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Vayaishhev

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IT IS always intriguing to see how differently people think from one another, although at other times, it is also very scary. In fact, as time goes on, it is becoming more scary than intriguing. It's a big blessing to know the Truth, and an even bigger one to live by it.

Until last week's *parsha*, the difference in thinking was between the "Jewish People" and the rest of mankind. But when Ya'akov was forced to berate Shimon and Levi for taking retribution against the people of Shechem, we were introduced to different mentalities within the "frum" community.

That problem is amplified in this week's *parsha*. Ya'akov Avinu sees Yosef as the continuation of the legacy of the Avos, but Yosef's brothers see him as the hindrance to it. To this end, Ya'akov treats Yosef differently than the rest of his sons, and to this end, his other sons sell Yosef into slavery. Somebody had to be wrong.

It would take twenty-two years and a lot of *Hashgochah Pratis* to show who, and it wouldn't be Ya'akov or Yosef. And it won't be until *Parashas Vayigash* when Yosef finally reveals himself that they will be forced to come to face-to-face with the truth and just *how* wrong they had been.

It was a much smaller world in those days. MUCH smaller. Today, we are over eight billion people strong, or weak, depending on how you look at it. That's a lot of mentalities, a lot of very *different* mentalities. For a while, we were able to live with the differences, but more recently, they are becoming so extremely different for one another that hostilities are surfacing abroad *and* locally.

The amazing thing is how God puts up with all of it, and for so long. Sometimes it seems as if He is just making sure people have enough rope to hang themselves, giving them the wrong impression that He doesn't care about what they say or do. As the Gemora warns, never say God gives up on things, especially if the Torah says they're important to Him.

That's if you suspect that God might not agree with your approach to life. In the case of Yosef's brothers, they thought they acted for God. L'havdil, so do the Muslims and the Christians, *especially* when they were torturing and killing the Jews. So do factions within the Orthodox world when they go so far as to fraternize with our enemies to undermine the Jewish State.

Even within a single household, mentalities vary, sometimes resulting in severe and unsolvable *shalom bayis* problems between spouses, between parents and children, or between siblings. The Gemora makes a seemingly absurd statement that a rebellious child is worse than the war of Gog and Magog (*Brochos* 7b). It's not clear how that can be, but the message is clear that a parent has to do whatever they can to at least not make a child rebellious.

But there is only one truth, God's truth. It is objective and absolute, and every individual will be judged based upon their ability to know that truth and how much they did. The Midrash compares Yosef's revelation of his truth to his brothers in

Parashas Vayigash to God's eventual revelation of His truth on *Yom HaDin*. Seeing it, we'll automatically know how much we distorted it in each and every *gilgul*.

Why wait? Had the brothers questioned themselves earlier, perhaps they could have avoided their painful realization later in the story. "What do I believe, and how did I come to believe it?" are good questions to start with. Asking them will tell God that you're ready to know the truth, *His* truth, and your life will be greatly enhanced because of it.

This Wednesday is **Session Three** of "Enlightened: The True Light of the Holiday of Light," b"H. Go here to register: <https://www.shaarnunproductions.org/seminars.html>.

I "accidentally" wrote a new book on Chanukah that is almost finished, b"H. Called "**Enlightened**," it is my best so far (I think). However, it won't be available in time for the holiday, so I had an idea. Anyone who believes they would want this book can receive 80 percent of it before Chanukah in PDF format for no charge (usually PDFs are \$ 5.95 each) by buying the book in advance (12.95 US plus \$ 4.50 shipping). Once the book is published, I will have it sent to you through Amazon, b"H. If you are interested, use this link to make the purchase: <https://www.-matara.pro/nedarimplus/online/?mosad=7014140>. Any questions, write: pinchasw@thirtysix.org.

Books: *Twenty-Four Days*, *The Light of 36*, and *The Equation of Life*, all available through Amazon and Thirtysix.org. Podcasts: "Bridging the Gap" and "Twenty-Four Days" at Shaarnun Productions.

Good Shabbos, and, of course, Chanukah Samayach!

Pinchas Winston