



## *Parshas Vayechi 2021, seek discomfort*

*This week is dedicated to the success of the Parsha Perspective and those who listen, watch or share it. May Hashem bless each of us with true happiness, health and meaning!*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Silvia Bas Herschel, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna and Shaul Ben Berta.*

Our Parsha begins with Ya'akov Avinu asking Yosef to swear that he would bury him in the land of Israel. Ya'akov then blessed Yosef's two sons, Efraim and Menasha. He elevates them to the status of his own sons and as tribes among the Jewish people. Ya'akov then blesses his own children and assigns them their role as a tribe amongst the Jewish nation.

At the age of 147 years old, Ya'akov Avinu passed away in the land of Egypt. Egyptian ministers accompanied Ya'akov to his final resting place in a funeral procession consisting of his children and grandchildren. He is buried in Chevron, in the Meoras HaMachpelah, next to his parents and grandparents.

Yosef also passes away in Egypt at the age of 110 years old. However, Moshe Rabbeinu removed his body many years later when the Jewish people left Egypt.

However, a question comes to mind: There is a beautiful custom for fathers to bless their children just before Yom Kippur or weekly on Friday night. Along with the priestly blessing, a father says, "*may G-d make you be like Efraim and Menasha.*" But Efraim and Menasha do not seem to play a significant role until now; we do not know much about them besides their parents. So why do we bless and hope that our children will be just like them, rather than Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov?!

One of the answers is that Efraim and Menasha changed history by not being jealous of each other's success. Until now, family members were envious of each other's achievements and prosperity.

Beginning with Cain killing Hevel because G-d favored and preferred his sacrifice. Jumping to the forefathers, Ishmael was jealous of Yitzchak and Esav of Ya'akov. More recently, the brothers resented Ya'akov's favoritism and closeness to Yosef, which led to his being sold into slavery.

But Efraim and Menasha broke the pattern and took a different approach when the other was successful. Each of them was genuinely joyful for the other's fortune and achievement.

We see this in action when Ya'akov puts his right hand on Menasha, the younger brother, and his left hand on Efraim when he blesses them. Yet, this created no animosity or hatred between them, breaking the vicious cycle of family conflict.

Like David Hamelch says in Tehillim (133:1), "*Hiney ma tov u'ma'nayim, shevet achim gam yachad - How good and pleasant is it for brothers to sit peacefully together.*"

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He writes that we bless our kids to be like Efraim and Menasha because they were righteous despite being born in Egypt.

All of Ya'akov's children were born and brought up in Israel, surrounded by immense spirituality and holiness. As the Talmud in Bava Basra states (158b), *"just the air of Israel makes a person wise."*

Unlike Efraim and Menasha, **who grew up in the most impure, immoral, and sinful place in the world, Egypt, they remained faithful** and devoted to the religion and morals taught to them by their father.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that to be great amongst great people is definitely a challenge. But maintaining a high level of spirituality and character in a society empty of morals and ethics is the test. This is why Ya'akov elevated them to the status of his own sons, for they had tried-and-true holiness.

In our daily life, whether we are parents trying to shield our children or just comfortable in our position in life. It is essential to realize that challenges cause growth and development.

As much as we try to protect and insulate our families or delicate egos, sadly, there will always be problems that can drive us to our limit. If we intentionally avoid confronting these challenges, we will likely break down and fail when our strength is crucially needed.

But if we don't purposely prevent difficulties from occurring, no matter how small they may seem. We start to build up endurance and resilience to use when it matters most. Be calm in facing even the most difficult adversities and grow from confronting them.

**“Discomfort is the opportunity that brings the choice to either move ahead or turn back. The choice is your!”**

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*