



SHABBAT ZEST

Parshat Mikeitz 2nd Tevet 5777

Torah Reading / Haftara:

Artscroll – p.222/1210

Living Torah – p.200/1360

SHABBAT TIMES:

Candle Lighting:
3:40pm

Kabbalat Shabbat
Davening: 3:30pm

Shabbat Morning
Davening: 9:15am

Mincha: After Kiddush

Shabbat Ends 4:59pm

NEXT SHABBAT
VAYIGASH

CANDLE LIGHTING
@ 3:48 PM

This week the
Haftarah will be
read by

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Parsha In a Nutshell

Genesis 41:1-44:17

Joseph's imprisonment finally ends when Pharaoh dreams of seven fat cows that are swallowed up by seven lean cows, and of seven fat ears of grain swallowed by seven lean ears. Joseph interprets the dreams to mean that seven years of plenty will be followed by seven years of hunger, and advises Pharaoh to store grain during the plentiful years. Pharaoh appoints Joseph governor of Egypt. Joseph marries Asenath, daughter of Potiphar, and they have two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Famine spreads throughout the region, and food can be obtained only in Egypt. Ten of Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to purchase grain; the youngest, Benjamin, stays home, for Jacob fears for his safety. Joseph recognizes his brothers, but they do not recognize him; he accuses them of being spies, insists that they bring Benjamin to prove that they are who they say they are, and imprisons Simeon as a hostage. Later, they discover that the money they paid for their provisions has been mysteriously returned to them.

Jacob agrees to send Benjamin only after Judah assumes personal and eternal responsibility for him. This time Joseph receives them kindly, releases Simeon, and invites them to an eventful dinner at his home. But then he plants his silver goblet, purportedly imbued with magic powers, in Benjamin's sack. When the brothers set out for home the next morning, they are pursued, searched, and arrested when the goblet is discovered. Joseph offers to set them free and retain only Benjamin as his slave.

Haftarah

Zechariah 2:14-4:7 (Maftir Artscroll Page 770 Verse 54)

This haftarah is read on Shabbat Chanukah as it contains a vision of the golden Temple Menorah. This prophecy was communicated by Zechariah shortly before the building of the Second Temple. The haftarah opens with a vivid depiction of the joy that will prevail when G-d will return to Jerusalem: "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for, behold! I will come and dwell in your midst, says the L-rd."

The prophet then describes a scene in the Heavenly Court: Satan was seeking to incriminate Joshua, the first High Priest to serve in the Second Temple, because of the "soiled garments" (i.e. sins) he was wearing. G-d himself defends the High Priest: "And the Lord said to Satan: The Lord shall rebuke you, O Satan; the Lord who chose Jerusalem shall rebuke you. Is [Joshua] not a brand plucked from fire?" I.e., how dare Satan prosecute an individual who endured the hardships of exile? "And He raised His voice and said to those standing before him, saying, 'Take the filthy garments off him.' And He said to him, 'See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I have clad you with clean garments.'"

G-d then proceeds to outline the rewards awaiting Joshua if he and his descendents follow G-d's ways. The ultimate reward is, "Behold! I will bring My servant, the Shoot, " an allusion to Moshiach, the Shoot of David.

Zechariah then describes a vision of a golden seven-branched Menorah. An angel interprets the meaning of this vision: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel [descendent of King David, one of the protagonists in the building of the Second Temple], 'Not by military force and not by physical strength, but by My spirit,' says the Lord of Hosts." Meaning that Zerubbabel's descendent, Moshiach, will have no difficulty in his task, it will be as simple as lighting a menorah.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December – Chanukah

Lightings – 6.30pm

Doughnuts, hot drinks music and entertainment:

31st: Gants Hill Roundabout

29th January 2017 - The return of Shir. The fabulous klezmer band are coming back for an encore. Reserve Tickets with the Office now.

Recurring Events

Cheder CLOSED

Mummy and Me CLOSED

Yahrzeits for the coming week 2nd – 8th Tevet:

4. Mark Levy – Father

4. Norman Pushkin – Father

8. Gerald Borman – Mother

A Little Deeper – Understanding G-d's Communication System

The name of this week's parsha means "end." It refers to the end of the two-year period that Joseph spent in jail.

If you remember, last week Joseph, who found himself in jail, seemed to have a glimmer of hope after he correctly interpreted the dreams of two fellow inmates. The baker would be hanged and the butler would be restored to his previous position. As a favour for giving the butler such good news, Joseph asked for his help.

Yet rather than being a source of reprieve, Joseph's efforts were the cause of an additional two years in prison. I highly doubt there was ever a possibility of him suing the prison service for being mistreated as some other criminals attempted to do this week! Yet by relying on the butler to help him get out of jail the Rashi points out:

"...Because Joseph relied on him ... it was necessary for him to be imprisoned two years..." (Rashi, Genesis 41:23) Thus, this week's parsha starts by telling us the two years were up and Joseph would soon be free.

Of course, we should be asking ourselves the question, what did Joseph do wrong?

I mean, here he was, stuck in prison for a crime he didn't commit, and let me tell you, this was no day time TV hot meals prison with separate showers. No, this would have made your average 3rd century hovel seem like Buckingham Palace. Obviously, Joseph was not punished for interpreting the dreams correctly. Inasmuch as a dream itself is some kind of coded message that needs a fairly high degree of sophistication to interpret, the fact that it was a dream of prophecy leads us to another question. Why would Joseph's cellmates need to know what will happen to them? The answer, Joseph concluded, was so that they would appreciate his help and get him free.

That's all well and good for the butler. But why did the baker need to know? He died.

Interpreting these dreams was not to provide a favour for the butler or baker, but rather they were part of some bigger, then-still-unknown plan. In other words, if the purpose of the dreams were to help Joseph get out of prison through some kind of reciprocity with the butler, then one dream would have sufficed. And Joseph should have realized that. The only reason the butler needs to know that the baker is going to die is so, later on, when the butler needs someone he knows interprets dreams correctly and is not just lucky, he can call on Joseph.

And that is exactly what happened. Pharaoh had a major dream that no one could interpret and the butler suggested Joseph. But that was two years later. Joseph needed two years to appreciate the mistake he made. It's not so obvious when we do something wrong. I am sure Joseph was not sitting on his hands waiting for something to happen, so to hone in on this incident as the one, takes a high degree of dedication. But it was necessary, if Pharaoh was going to have the dream, then Joseph needed to understand how to use that dream in the way G-d intended, something Joseph didn't do with the butler and baker.

In a similar way, G-d has a plan for all of us. The events in our lives are conversations. When we listen to the messages and understand what it is we are supposed to do with the cards we are dealt, then the game of life becomes a lot more fun, one thing is for certain we cannot afford to ignore those messages if we are to achieve our potential in this world

Wishing you all a Good Shabbos