
- **Avon** is a sin you did **on purpose**.

- **Pesha** is when you do it with the **worst of intentions**.

Say the brothers to Yosef again — pretending that they're the words of Yaakov:
שָׁא נָא פְשֻׁעַ אֲחִיךְ וְחַטָּאתָם.
"Forgive their *pesha* and their *chet*."
כִּי רְעוּה גָּמְלִיךְ —
"What they did to you was a *chet*, it was a *pesha*, it was *raah*, it was bad."

A Subtle Shift: What the Brothers Skip

Unbelievable, right?

By the way, they relate their father's words and their father says **pesha** and **chet** — sin on purpose, sin with desire to harm, and sin that's by mistake.
"Forgive their mistake and forgive their sin."

And then the brothers say:
Ve'atah — "and now,"
sa na le-fesha — now they're speaking:
שָׁא נָא לְפְשֻׁעַ עֲבָדִי אֱלֹהִי אָבִיךְ.

What did they skip?
Chet.
They don't say it was a mistake.

Taking True Ownership

So the brothers are here, and what are they trying to take?
They're trying to **take ownership**.

They're trying to say: "**It's our fault.**"

I don't know if this has ever happened to you.

Have you ever had to apologize for something — and the person **won't let you apologize**?

Not that they're not willing to forgive you — they're saying "**You didn't do anything.**"

Why Dismissing the Apology Can Hurt

And the person who says that a lot of times thinks that when someone's apologizing to you, you should try to minimize what they've done to you — and that's how you'll make them feel better.

But actually — **it's not true**.

They need to **get it off their chest**. They need you to know and to say and to hear and to admit — **that they've done something wrong**.

Yosef last week says:
"You didn't do anything."

The brothers live still with guilt that has not been undone, with a feeling of shame and embarrassment that has not been given oxygen — **it's not been allowed to breathe**.

Yosef shuts it down.

Why?

Because they didn't come and say they did anything wrong.

Yosef says:
"Ani Yosef."

Silence Last Week — A Missed Opportunity

What do the brothers say last week?
Nothing.
—
They step back, they're speechless, they can't say anything.

So without knowing where they were holding,
what does Yosef say?

He tries to **minimize it** to the point where he won't even allow them — he won't even allow that feeling of doing something evil to exist.

Now Yosef Understands What They Need

Here Yosef hearing this, what does he say?

Atem chashavtem lera'ah —
I know that you think you need my forgiveness.
You want this big scene where we cry and hug —
but I don't have that in me.

I'm not angry.
I'm not upset.

I want to support you for the rest of the time that you're here in Egypt —
you and your children.

A Love That Freely Gives

Like we said on Shabbat — what word does Yosef use?

Anochi achalkel —
He doesn't say "I'm going to buy your fealty, I'm going to buy your subservience with the money, with the food that I give."

I'm just going to give you.
The word *achalkel* carries within it the desire of a person who **loves**, who doesn't just want to give what they have to — they give **everything**.

Achalkel is *kol kol*, like when God says: **מחלקל חיים בחד** in the Amidah.

The Power of Letting Someone Own Their Mistake

Yosef is not upset at them.

But he understands —
sometimes the biggest kindness you could do with someone who has hurt you
is allow them to apologize,
is to **acknowledge and recognize** that at the very least —
even if it didn't hurt you —
that you **know** that they did something wrong.

Why People Insist on Owning Fault

And here is the crazy part.
Why is it so important for people?

No no — you didn't do it.
No I did.

And you're like trying to give answers for them:

"But you were under so much stress," you tell your wife or your best friend.

And the best friend says:

"Yeah but I still shouldn't have spoken that way.
You were also under stress and you handled yourself like a mensch."

Why We Reject Fake Love

Why is he arguing?

Listen carefully.

People **crave love**,
people crave **friendship**.

But we are **hard-wired** to know the difference between:

- **Real love**
- **Real friendship**

and

- **Fake friendship**
- **Fake love**

Real Love Sees the Whole You

Real love does **not** come when your eyes are closed,
when you don't see the person's faults,
where you gloss over everything:

"You're perfect."
"You never do anything wrong."
"You're the best kid."

Why Minimizing Doesn't Heal

The kid doesn't want to hear that.

Not only because they know it's not true — but because it means that your love is **not true**.

It means that the relationship is **not true**.

You have a relationship with someone who I know is not me.

I did wrong things.

What we crave —
what we want to feel —
is that someone **loves us even though** we had the wrong intentions,
even though **mechartem oti**.

Why you love me anyway matters to me **less** —
either because it didn't hurt you or because it **did** hurt you and you forgive —
I don't really care.

Because at this point,
the **love** and the **relationship is real**.

You're **seeing me**,
you're **loving me**.

God's Love Mirrors This Too

In God's parlance we find these words as well:

כִּי לَا אֶחֱפֹוץ בְּמוֹת הַמֵּת

"For I do not desire the death of those who die."

I don't want anyone wicked to die.
I don't want a *rasha* to get punished.
I don't want it.

כִּי אֵם בְּשׁוּבוֹ מַדְרָכֵו וְחַיָּה

I want him to return from his ways —
and I want him to **live**.

The Most Moving Part of God's Mercy

And here is the bit that always gets me:

וְעַד יֹם מֹותֵו אֶחֱכָה לוֹ

"Until the day of his death — I wait for him."

And until the day of his death, this wicked person,
achakeh lo — *I wait for him*.

אֵם תָּשׁוֹב — מֵיד אֶקְבְּלָו

"If he returns — *immediately* I will accept him."

The Waiting Is What's So Powerful

What gets me in this *pasuk* is not that when the guy does *teshuva*,
אֵם תָּשׁוֹב — מֵיד אֶקְבְּלָו —
"I'll accept him immediately."

What gets me is that **before he's returned**:

וְעַד יֹם מֹותֵו — אֶחֱכָה לוֹ
"God says: *I wait for him*."

He's standing at the door,
staring at the door,
waiting for the knock.

Sitting by the phone,
waiting for it to ring —
while the person is still living in his sin,
living in his rejection of God —

Hashem says: "I'm waiting for you."

That's the most beautiful thing in the world.

Love Despite Bad Intentions

I know you're a *rasha*,
I see you as you are,
I still love you.

You want to know what the **comfort** was for the brothers?

וַיַּחֲמֹד אֹתָם
וַיֹּאמֶר עַל לִבָּם

It was these words.

Paradoxically, the words that Yosef said:

— **אתם חשבתם עלי רעה** —

“I see you. You had the worst of intentions for me.”

— **אלוקים חשבה לטובה** —

“But Hashem had a different plan.”

“No, I didn’t even...

I didn’t think about it, I don’t know, I didn’t even notice it.”

“No. I know it hurt me, but you know what — look, I’m okay.”

So I don’t need to forgive you for something bad that happened.

I just need to forgive your **bad intentions**.

And you know what?

I know that the **vast majority** of our friendship — you’ve only ever thought to do **good things** for me.

So I have to weigh up in understanding:

- If I love you or not.
- If I trust you or not.
- If I feel like you’re a friend I want around or not.

And the answer is a **resounding yes**.

— **אנכי אככליך אתכם** —

“I care about you. I care about your kids.”

Restoring Humanity to the Torah

We sometimes strip away the **humanity** from these stories because it’s about such **giants**, such *tzaddikim*, we strip away the humanity.

Could you hear him saying to his brothers, “I’m **Uncle Yosef**”?

I mean your kids are playing at my house.

If Only More People Heard This

If only more **children** and more **spouses** could hear these words from their husbands, wives, parents, friends.

What?
You think I'm gonna...
you think now that our father passed away,
you think I'm gonna watch my nephew and
my niece —
I just danced at their wedding last week —
I'm gonna watch them **starve** and not give
them food?

I'm **Uncle Yosef**.

We may have had our ups and downs,
but **I love you**.

יְדַבֵּר עַל לְבָם

The Torah Deserves More Respect

Sometimes I think that the **Torah just doesn't get** —
like Rodney Dangerfield said —
"I don't get no respect."

The Torah doesn't get the **respect it deserves**.

People translate it as some **dogmatic document**.

And it's not only teaching you:

- What day you can't work
- Or who you can't marry
- Or how tall your *sukkah* is

It's teaching you the **greatest truths** of
every part of a **human life**.

What your home **looks like** or **feels like**.
What your relationship with your **family**
should be.

How you **emotionally process** **betrayal**.

How you **respond to people** who speak to
you or do things to you in this way.

When you **double down** on:

- "You didn't do anything"

And when you **double down** on:

- "You did something, but it's okay — I
see your flaws and I love all of you."

What a magnificent lesson.

What a way to speak to someone's heart.

Why "Al Libam" and Not "El Libam"?

I'll end with this observation.

If I'm talking to your heart, what should the
words be?

יְדַבֵּר עַל לְבָם

Really it should say:

וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל לְבָם

"And he spoke *to* their heart."

Why does it say:

וַיְדַבֵּר עַל לְבָם

"And he spoke *on* their heart"?

A Torah Chiddush: Words on a Closed Heart

And I want to share with you a **crazy chiddush**,

but the *chiddush* doesn't live here — it just comes here to stay.

Where does the chiddush live?

והיו הדברים האלה... על לבבכם

"And these words shall be... *on* your heart."

The words of Torah will be **on** your heart.

Why “On” and Not “In”?

Chachamim ask:

Why shouldn't the words of Torah be *in* your heart?

Answer the *chachamim* —
most magnificent answer:

There are times when the words of the Torah **can't penetrate** your heart — because your heart is **closed**.

So what do you do when your heart is not taking in the wisdom of the Torah, the mitzvot of the Torah, the instructions of the Torah, the behavior of the Torah?

What do you do?

Say the *chachamim*: You put the words **on top of the closed heart**.

When the Heart Opens, It All Falls In

And then — *bar minan*, a person gets into a car accident, escapes unscathed —

and for a second, his heart **opens** and he says:

“Thank you, Hashem.”

And in that split second — everything that he **stacked on his heart** just falls in.

All the lessons he's learned.

All the education he got in his parent's house —

that he was so angry at his dad for, that he closed his heart to it.

Yeah, but it doesn't matter.

It's **still there waiting**.

And in that moment:

— פתח לבי בתורתך

"You opened up my heart."

At the Chuppah, or a Crisis, It Can Happen

It could have been an **accident**.

It could have been **standing under a chuppah** —

where a person has had a difficult childhood,

who's rejected his childhood and the teachings of his childhood.

And he's standing under the *chuppah* — and he's a **new soul** —

and he's standing next to his wife, and his heart for a second is **open** — and he looks up under the *chuppah* at Hashem —

and his heart opens and **bam**, it falls in.

Why Yosef Spoke “On” Their Heart

על לבבם teaches you that a person's heart is sometimes closed — but **stacking is always important** — because **when the moment comes**, it will **fall in**.

That's where the *chiddush* lives.

But let's let that *chiddush* take a walk to our *pasuk*:

וינחם אוטם וידבר על לבם

Neither **Dinah** nor the **brothers** were ready to hear these words spoken **to** their hearts.

In Dinah's case — because of the pain that she had been caused, because of the trust that had been violated.

In the brothers' case — because their **shame** over what they had done was so great that they **couldn't hear Yosef's words**.

When Shame Closes the Heart

There are times when you are trying so hard to **communicate to your child** that you love them — to your **wife** or to your **husband** — and the words don't land because their **heart is closed**.

And their heart might not be closed because of **pain**.

It might be closed because of **shame**, because of a feeling that they are **not**

worthy of love, or maybe that they're not worthy of this **level of love**.

So they can't handle it — and they push it away.

The child does **not feel worthy** of accepting unconditional love, so their heart **closes to it**.

The Fear of Unconditional Acceptance

Unconditional **acceptance**.

In some ways, people **reject it** because they feel like:

"If I've been accepted unconditionally, then maybe I have to accept **unconditionally**.

Maybe I need to love you back that way. And I don't know if I can."

Yosef Leaves the Words Waiting

So what does Yosef do?

וינחם אוטם וידבר על לבם

The words are **there**, honey — **whenever you're ready to hear them**.

Final Blessing

May Hashem bless us to always be the **bigger person** in the relationship, to always think to ourselves:

“What should I do?”

Not: “What have they done?”

To always think:

“What do I want? What am I trying to achieve?”

And to **fight** to get that.

Because ultimately — whether you get it or not — is not in the hands of the **weaker person**. It's in the hands of the one that **wants it the most**.

And may Hashem bless us to always do all that we can even when the other in the story is **incapable of doing more**. So that we know that when the time comes, **we will have done our part**.

And they will step into:

עד ים מותנו אחכה לך

“I'm here. I'm waiting.”

Whenever you're ready.

ברוך הוא לעולם אמן ואמן

Takeaway: Vayechi — To Heal a Heart

The Torah isn't only teaching forgiveness — it's teaching **how a heart actually heals**.

Yosef doesn't just “say it's fine.” He does something far harder: he acknowledges the truth of what happened **without weaponizing it**, and then he chooses love anyway. The comfort isn't pretending they did nothing; it's the opposite — *“You had bad intentions... but Hashem turned it for good.”* That kind of love is real because it sees the full person and still stays present.

The derashah's emotional core is this: when someone is finally ready to own what they did, the most healing thing you can do is **let the apology land**. Don't rush to erase their guilt with “you didn't do anything.” Sometimes the person needs acknowledgment in order to release shame and return to relationship. Yosef models that sensitivity by “speaking to the heart” in the way that can actually be received.

And the deepest layer: the Torah says Yosef spoke **“al libam”** — *on* their hearts — not *into* their hearts, because hearts are sometimes closed. The job isn't to force entry. The job is to place truth and love **on top of the heart** so that when life opens it — a scare, a chuppah moment, a crack of humility — everything “falls in.” That's how Torah, relationships, and teshuvah work: steady, patient, non-coercive love that waits.

One line takeaway: Healing isn't “nothing happened.” Healing is: **“I see what happened, I see you, and I'm still here.”**

5 Shabbat table discussion questions

“Words on the heart”

When was a time someone said something to you that you *couldn't* receive in the moment... but later it finally “fell in”? What

changed?

The kind of apology you actually need

When you apologize, what helps you more:
“Don’t worry, it’s nothing,” or “I hear
you—and I still love you”? Why?

Love that doesn’t pretend

What feels more loving to you: being told
you’re “fine” and “perfect,” or being loved
while your flaws are still acknowledged?
What’s harder to give to someone else?

Forgiving the intention

Have you ever felt hurt more by someone’s
intention than the actual outcome?
What does it take to forgive the intention—if
the damage “worked out” but the intent was
still ugly?

Waiting without chasing

The blog talks about waiting for hearts to
open. In your life, what’s the difference
between **patient love** and
self-abandonment? How do you tell when
waiting is holy—and when it’s time to step
back?