



#183 • MIKETZ • 28 KISLEV, 5778 • 12/16/17

DAF KESHER

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DVAR TORAH DON'T RUSH, DON'T TARRY

After the Chief Butler told Pharaoh about Yosef's expertise at dream interpretation, Pharaoh sent for Yosef and, as the Torah tells us, "ויריצהו מן הבור" – They rushed him (ריצה is the Hebrew word for running) from the jail" (Bereishit 41:14). Why did they rush Yosef?

The simplest explanation seems to be the urgency created by Pharaoh's command. That command was fueled by his frustration that after all of his consultations with advisors and spiritualists his dream was still not interpreted. Pharaoh didn't want to delay even a moment.

But there are weaknesses to this explanation. If the messengers were so rushed, why was Yosef given the time to deal with his appearance, to cut his hair and change his clothes? Plus (as one commentator says), a calm and clear-headed Yosef would have been more primed for interpreting a dream than a rushed and harried one.

The Sforno (by Harav Ovadiah Sforno, דצ"ל, 1475-1550, Italy) takes a different approach: Yosef's release from jail followed the pattern of Divine salvations: when the time for salvation comes, it happens speedily. Even though Yosef was in jail for twelve years (see Baal Haturim on Bereishit 40:20), when the moment arrived for him to leave – he was rushed out. The same thing happened when the Jews left Egypt. Even though the Jews were in Egypt for 210 years (see Bereishit Rabbah 91:2), when it came time for them to leave they did not tarry for a moment. As we say every year in the Haggadah on Pesach night, they did not even have time to wait for their dough to rise. When the time for salvation arrived they left speedily without delay.

This is striking. These processes took years – 12 years, 210 years – yet their ends were rushed on the last day. When the moment of salvation came, it came hastily.

The same will be true (speedily in our day) of the final redemption. The prophet says, "וּפְתָאֵם יָבוֹא אֵל הַיְכָלֹ הָאֲדוֹן" – Suddenly will come to his palace the master that you seek (the Mashiah – Radak); and the angel of the covenant (Eliahu Hanavi – Radak) that you want is coming" (Malachi 3:1). "בְּעֵתָהּ אֲחִישְׁנָה" – In its time I will make it come hastily" (Radak's explanation of Yishayah 60:22).

We are taught about how Hashem "acts" in order to learn how to emulate his "actions." This is the mitzvah of "והלכת בדרכיו" – You should walk in Hashem's ways" (Devarim 28:9). How can we apply this to the Sforno's teaching about Divine salvation?

Here is one possibility: We should not rush a process that takes time. We must be cautious about the middah of פזיזות – acting hastily. Teshuvah takes time; a shidduch takes time; cooking salmon takes time. They cannot be rushed without harming the process. On the other hand, when the time does come – we must not delay for a moment. But when the process comes to fruition, we must take the next step in teshuvah or commit to the relationship - just as we must take the salmon out of the oven. We cannot rush, but we cannot tarry either.

SOURCE GUIDE: YOSEF: THE WORLD'S HOPE

Yosef is not counted as one of the Avot, along with Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, but he has a unique and lofty position that stands above that of the other tribes. This is evident even outside the Parshiot at the end of Bereishit. For instance, the entire People of Israel are sometimes even referred to as “Yosef,” as in the verse, “The Shepherd of Israel listen, the One Who leads Yosef like sheep” (Tehillim 80:2). This source guide focuses on one Midrash that describes Yosef’s special position as the “hope of the world.”

A. Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and Yosef

One passage in the Midrash begins by highlighting the special position of Yaakov among the Avot (Forefathers). It opens with a verse that is a transition point in the Parshah, when in the middle of the great famine Yaakov finds out that there is grain in Egypt:

<p>1. Bereishit 42:1 (1) Yaakov saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Yaakov said to his sons, “Why do you make yourselves appear [unaffected by the famine]?” (2) And he said, “Behold I heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy it from there and we will live and not die.”</p>	<p>בראשית מב:א-ב (א) וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ שָׂבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ. (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֵשׁ שָׂבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם רְדוּ שָׁמָּה וְשָׁבְרוּ לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת.</p>
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The Midrash first contrasts Yaakov with Avraham and Yitzchak:

<p>2. Midrash Tanchuma Miketz 5:5 “Yaakov saw that there was grain ...” (Bereishit 42:1) – This is what the following verse refers to: “Fortunate is the one for whom the G-d of Yaakov comes to his aid” (Tehillim 146:5). Why does it not say ‘for whom the G-d of Avraham’ or ‘for whom the G-d of Yitzchak,’ only Yaakov? You find that the Holy One, blessed be He, did not “stand over” Avraham or Yitzchak – only Yaakov, as it says, “And behold Hashem stood over him” (Bereishit 28:13). Rabbi Simon said: The king does not stand over his field when it is sowed, plowed, or weeded. When does he stand over it? It is when it is already standing with a grain pile. Thus Avraham weeded, preparing the ground, as it says, “Get up and walk in the Land” (Bereishit 13:17). Yitzchak sowed, as it says, “Yitzchak sowed” (Bereishit 26:12). But the King did not stand over [‘the field’] until Yaakov came, for then there was a pile of grain, as it is written, “Yisrael is holy to Hashem, and is the first of His produce” (Yirmiyah 2:3). The Holy One, blessed be He, stood over him, as it says, “Behold, Hashem stood over him.” This is “Fortunate is the one for whom the G-d of Yaakov come to his aid, his hope is in Hashem his G-d” (Tehillim 146:5).</p>	<p>מדרש תנחומא מקץ ה:ה “וירא יעקב כי יש שבר וגו’” (בראשית מב:א) – זה שאמר הכתוב: “אשרי שְׂאֵל-יעקב בְּעֶזְרוֹ” (תהלים קמו:ה). למה לא נאמר שְׂאֵל-אברהם או שְׂאֵל-יצחק אלא אל יעקב? אֵת מוצא שלא נצב הקב”ה לא על אברהם לא על יצחק אלא על יעקב, שנאמר “והנה ה’ נצב עליו” (בראשית כח:ג). א”ר סימון: אין המלך עומד על שדהו לא כשנזרעה ולא כשנתחרשה ולא כשנעדרה. ואימתי עומד עליה? כשהיא עומדת כרי. כך אברהם עדר, שנאמר “קום התהלך בארץ” (בראשית יג:יז). יצחק זרע, שנא’ “ויזרע יצחק” (בראשית כו:יב). לא עמד המלך עליה עד שבא יעקב, שהיה כרי של תבואה, שנאמר, “קדש ישראל לה’ ראשית תבואתו” (ירמיה ב:ג) ועמד הקב”ה עליו שנאמר “והנה ה’ נצב עליו.” הוי “אשרי שְׂאֵל-יעקב בעזרו שברו על ה’ אלקיו” (תהלים קמו:ה).</p>
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Other Midrashim also speak about Yaakov’s special position among the Avot:

<p>4. Bereishit Rabbah 76:1 Rabbi Pinchas quoted Rabbi Reuven: ... The chosen of the Forefathers is Yaakov, as it says, “For Yaakov G-d chose for himself” (Tehillim 135:4) ... The chosen of the prophets is Moshe, as it says, “If it were not for Moshe My chosen one” (Tehillim 106:23) ...</p>	<p>בראשית רבה עו:א ר’ פנחס בשם ר’ ראובן: ... הבחור שבאבות זה יעקב שנאמר, “כי יעקב בחר לו קה” (תהילים קלה:ד) ... הבחור שבנביאים זה משה שנאמר, “לולי משה בחירו” (תהילים קז:כג) ...</p>
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In what way did Avraham prepare the ground, Yitzchak plant, and Yaakov reap?

In his Netiv Hayam commentary on the Tanchuma (published in 1913), Harav Yisrael Moshe Bromberg, זצ"ל, of Lodz describes the process as follows: Avraham paved the way for his descendants by removing the “thorns and stones,” separating off Yishmael and the Bnei Keturah, and passed on leadership to Yitzchak in all his purity. Yitzchak sowed, beginning the process of growth, but straw and chaff still needed to be removed. Only Yaakov produced a grain pile, the twelve שבטי קה, twelve righteous sons that would all be part of the People of Israel.

B. Yosef: The World's Hope

When the Midrash quotes the verse in Tehillim a second time, it quotes it in its entirety. Reish Lakish identifies the word שברו in the end of the verse as referring to Yosef:

<p>3. Midrash Tanchuma Miketz 5:5 This is “Fortunate is the one for whom the G-d of Yaakov come to his aid, his hope is on Hashem his G-d” (Tehillim 146:5). Said Reish Lakish: This refers to Yosef, the hope of the world, who was in Egypt. The Holy One, blessed be He, showed Yaakov that his hope was in Egypt, as it says, “Yaakov saw that there was grain (hope) ...”</p>	<p>מדרש תנחומא מקץ ה:ה הוי “אשרי שָׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בַּעֲזָרוֹ שִׁבְרוּ עַל הַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ” (תהלים קמו:ה). אמר ריש לקיש: זה יוסף שברו של עולם שהיה במצרים. והראה הקב”ה ליעקב שסברו במצרים, שנאמר, “וירא יעקב כי יש שבר וגו’.”</p>
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Yosef, in retrospect, was certainly the “hope” of Yaakov and his family. The following Midrash, as ours does, builds on the inner affinity between the words שבר – grain – and סבר (שבר) – hope:

<p>5. Bereishit Rabbah 91:6 ... Do not read this as “there is שבר – grain – but there is סבר – hope. For he saw in a vision that his hope was in Egypt. And who was this? It was Yosef.</p>	<p>בראשית רבה צא:ו ... אל תהי קורא יש שבר אלא יש סבר שראה באספקלריא שסברו במצרים ואיזה זה זה יוסף.</p>
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But our Midrash (Source 3) goes a step further, referring to Yosef as שברו של עולם – the hope of the world. Yosef was Hashem’s messenger to save Egypt and the neighboring lands during the Great Famine. He provided for all:

<p>6. Bereishit 41:57 The entire land came to Egypt to buy grain from Yosef, for the famine was intense in the entire land.</p> <p>Bereishit 42:6 And Yosef was the ruler over the land. He was the provider of grain for all of the people of the land ...</p>	<p>בראשית מא:ג וְכָל הָאֲרֶזֶן בְּאוֹ מִצְרַיִם לְשִׁבְרֵי אֶל יוֹסֵף כִּי חָזַק הָרָעָב בְּכָל הָאֲרֶזֶן.</p> <p>בראשית מב:ו וַיֹּסֵף הוּא הַשְּׁלִיט עַל הָאֲרֶזֶן הוּא הַמְּשַׁבֵּיר לְכָל עַם הָאֲרֶזֶן ...</p>
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Yosef’s role in Egypt, as a leader and savior working outside of Yaakov’s family, is perhaps the biblical paradigm of Yosef’s role in world history.

A descendant of Yosef, according to Chazal, will become Hashem’s messenger to literally save the world. This is the tradition of the Mashiach ben Yosef, the Messiah descended from Yosef:

<p>6. Midrash Tanchuma Breishit Chapter 1 ... Thus said Yishayah, “Fortunate are you who sow on all water” (Yishayah 32:20) – This refers to those who are involved with Torah, as it says, “Behold, all those who are thirsty go to water” (Yishayah 55:1). “Those who send out the foot of the ox” – this refers to the Mashiach son of Yosef, who is likened to an ox (in Devarim 33:17). “And the donkey” – This refers to Mashiach son of David, as it says, “Poor and riding on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9).</p>	<p>מדרש תנחומא בראשית פרק א ... וכן ישעיה אמר “אשריכם זורעי על כל מים” (ישעיה לב:כ) – אלו עוסקי תורה שנמשלה למים שנא’ “הוי כל צמא לכו למים” (שם נה:א). “משלחי רגל השור” – זה משיח בן יוסף שנמשל לשור (בדברים לג:ז). “וחמור” – זה משיח בן דוד, שנא’, “עני ורוכב על חמור” (זכריה ט:ט).</p>
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A TALE OF TWO FRUITS BY RABBI YITZCHAK HIRSHFELD

Chazal gave us two precious gifts, two holidays which bring with them tremendous spiritual blessings: Chanukah and Purim.

As we know, they are, of course, different in their content. Purim is the celebration of the physical salvation of Klal Yisrael, and Chanukah celebrates the spiritual. But perhaps we can gain additional insights into the difference between them by looking into the two fruits which represent each of these Yamim Tovim. The grape is the symbol of Purim, the olive is the symbol of Chanukah. On Purim we drink the fruit of the vine, and on Chanukah we kindle the fruit of the olive tree.

What is wine? It is the secret of the grape. “נכנס יין ויצא סוד” – Wine enters and a secret comes out” (Eruvin 65a). The grape hides its secret.

What is olive oil? It is the secret of the olive. Who would imagine that out of this fruit comes the purest light of the world?

But here the comparison ends, because the grape itself is a sweet and delicious fruit. In that way it can be deceptive. Why should we suspect that there is something hidden underneath that sweet fruit, that it has the power of bringing a person to an exalted state of simchah, to great joy? “ויין ישמח לבב אנוש” – And wine makes a man’s heart glad” (Tehillim 104:15). The sweet grape hides an even sweeter secret.

But the olive is bitter. It is a symbol of darkness, of forgetting. The light that comes out of the dark olive is more than just a hidden dimension; it is a transformation into the opposite, from darkness to light.

Before the Yevanim, the Greeks, the world was illuminated spiritually. The world was sweet, and the task of the עובדי ה' was to seek the depth beneath the surface. But since the “enlightened” Greeks the world has been darkened. “והושך על פני תהום” – And there was darkness on the face of the depths” (Bereishit 1:2). The victory of the Chashmonaim was to succeed in lighting a candle in the darkness, but it didn’t turn night into day.

As עובדי ה', people dedicated to serving G-d, we must bring the approaches of both Chanukah and Purim into our daily life. We must get past the sweet exterior of this-worldly life and strive for inner depth, looking for the wine within. And we must also get behind life’s darkness and bitterness and find the illuminating olive oil inside the olive.

Let us apply this to marriage. Marriage is sweet – socially, practically, emotionally – just as a grape is sweet. But the Torah challenges us to look deep within the relationship between a husband and wife and find the Divine Presence within, to find the wine. But a healthy marriage also demands removing bitterness – removing the darkness of unrefined midot, (character traits) – in order to release the light within.

May we all be blessed with an illuminating Chanukah and look forward to an equally joyous Purim.

שבת שלום ומבורך וחנוכה שמח

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The Daf Keshet, a project of Shapell’s Darche Noam, is prepared by Rabbi Eliezer Kwass, edited by Rabbi Shmuel Jablon, and distributed by Emuna Diamond. To join the Shapell’s Daf Keshet mailing list contact us at dafkeshet@darchenoam.org.



The following digital Torah resources have been extremely helpful in researching and preparing the Shapell’s Daf Keshet:
DBS – Hataklitor Hatorani, Otzar Hachochmah, the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, Hebrewbooks.org, and the Tanach section of Chabad.org.

We continue to pray for a refuah shleimah, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.