Candle Lighting - 4:11
Havdalah - 5:20

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SHENK
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מרומי תורה

שבת קודש - פרשת וישב / כג' כסלו תשפ"ג

How Are You?

Ben Freund

The פסוקים towards the end of פרשת וישב say, "And Yosef came to them in the morning, and he saw them and behold they were distraught. And he asked the officers of Pharaoh that were with him in the custody of his master's house saying, 'Why are your faces bad today?'" (בראשית מ ו–ז).

The רמב"ן has a beautiful commentary on this. He says, "It would've been fitting that the pasuk would say, 'And he asked them saying', but it lengthened [the matter] because it wanted to tell of the praise of Yosef, that he was a young slave and he asked of two great officers, and they are in the house of his master who hates him, and each one was able to command to lift his head from on him, and he wasn't scared from them from asking them" (רמב"ן בראשית מ ז).

We have to picture the situation יוסף is in right now. He is a slave to פוטיפר who got thrown in jail because he allegedly tried having relations with אשת פוטיפר. He is at the lowlight of the public eye right now. He is in one of the worst possible situations. Sitting next to him are these two great officers who have served the king for many years. They are respected and honored, yet both made small mistakes to cause them to end up in jail. Each one has tremendous power and influence in the king's house. יוסף is in no position (dare I say, has no right) to even talk to these people.

Yet, he approaches them and says one of the most powerful sets of three words that exists: "How are you?" This "nobody" is speaking to people who can have his head chopped off in an instant, but he doesn't care. He sees they have long faces, and wants to know why. It is because of this simple question that the שר המשקים eventually mentions him to פרעה and that יוסף gets out of jail. Had he never asked about the

The Competition Within Us All

Miriam Rivkah Freund

Have you ever looked into a classroom full of young children before the teacher walks in the room? You'll probably see a couple students talking with each other, a pair arguing over something else, a student sitting by themselves coloring & another by themselves reading. Isn't it interesting that from a young age children like to be a part of a group and at the same time do their own thing. As we grow older, we continue to strive for a balance between these two desires. It is not an easy balance to juggle and as Rabbi David Aaron discusses in his book, "The God Powered Life," it leaves us with a paradox. On the one hand, we try our best to express our own unique individuality and be our most authentic selves, while at the same time, we then feel defeated because we no longer have anything in common with others (pages 31-33).

In this week's parsha, Yosef wants to fit in but also creates a certain competition between himself and his brothers. He does not do so intentionally, nevertheless the brothers feel slighted by the favoritism given to him by their father which is confounded by Yosef's defaming his brothers to Yaakov. All Yosef wants to do is the right thing. When he sees his brothers not acting accordingly, he cannot help as the verse says, "Yosef would bring bad reports about them to their father (37:2)." Yosef did not mean to create hatred between himself and his brothers, but rather struggled with what every one of us struggles with from a young age. Mainly, staying true to what he believed was right and at the same time being accepted by his brothers. However, if we look at the same verse just a few words earlier it says, "הוּא נַעַר אֶת־בְּנֵי בִלְהָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו" (Ibid). Rashi says that Yosef saw the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah being treated as less than,

well-being of the שרים, perhaps his name would never have been brought up in front of פרעה, and might have stayed in jail for much longer. Our whole reality of יציאת מצרים could have been so different.

We see the power of a simple, "How are you?". It can change someone's day completely, making them feel recognized and important. If they were having a bad day, your inquiry will make their day so much better. If someone is going through a problem that they're trying to navigate, asking them about their day and listening to them can take a huge burden off their shoulders. "How are you?" is probably one of the most important questions humans have ever formulated, yet it is so under appreciated.

So, next time you pass someone on the street, or you see one of your friends that's looking kind of down, ask them how their day is going. Or, better yet, ask a stranger. You never know what could come out of it.

By caring for each other and inquiring about others' well-being, may we be זוכה to the בנין of בית המקדש שלישי במהרה בימינו.

Have a good Shabbos!

and specifically chose to be friendly and create a close relationship with them. The verse shows us how much Yosef wants to be close with his brothers. Even so, Yosef struggles with seeing his brothers act in a way that is wrong in his eyes and feels he has no choice but to report his brother's wayward ways to Yaakov.

We see Yosef's struggle again when he first sees his brothers after 22 years of separation, and immediately recognizes them. Again, he is challenged. He knows he must live out the dreams he had 22 years earlier and test his brothers' resolution to change. Simultaneously, we know he also deeply desires to reunite with them as we see through his multiple encounters with them before revealing his identity. Again, he chooses to do what he knows is right before allowing himself to be accepted by his brothers by testing them and causing them great discomfort. Only after the dreams have come to fruition, does he reveal his true identity.

However, when Yaakov dies, we finally see Yosef merge his two dichotomous desires. Yosef's brothers reach out to him, afraid that now he will finally get his retribution. Yet what he says shows that this dichotomy with which he has been struggling with has found a resolution. He tells them "Am I a substitute for God? Do not be afraid for God has intended all of this for the good" (50: 19-21). Yosef acknowledges and shows us that the key to being able to individuate ourselves while at the same time continue to be a part of the *Klal* is through recognizing and putting Hashem at the head of it all. Once we are driven to serve Hashem in the best way possible, we can unite these two entreaties to do the will of Hashem in our own unique way contributing more to the *klal.*

Trivia Questions

1. Three of Avraham's children are mentioned in this week's parsha. Yitzchak is not one of them. Who are they? Hint: Look in the רשב"ם on the second to help you find the third.
2. There are no less than ten professions mentioned in this week's parsha. Can you find them all?

Trivia Answers From Last Week

1. נֹחַ, אֶת-שֵׁם אֶת-חָם (בראשית ה:לב)
כִּי-גַם-זֶה לְךָ בֵּן (בראשית לה:יז)
כִּי-יָד עַל-כֵּס קָהּ (שמות יז:טז)
2. ברוך קל עליון - כְּשֶׁמֶשׁ לוֹ זָרְחָה, מִנְחָה הִיא שְׁלוּחָה

Submit answers by Tuesday to **shenkparshapublication@gmail.com** for the chance to be included in a raffle!

Disclaimer: contents are Sheimos, please treat with proper kavod.