

*SHABBAT SHALOM & CHAG CHANUKAH SAMEI'ACH. Today is 30 Kislev 5779, the first day of Rosh Chodesh Tevet and the 6<sup>th</sup> day of Chanukah. We include Ya'aleh V'Yavo and Al HaNissim in the davening. We chant the whole Hallel then we uniquely read from three Sifrei Torah: Mikeitz, Rosh Chodesh, and Chanukah. The special Haftorah for Chanukah is followed by the Mussaf for Shabbat. In the Mussaf we say Atta Yatzarta and Al HaNissim. We omit Av HaRachamim.*

TORAH DIALOGUE

(p. 155 Hz) (p. 252 S) (p. 175 Hi) (p. 222 AS)

MIKEITZ מִקֵּץ Genesis 41:1

[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis, Rabbi Emeritus (RED)  
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1. When Pharaoh is puzzled by his two dreams, the Chief Butler approaches to inform Pharaoh of Yosef's presence in the dungeon and his ability to interpret dreams. When the Chief Butler approaches he states "my sins I recollect today" (41:9). What sins? The Midrash had said that a fly was in Pharaoh's goblet. It's hard to conceive that the Chief Butler should be held responsible, and probably claimed his innocence at the time of the charge. His release from prison was an act of clemency that Pharaoh enacted on the king's birthday. Hence it was politically correct for the Chief Butler to no longer protest his innocence but rather to recall his guilt. The problem is that the Chief Butler is mentioning more than one sin. He said, "my sins." What was the second sin? The Tur HaAruch claims that the Chief Butler was recalling the fact that he really has sinned against Yosef. He agreed to remember Yosef to help gain Yosef's freedom. That was two years ago and the Chief Butler had purposely forgotten about Yosef; it was not accidental. Hence he is stating that he was recollecting his sins; the sin against Pharaoh and the sin against Yosef.

2. When Pharaoh accepts Yosef's interpretation he immediately appoints Yosef as the Viceroy. There was a tremendous amount of pomp and flamboyant display to inaugurate Yosef in his new position. He was given Pharaoh's ring plus he was dressed in royal clothing with a gold chain. He also had Yosef ride in the second royal chariot. There was also the change of Yosef's name. Some of these were items of great importance. Giving the ring was probably the most important aspect of this rags-to-riches transformation, but to demonstrate to the people the new Viceroy in royal garb was extremely important. Perhaps in general we note that positions of leadership, and definitely a position of royalty go hand in hand with a certain demonstration of importance and authority. There are times that a rabbi wants to feel like he is a rabbi. There are other times when a rabbi feels that he would like to be like one of the masses and to shun any position of prestige and honor. Similarly a parent wants to assume the role of leadership and authority and discipline in the family. Yet there are other times when the parent would love to mix it up with the children as their best friend. You can't always have both and it's important for people who have a role to play as a teacher and a role model, be it Viceroy, parent or teacher, that the aura of respect should not be compromised. It is necessary to stress the position of authority and influence in order to accomplish the set

positions that we hold, whether in society or in the family. (RED)

3. When Yosef has his two sons, the Torah explains each name and how it relates to the fact that Yosef never forgot his family, be it years after his roller coaster ride in exile, which had never taken Yosef from the harsh reality of who and what he is. This is demonstrated by his explanation of the names he has given his sons. Very often the meaning of the names that we give our children has importance, but most of the time we are reflecting the ability to choose names whereby we connect the dots from past generations to the future generation. There are other times where we are choosing names that sound nice to our ear and we enjoy them. In my own situation it seems that my wife and I enjoyed the names of elements of vegetation in Hebrew in choosing names like Tamar, Elana, or Shoshana. They are all beautiful names and matching the children involved. Very often our children grow up and our association of the name is closely connected to their own personalities. For the most part we are no longer choosing names the way our Patriarchs and Matriarchs did. The choice of names is usually not reflective of their concerns. Nevertheless there are times where the choice of names is different. I have one granddaughter Ayala who was born Purim time and the name is associated with the Purim story. Another child might be named Nachum or Nechama if born around Tisha B'Av indicating the desire for comfort in the national painful experiences in Jewish history of that day. I have a grandson Moshe whose name was chosen because Moshe was born in the parsha of his birth. Again collectively our choice of names is reflective of different ideas, none of which are exactly the same as those of ancient times. (RED)

ROSH CHODESH CHANUKAH

(p. 695 Hz) (p. 944 S) (p. 622 Hi) (p. 890 AS)

Chapter 28, verse 9 from PINCHAS פִּינְחָס

MAFTIR (p. 599 Hz) (p. 830 S) (p. 540 Hi) (p. 768 AS)

Chapter 7, verse 42 from NASO נָסָא

HAFTORAH

(p. 987 Hz) (p. 857 S) (p. 953 Hi) (p. 1210 AS)

ZECHARIAH זְכַרְיָהוּ 2:14

The Maccabee story was actually the fourth Chanukah or dedication of the Temple. The haftorah describes the third Chanukah, that of Zerubavel (Hirsch). The image of the Temple Menorah is the vehicle for the prophetic message that "Not by the might of arms, not by physical strength, but by My Spirit, said Hashem of the hosts of creation." The type of power that will bring about the salvation of Israel is with an inner strength which will be divinely inspired. No intermediary will be necessary to bring about such a salvation. The ultimate redemption will come about not through our exercising a natural physical strength. God might send angels and deliver us through supernatural miracles. In order to recognize and appreciate these miracles and our deliverance, we will have to be true believers, Jews who are able to believe in miracles (Malbim). To choose this haftorah for Chanukah was to tell the Jewish people not to look upon the victory over the Greek-Syrians as a military victory that resulted from our strength and perseverance in the war. In order to be seen as a miracle and an act of divine deliverance we had to see God's direction in the war and see it through the image of the Temple Menorah.

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT MIKEITZ 5779  
by Rabbi Edward Davis

I. From the Text

1. What were the two dreams of Pharaoh? (41:1-8)
2. How did Yosef interpret Pharaoh's dreams? (41:25-32)
3. What special item did Pharaoh give to Yosef to make sure Yosef would be accepted as the royal leader of Egypt? (41:42)
4. How old was Yosef when he became Viceroy of Egypt? (41:46) How many years has he been separated from his family so far?
5. What did the Viceroy insist be done in order that the brothers convince him that they were telling the truth and they were not spies? (42:19)

II. From Rashi

6. How did Pharaoh's magicians/advisors interpret Pharaoh's dreams? (41:8)
7. All Egypt knew that there would be 7 years of famine in the near future. Why were the Egyptians starving so soon after the 7 years of plenty? (41:55)
8. Why were the brothers afraid when they returned to Egypt with Binyamin? (43:18)
9. What was significant about the names that Binyamin gave his ten sons? (43:30)
10. When the brothers ate with Yosef in the Viceroy's home they became intoxicated. How did that happen? (43:34)

III. From the Rabbis

11. On what Jewish holiday was Yosef brought out of prison?
12. Why did ten brothers go to Egypt to get food? (42:3 Seforno)
13. Why did Yosef continue to conceal his identity from his brothers? (Ramban and others)

IV. Haftorah : Zechariah

14. What Chanukah is this Haftorah talking about?

V. Relationships

- a) Yehudah – Osnat
- b) Yosef – Mupim
- c) Menashe – Potiphar
- d) Yaakov – Ephraim
- e) Shimon – Esav

ANSWERS FOR PARSHAT MIKEITZ 5779

1. The first dream was that seven fat cows came from the Nile followed by seven lean cows. The lean cows ate the fat cows. Second dream: seven healthy ears of grain sprouted from one stalk, followed by seven lean ears. The lean ears ate the seven healthy ears.
2. Yosef said that there would be seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine.
3. Pharaoh gave Yosef the King's ring.
4. Yosef was 30 years old when he became Viceroy of Egypt. He was sold by his brothers at the age of 17, so he has been separated from his family so far for 13 years.
5. The Viceroy told the brothers to leave one brother in Egypt and they would go home and bring the youngest brother back to Egypt.
6. Pharaoh's magicians interpreted the dream by stating that Pharaoh would have seven daughters and bury them all.
7. The Egyptians stored grain but it all spoiled.
8. The brothers felt that they were being taken to Yosef's home to be imprisoned.
9. Each of Binyamin's sons' names was chosen to commemorate the tragedy of his lost brother.
10. From the time that the brothers sold Yosef into slavery they no longer drank wine.
11. Rosh Hashanah (Talmud Rosh Hashanah 10b).
12. The Viceroy Yosef decreed that no-one could buy more food than he needed for a single household. Therefore all ten brothers went to Egypt (but not Binyamin).
13. Yosef wanted to make sure that his dreams would be fulfilled.
14. The dedication (Chanukah) of the Menorah of the Second Holy Temple.

Relationships:

- a) Brother-in-law – Sister-in-law
- b) Uncle Yosef
- c) Grandfather Potiphar
- d) Grandfather Yaakov
- e) Uncle Esav