

GIVING CRITICISM

by Rabbi Pinchas Winston

Ya'akov finished instructing his sons. He gathered his feet onto the bed and expired. He was gathered to his people. (Bereishis 49:33)

It is hard to believe, but we have reached the last parshah of Sefer Bereishis. Chazak! It has been eleven weeks since Simchas Torah, when we began the Torah all over again, as we have done now for thousands of years. Where has the time gone?

Some say time is actually speeding up. This may simply be an illusion, the product of so much distraction that we can barely be conscious of the passage of time. One hundred years ago life was much simpler and the world was much smaller. It could take weeks before someone found out what happened half across the globe. Today it takes seconds, as information constantly streams in from all over the world. There is so much to juggle at one time.

In the meantime, technology becomes increasingly more magical. Once toys were only for children; today they are more sophisticated and expensive, and for adults as well. Some are small and some are large, but all of them engage the interest of their owners to such a degree that they are no longer that conscious of their immediate surroundings.

Today, a person gets onto a bus or into a taxi and immediately reaches for his cell phone to make a call, or his smart phone to check his mail. Minutes will go by and the scenery will change around him, but he won't be aware of it, involved in