



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

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פרשת מקץ - כ"ז כסלו תשע"ד

## THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Shmuli Simons on the occasion of the Bar Mitzva this Shabbos of their son, Ellie. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in the Hall.

### Parshas HaShavua Shiur

There will be a Parshas HaShavua Shiur on Friday night straight after Davenning for 15 minutes in the Shiur rooms.

### Chanuka Funday

On Sunday afternoon the Shul will be holding a family funday from 2.00-3.30pm. See the back page for details.

### Pre-Chanuka Shiur Report

Rabbi Johnny Ross gave an insightful, often emotional and wholly practical Shiur focussed on 3 questions:

1. Why do we celebrate Chanukah at all?
2. Why does the Torah use precious words to inform of us of the cargo that accompanied Yosef to Egypt?
3. What is the significance of the fact that it was Chanukah when Yosef was left alone in Potifar's house?

For the interrelated answer(s) please listen online or download from the Shiurim section of the Shul website.

### Ladies Coffee Evening Report

It was great to see all those that came to the ladies coffee evening. We had time to relax and catch up as well update each other on the Shul activities such as Shul/ladies activities such as hot meal rota, shiurim, Rosh Chodesh girls group etc. Thanks to those who gave practical suggestions and ideas which we hope to implement iyH.

## THE NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

### The Butcher, the Baker and the Viceroy Maker

Dani Epstein

These sidros of the past few weeks are really the prologue to the pivotal story that this week's sidroh opens with.

Pharaoh has a couple of weird dreams. This is no big deal, since most people tend to have pretty weird dreams. One only need to look towards the end of Brochos where there are several amudim that discuss things people see in dreams and what they might portend, and some things mentioned there are quite bizarre.

Obviously, the purpose of these dreams was to raise Yosef to his eventual position as second-in-command. There are quite a few subtleties that would easily be missed were it not for the Malbim's typically unique approach to the prelude and then this story.

After the second dream, Pharaoh awoke yet again and realised that the second dream was the explanation of the first dream. What bothered him was that he failed to grasp the meaning of either dream, despite the symbolism being abundantly clear to him.

Ancient Egypt was a flourishing, largely agrarian, society. Fields were irrigated by water captured in channels and small canals that were filled

by the river Nile during the flood season. This was by far the main source of water for agriculture, which meant that the country was populated along the banks of the Nile. Even as today, the preferred flour was manufactured from wheat, and agriculture was made possible through the utility of cattle as the motive power for ploughs and for threshing.

The appearance of these two symbols of Egypt's economic power base – the cow and the wheat – were the obvious parts of the dream. The question was why are they consuming each other? And why did the thin, sickly looking things eat the healthy ones? And since when does cow eat cow or wheat eat wheat?

The call went out to the mages, necromancers and astrologers to explain all this weirdness, and yet Pharaoh was not satisfied. They told him he would have seven daughters and later bury them, or he would conquer seven provinces and they would rebel, or he would buy seven limousines and crash them all or would receive seven black American express cards and burn through the credit on all of them. The grumpier Pharaoh became, the wilder the predictions grew.

Yet Pharaoh realised that they were all making it up as they went along, since all these explanations were regarding him as an individual, and he had dreamed as a king dreams, not an individual. Whatever the dream implied, it concerned the entire country, not just himself.

This sets the scene for Yosef. Now watch carefully what the Minister of Wine says: "I recall my sins today. Pharaoh became furious at his servants, and he put me in the Minister of Butcher's prison; I and the Minister of Bakers." Then he goes on to explain how Yosef interpreted their dreams correctly.

Here is a man who has experienced the fall and rise of the mighty and powerful. One minute he was a minister, next minute he was a prisoner, and then he rose yet again to power. Why stick your neck out? And even if you do, why the whole spiel? Why mention your previous

## The Week Ahead

פרשת מקץ	שבת חנוכה/שבת מברכי
Candle Lighting	3.40pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.45pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.58am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Pirkei Ovos Shiur	3.02pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	3.32pm
Motzei Shabbos	4.52pm
Ovos uBonim	6.27pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.10am
Monday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday / Wednesday ראש חודש	6.30am / 7.00am
Friday	6.30am / 7.10am
Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	3.40pm (Shabbos 3.35pm)

misdemeanours – surely that would be quite the last thing one would want to discuss with the very person who had you thrown behind bars in the first place? What exactly was he thinking of?

What the Minister of Wine realised was that Pharaoh was in a truly foul mood. Everybody knows what happens when the king has a temper – he lashes out at those around him, and someone gets the chop. Having previously experienced Pharaoh's rotten temper, the Minister wanted to resolve the situation as rapidly as possible.

Now, the minister was quite aware that Yosef would be the best candidate to settle the impending disaster, but he also realised that he really needed to sell the product in a big way. The very last thing Pharaoh would want to hear after all the drivel he had been fed was that some bloke down in the local dungeons would be perfect for the job because he wrote a really great horoscope column in the Memphis Times.

So the minister sets the scene very carefully and says: "I recall my sins today...he (Pharaoh) put me in the Minister of Butchers' prison; I and the Minister of Bakers."

To understand what this was leading to, we have to go back to the start of this story, when last week we read about the two ministers being jailed.

In order to enhance his standing as a king, Pharaoh appointed ministers to various positions within the royal household. There was one minister in charge of butchery, one in charge of wine production, another one for bread and no doubt one minister whose sole function was to squeeze the toothpaste onto the royal toothbrush. The purpose of all this was that when the king clicked his fingers, instead of some lowly servant turning up with the goods, a VIP would proffer the requested item.

So imagine the scene one fine day when Pharaoh snaps his fingers during the lunch break. Immediately the various ministers in their official robes and silly hats rush forward, heads bowed in the deepest respect, genuflecting as they shuffle along holding up platters of shawarma, kebabs, pittas and a goblet of Sauvignon Blanc 1882 BCE.

Now, the poor wine minister who has his head bowed in his infinite respect for the ruling despot fails to see the fly falling into the ointment. Flies are a pretty common feature of hot countries, especially when hot food is being served. It's a foregone conclusion that at some stage a fly will fall into the wine. What the king should have done was hand back the goblet and ask for a fly-free one.

A stone in the bread, on the other hand, is nothing short of appalling. Why didn't the minister of bakers check the flour first? Had he sold the pebbly bread in the market place customers would have complained, so how much more so the king! He most definitely deserves to be

thrown to the nearest convenient pit.

Yet in Vayeshev the posuk says that חֲטָאוּ מִשְׁקָה מְלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֶפֶס – "לְאֹדְנֵיהֶם לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם" – the bartender and baker sinned to their masters, to the king of Egypt". Note the plural of "masters" – was Pharaoh suffering from bi-polar disorder?

The reality was the the Minister of Wine was not a vintner inasmuch as the Minister of Bakers was not himself a baker. They were the VIPs in charge of the servants who actually did all the work, but were in all likelihood uninformed in the day-to-day proceedings of their various departments.

It was the vintner and baker down in the wine cellar and bakery who were neglectful in their duties to their individual masters – the ministers respectively in charge of those departments. They were the ones who "sinned to their masters". The ministers in turn sinned against the king having failed to establish a proper quality control protocol.

This really turns the tables on the responsibilities. The Minister of Bakers was hardly expected to get his regalia dusty while sifting through the flour to ensure that it was pebble-free. This was the job of the bakers. One would hardly expect to find the Minister of Butchers swanning around the kitchens in his official robes reminding the chef to trim the fat off the steaks. Consequently, they would have no way of knowing if there was something wrong with the food until the king starting making ugly faces.

The wine minister, on the other hand, could have and should have made a last-minute check before handing the goblet over to Pharaoh. He was absolutely culpable for this abrogation of responsibility.

When we read what the wine minister says to the king, it becomes abundantly clear where he is heading when he says: "וַיִּתֵּן אֹתִי בְּמִשְׁכַּר...he (Pharaoh) put me in the Minister of Butchers' prison; I and the Minister of Bakers."

What he was implying was this. "That I went to prison was quite understandable. I was seriously out of order. But the poor Minister of Bakers, he got thrown into jail with me just because the king was throwing a tantrum. Everybody knew he was as innocent as Bill Stickers. In all fairness if anyone should have been eventually executed it should have been me, the Minister for Wine, and not the poor Minister of Bakers."

"Then we both had a dream that were so similar that they seemed identical, just flavoured according to our trades – וַיִּחְלְמָה הַלּוֹם בְּלֵילָה – אֶחָד אֲנִי וְהוּא."

"There was this chap in jail with us – וְשֵׁם אֶתְנֹנוּ נֶעֶר - He's just a kid, a bit of a thikko really, so what does he know of the ways of the corridors of power? So there is no way he could have figured this out logically. He a foreigner as well – וְעֵבֶרִי – so what could he possibly know about the ways we do things here in Egypt? He doesn't even speak Egyptian properly! What's more, he's a slave – עֶבֶד לְשֵׁר הַטְּבָחִים – so he knows nothing about royal politics."

"Our dreams were so similar, and occurred in the same night, that this slave could not have figured out anything from the symbolism to distinguish between me and the Minister of Bakers. So when he interpreted them - וַיִּפְתֹּר לָנוּ אֶת הַחֲלֹמֹתַיִנוּ - he did so without reading anything into the vines, bread or baskets."

"Instead of basing his interpretations on us – i.e. not – אִישׁ בְּחֻלְמוֹ פֹּתֵר - he simply interpreted the dreams as they were, הֵלֵם בְּאִישׁ פֹּתֵר."

"Now, If he was using logic or prior knowledge, which is unlikely as I have mentioned he's not the sharpest knife in the draw and a slave and kid to boot, he would have said that the Minister of Bakers would go free and I would die. Yet he predicted the opposite, illogical outcome and what's more, he got it right. It was he who returned me to my position – וַיֵּאָתֶוּ תִלְהָה - and it was he who hanged the Minister of Bakers."

"So you see, Your Majesty, clearly whatever he uses to interpret dreams is not logic, magic or soothsaying; he is the real deal. He can somehow tap into a Higher Power. Your Majesty, if anyone can do the job, this slave can."

And thus was Pharaoh convinced to give Yosef a whirl.

