

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

A PROJECT
OF THE
Mesorah
Heritage
Foundation

פרשת מקץ
די כסלו תשפ"א
5781
DECEMBER 19, 2020
ISSUE #21
RABBI YITZCHOK
HISIGER, EDITOR
DESIGN & LAYOUT:
AVIVA KOHN

WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

PARASHAH

THE GREATEST CONSIDERATION

Rav Asher Weiss on the Parashah

The *Ohr HaChaim* asks why Yosef Hatzaddik failed to contact his father, Yaakov, during the entire time that he served as steward of Potiphar's house and viceroy of Egypt. Surely, Yosef could imagine his father's overwhelming misery, languishing under the false impression that his favorite son has been killed.

For that entire period of twenty-two years, Yaakov was bereft of his *ru'ach hakodesh* (Divine inspiration), it only being restored to him after he learned that Yosef was still alive, as the verse states, וְתָחַי רִיחָ יַעֲקֹב, אֲבִיהֶם - *And the soul of Yaakov was revived (Bereishis 45:27, Targum Yonasan)*. The *Rambam* explains that prophecy can only rest upon a person in a state of joy (*Shabbos 30b*). Yaakov's pervasive unhappiness regarding Yosef's demise thus prevented him from experiencing Hashem's closeness (*Shemoneh Perakim*, Chapter 7).

Why did Yosef not send word to Canaan that he was alive and well, and thus allay his father's grief?

The *Ohr HaChaim* explains that if Yosef had informed Yaakov that he was still alive, he would have been compelled to explain what had happened to him. His brothers' crimes against him, and their false information that "a wild animal had devoured him," would be revealed to Yaakov, causing them untold humiliation (*Bereishis 45:26*).


Yosef was thus forced into the unenviable position of having to choose between the suffering of his father and the humiliation of his brothers. In light of our sages' warning that it is better to

be thrown into a fiery furnace than to embarrass another person in public (*Berachos 43b*), Yosef chose to remain silent and let his father grieve until the time came when he was forced to reveal himself.

We are all well aware of the importance of respecting one another's feelings, yet sometimes we take other considerations into account and imagine that for our own best interests, or perhaps even for the public good, we are justified in embarrassing someone else. However, from Yosef's example we learn the true importance of guarding the honor of our peers, such that Yaakov had to endure twenty-two years of misery so that his sons would be spared from embarrassment.

Our sages thus exhort us, "Let the honor of your peer be like the reverence of your teacher, and the reverence of your teacher like the awe of Heaven" (*Pirkei Avos 4:15*).

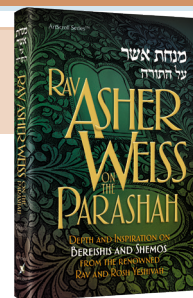
In *Tanna D'Vei Eliyahu*, we learn: *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* said to the *Bnei Yisrael*, "My sons, there is nothing that I failed to give you. And what do I ask in

return? I ask only that you love one another, respect one another, fear (to offend) one another, and that there never be found among you sin, theft, or disreputable deeds, only in order that you might never come to disgrace, as it is written, "[Hashem] tells you, man, what is good, and what Hashem demands of you: only to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with your G-d" (*Michah 6:8; Tanna D'Vei Eliyahu Rabbah 26*). 



Rav Asher Weiss

**HE WAS FORCED INTO
THE UNENVIABLE
POSITION OF
HAVING TO CHOOSE
BETWEEN THE
SUFFERING OF HIS
FATHER AND THE
HUMILIATION OF HIS
BROTHERS.**



ARTSCROLL
PUBLICATIONS

Nishmas by Rabbi Yisroel Besser

There is a glory that comes from being close, but also a glory that comes specifically from being distant. In times of darkness, there are opportunities that aren't always available, chances to experience a different form of joy. It's the joy of connection.

A *talmid* of Rav Eliezer Geldzahler left his *yeshivah*, Ohr Yisroel, and went to learn in another *yeshivah*. The new *yeshivah*, in a European city, was different from what he was used to, and it was far from New York City, which was home. The young man felt homesick and unmotivated, and eventually, he took a day off, roaming through town instead of going to learn. He did this for one day, and then the next day as well, walking the streets and relaxing in the local park rather than learning in in *yeshivah*, but it was too hard to stop.

On the third day, he knew he had to call his *rebbe*, Rav Leizer. It was an overseas call, an expensive proposition back then, and the *rosh yeshivah*

wasn't easy to reach, but eventually, the boy got through.

"Rosh Yeshivah!" he cried out when he heard his *rebbe*'s voice. "I'm so broken... I am in such a bad place."

Rav Leizer listened as the *talmid* admitted that he hadn't learned in several days and wasn't *davening* well either.

"HOW MANY FEEL THE ANGUISH OF BEING DISTANT FROM HIM?"



Rav Eliezer Geldzahler zt"l

"Listen to me," the *rosh yeshivah* said. "I think you should go drink a *l'chayim* and rejoice. You're a fortunate young man."

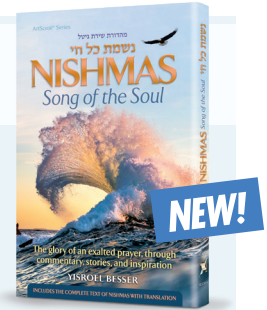
It seemed a strange comment and the *talmid* wondered if his *rebbe* had heard him correctly.

"Yes, drink a *l'chayim*," Reb Leizer reiterated, and he explained:

"The *Ribbono Shel Olam* has over seven billion people in His world. How many of them do you think experience pain and heartache when they don't sit by a *Gemara* for a few days? How many feel the anguish of being distant from Him?" Rav Leizer answered his own question. "So few, so very few. You are a minority of a minority, a person perceptive and sophisticated enough to know his mission and to feel misery at having missed a few

days. *Ashrecha!* How fortunate you are! How sensitive you are! Go drink a *l'chayim* to celebrate what you feel, and then go start again!"

With these encouraging words, a wise *rosh yeshivah* injected a *talmid* with new life, a new appreciation for the opportunity found especially in times of darkness. 📖



Open Your Eyes by Rabbi Dov Keilson

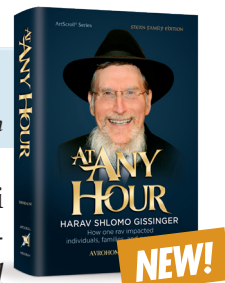
The Steipler Gaon writes in *Chayei Olam*, "How wondrous is the kindness of Hashem in that the thumb is distant from the other fingers and is lower than them. Due to this, one is able to hold items in his hand. Because the four fingers are on one side and the thumb is on the other, the object is held tightly and firmly, everything according to its need. It is impossible to describe how difficult it would have been for a person to do the thousands of activities he does daily, small and large, if the thumb



were not opposite the other fingers. How great are Your deeds, Hashem, how deep are Your thoughts (Tehillim 92:6)."

A close *talmid* of Rav Avigdor Miller, R' Yaakov Hamburger, related something that Rav Miller would demonstrate. Although the fingers are all different lengths and shapes, when pressed against the hand, somehow, they all fit perfectly into a precise fist! This is a marvel of engineering, yet we hardly notice it! 📖





When Rabbi and Mrs. Borger* celebrated the engagement of their daughter, the first thing the Borgers did was book the hall at Khal Zichron Yaakov, Rav Shlomo Gissinger's *shul*, for *Shabbos sheva berachos*. Although it is possible to have simultaneous *simchos* in the hall, as it can be partitioned, they chose to book the entire hall for two reasons: to make a *minyan* for *davening* on one side and so that the guests wouldn't be disturbed by noise from another *simchah*.

At some point, Rabbi A*, the person in charge of the hall, called to ask Rabbi Borger if he would relinquish half the hall for someone else. After discussing it with his wife, they opted to stick with their booking of the entire hall, despite the fact that half the hall would be more than sufficient. Rabbi A did not pressure nor share the identity of the other party.

A few weeks later, Rabbi Borger received a call from a relative asking if he would give up half the hall, as the oth-

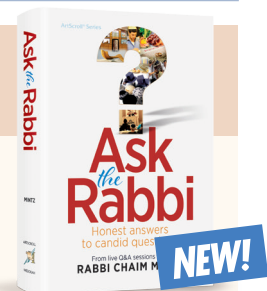


Rav Shlomo Gissinger zt"l

er person who wanted the hall was Rabbi Gissinger himself. Rabbi Borger was mortified! Rabbi Gissinger needed his own *shul* for a *simchah* and he had said no? Of course, the Borgers readily agreed. They could not get over the fact that they were even given the option to say no. They later found out that those in charge of the hall were given strict instructions not to reveal the name of the party who requested the other half of the hall.

On *Erev Shabbos* of the *simchah*, when Rabbi Borger came to the *shul* to set up, he noticed Rabbi Gissinger busily *shlepping* chairs from the hall into a truck. He quickly ran over, introduced himself, and asked the

rav what he was doing. He explained that another venue had been found down the block and he would be hosting his *simchah* there. Rabbi Borger was left with his mouth hanging open in astonishment: "This is his *shul*! And I am not even a member!" 📖



Q. It seems that in some Orthodox communities, girls are getting married younger than boys. Wouldn't the couple be more compatible if they are the same age?

A. While there is a general preference for the boy to be older than the girl, it is by no means a requirement. This tendency probably derives from the fact that, in general, girls mature at a younger age than boys. This even has a *halachic* basis. While a boy does not reach *bar mitzvah* until the age of 13, a girl already reaches *halachic* maturity at the age of 12. Since girls mature at a younger age, they are usually more capable of taking care of a household from a younger age. Some girls may be lacking experience, but they can usually pick up the techniques very quickly. And since girls often have many responsibilities at home — including taking

care of younger siblings — they will have plenty of experience as well. In addition, it is proper for a wife to look up to her husband and feel that she can rely on him. Therefore, a marriage between a boy and girl who are the same age may not be ideal, since she may see him as an equal. A year can make a big difference in the maturity of a boy, as he is still developing the character traits and skills that will make him a good husband.

There is another factor to keep in mind as to why boys will sometimes delay marriage longer than their female counterparts. A boy who is devoted to Torah study may want to continue learning without any distractions. Since marriage inevitably brings many interruptions, such a boy will choose to delay marriage for a few years. It is also worth

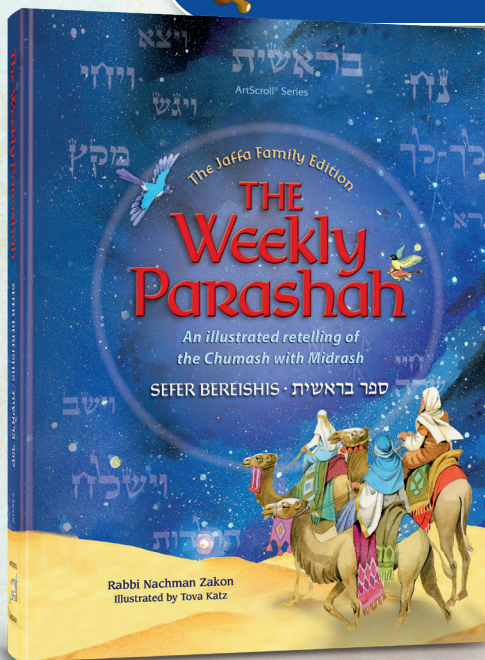
noting that this is more relevant to younger couples. By the time people reach their mid-20s, most of these differences fade away. The "age gap" becomes far less important, and it can be very worthwhile to consider suggestions in which the boy and girl are close in age or even one in which the girl is older. Age is also less of a factor if the boy is already quite mature, even at a young age.

Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch, renowned leader of German Jewry in the mid-1800s, married a woman three years older than he. When asked why he chose a wife who is older, he famously replied that he had lofty goals to accomplish in life and wanted a mature woman who could be a partner in it all. 📖



Parashah for Children

פרשת מקץ



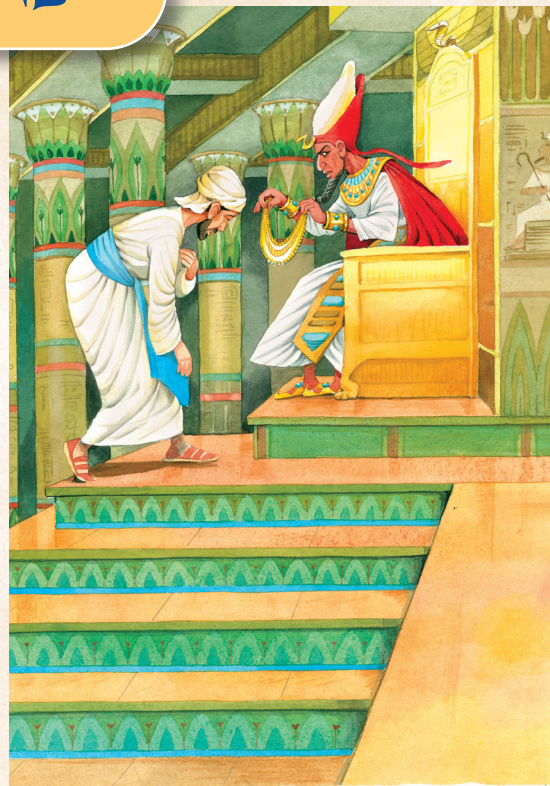
Yosef's Test

While Pharaoh was discussing how to save Egypt, Hashem was making sure that Yosef would become ruler of Egypt. He sent an angel to teach Yosef all the seventy languages spoken in the world at that time.

Yosef was taken back to Pharaoh. Pharaoh was sitting on a very large and beautiful throne covered with silver and gold. The throne was at the top of a high staircase that had seventy steps.

As Yosef walked up each step Pharaoh spoke to him in a different language, and Yosef answered him in that language. For every language they spoke Yosef could move up one step higher on the staircase, one step closer to Pharaoh. To pass Pharaoh's test Yosef would have to be able to get up to the very top step!

From the bottom of the staircase, the advisers watched as Yosef moved up step by step, higher and higher and higher. Finally, he reached the very top step. He had passed the test. Now Pharaoh could make him ruler of Egypt.



FASCINATING FACTS

When Yosef got to the top step he spoke to Pharaoh in one more language. That

language was Hebrew. Pharaoh couldn't answer Yosef. Yosef knew one more language than Pharaoh! This frightened Pharaoh.

He didn't want anyone to know that there was a language he couldn't speak. Pharaoh asked Yosef to swear to keep it a secret.



How old was Yosef when he left prison and became ruler of Egypt?

Yosef had been in jail for twelve years. At age 30 he suddenly became the ruler of Egypt.

GREAT NEW RELEASES!



© ARTSCROLL MESORAH PUBLICATIONS • 1-800-MESORAH • WWW.ARTSCROLL.COM

To receive the weekly ArtScroll Shabbos Newsletter, visit www.artscroll.com/newsletter