

BS"D

To: Parsha@YahooGroups.com
From: crshulman@aol.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON MIKETZ – 8th day of Chanuka - 5763

To receive this parsha sheet in Word and/or Text format, send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/join> Please also copy me at crshulman@aol.com For archives of old parsha sheets see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/messages> For Torah links see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/parsha/links>

From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: Thursday, December 05, 2002 To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Miketz

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Miketz -
Chanukah Theme One: The Many Into The Hands of the Few

"At the end of two years, and behold Pharaoh dreamt that he was standing by the Nile" [Bereshis 41:1]. Pharaoh is very disturbed by a dream wherein seven lean cows eat seven fat cows. None of the wise men of Egypt can interpret the dream for him, and this troubles him even more.

Even if we assume that the Egyptian Pharaohs were much more superstitious than modern man, it seems rather odd that a head of state should get so upset about a crazy dream. What is so upsetting about seven lean cows swallowing seven fat cows?

Rav Shimon Schwab (1908-1995) provides an insight into this question. Pharaoh's whole dominion, like that of any dictator, was based on the premise that the mighty will dominate the weak. "I have the troops. I have the force. Therefore I can impose my will, because no one can do anything against me."

Pharaoh was so bothered by this dream because it portrayed a situation wherein the weak dominated the powerful. It was the seven lean cows that swallowed the seven fat cows. He understood that as not just a silly dream, but as a terrible omen from heaven. He saw this as a Divine message that his dominion was not secure despite his power. This message shook him to the core, for it undermined the premise of his whole monarchy.

Rab Schwab further points out that Parshas Miketz always coincides with Chanukah. This is a constant of the Jewish calendar. It is not just a coincidence. One of the major themes of Chanukah is the idea that "the mighty fell into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few", as we say in the Al HaNissim prayer.

Chanukah Theme Two: Renewal

We recite two blessings prior to lighting the Chanukah candles: "...who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to light the Chanukah candles," and "...who has done miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time of year". The 'miracle' referred to in the second blessing is the miracle of the jug of oil. It was only through Divine Providence that they even found a jug of pure oil and then this small jug miraculously continued to burn for 8 days.

Rav Pam (1913-2001) observed as follows: In the Bais HaMikdash [Temple], miracles occurred every single day. The Mishneh [Avot 5:5] lists the miracles that occurred: The Lechem HaPanim [Show Bread] never became stale, flies never descended upon the sacrifices, etc. If so, asks Rav Pam, why don't we recite the blessing "...who has done miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time of year" every single day of the year? What was so special about the miracle of Chanukah that only that miracle is commemorated with a special blessing?

Rav Pam answers this question by citing a famous comment of the Pnei Yehoshua in Tractate Shabbos. Many of the commentaries ask why the miracle of the jug of pure oil was necessary at all, based on the halachik principle that "Tumah hutra (or dechuya) b'Tzibur" [when the majority of the people are impure, the Bais HaMikdash Service may be carried out even in a state of impurity]. Had no miracle occurred, they could have lit the Menorah with impure oil. The Pnei Yehoshua answers this question by conceding the point and stating that halachically the whole miracle of the oil on Chanukah was unnecessary. The reason, he suggests, that G-d created the miracle was only to demonstrate "an added amount of endearment" (chibah yeseirah) to the Jewish people.

What does the Pnei Yehoshua mean by this term "chibah yeseirah?"

"Chibah yeseirah" can be understood based on a comment of the Bac"n in the Tur at the beginning of the Laws of Chanukah (Chapter 670). The Bac"n points out that if the Jewish people were subjected to the decrees of the Greeks and if the Jewish people were subjected to the punishment of having their Bais HaMikdash desecrated by the pagans, then they must have done something terrible to deserve such a punishment. He suggests that their sin was becoming negligent and lazy in their Service of G-d. They performed the Bais HaMikdash service by rote without proper intent and enthusiasm.

G-d punishes 'measure for measure'. "If you take the Bais HaMikdash Service for granted, I will now deprive you of that Bais HaMikdash Service".

The sons of Matsiyahu rededicated themselves. They went to war over the Bais HaMikdash Service. There were renewed dedications and enthusiasm. The Jewish people picked themselves off the floor, so to speak. Yes, they were distant; yes they had been lazy; but they came back with a new strength and a new enthusiastic attitude for the Divine Service. They "returned the crown to its former glory."

The meaning of the Pnei Yehoshua, when he says that G-d wished to show them 'chibah yeseirah' can be understood as follows: A husband and wife had a terrible fight and then made up. However, the question lingered -- was their current love and relationship the same as it once was? Sometimes it is difficult to get back to the way it once was. G-d wanted to show the Jewish people that after they did Teshuvah [repentance], the relationship He now has with them is just as good as it 'once was'. There was no lingering complaint on G-d's part. From His perspective -- after Teshuvah -- the relationship was fully restored. True, impure oil would have worked under those circumstances (of general impurity), but G-d wanted to show that the relationship was fully equivalent to what it had been "in the old days" -- and was prepared to miraculously change nature to demonstrate that fact.

Yes, certainly the Bais HaMikdash was full of miracles. But this particular miracle was special. This was the miracle that showed that G-d will allow us to come back and that He will not hold grudges against us -- if we sincerely return to Him with complete Teshuva.

The Bnei Yissaschar comments that Chanukah is unique among the Jewish holidays in that it is the only holiday that spans two months (Kislev and Teves). This means that Chanukah always contains a 'Rosh Chodesh' [First day of the Month] within it. Why is that?

We can perhaps suggest that the same idea applies to Rosh Chodesh. Rosh Chodesh implies renewal (of the moon and of the month). This is the theme of Chanukah -- the renewal of the spirit of the Jews and the renewal of the Service in the Bais HaMikdash.

The Jewish people are compared to the moon -- sometimes their fate seems to darken and fade away but we are always confident that it will be renewed in the future. This too is a pattern that sometimes reflects our relationship with the Almighty. There are ups and downs. There are peaks and valleys. It waxes and it wanes. Rosh Chodesh demonstrates that there can be renewal. There can be a new moon. The moon returns. It can get bigger.

This is why Chanukah is connected with Rosh Chodesh. The whole theme of Chanukah is that the Jewish people's relationship with G-d slackened; but then they came back and the relationship was fully renewed its previous level.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, WA
DavidATwersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 353, Chanukah And Hiddur Mitzvah. Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc. 122 Slade Avenue, (410) 602-1350 Baltimore, MD 21208

From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Date: Wed 12/04/2002
Subject: Rabbi Mordechai Willig - Compromise
http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2002/parsha/rwil_miketz.html
TorahWeb
RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG
COMPROMISE

"One who blesses a compromiser, such as Yehuda, is a blasphemer" (Sanhedrin 6b). The Meshech Chochma (37:26) suggests that the sons of Bilha and Zilpa did not wish to kill Yosef (see Rashi 37:2), while the four sons of Leah who were present at the time (Reuven was absent) did. Yehuda was the deciding vote. Had Yehuda insisted that Yosef be returned safely to Yaakov, he would have prevailed by a five to four vote. In this context, compromise is indeed reprehensible.

Many years after the sale of Yosef, another compromise was proposed. When accused of stealing Yosef's royal cup, the brothers agreed that if the cup was found in their possession, the one found to have stolen the cup shall die, and they would all be slaves to Yosef (44:9). After the cup is found in Binyamin's bag, Yosef states that Binyamin will be a slave, and the brothers are free to leave (44:17). Under the circumstances, this compromise seems reasonable. Yet, Yehuda forcefully rejects this arrangement, insists that Binyamin be released, and offers himself as a slave instead (44:33). Furthermore, Yehuda threatens Yosef (Rashi 44:18), and is undeterred by the risk of his aggressive posture (see Rashi 42:14). This refusal to accept Binyamin's servitude represents Yehuda's teshuva for his earlier blasphemous compromise.

Still another compromise is presented to the brothers as they are about to bury Yaakov. Esav claims that the available grave in Ma'aras Hamachpelah is his, and denies that Yaakov purchased it from him. After negotiations, the brothers agree to postpone the burial until Naftali returns from Mitzrayim with the deed. Chushim, Dan's deaf son, is enraged at the disgrace to his grandfather's body and kills Esav (Sotah 13a).

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz (Sichos Mussar, 5733 ? 6) explains that the brothers were gradually entrapped into negotiations and compromise, and were therefore insensitive to the disgrace of their father's remains. Only Chushim, who couldn't hear the give and take, but was suddenly confronted with the reality of the

situation, responded to Esav's preposterous position and the resulting disgrace of Yaakov's body, and acted accordingly. However, according to the Yerushalmi (Kesubos 1:5, see Shita Mekubetzes 7b), it was Yehuda who killed Esav when he prevented the burial of Yaakov. Once again, Yehuda rejects a compromise, even at the risk of Esav killing him in self-defense, and at the cost of subsequent hostilities by Esav's descendants against Yehuda's (ibid). This completes his teshuva for the earlier ill-advised compromise.

II

When the Jewish people gathered around Aharon Hakohen and demanded that he make gods for them, he compromised and acceded to their request, resulting in the creation of the Eigel Hazahav (Golden Calf). He did so either to avoid worse consequences if he would be killed (Sanhedrin 7a, see Rashi), or to stall in the hope that Moshe would quickly return (Shemos 32:1-5, see Rashi). This compromise, like Yehuda's, is deemed blasphemous (Tosafos, though, disagrees with this understanding). Aharon incurred Hashem's wrath, and was severely punished (Devarim 9:20, see Rashi). Perhaps the tikkun (correction) for Aharon's compromise was the uncompromising heroism of his descendants. Pinchas risked his life to zealously destroy a public sinner (Bamidbar 25:7-15, Sanhedrin 82). And Matisyahu, following this example, rejected the blandishments of King Antiochus, and killed a public sinner as well as the king's emissaries (Macabees I). His subsequent call of "Mi Lashem Elai" ("whoever if to Hashem join me") echoed Moshe's response to the sin of the Golden Calf allowed by Aharon (Shemos 32:26). And the rest is history, i.e. the story of Chanukah.

Sometimes even silence is a punishable compromise. When Paroh plotted to outsmart Am Yisroel and thereby destroy them (Shemos 1:10, see Ramban), he consulted three advisors. Bilam, who advised him, was ultimately killed. Yisro fled, and was rewarded. Iyov was silent, and was sentenced to terribly painful and agonizing suffering (yissurim) (Sotah 11a). Iyov's compromise seems reasonable. After all, his protest would not accomplish anything. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz (Sichos Mussar, 5733-5) interprets that Iyov's silence reflected insensitivity. When one is in pain, he cries out even though the cry accomplishes nothing. For not feeling the pain of others, Iyov was sentenced to pain that would cause him to cry out.

On Chanukah, we read the story of Yosef and his brothers. We are reminded that compromise, a laudable and critical approach, can sometimes be blasphemous. Adherence to principle occasionally demands uncompromising defiance, even when there are risks and/or consequences. Even silence, the best of all attributes (see Avos 1:17) is not always appropriate.

There is a time for everything, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time for war and a time for peace (Koheles 3:1,7,8). As we have seen above, there is much room for error when deciding whether a given time demands that one compromise or stand on principle. May our Torah leaders be given the insight to correctly determine what time it is, and may we be given the strength to follow proper Torah leadership.

RABBI BEREL WEIN

From: RabbiWein@JewishDestiny.com Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2002 Subject: Rabbi Wein's Weekly Columns
Parsha Archive December 6, 2002 Parshas Miketz

The Torah reading of Miketz traditionally marches in lock step with the holiday of Chanuka so that it is almost always read on the Shabat of Chanuka. Since Jews know that there are no coincidences in Jewish tradition and life, it must therefore follow

that there is a deep and lasting connection between the Torah reading of Miketz and the holiday of Chanuka. I have always felt that one of the connections between Miketz and Chanuka lies in the willingness to be unpopular in the present in order to be judged correct in the future.

In the Torah reading of Miketz, Yosef interprets Pharaoh's dream in an accurate, truthful, and prophetic but basically critical and unflattering fashion. He tells Pharaoh that there will be a horrid famine and that the Egyptian authorities are unprepared for it. Pharaoh's own rule will be threatened unless he changes his governmental policies, prepares adequately for the future, and does not squander the prosperity of the present and immediate future. It is in the nature of all governments to sacrifice the tomorrow for the today, to turn a blind eye to the future and bask in the glory of the apparent successes of the here and now.

Pharaoh had many advisers that attempted to interpret his troubling dreams. But unlike Yosef, they were sycophants, who only fawned on the monarch's vanity and told him nothing that would affect his governmental policies. They told him that all the disasters were not because of him, they said they were not preventable and weren't his fault. But Pharaoh himself is untouched by his advisers' interpretations. Only Yosef, imprisoned and alien, dares tell him the unpopular truth, the politically incorrect but accurate interpretation of the dreams that so haunt the Pharaoh and give him no rest, neither in the day or in the night. But it is that truth, unpleasant and unwelcome, that will save Pharaoh's throne and Egypt itself.

Chanuka essentially repeats the same message - of telling and facing the unpopular truth in Jewish life and history. The Syrian Greeks possessed an attractive and civilized culture. The Jews, with their old-fashioned rituals and strait-laced Torah morality, appeared primitive and backward in comparison with the Syrian Greeks and their life-style. Tens of thousands of Jews defected to the side of the Syrian Greeks and became Hellenists. And they demanded that the Jews who remained loyal to the Torah and values of their ancestors not only accept them as Hellenists, but also agree that they were the ones to lead the Jewish people into that brave, new Greek world. They were not willing to face the awful truth that Hellenizing Jews would eventually mean the destruction of the Jewish people and Torah Judaism.

A small band of Jews, the family of the Chashmonaim, not only fought the Syrian Greeks, liberated the holy Temple and rekindled its menorah - the symbol of Torah purity, but perhaps, even more importantly, they told the truth to the Jewish people - the unpleasant, politically incorrect, jarring, divisive, intolerant truth. They stated that you cannot have a Jewish people composed of non-Jews, no matter how nice and fine people those individuals may be. Judaism without a Sabbath or true Jewish ritual and one that refuses to make the hard and necessary Jewish demands on its constituency will not contribute to Jewish growth. A Jewish community that does not give its young an intensive Jewish education, but willingly, almost desperately, spends its talent and wealth pursuing general social projects that change with the constantly varying popular perceptions of society will not ensure Jewish survival.

The difficulties of the Jewish future, which are now already apparent to all thinking Jews, are foolishly and irresponsibly ignored and their solutions sacrificed to the comfort and false unity of the present. That was not the way of Yosef or of the Chashmonaim.

Good Shabbos and Happy Chanuka Rabbi Berel Wein

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2001/moadim/rtw_e_chanukah.html

TorahWeb [from last year]

RABBI MAYER TWERSKY

CHANUKAH: A TIME OF RENEWAL

The parshios of Vayeshev and Miketz, wherein Yosef HaTzadik looms as the central figure, provide the kerias hatarah backdrop for the yom tov of Chanukah. We must separately analyze the yom tov of Chanukah and the religious persona of Yosef HaTzadik in order to appreciate the significance of this calendrical synthesis. What follows is but a brief, incomplete attempt at these analyses. Nonetheless, it is hoped that an appreciation of the aforementioned synthesis will be forthcoming.

The yom tov of Chanukah always encompasses rosh chodesh. This is not simply a calendrical coincidence or inevitability. The timing of the miracle of Chanukah was divinely ordained, and accordingly the timing of the yom tov of Chanukah was indirectly divinely dictated. Rather, the calendrical coincidence reflects a conceptual nexus. Rosh Chodesh marks the renewal of the lunar cycle, and as such is a model of renewal (hischadshus). Similarly, Chanukah commemorates the rededication of the Beis HaMikdash and as such it too is a yom tov of renewal.

In truth, hischadshus is a daily, miraculous occurrence. Hakadosh Baruch Hu is "mechadesh b'tuvo bechol yom tamid maaseh bereishis"; "He, in His goodness, every day continuously renews the work of creation". Each of us individually is considered a beriah chadashah each day. This ontological renewal, according to Rash"ba, forms the basis of our obligation to wash netilas yadayim and recite Birchos HaShachar each day upon awakening. Nonetheless, while each day is informed by hischadshus, the yom tov of Chanukah is dedicated to renewal. Chanukah is a yom tov of hischadshus, and as such the days of Chanukah are especially conducive to cultivating our capacity for self-renewal. This is the avodah of Chanukah.

[Chanukah, with respect to its avodah resembles other yomim tovim. For instance, Pesach is a yom tov of emunah. Obviously, this depiction of Pesach does not suggest that the mitzvah of emunah is restricted to Pesach. Rather, it indicates that this permanent component of avodas Hashem is stressed even more than usual on Pesach and accordingly, this yom tov is especially conducive to cultivating and deepening our emunah. The same holds true for the yom tov of Chanukah vis-à-vis the quality of hischadshus.]

How does our capacity for hischadshus manifest itself? First of all, exercising our capacity for hischadshus allows us to live, happily and successfully, in the present. Let us clarify this point. Without the capacity for hischadshus, the burdensome past, abounding with errors and blunders, wasted time and squandered opportunities, would overwhelm us. It would be nigh impossible for a religiously sensitive person to ward off depression. "What could have been? What I should have done..." The questions are endless, and their ramifications could have been shocking and shackling. Indeed, the failure to exercise the koach of hischadshus is one cause of depression when one is trapped in the mire of the past.

The capacity for hischadshus, however, while allowing us to productively dwell on the past long enough to recognize and regret our misdeeds, enables us to repent and immerse ourselves in the present; to be sustained and even enthralled by today's accomplishments. We have a remarkable capacity for self-renewal and regeneration (i.e., teshuvah) and an equally remarkable capacity to live in and enjoy the renewed present.

The second manifestation of our koach hischadshus is the ability to persevere in the face of adversity. This too is a vital, indispensable quality because most, if not all, people encounter some type of turbulence ? personal, professional, financial, spiritual, etc. - during their lives. Such periods of turbulence can be protracted. Lacking the capacity for self-renewal and regeneration, one would have become enervated, gradually but inexorably sapped of his strength, both physical and spiritual. Sadly, we are all too familiar with the consequences when the koach hischadshus is not utilized. God forbid, one's emunah and will to live gradually erode. The koach hischadshus, when exercised, allows us to persevere and prevail, steadfast in our faith and forever optimistic. "Gam ki yiktileni lo ayacheil."

Finally, the capacity for hischadshus is critical in the realm of talmud Torah. The ability to discover and formulate chidushei Torah which is essential to the entire endeavor of talmud Torah and masorah is but a component of the broader capacity of hischadshus.

In light of the above subsumption of koach hachidush in Torah as part of the broader koach hischadshus, we can now recognize that the foregoing depiction of Chanukah as a yom tov of hischadshus encompasses the well-known identification of Chanukah as a yom tov of Torah Shebaal Peh because Torah Shebaal Peh is distinguished from Torah Shebichsav and characterized by its capacity for chidush.

Having surveyed the crucial role of hischadshus within our lives, two fundamental questions remain. What is the source of this remarkable miraculous capacity? How do we tap this source so as to cultivate this vital capacity? The answer is provided by Shlomo HaMelech who writes in Megilas Koheles that, "there is nothing new under the sun". Mundane pursuits, when not elevated by the impulse and goal of l'sheim shomayim, are not new. Whatever novelty one initially experiences in mundane matters eventually wears off, together with its attendant joy, enjoyment and excitement. Even the routine of the fabulously rich, undoubtedly the object of jealousy to others less fortunate, becomes stultifying. This too is a phenomenon all too readily observable. People abandon successful careers or hazard risky investments in an attempt to generate excitement. In their pursuit of pleasure, people literally risk life and limb because they are plagued by the ennui resulting from the fact that "there is nothing new under the sun". However, as noted by Chazal, Torah is above time; it preceded and hence transcends time and is thus forever new (as is HaKadosh Baruch Hu himself, and "kudsha brich hu v'oraysa chad hu") and accordingly the source for hischadshus. When one immerses himself in Torah and mitzvos, and elevates his otherwise mundane pursuits by the impulse and goal of l'sheim shomayim, one draws from the wellsprings of hischadshus.

This was the middah of Yosef HaTzadik. When Yaakov charges Yosef with the fateful task of going to his brothers, Yosef responds "hinei". Rashi comments that this reflects zrius, alacrity. Alacrity flows from koach hischadshus. Throughout his years of suffering and imprisonments, Yosef does not despair. He perseveres. His own tragic plight and suffering notwithstanding, he remains sensitive to the plight of others, as evidenced by his concern for the sar hamashkim and sar haofim. This perseverance is also a manifestation of the capacity for hischadshus. And throughout his odyssey Yosef HaTzadik was sustained by the Torah he learned from Yaakov (he remembered exactly where their last lesson had ended!), Talmud Torah being both a source and manifestation of hischadshus. Hence the parshiyos of VaYeishev and Miketz ? i.e., the parshiyos of Yosef ? provide the krias HaTorah backdrop for Chanukah.

From: ohr [ohr@ohr.edu] Sent: Monday, December 02, 2002 3:00 AM To: weekly@ohr.edu Subject: Torah Weekly - Parshat Mikeitz * TORAH WEEKLY * from Ohr Somayach | www.ohr.edu

Highlights of the weekly Torah portion
Parshat Mikeitz For the week ending 7 December 2002 / 2
Tevet 5763

Sponsored by the Kof-K Kosher Supervision www.kof-k.org | info@kof-k.org

Raiders of the Lost Ark "Yet the chamberlain of the cup bearers did not remember Yosef, but forgot him." (40:23)

"Raiders Of The Lost Ark" was one of the biggest box-office hits of all-time. As the title suggests, the story centers on the Lost Ark, which is none other than the Holy Ark that Moshe constructed to house the original Torah and the tablets of the Ten Commandments. During the movie's climax, the villain garbs himself in the vestments of the Kohen Gadol High Priest as he battles with the movie's hero, Indiana Jones.

Truth, as they say, is stranger than fiction, for there is fascinating real-life connection between the Jewish People and Indiana Jones.

In 1911, Hiram Bingham III discovered the legendary Inca city of Macchu Picchu in Peru. Indiana Jones, the hero of "Raiders of the Lost Ark" was patterned after Hiram Bingham. Hiram had a son called, not very imaginatively, Hiram Bingham IV.

A few months ago, the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, gave a posthumous award for "constructive dissent" to Hiram (or Harry) Bingham IV. For over fifty years, the State Department resisted any attempt to honor Bingham. To them, he was an insubordinate member of the U.S. diplomatic service, a dangerous maverick who was eventually demoted. Now, after his death, he has been officially recognized as a hero.

In 1939, Bingham was posted to Marseille, France as American Vice-Consul. The U.S.A. was then neutral and, not wishing to annoy Marshal Petain's puppet Vichy regime, Roosevelt's government ordered its representatives in Marseille not to grant visas to Jews. Bingham decided this was immoral and, putting his conscience before his career, did everything in his power to undermine the official US foreign policy.

In defiance of his bosses in Washington, he granted over 2,500 U.S. visas to Jewish and other refugees, including the artists Marc Chagall and Max Ernst, and the family of the writer Thomas Mann. He sheltered Jews in his Marseille home and obtained forged identity papers to help others in their dangerous journeys across Europe.

He worked with the French underground to smuggle Jews out of France into Franco's Spain or across the Mediterranean. He even contributed to their expenses out of his own pocket.

By 1941 Washington had lost patience with Bingham. He was sent to Argentina. After the war, to the continued annoyance of his superiors, he reported on the movements of Nazi war criminals.

Not unsurprisingly, eventually he was forced out of the American diplomatic service completely.

Bingham died almost penniless in 1988. Little was known of his extraordinary activities until his son found a series of letters in his father's belongings after his death.

Subsequently many groups and organizations, including the United Nations and the State of Israel, honored Bingham.

Bingham is like a candle in the dark.

Many are the stories from the Spanish Inquisition onward of Jews who gave away their fortunes to sea captains on the promise of safety, only to find themselves robbed and betrayed by those whom they trusted. Change the year to 1940, and the same story could be repeated with equally chilling results in Nazi Europe.

"Yet the Chamberlain of the Cup bearers did not remember Yosef, but forgot him."

If the chamberlain "did not remember" Yosef, why did the Torah also write "but forgot him"? Rashi comments that the chamberlain "did not remember" him that same day, and subsequently he also "forgot him."

One could perhaps forgive the chamberlain for forgetting Yosef on the day of his release. It's human nature to be so overjoyed at escaping the purgatory of prison that you forget your benefactor. However, when the excitement had died down, why didn't the chamberlain keep his promise to Yosef?

This classic ingratitude echoes to us down the ages; in Spain, in Europe, in Russia, in the Arab lands.

When we find a Hiram Bingham, we should proclaim his kindness to the hills.

Sources: Jill Sinclair

Written and compiled by RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR <http://ohr.edu> (C) 2002 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved. At Ohr Somayach/Tanenbaum College in Jerusalem, students explore their heritage under the guidance of today's top Jewish educators. For information, please write to info@ohr.edu or visit www.ohr.edu

RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List [parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il] Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2002 4:44 AM To: Shabbat_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il Subject: Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Miketz and Hanukkah

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Miketz (Genesis 41:1 - 44:17) and Hanukkah By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - This last Shabbat of Hanukkah ? this year we are treated to two Sabbaths of Hanukkah ? is especially beautiful and festive, with the eight Hanukkah menorah lights joined to the regular Sabbath candle-lights to emblazon the Friday evening meal with the warmth of extra fire and the illumination of extra lights. I would like to take this special opportunity to further analyze the significance of the fire-light by attempting to understand the real muscle of Hanukkah within the context of its relationship to the Sabbath Torah readings of Joseph and his brothers.

The most fundamental question we must ponder is the true nature of the miracle of Hanukkah ? what was it and why was it! The *ra haNissim* (lit. *for the miracles*) prayer which serves as an addendum to the Modim (thanksgiving) blessing of the Amidah throughout the festival of Hanukkah, explains: *In the days of Mattathias the son of Yohanan High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked kingship of the Greek-Syrians rose up against Your nation Israel to cause them to forget Your Torah and to abrogate the laws of Your will, You, in Your many mercies stood up for them in the time of their pain, You battled their battles You gave over the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many in the hands of the few . For Your nation Israel You effected a great salvation and redemption at that time x It is indubitably clear from the perspective of this prayer ? and the Men of the Great Assembly who presumably composed it ? that the miracle of Hanukkah is the military victory of the few, valiant Judeans against the multitude of cruel Greek-Syrians.*

There is, however, another source, first found in the late, Tanaic Megillat Taanit, and then cited by the Babylonian Talmud,

which emphasizes an altogether different miracle ? not even mentioned in the *Al HaNissim* Prayer: *What is Hanukkah? As our Sages taught, x when the Greek-Syrians entered the Temple, they defiled all of the oils. And when the Kingdom of the Hasmonean House became great and conquered them, they investigated and found only one cruse of oil which was left with the seal of the High Priest; there was only enough oil (in the cruse) to kindle (the menorah) for one day. A miracle occurred, and they kindled the lights from that cruse for eight days x (B.T. Shabbat 21b). Apparently the Sages of this document understood the miracle to have been the supernatural feat of a cruse of oil sufficient for one day lasting for eight days ? the amount of time necessary to produce more pure oil, according to Maimonides. Which was the real miracle of Hanukkah? And if both, why did the Almighty have to do the second miracle at all? The military victory was sufficient to restore Israeli sovereignty, and the Hasmoneans could have waited eight days to secure new oil and then begin to light the menorah! Moreover, it was technically permissible to use *defiled* oil if no other opportunity presented itself, since Gentiles are not empowered to make our sacred objects prohibited from use (Rabbeinu Zerahai HaLevi, the Baal HaMaOr - B.T Avodah Zarah 52b, Rit 24a).*

In order to understand the significance of both miracles, let us re-visit a fundamental dispute concerning the proper manner of kindling the hanukiah: Bet Shammai maintains that we are to begin with eight lights on the first evening and go down to one on the last evening, while Bet Hillel argues that we begin with one and go up to eight. Rav Yosef Zevin ז"ל, Sage of Jerusalem, suggests that the basis of the disagreement is what we are kindling, *ur*, fire, or *ohr*, light: according to Bet Shammai the main struggle ? and miraculous victory ? was against an implacable enemy who wished to destroy us, and we had to counter fire with fire (*You shall destroy with fire the evil within you x it is the way of fire to begin with a great blaze and then diminish as it devours whatever is in its midst (hence, eight to one). According to Bet Hillel, the main struggle - and miraculous victory ? was against the false ideology of Hellenism, and pagan ideas can only be successfully countered by the light of Torah Knowledge (for a candle is commandment, and Torah is light x knowledge is cumulative and develops as text is joined to text, as idea is built upon idea (hence, one to eight).*

I would add that perhaps the real difference of opinion between the *giant* academies is not based so much on what we are kindling as it is against whom we are kindling ? because the Hasmonean ? Maccabees were fighting against two destructive enemies. According to the Apocryphal Books of Maccabees and the historian Josephus, the battle of Hanukkah was initially waged by the more traditional Kohanim - Priests, joined by the masses of pious Jews, against the hellenistic, assimilated, upper-class ruling priests, who wished to turn Jerusalem into a Greek *polis* (city ?state), and the Temple into a pagan curatorium. It began in actuality as a civil war of Jew against Jews ? a phenomenon which later generations wished to underplay and even *push* under the rug, x fearing that such internecine religious warfare might become a model for future generations. The Torah readings during Hanukkah, which recount the tragedy of brotherly hatred among the sons of Israel, only serve to highlight the destructive force of internal Jewish strife! Hence the miracle of the single cruse of oil wrested from all of the other vials which had been defiled by Hellenist priests, emphasizes the religious symbol of the menorah as the sacred object of Festival commemoration and *high-lights* the light of education rather than the fire of destruction. When Jew attempts to influence Jew, he must use Torah rather than terror, (*the candle is commandment and Torah*

is light), education rather than coercion, illumination rather than legislation.

Historically speaking, when the upper-crust, assimilated, Hellenist Jews saw they were losing on the battle-field to the same pious Maccabees, they called upon the Greek-Syrians, with all the might of their powerful and numerous army, to come to their aid ? promising that a Judea purged of primitive monotheistic rituals would then become a worthy satrap of Greek-Syria in her rivalry against Greek-Egypt. Miraculously, the Maccabees won against the Greek-Syrians as well ? and this miracle and victory is commemorated in the $\text{נא} \text{ל} \text{חא} \text{נ} \text{י} \text{ס} \text{י} \text{מ}$ prayer. When fighting against a foreign enemy hell-bent on our physical destruction, we must use whatever weapons of force we can garner in order to vanquish the oppressors and re-establish our freedom and sovereignty.

Shabbat Shalom and Hanukkah Sameach.

You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot on the web at:
<http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm>

Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and Graduate Programs Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chancellor Rabbi Chaim Brovender, Dean To subscribe, E-mail to:
<Shabbat_Shalom-on@ohrtorahstone.org.il>

RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG From: tsc@bezeqint.net Sent: Thursday, December 05, 2002 [par-new]Parshat Miketz - shiur Mazel Tov to Reena & Paul Schindman (my sister and brother in law) upon the birth of a baby boy last night in Yerushalayim. This week's shiur on Parshat Miketz is dedicated by * the Ruimy family in loving memory of Joseph Ruimy ben Habiba z"l, who passed away the 3 Tevet 5761. and * the Agus family in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Chana Bas Menachem Mendel Yitzchak A"H / 4 Tevet 5756 THE TANACH STUDY CENTER [<http://www.tanach.org>] In Memory of Rabbi Abraham Leibtag Shiurim in Chumash & Navi by Menachem Leibtag

PARSHAT MIKETZ

DOES YOSEF HAVE A PLAN?

He was certainly planning [a way out of jail] when he interpreted the dream of the "sar ha'Mashkim" (see 40:13-15). He was definitely planning [his own 'political appointment'] when he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams (see 41:33-36!). Clearly, Yosef was not only a dreamer; he was also a 'master planner'. But what was his plan when he: accused his brothers of being spies, returned their money, and hid his cup in Binyamin's bag, etc.? What he simply 'teasing' his brothers - in revenge; or did he have a more altruistic motive? As the Torah never reveals that motive, answering this question requires a lot of detective work. In the following shiur, we attempt to piece this puzzle together by weaving together some of the theories presented by earlier commentators (then adding a little touch of our own).

INTRODUCTION Before we begin our study, a point of methodology in regard to what allows us to search for an underlying motive behind Yosef's behavior. As Chumash is a book of "nevuah" [prophecy], and not simply an historical chronicle, we assume that its stories carry a prophetic message. Certainly, commentators can argue in regard to the precise message that should be derived from each story, and how to arrive [and who can arrive] at any conclusion. Nonetheless, all concur that Chumash should be studied in search for its prophetic lesson(s). This does not imply that we must assume that every action taken by our forefathers was altruistic. However, it does imply that if the Torah records a certain set of events, that they were written for the purpose that we study its detail in search of a significant message. With this in mind, we begin our study of the famous story of Yosef and his brothers.

WHY YOSEF DOESN'T WRITE HOME The first commentator to suggest a comprehensive approach that can explain all of Yosef's actions was Ramban. Before we discuss his approach, let's first explain his question. Considering Yosef's very close relationship with his father [recall that he was Yaakov's "ben zkunim" - see 37:3], one would have expected that he make every possible attempt to contact his father. Yet, even after his appointment as head servant of the House of Potiphar, and later as the Commissioner of Egypt, (second only to Pharaoh /see 41:44), Yosef makes no effort to inform his father that he is alive and well. Does Yosef no longer care for his father who loved him so dearly and now grieves for his lost son? Has he wiped his past from his memory? To answer this question, Ramban (see his commentary to 42:9) suggests that Yosef's actions were motivated by his aspiration to ensure the fulfillment of his dreams. According to Ramban, Yosef understood that his slavery, and his entire predicament in Egypt, was part of a Divine plan to ensure that his childhood dreams would come true. He also understood (for some reason) that for this to happen, he could not contact his family. And when necessary, he would even 'plan ahead' to help his dreams along. Ramban's interpretation beautifully explains Yosef's first plan [i.e. accusing his brothers as spies] - as its goal was to force the brothers to bring Binyamin, so that ALL the brothers would bow down to him. This would enable the fulfillment of his first dream - of the sheaves bowing down to him in the field. His second plan [i.e. hiding his cup in Binyamin's bag] was to force them to bring his father as well - to fulfill his second dream - the sun and moon and stars bowing down - while protecting Binyamin in the interim (from potential injury by his brothers). In this manner, Ramban explains why Yosef did not write home: "For had it not been for this (need to fulfill his dreams), Yosef would have committed a terrible sin to cause his father such grief and make him spend so many years in sorrow..." [See Ramban on 42:9, read carefully.]

According to Ramban, the need to fulfill his dreams 'allowed' Yosef to treat his father and brothers in such a cruel manner.

FULFILLING 'DREAMS' OR 'HALACHA'? In case you found something 'bothersome' about Ramban's approach, don't feel bad. Later commentators take issue with this conclusion that it would be permissible to cause other people terrible grief, just to make sure a 'dream comes true'. [See Nechama Leibowitz on Sefer Breishit who quotes various sources in this regard and deals with this issue in depth.]

This question leads Abravanel to suggest a very different approach. He agrees (like Ramban) that Yosef had a 'master plan', however, he disagrees as to its goal. Abravanel contends that Yosef's strategy was 'master plan' to bring his brothers towards repentance for their terrible deeds. Although he planned to ultimately 'reveal' himself; before doing so, he wanted to make sure that they had performed proper "teshuva". Abravanel's approach neatly explains just about all of Yosef's actions - which certainly caused his brothers to repent (see 42:21 & 44:16). However, it is not so clear why the goal of 'helping' his brothers perform "teshuva" would allow Yosef to cause his father continued grief. [We'll return to this question later in our shiur.] Furthermore, Abravanel's interpretation only explains Yosef's behavior after his brothers arrived to buy food; but it does not explain why Yosef did not contact his father for some twenty years beforehand!

DREAMS REMEMBERED, OR FORGOTTEN? Up until this point, our shiur has focused on the search for a single motive that would explain Yosef's behavior both before his brothers arrived and beforehand. In other words, we must search for one explanation for Yosef's behavior [i.e. why he doesn't contact

his father] during the twenty years before his brothers arrive; and a different explanation for his various actions after they arrive [i.e. when he begins his accusations and 'tricks'].

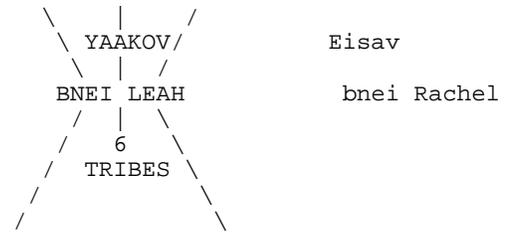
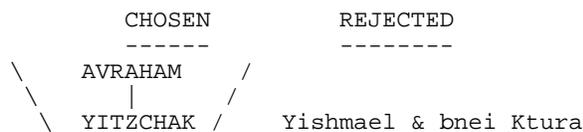
One could suggest that Yosef had 'forgotten' his dreams - an approach exactly the opposite of Ramban's! It is only after his brothers bowed down some twenty years later (when they came to buy food) - that he suddenly 'remembered' his childhood dreams. [Review 42:9 in its context to verify this point! [Note Rashi on 42:9 as well!]]

YOSEF 'HAD' A DREAM If our assumption is correct, then the simplest explanation for Yosef not contacting home would be a more 'realistic' one. Let's consider Yosef's predicament. First of all, why would Yosef want to contact (or ever see) his brothers again? Did they not just plot to kill him; then they threw him in a pit and sold him into slavery! Why should Yosef contact his brothers - especially once he attained a reputable position in Egyptian society! [Recall as well how the Egyptians looked down at 'transients' from Canaan /see 43:32.] In regard to his father, and his brother Binyamin; one could suggest that his love for them was not strong enough to overcome his despise for the rest of his family. Furthermore, recall that Yaakov was about 110 years old when Yosef was sold. Yosef probably assumed that his father had died (or soon would / note 43:7&45:3!). Binyamin may have met a similar fate as his own. Hence, the slight chance that his father was still alive was simply not worth the price of returning to deal with his brothers. [That is definitely an understandable reaction for a 17 year old.]

A more sophisticated approach to explain why Yosef didn't write home, is presented by Rav Yoel Bin Nun [in an article in Megadim Vol. I /a publication of the Herzog Teachers Institute]. In that article, Rav Yoel posits that Yosef had no idea that his father believed he was dead. Quite the opposite - Yosef assumed that his father would find out that he was sold (i.e. someone would 'snitch'), and hence expected that his father would demand that the brothers trace his whereabouts and come to his rescue! After all, the Yishmaelim [distant "mishpacha"] were international traders who traveled quite often between Eretz Canaan and Egypt. Surely, Yosef hoped, his family would come to his rescue. In fact, Yosef had no idea that the brothers tricked their father with the blood-stained coat., and hence, had no idea that his father presumed that he had been killed by a wild animal.

However, many months pass and no one shows. Yosef's hopes were replaced by a feeling of rejection. After several months (or years), he gradually reached the conclusion that he must have been 'rejected' from the family [and maybe from the entire "bechira" process]. His dreams are forgotten, and reluctantly, he accepted his new fate.

REJECTED FROM THE BECHIRA PROCESS Slowly, Yosef comes to the realization that there may have been some divine decree that Yosef is rejected, and only Leah's children [and not Rachel's] had been 'chosen.' Rachel, as her premature death may have indicated, had not attained the same matriarchal status as Sarah and Rivka. Yosef, convinced that his family has abandoned him, accepts this fate and decides to lead his own life. Just as Eisav established himself in Edom, Yosef will make a name for himself in Egypt. He can even bring the name of God into society in his own way, despite not being part of the Chosen Nation. The following chart reflects what may have been Yosef's perception of the outcome of the "bechira" process (based on his original 'misunderstanding'):



This tragic misunderstanding can explain why Yosef, even after rising to power, never contacted his family. Now we must consider the second stage, i.e. an explanation for Yosef's behavior after his brothers arrive to buy food.

YOSEF HAS A PLAN After spending years under the assumption that he has been 'rejected' - everything changes when Yosef sees his brothers among the many who came down to Egypt to buy grain. As they bow down before him, Yosef suddenly 'remembers' his long forgotten dreams (see 42:9), for they just appeared to come true! Should Yosef dismiss this as pure coincidence, or should this partial fulfillment of his childhood dreams lead him to reconsider his earlier conclusions? Its understandable why Yosef doesn't immediately reveal himself. He needs some time. But, if he simply wanted to hide his identity from them, he could have simply ignored them. [Surely, Yosef did not entertain every foreigner who came to purchase food.] But why does Yosef accuse his brothers of being spies? Why does he return their money? Later, when they come back, why does he plant his special cup in Binyamin's bag? Certainly, it appears to be more than random 'teasing' - to 'get back' at his brothers. Yosef has a strategy, and his actions suggest that he has some sort of 'master plan,' but it is not so clear what that master plan is.

In his article, Rav Bin Nun explains Yosef's 'plan' as an attempt to determine what had happened to Binyamin. The fact that Binyamin was not with the brothers the first time they came to Egypt supports his suspicion that Bnei Rachel had been rejected. Therefore, his primary goal is to find out if Binyamin is still alive. If Binyamin is indeed alive, then Yosef could question him concerning what 'really' happened in the family, and afterward possibly re-unite with his family. On the other hand, if Binyamin never shows (and hence probably not alive), Yosef would remain incognito - preferring never to reunite with his brothers. [This can explain why Yosef accuses his brothers of being spies. The 'spy accusation' allows Yosef to question them concerning their family roots etc., without raising their suspicion that he may be their brother.]

Although Rav Yoel's explanation flows nicely from the above presentation, it does not explain every detail of Yosef's behavior once Binyamin does arrive. After all, once Binyamin comes, why doesn't Yosef simply take him aside and question him. If Yosef only needs to determine what really happened in the "bechira" process, what point is there in planting his cup in Binyamin's bag? Surely, one cannot remain oblivious to Yosef's obvious attempt to create a situation that prompts the brothers to repent (as Avrabanel explains so beautifully). On the other hand, one must also explain why Yosef returns their money, and why he seats them in order of their birth, etc. These acts seem to be more of a 'tease' than an impetus for them to do "teshuva" (repentance). What is Yosef's intention in all of this? Furthermore, if his goal, as Avrabanel explains, is only to cause his brothers to repent, then his 'second' plan seems unnecessary - after all, they had already shown remorse for their sin at the first encounter. Recall their initial remorse, that Yosef himself overheard them saying: "Alas we are GUILTY, for we heard his crying out [when he was thrown in the pit], but we did not listen ... therefore this fate has befallen us..." (See 42:21-23)

And if that was not enough, then Yehuda's plea and admission of guilt (see 44:16) certainly would have sufficed. Finally, if Abravanel's contention is correct, who gives Yosef the right to 'test' his brothers to see if they have repented? Is Yosef allowed to play God? Is he permitted to tease, trick, and confuse others - in order to awaken their soul? And even if so, does this justify causing his father further aggravation?

PLAYING 'GOD' OR PLAYING 'MAN' One could suggest the following scenario - that would explain Yosef's behavior as well as his motives. Even though Yosef may have forgotten his dreams for some twenty years, when his brothers arrive in Egypt and bow down to him - everything changes! Totally shocked by what he sees or it suddenly dawns upon him that his childhood dreams may actually be coming true after all. Maybe he wasn't rejected? Maybe, his conclusions regarding his family were all wrong? On the other hand, Binyamin is not with them. But, if Binyamin is still alive and part of the family - as his brothers now claim, then maybe the children of Rachel are indeed included in the "bechira" process! At this point, Yosef does not only remember his dreams, he understands their purpose - for they help him chart a course of action. [Recall that Yosef has already become an 'expert' at dream interpretation!] To Yosef, his 'brothers bowing down' now means that he is not only included in the "bechira" process - he is destined to assume family leadership. So what should he do? First, let's explain what he can't do. Imagine what would have happened had Yosef revealed his identity immediately, as soon as he recognized his brothers! They would have 'melted' on the spot. How could they have faced him, talk to him? The shame of their relationship would have created an eternal barrier. They would never be able to speak to him, let alone work together as a family.

As family 'leader' - Yosef now recognizes his responsibility to keep the 'chosen' family united and cohesive. Yosef's plan is simple -he must plan a strategy that would reunite the family - to bond them both physically and spiritually. Yosef does not need to play GOD, to ensure that his brothers repent - that would be their own responsibility. Yosef, however, does have to play LEADER. Yosef's conceives a plan to facilitate family unity - to enable his brothers to 'redeem themselves'! But, to accomplish this, he must put them through a difficult test: After procuring the minimal information that he needs by his 'spies' accusation (see 42:7-10 AND 43:7!), he decides to create a situation where the brothers must choose if they are willing to forfeit their own lives - in order to save Binyamin. Indeed, this plan may cause his father a few extra weeks of suffering. But Yosef must restrain his emotions, for what he hopes will be short time - in order to create a situation of true family unity. [If they pass this 'test', it will be much easier for them to face one another, for they will have proven to themselves that they are worthy family members.] Therefore, Yosef's keeps Shimon in jail, to ensure that his brothers will bring Binyamin. Once Binyamin will come, Yosef plans the big 'set up' - where he will plant his cup in Binyamin's bag, thus giving a chance for his brothers to prove themselves (as they so well do). While doing so, Yosef does many other things to make the brothers wonder and think - to shake them up a bit [what we call "cheshbon ha'nefesh".] But by planting his cup in Binyamin's bag, Yosef provides his brothers with an opportunity to PROVE TO THEMSELVES that they have done "teshuva"! Only after they demonstrate their willingness to give up their own lives for Binyamin will they be able to face themselves, and Yosef - and unite as a cohesive family - to take on the challenges that lay in the future. It could be that according to Yosef's original plan, he may have wanted to 'push' his brothers even a bit farther. But at the beginning of Parshat Vayigash, when he hears Yehuda's petition concerning the fate of his father, Yosef can not hold back

any more' - he 'breaks down' and reveals himself. However, note how after his instinctive opening question regarding the health of his father, his following statements emphasize his assurance to his brothers that he is not angry and their need to recognize the Hand of God behind these events. Yosef also alludes to their own responsibility to look to the future instead of dwelling into the past (see 45:1 - 8).

MAASE AVOT SIMAN LA'BANIM By the end of this entire episode, God had created a situation that would guarantee the physical survival of Am Yisrael during the famine, while setting the stage for their future redemption. Yosef, in the meantime, had created a situation that would keep Am Yisrael united during this formative stage in land of Egypt. Throughout the generations, God oversees our history, while creating opportunities for our redemption. However, as we enjoy His providence, it remains OUR OWN responsibility to make sure that we remain united as our destiny unfolds.

shabbat shalom,

menachem

Copyright (c) 2002 by Menachem Leibtag

<http://mail.tanach.org/mailman/listinfo/par-new>

<http://www.koltorah.org/ravj/medicONshabbat1.htm>

[from 2 years ago] From Parshat Miketz Vol.10 No.15 Date of issue: 4 Tevet 5761 -- December 30, 2000

TAKING MEDICINE ON SHABBAT - PART I

BY RABBI HOWARD JACHTER

Introduction The Mishna (Shabbat 109b and 111a) presents the prohibition against taking medicine on Shabbat. The Gemara (Shabbat 53b) explains that Chazal prohibited us to take medicine on Shabbat lest one grind the medicine on Shabbat. Grinding (Tochen) is one of the thirty-nine categories of forbidden labor on Shabbat and is biblically prohibited.

In the next two issues, we will explore this rabbinical prohibition. We will focus primarily on the exceptions to the rule articulated by classic and contemporary rabbinical authorities. There is a large body of contemporary responsa literature on this topic since a great variety of medicines have been recently developed. Moreover, new types of medicines that do not cure maladies (such as sleeping pills) have been subject of Halachic debate.

Why Does This Prohibition Still Apply? People commonly ask why this rabbinical prohibition still applies if its reason is no longer relevant. The answer is that rabbinical prohibitions remain even if their reasons no longer apply. The Gemara (Beitzah 5a) articulates the rule that Kol Davar B'minyan Tzarich Minyan Acher L'hatio, "once the rabbis issue a decree only a rabbinical assemblage of equivalent stature can overturn it." The Gemara cites a biblical precedent for this rule. Today there is no rabbinical assemblage of equivalent stature to the rabbis of the Gemara. Hence, Chazal's decrees still apply even if their reasons are no longer relevant.

Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (Nefesh Harav p.173) specifically invoked this principle when he ruled that even today we are prohibited from taking medicine on Shabbat. Rav Eliezer Waldenberg (Teshuvot Tzitz Eliezer 8:15:15:4) adds that the reason for this decree is still relevant, as even today many people grind medicines when preparing home remedies.

Ma'achal Bri'im The aforementioned Mishnayot note an important exception to the prohibition. The Mishnayot state that if healthy people commonly consume the medicine (Ma'achal Bri'im), then it is permitted to take that medicine on Shabbat. Thus, one who has a cold on Shabbat is permitted to drink chicken soup or tea for relief.

Aspirin Rav Yosef Adler cites Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik as ruling that one may take aspirin on Shabbat because it is considered Ma'achal Bri'im. The Rav explains that some healthy people take aspirin as a preventative for heart attacks. Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata (34:3, citing Teshuvot Minchat Yitzchak 3:35) disagrees, defining Ma'achal Bri'im in a narrower manner. According to this source, this category applies only to something consumed by healthy people for non-medicinal purposes.

All authorities agree, however, that if the individual is suffering from an intense headache to the extent that he is bedridden or cannot function properly, he is permitted to take aspirin (Mishna Berura 328:1). The rabbinical decree to refrain from taking medicine on Shabbat applies only to someone suffering from mere discomfort (Michush Bialma). Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (cited in Nishmat Avraham 1:164) and Rav Yehoshua Neuwirth (Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata 34:16) rule that one who is suffering from a mild headache may take aspirin if this will avoid his developing a severe headache. Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that one is not required to wait until he is very sick to take the medicine.

One may ask why this rabbinical decree applies even if the person is experiencing mild discomfort. Does not Rav Akiva Eiger posit (in his commentary to Orach Chaim 307:5) that rabbinical decrees do not apply in cases of suffering? Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (cited in Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata 34:note 7) explains that this decree to refrain from taking medicine on Shabbat was specifically instituted to apply in cases of (mild) suffering. Rav Neuwirth (cited in Nishmat Avraham 1:163) notes that this also applies to the rabbinically ordained fast days. Only if one is suffering significantly more than most people suffer on fast days may he break his fast.

Vitamins There are three major opinions regarding the question of whether one is permitted to take vitamins on Shabbat. Rav Yosef Adler cites Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik who permits taking vitamins on Shabbat because they are Ma'achal Bri'im. Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata (34:20) forbids one to take vitamins in ordinary circumstances. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe 3:54) adopts a compromise approach. He rules that if a weak person wishes to take vitamins to strengthen himself, then it is forbidden. However, Rav Moshe believes that it is permissible for a healthy individual to take vitamins in order to prevent illness.

These opinions stem from a dispute between the Bait Yosef and the Magen Avraham regarding how to interpret a passage in the Tur. The Tur (O.C. 328) writes that "if a healthy individual eats or drinks the medicine to satisfy his hunger or thirst and he is not ill, then it is permitted." The Bait Yosef (ibid. s.v. Kol Ochlin) writes that the rabbinical decree to refrain from taking medicine on Shabbat does not apply to a healthy person. The Magen Avraham (328:43), however, limits the Tur to a case where the person is taking the medicine purely to satisfy his hunger or thirst. It is forbidden, though, if he is taking the medicine because of health considerations.

Rav Soloveitchik appears to follow the ruling of the Bait Yosef, which Rav Yosef Karo seems to follow in the Shulchan Aruch (O.C.328:37). On the other hand, the Mishna Berura (328:120) and the Aruch Hashulchan (O.C.328:48) rule in accordance with the Magen Avraham. Rav Moshe also rules in accordance with the Magen Avraham, but he limits the Magen Avraham to a case where one takes the medicine to improve his health. Rav Moshe argues that the Magen Avraham's ruling does not apply when a healthy person takes medicine merely as a preventative measure. Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata rules that the Magen Avraham's ruling applies even to medicine taken as a preventative measure.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (cited in Nishmat Avraham 1:164) permits taking vitamins to prevent becoming ill to the point

that one is permitted to take medicine. Rav Shlomo Zalman (cited in Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata 34:note 85) permits taking vitamins if one takes them in place of food. One might be permitted to drink "Ensure" (or a similar product) on Shabbat based on this ruling.

Conclusion Next week, God willing and Bli Neder, we will complete our discussion of the topic of medicine on Shabbat. We will survey a wide range of medicines and discuss if it is permissible for healthy people to take them on Shabbat.

From: ohr@ohr.edu Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2002 1:30 AM To: dafyomi@ohr.edu Subject: Weekly DAFootnotes - #71 - Sanhedrin 79-85

* WEEKLY DAFOOTNOTES * from Ohr Somayach | www.ohr.edu Historical and textual background from the week of Daf Yomi

Sponsored by the Kof-K Kosher Supervision www.kof-k.org | info@kof-k.org

#71 - Sanhedrin 79-85

MY SON, THE DOCTOR

Amongst the capital crimes for which execution by strangulation is the penalty is striking a parent and causing a wound (Shmot21:15).

What if the father is in need of bloodletting for his health - may his son perform that procedure even though it causes a loss of blood which constitutes a wound?

Conflicting opinions seem to emerge from our gemara. Rabbi Matna rules that it is permissible on the basis of the command to "love your fellow Jew as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18). Rabbi Dinur Chinena points to the equation the Torah makes (Vayikra24:21) between the obligation to pay for wounding someone's animal and the death penalty for wounding a parent. Just as one will not be required to pay the owner of the animal on whom he performs a veterinary service so too will the son called upon to heal his father be permitted to do so.

In apparent contrast to the lenient approach of these Sages we find that Rabbi Papa did not permit his son to remove a splinter from his body, and the Sage Mar, the son of Ravina, refused to allow his son to open a blister to remove the liquid inside.

Rambam (Hilchot Mamrim5:7) reconciles this apparent conflict in the following manner. If another person is available to perform any of the aforementioned medical functions it should not be done by the son. This is so because in the course of the procedure he may inadvertently cause a wound not essential for the treatment and be unwillingly guilty of the grave sin of wounding a parent. If no one else, however, is available to perform the procedure and the parent is in pain then the son may surely do so. The Kesef Mishne explains Rabbi Matna's point about "loving like yourself" in the same way that the Sage Hillel phrased it when he offered a convert a nutshell introduction to Torah: "Don't do to others what you would not want done to you." (Mesechta Shabbat31a). Since the son would wish his father or anyone else to treat him when he is ill, so there can be no restraint in doing the same for his father.

Sanhedrin 84b

By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions