

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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פרשת ויגש
ז' טבת תשפ"ב
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

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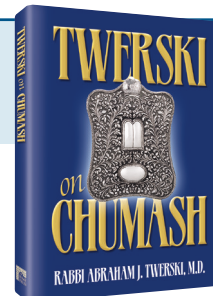
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PARASHAH

SINGLE-MINDEDNESS OF PURPOSE

Twerski On Chumash By Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski



וַיֹּאסֶר יוֹסֵף מְרֻכָּבָתוֹ וַיַּעַל לִקְרַאת יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו גִּשְׁנָה
וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו וַיִּפֹּל עַל צְוֹאֲרָיו וַיִּבְדֹּךְ עַל צְוֹאֲרָיו עוֹד.

Yosef harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Yisroel his father in Goshen. He appeared before him, fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively (46:29).

Rashi states that Yosef Hatzaddik personally harnessed his chariot in diligence to honor his father. Then *Rashi* makes a rather cryptic statement. On the words “He appeared before him,” *Rashi* comments, “Yosef appeared to his father.” Just what is *Rashi* adding to the text with this comment? The Torah says that “he appeared before him,” which obviously means that Yosef appeared to his father.

Rav Elyah Lopian gives a penetrating interpretation to *Rashi*’s comment. We have come to appreciate the power of focusing energy on one point. People trained in karate can break a thick board by striking it with their bare hand because they have learned how to harness the energy that is spread over the entire body to a single point. The power of the laser beam results because the light waves are focused.

The Torah tells how Yaakov was able to remove the huge boulder from the mouth of the well, even though several shepherds together could not do it. *Rashi* says that it was as simple as removing the cork from a bottle (*Bereishis* 29:10). How did Yaakov do this? We say in our *tefillah* for rain that Yaakov “dedicated his heart and rolled the stone from the well of water.” The Hebrew word for “dedicated” is *yichad*, which

means “to make one.” When Yaakov saw Rachel with her father’s flock, he was able to focus and bring all his energies to one point.

Our thoughts and emotions are rarely single-minded, focusing on a single point to the exclusion of all else. We may have a thought or emotion that is dominant, but there may be other thoughts or feelings present.

When Yosef went to meet his beloved father after an absence of twenty-two years, his emotions were very intense, as is evident by his “excessive weeping.” However, there was another issue involved. Yosef knew how much his father loved him, and how joyous his father would be to see him. To meet his father would be fulfilling the *mitzvah* of honoring his father. There were, therefore, two thoughts and feelings in Yosef’s heart and

mind: (1) the *mitzvah* of bringing happiness to his father and (2) his desire to see his father. The average person could have both simultaneously. Yosef knew that one would detract from the other. He wished to have nothing on his mind other than pleasing his father, and in order to do this, he had to set his own feelings aside temporarily.

This, Rav Lopian says, is what *continued on page 2*



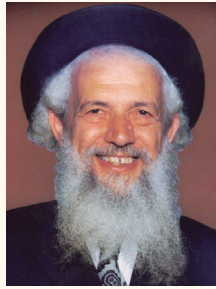
Rav Elyah Lopian

**YOSEF’S ONLY
THOUGHT WAS
TO APPEAR
BEFORE HIS
FATHER AND
BRING HIM JOY.**

When Yosef Hatzaddik revealed his identity to his brothers, he said (*Bereishis* 45:12), “Behold! Your eyes see... that it is my mouth that is speaking to you.” Rashi quotes the *Midrash* (*Bereishis Rabbah* 93:10), which says that Yosef was referring to the fact that he spoke to them in *Lashon Hakodesh*. The *Rishonim* wonder what sort of proof this offered as to Yosef’s true identity. After all, there were undoubtedly many Egyptians capable of speaking in *Lashon Hakodesh*.

The *Haflaah* makes a scintillating observation. Yosef used a term for seeing (*eineichem ro’os*, your eyes see), when a term for hearing would have seemed more congruous, i.e., *azneichem shom’os*, your ears hear. He was, after all, referring to his brothers hearing his voice speak in *Lashon Hakodesh*.

For context, the *Haflaah* points to a phenomenon that occurred at *Mattan Torah*. As *Klal Yisrael* gathered at *Har Sinai*, the Torah says (*Shemos* 20:15), the entire peo-

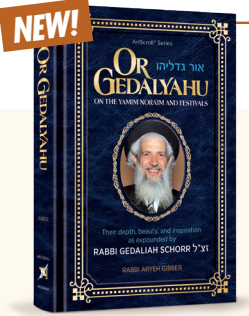


Rav Gedaliah Schorr

ple saw the thunder. Thunder is typically heard and not seen, but Chazal tell us that in the exalted and otherworldly atmosphere of Sinai, the *Bnei Yisrael* were able to “see that which is typically heard” (*Mechilta*, cited by *Rashi*). The words of Yosef to his brothers, says the *Haflaah*, were spoken in the same dimension of “seeing that which is typically heard.” Hence the expression “your eyes see.”

THIS WAS THE ELEVATED NATURE OF HIS SPEECH.

The meaning of the *Haflaah*’s enlightening elucidation is as follows. Yosef spoke words of Torah to his brothers. This was the elevated nature of his speech. The language of authentic Torah is *Lashon Hakodesh*, and *Lashon Hakodesh* in its purest form of Torah expression is subject to the properties of Sinai. As such, Yosef’s holy words of Torah could in fact be seen, not only heard! This, he told his brothers, should serve as sufficient proof of his true identity. 📖



LIMUD HATORAH

A MISSION

Arise and Sing by Yisroel Besser

Limud haTorah is not a job, or even an occupation. It is a preoccupation.

Just after the 1967 liberation of the Old City of Yerushalayim, Jews came pouring into its holy alleyways from all across the country. Many of them were desperate to see and touch the *Kosel*, while others, who had lived in the neighborhood before 1948, were eager to see their old homes. The narrow streets were crowded, and local Arab shopkeepers responded to the crowds, setting up tables with all sorts of trinkets for sale.

A group of *talmidei chachamim* from Bnei Brak made the trip as well, Rav Dov Landau, the *Slabodka rosh yeshivah*, among them. Rather than hastening to approach

the *Kosel*, he stopped near the Arab vendors and was soon deeply engaged in



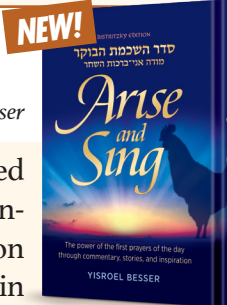
Rav Dov Landau

conversation with a group of merchants. His friends looked on in wonder; his motive soon became clear.

Rav Dov had come with a mission, bearing several obscure Arabic words that the *Rambam* uses in *Peirush HaMishnayos* that needed translation — and he had finally found people who could help him!

This was his goal: a little more clarity in Torah, a better understanding of a *Rambam*.

Torah study is an eisek, a preoccupation that consumes the one fortunate to become one with Torah. 📖

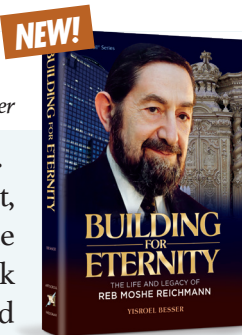


SINGLE-MINDEDNESS OF PURPOSE

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Rashi is telling us. The sequence of the verse tells us of Yosef’s extraordinary spirituality. “He appeared before him,” *Rashi* says, means that “Yosef appeared to his father.” Yosef’s only thought was to appear before his father and bring him joy. This was not to be diluted by his own desire to see his father again. It was only after he had fulfilled this *mitzvah* with single-mindedness that “he fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively.”

We fulfill the *mitzvos* of the Torah, but we must admit that it is not with the channeling of all our thoughts and feelings to a single focal point. *Rashi* is teaching us the goal toward which we should strive. 📖



Reb Moshe Reichmann had a special appreciation for *mechanchim*, who — as he knew from personal experience — are totally devoted to the spiritual wellbeing of *talmidim*, working long, hard days for meager salaries. He very much wanted to see the *rebbeim* in Yeshiva Yesodei Ha-Torah get a raise in salary, and after a drawn-out, exhausting meeting

with other lay leaders, it was decided to push off the decision to another time.

Frustrated, Reb Moshe turned to the *menahel* and asked how many *melamdim* the *cheder* employed, and how many children each one had. The *menahel* made a quick reckoning and told Reb Moshe that there were one hundred fifty-six children

among his staff.

On the spot, Reb Moshe wrote out a check for \$156,000 and handed it to the *menahel*. “This will be until the decision is made. The *rebbeim* don’t have to wait because the *baalei batim* can’t decide,” he said pointedly. 📖

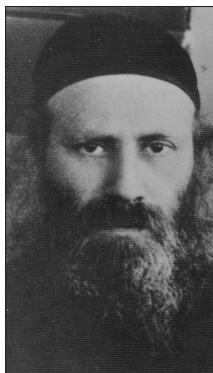
THE HISTORY OF MISHNAH YOMI

The new cycle of Mishnah Yomi begins on 21 Teves/December 25. In honor of the start of Maseches Berachos, we take a look at the history of the longstanding two-Mishnah-a-day initiative.

One of the most monumental ideas in the Torah world of the past century was proposed towards the end of the first Knessiah Gedolah in Vienna at the beginning of *Elul* in 1923, when Rav Meir Shapiro announced the concept of Daf Yomi, suggesting that Jews the world over study the same *daf* of *Gemara* daily, completing *Shas* in a cycle of seven-plus years. The proposal was accepted by many *gedolim* of the time and Daf Yomi was launched shortly thereafter on *Rosh Hashanah*, with many beginning their journey through Talmud Bavli. The first *Siyum Hashas* took place on *Tu B'Shevat* in 1931.

In 1933, in the middle of the second cycle of *Daf Yomi*, Rav Meir Shapiro passed away suddenly at the young age of forty-six. In 1934, on the seventh of *Adar*, another significant idea related to Torah learning was proposed at a meeting of *gedolim* in Lublin. In addition to the *Daf Yomi* cycle, it was proposed, the *Mishnah*, specifically the sections on which there is no *Gemara*, should be studied daily. The initial idea was for everyone to learn one *Mishnah* daily. The purpose of this initiative was so that the next *Siyum Hashas*, which was to take place in 1938, would be on all six *sedarim* of *Shas*.

This additional learning program was proposed by the Kozoglover Gaon, Rav Aryeh Tzvi Frommer,



Rav Aryeh Tzvi Frommer



Rav Yonah Sztencel

Rav Shapiro's successor as *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin. Various *gedolim* of the time, such as the *rebbeim* of Sochatchov and Ger, accepted Rav Frommer's proposal. The proposal was connected to *Daf Yomi*, as it was reported that Rav Meir Shapiro had indeed expressed great interest in adding these parts of *Mishnah* — specifically *Seder Zeraim* and *Seder Taharos* — to the *Daf Yomi* cycle. A *Mishnah Yomi* calendar was printed, and the exact dates of the learning cycle even appeared in some newspapers of the time, listing the *Mishnah Yomi* schedule.

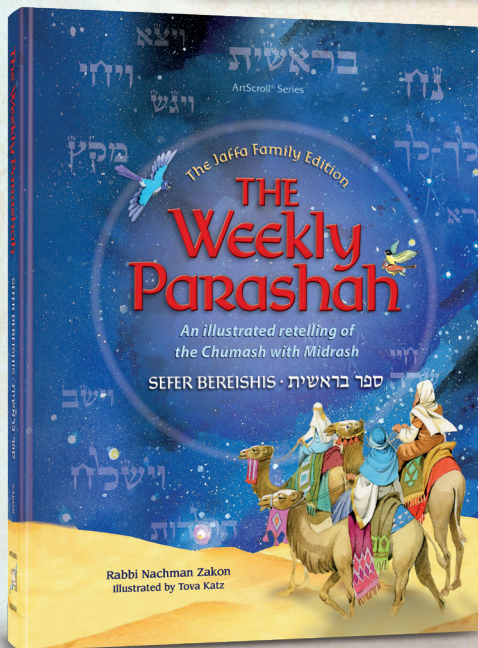
In 1938, as the winds of war began blowing across Europe, Rav Frommer addressed the *Siyum Hashas*, delivering a lengthy *drashah* in which he mentioned the significance of everyone learning *Mishnayos*.

In 1947, following the destruction experienced by *Klal Yisrael* during World War II, Rav Yonah Sztencel, a *rav* in Tel Aviv and a *talmid* of Rav Frommer, recommended adding to the program, building on Rav Frommer's proposal. He suggested that everyone should learn a cycle of all of *Shishah Sidrei Mishnah*, especially as many people found it difficult to keep to the *Daf Yomi* schedule. This proposal, to learn two *Mishnayos* each day, was then endorsed by Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, the Tchebiner Rov, the Gerer Rebbe, and many others. Thus was *Mishnah Yomi* born. 📖



Parashah for Children

פרשת ויגש



Beautiful Music, Great News

The brothers returned to Eretz Yisrael. They were very excited about telling Yaakov that Yosef was still alive. The question was how to break the news to him.

At the time Yaakov was 130 years old. The brothers were afraid to surprise him and say, "Guess who we found alive? Yosef!" The shock of hearing that, after so many years of believing Yosef was dead, could kill a man of Yaakov's age!

What to do?

The brothers decided they had to prepare Yaakov for the news. They sent Yaakov's granddaughter Serach, Asher's daughter, to do the job. How?



Serach came to Yaakov's tent, carrying a harp. She played her instrument and sang a song with the words, "Yosef is still alive." This was a gentle way of preparing Yaakov.

Slowly Yaakov began to understand what Serach was singing about. The brothers then came in and told him the great news: Yosef is alive and is ruler of Egypt.

Serach

Since Serach was the first one to give Yaakov the good news about Yosef, he gave her a blessing. He blessed

her that she would live forever! And indeed, Serach never died. She lived for a very, very long time, and she went straight to heaven without dying.

Before Yosef died, he asked the Jews to promise to take his coffin with them when they left Egypt. When the time came to leave Egypt, no one knew where Yosef had been buried. Moshe Rabbeinu went to Serach, who had been there when Yosef died. She remembered Yosef's funeral and told Moshe where he would find Yosef's remains.

Serach was still on this earth in the time of King David. That was 650 years after she told Yaakov that Yosef was still alive!



Is It True?

Even though Yaakov had heard Serach's song, and the brothers had told him that Yosef was alive, Yaakov wasn't sure he could believe them. They had told him that Yosef had been killed by animals. Now they were saying Yosef was alive. Which story was true?

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Vayigash:

Who were Yosef's five weakest brothers who he took to meet Pharaoh?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the Parashas Vayishlach question is: DOVID GROSS, Lakewood, NJ

The question was: Yosef was only 6 years old when he met Eisav. How could such a little boy block Eisav's view of Rachel?

The answer is: Hashem saw how much Yosef wanted to protect his mother, so He helped him by stretching him to be tall enough to hide his mother from Eisav's sight.

