

# א ביסל תורה!

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י"ט בסלו תשפ"ה · וישב

## יעקב's Punishment for Staying Away From His Parent's Home

By Nessa Jaffe '27

In this week's פרשה, יוסף is sold by his brothers. The brothers then trick יעקב into thinking that יוסף is dead, and יעקב mourns over him for 22 years, until he gets the news that יוסף is still alive, and goes down to מצרים. The גמרא on מגילה יז. says that יעקב was punished with being separated from יוסף for 22 years because יעקב stayed away from his parents for 22 years. (7 working for לאה, 7 working for רחל, 6 for the sheep, and finally 2 years to get home). The only problem with this is that if you do the math, יעקב was away from his parent's house for 36 years. How does the גמרא make this calculation?

We learn from the end of פרשת ויצא that יעקב left his parents' house the year ישמעאל died. Since ישמעאל was 14 years older than יצחק, and ישמעאל died when he was 137 years old, that would mean that יצחק was 123 when יעקב left, and since יצחק was 60 years old when he had יעקב, then יעקב must have been 63 years old when he left.

יוסף is 30 years old when he is appointed as viceroy. Then there were 7 years of plenty and 2 years of famine before יעקב came down to Egypt at the age of 130. If יעקב is 130 when יוסף is 39 that would make יעקב the age of 91 when יוסף was born. However, we know that יוסף was born after 14 years of יעקב working for לבן, and according to that, if יעקב went straight from his parents' house to לבן's house, he would have been 77 years old when he left his parents house. That means there are 14 years of יעקב's life missing!

There is a גמרא on מגילה טז: that says that during those 14 years, יעקב was learning in the בית מדרש of שם ועבר. Why, then, was יעקב not punished for being away from יוסף for those 14 years as well? רש"י says it is because יעקב was not just staying away from his parents because he felt like it; יעקב was away so that he could learn תורה. But then why was יעקב punished at all for being away from his parents; he was not away just because he felt like it, rather, he was running away from עשו, and even more so, his mom was the one who sent him?!

When רבקה sends יעקב away, she says he should stay with לבן for "ימים אחדים" "a few days" (בראשית כ"ז:מ"ד). When יעקב works the first 7 years for לבן the תורה says that it was "כימים אחדים" (בראשית כ"ט:כ). From there we see, that had יעקב gone home after working for just the first 7 years, it would not have been a problem. However, יעקב stayed at לבן's house for another 13 years, and by doing so, proved that the whole reason he stayed at לבן's house at all was because he wanted to, not because רבקה told him to, including even the first 7 years. Because of this יעקב was punished for 20 years that he spent at לבן's house (and two more from the journey from חרן to his mother's house).

We can learn from here 2 important lessons. Number one, we should not fully separate from our parents, rather, always keep in contact with them as much as we can. And number two, learning תורה is an incredibly important thing for everyone.

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## Trusting in Hashem

By Shaindle Kaplan '25

At the end of this week's פרשה, we see יוסף's prediction of what will happen to the butler and the baker come true. We read וַיָּשָׁב אֶת־שֵׁר הַמְּשָׁקִים עַל־מְשָׁקָהוּ וַיִּתֵּן הַכּוֹס׃ “עַל־כֶּף פְּרָעָה:” “and the butler returned to his butler duties and continued giving the cup to פרעה.” Continuing on in the פסוק, וְאֵת שֵׁר הָאֲפִים תָּלָה בְּאֶשֶׁר, פסוק, “פָּתַר לָהֶם יוֹסֵף:” “The baker was hanged just like יוסף interpreted”, and “וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ:” “וְיִשְׁכַּחְהוּ יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ:” “The butler didn't remember יוסף and he forgot him.” Doesn't “not remembering” mean forgetting? Why did the פסוק have to say both?

רש"י says that the words “וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ” refer to that day specifically, and “וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ” refers to then on. רש"י continues on to say that since he hung his hope on the memory of the butler, and depended on someone other than Hashem, he had to be imprisoned for an extra two years. This is as it says, lucky is the man who puts all of his faith in Hashem. Since יוסף didn't have full trust that Hashem would save and free him he needed to spend more time in prison to understand where he should be placing his trust.

Another important question we can ask on this פסוק, is why is he imprisoned for specifically an extra two years, why not a different amount of time? Later on in פרשת וישב similar language to the language used in our פסוק earlier. In פסוק י"ד מ', פסוק מ' it says, “כִּי אִם־זָכַרְתָּנִי” “Because if you remember me for the good that I did for you and now you do good for me and remember me to פרעה and get me out of this house (the jail).” יוסף was punished with an extra year in prison for every time that he put his faith in a human. This was done so he would know that instead of putting his faith in people he should put it in

Hashem. Later on, we see that יוסף did learn his lesson. We see this when פרעה comes to him two years later and asks if he is יוסף the dream interpreter, his response shows his growth. He says that he is only the intermediary and that he couldn't have done it without Hashem. From this stems the question of how much we can ask from other people compared to what we can only ask from Hashem and we learn that you can only truly depend on Hashem to help and save us in our darkest time of need.



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