

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Hatzlacha Raba and a massive thank you to all of the wonderful madrichim currently preparing for **Winter Machane!** We couldn't do it without you!

- **Summer Machane** applications are OPEN!!! To apply, please go to bauk.org/camps. For more information, please email camps@bauk.org.

- **Israel Machane** applications are OPEN NOW! Spaces are limited so make sure to sign up quickly! Head to bauk.org/israel for details of how to apply.

- **Student Bet Midrash** is taking a break over Winter Machane, but will be back on 9th January! Email Chana at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions.

- Sign up for our **Mega Siyum in memory of Marc Weinberg** now! Part 1 of the Siyum aims to complete Tanach by Winter Machane. All welcome to join at bitly.com/megasiyum. For more information contact chinuch@bauk.org.

- Bnei Akiva are proud to send a delegation of Bogrim on **March of the Living UK's** 10th anniversary trip including a trip to Bergen-Belsen. Sign up at marchoftheliving.org.uk. For further information email mazkir@bauk.org.

- To get involved with your local sviva please contact Zoe at svivot@bauk.org. If you have a child attending sviva, please ensure that you have completed the **medical form** at bauk.org/bnei-akiva-svivot-medical-form-5780.

- **2019 marks the 80th birthday of BAUK!!** Keep an eye out for events in your local community! For information on our '80for80' campaign and to set up a standing order head to bauk.org/bachad.

- Sign up now for **Mas Chaver** for 5780! To apply head to bauk.org/mas-chaver.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

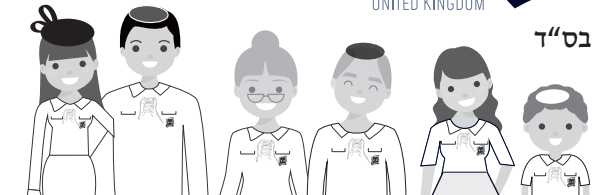
1. Why did Yosef insist on telling his brothers about his dream immediately? (See **Or HaChaim on 37:6**)
2. Who was the man who found Yosef wandering in the fields? (See **Bartenura on 37:15**)

זכור אתיום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כלמלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT VAYESHEV
23RD KISLEV 5780
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STRENGTH IN TIMES OF HARDSHIP
SASHA COHEN
SHEVET MORASHA

Throughout this week's parasha we see countless accounts of Yosef facing unimaginable hardships presented to him, yet one thing is consistent: Yosef's faith and perseverance is unfaltering. Despite being faced with multiple death threats and counts of jealousy from his brothers as well as being sold to the Ishmaelites, he continued to overcome such tests and retain his trust in Hashem. We see that this relationship of fondness on Yosef's part is reciprocated by Hashem, where it states:

וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-הוּא עָשָׂה ה' מְצַלִּיחַ בְּיָדוֹ, "Whatever he did Hashem made successful" (Bereishit 39:3)

This clearly demonstrates Hashem's protection over Yosef, most notably when he was in prison under Pharaoh's orders. Another area where Hashem's care for Yosef is evident is when he was sold to a caravan of Ishmaelites. According to the Midrash cited by Rashi, the Torah tells us that Hashem intervened for Yosef's sake. Normally, Ishmaelite caravans carried foul-smelling cargo, however in order to spare Yosef from such offensive odours, it is argued that Hashem arranged that this caravan was an exception by carrying fragrant spices instead. Through this subtle intervention, we can clearly see Hashem's devotion to Yosef and the extent of their special relationship, which is intensified by Yosef's con-

stant belief and faith in Hashem to protect him.

We can wonder how Yosef has such reverence for Hashem at such a young age. A midrash explains that after Yosef was sold, his captors took him past Bet Lechem (Bethlehem), which is where his mother, Rachel, was buried. It is said that Yosef threw himself on top of her grave, crying and asking her to pray for him and help him. Suddenly, he heard the voice of Rachel, demanding that he place his faith in God, as He would protect and watch over him.

During all his years in Egypt, where he was rejected and forlorn, he consistently carried that message that Hashem would watch over and protect him. Yosef received the same level of faith from his father, Yaakov, illustrated by the fact that despite uncontrollable tears and tearing of his clothes through mourning upon Yosef's disappearance, Yaakov composed himself and exclaimed 'everything that Hashem does is good'. This sentiment was instilled upon Yosef throughout his upbringing, highlighting the importance of nurture and encouragement by the people around us in order to fulfil our potential and overcome any challenges we may face.

We can transfer this attitude thousands of years later to our current lives, by remembering to learn from those inspirations around us in times of hardship, hence allowing us to strengthen our faith in Hashem. I am looking forward to learning from my tzevet throughout machane and overcoming any obstacles together. I wish you all a Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach!

SASHA IS A MADRICHAN ON ALEPH WINTER MACHANE 5780

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VAYISHLACH 5780:

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



Throughout history, attempting to annihilate the Jewish people has been a favourite pastime of ruling empires. Chanukah is yet another example of a time when attempts were made to wipe us out and we survived. Yet the

symbol of this festival, the Chanukiah that is lit in every Jewish home, comes to commemorate a different miracle altogether: the fact that an amount of oil which could only last for one day burned in the menorah for eight days. The victory in the war and the miracle of our continued existence seems to be relegated to the sidelines.

Another striking question about Channukah, asked by the Beit Yosef, is why we commemorate it for eight days. Since there was enough oil to burn for one day, on the first day nothing miraculous happened. Accordingly, we should only celebrate the miracle for seven days.

Perhaps we can find a clue to the answer of both of these questions in our parasha. When Yosef was lifted out of the pit and sold as a slave, the caravan of travelling merchants was loaded with "spices, balsam and lotus". Chazal tell us that this was unusual. Normally the nomadic merchants in the desert would deal in hides and tar, which carry a pungent odour, but a miracle was done for Yosef, and he was carried down by a caravan containing sweet smelling spices so that the journey would be more pleasant for him.

This statement is difficult to understand to say the least. Suddenly and unexpectedly, Yosef's entire world had been turned upside down. In an instant he went from being the beloved son in Yaakov's house, to a lowly slave on his way to Egypt, the land which epitomized the opposite

of everything which Yaakov and his sons stood for. Why would he care what he could smell on the way down?

Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz explains that the detail of the spices was significant not for its own sake but for the message it carried. At that moment, Yosef was in danger of falling into despair. He was completely isolated and alone, but he received a hint from Above that all was not lost. The sweet smell on the journey was an indication to Yosef that Hashem had not abandoned him. Even though the unthinkable had happened, the knowledge of Hashem's continuing relationship with Him gave Yosef the strength to endure even the darkest hour.

EVEN THOUGH THE UNTHINKABLE HAD HAPPENED, THE KNOWLEDGE OF HASHEM'S CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM GAVE YOSEF THE STRENGTH TO ENDURE EVEN THE DARKEST HOUR.

So too by Chanukah, we commemorate the miracle of the oil not necessarily for its own sake, but for the message lying beneath it. Our victory in the war and the miracle of the oil both come from the same root – Hashem's continued guidance and protection over us.

Seven days to remember the miracle of the oil would not be enough. The eighth day of Chanukah comes to celebrate the victory in the war, and to remind us that both miracles are really one and the same. Had it not been for the miracle of the oil, the journalists, politicians and military analysts of the day could have come up with a multitude of rational explanations for how the Jews staved off the onslaught of the mighty Greeks. Clever tactics or greater motivation might have been offered as rational reasons as to why the Jews won the day. The war wasn't necessarily seen to be miraculous. But the obvious suspension of the laws of nature through a tiny flask of oil, proved that everything that happens in the national life of the Jewish people is guided from Above.

Shabbat Shalom!

A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVES: VAYESHEV 5756

DVAR TORAH BY JONNY KLAHR

The hatred between Yosef and his brothers and how it leads to Yaakov's mourning and Yosef being sent down to Egypt is described in Bereishit chapter 47. Rather than continue with the story the Torah then switches to the events that happened between Yehuda and Tamar. Yehuda's two sons are killed, the second for not being prepared to continue the name of the first with his own seed and then Yehuda himself is shown to be slack in his observance of this principle. The position of this story in the middle of that of Yosef is puzzling. The story of Yehuda begs explanation. Through looking at its links to the occurrences with Yosef and his brothers it may be possible to enlighten ourselves as to the central theme of this narrative.

Rashi quoting Midrash Bereishit Rabba says tht it is to show that on seeing their father so distraught the brothers blamed Yehuda and said to him that if he would have told them to return Yosef to Yaakov then they would have done this. The Sforno says that it is to show that Yehuda received his punishment for allowing Yaakov to lose his sons by losing his own sons - 'midda k'neged midda'.

"Thw Holy One Blessed be He said to Yehuda, "You deceived your father with a kid. By your life, Tamar will deceive you with a kid"...The Holy One Blessed be He said to Yehuda, "You said to your father, 'haker-na'. By your life Tamar will say to you, 'haker-na' (Bereishit Rabba 84:11-12). By finding the motifs that occur both in the story of Yosef and also in that of Tamar we can begin to see the connections between the two. Tamar clearly deceives Yehuda by dressing up as a prostitute in order to get the seed she needs. The brothers deceive Yaakov by dipping Yosef's coat into the blood of a kid. In both deceptions the term 'haker-na' is used. Thus the link between the two stories is that of deception. The deception in the second story is clearly with the aim of continuing the line of the dead son. In the story of Yosef the deception is more laden with meaning than would first seem.

Yaakov's sons argue. The enmity between them is worsened by Yaakov's obvious favoritism to Yosef when it says the other brothers "saw that he [Yosef] was loved by their father more than all the other brothers and they hated him and they could not speak to him with peace." (ibid. 37:4). Yaakov's love, which was symbolised by the coat he made for his was the source of this breakdown. The inability to conduct a dialogue, to see what one shares with the 'other side' brings its own downward spiral of events. "And Yosef dreamt a dream and he told it to his brothers and they hated him even more" (ibid. 36:5). The breakdown caused by a lack of identification becomes evident. Yosef dreams of domination over his brothers. They in turn can no longer understand his dreams. His aspirations, instead of being understood, become a source of enmity. Most human beings share the same basic dreams yet mutual hatred quickly corrupts this until we see each others' dreams as threatening. Mutual understanding, once lost, means the shattering of all our dreams. Eventually,

Yaakov sees the abomination that has developed within his own family. "And his father rebuked him...and his father kept the thing in mind" (ibid. 37:10-11).

How painful for Yaakov must the years of hatred between himself and Esav have been. How easily they made up outside the camp when they stood facing each other stripped of the threat of domination with the realisation of their common brotherhood. Yaakov pans a similar reconciliation for his sons. He tells Yosef the plan and Yosef realises the dangers in the plan. He answers his father with the same word that Avraham uses to show his willingness to sacrifice everything: "Hineini". His father then sent him off to "see the peace of your brothers" (ibid. 37:14). However, the plan goes wrong because he never gets close enough to strike up a dialogue, he never gets close enough that they identify with him as a human being. "They saw him from a distance and before he could get close to them they conspired to kill him" (ibid. 37:18). The plan fails because the brothers never succeed in seeing the common attributes they share. They see from the distance the boy with his coat, his exterior which embodies so much that they hate. The result of this meeting has been decided from a distance.

We now understand the grief of Yaakov which seems so exaggerated when compared with the other portrayals of grief in the Torah. "And Avraham came to mourn and weep for Sara" (ibid. 23:2). "And Yaakov tore his garment, he put sackcloth on his loins and he mourned his son many days. And all his sons and daughters got up to comfort him but he refused to be comforted" (ibid. 37:34-5). Yaakov is so tormented by Yosef's death because he realises his own guilt in the death of his son. The other brothers present him with the bloodstained coat, which was the symbol of Yaakov's love of one brother over the others. Yaakov realises that his plan has failed and that he has killed his son.

The connection with the story of Tamar is now apparent. Yehuda's lack of sensitivity towards her is revealed only after he is humbled and his own guilt is demonstrated. Yehuda goes down to shear his sheep without a thought for Tamar who sits alone, in her widows clothes. "Yehuda saw her clothes and thought she was a prostitute" (ibid. 48:35). How easily we judge people by their exteriors and how wrong we are. When Yehuda is told of Tamar's alleged sin his reply is short and simple: "take her out and burn her" (ibid. 48:35). It is only when he realises his own weakness that connects him to her can he realise his own humanity. Thus in both stories it is the common theme of clothes that shows us how easily the characters lose their sensitivity, how rapidly they lose sight of the people beneath the clothes.

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