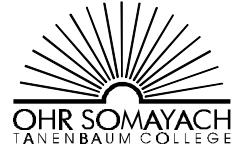


Parsha Q&A



Parshas Vayeshev

For the week ending 26 Kislev 5757
6 & 7 December 1996

Parsha Questions

1. "These are the offspring of Yaakov: Yosef...." Give three reasons why Yosef is considered Yaakov's main offspring.
2. Yaakov rebuked Yosef for telling his brothers the dreams. Why?
3. How do we see from the dream about the sun, moon and stars that all dreams contain some untrue element?
4. How did Reuven plan to save Yosef?
5. What did Ishmaelites usually transport?
6. Who brought Yosef down to Egypt?
7. Where was Reuven when Yosef was sold?
8. In addition to the brothers, who else knew that Yosef was alive?
9. For how long did Yaakov mourn the loss of Yosef?
10. Verse 37:35 states "his father wept." To whom does this refer?
11. Who was Tamar's father?
12. Why did Tamar not tell Yehuda that she was pregnant with his child?
13. In what merit did Tamar deserve to have kings as her descendants?
14. Why is the word "hand" mentioned four times in connection to the birth of Zerach?
15. Why does the Torah relate the incident with Potiphar's wife immediately after the incident of Yehuda and Tamar?
16. In what way was Hashem "with" Yosef?
17. Why were the butler and the baker imprisoned?
18. For how long were the butler and the baker in prison?
19. How did the baker know that Yosef had correctly interpreted the butler's dream? (40:16)
20. How was Yosef punished for asking the butler for help?

Bonus
Q:

"Yehuda said to his brothers, '...We should not kill him, for he is our brother, our flesh.'" (37:26-7) A person is a combination of elements inherited from his mother and his father. According to the Talmud, a person inherits his flesh from his mother and his bones from his father. If so, why did Yehuda refer to Yosef as 'our brother, our flesh?' Since Yehuda and Yosef had the same father, but not the same mother, Yehuda should have referred to Yosef as 'our brother, our bone.'

I Did Not Know That!

"Yosef was seventeen years old... and Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his sons, for he was his 'wisdom son...'" (37:2-3) "Yaakov taught Yosef everything he had learned from Shem and Ever." Rashi.

This hints to the custom to teach a child to read Hebrew when he is three years old. How so? Yaakov studied in the Academy of Shem and Ever for fourteen years. Yaakov taught this wisdom to Yosef by the time Yosef was seventeen. If it took Yaakov fourteen years to teach it, just as it had taken him to learn it, we see that Yaakov began teaching Yosef at age three!

(See Rema, Orach Chaim Yoreh Deah 245:8)

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Parshas Vayeshev — 26 Kislev 5757, 6 & 7 December 1996

Production Design: Lev Seltzer ☞☐

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

37:2	The Evil Report
37:10	The Moon
38:24	Tamar's Punishment

Sforno

37:2	The Evil Report
37:3	Yosef's Coat
37:18	The Brothers' Concern
38:1	Yehuda's Punishment
39:19	Why Yosef was Imprisoned

Answers to this Week's Questions

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

- 37:2 - (A) Yosef was the son of Rachel, Yaakov's primary wife. (B) Yosef looked like Yaakov. (C) All that befell Yaakov befell Yosef.
- 37:10 - Because Yosef aroused the hatred of his brothers.
- 37:10 - The moon represented Rachel. Since she had already died, it was impossible for that element of the dream to come true.
- 37:22 - He intended to return to the pit and pull Yosef out of it.
- 37:25 - Tar and Kerosene (*Itran and Neph*).
- 37:28 - A caravan of Midianites.
- 37:29 - He was attending to Yaakov.
- 37:33 - Yitzchak.
- 37:34 - Twenty-two years.
- 37:35 - Yitzchak, who wept because of Yaakov's suffering.
- 38:24 - Shem.
- 38:25 - She did not want to embarrass him in public.
- 38:26 - In the merit of her modesty.
- 38:30 - To allude to his descendent, Achan, who sinned with his hand by taking four things from the spoils of Jericho.
- 39:1 - To teach us that just as Tamar acted with pure motives, so did Potiphar's wife.
- 39:3 - Yosef mentioned Hashem's name frequently in his speech.
- 40:1 - The butler was imprisoned because a fly was found in the king's goblet, and the baker was imprisoned because a pebble was found in the king's bread.
- 40:4 - Twelve months.
- 40:5 - The baker dreamed the interpretation of the butler's dream.
- 40:23 - He remained in prison an additional two years.

Bonus

A:

Yosef had two mothers: Rachel and Leah!

Originally, Leah conceived Yosef and Rachel conceived Dina. But Leah saw with divine inspiration that if she were to bear Yaakov's seventh son, Rachel would bear only one son, and thus be less than even the handmaids, Billah and Zilpah, who had two sons each. Therefore, Leah prayed, and Hashem swapped her fetus with Rachel's. Thus, Leah was in fact one of Yosef's mothers.

Meshech Chochma