

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT VAYECHI

### Revealing Our Essence

In this week's Parsha, Vayechi, Yaakov blessed his children before he passed away. To Yehuda, he said, "Yehuda, your brothers will praise you." Rashi explains that after Yaakov rebuked Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, Yehuda was afraid that he would be rebuked as well, and Yaakov understood what he was feeling. So he said, "Yehuda, your brothers will praise you." Meaning, you don't have to be rebuked, on the contrary, you will be praised.

Every verse in the Torah can be understood on many levels. What deeper meaning can be found in this verse to help us serve Hashem better?

We understand from Rashi that these words to Yehuda come in conjunction with what came before: Yaakov's words to Reuven, Shimon, and Levi.

#### THE ESSENCE OF EVERY JEW IS A PART OF HASHEM, AND IS REVEALED THROUGH ACTS OF KINDNESS, TORAH STUDY, AND PRAYER.

we connect with Hashem on a level of "sight," as if we see Him. Sight is a very powerful sense, much greater than hearing. When you see something, you know that it is true, and nobody can talk you out of it, because you saw it. When we are connected to Hashem

on the level of sight, we understand Him the greatest way we can, and we connect with Him through love. This is why we say in the first paragraph of the Shema, "And you will love Hashem your G-d."

Shimon comes from the word *shama*, heard. Leah named him Shimon "because Hashem heard that I felt hated." Shimon is symbolic of the second paragraph of the Shema, *V'haya*, in which we connect with Hashem out of fear. It begins, "And it will be if you will hear," and later it continues, "Beware, lest you be misled," this is the idea of fear that comes from hearing, a step lower than seeing.

Levi comes from the word *yilaveh*, attached or accompanied. As Leah said, "This time, my husband will be attached to me." Levi is symbolic of the paragraph after the Shema, which begins with, "Emes v'yatziv..." And after fifteen accolades, it continues, "This thing is upon us forever and ever." "This thing" refers to the Torah that attaches us to Hashem.

These three steps are the preparation for the Amida, where we are so humbled and so nullified before Hashem that we can't speak. That is why we begin the Amida with the verse, "Hashem, open my lips, and my mouth will tell Your praises," because if we did it right, we wouldn't be able to speak.

Yehuda comes from the word *odeh*, which means to thank, praise, or admit. As Leah said, "This time, I will thank Hashem." To thank, praise, or admit, is to recognize the other. And that takes humility. Yehuda is symbolic of the



Amida, where we stand before Hashem, and at that moment, only He exists; you don't exist. Because through the steps of Reuven, Shimon and Levi, Shema, V'haya, and Emes v'yatziv, we become totally humbled and we stand before Hashem in total nothingness.

This state of nothingness before Hashem is the natural state of the neshama, G-dly soul, which is the essence of a Jew. It is just that the animal soul, the body, the physical world, and the dark exile cover up who we are, our essence. But at times, we can reveal it, and one of these times is when we reach the Amida.

Another way that a Jew can always tap into his essence is through the "Three things the world stands on, Torah, Avodah (prayer) and doing kindness."

Reuven is connected to the first paragraph of the Shema, which is about loving Hashem. Loving Hashem is at the core of loving every Jewish person because the essence of every Jew is the neshama, which is a part of Hashem. This love is the root of all acts of kindness. The first step is Reuven, doing kindness.

Shimon is connected to the second paragraph of the Shema, which is about the fear and awe of Hashem. Avodah is connecting to Hashem through prayer, standing before Him in awe and fear, recognizing how awesome and great He is. The second step is Shimon, Avoda.

Levi is connected to the paragraph after the Shema, which is about Torah. It is through Torah study that we become "attached" and one with Hashem. The greatest bond we can have with Hashem is through Torah study. Hashem and His Torah are one, so when you learn Torah, and you understand it, you are making Him part of who you are. The third step is Levi, attachment to Hashem through Torah study.

These three steps bring out our essential selflessness before Hashem, our Yehuda, which is the essence of every Jew, as all of the

Jewish people are called Yehuda.

The verse continues, "Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies." Meaning, that when our essence shines, the world is affected by us. As our sages say, "When our voice is the voice of Yaakov, in the houses of prayer and the houses of Torah study, then the hands of Eisav have no power over us." On the contrary, instead of working against us, they help us serve Hashem.

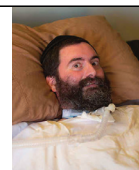
May our acts of kindness, Torah, and Avodah reveal our essence and affect the world to the point that our light shines so bright that Moshiach will come and lead us to our Holy Land. May it happen soon. The time has come.

*"Dear Rabbi Yitzi,  
I came across your video "I matter." I now use it as my foundational training for training staff to work with our population. Knowing and understanding that every person matters and contributes to the world. Hearing it from Rabbi Hurwitz is just incredible and there's usually not a dry eye in the audience when I show the video."*

- Perry B, New York

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:  
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

*Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.*



IN HONOR OF THE BIRTHDAY OF  
**DOVID GEISINSKY**

כ' טבת

SPONSOR AN EDITION OF TORAH FROM MY EYES: (937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

