

"And Yosef said to his brothers, "I am Yosef - is my father still alive?" And his brothers were not able to answer him since they were frightened at his presence. (45:3)

Rashi explains "They were frightened because they were overwhelmed with shame.

"Woe is to us the day of judgement - woe is to us the day of rebuke... Yosef was the youngest of the tribes and yet they could not stand up to his rebuke" (Midrash Rabba).

This *Midrash* has become a source of inspiration and guidance for anyone seeking to properly repent before Hashem. What is the difference between "*day of judgement*" and "*day of rebuke*". Are they not the same? We must say that the actions for which a person is accountable are varied. There are actions and deeds that one performs which are clearly and demonstrably wrong. There is no question regarding the iniquity of specific offenses. Such actions are immediately subject to judgement, and in reference to these wrongdoings the term "*day of judgement*" is implied. There are, however, many misdeeds in life that man justifies on various grounds, whether due to lack of knowledge, or lack of ability to resist temptation. Often a man will claim that circumstances were such that he could not prevail in his moral struggle. In such cases, the guilt of a person must be proven to him, and in this connection the term "*day of rebuke*" is applied.

The meaning of *vjfu*, (rebuke) comes from its derivative *vjfuv* (proof). On the day of judgement man is faced with clear and indisputable documents of all actions performed during his lifetime. The various facades and excuses no longer seem to hold true. The veneer of respectability is washed away in the face of the incontrovertible evidence of his own actions. It is this in itself which proves the accusations leveled at him: *ouhn ubk hut vjfu,v ouhn ubk hut ihsv/*