

- 1) Aside from the fact that Yosef was born from Yaakov's main wife Rachel, and that he was born when Yaakov was very old (91 years old!) Yosef was extraordinarily **brilliant**, and he used his gifted mind for Torah. He absorbed the decades of Torah that Yaakov learned at Yeshivot Shem & Ever at the young age of 17! He also loved him extra special because he looked exactly like himself which was a sign of his uniqueness. They had so much in common: Both were born mahul; both their mothers were barren; both had brothers that hated them both had dreams of greatness etc.
- 2) Yosef's brothers felt that Yosef was showing off- as if he was superior and they were inferior. By throwing him into a pit, he would be **humbled**- his spirit will have to be low. They were also worried that just like Avrohom had Yishmael, and Yitzchok had Esav, maybe Yosef thinks that he is the Tzadik and all of the other brothers are wicked sons. They felt he was belittling them before Yaakov so that maybe he should get blessed and them cursed- this person is a threat to all of our people, and therefore they tried to get rid of him. As the Gemara says- if someone comes to kill you- you are allowed to kill him first in self-defense.
- 3) This symbolized that because of this act of hatred, of "Sinaat Hinam" there would have to be a long exile, a long galut in which the Jews would have to **walk a long time** until they come back to rest in Yerushalayim their home. As the Gemara says in Yoma that the Bet Hamikdash was destroyed because of senseless hatred.
- 4) Yosef had exceptional ability to **stay holy**- even in an environment that was impure and corrupt. Knowing that the Jewish people would someday have to be sent into exile- out of their homeland, they needed someone with this tremendous quality to lead the way, so that we to can be pure even in an immoral society, and corrupt environment.
- 5) Truthfully the Mishna in Sanhedrin tells us that tranquillity is great for righteous people because they use that time to learn and teach Hashem's Torah all around. So really, asking for tranquillity is a perfectly fine request. However, since Yaakov our forefather was to be the role model for all generations for us to emulate, he needed to have hardships- so that we can learn how he stayed faithful to Hashem, to be that shining example for us to follow through any trials in our own lives. It was for that reason that Yaakov was unable to have a totally serene and peaceful life. He had to have hardships with his own children- whether it was Dina's kidnapping or Yosef's kidnapping in order so that he can show us how to stay firm and trust with bitachon in Hashem that all will turn out well. Another explanation is that the Satan accuses saying that tzadikim are going to have so much peace, tranquillity, pleasure and delight in the **world to come**- what's their rush to have it in this world also? Hashem is teaching us that the righteous should not be worried about their total comfort in this world because they ought to be focused on the real world, which is so much better.
- 6) The last mitzva that Yaakov discussed with Yosef before he was missing was mitzva number 530- the mitzva of *Egla Arufa*. That mitzva discusses what Bet Din must do if they find a dead body without any trace of the killer. How they must take a young calf and crack it's neck by the river bay in order for everyone to shiver that here in front of us, a man was plucked out of this world at such a young age when he could have done so much. And this would make people more careful and sensitive to prevent murder or danger in their midst. This symbolized that Yosef also was a young man, only 17 and plucked away from his family, when there was so much that they could have done together.
- 7) Yosef thought that this was a **prophecy**, not just a regular dream, and the Torah says that a Navi is not allowed to hold back a prophecy- rather, he must say it, or else he's punished with his own death. Yosef felt that he had no choice, and perhaps he didn't want to tell them this, but he felt it his obligation. Also Yosef knew that you're supposed to tell your dreams to your **friends** so that they can interpret them positively.
- 8) Yaakov really felt that since Yosef learned Torah so well, this would be an opportunity to make the other sons learn from his example. Yaakov figured that if I give him something extra special, this would cause "**jealousy of the scholars**", which the Gemara says increases their wisdom, because each would try harder to achieve more. But the painful reality is that favoritism in class does not cause the other boys to try harder, it just causes animosity towards that exceptional student.
- 9) When Yaakov would see a nice portion he would save it for Yosef. Yosef's brothers were jealous and they would give him **ayin harah**.
- 10) Yosef was Motsei Shem Rah on his brothers. He saw them doing **suspicious things** and he should have given them the benefit of the doubt. What did he see? a) He saw them eating an **animal which seemed to be alive** (ever min hachai) without properly slaughtering it first. In reality though it was a calf that was in the mother's stomach and the law is that the shechita of the mother permits the calf that it does not need a regular shechita to be eaten. b) He saw that they were degrading the sons of the shefachot- namely *Gad, Asher, Dan, And Naftali*. He said that they called them **slaveboys**. c) He said that they were looking at the **girls** of the land, while in reality, it was business transactions without gazing at them. Yosef was punished measure for measure. When the brothers sold him, they slaughtered the goat whose blood they used to dip his coat in. He said that they called the sons of the shefachot slaves- and he was sold as a slave. He said that they were looking at women, and he was punishment was that he was put in a terrible situation with an immodest woman.
- 11) Yosef was compared to a **stalk of wheat** and Gideon was compared to a **loaf of barley**. The reason that Yosef dreamt about wheat was because it was due to wheat that the brothers would need at the time of the hunger, that they would eventually come down to Mitzraim and bow down to Yosef. Sometimes people bow down and are forced to humble themselves before another to get food to eat. In Gideon's time it was due to the merit of the bringing of the barley of the **Korbon Omer** that the Jewish people were saved and that's why he was symbolized as barley.
- 12) The brothers just finished destroying Shechem after the episode with Dina. They went to graze their sheep there to show that they're **not scared of the people** that were there because they deserved punishment and they showed trust in Hashem that he will protect them for standing up to the bad in society.
- 13) Some say that the brothers wanted to send their shepherd dogs to attack Yosef Hatzadik, since the Gemara says that one who speaks Lashon Hara deserves to be thrown to the dogs. But when they tried to send the dogs to attack, Yosef's righteousness protected him and they wouldn't attack.
- 14) The brothers sold Yosef and dipped his beautiful coat in goat's blood (which resembles human blood), and we must always remember this act of "**sibling rivalry**", so every Rosh Chodesh and Yom Kippur we must use a **goat to atone**. This reminds us to do teshuva for this common sin of not getting along within the own family. (It would not be a bad idea to accept on ourselves that every Rosh Chodesh we **stop and send** a loving letter to our family...)
- 15) We find in the history of our people ten tragic occurrences where Tanaaic Rabbis were murdered in cold blood. The Rabbis were: *Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel; Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha Kohen Gadol; Rabbi Akiva; Rabbi Yehuda ben Bubbya; Rabbi Chananya ben Tradyon; Rabbi Yeshovev Hasofer; Rabbi Elazar ben Dama; Rabbi Chanina ben Chachinai; Rabbi Chutzpus Hametorgemin; and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamaa*. Their death was required to atone for the 10 great tzadikim -the sons of Yaakov- that participated in Yosef's sale. The reason that death was their punishment, is that the Torah warns if someone kidnaps another and sells him he is punishable by death. It seems those great Tanaim were in some way the **Gilgulim** of the 10 Shevatim.
- 16) Yaakov, brokenhearted, demanded that his sons search for the body of Yosef, which seemed to have been attacked by a beast. He said bring the first wild animal that you see- maybe that will be the one that was guilty. They brought Yaakov a wolf, and Yaakov cried out with his bitter heart. **Why did you eat Yosef my son!? Why didn't you fear Hashem!? Why did you kill my son, my innocent son!?** Hashem made a miracle and the wolf spoke and said "I swear to Hashem who made me, and by the life of you my master, I did not see your son. I come from a far land because my son too is missing. Many days I searched for my son and did not find him- and now they capture me to add more misery!?! I never tasted human flesh in my life!" Yaakov was astonished by its speech and they sent it off on its way.
- 17) When the Arabs were taking Yosef down to Mitzraim, he kept on crying and screaming. "Father! Father!" And the Arabs beat him in the face. Yosef kept on crying uncontrollably until he could not cry anymore. They beat him and threatened him that he better stopped crying. Hashem saw the pain of Yosef and Hashem made the hands of those that hit him become **paralyzed** and they didn't know what happened to them. When they passed by Rachel's grave, Yosef ran on to his mother's grave and cried "**Mommy! Mommy! Wake up and see your son, how he was sold as a slave, and no one has pity on me. Cry with me with my pain, and see what my mean brothers did to me. Wake up, Mommy, and fight for me! They tore me away from my father without pity!**" Yosef cried a great cry until he was silent and he then heard a voice come from under the ground. "**My son, my son, Yosef my son, I've heard your cry and your scream. I've seen your tears. I know your pain my son and it hurts me greatly. But my son, now you must wait for Hashem, and pray for Him and don't be scared because Hashem will be with you. He will save you from all tragedy. Go my son, to Mitzraim and don't be scared.**" Rachel strengthened Yosef, and encouraged him. Yosef still cried until one of the Arabs pulled him away again, and hit him and cursed him. Yosef begged, "Take me back to my father- he is very rich, he will ransom me", but they said "Quiet, you're a slave", and they began to beat him. Hashem defended Yosef's honor by making a **hurricane storm** come with lightning and thunder. The ground trembled and all of the people were scared- they couldn't even move on. They wondered what is this, what sin did we commit that God is doing this to us. And then they realized it must be because they were mean to this servant and they begged His forgiveness. Yosef prayed to Hashem and the storm stopped. Then they decided that Yosef is not worth the consequences that they would have to suffer so they sold him to a different group of Arabs.

- 18) **Osnat**, the stepdaughter of Potifar, defended Yosef. Zolikhah- Potifar's wife- charged Yosef for abusing her. Potifar was furious, and about to kill Yosef, when this little baby, the infant, spoke up and said "no, it's Mommy that's lying and not Yosef the righteous." A miracle.
- 19) Yosef would marry Osnat the girl that saved his life. Some say she was Dinah's daughter from Shechem. We find also that Moshe Rabenu's wife Tziporah saved his life on the way to Mitzraim when he was almost punished with death for delaying the Brit Milah of his son Eliezer. Esther saved Mordechai from Haman's plot.
- 20) Yehuda lost some popularity after Yosef was sold, because anyone who starts a mitzvah and doesn't finish it goes down in his status. Yehuda was punished that he lost his first wife and children as a punishment **for not saving** his brother Yosef.
- 21) The Tanach has several stories of deadly jealousy. There are too many examples for me to enumerate, but I wish to mention some. **Kayin** was jealous of Hevel; **Esav** was jealous of Yaakov; Leahvtil the brothers were jealous of Yosef; the **Meraglim** were jealous of the leaders that would take them over; **Korach** was jealous of Moshe; **Shaul** was jealous of David; **Yoav** was jealous of Avner; **Yeravam** was jealous of Ruchavam; **Achav** was jealous of Nevayot etc. We must pray to Hashem to remove the **Ruach Ra'ah**- the evil spirit- that makes one hate another just because he's good!
- 22) Yosef was rewarded with Malchut (kingship) in merit that he stayed holy and controlled his Yetzer Hara, which tempted him to do zenut.
- 23) Osnat, the stepdaughter of Zolikhah (Potifar's wife) was even more beautiful than her mother. Yosef refused to take an eshet ish, and Hashem rewarded him with even a more beautiful wife in the end. Hashem makes sure that those that keep his Torah don't lose out in the end.
- 24) The Talmud tells us that a woman who is **modest in her appearance** will merit descendants that will be kings! (**Talmidei Hachamim** are the kings of today!)
- 25) Since Yehudah sold Yosef to be a slave **not marrying until he was thirty**, Yehudah's descendant David Hamelech did not rise to his throne until he was thirty.
- 26) Just as **oil floats** to the top not mixing with any other liquid, so too **Yosef did not mix** with the immoral Egyptians and that's why he rose to the top (as we will see in the next Parasha).
- 27) Yosef's brothers only ate bread after throwing him in the pit. They felt that he was trying to reject them as if they were like Esav or Yishmael. They were relieved that now he won't prevent them from being the Shivtei Kah.
- 28) Yosef, **Yaakov's firstborn**, was sold for 20 selaim which equal 5 shekalim. As a fine for that despicable act, every father must redeem his firstborn son for 5 shekalim.
- 29) Peretz needed to be born first in order to be the Royal Family. By Peretz almost going first it symbolized that Malchut Yehuda would also almost get lost but in the end it would prevail.
- 30) Yosef 's brothers should have had "positive jealousy" known as "kinat soferim". They should have reasoned that his success was due to his higher level of fear of Hashem. By increasing their service to Hashem they would also be more successful.
- 31) Yehudah felt **ruach hakodesh** that he must marry Tamar. In those days "**yibum**" was permitted with any relatives. Since he caused Yosef's marriage to be delayed twelve years, his own marriage was not so smooth.
- 32) Yosef's caring for the prisoners mysterious dreams, helped him eventually be remembered to be able to interpret Paroh's dreams as well. This led to his promotion.
- 33) Yosef didn't want to tell his father if Hashem didn't.
- 34) Yosef was really as humble when he rose to the kingdom as he was when he was a slave. However, since he made his brothers feel inferior, some of his royal descendants were **wicked and arrogant namely, Yeravam and Achav**.
- 35) Yosef's dream referred to **Bilah as his mother**. Because she raised him after Rachel's passing.
- 36) Yosef always whispered **words of Torah and Tefillah** while serving Potiphar. At first potiphar thought Yosef was saying witchcraft, but then he realized he was really speaking words of closeness to Hashem.
- 37) Yaakov gave Yosef an exquisite and colorful cloak in recognition of his effort and achievement in Torah knowledge. It cost two coins. But, it created such a hatred, that henceforth his brothers treated him negatively.
- 38) A bear is not bashful. Even the mighty lion has a little shyness, but not a bear. One must be shy not to do bad things. (Not shy to do good things!) Zolika was not bashful to do inappropriate things.
- 39) The Midrash tells us that one must always inquire of the welfare from things he benefits from. This is why Yakov was inquiring how the sheep were doing.
- 40) Zolika spoke harshly to Yosef in attempt to seduce him. She wanted to kill her husband so she could marry Yosef. She said "I will torture you". Yosef replied "Hashem does justice for those that are oppressed." She said "I will starve you". He answered "Hashem gives food to those that are hungry". She said "I will shackle you". He said "Hashem frees those that are tied up". She said "I will bend you". He said "Hashem straightens those that are bent". She said "I will blind you". He said "Hashem gives sight to the blind". Finally she had a razor sharp iron brace put on his neck which would prompt his head to look up at her. But, still he closed his eyes not to see her *peritzut*.
- 41) When Yosef was thrown into the pit he screamed in horror. Hashem made a miracle that all the snakes and scorpions went into cracks so as not to harm him.
- 42) Reuvein really regretted that he disturbed his father Yaakov. He felt so bad that he did not give his father the maximum Kibud Av that he should of. So he sat in fasting and sackcloth to show his pain. **Reuvein is the first Baal Teshuva**, since Adam and Kayin only returned from fear of punishment. Plus they repented from a sin. He repented from not doing a mitzvah better.
- 43) Yosef caused his brothers to sell him. Then Yaakov tore his clothes in grief and mourning. So Yosef's descendant Yehoshua also had to tear his clothes in grief and mourning at the **battle with Ai**.
- 44) Yitzchok knew the truth that Yosef was not killed by a wild animal. But he didn't want to tell his son yaakov since Hashem didn't tell him. To share in his pain he cried and mourned. But when they weren't watching Yitzchok would wash his face, anoint himself, eat and drink.
- 45) Er and Onan were not tzeniut and acted **immorally**. Even though they were only about seven they were punished with death.
- 46) Two famous women covered their faces with veils having extreme modesty. Rivkah and Tamar. Both were therefore blessed with twins.
- 47) Yosef could of pulled his jacket away from Zolika to prevent her from framing him. But, he didn't want to be next to aveirah for a split second and fled as fast as he could get away from there. One must outrun the snares of the Yetzer Hara.
- 48) In the times of the Bet Hamikdash every Jewish male (over 20) is required to pay a mahasit hashekel tax. The money was used to purchase korbanot to atone for our sins. It was especially needed to **atone for the selling of Yosef Hatzadik**.
- 49) Yosef was a **teenager 17 years old** when he wished that Hashem would test him. He was tested for 12 months. His self control was supernatural.
- 50) Yaakov accepted all of life's challenges with **love** and trust in Hashem.
- 51) When one stares at something it makes a lasting impression. So one must get in the habit of looking at tzadikim and this will create a better nature. Yosef saw his **holy parents in his imagination** and it spared him from sinning. (It's a tragedy and a pity how youngsters watch TV and other treif media and are contaminated by seeing reshaim.)
- 52) Yosef's brothers shouldn't have hated Yosef for accomplishing more. They should have been **happy that he was doing so good**. They should of realized from his honor and recognition, that Hashem was pleased with him. They should of just increased their own determination to do their missions as best as they can. After all people are different and everyone has his own unique task. It helps to look at people that are not as fortunate as yourself and then you will be happy. Jealousy is an incurable disease.
- 53) Yosef should have **trusted solely in Hashem** and not of asked the non-Jewish Chief Bartender to speak up for him. By displaying a slight lack of trust, he had to wait several hundred days to be free.
- 54) Yosef was put to the ultimate test of passion and temptation. He overcame the natural drive and instinct even though there were no Jews watching him. In life man is tested daily and many fail. On their **days of judgement** they will be asked why they didn't learn from Yosef, self- control and fear of Hashem?
- 55) The Jews had to go to Egypt since Avrohom doubted he would have offspring in his old age. Hashem responded to that slight lack of trust with a promise that "your descendants will be numerous and they will be servants in a foreign country". But, really we wouldn't have had to work so hard and so long. **That bitter slavery was all a punishment for selling Yosef to Mitzraim**.

