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**Tidbits**

ISSUE 1544

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ד' טבת תשפ"ד • DEC. 16 2023

פרשת מקץ  
PARSHAT MIKETZ



**Transformative Failure**  
Rabbi Moshe Hauer  
Page 8



**Yosef and Mordechai  
Compared and Contrasted**  
Rabbi Shalom Rosner  
Page 28



כלנו בני איש-אחד בראשית מ"ב:י"א

YERUSHALAYIM SHABBAT PARSHAT MIKETZ ZMANIM  
CANDLES 4:01 PM • HAVDALA 5:17 PM • RABBEINU TAM 5:54 PM



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## HELPFUL REMINDERS



**The fast of 10th of Tevet is observed on Friday December 22.** Fast ends at 5:00pm (Jerusalem). We wait for kiddush to conclude the fast unless there is an urgent need to end earlier.



**Earliest Kiddush Levana, 3 Days After Molad:**  
5 Tevet/ Motei Shabbat Dec. 16  
**7 Days After Molad:**  
9 Tevet/Wed. night Dec. 20  
**Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana Until:**  
15 Tevet/Tues. night Dec. 26

## THIS WEEK'S COVER PHOTO

"Signs" of the times - seen in a Jerusalem supermarket on 24 October 2023. (Translation: "With HaShem's help, Together we will win / be victorious"). (Note: The Hebrew "root" for the word "To win" is Nun-Tzade-Chet, the same "root" letters for "Netzach" - meaning: Forever or Eternal. Victory / Forever, b'ezrat HaShem).

**Photographed by Leah Yerushalmi in Jerusalem**



## A SHORT VORT | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

ויאמר פרעה אל עבדיו, הנמצא כזה איש אשר רוח אלוקים בו (מא:לח)

"And Pharaoh said to his servants: Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of G-d is?"

The Midrash explains this verse as Pharaoh saying: If we would go from one end of the world to the other, we would not find another like Yosef.

The Ketav Sofer (Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Sofer 1815-1871 Bratislava) asks how did the Midrash know that Pharaoh was referring to Yosef's distinctiveness in contrast to the whole world? Wouldn't it have been more appropriate for Pharaoh to simply say no one in Egypt is like Yosef?

Maimonides points out that Pharaoh here was addressing his advisors, trying to convince them that Yosef should be appointed as Viceroy.

The Ktav Sofer answers that in order not to embarrass his advisors of their shortcomings compared to Yosef, the Midrash explains how Pharaoh chose his words very carefully. Pharaoh told his advisors that they are without doubt the wisest men in Egypt, but Yosef is unique in the world. In this way, Pharaoh avoided offending his advisors. - Shabbat Shalom

# CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



## OTHER Z'MANIM



	MIKETZ		VAYIGASH	
	CANDLES	HAVDALA	CANDLES	HAVDALA
Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	4:01	5:17	4:03	5:21
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	4:19	5:20	4:22	5:23
Beit Shemesh / RBS	4:19	5:18	4:22	5:21
Alon Shvut	4:17	5:18	4:20	5:21
Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	4:17	5:18	4:20	5:21
Modiin / Chashmonaim	4:17	5:18	4:20	5:21
Netanya	4:16	5:18	4:19	5:21
Be'er Sheva	4:19	5:20	4:22	5:23
Rehovot	4:18	5:19	4:21	5:22
Petach Tikva	4:01	5:18	4:03	5:21
Ginot Shomron	4:16	5:17	4:19	5:20
Haifa / Zichron	4:05	5:16	4:08	5:19
Gush Shiloh	4:15	5:16	4:18	5:20
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	4:17	5:19	4:20	5:22
Givat Zeev	4:01	5:17	4:24	5:21
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	4:17	5:18	4:20	5:21
Ashkelon	4:19	5:20	4:22	5:23
Yad Binyamin	4:18	5:19	4:21	5:22
Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden	4:07	5:14	4:10	5:17
Golan	4:13	5:14	4:15	5:17
Nahariya/Maalot	4:13	5:15	4:16	5:19
Afula	4:14	5:15	4:17	5:19
Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem) - 5:54 PM • Next Week - 5:57 PM				

All Times According to MyZmanim (20 mins before Sunset in most Cities;  
40 mins in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva; 30 mins in Tzfat and Haifa)

**Daf Yomi: Bava Kama 44**

## JERUSALEM

**Ranges 11 days Wed - Shabbat  
Dec. 12 - 23 / 4 - 7 Tevet**

Earliest Tallit and Tefilin **5:35 - 5:40**  
 Sunrise **6:30 - 6:36**  
 Sof Zman Kriat Shema **9:01 - 9:07**  
 Magen Avraham **8:22 - 8:27**  
 Sof Zman Tefila **9:52 - 9:57**  
 (According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)  
 Chatzot (Halachic Noon) **11:33 - 11:38**  
 Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha) **12:03 - 12:08**  
 Plag Mincha **3:32 - 3:37**  
 Sunset (Including Elevation) **4:40 - 4:44**



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## DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN  
Executive Director, OU Israel

Throughout Chanukah there has been a theme on my mind which I've been seeing again and again. It is a topic that many of us contemplate and are challenged with on a regular basis – *chinuch* (education). Our rabbis teach us that the word Chanukah and *chinuch* are related to each other. What is it about Chanukah that relates to *chinuch*? Is Chanukah a more educational holiday than Pesach, Sukkot, or Shavuot?

Normally, Chanukah tends to be when we spend a lot of time with our loved ones. Excluding Shabbat, there are seven full days and nights of Chanukah that are opportunities to get together. Between family, friends, workplaces and community events, many people find themselves busy almost every night.

This year, Chanukah had a different tone to it. We're thinking about our beloved soldiers fighting to keep Israel safe, both on the southern border and on the northern border. We're thinking about the hostages, ripped away from their families and loved ones, hidden deep in Gaza. And our attitudes reflect that. There's been more volunteering this Chanukah than I can remember for many decades of past Chanukahs. So many people have found their role, their *tafkid*. People writing Torah articles, giving *shiurim*, starting to learn Daf Yomi every day. The falafel store owner who isn't charging *chayalim* for their orders. The restaurant owner giving generously to the *sherut leumi* girls who are

working way beyond their regular hours. Farmers opening their fields to volunteers who are coming in the hundreds to help them collect their produce and stay afloat. Families that have taken in those displaced so that they could have a place to call home and in which to light their *chanukiyot*. So many people are rolling up their sleeves.

There was a feeling of giving this Chanukah. A feeling of *achdut*, unity. Of caring for each other in *Klal Yisrael*. Chanukah parties and events with our families, friends, and coworkers had something different to it. This year, everyone felt like they were in it together.

This is what I think *chinuch* is about. It is what is around you. What you see. When a child sees and interacts with people who are full of giving, of *chesed*, of unity, that will be impressed upon the child. Our youth are seeing what it means to be Jewish, to live in a Jewish state. This is the particular *chinuch* of Chanukah. Opportunities to see each other show our youth what role models they should have in family, friends, and religious leaders. This

**Condolences to  
Beaty & Donny Gordon and family  
on the passing of**

**Naftali Yonah Gordon** **Hy"d**

**first master sergeant in the  
53rd Battalion of the Barak Brigade,  
killed in Gaza on the eve of the  
1st night of Hanukkah**



year, this stands out more than ever.

When I was eleven years old, my interests were basketball, Transformers and He-Man. Like most kids, when I would draw, I'd draw something I was thinking about - a game I was playing or something I liked. This past week, my son Mordechai Tzemach and my daughter Moriah came to the OU Israel building one day after school. One of the things they love doing when they come to visit me at work is to draw on the gigantic whiteboard in my office. This time I noticed Mordechai Tzemach drawing a big rectangle with a brown marker, and then colored it all brown. I asked him why he was just making a solid brown box? He's eleven years old, why not draw something nice? He said to me, "Abba, I am drawing something nice." After he finished filling it in, he took his finger and wrote the Hebrew letters, "Talmud Bavli."

That was an eye-opener to me. I asked myself, what were the chances when I was eleven of drawing anything even resembling a *gemara*? I know the answer is slim to none. My mind was occupied with all sorts of other things. I wasn't thinking about Torah and *gemara*. Mordechai Tzemach was thinking higher thoughts. The reason for that is *chinuch*. He is surrounded by role models that help him think this way - his Rebbeim, teachers, grandparents, older siblings and other relatives, and community members.

Today, our children see more people learning Daf Yomi than previous generations. There are so many *shiurim*, not just in shul but online as well. Accessibility has been a game changer. Sites like the OU's AllDaf.org and AllParsha.org have made it easier than



ever for people around the world to learn Torah, and our youth are seeing it. They see the *yeshivot* bustling with students learning. These things were enough to put in my son's mind the idea to draw the Talmud Bavli, out of anything he could draw.

I remember how my Rav, the former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu zt"l,

In loving memory of  
**Miriam Korenstein a"h**  
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on her 8th *yahrzeit* ה' טבת תשפ"ד  
and  
**Manfred Korenstein z"l**  
**משה ניסן בן יצחק ז"ל**  
whose 24<sup>th</sup> *yahrzeit* was on  
ה' ח מרחשון תשפ"ד

Both greatly missed by their family  
and all who knew them

May the learning from  
this issue of TT be לעלוי נשמותיהם

would say that when someone moves into a new home, they should immediately have a *chanukat habayit* to celebrate having moved in that day. Most people would wait until everything is unpacked and they are settled. When you first move, there are boxes everywhere and furniture still wrapped up. Rabbi Eliyahu said to *davka* have it then. “*Al ha’argazim*, on the boxes themselves,” he would say. That’s when friends and family can give you well-wishes, where Torah can be shared. You should have a *Maariv minyan* in the newly-inaugurated house and let the house fill with Torah and *kedusha*. Right away, not weeks later.

It puzzled me why Rabbi Eliyahu held this way, but I believe he was saying that when we show our friends and families, and especially our kids, what our priorities are, that is *chinuch*. Before we organize the house, before we decide what looks nice here and over there, our focus will be to bring in the light of Torah. Before we’ve even opened our boxes, the first thing to go through our minds is *chinuch*. A *chanukat habayit*, just like Chanukah itself, is a time for *chinuch*. It’s a time to reflect on our futures. How will this home be one that expresses our values to our kids, to our families.

Let me tell you, when I was eleven, I wasn’t drawing the Talmud Bavli. I’m sure many readers weren’t either. When I think about my own journey, I think how much greater my kids will *b’ezerat Hashem* be than me. Who our youth as a whole will become, in just a few years time. I have high hopes for our future.

Every one of us is a role model for *chinuch*. When you volunteer, go to a *shiur*, *daven*, say *Tehillim*, do *hachnasat orchim* and give charity, you are creating an atmosphere of *chinuch*. Think about the impact we could have when we put *chinuch*, for ourselves and for the younger generation, as the focal point of our minds. When we do that, we can truly say we took this lesson of Chanukah and leveraged it in the best way possible.

May we continue to see the light that Chanukah gave us. May we continue to see the *gevurah*, the strength and heroism of *Klal Yisrael*, and the miracles that we so very much need. May we continue to focus on the *chinuch* that Chanukah brought. By incorporating this lesson, we will continue to see every generation being on a higher spiritual level than the generation before it.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman  
Executive Director, OU Israel  
aberman@ouisrael.org



May the Torah learned from  
this issue of Torah Tidbits be  
in loving memory and לע"נ of

**LILY BIBER a"h**

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on her 4th Yahrzeit ז' טבת

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## FROM THE DESK OF RABBI MOSHE HAUER

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# Transformative Failure

It pays to recall our failures.

As Pharaoh struggles to find an interpretation of his dreams (Bereishit 41:9), his chief butler comes forth with a solution, prefacing it by saying, “today I remind you of my sin.” He proceeds to tell Pharaoh about the dream he had in jail and the accurate interpretation that was provided by the young Hebrew – Yosef - who was guarding him there. This leads Pharaoh to liberate Yosef from jail and to ultimately elevate him to the throne.

The butler was hesitant to remind Pharaoh of the mistakes he made that had landed him in jail, but he nevertheless told him the story because it was during that time in jail that he discovered the person who would provide the solution to Pharaoh’s most vexing problem. His harmful mistake had somehow ended up proving helpful.

This would seem to explain a curious problem in the story. There is a tradition found in the Talmud (Rosh Hashana 10b) that Yosef was liberated from jail on Rosh Hashana. It was thus on that very same day that the butler reminded Pharaoh of the sin that had landed him in jail. Yet, as we recognize in our own *Yamim Noraim* liturgy, we studiously avoid mentioning our failures on Rosh Hashana. While *viduy* - confession of sin - is performed

repeatedly on Yom Kippur - the Day of Forgiveness - it is considered ill-advised to mention our sins at all on Rosh Hashana, the Day of Judgment (see for instance Mishna Berurah 684:3).

How is it that on the very day that we studiously avoid reminding the King of Kings of our failures we find the chief butler specifically reminding King Pharaoh of his? (This irony was noted by the *Bnei Yissaschar*.)

We must understand, however, that what we seek to avoid mentioning are those past failures that remain failures. The Talmud (Yoma 86b) speaks of the person who undergoes *teshuvah mei'ahava*, improving himself with the purest of motives, who transforms past failures into merits. One who successfully extracts positive outcomes from personal failure has transformed the failure into a stimulant of growth. It is for this reason that the butler did not have to worry about mentioning his sin on Rosh Hashana, as that sin had proven to be a source of growth, generating Pharaoh’s greatest benefit.

Yes, it often pays to recall our failures. When we open ourselves up to using the lessons of those failures to guide us to a better and more helpful future, failure serves as a vehicle for success.

That must always be our charge. We can choose to ignore our flaws and focus exclusively on moving forward. But to truly grow, we must be profoundly aware of the imperfections within and around us. We must use failure as the first step to success by addressing our imperfections, not only to avoid future failure, but as the catalyst of long-lasting positive change. ■



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We continue to pray for the safety and quick return of our soldiers, the injured, and the hostages being held in captivity.  
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## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

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### PARSHAT MIKETZ

Yosef ascends from jail to complete control of Egypt. Paro has a dream. The Butler remembers Yosef in jail. Yosef tells Paro of 7 impending years of plenty followed by 7 of famine. Yosef is appointed to manage the hoarding of food in the good years. When the famine begins, the whole world turns to Yosef for food. Including his family. Yosef recognizes his brothers; he accuses them of spying. Shimon is kept in jail, the brothers return home to bring Binyamin. When the need for food forces them back to Egypt, Binyamin is brought with them. Yehuda guarantees his return to Yaakov. Yosef plants his goblet with Binyamin, punishes him with remaining a slave in Egypt.



#### 1ST ALIYA (41:1-14)

2 years later (after the Butler's return to serve Paro), Paro dreams. 7 healthy cows emerge from the water, devoured by 7 skinny ones who emerge after. 7 healthy stalks are devoured by 7 parched ones. Paro is not satisfied by the dream interpretations of his wise men. The Butler remembers Yosef, telling Paro of him. Yosef is shaved, dressed and rushed to Paro.

Dreams aplenty. Yaakov dreamt of the ladder and the angels. Yosef had 2 dreams. The Butler and Baker had dreams. Now Paro has 2 dreams.

But there are subtle differences in who,

when and how many. Yaakov had one dream: 1 man, 1 dream, 1 night. Yosef had 2 dreams, but not on the same day; 1 man, 2 dreams, 2 nights. The Butler and Baker; 2 men, 2 dreams, 1 night. And Paro; 1 man, 2 dreams, 1 night.

When Yosef is successful in interpreting both the Butler and Baker and Paro's dreams, does he wonder about his dreams? Does he think his dreams may still come true? Or does he assume his don't match the pattern; the others were 2 dreams, one night. His were 2 dreams, 2 nights. Or perhaps 2 nights is a sign that they will take a long time to occur. Maybe even over 20 years.



#### 2ND ALIYA (41:15-38)

Paro relates the dreams to Yosef. Yosef tells Paro that the 7 years of plenty will be followed by 7 years of famine. Now, Paro you shall appoint a wise person to hoard food during the plenty, to avoid the lands collapse during the famine. Paro responds: could one like this be found who has G-d's spirit in him?

Dream interpretation is a rich subject. If the dream is of plenty and famine, I get healthy stalks being devoured by sickly ones. But stalks don't eat. And what do cattle have to do with agriculture? Why cows walking out of the Nile? Ok, cows can eat each other, whereas stalks can't. But stalks are agriculture, cows aren't.

The name Elokim appears 7 times in this exchange between Yosef and Paro. When a

word is repeated 7 times, it is a signal – take note, this is central. The story of Yosef's sale, his descent to Potiphar's home, his being framed by Mrs. Potiphar, thrown in jail, is a downward spiral designed by the hands of man. But all that is about to change, for G-d's Hand is entering the story.



### 3RD ALIYA (41:39-52)

Paro appoints Yosef over all of Egypt; he receives the signet ring, the royal clothes, rides the royal chariot, receives the Egyptian name Tzafnat Paneach and marries. He gathers the grain in the years of plenty. His 2 sons are born; Menashe, G-d has allowed me to forget my father's home and Ephraim, G-d has made me prosper in Egypt.

In an instant, Yosef has gone from the foreign lad in jail, to the number 2 man in the land. But. The wrong land. Aren't we supposed to be settling the Land of Israel? In our absorption in a wonderful story of twists and turns, we forgot that the story of the Torah is the promise to Avraham: Your children will inherit the Land. Of Israel. Not Egypt. The shift of the story of the Jewish people has moved entirely from Israel to Egypt right under our noses.

And don't we all love the Midrash that the Jews were redeemed from Egypt for not changing their names, their clothing or language. Yosef is given new clothes, and a new name in a new language. Yosef seems to have become the quintessential Egyptian.



### 4TH ALIYA (41:53-42:18)

The famine begins. Paro instructs his people to go to Yosef, for Yosef has opened the storehouses. Yaakov sends his sons, save

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Binyanim, to Egypt to get food. When the brothers bow to Yosef, he recognizes them. He remembers his dreams. Yosef challenges the brothers, claiming they are spying Egypt. To prove they are not, he demands they bring Binyamin. And puts them in jail for 3 days.

What did Yosef think when he saw the brothers? All the commentators grapple with Yosef's response. Why not say hello to them? Why hide? Varied are the responses. But on the level of metaphor or drush – what an image. The Jew, successful, wildly successful, in the highest offices of his new land, with his new language, his new name, his new clothes; is unrecognizable to his brothers. And he himself, so comfortable in his new world, cannot find the words to bridge the gap.





### 5TH ALIYA (42:19-43:15)

Yosef tells the brothers that one should stay behind while the rest return home and bring Binyamin to him. They respond to themselves; this has occurred because of how we treated Yosef. Yosef cries upon hearing this. Shimon is jailed. Yosef places their money with their grain. When they discover this, they wonder why G-d is doing this. Yaakov is distressed at the thought of Binyamin leaving him. But when the food runs out, there is no choice. Yehuda guarantees Binyamin's safe return. They return and stand before Yosef.

The brother's feelings of guilt for the sale of Yosef seem to persist even 20 years later. Over 20 years later, in Egypt, buying food – when things turn into a crisis, with Yosef demanding they bring Binyamin, the brothers immediately blurt out: we are getting our due for selling Yosef. They have been waiting for calamity to befall them, knowing it will surely come. But of course, they mean this is G-d meting out a form of punishment to them. When really, it is Yosef who is manipulating them. So, it isn't G-d, it's Yosef. Or is it? Maybe they are right. Yosef is repeatedly described as successful in Egypt; in Potiphar's home, in the jail, and now as number 2 in the Land. He is efficient and definitive. Yet, here, he is capricious; puts them *all* in jail, says they should *all* remain in jail and *one* return, then changes his mind, *one* stay in jail, *all* return. Either Yosef is beside himself and winging it, not really knowing what to do. Or maybe the brothers are not the only ones being manipulated. Maybe Yosef too is a puppet in the Divine Hands – he makes a move, and He puts into his head

something different. In order to bring the Jews to Egypt.



### 6TH ALIYA (43:16-29)

The brothers receive a royal welcome from Yosef upon their return with Binyamin. They apologize for the money they found in their grain sacks. Yosef tells them not to worry for their G-d has given them a gift. The brothers are treated to a fine dinner. Yosef inquires of their father and sees Binyamin.

Binyamin is Yosef's brother, the only other born from Rachel. Binyamin was very young when Yosef was sold. This is 22 years later. Yosef would not recognize Binyamin. The aliya ends on a pregnant note – he sees Binyamin – and then what? The next aliya begins with Yosef crying. Yosef does a lot of crying in the story. At the same time, for the brothers, they swing up and down. Nervous as to how he will react. Relieved at the banquet he serves them. But then crashing down when in the next aliya the goblet is planted with Binyamin.



### 7TH ALIYA (43:30-44:17)

Yosef sits the brothers in the order of their birth. They are surprised. Their sacks are packed with grain, their money returned. And Yosef's goblet is planted in the sack of Binyamin. No sooner had they left, Yosef orders the guards to pursue. The goblet is found in the sack of Binyamin. They return to Yosef. Yehuda offers that they all stay as slaves. Yosef demurs; the thief alone shall be a slave. The rest of you return home in peace to your father.

The swing of fortune of the brothers is dramatic. Accused of being spies, yet their money returned with their grain. Treated



royally upon their return, money again returned with their grain. Yet, accused of theft. And the stage is set for an even more dramatic swing: Yosef finally revealing himself to them.

## HAFTORAH

### 1 MELACHIM 3:15-4:1

This week's haftorah opens with the words "And Shlomo awoke, and behold it was a dream," echoing this week's Torah portion which opens with Pharaoh's dreams.

Though not included in the haftorah, in this dream G-d granted King Shlomo his legendary wisdom. The haftorah relates a famous episode that made all of Israel aware of their new monarch's keen intellect.

Two harlots approach King Solomon to adjudicate their dispute. They lived together in the same house, and each had given birth to an infant three days apart. One night, one of the infants was accidentally crushed to death by her mother, and one woman accused the other of switching infants in order to have a live baby. Each woman claimed that the live child is theirs and the deceased child was the other's. King Solomon asks that a sword be brought and orders that the child be cut in half with each woman receiving one half. At this point, the mother of the living child exhorts the king to give the child to the other woman so that he may live, while the other woman says, "Let it be neither mine nor yours, divide!" The king ruled: "Give her the living child, and by no means slay him: she is his mother!" ■

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## STATS

10th of 54 sedras; 10th of 12 in Bereshit.

Written on 254.6 lines, ranks 6th.

Mikeitz is a one Parsha petucha (open) (the longest parsha in the whole Torah). Contrast this parsha's 2022 words with the shortest parshiyot with 2 words.

146 pesukim - rank: 8th (5th in Bereshit) tied with Bereshit (the sedra).

2022 words - ranks 3rd (2nd).

7914 letters - ranks 2nd (first).

Mikeitz's pesukim are unusually long for a big sedra. That's why it is so high in the rankings for words and letters. On the other hand, with no parsha breaks, the "number of lines rank" drops a bit.

## MITZVOT

No mitzvot are counted from Mikeitz. One of 17 sedras without mitzvot.



## THE PERSON IN THE PARSHA

BY RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH WEINREB  
OU EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, EMERITUS

# An End to Darkness

Typically, this week's Torah portion, *Parshat Miketz* (Genesis 41:1-44:17), is read during Chanukah. This year is an exception. This Shabbat, we read *Miketz* on the day after Chanukah.

Since my early childhood, I've associated the day after Chanukah with sad feelings, feelings of loss. After all, for eight consecutive days, we celebrated with *hallel v'hodaah*, with praise and thanksgiving, with special foods and songs, and gifts.

We lit candles every night, culminating in the night before last when we lit eight candles. Then, suddenly, abruptly, we cease all celebration—no more candles!

I recall the first time I was conscious of these sad post-Chanukah emotions. I was five years old, old enough to have heard the Chanukah story and to have learned Chanukah songs. My uncle Yossel, one of my father's younger brothers, had just returned from serving in the United States Army during World War II. He returned with military souvenirs, including helmets and flags.

To me, he was more than just a war hero. He was the embodiment of Judah the Maccabee.

It was a special holiday for our family, and we celebrated accordingly. I had my own little menorah and still remember my mother's words of caution as I lit the last candle on the eighth night.

But the next night, I felt deprived and experienced what I now realize was a sense of anti-climactic loss.

I remember another Chanukah, about ten years later, in my early teenage years. Earlier that year, just before Rosh Hashanah, I had been contacted by a rabbi in another neighborhood, who was assembling a small group of selected yeshiva high school students to join him in a special "club for spiritual advancement." That rabbi, now long gone, eventually became, and remains, quite famous and influential. I refer to the late Rabbi Avigdor Miller, whom I consider one of my first mentors.

There were about ten or twelve young boys in the group, and we would assemble in his synagogue, the Young Israel of Rugby in Brooklyn, once every three weeks. We would briefly study a classic work of Jewish ethics, or *mussar*, and were given an assignment designed to foster our spiritual development. We returned three weeks later to report about our progress.

Several weeks before Chanukah, we were introduced to what is now referred to as "mindfulness meditation." We were asked to spend some time in front of the lit



Mazal Tov to



Ezra & Ilana Hershkowitz and family  
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menorah, gazing at the candles and monitoring the thoughts that came to mind and the emotions we were feeling.

On the “ninth day,” we were to sit before the unlit menorah and again reflect upon our thoughts and feelings while sitting in utter darkness.

That experience made a lifelong impression upon me, and I well recall that cold winter evening, sitting in the darkness, and sobbing in sadness.

Fast forward some thirty years to Chanukah 1984, when my wife’s late uncle came to visit the city of Baltimore, where we were his hosts. My wife’s uncle was a Hasidic Rebbe, the Modzitzer Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu Taub, of blessed memory, who had settled in Israel before the Holocaust.

That Chanukah, he was visiting the United States and spent the seventh and eighth day of Chanukah in our home. There, throngs of local Jews came to consult him and heard his inspiring words of Torah and charming melodies.

He departed on the morning of the “ninth day,” which was sad in itself.

Sadder, however, was the fact that soon after he returned to Israel, on the fourth day of *Iyar*, not long after Passover, he passed away. My wife and I were never to see him again.

And so, from a very personal perspective, you can understand the sadness that I associate with the day after Chanukah.

This year, however, the day after Chanukah falls on a Shabbat, this Shabbat. This is a special blessing for me, and for all who feel somewhat let down after the Chanukah holiday. The Shabbat day thankfully dispels whatever sadness we might

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otherwise be feeling.

Upon further reflection, it dawned upon me that it is not only the Shabbat itself that dispels the “darkness” that we feel post-Chanukah. Rather, dispelling darkness is the very theme of this week’s Torah portion.

Last week’s *parsha*, *Parshat Vayeshev*, ended on a very dark note. Joseph was interred in a deep and dark dungeon. His desperate, and only, hope was that his once fellow prisoner, Pharaoh’s chief cupbearer, would remember his plea: “But think of me when all is well with you again, and do me the kindness of mentioning me to Pharaoh, so as to free me from this place.” (Genesis 40:14)

But the discouraging final verse of last week’s Torah reading still rings in our ears: “Yet the chief cupbearer did not think of Joseph; he forgot him!” (Ibid. verse 23)

This week, our *parsha* begins with the very next verse: “At the end, *Miketz*, of two years’ time, Pharaoh dreamed...” We gradually come to know the details of Pharaoh’s dreams. We become aware that they dramatically lead not only to Joseph’s freedom from the dungeon, but to his elevation to the position of viceroy, the second most powerful man in all of Egypt.

The word *ketz* means “the end.” Thus, the Midrash links our verse to the words of Job: “*Ketz sum lachoshech*, He sets an end to darkness; to every limit that man probes, to rocks in deepest darkness.” (Job 28:3)

The Midrash continues, “The Almighty assigns limits to times of darkness,” to which the commentaries suggest that even times of darkness have a purpose. Thus, Joseph’s imprisonment, dark as it was, was the setting for his encounter with the royal cupbearer, which eventually led not only to

his freedom but to his rise to power. We can begin to understand the purpose of darkness only when the darkness is finally lifted.

I hasten to add that this lesson is intrinsic to the very procedure of Chanukah candle lighting. We follow the custom of the great Hillel. His custom was opposed to that of Shammai, whose school kindled eight lights on the first night of the holiday, and then kindled one less light each night until they were left with but one candle on the final night. With one candle left, there is nowhere to go except to zero. Hillel on the other hand began with but one candle and increased the number of candles each night until there were eight. He was, as the Talmud puts it, *mosif v’holech*, always increasing the number of candles, always increasing the amount of light.

His lesson is clear. When one encounters the darkness of the ninth day, he must continue to increase the amount of light. He must, figuratively of course, light a “ninth candle.” He dare not succumb to darkness or despair. He must continue on the path of *mosif v’holech*, constantly moving forward.

*Ketz sum lachoshech*. An end to darkness. An apt prayer for our current circumstances. ■

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## Sibling Rivalry

There has been massive debate in Anglo Jewry in the past few weeks<sup>1</sup> as to whether we should take a unified stance in our support of the State of Israel or whether we should openly air our differences. It's been a noisy debate, a shrill debate, but it's the wrong debate, and it is deflecting us from the real issue.

The real issue, should we seek it, can be found in this week's parsha. Listen to these words. They 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 him 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 in search of food. They stand before Joseph, but he no longer looks like the young 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. He 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 but one. He symbolises the Jewish condition. His brothers are older and stronger than he is. They resent his

1. It should be noted for context that this essay was written by Rabbi Sacks in November 2010.

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 it was not the last. Two others emerged claiming descent, literal or metaphorical, from Abraham, namely 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, and the accusations of poisoning wells or spreading the plague – when they sought to kill him.



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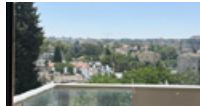
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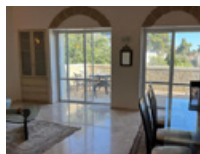
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And others – the expulsions that took place throughout Europe (England in 1290, Spain in 1492 etc.) – when they simply wanted to get rid of him. Let him go and be a slave somewhere else, far from here.

Then came the Holocaust. And 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 it has been an uphill battle.

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.

### AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE

1. What other impactful examples of sibling rivalry can you think of in Tanach?
2. Think of a time when you were not recognised or acknowledged for who you truly are. How did that make you feel, and what was the outcome?
3. What do you believe are some key steps towards achieving lasting peace and mutual recognition among differing nations and cultures? ■

These weekly teachings from **Rabbi Sacks** *zt"l* are part of his 'Covenant & Conversation' series on the weekly Torah teaching. With thanks to the Schimmel Family for their generous sponsorship, dedicated in loving memory of Harry (Chaim) Schimmel. Visit [www.RabbiSacks.org](http://www.RabbiSacks.org) for more.

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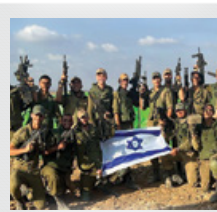


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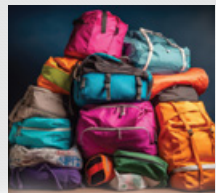
## Helping IDF Soldiers

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## ABOUT YAD L'OLIM

Former Knesset member Dov Lipman established Yad L'Olim in June 2021.

The organization helps Olim from around the world with navigating complex Israeli bureaucracy. It also serves as a voice for Olim and diaspora Jewry in the halls of the Israeli government.

To date, in 30 months, over 35,000 Olim families from 40 different countries have received assistance and guidance from the Yad L'Olim staff. The organization has also played an instrumental role in steering Knesset committees and improving government policy.

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Faculty, OU Israel Center

Rabbi Winkler's popular Jewish History lectures can be viewed by

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“Ha’ikar chahser min hasefer”

This expression, arguing that the essential idea that one proposed was untenable simply because the source for the approach was not to be found in the text. It is commonly found within Rabbinic literature when challenging an opinion based upon facts that are not found in the source itself. I thought of this expression when studying this week’s interesting - but rarely read - haftarah, one that is read only ten percent of the time.

Allow me to explain: Our haftarah for this Shabbat is taken from Sefer M’lachim A and tells the very well-known story of Shlomo adjudicating the case of two women, each of whom argued that she was the legitimate mother of the newborn child. The newly anointed king creates a “scenario” that successfully reveals the true mother, a plan that impresses the nation with the wisdom of young regent and realizing the divine promise that Shlomo would be wiser than all who preceded or followed him.

So why was I reminded of the expression that the essential theme is missing from this haftarah?

Most people who study the haftarah reading adopt the approach that its connection to the parasha is found in the first four words: “VaYikatz Shlomo, v’hinneh chalom” (“Shlomo awoke and behold! - it had been a dream”), echoing almost the exact

words that the Torah uses in our parasha: “VaYikatz Par’oh, v’hinneh chalom” (Par’oh awoke and behold! - it had been a dream”) - (and, no, it is not because the opening word “VaYikatz” reflects the parasha’s opening word “Miketz” - they are different words). But it is doubtful that Chazal would base their choice of haftarot simply upon the fact that both kings had dreams AND they woke up. Nor would Pharaoh’s dreams be the “inspiration” of Chazal’s choice of this haftarah – despite that they were focus of the first Aliyah – because Shlomo’s dream was not included in the haftarah. In fact, we are might be surprised as to WHY the ancient scholars consciously omitted the dream itself and began the haftarah in the ***middle*** of the perek, with Shlomo’s awakening ***from*** his dream!!!

And so, the dreams – both of Par’oh and Shlomo – could not have been the focus of Chazal in their selection of this reading. After all, if that were their goal, “Ha’ikar chahser min hasefer”, the essential idea (Solomon’s dream) is missing!

And, indeed, the dreams were NOT the common theme that our ancients saw in these two stories. Nor was Par’oh’s dreams of any significance in the seeing a link between parasha and haftarah. Rather, our Rabbis considered the common message of the two sources to be one that would resound throughout the generations: G-d will always keep His promises!

The haftarah clearly carries that message as Hashem fulfilled His promise to Shlomo, the promise He had given to the new King in the dream that preceded the haftarah. And G-d also kept His promise in Parashat Miketz –NOT the prediction hidden in the dreams of Par'oh of years of abundance and of scarcity, but the promise found in the dreams of **Yosef**, of his rise to power and seeing his brothers kneeling before him. It was this message that Chazal saw significant enough to eternalize for future generations.

And, truthfully, do we not daily recognize the fulfillment of the words of the nevi'im, the words that Hashem's spoke centuries ago?

Do we not see, with the return of Israel to her homeland, the realization of G-d's

promised redemption?

And do we not anticipate our concord with the haftarah each week in order to uncover what other promises of Hashem of which we may have been unaware, have indeed been actualized?

I know that I do! ■



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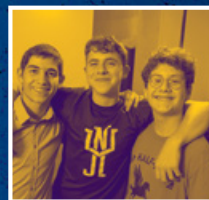
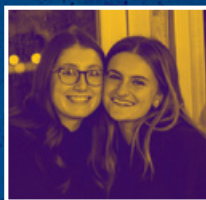
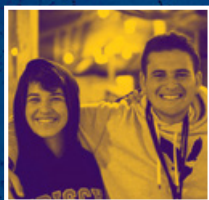
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# Yosef and Mordechai Compared and Contrasted

וַיִּסֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶת-טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ עַל-יַד יוֹסֵף וַיַּלְבֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ בִּגְדֵי שֵׁשׁ וַיַּשֶּׂם וַיְשִׂם רֶבֶד הָהָרָה עָלָיו צִנּוּרוֹ: (בראשית מא:מב)

*And Pharaoh removed his ring from his hand and placed it on Yosef's hand, and he attired him [with] raiment of fine linen, and he placed the golden chain around his neck. (Bereshit 41: 42).*

Often Parshat Mikeitz and Hanuka coincide, yet there seems to be a similarity between Mikeitz and Purim as well. After Pharaoh is satisfied with Yosef's interpretation of his dream, Pharaoh appoints Yosef as his second in command. Pharaoh gives Yosef his ring and dresses Yosef in royal garments. A similar depiction is described in connection with Mordechai in Megillat Esther.

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהָמָן מִיָּהָר קַח אֶת-הַלְבוּשׁ וְאֶת-הַסּוּס כְּאִשֶּׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ וַעֲשֵׂה-כֵן לְמֹרְדֵכַי הַיְּהוּדִי... (מגילת אסתר ו:י)

*And the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the (royal) attire and the horse as you have spoken and do so to Mordecai the Jew.... (Megillat Esther 6:10).*

There are several similarities between Yosef and Mordechai. Both were elevated in stature from jail or a death sentence to becoming close confidants of the king. Both were dressed in royal garb. Both were granted the king's ring which entitled them

to make decisions on behalf of the government. Yet, the honor Yosef received from Pharaoh was far greater than the honor Mordechai received from Achashverosh. When Mordechai was dressed in the king's robe and carried on the king's chariot, it was all accomplished through a messenger, Haman. When Yosef is granted these honors, it appears that Pharaoh himself performed the honorable tasks as it is stated: וילבש, וירכב.

In addition, in connection with Mordechai it is stated "המלך חפץ ביקרו" - that the king wishes to honor you. Whereby, by Yosef it states: "בלעדך לא ירים איש את ידו ואת רגלו" - "and without your approval, no one may lift his hand or his foot in the entire land of Egypt." Yosef is not just granted honor, but power. Why is Yosef granted greater respect than Mordechai?

In Hegyona Shel Torah, Rav Firer offers three reasons.

## SAVING THE KING VS SAVING THE KINGDOM

First, Mordechai is credited with saving the king's life, but Yosef is credited with saving the entire kingdom. Mordechai revealed a plot to kill the king and it later enabled him to save the Jewish people. Yosef devised a plan to save not only the king, but the entire country from a famine.



This is a much greater feat, and therefore deserving of a greater honor.

### YOSEF'S HONOR REFLECTED ON PHARAOH

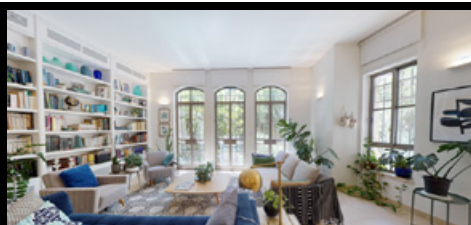
Second, honoring Yosef is essentially paying tribute to Pharaoh as well. Yosef interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, revealing a prophecy of an upcoming famine. When people honor Yosef for his ability to interpret dreams, they are also recognizing that a prophecy was revealed to Pharaoh and that is why the people were saved from a famine. There is a direct link between the two. In contrast, honoring Mordechai has no direct impact on Achashverosh.

In fact Pharaoh renamed Yosef **פַּעֲנֵחַ צִפּוֹנוֹת** – which Rashi interprets as **מַפְרֵשׁ צִפּוֹנוֹת** - a sort of fortune teller. This pseudonym publicizes Yosef's gift of interpreting dreams and that relates directly to the fact that Pharaoh had a dream that was a prophecy.

### WHEN JEWS ARE IN ISRAEL, JEWS WORLD-WIDE ARE INFUSED WITH HONOR

Third, Mordechai lived in exile and at the time, Israel was not under Jewish control. In contrast, although Yosef was also in exile, all other Jews (his father and brothers) lived in Israel. When Jews live in Israel, Jews living abroad can attain even greater honor. Having a state provides Jews all over the world with a sense of pride and security.

With the recent rise in antisemitism worldwide, we can be comforted that, notwithstanding the challenges we face, we live in a time when we have our own homeland. The State of Israel enhances Jewish pride – in a manner that resembles the honor Yosef was afforded. May we stand proud wherever we may be, knowing Israel is our home. “Am Yisrael Chai”! ■



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## Dear Friends,

In Rabbi Berman's recent Torah Tidbits message, the various challenges that have held us back from offering regular on-site programs at the OU Israel Center in the current circumstances were mentioned. B'Ezrat Hashem we intend to do our best to begin to gradually bring back as many of our beloved shiurim and programs as possible as we work to overcome those challenges in the weeks ahead.

There are now multiple ways to be kept up to date about virtual programs as well as in-person programs (which will be offered on-site at the OU Israel Center and in additional locations). In addition to advertisements for programs here in the pages of Torah Tidbits, we will also send periodic email newsletter updates. We also recently launched the OU Israel Community on WhatsApp, which allows those who join our WhatsApp community to access general program updates, as well as to join specific groups for many of our regular classes and programs.

To join the OU Israel WhatsApp community, enter this link into the browser on your phone:  
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# Remarkable Recognition

In a poignant moment, the sons of Yaa-kov arrive before the viceroy of Egypt. They prostrate themselves in deference to him, and the Torah tells us that the viceroy, Yosef Hatzadik, recognizes them as his brothers, but they don't recognize him. Rashi explains how this was possible, Yosef had grown a beard and looked different than what they remembered. Granted at that first meeting they did not recognize him, however, as the story unfolds, they never suspect it is Yosef! The Torah relates identifying details; Yosef Hatzadik ate separately from the Egyptians and he seated the brothers in age order. How is it that they were unable to see that he was their long-lost brother?

Rav Moshe Evgi in *Chachmat Hamatzpun* quotes a fundamental principle offered by the *Kovetz Inyanim* that gives insight into understanding the story. One must realize that whatever he sees or experiences is filtered with the message that Hashem wants him to determine. Hashem 'blinded' the brothers' eyes so they could not conceive that they were seeing Yosef Hatzadik even though there were so many facts pointing to that conclusion. We are mistaken to think that we are in control of even the

way we understand the circumstances we find ourselves in. Hashem is in control of everything, we can choose only how we respond. We must realize how every moment in our lives is dictated from Above and operate from this consciousness.

We find a different approach in *Infinity of Torah* by Rabbi Yochanan Zweig. He asks a more compelling question; why didn't the brothers recognize Yosef Hatzadik's voice? His answer tells us something profound about human nature. To the brothers, the person standing before them in Egypt was radically different from the mental image they had of their brother from Canaan. They remembered Yosef as a presumptuous young lad who was a dreamer. Now they were confronted by a royal figure with regal bearings, this couldn't possibly be their brother! They were simply unable to shift the perspective so embedded in their minds. Rabbi Zweig explains that we fall into this same trap as well. We may meet a person and form an unfavorable first impression. Even if we later come across information to the contrary, we find it difficult to change our initial attitude. The blessing we say at a bris, "may this young one become big" is thus a directive to the parents: look beyond the immaturity of this child as he grows. Focus instead on his inherent greatness, do not limit his potential with a narrow perspective. Then he will have a chance of truly becoming big. ■




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## RABBI JUDAH MISCHEL

Executive Director, Camp HASC  
Author of *Baderech: Along the Path of  
Teshuva* (Mosaica 2021)

# With a Kiss

As the Rav of Brisk and later in the holy city of Yerushalayim, Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin, known as the “Maharil”, *zt”l*, was known as a fiery *gaon* in Torah and man of great *chesed*. In 1881, after years of fostering needy children, and in the face of great suffering and poverty, the Maharil and his family opened an orphanage in the Old City.

When his son, Rav Yitzhak Yeruchem assumed leadership of the orphanage there was a group of young orphan girls there, who for a short period had been lovingly cared for in Rav Yitzchak and the Rebbetzin’s own home. Rav Yitzchak Yeruchem noticed that every night one of the little girls would cry after her bath and asked his wife what the reason might be. “Maybe she is cold?” the Rav gently suggested. Pausing to consider, the Rebbetzin replied, “I’m not sure; I do wrap her well as soon as she is out of the water...” “Perhaps the soap irritates her eyes?” guessed the Rav. “I don’t think so, I am very careful to not get soap in her eyes when washing her face and hair....”

That evening, while tucking the children in and saying the *Shema* with them, Rav Yitzchak Yeruchem sat down next to the girl’s bed. Softly, he asked her, “Darling child, is there something that makes you uncomfortable or upsets you after your bath? Is

there something that we can do better?”

With sadness in her eyes, the child assured the Rav that she felt loved and was well taken care of. “And on the contrary!” she said, “the Rebbetzin is so kind and gentle, and washes me even better than my mother used to.” Her voice trembling, she continued, “But after taking me out and wrapping me in a towel, my mother would always kiss me on the head... And it is her kiss that I miss so much.”

Throughout the special days of Chanukah, much of our attention has been focused on the miraculous events surrounding the *pach shemen*, the lone flask of pure oil found in the *Mikdash* that burned for eight days and nights. Who is not moved by the powerful, soul stirring imagery of a little bit of oil lighting up the darkness of exile. Our Sages state clearly that this miracle is the core reason and foundation of these wondrous days of *hoda’ah* and *hallel*, the celebration of *Chag Urim*, the Festival of Lights. (*Gemara Shabbos*, 21b).

Perhaps a bit lost in the shuffle is the other core reason for Chanukah: the brave Maccabean revolt and the astounding military victory of a handful of *yeshivah* students and *kohanim* over the mighty Greeks. While in our liturgy we do mention the “deliverance of the many into the hands of the few”, many commentators have addressed the frequent seeming omission,



in our thought and commemoration, of the miracle of our physical survival, and our strong emphasis on the victory of the spirit.

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz, zt'l, Rosh Yeshivas Mir and author of *Sichos Mussar* develops this question and expounds on the different categories of miracles and the underlying message they represent. The Maccabean military victory was a miracle of necessity: to ensure our survival in face of threat and existential harm. The Ribbono shel Olam had a 'duty' to save us from physical annihilation. However, the *nes pach shemen*, the miracle of the oil, is of a completely different nature. The Menorah had not been lit in the Bais haMikdash for some time, and Halacha explicitly states that *טומאה הותרה בציבור*, impure oil would have been *acceptable* to be used under those circumstances. Any oil would have fulfilled the requirements, and our reconsecration of the Temple would still have been a cause for celebration and joy. Therefore, beyond ensuring our basic need of survival, the miracle of our finding *shemen zayit zach*, pure oil that lasted eight nights, was like a kiss from our loving Father in Heaven, an expression of love and connection above and beyond all concepts of 'duty'.

Rav Shmuel Silber, shlit'a, the inspiring *Mara d'Asra* of Yeshivas Toras Chaim of Suburban Baltimore, extends this concept further, and draws out a powerful message relevant to our current parshios:

When Yosef is betrayed by his brothers and eventually sold to a caravan of *Yishmaelim*, the Torah points out, with seemingly extraneous detail, who these merchants were: "...a caravan of Yishmaelim

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coming from Gilead, their camels bearing gum, balm, and ladanum to be taken to Egypt (*Bereishis*, 37:25).

Rashi explains the lesson in detailing the merchandise: להודיע מתן שכרן של צדיקים, "It is to teach us the reward of the righteous." Generally, these types of caravans carried naphtha and tar, which were foul-smelling. Through His *hashgacha pratis*, a small 'miracle' was arranged by God for the benefit of Yosef so he would not suffer additional discomfort from noxious fumes.

Rav Zeidel Epstein, zt'l, the sagacious Mashgiach Ruchani of Torah Ohr, pointed out that while Yosef was made to suffer terribly, and being surrounded by sweet smelling herbs and spices certainly did not make everything 'all better'. Rather, the fragrance was an expression of Divine love, akin to a 'kiss' from Hashem, a sign

to Yosef that he was not alone.

The first three letters of the name of Chanukah's holy protagonist, Matisyahu Kohen Gadol, מתיש, mean "gift". The second half of his name is formed by three letters that spell one of Hashem's names, יהוה. Therefore, explains Rebbe Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, the Bnei Yissaschar, even the name of Matisyahu was a sign to us: "a gift from Hashem"...

May Chanukah draw to a close with a resounding and miraculous military victory and revealed good. May we be blessed to receive a great gift of salvation from the Ribono Shel Olam...A gift sealed with a kiss. ■

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# SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

*Parshat Mikeitz* revolves around the ascent of *Yosef* to the position of chief advisor to *Pharaoh*, his brothers appearing before him, and *Yosef* orchestrating that the brothers will return to bring his youngest brother *Binyamin* to Egypt as well. When the brothers return together with *Binyamin*, The *Torah* tells us that *Yosef* had a feast prepared for him and his brothers.

(לד) וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשְׁאֵת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֲלֵהֶם וַתֵּרֶב מִשְׁאֵת בְּנִימִן מִמִּשְׁאֵת כָּלֶם חֲמִשׁ יָדוֹת וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ:

*Portions were served from his table; but Binyamin's portion was several times that of anyone else. And they drank their fill with him.*

*Rashi*, offers an interesting insight on our verse:

וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ שֶׁמֶכְרוּהוּ לֹא שָׁתוּ יֵין וְלֹא הוּא שָׁתָה יֵין  
וְאִתּוֹ הָיִים שָׁתוּ

*From the day they sold him they had not drunk wine nor had he (Yosef) drunk wine. That day, however, they drank wine.*

What is the significance to the brothers and *Yosef* all having refrained from drinking wine for the many years since *Yosef* had been sold into slavery, and why now, were they all drinking wine? *Yosef* indeed recognized his brothers, yet his brothers clearly did not recognize *Yosef*, so why now after all these years did they suddenly each feel comfortable to drink wine?

The *Yismach Yisrael*, the Rebbe of Alexander *zy'a*, suggests that *Yosef* may have consumed the wine because he recognized his brothers, but since the brothers clearly did not recognize *Yosef*, how are we to interpret this

sudden change in long standing behavior?

The Rebbe suggests that since that tragic moment years before, when the brothers sold *Yosef* as a result of their envy and jealousy toward him, they had struggled to remove the character trait of envy from their hearts. As they sat at this *seuda*, they witnessed as *Binyamin* was served a portion five times the portion served to each of them, and despite this fact, they were not jealous or angry, but were simply appreciative of the portion that each one of them had received. Realizing they had finally managed to overcome this character trait of envy, they finally were able to let go of some of the guilt and angst they had been holding onto for so many years, and allowed themselves to enjoy the wine that was served to them as well.

Similarly *Rebbe Noach of Makarov, zy'a*, one of the disciples of the *Chozeh MiLublin, zy'a*, taught that this episode serves as an important practical message for each of us regarding the damage and harm, that results from jealousy and unhealthy rivalry, especially amongst siblings.

*Yehi Ratzon*, may each of us heed these powerful teachings from these two great Chasidic Masters, and may we merit to rid our hearts of any envy or jealousy that all too often serves as an impediment to *Avodat Hashem*, happiness and spiritual growth. Now more than ever, we need to work on calibrating our moral compass to see the good in one another and to love one another. ■



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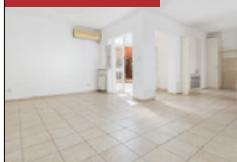
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## GEULAS YISRAEL

BY RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN

Ram, Yeshivat Har Etzion

# Strange Alliances of Hate

In the 83rd perek of Tehillim Dovid Hamelech voices his fear of an alliance of nations conspiring to annihilate his nation: “they plot and threaten to extinguish any trace of the Jewish people”

אמרו לנו וננחידים מגוי ולא יזכר שם ישראל עוד

Sadly, these sickening threats have echoed over the past 3000 years, and more recently, during the past two months.

Dovid Hamelech’s anxiety is magnified because these verbal attacks are hurled by a consortium of at least 11 enemies:

אֱהָלֵי אֲדוֹם וַיִּשְׁמְעוּאֵלִים מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִימִים: גְּבַל וְעַמּוֹן וְעַמְלֵק פָּלְשֶׁת עַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל צוּר: גַּם־אֲשׁוּר נָלֹחַ עִמָּם הֵיוּ זָרוּעַ לַבְּנֵי־לוֹט סָלָה:

This coalition of violence includes nations who share little common interest such as Ashur and Amon. Shockingly, this registry of murderers even includes sworn enemies. Even Edom and Yishma’el who are perpetual rivals, collude together against Jewish survival.

Though Dovid Hamelech probably references the wars of Yehoshafat which occurred toward the end of the first Mikdash, his ominous description of an alliance of genocidal enemies foreshadows Jewish

history. From the very onset, we witnessed hated enemies laying aside their mutual dislike to form unions against our nation and in defiance of our rights to Israel.

### BILAM: CONSPIRATOR FOR HIRE

Pharo effectively launched the history of antisemitism. In describing his search for a clever solution for the Jewish problem Pharo announced

הִבֵּה נִתְחַכְמָה לוֹ

Commenting upon the term הִבֵּה - which generally connotes coordination between multiple people- the midrash details a summit meeting convened by Pharo to address the growing Jewish menace. Among those who attended this summit were Yitro, a Midianite priest, Bilam, a prophet for hire, and Iyov, a cryptic Biblical figure. There is no plausible reason for Midianite emissaries to crash a conference addressing an “internal” Egyptian issue. Yet, any conference promoting hatred of Jews is bound to draw from a wide audience, including enemies of the hosts themselves.

Of course, this was not the only antisemitic conspiracy Bilam participated in. Two hundred years later, as our people approached the Land promised by Hashem, standing at the doorstep of destiny, Bilam was drafted by Balak, king of Moav, to lay a supernatural spell upon the people of Hashem. Moav and Midyan, from where Bilam hailed, were natural adversaries who quickly put aside their mutual dislikes to launch a united front and assault Jewish history. Evidently, there

is something primordial about antisemitism which bonds natural enemies into alliances of hate. It happened before and it would happen again.

### AMALEK AND PERSIA

Centuries later, toward the end of our first galus, we launched our return to Israel and laid new foundations to the Mikdash. A new murderous coalition arose attempting to thwart Jewish redemption. Haman, a descendant of Amalek, and Achashverosh, a Persian monarch formed a homicidal union seeking Jewish genocide.

שבכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותינו

In every generation they rise up against us. In some generations they rise up against us in strangely bizarre alliances. As Dovid Hamelech predicted, Jewish history is riddled with bizarre coalitions forged in hate and genocidal conspiracies. As Yechezkeil prophesied, it also ends that way.

### GOG U'MAGOG

The details of the wars of Gog and Magog are shrouded in mystery. Concerned that we would be distracted by Messianic fantasies, the Rambam famously discouraged detailed inquiry into these wars. Without delving into the obscure specifics of these wars and given the impossibility of accurately identifying Gog and Magog, one thing is patently clear: the battles will be launched by a king (Gog), who rallies the armies of Magog and is joined by militias from at least six other nations. These heavily armed legions will march upon Yerushalayim aiming to evict us from our Homeland. By roundly defeating this confederation of armies, Hashem will firmly establish His name and His presence in human consciousness. At this point, history

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will surge toward its redemptive terminus. Redemptive history will conclude much in the same fashion that it began: antisemitic coalitions composed of unlikely partners, will be defeated in their attempt to destroy the people of Hashem.

Obviously, it is impossible to graph the Gog U'Magog timeline. Past attempts to tag Gog U'Magog to major calamities such as the two world wars of the 20th century and the Holocaust often raised Messianic expectations which boomeranged when they weren't immediately fulfilled. Though we avoid attempts to decipher the Gog U'Magog puzzle, the basic outline of the story reminds us that, at the tail end of history we will continue to battle against strange coalitions of hatred, just as we have throughout our history.

### FUNDAMENTALISTS AND MORAL ATHEISTS

History is veering toward its endpoint and, once again, we face unlikely unions of hatred. The modern antisemitic partnership seeking our destruction combines Islamic Fundamentalist murderers who celebrate blood and death alongside hyper-liberal college students who foolishly buy whatever ridiculous woke narrative they are fed. These partners of murder and hate couldn't be more different. One

group speaks of a god who craves blood and revenge while believing that they alone possess a monopoly on truth. Non-believers are all infidels slated for elimination. The other faction of this antisemitic confederacy barely believes in any Higher Being but does believe in the god of moral relativism. This god has instructed them that absolute truth and objective morality are merely fictions. Truth and morality are social constructs which are completely based upon “context”. Just ask the high priests of moral relativism who happen to preside over Ivy league colleges in the US!

The most absurd aspect of this strange union is the irony that Islamic murderers would probably behead many of the LGBTQ supporters of Hamas. Once again, we face an axis of murder comprising natural enemies so drunk with hatred of Jews that they completely ignore their own internal differences.

This absurd phenomenon is indigenous to Jewish history and says a lot about the nature of antisemitism.

### ANTISEMITISM HOVERS ABOVE HISTORY

Firstly, it is proof that antisemitism is larger than any single factor or reason. Numerous theories have been offered to explain the scourge of antisemitism. Jew hatred has been traced to economic, geopolitical, prejudicial, cultural, racial, and historical factors. Though these theories all contain partial truth, none of them can account for the recurring phenomenon whereby sworn enemies unite against our people. Antisemitism must be larger than rational theories.

We are the people chosen by Hashem to call humanity to higher moral and religious ground. We play the role of perennial whistleblower, and no one likes a whistleblower.

As the conscience of humanity, we are hated because we constantly call humanity to higher ground. Obviously, the average antisemite would not articulate this as the root of his Jew loathing, but this factor lies at the heart of human subconsciousness. At the dawn of Jewish history Avraham was informed that, as part of his historical mission he was fated to be a stranger and to face hostility. Antisemitism is baked into the fabric of history, and it will only fully end when history itself ends.

Secondly, the recurring nature of “cooperative antisemitism” proves that, ultimately, those who hate us are, in reality, struggling against the presence of Hashem in our world. Rebellion against Hashem is the only force strong enough to unite natural enemies. It is the only force strong enough to unite Sunnis and Shiites in their battle for Yerushalayim. It is the only force strong enough to unite Nazis and Communists. Those who battle against Hashem are irrepressibly drawn to battle against His people. Were they able to scale heaven, the Midrash claims, they would wage war in heaven. Unable to ascend to heaven they pour their wrath against Hashem’s children on this earth.

For the enemies of Hashem, the desire to deny His presence is so powerful that it mutes any other factor or rivalry. To serve this criminal agenda the enemies of Hashem are willing to join any league and to ally with hated foes. Any other agenda pales in comparison to their desire to drive Hashem, chas v’shalom, from this world. Antisemitism isn’t just the oldest hatred. Our War is His War. Our Redemption is His Redemption. Nothing else explains antisemitism. Not Now, not Ever. ■



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## HAFTORAH INSIGHTS

BY REBBETZIN DR. ADINA  
SHMIDMAN



# Dreams and Destiny

## MELACHIM ALEPH 3:15-4:1

"חלום חלמתי ואיני יודע מה הוא."

"I have dreamed a dream and I do not know what it means." These words are part of the paragraph we recite in the Diaspora between the phrases of Birkat Kohanim. Generally these words are understood as a plea of Hashem to make our dreams comprehensible.

As the backdrop to our Haftorah, we read about Shlomo HaMelech's dream in which Hashem asks him to make a request. Shlomo asks to be blessed with wisdom to judge the nation with justice and discernment. Hashem approves and fulfills Shlomo's petition and indeed, we consider Shlomo to be the wisest of all men. This week's Haftorah begins with a continuation of this story. Shlomo displays his wisdom in the well-known incident with two women claiming the same child as their own. His brilliance establishes the monarchy and guides him through his forty-year reign.

In Parshas Mikeitz we read the continuation of the story of Yosef and his dreams. Yosef's dreams were about his destiny to rule over his brothers, which he then shares with them to their great dismay. By strong contrast, Shlomo's dream is not a

prediction about his future rulership over Klal Yisroel but rather provides the opportunity to request the ability to rule his people justly.

These stories are similar in that Yosef and Shlomo are two titanic figures whose dreams guide them to enormous success and to the pinnacle of leadership. These holy men understood that their dreams required them to strive for greatness. And they did.

Perhaps then our supplication in Birkat Kohanim should be understood not merely as an appeal for clarity of our dreams, but as a hope that we understand our innermost dreams and aspirations to best fulfill our potential. May we be *zoche* to profound dreams, appreciate their deepest meanings and climb the highest heights possible. May we see the fulfillment of our national dream, peace and harmony in our Land. ■

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# TOWARDS MEANINGFUL SHABBOS

BY REBBETZIN ZEMIRA OZAROWSKI  
Director of OU Israel L'Ayla Women's Initiative



## The Shabbat Meals

*A few weeks ago, I had the privilege to help run and participate in the OU Women's Initiative Mission to Israel for Rebbetzins and lay leaders. We spent three packed days visiting bereaved mothers, families of those who were kidnapped, displaced women from the south, chayalot, and wives of chayalim. The mission was intense and impactful on many levels. But one of the themes that kept repeating itself was the unbelievable strength exhibited by all of these heroes. One would expect to find broken, grieving families surrounded by sadness and pain. But instead, we left each meeting filled with hope and faith, having been inspired by the ability of these individuals to see beyond their personal difficulties and loss in the present and to have a deeper and longer-reaching perspective. Over and over, I wondered to myself – What material are these super-heroes made of?? From where do they find such strength?*

**Gemara Shabbat 118a** says:

”כל המקיים שלוש סעודות בשבת ניצול משלוש פורעניות: מחבלו של משיח, מדינה של גיהנם וממלחמת גוג ומגוג.”

*“Whoever makes sure to eat three meals every Shabbos will be saved from three calamities - the birth-pangs of the Mashiach, condemnation to Gehinom, and the war of*

*Gog and Magog at the end of days”.* This seems like a very random statement. We all love the Shabbat meals – sitting at a festively set table, eating the delicious Challa, chicken soup, and cholent. But why would enjoying this scene grant us such merit? What is the connection?

The **Peninei Halacha** explains that it's not only about enjoying good food. Rather, when a person is able to use everything he has, whether it's the spiritual or the physical, in service of Hashem, he is practicing being able to see the bigger picture.

כאשר אדם זוכה להתקשר בכל ישותו אל השבת, ברוח ובחומר, בלימוד תורה ותפילה וגם בעונג שבת ומנוחתה, הרי הוא מתרומם אל מעבר לחסרונות שבעולם, אל עולם הנצח שכולו טוב, וממילא הוא ניצול מכל הפורענויות שבעולם.

*When one is privileged to connect to Shabbat with all his being, spiritual and material, through Torah study and prayer as well as rest and pleasure, he transcends the world's flaws and reaches the eternally good world. Thus he is automatically saved from the calamities of this world.*

What does this mean? A person in this world has the capacity to see things in two different ways – he can either look in the here and now and see things as they are or he can look deeper and see beyond. When a person looks at a bowl of cholent, he can either see it for what it is – a delicious bowl of meat, beans, and potatoes and enjoy it as such. Or he can see beyond – and see it as a



means to enjoy quality time with family and friends, discussing Torah, singing zemirot, and connecting in his service of Hashem.

It seems that when we learn to use the physical world as a conduit to achieving closeness to Hashem, it helps us to develop our internal ability to look at the bigger picture and to understand that life is a process. Practicing this on a weekly basis will help a person to look at all of life in this way - to look beyond what is, and to see everything as Hashem's master plan. It is because of this that a person who learns to properly enjoy the Shabbat meals will, as a natural consequence, merit to recognize that the *chevlei Mashiach* are part of Hashem's larger plan. It doesn't mean he won't experience the pain of the *chevlei Mashiach*, but he will have the long-term perspective and patience to understand that there is much more than meets the eye. Will it be painful? Definitely, but it will also be purposeful, which will make it much easier to bear. The heroes we met on the mission have a "Shabbat-meal mindset". Their inner strength didn't come from nowhere, it came from years of building up a philosophy and belief system which enables them to see things with greater perspective.

The question is – how do we create Shabbat meals which really do bring us closer to Hashem? How do we find that inspiration within the kugel and gefilte fish? I don't have any magic answers but b'ezrat Hashem, we will spend the new few weeks discussing the different aspects of our Shabbat meals – the kiddush and challah, the zemirot, and the other various minhagim – and that will hopefully help us to bring our Seudot Shabbat to the next level. ■

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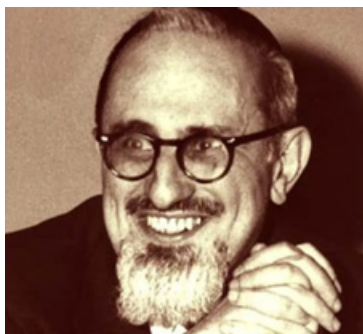
**RABBI AARON GOLDSCHIEDER**

EDITOR, TORAH TIDBITS

# The Faith of Forgiveness

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.”<sup>3</sup> But how does Yosef have any room for clemency given what he has gone through at his brothers’ hands? Surprisingly,

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).

1. Rashbam ad loc.



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. ■

**Rabbi Goldscheider** is the author of the newly published book 'Torah United' (OU Press), featuring divrei Torah on the weekly parasha from Rav Kook, Rabbi Solovetichik, and the Chassidic Masters.

## Real Life Rescues



### Tel Aviv Man Suffers Cardiac Arrest In His Vehicle, Is Revived By Bystanders and EMTs

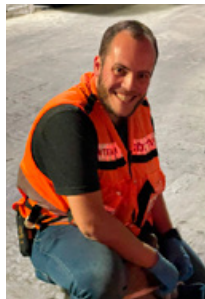
Tel Aviv - Thursday evening in front of Tel Aviv University, a car came to an abrupt stop, obstructing traffic. The drivers in the cars behind the stopped vehicle discovered that the driver of the stopped car had lost consciousness. They quickly alerted emergency services.

In a nearby college, United Hatzalah volunteer EMT Shalom Cohen was immersed in last-minute exam preparations. A call from his lecturer, who had witnessed the incident and knew of Cohen's medical training, alerted him about the incident.

The volunteer rushed to his car, navigated through the intense evening traffic of Tel Aviv, and arrived at the scene in under three minutes. A coordinated effort by a first responder and bystanders without medical equipment had begun to take place. The group was performing chest compressions on the man who had been taken out of his vehicle by the bystanders. Joining the rescue effort with a full medical kit, Cohen took out his defibrillator and attached it to the patient's chest. A moment later an electric shock was administered.

After another round of chest compressions, Cohen, together with the other first responder re-evaluated the patient's vital signs. With a weak but palpable radial pulse, the patient opened his eyes. The pair, relieved, checked for other vitals, and provided assisted ventilation until the patient reached a normal oxygen saturation level. They continued providing care, monitoring heart rate and oxygen saturation to ensure he remained stable.

After 15 intense minutes, a mobile intensive care ambulance arrived at the scene. The first responders handed over a now conscious patient to the intensive care team, who took charge of the patient's ongoing care and transported him to the hospital for definitive care in stable condition.



“Administering a shock with my defibrillator and witnessing the patient regain consciousness for the first time is an incredible feeling,” Cohen shared after the incident. “It took me a while to calm down after but I nevertheless managed to make it to my exam and even pass it with flying colors.”



# A Mistake in the *Beracha Acharona* on Wine

לעילוי נשמת  
יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

**Question:** After *Havdala*, I recited quietly the *beracha acharona* on grape juice by heart, and finished it aloud for my family to answer Amen. I was caught off guard when my wife alerted me to the fact that I mistakenly finished off “... *al ha’aretz v’al peiroteha*” (instead of “*al ha’aretz v’al pri gafnah*”). I do not know if my mistake was only on the last line (I knew the *beracha* was for grape juice, and I am usually proficient at *berachot*.) Should I have redone the *beracha*?

**Answer:** (The order of presentation is pedagogically rather than logically chosen). Starting to fix the mistake within *toch k’dai dibbur* (1-2 seconds) of finishing the *beracha* (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 209:2) would have solved your problem, but it sounds like your realization came later.

Can you assume you did the rest of the *beracha* correctly? On the one hand, you regularly make this *beracha* correctly right after *Havdala*. On the other hand, since you finished off incorrectly, there is a good chance that the mistake started earlier. We, thus, must treat the matter as a *safek* whether you were accurate in one or both

of the other mentions the specific food-category. When one has a *safek* whether he recited a *beracha* on food (or, equivalently, whether he did so validly), he does not recite/repeat the *beracha* (ibid. 3).

However, it would not help if you said the other part(s) of the *beracha* correctly. A *beracha*’s concluding part is crucial, and while there is a *machloket* whether getting the end right suffices, if it is wrong, the *beracha* is invalid (ibid. 59:2; Be’ur Halacha ad loc.).

However, you did not have to repeat the *beracha acharona* because the text you recited was not so wrong. There is a rule (with exceptions) that a *beracha* that is not slated for a certain food counts *b’di’eved* when its content is also true, even when a more specific *beracha* was prescribed. The most famous application is that *Shehakol N’hiya Bidvaro* is a valid *beracha rishona* after the fact for any food. The rule also validates *b’di’eved* one who recited *Borei Pri Ha’adama* instead of *Borei Pri Haetz* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 206:1) because fruit of a tree in effect grow from the ground, because the tree itself grows there (Mishna Berura ad loc. 1).

Grapes and wine come from an *etz* (a grapevine, halachically, is a tree) and,

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specifically, from a *gefen* (a grapevine). Therefore, logic seems to dictate that if one recites *Borei Pri Haetz* on wine, he should be *yotzei* because the *beracha* is true – the wine came from a tree. (R. Akiva Eiger (to Magen Avraham 208:22) and Nishmat Adam (1:50:1) are among those who concur.) If so, the same is true of the *beracha acharona* (our case) – although he should have recited *Al Hagefen*, he should be *yotzei* with *Al Hapeirot* (see Be'ur Halacha to OC 208:18). However, there is actually a *machloket* – the Magen Avraham (208:22), Yad Ephrayim (ad loc.), and Aruch Hashulchan (OC 208:28) say that *Borei Pri Haetz* does not work *b'di'eved* for wine. The Yad Ephrayim explains that since wine (and bread) received a special *beracha* beyond those of their category of food, *Chazal* did not allow the *beracha* to be fulfilled with a lesser, albeit accurate, *beracha*. The Mishna Berura (208:70) cites both positions and identifies *Rishonim* corroborating each (Sha'ar Hatziyun ad loc. 67). In conclusion, he treats the situation as a *safek*, and therefore based on *safek berachot l'hakel*, recommends not

reciting *Borei Pri Hagefen* afterward.

Based on the comparison between *beracha rishona* and *beracha acharona*, *safek* obviates the practical need for another *beracha* in your case. In your case, there is an additional reason to refrain from another *beracha*. According to a serious position among *Rishonim*, the *beracha acharona* on wine is supposed to conclude with "... *al ha'aretz v'al hapeirot*" (mentioning land and fruit, whereas the "fruit of the grapevine" is mentioned only earlier), and the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 11) rules that either is fine. Therefore, you, conceivably, said the *beracha* perfectly, and even if not, it was close enough to preclude another recitation. ■

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## Terumot and Ma'aserot

### Question:

A while back I attended a workshop about separating *terumot* and *ma'aserot*, where we learned the meaning of the various stages of the separation. I also recall that there are some opinions that hold that if someone does not understand what they are doing, the procedure is not valid. While I still have a vague idea of what I'm doing, I don't remember the exact details. Is my separation still valid?

### Answer:

It certainly is preferable to understand exactly what you are doing, and it's a good thing that you attended a lecture on the topic. However, if you understand the basics of the separation, it is nonetheless valid if:

1. You set aside at least a bit more than 1% of the produce understand that you are designating it as *terumot*, which you will wrap up and discard.
2. You read the text.
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and **designating** parts of the produce as gifts to a **Kohen**, **Levite**, and when applicable, to a **poor person**, or as **ma'aser sheni** (this year is a *ma'aser sheni* year).

Even if you don't remember how the percentages work and understand where 9% of the produce is or how it works, the separation is still valid. In any case, I would recommend refreshing your memory on the process. We have excellent lectures on our website on the topic: [toraland.org.il](http://toraland.org.il), [en.toraland.org.il](http://en.toraland.org.il). ■

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# Consistency with Rules

Why is it so important to be consistent with rules?

As parents, we are human and it's impossible to be 100% consistent. Situations change, life gets interrupted and sometimes we even change our minds. However, every parent should try to be as consistent as possible when it comes to their most important, iron-clad rules. For instance, if you have a zero tolerance rule for physical aggression, or lying or doing something dangerous, if the child breaks those rules, you should point it out and there should be a consequence. When a parent follows through, the child knows the parent can be trusted and relied upon and that he keeps his word. It teaches a child to listen. The parent is seen as the authority figure, one who is interested in protecting his child and keeping him safe. It also allows the child to know what's expected of him.

When children know what's expected of them and it's enforced, it contributes to a child's sense of identity and security. Each family has their own rules and decides what's important to them and the values they want to instill. Whether its rules related to screens or allowing certain snacks, or curfews, parents should decide what is of utmost importance to them.

When rules become inconsistent, or are not followed through with a consequence for breaking them, then a child becomes confused. A child begins to test the parents to see if they even know what their own rules are. If not, their voice becomes background noise and the child only listens after a parent explodes which tends to lead to unpleasant power struggles. Being clear on what's important to you and being confident is key to maintaining a respectful relationship.

As children grow, rules may change and adapt to certain situations. Bed times change, food restrictions change even tzniut and davening rules may adapt if teenagers need more flexibility. The most important thing to do when rules are being adapted, is to speak about it, keep communication open and make new rules clear. You want to make sure that rules especially for teenagers are ones that they can follow and that parents can realistically enforce if necessary.

Being firm about your rules and communicating them to your children will help you avoid a downward spiral in the long run. It is important to remember that not everything has to be rule. Pick your battles and only enforce things that really matter to you and the rest you can allow for negotiations.

Be'hatzlacha ■

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WELCOME, FELLOW OFFICE WORKERS FOLK, AND DISTINGUISHED OFFICE WORKERS FOLK FAMILIES, TO OUR ANNUAL OFFICE WORKER CHANUKA PRODUCTION!

THIS YEAR, WE ARE TICKLED TO OUR TOOTSIES TO PRESENT BEFORE YOU - "JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT!"

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YAAAAAAAY!

AS STAGE MANAGER, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE CAST, COSTUMES, PROPS AND BACKDROP ARE ALL THE HANDIWORK OF OUR OWN OFFICE WORKERS FOLK...

YAAAY, DADDY!

WE HAD TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT WE COULD, SO IN TRUTH THIS SHOW SHOULD BE CALLED "JOSEPH AND HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOR BATHROBE..."

...AND LET'S HAVE A PARTICULARLY BIG HAND FOR MR. CODSHOW HIMSELF FOR SPORTINGLY AGREEING TO PARTAKE IN A ROLE, AND ANOTHER BIG HAND FOR ME FOR GETTING THE WORKERS COMMITTEE TO THREATEN WITH A GENERAL STAFF STRIKE IF HE DOESN'T.

GRRRR... JUST YOU WAIT...

WRONG MUSICAL, SIR! HERE WE GO! CURTAIN -UP!

SOME 45 MINUTES LATER

"GUESS WHAT, IN HIS BED, PHAROAH HAD AN UNEASY NIGHT, HE HAD HAD A DREAM THAT PINNED HIM TO HIS SHEETS IN FRIGHT..."

NO ONE KNEW THE MEANING OF THIS DREAM..."

COME ON, SIR, YOU'RE UP IN A MINUTE. LET'S GET THAT WIG ON!

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU TALKED ME INTO THIS, YERUSHALMI, BUT YOU ARE SO FIRED...

THAT'S THE SPIRIT! JUST WHAT YOU SAID TO ME LAST YEAR!

"MY SERVICE TO PHAROAH HAS BEGUN... TELL ME YOUR PROBLEMS, MINNIIGHTY ONE..."

"WELL, I WAS WANDERING ALONG BY THE BANKS OF THE RIVER, WHEN SEVEN FAT COWS CAME UP OUT OF THE NILE, UH-HUH-UH-HUH!"

IS THAT...

CAN'T BE!

MR. CODSHOW?!

AND RIGHT BEHIND THESE FINE HEALTHY ANIMALS CAME SEVEN OTHER COWS, SKINNY AND VILE, UH-HUH-UH-HUH..."

"AND WELL, THE THIN COWS ATE THE FAT COWS, WHICH I THOUGHT WOULD DO THEM GOOOOOO UH-HUH-UH-HUH... OH YEEEEEAH... BUT IT DIDN'T MAKE 'EM FATTER..."

WOW! SOMEONE'S GOT INTO THE MOOD!







## TORAH 4 TEENS

## BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



**Emily Stemp**  
**Staff Development**  
**Director**

### Am Yisrael: Modern Bonds, Ancient Roots

This week's parsha, Miketz, describes the intense meeting between Yosef and his brothers in Mitzrayim, when they come in search of food during the famine. Yosef, having ascended to second in command to Pharaoh, is aware that the men are his brothers, but does not reveal his identity - instead, he accuses the brothers of being spies, and provides an opportunity to prove themselves. He takes Shimon prisoner and sends them to bring their youngest brother, Binyamin, who was born only after Yosef had been sold into slavery.

When Binyamin arrives in Mitzrayim, Yosef is overwhelmed with emotion upon hearing that since Yosef's disappearance, Binyamin had had 10 sons, and named them all after different aspects of Yosef's tumultuous life journey (Rashi, Bereishit 43:30). Binyamin's longing and awareness of his missing brother is so palpable — even though they had never met — and he is determined to incorporate Yosef's spirit and legacy into his family and their collective future.

There is a stark contrast between the types of brotherhood demonstrated by Binyamin versus the rest of the brothers. While the brothers initially manifested jealousy

and sibling rivalry, and only embraced Yosef as a brother many years later, Binyamin showed only love and deep connection toward him, despite having never met him - so much so that he named each of his children after a different part of Yosef's life!

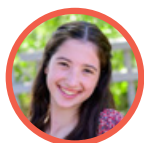
Just as Binyamin lost his brother, we too have lost a brother — many brothers — over the last 2 months, and there are now hundreds of Jewish babies who hold their names, or the names of their hometowns. As Am Yisrael faces this pivotal moment in our history, we must realize that we are all brothers in the truest sense. While we have the capacity to manifest the ugly side of brotherhood - to fight with and turn our backs on one another, we also have the capacity to love, connect and empathize with each other so deeply, even when apart, or indeed, without ever meeting at all.

May we not need the horrible events we are witnessing today to unleash the loving brotherhood between us. May we never lose sight of the connection and love we hold for one another, and may we allow it to fuel our united spirit so we can be a true **אור לגוים**. Am Yisrael Chai!

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## Yosef's Growth Through Adversity

In Parshat Miketz, Yosef's journey from slavery to leadership provides profound lessons for personal growth, particularly in the midst of the current war in Israel. Yosef's early hardships, being sold into slavery and unjustly imprisoned, illustrate the resilience needed to face adversity—similarly, during times of war, confronting challenges with determination and strength becomes crucial for personal development.

As Yosef acquires vital skills during trials, we too can cultivate strength, bravery, and understanding amid the difficulties of war. These testing moments offer opportunities to discover latent abilities, mirroring Yosef's journey towards becoming better individuals.

Yosef's decision to forgive his brothers, instead of seeking revenge, teaches us the power of choosing forgiveness during conflicts. In times of war, opting for forgiveness, assistance, and understanding becomes a catalyst for personal and communal growth, paving the way for a brighter future.

Parshat Miketz encourages contemplation on personal growth amidst tough times. Whether facing individual challenges or communal struggles in Israel during war, drawing inspiration from Yosef's story is paramount. By embodying strength, understanding, and forgiveness, we can navigate hardships, foster personal development and fortify our community.

Yosef's hardships underscore the theme of personal growth through adversity, demonstrating how challenges, when faced with strength and determination, lead to unexpected and significant achievements. From being sold into slavery to interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, Yosef's journey inspires us to navigate life's difficulties, emerging stronger and wiser. ■



### Be'er Tziporah a'h - Bottled Water Gemach



Walking down King George St. in Jerusalem and want a cold bottle of water?

Come help yourself to a bottle at  
 52 King George.

In loving memory of Yoni's wife  
**Tziporah a'h**, a true Eishes Chayil, always full of chessed, kindness and laughter, and brought life and strength to so many people, that she touched! She was like Aron, who loved peace and pursued peace.



Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

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