



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

OD YOSEF HAI
50 FINCHLEY LANE, NW41DJ
TEL: 020 8203 5701

Thoughts on Parashat

VAYECHI

Year 23

by Dayan Abraham David

The parasha unlike any other begins in the middle of the paragraph and is called a 'setumah' – concealed, blocked. Why is this? The Midrash gives an explanation for when Ya'acov Avinu died the eyes of the Jewish people were dimmed and closed because of the troubles of enslavement which began thereafter. How was this possible? Yosef was the ruler in Egypt, surely he would not allow the enslavement of his brethren. Perhaps we can explain this difficulty with a Midrash Tanchuma on the first pasuk, 'Vayechi Ya'acov Be'Eretz Mitzraim comparing the 17 years Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi, the compiler of the Mishna, lived in Zipori to the years of Ya'acov in Egypt. Rabbenu HaKodosh as he was known suffered a toothache for 13 years and in all those years no woman in the Land of Israel miscarried or died at childbirth. One day at the end of 13 years, Rabbenu HaKodosh who had been studying with his nephew the great Rabbi Chiya, became upset and angry with Rabbi Chiya (probably in a heated Torah debate). Eliyahu

HaNavi in order to make peace between them appeared to Rabbenu looking like Rabbi Chiya. He placed his hand on Rabbenu's cheek and cured his toothache. The next morning when Rabbi Chiya came to study with Rabbenu he inquired about his toothache and was told that since you placed your hand on it, it has been cured. Rabbi Chiya understood it was Eliyahu HaNavi who had cured Rabbenu. He gave a cry, 'Woe to the expecting mothers in Israel and woe to those about to give birth!' He understood that as long as Rabbenu overcame his pain and suffering and continued his study of Torah with such great sacrifice, he helped elevate the people above nature and its tragedies. But once he had lost control and had to be relieved of his suffering by Eliyahu HaNavi his uplifting influence ceased, then everything went back to normal and the women returned to face the dangers of miscarriage and childbirth. Ya'acov Avinu as long as he lived elevated the Jewish people above the influence of the Egyptians and thus the physical enslavement could not begin. For only after the spiritual decline were the Egyptians able to enslave them. This is what the Midrash means after the death of Ya'acov when his spiritual influence

ceased and the influence of their surrounding began to permeate the Israelites, that was the beginning of the physical enslavement, for before the Egyptians could physically dominate Am Yisrael. They had to influence their outlook with their culture and power. That happened when Ya'acov died the first step for the '*galut*' began.

TORAH GEMS

Yaacov Avinu blesses the sons of Yosef 'Hamalach Hagoel ote mikol Ra Yebarech et Hanearim, Vayikare Bahem Shmi Ve Shem Avotai Abraham Ve Yitzhak...' Why does Yaacov put his name first he should have put his grandfather and fathers name first as we normally do Abraham, Yitzhak and Yaacov.

We could say the names represent the characteristics of the Avot, Abraham as Chesed, Yitzhak was Gevurah and Yaacov was Tiferet which is Emet. Abraham's mida of chesed is loving kindness, as great as it was it had to be controlled. We find Abraham questioned Hashem, Bameda Ki Tirshena, he wanted to make sure his children would inherit and asked for some sign for this for which Hashem told him his children would have to go into servitude to learn to control chesed. Yitzhak's mida of Gevura is strict judgement this too needed to be tempered with rachamim (mercy) for the world to be able to carry on as we see in Beresheit Hashem added to His name Elokim the Hashem mida of rachamim. But the mida of yaacov, emet was perfect as the Torah is. The Torah is the revelation of G-d's

will in this world which is perfect. So this had to come first before the other two, chesed and gevura for both of these need direction from the Torah. The Talmud in nedarim (p81) asks 'why was the land lost?' she lo barchu baTorah techela because they did not make a Beracha for the Torah they studied, they did study Torah but they did not consider it important enough to make a Beracha on it before as Rabbenu Nissim explains there the appreciation of Torah must come first.

There is an explanation on these lines that when a father blesses his son he should first bless him for success in Torah and then for success in parnassa or a profession, this fits in with the Beracha of Yaacov who puts his right hand on Efraim before Menashe for Efraim studied Torah with him that is why he is mentioned before Menashe who was the statesmen in charge of the household of Yosef. For the Jewish people are a special nation close to G-d because of our commitment and dedication to Torah. Because of the Torah G-d has guaranteed our survival.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

A case for divorce came before Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu in the Beth Din. A man had won a huge sum of money in Mifal Hapaiyis (Israeli lottery), he began to change his lifestyle, his clothes, his eating habits to eat in expensive restaurants, drive expensive cars, he even felt that

his wife was not high class enough and came to Beth Din for a get. Rabbi Eliyahu spoke to the wife, he asked her "What are your thoughts about the divorce?" She told him there was always love and harmony between them until he won the lottery and then life became hell in their home. So she was willing to receive the get. The Rabbi told them to come back the next day.

He called up a friend, a young man he knew well. Do you want to merit olam haba? The young man answered "of course", even if it means I will be angry with you in public and insult you, he answered "yes". The Rabbi explained to him what he had to do in the Beth Din when the couple came for divorce. The next day, the couple came in and the Rabbi began the protocol of the case, in the middle, this man who the Rabbi had spoken to before, came forward and whispered something in his ear. The Rabbi answered him sharply "No" but the man came back again and whispered in the Rabbi's ear again, nobody heard what he said but the Rabbi seemed to be angry at his words and told him off, you should be ashamed, this is forbidden what you want, but he went on to whisper in the Rabbi's ear words which nobody could hear. The Rabbi seemed to be getting really upset and told him off, this is immodest and forbidden what you are asking for. The Rabbi was

becoming red and very angry and sent him off. The husband who came to divorce his wife tried to calm the Rabbi, why are you so angry, what has he said? The Rabbi told him "It is disgusting. I cannot tell you", this aroused the interest of the husband even more, "What did he say, please tell me". So after hesitating and because of the man's repeated requests, the Rabbi told him that this man was attracted by his wife and wanted to marry her and asked the Rabbi to make a speedy divorce. I told him it was assur to look at another man's wife while she was still married to him. I was most angry at his behaviour but he kept on insisting so I sent him out. When the husband heard about his wife being appealing to a stranger, he said he wanted to think it over and they never came back for a divorce. See to what length our tzadikim and chachamim go to keep a marriage going and their cleverness in doing so.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

- 1) According to the Shulhan Aruch (Maran) it is forbidden from the Torah to eat 'Chadash' – any of the five cereals planted after Pesach until after the 16th Nissan of the following year. This 'issur' applies even outside Israel and even cereals cultivated and belonging to non-Jews are forbidden until the 17th of Nissan outside Israel.
- 2) Where there is a doubt if the cereals were planted before or after Pesach of

the previous year, there are opinions that make a 'safek safeka' to allow it. There are still others who rely on the opinion that it is only an 'issur de Rabanan' outside Israel and does not apply to those lands far away from Israel nowadays. But the majority of Poskim hold that one should not rely on this and one should be 'machmir'. Anyway according to Maran whom we follow *Chadash* is forbidden.

3 Even though there is no spring wheat in this country but for some years now spring wheat from Canada is imported and used in bread. This problem begins to affect us from about the beginning of January until Pesach. There are a number of bakeries who have decided not to use '*Chadash*' such spring wheat, so one should enquire at the bakery he buys bread from. With cereals there is also some '*Sofek Chadash*' and some authorities give out notices to this effect. Please look out for this. There is a problem with strong flour for baking bread this contains spring wheat, so dates and makes should be checked by Notices of relevant Kashrut Authorities. Kedassia has produced a Kashrut update on this and bakeries under their supervision have only yashan.

***Avot Ubanim
Motzei Shabbat
one hour after Shabbat
terminates.
There will be refreshments
and prizes.***

***If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush
Please contact
Monty Sassoon 07787 571313
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724***

***We have a regular Youth Minyan
organised by Jason Ibrahim and
Jordan Moses followed by a
kiddush***

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	3:43 pm
Shabbat terminates	4:58 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	3:30 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	3:20 pm
Shacharit Weekdays (netz)	7:30 am
Shacharit Sundays (netz)	7:30 am
Mincha	1:30 pm
Arbit	7:45 pm

***SPECIAL SHIURIM FOR SUNDAY &
MONDAY BANK HOLIDAY WITH
BREAKFAST AFTER SHACHARIT***