

When one of them opened his sack...he saw his money and behold--it was in the mouth of his sack. (42:27)

Rashi comments that the “*echad*,” the individual who opened his sack and found the money, was Levi. *Abarbanel* says that it was by design that Levi found the money first. Yosef had Levi’s money placed by the top of his sack, so that he would be the first to discover the money. Since he was the one most responsible for Yosef’s sale into slavery, the distress he experienced would provide atonement for his sin. In any event, the one who found the money first would be the one to impose a feeling of fear and remorse upon the rest of the brothers. **Horav Shlomo Carlebach, Shlita**, remarks that it was necessary for Levi to be that one to engender fear of Hashem and fear of sin among the brothers. Why? What made Levi more suitable for this position of leadership?

Horav Carlebach suggests that the person who found the money first should be someone who possessed such qualities that he would not interpret finding the money as mere coincidence. It should be someone who distinguished himself from his brothers in his acute ability to pierce through the ambiguity and see the workings of Hashem. It should be someone who, after recognizing the truth, could also teach and transmit it to others. This individual would carry the responsibility to inspire his brothers to see the Hand of Hashem, weaving a tapestry of events whose focus it was to educate and imbue them with the truth.

Levi was the *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar, who was acutely aware of Hashem’s methods. He would be able to inspire his brothers to comprehend the truth. This is why Yaakov *Avinu* singled out Levi to be the one to fight the Greeks. It was Levi’s descendants, the *Chashmonaim*, who rose up against their oppressors and miraculously overwhelmed them. Indeed, the *Midrash* says that by their very nature, *Shevet Levi* were to be the nemesis of the *Yevanim*, Greeks. They are the third tribe in birth; Yavan is third of the four exiles to whom we are to be subjected. Each one has three letters to their name. Yavan is great in number, while Levi’s population is insignificant in comparison. Yaakov blessed the “few” to triumph over the “many.” This *Midrash* begs elucidation. One would think that the tribe whose goal it is to study in the *Bais Hamedrash* would not be singled out to battle Yavan. Second, what is the significance of “*rabim b’yad me’atim*,” “many in the hands of few?” It seems that this concept is an inherent component in the triumph over Yavan.

Horav Carlebach cites the **Maharal** who explains the *pasuk* in *Yirmiyah 5*, where the *Navi* compares each of the four nations that will persecute us to a specific animal. Yavan is compared to a *na’mer*, a tiger/leopard. The tiger symbolizes *chutzpah*, brazenness and daring. With audacity, the Greeks sought to destroy our *Torah* and crush our pride in being Jewish. They denied anything which they could not rationalize. The concept of a nation created in the *tzelem Elokim*, image of G-d, was ludicrous to them because they could not understand it. The eternity of *Am Yisrael*, *Torah min Hashomayim*, a *Torah* that comes from Heaven, were concepts which they looked down upon with disdain and derision. This is *chachmas Yevanis*, the philosophy and

wisdom of Greece. Everything is in the mind, everything must be analyzed and understood. There is no room for faith. They denied everything which was not rationally comprehensible. They had no place for the spirit. Is there greater *chutzpah* than that represented by such a philosophy?

The only way to fight *chutzpah* is with *chutzpah*. Yehudah ben Teimah says, "*Be bold as a leopard to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven.*" There are times when we refrain from performing a *mitzvah* properly, when we regress in our *mitzvah* observance, out of fear of what "others" might say. This type of behavior bespeaks weakness. We must be "brazen" in our observance, proud of our Jewishness, enthusiastic to serve the Almighty.

Shevet Levi are the ones who devoted themselves to *Torah* study. They are the ones whose commitment to Hashem, His *Torah* and *mitzvos*, was exemplary. They symbolize pride, they personify strength; they are the truly bold ones. Their conviction is above rationale; their commitment is without embellishment. They do what must be done. They do not answer to anyone, but to Hashem. Yaakov *Avinu* knew that in order to fight Yavan, one does not need physical prowess, horses and weaponry. Inner strength will triumph over the Greeks. Numbers will not succeed in battle. A committed group of even a "few" Jews will overwhelm the "many." *Shevet Levi* does not battle according to the laws of nature. They employ the power vested in them by the Almighty. They fear no man, no philosophy, and no religion. They are armed with the truth--a weapon which renders their antagonists powerless. Yosef understood what Yaakov had long before perceived: If anyone could evoke the boldness and courage it would take to repent, it was -- and has always been--*Shevet Levi*--the guardians of the *Torah*.