



Torah Reflections: Conversations on the Weekly Parsha  
Parshat Vayeshev 5785 – Success

Integrating Torah into one's life through reflection and conversation can be an incredibly fun and engaging experience. It's a journey of discovery, where ancient wisdom and timeless teachings come to life in our daily experiences. Through reflection, we have the opportunity to dive deep into the rich tapestry of Torah, extracting profound insights and lessons that resonate with our modern lives. The joy lies in the 'aha' moments, those instances when a Torah verse or story suddenly connects with our personal challenges, aspirations, and values. And when we engage in conversations about Torah with others, it becomes an interactive exploration, where diverse perspectives and interpretations enhance our understanding. These dialogues often spark excitement and intellectual curiosity, making the learning process both enjoyable and fulfilling. Torah becomes a vibrant and dynamic part of our lives, offering not just guidance but also a source of endless fascination, connection, and growth.

NOTE: Don't feel obligated to go through every source or answer all the questions—unless you want to. Even one source, or one question will give you plenty of material for discussion and meditation. Enjoy this!

### Some Thoughts from the Parsha

The Torah describes Joseph as a *matzliach*, a man who was “successful” or “prosperous,” achieving his aims and purposes. However, the story of Joseph reveals a deeper truth about the nature of success: it is not the result of human effort alone but stems ultimately from G-d's blessing.

Potiphar, Joseph's Egyptian master, recognized this when he observed that “the L-RD was with him” (as opposed to, “he does great work”). Rashi explains that Potiphar discerned G-d's Presence because Joseph constantly invoked the name of Heaven. The Maharal expands on this, noting that Joseph continually prayed, demonstrating his reliance on Divine Assistance in all he did. Later, even in prison, Joseph's success was again attributed to G-d, showing that prosperity and accomplishment come from a Higher Source.

For Noahides, this lesson holds universal relevance. In a world that often equates hard work with guaranteed results, Joseph's story reminds us that our efforts must be coupled with acknowledgment of G-d's role. It's not about abandoning effort—after all, human action is essential—but about understanding that the ultimate outcomes are in G-d's hands.

Joseph's example also teaches us to shift our focus from the pressure of results to the value of process. When we live with an awareness of G-d's presence, as Joseph did, even our smallest efforts become meaningful. Phrases like “G-d willing” or “with G-d's help” are more than colloquial expressions; they reflect an attitude of humility and gratitude, reminding us of our dependence on the Source of all success. This mindset can allow us to relax into a basic faith in Hashem and engage in our endeavors wholeheartedly. We are then liberated from undue pressure and are able to embrace life's processes with faith and trust. By keeping G-d's name on our lips and aligning our actions with His will, we open ourselves to true prosperity—spiritual and material—guided by His Blessings.

Now, reflect on the following questions:



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1. How can you balance the effort you put into achieving your goals with a sense of reliance on G-d for the results?
2. Do you find yourself placing pressure on yourself or others to succeed? How might shifting to a process-oriented perspective bring greater peace and fulfillment?
3. Joseph constantly invoked the name of Heaven, even in difficult circumstances. How can you bring more prayer and gratitude into your daily life?
4. What does it mean to you personally that success ultimately comes from G-d, not solely from human effort? How does this perspective affect the way you approach challenges?
5. How can you model and encourage this understanding of success for your loved ones, emphasizing faith and trust over results?

Shabbat Shalom!