

# Dvar Torah for Parshat VaYigash

Based on *Likutey Halakhot, Hashkamat HaBoker 1*

In memory of Moshe Tzvi ben Shmuel Yoel (29 Kislev 5762)

"He soul his bound up with his; when he sees that [he] is not there, he will die" (*Genesis* 44:30-31).

There are times when life is blacker than black, when it seems that the sun has set forever, never to rise again.

The death of a loved one is one of those times. When someone we know dies, it seems as if not only is his future accessibility to us gone, but that their past has evaporated as well. All the loved one stood for, all that he taught by word and example, seems to have been nothing more than a dream.

It is a such a time in a person's life that we are called upon to perform the *chessed* (kindness) of *nichum aveilim* (comforting the mourners). Comforting a mourner does not mean diverting his attention from what has happened. It means helping him to realize that the *niftar* (colloquially, the departed) did not live in vain.

So, we come. Those who knew the *niftar* tell of any *nekudah tovah* (good point) that he had; Torah that he shared with others, lessons in life that he gave, and the kindnesses that he performed. Those who did not know the *niftar* help the mourner to search and find points he couldn't recall on his own. In this way a warm smile or friendly gesture from a quarter-century ago suddenly shines anew. The mourner can feel a new day approaching and on his own begin again to thank and bless Hashem (God) for His many kindnesses (*Hashkamat HaBoker* 1:11).

Each *nekudah tovah*, like all true good, is a bit of Godliness (ibid. :2). Each *nekudah tovah*—even one from long, long ago—has permanence and is eternal, like God Himself. The mourner is comforted because the *niftar* has left a lasting impression.

May we all soon be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and live to see the day when God will wipe away the tears from every face (*Isaiah* 25:8). Amen.

*agutn Shabbos!*  
*Shabbat Shalom!*

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