



Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

By: Pinchas Ben-Ami

Junior

פֶּרֶשֶׁת וַיִּגַּשׁ

That Dramatic Moment

Sponsored by:

Avraham Yitzchok Berkovitz

In honor of my father

Rabbi Mordechai Shmiel Yonason Berkovitz Shlita

And in honor of my dedicated friends
who work so hard for Toras Avigdor,

Pinchas Wolhendler and Duvid Rosenberg

That Dramatic Moment

Totty and Mommy Jacobson were pleasantly surprised with Elazar's progress in yeshiva this year. He had struggled in the past, but this year he was so happy!

Of course he was, his rebbi was Rabbi Steiner. Ah! Rabbi Steiner — the star rebbi of the yeshiva, the rebbi who every boy looked forward to having. In Rabbi Steiner's class every child was a star! Elazar came home every night with a smile on his face and he always had a good word to say about his rebbi.

Tonight was finally PTA. In past years, PTA was not something the Jacobsons looked forward to. But this year the Jacobsons were actually looking forward to seeing the rebbi. They knew that they'd be hearing a good report, and they were also anxious to express their gratitude to Rabbi Steiner.

PTA Night, Yeshivas Imrei Yosef

Mr. Jacobson peeked through the classroom door and saw that no parents were there. "Hi, I'm Mr. Jacobson, Elazar's father. Can I come in?"

"Of course! Shalom aleichem, I'm Rabbi Yosef Steiner — it's so nice to finally meet you. Please sit down," said Elazar's rebbi, pointing at the chair. "Elazar is doing so well; it's a pleasure to be able to meet you in person and tell you that."

But Mr. Jacobson wasn't listening anymore. He was in shock — seeing Rabbi Steiner's face and hearing his voice had brought him all the way back to his own yeshiva days, and the blood drained from his face. "Rabbi Steiner, um, uhh, um – Yossi Steiner? The Yossi Steiner who was in my class in sixth grade?"

But Mr. Jacobson didn't even see Rabbi Steiner nodding his head. His thoughts were back in sixth grade and he was trembling and sweating as Rabbi Steiner continued to talk about how much Elazar was accomplishing in Gemara.

Mr. Jacobson is lost in his thoughts ...

“I forgot all about Yossi. We thought he was the biggest *shlimazel*”, Mr. Jacobson remembered as he blushed. “We made fun of him to no end. He didn’t learn as well as us, and he couldn’t run as fast as us when we played ball. He spoke a little funny too, and we, being immature sixth graders, always tchopped and needled him. Now that I think about it, we acted really horribly.

“We made his life so hard that he switched to another yeshiva. And we quickly forgot all about him — we never gave it a second thought. We didn’t even think we had done anything wrong. We had a whole long list of excuses to convince ourselves that we weren’t that bad. We weren’t really so mean – Yossi was just too sensitive. And also he didn’t really try hard enough to be friends with us. And this and that and this and that – a whole list of excuses to defend ourselves.

And now, in one moment,



with one sentence — “I’m Rabbi Yosef Steiner” — it all came rushing back, and Mr. Jacobson stood there in shock. Embarrassed, humiliated, afraid — that’s how he felt standing in front of Rabbi Steiner. He had never felt more ashamed in his entire life – he wished he could just sneak out of the room and forget that he ever came to PTA.

Pharaoh’s Palace, 2238

And that’s exactly how Yosef’s brothers felt when they were standing in Pharaoh’s palace and suddenly the king turned to them and said: אֲנִי יוֹסֵף — *I am Yosef!* “It’s me, your little brother!” At that moment the brothers realized that all of their jealousy and anger toward Yosef, and all of the plans they had made against him were all wrong! Hashem had saved Yosef and made him king despite them. Yosef was the one who was right all along — and they had been wrong. Their entire lifetime of reasons and excuses came crashing down when they heard those terrifying words — “I am Yosef.”

The Medrash tells us that this story was written in the Torah to teach us all a lesson about Olam Habo. Because one day, after 120 years, we’re also going to be standing in front of a king. Only that it won’t be a human king — it will be the *Melech Malchei Hamelachim*, the King of All Kings, Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

And as much as Mr. Jacobson was shocked when he heard those words, “I’m Rabbi Yosef Steiner,” we will be a million times more shocked when we hear Hashem say, “I’m Hakodosh Boruch Hu.” At that moment all of our excuses will crumble before our eyes. All the hurtful words we said, all the aveiros we did, everything that we made excuses for our whole lives – we will realize that our excuses were just that – empty excuses!

And that’s the lesson to think about when we read the words, “Ani Yosef” in this week’s parsha. As much as possible, we should try to think into our behavior while we’re still in this world and realize that so many of our excuses are really just empty excuses. And that way we could fix up things while we’re still here in this world, and not be shocked and ashamed in Olam Habo when we finally hear Hashem say, “Ani Hashem!”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos !