

He sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to prepare ahead of him in Goshen. (46:28)

Yaakov *Avinu* sent Yehudah, the leader of the brothers, to make the necessary arrangements for their imminent arrival in Egypt. Yehudah's mission (according to *Rashi*, who cites the *Midrash*) was to establish a *makom Torah*, a *yeshivah* from which Torah and its teachings would emanate and radiate to the family. Traditionally, the *makom Torah* has always been the priority in settling a community. Without Torah as its centerpiece, the community as a spiritually-committed community would be hard-pressed to survive. Upon perusing the *pasuk*, two questions stand out. First, why Yehudah over Yosef? Yosef *HaTzaddik*, despite being the Egyptian viceroy, was a *tzaddik*, righteous man, who was deeply committed to Hashem. He was already in Egypt and had established connections. Why not allow Yosef to build the *yeshivah*? Yehudah might have been the Torah giant, but Yosef certainly was no one to ignore. Second, the Torah uses the word *lefanav*, ahead of him, twice, when, in fact, neither was necessary.

In response to the first question, I think we can say that Yaakov felt that by having Yosef serve as the *Rosh Yeshivah*, he was sending a pejorative message to future Torah establishments. Only someone like Yosef, who maintained a position of secular leadership, who was welcome in halls of power, who enjoyed the acclaim of the wider community for his adroit skills, should be the *Rosh Yeshivah*. While this might apply to Yosef the *tzaddik*, to incorporate his other talents and secular position in his curriculum vitae would mean undermining every *Rosh Yeshivah* and *gadol* whose lack of secular embellishment would not find favor in the minds of those Jews whose priorities are not properly aligned with Torah values. In order to circumvent the wrong impression, Yaakov sent Yehudah, the *melech*, king of the brothers. His monarchy was based solely on character and Torah refinement – not on secular accoutrements. This does not, however, explain why the word *lefanav* is used twice.

Horav Moshe Bick, zl, offers an insightful explanation as to why Yehudah – not Yosef – was chosen to be the *Rosh Yeshivah* and why *lefanav* is mentioned twice for what appears to be no textual reason. *Chazal* (*Pirkei Avos* 3:17) state: "If there is no wisdom (Torah), there can be no fear (of Heaven); if there is no fear (of Heaven), there can be no (Torah) wisdom." Torah and *yiraas Shomayim* go hand-in-hand with each one incomplete without the other. *David Hamelech* says (*Sefer Tehillim* (111:10): *Reishis chochmah yiraas Hashem*, "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of G-d." *Rav Bick* explains that this does not mean sequentially – with fear preceding wisdom; rather, we are being told that the fear of Hashem that one receives as a result of his wisdom/Torah learning is the most prized and chosen of *yiraas Shomayim*. Fear without Torah is definitely significant, but lacking. Torah that engenders fear of Hashem is the apex of Torah study.

To create a successful Torah institution, it is critical that both qualities – Torah and *yiraah* – work in tandem. While both Yehudah and Yosef possessed exemplary fear of Hashem and were erudite in Torah, it was Yehudah who was the greater *gaon*, Torah giant, while Yosef excelled in *yiraas*

Shomayim. With his choice of prioritizing Yehudah over Yosef (as *Rosh Yeshivah*), Yaakov sought to impart a vital lesson: Torah is a priority over *yiraas Shomayim*, because fear of Hashem in a person who is lacking in Torah (or not willing to receive guidance and direction from someone who is erudite) is flawed. This is why the Torah underscores the word *lefanav*, ahead of him; Yehudah, who is the symbol of Torah, was ahead, dominated. The word *lefanav* is mentioned twice to teach that when one studies Torah (Yehudah), he must stay focused on it being the precursor to greater *yiraah* (Yosef). When the question arises concerning which one is to be prioritized, the Torah (Yehudah) is *lefanav*, ahead of *yiraah* (Yosef). I must add that the success of that first *yeshivah* in Goshen was due to the fact that Yehudah and Yosef worked together, with each one acknowledging the other's strength.