

Just a Story...

A Chance Meeting

by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach zt"l



It isn't every day that a Jew who asks a question from a rabbi thousands of miles away online gets a chance to meet that rabbi face to face. But that is exactly what happened some years ago to Rabbi Mordechai Becher who had spent considerable time answering questions presented to Ohr Somayach's "Ask the Rabbi" e-mail service.

On a lecture tour in South Africa, Becher took some time to enjoy a barbecue picnic together with the late Rabbi Gavriel Klatzko of Ohr Somayach's Johannesburg branch. Passing by their picnic site was a group of college-age trekkers who were invited to join the feast. "My only connection to my Jewish faith," confided one of the young men, "was the question I occasionally asked a rabbi by email." When they both realized that the rabbi he had turned to was standing right in front of him, a bond was formed. The young backpacker eventually became observant, and Rabbi Becher, today a world famous lecturer for "Gateways", attended his wedding.

[Source: Ohr Somayach Institutions www.ohr.edu . Printed with permission]

Hints & Answers* **HALACHA CHALLENGE:** Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchosa (3:37) writes: "When one opens a melon, it is permitted to remove the seeds that are inside of it, because without that it's not possible to get to the fruit. This is permitted only close to the time of the meal". **RHYME:** "way", "thirst" **RIDDLE:** He was afraid to leave Eretz Yisroel. See Rashi's commentary to Bereishis 46:3 | Note: Menucha's answer are not to be taken as final decisions in halacha, but rather as a springboard for discussions, and further study.

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Menucha

A Shabbos table companion
for the whole family

לע"נ ר' ברוך חיים בן שלמון ז"ל

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Halacha Challenge

Removing the Seeds of a Melon



"Shoshana, what should we have for the Shabbos party?" asked her younger sister Racheli, "It's starting in 5 minutes!"

"Yesterday, I bought a melon. We can use it for the kids Shabbos party," answered Shoshana.

"I'll be happy to help you cut it up," said Racheli.

"Great!" said Shoshana and took the melon out of the refrigerator. She then placed it on the cutting board and cut it in half. "Here you go," she said to Racheli as she handed one half to her. "First, scoop the seeds out of the melon. Then cut it into slices."

"But I cannot scoop the seeds out of the melon, since that would be *Borer!*" said Racheli.

"It's not *Borer*," said Shoshana, "since the only way to get to the fruit part of the melon is by scooping out its seeds first."

Question: Can Racheli scoop the seeds out of the melon?

(The "Hints & Answers" section is on page 4)

DEDICATIONS

◆ Dedicated anonymously for *yeshuos* and *refuos* to all Klal Yisroel

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Parsha Pearls

...וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו יְהוּדָה - *And Yehuda approached him...* (Bereishis 44:18).

Let's recall that Yehuda is a son of Leah, who named him יהודה because she wanted to thank (להודות) Hashem for giving her this son. The *Sefas Emes* (Vayigash, 5631) teaches that "Yehuda" is a representation of every Jewish person, as the root of the word יהודים (Jewish people) is יהודה. And the fact that יהודה is based on the word להודות (to thank) shows that the essential function of each Jew is to give thanks to Hashem for everything He does.

Now let's look at the opening words of the parsha: וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו יְהוּדָה - *And Yehuda approached him*. On a deeper level, says the Sefas Emes (ibid.), these opening words of the parsha are referring to approaching Hashem, since Yosef represents the divine spark in a Jewish person. Hence, to the question "who merits to come close to Hashem?" the words *And Yehuda approached him* answer: יהודה - i.e., a Jew who thanks Hashem. Based on this, continues the Sefas Emes, these words reveal to us a great *segula* for getting out of a difficult situation: be a יהודי! **What does it mean to be a יהודי?** To be a יהודי means to be a person who at any situation (including a difficult one) acknowledges that every little and major thing came from HaKadosh Boruch Hu, and then he thanks Hashem for all of them, because everything that Hashem does is for the good. A person who approaches a difficult situation in such way brings out the יהודי part of him, and consequently, as the opening words of the parsha teach us, he is able to come close to Hashem, from Whom all blessings and salvations emanate.

So next time, and any time you face a difficult situation, react to it like a יהודי - with הודאה - acknowledging that *this too* came from Hashem, and thanking Him for everything He did, does and will do. And that approach will give you the merit to get out of the difficult situation.



Rhymes for Kids



When you're ready to plan your day
Learn from Yehuda the proper ____!
Plan your Torah learning first!
Then you'll learn it with much ____!

וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שְׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת לְפָנָיו גִּשְׁנָה *And Yaakov sent Yehuda ahead of him to Goshen, to teach (Bereishis 46:28)* As this verse is letting us know, on his great move to Mitzrayim, Yaakov Avinu sent Yehuda ahead of him. What was the purpose for this? Rashi explains that Yaakov Avinu wanted Yehuda to establish a Beis Midrash in Mitzrayim before the family would arrive there. From that Beis Midrash, the Torah's *halachic*/guiding teaching would emanate. As such the verse says: לְהוֹרֹת - to teach (related to the word הוראה - a *halachic*/guiding teaching).

The lesson from here is for us as well. Yaakov Avinu taught that the formation of the structure for Torah study that guides our lives needs to be fixed in first. And then, everything else. When you open your daily planner and plan your tomorrow's busy schedule, "send Yehuda ahead first, to teach" - first, schedule in the *sedorim* for learning, and then everything else.



Trivia & Riddles



In last week's parsha, Yaakov Avinu was afraid to send Binyamin to Egypt. What was Yaakov Avinu afraid of in this week's parsha?