



Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Yosef Bronstein Parashat Vayigash / פרשת ויגש 5779

Crying for Each Other

After Yosef reveals himself to the brothers, the Torah tells us that Yosef and Binyamin fell on each other's necks and cried.¹ Rashi explains that in addition to the natural rush of emotions, their tears had a deeper component:²

And he fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and wept: for the two sanctuaries which were destined to be in Binyamin's territory and would ultimately be destroyed
and Binyamin wept on his neck: for the Tabernacle of Shiloh, which was destined to be in Yosef's territory yet would ultimately be destroyed.

Why were they crying at this point about the future destruction of the *Beit HaMikdash*?

Rav Dov Levanon³ explains that they understood the unfortunate relevance of the reason that the *Beit HaMikdash* was destroyed. Yosef and Binyamin were separated for twenty years due to the hatred of the other brothers. They saw the personal and familial destruction that could arise from such strife. And they saw that their children – the Jewish people – would make the same mistake in the future and it would lead to the destruction of Yerushalayim and the Beit HaMikdash.

Rav Levanon suggests that it was for this reason that they each cried for each other's loss. By Yosef focusing on Binyamin's pain and vice-versa, they were teaching future generations that

¹ Bereishit 45:14.

² Rashi, *ibid*. Translation from Chabad.org.

³ Available at <https://www.yeshiva.org.il/midrash/6446>.



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siblings can put each other before themselves and be sensitive to the other's feelings. We do not have to repeat the mistake of selling Yosef.

This theme of connectivity among brothers is the key criteria necessary for God to rest His presence in Yerushalayim. The midrash records that the Beit HaMikdash was mainly in the land of Binyamin as he was the only brother who was not involved in the sale of Yosef.⁴ Similarly, the Gemara says that the rest of the Beit HaMikdash was in the tribe of Yehuda due to his merit for protecting Binyamin. It is brotherly love and unity that brings God down into our holy city.⁵

Perhaps we can suggest that Yosef and Binyamin received this sensitivity to the pain of others from their mother, Rachel. She is the paradigm of sacrificing for the sake of others as she willingly let her sister Leah marry Yaakov rather than embarrass her. Therefore, she merits to be the one whose prayers for her children will finally be answered and God will bring her children back to Yerushalayim. Her direct children, Yosef and Binyamin, are therefore the ones who teach us to always show care and concern for another Jew.

⁴ Yalkut Shimoni Devarim, remez 957.

⁵ Yoma 12a.