

יגש is a very dramatic פרשה that highlights the confrontation between יוסף and his brothers and the reunion of יוסף and יעקב. All the מפרשים discuss at great length this confrontation and reunion. Another significant aspect of the Parsha, also discussed in detail, is יעקב's meeting with פרעה, which unfortunately has severe consequences for יעקב.

The פסוק says (47:8): יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיָּיָה - "How old are you?" יעקב answers (47:9): יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיָּיָה. The מפרשים discuss extensively why יעקב chose to describe his life negatively rather than positively. Be that as it may, it is brought down in all the מפרשים that for these words, יעקב's life was shortened.

and the דעת זקנים explain that there are 33 words in יעקב's response, and these 33 words correspond to the 33 years by which יעקב's life was shorter than יצחק's. שמולביץ raises an interesting question: these 33 words include the words יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיָּיָה - which were spoken by פרעה, not יעקב. Why should יעקב lose eight years of his life for words that פרעה spoke?

answers that יעקב was the cause of פרעה asking the question. פרעה looked at יעקב and saw an aged and sorrowful face. יעקב appeared older than his biological age, his presentation and appearance demonstrated sorrow and negativity, and that's what prompted פרעה to ask the question.

The משנה in אבות (1:15) teaches: הָיוּ מְקַבְּלִים אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסֶכֶר פָּנִים יְפוֹת, and the גמרא (ע"ב) says it is better that somebody should show someone his white teeth rather than giving him a glass of milk. The מפרשים elaborate: a glass of milk quenches thirst temporarily, but a smile uplifts a person's spirit for much longer, brightening their day.

points out the enormous responsibility this places on us. Our faces are "public property." A smile benefits everyone around us, while a frown can negatively affect others. As challenging as it may seem, we are obligated to present a cheerful face to those around us, regardless of our personal struggles. ציווי is not merely advice; it is a direct ציווי.

Beyond avoiding לשון הרע or being a גאוה, we are commanded to be considerate of others - not only in action but in appearance. Presenting a pleasant demeanor to others is part of our responsibility as בני תורה. By cultivating inner happiness and projecting positivity, we fulfill the מצוה and uplift those around us.

This is especially relevant in challenging times. Many of us are struggling, worrying, and grieving for those suffering from hardship or oppression. While we may not understand why these events occur, our response must be to daven, increase our מצוות, and use our מצוות as a זכות to benefit others. Above all, we must maintain complete אמונה and ביטחון in ה' and governance of the world, and that's really what the message is here. אמונה and ביטחון will save us under every circumstance, and hopefully will save us from צער and will bring about the ישועה that we're looking for. Good Shabbos!

