

GROWTH

At The

SHABBAT TABLE

7th Edition
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BS"D

PARSHAT

MIKETZ

Unstoppable

What enabled Yosef HaTzaddik to endure all the hardships he went through? From being rejected by his own brothers and sold as a slave at the young age of 17, withstanding all the *nisyonot* in Egypt with Potifar's wife, and being thrown in prison for 12 years; any "regular" person would probably have stooped to the lowest levels, have fallen into severe depression, and have taken their own life. Not only did Yosef not succumb to any of the above, but even when the tables turned and he rose to power, he didn't allow it get to his head; he didn't even bear a grudge on his brothers, let alone take revenge. This story is mind-boggling; *how* was any of this humanly possible?

Perhaps, through a closer look in the Torah, we can understand. If you notice, throughout his entire journey, both in times of darkness and in times of success, Yosef embodied *emuna* and *bitachon* through it all. When things were difficult, he kept his focus on Hashem and wouldn't stop speaking of Him. And in times of blessing, too, Hashem was openly in the forefront of his mind. Anyone and everyone around Yosef found him to be extremely charismatic, because of his authentic connection with his Creator. Yosef didn't just have a *religion*, he had a *relationship* – a relationship with *Boreh Olam*. He attached himself to his eternal source, allowing him to overcome human limitations. He constantly spoke *to* Him and *of* Him, and that ultimately led not only to his survival, but to his prosperity.

We, too, all want to tap into the endless reservoirs of *emuna* and *bitachon*. Who doesn't want a stress-free life? Who doesn't want the ability to appreciate all the blessings in one's life? Who doesn't want to have a real connection with their Father?

David HaMelech writes: *האמנתי כי אדבר* – I have *emuna* when I speak. The key to capitalizing on this treasure is through speaking. We need to speak to Hashem daily – not just in established *tefillot*, but in real, personal conversations. Doing so will allow us to build and strengthen our individual bonds with Hashem, and lead us to a path of *emuna*, where life is bliss and nothing can break you.

The Jug of Oil

As Chanukah 5784 takes leave of us, what can we internalize to keep the fire and hold on to for the rest of the year?

R' Mordechai Alster shared a powerful idea. Each holiday we celebrate has a profound theme. Pesach teaches us that no matter what level Klal Yisrael sinks to, no matter what type of slavery we are subjugated to, Hashem will still pick us up and bring us to Har Sinai. Sukkot teaches us that no matter what we're exposed to, Hashem will surround and protect us with Clouds of Glory. Purim's message is that even when the *goyim* are out to kill us and there is a decree of destruction upon us, Hashem will still save us from annihilation and turn the tables on them. What is the message of Chanukah?

Chanukah expresses that when we have a burning desire for a Mitzvah, Hashem will give us the strength, energy, and resources to do that Mitzvah, as it was in the merit of so badly wanting to light the Menorah that Hashem allowed a small jug of oil to last for 8 days. But it goes even further than that.

In order for the miracle to have taken place, they first had to have found that one bottle of oil. What is the message to the person who doesn't even *have* a bottle of oil? How does Chanukah help the depleted individual who says to himself "I have no strength left, even for one Mitzvah"? Furthermore, what would have happened if the Kohanim had come back to the Kohen Gadol reporting that they couldn't even find one bottle of pure oil? What would the Kohen Gadol have answered? Would we not have Chanukah at all?

The answer is that he would have replied: "That's a lie! Go check again!" Hashem doesn't leave anybody without a bottle of oil; Hashem doesn't leave anyone without the internal strength to do a Mitzvah. It may be as small as the hole of a needle, but everyone has something. True, Chanukah started with a bottle of oil, *but the message of Chanukah is that every one of us has that bottle of oil*. We have what to draw from and what to build upon; therefore, when we face challenges and find ourselves in situations in which we don't know where to turn, stop and remember that every Jew has a jug of oil for miracles to grow on...

**"The weak take revenge. The strong
forgive. The wise turn a blind eye."**

Refuah Sheleimah, b'toch she'ar cholei Yisrael:

Ariel Ben Frida
Rahamim Ben Shifra

Frida Bat Yaffa
Yitzhak Ben Naama

Miriam Bat Bakol
Michael Rachamim Ben Mazal

Esther Bat Frida
Michael Rachamim Ben Mazal

Noah Yisrael Ben Yaffa
Amit Ben Mertzeds