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לעילוי נשמת ר' יעקב יהודה בן יבלטו"א משה יוחנן שליט"א

The Zera Emes Project by Rabbi Moshe Hubner was created to honor and share the Torah of over 250 Gedolim who weren't zocheh to descendants of their own. Their legacy lives on through their words of Torah and emunah that continue to inspire and touch countless lives. By bringing their timeless divrei Torah and wisdom to life, we create a powerful connection to the past to help inspire today's generation.

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Safe Travels

Yosef finally reveals himself to his brothers and informs them that they must bring the momentous news back to their father. Initially, when Yaakov hears the report, "his heart rejected it, and he did not believe them" (45:26). However, when they related to him the words of Yosef and Yaakov saw the wagons that Yosef had sent, Yaakov was revived through prophecy and believed them (v. 27). He then declares that it is indeed true—that Yosef is alive—and expresses his desire to go see Yosef before he passes away.

R' Shaul Chaim Horowitz (*Pri Eitz Chaim*, pg. 16:4) notes a subtle but telling shift in the *pessukim*. When the Torah describes the brothers informing their father of the news, it refers to him as "Yaakov" (v. 25). This remains true even after he comes to believe the report. However, when the Torah records Yaakov declaring his intention to see Yosef, and later when it describes his actual journey and the prophecy he receives, the Torah switches and refers to him as "Yisrael."

R' Shaul Chaim explains that the name Yisrael represents a higher spiritual level—the name given after Yaakov conquered the angel. Once Yaakov understood that Yosef had survived not

only physically but spiritually as well, he himself was elevated and once again described by his higher name.



As Yaakov sets out for Egypt, he stops in Be'er Sheva, where he offers sacrifices to Hashem. There, Hashem appears to him in a prophecy and tells him not to fear descending to Egypt, promising that he will become a great nation. Hashem further assures him that He Himself will accompany Yaakov and his children in exile and that He will ultimately take them out.

When the Torah later describes Yaakov's departure from Be'er Sheva (46:5), it suddenly provides an extensive inventory of what was taken to Egypt: children, wives, wagons sent by Pharaoh, livestock, wealth, and more. This raises an obvious question. Why does the Torah detail these possessions only at this stage of the journey, and not earlier, when Yaakov first left his home for Be'er Sheva?

R' Shaul Chaim explains that initially, Yaakov intended only to go see Yosef and then return to Eretz Yisrael. The Ralbag similarly understands that Yaakov never planned to settle in Egypt at this point. As such, there was no reason for him to take his family or possessions with him. When others accompanied him, Yaakov assumed they were merely fulfilling the mitzvah of escorting him and would soon turn back.

It was only after Yaakov stopped in Be'er Sheva, offered sacrifices, and received Hashem's prophecy that he understood this journey was part of a broader Divine plan—that he was meant to descend to Egypt and remain there for a time.

Hashem reassured Yaakov that the concerns which had previously made him

reluctant to remain in Egypt (see Rashi to *passuk* 2) were no longer relevant. In a sense, Yaakov could live in Egypt as though he were living in Eretz Yisrael.

“Do not fear descending to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there”—meaning that you will not be spiritually corrupted by Egypt’s impurity.

“I will make you great there”—meaning that you will remain distinct and separate from the Egyptian population.

“I will go down with you”—meaning that the

Shechinah and prophecy will remain with you.

“And I will also bring you up”—meaning that you need not fear being buried there or remaining in exile forever.

“And Yosef will place his hand upon your eyes”—meaning that after your passing, Yosef will lead and protect the nation just as you did.

Only after all of this does the Torah list everything that descended with Yaakov to Egypt—because now his intent had changed. This was no longer a brief visit, but the beginning of the exile decreed upon the Jewish nation.

We have shown that R’ Shaul Chaim’s words can be sourced to *rishonim*. With this in mind we note that during Leil Haseder we recite the explanation of the words stated by the one who brings *bikkurim* – the first fruits to the Beis Hamikdash. The one who brings *bikkurim* states, “And he (Yaakov) went down to Egypt... And he sojourned there (ויגר שם)” (*Devarim* 26:5). The Haggadah adds that these words teach us that Yaakov did not

travel to Egypt to settle, but only to live there temporarily (מלמד שלא ירד יעקב אבינו להשתקע במצרים (אלא לגור שם). The Haggadah proves this by citing Yaakov’s words, “They said to Pharaoh: We have come to sojourn in the land (temporarily),” (*Bereishis* 47:4).

These words of Yaakov are stated in the Torah *after* Hashem explained to Yaakov that he could live in Egypt as though he were

living in Eretz Yisrael. Meaning, these words occur after Yaakov was informed from Hashem that his arrival in Egypt was going to be the beginning of the exile decreed upon the Jewish nation. Yaakov’s plan was to remain in Egypt.

So how do they explain Yaakov telling Pharaoh, “And he sojourned there (ויגר שם)” meaning that he did not travel to Egypt to settle, but only to live there temporarily?

ר' שאול חיים
ב"ר אברהם
הלוי הורוביץ

R’ Shaul Chaim Horowitz (1828-13 Teves 1915) was born in Vilna. His father, Rav Avraham was a Morah Tzedek there. He heard shiurim from Rav Yisrael Salanter. He married Yocheved Sarah, (Sorke - שירקא -) the daughter of the Nachalas David, R’ Dovid Tevel Rubin of Minsk (1794-1861), whose writings were posthumously edited and published by R’ Shaul Chaim. R’ Dovid referred to his son-in-law as a “*charif and baki*.” In 1865, he was appointed Rav of Dubrowna, Poland. R’ Shaul Chaim helped raise his sister’s son, R’ Yosef Gershon Horowitz, so much so that when he emigrated to Eretz Yisrael (1883) he took his nephew along with him. Shortly thereafter (1884) R’ Shaul Chaim helped found Yeshivas Meah Shearim. His own published writings include *Kelilas Shaul* (Vilna 1879) which includes *haskomos* from the Malbim and Rav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector. He also published *Pri Eitz Chaim* (Jerusalem 1904), as well as an appendix to the *Nachalas David* (Vilna 1882) entitled *Mitzpe Shaul*. After, R’ Shaul Chaim passed away, R’ Yosef Gershon succeeded him (14 Nisan 1951).

ר' יעקב יהודה בן יבלטו"א משה יוחנן שליט"א

This issue has been dedicated as a *zechus* for the *aliyas neshamah* of Reb Leiby Freund, ז"ל, who passed away on Rosh Chodesh Teves one year ago.

Reb Leiby was a true friend to all who knew him. His devotion to his children and grandchildren, his *mesorah*, and above all, to his relationship with the *Ribbono shel Olam*, are legendary. May he be a *meilitz yosher* for all.

