

## I. Summary

- **Yoseph (Joseph) Arouses His Brothers' Jealousy.** Yaakov made his favorite son, Yoseph, a multi-colored silk coat as a sign of distinction and lordship. This further aroused his brothers' jealousy to the point that they hated Yoseph, and couldn't even speak with him congenially. Yoseph dreamt two dreams with the same obvious message. His brothers' hate intensified as they heard these two dreams. In the first dream, the brothers' sheafs bowed down to Yoseph's sheaf which was standing upright in their midst. In the second, the sun, moon & eleven stars (representing the rest of Yoseph's family) bowed down to him. The implication of these dreams was that all of Yoseph's family would become subservient to him. Yaakov rebuked Yoseph for arousing his brothers' hatred, though he personally noted and awaited fulfillment of the dreams.
- **Yoseph Is Sold Into Slavery.** When Yoseph's brothers were away tending their father's flock in Shechem, Yaakov sent Yoseph to see how they were doing. Yoseph was on his way when his brothers noticed him from a distance. They decided that this was their chance to conspire to kill him, throw his body in a pit and then conceal their act by saying that he had been killed by a wild beast. Reuven, however, knew that this was wrong. He wanted to save Yoseph, but saw that the other brothers wouldn't heed his word; he was, however, able to convince them not to kill him but rather to cast him alive into a nearby pit. "Let it not be your hands that directly injure Yoseph," argued Reuven. Reuven reasoned silently that he would return later after the brothers had left and free Yoseph. When Yoseph finally arrived, the brothers stripped him of his coat and, as Reuven had suggested, threw him alive into the pit. A caravan of Yishmaelites bearing spices to Egypt approached, and the idea came to Yehudah to sell Yoseph as a slave. The brothers accepted this new plan and sold Yoseph to the traveling Yishmaelites. Reuven, away while this happened, returned to find no trace of Yoseph, much to his dismay. The brothers then dipped Yoseph's coat into goat's blood and brought it to Yaakov, who concluded that Yoseph had been killed by a wild beast. Yaakov mourned Yoseph's loss for many days.
- **Yehudah & Tamar.** Yehudah married the daughter of Shooa, a merchant, and they had 3 sons, the oldest of whom married Tamar and died soon thereafter. As was customary in the case of a childless widow, the second son married Tamar, but he also soon died. Attempting to protect his third son, Yehudah asked Tamar to wait in her father's house until his son was old enough for marriage (although he didn't actually intend to allow the marriage to take place). Realizing through a prophecy that the Kings of Israel would descend from Yehudah, Tamar disguised herself and deceived Yehudah so that she should bear his child. When Yehudah found out that she was pregnant, he (not realizing that he was the father) condemned her to death. However, she was saved when she proved that Yehudah was the father.
- **Yoseph In Potiphar's House.** Meanwhile, Yoseph was being sold and re-sold many times. The Yishmaelites sold him to the Midianite merchants, who sold him to Potiphar (an official of Pharaoh) in Egypt. With Hashem's help, Yoseph became very successful, eventually being appointed overseer of Potiphar's household. However, when Yoseph rejected the advances of Potiphar's wife, she became angry and falsely accused him of molesting her, for which he was imprisoned.
- **Yoseph Interprets The Butler's and Baker's Dreams.** With Hashem's help, Yoseph found favor in the prison warden's eyes, who placed him in charge of the other prisoners. While in prison, Yoseph interpreted the dreams of the Pharaoh's butler and baker, who had offended Pharaoh and were in prison awaiting word of their fate. One night, each of them had a dream which they revealed to Yoseph. Yoseph interpreted the dreams to mean that butler would be released, but the baker would be executed. The events happened exactly as Yoseph had foretold. Yoseph asked the butler to intercede with Pharaoh on his behalf, but the butler forgot his request as soon as he was released.

## II. Divrei Torah

### A. Lilmode U'lilamed (Rabbi Mordechai Katz)

- **"Hashgochah Perotis" (Divine Supervision).** Whatever happens in this world is planned and controlled by Hashem. People often question "why, if Hashem controls everything, do bad things happen?" Often, we can't perceive the reason for certain events; however, this doesn't mean that there is no explanation. What we lack is the ability to see events in total perspective from the vantage point of hindsight. What might seem tragic today might prove to be a blessing tomorrow. Life is like a puzzle with all the pieces scattered about, and we seem unable to fit them together into a logical form. However, Hashem designed the puzzle and it is He who

will eventually link together all the pieces into a perfectly comprehensible whole. The truth of this can be seen from Yoseph's story. While the ups-and-downs of his life seemed hard to explain at the time, they eventually led to his ascent in Egypt, which in turn led to B'nai Yisroel's immigration to Egypt where they were able to stay alive amidst the famine. The Divine Hand had been in command of the situation throughout, and His Divine plan became clear in retrospect.

- **Avoiding Temptation/Using Role Models.** The wicked are summoned before the Court of Hashem and asked why they didn't adhere to the laws of the Torah. If they reply that they were exposed to temptations and therefore succumbed to wickedness, they are told "were you really more tempted than Yoseph?" Yoseph was able to avoid the temptation and persistent advances of Potiphar's wife, conjuring up the image of his father, Yaakov, for inspiration. We, too, should keep the image of someone important in mind as an inspiration during difficult moments.
- **Judging Your Fellow Man Favorably.** Yoseph was not careful enough in judging his brothers, mistakenly accusing them of transgressions. We must learn to judge other favorably — "Judge not your fellowman until you have put yourself in his place" (Hillel). One who did all he could to find the good in others was Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. Once he was surprised to find a Jewish neighbor smoking a cigarette on Shabbos. He came over to his neighbor and said "You probably began smoking because you didn't realize it was Shabbos." "Oh, I know that today is Shabbos," replied the man. "Then you probably don't know that one is not allowed to smoke on Shabbos," Rav Levi Yitzchak continued. "I know that too," said the man. "Then I suppose you are smoking since it is necessary for your health," the Rav stated. "No, not at all," the man responded. At this point, Rav Levi Yitzchak lifted up his eyes to heaven and speaking directing to Hashem said, "See how honest your people are. Even when they commit a sin, they don't compound it by lying about it!"

## **B. Growth Through Torah (Rabbi Zelig Pliskin)**

- **Focus on Growth, Not Serenity.** "And Yaakov sat . . ." Yaakov wanted peace and serenity, yet he was forced to endure trials with Yoseph. Hashem said "Is it not sufficient that the righteous receive their reward in the World-To-Come; why do they need to live in serenity in this world?" The question arises: why is it wrong to want to live in serenity, particularly as in Yaakov's case when he wanted use such serenity to free himself for spiritual pursuits? Rabbi Yeruchem Levovitz explained that the purpose of this world is for a person to elevate himself by passing the numerous tests that come to him. The goal is spiritual growth from every life situation. Therefore, it was considered improper for Yaakov to place this focus on serenity. This, said Rav Yeruchem, is an attitude which we must internalize. Every occurrence in this world can make us a better person.
- **When Angry, Talk Things Over.** "And they [Yoseph's brothers] hated him and they were unable to speak to him for peace". Rabbi Yonoson Eibeshutz commented that it is possible that if the brothers would have spoken the matter over with Yoseph, they would have been able to make peace. The problem was that they were not talking to each other. This is what frequently happens when two people are in the middle of a feud. One doesn't listen to the other. If they will talk things over calmly, they will often see that they have nothing to argue about. Even if they still disagree in the end, the heavy emotionalism will be greatly diminished.
- **Avoid Boasting.** Sforno comments that it was a mistake on Yoseph's part to tell his brothers about the dream; even worse was his interpreting the dreams to them to mean that he would rule over them. When you boast to others, your intention might be to gain honor and respect from them, but envy is a very powerful emotion which easily leads to hatred. Be careful about boasting to others, for your boasting may lead to hatred. Furthermore, refraining from causing others these painful feelings is an act of kindness. Sharing your successes with a close friend is very different than boasting; your goal is not to show off, but to have someone share your joy.
- **Accept Positive Occurrences In Your Life As Messages From Hashem.** Rashi comments on why the Torah needs to tell us that the Yishmaelites were transporting spices. This seems to be little consolation for Yoseph; he had been sold into slavery by his brothers. How could something as minor as pleasant smelling merchandise on the caravan taking him to Egypt make a difference? The answer is that was a subtle hint from Hashem that all was not lost. We must appreciate that Hashem's Hand is guiding our life and supplies us with minor pleasures to enhance your life. This is an important lesson for one undergoing a difficult situation. When facing difficult moments, one is apt to become lost in self-pity and despair. It's easy to focus solely on what is wrong. But, remain aware of any positive aspects, for these minor pleasures are messages from Hashem.
- **Recognize That You Can Never Tell How Things Will Turn Out In The End.** Yoseph's ups-and-downs highlight that one must not despair when things are bleak nor gloat when things are good, since we don't have the omniscience to know what the final consequences of a situation will be. Therefore, when a situation seems

extremely negative, don't despair for it could lead to wonderful things for you. Conversely, when things seem to be going extremely well, don't become overly complacent or arrogant. One can never tell what the future has in store.

### C. Kol Dodi on the Torah (Rabbi David Feinstein)

- **One Must Not Show Favoritism To One Child Over Another.** Even in cases such as this — when Yaakov assumed that his other sons would understand his favoritism as being the result of Yoseph being born in Yaakov's old age — one can never predict what other factors will come into play. In this case, Yaakov didn't predict that Yoseph would bring evil reports about the brothers to him, thus arousing their hatred. For this reason, our Sages teach (Shabbos 10b) that one must never show favoritism to one child over another.

### D. Wellsprings of Torah (Rabbi Alexander Zusia Friedman)

- **Focusing on others' virtues.** An alternative reading of Yaakov's charge to Yoseph to "go now, see that all is well with thy brothers . . ." is "go now, seek the peace of thy brothers . . ." Yaakov told Yoseph to go and behold the integrity (Shelelemuth from Shalom) of his brothers; to consider their virtues rather than their shortcoming, and thus "avoid strife and contention with them." (Simcha Bunim of Przysucha)
- **Torah as the antidote for the "Yetzer Hara" (Evil Inclination).** ". . . and they cast him into the pit and the pit was empty; there was no water in it." Rashi comments that the pit didn't contain water but did contain snakes and scorpions. Water represents Torah, and the "snakes and scorpions" represent the Yetzer Hara. As Chazal teach (Kiddushin 30), Hashem created the Yetzer Hara, and created the Torah as its antidote. This, then, is the thought that Rashi sought to convey in allegorical terms: there was no water (i.e., Torah); therefore, it was certain that there were snakes and scorpions in it (i.e., that the Yetzer Hara would be present). (Avnei Ezel)
- **Service Hashem in Poverty and Wealth.** "And Hashem was with Yoseph and he was a prosperous man and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian." Tosafists notes that an alternative reading is that "and Hashem was with Yoseph when he was a prosperous man and also when he was in the house of his master the Egyptian." Some serve Hashem only when they are poor, but forget Him as soon as they become wealthy. Others serve Hashem as long as they lack nothing, but as soon as they lose their wealth, they turn away from Him. The Torah is signifying that Yoseph had neither of these shortcomings; he clung to Hashem when he was prosperous as well as when he was no more than a humble slave in Potiphar's house.

### E. Peninim on the Torah (Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum)

- **Kiddush Hashem.** "Yet the chief butler didn't remember Yoseph, but forgot him." Rashi explains that since Yoseph put his trust in the butler, he was punished by an additional two years in prison. This implies that true "bitachon" (trust in Hashem) consists of doing absolutely nothing; apparently, Yoseph shouldn't have made any attempt to gain release from prison. This further suggests that "hishtadlus" (exerting any effort) contradicts the concept of bitachon. However, the contrary is clearly implied throughout Torah literature! What, then, did Yoseph do wrong? The answer seems to lie in the result of Yoseph's actions. The behavior of the righteous should serve as a paradigm, bringing about a "Kiddish Hashem" (Sanctification of Hashem's name). In Yoseph's case, this opportunity was forever lost. Unquestionably, Yoseph realized that his successful prediction of the butler's fate was due solely to Divine Inspiration. Had the butler emerged from prison and publicly attested to the Divinely-inspired powers of a G-d-fearing prophet, it would have been a great Kiddish Hashem. Yoseph, however, committed a tactical error in that he asked the butler to free him. Despite the fact that this was a logical act of hishtadlus, it had a negative effect. When he asked for the butler's intercession, he implied that it was the butler that had the power to release him. Thus, Yoseph inadvertently missed a magnificent opportunity to glorify Hashem's name, for which he was punished (HaRav Schwab shlita)
- **Avoiding self-aggrandizement.** The Torah first refers to the "butler" and "baker", but later refers to the "prince of the butlers" and the "prince of the bakers". HaRav Hirsh notes the apparent mockery reflected in the pathos of the "princes". They were princes to those beneath them in status, but mere slaves to those above them. When one's stature is dependent on his relationship to the king, his princely position is — at best — precarious. This is an important lesson for those who dilute themselves with self-aggrandizement as soon as they ascend to a position of semi-importance. We can extend this to a spiritual perspective — we often concern ourselves with the opinion of our fellow man, rather than the only opinion which is of real importance — that of Hashem's.

### F. Love Thy Neighbor (Rabbi Zelig Pliskin)

- **A Person Should Give Up His Life Rather Than Publicly Shame Someone.** Tamar did not want to publicly shame Yehudah, so she only said “By the man whose these are . . .”, rather than “Yehudah is the father”. R’ Yonah writes that one must give up his/her life rather than shaming another. (Bava Metzia teaches that a person who shames another loses his share in the World To Come.)
- **We Should Try to Cheer Up Someone Who Is Despondent.** Yoseph was concerned about the butler and baker, and sought to boost their spirits. Despite his predicament, he nonetheless cared about his fellow man and when he saw someone with a problem was eager to help.

#### G. Something to Say (Dovid Goldwasser)

- **True Brotherhood.** When Jacob sent Yoseph to see his brothers in the field, a man found Yoseph wandering and asked him “what are you seeking?” Yoseph answered, “I seek my brothers. Tell me where they are.” The responsibility one Jew feels for another has become proverbial and throughout the centuries of persecution has saved countless Jewish lives. While geographic and cultural differences exist, the bond remains strong. There is something even deeper implied in Yoseph’s declaration, “I seek my brothers.” He didn’t know whether they needed him, but they might, and Yoseph had to find out. Seeking out our brothers – helping them before their situation becomes desperate – is the true measure of greatness.

#### H. Soul of the Torah: Insights Of the Chassidic Masters on the Weekly Torah Portions (Victor Cohen).

- **Seeing the Whole Picture.** “Go see how your brothers are doing” (literally, “go the Shalom [peace] of your brothers”). The S’fas Emes said that Jacob did not intend to make Yoseph a messenger to find out how his brothers were doing, for he certainly could have sent one of his servants to do so. Jacob used the term “Shalom” deliberately – he wanted Yoseph to stop looking only at his brothers’ faults. He sent him so that he should also notice their good traits and wholesomeness.
- **Unwavering Faith.** “G-d was with Yoseph, and he was a successful man; and he remained in the house of his Egyptian master.” In both success and adversity, Yoseph remained with G-d. (R. Bunim of Pshys’cha).
- **Maintaining Our Jewish Identity.** “And he [Yoseph] was in the house of his Egyptian master.” The S’as Emas noted that no matter the circumstances in which Yoseph found himself while in his master’s house, he was always himself. He did not change. No matter what happens to us, we must always behave as a Jew.

#### I. Living Each Week (Rabbi Abraham Twerski).

- **Denying Our True Feelings.** “The brothers saw that their father loved him [Yoseph] more than all of his brothers, and they hated him.” The true reason for each brother’s emotion was that Jacob loved Yoseph more than that brother. This rationale was, however, “disguised” with a new justification – they hated Jacob because he was more loved than their brothers. By “championing” the cause of others, he could consider himself altruistic and virtuous. This delusion led to the brothers’ unspeakable act, and reminds us how careful we must be in searching out our true motivations.
- **Defining Our Goals.** “The man asked him, saying, ‘what is it that you seek?’” The Kotzker Rebbe cited the Midrash that the “man” whom Yoseph encountered was the angel Gabriel. The series of events that was to follow – Yoseph being sold into slavery, tempted by a seductress, unjustly imprisoned and becoming viceroy of Egypt – was enough to bring out the worst in a person. Gabriel thus provided Yoseph with a principle that would enable him to maintain his spirituality and not be corrupted by these ordeals. He was to repeatedly ask himself, “what is it that I seek?” As we go through life, our important goals must always be before us. We must also constantly ask ourselves “what is it that we seek?” The proper answer to this question will help determine but our reactions to various spiritual challenges and ultimately the course of our lives.
- **Misbehavior Is Beneath Our Dignity.** The Rabbi of Slonim notes that the yetzer hara (evil inclination) will use every trick to manipulate us to do wrong. It may depress our self-esteem and thereby diminish our resistance to doing wrong. Our response must be strong and unequivocal, for even if we done wrong in the past, we are capable of eradicating it all with teshuvah (repentance). This is why Yoseph said: “My status in this household is one of trust and honor. I am not going to demean myself by doing something what will detract from my dignity.” The Torah tells us that “[we] are children of G-d”. We expect dignified behavior from princes, who are but children of temporal monarchs. How much more should be respect our princely status by virtue of being children of G-d?!

## J. Something To Say (Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser)

- **Causeless Love.** “Yoseph dreamt a dream which he told to his brothers, and they hated him even more.” Yoseph had not yet revealed the contents of his dream, yet the mere fact that he had a dream caused his brothers to increase their hatreds towards him. Why? The Belzer Rebbe once showed great love to a person who was known to be rather uncharitable. His Chassidim asked him, “are we supposed to show great love to such a person?” The Rebbe answered, “after 120 years, I would rather be rebuked for loving someone without cause than for hating someone with cause.”
- **The Divine Hand.** Upon the chamberlain’s release from prison, Yoseph asked him to intercede with Pharaoh on his behalf and help secure his release from prison. However, once freed, the chamberlain forgot about Yoseph. Rashi notes that because Yoseph placed his trust in the butler, he was punished with two more years in prison. Why did Yoseph deserve such a punishment? Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt’l notes that Yoseph should have understood that the prison sentences of the butler and baker, their confusing dreams and their entreaty to Yoseph for interpretations were all occurrences designed by G-d. Yoseph should have understood that his freedom was not dependent on his own efforts; G-d had already orchestrated his release. During World War II, the Bobover Rebbe was kept hidden in a small attic of his righteous Gentile neighbors. The Rebbe lived in seclusion, unable to exit the home. The Rebbe felt deeply distressed when, one morning, the straps on his only pair of tefillin tore. Just then, the Gentile neighbor in whose attic the Rebbe was staying came in with a small bag. He explained that a Jew had handed him the bag as he was being deported. “I have been meaning to ask you what this object is,” he said. He opened the bag and pulled out a pair of tefillin. G-d’s Providence was at work.
- **True Brotherhood.** “May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh”. Why did Jacob want his future descendants to bless their children with the examples of Ephraim and Manasseh, of all the tribes? Chazal explain that these two sons of Yoseph exemplify fundamental Torah principles: there was no competition between them, and neither considered themselves greater than his brother. Each had a deep and authentic respect for the other, and was happy for the other’s success. Each performed his individual goal, harmonizing with his brother’s contribution to create a unique symphony of Divine service. Jacob, therefore, expressed the hope that all of his future generations would emulate their behavior. He thus created tradition that this blessing be given by Jewish parents to their children throughout history.

## K. Torah Gems (Rabbi Ahron Yaakov Greenberg)

- **A Failure To Listen.** “They hated him, and could not speak peacefully to him. . . .” Had they sat down together, they would have spoken to one another and told one another what bothered them. They then would have ironed out their differences. The trouble in this and every argument is that there is no common language and no one listening. (Tiferet Yehonatan)
- **Clarifying Our Goals.** The man asked him saying, “what seek you?”. . . Chazal tell us that this was no ordinary “man,” but rather an angel. The angel taught Yoseph that whenever he was lost in knowing what to do with his life, at a time of confusion, he should “seek himself (seek” you”) – he should first clarify to himself what he wanted and for what he was striving. (The Kotzker Rebbe).
- **Pure Intentions.** “And Reuven heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands. . . .” Reuven performed a commandment (i.e., encouraging his brothers to spare Yoseph’s life) with totally good intentions. However, when he saw that the pit where Yoseph had been placed was empty, he was convinced that his plan had been for naught. The Torah, however, states clearly that “he delivered him out of their hands” — that had it not been for Reuven’s plan, Yoseph would certainly have been killed. This teaches us that when our intentions are pure, when we truly want to perform a commandment, even if it appears to us that we were unsuccessful in our efforts it was certainly not in vain (S’fas Emes).
- **Focusing On The Positive.** “The pit was empty, there was no water in it. . . .” Isn’t the latter part of this verse redundant? Rashi notes that it teaches us that there were snakes and scorpions in the pit. We can learn an important lesson from this verse. The pit had an advantage in that it had no water in it ; however, it also had a disadvantage in that it was filled with snakes and scorpions. In referring to the advantages of the pit the Torah explicitly states that there was no water in it. As to its disadvantage, however, it can only be implied from the hint. If this is true for a pit, how much more so when dealing with our fellow man: when it comes to praising someone, we should do so wholeheartedly and clearly; when we are forced to say something negative about someone, we should try to say it indirectly. (Oznayim La-Torah)

- **We Are Judged By Our Friends.** “And Judah said ‘let her keep them, lest we be shamed’”. Why did Judah use the word “we”? After all, his friend was not involved in this in any way. The answer is that we are judged by our friends. (Various sources)
- **The True Source Of Wealth.** “And the Lord was with Yoseph, and he was successful. . . .” Generally, when a person succeeds, he claims that his accomplishments were due to his own efforts. But the Torah tells us, in regard to Yoseph, that even when he was successful he recognized that it was G-d’s doing (Sha’arei Simhah).

#### L. Growth Through Torah (Rabbi Zelig Pliskin)

- **Develop Compassion For All Living Creatures.** “And [Yaakov] said to [Yoseph], go see about the welfare of your brothers and about the welfare of the sheep.” Rabbi Noson Tzvi Finkel noted that Yaakov was concerned about the welfare of his sons, yet in the same breath instructed Yoseph to check on the welfare of the sheep. This because a righteous person emulates G-d, who is compassionate and merciful to all creatures.
- **When You Have Bias, Be Careful About Taking Action.** “And one brother said to another, behold this dreamer is coming.” Rashi notes that the two brothers were Shimon and Levi. Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin notes that Shimon and Levi were the ones who were zealous to save the birthright and future monarchy for Reuven. Reuven himself, however, tried to save Yoseph from their hands. Rabbi Shmuel Walkin noted that whenever a person’s bias is involved he should not trust himself. Therefore, Reuven, who was the firstborn son and had the most to lose from Yoseph’s becoming ruler, avoided doing anything to harm Yoseph and even planned to save him.
- **When Influencing Others Speak To Them From Their Point Of View.** “And Reuven heard and he saved him from their hands, and he said, let us not hit a mortal blow . And Reuven said to them, do not shed blood.” Had Reuven merely said “let us not hit him,” his motivation (i.e., compassion for Yoseph) would have been evident and his brothers would have ignored him. Therefore, Reuven also expressed concern that he (and the others) not become murderers. This teaches us an important principle. When trying to influence others, the focus of our arguments should be on points that the listener will accept even though our focus might center on a different aspect of this same situation.

#### M. There Shall Be Light (Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman)

- **Successful Childrearing.** Rashi notes three ways in which Yoseph was Yaakov’s “ben zekunim”: (a) he was born in Yaakov’s old age; (b) he was a wise son (old age being synonymous with wisdom according to Onkelos); and (c) he resembled Yaakov (“Zekunim” being an Aramaic contraction of “Ziv Ikunim”, “facial appearance”). How do these ideas interrelate? Of the seven pillars of Judaism, only Yoseph is known as “ha-Tzaddik.” For even as a lone Jew among non-Jews, Yoseph resisted every temptation and remained a Tzaddik (righteous person). What was the source of his spiritual stamina? Because Yoseph was born to Yaakov’s beloved wife Rachel and only after six years of earnest prayer, he loved the boy as if he were his only son born in his old age. Furthermore, he recognized Yoseph’s innate wisdom and gave him only positive reinforcement, the first step in successful childrearing. Simultaneously, Yaakov was a role model, practicing what he preached. Consequently, Yoseph became a carbon copy of his father. These three “ingredients” – fierce love, positive reinforcement and self-examples – are vital in producing wonderful children.
- **The Secret of Yoseph’s Success.** “And [Yoseph’s] master saw that G-d was with him and [that] everything he did, G-d made successful in his hand.” Yoseph seems to be the ultimate success story. What was his secret? The answer lies in a literal reading of the verse: “Everyone who does, G-d makes succeed.” The secret of success is toil, not surrender; effort and action, not sloth. Yoseph never rested, he made himself useful, always doing.

#### N. Windows To The Soul (Rabbi Michael Bernstein).

- **Hate From A Distance.** “And they saw [Yoseph] from afar, and before he came close to him, they plotted to kill him.” The words “from afar and before he came close” seemed redundant, for if they saw him from afar we know that he had not yet come close. It appears that the Torah is probing the sin of Yoseph’s brothers. Overcome with jealousy and hatred, they were only to see Yoseph from afar. They did not want to see him from up close. Had they done so, they might have identified more with him. They might have seen those qualities that had inspired their father’s special bond with them. But they kept their distance and only saw the object of their hatred. This is the mechanism we often use to condemn others. We pass judgment from afar, not allowing the object of our hatred to come close.