

Parshat HaShavu'ah

ויגש

VAYIGASH

DECEMBER 22, 2012

ט' טבת תשע"ג

A PUBLICATION OF

The Weinbaum  
Yeshiva  
High School  
INSPIRE & CHALLENGE

Ashreinu

חלקינו מה טוב

Enriching and Enhancing Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

Candle Lighting

5:16

S"Z Kriat Shema

9:41

Sunset

5:35

Motzei  
Shabbat

6:13

RABBI MOSHE SCHOCHET 1, 4

ARIEL BUGAY ('15) 2

ALANA REICHENBERG ('13) 2

MOSHE LEVENSON ('14) 3

MICHALI MAZOR ('15) 3-4

## AN HONEST MISTAKE

### RABBI MOSHE SCHOCHET

One of the most famous quotes from the entire Torah can be found in this week's parsha. Once Yosef can no longer stand to keep his secret from his brothers, he asks his servants to leave the room and proceeds to reveal who he is. He declares: "אני יוסף העוד אבי חי"—"I am Yosef, is my father still alive?"

On the surface, this seems to be an appropriate question. Yosef would like to see his beloved father before he dies and therefore asks about his well-being. However, the *בית הלוי* points out that Yosef's inquiry is extremely difficult to understand. The brothers have not returned back to their father's house since the last time Yosef has interacted with them. While they were on their way home Binyamin was caught with the goblet and they were immediately taken back to מצרים. If this is in fact true, then why is Yosef asking about his father when he knows that his brothers do not have any new information?

The *בית הלוי* explains that Yosef is not asking whether or not his father is alive. Rather, he is responding to what Yehuda has said. When Yosef informs his brothers that he is going to enslave Binyamin for having "stolen" the goblet, Yehuda explains that ultimately this will result in the death of their father. Yosef hears what Yehuda says, and he responds by saying—"I am Yosef, is my father still alive?" The *בית הלוי* explains what Yosef is really saying: "You are talking to Yosef, remember me? Your brother whom you sold? When you sold me, you did not care about our father. Is he still alive from that traumatic episode? If so, then your concern now about how Yaakov will go on without Binyamin is unfounded!"

The Torah records that when Yehuda (and his brothers) hear this, they are in a state of shock and can not respond. They all realize that their current explanation for why Binyamin should be released contradicts their behavior from many years ago.

The *בית הלוי* continues to explain, based on the *מדרש*, that this episode is a model for how we will be judged in the world-to-come. We are going to be asked about everything that we have done in this world.

Continued page 4





## TRUTH BE TOLD

ARIEL BUGAY ('15)

We read in this week's parsha about a beautiful reunion between Yosef and his brothers. After Yosef questions his brothers and in effect puts them through a stern test, Yosef finally reveals himself with the famous quote: "אני יוסף העוד אבי חי" – "I am Yosef, is my father still alive?"

Thereafter, Yosef acts in a very noble fashion in forgiving his brothers. Then Yosef sends the group back to Yaakov with a message that he, Yosef, is alive, and Yaakov should migrate to Egypt with his entire family. He promises that this is truly the will of Hashem and that the clan will be sustained in Goshen.

When the brothers return to their father with the exciting news that Yosef is alive, Yaakov reacts in disbelief. From this encounter we learn a powerful lesson. The brothers were all tzadikim. We understand that they were honest and well-educated in Torah and mitzvot. However, because of their one lie 22 years prior, the lie that Yosef is dead, Yaakov is now unable to readily believe their unexpected good news. We thus learn a valuable lesson that once a person lies, the lie sticks with him and even becomes part of his character.

According to Rabbi Shimon, the punishment for the liar is that he or she is no longer believed. Rabbi Shimon does not say that when one lies it leads such a person to lie again and again. He also does not say that people will react with hostility towards a person who lies. Rather, he states that the liar will not be believed, which is actually very harsh because honesty is one of the most important character traits one can possess. People trust honest individuals. Thus, Rabbi Shimon is warning everyone that it only takes one lie to ruin one's reputation for many years as evident from the lie stated by Yosef's brothers, which affected their ability to be believed even after 22 years.

Based upon a Dvar Torah By Rabbi Perry Netter

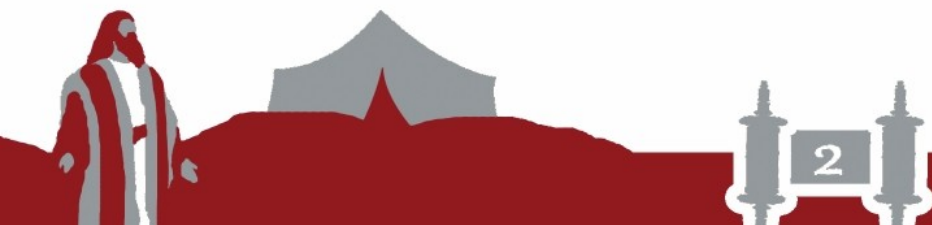
## MIND YOUR MANNERS

ALANA REICHENBERG ('13)

In this week's parsha Yosef asks his brothers if their father is still alive and his brothers tremble before him, unable to answer the question. Two philosophical questions arise from this interaction: How long does it take for someone to change his heart and how long does it take for someone to change himself?

Yosef answers these two questions by indirectly rebuking his brothers by asking them about Yaakov. His rebuke allows them to realize that his dreams were in fact true and that they were wrong in judging him.

When Yosef says, "I am Yosef," the brothers instantly understand their mistake that they had regretted for years. The lesson we learn is that there is no limit to how someone can touch a person's heart. Likewise, words and actions are powerful and can spread very quickly, so we must be sure to watch what we say and what we do.





## SIBLING SQUABBLING

### MOSHE LEVENSON ('14)

In this week's parsha we are exposed to a fundamental difference between the philosophies of Yehuda and Yosef. Yehuda represents the continued study of Torah—the ability to learn, understand, interpret, draw conclusions, and internalize its teachings.

Yehuda's ability to deduce and infer from the Torah is in direct conflict with the ideology of Yosef. Yosef represents *edut*, translated as evidence, in his perception of the world in black and white, purely objective analysis and deductions, with no room for subjective interpretation.

This central discrepancy encourages Yaakov to choose Yehuda to establish yeshivot in Goshen before the remainder of his family makes the trek to Egypt. Yehuda's flexibility with learning and understanding clearly demonstrates his *chizuk* in Torah, making Yehuda the best man for the job.

The Midrash cites an example of Yehuda's love and dedication to Torah; When Pharaoh's wagons stocked with idols cross Yehudah's path, Yehuda seizes the opportunity and mandates a new halacha to burn idols. Although he does not have the eminent right to do so, Hashem later institutes this very halacha in Devarim (7:25).

When Yaakov first sees Yosef, after 22 years of absence, Yaakov promptly recites the tefilah of Shema. The unexpected tefilah seems to come in place of an emotional response. What is the significance of Shema in this context?

The third and fourth words of Shema, "*Hashem Elokeinu*," describe this world. These words portray Hashem's unrivaled ability to "*meshane et haolam*," change the world, consistent with Yehuda's outlook of flexibility. In accordance with Yehuda's view, this world involves destiny and an opportunity to utilize one's creativity to change the world for the better. The final words of the pasuk of Shema, "*Hashem echad*" allude to *olam haba*, the world to come. *Olam haba* (Yosef's approach) is the *olam shel emet*, the world of truth. There, everything is black and white, right and wrong.

Every individual must embrace the contrast between the philosophies of Yehuda and Yosef. Each has its merits and when both are in place we are able to continue on the path to becoming more righteous people.

---

## TOUGH LOVE

### MICHALI MAZOR ('15)

This week's parsha relates the culmination of Yosef's onerous journey: from being sold as a slave, to employment in Potiphar's household, to false imprisonment, to being summoned to interpret dreams for Pharaoh. Unbeknownst to his brothers—who arrive in Egypt to purchase food—Yosef has risen in Pharaoh's kingdom and has been charged with administrating the entire land of Egypt and to prepare for the famine.

*Continued page 4*



*Mazor continued*

When Yosef's brothers come to Egypt in search of food, they do not recognize him. Yosef charges them with espionage and later frames his youngest brother Binyamin for stealing his silver cup. When Yosef commands Binyamin to remain in Egypt as a slave, Yehuda offers himself in exchange. Yosef, inspired by his brother's speech, decides to reveal himself and exclaims: "I am Yosef."

The brothers' reaction to Yosef's revelation is neither joy nor anger, rather they are ashamed. The brothers now understand why Yosef has acted in such a manner. They realize that he threatened to keep Binyamin to remind them of the sorrow they caused their father when they sold Yosef into slavery.

Yosef's rebuke seems cruel; have the brothers not repented? In actuality, Yosef's rebuke is a gesture of love. Just as loving parents chide their children when they transgress in order to help them learn, Yosef's rebuke of his brothers was his way of showing them his love. Indeed, Yosef is ridding them of guilt later when he assures them that it was Hashem's will that sent him to Egypt, for He intended Yosef to rule the land and ensure the survival of the Jewish people.

As in all the tales of our forefathers, this episode teaches an important lesson. Being on the receiving end of rebuke may not feel so good, but we should remember that when our parents offer constructive criticism, it is meant for our benefit and as a token of their love and interest in our well-being.

*Rabbi Schochet continued*

When we make an excuse for a sin that we have committed, ה' (like Yosef) is going to find the internal contradictions within our explanations and we are going to be left with nothing to say.

This is an extremely powerful lesson. Many times when we do something, we do not think about the consequences of our actions. Only later, when we realize the impact of our decisions do we regret and reflect on what we have done. We must think about our conduct BEFORE we act, so that we will not have any "explaining" to do later on.

**Editor-in-Chief**

Isaac Kurtz ('14)

**Final Editor**

Zevi Litwin ('13)

**Editing**

Hannah Baum ('13)

Ari Clements ('14)

Kira Dennis ('14)

Ari Mazor ('14)

Jared Samilow ('14)

Matthew Silkin ('14)

# Staff

Chaim Bitterman ('13)

Daniel Feldan ('16)

Seth Fisher ('13)

Daniel Lasko ('14)

Efraim Schacter ('16)

Gabriella Sobol ('13)

Simcha Stadlan ('16)

**Layout**

Danielle Sobol ('13)

**Proofreader**

Saige Rosenberg ('13)

**Senior Editor**

Eliana Feldan ('13)

**Faculty Advisor**

Rabbi Avi Hochman

Interested in sponsoring Ashreinu?  
Contact Rabbi Hochman at  
RAVH@WYHS.NET

This publication contains Torah matter-  
Please treat it with respect



7902 Montoya Circle  
Boca Raton, FL 33433  
Phone: 561-417-7422  
Fax: 561-417-7028  
www.wyhs.net