**Miller’s Musings**ויגש

Could there be a greater turn of events than that played out in our Parsha?  In an instant everything changes and the brothers’ tormentor reveals himself to be none other than Yosef, their sibling they had sold into slavery all those years ago.  The brothers are left totally dumbfounded, unable to utter a single word in response.  The Gemoro tells us that this episode provides an absolutely crucial message. If the brothers were so devastated by the rebuke of Yosef, one can only imagine the utter trauma that one will feel when confronted by the Creator in our day of final reckoning.  The perplexing thing about this statement is that in none of the words of Yosef do we find an actual rebuke.  He merely reveals his true identity.

Reb Chaim Shmulevitz zt’l uses this to reveal an important truth about the nature of the admonition we will ultimately face.  It is not a process in which we are reproached for our misdeeds, rather we are simply shown the mistake that we have made, which consequently enables us to recognise how foolish we were to have done wrong.  Yosef had told his brothers that one day he would rule over them, for which they had deemed him worthy of being sold.  In one foul swoop Yosef exposed their actions for what they were and demonstrated how wrong they had been.

This is what we will all one day face.  Not a fresh revelation of the tragedy of the acts we performed but a sharp blast of reality, involving all the errors of judgement we have made. The sad truth is that if we would step back and examine much of our life as we lived it we would often see the folly of our actions.  The goals we hoped to achieve, the people we sought to impress, the pleasures we thought would bring us satisfaction. How many of them have actually led to the outcomes we so desired? How many of those outcomes are actually of any true worth? And yet we don’t learn from our mistakes.  We just persist in making them. Let’s not wait to the final day of judgement to receive our rebuke when we can face up to it now. It will not be things that we did not know.  It will be things we knew all too well but chose to ignore for momentary gratification or a fleeting diversion.  To err is human, but it is often a choice we make and not one we are compelled to do.  Mistakes can be the making of you, as long as you learn from them before it’s too late.

May Shabbos awaken our souls to learn from the past and prepare for the future.

לעילוי נשמת לאה בת אברהם