

## For it was to be a provider that Hashem sent me ahead of you. (45:5)

The above *pasuk* should be every Jew's rallying cry upon confronting the various vicissitudes of life. Travail, challenge, obstacles, speed bumps – however one seeks to refer to them – they happen, but we must remember they happen for a reason which only Hashem knows. The mere fact that we accept that everything that takes place is Divinely dispatched and serves a Heavenly purpose, which is inherently good, should be sufficient balm for the pain and anxiety it leaves in its wake. We are, however, only human. As a result, while we are in the midst of the maelstrom of challenge, we often lose sight of its Heavenly Source. This is what Yosef intimated to his brothers: "It was Hashem – not you – Who sent me here. It was His purpose to have me here as a provider to facilitate your eventual arrival. It was destined to happen. We were going to come down to Egypt regardless. Hashem just made it easier for us."

For twenty-two years Yaakov *Avinu* grieved for his precious Yosef. No one should experience the pain of mourning a child. It was all part of Hashem's plan. Yaakov's years mitigated the cumulative pain that his children would have endured had they been subjected to descend to Egypt in iron fetters as slaves. Instead, they went down as honored guests of the viceroy and Pharaoh of Egypt. We simply do not know Hashem's purpose, but the mere fact that we know that it comes from Hashem should in and of itself serve as an agent to ameliorate the pain. Everyone has a story of Divine Providence, in which what he thought was travail was actually the precursor to a happy, joyous ending. The following story reinforces this idea and will, thus, inspire those who think about its message to realize, *Ki l'michyah shlachani Hashem lifneichem*, "For it was to be a provider that Hashem sent me ahead of you."

One evening, *Reb Shlomo Pinchas Schwimmer*, a resident of Monroe, N.Y., noticed a teenager wandering the streets. Clearly, the boy was lost and was finding it difficult to navigate the streets. *Reb Shlomo Pinchas* pulled over and asked, "Can I help you get to your destination?" The boy replied, "I live in Monsey, where I attend *yeshivah*. During the summer, my *yeshivah* moves to a summer camp situated at 441 Sckunemunk Rd. I went to Monsey to see a doctor concerning the pain I have been experiencing in my arms. I took a taxi back to camp. However, the driver could not locate 441, so he dropped me off at the corner of Sckunemunk and Berditchev – assuming that it was a short walk to the camp. I have been walking around looking for 441 and have not been successful."

*Reb Shlomo Pinchas* said, "I will be happy to drive you there." The problem was that 441 did not appear on his GPS. After a few moments of searching, he came to the conclusion that Sckunemunk is a very long street, and 441 is situated in another village past the Monroe line. They began to drive, but, once again, they could not locate 441. Apparently, as is not uncommon in small, rural villages, the address might be there, but not always in plain sight.

The boy remembered a landmark, “Every morning, we use the *mikvah* on Koritz Street. If you can take me there, I know a shortcut to the camp. They drove to Koritz Street where the boy showed *Reb Shlomo Pinchas* how to get to the camp. This was an area to which he had never been. Indeed, he was impressed by the size of the camp’s old, large building and the beautiful private lake in the background. He now knew how to get to 441 Sckunemunk. The two parted, with the boy thanking *Reb Shlomo Pinchas* for the time he spent accompanying him to his destination. It was the type of *chesed*, act of kindness, in its complete, unvarnished form. Accompanying someone who is lost is much more beneficial than giving him directions and expecting him to find his destination on his own.

The next day, the *yeshivah* boys went boating on the lake. One of the boats, carrying four students, turned over. Three students swam to shore. One boy was unable to make it to shore. *Hatzalah* of Monroe, which was closest to the area, received the call to come quickly to 441 Sckunemunk. The problem was that the *Hatzalah* volunteers could not locate 441. *Reb Shlomo Pinchas*, who is a member of *Hatzalah*, was fortunately able to direct the volunteers who arrived just in time to save the boy’s life. The fact that the previous evening *Reb Shlomo Pinchas* had performed a *chesed* for a lost boy enabled him to help save a life the following day. Did I mention the identity of the boy? He was the same boy whom *Reb Shlomo Pinchas* helped the night before. Since he still had pain in his arms, he was unable to swim ashore. A few minutes later, and *chas v’shalom*, Heaven forbid, *Hatzalah* would have been too late.

We often think that something is bad; the cards are stacked against us. Hashem does only good. We are not able to see the large picture until we retrospect and look through the lens of hindsight. The combination of the taxi driver’s mistake, dropping the boy off in the wrong place, and a *Yid’s* incredible act of kindness proved to be quite beneficial for the boy. Hashem was setting the stage for the next day’s salvation.