Points to Ponder

Mekeitz 5781

**וַיְהִ֕י מִקֵּ֖ץ שְׁנָתַ֣יִם יָמִ֑ים At the end of 2 years (41:1) - Rashi** had explained that the delay of Yosef’s release from prison was 2 years because he placed his trust in Sar HaMashkim. **Rav Schachter** Shlita asked how this was possible if the dreams only happened 2 years later? Rav Schachter answered that the  **Midrash** explains Pharaoh had the same dream for two years before the שר המשקים got involved. The fact that he delayed so long / didn’t remember that Yosef interpreted dreams was an עונש מן השמים.

**וַיְהִ֤י בַבֹּ֨קֶר֙ וַתִּפָּ֣עֶם רוּח֔וֹ Pharaoh was distressed (41:8) - Rav Dovid Povarsky ztl.** contrasted Yosef to Pharaoh. While Pharaoh was out of sorts and inspired chaos, Yosef continued to proceed in a measured manner with Middos. We cannot allow the body to reign over our actions.

**וְעַתָּה֙ יֵרֶ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה אִ֖ישׁ נָב֣וֹן וְחָכָ֑ם And now Pharaoh should seek out a wise person (41:33)** - If Hashem had also given Yosef the dream interpretation and the advice, certainly Pharaoh would listen to his advice! What else would he do? **Rav Pam ztl**. explained that Yosef was giving advice for people beyond just the immediate crisis. He was telling people not to waste the “good years” the times we are young -- when we can grab an “Amen” or a “Daf.” We need to grab and appreciate it!

**וַיִּקְרָ֨א פַרְעֹ֥ה שֵֽׁם־יוֹסֵף֘ צָֽפְנַ֣ת פַּעְנֵ֒חַ֒ He called Yosef Tzafnas Paneiach (41:45)** - Why did Pharaoh change his name but he remained Yosef? Even in the same Possuk we see that it is Yosef who goes out among the people?! It seems that there is a difference between Yosef and Pharaoh about Yosef. Pharaoh sees him as the unique one who reveals that which is hidden. Yosef argues that he is just the one who expands (Yosef) the reach of Hashem’s goodness within the world.

כִּֽי־נַשַּׁ֤נִי אֱלֹקים֙ **For Hashem caused me to forget all my hardships (41:51)** - **Rashi** notes that when Yosef sent word to his father that he was alive, he sent wagons to remind Yaakov that this was the last sugya that they studied together. What did he mean that he forgot? **Rav Wolbe ztl** explained that forgetting in the Torah’s language means forgetting even the slightest amount of Torah. It helps him not only overcome his animalistic aspects of his nature but also the capacity to accomplish that feat.

**וַיַּכֵּ֥ר יוֹסֵ֖ף אֶת־אֶחָ֑יו Yosef recognized his brothers but they didn’t recognize him (42:8) - Rashi** notes that they were not used to seeing him with a beard. Was this ready so simple? Do we REALLY believe that this was the only reason they didn’t recognize him? **Rav Rivlin Shlita** explained that Yosef thought he was sold because of his youthful Lashon Hara transgressions and his personal haughtiness over his brothers. However as he aged (growing his beard) he learned from his experiences and became more wholesome in the process.

**וְאֶת־חֲמֹרֵֽינוּ: And to take us as slaves and our donkeys (43:18)** - With all of the danger that the brothers were facing, why and where do the donkeys come into the conversation? **Rav Mordechai Druk ztl**. notes that in the Gemara we meet people whose donkeys did great things. The donkey of Rav Yosi of Yokeras would not move with money that was not his. Rav Pinchas ben Yair’s donkey didn’t work on Shabbos. You might imagine what the Shevatim’s donkeys should have been all about. Yet, one of them walked off with the Gaviya of Yosef. Why did the donkeys do that? It must be part of some evil plan, they assumed.

**וַיִּשְׁתּ֥וּ וַיִּשְׁכְּר֖וּ עִמּֽוֹ: And they drank and got drunk with him (43:34) - Rashi** notes that prior to this point, they had not drunk alcohol as they were still mourning Yosef’s disappearance. **Rav Eliyahu Lopian ztl.** explains that even where we believe that someone is a Rodef who deserves what he gets, we need to be in pain with his suffering. (Rav Chaim Soloveitchik ztl. Ran to take care of a bundist who regularly cursed him in Brisk).

**Haftara - שְׁתַּ֛יִם נָשִׁ֥ים זֹנ֖וֹת  2 women Zonos (Melachim Alef 3:16)** - Why did the women go to Shlomo?  **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl.** explained that they had already been to Beis Din with no success noting that whomever was most strong would win. The women knew that if this were the Halacha, they might tear the baby to pieces! Thus, they went to Shlomo since a king need not only rule baked on established precedent.