

GROWTH

At The

SHABBAT TABLE

7th Edition
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BS"D

PARSHAT VAYETZE

Real Risk

R' Meir Gavriel Elbaz shared a beautiful insight. People don't even realize how often they put their lives into other people's hands. Any time you step onto a bus, you put your life in the hands of the driver. Whenever you board a plane, you're putting your life into the hands of the pilot. The same is true when entering a car or train. Anyone requiring medical procedures puts their lives into the hands of the physician, as well.

It is interesting to note that when a person needs a surgery, they're not so quick to go with just any surgeon. They'll look into the surgeon, making sure that he graduated top of his class from a reputable establishment. When considering a medical procedure, the patient will often consult with other professionals, getting a second and even third opinion. After all, they're putting their lives into someone else's hands, and justifiably are analytical and somewhat skeptical before doing so.

On the other hand, when was the last time you looked into your pilot before booking a flight? Or looked into the driver when getting into a bus or taxi? After all, these instances, too, entail putting your life into someone else's hands. Why does the doctor get scrutinized while the pilot and driver go completely unnoticed?

There is a fundamental distinction between entering a surgery and entering a plane. By a medical procedure, whether the doctor fails or succeeds, he still goes home at the end of the day. The physician's personal well-being isn't contingent on the surgery going smoothly. Therefore, there is much analysis before choosing a treatment method. The driver and pilot, however, share the same risk as the passengers, and that personal risk on their end serves as their motivation as well as the passengers' assurance of success.

We see from here that people are less analytical in situations of shared risk. In times such as these, when Klal Yisrael is united and each of us share the pain and distress of one another, we too, become less analytical of each other. May the brotherhood amongst Am Yisrael be everlasting, and may it be Hashem that keeps us united, and not a common enemy...

The Song of Exile

R' Shaul Wertheimer recounted a gem from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Midrash debates whether Yaakov would prophetically say the entire Tehillim or just the 15 chapters of "Shir Lama'alot" when working for Lavan. The Rebbe asked: It's one thing if Yaakov went through the whole Tehillim, but according to the other opinion, that he only recited the 15 chapters, what is so unique about those specific ones and of what significance did those have towards Yaakov Avinu?

The Rebbe explained that Yaakov needed these poems to provide him with the strength and *chizuk* needed to endure the difficulties and challenges he faced in Lavan's house, exiled in bitterness and surrounded by deception. "15" corresponds to the letters *yud* and *hei* in Hashem's Name, equaling 15 in *gematria*, and signified connecting to Hashem. He integrated these specific chapters of Tehillim to constantly remind himself that there is purpose behind the pain, and that this *yeridah*, this descent, was *l'tzorech aliya*, vital in climbing higher levels. That is why Yaakov attached himself to the paragraphs of "*Shir Lama'alot*," the 'songs of ascent,' because he internalized that the challenges coming with exile are meant to facilitate otherwise impossible levels of growth. He understood the objective behind the bitterness, and thus felt compelled to just sing and praise Hashem.

Let us, too, internalize that our challenges are only here to bring us to higher levels. We certainly don't ask for hardships, but when we have them, we can emerge stronger and greater.

**"Sometimes your
only available
transportation is a
leap of faith."**

Le'iluy Nishmat: Nissim Ben Rachel

*Dedicated for the safe
return of the captives, the
safety & success of our
dear soldiers, our brothers
& sisters in Eretz Yisrael,
and all Am Yisrael.*

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

*Ariel Ben Frida Frida Bat Yaffa Miriam Bat Bakol Esther Bat Frida Chaya Dina Bat Chana Mindel
Yitzhak Ben Sara Noah Yisrael Ben Yaffa Rahamim Ben Shifra Zvi Haim Ben Malka Tal Ben Elana
Yitzhak Ben Naama Menachem Mendel Chaim ben Merel Chana Perel Bat Rachel Noam Ben Ada
Rachel Bat Leah Shoshana Bat Miriam Chana Ahuva Bat Fradel Michael Rachamim Ben Mazal
Shalom Ben Galia Yitzhak Moshe Ben Dalia Matan Ben Devora Amram Ben Rina Fani Alegria
Shmuel Ben Tehilla Yisrael Meir Ben Daphne Bruria Eliyahu Ben Nissim Moshe Yehuda Ben Golda*