

And they rushed him from the dungeon. (41:14)

Yosef is imprisoned in an Egyptian dungeon – with no realistic hope of being released. He needs Hashem to provide him with a miracle. Suddenly the door is opened, guards enter and lift him off the floor. The people quickly give him a haircut and a new set of clothes. He does not have a moment to comprehend what is occurring. Before he realizes what is happening, he is presented to Pharaoh. Yosef had no preparation whatsoever for that moment in which Pharaoh said to him, “I hear that you are good at interpreting dreams. I want you to listen to my dreams and give me the correct interpretation.” Yosef’s immediate reply was: “It is not about me. Everything I say comes from G-d.” Imagine any one of us being awakened from a deep sleep, would that be our immediate response? Yosef conveyed what was in his heart, what he thought about all the time. At no juncture was he separated from Hashem.

Horav Yaakov Neiman, zl, explains that this was Yosef. *Shem Shomayim shagur b’piv*, “The name of Heaven was fluent in his mouth” (*Rashi* Ibid. 39:3). He was completely attached to the Almighty. Thus, his response to Pharaoh was spontaneous. It is related (*He’emanti Va’Adabeirah*) that the venerable *Mashgiach* of Mir, *Horav Yeruchem Levovitz, zl*, was once traveling by train. He was holding his gloves loosely in his hand, when one of the gloves flew out the open window. *Rav Yeruchem’s immediate* reaction was to fling the other glove out of the window. Why? This way, in case someone were to discover the glove, he would find its pair – thus providing him with a pair of gloves. After all, what good is one glove? This is the reaction of an individual who always thinks of others. No *gam zu l’tovah*, or it should be a *kaparah*; just, “How can I help another person?” Our spontaneous reactions define who we are and what we think about. A person’s essence comes to the fore when he does not have the luxury of time to prepare, to think, to mull over a situation and issue a proper (politically correct) response. The real person is manifest when he is up against the wall, and he needs to produce a spontaneous reaction.

A distinguished *Rav* delivered a lecture at one of the seminaries in *Eretz Yisrael*. He commenced his lecture with a question: “I will state one word, and you will give me your immediate reaction to that word. (In other words, “What does that word invoke you to think about?”). The first word was *echad*, one. The common response was “two.” The next word was *abba*, father, which evoked the response of *ima*, mother. The *Rav* noted their replies and explained to them the actual replies he had hoped they would provide. The word *echad* should have been an immediate correlation to Hashem, Who is truly the only “one.” *Abba*, father, should have elicited *Avinu She’ba’Shomayim*; “Our Heavenly Father.” How one instinctively responds demonstrates what is on his mind and his line of thinking, which, for the most part, reflects his identity.