



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 VAYESHEV

Year 23

by Dayan Abraham David

The Talmud in tractate Shabbat warns us that a father should not favour one of his children with gifts over the others. As we see when Yaacov gave Yosef a 'Ketonet Passim', his embroidered coat, he made the brothers jealous and brought about our exile to Egypt. It is also mentioned in the Zohar that the exile to Egypt was a consequence of Yosef being sold by his brothers. But the Talmud in Sota explains the pasuk 'Vayishlachehu Me'emek Chevron', and he sent him to Hebron, by saying that Yosef was sent to see his brothers in order to fulfil the agreement Hashem made with Abraham, who was buried in Chevron, that his children would be in exile 'Veavdum Ve anu otam'. And a similar midrash that says that Yaacov had to go down to exile, and Yosef was sent first, as the calf is sent before to make the mother follow willingly. There

seems to be two contradictory opinions as to the reason for the exile to Egypt. The first opinion is that the exile was because of the problem of Yosef and his brothers. The second opinion is that it happened in order to fulfil G-d's covenant with Abraham and this was brought about as a result of 'Mechirat Yosef', the selling of Yosef.

The Shem Mishmuel explains that there were two parts to the exile in Egypt. One was the physical servitude and subjugation of the body and the second was the bad spiritual and corrupting influences of the Egyptians on the Israelites. When Abraham was told that his children would go into exile 'Ve'avadum Ve anu otam', it said 'Eretz Lo Lahem' but it did not say to Egypt. Even if it was to Egypt it would have only been a physical 'shibud', slavery. But now, because of the problem of Yosef and his brothers, the bondage would be a spiritual one where they would descend to the lowest levels of 'tumah' under the corrupt influence of the Egyptians. But we may ask,

how does *Mechirat Yosef* correlate with the added bondage of the spirit that followed from it? Yosef was the *'mida'* of *'yisod'* which is purity from lewdness and depravity as we see from his overcoming the test with the wife of Potiferah. If the brothers had accepted Yosef as their leader, his influence upon them would have helped them to achieve that protection and a higher level of *'kedushah'*. Even if they had gone into exile because of Abraham's covenant they would not have been prone to spiritual corruption being under the influence of Yosef. But since they had rejected Yosef and his influence they had to go into a spiritual exile and to fight themselves out of the *'tumah'* – pervert influence, of the Egyptians and make the *'tikun'* themselves the hard way. They went down to the 49th level of *'tumah'* before coming out of it. G-d with his loving kindness saved them giving them another chance to cleanse themselves through their own efforts and hard work after *'yetziaat mitzrayim'* (the forty nine days to Kabbalat HaTorah). Yaacov Avinu had intended that Yosef would be their shepherd as it says *'Haya Roeh et Echav'*. He was to look after their spiritual well-being and that is why he felt he had to bring reports to his father to correct them. But it was

not to be, as his brothers did not accept him as their shepherd (leader). This friction between Yosef and his brothers led to the spiritual exile of our people in Egypt.

TORAH GEMS

When Yehudah saw the caravan of Yishmael going down to Egypt he convinces his brothers to sell Yosef to them. But then the Pasuk tells us of Midianite traders who pulled out Yosef from the pit and then mentions Yosef was sold to the Yishmaelim; *'Vayaavor anashim Midyanim Socharim vayamshechu vayalu et Yosef vayimkaru et Yosef laYismaelim Vayaveu et Yosef Mitzraim'*; and later on it says (Pasuk 36) *'Ve hamidyanim Machru oto al Mitzraim le Potifer saris Pharaoh'*. That it was the Midianites who sold him to Potifer. Rashi explains that Yosef was sold many times between the Midianites and the Yeshmaelim, back and forth. But this is difficult to understand since it does not mention that the Midianites bought him when they drew him out of the pit. Even more difficult is that later on after the episode of Yehudah and Tamar it goes back to the story of Yosef and says: *'Ve Yosef Hurad Mitzraimah vayiknehu Potifer saris Pharaoh. Meyad ha Yishmaelim'*. And he was bought by Potifer from the Yishmaelim and not as it said before that the Medianites sold him to Potifer, which is a contradiction you cannot answer with Rashi's explanation. Maybe we could explain differently that the

Yishmalites who brought caravans of incense and other spices to Egypt were not capable or interested in making deals outside their business. It was the Midianites who were the traders and they convinced the Yishmaelites to buy Yosef as a slave and to take him down to Egypt to sell. So they pulled Yosef out of the pit and bought him on behalf of the Yishmaelim, of course charging a commission. The Yishmaelim took him down to Egypt and again it was the Midianites who made the sale on behalf of the Yishmaelim who were not capable of doing so, (of course for a fee). That is why it says first the Midianites sold him to Potifer and later on it says that Potifer bought Yosef from the Yishmaelim. The Midianites were the agents and salesmen who sold Yosef to Potifer on behalf of the Yishmaelim who brought him down to Egypt. Even today we find that even though the Yishmaelim have the oil, others take it out of the earth and sell it for them then refine it and sell it back to them for their use and charge them on all the transactions. The Targum in Lech Lecha explains the Pasuk (16:12), *'Ve hu Yehey pera adam yado bakol vayad kol bo'*. He will be a wild and rebellious being and he will need others and others will need him. An apt description of Yishmael and his descendants, a wild rebellious person who will need others and others will need him, as we see today, even though they have great wealth in oil. They need others to take it out of the earth, refine it and sell it back to him for their use as in the story of the sale of Yosef.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

When Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu was taken to hospital on the last day of Pesach with a serious heart condition, his secretary says that he did not forget to count the omer every night. In Succoth while in hospital he asked to build a small succah on the balcony outside his room to fulfil the mitzvah of eating in a succah. In Chanukah the Rabbi insisted to be taken home to light the nerot of Chanukah at home to fulfil the mitzvah "Ner Ish Vu Beto", he was taken home in an ambulance with all the equipment attached to him every night for one hour. Let us learn from him what effort we should make to light for Chanukah in our homes on time.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

Some of the Laws of Hanukka for Sephardim.

First night falls on Tuesday, 12th December 2017.

1. Both men and women are obliged to light the Nerot of Hanukka, but in any one household, only one Menorah is lit. It is usually done by the father of the house. If two or more families live together in the same house but eat separately, then they should share the cost and light together. Children who bring Hanukkia from school should hear the Beracha from their parents and then light their Hanukkia. The minhag Ashkenaz is that every member of the

household should light their own Hanukkia.

2. The correct time for lighting is at the beginning of night; this year this will be at about 4:50 pm and into the next half-hour. However, it is possible to light throughout the night as long as two members of the family are awake. If not, then one should light without a Beracha.

3. Sufficient oil must be put in the Menorah to last at least half an hour. Once lit, more oil may not be added to the Menorah. On Erev Shabbat, we must put enough oil or use large enough candles to last until 5:20pm or about 2 hours. We have to kindle the Hanukka lights before the Shabbat lights are lit. If less oil than the required quantity was put, the Menorah must be re-lit with the required amount of oil. On Motzei Shabbat, at home, we should make Havdala over wine etc. before we kindle the Hanukka lights.

4. On the first night we start with one light (plus the Shamash, which is lit at the end) and we increase by one every until the last night when we have eight. We position the lights so that we always light from left to right e.g. On the second night we would start from the new light placed on the left side of the first light and so on.

**Next Erev Shabbat Mincha
3:20pm
An Early Mincha for
Channukah
1:20pm**

***Avot Ubanim starts this
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	3:35 pm
Shabbat terminates	4:50 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	3:20 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	3:15 pm
Shacharit Weekdays (netz)	7:20 am
Shacharit Sundays (netz)	7:20 am
Mincha	1:30 pm
Arbit	7:45 pm