

## **"And the keeper of the prison put in Yosef's hand all the prisoners... and whatever they did there he was the doer of it." (39:22)**

The *pasuk* implies that Yosef initiated everything that was accomplished by the prisoners. The redundancy of the text begs explanation. Obviously, everything they did he would do. *Horav Moshe Yechiel Epstein, z.l.*, interprets this *pasuk* homiletically. Yosef was teaching us a profound lesson in *avodas Hashem*, serving the Almighty. Yosef was not satisfied with the fact that he upheld all of the *mitzvos*. He was not complacent with his own *mitzvah* observance. He was driven to do more, to correct and complete what others had either denigrated or discarded. Yosef was not content simply to abstain from transgressing any *aveiros*, sins; rather, he further sought to perform *mitzvos* which could deflect the effects of the *aveiros* of others. Yosef's name is derived from the Hebrew word "to add." Yosef added on to his own *mitzvah* observance; he was constantly "doing" good deeds.

Yosef reflected upon the "doings" of the evil Egyptians, and he countered their actions with his *mitzvos*. For "whatever they did," he would do the opposite. His positive action in performing *mitzvos* filled a void left by the behavior of others.