



## *Parshas Vayigash 2020, re-framing our mind for success*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna, Shaul Ben Berta. As well as in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia.*

Our Parsha continues Yehuda's negotiation with Yosef to let Benyamin return home. He pleads with Yosef to take him as a slave instead, citing that if he were to return home without Benyamin, his father would die from the pain of losing a second son.

At that time, Yosef cannot restrain himself anymore; overcome with emotion, he asks all but his brothers to leave his presence, and he immediately reveals his true identity: **"I am Yosef."** He instructs them to return home quickly and bring Ya'akov and their families back to Egypt.

His brothers were speechless and in complete shock; they could not believe that Yosef had become the viceroy of Egypt. But then they began to tremble, fearing the punishment that Yosef would retaliate against them with. However, Yosef called them back and told them that they were forgiven. At the moment he made history, he became the first person in the Torah to forgive.

When the brothers returned home, they told Ya'akov something he'd never thought he would hear in his lifetime: **Yosef is still alive!** Ya'akov was ecstatic and overjoyed, as the Pasuk says (45:27), *"And the spirit of their father, Ya'akov, was revived."* Before Ya'akov began his journey down to Egypt, G-d appeared to him and said that He would go with him down to Egypt and make his family a great nation. Ya'akov gathered his family and quickly traveled down to Egypt to his beloved son, Yosef.

A question comes to mind: when Yosef revealed his identity to his brothers, he said,(45:7-8) *“G-d sent me before you to create for you a piece in the land, and preserve it for you. You did not send me; G-d did, and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, a lord over all his household, and a ruler over Egypt.”*

Why does Yosef assure them they did nothing wrong and shift all the blame and responsibility from his brothers to G-d? Did he not want his brothers to see the faults of their actions and repent for their sins?!

The Abarbanel explains that Yosef could not hold himself back from revealing his identity when he realized that his brothers fully repented for their actions.

The repentance began in last week’s Parsha (42:21): *“They said to each other, ‘Indeed, we are guilty for our brother, that we witnessed the distress of his soul when he begged us, and we did not listen. That is why this trouble has come upon us.’* They admitted that what they did was wrong, one of the steps of repentance.

Then, Yehuda says to Yosef (44:33), *“Please let me stay instead of the boy as a slave, and may the boy go up with his brothers.”* He completed his repentance because he was the one who sold Yosef.

But now that he is faced with a similar circumstance, he offers to become a slave instead of Benjamin, doing the exact opposite of what he did to Yosef. He and the rest of his brothers showed Yosef that they were truly remorseful for what they did; therefore, Yosef did not need to reiterate the faults and misdeeds of their actions.

However, a more profound explanation is that Yosef reframed his past so he could have a future. Instead of feeling depressed while he was in prison with no end in sight, he realized that it was all part of G-d’s plan and part of his life’s journey.

Eventually, he was successful, put in charge of the prison, and took advantage of the opportunity to gain his freedom.

When he revealed his identity to his brothers, he said (45:8), *“You did not send me here, but G-d did.”* He framed their actions as his gift from G-d, which allowed him the opportunity to save the world from starvation.

When Ya’akov passed away 17 years later, the brothers feared what Yosef might do to them now that their father wasn’t alive. Yosef calmed them down because he still maintained that his past was from G-d alone, as the Pasuk says (50:20), *“You intended to harm me, G-d made it for good for me.”*

In our daily life, we must understand that although we may not be able to control the circumstance, we are in; however, we do control our reactions. Our mindset dictates how we view a situation and our attitude toward it.

If we believe that everything that G-d does is for the best, we can overcome and survive the most horrific circumstances, as history has shown us.

We must work on remembering that G-d has the best for us in mind; therefore, we must have a positive attitude and focus on matters that we have the power to change.

This approach enables us to take advantage of opportunities and achieve our potential, becoming prosperous and more successful beyond our wildest expectations.

***“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”***

*Viktor Frankl*

*Have a meaningful Shabbos*  
*Rabbi Sholom Yemini*