



CONGREGATION TIFERETH BETH DAVID JERUSALEM

# Shabbat Bulletin

יד טבת התשפ"ב  
שבת פרשת ויחי

Shabbat Parshat Va'yechi  
December 17 - 18, 2021 / 5782  
Please print this bulletin before Shabbat.

Chazan Sheini  
Rev. Amiel Bender

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## SHABBAT SHALOM • שבת שלום

Sam Jacob Tabak, Bar Mitzvah

### Shabbat Parshat Va'yechi

Haftara: Melachim Alef 2:1 - 2:12

#### Friday, December 17

- 2:15pm Daf Yomi on Zoom
- 3:18pm Plag Hamincha
- 3:54pm Candle Lighting
- 3:55pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv - Main Sanctuary only - masks required even while seated
- 4:12pm Sh'kiah

#### Shabbat, December 18 / 14 Tevet

- 8:00am Shacharit - Upper Social Hall
- 9:00am Shacharit - Main Sanctuary
- 9:40am Sof Zman Kriyat Sh'ma
- 10:00am Kef Club for Kids - Lower Level
- 3:18pm Plag Hamincha
- 3:50pm Mincha, Seudah Shleesheet and Maariv - Main Sanctuary only - masks required even while seated
- 4:13pm Sh'kiah
- 5:03pm Havdala
- 5:10pm Daf Yomi - Upper Social Hall
- 5:50pm Musical Havdala on Facebook with Rev. Amiel Bender
- 6:30pm Daf Yomi on Zoom

#### SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEK

**Mincha:** 4:00pm Sunday to Thursday

#### Shacharit

Sunday: 8:00am only  
(no 9:00am minyan)

Monday to Friday: 7:30am  
(one minyan only)

**Candle Lighting** is at 3:57pm  
and **Mincha** is at 4:00pm  
on Friday, December 24

**For our full schedule,  
go to [tbdj.org/calendar](http://tbdj.org/calendar)**

### COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to **Sam Tabak** on becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Proud parents are **Stephanie & Eli Tabak**. Sharing in their simcha are Sam's siblings Ryva and Ari, his grandparents **Chaya & Gerald Tabak** and Pierre Sitruk, and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time is Sam's grandmother Rachel Sitruk z"l who passed away on December 7.

Mazal Tov to **Tima & Greg Bordan** and their families on the birth of a grandson on Tuesday, December 14 in Toronto. Proud parents are Ahava & Daniel Bordan. Sharing in their simcha are the baby's sister Nava, his maternal grandparents Shawna Magence and Jeremy Magence, great grandparents Sylvia & Jack Bordan, Helen & Hy Bergel, Phyllis & Meir Sadwin and Chana Petrushka of Yerushalayim and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time is the baby's great grandfather Rabbi Yitzchak Petrushka z"l.

Mazal Tov to **Carolyn & Arnold Steinman** and their families on the wedding of their granddaughter Adina Charlotte Steinman to Aharon Shevach on Sunday, December 12 in New York City. Proud parents are Golda & Ned Steinman of Yerushalayim and Shanie & Boaz Shevach of Cleveland, Ohio. Sharing in their simcha are many delighted siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families.

### THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

This Shabbat Bulletin is sponsored by **Sharon & Robert Hecht** in memory of Robert's beloved father Ben Hecht z"l (Dov Ber ben Avraham - 14 Tevet).

Rifki Freundlich's Tehilim Shiur on Monday, December 13 was sponsored by the **Stern-Newman Family** for a Refu'a Sh'leima for Chana Eliana bat Naomi.

### Mark your calendars!

**TBDJ welcomes Scholar-in-Residence**

**Rabbi Seth Grauer of Bnei Akiva Schools of Toronto**

Shabbat Parshat Sh'mot, December 24 and 25

### THE FOLLOWING WEEKLY PROGRAMS ARE ON HIATUS UNTIL JANUARY

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sunday mornings       | Kollel Yom Rishon - Upper Social Hall                         |
| Mondays at 10:00am    | Tehilim Class for Women with Rifki Freundlich - Zoom          |
| Mondays at 7:45pm     | Jewish History Lecture with the Rabbi - Social Hall / Zoom    |
| Tuesdays at 12:00pm   | Lunchtime Halacha Shiur with the Rabbi - Zoom                 |
| Wednesdays at 12:15pm | Wednesday Parsha Shiur with the Rabbi - Social Hall / Zoom    |
| Thursdays at 12:30pm  | Parsha Shiur for Women with Rifki Freundlich - Library / Zoom |

## A Cooling Relationship

In this week's Torah portion of Vayechi, we mark the end of the era of the exalted founders of our people with the passing of Yaakov Avinu and Yosef Hatzadik. For the past ten weeks our Torah portions have enlightened us with chronicles and stories of our patriarchs and matriarchs. For the growing Jewish population in Egypt, the good years gradually start to fade with the end of that era, and our ancestors are destined to descend into the difficult challenges of persecution and slavery at the hands of a new king... *who did not know Yosef.* (Shemot 1:8)

Yosef's story reads like a fairy tale. It is inspiring and uplifting. He was sold and taken down to Egypt at the age of seventeen. He spent the next thirteen years in relative obscurity, spending one year as a servant in Potiphar's home and another twelve years in prison following Potiphar's wife's false accusations that he made advances on her. On Rosh Hashana, at the age of thirty, Yosef was freed from prison and immediately appointed viceroy of Egypt - following his interpretation of dreams dreamt by Pharaoh on Erev Rosh Hashanah, the night before. Yosef merited a new beginning at the beginning of the new Hebrew year.

Pharaoh was impressed by Yosef's interpretation of his dreams at the hand of Hashem. The resulting reward of being appointed as Pharaoh's second-in-command is described by the Torah in no uncertain terms: *Then Pharaoh said to Yosef: "Since Hashem has informed you of all this - the dream interpretations - there can be no one as discerning and wise as you; You shall be in charge of my palace and by your command shall all my people be sustained, only by the throne shall I outrank you"* Then Pharaoh said to Yosef: *"See! I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt!"; Pharaoh said to Yosef, "I am Pharaoh and without you no man may lift up his hand and foot in all of Egypt"; ...Thus Yosef emerged in charge of the land of Egypt.* (Brisheet 41:39-41,44-45)

Later, with the onset of the famine in Egypt, Yosef was destined to help Pharaoh with a successful solution to this devastating challenge: *When all the land of Egypt hungered, the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread. So Pharaoh said to all of Egypt, "Go to Yosef, whatever he tells you, you should do."* Not only was Yosef in total command, he had Pharaoh's faith, trust and confidence in his ability to carry the banner of leadership.

Having strongly established himself in his authoritative position, it is surprising that, after the death of his father Yaakov, Yosef find it necessary to ask Pharaoh for permission to leave Egypt to go bury his father in the the designated burial place - the Cave of Machpela in Chevron, thereby honouring an oath he took with his father before his passing. Pharaoh's response seems unsympathetic: *And Pharaoh said: "Go up and bury your father as he adjured you."* (Brisheet 50:6) Rashi teaches us about Pharaoh's response: Had Yosef not sworn to take his father for burial outside of Egypt in the land of Canaan, Pharaoh would not have permitted him to go.

After Yosef showed his wisdom in managing the crisis of a famine and helping Pharaoh maintain his wealth, we would expect that Pharaoh would understand that his brilliant and efficient viceroy was in need of compassionate leave for his mourning rituals. A more supportive response might have sounded like this: *Sure Yosef - go and bury your father. He was a great man and we were blessed to have him with us for seventeen years. Please let me know what I and my people can assist you with. Don't worry.....Egypt will be here when you get back. All will be taken care of. Your position is secure and we await your return.*

Why was Pharaoh's response so unsupportive? Professor Chaim Genisi of Bar Ilan University writes that the relationship between Pharaoh and his prodigious assistant had chilled somewhat over the years. Following the famine, Egypt's economy was restored to its previous standards and Yosef was gradually distanced from Pharaoh since he was no longer needed in the same drastic way as before. Thus, Yosef didn't have the direct connection to the monarch at the time of his father's passing. Professor Genisi writes that Yaakov was aware of the changed relationship between Yosef and the king and therefore made Yosef take the oath to bury him - an oath that Yaakov knew would not be disrespected by Pharaoh.

There is a fascinating account in the Tractate of Sota 36b which reveals a point of contention between Pharaoh and Yosef, where Pharaoh had no choice but to let Yosef go to Canaan to bury Yaakov:

*Rabbi Chiyya bar Abba says that Rabbi Yochanan says: "When Pharaoh said to Joseph: 'And without you no man shall lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt' (Genesis 41:44), Pharaoh's astrologers said: 'You will appoint a slave whose master bought him for twenty silver coins to rule over us?' He said to them: 'I perceive royal characteristics [ginnunei malkhut] in him and see that he was not initially a slave.'*

*They said to him: 'If that is so and he is a child of royalty, he should know the seventy languages that all kings' children learn.' The angel Gabriel then came and taught him the seventy languages, but he could not learn all of them. Gabriel then added one letter, the letter heh, to Joseph's name from the name of the Holy One, Blessed be He, and then he was able to learn the languages, as it is stated: 'He appointed it (Yehosef) for a testimony, when he went forth against the land of Egypt, the speech of one that I did not know I heard' (Psalms 81:6). And the next day, when he appeared before Pharaoh, in every*

*language that Pharaoh spoke with him, he answered him.*

*Joseph then spoke in the sacred tongue, Hebrew, and Pharaoh did not know what he was saying. Pharaoh said to him: 'Teach me that language.' He taught him, but he could not learn it. Pharaoh said to him: 'Take an oath for my benefit that you will not reveal that I do not know this language.' He took an oath for his benefit.*

*Years later, when Joseph said to Pharaoh: 'My father made me swear saying' (Brisheet 50:5) that I would bury him in Eretz Yisrael, Pharaoh said to him: 'Go request the dissolution of your oath.' Joseph said to him: 'And should I also request dissolution for the oath that I took for your benefit?' And consequently, even though Pharaoh was not amenable to letting Joseph go, he worried that Joseph would then request dissolution for the oath that he had taken for his benefit, and Pharaoh therefore said to him: 'Go up and bury your father according to what he made you swear.' (Brisheet 50:6)*

There are other considerations offered by commentary for Pharaoh not to let Yosef leave Egypt for his father's burial. As the ruler of the land, Yosef could not leave his duties for an extended amount of time without his absence affecting the administration of government. It is also noted that if it became apparent that Yaakov and his family still considered Canaan to be their true home, Pharaoh may suspect that Yosef would stay there and not return to Egypt. Pharaoh sends a large delegation with Joseph, probably to ensure he would return: *Yosef went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the officials of Pharaoh, the senior members of his court, and all of Egypt's dignitaries.* (Brisheet 50:7) The children however, have to stay back in Egypt (as hostages?) *Only their young children, their flocks, and their cattle did they leave in the region of Goshen.* (Brisheet 50:8)

It is safe to assume that upon Joseph's meteoric rise to power as a Hebrew in a foreign land, especially as an "offender" coming out of prison, that there were dissenting opinions among the locals regarding Pharaoh's crowning him with such political prominence. As in any political pyramid - not a pun - there were certainly those who craved his position of power and maybe even some who were designated for promotion and were bypassed. It is not beyond the stretch of the imagination to assume that there was enmity towards Yosef from many of the Egyptian people because a Hebrew "foreigner" rose to power and began ruling over them.

Indeed, Professor Natan Aviezer of Bar Ilan University writes that when Yosef ascended to the political heights in Egypt he eclipsed the standing of Pharaoh's ministers and advisors. He questions their reactions to Yosef's meteoric rise, writing that in their eyes Yosef was a foreigner and a criminal who was imprisoned for inappropriate behavior with the wife of a senior Egyptian official. Even worse than that - he was a Hebrew! Aviezer points out that the second time that Yosef's brothers came down to Egypt, they were invited to Yosef's table to dine with him. The Egyptians in the room ate at a separate table as it was an abomination for them to eat bread with the Hebrews. If eating with Hebrews was considered disgraceful for the Egyptians, how much more so their feelings having a Hebrew being appointed to rule over them? Aviezer adds that Pharaoh's ministers were full of jealousy and hatred for Yosef and that they waited for him to err so that they could tarnish his reputation in Pharaoh's eyes. Yosef had to carefully rule with wisdom and caution and exhibit his faithfulness to Egypt, all the while using his mighty position as viceroy to serve Pharaoh and to take care of the concerns of the land of Egypt and its people. Aviezer concludes that this is precisely why the request for Yaakov's burial in Canaan had to come from Yaakov through an oath and not through Yosef. Had Yosef asked to bury his father in Canaan, the Egyptians would have interpreted the request as an insult: Is our Egyptian land not considered holy enough for the Hebrews' burial needs? The only option for Yosef to justify Yaakov's burial in Canaan was the oath that he gave his father. Pharaoh understood that the oath had to be honoured and therefore he gave permission for Yosef to leave.

The relationships in our lives are many and complex. We have family relationships. We have working relationships. We have acquaintance relationships. We negotiate bumpy roads in our relationships and our relationships tend to change over time. Some relationships are limited and destined for specific circumstances. Yosef's relationship with Pharaoh was divinely-ordained and it lasted for its necessary duration. Yosef was an outsider in the upper political echelon of Egypt and it is understandable that when his divinely-ordained mission of securing the Egyptian nation's survival through the years of famine was complete, there was no longer any need or place for a foreigner to be the viceroy of the land. This seems to be a message at the end of Parashat Vayechi where the story shifts to Yosef and his brothers and the mending of their relationships with each other. The story of Yosef as the viceroy and ruler in Egypt is over. The famine is over and Yosef's political prominence in Egypt is a thing of the past. Yosef's prominence as a leader of our people is the story of the future of Bnei Yisrael - a magnificent never-ending story.

Shabbat Shalom,

*Rev. Amiel*





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE, TOGETHER.

MONTREALERS NEED OUR HELP  
TO STAY WARM THIS WINTER.

Be a part of this incredible shared opportunity, as Lori Bassal, Alyssa & Yair Meyers and their children visit downtown Montreal for a special morning of giving back and caring for the homeless.

## **WE ARE COLLECTING:**

- Non-perishable food items
- Gift Cards (i.e. Tim Hortons, McDonald's)
  - New and gently used winter gear
  - Toiletry items

**HELP IN ANY WAY THAT YOU CAN,  
EVERY LITTLE BIT GOES A LONG WAY!**

**SUNDAY  
DEC 26  
AT 11AM**

TO JOIN OR FOR DROP-OFF  
LOCATIONS,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
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