



TIFERET HASHABBAT

This Week in Tiferet

Last Friday, we enjoyed a tour of the Kfar Etzion Museum where we learned about the biblical, historical and strategic significance of Gush Etzion and were moved by the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for Kfar Etzion depicted in the Sound and Light Show. After a beautiful Kabbalat Shabbat and dinner in the Kibbutz, Rabbi Alan Haber ran a rousing Oneg Shabbat. The Oneg theme was heroes, where we discussed what it means to be a hero, who is a hero and seeing heroes in our daily lives. On Shabbat day, a resident of the Kibbutz led a tour culminating in the Mekor Chaim Yeshiva, the high school whose two students,

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תורת תפארת

The Courage to Challenge Fate **Mrs. Dina Etigson** **Parashat Miketz – Shabbat Chanuka**

Parshat Miketz opens with the description of Pharaoh's dreams. Interestingly, the dreams in their entirety are repeated twice; first when Pharaoh dreams them and then when he retells them to Yosef. Obviously there is great significance to this, as the Torah does not even contain an extra letter that is not purposeful, much less an entire dream dreamed by an Egyptian King--twice. Also, was Yosef's interpretation really so revolutionary? Was it really possible that no one from Pharaoh's court could have come to a similar understanding as Yosef? Finally, if Yosef was indeed the only one to offer this interpretation, what would then propel Pharaoh to think that he would also be the ideal person to implement this economic solution?

The narrative of the dream is almost identical in both accounts with very minor variations. One slight but perhaps significant difference is a short addition made by Pharaoh in his recounting of the dream to Yosef. When describing the dream itself, the Torah tells us that the seven full cows swallowed the scrawny ones. However, in the version Pharaoh tells Yosef, Pharaoh adds---"ולא נודע כי באו בקרבנה"--[It was not discernable that the scrawny ones ate the full ones]. Perhaps Pharaoh intuited the meaning of the dreams on his own--seven years of famine followed by seven years of plenty. What tormented Pharaoh was not the meaning of the dream, but his life philosophy projected onto that dream. In Pharaoh's statement that one could not discern that the scrawny cows consumed the full ones, he was disclosing his personal belief that there are things that are fated, and there is no escaping that fate. There is nothing that can impact the "years of bad." They just need to be lived out. They cannot be escaped.

What Yosef introduced to Pharaoh was that destiny is not set in stone. The seven good years can influence the seven bad years! One can prepare and thereby change the destiny of this vision. Yosef taught Pharaoh that when one is privy to seeing an event in the future, as with the prophets, the primary function of that revelation is to encourage action to reshape that fate. Yosef shook Pharaoh out of his robotic submission to destiny.

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Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Rebecca Schrag (5767, madricha) on her engagement to Benjy Mayer! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Gabi Herschfus (5771) on her engagement to Aharon Lazerowitz! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Elana Bass (5772, 5773) on her engagement to Nachum Meyers! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Yonina Liechtung (5772) on her engagement to Max Stern! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Give Credit Where Credit Is Due

Ariana Cushner (5775)

Imagine you were in a situation where you wanted to get an amazing job. When you were in high school, you started a major project. The employer interviewing you says, "I heard you're the one responsible for starting that major project that was a huge success." Because you want the job, of course you would jump to take credit and say it was me, because getting this job would be a life saver.

In last week's parsha after יוסף interprets the butler's dream, Yosef tells him to remember him when talking to פרעה - but the butler forgets. According to רש"י, יוסף was imprisoned an extra two years because he was on a level such that he should only put his אמונה and ביטחון in Hashem and not anyone else.

In contrast, in this week's parsha, פרק מא פרק טו פסוק טו, Yosef completely puts his faith in Hashem. When פרעה asked יוסף to interpret his dream. יוסף responded "It's beyond me, it is Hashem who will respond." Of course we would expect יוסף to take the credit for interpreting the dream. This time though he fixed his mistake and attributed his success to Hashem.

This idea also connects to the Chanukah story. After a long and hard fight we were able to defeat the יונים. Our natural instinct is to attribute our victory to our strength and efforts.

The important lesson we need to learn is that while we should feel good about our successes, we should never forget to attribute them to Hashem. We must always remember that anything that happens in the world - good or bad - happens because Hashem made it happen.

תורת תפארת (המשך)

Pharaoh was therefore not just impressed with Yosef's abilities to understand the dream and offer an economic solution, but also by the spiritual perspective he offered. Perhaps Pharaoh felt a man who would challenge destiny is the man to carry out this dramatic plan. Someone with vision who is willing to challenge "the gods"--(from Pharaoh's perspective), is the only one who can successfully carry out this initiative.

On a deeper level, Yosef is teaching us that we have free choice not just with our actions but with our perspective. This concept can perhaps shed light on a philosophical issue surrounding Rosh Hashannah and the way fate works. How can it be that our destiny is sealed on Rosh Hashannah / Yom Kippur for the entire year and yet simultaneously we are graced with the possibility of doing Teshuva at any moment in time thereby altering our judgment? Yosef teaches us the secret to synthesizing both concepts. Yes, it is true that our fate is sealed on Yom Kippur. However, any subsequent repentance can affect how we perceive and receive the decree from Above. For example, if it is decided that one is destined to (Chas Veshalom) have his house burn down, that event may remain decreed. However, self-reflection and Teshuvah can completely change how he will receive that decree and the impact that it will have upon his life. A person could respond to this event by completely reevaluating his life priorities, so that looking back he may view this event as the *best thing that ever happened to him*. Alternatively, his house burning down could have caused him to find a treasure buried beneath it that was unknown to him.

Judaism's light is the light of perspective. When our perspective is *enlightened*, we can transform our experience of what is decreed from curse to blessing. God granted us free choice, in our actions and in our ability to process our understanding of reality. We are charged with the mission of using this gift wisely. The Chassidic Masters teach that looking at the holy candles of Chanukah can literally heal our vision-- not just literally but spiritually as well. May we all be blessed to cure our apathy, redefine our destiny and thereby heal how we see the world. sMay we be blessed to receive the gift that Yosef offered Pharaoh-- the gift of true sight.



Coming Soon!

**Alumnae Program and
Shabbaton in Tiferet –
January 8th – January 11th
We can't wait to see you there!**

This Week in Tiferet (continued)

Naftali Fraenkel and Gilad Shaer ת"ה, were killed this past summer. We were invited into the Bet Midrash where two of Naftali and Gilad's roommates spoke to us and answered questions. It was extremely moving. Later in the afternoon, the Mashgiach of the yeshiva, Rabbi Billet, spoke to us about the importance of Ahavat Yisrael.

On Wednesday morning, we attended a women's gathering to mark the shloshim of the tragedy in Har Nof. Our students were moved to tears listening to speeches of emunah and inspiration by Mrs. Chaya Levine, the wife of Rav Kalman Levine who was murdered in Har Nof and Mrs. Racheli Fraenkel, the mother of Naftali Fraenkel.

After an intense morning, the Chanukah Chagiga was a welcome change. There was music and dancing with lots of ruach. The talent show and auction were great fun and full of laughs. Before the beginning of the break, we had a Yom Iyun on Chanukah. It was a very powerful week and will surely be a Chanukah that our students will remember for the rest of their lives.