

**VaYeishev Yaakov (37:1) – Rashi** notes that Yaakov wished to rest in peace and thus received the anger of Yosef. Why is it such a sin of Yaakov to desire to sit in peace? **Rav Shlomo Zalman Lipshitz ztl.**, the Chemdas Shlomo, explains based on the Sefer Chovos HaLevavos that if we rely on Hashem then we will discover that the challenges of Olam HaZeh are small. Yaakov's desire for serenity now was an indication that he was overwhelmed here too. (Sefer Shalal Lo Yechsar story with **Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank** about the **Beis HaLevi** and the man who needed to make Kiddush and eat to hear good news about daughter's labor – based on V'Hisanag Al Hashem V'Hu Yeeten Mishalos Leebecha.

**Because he was the Ben Zekunim (37:3) – Rashi** offers three interpretations for the word Zekunim – born when Yaakov was old, learned from the father or – as noted in Targum Yonasan – his face looked like that of Yaakov's. **Rav Aizik Ausband Shlita** explains that that the different interpretations are actually the same. When a Talmid truly immerses himself in the world of Toras Rabbo, he begins to look, act and even become an extension of the Rebbe.

**The brothers were jealous of him (37:11) –** The concept of jealousy only enters the brothers' minds after the SECOND dream. Why were they jealous after THAT dream and not the earlier one? **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** explains that the earlier dream was one about economics. The second dream was Yosef's declaration of Memshala – of his lordship over the other brothers. Jewish psychology asks the question "why do we need leaders." Yosef was charismatic – he charmed everyone who met him – Potiphar, Sar HaTabachim, etc. But there are a lot of leaders who have different levels of charisma – while Rabbi Akiva brought out the masses charismatically for a higher purpose, Korach also used his charisma to shape and lead – but he was the center and he was using the charisma to lead the people by lording over the people.

**In order to save him from their hands and return him to their father (37:22) – Rashi** explains that Reuven had an internal dialogue with himself explaining why he should save Yosef – because of the fact that he was the oldest and therefore most responsible. Why did he not note the obvious – that he should save Yosef because it was the right thing to do? **Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztl.** explains that if Reuven had offered to save Yosef for the real reason – that it was the "right thing," then the Yetzer HaRa would have trapped him and attempted to break him in the process. He therefore convinced himself of the secondary reason and used it to fight off his Yetzer HaRa.

**Yehuda went down from his brothers (38:1) –** The midrash explains that the brothers excommunicated Yehuda when they reconsidered that his advice was not correct. **Rav Benny Lau Shlita** explains that the entire Perek demonstrates Yehudah's slide in life at this moment – first hanging out with the bad crowd – the Canaanim, then intermarrying with a Canaanite woman – the very women that his grandparents saw as Raot and then engaging in a lifestyle that had values that passed through to the children including Onanism. Rav Benny suggests that his freefall life finally stops when Tamar asks him "Haker na" (38:25). Rav Benny parallels the situation based on Rav Yehuda HaLevi's piyut in response to Christianity's claim of rejection of the Jew recited at a Bris when the poet declares Haker Na – that like Tamar, being taken to the fiery furnace, throughout history we too have always had the signs that we stand up for that which is just and right and as Yehudah returns to his leadership position, we ask Hashem to do the same...

**As she was taken out she sent to her father in law saying “I am pregnant to the one who owns these items (38:25) – Rashi** explains that Tamar did not want to embarrass Yehudah publicly. The Gemara determines that it is better to allow oneself to be burned in a furnace and not embarrass a friend. Why didn’t Tamar apply the title of Rodef to Yehuda here and allow his embarrassment to be a solution to her own potential demise? **Rav Zev Wolbe Shlita quotes Rav Shlomo Wolbe ztl** who explains that Tamar was not obligated to give up her life, she decided to do it and it was not halachically a suicide. She did not want to live a life built upon actions created by bad middos. Better to be in the Kivshan than to embarrass someone permanently.

**And on that day he came to the house to do his work (39:11) – Yosef** is referred to as “Hatzaddik” because he withstood the temptation of the wife of Potiphar. Rashi notes that he either stayed off the advances of Mrs. Potiphar or that he saw his father’s image which held him back from sinning. Which image did he get? **Rav Schachter Shlita** explained that being Ben Zekunim meant that he was supposed to be the next link in the Mesorah – and if he sins he won’t deserve to be the next link in the Mesorah. Those who are Mizalzel in the Torah don’t get to be looked up to as part of the Chachmei HaMesorah.

**Haftorah: For three transgressions of Israel but for four I will not revoke it (Amos 2:6) –** Interestingly the Novi rebukes the Northern kingdom for its infliction of harm on their fellow members of the community. All the Avairos mentioned are ethical ones. **Amos Hacham** notes that Amos’s message is clear – ethical Jews are righteous if they follow all of Hashem’s words – the Bein Adam L’Makom AND the Bein Adam L’Chaveiro.