

THE  
TORAH

חומש

בראשית

∞  
TORAH

CHUMASH BEREISHIT

*The Book of Genesis*

***Parshat Mikeitz***

*A free excerpt from the Kehot Publication Society's  
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based on the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe,  
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*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of  
The Lubavitcher Rebbe*

**THE TORAH - CHUMASH BEREISHIT**

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

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# חומש בראשית

## THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of  
The Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*

CHUMASH BEREISHIT

*The Book of Genesis*

*Parshat Mikeitz*



*Kehot Publication Society*

*770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11213*





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Lech Lecha  
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Chayei Sarah  
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# 10 מִקֵּץ Mikeitz

## Overview

**I**n *parashat Vayeishev*, we saw Joseph begin his odyssey in Egypt, following him as he was sold to the royal butcher, promoted to the position of chief administrator of his master's household, incarcerated on trumped-up charges, and subsequently promoted to chief administrator of the prison. While imprisoned, he interpreted the dreams of his fellow inmates, predicting that one of them would shortly be freed and asking him to intercede on his behalf upon his release. The *parashah* closes as this former inmate chooses to ignore Joseph's request, leaving him to languish in prison.

The pattern that emerges from these events is one of descent followed by illusory ascent. Both times that Joseph appears to be on his way out of his predicament, he is cast once more into a new one: The moment he began to indulge in feelings of security as the butcher's trusted administrator, he was shown just how fragile that security was; after he again felt secure when he was promoted to chief administrator of the prison, he was shown how hopeless his prospects were. Both instances in which he ascended to power thus served to bring home how little independence he really possessed; how, even from the best imaginable vantage point under the circumstances, he was still merely a slave, a prisoner. By the end of the *parashah*, his apparent successes, rather than providing him with hope, only made a mockery of his situation, leaving him desperate.

*Parashat Mikeitz* shows Joseph once again promoted, this time to viceroy of Egypt. In contrast to his previous promotions, this time he remains in his prominent post until the end of his life, and is granted not only full control over his own life but over everyone else's lives, as well.

From this perspective, Joseph's life as evinced in this *parashah* begins to mirror that of his father Jacob. Jacob had also been thrust into difficult circumstances and had to discover how to prosper in spite of them. In demonstrating his ability to flourish in a hostile environment, Joseph was starting to manifest the essential qualities his father had seen in him from birth, qualities which would later enable him to continue the work Jacob himself had started: overcoming the most profound challenge to the Divine mission, exile.

The essence of exile is living under the control of some power that deprives us of the freedom to live our lives as God would like us to. It is immaterial whether that "power" is political, social, or psychological; whether we submit to it unwillingly or willingly; whether we are physically located in our native country or not. Whatever the case, exile is

the mentality that we must constantly seek the approval or bend to the will of an authority whose values are inimical to ours. Being in exile is thus the single most challenging obstacle to living up to our Divine potential, fulfilling God's will, and following our life's true calling.

As we have seen, when Jacob saw that Esau was not ready to join forces with him in the Divine mission of making the world into God's home, he realized that refining Esau's energy and passion would be a long, arduous, and gradual process. In the course of this process, there would be times when Esau's descendants would gain the upper hand, and Jacob's descendants, individually or collectively, would find themselves in physical and/or spiritual exile. In such times, it would be crucial for them to follow Joseph's example, to be able to thrive under adverse conditions and eventually even triumph over them.

This ability to achieve great heights in the face of adversity, as exemplified by Joseph, is alluded to in the name of this *parashah*, *Mikeitz*, which means "at the end." The word for "end" used here actually means "extreme," and thus alludes to how evil, the lower extreme on the moral continuum, should elicit our inner strengths for good, the upper extreme of that continuum. Inasmuch as the two "extremes" of any process are its beginning and its end, the word *Mikeitz* alludes not only to the end of exile—whether Joseph's exile in prison or our present personal and general exiles—but also to how this nexus itself becomes the beginning of redemption.

As we shall see, Joseph was able to turn his life around, extricating himself from the depths and soaring to the heights, by learning to surrender his ego. As soon as he acknowledged God's presence and providence in his life, abandoning the illusion that his achievements were the result of his own prowess, true success ceased to elude him.

These, then, are the lessons of *parashat Mikeitz*. Every descent we undergo is intended to lead us to an even greater ascent; the key to transforming a descent into an ascent is letting go of our ego; and the challenge of exile is to turn the tables on it, co-opting the powers of passion and ambition and transforming them into good and holy forces.

Joseph ultimately derived the power to nullify his ego and thrive in the face of adversity from the Torah he had learned with his father during childhood. We, too, must look to the Torah for inspiration and instruction on how to survive in our exile and advantageously exploit it. Nowadays, we must turn in particular to the inner dimension of the Torah, which sensitizes us to the inner dimension of reality, enabling us to see all of life's challenges for what they truly are—God's means of elevating us to higher levels of spiritual maturity.

As Jacob foresaw, the ultimate rectification of Esau will usher in the final Redemption. Thus, transforming the extreme of evil into the opposite extreme of goodness—by neutralizing our ego and remaining unwaveringly loyal to our Divine mission—will also transform the extreme of exile into its opposite extreme of Redemption. The name of this *parashah*, *Mikeitz*, thus alludes not only to the dynamic of transformation that leads to redemption, but also to the Redemption itself, the end of the long exile and beginning of the messianic future.<sup>1</sup>

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1. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5746, p. 74; *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 1, pp. 201-202; *Sefer HaSichot* 5752, vol. 1, p. 202; *Hitva'aduyot* 5743, vol. 2, p. 721-722.

— ONKELOS —

41:1 וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפְרָעָה חָלַם וַהֲנֵה עֹמֵד  
עַל-הַיָּאָר: 2 וַהֲנֵה מִן-הַיָּאָר עֹלֵת שֹׁבַע פָּרוֹת יְפוֹת  
מֵרָאָה וּבְרִיאֹת בָּשָׂר וַתִּרְעִינָה בָּאָחוּ: 3 וַהֲנֵה שֹׁבַע  
פָּרוֹת אַחֲרוֹת עֹלֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן מִן-הַיָּאָר רָעוֹת מֵרָאָה  
וְדָקוֹת בָּשָׂר וַתַּעֲמִדְנָה אֵצֶל הַפָּרוֹת עַל-שֵׁפֶת הַיָּאָר:  
4 וַתֹּאכְלֶנָּה הַפָּרוֹת רָעוֹת הַמֵּרָאָה וְדָקוֹת הַבָּשָׂר אֵת  
שֹׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת יְפוֹת הַמֵּרָאָה וַהֲבִרְיָאֵת וַיִּקֶּץ פְּרָעָה:  
5 וַיֵּשֶׁן וַיַּחֲלֹם שֵׁנִית וַהֲנֵה א שֹׁבַע שִׁבְלִים עֹלֹת בְּקִנָּה  
אֶחָד בְּרִיאֹת וּטְבוֹת: 6 וַהֲנֵה שֹׁבַע שִׁבְלִים דָּקוֹת  
וְשְׂדוּפֹת קָדִים צִמְחוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן:

— RASHI —

עין בְּרִיָּה צָרָה בַּחֲבֶרְתָּהּ: **בָּאָחוּ**. בָּאֵג, מְרִישׁ"ק בְּלַעֲוִי,  
כְּמוֹ: "יִשְׁגָּא אָחוּ": 3 **וְדָקוֹת בָּשָׂר**. טִיבִי"ש בְּלַעֲוִי,  
לְשׁוֹן דָּק: 4 **וַתֹּאכְלֶנָּה**. סִימָן שֶׁתְּהָא כָּל שִׁמְחַת הַשֹּׁבַע  
נִשְׁכַּחַת בִּימֵי הָרָעָב: 5 **בְּקִנָּה אֶחָד**. טוֹדִי"ל בְּלַעֲוִי:  
**בְּרִיאֹת**. שִׁינִי"ש בְּלַעֲוִי: 6 **שְׂדוּפֹת**. הַשְׁלִידִי"ש בְּלַעֲוִי,  
"שְׂקִיפֹן קְדוֹם", חֲבוּטוֹת, לְשׁוֹן מִשְׁקוֹף הַחֲבוּט תְּמִיד  
עַל יְדֵי הַדֶּלֶת הַמְּכֻּה עָלָיו: **קָדִים**. רוּחַ מִזְרָחִית שְׂקוּרִין  
בִּישׁ"א:

1. בִּיצָה. 2. אִיבּוּחַ, יָא. 3. דָּקוֹת. 4. צֹנֹר, גִּבְעוּל. 5. בְּרִיאֹת. 6. שְׂדוּפֹת, מִבְּשׂוֹת, שְׂדוּפֹת. 7. רוּחַ הַזֶּקֶה, קֶרֶה וּבִשָּׁה.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

predicting an actual regression from years of plenty to years of famine.

Joseph's dreams, in contrast, occurred as a progression: he first dreamed about earthly sheaves and then about the heavenly hosts. Likewise, in his first dream, individual stalks were turned into more valuable sheaves. This difference reflected the truth that holiness possesses intrinsic existence—it exists for its own sake and therefore is permanent—while unholiness is only a temporary phenomenon, existing only to challenge holiness. Therefore, any change that occurs in holiness must be an addition, a progression, whereas the nature of the unholy is to progressively diminish. Any regression that does occur in holiness is only apparent, paving the way for a subsequent ascent.

Another difference between the dreams is that Pharaoh dreamed only of the earthly—animals and food, whereas Joseph dreamed of both the earthly and the heavenly. This difference reflected their different perspectives: Pharaoh perceived nothing higher than ma-

1 **וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ**. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ "מִסּוּף", וְכָל לְשׁוֹן "קֶץ" סוּף הוּא: **עַל הַיָּאָר**. כָּל שְׂאָר נִהְיֹת אֵינִם קְרוּיִם "יָאָרִים", חוּץ מִנִּילוּס. מִפְּנֵי שֶׁכָּל הָאָרֶץ עֲשׂוּיָן יָאָרִים וְאָרִים בִּידֵי אָדָם, וְנִילוּס עוֹלָה בְּתוֹכָם וּמִשְׁקָה אוֹתָם, לְפִי שְׂאִין גִּשְׁמִים יוֹרְדִין בְּמִצְרַיִם תְּדִיר כְּשֶׁאָר אֲרָצוֹת: 2 **מִן הַיָּאָר עֹלֵת**. וְהוּ עֲקָרוֹ שֶׁל חֲלוֹם, לְפִי שֶׁשְׂבִיעֲתָן וְרָעִיבָתָן מֵתוּחַ גְּדִלוֹת הַנֶּהָר וּמֵתוּחַ יְבֻשׁוֹתוֹ: **יְפוֹת מֵרָאָה**. סִימָן הוּא לִימֵי הַשֹּׁבַע, שֶׁהַבְּרִיּוֹת נִרְאֹת יְפוֹת זֶה לָזֶה, שְׂאִין

terial reality (the deities he worshipped being nothing more than abstractions of physical forces), whereas Joseph was acutely aware of spiritual reality, as well.

Furthermore, the fact that both Joseph's earthly and heavenly dreams conveyed the same basic idea implies that for Joseph, the earthly and heavenly were one. Even while immersed in the earthly, Joseph was aware of the heavenly. Not only did the earthly not distract him from the heavenly, it itself was transformed and became heavenly. For Pharaoh, in contrast, there was only one world—the world of cows and grain.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch was imprisoned by the Soviets in 1927 for his efforts to keep the flame of Judaism alive despite the Soviet Union's religious persecution. During his imprisonment, he remained defiant and refused to bend to the pressures of the interrogators. Once an interrogator lifted a revolver and said, "This little toy has made many a man talk," to which Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak replied: "Those who have many gods and one world are afraid of a revolver; those who have one God and two worlds have nothing to fear."<sup>3</sup>

3. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 805-810, 820-822.



## Pharaoh's Dreams

**41:1** At the end of two full years, Pharaoh had a dream. In his dream, there he was, standing by the Nile River,

**2** when seven good-looking, robust cows emerged from the Nile River and started grazing in the marsh.

**3** Then seven other cows, ugly and scrawny, emerged after them from the Nile River, and they stood next to the good-looking cows on the bank of the Nile River.

**4** The ugly, scrawny cows ate up the seven good-looking, robust cows. Pharaoh then woke up.

**5** He fell asleep and dreamed a second time. In this dream, there were seven ears of grain, healthy and good-looking, growing on a single stalk.

**6** Then seven ears of grain sprouted after them, gaunt and parched from being battered by the east wind.

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### — CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

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**1 Pharaoh had a dream:** Because Joseph, the central figure of his generation, learned of his future through dreams, this became the norm. This was why Pharaoh learned about the future of his land through dreams as well. (As to why Joseph is associated with dreams, see below on v. 35.)

Today, as well, the dynamics of the world at large stem from those of “Joseph,” the Jewish people. Even the forces that oppose Godliness take their cue from the Jewish people.

This occurs in two ways:

- (1) The Jewish people’s spiritual deficiencies spawn similar such deficiencies in the world.
- (2) Some aspects of evil are so egregious that they cannot possibly emerge from our own failings. Nevertheless, they stem from us indirectly, since the purpose of their existence is to challenge us and thereby elicit our otherwise dormant spiritual powers.

Ironically, when we encounter these seemingly unnaturally evil phenomena, we tend to assume that they stem from a source all their own. We are therefore intimidated by them at best and seduced by them at worst. If, instead, we would recognize that they are nothing more than reflections of our own inadequacies or simply challenges designed to elicit our dormant spiritual powers, we would consider them neither intimidating nor tantalizing. Our reaction would then be as it should be: to rectify our own inadequacies with holiness, which in turn would affect the spiritual condition of the world at large.<sup>1</sup>

**2-6 Seven cows...seven ears of grain:** Although, as we have seen, Pharaoh’s dreaming stemmed from Joseph,

the content of his dreams differed profoundly from that of Joseph’s. Pharaoh dreamed only of produce and animals but not of work. Joseph’s dreams, in contrast, began from the start with the image of work—the brothers gathering sheaves in the field.

This aptly reflects the difference between how holy individuals and unholy individuals receive sustenance from on high. The holy receive sustenance through the work of aligning themselves with God’s will. When they do so, Divine sustenance flows to them naturally. The unholy balk at the idea of self-discipline and work and therefore refuse to conform to God’s will; they are therefore sustained by God in a backhanded fashion.

Moreover, receiving something without effort constitutes flawed goodness, since recipients do not truly appreciate something gained without effort. Our sages describe such gain as “bread of shame.”<sup>2</sup> It is therefore incompatible with the realm of holiness, which is categorized by perfect goodness.

We should bear the above in mind when the thought falls into our minds that we can get by without hard work. Such notions stem from our unholy side, where work and effort is not critical. Furthermore, we should remember that anything we receive for “free” will not endure.

**T**he dreams of Pharaoh differed from Joseph’s in another significant way: The themes of Pharaoh’s dreams occurred as a regression—first the higher life form of animal, followed by the lower life form of vegetation—even though temporally, the poor condition of the cows resulted from the poor condition of the grain. Furthermore, each individual dream was about a regression—from healthy cows and grain to unhealthy—

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1. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 819-820. 2. See *Y. Orlah* 1:3, cited in *Likutei Torah* 2:7d.

ONKELOS

7 וּבִלְעֹז שְׂבִלְיָא לְקִיטָא ית שְׂבַע  
שְׂבִלְיָא פְּטִימָתָא וּמִלִּיתָא וְאִתְעַר  
פְּרַעָה וְהָא חֲלָמָא: 8 וְהוּהוּ בְּצִפְרָא  
וּמִשְׁרָפָא רִוְחָה וְשִׁלַּח וּקְרָא ית כָּל  
חֲרָשֵׁי מִצְרַיִם וְיִת כָּל חֲכִימָהָא  
וְאִשְׁתַּעֲי פְּרַעָה לְהוֹן ית חֲלָמָה  
וְלִית דְּפִשֶׁר יִתְהוֹן לְפְרַעָה:  
9 וּמִלִּיל רַב שָׁקִי עִם פְּרַעָה לְמִימָר  
יִת סוּרְחָנִי אָנָּא מְדַבֵּר יוֹמָא דִּין:  
10 פְּרַעָה רָגַז עַל עֲבֹדָהּ וְיִהֵב  
יְתִי בְּמִשְׁרַת בֵּית רַב קְטוּלְיָא  
יְתִי יְתִי רַב נַחְתוּמִי: 11 וְחֲלָמָא  
חֲלָמָא בְּלִילְיָא חֹד אָנָּא וְהוּא גִבֵּר  
כְּפֹשֶׁרֶן חֲלָמָה חֲלָמָא: 12 וְתִמְנָן  
עֲמָנָא עוֹלָם עֲבָרָאָה עֲבָדָא לְרַב  
קְטוּלְיָא וְאִשְׁתַּעֲינָא לֵה וּפִשֶׁר לָנָא  
יִת חֲלָמָא גִבֵּר בְּחֲלָמָה פִּשֶׁר:  
13 וְהוּהוּ כְּמָה דִּי פִשֶׁר לָנָא כֵּן הוּהוּ  
יְתִי אֲתִיב עַל שְׁמוּשֵׁי וְיִתְהָ עֲלָב:  
14 וְשִׁלַּח פְּרַעָה וּקְרָא ית יוֹסֵף  
וְאִתְיִשׁוּדֵהּ מִן בֵּית אֲסִירֵי וְסִפֵּר  
וְשִׁנִּי כְּסוּתָהּ וְעַל לֹת פְּרַעָה:

7 וּתְבַלְעָנָה הַשְּׂבָלִים הַדִּקְוֹת אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַשְּׂבָלִים  
הַבְּרִיאוֹת וְהַמְּלָאוֹת וַיִּקְרָן פְּרַעָה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם: 8 וַיְהִי  
בְּבִקְרָה וּתְפַעֵם רוּחוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-כָּל-חֲרָטְמֵי  
מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת-כָּל-חֲכָמֵיהֶם וַיְסַפֵּר פְּרַעָה לָהֶם אֶת-חֲלָמוֹ  
וַאֲיֵן-פֹּתֵר אוֹתָם לְפְרַעָה: 9 וַיִּדְבֹּר שֶׁר הַמִּשְׁקִים אֶת-  
פְּרַעָה לֵאמֹר אֶת-חֲטָאִי אֲנִי מִזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם: 10 פְּרַעָה  
קָצַף עַל-עַבְדָּיו וַיִּתֵּן אֹתִי בְּמִשְׁמֶר בֵּית שֶׁר הַטְּבָחִים  
אֹתִי וְאֶת שֶׁר הָאֲפִים: 11 וַנַּחֲלָמָה חֲלוֹם בְּלִילָה אַחֵר  
אֲנִי וְהוּא אִישׁ כְּפֹתֶרוֹן חֲלָמוֹ חֲלָמָנוּ: 12 וְשֵׁם אֲתָנּוּ נָעַר  
עַבְדִּי עֶבֶד לְשֶׁר הַטְּבָחִים וְנִסְפָּר-לוֹ וַיִּפְתָּר-לָנוּ אֶת-  
חֲלָמֵינוּ אִישׁ בְּחֲלָמוֹ פָּתַר: 13 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר-לָנוּ  
כֵּן הָיָה אֹתִי הַשִּׁיב עַל-כֵּנִי וְאִתּוֹ תֵּלָה: 14 וַיִּשְׁלַח פְּרַעָה  
וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיעֵהוּ מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיַּגְלֵל וַיַּחְלֵף שְׂמֹלֵתּוֹ  
וַיָּבֹא אֶל-פְּרַעָה:

RASHI

מִזְכִּירוֹ בְּלִשׁוֹן בִּיזוֹן: נָעַר. שׁוֹשָׁה וְאִין רָאוּי לְגִדְלָה:  
עַבְדִּי. אֶפְלוֹ לְשׁוֹנֵנוּ אִינוּ מְכִיר: עַבְדִּי. וְכָתוּב בְּנִמוּסֵי  
מִצְרַיִם, שָׁאִין עֶבֶד מוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא לֹבֵשׁ בְּגָדֵי שָׂרִים: אִישׁ  
כְּחֵלְמוֹ. לְפִי הַחֲלוֹם וְקָרֹב לְעֵינָיו: 13 הַשִּׁיב עַל כֵּנִי.  
פְּרַעָה הַנּוֹכַח לְמַעַלָּה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר: "פְּרַעָה קָצַף עַל  
עַבְדָּיו". הִרִי מִקְרָא קָצַר, וְלֹא פָּרַשׁ מִי הַשִּׁיב, לְפִי שָׁאִין  
צָרִיךְ לְפָרֵשׁ מִי הַשִּׁיב, מִי שֶׁבִּדְדוֹ לְהַשִּׁיב, וְהוּא פְּרַעָה.  
וְכֵן דָּרָךְ כָּל מִקְרָאוֹת קְצָרִים, עַל מִי שֶׁעָלִיו לַעֲשׂוֹת הֵם  
סוֹתְמִים אֶת הַדְּבָר: 14 מִן הַבּוֹר. מִן בֵּית הַסֵּהָר שֶׁהוּא  
עֲשׂוֹי כְּעֵין גּוּמָא, וְכֵן כָּל בּוֹר שֶׁבְּמִקְרָא לְשׁוֹן גּוּמָא הוּא,  
וְאִם אֵין בּוֹ מִים קְרוִי "בּוֹר", פּוֹשֵׁא בְּלַעְזִי: וַיַּגְלֵל.  
מִפְּנֵי כְּבוֹד הַמַּלְכוּת:

7 הַבְּרִיאוֹת. שִׁינִי"ש בְּלַעְזִי: וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם. וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁלַם  
חֲלוֹם שְׁלֵם לְפָנָיו, וְהַצָּרָה לְפֹתֵרִים: 8 וּתְפַעֵם רוּחוֹ.  
"וּמִשְׁרָפָא רִוְחָה", מְקַשְׁקֶשֶׁת בְּתוֹכּוֹ כְּפַעֲמוֹן. וּבְנִבּוּכַדְנֶצַּר  
אוֹמַר: "וְתִתְפַעֵם רוּחוֹ", לְפִי שֶׁהָיָה שָׁם שְׁתֵּי פְּעִימוֹת,  
שִׁכַּחַת הַחֲלוֹם וְהַעֲלָמַת פְּתוּרָתּוֹ: חֲרָטְמֵי. הַנְּחָרִים בְּטִימֵי  
מַתִּים, שֶׁשׁוֹאֲלִים בְּעַצְמוֹת. "טִימִי" הֵן עַצְמוֹת בְּלִשׁוֹן  
אַרְמִי, וּבְמִשְׁנָה: "בֵּית שֶׁהוּא מְלֵא טִימָא", מְלֵא  
עַצְמוֹת: וְאִין פֹּתֵר אוֹתָם לְפְרַעָה. פֹּתֵרִים הָיוּ אוֹתָם  
אֲבָל לֹא לְפְרַעָה, שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה קוֹלֵן נִכְנָס בְּאִזְנוֹ, וְלֹא הָיָה  
לוֹ קוֹרֵת רוּחַ בְּפִתְרוֹנָם, שֶׁהָיוּ אוֹמְרִים: שְׂבַע בְּנוֹת אֶתָּה  
מוֹלִיד, שְׂבַע בְּנוֹת אֶתָּה קוֹבֵר: 11 אִישׁ כְּפֹתֶרוֹן חֲלָמוֹ.  
חֲלוֹם הָרָאוּי לְפִתְרוֹן שֶׁנִּפְתָּר לָנוּ וְדוֹמָה לוֹ: 12 נָעַר  
עַבְדִּי עַבְדִּי. אֲרוּרִים הָרָשָׁעִים שָׁאִין טוֹבָתָם שְׁלָמָה,

8. בְּרִיאוֹת. 9. דְּנִיאל ב, א. 10. עֵיין רִשִׁי בְּרוּכָת נט, א; שֶׁבַת קכב, ב. 11. פִּסְקוֹ י. 12. חֲפִיכָה.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

14 **He changed...his...clothes:** Joseph's release from prison ultimately led to his becoming viceroy of Egypt. Spiritually, then, he "changed his clothes" to prepare for the next stage of his mission in Egypt, when he would be fully immersed in mundane matters. In order to protect himself spiritually, Joseph planned to remain spiritually detached from Egypt. The material concerns of this world would remain insignificant to

him and therefore be unable to disrupt his attachment to God.

As a preparation for kingship he made it clear that he considered his new role as a "garment," something that would remain external to him, just as a garment remains external to a person. His new role would only affect him superficially; it would not change his inner self.<sup>6</sup>

6. Likutei Sichot, vol. 35, p. 180.

**7** The gaunt ears then swallowed up the seven healthy, full ears. Pharaoh awoke and behold, it was clear to him that he had dreamed a complete dream that now needed to be properly interpreted.

**8** In the morning, his spirit was agitated, so he sent for and called all the necromancers and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but none of them were able to interpret them to Pharaoh's satisfaction. Since Egypt's agricultural bounty depended upon the annual overflow of the Nile, the cows and the grain emerging from the river were obvious symbols of material sustenance, and it seemed plausible to interpret them as signifying successive years of agricultural plenty and famine. But Pharaoh's advisors were confused by the fact that the seven scrawny cows and the seven robust cows were standing next to each other in his dream, since years of famine and years of plenty cannot occur simultaneously. On the other hand, if the cows and grain did not symbolize agricultural seasons, how could it be explained that the Nile produced healthy food and deficient food at the same time? They therefore offered other interpretations, such as, "You will have seven healthy daughters and bury seven other daughters." True, these interpretations ignored the prominent appearance of the Nile in Pharaoh's dream, but Pharaoh's advisors assumed that this detail was one of the inaccuracies that inevitably occur in prophetic dreams.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Pharaoh knew that these types of interpretations could not be correct, for, as the ruler of Egypt, he knew that his dreams would bear more than personal significance.

**9** The chief cupbearer then spoke up and said to Pharaoh, "I must mention my transgressions today.

**10** Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and he put the chief baker and me into custody in the house of the chief butcher.

**11** We both had a dream on the same night, he and I, each having a dream that accorded with its interpretation.

**12** And there, in custody with us, was a person who interpreted our dreams. Despite his abilities, he is not fit to hold any political office, for firstly, he is an unsophisticated youth; secondly, he is a Hebrew, who cannot speak our language fluently; and finally, he is a servant of the chief butcher—and as you know, Egyptian law does not allow anyone who was ever a slave to hold public office or even don royal raiment. We told him our dreams and he interpreted them for us, interpreting them for each of us according to his dream and its details.

**13** And just as he had interpreted them for us, so it transpired: Your Majesty reinstated me to my post, while Your Majesty hanged him, the chief baker."

**14** Pharaoh sent messengers and had Joseph summoned, and they hurried him out of the dungeon. He had his hair cut in honor of his audience with Pharaoh, changed from his prison clothes to ordinary clothes,<sup>5</sup> and then appeared before Pharaoh.

4. See above, 37:10. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 339-345. 5. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, pp. 176-178.

ONKELOS

15 וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּרְעָה לְיוֹסֵף חֲלָמָא חֲלָמִית וּפֶשֶׁר לִית לָהּ וְאִנָּא שְׁמַעִית עֲלָךְ לְמִימַר דְּאֵת שְׁמַע חֲלָמָא לְמִפְשַׁר יְתָה: 16 וְאִתִּיב יוֹסֵף יֵת פֶּרְעָה לְמִימַר לֹא מִן חֲכָמִית אֱלֹהִין מִן קֹדֶם יְיָ יִתְתֵּב יֵת שְׁלָמָא דְּפֶרְעָה: 17 וּמְלִיל פֶּרְעָה עִם יוֹסֵף בְּחֲלָמִי הָא אֲנָא קָאֵם עַל כִּיָּה נִהְרָא: 18 וְהָא מִן נִהְרָא סִלְקֹן שִׁבְעַת תּוֹרָן פְּטִימָן בֶּשֶׂר וְשִׁפְיוֹן לְמַחְזֵי וְרַעֲזָן בְּאִתְּוָא: 19 וְהָא שִׁבְעַת תּוֹרָן אֲחֵרִינָן סִלְקֹן בְּתַרְיָהן חֲסִיכָן וּבִישׁוֹן לְמַחְזֵי לְחֹדָא וְחֲסִינָן בֶּשֶׂר לֹא חֲזִיתִי כֹוֶתֶהָן בְּכָל אֲרַעָא דְּמַצְרַיִם לְבִישׁוֹ: 20 וְאֶבְלָא תּוֹרָתָא חֲסִיכָתָא וּבִישְׁתָּא יֵת שִׁבְעַת תּוֹרָתָא קְדִמִּיתָא פְּטִימָתָא: 21 וְעֵלָא לְמַעֲיָהָן וְלֹא אֲתִידַע אֲרִי עֵלָא לְמַעֲיָהָן וּמְחִיָּהָן בִּישׁ כֹּד בְּקִדְמִיתָא וְאֲתַעֲרִית: 22 וְחֲזִית בְּחֲלָמִי וְהָא שִׁבְעַת שְׁבָלִין סִלְקֹן בְּקִנְיָא חֹד מִלְּזֹן וְסִבְּן: 23 וְהָא שִׁבְעַת שְׁבָלִין נִצְן לְקִנְיָן שְׁקִיפֹן קְדוּם עֲמָחֹן בְּתַרְיָהָן: 24 וּבְלַעֲנו שְׁבָלִיא לְקִנְיָתָא יֵת שִׁבְעַת שְׁבָלִיא טִבְתָּא וְאֲמִרִית לְחֶרֶשׂא וְלִית דְּמַחְזֵי לִי: 25 וְאֹמֶר יוֹסֵף לְפֶרְעָה חֲלָמָא דְּפֶרְעָה חֹד הוּא יֵת דִּי יְיָ עֲתִיד לְמַעֲבַד חֲזִי לְפֶרְעָה: 26 שִׁבְעַת תּוֹרָתָא טִבְתָּא שִׁבְעַת שְׁנִין אֲנִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁבָלִיא טִבְתָּא שִׁבְעַת שְׁנִין אֲנִין חֲלָמָא חֹד הוּא: 27 וּשְׁבַע תּוֹרָתָא חֲסִיכָתָא וּבִישְׁתָּא דְּסִלְקֹן בְּתַרְיָהָן שִׁבְעַת שְׁנִין אֲנִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁבָלִיא לְקִנְיָתָא דְּשְׁקִיפֹן קְדוּם יְחִוִּין שִׁבְעַת שְׁנִין כִּפְנָא:

שני 15 וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּרְעָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף חֲלֹם חֲלָמִית וּפֶתֶר אֵין אֹתוֹ וְאִנִּי שְׁמַעֲתִי עָלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע חֲלֹם לְפֶתֶר אֹתוֹ: 16 וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף אֶת-פֶּרְעָה לֵאמֹר בְּלַעְגִּי אֱלֹהִים יַעֲנֶה אֶת-שְׁלֹם פֶּרְעָה: 17 וַיְדַבֵּר פֶּרְעָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף בְּחֲלָמִי הִנְנִי עֹמֵד עַל-שֹׁפֶת הַיָּאֵר: 18 וְהִנֵּה מִן-הַיָּאֵר עֹלֹת שִׁבְעַת פְּרוֹת בְּרִיאֹת בֶּשֶׂר וַיִּפֹּת תֹּאֵר וַתִּרְעֵנָה בְּאֵחוֹ: 19 וְהִנֵּה שִׁבְעַת-פְּרוֹת אַחֲרוֹת עֹלֹת אֲחֵרִיָּהֶן דְּלוֹת וְרַעֲוֹת תֹּאֵר מְאֹד וְרִקּוֹת בֶּשֶׂר לֹא-רָאִיתִי כַּהֲנָה בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לָרַע: 20 וַתֵּאבְלֶנָּה הַפְּרוֹת הָרִקּוֹת וְהָרַעֲוֹת אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַפְּרוֹת הָרֹאשְׁנוֹת הַבְּרִיאֹת: 21 וַתִּבְאֲנָה אֶל-קֶרְפָּנָה וְלֹא נִוְדַע כִּי-בָאוּ אֶל-קֶרְפָּנָה וּמְרִאִיהֶן רָע בְּאִשֶּׁר בְּתַחֲלָה וַאֲיָקִין: 22 וַאֲרָא בְּחֲלָמִי וְהִנֵּה שִׁבְעַת שְׁבָלִים עֹלֹת בְּקִנְיָה אֶחָד מִלֵּאֹת וְטִבּוֹת: 23 וְהִנֵּה שִׁבְעַת שְׁבָלִים עֲנָמוֹת וְרִקּוֹת שְׂדֵפוֹת קָדִים עֲמֻחוֹת אֲחֵרִיָּהֶם: 24 וַתִּבְלַעְנָן הַשְּׁבָלִים הַדִּקָּת אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַשְּׁבָלִים הַטִּבּוֹת וַאֲמַר אֶל-הַחֲרֻטָּמִים וַאֲיִין מַגִּיד לִי: 25 וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-פֶּרְעָה חֲלֹם פֶּרְעָה אֶחָד הוּא אֶת אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה הַגִּיד לְפֶרְעָה: 26 שִׁבְעַת פְּרוֹת הַטִּבּוֹת שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וּשְׁבַע הַשְּׁבָלִים הַטִּבּוֹת שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים הֵנָּה חֲלֹם אֶחָד הוּא: 27 וּשְׁבַע הַפְּרוֹת הָרִקּוֹת וְהָרַעֲוֹת הָעֹלֹת אֲחֵרִיָּהֶן שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וּשְׁבַע הַשְּׁבָלִים הָרִקּוֹת שְׂדֵפוֹת הַקָּדִים יִהְיוּ שִׁבְעַת שָׁנֵי רָעָב:

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בלי לחלום, וקשות פסלע. ותרגומו: "נצן לקנן". "נצן", אין בהן אלא הנצן, לפי שנתורקנו מן הורע: 26 שבע שנים ושבע שנים. כלן אינן אלא שבע, ואשר נשנה החלום פעמים, לפי שהדבר מזמן, כמו שפרש לו בסוף: "ועל השנות החלום" וגו'. בשבע שנים הטובות נאמר: "הגיד לפרעה", לפי שהיה סמוך, ובשבע שני רעב נאמר: "הראה את פרעה", לפי שהיה הדבר מפלג ורחוק, נופל בו לשון מראה:

15 תשמע חלום לפתור אותו. תאזין ותבין חלום לפתור אותו: תשמע. לשון הבנה והאזנה, כמו: "שמע יוסף", "אשר לא תשמע לשנתי". אינטינדר"א בלעז: 16 בלעדי. אין ההכמה משלי, אלא "אלהים יענה", יתן עניה בפי ל"שלום פרעה": 19 דלות. בחינות, כמו: "מדוע אתה ככה דל" דאמנון: ורקות בשר. כל לשון "רקות" שבמקרא חסרי בשר, בלשון "ש בלעז": 23 צנמות. "צנמא" בלשון ארמי "סלע", הרי הן בעץ

13. בראשית מב, כג. 14. דברים כח, מט. 15. להקנין. 16. שמואלב יג, ד. 17. מקשרות. 18. פסוק לב. 19. פסוק כה. 20. פסוק כח.

- ◆ **Second Reading 15** Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, but there is no one who can interpret it, and I have heard reliable reports<sup>7</sup> about you that you can understand a dream and interpret it.”

**16** Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not by my own power; God will provide an answer through me for Pharaoh’s welfare.”

**17** Pharaoh then spoke to Joseph: “In my dream, I was standing on the bank of the Nile River.

**18** And then, out of the Nile River emerged seven cows, robust and well-formed, and they grazed in the marsh.

**19** Then seven other cows emerged after them, meager, very ill-formed, and emaciated; I have never seen such bad-looking ones in all Egypt. They stood next to the robust cows on the bank of the Nile.<sup>8</sup>

**20** The emaciated, ill-formed cows then ate up the first seven robust cows.

**21** These were ingested whole inside them, but it wasn’t visibly apparent that they had been ingested whole inside them: their appearance was just as ill-formed as before. Then I woke up.

**22** I then saw in my dream that seven full, good-looking ears of grain were growing on a single stalk.

**23** Then seven ears of grain, shriveled, gaunt, and battered by the east wind, sprouted after them.

**24** The gaunt ears of grain then swallowed up the seven good-looking ears. I told this to the necromancers, but not even one of them could explain it to me.”

**25** Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The two parts of Pharaoh’s dream are actually a repetition of one and the same dream. God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do.

**26** First of all, both the cows and the grain symbolize sustenance.<sup>9</sup> Next, the seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are the same seven years; it is all one dream.

**27** The seven emaciated, ill-formed cows that came up after them are seven years, as are also the seven empty ears of grain that were battered by the east wind. They will be seven years of famine.

#### ✧ INNER DIMENSIONS ✧

**[16-28] “God [Elokim] will provide an answer... God [Elokim] has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do”:** The Name *Elokim* refers to the immanent aspects of God, that is, to God the Creator, the aspect of God that is discernible or can be deduced by observing created reality.

Joseph therefore used this name when talking to Pharaoh, since Pharaoh could not fathom Godliness that transcends the constrictions of nature, which is conveyed in the Name *Havayah*. Similarly, when the

Torah talks about God speaking to Avimelech, king of the Philistines, it states,<sup>10</sup> “*Elokim* spoke to Abimelech.”<sup>11</sup>

Generations later, when Moses confronted Pharaoh and spoke of God as *Havayah*, as a power that transcends nature, Pharaoh responded, “Who is *Havayah* that I should heed His voice?...I do not recognize *Havayah*.”<sup>12</sup> He did not recognize a God who transcends nature and refused to accept such a notion.<sup>13</sup>

7. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, p. 315; *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 11, #3673. 8. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 339-345. 9. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 116, note 10. 10. Above, 20:3,6. 11. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5697, p. 149. 12. Exodus 5:2. 13. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, p. 29. See on Exodus 5:2.



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28 הוא פתגמא די מלילית עס פרעה די יי עתיד למעבד אחוי ית פרעה: 29 הא שבע שנין אתון שבעא רבא בכל ארעא דמצרים: 30 ויקומן שבע שני כפנא בתריהן ויתנשי כל שבעא בארעא דמצרים וישיצי כפנא ית עמא דארעא: 31 ולא יתידע שבעא בארעא מן קדם כפנא ההוא ידיה בחר כן ארי תקין הוא לחדא: 32 ועל דאתני חלמא לפרעה תרתין זמנין ארי תקין פתגמא מן קדם יי ומוחי יי למעבדה: 33 וכען יחזי פרעה גבר טובלתן וחסים וימננה על ארעא דמצרים: 34 יעביד פרעה וימני מהימנין על ארעא ויורוון ית ארעא דמצרים בשבע שני שבעא: 35 ויכנשו ית כל עבד שניא טבן דאתון האלון ויצברון עבדא תחות דא דפרעה עבדא בקרויא וישרון:

28 הוא הדבר אשר דברתי אל־פרעה אשר האלהים עשה הראה את־פרעה: 29 הנה שבע שנים באות שבע גדול בכל־ארץ מצרים: 30 וקמו שבע שני רעל אחריהן ונשכח כל־השבע בארץ מצרים וכלה הרעב את־הארץ: 31 ולא־יודע השבע בארץ מפני הרעב ההוא אחרי־כן כי־כבד הוא מאד: 32 ועל השנות החלום אל־פרעה פעמים כי־נכון הדבר מעם האלהים וממהר האלהים לעשותו: 33 ועתה ירא פרעה איש נבון וחכם וישיתוהו על־ארץ מצרים: 34 יעשה פרעה ופקד פקדים על־הארץ וחמש את־ארץ מצרים בשבע שני השבע: 35 ויקבצו את־כל־אכל השנים הטובות הבאת האלה ויצברו־בָר תחת יד־פרעה אכל בערים ושמרו:

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טעמו בא"ף ונקוד בפתח קטן<sup>21</sup>, ו"אכל" שהוא פועל, בגון<sup>22</sup>: "כי כל אכל חלב" — טעמו למטה בכ"ף, ונקוד קמץ קטן<sup>23</sup>: תחת יד פרעה. ברשותו ובאוצרותיו:

30 ונשכח כל השבע. הוא פתרון הבליעה: 31 ולא יודע השבע. הוא פתרון<sup>24</sup>: "ולא נודע כי באו אל קרבנה": 32 נכון. זמן: 34 וחמש. בתרגומו: "ויורוון", וכן "וחמשים"<sup>25</sup>: 35 את כל אכל. שם דבר הוא, לפיכך

21. פסוק כא. 22. שמות יג, יח. 23. סג' ויל. 24. ויקרא ז, כה. 25. צירי.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

inconsistent and may seem hypocritical at times, we should not become disheartened, since that is the nature of the "dream" we are living. We must try to live as consistently possible with our ideals and not give up because of our momentary lapses. This is because the effects of misdeeds are transient, lasting only until we repair their damage through repentance. The effects of our good deeds, in contrast, last forever.<sup>21</sup>

Pharaoh's dream, particularly, conveyed the essence of exile, the coexistence of opposites: the simultaneous presence of plenty and famine. Plenty and satiety allude to feeling close to God during prayer. Famine and scarcity allude to worry and anxiety over material concerns throughout the rest of the day, which belies a lack of trust and closeness to God. During exile, these opposing sentiments can coexist.

Superficially, the reason for irrationality in dreams is that during sleep, the imagination is not controlled by the rational mind. Similarly, during exile, our "rational mind," our appreciation and understanding of Godliness, is weak.

On a deeper level, however, the reason for the irra-

tionality of dreams and exile is because they are both rooted in transcendent, infinite Divinity, which defies logic and allows opposites to coexist. However, when this transcendence manifests itself in dreams and exile, its infinity is hidden beneath a cloak of confusion.

Inasmuch as Joseph's soul was rooted in God's infinity, he was able to interpret dreams by unveiling the infinity hidden within them.

This is the deeper significance of Joseph's interpreting Pharaoh's dream: By getting past the external contradiction of Pharaoh's dream, Joseph gave the Jewish people the strength to go about the work of getting past the external contradiction of exile, to see its root in Divine infinity. This work will be complete in the messianic age, when the infinity of Godliness will be revealed.<sup>22</sup>

Because of the lofty origin of exile, there is an advantage in our spiritual work during the "dream" of exile over our work during the days the Temple stood, when we were "awake." During the Temple era, the conscious capacities of our souls operated soundly. During exile, these capacities are asleep. Ironically, this

21. Likutei Sichot, vol.1, pp. 85-87. 22. Likutei Sichot, vol. 15, pp. 345-347.

**28 It is as I have told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.**

**29 Seven years are coming during which there will be great abundance in the entire land of Egypt.** The fact that the seven robust cows were ‘fine-looking’ means that there will be so much abundance that no one will be jealous of anyone else’s wealth; everyone will ‘look favorably’ upon each other’s prosperity.<sup>14</sup>

**30 These seven years of plenty will be followed by seven years of famine, when all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten,** just as the scrawny cows ate up the robust cows.<sup>15</sup> **The famine will ravage the land.**

**31 The former abundance will not be discernible in the land, due to the famine that is to follow**—just as the scrawny cows remained scrawny even after swallowing up the robust cows—**for it will be very severe.**

**32 As for Pharaoh having dreamed the same dream twice, this is because the matter stands ready before God, and God is moving quickly to carry it out.**

**33 So now, let Pharaoh seek out a man of discernment and wisdom and put him in charge of Egypt.**

**34 Let Pharaoh take steps to appoint officials over the land and prepare Egypt for the seven years of famine during the seven years of plenty.**

**35 Let them gather all the food during these coming good years, and let them store grain to be under Pharaoh’s control for food in the cities, and guard it.** Preparing for the seven years of famine during the seven years of plenty will fulfill the dream’s indication that the seven years of famine and the seven years of plenty will occur ‘simultaneously’ (as symbolized by the robust cows and scrawny cows standing simultaneously on the bank of the Nile).<sup>16</sup>

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❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

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**30 Seven years of plenty will be followed by seven years of famine, when all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten:** Metaphorically, the seven years of abundance allude to the years of spiritual “plenty” that we enjoyed when the Temples stood and God’s presence was perceivable in the miracles that occurred in the Temple. This era was followed by the exile, an era of spiritual “famine,” when Godliness became much less perceivable. Today, the ravages of our long exile have made us forget the years of spiritual plenty when Godliness was revealed during the Temple era.

But, as Joseph advised, we did store up “food,” by preserving the knowledge of the Torah during the years of plenty. The inspiration of the Torah sustains us during exile—as King David wrote, “[The Torah] is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.”<sup>17</sup> The Torah will continue to sustain us until the “famine” ends and Godliness is once again revealed.<sup>18</sup>

**35 The seven years of famine and seven years of plenty will occur simultaneously:** The dreams of Joseph and Pharaoh led to the Jewish people’s first exile, in Egypt: Joseph’s dreams led him to be sold as a slave in Egypt; Pharaoh’s dreams led Joseph to be crowned as

viceroy, which ultimately led to the Egyptian exile, the precursor of all our exiles.<sup>19</sup>

Exile was caused by dreams because the reality of exile is analogous to that of a dream. Dreams consist of incoherent illusions where conflicting and contradictory elements can coexist. Similarly, our lives in exile a confusing blend of seemingly hypocritical forms of behavior, combining spiritual transcendence and animalistic selfishness almost simultaneously. We pray to God with absolute devotion, and yet, in a matter of minutes, we find ourselves acting in ways that contradict God’s directives. Our actions do not match our words and our words do not match our thoughts. Much like a dream, our lives are often an inconsistent and confusing combination of right and wrong.<sup>20</sup>

Living in this dreamlike existence can lead to frustration, even despair. We may think that we are not progressing, that we are being dishonest with ourselves. We may feel, considering all our faults, that our connection to God is not real, and that our efforts to advance spiritually are superficial and ultimately futile.

The Torah therefore emphasizes the relation of dreams to the exile, to teach us that although our actions are

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<sup>14</sup> Rashi on v. 2, above. <sup>15</sup> Rashi here and on v. 4, above. <sup>16</sup> *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 339-345. <sup>17</sup> Psalms 119:50. <sup>18</sup> *Or HaTorah, Bereishit*, vol. 5, pp. 1950-1951. <sup>19</sup> *Likutei Torah* (Arizal), *Teitzei*. See *Bereishit Rabbah* 16:4. <sup>20</sup> See *Torah Or* 28c.

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36 ויהא עבדא גניז לעמא דארעא לשבע שני כפנא די יהון בארעא דמצרים ולא שתיצי עמא דארעא בכפנא: 37 ושפר פתגמא בעיני פרעה ובעיני כל עבדוהי: 38 ואמר פרעה לעבדוהי הנשפח בדין גבר די רוח נבואה מן קדם יי בה: 39 ואמר פרעה ליוסף בתר דאודע יי יתך ית כל דא לית סובלתן וחסכים כותף: 40 אתה יהי ממנא על ביתי ועל מימרך יתון כל עמי לחוד כרסי מלכותא דין אהי יקיר מנף: 41 ואמר פרעה ליוסף חזי מניתי יתך על כל ארעא דמצרים: 42 ואעדי פרעה ית עזקתה מעל ידה ויהב יתה על ידא דיוסף ואלבש יתה לבושין דבוץ ושוי מניכא דדהבא על צורה: 43 וארכב יתה ברחבא תניחא די לה ואכריו קדמוהי דין אבא למלכא ומני יתה על כל ארעא דמצרים:

36 והיה האכל לפקדון לארץ לשבע שני הרעב אשר תהיין בארץ מצרים ולא תכרת הארץ ברעב: 37 וייטב הדבר בעיני פרעה ובעיני כל-עבדיו: 38 ויאמר פרעה אל-עבדיו הנמצא כזה איש אשר רוח אלהים בו:

שלישי 39 ויאמר פרעה אל-יוסף אחרי הודיע אלהים אותך את-כל-זאת אין-נבון וחכם כמוך: 40 אתה תהיה על-ביתי ועל-פיך ישק כל-עמי רק הכסף אנגדל ממך: 41 ויאמר פרעה אל-יוסף ראה נתתי אתך על כל-ארץ מצרים: 42 ויסר פרעה את-טבעתו מעל ידו ויתן אותה על-יד יוסף וילבש אתו בגדי-שש וישם רכב הזהב על-צוארו: 43 וירכב אתו במרכבת המשנה אשר-לו ויקראו לפניו אברך ונתון אתו על כל-ארץ מצרים:

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אות למי שנותנה לו, להיות שני לו לגדלה: בגדי שש. דבר חשיבות הוא במצרים: רכב. ענק, ועל שהוא רצוף בטבעות קרוי "רביד", וכן: "רבידתי ערשי", רצפתי ערשי מרצפות. בלשון משנה: "מקף רובדיו של אבן", "על הרבד שבצורה", והיא רצפה: 43 במרכבת המשנה. השניה למרכבתו, המהלכת אצל שלו: אברך. בתרגומו: "דין אבא למלכא", "רך" בלשון ארמי "מלך". בהשתפיו: לא ריכא ולא בר ריכא. וברברי אגודה: דרש רבי יהודה: "אברך", זה יוסף, שהוא אב בחכמה ורך בשנים. אמר לו רבי יוסי בן דרמסקית: עד מתי אתה מענת עלינו את הכתובים, אין "אברך" אלא לשון ברבים, שהכל היו נכנסין ויוצאין תחת ידו, כענין שגאמר: "ונתון אותו" וגו'.

36 והיה האכל. הצבור, כשאר פקדון הגנוז לקיום הארץ: 38 הנמצא כזה. "הנשפח בדיו", אם נלף ונבכשנו, הנמצא כמוהו? "הנמצא" — לשון תמיהה, וכן כל ה"א המשמשת בראש תבה ונקודה בחטף פתח: 39 אין נבון וחכם כמוך. לבקש "איש נבון וחכם" שאמרתי, לא נמצא כמוך: 40 ישק. "יתון", יתפרנס. כל צרכי עמי יהיו נעשים על ידך, כמו: "וכן משק ביתי", וכו': "נשקו בר", גרנישון בלעז: רק הכסף. שיהיו קורין לי מלך: כסף. לשון של מלוכה, כמו: "ויגדל את כסאו מכסא אדני המלך": 41 נתתי אתך. "מניתי יתך", ואף על פי כן לשון נתינה הוא, כמו: "ולתתך עליון". בין לגדלה בין לשפלות נופל לשון נתינה עליו, כמו: "נתתי אתכם נבזים ושפלים": 42 ויסר פרעה את טבעתו. נתינת טבעת המלך, היא

26. בראשית טו, ב. 27. תהלים ב, יב. 28. ציד, צדה, אספקה. 29. מלכים א, לו. 30. דברים כו, יט. 31. מלאכי ב, ט. 32. משלי ז, טו. 33. מדות א, ח. 34. יומא מג, ב. 35. בבא בתרא ד, א. 36. ספרי דברים טו"א.

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when the latter is set free.<sup>28</sup> Joseph, who had just been freed from slavery, experienced the fulfillment of this law when Potiphara, his former master, gave him his daughter, Asnat, as a wife.

On the other hand, inasmuch as Potiphara was subject to Pharaoh, and it was Pharaoh who actually freed Joseph, Pharaoh could be considered to have been Joseph's ultimate master. Therefore, indeed, Pharaoh bestowed gifts upon Joseph when he freed him, as de-

scribed in this verse.

Finally, since God had both arranged for Joseph to be sold into slavery and caused him to be freed, He could be considered Joseph's master. We therefore see the God, too, bestowed a gift upon Joseph when he was freed, namely, the ability to quickly learn all seventy languages.<sup>29</sup>

43 They proclaimed before him, "The king's counselor! How wise is he, and yet so young! Bend the knee

29. Torat Levi Yitzchak, pp. 120-121.



**36 The food will then be held in reserve for the land for the seven years of famine that will be in Egypt, so that the land will not be depopulated by the famine."**

**37 The way** in which Joseph explained the dream according to its obvious reference to Egypt's sustenance while simultaneously resolving the anomaly of the robust and scrawny cows standing together on the bank of the Nile **pleased Pharaoh and all his courtiers,**

**38 and Pharaoh said to his courtiers, "Could we find another man like this, who clearly has the spirit of God within him?"**

### Joseph as Viceroy

◆ *Third Reading* **39 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as discerning and wise as you to be in charge of the operation that you recommend we undertake.<sup>23</sup>**

**40 You shall be in charge of my court, and by your orders will all my people be provided for. Only by the throne—i.e., by the fact that I am king whereas you are only viceroy—will I outrank you.**

**41 Except for this," Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am hereby giving you the same power that I myself have over the entire land of Egypt."** Pharaoh paid no heed to the cupbearer's remarks about Joseph's unfitness to hold public office.

**42 As a sign that he was making Joseph viceroy, Pharaoh removed his signet ring from the finger of his own hand and put it on a finger of Joseph's hand. He had him dressed in robes of linen, a fabric highly prized in Egypt,<sup>24</sup> and placed the gold chain of office around his neck.**

**43 He had him ride** through the capital city, next to his own chariot, **in his second royal chariot, and they proclaimed before him, "The king's counselor! How wise he is for his young age! Bend the knee to him!" He was thus given kinglike authority over the entire land of Egypt.** Nonetheless, Pharaoh commanded his subjects to only bend their knees to Joseph and not to prostrate themselves before him (as would befit someone with kinglike authority) because he wanted to retain some indication that Joseph owed his position not to his birth but to Pharaoh's goodwill.<sup>25</sup>

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provides us greater access to our subconscious capacities, which transcend limitations.

For example, in Temple times, a ritually impure person could not experience holiness. Today, however, we transcend such limitations and can experience holiness even in the midst of our impurity.<sup>26</sup>

In "normal" times, we must follow "normal" conventions, such as ascending the spiritual ladder one step at a time. In exile, however, we can tap into lofty spiritual opportunities that by normal standards are outside our

realm. For example, in previous generations, we could not study the inner dimension of Torah without having undergone numerous preparations. Today, however, we can—and therefore must—study the inner dimension of Torah regardless of our limited knowledge and spiritual level.<sup>27</sup>

**42-45 Pharaoh removed his signet ring.... The angel Gabriel came and taught him.... He gave him Asnat, daughter of Potiphara...as a wife:** According to Torah law, a slave-owner must give his slave a parting gift

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23. Above, v. 33. 24. Above, 2:11; Isaiah 19:9; Exodus 25:4. 25. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 207. 26. See Leviticus 16:16. 27. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 86-87. 28. Deuteronomy 15:14.

## ONKELOS

44 ואמר פרעה ליוסף אָנָּא פֿרעה  
וְכֵר מִמִּימְרֶךָ לֹא יָרִים גְּבֵר יֵת  
יְדָה לְמִיחֹד זֶין וְיֵת רִגְלָה לְמִרְפֵּב  
עַל סוּסִיא בְּכָל אֶרֶעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם:  
45 וְקָרָא פֿרעה שׁוֹם יוֹסֵף גְּבֵרָא  
דְּמִשְׁמֶרֶן גְּלָזֵן לֵה וְיַהֲב לֵה יֵת אֶסְנַת  
בֵּת פּוּטִי פֿרע רַבָּא דְּאֹזֶן לְאַנְתּוֹ וְנִפְק  
יוֹסֵף שְׁלִיט עַל אֶרֶעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם:

44 וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּרֶעַה אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲנִי פֶּרֶעַה וּבִלְעָדֶיךָ לֹא־יָרִים  
אִישׁ אֶת־יָדוֹ וְאֶת־רִגְלֹו בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 45 וַיִּקְרָא  
פֶּרֶעַה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צִפְנַת פַּעֲנָה וַיִּתֵּן־לּוֹ אֶת־אֶסְנַת בֵּת־  
פוּטִי פֶּרַע כֹּהֵן אֵן לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

## RASHI

רַגְלוֹ. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ: 45 צִפְנַת פַּעֲנָה. מִפְּרֵשׁ הַצִּפּוֹנוֹת. וְאִין  
לְ"פַעֲנָה" דְּמִיּוֹן בְּמִקְרָא: פּוּטִי פֿרע. הוּא פּוּטִיפֶר, וְנִקְרָא  
פּוּטִיפֿרע, עַל שְׁנִסְתָּרִס מֵאֵלָיו, לְפִי שְׁחָמֵד אֶת יוֹסֵף  
לְמִשְׁכָּב זָכָר:

44 אֲנִי פֶּרֶעַה. שֵׁשׁ בִּיּוֹדֵי וְכָלֵת לְגִזּוֹר גְּזוֹרוֹת עַל  
מַלְכוּתִי, וְאֲנִי גִזּוֹר שְׁלֹא יָרִים אִישׁ אֶת יָדוֹ בִּלְעָדֶיךָ,  
שְׁלֹא בְרִשׁוֹתָךְ. דְּבָר אַחֵר: "אֲנִי פֶּרֶעַה", אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה  
מֶלֶךְ, "וּבִלְעָדֶיךָ" וְגו', וְהוּא דְּגִמַּת "דֶּק הַכֶּסֶּא"<sup>37</sup>, אֶלָּא  
שֶׁהֶצְרֵךְ לְפָרְשָׁה בְּשַׁעַת נְתִינַת הַטִּבְעֵת: אֶת יָדוֹ וְאֵת

פסוק מ.

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prostrated themselves before Joseph because they had been subconsciously affected by what he was emanating.

Rabbi Yosi of Damascus (who lived outside the Holy Land and was therefore associated with a lower level of selflessness) focuses on what the Egyptians were actually able to assimilate from Joseph, which was an imposed selflessness before God—bending of the knee.

Regarding Joseph's brothers, the Torah explicitly states that they *prostrated* themselves before Joseph.<sup>37</sup> This is

because, according to all views, they were capable of assimilating Joseph's level of absolute selflessness.<sup>38</sup>

**Bend the knee:** The word for bend the knee (אִבְדֵּךְ) is cognate with the word used in the Mishnah to describe the method of propagating a vine (הַכְרֵכָה) by bending it down into the ground in order to send forth new roots and thereby form a new plant.<sup>39</sup> This is an appropriate name for Joseph, who, as we have seen,<sup>40</sup> functioned as a conduit to bring lofty Divine consciousness downward into the material world.<sup>41</sup>

## A CLOSER LOOK

[44] He must know all seventy languages, as is expected of all royalty: Pharaoh sought to not only rule over his subject nations by force, but to control their minds as well. In order to do this, it was nec-

essary to know their languages, because a culture's values and way of thinking are reflected in its language; indeed, language often determines the way people think and conceptualize reality.<sup>42</sup>

## INNER DIMENSIONS

[44] The angel Gabriel came and taught Joseph the seventy languages: Gabriel taught Joseph the languages he needed to learn by adding the letter *hei* from God's Name to Joseph's name. This is alluded to in the single verse in the whole Bible in which the letter *hei* is inserted into Joseph's name: "As a testimony for Jehoseph, He ordained it, when he went forth over the land of Egypt, [when Joseph said,] 'I understood a language that I had not known.'" <sup>43</sup>

The *hei* added to Joseph's name was the first *hei* of God's Name *Havayah* (יהוה). This *hei* signifies *binah*.<sup>44</sup> The shape of the letter *hei* therefore suggests

expansion, reflecting the expansion and articulation of the seminal point of insight (*chochmah*) that occurs in *binah*.

Joseph would use his mastery of the languages to communicate with all the various nations that would come to buy food from Egypt, and thereby influence them. His name-change thus reflected the same change that occurred to his great-grandfather, Abraham. When the letter *hei* was added to Abraham's name, he became father of *all* nations,<sup>45</sup> meaning that he became capable of influencing the entire world.<sup>46</sup>

37. 42:6, below. 38. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 202 ff. 39. *Kilayim* 7:1. 40. On 37:2, above. 41. *Torah Or* 37c. 42. See *Torah Or* 77d. 43. *Psalms* 81:6. *Sotah* 36b. 44. *Me'orei Or, Ma'arechet Yud*, s.v. *Mem*. 45. 17:5, above. 46. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5745, p. 154; *Or HaTorah, Bereshit*, vol.1, 17a; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5631, vol. 1, pp. 344 ff.

**44 Pharaoh then said to Joseph, in the presence of the crowd, “I am Pharaoh; only I now wield authority higher than yours. By my authority as Pharaoh, I decree that without your say, no man may lift his hand to bear weapons or his foot to mount a horse in the entire land of Egypt.”**

When they heard that they, too, would be subordinate to Joseph, Pharaoh’s advisors exclaimed: “How can you grant a slave authority over us?!” Pharaoh replied to them, “I discern royal characteristics in him.” They said to him, “If you are correct, he must know all seventy languages,<sup>30</sup> as is expected of all royalty.” But before they had a chance to test Joseph, the angel Gabriel came and taught him whatever languages he did not already know. After that, no matter what language Pharaoh addressed Joseph in, Joseph replied to him in that same language.

But when Joseph then tried to converse with Pharaoh in Hebrew, Pharaoh did not understand him, for the Hebrew language had been preserved only by the line of Shem.<sup>31</sup> When Pharaoh saw that Joseph knew this language—and therefore was more suited to be the ruler of Egypt than he—he said to Joseph, “Swear that you will not divulge this,” and Joseph swore to him.<sup>32</sup>

**45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Tzafnat Paneiach [“He who deciphers the cryptic”], and gave him Asnat, daughter of Joseph’s former master Potiphera, lord<sup>33</sup> of On, as a wife. Joseph thus went out to oversee Egypt.**

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to him!”: These three proclamations are all alluded to in the Hebrew word *avrech*, which bears various interpretations.

The second two interpretations stem from a debate between two sages of the Mishnah, Rabbi Judah and Rabbi Yosi ben Durmaskis (i.e., Rabbi Yosi of Damascus<sup>34</sup>):

Rabbi Yosi preferred to interpret the Torah as literally as possible.<sup>35</sup> He therefore translates *avrech* as “bend the knee,” since the word *avrech* is clearly related to the word for “knee” (*berech*). From this perspective, the Egyptians only bent their knees to Joseph and did not prostrate themselves before him, as they did to Pharaoh.

Rabbi Judah, on the other hand, preferred to interpret the Torah contextually; he therefore finds it unlikely that the Egyptians did not prostrate themselves before Joseph, since, as we saw above,<sup>36</sup> it was only the throne that Pharaoh kept from Joseph, which implies that in everything else Joseph was equal, including, presumably, that the Egyptians did not just bend their knees to Joseph, they prostrated themselves to him as well.

Rabbi Judah therefore prefers to interpret *avrech* as referring to Joseph’s wisdom; although this is not a literal interpretation of the word *avrech*, it aligns more comfortably with the context of the story.

**I**n general, there are two levels of selflessness before God. The first is the selflessness we impose on ourselves when we are aware of ourselves; we are conscious of being separate from God, yet we subdue our sense of self and submit to His will (*bitul hayesh*). The second is inherent selflessness, where there is no self that requires subdual (*bitul bintziut*).

Bending of the knee expresses the first type: tempered, imposed selflessness. Bowing in this way demonstrates that we accept God’s sovereignty, but we still remain our own selves. Prostration, in contrast, reflects the second type: absolute selflessness, wherein we possess no self-identity aside from our submission Him.

By bowing to Joseph, the Egyptians were, in effect, submitting themselves to Joseph’s level of Divine consciousness. But whereas Joseph embodied absolute selflessness, the Egyptians could only assimilate whatever portion of Joseph’s Divine consciousness they were capable of sustaining.

Rabbi Judah, who emphasizes context over literalness, focuses on Joseph’s transmission of absolute selflessness, prior to its diffusion into the distilled particulars that the Egyptians could assimilate. He therefore asserts that although the Egyptians may not have consciously experienced absolute selflessness, they still

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30. Cf. 10:30, above. 31. Above, 11:17. 32. *Sotah* 36b; Rashi on 50:6, below. 33. Rashi on 47:22, below. 34. See *Seder HaDorot*, s.v. Rabbi Yosi ben Durmaskis. 35. *Sifri*, *Devarim* 1. 36. V. 40, above.

— ONKELOS —

46 וְיוֹסֵף בֵּר תַּלְתִּין שָׁנִין כֹּד קָם  
קָדָם פְּרַעַה מֶלֶכָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וַנִּפְק  
יוֹסֵף מִן קָדָם פְּרַעַה וַעֲבַר בְּכַל  
אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: 47 וּבְכִנְשׁוּ דִּירֵי  
אַרְעָא בְּשִׁבְעָה שָׁנֵי שְׂבָעָא עֲבוּרָא  
לְאַוּצְרִין: 48 וּבְכִנְשׁ יֵת כָּל עֲבוּר  
שְׂבָעָה שָׁנִין דִּי הָוָא בְּאַרְעָא  
דְּמִצְרַיִם וַיְהִי עֲבוּרָא בְּקִרְוֵא  
עֲבוּר חֶקֶל קָרְתָא דִּי בְּסִתְרִנְהָא  
יְהִי בְּגִזָּה: 49 וּבְכִנְשׁ יוֹסֵף עֲבוּרָא  
בְּחֶלֶא דִּימָא סְגִי לְחֶדָא עַד דִּי פִּסַּק  
לְמִמְנֵי אַרִי לִית מִנְיָן: 50 וְלִיוֹסֵף  
אַתְלִידוּ תְרִין בְּנִין עַד לֹא עָלַת  
שְׂתָא דְּכִפְנָא דִּילִידַת לֵה אֶסְנַת בַּת  
פּוֹטִי פְרַע רַבָּא דְּאוֹן: 51 וּקְרָא יוֹסֵף  
יֵת שׁוּם בְּכָרָא מְנַשֶּׁה אַרִי אֲנִשְׁנֵי  
יֵי יֵת כָּל עֲמָלֵי וְיֵת כָּל בֵּית אָבָא:  
52 וְיֵת שׁוּם תְּנִינָא קָרָא אֶפְרַיִם  
אַרִי אֲפִשְׁנֵי יֵי בְּאַרְעָא שְׂעִבּוּדִי:

46 וְיוֹסֵף בֶּן-שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה בָּעָמְדוֹ לִפְנֵי פְרַעְה מֶלֶךְ-  
מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף מִלִּפְנֵי פְרַעְה וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּכָל-אַרְצֵי  
מִצְרַיִם: 47 וַתַּעַשׂ הָאָרֶץ בְּשִׁבְעַת שָׁנֵי הַשְּׂבָעָה לְקִמְצִים:  
48 וַיִּקְבֹּץ אֶת-כָּל-אֶכָּל | שְׂבַע שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ בְּאַרְצֵי  
מִצְרַיִם וַיִּתֵּן-אֶכָּל בַּעֲרִים אֲכָל שְׂדֵה-הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר  
סְבִיבֹתֶיהָ נָתַן בְּתוֹכָהּ: 49 וַיַּצְבֹּר יוֹסֵף בָּר כַּחֲלוֹל הַיָּם  
הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד עַד כִּי-חָדַל לְסַפֵּר כִּי-אֵין מִסְפָּר: 50 וּלְיוֹסֵף  
יָלַד שְׁנֵי בָנִים בְּמָרָם תָּבוֹא שְׁנַת הָרַעָב אֲשֶׁר יִלְדֶּה-לּוֹ  
אֶסְנַת בַּת-פּוֹטִי פְרַע בֶּתָן אֹן: 51 וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת-שֵׁם  
הַבְּכוֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי-נִשְׁנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֶת-כָּל-עֲמָלֵי וְאֵת כָּל-  
בֵּית אָבִי: 52 וְאֵת שֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִי קָרָא אֶפְרַיִם כִּי-הִפְרִנִּי  
אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְצִי עֲנִי:

— RASHI —

לְסַפֵּר. עַד כִּי חָדַל לוֹ הַסּוֹפֵר לְסַפֵּר, וְהָרִי זֶה מִקְרָא  
קֶצֶר: כִּי אֵין מִסְפָּר. לְפִי שְׂאִין מִסְפָּר, וְהָרִי "כִּי" מְשַׁמֵּשׁ  
בְּלָשׁוֹן "דִּהָא": 50 בְּמָרָם תָּבוֹא שְׁנַת הָרַעָב. מִכָּאן  
שְׂאִסּוּר לְאַדָּם לְשִׁמֵּשׁ מִסְתּוֹ בְּשָׁנֵי רַעֲבוֹן:

47 וַתַּעַשׂ הָאָרֶץ. בְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ, וְאֵין הִלָּשׁוֹן נֶעְקַר מִלָּשׁוֹן  
עֲשִׂיָּה: לְקִמְצִים. קִמֵּץ עַל קִמֵּץ, יָד עַל יָד הָיוּ אוֹצְרִים:  
48 אֶכָּל שְׂדֵה הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֶיהָ נָתַן בְּתוֹכָהּ. שֶׁכָּל  
אֶרֶץ וְאֶרֶץ מַעֲמֶדֶת פְּרוּתֶיהָ, וְנוֹתְנִין בְּתַבּוּאָה מַעֲפָר  
הַמָּקוֹם וּמַעֲמִיד אֶת הַתְּבוּאָה מִלְּרָקֵב: 49 עַד כִּי חָדַל

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

"food" and ensure that it does not "spoil," we must place some "soil" inside it.<sup>54</sup>

Soil, which is trod upon by all, is a metaphor for humility. By infusing our Torah knowledge with humility, we ensure that it will endure within us. Hence, in the daily liturgy, the prayer, "May my soul be as soil to all" is followed by "open my heart to Your Torah."<sup>55</sup> If our souls are humble like soil, our hearts can be open to the Torah's meaning and message.

We must, however, ensure that we apply this humility appropriately, not to justify inaction. For example, some people invoke false humility to avoid their obligation to teach the Torah to others,<sup>56</sup> saying, "I am too spiritually weak to allow myself to come in contact with people who are ignorant of Torah. I will instead focus only on my own family and immediate neighborhood."

The Torah therefore teaches us here that the humility, the "soil," must be "taken from the fields surrounding the city where it had grown." In other words, we must apply "localized" humility, only in the actual study of Torah, remaining aware that as we study Torah, God is studying with us.<sup>57</sup> We are thus required to study

Torah with the same trepidation and awe that we felt at Sinai.<sup>58</sup>

Moreover, we must remember that as much as we understand and as much as we have learned, the Torah, as the wisdom of the infinite God, remains beyond us. This awareness will preserve our knowledge of the Torah as the soil preserved the grain.

Our world, too, is plagued with famine, but this time it is a spiritual famine, a dearth of spiritual enlightenment. Like Joseph, we are called upon to do all we can to alleviate the famine, to banish the plague of ignorance and sustain the world with the teachings of the Torah.

Just as Joseph took measures to preserve the sustenance he prepared, we too must take measures to "preserve" the spiritual sustenance we share to ensure that it is not fleeting. It should sustain its recipients throughout their lives. Moreover, they should be able to pass it on to their children, creating an endless chain of spiritual sustenance.<sup>59</sup>

**52-51 Manasseh...Ephraim:** Living in exile, we must employ two paradoxical approaches with regard to

54. See *Shabbat* 31a, end. 55. End of the *Amidah*, from *Berachot* 17a. 56. *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, *Talmud Torah* 1:8. 57. *Tanna D'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah* 18, beginning; *Yalkut Shimoni* 1034. 58. *Berachot* 22a. 59. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 224-226.

**46 Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He left Pharaoh's presence, and he traveled throughout the entire land of Egypt in order to implement his program of storing up produce from the seven years of plenty.**

Even though he was now free to act as he chose, Joseph made no attempt to inform his father that he was alive, for he had been present when his brothers made their pact forbidding any of them to tell their father the truth about Joseph's disappearance until receiving a sign to do so from God.<sup>47</sup> Since God had not yet given any such sign, Joseph understood, as his grandfather Isaac had before him,<sup>48</sup> that God did not yet want Jacob to know the truth.<sup>49</sup>

### The Seven Years of Plenty

**47 During the seven years of plenty, the inhabitants of the land gathered grain and brought it to the storehouses by the handful, that is, unhurriedly.**

**48 Joseph collected all the surplus food during the seven years that had now come to pass in Egypt, and he placed the food in storage complexes in the cities.** It was a well-known fact that soil's composition varies from one locale to the next, the soil of each locale possessing its own unique properties that enable it to sustain different crops. It was further known that, because of this fact, the crops of any specific locale are best preserved when stored with some of the soil in which they were grown. Joseph therefore **placed with the food** some soil taken from **the fields surrounding the city** where it had grown.<sup>50</sup>

**49 Joseph amassed quantities of grain as abundant as the sands of the sea, until the treasurer had to stop counting it since there was too much to count.**

**50 Two sons were born to Joseph before the first year of famine arrived, borne to him by Asnat, daughter of Potiphera, lord of On.**

**51 Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh [*Menasheh*, "causing to forget"]—"because," he said, "by granting me success, God has made me forget all my past hardships, but this could also cause me to forget all I held dear in my father's household." Joseph knew that prosperity carries with it the danger of assimilation; in order not to forget his family and heritage, he gave his firstborn son a name that would constantly remind him of this danger.<sup>51</sup>**

**52 He named the second child Ephraim [from *peri*, "fruit"]—"because," he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering." Joseph did not attempt to father any additional children after these two sons, because he knew that seven years of famine were coming. Whereas a single, occasional year of famine results from factors connected to that year alone, two or more consecutive years of famine indicate that, for whatever reason, God has temporarily suspended His desire that the world grow and thrive. In such times, it is understood that He is in parallel also suspending His desire that humanity be "fruitful and multiply."<sup>52</sup>**



**48 Joseph therefore placed with the food some soil it had grown:** Metaphorically, our food is the Torah taken from the fields surrounding the city where knowledge we amass.<sup>53</sup> In order for us to retain this

47. Above, 37:31. 48. Above, 37:36. 49. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 129-135. 50. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 220-224. 51. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 433. 52. Above, 1:28, 9:1, 7. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 20, pp. 192-196. 53. See *Sanhedrin* 42a, *Tosafot* s.v. *VeRav Tevuot*, *ad loc.*



— ONKELOS —

53 וְשָׁלִימָא שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי שְׁבַעא דִּי הָהּ בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: 54 וְשָׂרִיָּא שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי כִפְנָא לְמִיתִי כְּמָא דִּי אָמַר יוֹסֵף וְהָהּ כִּפְנָא בְּכָל אֶרְעָתָא וּבְכָל אֶרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם הָהּ לְחָמָא: 55 וּכְפָנָת כָּל אֶרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וְצֹחַ עֲמָא קָדָם פְּרַעָה עַל לְחָמָא וְאָמַר פְּרַעָה לְכָל מִצְרָאִי אֵילּוּ לֹת יוֹסֵף דִּי יִימַר לְכוּן תַּעֲבֹדוּן:

רביעי 53 וְתִכְלִינָה שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁבַע אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 54 וְתִכְלִינָה שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי הָרָעַב לָבוֹא בְּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּכָל־הָאֲרָצוֹת וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָיָה לֶחֶם: 55 וְתִרְעַב כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיִּצְעַק הָעָם אֶל־פְּרַעֲה לֵלְחֶם וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרַעֲה לְכָל־מִצְרַיִם לָכוּ אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר־יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ:

— RASHI —

צְבֻרָתָם בָּר, וְהֵלֵא הִכְרִיז לָכֶם שְׁשָׁנֵי הָרָעַב בָּאִים? אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אֶסְפְּנוּ הָרֶבֶה וְהִרְקִיבָה. אָמַר לָהֶם: אִם כֵּן, כָּל "אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ", הִרִי גֹזֵר עַל הַתְּבוּאָה וְהִרְקִיבָה, מִדָּה אִם יִגְזֹר עָלֵינוּ וְנָמוּת:

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*Ephraim...God has made me fruitful:* The consistently saintly are inspired by the fact that God has made them fruitful in the past because of their good deeds. Their past experience spurs them on to continued good. This is like a person, who, after traveling some distance to reach a certain city, is advised by others to give up the trip. The traveler will reply, "I have come so far; how can I give up in the middle?"

*Manasseh...God has made me forget:* Penitents recall the fact that they have in the past forgotten God, and are thereby fired with a greater yearning for closeness with God.<sup>64</sup>

**55 So all the males in Egypt had themselves circumcised:** Joseph not only remained unaffected by Egypt, he influenced it. One manifestation of this was the fact that he had the Egyptians circumcised.

Egyptian society was steeped in the pursuit of self-serving carnal pleasure,<sup>65</sup> which, as Maimonides writes,<sup>66</sup> is reduced by circumcision. Thus, by having the Egyptians circumcised, Joseph subdued their obsession with carnal indulgence. Furthermore, Pharaoh himself, the king of Egypt, instructed them to acquiesce to Joseph's insistence that they be circumcised; this signified that the very fountainhead of Egyptian corruption was willing to be refined, at least somewhat.

We can all follow Joseph's example, especially since the Jewish people are collectively referred to as "Joseph."<sup>67</sup> Like Joseph, we can remain spiritually untainted by our materialistic milieu. We should not feel overwhelmed by it nor allow it to depress us. Rather, we should strengthen our own commitment to holiness and influence our neighbors, including the broader community of non-Jews, encouraging them to keep Noahide law. Thus, we will ultimately transform the entire world

55 וְתִרְעַב כָּל אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. שֶׁהִרְקִיבָה תְּבוּאָתָם. שְׁאֲצָרוּ, חוּץ מִשָּׁל יוֹסֵף: אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ. לְפִי שְׁהִיָּה יוֹסֵף אוֹמֵר לָהֶם שְׁיִמּוּלוּ, וּכְשָׁבָאוּ אֶצֶל פְּרַעֲה וְאוֹמְרִים: כִּךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר לָנוּ. אָמַר לָהֶם: לְמָה לֹא

into God's home.<sup>68</sup>

Nonetheless, although Joseph succeeded in refining Egypt, he acted on his own initiative, and therefore, despite his good intentions, his plan backfired. By becoming more refined, Egypt was made worthier of receiving Divine beneficence, and receiving this beneficence strengthened it. Unfortunately, Egypt was not refined enough to use this power properly and used it instead to persecute the Jewish people.<sup>69</sup>

If Joseph was capable of doing damage despite his good intentions, we are certainly similarly capable. We must therefore be careful not overreach in our efforts to do good. We may sometimes be tempted to bend the Torah's rules in our desire to bring others closer to it, thinking that if we insist on following the law meticulously we may turn them away.

Even if it were true that bending the law would benefit others, we are still not authorized to do so. We should not be more zealous than the Torah itself,<sup>70</sup> and our concern for bringing a Jew to Judaism should not be stronger than the Torah's own concern.

The truth is, however, that no good can come out of compromising Torah law, or even a Jewish custom.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch was once at a meeting where one of the participants suggested that in order to save Judaism it is sometimes beneficial to compromise Torah law. The latter stated that when it comes to drinking, one seeks only clean water; but to put out a fire, any liquid, even dirty water, will suffice. The Rebbe responded, "If you're certain that what you're pouring on the fire is water, then you're right—dirty water will suffice. The problem is you are pouring kerosene, which, while also a liquid, will not extinguish but increase the fire."<sup>71</sup>

64. Or Torah 59. 65. Rashi on 12:19 above. 66. *The Guide to the Perplexed* 3:35, 49. 67. Psalms 80:2; Rashi and Metzudot David ad loc. 68. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 141. 69. Eitz Chaim, *Sha'ar Chag HaMatzot* 6. 70. See Ecclesiastes 7:16. 71. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 98-102.

## The Years of Famine Begin

◆ **Fourth Reading 53** The seven years of plenty that came to pass in Egypt came to an end.

**54** The seven years of famine then began, just as Joseph had said they would. There was famine in all the other lands, but throughout Egypt there was bread, thanks to Joseph's storage program.

**55** Nonetheless, even though everyone had stored up enough grain for themselves for seven years, everyone's grain rotted except for what Joseph himself had put away. **When all** the inhabitants of **Egypt** therefore were **starving**, they asked Joseph to provide them with grain. Joseph knew that God had commanded Abraham and his descendants to circumcise any servant they purchased.<sup>60</sup> When he became officially responsible for the welfare of Egypt, this in effect made all its citizens into his property, and he thus became liable to circumcise them. When they came to him for food, he saw this as an opportunity to prevail upon them to do so. He therefore responded that he would only give them grain on condition that they first consent to circumcise themselves. **The people then cried out to Pharaoh for bread**, objecting to Joseph's stipulation. Pharaoh asked them why they had not stored grain for themselves during the seven years of plenty. They replied that they had, but that it had all rotted. Pharaoh responded, "If that is the case, Joseph evidently put a curse on the grain, making it rot. There is therefore no point in my commanding him to give you grain, because he can just as easily curse whatever grain he gives you, making it also rot." True, at least until it rotted they would have what to eat; or perhaps Joseph would not even curse the grain; and even if he would, they had nothing to lose. Nonetheless, Pharaoh feared that if he would try to force Joseph into giving them grain, Joseph might react by cursing him for trying to force him and cursing the people for causing Pharaoh to take this course of action. Since they were already in imminent danger of starving to death, any further curse would only mean a curse that they die immediately.<sup>61</sup> **So Pharaoh announced to all Egypt, "Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you to."** So all the males in Egypt had themselves circumcised.

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### CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

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the world at large.<sup>62</sup> On the one hand, we must be constantly vigilant against alien influences; on the other hand, we must engage the outside world in order to influence it positively.

Influencing our environment is obviously more important than merely maintaining our values. Temporally, however, the latter must precede the former, since if we forget our roots we will no longer have anything to contribute.

The two sons of Joseph, born and raised in Egypt, personified these two aspects of exilic life. Manasseh, so named by Joseph "in order not to forget his family and

heritage," personifies our need to resist assimilation. Ephraim, so named "because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering," demonstrates our purpose in the "land of suffering": to be fruitful there and influence it positively.

Chronologically, therefore, Manasseh preceded Ephraim—he was the firstborn.<sup>63</sup>

**A**ccording to Rabbi Dovber of Mezeritch, Ephraim represents consistently saintly individuals while Manasseh represents penitents. Each group is inspired by their pasts, but in different ways:

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60. Above, 17:12-13. 61. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 136-141. 62. See *Noam Elimelech* on 48:13, below. 63. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 432 ff. See below on 44:14, above on 38:28.

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56 וכפנא הוה על כל אפי ארעא ופתח יוסף ית כל אוצריא די בהון עבורא וזבין למצראי ותקוף כפנא בארעא דמצרים: 57 וכל דיירי ארעא אתו למצרים למזון עבורא מן יוסף ארי תקוף כפנא בכל ארעא: 42:1 וחזא יעקב ארי אית עבורא מזדבן במצרים ואמר יעקב לבנוהי למא תתחזון: 2 ואמר הא שמעית ארי אית עבורא מזדבן במצרים חותנו לתמן וזבוננו לנא מתמן ונחי ולא נמות:

56 וְהָרַעַב הָיָה עַל כָּל-פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ וַיִּפְתַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת-כָּל-אִישׁ בֵּהֶם וַיִּשְׁבֶּר לְמִצְרַיִם וַיַּחְזֹק הָרַעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 57 וְכָל-הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרִימָה לְשֹׁבֵר אֶל-יוֹסֵף כִּי-חָזַק הָרַעַב בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ: 42:1 וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ-שֹׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ: 2 וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֵשׁ-שֹׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם רְדוּ-שָׁמָּה וּשְׁבֻרוּ-לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנָחִיָּה וְלֹא נָמוּת:

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שֹׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם, וְלֹא הָיְתָה נְבוּאָה מִמֶּשׁ לְהוֹדִיעוֹ בְּפִרוּשׁ שְׁוֹה יוֹסֵף: לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ. לָמָּה תִּרְאוּ עֲצֻמְכֶם בְּפָנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל וּבְנֵי עֲשׂוֹ כְּאֵלוֹ אֲתֶם שְׂבָעִים, שְׂבָאוֹתָהּ שְׂעָה עֲדִין הָיָה לָהֶם תְּבוּאָה. וְלִי נִרְאָה פְּשׁוּטוֹ: לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ, לָמָּה יִהְיוּ הַכֹּל מִסְתַּכְּלִין בְּכֶם וּמִתְמִיחִים בְּכֶם, שְׂאִין אֲתֶם מִבְּקָשִׁים לְכֶם אֲכַל בְּטָרִם שִׁיכְלָה מֵה שְׂבִידְכֶם. וּמִפִּי אֲחֵרִים שְׁמַעְתִּי, שֶׁהוּא לְשׁוֹן כְּחִישָׁה, לָמָּה תִּתְּנוּ כְּחוּשִׁים בְּרָעַב. וְדוֹמָה לוֹ: "וּמִרְוֹה גַם הוּא יוֹרָה": 2 רְדוּ שָׁמָּה. וְלֹא אָמַר "לָכוּ", רָמַז לְמֵאֲתֵיב וְעֵשֶׂר שָׁנִים שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּעֲבְדוּ לְמִצְרַיִם, כְּמִנִּין "רְדוּ":

56 עַל כָּל פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ. מִי הֵם פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ, אֵלּוֹ הָעֲשִׂירִים: אֵת כָּל אִשׁ בֵּהֶם. כְּתִירָגוּמוֹ: "דִּי בְּהוֹן עֲבוּרָא": וַיִּשְׁבֶּר לְמִצְרַיִם. "שֹׁבֵר" לְשׁוֹן "מְכַר" וּלְשׁוֹן "קִנְיֹן" הוּא, כָּאֵן מִשְׁמֵשׁ לְשׁוֹן מְכַר, "שְׁבִירוֹ לָנוּ מַעֲט אֲכָל" — לְשׁוֹן קִנְיֹן. וְאֵל תֹּאמַר: אֵינִי כִּי אִם בְּתִבּוּאָה. שְׂאֵף בְּיִין וְחָלָב מַצִּינוּ: "וּלְכוּ שְׁבִירוֹ בְּלֹא כֶסֶף וּבְלֹא מְחִיר זֵין וְחָלָב": 57 וְכָל הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרִימָה. אֵל יוֹסֵף לְשֹׁבֵר. וְאִם תִּדְרָשׁוּהוּ בְּסִדְרוֹ, הִנֵּה צָרִיף לְכַתֵּב "לְשֹׁבֵר מִן יוֹסֵף": 1 וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ שֹׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם. וּמֵהִיכָן רָאָה, וְהֵלֵא לֹא רָאָה אֶלֶּא שְׁמַע, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "הִנֵּה שְׁמַעְתִּי" וְגו', וּמֵהוּ "וַיֵּרָא"? רָאָה בְּאֶסְפֶּקְלָרִיא שֶׁל קֹדֶשׁ, שְׁעָדִין יֵשׁ לוֹ

38. בראשית מג, ב. 39. ישעיה נה, א. 40. פסוק ב. 41. משלי יא, כה.

there and buy us produce from there, so that we may live and not die." The numerical value of the word for "go down" (רדו) is 210, alluding to the 210 years that they and their descendants were destined to reside in Egypt (2238-2448). He further told them,<sup>76</sup> "Enter the city, each of you by a different gate; since you are all of impressive appearance, it is imperative that you avoid arousing the evil eye against yourselves."<sup>77</sup>

### INNER DIMENSIONS

[1] Jacob saw that there was produce in Egypt: The word used here for produce (*shever*) also means breakage. Spiritually, Jacob perceived that there were holy sparks embedded in Egypt, broken

shards that had fallen there through the process of "the shattering of the vessels" of *Tohu*.<sup>78</sup> He therefore intuited that there was a need to descend to Egypt to elevate and redeem these holy sparks.<sup>79</sup>

76. Rashi on v. 5, below. 77. See above, 21:14. 78. See above on 36:31. 79. Or Torah 54.



**56 When the famine** became so severe that it even **struck all** the wealthy people of the land, **Joseph opened all the** storehouses **containing all the** grain, **and he sold it to the Egyptians, but the famine in Egypt intensified.**

**57 People from the entire region came to Egypt, to Joseph, to buy produce, for the famine had grown severe in the entire region.**

The Torah will continue the narrative of Joseph's administration of Egypt during the years of famine further on.<sup>72</sup> In the meantime, it will describe how Joseph's family came to settle there.

### **Joseph's Brothers' First Journey to Egypt**

**42:1** The famine struck not only Egypt; it also affected the Land of Israel, whose inhabitants were going hungry just as were the inhabitants of Egypt. **Jacob** heard **that there was produce in Egypt**, and, at the same time, he **saw** in a prophetic vision **that there was** some type of **cure** for his anguish over having lost Joseph awaiting him **in Egypt**. Despite the famine, Jacob and his family miraculously still had enough grain to last them at least for a short time. Jacob's sons were therefore confident that God would continue to sustain them miraculously, and made no secret of their optimism. They knew that when Abraham and Isaac were forced to leave their homeland due to famine,<sup>73</sup> it was because God was testing them and not because they did not deserve His miraculous intervention in their lives. (After all, once Isaac passed his test, God made his crops miraculously productive even though it was a year of famine.<sup>74</sup>) The brothers had no reason to think that God would test them, too, by not sustaining them through the famine.

Jacob, however, knew that the Ishmaelites and Edomites were not aware that it was in order to test them that God did not sustain Abraham and Isaac miraculously during the famines that occurred in their lifetimes; they simply assumed that Abraham and Isaac were not sufficiently righteous to deserve God's miraculous protection in these cases. Jacob therefore feared that the Ishmaelites and Edomites, seeing his sons' conspicuous optimism, might accuse them of considering themselves more worthy of God's protection than their forebears. This accusation might in turn cause a similar accusation in the Heavenly Court, which could result in Jacob's family indeed being sentenced to leave their homeland in search of provisions.<sup>75</sup> **Jacob** therefore **said to his sons, "Why do you pretend** to the Ishmaelites and Edomites that we have enough provisions to last us through the famine, when in fact we only have enough for a short while? **Why should you draw attention to yourselves** by not actively seeking some means of providing for yourselves before our provisions run out? There is no guarantee that God will continue to sustain us miraculously, so if you do not make provisions for the future, you may well end up going hungry. **Why should you allow yourselves to risk becoming lean** through hunger?"

**2 He then said, "Look, I have heard that there is produce in Egypt. Go down**

72. 47:13. 73. Above, 12:10-20, 26:1-33. 74. Above, 26:12. 75. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, pp. 190-194.

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3 וַיֵּרְדּוּ אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף עֶשְׂרָה לְשֹׁבֵר בָּר מִמִּצְרַיִם: 4 וְאֵת בְּנֵימִין אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶחָיו כִּי אָמַר פֶּן יִקְרָאנוּ אִסּוֹן: 5 וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשֹׁבֵר בְּתוֹךְ הַבָּאִים כִּי־הָיָה הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: 6 וַיּוֹסֶף הוּא הַשְּׁלִיט עַל־הָאֶרֶץ הוּא הַמְשָׁבִיר לְכָל־עַם הָאֶרֶץ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶהוּ־לוֹ אַפָּיִם אֶרְצָה: 7 וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיִּכְרַם וַיִּתְּנֵם אֱלִיהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם קְשׁוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מֵאֵין בָּאתֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְשֹׁבֵר־אֶכֶל: 8 וַיִּבֶר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכְרָהוּ:

3 וַיֵּרְדּוּ אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף עֶשְׂרָה לְשֹׁבֵר בָּר מִמִּצְרַיִם: 4 וְאֵת בְּנֵימִין אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶחָיו כִּי אָמַר פֶּן יִקְרָאנוּ אִסּוֹן: 5 וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשֹׁבֵר בְּתוֹךְ הַבָּאִים כִּי־הָיָה הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: 6 וַיּוֹסֶף הוּא הַשְּׁלִיט עַל־הָאֶרֶץ הוּא הַמְשָׁבִיר לְכָל־עַם הָאֶרֶץ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶהוּ־לוֹ אַפָּיִם אֶרְצָה: 7 וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיִּכְרַם וַיִּתְּנֵם אֱלִיהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם קְשׁוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מֵאֵין בָּאתֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְשֹׁבֵר־אֶכֶל: 8 וַיִּבֶר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם לֹא הִכְרָהוּ:

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אֶחָד בְּפִתְחוֹ, כִּדִּי שְׁלֹא תִשְׁלַט בָּהֶם עֵין הָרַע, שְׂכָלִם נָאִים וְכָלִם גְּבוּרִים: כִּי הָיָה הָרָעַב. מוֹסֵב עַל "הַבָּאִים," "כִּי הָיָה הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן," וְהָיוּ בָאִים הָרַבָּה שִׁירֹת מִשָּׁם: 6 וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶהוּ לוֹ אַפָּיִם. נִשְׁתַּחֲוּ לוֹ עַל פְּנֵיהֶם, וְכֵן כָּל "הַשְׁתַּחֲוָּא" פְּשׁוּט יָדִים וְרַגְלִים הוּא: 7 וַיִּתְּנֵם אֱלִיהֶם. נִעֲשָׂה לָהֶם כְּנִכְרִי בְּדָבָרִים, לְדַבֵּר קְשׁוֹת: 8 וַיִּבֶר יוֹסֵף וְגו'. לְפִי שֶׁהֵנִיחָם חֲתוּמֵי זָקֵן: וְהֵם לֹא הִכְרָהוּ. שִׁינָּא מֵאֲצֵלֶם בְּלֹא חֲתוּמֵי זָקֵן, וְעִכְשָׁיו בָּא בְּחִימָת זָקֵן. וּמִדְּרַשׁ אֲגָדָה: "וַיִּבֶר יוֹסֵף אֶת אֶחָיו," כְּשֶׁנִּמְסְרוּ בְּיָדוֹ, הִכִּיר שֶׁהֵם אֶחָיו וְרַחֵם עֲלֵיהֶם. "וְהֵם לֹא הִכְרָהוּ" כְּשֶׁנִּפְל בְּיָדָם, לִהְיוֹת בּוֹ אֲחוּה:

3 וַיֵּרְדּוּ אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף. וְלֹא כָתַב "בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב," מִלְּמַד שֶׁהָיוּ מִתְחַרְטִים בְּמִכִּירָתוֹ, וְנִתְּנוּ לָבֶם לְהִתְנַהֵג עִמּוֹ בְּאֲחוּה, וְלִפְדּוּתוֹ בְּכָל מָוֶן שִׁפְסָקוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם: עֶשְׂרָה. מֵה תִּלְמוּד לומר, וְהֵלֵא כְּתִיב: "וְאֵת בְּנֵימִין אֶחָיו יוֹסֵף לֹא שָׁלַח?" אֵלָּא, לְעֵנִין הָאֲחוּה הָיוּ חֲלוּקִין לְעֶשְׂרָה, שְׁלֹא הָיְתָה אֶחָת בָּלֶם וְשְׁנָאת בָּלֶם שָׁוָה לוֹ. אֲבָל לְעֵנִין לְשֹׁבֵר בָּר, בָּלֶם לֹב אֶחָד לָהֶם. בְּבִרְאשִׁית רַבָּה: 4 פֶּן יִקְרָאנוּ אִסּוֹן. וּבִבְתִּית לֹא יִקְרָאנוּ אִסּוֹן? אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן יַעֲקֹב: מִכָּאן, שֶׁהִשְׁטָן מְקַטְרֵג בִּשְׁעַת הַסַּכָּנָה: 5 בְּתוֹךְ הַבָּאִים. מִטְּמִינִין עֲצָמוֹן שְׁלֹא יִפְרִיז, לְפִי שֶׁצָּוָה לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם שְׁלֹא יִתְּרָאוּ בָּלֶם בְּפִתַּח אֶחָד, אֵלָּא שִׁיכְנֵס כָּל

42. פסוק ד. 43. צא, ב. 44. בראשית רבה צא, ז.

Canaan, to buy food."

8 Although, as stated, **Joseph recognized his brothers**—for all their beards had been fully grown before they had parted and therefore, their appearance had not changed drastically in the interim—they **did not recognize him**, for when he left them, his beard had not yet grown, and now it was fully grown. Nonetheless, Joseph did not take advantage of the fact that his brothers did not recognize him. Even though they were now in his power and he could have easily taken revenge on them for having sold him, **Joseph treated them as his brothers**, pitying them, despite the fact that **they had not treated him** as their brother, pitying him, when he was in their power.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

8 **Joseph recognized his brothers...they did not recognize him:** As we have seen, Joseph was capable of retaining his Divine consciousness even while immersed in the mundane world, which his brothers were incapable of doing. Hence, they did not "recognize him":

they could not imagine that this viceroy of Egypt could be the righteous Joseph, since, from their perspective, it was impossible to be immersed in the mundane and remain righteous.<sup>86</sup>

86. Likutei Sichot, vol. 3, p. 832. See Alshich on 45:4, below.

3 When the brothers saw that Jacob had a premonition that Joseph was in Egypt, they understood that the time had come to ascertain Joseph's whereabouts and state, and if possible, return him to their father.<sup>80</sup> By this time, they had all regretted selling Joseph, although each one to a different degree. **Joseph's brothers thus went down** to Egypt as **ten** individuals, each feeling a different degree of brotherly love toward him, but equal in their resolve to redeem him at whatever price necessary, just as they were equal in their awareness that it was necessary **to buy grain from Egypt**.

4 **But Jacob did not send along Joseph's brother Benjamin with his other brothers, for he said, "Lest some disaster befall him."** Knowing as he did that Benjamin's mother Rachel had died while on a journey<sup>81</sup> and that Benjamin's brother Joseph had been killed by a wild beast while on a journey, Jacob was worried that it was particularly dangerous for this branch of his family to travel. True, there were additional causes responsible for Rachel's death—Jacob's own unwitting curse,<sup>82</sup> as well as her complications in childbirth—so in truth, there were not sufficient grounds to assume that traveling *per se* posed any real danger to this branch of the family. But Jacob also knew that people need to draw on their accrued merits as self-protection in dangerous situations, and that Satan, the prosecutor in the Heavenly Court, therefore prosecutes against people in just such situations in the hopes that their depleted reserves of merit will tilt the balance against them. Since for Benjamin, traveling was potentially risky, given his family history, Jacob felt it imprudent to send him on a journey.<sup>83</sup>

5 **The sons of Israel came to buy produce**, each entering the city by a different gate, as their father had suggested, and mingling **among all those others who had also come to buy**, as their father had instructed them, **for the famine had extended to Canaan**.

6 **Joseph, as viceroy of the land, was the one who sold produce to all the people of the region, and Joseph's brothers prostrated themselves before him with their faces to the ground.**

7 **Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them**, but he did not reveal his true identity to them. He understood that he first had to ascertain whether they regretted selling him and were ready to take the next step in the development of their family into the chosen people. Therefore, **he acted like a stranger toward them and**, playing his role as viceroy of Egypt, **spoke to them harshly**.

At the same time, in the ensuing interactions with his brothers, Joseph also made it a point to occasionally act congenially toward them, and even to hint that he knew who they were, so that when he would eventually reveal his identity to them, they would recall these displays of kindness and therefore be more inclined to believe that he really was their brother.<sup>84</sup>

Pretending to not understand their language, **he asked them**, via his interpreter, his seven-year-old son Manasseh,<sup>85</sup> **"Where are you from?"**

**They**, not knowing the Egyptian language, **replied**, also via an interpreter, **"From**

80. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 129-135. 81. Above, 35:16-20. 82. Above, 31:32. 83. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 213-219. 84. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, pp. 185-186. 85. Below, v. 23.

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9 וידכיר יוסף ית חלמיא די חלים להון ואמר להון אלילי אתון למחזי ית בדקא דארעא אתיתון: 10 ואמרו לה לא רבוני ועבדיך אתו למזבן עבדא: 11 כלנא בני גברא חד נחנא פיוני אנחנא לא הו עבדיך אלילי: 12 ואמר להון לא אליהן בדקא דארעא אתיתון למחזי: 13 ואמרו תרין עשר עבדיך אחין אנחנא בני גברא חד בארעא דכנען והא זעירא עם אבונא יומא דין וחד ליתוהי: 14 ואמר להון יוסף הוא די מלילית עמכון למימר אלילי אתון: 15 ברא תתבונן חי פרעה אם תפקון מכא אליהן במיתא אחובון זעירא הכא: 16 שלחו מנכון חד וידבר ית אחובון ואתון התאסרון ויתבונון פתגמיכון הקשוט אתון אמרין ואם לא חי פרעה ארי אלילי אתון: 17 וכנש יתהון לבית משרא תלחא יומין: 18 ואמר להון יוסף ביומא תליתאה דא עבדו ואחזקומו מן קדם יי אנא דחל: 19 אם פיוני אתון אחובון חד יתאסר בבית משרתכון ואתון אזילו אובילו עבדא דחסיר בבתיכון:

9 ויזכר יוסף את החלמות אשר חלם להם ויאמר אליהם מרגלים אתם לראות את ערות הארץ באתם: 10 ויאמרו אליו לא אדני ועבדיך באו לשבר-אכל: 11 כלנו בני איש-אחד נחנו בנים אנחנו לא-היו עבדיך מרגלים: 12 ויאמר אליהם לא פי-ערות הארץ באתם לראות: 13 ויאמרו שנים עשר עבדיך אחים אנחנו בני איש-אחד בארץ כנען והנה הקטן את-אבינו היום והאחד איננו: 14 ויאמר אליהם יוסף הוא אשר דברתי אלכם לאמר מרגלים אתם: 15 בזאת תבחנו חי פרעה אם-תצאו מזה פי אם-בבוא אחיכם הקטן הנה: 16 שלחו מכם אחד ויקח את-אחיכם ואתם האסרו ויבחנו דבריכם האמת אתכם ואם-לא חי פרעה פי מרגלים אתם: 17 ויאסף אתם אל-משמר שלשת ימים: 18 ויאמר אליהם יוסף ביום השלישי זאת עשו וחיו את-האלהים אני ירא:

חמישי 19 אם-בנים אתם אחיכם אחד יאסר בבית משמרכם ואתם לכו הביאו שבר רעבון בתיכם:

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הוא האמת והנכון, והו לפי פשוטו. ומדרשו: אמר להם: ואלו מצאתם אותו ויפסקו עליכם ממון הרבה, תפדוהו? אמרו לו: הן. אמר להם: ואם יאמרו לכם שלא יחזירוהו בשום ממון, מה תעשו? אמרו: לכה באנו, להרג או להרג. אמר להם: "הוא אשר דברתי אליכם", להרג בני העיר באתם, מנחש אני בגביע שלי ששנים מכם יחזירוהו כרף גדול של שכם: 15 חי פרעה. אם יחיה פרעה. כשהיה נשבע לשקר, היה נשבע בחי פרעה: **אם תצאו מזה**. מן המקום הזה: 16 **האמת אתכם**. אם אמת אתכם. לפיכך ה"א נקוד פתח, שהוא כמו בלשון תימה. "ואם לא" תביאוהו — "חי פרעה כי מרגלים אתם": 17 **משמר**. בית האסורים: 19 **בבית משמרכם**. שאתם אסורים בו עכשו: **ואתם לכו הביאו**. לבית אביכם: **שבר רעבון בתיכם**. מה שקניתם לרעבון אנשי בתיכם:

9 אשר חלם להם. עליהם. וידע שנתקמו, שהרי השתחוו לו: **ערות הארץ**. גלוי הארץ, מהיכן היא נוהה לכבש, כמו: 45: "את מקרה הערה", וכמו: 46: "ערם ועריה". וכן כל "ערוה" שבמקרא לשון "גלוי". ותרגם אנקלוס: "בדקא דארעא", כמו: 47: "בדק הבית", רעוע הבית. אבל לא דקדק לפרשו אחר לשון המקרא: 10 **לא אדני**. לא תאמר בן, שהרי "עבדיך באו לשבר אכל": 11 **כלנו בני איש אחד נחנו**. נצנצה בהם רוח הקדש וכללוהו עמם, שאף הוא בן אביהם: **בנים**. אמתיים, כמו: "בן דברת" 48, "בן בנות צלפחד דברות" 49, "ועברתו לא בן בדין" 50: 12 **כי ערות הארץ באתם לראות**. שהרי נכנסתם בעשרה שעי העיר, למה לא נכנסתם בשער אחד? 13 **ויאמרו שנים עשר עבדיך וגו'**. ובשביל אותו אחד שאיננו נתפזרנו בעיר לבקשו: 14 **הוא אשר דברתי**. הדבר אשר דברתי שאתם מרגלים

45. ויקרא כ, יח. 46. יחזקאל טז, ז. 47. מלכים ב, יב, ו. 48. שמות י, כט. 49. במדבר כז, ו. 50. ישעיה טז, ו. 51. בראשית רבה צא, ז.

rest of you go back to your homeland and bring back the produce you have purchased in Egypt for satiating the hunger of your households.

**9 He recalled the dreams that he had dreamed about them**, and saw that they had now prostrated themselves before him in a matter regarding grain, just as they had in his first dream.<sup>87</sup> Understanding that the dreams were coming true, he realized that he had to contrive some way for Benjamin to join them so he, too, could prostrate himself before him, completing the rest of the dream. Therefore, **he said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see where the land is vulnerable."**

**10 They said to him, "No, my lord! Do not say such a thing, for we, your servants, have come just to buy food."**

**11 We are all the sons of the same man."** Saying this to him, they unwittingly included him, implying that he, too, was a son of their father. **"We are honorable men; your servants have never been spies!"**

**12 He said to them, "No! I'm sure you are spies! You have come to see where the land is vulnerable!** If, as you say, you are brothers, what other reason could you possibly have had for entering through different gates? And if you are not brothers, then you are liars!"

**13 They answered, "No! We can explain. We, your servants, were twelve brothers, the sons of one man who is in Canaan. The youngest is today with our father, and the other one has gone missing, and we separated in order to look for him."**

**14 Joseph said to them, "And if you find him, and his captors demand a huge sum of money for his release, will you pay it?"**

They answered, "Of course."

He then asked them, "And if they refuse to release him, even for a huge ransom, what will you do?"

They answered, "Then we will take him by force, even if we have to kill to save him or be killed trying!"

He said to them, "Then it is exactly as I told you before: **you are spies**, and you have come to kill the people of this city. Don't think I don't know that you are capable of murder; I have divined by my goblet that two of you destroyed the city of Shechem!"

**15 By this you shall be put to the test: I swear to you on the life of Pharaoh that you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.**

**16 Send one of you to bring me your youngest brother, while the rest of you remain imprisoned here, so that the veracity of your words may be put to the test.** If he does not bring him, then by the life of Pharaoh, you are indeed spies!" Whenever Joseph swore falsely, as part of his imposture, he did so in the name of Pharaoh.

**17 He then held them all in custody for three days** in order to give them time to consider their situation calmly and rationally.<sup>88</sup>

**18 On the third day, Joseph said to them, "I have decided to make my test easier than I had originally planned. Do, then, as follows, and you will live.** You can trust me, for I am a God-fearing person.

◆ **Fifth Reading** **19 If you are being truthful, prove it in the following way: Let one of your brothers remain as hostage in your present place of detention, while the**

<sup>87</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 116. <sup>88</sup>. See 22:4, above. *Hitva'aduyot* 5748, vol. 2, p. 140.



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20 וַיִּתֵּן אֲחֻבוֹן וְעִירָא תִּיתָנוּן לְוִיתִי וַיִּתְּנֵימֵנוּן פִּתְגָּמִיכוֹן וְלֹא תִּמְוִתוֹן וְעִבְדוֹ כֵּן: 21 וְאָמְרוּ גְבֵר לְאַחוּהִי בְּקוּשָׁטָא חִיבִין אֲנַחְנָא עַל אֲחוּנָא דִּי חֻינָא עֲקַת נִפְשָׁה כִּד הָוָה מִתְחַנֵּן לָנָא וְלֹא קְבִילָנָא מִנָּה עַל כֵּן אֲתַת לְוִיתָנָא עֲקָתָא הָדָא: 22 וְאִתִּיב רָאוּבֵן וַיְתוּדוּן לְמִימֵר הָלֹא אָמְרִית לְכוֹן לְמִימֵר לֹא תִּחְסֹאנוּן בְּעוֹלִימָא וְלֹא קְבִילָתוֹן וְאִף דְּמָה הָא מִתְבַּעֵי: 23 וְאֲנָנוּן לֹא יִדְעִין אַרְי שְׁמַע יוֹסֵף אַרְי מִתְרַגְּמָן הָוָה בִּינִיחוֹן: 24 וְאִסְתַּחֲר מְלֻתְהוֹן וּבִקָּא וְתֵב לְוִיתָנוּן וּמְלִיל עֲמֹהוֹן וְדַבֵּר מְלֻתְהוֹן יֵת שְׁמַעוֹן וְאִסֵּר יִתְהָ לְעִינֵיהוֹן:

20 וְאֶת־אֲחֵיכֶם הִקְטַן תָּבִיאוּ אֵלַי וַיֵּאמְרוּ דְּבָרֵיכֶם וְלֹא תָמוּתוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּכֶן: 21 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו אֲבֹל־אִישׁ־מִי־אֶנְחֵנוּ עַל־אֲחֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְנוּ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ עַל־כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת: 22 וַיַּעַן רָאוּבֵן אֹתָם לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא אֶמְרָתִי אֵלֵיכֶם | לֵאמֹר אֶל־תִּחַטְּאוּ בִּילָד וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם וְגַם־דָּמוֹ הִנֵּה נִדְרָשׁ: 23 וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע יוֹסֵף כִּי הִמְלִיץ בֵּינֵתָם: 24 וַיִּסָּב מֵעַלֵּיהֶם וַיִּבֶךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶל־הֶלֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־הֶלֶם וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲתָם אֶת־שְׁמַעוֹן וַיֹּאסֶר אוֹתוֹ לְעֵינֵיהֶם:

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מִצָּרִי, וְהִיָּה מְלִיץ דְּבָרֵיהֶם לְיוֹסֵף וְדְבָרֵי יוֹסֵף לָהֶם, לְכָף הָיוּ סְבוּרִים שָׁאִין יוֹסֵף מְכִיר בִּלְשׁוֹן עֲבָרִי. **הַמְלִיץ**. וְהָ מְנִשָּׁה בְּנוֹ: 24 **וַיִּסָּב מֵעַלֵּיהֶם**. נִתְרַחַק מֵעַלֵּיהֶם, שֶׁלֹּא יִרְאוּהוּ בּוֹכָה וַיִּבֶךְ. לְפִי שֶׁשָּׁמַע שֶׁהָיוּ מִתְרַחֲטִין: **אֶת שְׁמַעוֹן**. הוּא הַשְּׁלִיכוֹ לְבוֹר, הוּא שָׁאֵמֵר לְלוֹיִ: "הִנֵּה בָעַל הַחֲלָמוֹת הִלְזָה בָּא". דְּבָר אַחֵר. נִתְכַּנֵּן יוֹסֵף לְהַפְרִידוֹ מִלּוֹ, שֶׁמָּא יִתְיַעֲצוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם לְהִרְגֵּא אוֹתוֹ: **וַיֹּאסֶר אוֹתוֹ לְעֵינֵיהֶם**. לֹא אָסְרוּ אֶלָּא לְעֵינֵיהֶם, וְכֵן שֶׁיִּצְאוּ, הוֹצִיאוּ וְהָאֵכִילוּ וְהִשְׁקָהוּ:

20 וַיֵּאמְרוּ דְּבָרֵיכֶם. וַתִּאמְרוּ וַיִּתְּקֵנוּ, כְּמוֹ: 52. "אֲמֵן אֲמֵן", וְכְמוֹ: 53. "יֵאמְרוּ נָא דְּבָרְךָ": 21 אֲבֹל. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ: "בְּקִשְׁטָא". רֵאִיתִי בְּבִרְאשִׁית רַבָּה: 54. לְשָׁנָא דְּרוּמָאָה הוּא: "אֲבֹל" — "בָּרָם": **בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ**. טַעְמוֹ בְּבִי"ת, לְפִי שֶׁהוּא בִּלְשׁוֹן עֲבָר, שֶׁכָּבֵר בָּאָה. וְתִרְגוּמוֹ: "אֲתַת לָנָא": 22 **וְגַם דָּמוֹ**. אֲתִי"ן וְגַמִּי"ן רַבּוּיִין, דָּמוֹ וְגַם דָּם הִקְוִן: 23 **וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע יוֹסֵף**. מִכֵּין לְשׁוֹנָם, וּבִפְנֵי הָיוּ מְדַבְּרִים כֵּן: **כִּי הִמְלִיץ בֵּינֵתָם**. כִּי כִשְׁהָיוּ מְדַבְּרִים עִמּוֹ הָיָה הִמְלִיץ בֵּינֵיהֶם, הַיּוֹדֵעַ לְשׁוֹן עֲבָרִי וּלְשׁוֹן

52. בַּמְדַּבֵּר ה, כב. 53. מְלִיכִיס'א ח, כו. 54. צא, ח. 55. בְּרִאשִׁית לו, יט.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

have repented in such a way that God can testify that we will never again return to our folly.<sup>94</sup> If, however, we are motivated to repent by some external factor, we cannot be sure that we will not return to our old ways once that external factor is no longer relevant.

Thus, when Reuben saw that his brothers were repenting, he wanted to ensure that they did so in the optimal manner. He feared that their repentance was not motivated from within but by external circumstances—the misfortune that had befallen them. Reuben wanted them to repent out of recognition of the magnitude of their sin, which he had tried to impress upon them twenty years prior. Instead of focusing on the repercussions of the sin—in the brothers' words, "that is why this misfortune has come upon us"—Reuben wanted them to focus on the magnitude of the sin itself: "we are being called to account for his blood."

Furthermore, just as true repentance must be freely chosen and not motivated by external factors, so too, we must recognize that the wrong for which we are

repenting was committed freely—we cannot blame any external factors. As long as we have an excuse to somewhat justify our behavior, as long as we think that other factors also contributed to our choice, even if we admit our guilt we have not truly repented. As King Solomon wrote, "He who covers his sins will not succeed," alluding to Adam, who wanted to pass off his guilt to Eve.<sup>95</sup>

In order to truly repent, we have to recognize that we—knowingly, deliberately, and with complete freedom of choice—chose to turn our backs on God. Even if external factors did influence us to sin, we are still responsible for having knowingly and deliberately chosen to sin, for we can always ignore such influences.

This was the second point that Reuben sought to impress upon his brothers. He told them, "You cannot blame anyone else for your sin, since I had warned you against sinning and yet you chose to ignore my pleas."<sup>96</sup>

94. *Mishneh Torah*, *Teshuvah* 2:2. 95. *Proverbs* 28:13; *Midrash Tehilim* 100. See also *Ikarim* 4:26 at length. 96. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, pp. 198 ff. See above on 3:22.

**20 You shall then bring me your youngest brother, and thus your words will be substantiated and you will not die.” They agreed to do this.**

**21 They moved away from the interpreter so he would not hear them speak,<sup>89</sup> remaining within earshot of Joseph, whom they assumed could not understand them anyway. They then said to one another, “We are indeed guilty regarding our brother, for we saw his anguish when he pleaded with us, but we would not listen. That is why this misfortune has come upon us.”**

**22 Reuben responded to them and said, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’? But you would not listen. And now that it is clear that he is dead, we are being called to account for spilling his blood.** We will be called to account for our father’s life, too, if he dies of grief when he hears that Benjamin must come down to Egypt.”

**23 They did not realize that Joseph understood them, for, as above, whenever they conversed, there was an interpreter between them.**

**24 He turned aside and moved away from them so that they would not see him, and wept over the fact that they regretted having mistreated him. But then he resumed his act in order to get them to bring Benjamin to Egypt. He came back to them and spoke to them, and had Simeon taken away from them and bound before their eyes.** He chose Simeon because he was the one who had instigated the brothers’ plot to kill him<sup>90</sup> and who had thrown him into the pit,<sup>91</sup> and also in order to separate him from Levi so that the two not devise some way to kill him.

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❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

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**21 For we saw his anguish when he pleaded with us, but we would not listen:** The crime of Joseph’s sale into captivity can be seen as a metaphor for all our “crimes” against God. During the Godly soul’s sojourn in the body and its mundane consciousness, it is like a prince in captivity. The purpose of this exile is for the soul to refine and spiritualize the body and its share of the material world. The soul thereby gains the ability to rise to a spiritual level higher than it existed in prior to its descent.

Consequently, as long as we remain true to the purpose of the soul’s descent, our souls are happy to endure the agony living life in material captivity. When, however, we are unfaithful to our mission, and certainly when we behave contrary to it, the soul suffers unjustified agony.

Since the soul is a part of God, the pain of the soul is the pain of the Divine presence as well. Thus, whenever we behave in ways that negate the purpose of the soul’s descent, or even simply do not justify it, we are, so to speak, casting God into “captivity” just as the brothers did to Joseph.

Nachmanides writes that the brothers’ failure to have mercy on Joseph despite his pleas was more egregious

a sin than the sale itself. Similarly, our failure to pay heed to the voice of our souls and the Divine presence, which beg us to free them from captivity, is more egregious than our negative behavior itself.<sup>92</sup>

**22 Reuben responded to them and said, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’? But you would not listen. And now we are being called to account for his blood:** Reuben’s reaction to his brothers’ expression of regret seems uncharacteristic for someone of his stature. The brothers were obviously feeling remorseful about their sin and understood that they were being punished for their past deed. We would expect Reuben to be sympathetic and offer words of consolation. Instead, he seems to be pouring salt on their wounds.

In fact, however, Reuben was trying to help his brothers repent fully. Reuben himself was penitent par excellence. Although Adam and Cain had repented before Reuben, the *Midrash* refers to Reuben as the first to have repented,<sup>93</sup> for he was the first to truly understand repentance and repent with absolute sincerity

True repentance is possible only when we are motivated solely by an inner desire to correct the past, to fix our relationship with God and get closer to Him. As Maimonides writes, true repentance means that we

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89. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, p. 112, note 22\*. 90. Above, 37:19-20. 91. Above, 37:24. 92. *Sefer HaMa’amarim Melukat*, vol. 5, pp. 261-262. 93. *Bereishit Rabbah* 84:19.

ONKELOS

25 ופקיד יוסף וגמלו ית מנייהון  
עבורא ולא תבא כספיהון גבר  
לסקה ולמתן להון וידין לארעה  
ועבד להון כן: 26 וגטלו ית  
עבורהון על חמריהון ואזלו  
מתמן: 27 ופתח חור ית סקה למתן  
כסתא לחמרה בבית מבתא וחזא  
ית כספה וקא הוא בפום טוענה:  
28 ואמר לאחוזי אתותב כספי  
ואף קא בטועני ונפק מדע לבהון  
ותנהו גבר לאחוזי למימר מא דא  
עבד יי לנא: 29 ואתו לות יעקב  
אבוהון לארעה דכנען וחזאו  
לה ית כל דערעא יתהון למימר:  
30 מליל גברא רבונא דארעא  
עמנא קשין ויהב יתנא כמאללי  
ית ארעא: 31 ואמרנא לה כיוני  
אנחנא לא הוינא אלילי: 32 תרי  
עשר אנחנא אחין בני אבונא  
חד ליתוהי וועירא יומא דין עם  
אבונא בארעא דכנען: 33 ואמר  
לנא גברא רבונא דארעא בדא  
אדע ארי כיני אתון אחוכון חור  
שבוקי לותי וית עבורא דחסי  
בבתיכון סיבו ואזלו: 34 ואיתו  
ית אחוכון ועירא לותי ואדע ארי  
לא אלילי אתון ארי כיני אתון  
ית אחוכון אתן לכון וית ארעא  
תעבדון בה סחורתא: 35 ותה  
אנון מריקין סקיהון וקא גברא  
ציר כספה בסקה וחזו ית צירי  
כספיהון אנון ואבוהון ודחילו:  
36 ואמר להון יעקב אבוהון ותי  
אתבלתון יוסף ליתוהי ושמעון  
לא יהוה קבא וית בגימין תדברון  
עלי הוואה בלחן: 37 ואמר ראובן  
לאבוהי למימר ית תרין בני תמית  
אם לא איתנה לותך הב יתה על  
ידי ואנא אתיבנה לך:

25 ויצו יוסף וימלאו את כליהם בר ולהשיב כספיהם  
איש אל־שקו ולתת להם צדה לדרכו ויעש להם  
כן: 26 וישאו את־שברם על־חמריהם וילכו משם:  
27 ויפתח האחד את־שקו לתת מספוא לחמרו במלון  
וירא את־כספו והנה־הוא בפי אמתחתו: 28 ויאמר  
אל־אחיו הושב כספי וגם הנה באמתחתי ויצא לכם  
ויחרדו איש אל־אחיו לאמר מה־זאת עשה אלהים  
לנו: 29 ויבאו אל־יעקב אביהם ארצה כנען ויגידו לו  
את כל־הקרת אתם לאמר: 30 דבר האיש אדני הארץ  
אתנו קשות ויתן אתנו כמרגלים את־הארץ: 31 ונאמר  
אליו בנים אנחנו לא היינו מרגלים: 32 שנים־עשר  
אנחנו אחים בני אבינו האחד איננו והקטן היום את־  
אבינו בארץ כנען: 33 ויאמר אלינו האיש אדני הארץ  
בזאת אדע כי בנים אתם אחיכם האחד הניחו אתי  
ואת־רעבון בתיכם קחו ולכו: 34 והביאו את־אחיכם  
הקטן אלי ואדעה כי לא מרגלים אתם כי בנים אתם  
את־אחיכם אתן לכם ואת־הארץ תסחרו: 35 ויהי הם  
מריקים שקהם והנה־איש צרור־כספו בשקו ויראו  
את־צרורות כספיהם המה ואביהם וייראו: 36 ויאמר  
אלהם יעקב אביהם אתי שב־לתם יוסף איננו ושמעון  
איננו ואת־בנימין תקחו עלי היו כלנה: 37 ויאמר ראובן  
אל־אביו לאמר את־שני בני תמית אם־לא אביאנו  
אליך תנה אתו עלידי ואני אשיבנו אליך:

RASHI

תסובבו. וכל לשון סחרים וסחורה, על שם שמחזרים  
וסובבים אחר פרקמטיא: 35 צרור כספו. קשר כספו:  
36 אתי שב־לתם. מלמד ששקדן שמא הרגהו או  
מכרוהו כיוסף: שב־לתם. כל מי שבגיו אבודים קרוי  
"שכול":

27 ויפתח האחד. הוא לוי, שנשאר יחיד משמעון כן  
ווגו: במלון. במקום שלנו בלילה: אמתחתו. הוא שק;  
28 וגם הנה באמתחתי. גם הכסף בו עם התבואה: מה  
זאת עשה אלהים לנו. להביאנו לידי עלילה זו, שלא  
הושב אלא להתעולל עלינו: 34 ואת הארץ תסחרו.

## A CLOSER LOOK

[37] You may put my own two sons to death: How could Reuben say this? The Torah clearly prohib-

its killing people—except when administering the Torah's own death penalty for certain specific sins,



**25** Joseph then gave orders that when their containers were filled with grain, each one's money should be returned to his sack, and that they should be given provisions for the journey. This order was carried out for them. Although Joseph detained Simeon, he did not detain his donkey; he had Simeon's container loaded up with provisions for his family, placed on his donkey, and sent back with the other brothers.<sup>97</sup>

**26** The brothers then loaded their produce onto their donkeys, and they departed. After they left, Joseph had Simeon unbound and fed a meal.

**27** As Levi—the one of them who was now left without his usual companion, Simeon—was opening his sack at the inn to give fodder to his donkey, he saw his money, right there at the opening of his pack.

**28** He said to his brothers, "My money has been returned! Not only is the grain here, but it, too, is here in my pack!"

Their hearts sank. Trembling, they turned to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us? The money can only have been put back into his pack as a pretext to accuse us of having stolen it!"

**29** When they came to their father Jacob in Canaan, they told him about all that had happened to them, as follows:

**30** "The man who is the lord of the land spoke to us harshly and charged us with spying out the land.

**31** We said to him, 'We are honorable men; we have never been spies.

**32** We were twelve brothers, sons of the same father; one of us went missing, and the youngest is today with our father in Canaan.'

**33** The man who is the lord of the land said to us, 'By this I will know that you are being honest: Leave one of your brothers with me, take the grain you have purchased for satiating the hunger of your households, and go home.

**34** But you shall bring me your youngest brother, and then I will know that you are not spies, but are rather being honest. I will give your brother back to you, and you will be able to move about in the land freely.'

**35** While they were emptying their sacks, there, in each one's sack, was his money-pouch! When they and their father saw their money-pouches, they became afraid.

**36** Their father Jacob did not believe their story. Now that two of his sons were missing, he began to suspect that the other brothers had behaved either maliciously or negligently: they had either killed Joseph and Simeon or let them be killed.<sup>98</sup> He said to them, "You are bereaving me of my sons! Joseph is gone because of you, Simeon is gone because of you, and now you would take Benjamin away from me as well?! All this has befallen me!"

**37** Reuben then said to his father, "You may put my own two sons to death if I do not bring Benjamin back to you. Entrust him to my care, and I promise that I will bring him back to you."

<sup>97</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 155-156. <sup>98</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 219.

ONKELOS

38 וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יִחַד בְּנֵי עַמְכֶּם כִּי־אֲחִיו מֵת וְהוּא לְבַדּוֹ נִשְׁאָר וּקְרָאָהוּ אֶסּוֹן בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תִּלְכוּ־בָּהּ וְהוֹרְדְתֶם אֶת־שִׁיבְתִּי בִּיגּוֹן שְׁאוּלָּה: 43:1 וְהָרַעַב כָּבֵד בְּאֶרֶץ: 2 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלוּ לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־הַשֶּׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר הֵבִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם אֲבִיהֶם שֹׁבוּ שְׁבֵרוּ־לָנוּ מַעֲט־אֶכֶל: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלָיו יְהוּדָה לֵאמֹר הָעֵד הָעֵד בְּנוֹ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר לֹא־תֵרָאוּ פָנַי בְּלִתִּי אֲחִיכֶם אִתְּכֶם: 4 אִם־יֵשֶׁךְ מִשְׁלַח אֶת־אֲחִינוּ אִתְּנוּ נִרְדָּה וְנִשְׁפָּרָה לָךְ אֶכֶל: 5 וְאִם־אֵינֶךָ מִשְׁלַח לֹא נִרְדָּה כִּי־הָאִישׁ אָמַר אֲלֵינוּ לֹא־תֵרָאוּ פָנַי בְּלִתִּי אֲחִיכֶם אִתְּכֶם: 6 וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמָה הִרְעִיתֶם לִי לְהַגִּיד לְאִישׁ הָעוֹד לָכֶם אָח: 7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁאוּל שְׁאֵל־הָאִישׁ לָנוּ וְלִמּוֹלְדֵתָנוּ לֵאמֹר הָעוֹד אֲבִיכֶם חַי הָיִשׁ לָכֶם אָח וְנִגְדַּלּוֹ עַל־פִּי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הַיְדוּעַ נִדַּע כִּי יֹאמֶר הוֹרִידוּ אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם:

RASHI

תראוי בלא אחיכם אתכם. ואנקלוס תרגם: "אלהין כד אחוכון עמכון", ישב באור הדבר על אפנו. ולא דקדק לתרגם אחר לשון המקרא: 7 לנו ולמולדתנו. למשפחותינו. ומדרשו: אפלו עצי עריסותינו גלה לנו: ונגד לו. שיש לנו אב ואח: על פי הדברים האלה. על פי שאלותיו אשר שאל הזקקנו להגיד: כי יאמר. אשר יאמר. "כי" משמש בלשון "אם", ו"אם" משמש בלשון "אשר". הרי זה שמוש אחד מארבע לשונות שמשמש "כי" והוא "אי", שהרי "כי" זה כמו "אם", כמו: "עד אם דברתי דברי":

38 לא ירד בני עמכם. לא קבל דבריו של ראובן, אמר: בכור שוטף הוא זה, הוא אומר להמית בניו, וכי בניו הם ולא בניו: 2 באשר כלו לאכל. והודה אמר להם: המתינו לזקן, עד שתכלה פת מן הבית: באשר כלו. "כד שיציאו". והמתרגם: "כד ספיקו" טועה. "כאשר כלו הגמלים לשותות"<sup>56</sup>, מתרגם: "כד ספיקו", כששתו די ספוקם הוא גמר שתיתם. אבל זה "כאשר כלו לאכל" — כאשר תם האכל הוא, ומתרגמין: "כד שיציאו": 3 העד העד. לשון התראה, שסתם התראה מתרה בו בפני עדים. וכן: "העד העדתי באבותיכם"<sup>57</sup>, "ירד העד בעם"<sup>58</sup>: לא תראו פני בלתי אחיכם אתכם. לא

56. בראשית כד, כב. 57. ירמיה יא, ז. 58. שמות יט, כא. 59. בראשית רבה צא, י. 60. בראשית כד, לג.

### A CLOSER LOOK

[continued...] and failure to keep a promise is not one of these sins.

This is therefore an instance of what we have seen elsewhere, namely, that before the Giving of the Torah it was permissible for society at large or for a private individual to obligate themselves to do

something and make themselves (or in this case, their children) liable to the death penalty for not fulfilling this obligation. This explains why, in his response to Reuben, Jacob did not mention anything about such a commitment being forbidden by the Torah.<sup>102</sup>

102. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 190-191.

38 Jacob ignored Reuben's offer. He thought, "How foolish are my firstborn's words! Does he think that I would really kill his sons, my own grandsons?!" **He replied, "You have shown yourself to be irresponsible! My son Benjamin will not go down to Egypt with you! For his brother Joseph is dead and he alone remains from his mother, and should disaster befall him along the road you travel, due to your malice or negligence,<sup>99</sup> you will bring my white-haired head down to the grave in grief."** Judah had additional arguments he could have used to convince his father to let them take Benjamin back with them, but seeing Jacob's obstinacy, he understood that they would prove more effective when there would be almost no food left. So he told his brothers, "Let us not trouble our elderly father now; let us bide our time until the food runs out."

### Joseph's Brothers' Second Journey to Egypt

43:1 The famine in the region continued to be severe.

2 When they had fully consumed the produce that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go back to Egypt and buy us a little food."

3 So Judah said to him, "The man in charge of the food supplies there sternly warned us, saying, 'Do not appear before me again unless your brother is with you.'

4 If you agree to send along our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.

5 But if you do not send him, we will not go down, for the man told us, 'You may not see my face again unless your brother is with you.' "

6 Israel said, "Why did you do me such a terrible disservice by telling the man that you have another brother?"

7 Although the brothers understood the viceroy of Egypt's harsh behavior toward them as a Divine response to their having sold Joseph, they obviously could not explain it that way to Jacob. They therefore described his behavior as being the result of a natural sequence of events.<sup>100</sup> **They replied, "The man kept asking about us and our families, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' He even asked us what kind of wood our cradles were made of, and then guessed correctly. We told him that we had a father and another brother in response to his questions. Could we have known that he would say, 'Bring down your brother?!' "**

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#### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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7-14 They presented his behavior to their father as being the result of a natural sequence of events.... Israel said to them, "Besides this, we must ask God for His help": Conventional thinking has it that prayer is for desperate situations. Under normal conditions, we assume that as long as we do what we need to do everything else will naturally fall into place.

From Jacob's words to his children, we learn otherwise. Even when a situation seems perfectly natural, we should never assume that we can negotiate it without Divine assistance. We must always resort to prayer—and not as a secondary measure, but as the primary

measure. In fact, thinking that prayer is superfluous is itself a problem for which we should pray for help to solve!

Although we must create natural channels to facilitate God's blessings, we must realize that these natural means are merely external and that in truth we are connected to God, who is beyond nature. Therefore, our primary focus should be to pray to God, who controls every aspect of our lives, both material and spiritual.

When we do so, we merit to perceive that the "natural" occurrences of our lives are in fact miracles garbed in nature.<sup>101</sup>

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99. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 219. 100. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 227-232. 101. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 227-234.

— ONKELOS —

8 ואמר יהודה לישראל אביו שלחה הנער אתי ונקומה ונלכה ונחיה ולא נמות גס־אנחנו גס־אתה גס־טפנו: 9 אנכי אערבנו מידי תבקשנו אם־לא הביאתי אליך והצגתי לפניך וחתאתי לך כל־הימים: 10 כי לולא התמהמהנו כִּי־עתה שבנו זה פעמים: 11 ואמר אלֹהם ישראל אביהם אם־כן אפוא זאת עשו קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם והורידו לאיש מנחה מעט צרי ומעט דבש נכאת ולט בטינים ושקדים: 12 ובסוף משנה קחו בידכם ואת־הכסף המושב בפי אמתחתים בל תשיבו בידכם אולי משנה הוא: 13 ואת־אחיכם קחו וקומו שובו אל־האיש: 14 ואל שדי יתן לכם רחמים לפני האיש ושלח לכם את־אחיכם אחר ואת־בנימין ואני באשר שכלתי שכלתי:

— RASHI —

ודומה לי שהם אפרסקין: 12 ובסוף משנה. פי שנים בראשון: קחו בידכם. לשבר אכל, שמא הוקר השער: אולי משנה הוא. שמא המקנה על הבית שכוו שוגג: 14 ואל שדי. מעתה אינכם חסרים כלום אלא תפלה, הריני מתפלל עליכם: ואל שדי. שדי בנתינת רחמי וכדי היכלת בידו לתן, "יתן לכם רחמים", והו פשוטו. ומדרשו: מי שאמר לעולם די — יאמר די לצרותי, שלא שקטתי מנעורי, צרת לכן, צרת עשו, צרת רחל, צרת דינה, צרת יוסף, צרת שמעון, צרת בנימין: ושלח לכם. "ויפטר לכו", תרגומו, ויפטרנו מאסורינו, לשון "לחפשי ושלחנו". ואינו נופל בתרגום לשון "וישלח", שהרי לשם הם הולכים אצלו: את אחיכם. זה שמעון: אחר. רוח הקדש נזקק בו, לרבות יוסף: ואני. עד שובכם אהיה שכול מספק: באשר שכלתי. מיוסף ומשמעון: שכלתי. מבנימין:

8 ויאמר יהודה אל־ישראל אביו שלחה הנער אתי ונקומה ונלכה ונחיה ולא נמות גס־אנחנו גס־אתה גס־טפנו: 9 אנכי אערבנו מידי תבקשנו אם־לא הביאתי אליך והצגתי לפניך וחתאתי לך כל־הימים: 10 כי לולא התמהמהנו כִּי־עתה שבנו זה פעמים: 11 ואמר אלֹהם ישראל אביהם אם־כן אפוא זאת עשו קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם והורידו לאיש מנחה מעט צרי ומעט דבש נכאת ולט בטינים ושקדים: 12 ובסוף משנה קחו בידכם ואת־הכסף המושב בפי אמתחתים בל תשיבו בידכם אולי משנה הוא: 13 ואת־אחיכם קחו וקומו שובו אל־האיש: 14 ואל שדי יתן לכם רחמים לפני האיש ושלח לכם את־אחיכם אחר ואת־בנימין ואני באשר שכלתי שכלתי:

8 ונחיה. נצנצה בו רוח הקדש, על ידי הליכה זו תחי רוחך, שנאמר: "ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם": ולא נמות. ברעב. בנימין ספק יתפש ספק לא יתפש, ואנו כלנו מתים ברעב אם לא נלך, מוטב שתניח את הספק ותתפש את הודאי: 9 והצגתי לפניך. שלא אביאנו אליך מת, כי אם חי: וחתאתי לך כל הימים. לעולם הבא: 10 לולא התמהמהנו. על ידך, בכר היינו שבים עם שמעון, ולא נצטערך כל הימים הללו: 11 אפוא. כל לשון "אפוא" לשון יתר הוא, לתקן המלה בלשון עברי. אם כן אודקק לעשות, שאשלחנו עמכם, צריך אני לחזור ולבקש "איה פה" תקנה ועצה להשיאכם, ואומר אני: "זאת עשו": מזמרת הארץ. מתרגם: "מדמשבח בארעא", שהכל מזמרים עליו כשהוא בא לעולם: נכאת. שעוה: בטינים. לא ידעתי מה הם. ובפרושי א' ב' של רבי מכיר ראיתי פישטציא"ס.

61. בראשית מה, כו. 62. בראשית רבה צב, א. 63. שמות כא, כו.

Benjamin back unharmed." When Jacob used the word "other" when referring to Simeon, he unknowingly prophesied that Joseph, too, would be "released" from obscurity. "As for me," Jacob concluded, "just as I have been bereaved of Joseph and Simeon, so, too, will I be bereaved of Benjamin until he returns safely with you."

8 **Judah then said to his father Israel, “If you send Benjamin with me, he might be seized or he might not be. But if you don’t send him, we cannot go buy food and we will all surely starve to death. Therefore, send the boy with me and let us set out and go, so that we should live and not die—we, you, and also our little ones.”** When Judah said, “that we should live,” including his father, he unwittingly prophesied that Jacob’s Divine inspiration would be restored to him as a result of this journey.<sup>103</sup>

9 Judah continued: “I understand that you suspect us of malice or negligence. In order to assure you that we will protect him at all costs, **I offer myself as a guarantee for him; you can demand him from my hand. If I do not bring him back to you and present him to you alive, I will have sinned against you** and hereby forfeit the privilege of being associated with you **for all the days** of my afterlife.

10 **For had we not lingered** due to your exaggerated caution, **we could have been there and back twice by now!** We could have long ago returned Simeon to you, and you would have thus been spared the ordeal of worrying about him all this time.”

11 **Their father Israel said to them, “If it is so,** as you say, that the viceroy’s attitude is the result of a natural chain of events, leaving me no choice but to send Benjamin with you, **then** we must use all natural means at our disposal to ensure the best chances for success. Therefore, **this is what you must do: Take some of the land** of Canaan’s most celebrated, **choice products in your containers, and bring them down to the man as a gift—a little balsam, a little honey, and some wax, lotus, pistachios, and almonds.**

12 **Take along a double amount of money,** for the price of food there might have risen; **and take with you the money that you found returned at the opening of your packs; perhaps it was an oversight** on the part of the seller and he forgot to take the payment due him.

13 **And take your brother, and arise and return to the man.**

14 These are all the natural preparations we can do; besides this, we must also ask God for His help. We all know that prayers offered up by those who need them are more effective than prayers offered by others on their behalf.<sup>104</sup> But since you feel that our situation does not indicate any extraordinary Divine involvement, I know that you will not overly exert yourselves when you pray. I, however, sense that God is involved here in a more-than-natural way, and therefore, I will also pray for you. I will pray that<sup>105</sup> **God Almighty**—for whom nothing is impossible—**grant that the man have pity on you.** And that God—who, when He was creating the world, stopped the process of creation by saying, ‘Enough!’—say ‘enough!’ to my troubles, for I have had nothing but trouble my whole life: trouble with Laban, trouble with Esau, trouble over Rachel, trouble over Dinah, trouble over Joseph, trouble over Simeon, and trouble over Benjamin. And finally, I will also pray that the man **release for you your other brother, Simeon, from his bonds and send**

103. See below, 45:27. 104. Above, 21:17. 105. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 227-232.



— ONKELOS —

15 וְנִסְיָבו גְּבֵרִיא יֵת תְּקֻרְבָּתָא  
הָדָא וְעַל חַד תְּרִין כִּסְפָּא נְסִיבו  
בְּדִדְהוֹן וְדִבְרוּ יֵת בְּנִימִין וְקָמוּ וְנִחְתּוּ  
לְמַעְרִים וְקָמוּ קָדָם יוֹסֵף: 16 וְחָזָא  
יוֹסֵף עֲמֻהוֹן יֵת בְּנִימִין וְאָמַר לְדִי  
מִמָּנָא עַל בֵּיתָה אָעַל יֵת גְּבֵרִיא  
לְבֵיתָא וְנָבֹס נְכִסְתָּא וְאִתְקִין  
אָרִי עָמִי יִיכָלוּ גְּבֵרִיא בְּשִׁירוּתָא:  
17 וְעֵבֶר גְּבֵרָא כָּמָא דִּי אָמַר יוֹסֵף  
וְאָעִיל גְּבֵרָא יֵת גְּבֵרִיא לְבֵית יוֹסֵף:  
18 וְדִחִילוּ גְּבֵרִיא אָרִי אֲתַעֲלוּ  
לְבֵית יוֹסֵף וְאָמְרוּ עַל עֵיֶסֶק כִּסְפָּא  
דְּאִתְרַבְּרָא בְּטוּעָנָא בְּקִדְמִיתָא  
אֲנִיכָא מִתְעֲלִין לְאִתְרַבְּרָא  
עֲלָנָא וְלֹאֲסִתְקָפָא עֲלָנָא וְלִמְקָנִי  
יִתְנָא לְעִבְדִּין וְלִמְדַּבֵּר יֵת חֲמִנָא:  
19 וְקִרְבּוּ לוֹת גְּבֵרָא דִּי מִמָּנָא  
עַל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וּמִלִּילוּ עֲמָה בְּתַרְע  
בֵּיתָא:

15 וַיִּקְחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה הַזֹּאת וּמִשְׁנֵה־כֶּסֶף  
לָקְחוּ בִידָם וְאֶת־בְּנִימִין וַיִּלְכְּמוּ וַיֵּרְדּוּ מִצָּרִים וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לִפְנֵי  
יוֹסֵף:

ששי 16 וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־בְּנִימִין וַיֹּאמֶר לְאִשְׁרֵי עַל־  
בֵּיתוֹ הֲבֵא אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבְּיָתָה וּטְבַח טֶבַח וְהִזְן בִּי  
אֹתִי וַיֹּאבְלוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּצִהָרִים: 17 וַיַּעַשׂ הָאִישׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר  
אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיֵּבֵא הָאִישׁ אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף:  
18 וַיֵּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בִּי הוֹבָאוּ בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמְרוּ עַל־  
דְּבַר הַכֶּסֶף הָשֵׁב בְּאֲמַתְּחֵינוּ בְּתַחֲלָה אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹבָאִים  
לְהַתְגַּלֵּל עָלֵינוּ וּלְהַתְנַפֵּל עָלֵינוּ וּלְקַחַת אֶתְנוּ לַעֲבָדִים  
וְאֶת־חֲמִרֵינוּ: 19 וַיִּגְשׁוּ אֶל־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּית יוֹסֵף  
וַיִּדְבְּרוּ אֵלָיו פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת:

— RASHI —

"וַיִּדְחִילוּ": כִּי הוֹבָאוּ בֵּית יוֹסֵף. וְאֵין דֶּרֶךְ שְׁאֵר הַבָּאִים  
לְשֹׁבֵר בָּר, לָלוּן בְּבֵית יוֹסֵף, כִּי אִם בְּפִנְדָּקָאוֹת שְׂבָעִיר,  
וַיֵּירָאוּ שֶׁאֵין זֶה אֶלָּא לְאִסְפָּם אֶל מִשְׁמֵר: אֲנַחְנוּ  
מוֹבָאִים. אֶל תּוֹךְ הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: לְהַתְגַּלֵּל. לְהִיּוֹת מְתַגַּלְגֵּל  
עָלֵינוּ עֲלִילַת הַכֶּסֶף, וְלְהִיּוֹתָה נּוֹפֶלֶת עָלֵינוּ. וְאֲנִיכָא  
שֶׁתִּרְגֹּם וְלֹאֲסִתְקָפָא עֲלָנָא, הוּא לָשׁוֹן לְהַתְעוּלָל,  
כְּדִמְתַּרְגְּמִינָן "עֲלִילַת דְּבָרִים", "מִתְקֻפִּי מִלִּין".  
וְלֹא תִרְגְּמוּ אַחֵר לָשׁוֹן הַמְקָרָא. "וּלְהַתְגַּלֵּל" שֶׁתִּרְגֹּם  
לְאִתְרַבְּרָא, הוּא לָשׁוֹן "גִּלְתָּ הֹדֵב", "וְהִצַּב גִּלְתָּ  
הַעֲלָתָה", שֶׁהוּא לָשׁוֹן "מַלְכוּת":

15 וְאֵת בְּנִימִין. מִתְרַגְּמִין: "וַיִּדְבְּרוּ יֵת בְּנִימִין", לִפִּי שְׁאֵין  
לְקִיחַת הַכֶּסֶף וּלְקִיחַת הָאֲדָם שְׁוֶה בְּלָשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי, בְּדָבָר  
הַנֶּקָּח בִּיד מִתְרַגְּמִין "וְנִסְיָבו", וְדָבָר הַנֶּקָּח בְּהִנְהֻגָּת  
דְּבָרִים מִתְרַגְּמִין "וַיִּדְבְּר": 16 וּטְבַח טֶבַח וְהִזְן. כִּמּוֹ  
"וְלִטְבַּח טֶבַח וְלִהְכִין", וְאֵין "טֶבַח" לָשׁוֹן צוּרִי, שֶׁהִיָּה לוֹ  
לּוֹמַר "וּטְבַח": בְּצִהָרִים. זֶה מִתְרַגֵּם: בְּשִׁירוּתָא, שֶׁהוּא  
לָשׁוֹן סְעוּדָה רַאשׁוֹנָה בְּלָשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי, וּבְלַעַז דִּישְׁנִירִי.  
וְיֵשׁ הִרְבֵּה בְּגִמְרָא: שֶׁדָּא לְכַלְבָּא שִׁירוּתָהּ, בְּצַע אֶבְלָא  
שִׁירוּתָא. אֶבְל כָּל תִּרְגוּם שֶׁל "צִהָרִים" — "טִיְהָרָא":  
18 וַיֵּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים. כְּתוּב הוּא בְּשִׁנֵּי יוֹדִין, וְתִרְגוּמוֹ:

64. אֲרוּחַת־צִהָרִים. 65. תַּעֲנִית יֵא, ב. 66. בְּרוּכּוֹת לט, ב. 67. דְּבָרִים כב, יד. 68. קִהְלַת יב, ו. 69. נְחוּם ב, ח.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

**16 He was certain that they had not voluntarily undertaken to observe the Torah's laws in their entirety.... He therefore did not think twice about serving them non-kosher meat:** By emphasizing that Joseph had non-kosher meat prepared for his brothers, the Torah sheds light on how to fulfill the precept of hospitality:

In its optimum form, hospitality requires that hosts try their best to care for all their guests' needs. Even if they are not sure that the guests will take part in what is prepared for them, the hosts should provide abundantly for them.

Furthermore, hosts should not allow their own voluntarily pious stringencies to limit what they serve

their guests. The guests might adhere to the same pious stringencies and refrain from partaking of what is served, but it is not the role of hosts to impose their piety upon their guests, but rather to prepare for them abundantly and leave it to them to choose their level of piety.<sup>114</sup>

Similarly, although austerity is a value found in the Torah, it is one we should impose on ourselves, not on others. When we think about providing for a poor family, for example, we should not look to provide them with the bare necessities to live an austere existence, but rather to provide for them according to a respectable standard of living.<sup>115</sup>

114. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 186. See also above on 29:28. 115. *Sichot Kodesh* 5728, vol. 1, p. 322.

**15** The brothers took this gift, and also took along a double amount of money, as well as Benjamin. They set out and went down to Egypt, and they presented themselves before Joseph.

- ◆ *Sixth Reading* **16** When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the overseer of his household, “Bring the men into the house and have animals slaughtered and their meat prepared, for these men will dine with me at the first meal of the day.” Joseph said this in his brothers’ presence so that they would hear that he was having a special meal prepared for them. As was mentioned above,<sup>106</sup> he occasionally acted congenially toward them so they would believe him when he would eventually tell them that he was their brother. In addition, Joseph wanted them to hear that he was giving specific instructions to the overseer to have the animals *slaughtered* rather than simply killed, in order to plant the thought in their mind that he actually knew who they were and that he knew that in their household, animals had to be slaughtered. Nonetheless, Joseph did not serve them meat slaughtered according to the Torah’s stipulations for consumption by Jews, i.e., kosher meat. In his youth, Joseph had considered them guilty of transgressing the prohibition of eating flesh torn from a living animal.<sup>107</sup> Since, in his opinion, they were not even properly observing laws that they were required to observe, he was certain that they had not voluntarily undertaken to observe the Torah’s laws in their entirety, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had done. He therefore did not think twice about serving them non-kosher meat. And in fact, although Jacob had educated all his sons in the ways of the Torah, Joseph’s brothers had never undertaken to observe the Torah’s laws in their entirety, at least not to the same extent that their forebears had, as is clear from the fact that they married their sisters,<sup>108</sup> which the Torah forbids.<sup>109</sup> Certainly, voluntary observance could in no way obligate them to endanger their lives (by not eating the meat served them by the viceroy of Egypt himself, thereby possibly insulting him and risking making him angry enough to kill them).<sup>110</sup> Although they were specifically forbidden to eat the sciatic nerve,<sup>111</sup> Joseph did not order his overseer to have it removed; he relied on the brothers to do this themselves when they would be served.<sup>112</sup>

**17** The man did as Joseph said, and the man escorted the people into Joseph’s house.

**18** The men were fearful because they had been brought into Joseph’s house, whereas travelers typically lodged at inns around the city. They said, “It is on account of the money that was returned to our packs when we were here the first time that we are being brought here, so that we may be falsely accused, attacked, imprisoned, and seized as slaves, along with our donkeys.”

**19** They approached the overseer of Joseph’s household, backing him out of the interior of the house,<sup>113</sup> and spoke to him at the entrance of the house

106. 42:7. 107. Above, 37:2. 108. Above, 35:26. See also Exodus 6:20. 109. Leviticus 18:9. 110. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, pp. 181-186; vol. 5, pp. 266-267, note 23. 111. Above, 32:33. 112. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 266, note\* to note 23. 113. Rashi on v. 24, below.

ONKELOS

20 וַאֲמָרוּ בְּכַעַר רַבּוּנִי מִחַת נִחְתָּנָא  
בְּקִדְמִיתָא לְמִזְבֵּן עֲבוּרָא: 21 וְהִיא  
כַּד אֲתִינָא לְבֵית מִבְתָּא וּפְתַחְנָא  
יֵת טוֹעֵנָא וְהָא כֶּסֶף גָּבֵר בְּפֹם  
טוֹעֵנָא כֶּסֶפָּא בְּמִתְחַלָּה וְאֲתִינָא  
יֵתָּה בִידְנָא: 22 וְכֶסֶפָּא אַחֲרָנָא  
אֲחִינָא בִידְנָא לְמִזְבֵּן עֲבוּרָא לֹא  
יִדְעָא מֵאֵן שׁוּי כֶּסֶפָּא בְּטוֹעֵנָא:  
23 וְאָמַר שְׁלָם לְכוּן לֹא תִדְחִלוּן  
אֶלְהִכוּן וְאֶלְהָא דְאֲבוּכוֹן יִהְיֶה לְכוּן  
סִימָא בְּטוֹעֵנִיכוֹן כֶּסֶפְכוֹן אֲתָא  
לְוִיתִי וְאִפִּיק לְוִיתְהוֹן יֵת שְׁמַעוֹן:  
24 וְאָעַל גְּבֵרָא יֵת גְּבֵרָיָא לְבֵית  
יוֹסֵף וְיִהְיֶה מִיָּא וְאֶסְחוּ רַגְלֵיהוֹן וְיִהְיֶה  
כֶּסֶתָא לְחִמְרֵיהוֹן: 25 וְאֲתִקְנוּ יֵת  
תְּקֻרְבָתָא עַד דְּעַל יוֹסֵף בְּשִׁירוּתָא  
אַרִי שְׁמַעוּ אַרִי תִמְן יִיכְלוּן לְחִמָּא:  
26 וְעַל יוֹסֵף לְבֵיתָא וְאָעִילוּ לָהּ  
יֵת תְּקֻרְבָתָא דִּי בְּיָדְהוֹן לְבֵיתָא  
וּסְגִידוּ לָהּ עַל אֲרָעָא: 27 וְשָׂאִיל  
לְהוֹן לְשָׁלָם וְאָמַר הַשְׁלָם אֲבוּכוֹן  
סָבָא דִּי אֲמַרְתוֹן הָעַד כְּעַן קָיָם:  
28 וְאָמְרוּ שְׁלָם לְעִבְדְּךָ לְאַבְנָא  
עַד כְּעַן קָיָם וּכְרַעוּ וּסְגִידוּ:

20 וַיֹּאמְרוּ בִּי אֲדָנִי יִרְדּוּ בְּתַחֲלָה לְשֹׁבַר-אֶכְלִי:  
21 וַיְהִי כִּי-בָאוּ אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַנִּפְתַּח-לָהּ אֶת-אֲמַתְהֵינוּ  
וְהִנֵּה כֶּסֶף-אִישׁ בְּפִי אֲמַתְהֵתוֹ כֶּסֶפֵּנוּ בְּמִשְׁקָלוֹ וְנִשְׁבַּ  
אֹתוֹ בִּידְנוֹ: 22 וְכֶסֶף אַחֵר הוֹרְדֵנוּ בִּידְנוֹ לְשֹׁבַר-אֶכְלִי  
לֹא יֵדְעֵנוּ מִי־שֵׁם כֶּסֶפֵּנוּ בְּאֲמַתְהֵינוּ: 23 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹם  
לְכֶם אֶל-תִּיבְאוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם נָתַן לְכֶם  
מִטְמוֹן בְּאֲמַתְהֵיכֶם כֶּסֶפְכֶם בָּא אֵלַי וַיֵּצֵא אֱלֹהִים  
אֶת-שְׁמַעוֹן: 24 וַיָּבֹא הָאִישׁ אֶת-הָאֲנָשִׁים בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף  
וַיִּתֵּן-לָמִים וַיִּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיהֶם וַיִּתֵּן מִסְפּוֹא לְחִמְרֵיהֶם:  
25 וַיְכִינּוּ אֶת-הַמִּנְחָה עַד-בֹּא יוֹסֵף בְּצִהְרִים בִּי שְׁמַעוֹ  
בִּי־שֵׁם וַאֲכָלוּ לָחֶם: 26 וַיָּבֹא יוֹסֵף הַבֵּיתָה וַיְבִיאוּ לוֹ  
אֶת-הַמִּנְחָה אֲשֶׁר-בְּיָדָם הַבֵּיתָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ-לוֹ אֶרְצָה:  
27 וַיִּשְׂאֵל לָהֶם לְשָׁלוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר הַשְׁלֹם אֲבִיכֶם הַזֶּקֶן  
אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם הָעוֹדֵנוּ חַי: 28 וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלֹם לְעִבְדְּךָ  
לְאַבְנֵינוּ עוֹדֵנוּ חַי וַיִּקְרָא וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ {וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ}:

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שֹׁבַר אֶלִּי פֶתַח הַבַּיִת, וּמִשְׁאֶמֶר לָהֶם: "שְׁלֹם לְכֶם",  
נִמְשְׁכוּ וּבָאוּ אַחֲרָיו: 25 וַיְכִינּוּ. הַזִּמְנוּ, עֲטֹרוֹהוּ בְּכִלִּים  
נָאִים: 26 הַבֵּיתָה. מִפְּרוֹדוֹר לְטָרְקִלִין: 28 וַיִּקְרָא  
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ. עַל שְׂאִילַת שְׁלֹם. "קִדְה", כְּפִיפַת קִדְקֵד.  
"הַשְׁתַּחֲוָה", מִשְׁתַּטֵּחַ לְאַרְץ:

20 בִּי אֲדָנִי. לָשׁוֹן בַּעֲיָא וְתַחֲנוּגִים הוּא, בְּלִשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי:  
בִּיָּא בִּיָּא: יִרְדּוּ. יִרְדָּה הִיא לָנוּ, רַגְלִים הֵיינו  
לְפָרִס אַחֲרִים, עֲכָשׁ אָנוּ צְרִיכִים לָהּ: 23 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.  
בְּזִכְוֹתְכֶם, וְאִם אֵין זְכוֹתְכֶם כְּדָאי — "וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם",  
בְּזִכְוֹת אֲבִיכֶם "נָתַן לְכֶם מִטְמוֹן": 24 וַיָּבֹא הָאִישׁ.  
הַבָּא אַחֵר הַבָּא, לְפִי שְׁהִי דוֹחֲפִים אוֹתוֹ חוּץ, עַד

70. פסוק כג.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

by such a naturally dependable phenomenon are far more likely to forget that God is the one who provides for their needs.

Thus, for the Jews to leave the Holy Land, where humanity's dependence on God was more apparent, and enter a land where Godliness is concealed, was already a great spiritual descent.

The second descent was not geographic, since they were already in Egypt; it was a purely spiritual descent, which occurred after Joseph died.<sup>121</sup> As long as Joseph was alive, the Divine concealment that characterizes Egypt was temporarily subdued. After Joseph

died, Egypt's true nature came back into force. At that time, the Jewish people once again "descended" into Egypt, but this time into the real Egypt.

More broadly, the first descent alludes to the descent to Egypt and the second to the descent into the subsequent exiles of our history. These two descents are countered by two ascents, as God promised Jacob, "I will ...bring you up [yes, bring you up] from there."<sup>122</sup> The first "bring you up" was fulfilled with the Exodus from Egypt; the second will be fulfilled in the messianic age.<sup>123</sup>

121. See *Shemot Rabbah* 1:4. 122. Below, 46:4. 123. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, pp. 28-32. See *Torah Or* 49a ff.



**20** as follows: “If you please, sir, we originally came down to buy food. Believe us, the very fact that we had to do so is humiliating to us; we are used to giving food to others. So you see, we would not have done this were it not necessary.

**21** Then, when we arrived at the inn and opened our packs, we saw that each man’s money was at the opening of his pack, our own money, in its exact weight. We have brought it back with us.

**22** We have also brought down additional money with which to buy food. We do not know who replaced the money into our packs.”

**23** He replied, “All is well with you; do not be afraid. Your God, in your own merit, and if your own merit be insufficient, then the God of your father—in your father’s merit—has placed a hidden treasure for you in your packs. Your money reached me.” With that, he brought Simeon out to them. Their fears allayed, they agreed to follow the overseer back into Joseph’s house. In the meantime, Simeon related to them that Joseph had unbound him and fed him a meal as soon as they had left, and that he had treated him well. As was noted above,<sup>116</sup> this kind treatment was another way Joseph was preparing them to accept him as their brother when he would eventually reveal his identity to them.<sup>117</sup>

**24** So the man brought the brothers once again into Joseph’s house, gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he provided fodder for their donkeys.

**25** They got their gift ready for when Joseph would come for the first meal of the day, arranging it in elegant dishes, for they heard that they would be dining there.

**26** When Joseph arrived home, they presented him with the gift they had brought into the inner chamber, and they prostrated themselves on the ground before him.

**27** He inquired as to their welfare and asked, “How is your aged father of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”

**28** They replied, “Your servant, our father, is well; he is still alive.” They bowed their heads and prostrated themselves once again, in acknowledgement of Joseph’s interest in their welfare.

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— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

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**20** We originally came down [literally, “came down, yes, we came down”]: These two expressions of descent—“came down, yes, we came down”—presaged two descents that the Israelites would yet make to Egypt.

The first was the descent of Jacob and his family after Joseph would reveal himself to the brothers.<sup>118</sup> Although at first they were neither persecuted nor enslaved by Egypt, this was a spiritual “descent,” since they had left the Holy Land for Egypt.

One of the differences between the Land of Israel and Egypt is that the Land of Israel is watered by rain and Egypt is watered by the Nile. The *Midrash* explains that God wanted the inhabitants of the Holy Land to have to look “upward,” to recognize that their sustenance depends upon God.<sup>119</sup> At least to some extent, this would prevent them from growing too haughty and forgetting about God.<sup>120</sup>

In Egypt, however, God had the Nile overflow annually and water the fields. Inhabitants of a land sustained

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<sup>116</sup> Above, 42:7. <sup>117</sup> *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 185. <sup>118</sup> Below, 46:6. <sup>119</sup> *Bereishit Rabbah* 13:9. <sup>120</sup> See Rabbeinu Bachye on Deuteronomy 11:17.

ONKELOS

29 וְזָקַף עֵינוּהִי וְחָזָא יֵת בְּנִימִין  
אֲחוּהִי בֵר אִמָּהּ וְאָמַר הָרִין אֲחוּכוֹן  
וְעִירָא דִּי אֲמַרְתוֹן לִי וְאָמַר מִן  
קָדָם יִי יִתְרַחֵם עָלֶךָ בְּרִי: 30 וְאֲחוּהִי  
יוֹסֵף אָרִי אֲתַגְלִלוּ רַחֲמוּהִי עַל  
אֲחוּהִי וּבְעָא לְמַבְכֵּי וְעַל לְאֲדָרוֹן  
בֵּית מִשְׁכָּבָא וּבְכָא תַּמּוֹן: 31 וְאֲסָחִי  
אֲפוּהִי וּנְפִק וְאֲתַחֲסִין וְאָמַר שְׂוִיאוּ  
לְחֻמָּא: 32 וְשְׂוִיאוּ לָהּ בְּלַחֲדוּדָהִי  
וּלְהוֹן בְּלַחֲדוּדִיהוֹן וּלְמַצְרָאִי  
דְּאֶבְלִין עֲמָה בְּלַחֲדוּדִיהוֹן אָרִי לֹא  
יִבְלִין מַצְרָאִי לְמִיכַל עִם עֲבָרָאִי  
לְחֻמָּא אָרִי בְּעִירָא דְּמַצְרָאִי דְּחִלִּין  
לָהּ עֲבָרָאִי אֶבְלִין:

29 וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת־בְּנִימִין אָחִיו בֶּן־אִמּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר  
הִזֶּה אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטָן אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם אֵלַי וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים  
יִחְנֶנּוּ בְנֵי:

שביעי 30 וַיִּמְהַר יוֹסֵף בִּיְנֻכְמָרוֹ רַחֲמָיו אֶל־אָחִיו וַיִּבְקֹשׁ  
לְבָבוֹת וַיָּבֹא הַחֲדָרָה וַיִּבְךְ שָׁמָּה: 31 וַיִּרְחֹץ פָּנָיו וַיֵּצֵא  
וַיִּתְאַפֵּק וַיֹּאמֶר שִׁימוּ לָחֶם: 32 וַיִּשְׁימוּ לוֹ לֶבֶדוֹ וּלְהֶם  
לֶבָדִם וּלְמַצְרִים הָאֲכָלִים אֹתוֹ לֶבָדִם כִּי לֹא יוֹכִלוֹן  
הַמַּצְרִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־הָעֵבְרִים לָחֶם בִּיתוּעֵבָה הוּא  
לְמַצְרִים:

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שְׂוִיאוּ לָהּ רָאָה חֲפָתִי, וְלֹא רָאִיתִי אֲנִי חֲפָתוֹ. וְאָרֶךְ — שְׁנֵי  
לְבִין הָאֲמוּת. כְּדֹאִיתָא בְּמִסְכַּת סוּטָה<sup>72</sup>. מִיָּד "נִכְמְרוּ  
רַחֲמָיו": נִכְמְרוּ. נִתְחַמְמוּ. וּבִלְשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה<sup>73</sup>: עַל הַכֹּמֶר  
שֶׁל זֵיתִים. וּבִלְשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי<sup>74</sup>: מִכְמַר בִּשְׂרָא. וּבִמְקָרָא<sup>75</sup>:  
"עוֹרְנוּ כְּתָנוֹר נִכְמְרוּ", נִתְחַמְמוּ וְנִקְמְטוּ קִמְטִים קִמְטִים,  
"מִפְנֵי זִלְעָפוֹת רָעֵב". וְכֵן דֶּרֶךְ כָּל עוֹר, כְּשֶׁמִּתְחַמְמִין  
אוֹתוֹ נִקְמְט וְנִתְפַּוֵּץ: 31 וַיִּתְאַפֵּק. נִתְאַמֵּץ. וְהוּא לְשׁוֹן  
"מְמוּיָח אֶפִּיקִים רָפָה"<sup>76</sup>, וְכֵן<sup>77</sup>: "אֶפִּיקִי מְגֻנִים", חֲזָק:  
32 כִּי תוֹעֵבָה הוּא. דְּבֵר שְׁנֵאוֹ הוּא לְמַצְרִים לֶאֱכֹל  
אֶת הָעֵבְרִים. וְאֶנְקְלוֹס נִתֵּן טַעַם לְדָבָר:

29 אֱלֹהִים יִחְנֶנּוּ בְנֵי. בִּשְׂאֵר שְׁבָטִים שֶׁמַּעֲנֵנוּ חֲנִינִי:  
"אֲשֶׁר חָנַן אֱלֹהִים אֶת עֲבָדָךְ", וּבִנְיָמִין עָדִין לֹא נוֹלַד,  
לְכָף בָּרְכוּ יוֹסֵף בְּחִינָה: 30 כִּי נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמָיו. שְׂאֵלוֹ:  
יֵשׁ לָךְ אֵחַ מֵאֵם? אָמַר לוֹ: אֵחַ הִיָּה לִי, וְאִינִי יוֹדֵעַ הִיָּבֵן  
הוּא. יֵשׁ לָךְ בְּנִים? אָמַר לוֹ: יֵשׁ לִי עֶשְׂרֶה. אָמַר לוֹ: וּמָה  
שָׁמָּה? אָמַר לוֹ: בָּלַע וּבָכָר וְכו'. אָמַר לוֹ: מָה טִיבֵן שֶׁל  
שְׁמוֹת הַלְלוֹ? אָמַר לוֹ: בָּלַם עַל שֵׁם אָחִי, וְהִצָּרוֹת אֲשֶׁר  
מַצְאוּהוּ. בָּלַע — שֶׁנִּבְלַע בֵּין הָאֲמוּת. בָּכָר — שֶׁהִיָּה  
בְּכוֹר לְאִמִּי. אֲשָׁבַל — שֶׁשָּׁבָאוּ אֵל. גָּרָא — שֶׁנִּתְגָּדַר  
בְּאֶכְסֵנְיָא. וְנַעֲמָן — שֶׁהִיָּה נָעִים בְּיוֹתֵר. אָחִי וְרֹאשׁ —  
אָחִי הִיָּה וְרֹאשִׁי הִיָּה. מִפִּים — מִפִּי אָבִי לְמוֹד. וְחִפִּים —

71. בראשית לג, ה. 72. לו, ב. 73. בבא מציעא עד, א. 74. פסחים נח, א. 75. איכה ה, י. 76. איוב יב, כא. 77. איוב מא, ז.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

'bread']": Allegorically, Benjamin alludes to the soul. Benjamin's original name, *Ben Oni*—"son of my sorrow"<sup>129</sup>—alludes to the pain the soul suffers because it leaves its heavenly abode and descends into this world, as well as to the pain it suffers because of whatever further descents it undergoes during its earthly sojourn. Since, as we have seen,<sup>130</sup> the Jewish people are collectively referred to as Joseph, this verse allegorically describes how, when we consider the plight of "Benjamin," our own soul, we are overcome with compassion on it.

Kindness (*chesed*) is the drive to give to others regardless of whether they need or deserve our giving. Severity (*gevurah*) is the drive to execute justice, that is, to give only what is deserved, and not to give to those who do not deserve. Compassion (*rachamim*) is the drive to give to others because of their plight, regulating the giving according to what best serves their needs. Compassion is thus the synthesis of kindness and severity.

Kindness is cool and dispassionate, and is therefore associated with water. Severity is "hot" and passionate (which is why one of its manifestations is anger), and is therefore associated with fire. Compassion synthesizes the generosity of kindness with the heat and passion of severity.

*He went to the room and wept there, restraining his emotions:* Just as Joseph only wept in the room but restrained himself outwardly, we too must confine our tears over our soul's plight to our inner "room," the inner chambers of our hearts. Outwardly, our spiritual work should be permeated with joy.

*He said, "Serve the bread":* Crying over our soul's distance from God increases our hunger for Godliness. We can satisfy this hunger by cleaving to God through studying His Torah, the spiritual "bread" of our lives.

Moreover, when our study of the Torah is motivated by the compassion we arouse for our soul, the "heat" of this compassion ensures that our knowledge of the

129. Above, 35:18. 130. Above, on 41:55.

29 Joseph raised his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and he said, "Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?" And then he said, addressing Benjamin, "May God be kind to you, my son." Benjamin had not yet been born when Jacob referred to his children as gifts of God's kindness,<sup>124</sup> so Joseph wished to bestow upon him this distinction, too.

- ◆ **Seventh Reading\*** 30 Joseph then engaged Benjamin in conversation, pursuing the notion that children are gifts of God's kindness,<sup>125</sup> and asked him, "Do you have another brother from your mother?"

Benjamin replied, "I do, but I do not know his whereabouts."

"Do you have any children?"

"I have ten sons."

"What are their names?"

"Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Na'aman, Eichi, Rosh, Mupim, Chupim, and Ard."<sup>126</sup>

"What do these names mean?"

"They all refer to my lost brother and the troubles he underwent. *Bela* refers to how he was swallowed up (*nivla*) and disappeared among the gentiles. *Becher* refers to the fact that he was the firstborn (*bechor*) of our mother. *Ashbel* refers to how God sent him into captivity (*shavo el*). *Gera* refers to how he was a sojourner (*ger*) among the gentiles. *Na'aman* refers to how he was of pleasant nature (*na'im*). *Eichi* refers to the fact that he was my brother (*achi*). *Rosh* refers to how, as my elder brother, he was my superior (*rosh*, 'head'). *Mupim* refers to how he learned from the mouth of (*mipi*) my father. *Chupim* refers to how neither of us was present at the other's marriage to see each other under the wedding canopy (*chupah*). *Ard* refers to how he descended (*yarad*) to live among the gentiles.

When Joseph heard that Benjamin had given all his sons names that recalled him or his misfortunes,<sup>127</sup> **Joseph immediately hurried out, for he was overcome with compassion for his brother and was on the verge of tears. He went to another room and wept there.**

**31 He then washed his face and came back out, restraining his emotions, and said, "Serve the meal."**

**32 They served him and his family separately, and them separately, and the Egyptians who were eating with him separately, for the Egyptians could not eat a meal together with the Hebrews, since the Hebrews ate meat from animals worshipped by the Egyptians,<sup>128</sup> and this was an abomination for the Egyptians.** Thus, Joseph could not eat with his brothers since he was pretending to be an Egyptian, and the Egyptians could not eat with Joseph since they knew he was a Hebrew.

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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30-31 Joseph hurried out, for he was overcome with tears. He went to room and wept there...restraining compassion for his brother and was on the verge of his emotions, and said, "Serve the meal [literally,

124. 33:5, above. 125. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 350-353. 126. 46:21, below. 127. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 353. 128. See below, 46:34. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 266, note 23.

\*If the Sabbath of *parashat Mikeitz* falls on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of Kislev, the sixth reading continues until the end of the *parashah*, the *Maftir* for Rosh Chodesh (p. 366) is the seventh reading, and *Maftir* for the Sixth Day of Chanukah (p. 376) is read as the *maftir*.

— ONKELOS —

33 וְאֶסְחָרוּ קְדֻמּוֹהֵי רַבָּא כְּרִבִּיתָהּ  
וּזְעִירָא כְּזַעֲרִיתָהּ וּתְמִידָהּ גְּבֵרָא  
גָּבֵר לְחִבְרָהּ: 34 וְנָטַל חֶלְקִין מִן  
קְדֻמּוֹהֵי לְקַדְמִיהֶון וּסְגִי חֶלְקָא  
דְּבִנְיָמִין מִחֶלְקִי דְּכֻלְהֶון חֲמוּשָׁא  
חֶלְקִין וּשְׁתִּיאוּ וּרְיָאוּ עֲמֹה:  
44:1 וּפְקִידֵי יֵת דְּמִמְנָא עַל בֵּיתָהּ  
לְמִימְרֵי מַלְי יֵת טוֹעֲנֵי גְּבֵרָא  
עֲבוּרָא כְּמָא דִּי יִכְלִין לְמַטְלֵי וְשׁוּי  
כְּסָף גָּבֵר בְּפֹם טוֹעֲנָה: 2 וְיֵת כְּלִידֵי  
כְּלִידָא דְּכֻסְפָּא וְשׁוּי בְּפֹם טוֹעֲנָא  
דְּזַעֲרָא וְיֵת כְּסָף זְבִינֻהִי וְעֵבֶד  
כְּפִתְגָמָא דִּיוֹסָף דִּי מַלְיָל:

33 וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדֹל וַהֲצִיעַר בְּצַעֲרָתוֹ וַיִּתְּמָהוּ  
הָאֲנָשִׁים אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ: 34 וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשְׁאֵת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו  
אֵלֶיהֶם וַתֵּרָב מִשְׁאֵת בְּנִימִן מִמִּשְׁאֵת כָּלֶם חָמֵשׁ יָדוֹת  
וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ: 44:1 וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֶת-אֲשֶׁר עַל-בֵּיתוֹ לְאִמּוֹ  
מִלֵּא אֶת-אֲמִתְחַת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֹכֵל בָּאֲשֶׁר יוֹכְלוֹן שְׂאֵת  
וְשִׁים כֶּסֶף-אִישׁ בְּפִי אֲמִתְחָתוֹ: 2 וְאֶת-גְּבִיעִי גְּבִיעַ  
הַכֶּסֶף הַשֵּׁים בְּפִי אֲמִתְחַת הַקֶּטָן וְאֶת כֶּסֶף שִׁבְרוֹ וַיַּעַשׂ  
בְּדָבָר יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר:

— RASHI —

אָצְלִי: 34 מִשְׁאֵת. מְנוּת: חָמֵשׁ יָדוֹת. חֶלְקִין עִם אֲחִיו,  
וּמִשְׁאֵת יוֹסֵף וְאֶסְנֵת וּמִנְשֶׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם: וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ. וּמִיּוֹם  
שֶׁמָּכְרוּהוּ לֹא שָׁתוּ יֵין, וְלֹא הָיָה שָׁתָה יֵין, וְאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם  
שָׁתוּ: 2 גְּבִיעַ. כּוֹס אֲרוֹךְ, וְקוֹרִין לֹא מְדִירָנָא<sup>135</sup>:

33 הַגָּבֵר בְּכֹכְרָתוֹ. מִכָּה בְּגִבֵּעַ וְקוֹרָא: רְאוּבֵן שָׁמְעוֹן  
לִוי יְהוּדָה יִשְׁשָׁכָר וְיִבּוּלֹן. בְּנֵי אִם אַחַת, הֵסְבוּ כֶּסֶדֶר  
הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא סֹדֶר תּוֹלְדוֹתֵיכֶם, וְכֵן כָּלֶם. בֵּינָן שֶׁהִגִּיעַ  
לְבִנְיָמִין, אָמַר: זֶה אֵין לֹא אִם, וְאֵין אֵין לֹא אִם, יֵשֶׁב  
78. כּוֹס אֲרָכָה עֲשׂוּיָה עַץ מִשְׁנֵשׁ, כּוֹס הַדּוּרְכָה.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

prayer, we should invest these emotions into studying the Torah—"bread"—Divine wisdom as it has been garbed in the physical realm.<sup>135</sup>

**2 And put my goblet—the silver goblet—at the top of the youngest one's pack:** Benjamin and Joseph were extremely similar in outlook. They were bound up to each other like one soul.

By framing Benjamin, Joseph was creating a situation where his brothers could atone for their sin of selling him. When the brothers would put their own lives at risk to save Benjamin, it would be as if they were doing so to save Joseph. They would thereby undo their crime against Joseph, by doing the exact opposite. This would remove from them the negative repercussions of their sin.

On a deeper level, the goblet Joseph placed in Benjamin's pack alludes to a profound gift that Joseph sought to give his brothers and their descendants. He knew that the Jewish people would be in Egypt for a long time and that they would not all be able to attain or maintain his level of Divine consciousness, which enabled him to survive and thrive in the decadence of Egypt. He therefore sought a means to prevent them from getting sucked in to Egyptian depravity, ensuring instead that they would eventually leave the darkness of Egypt and receive the Torah. Joseph realized that the quality they would need was a sublime, subconscious love for God, which would overcome the gross materialism of their milieu. He also knew they would not be able to spark such a love by themselves, so he devised

to implant this love in them. Specifically, he chose to implant it in Benjamin.

Spiritually, Benjamin was an intermediary between Joseph and his brothers. Relative to Joseph and the patriarchs, Benjamin was on a lower spiritual order, together with his other brothers. Relative to the other brothers (excluding Joseph), however, Benjamin was on a higher level, putting him almost on a par with Joseph. Specifically, whereas Joseph personified the perfectly righteous individual, Benjamin personified the glimpse of saintliness that people who are not yet perfectly righteous experience intermittently, during times of spiritual transcendence, such as prayer or meditation.

Benjamin was thus the perfect vehicle for what Joseph tried to accomplish. His higher spiritual level relative to his other brothers enabled him to receive Joseph's spiritual input, while his similarity to them enabled him to receive it on their behalf.

Joseph alluded to the sublime, subconscious love for God he was implanting in his brothers with his silver goblet. The word for "silver" (כֶּסֶף) also means "yearning" (כִּיסוּפִים). Silver thus alludes to yearning and love for God. Inasmuch as wine signifies the joy that wine brings,<sup>136</sup> Joseph's wine goblet alluded to love for God that is filled with joy. By hiding his silver goblet in Benjamin's pack, Joseph embedded his level of joyful love of God in the souls of all Jews, even those who can only occasionally experience it consciously and within whom it normally lies dormant.<sup>137</sup>

135. *Or HaTorah, Vayikra*, vol. 2, p. 547. 136. Psalms 104:15; Proverbs 10:19. 137. *Likutei Torah* 3:90bc; *Ma'amarei Admur HaEmtzai, Bereishit*, pp. 291 ff; *Or HaTorah, Bereishit*, vol. 2, pp. 681 ff, vol. 6, pp. 2206 ff.

33 Pretending to divine by use of his goblet, Joseph struck it and announced, “Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun were all born, in that order, to the same mother, so they shall sit at one table. Dan and Naphtali were born, in that order, to a second mother, so they shall sit at a second table. Gad and Asher were born, in that order, to a third mother, so they shall sit at a third table. Benjamin’s mother is no longer alive, and neither is mine, so he shall sit at my table.” The brothers **were thus seated before Joseph, the firstborn according to his seniority and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at each other in amazement**, wondering how Joseph was able to know all this exact information about their family. Joseph did this once again with the intention of planting the thought in their minds that they knew each other, so that they would then be more inclined to believe him when he would eventually identify himself.<sup>131</sup>

34 **He had portions served to them from his table.** After they all had been served, Joseph announced, “The ten others came here of their own free will, but Benjamin came only because I forced him to, so he deserves another portion.” He sent him another portion. When Joseph’s wife Asnat saw him do so, she also sent Benjamin an additional portion, and then Joseph’s sons Manasseh and Ephraim did likewise.<sup>132</sup> **Benjamin’s portion was thus five times as much as the others’.** Ever since the brothers had sold Joseph, neither they nor he had drunk wine. On that day, however, **they drank with him and became intoxicated.**

44:1 After the meal was over and the brothers had taken their leave, Joseph **gave orders to the overseer of his household, as follows: “Fill the men’s packs with as much food as they can carry, and place each man’s money at the top of his pack.**

**2 And put my goblet—the silver goblet I use for divining—at the top of the youngest one’s pack, together with the money for his produce.” He did exactly as Joseph instructed him.**

#### — CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

Torah will be fully “baked” and is thus “digestible.” Just as raw dough cannot be assimilated into the body, “unbaked” knowledge of the Torah cannot be assimilated into our hearts and minds. Only if we “bake” our study of the Torah with warmth and passion can we internalize the Torah and become one with it.<sup>133</sup>

**I**n these verses, Joseph expresses both intense emotion and emotional restraint. This alludes to the emo-

tional yearning and restraint that are part of our holy living. On the one hand, we are called upon to experience an intense emotional desire to cleave to God and escape the bonds of physical reality. On the other hand, we must restrain this emotion and remain grounded in this world in order to fulfill the Divine mission we have been entrusted with.

Our emotional yearning takes place primarily during prayer, when we feel a fiery love for God. Following

#### — A CLOSER LOOK —

**[34] They drank with him and became intoxicated:** Rabbinic law prohibits Jews and non-Jews to drink wine together, and the patriarchs kept not only the formal laws of the Torah but also practices that would later be enacted by the sages of the Talmud. However, the brothers, as was said, did not under-

take to observe the Torah’s laws to the extent the patriarchs had, and in any case, if, as was also said, the possibility of danger overrode the Torah’s prohibition of eating non-kosher meat, it surely overrode this Rabbinic prohibition.<sup>134</sup>

131. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 186. 132. *Bereishit Rabati*, p. 196. 133. *Likutei Torah* 2:40d; *Or HaTorah*, *Bereishit*, vol. 6, pp. 2215-2216; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 357. 134. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 183.



## ONKELOS

3 צפרא נהר וגבריא אתפטר  
אנון וחמריהון: 4 אנון נפקו מן  
קרתא לא ארחיקו ויוסף אמר  
לדי ממנא על ביתה קום רדף  
בתר גבריא ותדבקנו ותימר להון  
למא שלמתון בשתא חלה טבתא:  
5 הלא דין די שתי רבוני בה והוא  
בדקא מבדק בה אבאשתון די  
עבדתון: 6 נאדבקנו ומליל עמהון  
ית פתגמא האלין: 7 ואמר  
לה למא ימלל רבוני כפתגמא  
האלין חס לעבדיך מלמעבד  
כפתגמא הדין: 8 הא כספא די  
אשכחנא בפום טוענא אתיכנדי  
לך מארעא דכנען ואיכדין נגנוב  
מבית רבונך מנין דכסף או מנין  
דדבב:

3 הַבָּקָר אֹר וְהָאֲנָשִׁים שָׁלְחוּ הֵמָּה וְחִמְרֵיהֶם: 4 הֵם  
יֵצְאוּ אֶת־הָעִיר לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר לְאִשֶּׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ  
קוּם רֹדֵף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהִשְׁגָּתָם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם לָמָּה  
שָׁלַמְתֶּם רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה: 5 הֲלוֹא זֶה אִשֶּׁר יִשְׁתָּה אֲדֹנִי  
בֹּו וְהוּא נָחֵשׁ יִנְחֹשׁ בּוֹ הִרְעַתֶּם אִשֶּׁר עָשִׂיתֶם: 6 וַיִּשְׁגּוּ  
וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: 7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו לָמָּה  
יְדַבֵּר אֲדֹנִי בַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חֲלִילָה לַעֲבָדֶיךָ מַעֲשֹׂוֹת  
בַּדְּבָר הַזֶּה: 8 הֵן כֶּסֶף אִשֶּׁר מִצְאָנוּ בְּפִי אִמְתַּחֲתֵינוּ  
הִשִּׁיבְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְאִיךָ נִגְנוֹב מִבֵּית אֲדֹנֶיךָ כֶּסֶף  
אוֹ זָהָב:

## RASHI

כֶּסֶף אִשֶּׁר מִצְאָנוּ. זֶה אֶחָד מַעֲשֵׂה קֹל וְחֹמֶר הָאֲמֹרִים  
בַּתּוֹרָה, וְכֵל מְנוּיִן בְּבִרְאשִׁית רַבָּה:<sup>79</sup>

7 חֲלִילָה לַעֲבָדֶיךָ. חֲלִין הוּא לָנוּ, לְשׁוֹן גְּנָאִי. וְתַרְגּוּמוֹ:  
"חֶסֶל לַעֲבָדֶיךָ", חֶס מֵאֵת הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יְהִי עֲלֵינוּ  
מַעֲשֹׂוֹת זֹאת. וְהִרְבָּה יֵשׁ בְּגִמְרָא: "חֶס וְשְׁלוֹם": 8 הֵן

79. צב, 1.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

expect an Egyptian, whose country was known for its materialism, to think of the mundane as disgraceful. It is therefore clear that the brothers chose such an expression, even while speaking to an Egyptian, because mundaneness was so foreign to them that they expected the Egyptian to know that.

Generally, since we all descend from all the patriarchs, we inherit their characteristics. But since we are not all descendants of all the sons of Jacob, we do not inherit all their individual characteristics.<sup>150</sup> In this case, however, this attitude toward mundaneness did not belong to one particular son of Jacob; it was stated by them as a group. We are therefore all heirs to this characteristic.

Thus, our truest self, our real identity, is holiness. Mundaneness, i.e., involvement with the material world, is so much not a part of us that is completely foreign to us. Furthermore, we learn from Jacob's sons that this sentiment should not remain buried somewhere deep in the recesses of our subconscious; it should be so much a part of us that others understand it, that it is obvious to them that mundaneness is just as alien to us as theft.

From where can we derive the strength to be simultaneously immersed in mundaneness and aloof from it? From God. Since the aspect of Godliness that descends to create the world remains existentially aloof from it, we too have the power to engage with the mundane

and at the same time remain aloof from it. In fact, it is this very aloofness that enables us to sanctify the mundane.

A person who is completely righteous is incapable of sinning, even by accident.<sup>151</sup> Thus, the fact that the brothers had something in their possession that did not belong to them, even though the item was deliberately planted within their possessions, demonstrates that their righteousness was incomplete. They were lacking to some degree in this revulsion to materialism.

This incident was thus the final cause that led to their descent into exile. As we have seen,<sup>152</sup> only the body can be subjected to exile; the soul can never be exiled. Exile therefore only has power over us when we focus on our bodily selves, our material lives. But if we allow the reality of our souls, in which the material is completely foreign, to permeate our consciousness, we transcend the exile. Thus, the fact that the brothers showed some weakness in the realm of detachment from materialism is what led to their exile.

Furthermore, exile itself is an impediment to Godliness, a spiritual descent, only in its external façade; its true self, its inner purpose, is the revelation and spiritual ascent that will come in its wake.

Our challenge is to reveal the inner identity of exile by revealing and actualizing our inner identity—by living in consonance with the reality of our souls.<sup>153</sup>

150. See *Torah Or* 55a. 151. See *Igeret HaKodesh* 28, end; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 944 ff. 152. Above, on 33:18. 153. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 359-363.



3 With the first **light of morning**, the men were sent on their way, together with their donkeys. When the brothers had previously left Egypt, they had taken Simeon's donkey and sack with them;<sup>138</sup> thus Simeon now left on foot and empty-handed, intending to buy another donkey on the way.<sup>139</sup>

4 They had barely left the city and had not yet gone far, when Joseph said to the overseer of his household, "Set out and pursue those men, and when you catch up with them, say to them, 'Why did you repay good with evil?'"

5 After all, this is the goblet from which my master drinks; indeed, he also uses it for divination. What you have done is an evil thing!"

6 He caught up with them, and told them these very words.

7 They said to him, "Sir, why do you say such things? It would be a disgrace for us, your servants, to do such a thing! May God protect us from ever doing such a thing!"<sup>140</sup>

8 After all, we brought you back the money that we found at the top of our packs when we returned from Canaan. This is clear proof of our integrity. How then could we have stolen silver or gold from your master's house?

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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Placing the goblet in Benjamin's pack also had other implications. As we have seen, Joseph's focus was on bringing Divine consciousness down from the supernal to the terrestrial.<sup>141</sup> He is therefore associated with the study of the Torah, through which Divine consciousness is brought down into the world. In contrast, Benjamin's focus was on elevating the terrestrial upward toward the supernal, which is the function of prayer, the effort to rise up and transcend our earthly consciousness. By planting his goblet in Benjamin's pack, Joseph was sharing with him his specialty, the study of the Torah.

An allusion to this can be found in the numerical value of the word for "goblet" (גביע), 85, which equals  $5 \times 17$ . Inasmuch as 17 is the numerical value of the word for "good" (טוב), the goblet alludes to five types of good. Since the sages tell us that "the ultimate good is the Torah,"<sup>142</sup> these five types of good can be considered to allude to the five books of the Torah.<sup>143</sup>

Furthermore, if we add 1 to 85 for the word for "goblet" itself (in Jewish numerology, this is done to consider the word as a whole in addition to the sum of its constituent letters), we have 86. The goblet thus represented the power through which the Jewish people would be able to endure to the second phase of their slavery in Egypt, 86 years of harsh labor.<sup>144</sup>

5 **He also uses it for divination:** The words for this phrase (נחש ינחש) are related to the word for "snake" (נחש). This phrase can thus mean that with this goblet Joseph "out-snakes the snake."

The snake is associated with slyness and trickery;<sup>145</sup> the nature of a trick is to conceal reality. Thus, Egypt was a land of magicians,<sup>146</sup> and Pharaoh, the quintessence of Egypt, was envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel as a serpent,<sup>147</sup> since the idolatry of Egypt sought above all to conceal the truth of Godliness.

Through his "goblet," the metaphor for Joseph's spiritual power, Joseph neutralized Egypt's concealment of Divinity—he "out-snaked the snake."<sup>148</sup>

7 **It would be a disgrace for us, your servants, to do such a thing:** The literal meaning of the words for "it would be a disgrace for us" is "it would be *mundane* for us."

Abraham used a similar expression when he argued with God to save Sodom, which we have translated as "It would be sacrilegious for You."<sup>149</sup> Again, the literal meaning of Abraham's words is "It would be *mundane* for You."

In Abraham's statement, referring to something as "mundane" to mean "sacrilegious" is understandable. He was speaking to God, to whom mundaneness is completely and obviously foreign. Therefore, referring to something as mundane for God is an apt way to refer to something foreign to Him. But in the case of Joseph's brothers, referring to stealing as "mundane" to mean "foreign" is somewhat curious, for it implies that they assumed the Egyptian they were talking to felt that mundaneness was something foreign and disgraceful! True, mundaneness was foreign and disgraceful to *them*, but it seems strange that they would

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138. Above, 42:25. 139. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 156, note 30. 140. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 359-360. 141. Above, on 34:16. 142. *Avot* 6:3. 143. *Or HaTorah, Bereishit*, vol. 5, p. 1956. 144. Exodus 1:13 ff. *Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtza'i, Bereishit*, p. 297; *Or HaTorah, Bereishit*, vol. 2, pp. 681 ff, vol. 6, pp. 2208-2209. 145. See 3:1, above. 146. Exodus 7:22. 147. Ezekiel 29:3. 148. *Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtza'i, Bereishit*, p. 297; *Or HaTorah, Bereishit*, vol. 2, pp. 681 ff, vol. 6, pp. 2208-2209. 149. 18:25, above.

ONKELOS

9 די ישתכח עמה מעבדיך יתקטל  
ואף אנחנא נהי לרבוני לעבדין:  
10 ואמר אף כען כפתגמיוכו כן  
הוא די ישתכח עמה יהי לי עבדא  
ואתון תהון זכאין: 11 ואזחיו  
ואחיתו גבר ית טוענה לארעא  
ופתחו גבר טוענה: 12 ובלש ברבא  
שרי ובועירא שיצי ואשתכח  
כלידא בטוענא דבנימין: 13 ובועו  
לבויסיהון ורמו גבר על חמרה ותבו  
לקרתא: 14 ועל יהודה ואזחיה  
לבית יוסף והוא עד כען תמן ונפלו  
קדמוהי לארעא: 15 ואמר להון  
יוסף מא עובדא הדין די עבדתון  
הלא ידעתון ארי ברקא מבדק  
גברא די כותי: 16 ואמר יהודה  
מא גימר לרבוני מא נמליל ומה  
נזפי מן קדם יי אשתכח ית חובא  
בעבדיך הא אנחנא עבדין לרבוני  
אף אנחנא אף דאשתכח כלידא  
בידה: 17 ואמר חס לי מלמעבד  
דא גברא די אשתכח כלידא  
בידה הוא יהי לי עבדא ואתון סקו  
לשלם לות אבוכון:

9 וְאִשֶּׁר יִמְצָא אֹתוֹ מִעֲבָדֶיךָ וְגַם־אֲנַחְנוּ נִהְיָה לְאֹדְנֵי  
לְעֲבָדִים: 10 וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־עִתָּה כְּדַבְרֵיכֶם כִּי־הוּא אִשֶּׁר  
יִמְצָא אֹתוֹ יִהְיֶה־לִּי עֶבֶד וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ נָקִים: 11 וַיִּמְחְרוּ  
וַיִּזְרְדוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אֲמִתְּחָתוֹ אֶרְצָה וַיִּפְתְּחוּ אִישׁ  
אֲמִתְּחָתוֹ: 12 וַיַּחֲפֹשׂ בְּגָדוֹל הַחֵל וּבִקְמָן כֻּלָּה וַיִּמְצָא  
הַגִּבִּיעַ בְּאֲמִתְּחַת בְּנִימִן: 13 וַיִּקְרְעוּ שְׂמֹלֵתָם וַיַּעֲמֹס אִישׁ  
עַל־חֻמְרוֹ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ הָעִירָה: 14 וַיָּבֹא יְהוּדָה וְאָחִיו בֵּיתָה  
יוֹסֵף וְהוּא עוֹדְנוּ שָׁם וַיִּפְּלוּ לִפְנֵי אֶרְצָה:

◆ מפטיר 15 וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יוֹסֵף מַה־הַמַּעֲשֶׂה הַזֶּה אִשֶּׁר  
עָשִׂיתֶם הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתֶּם כִּי־נִחַשׁ יִנְחֹשׁ אִישׁ אִשֶּׁר  
כִּמְנֵי: 16 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה מַה־נֹּאמַר לְאֹדְנֵי מַה־נִּדְבַּר  
וּמַה־נִּצְטָדַק הָאֱלֹהִים מִצָּא אֶת־עוֹן עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנֶּנוּ  
עֲבָדִים לְאֹדְנֵי גַם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַם אִשֶּׁר־נִמְצָא הַגִּבִּיעַ בְּיָדוֹ:  
17 וַיֹּאמֶר חֲלִילָה לִּי מַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֵת הָאִישׁ אִשֶּׁר נִמְצָא  
הַגִּבִּיעַ בְּיָדוֹ הוּא יִהְיֶה־לִּי עֶבֶד וְאַתֶּם עָלוּ לְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־

## אֲבִיכֶם: ס ס ס

קמ"ו פסוקים. יחזקיה'ו סימן. אמציה'ה סימן. יהודה'ה ל"י עב"ד סימן.

RASHI

ומה נצטדק. לשון "צדק", וכן כל תבה שתחלת יסודה  
צד"י, והיא באה לדבר בלשון "מתפעל" או "נתפעל",  
נותן ט"ת במקום ת"ו, ואינה נתנת לפני אות ראשונה  
של יסוד התבה, אלא באמצע אותיות העקר, כגון  
"נצטדק", מגזרת: "צדק", ו"יצטבע"<sup>80</sup>, מגזרת: "צבע",  
ו"יצטירו"<sup>81</sup>, מגזרת: "ציר אמונים"<sup>82</sup>, "הצטידנו"<sup>83</sup>,  
מגזרת: "צדה לדרך"<sup>84</sup>. ותבה שתחלתה סמ"ך או ש"ן,  
כשהיא מתפעלת — התי"ו מפרדת את אותיות העקר,  
כגון: "ויסתכל הקב"ה"<sup>85</sup>, מגזרת: "סכל", "משתכל הוית  
בקניא"<sup>86</sup>, מגזרת: "סכל", ו"ישתמר חקות עמרי"<sup>87</sup>,  
מגזרת: "שמר", ו"סר מרע משתולל"<sup>88</sup>, מגזרת: "מוליד  
יועצים שולל"<sup>89</sup>, "מסתולל בעמי"<sup>90</sup>, מגזרת: "דדרך לא  
סלולח"<sup>91</sup>.

חסלת פרשת מקז

10 גַּם עִתָּה כְּדַבְרֵיכֶם. אף זו מן הדין, אמת "כדבריכם  
כן הוא", שכלכם חובים בדבר, עשרה שנמצאת גנבה  
בניד אחד מהם, כלם נתפשים. אבל אני אעשה לכם  
לפנים משורת הדין, "אשר ימצא אתו יהיה לי עבד":  
12 בְּגָדוֹל הַחֵל. שלא ירגישו שהיה יודע היכן הוא:  
13 וַיַּעֲמֹס אִישׁ עַל חֻמְרוֹ. בעלי זרוע היו, ולא הצרכו  
לסיע זה את זה לטעון: וישבו העירה. מטרפולין  
היתה, והוא אומר "העירה", העיר כל שהוא? אלא,  
שלא היתה חשוכה בעיניהם אלא כעיר בינונית של  
עשרה בני אדם, לענין המלחמה: 14 עוֹדְנוּ שָׁם. שהיה  
ממתין להם: 15 הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתֶּם כִּי נִחַשׁ יִנְחֹשׁ וְגו'. הלא  
ידעתם כי איש חשוב כמוני יודע לנחש ולדעת מדעת  
ומסברא ובינה, כי אתם גנבתם הגביע: 16 הָאֱלֹהִים  
מִצָּא. יודעים אנו שלא סרחנו, אבל מאת המקום נהיתה  
להביא לנו זאת, מצא בעל חוב מקום לגבות שטר חובו:

80. דניאל ד, כ. 81. יהושע ט, ד. 82. משלי יג, יז. 83. יהושע ט, יב. 84. בראשית מב, כה. 85. קהלת יב, ח. 86. דניאל ז, ח. 87. מיכה ו, טו. 88. ישעיה נט, טו. 89. איוב יב, יז. 90. שמואל ט, יז. 91. ירמיה יח, טו.

9 **Whichever of your servants with whom it is found shall die, and the rest of us shall become slaves to my lord."**

10 **He replied, "Although it should be as you have now declared—for if a stolen object is found in the possession of one member of a group, the whole group is implicated—I shall deal with you leniently: only the one with whom it is actually found shall be my slave, and the rest of you shall go free."**

11 **Each man quickly lowered his pack to the ground, and each man opened his pack.**

12 **The overseer searched each one, beginning with that of the eldest and ending with that of the youngest, searching in this order so that they should not suspect that he already knew whose pack it was in, and the goblet was found in Benjamin's pack.**

13 **The brothers rent their clothes. Each one loaded his donkey by himself, since they were all strong men and did not require each other's help. They returned to the city.** Convinced that they were victims of a plot, they began to formulate strategies for possible eventualities, and confidently noted that they could easily overcome the city if the need arose.

◆ *Maftir*\* 14 **When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there, anticipating their arrival, and they threw themselves on the ground before him.**

15 **Joseph said to them, "What is this deed that you have done? Did you intend to undermine my power by stealing my divination goblet? Do you not know that people of rank rise to their posts by virtue of their own intelligence, and therefore such an important man as I can determine the truth as to who stole the goblet by logic, even without a divination goblet?"**

16 **Judah replied, "What can we say to my lord? We know we are innocent of this crime, but how can we speak convincingly, and how can we prove our innocence? Since we have no way to do so, it is clear that God has uncovered your servants' old transgression and found a way to punish us for it. Here we are, then, slaves to my lord, we together with the one in whose possession the goblet was found."** Seeing that they were trapped, Judah assumed that God was now fulfilling His prophecy to Abraham that his descendants would be slaves in a foreign land.<sup>154</sup>

17 **But Joseph replied, "It would be a disgrace for me to do that! The one in whose possession the goblet was found shall be my slave, while the rest of you can go up in peace to your father."** When Judah heard that Joseph only wanted to enslave Benjamin and not the rest of the brothers, he understood that God was not yet fulfilling the prophecy of slavery, as he had assumed. He therefore resolved to do whatever was necessary to keep Joseph from retaining Benjamin.<sup>155</sup>

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Mikeitz* may be found on p. 357.



<sup>154</sup>. Above, 15:13. <sup>155</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 20, p. 217, note 38.

\*The *maftir* readings for Chanukah are found on p. 373-377.

## *Maftir reading for the Second Sabbath of Chanukah*

Numbers 7:54–8:4

**54** On the eighth day of Nisan, the prince who brought his offering was of the tribe of Manasseh: Gamliel the son of Pedahzur. **55** His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver sprinkling basin weighing seventy shekels according to the holy shekel, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a voluntary grain-offering, **56** one gold spoon weighing ten shekels filled with incense, **57** the choicest young bull in his herd, the choicest ram in his flock, and the choicest lamb in its first year in his flock for an ascent-offering, **58** one young he-goat for a sin-offering, **59** and for the peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs in their

**54** ביום השמיני נשיא לבני מנשה גמליאל בן-  
פדהצור: **55** קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים  
וימאה משקלה מזרק אחד פספ שבועים שקל  
בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה  
בשמן למנחה: **56** כף אחת עשרה זרה מלאה  
קמרת: **57** פר אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-  
אחד בן-שנתו לעלה: **58** שעיר-עזים אחד  
לחטאת: **59** ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים  
אילים חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה  
חמשה זה קרבן גמליאל בן-פדהצור: פ

first year. This was the offering of Gamliel the son of Pedahzur.

**60** On the ninth day of Nisan, the prince who brought his offering was of the tribe of Benjamin: Avidan the son of Gidoni. **61** His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver sprinkling basin weighing seventy shekels according to the holy shekel, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a voluntary grain-offering, **62** one gold spoon weighing ten shekels filled with incense, **63** the choicest young bull in his herd, the choicest ram in his flock, and the choicest lamb in its first year in his flock for an ascent-offering, **64** one young he-goat for a sin-offering, **65** and for the peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Avidan the son of Gidoni.

**66** On the tenth day of Nisan, the prince who brought his offering was of the tribe of Dan: Achiezer the son of Amishadai. **67** His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver sprinkling basin weighing seventy shekels according to the holy shekel, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a voluntary grain-offering, **68** one gold spoon weighing ten shekels filled with incense, **69** the choicest young bull in his herd, the choicest ram in his flock, and the choicest lamb in its first year in his flock for an ascent-offering, **70** one young he-goat for a sin-offering, **71** and for the peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achiezer the son of Amishadai.

**72** On the eleventh day of Nisan, the prince who brought his offering was of the tribe of Asher: Pagiel the son of Ochran. **73** His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver sprinkling basin weighing seventy shekels according to the holy shekel, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a voluntary grain-offering, **74** one gold spoon weighing ten shekels filled with incense, **75** the choicest young bull in his herd, the choicest ram in his flock, and the choicest lamb in its first year in his flock for an ascent-offering,

**60** בַּיּוֹם הַתְּשִׁיעִי נָשִׂיא לְבָנִי בְנִימִן אֲבִידָן בֶּן גִּדְעֹנִי: **61** קָרְבָּנוֹ קִעְרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזֶּרֶק אַחֵד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְ�נֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: **62** כֹּף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְמֹרֶת: **63** פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אֵיל אַחַד כֶּבֶשׂ־אַחַד בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: **64** שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אַחַד לַחֲטָאת: **65** וּלְזִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתְרִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבֵּן אֲבִידָן בֶּן־גִּדְעֹנִי: פ

**66** בַּיּוֹם הָעֲשִׂירִי נָשִׂיא לְבָנִי דָן אַחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן עֲמִישָׁדַי: **67** קָרְבָּנוֹ קִעְרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזֶּרֶק אַחֵד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְ�נֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: **68** כֹּף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְמֹרֶת: **69** פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אֵיל אַחַד כֶּבֶשׂ־אַחַד בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: **70** שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אַחַד לַחֲטָאת: **71** וּלְזִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתְרִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבֵּן אַחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עֲמִישָׁדַי: פ

**72** בַּיּוֹם עֲשָׂרִי עֶשֶׂר יוֹם נָשִׂיא לְבָנִי אָשֵׁר פַּגִּיעָאֵל בֶּן־עֹכְרָן: **73** קָרְבָּנוֹ קִעְרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזֶּרֶק אַחֵד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְ�נֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: **74** כֹּף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְמֹרֶת: **75** פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אֵיל אַחַד כֶּבֶשׂ־אַחַד בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה:



76 one young he-goat for a sin-offering, 77 and for the peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ochran.

78 On the twelfth day of Nisan, the prince who brought his offering was of the tribe of Naphtali: Achira the son of Einan. 79 His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver sprinkling basin weighing seventy shekels according to the holy shekel, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a voluntary grain-offering, 80 one gold spoon weighing ten shekels filled with incense, 81 the choicest young bull in his herd, the choicest ram in his flock, and the choicest lamb in its first year in his flock for an ascent-offering, 82 one young he-goat for a sin-offering, 83 and for the peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achira the son of Einan.

84 The above was the dedication offering of the altar presented by the princes on the day the altar was anointed, the first day of Nisan,<sup>59</sup> even though they brought their offerings over a period of twelve days. The Torah now repeats the tally to indicate that nothing happened to disqualify these items from use between the first of Nisan and the specific day on which they were offered. There were twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins and twelve gold spoons. 85 The weight of each silver bowl was 130 shekels, and that of each basin was 70 shekels; all the silver of the vessels weighed in total exactly 2,400 shekels according to the holy shekel. 86 The twelve gold spoons were filled with incense. Each spoon weighed ten shekels according to the holy shekel; all the gold spoons thus totaled 120 shekels. 87 The total of the cattle for the ascent-offerings was twelve bulls, twelve rams, and twelve lambs in their first year with their grain-offerings. There were twelve young he-goats for sin-offerings. 88 The total of cattle for the peace-offerings was 24 oxen, 60 rams, 60 he-goats, and 60 lambs in their first year. This was the dedication offering for the altar, which was offered after the altar was anointed, i.e., beginning later the same day and continuing over the next eleven days.

76 שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: 77 וּלְזִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנָיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֲתֻדִּים חֲמִשָּׁה כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן פַּגְיֵאל בֶּן־עֹכְרָן: פ

78 בְּיוֹם שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר יוֹם נָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי נַפְתָּלִי אַחִירָע בֶּן־עֵינָן: 79 קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרֹת־כֶּסֶף אֶחָת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזֶּרֶק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מִלֵּאִים סֶלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: 80 כֶּף אֶחָת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מִלֵּאָה קְמֹרֶת: 81 פָּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לַעֲלֹה: 82 שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: 83 וּלְזִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנָיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֲתֻדִּים חֲמִשָּׁה כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אַחִירָע בֶּן־עֵינָן: פ

84 זֹאת | חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּיוֹם הַמִּשָּׁח אֹתוֹ מֵאֵת נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל קַעֲרֹת כֶּסֶף שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה מִזֶּרֶק־כֶּסֶף שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר כִּפּוֹת זָהָב שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה: 85 שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה הַקַּעֲרָה הָאֶחָת כֶּסֶף וְשִׁבְעִים הַמִּזֶּרֶק הָאֶחָד כֶּל כֶּסֶף הַבָּלִים אֲלֵפִים וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ: 86 כִּפּוֹת זָהָב שְׁתֵּים־עֶשְ�רֵה מִלֵּאֹת קְמֹרֶת עֲשָׂרָה עֲשָׂרָה הֶכֶף בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ כֹּל־זָהָב חֲכָפּוֹת עֲשָׂרִים וּמֵאָה: 87 כֹּל־הַבָּקָר לַעֲלֹה שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר פָּרִים אֵילִם שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר וּמִנְחָתָם וְשַׁעֲרֵי עִזִּים שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר לְחַטָּאת: 88 וְכֹל בָּקָר | זִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים עֲשָׂרִים וְאַרְבַּעַּ פָּרִים אֵילִם שְׁשִׁים עֲתֻדִּים שְׁשִׁים כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שְׁשִׁים זֹאת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אַחֲרֵי הַמִּשָּׁח אֹתוֹ:

59. Numbers 7:1.



89 The Torah now continues<sup>60</sup> to describe how God spoke to Moses in the Tabernacle once it was erected. **When Moses would come into the Tent of Meeting so God could speak with him,**<sup>61</sup> he would hear His **voice** as loud as it was heard on Mount Sinai, but the sound miraculously stopped at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, so no one heard it outside. Even though the voice was this loud, it sounded to Moses as if it was **speaking to itself** and he was simply overhearing it. God's voice issued from between the two cherubim above the covering that was over the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies, and Moses heard it while standing in the outer chamber of the Tent of Meeting. God **spoke** only to Moses and not to Aaron, except when it is explicitly stated otherwise.

8:1 After the princes of the other tribes finished their inaugural offerings, Aaron was disappointed that his tribe, Levi, had not also brought an inaugural offering. In response, God told him that (a) he had in fact inaugurated the candelabrum by kindling its lamps throughout the twelve days the princes offered their inaugural sacrifices; (b) he kindled the lamps himself, while they had not sacrificed their offerings themselves; (c) his kindling framed each day's sacrificial rites, while their offerings were just one component of each day's events; and (d) his kindling took place in the inner chamber of the Tabernacle, while their offerings were sacrificed on the outer altar. True, Moses had lit the candelabrum during the installation week, but this was not considered its inauguration, just as the offerings he sacrificed on the altar were not considered its inauguration.<sup>62</sup> In order to allude to this exchange, the Torah records here those details of how Aaron is to light the candelabrum that articulate its uniqueness.<sup>63</sup> **God spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to Aaron and say to him: "The spouts of the candelabrum's lamps face its central shaft."**<sup>64</sup> **When you** ascend the stool in front of the candelabrum in order to **kindle the lamps**, be sure to place the wicks in these spouts so **the seven lamps shine toward the central shaft of the candelabrum**. Also, be sure to hold the fire to **the wick until it burns by itself.**" ' 3 **Aaron did so; he kindled the lamps** such that their wicks faced **toward the central shaft of the candelabrum**, exactly as **God had commanded Moses**. 4 Having the lamps face the central shaft emphasized the fact that the candelabrum was one, undivided entity. **This was also reflected in the unique way the candelabrum was made: it was a hammered work of gold; it was made out of one block of gold hammered out to form all its parts, from its base—its largest part—to its flower—its most delicate part.** It was not made of separate pieces joined together.<sup>65</sup> When God told Moses to make the candelabrum this way, Moses did not understand how it could be done. God therefore showed him a visual representation of it and said, **"This is how the candelabrum is to be made."** **According to the form that God had shown Moses,**<sup>66</sup> so did the artisan **construct the candelabrum** by throwing the block of gold into the fire, after which God caused it to be fashioned

89 וּבָנָא מִשָּׁה אֶל־אֱהֱל מוֹעֵד לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ  
וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־הַקּוֹל מִדַּבֵּר אֵלָיו מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת  
אֲשֶׁר עַל־אֲרֹן הָעֵדוּת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִּים וַיְדַבֵּר  
אֵלָיו:

8:1 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 2 דַּבֵּר אֶל־  
אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהִעָלְתָּךְ אֶת־הַנֵּרוֹת אֶל־  
מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יֵאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת: 3 וַיַּעַשׂ  
בֶּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הָעֵלָה נִרְתִּיחָהּ  
כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: 4 וְהָ מַעֲשֵׂה  
הַמְּנוֹרָה מִקְשָׁה זָהָב עַד־יִרְכָּה עַד־פְּרֻחָהּ  
מִקְשָׁה הִוא כַּמֵּרָאָה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָה יְהוָה אֶת־  
מֹשֶׁה בֶּן עֲשָׂה אֶת־הַמְּנוֹרָה: פ

60. This has been partially described in Leviticus 1:1. 61. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 13, p. 20, note 3. 62. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, pp. 92-98. 63. The other laws of lighting the candelabrum are given in Exodus 27:20-21 and Leviticus 24:1-4. 64. See on Exodus 25:37. 65. Exodus 25:31, 36. 66. Exodus 25:40. 67. See on Exodus 25:31.

on its own.<sup>67</sup> In fact, God showed Moses a visual representation of the candelabrum not only because he did not understand how to make it, but also because the miraculous way the candelabrum's light shone<sup>68</sup> indicated that God's presence rested on the Jewish people. It was therefore appropriate that fashioning the candelabrum required a special Divine revelation. Thus, the fact that Aaron was to kindle the candelabrum so that all its lamps shone toward its central shaft, reflecting the unique way the candelabrum was fashioned, indicated that his inauguration of the candelabrum was superior to the princes' inauguration of the altar.<sup>69</sup>

## Haftarah for the Second Sabbath of Chanukah

1 Kings 7:40-50

Chanukah celebrates the rededication of the Second Temple after it had been defiled by the Seleucids; this *haftarah* is the conclusion of the description of King Solomon's construction of the first Temple.

40 Hiram, the artisan from Tyre,<sup>70</sup> made the lavers to remove the ashes from the altar, the shovels to rake the ashes into the lavers, and the basins to receive the blood of the sacrifices. Hiram finished doing all the work which he did for king Solomon in the house of God: 41 The two pillars and the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; the two net-works to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; 42 the four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works—two rows of one hundred pomegranates for each net-work—to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were upon the pillars; 43 the ten bases, and the ten lavers on the bases; 44 the one sea, and the twelve oxen under the sea; 45 the pots—these are the same as the lavers, above<sup>71</sup>—the shovels, the basins, and all these vessels, which Hiram made for king Solomon in the house of God, were of bright copper. 46 The king cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the thick clay, between Sukot and Tzaretan. 47 Solomon left all the vessels unweighed because there were very, very many; therefore the weight of the copper used for the vessels was not determined. 48 Solomon made all the vessels of that were in the house of God—the altar of gold and the table

7:40 וַיַּעַשׂ חִירֹם אֶת־הַכִּיֹּרוֹת וְאֶת־הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְכֵל חִירֹם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כֹּל־הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה: 41 עַמֻּדִים שְ�נַיִם וְגִלְתֵּי הַכֶּתֶרֶת אֲשֶׁר־עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים שְ�נֵתִים וְהַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁתֵּים לְכַפּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלְתֵּי הַכֶּתֶרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים: 42 וְאֶת־הַרְמָנִים אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לְשֵׁנֵי הַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁנֵי־טוּרִים רַמְנִים לְשֵׁבְכָהּ הָאֶחָת לְכַפּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלְתֵּי הַכֶּתֶרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים: 43 וְאֶת־הַמְּכַנּוֹת עָשָׂר וְאֶת־הַכִּיֹּרוֹת עֶשְׂרֵה עַל־הַמְּכַנּוֹת: 44 וְאֵם הַיָּם הָאֶחָד וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר שְׁנַיִם עֶשְׂרֵה תַּחַת הַיָּם: 45 וְאֶת־הַפִּסְלִיּוֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְאֵת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה [וְהָאֵלֶּה] אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה חִירֹם לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה נְחֹשֶׁת מְמֻרָט: 46 בְּכֶבֶד הַיַּרְדֵּן יָצְקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּמַּעֲבָה הָאֲדָמָה בֵּין סְפּוֹת וּבֵין צֶרֶתָן: 47 וַיִּנַּח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים מִרֹב מְאֹד מְאֹד לֹא נִחְקָר מִשְׁקַל הַנְּחֹשֶׁת: 48 וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה אֵת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה אֵת מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים וְהַבֹּרֶקֶת

67. See on Exodus 25:31. 68. See on Leviticus 24:3. 69. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 33-37. 70. 1 Kings 7:13. 71. V. 40.

49 He made **the ten candelabra—five on the right** side of the candelabrum of the Tabernacle **and five on the left, in front of the Sanctuary—of pure gold**; and he made **the flowers** of the candelabra, **the lamps, and the tongs** to remove the wicks from the lamps, **of gold**. 50 He made **the musical instruments, the other musical instruments, the basins** to receive the blood of the sacrifices, **the spoons** for the frankincense, **and the censors** to remove the ashes from the altar and carry the coals from the outer altar to the inner altar for burning the incense, **of pure gold**. Likewise, he made **the keys for the doors of the inner house, i.e., for the Holy of Holies, and for the doors of the outer house, i.e., of the Sanctuary, of gold**.

49 וְאֵת הַמְּנֹרוֹת חָמֵשׁ מִיְּמִין וְחָמֵשׁ מִשְּׂמָאל  
לִפְנֵי הַדָּבִיר וְהָב סָגוֹר וְהַפָּרַח וְהַנֶּרֶת  
וְהַמְּלָקָחִים וְהָב: 50 וְהַסְּפֹת וְהַמְּזֻמָּרוֹת  
וְהַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְהַכַּפּוֹת וְהַמַּחְתּוֹת וְהָב סָגוֹר  
וְהַפְּתוֹת לְדִלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי לְקָדֹשׁ  
הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לְדִלְתֵי הַבַּיִת לְהִיכָל וְהָב:



*Dedicated in honor of our children*

**Nathan, Yitzchok,  
Moshe Lev,  
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways  
of our holy Torah*

**Yuri and Deana Pikover**

