

Parshat Vayigash: Hidden Tzaddikim

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur on Chassidut by Rabbi Hershel Reichman

The gemara says that Yosef's name is spelled with an extra hey in Tehillim. This hey, which is one letter of the four letter name of Hashem, was given to Yosef because he sanctified Hashem's name in private. In contrast, Yehuda's name contains all four letters of Hashem's name because he sanctified Hashem's name in public.

The Shem Mishmuel explains that this Gemara makes a profound statement about the character of Yosef and Yehuda. Yosef was the epitome of "*hatzne'a lechet*," he walked modestly with Hashem. He was a hidden *tzaddik*. Chazal say that he would groom himself because he wanted his outside appearance to deceive people into thinking he was not righteous. He was so private that his own family did not know who he truly was. He was an exceptional *tzaddik*, who stood firm in his faith and remained loyal to the Torah throughout the long years of suffering in Egypt. Yehuda's righteousness, however, was well known. He confessed in public to the sin he had committed with Tamar. Both *tzaddikim* had special roles to play in the destiny of Klal Yisrael.

Yosef would not be deceived by the outside

blandishments of Egypt. Even though he spent many years among the finest pleasures that Egypt had to offer, he did not join their way of life. He searched for the essence.

This is an important model for us. The culture around us has such incredible attraction. It is so tempting for us to submit to the bad and rationalize it as good. The power of Yosef gives us the strength to withstand this difficult trial.

Yehuda was the leader of the Jewish nation. When he rose, the nation rose with him. The Jews need someone who can lead them along a clear path. This is the revealed *tzaddik*.

The Shem Mishmuel cites a saying of the Zohar, "The Jewish people have fallen never to rise again." This refers to our present exile. How will the Jewish people return? The Rambam says the revival of the Jewish people will come through their repentance. This repentance will be a movement led by the descendants of Yosef and Yehuda, respectively.

In the future there will be a *Mashiach ben Yosef* and a *Mashiach ben David*. *Mashiach ben Yosef* will come first. *Mashiach Ben*

David, from the family of Yehuda, will come later and bring us into the final Messianic era. *Mashiach ben Yosef* will follow the model of Yosef, who brought down spiritual energy *mi'lemala l'mata*, from above down into the physical world. He will connect heaven with earth. This will be the first stage, because the Jewish people will be so worn out from exile that they will not have the strength to repent on their own. They will need that extra inspiration to give them new life. After this rebirth, *Mashiach ben David* will come. He will be a part of the people, someone who will live with the Jewish nation and show them how to live a spiritual life once again.

Yosef taught us how to survive through difficult times. He taught us to believe in the power of a dream. Yosef maintained his *emuna* and *simchat hachaim* because he knew Hashem had a mission for him. He saw his dreams come true. We too must have dreams and believe in them. We should not be deceived by the seeming dangers of the outside world. Hashem is with us and will protect us come what may. Let us try to emulate the model of Yosef by keeping our dreams alive as we navigate the challenges of life.

Rebbetzin's Perspective II Part 5

Excerpted from Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller's Question and Answer series on Naaleh.com

Question:

Could you suggest what I should say to my child if another child tells her, "No one wants to play with you."

Answer:

This is a "girl thing" to say, so I suspect the child is a girl. You need to ascertain if your child is socially deficient in any way, or if the other child is just being nasty. There could be a number of reasons why she is being ostracized. Is she clean, dressed well, with it, keen on the rules of the game of life, and equipped when she comes to school? If there is a specific reason why the

other children view her as different, then make it your business to fix it right away.

If it's just the usual picture of an insecure child zeroing in on your child because of her own needs, you need to respond in a different way. Make your house attractive for kids by providing good games and nosh, and invite other children over to play with your child. This will tell her that she is basically OK.

This strategy will make you much more credible when you say, "That girl felt bad so she wanted to make herself feel good by putting you down. Poor girl, for some reason she doesn't feel like #1 already. She'll grow out of it."

Teach your child to respond with a mature level

of disdain by telling the nasty girl, "Why are you saying these things? Do you enjoy saying things like that?" The child will realize it's not her problem, but the other person's. If there is something wrong that you cannot fix, then you will need to toughen up your child by saying, "Look, the issue isn't you. She would like everyone to have exactly the same of everything. You're you. Hashem gives you what you need. She just doesn't see it." So again, you've created an attitude that says, "Poor her, her vision of life is limited. You're OK. Don't take it personally."



Bringing Torah To Life #6 – Teaching Children Kibud Av

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

We continue with our discussion of how to teach children the value of *kibud av v'aim*, respecting parents. Children from age ten to thirteen are maturing rapidly. You need to move the relationship from imitation to discipleship and friendship. This is achieved by showing the child how much you value their opinion and by sharing beliefs and ideas with them. Inviting a discussion with your child shows him that you think he is important. Recognize that they have their own unique value and that they are not just an extension of you. Rebellion is the consequence of feeling that one can't have a self. Build a relationship with your child. Nurture bonds of love. The more time you give them, the more affection and intimacy will develop, and the more they will have to lose by disobeying.

Show your child that you value him but expect him to still treat you as a parent. Listen to him and be empathetic. When something about his behavior bothers you, explain it in a nice way and place in his hands some of the authority to correct it. If he respects you enough, he will not want to disappoint you.

At this age, jealousy, lust, and honor are big forces in a child's life and he will need you to teach him skills on how to handle them before temptation overpowers him. Children may become envious and demand possessions that you don't think they need. Talk to

them about independence and individuality and being happy with what Hashem gives us. If you do a good job at getting the point across with examples and stories, your children will feel less pressured to conform. If you see that they cannot stand up to the test, try not to force them into conflict. Sometimes you might just have to give in. If you really can't, try to understand them and use your authority to put limitations on how far their resentment takes them.

Kids this age are *baalei taava* – lustful. Girls should be taught the laws of *tzniut* and boys should be trained in *shemirat einayim*. For girls, *taavah* expresses itself many times in the desire for admiration. Lay down the right foundation by teaching them the joy of discipline. Self esteem comes from self discipline. Stretching yourself beyond your limitations gives you a feeling of satisfaction. Train them to take pride in overcoming base desires. Teach them *yirat shamayim* by your own example. Listen to them, be willing to extend yourself if possible, and then exert your authority.

Kavod, honor, is much harder to deal with. Children have an insatiable need for acknowledgment and appreciation. If they feel slighted it will be hard for them to control themselves and they may react by saying and doing things they shouldn't. The Netivot Shalom writes that insulting a child is like pouring oil on a fire. Criticizing and devaluation destroys

their self esteem. Always express acknowledgment, validation, and appreciation. If they feel they are being mistreated, listen to them, restate their complaint, acknowledge that you think differently, state the thing they did, and assert your authority. Children who are hypersensitive will interpret any disapproval as complete rejection. Build your ability to acknowledge your child's inherent goodness. Help them develop a sense of security, value, and trustworthiness. Then you can credibly say, "A girl like you, who I acknowledge and believe in, shouldn't be doing something like this."

In summation, in early childhood take advantage of your children's desire to follow and teach them the basics of *kibud av*. They should learn to respect and listen to you. In return you should listen to them and make fair decisions with their interests in mind. In mid childhood, be an example for your child in how you treat your spouse and your own parents. Cultivate a relationship of discipleship and friendship in the late childhood and early teen years. Be an empathetic listener but remain authoritative. Get your decision across in a way that the child feels he's been acknowledged and that it is not your ego speaking, but the Torah. We've only touched on this topic which is so broad and complex. Applying these basic principles will get you off to a good start on the challenging road of *chinuch*.

Parsha Journeys: Parshat Vayigash – Confrontation of Kings

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Hanoah Teller

When Yosef imprisons Binyamin, Yehuda attempts to arouse the compassion of Yosef by depicting the unbearable pain their father would experience upon hearing the news. Yosef then reveals himself by declaring, "I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?" The verse reads, "His brothers could not answer him because they were disconcerted." Why did Yosef ask if his father was still alive if Yehuda had just spoken of him? The Midrash says, "Woe to creation on the day of judgment. Woe to creation on the

day of admonishment."

The Bait Halevi explains that there are two distinct days, the Day of Judgment and the Day of Admonishment. When the soul reaches the world to come after 120 years, he will be shown a film of his life split in two screens. One screen will ask him why he did not give charity. The soul will answer he did not have any money. The other screen will show him buying a fancy chandelier and flying away on an expensive vacation. The

soul will be pitted against itself. You may be able to answer anything in the world but you cannot justify your own self. This is what happened with the brothers. They attempted to arouse Yosef's mercy out of concern for their father but when Yosef confronted them they had nothing to say. They realized the magnitude of their misdeed and how they had hurt their father with the sale of Yosef. It was a moment of truth. Our moment of truth awaits us too. Let us be sure to repent before it is too late.