



BS"D

To: parsha@groups.io
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON MIKETZ - 5784

parsha@groups.io / www.parsha.net - in our 29th year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to parsha+subscribe@groups.io Please also copy me at cshulman@gmail.com A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net> It is also fully searchable.

Sponsored in memory of **Chaim Yissachar z"l** ben Yechiel Zaydel Dov

Sponsored by **Rabbi Meier Brueckheimer**
In loving memory of his mother
Rachel Bat Yissachar, A"H Yahrzeit on 6 Tevet

To sponsor a parsha sheet contact cshulman@parsha.net
(proceeds to tzedaka)

from: TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org> date: Dec 14, 2023, 6:34 PM

Rabbi Benjamin Yudin

The High Cost of Free Speech

In Parshas Miketz (41:51) we are taught that Yosef called the name of his firstborn Menashe because "Hashem has made me forget all my hardships and all my father's household." The first explanation for the name is most understandable. Yosef, who encountered many challenging episodes, trials, and tribulations, gives thanks to Hashem for enabling him to forget and create a family after all his setbacks. The second reason, however, is most difficult to understand. What does it mean that Yosef gives thanks to Hashem for enabling him to forget his father's home? It is clear from the way our sages understand the text that Yosef never forgot his father, his household, and his roots.

In Parshas Vayeishev (39:11), when Yosef overcomes his natural temptation and flees from the advances of his master's wife, Rashi cites the Medrash Tanchuma which states that it

was the vision of his father, Yaakov, that enabled Yosef to avoid sin. This shows that Yaakov still played a major role in his life. Similarly, in Parshas Vayigash (45:27), we are taught that when "Yaakov sees the agalos (wagons) that Yosef has sent to transport him to Egypt, the spirit of Yaakov was revived." The Rabbis understand that the wagons represent either the six covered wagons that the twelve princes of Israel donated to transport the Mishkan, as found in Bamidbar (6:3), or to remind Yaakov of the last Torah topic that they studied together, namely the laws of eglah arufah, the incident of a murdered body found in Israel. Regardless, it shows that Yosef did not forget the Torah he learned in Yaakov's house, even after twenty-two years of separation. So, how are we to understand the name Menashe to mean that Hashem helped Yosef forget his father's home?

I'd like to share an explanation given by Reb Simcha Zisel Brody zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva Yeshivas Chevron. He cites the Gemara (Bava Metzia 85a), which teaches that when Reb Zeira, who studied in Babylonia, decided to move and study in Eretz Yisrael under Reb Yochanan, he fasted one hundred times to "forget" the Torah of Bavel, thereby enabling him to more easily absorb the Torah of Eretz Yisrael. He did not literally forget the Babylonian Talmud, rather he was eager to absorb the new approach to talmud Torah in Eretz Yisrael. Unlike the Babylonian Talmud, which is replete with arguments between the Rabbis, the Jerusalem Talmud is significantly more devoid of friction between the scholars and more straightforward in the implementation and explanation of Jewish law. Reb Zeira demonstrated the ability to adapt from one community to another.

At the end of Parshas Toldos (28:2), Yitzchak instructs Yaakov to leave the land of Israel and marry one of his cousins, the daughters of his uncle Lavan. Rashi on the closing verse in Toldos provides an extensive commentary that proves that between Yaakov's leaving home and arriving at his uncle's home, there was a fourteen-year gap. The Rabbis attribute these fourteen years to Yaakov's having gone to study Torah at the Yeshiva of Shem and Aver. Why was this detour necessary? Reb Yaakov Kaminetzky zt"l (in Emes L'Yaakov) teaches that while Yaakov studied much Torah with his father, that was Torah appropriate for the Land of Israel. Now that Yaakov was going to chutz la'aretz, he needed to study Torah that could be maintained in different surroundings and challenges - the Torah of galus. It is this knowledge that our Rabbis teach us that Yaakov taught his son Yosef. Indeed, this is why Yosef calls his son Menashe as he was thanking Hashem for helping him "forget" the manner of observance in Eretz Yisrael and helping him adapt to his new challenges and surroundings.

As Yosef adapted and forgot his previous lifestyle, it behooves us to unfortunately take a new look and reexamine what has been, for many, a normative behavioral pattern for almost a

hundred years. I am referring to the mode whereby many Jewish, and even Torah-observant, families enroll their college-aged students in universities after high school. There, they receive higher education that enables them to advance both individually and to enrich society. The presence of nearby Chabad, Hillel, and shiurim on many campuses has helped sustain and maintain a positive Jewish identification for numerous Jewish students throughout the country.

Since October 7th, there has been an immediate unleashing of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic pronouncements throughout much of the civilized world, especially on college campuses. What perhaps was always there but beneath the surface has now come out of the woodwork, making Jewish students who have loyalty and devotion to Israel feel either threatened or uncomfortable in their academic surroundings. Even worse, a great percentage of Jewish students who are themselves uneducated about the history of Israel, its value for human life, and its humanitarian gestures of urging civilians to leave Gaza and avoid being caught up in the military conflict, are subject to propaganda found both unfortunately in the classroom and in student activities on campus.

We have to learn from Yosef that what worked before might not work in the future. Jewish parents must come to realize the high cost of free speech. They must be informed that there are valid Jewish alternatives to the present challenging secular college campuses, where, in the name of free speech, a great disconnect can be created between our promising Jewish student population and our proud Jewish heritage. What is at stake on secular college campuses today is nothing less than the essence of our identity as the People of the Book, risking the loss of a generation's connection to the profound and timeless wisdom that our sacred texts and traditions offer.

© 2023 by TorahWeb Foundation. All Rights Reserved

<https://www.jewishpress.com/indepth/opinions/poison-ivy-too-smart-for-their-own-good/2023/12/14/>

Poison Ivy: Too Smart for Their Own Good?

By Rabbi Moshe Taragin

December 14, 2023

“Knowledge can easily blur true and falsehood. Accuracy lies in the subtleties of wisdom” (Sefat Emmet, Chanukah).

Throughout Mishlei, Shlomo Hamelech explores the relationship between knowledge and morality. Much of the sefer presumes that knowledge and wisdom expand moral reasoning.

Ideally, education does expose us to larger universal truths, extending our horizons beyond our personal and narrow experiences. Any encounter with broader truths decentralizes self-interest and should enhance ethical sensitivity.

Additionally, education highlights the complexity of the human condition, hopefully sensitizing us to the experiences and needs of others.

Shlomo Hamelech wasn't the only thinker to assume that expanded knowledge heightens moral conscience. Socrates asserted that “virtue is knowledge,” assuming that immoral behavior was purely a result of ignorance. Enlightenment thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries such as Locke and Rousseau were optimistic that widespread education would yield a more civil and humane society. Knowledge, many asserted, was a portal to moral behavior and reasoning.

The shocking events of the past two months have debunked these assumptions. Our just war to defeat pure evil and to defend the world against moral collapse has elicited a vicious wave of enraged antisemitism. Astonishingly, college campuses across the United States have become podiums for hatred and for the support of rape, murder, torture, and dismemberment of human beings. They have also become launching pads for violence against Jews.

University administrations sat by idly, as their students, presumably exposed to the best and finest of Western education, rioted for murder and, in some instances, expressed their verbal hatred through acts of physical violence.

To make matters worse, several Ivy League college presidents were summoned by the U.S. Congress to explain their inaction and their implicit support for demonstrations of hate. Their moral hedging and their embarrassing attempts to “contextualize” violence and bigotry was shameful. It provided a wake-up call for those who had previously revered these colleges as “prestigious” institutions of higher learning.

Though several of these administrators walked back their heinous comments, their retractions seemed little more than lame apologies meant to save their cozy appointments rather than heartfelt admissions of moral dysfunction.

Some of the moral confusion on campuses is just simple, old-fashioned, Jew hatred. Opportunistic antisemites always wait in the wings, eagerly joining whatever group or movement preaches antisemitism. The particular narrative of antisemitism makes no difference, as long as Jews are vilified for fabricated crimes, and hatred is provoked. Hitler built his initial base of support by rallying student groups across Germany to loathsome antisemitism. History repeats itself.

Furthermore, some of the Israel-bashing and Jew-threatening is feeble herd mentality. Social media favors the most vocal shouters and the most aggressive posters. Many protesters against Israel are pitiable stooges, completely ignorant of even the basic details of this war, and are blindly parroting irrelevant slogans, completely unrelated to the complex war we are carefully navigating. Beware of the herd.

However, there are much deeper roots to this appalling academic moral freefall. This intellectual tragedy occurring within these “beacons of enlightened thinking” exposes serious shortfalls within Western culture and showcases implicit dangers of higher education. If knowledgeable professors and cultured students are being duped into morally humiliating and

venomous opinions, there is something structurally flawed about our culture. Evidently, some people are too smart for their own good.

Over-Sophistication

Our world is complex and human experience is multi-layered. Education trains us to be analytical – to evaluate information, consider multiple perspectives, and make informed decisions. Through analysis we probe beyond surface-level understanding, challenge preconceived notions, and embrace complexity. When we look at the world through a periscope, we miss much of its sweep and texture. Education and analysis enable us to see the world large and whole, rather than narrow and simplistically.

However, the methodology of analysis also blurs moral clarity. As we delve into the intricacies of intellectual analysis, we inadvertently lose sight of simple truths which anchor moral behavior. Though many moral issues do contain complexity, there are many black and white moral situations which demand clear-cut and unqualified moral certainty.

For this reason, common or uneducated people often possess stronger moral conviction than those who are educated.

Ordinary people are often more attuned to inner and untainted moral instincts than sophisticates, who ignore intuitive moral reasoning in their endless search for convoluted moral formulas.

The Torah introduces Yaakov as a simple man who dwelled within tents, while tending to his sheep. Though Yaakov's life would soon turn complicated, he enjoyed a simple youth, insulated from the duplicity of this world and its complex moral predicaments. Similar to Yaakov, many of our greatest leaders, from Moshe Rabeinu to Dovid Hamelech, to many nevi'im such as Amos, began their moral journeys as simple shepherds, far removed from cosmopolitan sophistication. Their pure and noble upbringing provided an ingrained and indissoluble moral backbone.

Moshe the shepherd flees Egypt as a fugitive from the law. Though it is in his best interest to remain incognito, he cannot ignore the young girls he witnesses being harassed at the watering hole. Ignoring any "context" of this harassment, and despite his desire for confidentiality, he rallies to their defense.

My revered rebbe, Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, modeled an uncanny combination of intellectual sophistication and steadfast moral clarity. His lectures were both intellectually scintillating and panoramic. He would discuss a single issue for hours, carefully and delicately unfolding concealed layers of meaning. He taught us to see the world as nuanced rather than binary. Yet, he also displayed clear moral thinking and frequently expressed moral outrage against injustice. His analytic talents didn't obfuscate his moral courage.

This past month has taught us a harsh lesson: knowledge doesn't automatically translate into moral integrity. Perhaps we should examine who we admire and which institutions we

consider prestigious. Sharp-witted professors may impress us with their brilliance, but may miserably fail the morality litmus test. Maybe we should pay more respect to those who display moral courage and clear-headed moral principles. Maybe they are more prestigious.

Intellectual Arrogance

There may be a more sinister factor causing this despicable moral dysfunction. Acquisition of knowledge can often cause intellectual snobbery. People who amass knowledge often feel superior to those who are less educated. Education provides cultural and social opportunities, including better jobs and social networks. These socio-economic privileges often create a superiority complex. Though intellectual elitism has always existed, in the past it was partially justified given a world of mass illiteracy, when the non-educated had absolutely no access to knowledge. In the modern era of widespread literacy information is accessible to most of the population, who are more than capable of ethical reasoning without benefitting from enlightened moral theories of superior intellects.

In the United States Ivy League colleges have become a cultural icon. As they are vital for professional advancement, they have become objects of prestige and even cultural idolization. Parents are willing to pay sizable fees to facilitate their children's acceptance, and there have been numerous high-profile scandals in which illegal bribes opened the doors to otherwise unsuitable students. Given the absence of an actual aristocracy in the United States, Ivy League professors and students are sometimes viewed as pseudo-aristocracy which often breeds smug arrogance within their inner circles. It is fair to wonder whether their repulsive moral equivocation stems from a false superiority complex. Why is our moral reality so obvious to everyone but not to them? Could it be that they perceive themselves as possessing a higher and more sophisticated moral logic and better tools for moral calculations? Is their moral confusion a byproduct of their intellectual arrogance?

Rabbi Moshe Taragin Rabbi Moshe Taragin teaches at Yeshivat Har Etzion/Gush. He has semicha and a BA in computer science from Yeshiva University, as well as a masters degree in English literature from the City University of New York.

from: **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** <ryfrand@torah.org> reply-to: do-not-reply@torah.org to: ravfrand@torah.org date: Dec 14, 2023, 3:59 PM subject: Rav Frand - Pharaoh's Advisors Bought Into Yosef's Interpretation Based on a False Assumption

Parshas Miketz Pharaoh's Advisors Bought Into Yosef's Interpretation Based on a False Assumption

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly portion: #1273 – Chanukah Lights Motzei Shabbos:

How Early? Havdala Before or After Chanukah Lights? Good Shabbos!

After Pharaoh's advisors failed to satisfactorily interpret his dreams, Yosef was brought out of the dungeon and in front of Pharaoh. Yosef not only interprets the dream, but he also offers a plan how to mitigate the situation that the dream portends. Egypt must save up during the good years to prepare for the bad years, and a wise and discerning individual must be placed in charge of implementing this plan.

The pasuk says "And the matter found favor in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants." (Bereshis 41:37). Consider the following two scenarios:

Scenario #1: A high-powered law firm is considering a tough case. All the partners are in the conference room trying to figure out what is the best legal approach to the case. They can't figure out a good plan. Suddenly, the guy from the mail room walks into the conference room and hears the issue that the lawyers are discussing and makes a suggestion. The entire legal team of \$650-an-hour lawyers unanimously say "You know what? This kid knows what he is talking about!"

Scenario #2: A group of medical specialists are trying to diagnose a patient and determine a course of treatment for a particularly mysterious illness. They don't know what to do. Suddenly, an orderly who is merely trained to assist patients' daily living activities walks in and suggests a plan for how to treat this patient. All the doctors are blown away by the suggestion, and they tell the orderly, "You know what? You may only have a grade school education, but you are right!" The chances of either of these scenarios actually occurring is between zero and none. "I, the \$650 an hour lawyer, should listen to this little kid from the mail room?" or "I, the great physician, am going to listen to an orderly?" People's egos won't let that happen. And yet the Torah says "The matter found favor in Pharaoh's eyes, and in the eyes of all his servants!"

Pharaoh's advisors said "This guy is right!" How did that happen? Yosef was a slave who spent the last who knows how many years in prison. Go to the detention center downtown. Yosef should have had as much credibility as any of those prisoners.

Yosef was aware of this challenge. Yosef knew that if he merely suggested an interpretation, no one would believe him. That is why Yosef added the other detail that the solution to this problem is "to get a wise and discerning individual and to give him the authority to implement this plan and to thereby become the viceroy to Pharaoh, the second most important person in the land of Egypt." Every single advisor thought, "Who is this wise and discerning individual? Who is Pharaoh going to appoint?" Each advisor assumed that he would be chosen as the one. Consequently, they all agreed to Yosef's plan.

The story was similar a thousand years later with Haman. "... And the king said to him, 'What shall be done to the man whom the king wishes his welfare?' And Haman said to himself 'Who does the king wish to honor more than me?'" (Esther 6:6)

That is why Yosef not only explained the dream, but also suggested a solution for it. Who asked Yosef to advise Pharaoh? Yosef was asked to interpret Pharaoh's dream, not tell Pharaoh what to do! The answer is that Yosef knew what he was up against. He understood that all of Pharaoh's advisors were going to belittle his interpretations and reject anything he told Pharaoh. But once the advisors heard that this interpretation created an opportunity to be appointed CEO, every advisor thought to himself "Aha! I am CEO material!"

Mixing Up Cause and Effect in World Events

The parsha begins with the words "And it was at the conclusion of two years, Pharaoh dreamt..." (Bereshis 41:1) The Medrash on these words references the pasuk in Iyov (28:3) "Ketz sam l'choshech" (He set an end to the darkness...) and states that "Hashem set an end to Yosef's imprisonment, determining ahead of time how long he would need to remain in prison. Once the end arrived, Pharaoh immediately had his dream."

There is a very important vort from the Beis HaLevi, which is an important insight into how to understand life, and how to understand current events and history.

For instance, if a person has property or merchandise to sell and he sells it and makes a windfall profit, how do we look at that? We say, because he had this merchandise or this property and he sold it, that is why he made money. We view the "cause" as the merchandise and the "effect" as the profit. The Beis HaLevi says that is not how it works. Those labels need to be reversed. The Ribono shel Olam decided that this person will make X amount during this year. It is because it has been determined in Heaven that he will make X amount this year that he got a hold of the merchandise and was able to sell it at the windfall profit.

This is like the old issue of 'what comes first, the chicken or the egg?' In Rabbinic terminology, we need to know what is the "Seebah" (cause) and what is the "Mesovev" (effect). Many times in life, we confuse cause and effect. By the story of Yosef and Pharaoh, someone could say "Pharaoh had a dream. He had no one to interpret it. Yosef was a great interpreter of dreams. Therefore, he summoned Yosef to the palace. That is why Yosef got out of prison!" We see Pharaoh's dream as being the cause and Yosef's freedom being the effect.

The Medrash views the matter differently. Ketz sam l'choshech (An end was set for the darkness). Yosef needs to get out of prison because he was in there for X amount of time, per Heavenly decree. He won't stay there a minute longer. ("And they hurried him out of the pit." (Bereshis 41:14)) Yosef

needs to get out. (This is the cause). Therefore, what needs to happen? “And Pharaoh dreamt.” (This is the effect.)

I saw the following interesting incident brought in the name of Rav Yaakov Galinsky, who was the great Maggid of Yerushalayim (1920-2014):

Rav Galinsky’s mother wrote for a newspaper known as Tag Blatt (“The Daily Page”) in Poland, which was published by Agudas Yisrael. There were women there who spoke Polish and understood Polish but could not read Polish. This was not uncommon. There are people who are illiterate even though they can understand and speak a particular language.

Especially in Poland in those days, women did not go to school so they did not learn to read. Yet, these women wanted to know the news. What did they do? Every night, they gathered in Mrs. Galinsky’s house and she read the Polish paper to them. This is how they got their news. They understood Polish and Mrs. Galinsky not only understood Polish, she could read it and write it as well.

One night, a certain woman came into the Galinsky home earlier than usual. While Mrs. Galinsky was peeling potatoes in the kitchen, the women picked up the newspaper and gave out a shout. She ran into the kitchen. “Devorah!”, she shouted, “A boat sank in the ocean and you are here in the kitchen peeling potatoes?” (The picture was a picture of a new ship that set sail from England. It was such big news that it made the front page of the Tag Blatt.)

Mrs. Galinsky did not know what this woman was talking about. She came into the front room and saw that this woman (who could not read Polish) was holding the paper upside down. Held upside down, it looked from the picture like the boat sank into the water. Mrs. Galinsky showed her the proper way to hold the paper. There was no tragedy of a boat sinking. Rav Yaakov Galinsky drew a homiletic lesson from this story to understanding world events. He said that we often read the paper upside down! We look at world events and we say “Aha, because of ‘X’, that is why Y happened.” We believe that X is the cause and Y is the effect. But so many times in life, what we see as the cause is really the effect and vice versa.

This is especially true because we know that everything in the world happens because of the Jewish people (“HaKol bishvil Yisrael”) (Medrash Tanchuma Shoftim Siman 9). When there are wars or political turmoil in the world, wait to see what happens. Everything is for the sake of Israel. We look at these events backwards and say because of “X” that is why “Y” happens. We need to approach the matter with wisdom. We need to know how to read the newspaper. We need to read it right side up.e HeH

Transcribed by David Twersky; Jerusalem

DavidATwersky@gmail.com Edited by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD his week’s write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand’s Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion. A complete

catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit

<http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information.

Rav Frand © 2023 by Torah.org. Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Torah.org. Both the author and Torah.org reserve certain rights. Email copyrights@torah.org for full information.

<https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/1083220>

YUTORAH IN PRINT • Miketz 5784

Rav Soloveitchik on Miketz: The Faith of Forgiveness

Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider (Excerpted from Torah United, Teachings on The Weekly Parashah From Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, and The Chassidic Masters (Ktav, 2023)

Almost two decades after the brothers sold their despised sibling to passing peddlers, they now face him once more, and this time he has the upper hand. A world run by God is indeed a small world after all. In the meantime, Yosef has become unrecognizable—his beard has grown out, he is decked in royal finery, and he speaks through an interpreter—so the brothers do not identify him as Yosef.¹ He, however, recognizes his flesh and blood immediately.

Why, though, does the Torah state twice, in two consecutive verses, that Yosef recognizes them? “Yosef saw his brothers and recognized them... Yosef recognized his brothers...”

(Genesis 42:7-8). In the thinking of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, initially Yosef recognizes them as the brothers of his haunted past, who betrayed him and caused him untold pain and suffering. Resentful, “he made himself a stranger to them and spoke to them harshly” (Genesis 42:7). But then Yosef looks at his brothers again, this time more closely: Studying their faces, however, he discovered a change. Levi and Shimon’s faces softened; they did not reflect the same ferocity. They had a different look; the steely gray eyes turned blue, dreamy. Yehudah’s face had matured; there was firmness and determination in his features. The brothers looked depressed, as if they lacked inner peace, as if some grisly fear haunted them. They came with a contrite heart.

In the Rav’s vivid portrayal, Yosef beholds the brothers as they are now, and not as they are etched horribly into his memory. He comes to truly recognize the ten men before him, to see in their countenances and deportment that they, too, have changed in the intervening years and are not who they once were. He allows himself to form new impressions, and he relents. A Change of Heart According to the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, this episode is “the first recorded act of forgiveness in literature.”³ But how does Yosef have any room for clemency given what he has gone through at his brothers’ hands? Surprisingly, Yosef himself later indicates that this was

no interpersonal character trait, but one between man and God. Later, Yosef encourages his brothers with the following explanation:

“Now, do not be sad, and let it not distress you... because God sent me before you. [...] God sent me before you [...] you did not send me here but God did.” (Genesis 45:5-8)

He reconfirms this after Yaakov’s death, when the brothers were concerned that only their father’s presence kept Yosef’s hatred at bay:“

Have no fear. Am I in place of God? You plotted to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, sustaining a great people. So, have no fear; I will provide for you and your young ones.” He reassured them and spoke kindly to them. (Genesis 50:19-21)

As Yosef reflects on his own life experiences, he sees the providential hand of God behind even the most agonizing of moments. Yosef is committed to reframing everything he has endured, thereby mitigating the guilt of his brothers.

Yosef teaches us a profound lesson about human relationships. Forgiveness may be based on faith that people can change, but it is also based on faith that God is at work behind the scenes. If one is absolutely convinced that there are invisible strings above pulling on human beings, it becomes almost an absurdity to lay blame at the puppet’s feet.

His Mother’s Son

Eventually, the brothers return to Canaan with the astonishing news that Yosef is alive and more than well in Egypt. The brothers exclaim to Yaakov, “‘Yosef is still alive and he rules over the entire land of Egypt!’ His heart stopped and he did not believe them” (Genesis 45:26). On the face of it, “his heart stopped” means Yaakov was so overwhelmed by the astonishing news that he fainted. But the Rav perceives more than immediately meets the eye.

Needless to say, Yaakov is ecstatic to learn that his beloved son is alive. But immediately another thought flashes through his mind: Has he kept the faith of his father 9 YUTORAH IN PRINT • Miketz 5784Download thousands of audio shiurim and articles at www.yutorah.organd forefathers? Could the second-in-command “over the entire land of Egypt” be the same Yosef with whom he learned and to whom he transmitted Avraham’s way of life? When the Torah says “his heart stopped,” it captures a moment of trepidation. Yaakov cannot help but wonder, “My son is physically alive, but is he spiritually sound?”

Only after the brothers relay to him “all the words of Yosef that he spoke to them” does it say that “the spirit of Yaakov, their father, revived” (Genesis 45:27). What were these becalming “words”? The Rav believes they were Yosef’s words of conciliation and recognition that the sale was part of God’s plan. Yaakov was reassured—only a descendant of Avraham who had maintained his faith and emulated his

forbear’s compassion could have genuinely declared his own enslavement and near murder as water under the bridge.

The Rav adds that Yosef had a more immediate role model for kindness in general and for reconciliation with older siblings in particular. His mother Rachel, in an almost superhuman act of kindness, allowed her older sister Leah to take her place under the bridal canopy with Yaakov. Her sensitivity to Leah’s needs and personal sacrifice for her, coming perhaps at the expense of her own happiness in life, surely helped mold Yosef’s compassion. “Only a superhuman, only the son of Rachel could do it.”

Yosef offering his hand in peace to brothers who had acted so cruelly to him is an astounding gesture of love and tenderness in the history of the first family of Israel. Yosef’s act of appeasement exemplified a trait that he absorbed from his ancestors. However, it can be said that Yosef raised the bar even higher, by extending extraordinary mercy and love to those who were unquestionably guilty, in order to achieve unity and lasting peace within the family.

The Saintliness of Compassion

Yosef’s compassion and desire to reconcile with his brothers prompted the Talmudic Sages to refer to him as “Yosef the Tzadik.” The Rav adds that because Yosef did not display vindictiveness towards his brothers, Moshe, in the blessings he conferred before his death, bestowed upon the tribe of Yosef the title of saintliness by calling it “the Nazirite of his brothers” (נַזִּירָיו) (Deuteronomy 33:16).

Yosef’s saintly attribute can still be found in this world, even in modern times. Once there was a young man in Kenesses Yisrael, the yeshiva headed by the illustrious master of Musar, the Alter of Slabodka (Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel).

He was known in his yeshiva as an outstanding, budding Torah scholar, and was soon to be married to a young lady from a prominent family. A fellow student, caught in the grip of jealousy, began spreading false rumors to hurt the intended chatan’s image. The parents of the kallah understandably became concerned and called off the nuptials. This sent the young man in a downward spiral, ending with his conscription in the Czar’s Army. Years later, the Alter received a letter of apology from the slanderer. He did not have the courage to approach his victim directly and asked the Alter to intervene. The Alter had misgivings but had an exploratory conversation anyway. It became clear that the innocent victim bore no grudge and completely and absolutely forgave his oppressor. He told the astonished Alter, “I forgive fully. This was from God, and whatever God does is for good.” Whereupon the Alter called him “a true tzadik,” and set him as an example for his peers.

Exploring the Rav’s Insight

Yosef’s faith that everything is in God’s all-capable hands enabled him to forgive, but not quite to forget. According to the Midrash, when he traveled with his brothers to Chevron to

bury Yaakov, he detoured back to the pit, the scene of the terrible crime, on the way back. He peered down into the cistern and declared, “Blessed be the Omnipresent who worked a miracle for me in this place” (קֹדֶם שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי נִס בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה: Yosef had reframed the event within the framework of God’s plan, which only becomes evident in hindsight, such that it was completely transformed for him intellectually and psychologically.

We learn from Yosef that the key to forgiveness is working on our faith in divine providence. The classic work of exposition of the 613 commandments, Sefer ha-Chinuch, states that the key to following the Torah’s commandments not to hold a grudge nor to take revenge requires internalizing that everything that happens, good or ill, is God’s handiwork.¹¹ When an individual adopts this perspective, feelings of animosity are seen to be out of place, and anger against those who have hurt us subsides.¹²

This acts as more than preventative medicine empowering us to not violate the Torah’s commandments. Even if he forgave the human agents of God’s plan, Yosef had every reason to wallow in self-pity. Instead, he maintained his dignity, worked hard, and came out on top, with more than a little help from God. God had put him into the pit, but He also raised him to the second highest position in mighty Egypt. The faith of forgiveness can be the elixir of life.

[1] Rashbam ad loc.[2] Chumash Mesoras Harav, 1:312.[3] Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, “What It Takes to Forgive (Vayechi 5778),” <https://rabbisacks.org/takes-forgive-vayechi-5778/> (accessed ...March 31, 2021).[4] Chumash Mesoras Harav, 1:336.[5] Ibid., 1:333. See Rashi on Genesis 29:25.[6] Holzer, The Rav Thinking Aloud: Bereishis, 402.[7] See, e.g., Yoma 35b.[8] Chumash Mesoras Harav, 1:333. Yaakov himself had already used this expression (see Genesis 49:26), but its repetition extended it to the entire tribe.[9] Tovolski, Ke-Tzet ha-Shemesh, 188.[10] Midrash Tanchuma, Vayechi, §17.[11] Sefer ha-Chinuch, §§241–242.[12] This does not mean that we must be dismissive of emotions such as anger or grief; in fact, we learn from our Matriarch Sarah that they can be directed at God. See the Chassidut Dvar Torah for Parashat Chayei Sarah.

<https://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/parsha/inconspicuous-in-exile/2023/12/14/>

Rav Dovid Feinstein ZT"l on the Parsha Presented by Raphael Grunfeld

Yosef was meant to be freed from jail immediately after he interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh’s butler and baker. But he was kept in jail for another two years because he relied on the butler to plead his case to Pharaoh to release him from jail, when he should have relied on G-d alone (Rashi to Bereishis 40:23).

What was Yosef’s sin that deserved this punishment? Is it not a rule that: Ein somchim al ha’nes, one should not rely on miracles? Rather, one should try one’s best to solve the situation on one’s own and only when one has exhausted one’s human capacities will G-d take over?

We see the principle of ein somchim al ha’nes many times in the Torah. It was not the ark on which Noach toiled for 120 days that saved him. The gushing waters rendered him powerless to close its doors. It took G-d’s direct intervention to achieve that, “Vayisgor Hasehm ba’ado – and G-d shut the door for him” (7:16). If it required G-d’s direct intervention to save Noach anyway, why did G-d task him with the huge undertaking of building the ark?

When the daughter of Pharaoh discovered Moshe hidden in the river, she stretched out her hand as far as she was physically able to retrieve him, but still he remained out of reach. The Talmud tells us (Sotah 12b) that at that point, G-d miraculously extended her arm further to enable her to draw him from the water. And why was it necessary to equip the shulchan, the table in the sanctuary with kesavos, which were hollow, golden canes designed to allow air to circulate freely between Lechem Hapanim (the twelve loaves of bread) so that they would not become stale? Didn’t they miraculously remain warm and fresh from Shabbat to Shabbat anyway without human intervention (Menachos 96b)?

The answer to all of these questions is that G-d will only step in with miracles when one has done all that is humanly possible to help oneself.

So what did Yosef do wrong?

The answer is that the rule of ein somchim al ha’nes applies only when there is no miracle already in progress at the time of danger. But where it is clear that G-d is already busy working a miracle on one’s behalf, it is presumptuous to believe that G-d needs our help and cannot go it alone. In this case, miracles were already unfolding before Yosef’s eyes. Although he was not a dream interpreter, he saw that G-d intervened and enabled him to correctly interpret the dreams of the butler and baker, when none of the professional dream interpreters could do so, (40:8). If you see G-d’s hand already at work, step out of the way and let Him finish the job.

Pharaoh dreams that “vehineh omed al haye’or – he was standing on the river” (41:1). Before his dreams, Pharaoh considered himself to be a god who walked on water. He boasted that the Nile, the nerve center of Egypt’s economy, belonged to him and that he had created it, “Li ye’ori ve’ani asitini – the river is mine and I made it,” (Yechezkel 29:3). But he woke up from his dreams feeling vulnerable. Although his regular dream interpreters told him that the dreams meant that he would have seven daughters and would bury seven daughters, the Torah tells us that this interpretation that focused on his personal life did not satisfy him in his role as Pharaoh, the monarch of Egypt.

Pharaoh was preoccupied with affairs of state, not with personal matters. He was worried that if the economy of Egypt would fail, he would be ousted from power. So when he repeated his dream anxiously to Yosef, he spoke like a vulnerable human being, “hineni omed al sfas haye’or – I stood on the bank of the river “41:17). Now pharaoh is standing on the edge like everyone else, in need and worried for his physical survival. He no longer walks on water. When, two years later, the butler finally remembers Yosef, Pharaoh sends for him urgently and he is released from jail. Clearly, time is of the essence when Pharaoh is in distress. Yet, Yosef does not go to see him right away. He only does so after taking a haircut and changing his clothes (41:14.) Why make the mighty king of Egypt wait when there is an emergency? Rashi tells us that Yosef did so out of respect for royalty. We are cautioned “Heve mispallel beshloma shel malchus she’ilmaleh mora’ah, ish es re’eihu chayim belo’o – pray for the welfare of the government because if people do not fear it, they would eat each other alive.” Although Yosef might be delayed for a while, it would be disrespectful to show up in prison clothes and with unkempt hair. Besides, that first impression would remain forever and Yosef would never be taken seriously as the viceroy of Egypt.

Before Yosef is officially appointed as viceroy to the king, he is told that he should get married. His job requires focus and dedication. He cannot be distracted with bachelor pursuits, kol she’ein lo isha shorui belo choma, a person who is without a wife is unprotected from sin (Yevamos 62b).

During the years of famine Yosef’s wife Osnat bore him two children. Yosef calls the firstborn child Menashe, “ki nashani elokim es kol amali ve’es kol beis avi – because G-d has made me forget all my hardship and all my father’s house” (41:51). We know Yosef never forgot his father. Even though he no longer lived next to him, his father was an ever-present influence wherever he went and whatever he did. Yosef was able to resist succumbing to the seductive overtures of Potiphar’s wife because the image of his father came between him and his desire.

So what is Yosef saying? He is not saying he forgot his father, he is saying he forgot his father’s household and the sibling jealousy that was part of it. Yosef had a frenetic job to do. He was running from pillar to post trying to save the greatest world economy from imminent disaster. He simply did not have the time to dwell on petty brotherly rivalry. In the end he was thankful to his brothers for selling him into slavery because it helped him save his entire family from hunger and, as he later says, “ki lemichyah shelachani elokim lifneichem – for G-d sent me before you to keep you alive” (45:5). It seems that many family disputes would be resolved if people just focused on making money themselves instead living off other people’s money.

Yaakov sees that there is famine in Canaan but there are stockpiles of food in Egypt. Even though Yaakov and his family had sufficient food at that time and did not require the assistance of Egypt, his non-Jewish neighbors did. And so Yaakov ordered his sons to join the crowd that was going down to Egypt in search of food. He said to his sons “Lamah tisrau” (42:1), why would you risk the envy of your neighbors by appearing to have enough food when they are starving. We know that ma’aseh avos siman lebonim, the purpose of many of the patriarchs actions was to teach their future generations how to conduct themselves in the diaspora. If you are blessed with wealth, keep a low profile and don’t be conspicuous. Yosef recognizes his brothers but he hides his identity from them. When he sees them, the first thing that comes to mind is the dreams he had about them. “Vayizkor Yosef et hachlomos asher chalam lahem” (42:9). He had dreamt that he was binding sheaves of corn with his brothers and his sheaves stood upright and his brothers sheaves stood round about and bowed down to his sheaves. This dream had nothing to do with Yosef wanting to rule over his brothers. The Torah does not say “asher chalam aleihem,” that he was dreaming about ruling over them, but that his dreams were “lahem,” for his brothers’ benefit. He dreamt about providing food for his brothers in times of need. And now this dream had come true. So why did he not identify himself there and then? Why did continue to remain anonymous? Because he also had another dream of eleven stars bowing down to him and this dream included Benjamin. He wanted that dream to come true as well and so he devised a strategy to bring Benjamin down to Egypt too. Yosef, like his father before him (See Rashi to 7:11) knew the significance of these dreams and that they were destined to come true. But he also knew that they could not be realized before Yaakov had lived for 22 years separated from Yosef. This, we are told is what Yaakov had to endure for staying away from his father Yitzchak for 22 years. Yosef met his brothers in the twenty-first year and he knew that there was one year to go before he could reveal his identity and be reunited with his father. So he kept up the pretense for another year. But it pained him to make his brothers suffer even though they made him suffer in the past.

The Torah conveys to us Yosef’s suffering in causing his brothers pain. It uses the words “Vayisov me’aleihem vayevech” (42:24). Chazal tell us that the letters “Vay” convey distress. Vay sav, Yosef was distressed for his father, sav, the old man who had to suffer another year of separation from his son. Vay kaf-beis, woe unto the 22 years that Yaakov had to suffer.

from: Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu> date: Dec 14, 2023,
11:45 AM subject: Insights into Halacha - 5784 - The Year of
the Rare Haftarah
5784 - The Year of the Rare Haftarah

by Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

Our current year, 5784, is a rare one indeed. It is classified as (me'uberes - leap year) in our calendars. This abbreviation is referring to Rosh Hashanah falling out on Shabbos (zayin), both months of Cheshvan and Kislev being chesir (ches; 29-day months instead of 30; these are the only months that can switch off in our set calendar),[i] and Pesach falling out on Tuesday (gimmel). Although technically not the rarest of years, out of the 14 possibilities in Tur's 247-year calendar cycle,[ii] this year type occurs on average 14 times out of 247, or only once in about 18 years (5.8% of the time).[iii] The reasons and rules governing the whys and whens this transpires are too complicated for this discussion; suffice to say that when the Mishnah Berurah discusses these issues he writes "ain kan makom l'ha'arich," that this is not the place to expound in detail,[iv] which is certainly good enough for this author.

However, that is not why I am referring to our year as rare. Rather, it is because in this special year, not just one, but three out of the six rarest haftaros will be leined. The next time this will occur is in another seventeen years, in 5801/2040.[v] But first, a bit of background is in order.

Haftarah History

According to the Abudraham and Tosafos Yom Tov, the haftaros were established when the wicked Antiochus IV (infamous from the Chanukah miracle) outlawed public reading of the Torah. The Chachamim of the time therefore established the custom of reading a topic from the Nevi'im similar to what was supposed to be read from the Torah.[vi] Even after the decree was nullified, and even prior to the Gemara's printing, this became minhag Yisrael.

Most haftaros share some similarity with at least one concept presented in the Torah reading. The Gemara Megillah (29b-31a) discusses the proper haftarah readings for the various holidays throughout the year, which are rather related to the holiday and generally trump a weekly haftarah. But it is not just Yomim Tovim that may "knock off" a regular haftarah, but special Shabbosos, and usually, even if Rosh Chodesh falls out on Sunday.[vii] Hence, practically speaking, there are several haftaros that almost never get a chance to be leined publicly. But, as mentioned previously, this year, three out of the six rarest haftaros will be leined. Let's discuss when and why.

Haftaras Parashas Mikeitz

This year, as the eight-day chag of Chanukah started on a Friday, it ends on a Friday as well – right before Parashas Mikeitz. This affords us a rare opportunity to read Mikeitz's actual haftarah; as the vast majority of the time Mikeitz is Shabbos Chanukah, which causes its haftarah to be pre-empted for one of the special Shabbos Chanukah haftaros.[viii] This haftarah, "Vayikatz Shlomo," discussing the wisdom of Shlomo HaMelech – ordering to cut the disputed baby in half

in order to determine his real mother, was last publicly read three years ago in 5781, and before that twenty years prior back in 5761.[ix] This is actually the second rarest haftarah Ashkenazim read – just 24 times over the Tur's entire 247-year cycle,[x] and averages once in ten years. Essentially, the only time this haftarah can be leined is when Chanukah starts on a Friday and hence ends directly before Shabbos Mikeitz. The next time this haftarah is slated to be read is in another 17 years in 5801/2040.

Haftaras Parashas Tazria

The second of our rare haftaros leined this year is that of Parashas Tazria, "V'ish ba." [xi] Although statistically speaking, it is on average read every 6 years (16.32% of the time), nevertheless, it practically has not been leined in 21 years – since 5763/2003. There are several reasons for this. When the Parshiyos of Tazria and Metzora are read together (which they are in a standard year; they are only leined separately in a leap year), only the haftarah of the latter Parashah is read.[xii] This means it is only possible for Tazria's haftarah to be read in a leap year. Moreover, Tazria can also be Parashas HaChodesh, which would also trump its leining.[xiii] That, plus the preponderance of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh or Rosh Chodesh falling on Sunday, both of which would preclude it from being leined, make this year's Tazria's stand-alone haftarah quite a rare read, indeed.[xiv]

Rarest of All

However, the piece de resistance is that the hands-down rarest haftarah for Ashkenazic Jewry will actually be read this year. I am referring to the haftarah of Parashas Kedoshim, "Hasishpot." [xv] It is read on average only once in seventeen years, only 5.8% of the time. The last times it was leined was in 5733/1973 and then in 5757/1997, twenty-seven years ago. There are even times when "Hasishpot" goes forty-four years in between leinings.[xvi] The next several times it will be leined are in another 17 years, in 5801/2041, and following in another 27 years, in 5828/2068. As noted by Rav Moshe Feinstein, practically speaking, "Hasishpot" can only be leined in a me'uberes year, and its reading is considered so rare, that it is as if it is 'k'maat hu ne'elam mi'stam adam, almost hidden from the average person's conscience.' [xvii]

Why So Rare?

Now that we established the 'what,' we can address the 'why'. As mentioned previously, generally speaking, whenever there is a double parashah, the haftarah of the second parashah is read, as that is the Torah reading that we just concluded. Yet, when it comes to the parshiyos of Acharei Mos and Kedoshim, it seems that it is not so simple. Although the Shulchan Aruch does not mention any difference between these and other double parshiyos, the Rema, the great codifier of Ashkenazic psak, (citing precedent from the Sefer Haminhagim and the Mordechai), rules that the haftarah of the first parashah, Acharei Mos, is the proper one to read.

Acharei Exclusion

The reason for the uncharacteristic change is that the haftarah of Parshas Kedoshim, 'Hasishpot,' from sefer Yechezkel, includes what is known as 'To'avas Yerushalayim,' referring to a revealing prophecy of the woeful spiritual state and the terrible happenings that will occur to the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael for not following the word of G-d. The Gemara in Megillah (25b) relates a story of Rabbi Eliezer and one who read such a haftarah, who was subsequently found to have his own family's indiscretions exposed. Ultimately though, the Gemara concludes that that haftarah can indeed be read, and even translated.[xviii]

Hazardous Haftarah?

Despite that, all the same, it seems that we are being taught that whenever possible, we should try to avoid having to read this condemning passage as the haftarah. Additionally, the content of Acharei Mos's haftarah, 'Halo K'Bnei Kushiym' (from Amos in Trei Asar Ch. 9) has similar content to Parshas Kedoshim as well. Therefore, the Rema rules that when the Torah reading is the double parshiyos of Acharei Mos and Kedoshim, and as opposed to every other double parashah, the haftarah of Acharei Mos is read instead of Kedoshim's.

Although the Levush vigorously argued against switching the haftaros, positing that it is a printing mistake in the earlier authorities to suggest such a switch,[xix] nevertheless, the Rema's rule is followed by virtually all later Poskim and Ashkenazic Kehillos.[xx]

However, it must be noted that this switch was not accepted by Sefardic authorities and when Acharei Mos and Kedoshim are combined, they do indeed read Kedoshim's haftarah, 'Hasishpot.'[xxi]

Acharei or Kedoshim?

But there is more to the story and a fascinating dichotomy. As mentioned previously, often special haftaros push off the regular one. For example, the Gemara states that whenever Rosh Chodesh falls out on Shabbos, a special haftarah is read: 'Hashamayim Kisi,' as it mentions both the inyanim of Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh.[xxii] If Rosh Chodesh falls out on Sunday, then on the preceding Shabbos, the haftarah of 'Machar Chodesh' is read, as it mentions the following day being Rosh Chodesh. This is the codified halacha as well, barring specific exceptions.[xxiii]

Rav Akiva Eiger, adding a wrinkle, writes that when Parshas Acharei Mos falls out on Erev Rosh Chodesh and its haftarah gets pushed off for 'Machar Chodesh,' then the proper haftarah for Parshas Kedoshim the next week is... Acharei Mos's haftarah, and not Kedoshim's![xxiv] Rav Eiger's reasoning is since we find precedent by a double parashah that we actively try not to read Kedoshim's haftarah due to its explicit content, the same should apply for any other time Acharei Mos's haftarah was not read, for whatever reason - that it should

trump and therefore replace (and displace) Kedoshim's haftarah!

Although not universally accepted,[xxv] Rav Akiva Eiger's rule is cited as the halachah by the Mishnah Berurah, and the proper Ashkenazic minhag by the Kaf Hachaim.[xxvi] The Chazon Ish, as well as Rav Moshe Feinstein, and Rav Chaim Kanievsky,[xxvii] all ruled this way as well. That is why in years when Acharei Mos is Shabbos Hagadol and its usual haftarah is not read, but rather replaced by the special haftarah for Shabbos Hagadol, many shuls read Acharei Mos's haftarah on Parshas Kedoshim, instead of Kedoshim's usual one. In other words, if either of the two parshiyos requires a special haftarah, Kedoshim's "Hasishpot" is not leined at all, but rather Acharei Mos' "Halo" is read on the other Shabbos. So, practically speaking, unless a very specific year such as ours, the common Ashkenazic minhag is to almost never lein "Hasishpot." But this year, for the first time in twenty-seven years, there is no special haftarah available to trump either of the two haftaros. And hence, the rarest of haftaros for Ashkenazim, "Hasishpot," will actually, finally be leined.[xxviii]

Never Read

However, there is an alternate, albeit not the common custom - an old Yerushalmi minhag - not to ever read the haftarah of Kedoshim. Even in a year such as ours, when the Parshiyos are separate, Acharei Mos's haftarah, "Halo," is instead read two weeks in a row.[xxix] [xxx] This minhag is claimed to be dated to the esteemed Rav of Yerushalayim of the late 1800s and early 1900s, Rav Shmuel Salant (to 5662/1902).[xxxi] with precedent cited for reading the same haftarah two weeks in row from the rare occurrence of Purim Meshulash in Yerushalayim.[xxxii]

However, as noted, this is not the common minhag, and actually Kedoshim's haftarah, "Hisishpot," the actual rarest haftarah read for most of Ashkenazic Jewry, is indeed slated to be read by the majority of Klal Yisrael this year - the first time since 5757/1997.[xxxiii]

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch famously wrote that "the Jew's catechism is his calendar." [xxxiv] It is this author's wish that by showcasing the uniqueness of our calendar year and its rare haftaros, this article will help raise appreciation of them and our calendarical customs.

This author wishes to thank R' Yosef Yehuda Weber, author of 'Understanding the Jewish Calendar,' for originally 'tipping me off' as to the rare haftaros being leined this year, as well as for being a fount of calendarical knowledge.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz, author of M'Shulchan Yehuda on Inyanei Halacha and 'Insights Into Halacha,' serves as the Sho'el U'Meishiv and Rosh Chabura of the Ohr Lagolah Halacha Kollel at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach in Yerushalayim.

For any questions, comments or for the full Mareh Mekomos / sources, please e-mail the author: yspitz@ohr.edu.

Rabbi Spitz's recent English halacha sefer, "Insights Into Halacha - Food: A Halachic Analysis," (Mosaica/Feldheim) has more than 500 pages and features over 30 comprehensive chapters discussing a myriad of halachic issues relating to food, in an engaging manner. It is now available online..

Footnotes at

https://ohr.edu/this_week/insights_into_halacha/11470

from: Esplanade Capital <jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com> via
auth.ccsend.com reply-to: jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com to:
internetparshasheet@gmail.com date: Dec 14, 2023, 9:15 PM
subject: **Rabbi Yisroel Reisman's Chumash/Chanukah Shiur**

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Mikeitz 5784

1 – Topic – A Beautiful Thought Regarding the 70 Leshonos.

As we are on the Yom Shevii Shel Chanukah approaching quickly Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz, in an unusual year where Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz is not Shabbos Chanukah it is actually the day after Chanukah. If there is an Isru Chag Chanukah then that is what it is. Let's say a Vort on Parshas Mikeitz and then we will see if we can have a thought that is Noge'a more to today.

Beginning with Parshas Mikeitz. The Gemara says in Sotah 36b (10 lines from the bottom) (בשעה שאמר לו פרעה ליוסף (ובלעדיך לא ירים איש את ידו אמרו)). At the time that Pharoh said to Yosef that you would be a leader over Mitzrayim. (א"כ יהא יודע בשבעים לשון) there was a complaint from the officers of Pharoh, (אצטגניני פרעה) You want Yosef to be the viceroy over Mitzrayim, he has to know 70 languages. (בא גבריאל ולימדו שבעים לשון) Gavriel came to teach him the 70 languages. (לא היה קגמר) It didn't work. (הוסיף לו אות אחת משמו) (של הקב"ה). The Gemara says that a letter of G-d's name was added to Yosef's name, (ולמד) and presto he was able to understand (שנאמר עדות ביהוסף שמו). His name became Yosef (בצאתו על ארץ מצרים). At the time that he went out to Mitzrayim. So we are told that Yosef learned the 70 languages as we know, and for that to happen HKB"H added an Os.

The question of course is that learning 70 languages in one day is a miracle. It is a Chiddush that Yosef didn't know and that an Os of the Sheim Hashem had to be added? To learn 70 languages in a lifetime is a challenge, 70 languages in one shot? What was it that originally they thought that Kavayochel G-d said that we will teach him and then He said we have to add an Os. What changed exactly? It needs an explanation.

The Maharsha on that Gemara asks another Kasha. In the same Gemara in Sotah it says a different reason why a letter was added to his name. It says, (שקידש שם שמים בסתר הוסיפו עליו) (אות אחת משמו של הקב"ה). Because Yosef was Mikadeish Sheim Shamayim B'seiser, meaning that he resisted the temptation of Eishes Potiphar, nobody knew about it but B'seiser it was a Kiddush Hashem, so Hashem added the Hei. So the Gemara

says Freigt the Maharsha a different reason for the Hei to be added.

In order to explain this I saw in the Sefer Ivrah D'dasha Gevaldig. He says the following. He quotes the Chiddushei Harim. The Chiddushei Harim says the language of every nation reflects the personality of that nation. It reflects the essence of that nation. The Chiddushei Harim says it is specifically talking about the language Tzar'fasi, the French language. The French as you know are more into so to speak, culturally more attached to certain what we consider to be improper behavior between the genders, and it is a Lashon Meguna. Therefore, that is reflected in the language of French. The Chiddushei Harim says that the reason Rashi sticks some French words in his Pirush on Chumash B'laz, to somehow to pull the language to Kedusha. I don't know how that works, I have no clue, but one thing that he is saying is that the language has something to do with the people.

Of course with this we can understand that Pharoh who was able to learn 69 languages, he was not able to grasp Lashon Kodesh. If he already learned 69 languages he couldn't learn one more? No. The essence of Lashon Kodesh is Kedusha, and therefore, he was not able to grasp the language. That is how it is explained that in today's modern Hebrew, Ivrit strays from true Lashon Kodesh in many ways because it is not so simple to just be able to grasp the Heilige Lashon of Lashon Kodesh.

The Chasam Sofer writes that when Klal Yisrael came back in the Bayis Sheini, they spoke Aramis. The Chasam Sofer wondered and said he sees people from other nations go to other countries and the Spanish are still speaking Spanish, why couldn't the Jews after 70 years speak Lashon Kodesh? He says the same idea. The idea that the language has to do with the essence of the people. To the degree that Lashon Kodesh has to do with Kedusha we are missing Kedusha, then it is hard to grasp Lashon Kodesh.

Yosef was not able to grasp the 70 Leshonos. Why? If Gavriel is the teacher apparently Gavriel felt confident that he could do it. The answer is it was not because there was something missing in the teacher/student relationship. Yosef had the intellect to grasp the 70 languages. But he was so Kadosh that his mouth only spoke Lashon Kodesh. To start mixing into other languages and other values, it didn't work for Yosef.

However, the Gemara is telling us that in the Zechus that he was Mikadeish Sheim Shamayim B'seiser, Yosef was private, alone, away from the Jewish people and stayed faithful to Torah Hakedosha, that gave him the power, that gave him the ability to withstand the Nisyonos of the nations of the world. Allowed him to absorb the language of the 69 Leshonos without having a Yerida, without him falling in his level. So that, it is true that the Hei was added because of the Mikadeish Sheim Shamayim. V'ha Gufa, that is the reason that he was able to absorb the 69 Leshonos and he really should have been majorly influenced by it and his Neshama shouldn't take it.

But because he had this protection from the influence of the Umos Ha'olam he was able to take it.

<https://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/parsha/a-dream-come-true/2023/12/14/>

A Dream Come True

By Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser - 3 Tevet 5784 – December 14, 2023 0

“The Royal Butler spoke up before Pharaoh, “My transgressions I do mention today” (Bereishis 41:9) HaGaon R’ Dovid Feinstein asks: Why did the Royal Butler feel it was necessary to open the conversation by talking about his transgressions? He could have merely said, as he did when he continued, “Pharaoh had become angry at his servant and placed me in prison ...”

The truth is that the Royal Butler had forgotten Yosef because he never thought that he had sinned against Pharaoh. He had no doubt that he had been imprisoned in error, and Pharaoh would certainly free him. He therefore didn't believe that he owed Yosef anything just because he had interpreted his dream favorably. He was convinced that Pharaoh would have freed him anyway, having nothing to do with Yosef's interpretation. Accordingly, he put Yosef out of his mind. However, now that he heard that Pharaoh's dream needed interpretation, he reconsidered the possibility that his dream may have also needed interpretation and perhaps, in fact, he had sinned by serving Pharaoh with a cup of wine that had a fly in it. He therefore said, “My transgression I do mention,” i.e. I finally understand that I did sin, and I was no less guilty than the Royal Baker. It is only because of the favorable interpretation that Yosef gave that I merited to be freed from prison and restored to my former position. Since I didn't appreciate the good turn Yosef had done for me, I forgot about him.

When Yosef interpreted the dreams, he understood that the dreams of the butler and the baker had been solely for his own benefit. He saw that one of them would be freed in order to be indebted to Yosef for the positive interpretation, thereby facilitating Yosef's release from prison to do his mission in life. It was for that reason that Yosef interpreted the first dream favorably, not because the butler's transgression was any less severe than the baker's.

The Royal Butler realized that there was a higher power here than Yosef and Pharaoh. He noted, “and just as he had interpreted, so it was,” despite the fact that the transgression of the two – the butler and the baker – were the same.

The Talmud (Brachos 55b) states that “all dreams follow the mouth of the interpreter.” The Maharsha elaborates that whatever interpretation is said out loud will come true, because speech empowers the dream. In a similar vein, the Talmud tells us (Megillah 15a) that one should never regard the blessing of an ordinary person lightly. The Rashba points out that the prohibition (Vayikra 19:14) not to curse a deaf person is meant

to include all men and women (Mitzvah 317 in the Sefer HaMitzvos) because words have the power to influence certain spiritual aspects of reality.

An extremely ill young man entered the waiting room of the Baba Sali. When the gabbaim saw his state of health, they immediately ushered him to the head of the line and brought him in to Baba Sali. The young man began to cry that he had already visited many doctors who had tried various therapies to heal him, but nothing had helped.

As the tears ran down his face, he begged Baba Sali to help effect his salvation. Baba Sali listened to him intently and then began to pray for him. Baba Sali also cried, and in a broken voice blessed the young man with a refuah shleimah. He gave the man a bottle of water, and instructed him to take a sip from the bottle every night before he went to sleep.

A few nights later, the ill man had a dream, in which Baba Sali appeared to him with a picture of someone in his hand. The tzaddik showed him the picture and said, “This man is a doctor. His name is Dr. Refoel Karso, and he lives in Tel Aviv on this-and-this street. Go to this doctor and ask him to bring you a refuah.”

When the young man awoke in the morning, he remembered his very strange dream of the night before. He called his daughter who lived in Tel Aviv and asked her to please find out if there was a Dr. Karso on the street that Baba Sali had given him.

The daughter immediately confirmed that she, in fact, did know the doctor, but she was curious how her father knew of him. He explained that Baba Sali had come to him in a dream with a picture of the doctor and had told him that Dr. Karso could help him.

The daughter was shocked. She could not understand how her father was able to describe the doctor so accurately, even though he had never personally met him. She ran to the doctor's house and was able to promptly obtain an appointment.

When her father arrived, Dr. Karso gave him a thorough examination, and concluded that he did not agree with the given diagnosis. He prescribed a course of medication and therapy. Within a couple of weeks, the ill man had a refuah shleimah.

The man returned to Netivot and wanted to personally thank Baba Sali for his bracha. The man related what had happened to the family, and the gabbai brought him into Baba Sali's room. As soon as Baba Sali saw him, his face shone, and before the man could say a word, Baba Sali said with a smile, “B'chalom adaber bo – in a dream I will speak to you.”

<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/381957>

Miketz: Joseph's test

Joseph created a scene that almost exactly reenacted his own story.

Parshat Shavua

Rabbi Avraham Gordimer

The central theme of Parshat Miketz is that of Yosef (Joseph) setting the stage for his brothers to do teshuva for having sold him. As God orchestrated the events in order to facilitate this scheme, by causing a famine which necessitated that Yosef's brothers go to Mitzrayim (Egypt) to buy food, and by arranging that Yosef be the one person the brothers needed to meet for this purpose, Yosef sought to place his brothers in a situation almost identical to that of 22 years prior, when they sold him into slavery, resentful of his special status.

In order to recreate this scenario as best as possible, Yosef took his brother Binyamin – who now filled a special role in the life of Yaakov as the son of Rachel who needed to be with Yaakov in order to comfort him for the loss of Rachel and Yosef (c. Rashi on Bereshit/Genesis 44:29) and whose safety could not be risked – and enhanced Binyamin's privileged status even further by seating Binyamin up front with him at the feast with Yosef's family and the brothers, and by providing Binyamin with five times the amount of portions as received by the other brothers. Then, by placing the apparently-favored Binyamin in peril (to become enslaved in Mitzrayim) in the presence of his brothers, just as Yosef himself was in peril with them 22 years ago, Yosef positioned his brothers to either succumb to feelings of envy and enmity and allow Binyamin to suffer a dire fate, or to overcome any feelings of resentment toward Binyamin and jeopardize their own welfare in order to save him and to protect the wellbeing of their father Yaakov.

As the Rambam explains in Hilchot Teshuva (2:1), complete teshuva is attained by being in the same situation as one sinned on a previous occasion and now conquering one's inclination this time in order to do what is right. This was Yosef's goal for his brothers, by creating a scenario very akin to the events leading up to Yosef's sale into slavery. The seemingly-favored younger brother Binyamin was now about to become a lifelong slave in Mitzrayim; would the brothers go along with it or fight it?

The test for the brothers was formidable, for it was designed to evoke potential feelings of bitterness toward another younger brother and son of Rachel, who appeared to have done nothing positive to attain exceptional and protected status. Yet as challenging as this test might have appeared to have been for Yosef's brothers, it was a real challenge for Yosef himself. Let me please explain.

Midrash Ha-Gadol (Mikeitz 16) relates regarding Yosef's initial sighting of Binyamin in Mitzrayim: "When Yosef saw Binyamin, he rejoiced, for he saw in Binyamin the visage of his father". What does this mean? Indeed, all of Yosef's brothers had the DNA of Yaakov Avinu (Jacob our forefather) and they all therefore presumably resembled Yaakov to a

certain degree. What was it about Binyamin that embodied the visage of Yaakov more than the other brothers?

As noted above, Binyamin needed to be with Yaakov to provide comfort. Binyamin's prolonged intimate exposure to his father, similar to Yaakov's relationship with Yosef himself decades prior (see second interpretation in Rashi on Bereshit 37:3), caused Binyamin to more robustly internalize and personify Yaakov's character and his essence. (As those who have been privileged to witness the impact of gedolei Torah (the generation's greatest Torah scholars) on their closest talmidim (students) can attest, prolonged periods of being in the intimate presence of one's rebbe rub off and result in these closest talmidim substantially becoming personifications of their rebbe.) In Binyamin did Yosef see a marked reflection of his father's personality, values and mannerisms; this moved Yosef so and filled him with a feeling of joy. This is the meaning of the above statement from Midrash Ha-Gadol. Although Yosef probably wanted nothing more at this juncture than to reveal his identity and reunite with his father, whose visage and persona he delightfully encountered when seeing Binyamin, Yosef held back, as this would have prevented his scheme for the brothers' teshuva from coming to fruition. The failure of the brothers to do teshuva would have eternal negative ramifications for Klal Yisrael (the Jewish People) and would have doomed the nation's future and resulted in perpetual schism.

Similarly, when Yosef first saw Binyamin in Mitzrayim and blessed him, then rushed out to cry, as Yosef's emotions overcame him (ibid. 43:29-30), Yosef would have loved to embrace Binyamin and reunite with him – yet Yosef refrained from doing so, as it would have hindered the much greater goal that Yosef was hoping would be achieved.

As much as Yosef's brothers were put to a test, so was Yosef put to a test, for he longed and pined to reunite with his father and brothers, but he painfully restrained himself in order to further a strategy that would determine the entire trajectory and future existence of Klal Yisrael.

Yosef's tzidkut (righteousness) was not only reflected in his saintly behavior while in Egyptian captivity and later as the viceroy of Egypt, where he held fast to his heritage under the most challenging of circumstances, in a society that was the antithesis of tahara and kedusha (purity and holiness).

Yosef's tzidkut extended into his plans for the future Jewish nation, as he continued to courageously hold back his desires, passions and emotional needs in pursuit of an infinitely higher goal. Miketz: Joseph's test Joseph created a scene that almost exactly reenacted his own story. Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer Dec 14, 2023, 12:25 PM (GMT+2) Parshat Shavua Joseph Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer Rabbi Avraham Gordimer Rabbi Avraham Gordimer

The central theme of Parshat Miketz is that of Yosef (Joseph) setting the stage for his brothers to do teshuva for having sold

him. As God orchestrated the events in order to facilitate this scheme, by causing a famine which necessitated that Yosef's brothers go to Mitzrayim (Egypt) to buy food, and by arranging that Yosef be the one person the brothers needed to meet for this purpose, Yosef sought to place his brothers in a situation almost identical to that of 22 years prior, when they sold him into slavery, resentful of his special status.

In order to recreate this scenario as best as possible, Yosef took his brother Binyamin – who now filled a special role in the life of Yaakov as the son of Rachel who needed to be with Yaakov in order to comfort him for the loss of Rachel and Yosef (c. Rashi on Bereshit/Genesis 44:29) and whose safety could not be risked – and enhanced Binyamin's privileged status even further by seating Binyamin up front with him at the feast with Yosef's family and the brothers, and by providing Binyamin with five times the amount of portions as received by the other brothers. Then, by placing the apparently-favored Binyamin in peril (to become enslaved in Mitzrayim) in the presence of his brothers, just as Yosef himself was in peril with them 22 years ago, Yosef positioned his brothers to either succumb to feelings of envy and enmity and allow Binyamin to suffer a dire fate, or to overcome any feelings of resentment toward Binyamin and jeopardize their own welfare in order to save him and to protect the wellbeing of their father Yaakov.

As the Rambam explains in Hilchot Teshuva (2:1), complete teshuva is attained by being in the same situation as one sinned on a previous occasion and now conquering one's inclination this time in order to do what is right. This was Yosef's goal for his brothers, by creating a scenario very akin to the events leading up to Yosef's sale into slavery. The seemingly-favored younger brother Binyamin was now about to become a lifelong slave in Mitzrayim; would the brothers go along with it or fight it?

The test for the brothers was formidable, for it was designed to evoke potential feelings of bitterness toward another younger brother and son of Rachel, who appeared to have done nothing positive to attain exceptional and protected status. Yet as challenging as this test might have appeared to have been for Yosef's brothers, it was a real challenge for Yosef himself. Let me please explain.

Midrash Ha-Gadol (Mikeitz 16) relates regarding Yosef's initial sighting of Binyamin in Mitzrayim: "When Yosef saw Binyamin, he rejoiced, for he saw in Binyamin the visage of his father". What does this mean? Indeed, all of Yosef's brothers had the DNA of Yaakov Avinu (Jacob our forefather) and they all therefore presumably resembled Yaakov to a certain degree. What was it about Binyamin that embodied the visage of Yaakov more than the other brothers?

As noted above, Binyamin needed to be with Yaakov to provide comfort. Binyamin's prolonged intimate exposure to his father, similar to Yaakov's relationship with Yosef himself

decades prior (see second interpretation in Rashi on Bereshit 37:3), caused Binyamin to more robustly internalize and personify Yaakov's character and his essence. (As those who have been privileged to witness the impact of gedolei Torah (the generation's greatest Torah scholars) on their closest talmidim (students) can attest, prolonged periods of being in the intimate presence of one's rebbe rub off and result in these closest talmidim substantially becoming personifications of their rebbe.) In Binyamin did Yosef see a marked reflection of his father's personality, values and mannerisms; this moved Yosef so and filled him with a feeling of joy. This is the meaning of the above statement from Midrash Ha-Gadol. Although Yosef probably wanted nothing more at this juncture than to reveal his identity and reunite with his father, whose visage and persona he delightfully encountered when seeing Binyamin, Yosef held back, as this would have prevented his scheme for the brothers' teshuva from coming to fruition. The failure of the brothers to do teshuva would have eternal negative ramifications for Klal Yisrael (the Jewish People) and would have doomed the nation's future and resulted in perpetual schism.

Similarly, when Yosef first saw Binyamin in Mitzrayim and blessed him, then rushed out to cry, as Yosef's emotions overcame him (ibid. 43:29-30), Yosef would have loved to embrace Binyamin and reunite with him – yet Yosef refrained from doing so, as it would have hindered the much greater goal that Yosef was hoping would be achieved.

As much as Yosef's brothers were put to a test, so was Yosef put to a test, for he longed and pined to reunite with his father and brothers, but he painfully restrained himself in order to further a strategy that would determine the entire trajectory and future existence of Klal Yisrael.

Yosef's tzidkut (righteousness) was not only reflected in his saintly behavior while in Egyptian captivity and later as the viceroy of Egypt, where he held fast to his heritage under the most challenging of circumstances, in a society that was the antithesis of tahara and kedusha (purity and holiness). Yosef's tzidkut extended into his plans for the future Jewish nation, as he continued to courageously hold back his desires, passions and emotional needs in pursuit of an infinitely higher goal.

<https://outorah.org/author/846>

Sibling Rivalry

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ztz"l

Listen to these words that are among the most fateful and reverberating in all of Jewish history:

Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not recognise him. Gen. 42:8

The Torah is a deep book. We make a great mistake if we think it can be understood on one superficial level.

On the surface, the story is simple. Envious of him, Joseph's brothers initially planned to kill him. Eventually they sell into slavery. He is taken to Egypt. There, through a series of vicissitudes, he rises to become Prime Minister, second only, in rank and power, to Pharaoh.

It is now many years later. His brothers have come to Egypt to buy food. They come before Joseph, but he no longer looks like the man they knew many years before. Then, he was a seventeen-year-old called Joseph. Now he is thirty-nine, an Egyptian ruler called Tzofenat Paneach, dressed in official robes with a gold chain around his neck, who speaks Egyptian and uses an interpreter to communicate with these visitors from the land of Canaan. No wonder they did not recognise him, though he recognised them.

But that is only the surface meaning. Deep down the book of Bereishit is exploring the most profound source of conflict in history. Freud thought the great symbol of conflict was Laius and Oedipus, the tension between fathers and sons. Bereishit thinks otherwise. The root of human conflict is sibling rivalry: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and now Joseph and his brothers.

Joseph has the misfortune of being the youngest. He symbolises the Jewish condition. His brothers are older and stronger than he is. They resent his presence. They see him as a troublemaker. The fact that their father loves him only makes them angrier and more resentful. They want to kill him. In the end they get rid of him in a way that allows them to feel a little less guilty. They concoct a story that they tell their father, and they settle down to life again. They can relax. There is no Joseph to disturb their peace anymore.

And now they are facing a stranger in a strange land and it simply does not occur to them that this man may be Joseph. As far as they are concerned, there is no Joseph. They don't recognise him now. They never did. They never recognised him as one of them, as their father's child, as their brother with an identity of his own and a right to be himself.

Joseph is the Jewish people throughout history.

Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not recognise him. Judaism was the world's first monotheism but not the last.

Two others emerged claiming descent, literal or metaphorical, from Abraham, Christianity and Islam. It would be fair to call the relationship between the three Abrahamic monotheisms, one of sibling rivalry. Far from being of mere antiquarian interest, the theme of Bereishit has been the leitmotiv of the better part of the last two thousand years, with the Jewish people cast in the role of Joseph.

There were times – early medieval Spain was one – when Joseph and his brothers lived together in relative harmony, convivencia as they called it. But there were also times – the blood libels, the accusations of poisoning wells or spreading the plague – when they sought to kill him. And others – the expulsions that took place throughout Europe between the

English in 1290 and the Spanish in 1492 – when they simply wanted to get rid of him. Let him go and be a slave somewhere else, far from here.

Then came the Holocaust. Then came the State of Israel, the destination of the Jewish journey since the days of Abraham, the homeland of the Jewish people since the days of Joshua. No nation on earth, with the possible exception of the Chinese, has had such a long association with a land.

The day the State was born, 14 May 1948, David Ben Gurion, its Prime Minister, sought peace with its neighbours, and Israel has not ceased seeking peace from then until now.

But this is no ordinary conflict. Israel's opponents – Hamas in Gaza, Hizbollah in Lebanon, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, are not engaged in a border dispute, these boundaries or those. They deny, as a matter of non negotiable religious – not just political – principle, Israel's right to exist within any boundaries whatsoever. There are today 56 Islamic states. But for Israel's neighbours a single Jewish state the size of Wales, is one too many.

Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not recognise him. There is no State among the 192 member nations of the United Nations whose very existence is called into question this way. And while we as Jews argue among ourselves as to this policy or that, as if this were remotely relevant to the issue of peace, we fail to focus on the real issue, which is, so long as Joseph's brothers do not recognise his right to be, there can be no peace, merely a series of staging posts on the way to a war that will not end until there is no Jewish state at all.

Until the sibling rivalry is over, until the Jewish people wins the right to be, until people – including we ourselves – realise that the threat Israel faces is ultimate and total, until Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah agree that Jews have a right to their land within any boundaries whatsoever, all other debate is mere distraction.

Previous Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ztz"l Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ztz"l was a global religious leader, philosopher, the author of more than 25 books, and the moral voice for our time. Until 1st September 2013 he served as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, having held the position for 22 years. To read more from Rabbi Sacks, please visit www.rabbisacks.org

from: **Ira Zlotowitz** <Iraz@klalgovoah.org> date: Dec 14, 2023, 6:59 PM subject: **Tidbits for Parashas Miketz in memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz ZT"l**

After Chanukah, used wicks, cups and oil should be disposed of in a respectful manner (i.e. by placing them in a plastic bag before disposing of them). Some have the minhag to burn them on the last day of Chanukah; others do so at Bi'ur Chametz before Pesach.

The first opportunity for Kiddush Levanah is this Motzaei Shabbos Parashas Miketz, December 16th. The final opportunity in the USA is Tuesday, December 26th. Next Friday, December 22nd is the fast of Asara B'Teves. (This is the only fast day that can fall on Erev Shabbos.) During Chazaras HaShatz of Shacharis, only the Shaliach Tzibbur adds Aneinu. Chazaras HaShatz is followed by Selichos, Avinu Malkeinu, Tachanun, and Krias Hatorah. Mincha includes Krias Hatorah followed by the Haftarah. Those fasting add Aneinu in Shemoneh Esrei. Nusach Ashkenaz says Sim Shalom in place of Shalom Rav. The Shaliach Tzibbur adds Aneinu and Bircas Kohanim in Chazaras HaShatz. As it is Erev Shabbos, Avinu Malkeinu and Tachanun are omitted. All the regular Shabbos preparations such as hot showers etc. are permitted. While the fast ends at the regular z'man for a Ta'anis (tzeis hakochavim), one may not eat or drink until after he hears Kiddush. Daf Yomi - Friday: Bavli: Bava Kamma 43 • Yerushalmi: Shevi'is 69 • Mishnah Yomis: Yevamos 14:3-4 • Oraysa: Next week is Yoma 41b-43b.

Make sure to call your parents, in-laws, grandparents and Rabbi to wish them a good Shabbos. If you didn't speak to your kids today, make sure to connect with them as well!

Summary

Miketz: Pharaoh's dreams • The Sar Hamashkim refers Pharaoh to Yosef • Yosef interprets Pharaoh's dreams as predicting 7 years of plenty and 7 years of hunger • Yosef is appointed viceroy over Mitzrayim • Yosef marries Osnas • Menashe and Ephraim are born • The famine begins • Yaakov sends the brothers to Mitzrayim for food • Yosef accuses the brothers of spying • Yosef commands them to bring Binyamin • Yosef has their monies returned to their sacks; the brothers fear this is a ploy to harm them • Yaakov resists sending Binyamin • The famine worsens • Yehudah accepts responsibility for Binyamin • The brothers set out with gifts and the returned monies • Yosef is overwhelmed upon seeing Binyamin • The brothers are treated royally and sent home with abundant provisions • Binyamin is framed as stealing the goblet and the Shevatim are returned to Mitzrayim. Haftarah: The haftarah from Melachim Alef (3:15-4:1) tells the well-known story of Shlomo Hamelech's wise advice to "cut the baby in half". (This haftarah is rarely leined, as usually Parashas Miketz is Shabbos Chanukah.)

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף מִן־הַבּוֹר... Pharaoh sent and called for Yosef and he was hurried from the pit... (Bereishis 41:14)

Yosef was languishing in a pit serving a life sentence. Suddenly he is removed and brought in front of the great Pharaoh himself. Immediately thereafter he is appointed leader over the entire land. The speed in this change of circumstances is incredible. The Seforno expounds on this pasuk and writes this is the manner of Yeshuas Hashem, salvation of the

Almighty as we find when the Jews left Mitzrayim in such a hurry that their dough did not have time to rise before the moment of freedom arrived. So too will be the final redemption, "Pisom yavo el Heichalo", Suddenly we will enter the Beis Hamikdash. Why is this the manner in which redemption and salvation are introduced, instead of taking place in a more natural and measured way?

Rav Yitzchok Feigelstock zt"l explains that generally the world is run with derech hateva, a natural progression of events and the appointment of leaders follows a gradual process whereby the individual climbs the hierarchical ladder. However, in essence, Hashem is not confined to the nature of the world; He can make instant and immediate changes, and does so when carrying out certain salvations.

Mrs. Rochel Zlotowitz a"h sought the counsel of Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l when she felt the shidduch process with her prospective husband R' Meir z"l was going rather quickly. Rav Moshe responded with Chazal's words, "Yeshuas Hashem k'Heref Ayin" - salvation from Hashem comes in the blink of an eye, and explained that when events move quickly, one can trust that this is a sign that this salvation is being orchestrated by Hashem.

<https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/1083220>

YU TORAH IN PRINT • Miketz 5784

Of Miketz, Menorahs and Majesty Rabbi Daniel Z. Feldman

The release of Yosef from prison, a moment of great drama and emotion, has also been the subject of halakhic inquiry. Some rishonim note, in light of the fact that his release took place on Rosh HaShanah, it is surprising that Yosef shaved at that time. Rashi comments that the shaving was done because of kevod ha-malkhut; nonetheless, working under the assumption that the Avot (and, apparently Yosef included) observed the entire Torah before it was given, it would be expected that he would refrain from shaving on Rosh Hashanah. This question prompted an extensive literature in later generations, analyzing the halakhic considerations from every angle - is shaving a violation mi-d'orayta of Hilkhos Yom Tov; perhaps the action is to be considered a melakhah she'einah tzrichah li-gufah; can it be excused under his unique circumstances; what role does kevod ha-malkhut play in the question; perhaps the situation is considered pikuach nefesh; perhaps it is relevant that Yosef was presumably shaved by someone else, etc.

The Chatam Sofer, for one, seemed bothered by the very question itself. The notion of the Avot keeping the Torah, he argued, was a fine and important idea, but not an actual obligation. Kevod Ha-Malkhut, by contrast, is a genuine din, one that had to be observed even before the giving of the Torah, by force of law. Thus, kevod ha-malkhut, which was

commanded, certainly overrides Yom Tov, which was “eino metzuveh vi-oseh”.

The Chatam Sofer’s comment is itself difficult to understand. Kevod ha-malchut is also a law of the Torah, derived from pesukim . By what logic is this law separated from the other mitzvot of the Torah, that they are voluntary in the Pre-Sinaitic era, and this one is not?

In considering the obligation of kevod ha-malkhut, R . Simcha Zissel Broide, the late Rosh Yeshivah of the Chevron Yeshivah, posits a number of theories explaining its importance. Among the five points that he makes is what he considers a fundamental principle of the human personality: It is crucial for one’s spiritual development that he possess the ability to appreciate great things. One who is jaded and cynical, who views all things with disinterest, is unable to attain any kind of meaningful spiritual maturity. Thus, it is critical to hone one’s awareness of the extraordinary, and the attitude one brings toward royalty is certainly reflective of this vital attribute.

It is interesting to note that there is another (seasonally appropriate) comment of the Chatam Sofer that is also somewhat surprising. We are in the midst of celebrating Chanukah. We generally assume that Chanukah and Purim, clearly post-Biblical in origin, are observed as chiyuvim mi-de-rabanan. Nonetheless, maintains the Chatam Sofer , if one would let the occasions of Chanukah or Purim pass by without any acknowledgement, this would be the wrong thing on a level mi-d’orayta.

Perhaps the common element between the two statements of the Chatam Sofer - his comment regarding Yosef, and his assertion regarding Chanukah - is the fundamental necessity of cultivating an appreciation for greatness and majesty. One who is unreceptive to the miraculous and the majestic is incapable of approaching the Torah with any potential for success. If one is unmoved by the extraordinary, then the greatest gift of all eternity can fail to move and inspire; not for any internal deficiency in the item, but because of the closed “eye of the beholder”. This issue is indicated as well by the comments of the Ramban on the pasuk following the giving of the aseret ha-dibrot, when Moshe tells the Jewish people not to be afraid, because G-d has come “ba-avur nasot etchem”. The Ramban understands this in the sense of nisayon, to test the Jewish people, to see if they are capable of feeling an appreciation for the awe-inspiring display that accompanied Matan Torah. As R . Yitzchak Hutner explains , this “test” was a crucial part of the process of the bestowing of the Torah upon the Jewish people. If the Jews failed to be moved by such a display, then they cannot fulfill their roles as the guardians of the Torah; they will be unreceptive to the infinite treasures of its content, and thus immune to its influence.

In this sense, R . Hutner notes the Maharal of Prague’s interpretation of the Talmud’s statement that the churban ha-

bayit took place because the Jews failed to recite Birkhot HaTorah. This passage has long challenged commentators, both because of the apparently disproportional nature of the punishment, and the well-known fact that the Jews of that era were guilty of several other egregious offenses. The Maharal explained that the Talmud is not claiming that the lack of Birkhot HaTorah is the punishable offense; indeed, the churban was provoked by the other offenses committed at that time. Rather, the Talmud’s question was this: since we know that the Jews of that time were involved in the study of Torah, how is it also possible that they were guilty of such transgressions? Should not their Talmud Torah have influenced them toward a more righteous path?

To this, explains the Talmud, it is commented that the Jews of that time did not recite a berakhah on the Torah. They were not awestruck by the experience; they were not moved by the privilege to express gratitude to He who bestowed this great gift. If that was their attitude, they were not in a position to be influenced by the Torah’s content.

The Chatam Sofer is reminding us, in his two comments, that no relationship with Torah can be complete without a sense of the majestic and the miraculous. Before the giving of the Torah, the avot were not technically obligated in mitzvot; but if they were lacking an awe of majesty, they would not have been the avot. Before the events of Chanukah, there was no obligation to light candles or recite hallel; but in the generations after, one who can casually fail to do so is shown to be flawed in his relationship with Torah at a fundamental level. The convergence of Miketz and Chanukah provides us with a reminder that allowing the magnificent to become mundane is a danger to the very definition of the Jewish personality.

It can also be added that Yosef, by choosing to focus on honoring the king, was actually going to the essence of Rosh HaShanah, a reasonable approach especially before there was an actual commandment to observe its requirements technically. One of the central themes of Rosh HaShanah is malchiyut, recognizing the majesty of Hashem. One reason that kevod ha-malkhut is such a crucial concept is “Malka d’ara k’ein Malka d’rakia”, Earthly royalty is an illustration that allows humanity to picture the true royalty of the King of Kings. Yosef’s perceptive prioritization laid the groundwork for much of the spiritual growth that would lie ahead.

from: **Alan Fisher** <afisherads@yahoo.com>

date: Dec 14, 2023, 9:05 PM subject: Fw: Shabbat Shalom: Devrei Torah for Shabbat Miketz 5784

One theme that appears throughout the story of Yosef in Egypt is anti-Semitism under Paro. Although Paro recognized that Yosef was the most brilliant and capable person in Egypt, the Egyptians would not mix socially with Yosef and his family. To protect the family, Yosef arranged for his family to live in

Goshen, a territory well suited to grazing cattle and separate from the areas where Egyptians lived. Even while Yosef was the most powerful leader in Egypt other than Paro, the Egyptians would not permit Yosef (let alone any other Jew) to eat at the same table with them. (Egyptians were vegetarians, and Jews ate cows and sheep – both Egyptian gods – so the Jewish diet disgusted the Egyptians.) Yosef could not even leave Egypt to attend his father’s funeral without asking permission from Paro – and he had to go through members of Paro’s household before he could even gain permission to speak to Paro and ask for permission to bury his father. In Sefer Shemot, we shall see that Egyptian anti-Semitism becomes even stronger.

Anti-Semitism has exploded again in recent years, and especially since the Hamas massacre on October 7. Miketz seems an appropriate time to consider the explosion of anti-Semitism recently. Rabbi Avi Weiss discusses the duplicity of university presidents who would not permit discussions attacking other minority groups but permit calls for violence against Jews and Israel as long as those advocating such violence do not engage in direct physical attacks. Rabbi Weiss recommends that the proper way for Jews to deal with this anti-Semitism is to become better Jews – wear kippot, wear Jewish t-shirts and other clothing, and openly practice our religion. Author Bari Weiss discusses twenty years of woke policies at universities, cultural institutions, and professional schools – all creating an atmosphere of activist leftist hate that seeks to prevent any discussion of opposing views. Nathan Lewin, probably the leading constitutional law scholar and attorney of our generation, reviews Supreme Court decisions over the past couple of decades. [Nat] Lewin demonstrates that not one Supreme Court justice agrees with the assumption of the presidents of the University of Pennsylvania, MIT, and Harvard universities (in their statements to Congress) that the First Amendment protects hate speech in public forums unless the speech leads directly to hate violence.

[<https://www.jns.org/explaining-the-first-amendment-to-university-presidents/>]

As Bari Weiss and many others have observed, university professors and school teachers have greatly reduced the percentage of conservative and open minded professors and teachers in universities and schools over the past few decades.

Those who wish to speak in favor of Israel or conservative political views often cannot find public forums, especially at universities, to express their views. A recent poll of college age individuals who self identify as pro-Hamas and anti-Israel in the current conflict demonstrates that many of the pro-Hamas students cannot even identify the river or sea in the expression, “From the River to the sea.” Many of them cannot correctly identify leading Arab or Israeli leaders (such as whether Arafat was pro-Palestinian or Israeli). This sort of evidence suggests that more factual knowledge and less

shouting could lead to better informed positions on the conflict between Hamas and Israel.

During Hanukkah, we thank Hashem for protecting us during dangerous times, even when He operates behind the scenes. During the time of the Maccabees, prophecy had ended. Jews of that time wondered whether God would continue to protect the Jews even when we had no prophet and no direct contact with God. The Maccabeus brothers trusted in Hashem and did their part to work with God to stop the Greeks, Seleucid-Syrians, and Hellenized Jews, remove pagan influences from the Temple, and re-establish proper sacrifices. The victory of the Orthodox Jews over the Hellenized Jews and strong foreign countries was a miracle that Jews have always considered a sign of God working behind the scenes to save our people. My beloved Rebbe, Rabbi Leonard Cahan, z”l, always found a way to include lessons for today in his Torah discussions, even when his primary focus was on explaining some of the many levels in a parsha. The history of anti-Semitism provides numerous lessons for today, as we can see from the explosion of hate in our world, especially in the past two months.

Shabbat Shalom,
Hannah and Alan

Much of the inspiration for my weekly Dvar Torah message comes from the insights of Rabbi David Fohrman and his team of scholars at www.alephbeta.org. Please join me in supporting this wonderful organization, which has increased its scholarly work during and since the pandemic, despite many of its supporters having to cut back on their donations.