

**וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו Yaakov settle in the land of his forefathers (37:1)** – Rashi notes the contrast between Eisav's history marked in a short form with those of Yaakov whose travels and travails are spelled in painstaking detail. **Rav Shaul Yisraeli ztl.** explains that Eisav's rise was quick. Immediately after his meeting with Yaakov, he begins to develop his nation. Yaakov needs further development and learns the lessons of internal jealousy, of famine and of Egyptian politics and ultimately of slavery in order to emerge as a vibrant nation. To become a simple and evil nation takes no real effort. To emerge as Israel -- whether as a nation or even as a nation on our land – needs tests and retests so that we can be a nation under Hashem indivisible.

**Yosef brought their slander to their father (37:2)** – **Sforno** notes that this is the reason for **גלות בית שני** in that it caused **שנאת חנם**. **Rav Gifter ztl.** added that this teaches us a valuable lesson about families in the Jewish nation. From the time that Yaakov completed his family, they set the tone for the future nation. This is also why when there is a challenge in the family, (ומכה) **אביו ואמו** we treat it severely because it is a challenge to the order and structure of the nation.

**A man found him (37:15)** – **Rashi** tells us that this man was the **מלאך גבריאל**. Yet in last week's Parsha the **מלאך** was the **שרו של עשו**. How could it be that the same word – **איש** is used for both and how are we to know when we want to highlight which one? **The Sanzer Rav ztl.** explained that when he comes to engage in a **חסד** he must be a **מלאך של חסד** but when he comes to fight, he is the **מלאך של עשו**.

**And Reuven heard and he declared that we will not destroy the life (37:21)** – The Midrash notes that had Reuven known what the Torah would have recorded about him, he would have carried Yosef home with him. **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky ztl.** noted that Reuven did not know the depth of the Mitzva he was doing or its reward. Had he known the seriousness of his action he would have gone even further to save Yosef. Rav Yaakov adds that we also often do not appreciate the value of our good deeds when we do them. It is reminiscent of **Rav Kook ztl's** comment that we state **אלקי עד** **שלא נוצרתי איני כדאי**. We have a responsibility to store up our actions and see value in them even before their value becomes overtly apparent.

**She is right and it is mine (38:26)** – **Rashi** quotes that Yehuda noted that Hashem suspended his **בחירה** in order to get him to serve a prostitute. How are we to understand Hashem's decision to suspend **בחירה**? **Rav Schachter Shlita** would explain to us that the Gemara notes that there are three for whom Hashem sheds a tear every day. The first two are those who stay in learning and shouldn't or those who do go into business and shouldn't and the third are those who are leaders who are too haughty on the Tzibbur. Therefore the Gemara notes that a good leader has skeletons in his background. The Rambam begins Hilchos Ishus by noting that before Matan Torah the idea of prostitution was Halachically ok. However Hashem created the Yehuda episode in order to demonstrate that power can corrupt one's personal values. This would be an important lesson for Dovid HaMelech and future Jews serving in power positions until today.

**And his master saw that Hashem was with him and whatever he did Hashem saw to it that he was successful (39:3)** – How did Potiphar, an idolator, see that whatever Yosef did Hashem saw to his success? **Rav Mayer Twersky Shlita** explained that Yosef

had to be constantly crediting a Kiddush Hashem (בלעדי). Part of the awareness of one's belief in Hashem becomes apparent when he creates a Kiddush Hashem in business in the same way that he does in his religious activities. The awareness when in these endeavors protects one when he is facing spiritual challenges there too. No one knew this better than Yosef.

**שר האופים and the שר המשקים חטאו משקה מצרים והאופה לאדניהם למלך מצרים**  
**their master the king of Mitzrayim (40:1)** – Both chiefs had erred in that they focused too much on being a chief while being derelict in the duties of the charges under them. What demonstrated to Yosef that their future fates would be and how they would so different? **Rav Nissan Alpert ztl.** suggested that the difference was that in his dream the שר המשקים took responsibility. Throughout the dream, he was the active one and took care of every aspect of his job personally. The שר האופים just stood by. However, once furloughed, the שר המשקים returns to his position of perceived importance as he not only could not remember Yosef – he actively sought to forget the ordeal and Yosef in the process.

**הפטורה** – What is the connection between the הפטורה and the Parsha. The simple answer is that the הפטורה references the idea of selling a Tzaddik for money. **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** offered a deeper explanation. He opined that the major three episodes of the Parsha – the selling of Yosef, the episode of Yehuda and Tamar and the episode of Yosef in מצרים all stem from the challenge of the internal conflict over the dreamer. On the one hand, dreamers can be dimwitted and their dreams reflective of personal hubris. At the same time, a dream can be a source of inspiration and innovation. The brothers of Yosef had no room for the latter and neither did the people in the time of Amos.