

B'S'D'

DIVREI TORAH FROM INTERNET  
ON PARSHAS MIKEITZ- 5756

(c/o CShulman@paulweiss.com)

**From:** "Ohr Somayach <ohr@jer1.co.il>"  
**To:** CSHULMAN, " " Highlights of the Torah weekly  
port...  
**Date:** 12/18/95 11:06am  
**Subject:** Torah Weekly - Miketz

\* TORAH WEEKLY \*

Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion  
Parshas Miketz

For the week ending 30 Kislev 5756 22 & 23 December 1995

Summary

It is two years later. Pharaoh has two ominous and enigmatic dreams. He is not satisfied with any of the interpretations that are offered to explain them. Pharaoh's wine chamberlain belatedly remembers that Yosef accurately interpreted his dream while they were imprisoned together, and Yosef is immediately released. Yosef interprets that within a short time there will be seven years of unusual abundance, followed by seven years of extraordinarily severe famine. Yosef suggests to Pharaoh that he appoint a wise and discerning man to harness the years of plenty in preparation for the years of famine. Pharaoh, recognizing the spirit of G-d in Yosef, appoints him as viceroy to oversee the entire project. Pharaoh gives Yosef an Egyptian name, Tsofnas-Paneach, and selects Osnas, Yosef's ex-master's daughter, as Yosef's wife. As a result of Yosef's plan, Egypt becomes the granary of the world during the famine. Yosef has two sons, Menashe and Ephraim. Yaakov, hearing that there is food in Egypt, sends his sons to buy provisions. In Egypt, the brothers come before Yosef and bow down before him, fulfilling his prophecy. Yosef recognizes them immediately, but they do not recognize him in his new incarnation as viceroy of Egypt. Mindful of his prophetic dreams, Yosef plays the part of an Egyptian overlord and acts towards them harshly, accusing them of being foreign spies. After interrogating them, Yosef sells them food, but keeps Shimon hostage until they bring their youngest brother Binyamin to him as a proof of their honesty. Yosef commands his servants to place the purchase-money on top of the food in each of their sacks. On the return journey, when feeding their donkeys, they discover the money and their hearts sink. They return to their father Yaakov and retell everything that has happened. At first Yaakov refuses to let Binyamin go down to Egypt, but when the famine grows unbearably harsh, he accedes. Yehuda guarantees Binyamin's safety, and the brothers including Binyamin return to Egypt. After inquiring about his father's welfare, Yosef welcomes the brothers lavishly as honored guests. However, when he sees Binyamin he can barely control his emotions and rushes from the room and weeps. Yosef secretly instructs his servants to again replace the money in the sacks, and in addition, to put his goblet inside Binyamin's sack. When the goblet is discovered, Yosef demands that Binyamin become his slave as a punishment. Yehuda, remembering his promise to his father, interposes and offers himself instead, but Yosef refuses.

Commentaries

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

"And may Almighty G-d (Kel Sha-dai) grant you mercy...." (43:14)  
When Hashem brought the universe into existence, if left to itself, Creation would have continued to expand ad infinitum. Hashem said "Enough!" and Creation stopped expanding. The name of Hashem that expresses the power of this cosmic limitation is the name Sha-dai - meaning: He who said to the world "Enough!" The essential purpose of the world's creation was for man to recognize the magnitude of its Creator. Thus, when this point was reached, it was enough - the creation did not need to be any larger to evoke man's recognition of the power of the Almighty. Similarly, when a person experiences adversity, it is to purify him and to bring him to recognize his Creator. That is why Yaakov uses the name Sha-dai in this verse: Enough! The troubles that I have undergone are enough to bring me to the recognition of the Creator of All... (Rashi, Otzer HaChasidus in the name of Admo"r Rabbi Mordechai Yosef M'Izbitze, Rabbi Bunim M'Pschiske, in Iturei Torah)

CANDLE IN THE NIGHT

"And Yosef called the name of his firstborn Menashe...and the name of the second son, he called Ephraim." (41:51,52)  
Fire consists of two powers - the power to burn, and the power to illuminate. The Chashmonaim in the days of Chanukah used both of these powers. Fire to sear and eradicate the impurity of the Greeks, and the fire of the Torah to light up the Beis Hamikdash once it had been re-sanctified. A fire to burn out Evil, and a fire to illuminate Good. There is a famous dispute between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel how to light the Chanukah candles. Beis Shammai says that you start with eight candles on the first night and work down to one on the last, and Beis Hillel says you start with one and work up to eight. The power to burn always starts with much and reduces it to nothing - to ashes. That's the idea of starting with eight candles and reducing them to nothing: Beis Shammai held that the essential aspect of Chanukah to be communicated to future generations was the eradication of even the smallest particle of evil, for then, automatically, Good must blaze out and shine.

The power of light, however is always something which grows stronger and stronger: Beis Hillel considered that the stress should be on the triumph of the light - for where there is light, necessarily the darkness must flee. So they say we light one candle on the first night - and that light grows and grows until it fills the world and there is no place left for the darkness.

Yosef's two sons - Ephraim and Menashe are these two powers - fire and light - rooted in all Israel. Menashe is the 'negative power' - the power to burn and destroy evil with the result that the light will shine. And Ephraim is the 'positive power' - the power to illuminate, so that darkness can have no place to rule. Just as ultimately the Jewish People will be called by the name Ephraim, the power of illumination, similarly, the Halacha is like Beis Hillel - we start with one candle and add more light every night until the darkness disappears.

(Adapted from Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin in L'Torah ul'Moadim)

AN UNWELCOME GUEST

"And behold seven other cows arose after them... and they stood next to the cows on the bank of the river. And the cows of ugly appearance ate the seven cows of beautiful appearance and robust." (41:3,4)

The negative impulse comes to you first as a 'sleep-over' guest - someone just passing through. If you allow him to stay, he becomes a lodger; and finally, if you don't kick him out, he takes over, becomes the master of the house and dominates you completely. The seven ugly cows are a

representation of the evil powers of the negative impulse. First, like the cows, it rises up, appearing out of the distance like a wayfarer on his travels, then it stands next to you - on an equal footing - like a guest sharing all the facilities of your home. Lastly, just as "the cows of ugly appearance ate the seven cows of beautiful appearance" - so eventually, if you don't stop him, the negative impulse will devour its victim completely...

(In the name of the Sfas Emes in Mayana shel Torah)

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**To:** CSHULMAN  
**Date:** 12/18/95 11:07am  
**Subject:** Torah Studies - Mikeitz

B"H  
Torah Studies  
Adaptation of Likutei Sichos  
by  
Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks  
Chief Rabbi of Great Britain

Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion

MIKEITZ

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MIKEITZ

The beginning of our Sidra, which tells in what appears to be excessive detail of the two dreams of Pharaoh, invites a number of questions.

Why are these dreams recounted in the Torah at such length? What can we learn from the differences between Pharaoh's dreams and the dreams of Joseph in last week's Sidra? Do they characterize some fundamental contrast between the worlds which Joseph and Pharaoh represent? And if so, what is the implication for us?

#### PHARAOH'S DREAMS

At the beginning of our Sidra, a long account is given of the dreams of Pharaoh - about the cows and the ears of corn - and the interpretation which Joseph gave them, that they were symbols of the years of plenty and of famine.

But why is this narration given at such length and in such detail? The point of the episode is simple: Joseph forecasted the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine, and as a result became viceroy to Pharaoh in Egypt. What significant difference does it make, whether this came about through dreams and their interpretation, or by some other chain of events?

Even if the Torah wished to emphasize that it was specifically through Pharaoh's dreams that Joseph obtained his position, it could have informed us of the fact without narrating every detail of the dreams.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF JOSEPH

The answer is, that Pharaoh's dreams must be understood in the context in which they occurred.

Pharaoh dreamed because of Joseph.

In the previous Sidra we learned that Joseph received Divine communication through dreams. And Joseph was the heir to Jacob's spiritual heritage, bringing to the world all that Jacob represented.

He was, in short, a "collective soul," the medium through which Divine emanations to the world must pass, the "righteous man who is the foundation of the world." If to him the Divine revelation came through the medium of dreams, then this was to be the order in the world. So that when a communication was necessary for the world, and for Pharaoh, its ruler, it came to him in a dream.

#### The Jew and the World

This indicates a fundamental lesson about our service to G-d.

When a Jew encounters severe challenges, from harmful attitudes and desires, he must realize that their ultimate source lies not in the world but in himself. It is not true that he must follow the world; neither is it true that in order to live a faithful Jewish existence one must make concessions to the world. The reverse is the case. The Jew himself creates the state of the world he inhabits. If his Judaism is tempered by an inner reluctance, this is mirrored in the world. But it is the nature of the world to conceal its spiritual source. So this fact, too, is concealed, and attitudes hostile to Judaism are sensed as coming from the outside, from the world at large, pulling the Jew away from his faith.

But the truth is: The Jew is himself the author of these attitudes. Were he to change his own desires, from reluctance to affirmation, he would change the attitude of the world as well.

This is not all.

Even where we cannot find the origin of such conflict within the Jew, because he is personally wholly free of conflict, then it is still because of the Jew that it occurs. For in him lies the purpose of creation. As the Rabbis said: The world was created in the beginning for the sake of Israel who are called the beginning of (G-d's) produce.

The conflict occurs as a test of the Jew's inner strength. And if he refuses to be overwhelmed by it, it will turn out to have had no reality. Because the state of the world is dependent on the state of the Jew in his Judaism.

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JOSEPH'S AND PHARAOH'S DREAMS

Although Pharaoh's dreams were dependent on the fact of Joseph's dreams, they were radically different in their nature.

Joseph's dreams belonged to the realm of holiness; Pharaoh's did not. Thus we find several distinctions between them, in their structure and detail.

Firstly, Joseph's dreams begin with an image of service, of bread earned by labor: "We were binding sheaves." But this idea is wholly absent from the dreams of Pharaoh, in which food is seen as coming without any effort. Blessings which come from G-d to the Jew are good to the point of perfection.

Thus they must come in response to effort. For that which is received without having been worked for - the "bread of shame" - lacks something, namely, that man has been a partner in its creation. But that which derives from outside the realm of the holy - the food of which Pharaoh dreamt - is not wholly good, and can therefore sometimes come gratuitously, without effort.

Secondly, Joseph's dreams represent a progression from lower to higher forms of perfection. They begin with "ears of corn" - individual ears, each separated from the next. They progress to "sheaves" - where things which were apart have been bound into a unity. And then, in the second dream, we pass to the sun, moon and stars - the things of the Heavens.

Even at the physical level, sheaves are more valuable than ears, and jewels (the earthly counterpart of the stars) more precious than sheaves. But in Pharaoh's dreams, the order is reversed: From cows we descend to corn, from the animal to the vegetable kingdom.

The natural order would in any case have been the opposite, for the condition of the cows, both healthy and lean, would depend on whether they feed from rich or meager corn. Within each dream there is the same notion of descent or decline. First appear the healthy cows and corn, then the lean, to the point that the good is wholly consumed by the bad. And this order is preserved in their interpretation.

First came the seven years of plenty, followed by the decline to the seven years of famine, until "all the plenty shall be forgotten, and the famine shall consume the land." (The fact that after the years of hunger, prosperity returned, does not belong to Pharaoh's dreams at all, but to the blessing of Jacob.)

**THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR: STASIS AND CHANGE**  
These differences between the dreams of Joseph and of Pharaoh disclose the difference between sanctity and its opposite. Sanctity is eternal and unchanging. In the realm of sanctity, if there are changes, they are always ascents, going "from strength to strength" - which is in truth not a change at all, but a more perfect realization of something which remains the same. And even though the Jewish people suffers vicissitudes, sometimes in the ascendant, sometimes in decline, these are not real changes. For the Jew always carries with him a single mission, and a single faith: to fulfill the Torah and the Mitzvot, and to be elevated in sanctity.

And since "where a man's will is, there he is to be found"; since, moreover, the descent of the Jewish people is always for the sake of a subsequent elevation an "everlasting peace," the fluctuations in Jewish history are not ultimately changes but "peace," the absence of change.

A single will and intention runs through them all.

Against this, the realm of unsanctity is subject to change, indeed, to continual decline. For whatever is not holy does not exist in and for itself. It is at most the means to an end, to test man and to evoke his highest powers of sanctity. The more man responds to the test, becomes strong and elevated in his service, the less he needs to be tested.

And automatically, the existence of unsanctity becomes weaker, more tenuous. "When this one ascends, the other falls" - as the realm of the holy is strengthened, the realm of the purely secular declines.

This is also the basic distinction between the Chanukah lights and the sacrifices of the festival of Succot.

On Succot, seventy bullocks were sacrificed in the course of its seven days, representing the "seventy nations of the world." And on each day a successively smaller number was offered up (from thirteen on the first day to seven on the seventh), representing a continual decrease or decline. But the lights of Chanukah signify sanctity: Thus each day sees an increase in the number of lights kindled. For holiness is always ascending.

#### Effort and Reward

From all this we learn a specific lesson. When a person believes that he can receive benefits or blessings without effort, merely as a result of certain natural causes, he can be sure that this belief derives from his "animal soul," the unspiritual side of his nature. For at this level, there can indeed be benefit without effort. But he must equally be aware that the things of this realm are continually in a state of decline: He will, in the end, be left with nothing.

Were he, on the other hand, to labor in the service of G-d, he would be assured of the promise, "You have toiled and you have found." He will "find" from Heaven more than he has labored for. And always, as he progresses, he will be "ascending in holiness."

(Source: Likkutei Sichot, Vol. III pp. 819-822)

**From:** "Rafael Salasnik <rafi@brijnet.org>"  
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**Subject:** daf-hashavua Mikeitz 5756/1995

Mikeitz-5756

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Shabbat ends in London at 16:49 SHABBAT CHANUKAH ROSH CHODESH

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This edition is dedicated to the memory of Mr Nathan  
Rubin, Secretary,  
United Synagogue 1968-1983

MIKKETZ - Disorientation

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by Dr Alex Pomson, Head of Jewish Studies, King Solomon High School,  
Ilford

One and the same segment of human behaviour may be characterised in a number of different ways. When asked, for example, what one is doing, one may reply with equal truth and appropriateness, 'digging', 'gardening', 'taking exercise', 'preparing for winter' or 'pleasing the wife'. This point is made by Alasdair Macintyre, professor of philosophy at Harvard. He argues that we are only capable of understanding what we or someone else is doing by placing a particular episode in the context of a set of narrative histories. Without such narratives our lives disintegrate into a set of discrete and intelligible episodes.

One can read the parashah of Miketz as a demonstration of what happens when people find that an apparently intelligible narrative of which they are part has either been decisively fractured or at best transformed into an entirely unfamiliar narrative.

In Bereshit, chapter 42 Jacob's sons set for Egypt. They have "come to buy food". This is, at least, how they see it - and it is what they repeatedly

insist under interrogation by Joseph. But the brothers are not in control of their own personal story, as they gradually and painfully come to learn.

Before the brothers even meet Joseph, the Torah hints at how they exist (at this stage, unknowingly,) within a number of complex narratives at one and the same time. In the space of only six verses at the beginning of the chapter they are described as the 'sons of Jacob', the 'brothers of Joseph', the 'sons of Israel' and the brothers of Benjamin. Each time we recognise that this involves them carrying a different burden - be it responsibility, guilt or destiny. However, the Torah signals in this short-hand fashion that they are unaware of these burdens and that they therefore cannot anticipate the vortex into which their actions have drawn them.

As the chapter proceeds Joseph leads them through circumstances which become

increasingly disorientating. They are accused of spying. They are placed under arrest for three days. One of them is randomly taken hostage. Their money is mysteriously returned to their sacks. And finally, on their return to Egypt, the only truly innocent one among them is enslaved for stealing.

We cannot fail to be moved by the way in which the Torah narrates this sequence of events - the way in which it depicts their terror at being in the grip of larger and incomprehensible forces which they themselves have somehow created. We can savour the delicacy with which the plotters have been out-plotted. Indeed, writers of all ages have been inspired by the penetrating way in which the Torah presents these themes.

However, the Torah is more than just entertainment. This is an account with moral as well as aesthetic implication, and this is largely what Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg argues (with extraordinary power and poise) in her recently published commentary on Sefer Bereshit.

She argues that "Joseph purposefully precipitates the brothers beyond the safe mappings of their own reality, so that they can experience the terrible vertigo which he felt as the secure perspectives he had cultivated fell apart. He subjects them to the same radical anxiety of loss and recollection so that they, like him, find themselves disintegrated, whirling in the blooming, buzzing chaos of a reality whose plot is hidden from them".

This is not, as some modern non-Jewish Biblical scholars have argued, because he desired vengeance, but because he knew that it was only under such circumstances that they would be able to construct a new family unity with a clearer sense of its destiny and their roles within it. Joseph had himself experience the oblivion of the Bor - the pit - both when his brothers threw him into a hole in the ground and when he was cast into an Egyptian prison. The same Hebrew word is used to describe both settings. As Rashi famously intimates these were not palaces of physical emptiness but of a far more terrifying existential loneliness. Joseph understood how the dislocation afforded by these places had enabled him to reconstruct the meaning of his life and his relationship with his family.

He makes his brothers experience the same disorientation. By forcing the uncanny into their lives he forces them to reconstitute themselves. Thus, "he made himself strange to them". For, out of this uncanniness and the anxiety it generated would come recognition and a different sense of their shared narrative.

Abrabanel famously charted the way in which Joseph's stratagems inspired the brothers to feel regret, confess their sin and then finally demonstrate that they had changed. He saw Joseph as facilitating the brothers' teshuvah

- their repentance.

Zornberg points in a different direction. She suggests that Joseph's purpose was not so much to repair the painful wrongs of the past as to construct from out of the fragments of the past a new reading of the family's future responsibilities, which fitted better with a more sensitive understanding of the divine purpose. Thus, once Judah - acting on behalf of the others - displayed both empathy and responsibility for the rest of the family, Joseph could reveal the contours of the largest and most extraordinary narrative within which they existed: "It is not you who sent me here - but G-d". As Bnei Yisrael - the sons of Israel - this was their special story.

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**Date:** 12/19/95 9:58pm  
**Subject:** Drasha - Chanukah / Miketz

Drasha Vol. 2 Issue 10  
Chanukah / Miketz 5756  
WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET

Every year on Shabbos Chanukah we read Parshas Miketz. It contains the story of Yoseph, the viceroy of Egypt, greeting his brothers and accusing them of spying. It can not be mere coincidence. There must be a connection between Chanukah and that reading.

I have a question about both episodes and, of course, I have a story.

This week the Torah relates how a famine plagued the entire Middle East. Yaakov's children elected to go to the only country that was spared from hunger, Egypt. Through the brilliant vision, organization, and planning of a young Hebrew slave known to Egyptians as Tzafnat Paneach, that country fed both itself and the world. The brothers were ushered into the prodigal viceroy's chambers. He acted towards them like a total meshuganah. He accused them of a heinous plot to spy on Egypt. He incarcerated Shimon, and forced them to bring the youngest brother, the orphaned child of an aged father, to him. Yoseph surely wanted to teach a lesson to the brothers who sold him. But if Yoseph wanted to castigate or punish his brothers for selling him, why doesn't he do so openly and directly? Why the senseless charade?

Let's take a look at Chanuka, symbolized by the Menorah. It represents a miracle. A small amount of oil, enough for one day, lasted for eight. But there were greater miracles. A small army of Kohanim, priests who were previously involved in only spirituality and had very little experience in battle, defeated the Greek army. Why don't we make a parade or a feast to celebrate a major victory? Why is the main commemoration over a little oil?

In a small village lived a poor groom. Unable to afford a proper tailor to make a wedding suit, he brought material to a second-rate one. The poor boy was shocked to see the results.

"But this sleeve is six inches too short," he cried. "So pull in your arm," smiled the tailor. "But the other sleeve is a half a foot too long!" "So extend it," beamed the so-called craftsmen. "And the pants," screamed the

groom, "the left leg is twisted!" "Oh that's nothing. Just hop down the aisle with your knee slightly bent!"

At the wedding, the assembled reeled in horror as the poor groom hobbled down to the canopy in the poor excuse for a suit. "What a grotesquely disfigured young man," gasped one guest. "Oy! Ah rachmunis (pity) on his poor bride," sighed another. The spectators looked once again at the pathetic sight and in unison all exclaimed. "But his tailor -- what a extraordinary genius!"

My grandfather, Reb Yaakov Kamenetzky of blessed memory, once explained to me that Yoseph had a very important message to send his brothers. "More than a decade ago you sat in judgment. You thought you made a brilliant decision and were smarter than anyone else, including your father. You decided to sell me as a slave. Now you meet the most brilliant saviour of the generation, the man who saved the world from starvation, and he is acting like a paranoid maniac. He is accusing you of something that is so hallucinatory that you think he is a madman. Is it not possible to think that perhaps you also made a gross error in judgment? Is it not possible that you saw a situation in a twisted light? Is it the boy or is it the suit that is actually grotesque?" Yoseph showed his brothers that even the best and brightest can misinterpret any situation.

Chanukah delivers a very similar message. The sages were not interested in commemorating a battlefield victory. They had a more powerful message for us. Nothing in this world can be judged at face value. A bit of oil that decidedly can only last one day -- may last much longer. They want us to remember that outward appearances, as the opinions of pundits, have no bearing on reality. When that message is understood, it is easy to understand that a small army of Kohanim (priests) can topple a mighty force. We can understand that what we view as weak may be strong and what we thought was insufficient is actually plenty. And that a little bit of oil, like a pesky younger brother, both of whom you thought would not amount to anything, can really light the way.

Good Shabbos and a Freilichin Chanukah! (c)1995 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

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**From:** "Mordecai Kornfeld <kornfeld@jer1.co.il>"  
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**Date:** 12/21/95 8:22am  
**Subject:** Chanukah 5756 - "Yosef and the hazards of beauty"

The Weekly Internet  
5 P \* A \* R \* A \* S \* H \* A - P \* A \* G \* E  
5 --- ---  
5 by Mordecai Kornfeld  
5  
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5 Chanukah 5756

5  
5 YOSEF AND THE HAZARDS OF BEAUTY  
5

5 This week's essay is based on the works of Rabbi Mattityahu  
Weinberg, who presently resides in the Old City of Jerusalem. "Patterns in  
Time," Rabbi Weinberg's series on the Jewish festivals, weaves a beautiful  
tapestry from the words of our Sages in order to reveal to us many of the  
striking and profound motifs of the Jewish calendar that hitherto went  
unnoticed. The thought-provoking material presented in his book on  
Chanukah

provides more than enough spiritual fuel to keep one's soul on fire for a  
good eight days straight!

5 The following essay is based on the volume on Chanukah, pp. 74-81;  
224-227

(along with some embellishments of my own).

5  
5 I

5 On Chanukah we celebrate the victory of the meager, ill-equipped  
Jewish militia against the vast and mighty Greek legions. The Jewish  
victory was more than a physical one. It was a victory of the God-fearing  
Kohanim [= priestly tribe] over the Hellenized secularists -- of the  
Torah's eternal teachings over materialism. The Jewish victory was climaxed  
by the restoration of the Temple service, and the rekindling of the Golden  
Menorah [= seven branched candelabra] in the Holy Temple.

5 Every year during the festival of Chanukah, in the regular cycle of  
weekly Parasha readings, we read the story of Yosef and his brothers. This  
could be taken as mere happenstance, since, after all, the fixed yearly  
Torah-reading cycle happens to reach the story of Yosef and his brothers  
around this time of year. However, great Kabbalists throughout the ages  
have pointed out that there is more to it than that. According to Rav  
Natan Shapiro (16th century Poland) in "Megaleh Amukot" (Parashat  
Vayeshev), the Greek domination over Israel came about as Divine  
retribution for the sale of Yosef. Rav Zvi Elimelech of Dinov (Bnai  
Yisaschar, Kislev, 4:119) points out further that the name of the Greek  
king at the time of the Chanukah story, "Antiochus," has the same numerical  
Gematria value as "Yosef" (=156). It is as if the Greek king Antiochus  
somehow derived his power through what transpired with Yosef! See also  
Bnai  
Yisaschar, Kislev, #13).

5 How are we to understand this? What is the connection between the  
Greek conquest and the Chanukah story on the one hand, and the story of

Yosef on the other?

5  
5 II

5 Yosef was beautiful of form and beautiful in appearance.  
5 (Bereishit 39:6)

5 When Yosef saw that he was successful in Potifar's house, he  
began to eat, drink and curl his hair. Hashem said to him, "Your  
father is mourning for you and you are busy curling your hair? I  
am going to set the bear upon you!  
5 (Rashi, ad loc.)

5 Yosef was extremely handsome. Rashi (Bereishit 49:22) tells us that  
Yosef was so attractive, the Egyptian women would climb on top of a wall in  
order to get a glimpse of him as he went by. Yosef sometimes acted in a  
conceited manner, due to his good looks. Rashi (37:1) tells us that while  
he was still in his father's home, Yosef used to act childishly, fixing his  
hair and touching up his eyes to look more beautiful. He continued this  
behavior in the house of Potifar, after being sold into slavery. Hashem  
punished him for his conceit with the advances and seductive pleas of  
Potifar's wife, and with her subsequent false accusations.

5 Being overly conscious of one's personal beauty can lead to more  
than simple arrogance. One who becomes obsessed with himself will want to  
become more and more beautiful -- to amass all the beauty that money can  
buy. He will want to ornament himself with gold and jewelry, and with the  
riches of royalty. The obsession will gradually turn into self-idolization,  
and to more than that -- into idol-worship itself!

5 The idol worshipper believes that he will obtain whatever he wants  
by procuring it through his idols. He aims to satisfy his physical desires  
with nothing in mind but his own personal gain. There is no responsibility,  
no accountability, no sense of fairness, in idol-worship. He serves the sun  
god so that the sun should bestow its bounty upon him, the god of the sea  
so that the sea should bestow its blessings upon him, and the god of gold  
to acquire more gold. He plays a game with the gods in order to get what he  
needs.

5 This is what an obsession with one's self can culminate in. "I have  
given [Israel] much wealth, and they made their gold into an idol" (Hoshea  
2:10). The more gold, or beauty, that a person has, the more at risk he is  
of falling into idolatry (see Berachot 32a).

5  
5 III

5 This is the pitfall that Yosef's brothers saw in Yosef's actions.

5 "The brothers [of Yosef] said one to the other, 'Behold, the  
Ba'al Hachalomot [= dreamer] is coming.' " (Bereishit 37:19) --  
The brothers said, "This is the one who will lead them all to  
the Ba'al [= a form of idolatry]."

5 (Bereishit Rabba 84:14)

5 When the brothers saw Yosef coming they remarked, "This is the one  
who will bring idol worship to Israel!" Yosef's descendant, Yeravam ben  
Nevat broke away from the Davidic kingdom to form the kingdom of the  
northern ten tribes, and set up two golden calves in his kingdom. He  
forbade his subjects from going to the Temple in Jerusalem, forcing them to  
serve his golden calves instead. This, the brothers foresaw, would be the  
result of Yosef's preoccupation with his own beauty. This is why they felt  
it necessary to stop Yosef at all costs. They felt that they could not  
allow him to be a part of the holy nation that was to descend from them.  
Thus they agreed to sell him as a slave, where his erroneous ways would not

be able to affect others.

5 It was this same abuse of beauty that Yosef demonstrated, which brought about the worship of the Golden Calf that the Jews served after receiving the Ten Commandments (Shmot, Ch. 32). Rashi (Shmot 32:4) explains

that after Aharon had cast the gold that was brought to him into the furnace, one of the Jews threw into the fire a slate engraved with an incantation. This gave the Golden Calf the appearance of life. The background of this slate and its incantation was as follows:

5 Before Yosef died, he left instructions that his body should be transported out of Egypt when the time for the exodus arrived (Bereishit 50:25). In the meantime, however, his body was placed in a leaden coffin which was sunk to the bottom of the Nile River. When the time came for the Jews to leave Egypt, Moshe took a slate and wrote on it the phrase, "Aleh Shor, Aleh Shor" -- "Arise bull, arise bull!" (See Bereishit 49:6, where Yosef is compared to a bull.) Moshe threw this slate into the Nile, and the coffin of Yosef miraculously rose to the surface (see Sota 13a). It was this slate, with its reference to Yosef, which the worshippers of the Golden Calf cast into the furnace, causing the calf to mystically take on the appearance of life.

5 The Midrash is telling us that the Jews came to worship the Golden Calf through an expression of the same lust for beauty -- and riches -- that Yosef had shown. Indeed, the Gemara tells us, "Moshe protested to Hashem, 'It was the tremendous amount of gold and silver that you granted the Jews [upon their exodus from Egypt] that caused them to build the Golden Calf!' " (Berachot 32a).

5 And it was this very attribute which brought about Yeravam's worship of golden calves, and, eventually, the Greek exile.

5 The very day that Yeravam brought his golden calves to Beit El and Dan, a shanty was built, which grew through the centuries into the city Italy of the empire of Yavan [= Greece].

(Shabbat 56b, and Rashi)

5 Greece, the nation of self-worship -- the nation which epitomized the idolization of beauty and the worship of pagan gods -- overpowered Israel when the Jews themselves showed a weakness in this regard. And the root of this weakness lay in Yosef's actions as a youth -- those same actions that Yosef's brothers based their decision on when they decided to sell him. "The brothers said, 'This is the one who will lead them all to the Ba'al!'"

IV

There is, however, another side to beauty.

Beauty and favor are false, but a woman who fears God should genuinely be praised.

(Mishlei 31:30)

5 If a woman uses her beauty to invoke the fear of God, then even her beauty can be praised. It is not "false" beauty, but "true" beauty. If beauty is used to inspire awe and admiration for the Almighty, then it is a praiseworthy trait. That is what gold and silver were meant to be used for, and that is where it is necessary for beauty to be expressed.

5 The Midrash describes the Mishkan [= Tabernacle] which the Jews built to worship Hashem in the desert, as the "beauty of Israel" (Tanchuma Ki Tisa, #13). This may be what Chazal [= our Sages] meant when they said, "Let the gold of the Mishkan come and atone for the gold of the Calf" (Tanchuma Terumah, #8). By using gold, wealth and beauty properly, to

increase the awe of Heaven, the Jews were able to rectify the wrongdoing of making the Golden Calf.

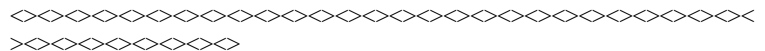
5 The Temple in Jerusalem is also referred to as "the beauty of the world" (Zevachim 54b). Similarly, Zion [= Jerusalem, while it was crowned with the glory of the Holy Temple], is called "the all-beautiful" (Tehillim 50:2), because, "From Zion sprouted forth all of the beauty of the world!" (Gemara Yoma 54b)

5 The victory over Greece represented the victory of God-fearing beauty over pagan beauty. The rededication of the Holy Temple symbolized the use of beauty to serve Hashem, rather than to serve one's self. By channeling their appreciation for beauty in the proper direction the Jews were able to free themselves of the pagan Greek rule. They were able to rebuild Zion and the Holy Temple -- the "beauty of the world."

5 Yosef set the pattern for the rectification as well as for the sin. Ultimately, he conquered his impulse to be led astray by his beauty. He refused to give in to Potifar's wife, even though it meant his long imprisonment and near death (see Sota 36b). So too, the Chashmona'im [=Hasmoneans] were able to withstand the Hellenistic pressures of the assimilated Jews.

5 The very name "Zion" actually contains within it the name "Yavan" [= Greece]. Yavan is spelled: Yud, Vav, Nun. Zion also ends with Yud, Vav, Nun -- but these letters are preceded by the letter "Tzaddik". The letter "Tzaddik" alludes to G-d-fearingness, the trait of the Tzaddik [= G-d-fearing person] -- "A Tzaddik rules himself through the fear of Hashem" (Shmuel II 23:3). By using the quality of the "Tzaddik" -- i.e. the fear of Hashem -- the beauty of Yavan is transformed into the beauty of Zion, and "Yosef = Antiochus (156)" becomes "Yosef = Zion (156)." Zion has what it takes to overcome the forces of Yavan -- "I will awaken your children \*Zion\* against your children \*Yavan\*!" (Zecharya 9:13)

5 May we merit to bring about the final return to Zion, soon and in our days!



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YESHIVAT HAR ETZION VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH PROJECT(VBM)

PARSHAT HASHAVUA

\*\*\*\*\*  
 DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF ESTHER MALKA BAT  
 MENACHEM.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF ARYEH BEN YOSEF HALEVI  
 ROTHSTEIN.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

PARSHAT MIKETZ

by Menachem Leibtag

PARSHAT MIKETZ

In Parshat Miketz, Yosef rises to royalty in Egypt, yet, despite his high position, not once does he attempt to contact his father. Does he no longer care for his father who loved him so dearly?

Last week, in Parshat Va'yeshev, Yaakov Avinu's ten sons conspired to kill their own brother for what appears to be petty jealousy! Can there be any excuse for this cruel behavior?

How are we to understand the behavior of our ancestors in these two Parshiot? Are we to gloss over this appalling conduct? Do these turbulent events of Sefer Breishit simply teach us of our 'shameful' heritage, or do they carry a message for future generations?

This week's shiur suggests an answer to these difficult questions by projecting into the story of Yosef and his brothers, their perception of the "bchira" process, the theme of Sefer Breishit.

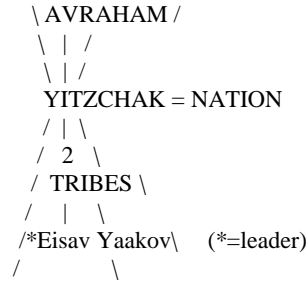
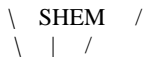
BACKGROUND / REVIEW

Because we are familiar with Chumash from childhood, it is difficult for us to envision any conclusion to the "bchira" process of Sefer Breishit other than with Yaakov and his twelve sons. To the Avot, however, this 'happy ending' was not so obvious. Although it was clear to them that this process began with Avraham Avinu, it was not so clear when, and with whom, this process would end. There were various possibilities.

First, we will review the two possibilities we have encountered thus far in previous shiurim. Afterward, we will consider a third possibility which may help us understand the conduct of Yosef and his brothers.

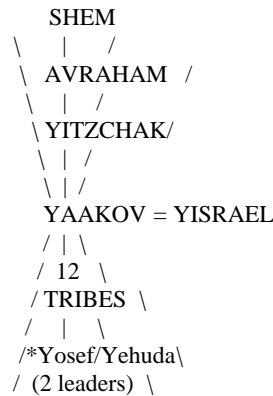
Recall our explanation of Yitzchak's intention to bless Eisav (see previous shiur on Parshat Toldot). Yitzchak presumed that he constituted the end of the "bchira" process, and thus both of his sons would become the Chosen Nation. The following diagram illustrates this possibility:

POSSIBILITY #1 - YITZCHAK



After the incident of the stolen brachot, Yitzchak realized that his original conception was wrong, and that only Yaakov was to be chosen. The next diagram illustrates this possibility, the one which ultimately came true:

POSSIBILITY #2 - YAAKOV



To the reader of Chumash, (with 20:20 hindsight), this ending of the "bchira" process is obvious. To the brothers, however, the final outcome was not so clear. Although they were aware of the God's choice of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov to become the forefathers of a His special nation, they may have been pondering how that nation was to develop: Were ALL twelve sons of Yaakov to be chosen?

If so:

Which son was destined to assume the responsibilities of family leadership? Would this leadership role emerge naturally, or would Yaakov bestow it upon one of his sons, just as Yitzchak had intended to bless Eisav?

If all twelve sons were NOT to be chosen, then:

Which of the sons would be rejected and which would be chosen? Would it depend on who their mother was? Would the children of the "shfachot" (maidservants) be included? (Recall that only the son of Sarah was chosen and not the children of Hagar.)

Would one's behavior affect his "bchira"? Should Reuven - and possibly Shimon and Levi - worry that their disrespect towards their father may affect their status?

The brothers may have considered the following scenario:





Considering that Yosef (Yaakov's "ben zkunim" 37:3) enjoyed a very close relationship with his father, one would expect that he would make every effort possible to contact his father. Yet, even after his appointment as Head Servant of the House of Potiphar, Yosef makes no effort to inform his father that he is alive and well. Furthermore, after his appointment as the Commissioner of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh, Yosef should have no problem whatsoever in contacting his father. Nevertheless, it appears that Yosef has wiped his past from his memory.

This question is raised specifically by Ramban (see 42:9), and dealt with by numerous other commentators. Ramban explains that Yosef's actions were motivated by his aspiration to make his dreams come true. For some reason, Yosef felt that in order for the Divine plan to unfold, he must not contact his family.

Abarbanel argues with Ramban's assumption that Yosef's primary drive was to fulfill his childhood dreams. He explains Yosef's entire strategy as an attempt to bring his brothers to do proper teshuva (see Nechama Leibowitz on Breishit who deals with this "shita" in depth). However, Abarbanel's explanation does not answer why Yosef did not contact his father!

R. Yoel Bin Nun, in an article in Megadim vol. I, offers a fascinating answer to this question, based on an analysis of Yosef's understanding of the "bchira" process and his perception of the events that took place in Dotan.

The first part of our explanation is based primarily on Rav Yoel's approach, while the second part incorporates the basic approach of Abarbanel, with a little twist.

Rav Yoel begins his article by taking issue with the Ramban's basic assumption that Yosef felt an obligation to see to it that his dreams came true. He considers as unthinkable the Ramban's assumption that it be permissible to cause such suffering to one's father, just because of a dream. Rav Yoel also contends that "pshat" of the parsha indicates that Yosef remembered his dreams only AFTER the brothers came. During the twenty some years beforehand, his dreams seem to have been forgotten!

To explain Yosef's behavior, Rav Yoel suggests that Yosef has no idea that his father believes that he is dead. Rather, he expects his father and/or his brothers to come to his rescue. When months pass, and no one shows, Yosef concludes that he was 'rejected' by his family, and accepts his new fate. There are two theories which may explain his conclusion - either a 'conspiracy theory', or a more conservative approach.

#### THE CONSPIRACY THEORY

How does Yosef perceive what had happened? Let's look at the events from his perspective. Age 17, full of energy and the emotions of a teenager, he is sent by his father to check on his brothers. As soon as they see him, they immediately take off his coat and throw him in the pit. A short time later he is removed from the pit by the Midyanim who sell him to the Yishma'elim. Even if the brothers themselves had not actually sold Yosef, HE is sure that they were behind the deal, convinced that they

wanted him out of the family picture.

Despite all this, Yosef is sure that someone will soon come to redeem him. After all, his father will surely investigate what happened, someone will 'snitch', and no stone will be left unturned until 'daddy's favorite son' is found and brought home. Yosef is totally unaware that the brothers tricked their father with the blood stained coat. He has no idea that his father presumed that he was killed.

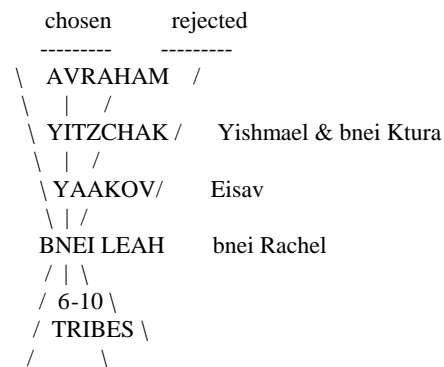
The months pass, and nothing happens. Yosef begins to wonder why no one has come to look for him. Does his father no longer care about him? Why did the brothers throw him in the pit as soon as he arrived? Why did his father send him out alone on such a long journey to see his brothers who hated him? Slowly, Yosef comes to the realization that there must have been a Divine decree that he has been rejected. Leah, not Rachel, must have been destined to be the mother of the chosen offspring (see Possibility #3, above). Rachel, as her premature death may have proven, had not attained the same matriarchal status as Sarah and Rivka.

Yosef may even have entertained the thought that there had been a conspiracy against him, coordinated by his father and executed by his brothers. His father may have been Divinely informed that Yosef was to be rejected. Rather than confront Yosef directly with this terrible information, Yaakov may have preferred that the brothers do 'dirty work' for him. This, Yosef may have conjectured, would explain this bizarre sequence of events.

#### YOSEF 'HAD' A DREAM

Even if we reject this conspiracy theory, Yosef may have supposed that when the brothers returned home, they had convinced their father that Yosef's disappearance was a Divine indication of his rejection. In either case, Yosef is convinced that he has been abandoned by his family. He accepts this fate, and decides to lead his own life, cut off from his family and his childhood dreams. Just as Eisav established Edom, Yosef will make a name for himself in Egypt. He can even bring the name of God into society in his own way, even though he will not be part of the Chosen Nation.

According to Yosef's perception, the following outcome of the "bchira" process has unfolded:



Hence, Yosef, after rising to power, did not contact his family because he felt that his family had disowned him - abandoned him. He did not contact them, for they did not contact him. It was a tragic misunderstanding.

This all changes some twenty years later when Yosef's brothers come down to Egypt to buy grain. As they bow down before him, Yosef recognizes them and suddenly remembers his long forgotten dreams.

#### YOSEF HAS A PLAN

Now it is necessary to explain Yosef's strategy when his brothers arrive. Why does he accuse his brothers of being spies? Why does he return their money? When they return, why does he plant his special cup in Binyamin's bag? One would assume that Yosef has a plan, yet it is hard to define just what this plan is. Could it possibly be that he is simply 'teasing' his brothers, just to 'get back at them'?

Rav Yoel explains Yosef's plot as an attempt to determine what had happened to Binyamin. The fact that Binyamin was not with the brothers only supported Yosef's suspicion that Bnei Rachel were rejected. First, he must isolate Binyamin from his brothers to find out what had really happened.

Although this explanation flows nicely from the above presentation, it does not explain every detail of Yosef's behavior once Binyamin arrives. One can not remain oblivious to Yosef's obvious attempt to create a situation that prompts the brothers to repent (see Abarbanel).

On the other hand, one must also explain the reason for Yosef's returning their money, and for sitting them down in order of their birth, etc. These acts seem to be more of a tease than an impetus for them to do "teshuva" (repentance). What is Yosef's intention? If it is only in order that the brothers do teshuva, then they had already shown remorse for their sin at the first encounter (see 42:21-23)!

Furthermore, why must Yosef test his brothers to see if they have repented? Is Yosef allowed to play God? Is it permitted for one to tease, trick, and confuse others in order to awaken their soul? Even so, does this justify causing his father further worry and frustration?

#### PLAYING GOD OR PLAYING MAN

One could suggest the following explanation:

Upon recognizing his brothers, Yosef realizes that his childhood dreams may actually come true. If Binyamin is still part of the family, as his brothers claim, then the "bchira" process may have truly included Bnei Rachel. Suddenly, all the events that transpired become pieces in a much larger puzzle. The family will ultimately unite, and he will obviously become the family leader. Yosef now sees God's fingerprints on every puzzle piece, yet he is unable to reveal himself to his brothers for a very simple reason. If he did, a wound would be opened that could never be healed. Let us explain.

Yosef does not need to play GOD, to ensure that his brothers do teshuva; God is always one step ahead of him. Yosef, however, does have to play LEADER. Given the situation created by "mchirat Yosef", had Yosef revealed himself at this point, his brothers would have never been able to face him. What could they say to him? Even though all of the brothers may have remained 'chosen', family unity and fraternity would have been impossible to achieve. Yosef found it necessary to do something which could re-unite the family. He needed to create a situation that would bond the family both physically and spiritually. [This is the trait of a true leader.]

Should he inform his father at this point of his identity, before informing his brothers, Yaakov's anger toward his sons would undoubtedly lead to his cursing them. This, for sure, would cause disastrous results for the future of Am Yisrael. Yosef must restrain his emotions for a few more weeks, in order to create a situation of true family unity.

Yosef's primary goal is to have the brothers bring Binyamin so that he can both verify their story and set up his plot. Towards this end, Yosef puts his brothers through a difficult test, by creating a situation in which the brothers must forfeit their lives in order to save Binyamin. He does many other things to make the brothers wonder, to think, to shake them up a bit ["cheshbon ha'nefesh"]. Then, he plants his cup in Binyamin's bag to give them a chance to prove themselves. Yosef's intention is not find out whether they had done teshuva, rather it is for the brothers to PROVE TO THEMSELVES that they had done teshuva! Only after they demonstrate willingness to give up their lives for Binyamin, will they be able to unite again as a family, and be able to face Yosef as a brother and their leader.

God, by the end of this entire episode, had created a situation which would guarantee the ultimate survival of Am Yisrael. Yosef, in the meantime, had created a situation that would keep Am Yisrael united.

Throughout our history, God takes the responsibility to guarantee our survival; however, it is our own responsibility to guarantee our unity.

shabbat shalom  
menachem

#### FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. Rav Yaakov Meidan, in an article in Megadim vol. III, defends the Ramban's shita arguing point by point with the assumptions made by Rav Yoel Bin Nun. After reading Ramban and Abarbanel, read Rav Yoel's and Rav Meidan's articles and the rebuttals, as they are very interesting and enlightening. [Megadim, a Tanach periodical (in hebrew) published by the Herzog Teacher Training College, back issues can be ordered via E-mail to: office@etzion.org.il.]

B. In Parshat Vayigash, Yosef "can no longer hold back" and

reveals himself.

1. Was his plan finished? Was this the ideal time, or was he planning to take his plot a step further?

If so, what specifically caused him to 'break'?

Note: we will deal with this point in next week's shiur.

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**To:** CSHULMAN, " "Halachic Topics Related to the Weekl..."  
**Date:** 12/20/95 7:08am  
**Subject:** Parshas Mikeitz

SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS MIKEITZ

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

"Have meat slaughtered, and prepare it (43:16). 'Prepare it' refers to the preparations for Shabbos, since the Avos kept the Shabbos even before it was given (Medrash Rabba)."

Refrigeration Problems on Shabbos

QUESTION: What are the possible problems and solutions regarding the use of a refrigerator on Shabbos?

DISCUSSION: There is a widespread dispute among contemporary Poskim regarding opening a refrigerator on Shabbos. Some(1) prohibit opening the refrigerator unless the motor is running(2), while others(3) permit opening it at all times. As there is no binding custom, one may conduct himself according to either view(4).

Some refrigerators and freezers are equipped with a switch that automatically turns the fan off when the door is opened. This switch must be disconnected before Shabbos.

Most refrigerators have a light bulb that turns on when opened. The bulb must be loosened or removed before Shabbos.

If the switch or bulb was not disconnected before Shabbos, one may not open the refrigerator on Shabbos, even if all of his Shabbos food is stored inside. Although one does not intend to turn on the light or to switch off the fan, since these devices will necessarily be activated, it is considered in Halacha as if he expressly intended to do so (Psik Reischei). Similarly, if the refrigerator was opened and it was discovered that he had

inadvertently turned the light on or the fan off, the refrigerator door may not be closed(5).

Are there any solutions for one who forgot to disconnect the light or switch before Shabbos, and the main portion of his Shabbos meal is in the refrigerator?

If there is a non-Jew available, he may ask the non-Jew to open the refrigerator for him(6). This is permitted because one may instruct a non-Jew to do an action which is only prohibited to the Jew because it is Psik Reischei(7).

The non-Jew may also be instructed to close the refrigerator if leaving it open would spoil any other food (for Shabbos) which is inside.

The non-Jew may not be instructed to remove the bulb from the refrigerator or to shut off the switch which regulates the fan. One may, however, imply(8) that if the bulb or switch is left in their present state, the Jew would not be able to open the refrigerator door for the rest of Shabbos(9).

What if a non-Jew is not available, are there any other solutions?

In the case of the automatic fan, there is nothing that can be done. In the case involving a light bulb, there are Poskim who allow instructing a minor to unplug the refrigerator while the motor is not running(10). If there is no available minor, there are Poskim who allow an adult to do so under certain circumstances and with certain conditions. A Rov must be consulted.

This issue of Halacha is sponsored L'zchus Haya'el Doniel Meir ben Hinda.

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FOOTNOTES:

- 1 See Har Tzvi 1:151; Igros Moshe OC 2:68 Chelkas Yaakov 3:179; Minchas Yitzchok 2:16
- 2 Since opening the door allows warm air to enter the refrigerator and might cause the motor to begin working.
- 3 See Minchas Shlomo 10; Tzitz Eliezer 8:12, 12:92.
- 4 Water coolers (fountains) operate in the same manner as a refrigerator. The Halacha would be the same by both appliances.
- 5 There are conflicting views in the Poskim in a case when one is in doubt whether he disconnected the switch or the bulb - see

Shmiras Shabbas Khilchasa 10:15.

6 See Igros Moshe OC 2:68. Rav S.Z. Auerbach in SSK 31:1

7 Based on MB 253:99; 259:21 277:15; 337:10. It must be noted that there are opinions who are more stringent on this issue - see Shar Hatzion 353:104. See also MB 253:51.

8 Using the "hint" format - not a direct command.

9 See Igros Moshe there and SSK 31:1.

10 Har Tzvi 1:151. HaRav S.Z. Auerbach in SSK 10:14.

**From:** "kollel@mcs.com"  
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**Date:** 12/20/95 8:00pm  
**Subject:** Haftorah - Mikeitz

PARSHAS MIKEITZ - SHABBOS CHANUKAH  
Zechariah 2:14

This week's haftorah, read in conjunction with Shabbos Chanukah reveals to us a hidden dimension of Hashem's compassionate ways. The prophet Zechariah predicts the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash and says, "Rejoice and be happy daughter of Zion for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says Hashem. "This prophecy refers to the rebuilding of the second Temple which is finally becoming a reality after seventy dark years of exile. In fact, early construction had once begun but, due to the slander to the government by our own Jewish brethren all construction came to a halt. The result of this was that Jews fell into total despair and forfeited all hope of experiencing Hashem's return. Suddenly, as if out of oblivion, the prophet Zechariah came and announced the immediate plans for the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash.

The prophet continues and reveals a private discussion between Hashem and the prosecuting angel. It revolved around Yehoshua, the high priest, who had been previously designated to serve in the new Bais Hamikdash. Hashem said, "Is he not an ember spared from the fire?" The prophet continues "And Yehoshua was wearing soiled garments and standing before the angel. And the angel responded, "Remove the soiled garments from upon Yehoshua...and they placed the turban upon his head." This dialogue shows to us that the future

Kohain Gadol was held seriously at fault for his actions. Our Chazal explain that Yehoshua was being judged for his failure to involve himself in the lives

of his children. They married wives forbidden to them according to the laws of the priesthood and their father Yehoshua failed to interfere in their marriages. Hashem defended Yehoshua and argued that he deserved special consideration being that he was an ember spared from the fire. Yehoshua received a second chance and immediately influenced his children to terminate their inappropriate relationships. Hashem responded to this and restored Yehoshua to the prestigious position of priesthood.

The above incident reveals a special characteristic of Hashem's judgement & compassion. In truth Yehoshua was at fault for his children's violation of their priesthood status and did not deserve to be the Kohain Gadol. However, Hashem turned His focus on the special merit of Yehoshua, being an ember spared from the fire. Our Chazal (Sanhedrin 93a) explain that the wicked Nebuchadnezar tested the faith and merit of Yehoshua and had cast him into a fiery furnace. Yehoshua was miraculously spared which demonstrated his supreme level of devotion to Hashem. Hashem argued that His tzadik Yehoshua whose every fiber was devoted to Hashem deserved review of status. Although a serious fault presented itself, Yehoshua received a second chance and after rectifying his children's conduct Yehoshua regained his status of the High Priest.

This lesson rings with a familiar tone in the famous story of Chanukah. In the early years of the second Temple we were privileged to be represented by the illustrious Shimon Hatzadik as the High Priest. During his days the western lamp of the menorah continuously burned which indicated Hashem's constant presence. However as the years went on the priesthood became somewhat of a mockery. It assumed a political status and was even obtained through handsome sums of money. This eventually resulted in the Greek control

over the Bais Hamikdash which brought all sacrifices to a halt. The Chashmonaim who were Kohanim took charge of the situation and risked their own

lives to restore the service in the Bais Hamikdash. They demonstrated unprecedented levels of devotion to Hashem and in their merit Hashem restored the service of the priesthood to them. Although, historically speaking, the broader family of the Chashmonaim always had their own faults, Hashem focused

on this display of devotion and granted them the privilege of the priesthood.

As a family, they were, after all, embers miraculously spared from the fire and deserved a fair chance to rectify their faults. (see Malbim, Zechariah 3:7)

This lesson is also found in our weekly sedra regarding Yehuda, the leader of the tribes. In Parshas Vayeishev we read of Yehuda's demotion from his royal position of leadership. The brothers, following the suggestion of Yehuda refrained from physically harming Yoseif and resorted to selling him as a slave. The brothers witnessed afterwards their father's grief over Yoseif's absence and blamed Yehuda for his insensitivity. In expression of their disturbance, they removed Yehuda from his position of leadership indefinitely.

In this week's sedra Yehuda stepped forward and risked his total eternal existence for the sake of his brother Binyomin. His father Yaakov accepted this sincere display of devotion and Yehuda was eventually restored to his post. Such devotion does not go unnoticed and eventually resulted in his return to the position of authority.

It is with this quality that the prophet concludes our haftorah and states "So

says Hashem, "Behold I am bringing my servant Mashiach.. and he will uncover the cornerstone resounding the voice of graciousness." In the end of days, the tribe of Yehuda, after straying for years, will demonstrate total

devotion to Hashem and in response to this Hashem will bring from amongst Yehuda, the Mashiah.

MESSAGE FROM THE HAFTORAH

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- "RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Miketz -  
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These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi  
Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah  
portion: Tape # 35, Chanukah Issues Good Shabbos!  
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Parshas Miketz:  
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"We Rely on Our Father in Heaven": Problem or Solution?  
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There is an enigmatic Medrash in Shir HaShirim Rabbah on the verse (7:14)  
"Hadudaim Nosnu Reach; v'al pesachenu kol megadim; chadashim gam  
yeshanim, dodi tsafanti lach".

The Medrash interprets as follows:

"The 'dudaim' (flowers) gave forth a fragrance" refers to Reuvain  
(who gave his mother dudaim [Bereshis 30:14]).

"And on our doorsteps all types of fruits" refers to the miracle  
of Chanukah.

"The new and also the old, my Beloved, I have hidden away for  
you" refers to the Written Torah and the Oral Torah.

For some reason, the Medrash lumps together in this one verse the dudaim  
of Reuvain, the miracle of Chanukah, Torah she'bichsav and Torah  
she'ba'al-peh. What do they have to do with each other?

The Medrash (in Vayetzei) says concerning the dudaim of Reuvain "Come  
and  
see the intervention that these flowers of Reuvain accomplished!" (He gave  
them to his mother, Leah, who traded them with Rachel who in turn gave up  
her night with Yaakov, so that Leah could be with him. That night Leah  
conceived Yissocher.) As a result of this action, two great tribes arose  
in Israel -- the Tribe of Yissocher and the Tribe of Zevulun, who created  
the arch-typical relationship of Yissocher and Zevulun whereby Yissocher  
would sit and learn and Zevulun would go out and earn money which would  
support both of them. As a result of these two tribes, the Medrash goes  
on, we have Torah today amongst the Jewish people.

Again, the Medrash refers to the verse in Shir Hashirim -- the 'dudaim'  
gave forth fragrance and these flowers are again linked with the  
preservation of Torah in Israel. What is the connection?  
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Rav Reuvain Katz, in the introduction to his sefer "Dudai Reuvain," says  
a beautiful peshat in this Medrash. It could be argued that Yaakov and  
his wives knew that there were going to be 12 tribes born to him (Rash"i  
points out in a number of places, that they knew that by Divine  
Providence, Yaakov was to father 12 tribes). Leah could have, therefore,  
taken the attitude, "I'll sit back and whatever will happen, will happen.  
If G-d wants me to have X amount of children, it will happen on its own.  
I don't have to do anything other than wait for the Hashgocha to make  
whatever He wants to happen happen."

But what does the Torah tell us? The Torah tells us that these two  
Tribes -- the tribes responsible for the preservation of Torah in Klal  
Yisroel -- were created as a result of Leah being pro-active and doing,  
rather than being passive and having an attitude of "what will happen  
will happen."

The Torah is instructing us that one cannot be passive when it comes to  
Torah. One must be an activist! This is a lesson for us -- Torah and  
Yiddishkeit will not be made or will not be saved by sitting back with  
folded hands. The Dudaim of Reuvain teach us that sometimes a person has  
to 'take the bull by its horns'.

This is the link between 'the flowers of Reuvain' and 'Ner Chanukah'.  
Had we been living in a period where the Kohanim Gedolim were corrupt,  
the Beis HaMikdash was defiled, there were no leaders, there was no  
oil.... this would certainly have been a time for despair. What's there  
for us to do? If the High Priests are corrupt, what can we do?

But on the contrary, the story and the miracle of Chanukah represent  
people that weren't passive, that refused to just allow things to  
continue as they were supposedly going. They got up and they did  
something. They took the bull by the horns and acted -- just like the  
action taken by Leah as recalled by the incident of the 'flowers of  
Reuvain'.

Reb Chaim Volozhiner says an interesting peshat on the Mishneh in Sotah  
[49b]. The Mishneh lists all the things that will happen at the end of  
time -- during the days of the 'footsteps of Moshiah'. The Mishneh says

insolence will increase, inflation will soar, the government will turn to heresy, there will be no rebuke, the knowledge of scholars will be lost, those who fear sin will be despised, youth will shame old men, the face of the generation will be like the face of the dog, etc., etc. Finally the Mishneh concludes with the words, "And we have no one to rely on, only on our Father in Heaven".

The simple peshat in the Mishneh is to read "this and this and this will happen and all we can do is rely on our Father in Heaven". Reb Chaim Volozhiner interprets otherwise. He says that the concluding phrase "We have no one to rely on other than our Father in Heaven" is one of the problems that will be symptomatic of the time of the 'footsteps of Moshiach'. The attitude "Nebach, there's nothing we can do" is part of the problem of those days just like the attitude of insolence and disrespect mentioned earlier in the Mishneh.

People will say "What can I do, I'm only an individual; this is basherte; we have to rely on G-d". That, according to Reb Chaim Volozhiner is symptomatic of the problem. What we learn from the 'flowers of Reuvain' and from 'Ner Chanukah' is that we must act, no matter how bleak the prospect for success. Only if one is not active and refuses to take charge of a situation does he in fact have no hope.

Reciting the She'Hechyanu in Bergen Belsen  
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Our Parsha begins with the expression "At the end of two years..." This refers to the time since the incident at the end of last week's Parsha which concludes with the verse "The chief steward did not remember Yosef. He forgot him".

The verse at the end of VaYeshev begs for a clarification -- if you don't remember someone, obviously you forgot. The Bluzheve Rebbe offers this insight into the verse:

We see, he says, that there is a concept of not remembering and there is a separate concept of forgetting. There are some things in life that one can't remember, but that one can't forget either. What is such an event? The Holocaust. It is too painful to remember, but yet we can never forget it either. As painful as it is, we must, at times, remember it.

The following incident occurred to the Bluzheve Rebbe himself in Bergen Belsen on Chanukah during the middle of the Holocaust:

Erev Chanukah had been a particularly grim day in the camp. Many Jews had been randomly taken out and shot. The bodies were still lying on the ground as the day ended. The Jews that remained got together, found an old shoe, made some oil out of shoe polish, made a wick out of threads of a garment and wanted to light Ner Chanukah.

The Bluzheve Rebbe, being one of the leaders in the camp, proceeded to light Ner Chanukah and recite the appropriate blessings. He recited the first blessing "...to kindle the Chanukah candle". Then he made the second blessing "...who has done miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time".

Then he came to make the she'hechyanu ("... who has kept us alive and sustained us and brought us to this occasion"). Before he made the

she'hechyanu he paused and hesitated. He looked around and then made the blessing.

There was a Jew who witnessed this scene and later came to the Rebbe and said bitterly, "Spira, I understand how you can make the first blessing and I can understand how you make the second blessing but tell me, Spira, how can you in this terrible place with dead Jews lying around us make the she'hechyanu blessing thanking G-d for keeping us alive and bringing us to this time?"

The Rebbe looked at the Jew and said "You know, I had the same problem. But then I looked around and saw that these Jews in these worst of circumstances, surrounded by death and destruction, got together and insisted on fulfilling the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles even in these horrible conditions. I said to myself for this alone one can and should make the blessing "she'hechyanu v'kiyamanu v'higeeyanu lazman hazeh".

Personalities & Sources:  
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Rav Reuvain Katz -- Former Rav, Petach Tikvah Israel

Reb Chaim of Volozhin -- (1749-1821), prominent disciple of Vilna Gaon; founder of the Yeshiva of Volozhin, Lithuania.

Bluzheve Rebbe -- R. Yisroel Spira (1890-1989) miraculously survived the Holocaust and reestablished a community in Brooklyn, NY which he led for over 40 years.

Vocabulary:  
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Torah she'bichsav -- Written Torah

Torah she'ba'al-peh -- Oral Torah

sefer -- book

peshat --interpretation

Hashgocha -- Divine Providence

Ner Chanukah -- Candle of Chanukah (representing events of the Chanukah miracles and victories)

basherte -- the way G-d wants things to happen (Yiddish)

nebach -- what a shame (Yiddish)

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Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@scn.org  
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This weeks write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion (#35). The corresponding halachic portion for tape #35 is: Chanukah Issues. The other halachic portions for Miketz from the

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mikeitz

Enayim LaTorah  
parshat mikeitz  
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Yosef and the Spies  
by Rabbi Yitzchak Twersky

One of the most puzzling elements in this week's parasha is the accusation made by Yosef that his brothers were spies. While we can appreciate the utility of accusing them of a crime (in order to carry out his

plan for them), we are left wondering about the significance and meaning of the particular charge [other than the pragmatic benefit that it stifled their ability to ask too many questions and thereby learn the true identity of Yosef, as some suggest]. There are several levels on which we may address this issue, some of which we will discuss here.

The simplest level of understanding may be that the Torah is telling us that they really were coming as spies; they were searching for Yosef. This is alluded to by Chazal and the Meforshim and requires little elaboration. The idea that they were coming for the purpose of seeing Erevat Ha'aretz - "nakedness of the land" is interesting, insofar as Yosef could be described that way (as he is stripped of his Kutonet by his brothers and is left naked in his struggle to escape Potiphar's wife) [see Breishit 37:23 to 39:12]. This may well be the Omek HaPshat here .

There may be a deeper level of Remez, as well. The ten brothers (and the Torah emphasizes the number) are the prototype for the ten spies (of parashat Shlach). The Talmud (Shabbat 10b) tells us that it was the jealousy of the brothers that resulted in the exile in Egypt. They were responsible for the Jewish nation's exile from Canaan. The Meraglim [admittedly not referred to as such in parashat Shlach] advocated abandoning Eretz Yisrael/Canaan in order to return to - Egypt! It is fascinating that Chazal actually compare the two groups of ten (see Yerushalmi B'rachot Perek 7 Halacha 3).

Yosef stands in contrast to them in this regard. Yosef bequeathed to Bnei Yisrael the keys to redemption and the return to Eretz Yisrael. Yosef is constantly associated with Yehoshua. We find, for example, that the death of Yehoshua culminates with the burial of - Yosef! (see Yehoshua 24) As is pointed out in B'reishit Rabba Parsha 100, they both die at the age of 110 . These are but a few of the numerous connections between them. One of the reasons for this association is the fact that Yosef is the one who lays the foundation for the entry into Canaan that is accomplished by Yehoshua.

Yosef paved the way for Yetziah MiMitzrayim - exit from Egypt and K'nisah La'Aretz - entrance into Eretz Yisrael in several ways. The ShL"ah points out that Yosef created the potential for redemption, although it was actualized by others. We find that he takes his family through a model of the Exodus (in the procession that he leads to Canaan after the death of Yaakov). Similarly, it was Yosef who gave the Jewish People the "code words" for the redemption: Pakod Yifkod Elohim Etchem.

Most importantly, perhaps, is the perspective that Yosef gave to his people. Yosef gave them - and us - the understanding that there is a need to return to Canaan. It is Yosef who declares that in Egypt he is Be'ereztz Onyi and removed from Beit Avi (when he names his sons). It is he who taught that he must be returned to Eretz Yisrael, in death if not in life. It is this tzaddik who reminds his brothers that they need to be redeemed from Egypt.

This declaration was indeed heroic. Yosef was in exile at the time against his will. He was serving an essential, even critical, function in Egypt. He and his brothers were living very comfortably - both physically and spiritually. Given the fact that he had no choice but to be in Egypt, it would have been only human to categorize his situation as Lechatchilah (especially given how much truly was positive). Yet this is not what he did. Yosef bequeathed to his people the understanding that they needed to be remembered by G-d. This was the true key to redemption that Yosef gave his brothers. It was through this that he began the mission of Yehoshua (both in Parashat Shlach and in Sefer Yehoshua). This is part of the spiritual legacy of Yosef Hatzaddik to his brothers - then and now.

The Image of Wealth



by Kevin Rodbell

When famine struck the fertile crescent, Yaakov instructed ten of his remaining sons to travel to Egypt to purchase provisions. The Torah relates:

Yaakov saw that there were supplies in Egypt and he told his sons, "Lamah Titrau" (42:1).

The words Lamah Titrau lend themselves to various translations. Rash"i's first approach is based on the Talmud in Taanit (10b). The Talmud writes that while Yaakov had ample food and his own household was not suffering, others around him were not as fortunate. Yaakov sent his children to Egypt to avoid becoming alienated, and possibly endangered, by appearing "wealthier than thou." He was going out of his way not to antagonize his neighbors. It follows that, Lamah Titrau means "Why should we risk angering the people around us by appearing satisfied when they are starving?"

Rav Dov Beer of Vilna in his Sefer R'vid Hazahav saw a halachic precedent in Yaakov's actions. The Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat 51:14) rules that if a person admitted in front of two witnesses that he owes a particular amount of money to a specific individual, and then this individual attempts to collect this debt, the self-indicted debtor will not necessarily have to pay. He can employ the principle that "Adam Asui SheLo Lehasbiah Et Atzmo" - halacha recognizes that people tend to downplay their wealth. They may casually mention that they owe money in an attempt to avoid appearing richer than their neighbors.

Similarly, the Talmud (Sanhedrin 29b) discusses the case of a man who earned the nickname Kav Reshu - a bundle of debts. He was rumored to owe large amounts of money to many creditors. One day, in an attempt to deflect the unpleasant rumor, he stated, "Who do I owe other than [Mr. X] and [Mr. Y]!?" Mr. X and Mr. Y promptly brought him to court and demanded payment. Despite the testimony of two valid witnesses regarding the admission, Rav Nachman ruled that since "Adam Asui SheLo Lehasbia Et Atzmo", the man's statements do not obligate him to pay. Indeed, they were simply the least painful way of minimizing his bad reputation.

According to Rash"i's first explanation of the pasuk, Yaakov Avinu introduced this principle. To convince the jealous children of Yishmael and Esav that he was not better off than they were, Yaakov went so far as to send ten of his sons on a perilous trip to Egypt.

How to Blight Something Right  
by Dov Hartstein

The sons of Yaakov, after being arrested by the Egyptians as spies, deny the charges and profess themselves upright men. Among themselves, however, they concede their guilt for ignoring their brother Yosef's cries for mercy years earlier. Perhaps, they suggest, G-d is now punishing them, through the Egyptians, for that base deed: But we are guilty concerning our brother, for we saw his anguish and paid no heed. (42:21)

The confession of the brothers begins with the word "Aval", usually translated as "but." Unkelus, however translates it as "Kushta" - "in truth (we are guilty)." Harav Aharon Soloveitchik expands upon this interpretation. Years earlier, before the brothers condemned Yosef to slavery, they convened a make-shift court to sentence him. Their judgement, however, was biased, their verdict unjust. The Torah commands "Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof (D'varim 16:20), and Unkelus translates this verse as "Kushta" - "with truth shall you judge." Unkelus, in our verse, hints that the brothers admitted to spurning this injunction;

they had not judged with "truth."

Harav Avigdor Nebenzahl, in Sichot LeSefer B'reishit, suggests another interpretation. The brothers, he says, had found Yosef guilty and thus he deserved to be killed. Now the brothers regretted their hasty judgement. According to halacha, even murderers, in certain instances, may receive lenient sentences. Though their judgement had been exactly correct, they had failed to temper their justice with mercy.

Both Scenes at Egypt's Talent Show  
by Simcha Jacob

Yosef's fortunes change dramatically in this week's parasha when Pharaoh appoints him viceroy of Egypt. After a single conversation, Yosef, a jailed convict, assumes a position second only to Pharaoh in its power. What prompted Pharaoh to suddenly make this seemingly imprudent decision?

The wisdom Yosef displayed in his interpretation of Pharaoh's dream certainly influenced this decision to a degree. Yet even Pharaoh's hunches do not justify recklessly delegating such absolute authority. Rav Chaim Shmulevitz argues that it was Yosef's insistence that all his wisdom and talent came from G-d which persuaded Pharaoh. He recognized that such humility would ensure that Yosef would responsibly make use of the powers entrusted to him. The words Pharaoh chose to appoint Yosef support Rav Chaim's assertion:

Without your approval shall no man lift his foot in Egypt. (41:44) "Bil'adecha", which occurs rarely in Tanach, also appears earlier in the parasha. When Yosef ascribes his abilities to G-d he uses the same word: It is not I: G-d shall give Pharaoh a favorable answer.

Perhaps, we may suggest, Pharaoh was alluding to this demonstration of humility in his appointment of Yosef.

"Words, Words, Words . . ."

Yoni Kristt

Rav Eliyahu Dessler, in his Michtav MaEliyahu, writes that nothing in the Torah was written solely for informative purposes. Everything in the Torah teaches us a lesson for our everyday serving of Hashem. Why then, in our parasha, does the Torah relate Pharaoh's dreams not only once, but a second time when Pharaoh describes them to Yosef. What possible significance could this have vis-a-vis our relationship with Hashem?

The Kli Yakar points out several differences between Pharaoh's original dream and his retelling of it to Yosef. He suggests that Pharaoh's different description reflects his belief in the divine nature of the Nile. For example, the beginning of the parasha describes how the seven infirm cows arose from the Nile (Breishit 41:3). However, when Pharaoh recounts the event, in pasuk 19, although he nearly echoes pasuk 3 word for word, he glosses over the origin of these later bovines, omitting that they arose from the Nile. The Kli Yakar writes that Pharaoh purposely tried to separate the sickly cows from his god, the Nile; how could such a great god produce anything so dreadful? Similarly, in the dream itself, the decrepit cows actively eat the robust ones: "Vatochalna Haparot Re'ot HaMar'eh" (41:4). This constitutes an insult to the Nile; the superb specimens it produced are devoured by debilitated and dastardly bovines. Pharaoh, however, portrays this event as noble self-sacrifice on the part of the healthy cows; almost willingly they enter into the maws of the infirm ones: "Vatavonah El Kirbenah" (41:21).

Still, the distinctions of the Kli Yakar have not alleviated the problem; why should we care about Pharaoh's sensitivity to a mythical aquatic entity? Yet this is exactly the Torah's point. If a Rasha like

Pharaoh, who lived in a land completely dominated by moral sludge, felt the need to be so sensitive to his divine entities as to choose his words extraordinarily carefully so as not to offend his god, all the more so must we. Not only must we think twice before uttering statements that might be misconstrued as disrespectful to Hashem or his Torah, but even regarding our fellow humans, who are made in His image, must we choose our words and act with sensitivity of the highest order.

Haftorah: (Zecharia 2:14-4:7)

Smokey the Bear Says "Don't Light Fiery Furnaces!"

By Elie Rothberger

Our Haftorah contains three different sections, each with its own specific association to Chanukah. The first section (2:14-2:17) discusses the future redemption of Bnei Yisrael. According to Sefer Gevul Binyamin the victory attained by the Chashmonaim was only temporary because it was brought about by human beings. However, Zecharia, in these verses, promises that the future redemption, generated solely by Hashem, will be everlasting.

The middle part of the Haftorah describes the scene of Yehoshua, the kohen gadol, being judged by the heavenly court while wearing "soiled garments":

Hashem showed me a vision of Yehoshua the kohen gadol standing before the angel of Hashem, and Satan stood at his right to accuse him. The angel of Hashem said to Satan, 'May Hashem rebuke you...How dare you accuse Yehoshua?' (3:1-2)

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 93), explaining these verses, relates that Nevuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had tossed Yehoshua into a furnace. Although Yehoshua miraculously emerged alive, Yehoshua's garments were consumed by the fire. The Satan immediately accused Yehoshua of impiety. Had Yehoshua been completely faithful, the Satan charged, no evil - not even having his garments singed - could have happened to him. Therefore, the Satan concluded, Yehoshua was not fit to serve as the High Priest.

Rah"i in Sanhedrin explains the Angel's response to the Satan. The Angel replied that Yehoshua's very survival proved that he deserved the position of kohen gadol. No man, the angel argued, can reach the standard of perfection. Each man has his faults, and each man must strive to conquer the flaws in his character. Yet we must all realize that we can only expect a battle for morality - not supernatural perfection - from people.

The Haftorah concludes with Zecharia being shown a vision of the Menorah which was going to be lit when the Second Beit Hamikdash was rebuilt:

Not by physical might, or power, but My spirit, says Hashem of hosts.

(4:6)

We might often delude ourselves into believing that our own talents and abilities lead to our successes. Zecharia, however, warns us against indulging in this arrogant behavior. Only through G-d's help, as evidenced in the miracle of Chanukah, do we succeed in our goals.

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Shiur HaRav on Parshas Miketz/Shabbos Channukah

The Haftorah of Shabbos Channukah, Rani V'Simchi in Zechariah(2,3), deals with the topic of Pirsumei Nisa, in a greater and more obvious way than does Parshas Miketz (see Tosfos Shabbos 23b D'H Hadar). On the surface, the the Pirsumei Nisa aspect of the Haftorah derives from the discussion of the vision of the beautiful, brightly burning Menorah as seen by Yehoshua Kohen Gadol and its symbolizing the future redemption at the hand of Hashem for all the world to see. This is the main theme of the second half of the Haftorah.

The Rav raised the question as

to the relevance of the first half of the Haftorah for Shabbos Channukah,

which deals with Yehoshua Kohen Gadol with no apparent relevance to the

story of Channukah. Was the first half

included simply in order to fulfill the requirement that the minimum Haftorah must consist of 21 verses?

The Rav explained that both halves of the Haftorah were indeed relevant to Channukah.

When the Rambam describes the miracle of Channukah (Hilchos Channukah 3:2) he says "and the the sons of the Hasmonean family, the Kohanim Gedolim, were victorious.." Why does the Rambam mention that they were Kohanim Gedolim? The Rambam obviously took his cue from the Al Hanissim that begins "In the days of Matisyahu the Kohen Gadol...". Why is it important to mention the title of Matisyahu? After all, we don't mention any specific titles for Mordechai in the Al Hanissim we recite for Purim.

The Rav explained that the miracle of Channukah was not only limited to the miracle of the Menorah. There was a second miracle as well: the preservation of the Kehunah Gedolah throughout their ordeal. We see this clearly upon examining closely the story of Yehoshua Kohen Gadol, as told by the Navi. Yehoshua was obviously a great man, as the Navi states "V'yigar Becha Hasatan V'yigar Becha Habocheh B'Yerushalayim". Yehoshua is described as wearing dirty clothing (Begadeim Tzoim), which the angel asks him to remove and replace them with clean white clothing. Chazal say that the dirty clothing is a metaphor for the inappropriate wives (Nashim Nachrios) that his children had taken. One can assume that Yehoshua did not endorse these marriages, so why is he the one referred to as wearing dirty clothes? Why is he responsible to remove his dirty clothing, which refers to removing the unfit wives of his children? Why this pre-condition to the cleansing of his sin "R'eh Haavarti M'alecha Avoncha" and his the subsequent clothing with pure white garments as mentioned by the angel?

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The Rav gave the following interpretation of the Navi that he heard from his father (R' Moshe ZT'L) (an explanation that Reb Chaim agreed with). On Yom Kippur the Kohen Gadol recited 3 different Viduyim, one for himself and his house (Baiso), one for the rest of the Kohanim, and one for all Israel. Chazal learn that the term "house" minimally requires that the Kohen Gadol must have a wife in order to do the Avodas Yom Kippur. There is no

requirement that he have children as well. However, if he does have children, and they are sinners, he cannot say that he is reciting Viduy for all his immediate family members, unless they themselves are repentant as well. To do otherwise would be equivalent to "Tovel V'sheretz B'yado". His entire household must be in a state of repentance and ready for Viduy. The children of Yehoshua Kohen Gadol therefore had to remove their forbidden wives in order for him to function as the Kohen Gadol and perform the Yom Kippur service, which the Kohen Gadol alone must do. If they would not comply, Yehoshua Kohen Gadol himself would be deemed unworthy of being the Kohen Gadol.

The first portion of our Haftorah, is the story of Yehoshua Kohen Gadol and how he was disqualified from doing the Avodas Yom Kippurim until he removed the "dirty clothing" within his family. The purification of his entire family was a prerequisite to his own forgiveness and subsequent re-clothing with garments of pure white, which symbolizes the special clothing worn by the Kohen Gadol during the Avodas Yom Kippur.

The Rav used the above to connect the entire Haftorah to Channukah. The Rambam that we mentioned above referred to all the children of Matisyahu as Kohanim Gedolim. It was obvious that not all of his sons actually functioned as Kohanim Gedolim. The Rambam used this terminology to indicate that they were all worthy of being Kohanim Gedolim, that they had not sinned in ways that would have disqualified their father from acting as Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur. Since there was no "Pasul B'zaro", Matisyahu was able to recite the Viduy of Yom Kippur without hesitation or doubt.

The Rambam is echoing the scope of the miracles of Channukah as defined by the Al Hanissim: there was the miracle of the pure oil that was found and lasted for 8 days. The second miracle was that entire family of the Kohen Gadol remained pure and completely dedicated to Hashem B'shlaymusa, allowing their father and subsequent generations to function as Kohanim Gedolim. The Haftorah we recite on Shabbos Channukah alludes to both these miracles: the miracle of the Menorah and the miracle of one entire family that remained fit for the Kehuna Gedolah.

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