

"And Yosef sustained his father and his brothers... And they brought their cattle unto Yosef, and Yosef gave them bread . . . and he provided them with bread." (47:12,17)

Rashi understands the word *okvbhu* to mean "he led (them)." He thus interprets the verse, "Yosef controlled the Egyptians by means of the bread which he gave them." This contrasts to the word *okfkfhu*, "he sustained (them)," which is emphasized regarding Yosef's brothers. *Horav Z. Sorotzkin z.t.l.* explains the contrasting choice of words. While *okfkfhu* means simply "to sustain," *okvbhu* also means "to manage" or "to provide."

The Jew will not allow himself to be sold in exchange for bread. His commitment to *Torah* and *Yidishkeit* is resolute. Only Eisav was prepared to sell his birthright and his soul for a bowl of lentil soup. Although a hungry Jew may be "sustained" by another's bread, he cannot be manipulated by it. The Egyptians, however, accepted their grandfather Eisav's orientation. They were willing to sacrifice their self-respect by selling their conscience for a slice of bread during the Egyptian famine. Indeed, the Egyptians were even willing to undergo circumcision in order to receive food. Circumcision as a spiritual development was totally antithetical to the Egyptian mindset. They agreed to circumcision in order to satisfy their hunger.

Horav Sorotzkin applied this idea during a fundraising effort on behalf of the *Vaad Ha'Yeshivos* in *Eretz Yisrael*. A number of people were reluctant to donate on behalf of this cause, citing the ultra traditional orientation of some of the *yeshivos*. They subsequently went on to stipulate that if the *yeshivos* would "relax" their philosophy, they would offer their encouragement and support.

Horav Sorotzkin responded in the following manner: The *Torah* uses two words to describe their provision of food. The word *kfkfk* is used when Yosef feeds his family, while the word *kvbk* is used when he is feeding Egyptians. We feed our brothers unconditionally. They are supported with love, without limitations. When providing for a stranger, however, one may make stipulations for his support. The manner in which one individual supports another person indicates the nature of his relationship with him. If there are "strings attached" to his support, then he is no friend. *Horav Sorotzkin* turned to the people and closed his remarks, saying, "Decide among yourselves your attitude towards the *Yeshiva* students. Are they your brothers, or are they strangers?"