

Weekly Vort - וַיֵּשֶׁב

Intro: This week's Parsha, **וַיֵּשֶׁב**, begins like this:

Bereshit 37:1

וַיֵּשֶׁב	יַעֲקֹב	בְּאֶרֶץ	מִגְוֵרֵי	אָבִיו	בְּאֶרֶץ	כְּנָעַן

After many challenges—fleeing from Esav, living with Lavan, making peace with Esav, and the passing of Rochel—**וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב**, Yaakov settles in the land of Canaan.

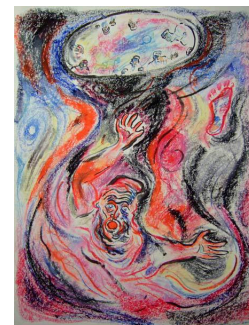
Rashi comments on these words:



וַיֵּשֶׁב, בְּקֵשׁ יַעֲקֹב לֵישֵׁב בְּשֵׁלְוָה, קָפַז עָלָיו רָגֹזוֹ שֶׁל יוֹסֵף

Yaakov requested to dwell in peace, when the troubles with Yosef sprang upon him.

It seems that Yaakov was hardly able to live at ease, for soon his sons threw Yoseph in a pit, sold him into a slavery, and told Yaakov he was eaten by a wild animal.



Question: To the requests of the Tzaddikim Hashem always listens, so Yaakov's desire to live in peace must have been fulfilled. How could Yoseph going down to Egypt actually be a part of **לֵישֵׁב בְּשֵׁלְוָה**, Yaakov dwelling in peace?

Answer:

One Answer: There are different levels of peace. One level comes when everything around a person is calm and comfortable. This was Yaakov's peace when he lived in Eretz Yisrael, the Holy Land.



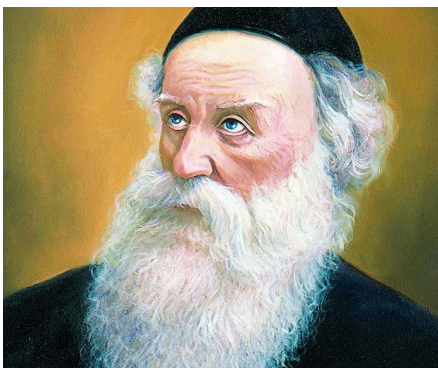
A greater level of peace comes when a person breaks through a barrier to achieve peace. That's what happened when the "troubles with Yosef" began, leading Yaakov and his family down to Mitzrayim—the lowest, most unholy place in the world.

Amazingly, the Torah tells us that the seventeen years Yaakov lived in Egypt were the best of his life. This shows a deeper level of **לִישׁב בְּשֵׁלֶוָה**—not peace that comes from good surroundings but peace that comes from transforming a dark place into a holy one. That kind of peace is **לְמַעַל מִן הַטֶּבַע**—beyond nature—because it comes from not from outside conditions but through the power of a person's G-dly soul.

Lesson: Anyone can be happy in a perfect environment, but true peace comes when a person transforms a difficult situation into a positive one. This is the greatest achievement!

Gematria: Yosef was ____ when he was sold into slavery. Yaakov lived the best ____ years of his life in Egypt. What is the Gematria of the word **טוב**?

This shows us all that all that happened to Yoseph was really for the _____



Class Connection: This week we learned about Yud Tet Kislev, the liberation of the Alter Rebbe from Russian prison. He used this opportunity to teach more fully and widely the inner wisdom of the Torah, thereby transforming a tough situation into a holy mission!

Discussion Question: Have you ever had in your life a **יְרִידָה לְצוּרָה עֲלֵיָהּ**, “going down in order to go up?” When, and how did you transform the tough into Tov?