

However, when they related to him all the words that Yosef had spoken to them, and he saw the wagons that Yosef had sent to transport him, then the spirit of their father Yaakov was revived. (45:27)

It seems as if the brothers were now conveying something new to Yaakov *Avinu*. Apparently, earlier when they had told him, *Ode Yosef cha!* – “Yosef is still alive, and he is the ruler over the land of Egypt” (45:26), this news did not catalyze as strong a reaction as their relating to him **all** that Yosef had actually told them. Furthermore, why is it that **now** – after hearing what Yosef had said – Yaakov suddenly noticed the wagons sent by Yosef? It is not as if the wagons were not there earlier. Last, what is the meaning of the phrase, “Then the spirit of Yaakov was revived”? What took place “then” that so altered Yaakov’s perception?

Horav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, zl, notes that Yosef *HaTzaddik* went through some extremely traumatic spiritual and physical challenges in his life. Pharaoh’s dungeons housed some of the country’s most ruthless criminals. Additionally, the physical conditions left much to be desired. Overcoming the daily blandishments of Potifar’s wife was no simple task either. Loneliness was his constant “companion.” How did he survive? What superhuman forces within Yosef gave him the ability to confront evil, loneliness, debauchery, spiritual and physical deprivation, to emerge triumphant – as righteous as before? The *Rosh Yeshivah* suggests that, upon perusing the text, one notes that two unique forces played an integral role in Yosef’s success.

First, was Yosef’s *emunah*. His unabiding faith in the Almighty, his acute awareness that *Ein ode milvado*, “There is no other (power) than He,” fortified him with trust in Hashem. Yosef knew that there was no other power to whom he could turn; no one else who could help him. It was either Hashem or nothing! Every time Yosef spoke, he acknowledged that Hashem is the **only** source of salvation and success – and that everything that He does is for the good.

Second, Yosef learned Torah – constantly. His toiling in the pathways of Torah gave him insight, fortitude and courage. With faith fortified by Torah, Yosef could take on the life challenges that confronted him.

We now understand why it was **after** Yaakov heard about Yosef’s behavior and manner of speech, and then saw the wagons that he became a believer. Yosef had made it! He had survived the ordeals of the past twenty-two years. At first, when he heard that Yosef was alive, Yaakov was quite frightened. There was no way that Yosef’s original spiritual plateau could have survived the challenges he faced from Egyptian culture and society. Moreover, his years in the Egyptian dungeons were truly the “pits.” When his sons related the manner in which Yosef had expressed himself – how he spoke about Hashem – Yaakov’s heart began to beat rapidly. Maybe, he could dare to have hope. Perchance, Yosef did survive. When he saw the wagons, which *Rashi* says

were an allusion to the *Eglah Arufah*, Axed Heifer – the last topic Yaakov had studied with Yosef –the Patriarch’s spirit was Indeed, his son had not forgotten his learning. He still bonded with the Torah through study and practice. Yes, Yosef was truly alive – in the spiritual sense. Certainly, Yaakov cared about Yosef’s physical being, but it was his spiritual well-being that concerned him most. He could now rest assured.