

Yisrael saw the great hand that Hashem inflicted upon Egypt. (14:31)

“Great hand” is explained by the *Chafetz Chaim*, זי, as far-reaching. At times, years could go by before we see the great hand. Things happen; some (apparently) positive, and others which appear to be negative. We do not understand why, but we maintain our faith that these are not haphazard occurrences. Everything is a piece in Hashem’s Divine Plan; everything has its assigned place. When we will be privy to the complete big picture, we will see with clarity how everything fits neatly into the puzzle of reality.

Klal Yisrael suffered cruel and bitter persecution at the hand of the Egyptians. Surely, they must have had questions during those 210 years of servitude. They waited 210 years to see their oppressors perish in the Red Sea, while they were spared in the greatest miracle of all time. We, too, have questions, but we wait patiently for that glorious day when they will all be answered, when we will see the great hand of Hashem. What keeps us going? What preserves our faith? The great hand. The knowledge that, at times, the path to the explanation is a long one, and, until we reach the end of the road we will really not understand. In retrospect, we understand that everything has taken place at the perfect time.

Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita, relates the story of Reuven and Shimon (fictitious names), who were the best of friends. They both took an accounting course and completed it successfully. Reuven immediately landed a job at a company and did well there over the years. At one point, the company was in the market to fill another accounting position. Reuven mentioned the name of his good friend, who eventually impressed his boss so much that he was hired.

Years went by with Reuven and Shimon growing in stature at the company. When the position of director opened up, they both submitted their resumes – since such a prestigious position would help ease the financial challenges each one had endured as their individual families grew. Indeed, the director’s position paid over three times what they were presently earning.

Since Reuven had seniority, he was certain that he would be selected for the position. How shocked and dismayed he was when Shimon was picked for the position over him. The dismay soon turned to anger – first at management, and then at Shimon, who, through no fault of his own, had become his competitor. Reuven was upset, but he internalized his feelings. He could have lashed out, but he kept it to himself. Nights went by that he did not sleep. Many a dinner with his wife and children was disrupted by these negative internal feelings, but, to the best that he was able, he shored up his faith in Hashem, trusting that eventually things would smooth themselves out. After all, whatever comes from Hashem has to be good. We might not see it right away, but, eventually, it all comes together.

Time does not stop for anyone. Reuven’s children grew up, and his oldest son was now of

marriageable age. He had an enviable reputation both as a scholar and a *yarei Shomayim*, G-d-fearing. A *shadchan*, marriage broker, approached Reuven and suggested a *shidduch* with an outstanding young woman, whose reputation appeared to be a perfect fit. The *shadchan* added that he had taken the liberty of mentioning the boy's name to the girl's family, and they were very receptive, to the point that they are prepared to give the "couple" a four-room apartment in Bnei Brak.

Reuven seemed fine about the whole thing until he enquired regarding the girl's family. When he heard that it was none other than his old friend, Shimon, he was floored. The *shadchan* reiterated that the girl's father was ready to give his entire savings to have such a fine young man as a son-in-law.

A few weeks later Reuven and Shimon – once best friends – now celebrated the engagement of their children. Now, let us ask ourselves: What would have happened had Reuven lost his cool and lashed out against Shimon when he was appointed director of the firm? Both Reuven and Shimon would have lost out, since the *shidduch* probably would not have materialized. Patience, forbearance, silence in the knowledge that we are all part of Hashem's Divine Plan proved determinative. Who understands the inspired life of a boy growing up in a home knowing that his father accepts Divine decree with complete equanimity?