

A Thought for Shabbat

Rabbi Richard Steinberg

Shabbat Shalom

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In this week's Torah portion, *Vayigash*, Joseph confronts his brothers to reveal his true identity. The brothers are dismayed by the information and fear for their lives, for they imagine Joseph as holding a grudge towards them and wanting to do harm to them after they had sold him into slavery. This would have been a natural reaction to such a horrible act.

Alas, Joseph behaves just the opposite. He is forgiving and thoughtful, emotional and embracing, making sure to allay his brothers fears.

What must it take for a person to be forgiving when wrong has been done to him? It takes strength to move beyond the hurt. It takes depth to see the goodness in the person who caused the hurt so as to be forgiving. It takes the will to put things in perspective. These are all easier said than done, but they work. Once one forgives, the burden is often lifted from the perpetrator and even more the victim. Forgiveness allows for moving forward instead of living in the past.

Let us resolve on this New Year's Eve to be more for giving people.