



## YACHAD ISRAEL

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*Torah Tidbits is proud to share a dvar Torah from OU Israel's remarkable Yachad program! Thank you for all your outstanding work in providing for the special needs community throughout Israel.*

In this week's parsha, we read the meaningful declaration of Yehuda on behalf of his younger brother, Binyamin. "Ki Avdecha Arav Et HaNa'ar," "For your servant assumed responsibility for the boy..." Yehuda is willing to sacrifice his future to be a servant in place of Binyamin. Due to tremendous Hashgacha Pratit, Yehuda is unknowingly speaking to his brother Yosef. This situation stands as true testimony to the truth and sincerity in the brothers' words. From Yehuda's perspective, he is speaking to a powerful and rigid Egyptian leader as he speaks the truth, and the truth speaks.

Yosef hears this "Areivut", assumed responsibility, which leads to one of the sources in the Gemara (Bava Batra) for the Laws of Areivut. An "Areiv", a guarantor, is one who is "Mit'arev", in essence involves himself in a matter that technically isn't connected to him. For example in a loan, a guarantor is coming and taking responsibility for the one taking the loan. One who is glancing from the outside might ask, why would someone do such a thing? Is he looking for trouble? Why get involved in something that you don't need

to be involved in? Rav Akiva Kashtiel gives a beautiful explanation, that if the answer is not obvious as to why someone gets involved in something, it's because deep down inside - they truly are involved.

"Kol Yisrael Areivim Ze L'Ze." The Tanya describes all of Bnei Yisrael to have one Neshama divided by different bodies. This is a tremendous foundation that is said clearly in Yehuda's declaration, and when Yosef hears this - "V'lo Yachol Yosef L'Hita-pek." He couldn't hold back.

Each and everyone of us can identify with certain sects of society, things that they feel connected to and get involved in. We raise money, we donate, we volunteer in different ways that feel right. Whether it be Torah Learning, Outreach, Gemachs, Hachnasat Orchim, etc. We, as Jews, are super involved in one another. We assume responsibility, even when sometimes we don't have a direct connection. However, it is important to point out that often there are areas of Jewish involvement that can get less attention and perhaps we can improve in. "It's not my thing" "It's not my responsibility." "It's for the young single volunteers." "I don't know enough." Particularly in the field of inclusion for people with disabilities, caring for the elderly, mental health advocacy and more. It is so important to look within ourselves, and think - am I accessing my inner Yehuda? Am I taking responsibility for Klal Yisrael

where I can? Can I do better? Can I show more support? Do I really care about this for Klal Yisrael? Or Chas Vishalom, am I making the mistake of the brothers in Parshat Vayeshev, where I hear the cries of my brother and choose to walk away.

Our chachamim tell us that the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash was due to a lacking in “Areivut Hadadit.” In Sefer Yechezkel (9) Hashem tells Gavriel to warn the Older Tzadikim, as they were the first who were going to be punished. Rav Mordechai Eliyahu explains that these big tzadikim kept all of the torah, from Alef to Tav, A to Z. However, they did not do all that was in their ability to make a difference and impact Klal Yisrael. Tzidkiyahu, who according to his name was a tzadik, yet did wrong in the eyes of Hashem. The gemara explains that he didn’t protest his guards who chased after Yirmiyahu. He did not protest the rich who did not free their slaves. He didn’t take responsibility for the spiritual state of Am Yisrael, and the result was the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash.

From Yehuda, we can learn so much about learning from our mistakes, taking responsibility for ourselves and for others in Klal Yisrael. We learn what it means to assume responsibility, and get involved even when technically we don’t need to be. Each of us is capable of this, perhaps one of the many reasons we identify as “Yehudim”, from Yehuda’s name. We can each take one more step in these directions that perhaps are less comfortable and be more involved in areas of society that truthfully deep down, we do care about and do want to see improvement in. By doing so, may we

all merit in coming closer to one another - bringing Nachat to Hashem and bringing the Geula closer, B’mheira B’yamenu - Amen! ■

Inclusion knows no bounds. That’s why Yachad is proud to have a chapter in the eternal Jewish homeland. Yachad Israel covers the gamut of inclusive programming. Out of the OU Israel Center and Harel (in Bet Shemesh), we offer weekly hangouts, Relationship Building Courses, chuggim, trips, Shabbatons, family support groups and more to Anglos and Israelis looking for inclusive programming.

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**Tuesday, December 7** - Rabbi Breitowitz’s shiur was sponsored by **Shimshon Granek** in memory of his father **ז"ל יעקב גראניק ז"ל** yahrzeit is ג' טבת, Dec 7

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**Monday, December 13** - Pearl Borow’s shiur is sponsored by **Vivien and Nechemia Kleinman** in memory of **Lori and Bernard Levmore z”l**

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