



The Joy of Torah - For Life

Parshas Vayechi

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The Pasuk (50,15) discusses that after the death of Yaakov, the brother's suspected that maybe Yosef hated them in his heart and would now take revenge on the brothers for selling him into slavery.

The Chizkuni fills in some of the backstory. When they were all returning together from burying their father, they passed by the pit that they had thrown Yosef, and Yosef said a bracha thanking Hashem for the miracles that had happened to him there. The brothers heard and they were afraid that Yosef remembered what happened to him, and that now he would take revenge!

This is so difficult to understand - Yosef had already forgiven them and treated them like royalty. And now because he was making a bracha that he's obligated to make and that would awaken bad feelings in his heart?! What we see from here is that even such a tzaddik while doing the action of thanking Hashem for his salvation, and in midst of recognizing that Hashem is in charge of everything, if there is real trauma there, it can be awakened and brought out into drastic action and cause Yosef to change his attitude and rescind his forgiveness!

The Ba'al Haturim takes a similar approach to the Chizkuni and he adds that the brothers thought that they hoped Yosef wouldn't take revenge on them, but if he would then he should also make us all kings, because we caused him to become king of all of Mitzrayim! How can we explain this? It seems that the Ba'al Haturim is saying that when we are triggered to remember the bad events that happened in our lives, we should try to look at the whole picture, and how Hashem ultimately orchestrated the entire thing for our good. So the brothers were saying that if Yosef remembers them throwing him into a pit we hope that Yosef will look at the whole picture as to what happened and see how actually their act of throwing Yosef in a pit ultimately caused Yosef to get tremendous honor in becoming the viceroy. Yosef looking at the whole picture would reframe the whole story in his mind which would help melt away any possible hate. In life we know everything is Chesed HaShem but in hindsight we can often see so clearly so much chessed even from life's challenges. "אם לא נפלתי לא קמתי"