

## "He appeared before him, fell on his neck and he wept on his neck." (46:29)

*Rashi* explains that Yosef was the one who cried, since Yaakov was absorbed with reciting the *Shema*. Yaakov's reciting the *Shema* at that moment reflects his supreme submission to Hashem, at a time when an ordinary individual might have been overwhelmed with more mundane thoughts. The *Maharal* explains that when the opportunity presents itself for the righteous to express their feelings of love, they do not desire to retain these feelings of joy for themselves, but rather they seize this moment to pay tribute to Hashem. This was the case with Yaakov. Just as he reached the moment of extreme joy and happiness, as he was about to come face to face with his long lost son, when the emotions of fatherly love were soaring within him, he controlled his feelings and recited *Shema*, submitting all his love to Hashem. At this most joyous occasion of his life, he wanted to have one thought on his mind, that of "*You shall love Hashem your G-d*".

Yosef, however, was not able to recite *Shema*, since the obligation to fulfill the *mitzvah* of honoring his father was an immediate priority. It would not be proper to delay fulfilling an obligatory *mitzvah* for the sake of personal piety.

To fully appreciate Yosef *Hatzadik's* greatness, one must be aware of the various trials and tribulations that Yosef endured. At a very young age he was taken from his home and abandoned into a society that was the absolute antithesis of his upbringing. He first served in a home where immorality and idol-worship were rampant. Then, he was sentenced to prison, where he spent the next twelve years in the company of derelicts. Would it have been surprising if Yosef had been influenced and changed by the subculture to which he was exposed? Yet, he not only survived physically and spiritually, he flourished in these surroundings. His trust and faith in Hashem remained firm and unshaken, his conversation replete with a constant awareness of Hashem. His moral character remained unblemished, maintaining an unbelievable sensitivity towards his fellowman.

All this was the result of the exemplary upbringing and education, which Yosef received in his father's home. After being saturated with Yaakov's faith in Hashem, and experiencing firsthand the wonderful moral character which was the hallmark of the Patriarchs, Yosef was able to go into the world and withstand the enormous tests that he faced. Today, in our permissible society, a Jew is constantly being tested. It is necessary for parents to instill in their children faith and trust in Hashem, with an outlook on life that is in absolute conformance with the *Torah*. It is only then, that our children will be properly prepared for the tests of life.