

## Parashah #10

(Updated 12.27.08)

Miketz ~ מקץ ~At The End

Torah: B'resheet/Genesis 41:1~44:17

Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1<sup>st</sup> Kings 3:15~4:1; Z'kharyah/Zechariah 2:14~4:7

B'rit Hadashah: Acts 7:9-11 & 12-16; Yochanan/John 10:22-39

I don't know about you . . . but these last several days have been very, very special for me. Lighting the Hanukkiah each night, saying the blessings, and just resting in His presence has been incredible. As we approached this Shabbat, I was a little sad that Hanukkah will soon be over but then I got a Kiss from G~d! However, I guess we better go over our Parashah (Torah Portion) for this week before I tell you about that.

### CHAPTER 41

It begins with Yosef still sitting in a prison for a crime he did not commit. **Verse 1** tells us "**at the end of two years**" Yosef is freed from prison, which the Sages say was on Rosh Hashanah, a time when many prayers are answered. I don't know if that is actually true but it sounds good! Also in **verse 1**, the Chumash says that Pharaoh was standing over "**the River**". Usually, throughout Torah, "**the River**" refers to the Nile River because of its importance in Egyptian life. (The Complete Jewish Bible renders these words as "**the Nile River**"). Networks of canals were dug from it to irrigate as much farmland as possible. Because it was a source of Egypt's prosperity, it was considered one of the country's "gods".

Pharaoh has had a dream, no; make that two dreams (**verses 1-7**). Finding no one in all of Egypt able to interpret them for him, he is in great anguish. At this point (**verse 9**), the Cup Bearer confesses that he was at fault for not mentioning the young Hebrew slave, earlier. If in fact, this is at the time of Rosh Hashanah, it is a good time for him to be confessing his sins.

Did you notice the disparaging manner in which the Cupbearer referred to Yosef? It's really quite easy to read over it. **Verse 12**, "and there, with us, was a **Hebrew youth**, a **slave** of the Chamberlain".

- A "**youth**", implied that he was ignorant and unfit for distinction;
- a "**Hebrew**", meant he was a foreigner who didn't understand the Egyptian language
- and, on top of that, he was a "**slave**".

It was written in the laws of Egypt that a **slave can neither be a ruler nor wear the robes of a noble**. It's important to remember this "written Egyptian law"!

Then, as we read in **verses 14-36**, Yosef is summoned from prison "**and they rushed him**" to Pharaoh, who says that no one can interpret his dream but he has heard that Yosef can. Yosef quickly replied that it was beyond him but "**G~d will respond to Pharaoh's welfare**." We all know about the interpretation of seven years of abundance, quickly followed by the seven years of famine. Not only once did Pharaoh dream this but twice with different "characters" if you will. It made me think of **Mattityahu/Matthew 18:16** "By the mouth of two or three witnesses, every fact may be confirmed." Yosef recommends that Pharaoh appoint a discerning and wise man to oversee the land explaining how this feat can be carried out for the good of all. Pharaoh says to his officials, (**verse 38**) "Can we find anyone else like him? The Spirit of God lives in him!" Pharaoh says to Joseph, "There is no one as (bee-**nah** veh coke-mah) **binah veh chokmah** (**בִּינָה וְחִכְמָה**) discerning and wise as you are." (**verse 39**). So Yosef's interpretation is accepted. He becomes Viceroy of the region and second in command only to Pharaoh.

I believe the Hebrew terms **binah/understanding** and **chokmah/wisdom** are characteristics associated with the Holy Spirit as well as excellent descriptions of Messiah, in whom the Spirit of G~d dwells fully.

Also, concerning the dream of the soon coming famine, in **verses 25-32**, did you notice that Yosef tells Pharaoh THREE times that HaShem has (1) told him, (2) shown him and because the dream was doubled, it was (3) fixed and would happen soon,. Again, we see "By the mouth of two or three witnesses, every fact may be confirmed." (**Mattityahu/Matthew 18:16**)

I want to revisit **verse 14**, "**and they rushed him**". Sometimes, divine salvation comes quickly and unexpectedly. Just as the coming of **Yeshua Ha Mashiach/Jesus, the Anointed One/The Messiah** will be sudden and hasty. We need to remember that HaShem's timetable may appear to be slow (or late for that matter) but He is an "on-time" G~d and His timing is perfect!!

Also in that same verse (14), it says “he shaved and changed his clothes”. At first I thought, well, that makes sense; he’s been in prison, albeit not the dungeon, he still would need to clean up before approaching Pharaoh. But then, I had another idea. Perhaps the “shave” included his head as well as his face, which is the way Egyptians presented themselves in those days and I wonder if perhaps he donned Egyptian attire instead of his Hebrew clothing. In approaching Pharaoh in this manner, perhaps Yosef felt he would have more favor. (Actually, I’m not sure he really had a choice in the matter; he was probably given Egyptian clothing to put on.) Maybe this is what *Rav Sha’ul (Rabbi Paul)* wrote about in **1 Corinthians 9:22** “**To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some.**” And perhaps this is where we get our cliché of “when in Rome do as the Romans do”.

Remember the disparaging remarks from the Cupbearer, back in **verse 12**? Every derogatory comment the Cupbearer said about Yosef didn’t seem to hold any water (pun intended). When HaShem wills something, it **will** come to pass; neither nature nor politics will keep it from happening

Despite the “written Egyptian laws”, in **verses 42 & 43**, we see Pharaoh placing his ring on Yosef’s hand, fine linen garments on his body and a gold chain around his neck. I believe that Yosef deserved these honors because of his virtuous life. The hands, neck and body that refused to sin with Potiphar’s wife are now adorned with items of royalty. “**And they proclaimed before him: Avrech!**” **Avrech** is a composite of two words: **av** which means **father** (i.e. counselor, mentor) and **rach** which means **king** in Aramaic. Obviously, Yosef did find favor with Pharaoh, so much so that Pharaoh gave Yosef his second best chariot. This is the first mention of chariots in the scriptures!

Pharaoh gives Yosef a new name (**verse 45**) (Zahf-naht Pah-nay-ahk) **Tzafnat~Pa’neach** which means **he who explains what is hidden**. It would seem that this was Divine Providence because in the future it would conceal Yosef’s identity from his family. In addition, Pharaoh gave him a wife, (Ohs-naht) **Osnat/Asenath** (say Ah-seh-nahth), who, some say, was the daughter of Potiphar. Chumash commentary says she is the daughter of Poti-phera, Chief Priest of On and they, Potiphar and Poti-phera, are one and the same. Isn’t this an interesting turn of events, the slave of a Chamberlain has now become his son-in-law! Further commentary says that allowing his daughter to marry Yosef vindicated Yosef in the eyes of the Egyptians from the charge that he had assaulted Potiphar’s wife.

Following are some interesting facts concerning Asenath with regard to whom she REALLY was and where she came from. From history, the sages teach that early in life, Potiphar became ill with a disease which rendered him impotent; consequently, he and his wife could have no children so he was named **Poti-phera**, which literally means **the mutilated one** unable to bear children. So that would make Asenath an adopted daughter. Adopted from whom? More importantly, adopted from where?

According to one commentary, historical documentation says that Asenath was the daughter of Dinah. Remember Dinah? She was **Ya’akov’s/Jacob’s** only daughter who was raped in Shechem. Ultimately, she returned to her father’s house and gave birth to a baby girl. As I understand it, the brothers were not able to tolerate the presence of this child because it represented the shame brought upon their sister so while the child was still young, she was sent to Egypt. It is told that before she left, Jacob gave her a necklace he had fashioned which contained the words “Asenath, daughter of violent tragedy”. Long story short, she was adopted by Potiphar and his wife, who raised her in their home as their daughter. Do you have the picture of Asenath’s lineage? Jacob was married to Leah, who gave birth to Dinah, who was raped in Shechem, which culminated in the birth of Asenath, which would make her Jacob’s granddaughter. Hmmmm, a little Jewish girl raised in the home of a pagan priest! So would this make **Yosef/Joseph** her uncle as well as her husband? And how awesome of Pharaoh to give **her** to Yosef!!!

It is important that we take note of Yosef’s age, at this point. **Verse 46** says that he was 30 when he stood before Pharaoh. According to “my little book of numbers” by Rose Crownover, **30** is the number of “**consecration**” as well as “**maturity for ministry**”. Fast forward to **Luke 3:23**, “Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years old . . .” Just think, if it were not for Yosef’s G~d-given wisdom and grace, one his age could not have risen to the highest position, especially in a foreign land. Another thing to bear in mind is the fact that Yosef has been separated from his family for 13 years. One of the meanings assigned to the number **13** is “**double portion**”.

Man, I’m having a hard time getting out of chapter 41. L~rd, help me, please!!!

Anyway, **verses 50-52** tell about two sons being born “**to Yosef**”. There seems to be an emphasis here on **TO HIM** and this is what one of the leading rabbis, Rabbi Hirsch, had to say. “The sons were dedicated to the ideals of Joseph, not to those of the idolaters among whom she had been raised. As the daughter of aristocracy married to a foreign slave and former convict who owed his position to Pharaoh’s whim, she might well have dominated the home atmosphere, in which case the children would have been “hers”. Yosef named his firstborn, **M’nasheh/Manasseh (causing to forget)**

“because G~d has caused me to forget all the troubles I suffered at the hands of my family.” His second son was named **Efrayim/Ephraim** which means “**fruit**” because “G~d has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortune.”

Asenath adopted Yosef’s spiritual and moral outlook. To be the only Jew (supposedly) in Egypt, and to be married to the daughter of an idolatrous priest, yet to raise children who remain the model after whom Jewish parents bless their sons, ~ “**May G~d make you like Ephraim and Manasseh**” (B’resheet/Genesis 48:20) ~ is no small privilege. But stop and think about this!!! Before Asenath was sent to Egypt, she would have been raised worshipping the one true G~d of **Avraham/Abraham, Yitz’chak/Isaac** and **Ya’akov/Jacob**. In my opinion, she would, naturally, have been attracted to Yosef and when she learned that Yosef was a Hebrew, she repented for the way she had been raised with idols and false gods and chose to raise her sons in the spirit of her husband. This is another one of those “but G~d” things!!!!

## CHAPTER 42

FINALLY! B’resheet/Genesis 42. In **verses 2 and 3** Ya’akov tells “the boys” to “go down” to (Meets-rah-yeem) Mitzraim/Egypt and buy food. That is all “the boys” except Benjamin! According to Rabbi Ya’akov Youlus, the Biblical Hebrew word for **going down** is **reh-doo**. As most of us know, each Hebrew letter has a numerical value and the numerical value of **reh-doo** is equivalent to 210. Rabbi Youlus indicates that this was prophecy saying to the brothers, that they were going down for 210 years to stay in Egypt.

So, Ya’akov sends his sons to Egypt; the brothers prostrate themselves before Yosef; **(verse 7)** “**and he recognized them . . .**” Initially, I wondered, if Yosef recognized his brothers, why didn’t they recognize him? Analytical thought processing finally kicked in and I came up with this solution. Yosef was sold at the age of 17, when he was a mere lad. Now he is a man of probably 38/39 years of age, dresses as an Egyptian and more than likely has a shaven head as was the custom in those days in that society.

Then the “cat and mouse” game begins. Yosef accuses them of being spies, which they vehemently deny. For a total of four times he accuses them of being spies. The second time he accuses them of being spies they let him know that they are 12 brothers of one man in Kena’an. How did you like the way the brothers walked around the issue of the 12<sup>th</sup> son. There are 10 of them; the youngest stayed home with his father and “**another one is gone**”. It’s a good thing for them that Yosef didn’t press them as to his whereabouts! Nonetheless, Yosef stands his ground but offers them a way out. First of all, **Yosef says he’ll keep all but one**, whom he will send back to fetch Benjamin. “Then he put all of them together in prison for three days” **(verse 17)**. So on the third day, Yosef kinda does an about face . . . **this time he says “let one of your brothers remain incarcerated** in the prison you’re being kept in, while you go and carry grain back to relieve the famine in your homes. But bring your youngest brother to me. In this way your statements will be verified and you won’t die.” **(verses 19-20)** I’m not exactly sure what it is, but there is something about the brothers being incarcerated for THREE days. If you have a handle on this, let me know!

Bear in mind, during this time there has been an interpreter involved in this communication. “The boys” have no idea that **Tzafnat~Pa’neach** can understand their conversations perfectly. During this time the brothers regret their treatment of their younger brother 22 years earlier. **Verses 25-28** Yosef sends them back – with their money and in **verses 29-38** “the boys” have a conversation with Ya’akov concerning their ordeal. Reuben even offers his own two sons to Jacob if he fails to return without Benjamin. At this point, Jacob says “IT AIN’T GONNA HAPPEN!!!!”

## CHAPTER 43

Finally, the famine is so severe **(verses 1-15)** Ya’akov allows Binyamin to go to Egypt with his brothers. Did you notice in **verse 12** that Ya’akov advises them to take double the amount of money that had been put into their sacks? Not only that, they were to take some of the best of their lands produce . . .

- Healing resin
- A little honey
- Aromatic gum
- Opium
- Pistachio nuts
- Almonds

This would be a good place to point out that when someone makes a mistake in giving us change or merchandise different than what we purchased, we should always correct the situation as quickly as possible.

In **verse 14** Ya'akov prays mercy over them from **El Shaddai**. This name depicts G~d, literally as **one Who is sufficient** in granting His mercies and Who has sufficient power to provide whatever is necessary. A week or two ago, I mentioned this but it bears repeating. The Hebrew root word **shad**, (pronounced shod) means **breast**, as a mother's breast for feeding. A mother sufficiently supplies all that her baby needs nutritionally, from her **breast (shad)**. In **verses 16-34** Joseph sees Benjamin and tests his brother's sincerity. **Verse 26** reveals the fulfillment of Yosef's first dream that all his brothers would bow down to him. We would do well to learn a lesson here. We should not despair when things don't fall within our timeframe. G~d will do what He says He will do but He will do it in His perfect timing. We must learn (beet-a-cone) **bitachon**, which means **trust in G~d**. In **verse 29** Yosef says "is this your '**youngest**' brother?" We need to look at this in proper perspective. At this point, Benjamin was probably 31 years old, being neither too little nor too fragile to make the journey as Yosef had been led to believe by the brothers on their first trip.

I am still unable to read **verse 30** without getting "teary-eyed". I know the feeling of not being able to contain my feelings, especially over a very sensitive, emotional matter.

In **verses 32 & 33**, did you notice that everyone seems to be eating separately? The custom of the land was for the Egyptians not to eat with Hebrews because it was loathsome to the Egyptians, so the brothers were served separately from Yosef. Also, at this point, Yosef is Viceroy so he wouldn't eat with "commoners". In addition, he doesn't eat with the other Egyptians either because of their custom. The brothers are astonished to find themselves seated according to their seniority. One of the reasons this was so amazing is the fact that the first six brothers were approximately only a year apart and physical appearance would not necessarily reveal their ages. Each was given their individual servings but Benjamin received five times as much as they. Again, we notice the number **five** representing **grace**.

## CHAPTER 44

On with the saga . . . In this chapter, Benjamin is accused of thievery. We know that the wine goblet was "planted" in Benjamin's sack, as a means of keeping Benjamin so Yosef can bring his family, according to HaShem's plan, to Egypt. I found **verse 15** to be interesting. Joseph says that a man like him practices "divination". Wait just a minute!!! Isn't "divination" a form of witchcraft? Would a G~dly man like Yosef really do that??? Actually, it was a ruse! Were Yosef an Egyptian, he probably would have practiced divination and for all intents and purposes, at this point, the brothers thought he was an Egyptian so all the more reason for this scenario to be played out. Yosef demands that Benjamin become his slave.

Yosef retains Benjamin and to the other brothers he says "**go in peace to your father**". Something tells me those "boys" didn't have much peace on their journey back to Ya'akov and not much peace after they arrived. So . . . until next week, like any good serial drama, this week's Parashah ends on a cliffhanger note. To be continued . . . . .

### **Miketz ~ מקץ ~At The End** **Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1<sup>st</sup> Kings 3:15~4:1** **Z'kharyah/Zechariah 2:14~4:7**

I don't suppose there is anyone who has attended church or synagogue at one time or another who hasn't heard this story about King Solomon and his decision concerning the child which each of two women claimed was hers. And most of us know that when **Sh'lomo/Solomon** was appointed king, he asked of HaShem to give him "wisdom". Actually, in

**Ivrit/Hebrew**, he requested (lehv show-may-ah) **lev shomea** (לב שמע), literally **a heart that listens**, a rather remarkable request to be made by a 12 year old. Yep, that's what several commentaries indicate, though I have a hard time believing that! I believe he was a young man, perhaps late twenties or early thirties. Nonetheless, what Sh'lomo requested is right in line with what we learn in the **B'rit Hadashah/Renewed Covenant** from **Ya'akov/James (1:6-8)**, "but if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of G~d . . . but let him ask in faith without any doubting."

Before we leave Sh'lomo, I have a couple of interesting tidbits I would like to share with you. Another name given to Sh'lomo by his father, David, was (Yeh-dee-dee-ah) **Yedidiah**, which means "**beloved of the L~rd**". After David had sinned with Bathsheba and their child died, a second child (Sh'lomo) was born, and one name David gave him was Jedidiah, since he had been reassured that the L~rd had forgiven him and still loved him. By the way, **Sh'lomo** comes from the Hebrew word **shalom** which means **peace**.

Another thing I learned during my studies . . . The Book of Proverbs contains many proverbs of Solomon, including one section entitled "The Proverbs of Solomon: (**Solomon 10:1-22:16**) In this section there are exactly **375** proverbs and strangely enough but not coincidentally, **375** is the numerical value of Sh'lomo's name.

Remember at the very beginning I spoke of a Kiss from G~d? Well, here ya go . . . Ya see, I had read the regular Haftarah reading from **M'lakim Alef/1<sup>st</sup> Kings 3:15~4:1**. But when I began to study in my Chumash, it said that when Hanukkah falls during Miktetz (and it usually does) that we should read **Zechariah 2:14~4:7**, so I did. And guess what . . . we learn how (Zk-har-yah) **Z'kharyah/Zechariah** was shown a vision of the Menorah, made entirely of gold, complete with the reservoir, tubes to bring it oil; **two olive trees** to make the oil; a complete self-supporting system. (Could the two olive trees represent the Jew and the Gentile with the heart of Ruth? . . . or the house of Israel and the house of Judah?)

The symbolism here, I believe, is that HaShem provides a system, which supports us continuously, but it is up to us to open our eyes to see where the support is coming from. Many don't see our support system as a miracle; they see our day to day support system as nature but I'm here to tell ya that Mother Nature has a "Father" and His name is (El-o-heem) **Elohim, Creator G~d** and that is another reason we light the eight candles; to celebrate "His miracles, His wonders and His salvations".

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As most of you know, I love Jewish traditional symbolism and gematria. I believe that HaShem didn't leave anything to chance and there is a reason and a purpose behind each and every letter and number of the Hebrew Alefbet. This may seem a little off course but stay with me. I believe when I am through you will be blessed by my findings.

One of the items associated with Hanukkah is the Dreidel, which is a four-sided top. There is a Hebrew letter on each side: **Nun (נ), Gimmel (ג), Hey (ה), Shin (ש)** and they are an acronym for **Nes Gadol Hey Sham**, which means, **A great miracle happened there**. Those same four letters, rearranged, spell the word **Goshen** which is where Judah built the Yeshiva in Egypt. As with **B'nei Yisrael/Children of Israel** reversal of our circumstances is achieved through the light of Torah

Another twist to this idea of dreidel letters has to do with the dreidels **in Israel** today. They have one letter different. Instead of the **Shin**, they have a **Pey** so the words would be **Nes Gadol Hey Po** which changes the meaning to **A great miracle happened here**. Instead of the four letters forming the word **Goshen**, an Israeli dreidel spells **Gofen** meaning **wine**.

Each Hebrew letter has a numerical value assigned to it and the numerical value of these four letters equals **358 (Nun=50, Gimmel=3, Hey=5, Shin=300)**. So what's the importance of 358? (Hint: The Jews are awaiting His coming; we're awaiting His return)

**Mashiach/Messiah** is spelled with the Hebrew letters **Mem (40), Shin (300), Yud (10), and Chet (8)** which equal **358**. So what's the connection between Hanukkah and Mashiach? It is said that after Mashiach comes, the other holidays will not be celebrated any more but Hanukkah will still be celebrated as the Light of the World will be kindled from Yerusalayim. The Light of the World like the **shamash**, the servant candle, that lights all the others. Let me be quick to say that I, personally, believe all of **HaShem's moedim (G~d's appointed times)** will be celebrated as long as there is a heaven and an earth according to **Mattityahu/Matthew 5:18**.

Another little tidbit: Parashah Miktetz, which we read today & is usually read at Hanukkah time, consists of 2,025 words. The Sages find an interesting connection between this number and Hanukkah.

- The numerical value of **Ner** which is Hebrew for **candle** equals 250 (Nun=50 & Resh=200).
- There are 8 Hanukkah candles X 250 = 2,000.
- Hanukkah begins on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev (the Hebrew month) therefore the 2,025 words of the Parashah allude to the eight candles (2000) plus the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev.

One more, actually, make that two more acronyms. During the Hanukkah season, we learn about a small number of renegade Jews who were sick and tired of their temple being desecrated so they rose up against the mighty Syro-Grecian Army and they won! That group was known as the Maccabees.

Maccabee is an acronym for the following words of the Torah: **Mi Kamocha Ba'elim Adonai ~ "Who is like you, O L~rd, among the gods?" (Sh'mot/Exodus 15:11)** These were the words on their banner proclaiming their faith in Adonai. Maccabee is another acronym for **Mattithias Kohen Ben Yochanan**, which means **Mattithias, the Priest, son of Yochanan/John**. He was the head of the priestly Chashmonai family, leader of the Maccabees, who led the revolt against the Syro-Grecian armies.

Remember earlier, I mentioned that the Israeli dreidels are different and the Hebrew letters spell **Gofen** a word that means **wine**? We are told that when **Ya'akov/Jacob** blessed his sons before he died, the blessing he gave to Judah was a blessing of **Gofen** or **wine**. It helps to remember that **Yeshua Ha Mashiach** is a descendant from Judah. And the Talmud says that a dream of wine foretells the coming of the Messiah!

Do you see how we can find Yeshua all the way through both the Original Covenant as well as the Renewed Covenant? Bottom line . . . it's all about Yeshua!!! **Ha Or HaOlam/The Light of the World**

**Miketz ~ מִקֵּץ ~At The End**  
**B'rit Hadashah: Acts 7:9-11 & 12-16; Yochanan/John 10:22-39**

**Acts 7:9-11 & 12-16** I really have nothing new to add to the Acts account. It is quite straight forward and gives us an overview of Yosef and his family from the time of his "pit" experience to the taking of his bones back to Eretz Yishra'el.

**Yochanan/John 10:22-39** However, with regard to the reading that falls this time of the year because of Hanukkah, we do find some interesting information that we haven't been taught during our "church" years. Most translations say in **John 10:22** "And it was at Jerusalem the **feast of the dedication**, and it was winter. **23** And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch." The Hebrew word for **Feast of Dedication** is **Hanukkah**. Hanukkah has nothing to do with Christmas and everything to do with celebrating the rededication of the Temple in **Yerushalayim/Jerusalem**, which has taken place since 164 BCE. This is the earliest mention of the holiday in all literature and the only mention of it in the Bible, since the Tanakh was completed before that date; however, the book of Daniel does prophesy about the celebrated event.

**The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 40**