



## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Vayeishev

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

**An Internalization to Understand A Representation of His Father**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**Honored & Acknowledged by the Viceroy & Multitudes**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**An Insensitivity that Incurs Inexorable Results**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**How to Understand The Plan to Remove The Pursuer**

CLICK TO VIEW!





## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Vayeishev

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

### The Exactness Of Justice Nullifies Mercy

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Yosef was sold as a slave to Potiphar, a Minister in the court of Pharaoh.
2. Because of his unusual ability, he rose to oversee all the financial affairs of his master.
3. After being acknowledged for his success he focused on being physically attractive.
4. Rashi: G-d said, "Yaakov your father is grieving over your loss and you're coiffing your hair; I will set the bear upon you."
5. Potiphar's wife took notice of him and attempted to seduce him.
6. If not for Yosef's insensitivity to his father he would not have been subject to this challenge.
7. It was necessary for him, as the son of Rachel, to

subordinate his physicality for the sake of G-d.

8. Yosef tale-bearred against his brothers.
9. One of the things he said was that they had illicit relations with women.
10. G-d said: "Because you slandered your brothers your master's wife will attempt to seduce you."
11. Yosef definitely repented for his slander after being sold into slavery.
12. Based on the Attribute of Mercy, Repentance is sufficient to absolve one of sin.
13. However, if the Attribute of Justice should be activated, there is still a level of liability.
14. Not being sensitive to his father's mourning, activated the Attribute of Justice.

### An Embodiment Of Clarity To Dispel Distortion

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Yosef the son of Rachel is the most beloved child of Yaakov because he is his Ben Zekunim.
2. Ben Zekunim has 3 interpretations:
3. A. born to him in his old age B. wisest son C. his facial features were identical to his father.
4. One would think he was was most beloved because he was the eldest son of Rachel.
5. Gemara: The progeny of Esav will only fall into the hands of Rachel.
6. Yosef was the flame that reaches out to consume the house of Esav.
7. Yosef, the wisest of his sons, was taught all the Torah

that Yaakov had learned in Yeshiva Shem V'Eiver.

8. Yaakov enacted Arvis, the evening service.
9. Evening is a representation of exile; ominous and lacking in clarity.
10. Yaakov is the Patriarch who represents exile.
11. Despite the overwhelming challenges of exile, Yaakov is able to retain his spiritual persona to its fullest.
12. Yosef was endowed with the capacity of his father to contend with all the negative issues of Egypt as Yosef Hatzadik.
13. Yosef as Viceroy of Egypt was therefore able to create a setting for his family to survive the Egyptian exile.





## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Vayeishev

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

### A Calculation Indicative of Rational Thinking

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Yosef was the most beloved son of Yaakov because he was most similar to him.
2. He was acknowledged by his father to be most special by giving him a special tunic.
3. Yosef, due to his immaturity, shared with his father what he believed to be negative about his brothers.
4. This caused great strife and animosity between Yosef and his brothers.
5. Yosef dreamt 2 dreams he believed to be prophetic and therefore shared them with his brothers.
6. This only intensified the hate and strained the relationship to a greater degree.
7. In the second dream he dreamt the sun, moon and 11 stars bowed to him.
8. The sun being his father, the moon his mother, and the 11 stars his brothers.
9. Yaakov scolded Yosef for sharing this with his brothers because it was obviously nonsense since his mother had passed away.
10. Midrash: The moon was Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, who raised him as a mother.
11. When Rachel passed away, Yaakov put his bed in the tent of Bilhah, rather than the tent of Leah, who was a Matriarch.
12. Yaakov loved Yosef more than all his sons – he saw Yosef as his equivalent with similar abilities.
13. Bilhah, as Rachel's maidservant, was mentored by Rachel, understanding how to raise Yosef.

### The Worthiness of Achieving Clarity

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Midrash: Because Yaakov wanted to be in a state of tranquility the strife of Yosef was ignited.
2. Why the claim against Yaakov for wanting a respite from his sufferings and have a tranquil moment?
3. Rashi: It is not enough what the righteous have awaiting them for them in the world to come they also want tranquility in this world.
4. Although one's contribution to a mitzvah is only initiative, despite this, one receives full credit for the mitzvah.
5. Mishna: One's reward is determined by one's pain and degree of effort.
6. If not for the struggle aspect of a mitzvah, the mitzvah is not commensurate with the reward: the return is endlessly greater than the effort.
7. Since it appears that reward for a mitzvah is basically a gift, G-d creates a context of difficulty.
8. Yaakov's merit did not protect his children from struggles among themselves.
9. Yosef: The most beautiful person to ever subjugate the physical to the spiritual.
10. Yosef functioned as a spiritual being regardless of the setting and dictates of the material.

## Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Vayeishev

### Launching The Destiny Of The Jewish People



#### Minimizing the Desecration of G-d's Name

*Midrash:* “‘How great are Your accomplishments, G-d. Your thoughts are profound...’ What is the meaning of ‘Your thoughts are profound?’ *Reb Yochanon* says, ‘There is a profound thought that was brought about as a result of the Covenant Between the Parts. G-d had said to *Avraham*, ‘You shall know that your offspring will be strangers in a land that is not their own. There, they will be enslaved and afflicted for 400 years.’

“If the offspring of *Avraham* were destined to be strangers and slaves in a land that was not their own, then they would have needed to have brought to that location bound in shackles. G-d wanted that *Yaakov* and his family should go to Egypt in an honorable manner. G-d thus devised a plan to allow this to be so. He caused *Yaakov*, our Patriarch to have an intense love for his son *Yosef*. As a result of this love, *Yosef*’s brothers will hate him and sell him as a slave to the Ishmaelites and they will take him Egypt.

Ultimately, *Yaakov* and his children will go down to Egypt because of *Yosef*. As it states, ‘*Yosef* was taken down to Egypt...’”

*Yaakov* and his family were in *Canaan*. If the story would have not unfolded as it did, they would have been forced to go to Egypt bound in shackles because they would have not gone of their own volition. G-d therefore, devised a plan so that their descent to Egypt should be within a glorious context to be reunited with *Yosef*, who had become the Viceroy of Egypt. Why was it of the utmost necessity to descend to Egypt in an honorable state?

*Yaakov*, our Patriarch was the personification of *Torah*. The *Torah* tells us that after transporting his family across the river, *Yaakov* had returned to retrieve his small earthenware vessels.

*Torah:* “*Yaakov* was left alone (*levado*) and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn.”



*Chazal*: Just as G-d Himself is referred to as “*levado* – alone/unique,” as the verse states, “G-d is exalted (*levado*) – at a level unto Himself” so too is *Yaakov* referred to as “*levado*.” *Yaakov* is G-d’s representation in existence. He is at a level of spirituality unto himself. Had *Yaakov* been brought to Egypt bound in shackles together with his family, the Tribes of G-d (*Shivtei Ka*) it would have been a disgrace and a desecration of G-d’s Name. G-d therefore, orchestrated a plan that brought *Yaakov* to Egypt with honor and glory.

While in Egypt he and his family were esteemed and treated by Pharaoh as royalty. Before *Yaakov* passed away he adjured *Yosef* to not bury him in Egypt because he was concerned that the Egyptian people would deify him. From this, we are able to understand to what degree *Yaakov* was revered and esteemed. *Yaakov* was perceived by the Egyptian people as a person of a special spiritual distinction. This perception of *Yaakov* was a sanctification of G-d’s Name.

Although the Jewish people were ultimately enslaved in Egypt, the bondage did not commence until after *Yosef* and the entire generation that had gone down to Egypt had passed away. The subsequent generations, because they had not followed the way of G-d had no semblance of their forbearers. They in fact ceased to circumcise themselves so that they would be valued by Egyptian society. G-d’s Holiness or its representation through *Yaakov*’s family, was never denigrated in Egypt.

Although *Yaakov* and his family coming to Egypt in a state of glory and prominence was a positive result of *Yosef*’s brothers selling him to slavery; nevertheless, it ultimately resulted in something extremely negative.

*Chazal*: The Ten Martyrs, who were the ten most special *Torah* sages (who had lived in the same generation since the giving of *Torah* at Sinai), were murdered by the Romans in the most cruel manner to atone for the sin of *Yosef*’s ten brothers selling him into slavery. These *Torah* Sages were spiritual giants and the leaders of the Jewish people. The ten martyrs who had gone to their death had given their lives to sanctify G-d’s Name.

However, the Romans who were the descendants of *Esav* demonstrated to the world that “the hands are the hands of *Esav*.” The Edomites demonstrated their upper hand over the children of *Yaakov*, which

resulted in a desecration of His Name. Despite the end result, *Yaakov* and his family could not be brought to Egypt bound in shackles because that would have not allowed the prominence of *Torah* to be established, through *Yaakov*’s being the man of the tent (of *Torah*).

## The Value of Appreciating One’s Failing

*Torah*: After *Yosef* had shared his (prophetic) dreams with his brothers, they had wrongly suspected that his intent was to undermine their relationship with *Yaakov*. They thus despised him to the point that they had chosen to remove themselves from his presence. When *Yosef* was sent by his father to see how they were faring, his brothers attached and wanted to kill him.

*Torah*: “*Reuvain* heard (what his brothers were planning), and he rescued him (*Yosef*) from their hand; he said, ‘We will not strike him mortally!... Shed no blood! Throw him into this pit in the desert... intending to rescue him from their hand, to return him to his father.’” The *Torah* attests to the fact that *Reuvain*’s intent was not to leave *Yosef* to die in the pit, but rather to return at a later time and rescue him.

*Sforno*: “The verse states, ‘...and he rescued him from their hand...’ Acting upon a sudden impulse can bring about a wrong (tragedy) that can never be corrected. Such as the incident of *Reuvain* and *Bilhah*, as it states in the verse when *Yaakov* had quantified *Reuvain* at the time of the blessings, ‘(he) was impulsive as water...’”

*Reuvain* understood that his brothers were acting impulsively by planning to kill *Yosef*. It was a decision that was made without any consideration for the future ramifications. Had this tragedy occurred, it would have never been able to correct. *Reuvain* understood the necessity to intercede immediately on *Yosef*’s behalf to prevent his brothers from acting impulsively. *Reuvain* had done so because he himself was victimized through his own personal impulsive behavior.

After *Rachel*, the primary Matriarch, had passed away, *Yaakov* had taken his bed from the tent of *Rachel* and placed it into the tent of *Bilhah*, the maidservant of *Rachel*. *Reuvain*, feeling slighted chose to take his father’s bed and placed it in the tent of *Leah*, without consulting with his father *Yaakov*. The act of moving

Yaakov's bed from the location that he had chosen it to be, without his permission, is considered to be such a grave sin that the *Torah* equates it to Reuvain cohabiting with his father's concubine. When Yaakov had blessed his children before his death, he said to Reuvain, "...impulsive as water you cannot be foremost, because you mounted your father's bed..." Consequently, Reuvain, because of the negative characteristic that he possessed, he had forfeited his birthright, the priesthood, and his leadership position as king.

Although Reuvain had forfeited his inalienable rights as the first born because of his impulsivity, he had learned from his loss a valuable lesson. He had understood the ramifications and consequences of impulsive behavior. Had Reuvain not interceded to prevent his brothers' decision to kill Yosef, there would not have been a Jewish people. The value of Reuvain's irretrievable loss brought about the ultimate result and accomplishment. There is a Jewish people, which is comprised of twelve tribes, because Reuvain had internalized with absolute clarity the consequence of his brothers' behavior. Thus, the Jewish people exist as G-d's nation because of Reuvain's initial failing.

## **G-d Does Not Abandon the Tzaddik**

*Torah*: Before Yosef was sold into slavery by his brothers they had cast him into a pit to die. They had believed that the objective of his tale bearing to their father was to discredit them in his eyes and ultimately bring about their destruction..

*Torah*: "They took him and cast him into the pit; the pit was empty, no water was in it."

*Gemara* in Tractate *Shabbos*: "If the *Torah* tells us that the pit was empty, is it not obvious that it did not contain water?"

The *Gemara* answers: "It is to infer that although the pit had no water, it did contain snakes and scorpions." Despite the fact that he was thrown into a snake pit, Yosef emerged unharmed because G-d had performed a miracle on his behalf. One would think that after witnessing their brother's miraculous emergence from the snake pit, it should have been a confirmation that Yosef was indeed devoutly righteous. His dreams were truly prophetic and not delusions of grandeur. However, Yosef's brothers seemed not to have been

impressed by his survival. They therefore sold him into slavery the moment the opportunity presented itself. Why did they not recognize that Yosef was indeed a tzaddik who had merited to be saved by G-d?

*Midrash*: Yosef's brothers were unaware that the pit in which they had placed him contained snakes and scorpions because they were hidden in the walls of the pit. Only Yosef himself was able to see them. They were therefore unaware of the miracle that had transpired on Yosef's behalf. After Yosef was taken out of the pit, his brothers sold him into slavery for twenty silver coins. The *Torah* attests to the fact that Yosef possessed exceptional beauty, intelligence, and capability. If Yosef was so unique in all of his qualities, why was such a gifted person sold for only twenty silver coins?

*Midrash*: When Yosef was put into the pit and had seen the snakes and scorpions he was traumatized to such a degree he became as white as a corpse. Thus, when he was removed from the pit, he did not have any semblance of anything of value. Therefore, he was sold for only a pittance. After Yosef was taken out of the pit, he was sold into slavery. The *Torah* describes the unusual merchandise and wares that were being transported by the merchants who had bought him as a slave. The verse states, "A caravan of Ishmaelites from Gilead, and their camels were bearing spices, and balsam, and birthwort..."

*Rashi* citing the *Midrash*: "Why did the *Torah* reveal the nature of the merchandise that was being transported - To make known the reward of the righteous. For it is not common for Arabs to transport anything but naphtha and foul smelling resins. But because Yosef was a tzaddik, G-d caused that the cargo being transported was spices that emitted a (pleasant) fragrance, so that he should not be harmed by the noxious odor." Yosef was being transported at that moment to live his life as a slave in a foreign location. How is experiencing pleasant aromas at this bleak moment considered to be a "reward" for him?

Initially Yosef believed that his dreams were prophetic visions that needed to be shared with his brothers. He believed that ultimately he would be the provider for his family and they would bow down to him because he would assume the role of benefactor. However, when Yosef was cast into the pit to die, he began to question

the efficacy of his visions. Perhaps he was mistaken – maybe they were in fact delusions of grandeur. G-d wanted to dispel this consideration from his mind and to communicate to him that he was not mistaken. His dreams would come to fruition. Consequently, G-d brought about a miracle for Yosef to understand that he should not despair. The miracle was not for his brothers to appreciate the fact that he was a tzaddik, but rather it was to confirm to Yosef that his dreams would come to fruition and G-d was with him

When Yosef was taken out of the pit sold to the Arab merchants who had put him on to the caravan, he immediately noticed that the usual foul smelling fuels, were not there. Rather, there were pleasant smelling spices. Yosef again understood that this was another communication from G-d that He was with him. The “reward of the righteous” that is mentioned by Chazal is not the pleasure of smelling something that is sweet; but rather, informing the tzaddik that he should not despair, because G-d is with him. Thus, despite the bleakness of the moment and with no understanding of the direction in which he was going, Yosef understood with certainty that ultimately this would lead to a positive conclusion.

Blessing of the righteous in the *Amidah* (Silent Prayer): “On the righteous, on the devout... Blessed are You Hashem, Mainstay and Assurance of the righteous.”

*Vilna Gaon*: G-d allows the tzaddik to have faith despite the trials and tribulations that he may face in his lifetime. Although the tzaddik is tested by G-d to a greater degree than anyone else, G-d Himself allows the tzaddik to see glimpses of the true reality of Divine Providence. Yosef had been greatly frightened by his experience in the snake pit; however, by allowing him to survive, He communicated to him that all would be good. After being removed from the pit, again G-d reiterated the communication by exposing him to the fragrant spices when he was sold to the Arabs, rather than exposing him to foul smelling odors. Yosef understood that although the present is uncertain, the future will reveal G-d’s plan for him.

## Yaakov’s Refusal to Be Consoled

*Torah*: After Yosef’s brothers had sold him into slavery, they had taken his tunic and dipped it into goat’s blood. They brought it to their father Yaakov and said, “We found this; identify (it), if you please:

Is it your son’s tunic or not?” Yaakov recognized it and said, “My son’s tunic! A savage beast devoured him! Yosef has surely been torn to bits!” Yaakov rent his garments, put on sackcloth and began to mourn and grieve for his son Yosef. Despite all the attempts of his children to console him, the *Torah* states, “He refused to be consoled.”

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: Since Yosef was in fact still alive, Yaakov could not be consoled because “one who is alive is not forgotten by the heart.”

*Gemara* in Tractate *Pesachim*: One of the gifts that G-d had given to humanity was the ability to forget one’s beloved after he passes away. If one would not be able to forget the pain of losing a loved one, it would be virtually impossible to survive. However, since Yosef was still alive (although it was unknown to Yaakov), Yaakov could not naturally forget him. However, it seems from the words of the text that Yaakov consciously “refused to be consoled.” His lack of ability to be consoled was a deliberate rejection of those who attempted to comfort him.

*Sforno*: “Yaakov did not want to hear words of consolation so as not to remove the feeling of worry in his heart.” Meaning, Yaakov rejected any attempts to console him so that he should not forget the worry in his heart. What was the worry in his heart that he refused to forget?

*Chazal*: Yaakov had known from G-d that if any of his children should die during his lifetime, he would be destined for eternal punishment in *geheimom*. If Yosef had been killed, it was an indication to Yaakov that he had failed in his spiritual objective and responsibility. He was to be the Patriarch to father the twelve tribes of G-d.

Without Yosef, there would be no Jewish people and consequently no future for existence. Yaakov refused to forget or be comforted because he internalized the tragic ramifications of Yosef’s death. He believed that since he had failed in his responsibility as Patriarch, he must repent and atone for his irreparable failing. The only way that Yaakov could consider the need to do proper repentance, was to maintain the tragic loss of Yosef in his state of consciousness.

King David in Psalms regarding his own personal sin: “My sin is continuously before me.” King David



never lost focus of his spiritual failing and therefore maintained an ongoing cognizance of the need to repent.

*Torah:* “Yaakov had said, ‘For I (Yaakov) will go down to the grave mourning for my son (Yosef).’ And his father bewailed him...”

*Rashi:* “And his father bewailed him” is referring to *Yitzchak*, our Patriarch, the father of *Yaakov*. *Yitzchak* cried on behalf of his son because he saw *Yaakov* in such distress and grief. However, *Yitzchak* did not mourn for *Yosef* himself because he was aware that he was actually alive.

*Sforno:* *Yitzchak* cried for his son because *Yaakov* was denied the ability to prophesize due his state of grief and mourning.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Bava Basra*: The Divine Presence only rests upon one who is in a state of joy and not in a state of melancholy. *Yitzchak* was pained not because *Yaakov* was suffering, but rather because *Yaakov* was denied the infinite value of G-d communicating to him during this period of time.

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: “Why is the portion concerning the separation of *Yehudah* from his brothers juxtaposed to the portion concerning the sale of *Yosef* and the subsequent grieving of *Yaakov* for his son? To teach us that *Yehudah* was no longer valued by his brothers, thus causing him to be ineffective. *Yehudah* was no longer seen as a leader among his brothers because he was rejected by them. They believed that *Yehudah* was the cause of their father’s distress and grief. They had said to *Yehudah*, ‘You told us that we should sell him (into slavery). Had you told us to return him to our father *Yaakov*, we would have listened to you.’” This rejection forced *Yehudah* to go away from his brothers.

The brothers of *Yosef* never imagined that his loss would have caused *Yaakov* to enter into an inconsolable state. They had believed that after time and proper consolation, his grief would pass. They did not understand that *Yaakov* would reject any degree of consolation, thus not allowing him to dismiss the worry in his heart. Only *Yaakov* could truly understand how it was to fail in establishing the eternal people, the tribes of G-d.

## **Yaakov’s Level of Accomplishment** (from *Vayishlach*)

When *Yaakov* was returning from the home of *Lavan*, he had sent agents to *Esav*, his brother with a communication stating, “I have sojourned with *Lavan* (*im Lavan gartie*) and lingered until now. I have acquired oxen and donkeys, sheep, servants, and maidservants...”

*Rashi:* The word “*gartie*” is numerically the equivalent of “*taryag*,” which corresponds to the 613 *mitzvos* of the *Torah*. *Yaakov* was communicating to *Esav* that although he had been associated for a period of twenty years with *Lavan*, his spirituality had not been diminished. He had remained spiritually unscathed despite the fact that the community of *Padan-Aram* was the antithesis of holiness.

*Reb Meir Simcha:* “If in fact *Yaakov* did possess camels as part of his wealth, as we see from the gift that he had sent the gift to *Esav*, why does the *Torah* not delineate among his wealth the camels? Why are only the oxen and donkeys mentioned?”

*Torah* in *Shemini*: In order for an animal to be classified as “kosher” it must have two signs. *Kosher* species of animal have split hooves and chew their cud. The *Torah* concludes, “In order to differentiate between what is impure and pure...” Based on the two identifying signs that are stated by the *Torah*, it is obvious and clear, which species are *kosher* and which are not. If so, then why does the *Torah* use the expression “to differentiate” between what is impure and pure? Seemingly, the term “discern” should be used regarding a context that is not so obvious and clear.

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: The *Torah* is addressing the difference between what is considered properly ritual slaughter and what is not. If a *kosher* species is slaughtered 50% it is considered to be a “carcass” and it is impure. If it is slaughtered even slightly more than 50% is considered to be a valid slaughter and is pure. It is in this area that one needs to “discern.” It is not regarding the difference between the ox and the donkey where the difference is obvious what is *kosher* and what is not.

*Reb Meir Simcha:* *Yaakov* specifically delineated the “ox and donkey” and not the camel because the camel possess one of the signs of being a *kosher* species (chews its cud). In order to communicate to



*Esav* that just as the ox is distinctively pure because it possesses two signs and the donkey is without question not kosher because it possesses none of the signs, so too is *Yaakov's* pristine spiritual condition clear and distinct.

*Yaakov's* spirituality had not been tainted to any degree. Although *Yaakov* had communicated to *Esav* that he observed all of the *mitzvos* in the house of *Lavan*, despite the evil influences, he wanted *Esav* to understand and appreciate that his reverence of G-d was not diminished to any degree. He was as removed from impurity as the status of the status of the ox has no relevance to the status of the donkey. By informing *Esav* of his untainted spiritual state, *Yaakov* was telling him that their father's blessing was still intact and thus effective. He was therefore not vulnerable to *Esav*.

When the agents that *Yaakov* had sent returned to him they had said, "We met with your brother, *Esav*." Meaning, although outwardly he presented himself as *Yaakov's* brother, it was important to understand and realize that he was still "*Esav*", who opposes *Yaakov's* existence.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Nidah*: When the fetus is in the womb, an angel teaches the child the *Torah* in its entirety. Before birth, the child is in a spiritual environment that is the equivalent of the world to come. Despite this fact, *Chazal* tell us that when *Yaakov* was in the womb of his mother *Rivka*, our Matriarch, when she would pass before the study hall of *Shem* and *Aiver*, he would bolt to try to escape his location. If the womb is the equivalent of the Holy of Holies, why would *Yaakov* want to leave it, if his teacher was an angel? It is because he shared the womb with his brother *Esav*. He needed to flee even from the Holy of Holies so that he should not be exposed to any level of impurity.



**Yad Avraham Institute**