



MORDEKAI'S DRASH — MIKKEZ

Torah: *Mikketz* (At the end of), *B'resheet* (Genesis) 41.1-44.17

Haftorah: *M'lakhim Alef* (1 Kings) 7.13-26, 40-50

Suggested **Messianic Writings** reading: *Mattityahu* (Matthew) 27.15-46

Shalom,

“At the end of two years, Pharaoh had a dream....” Two years after *Yosef's* (Joseph's) interpretations of the chief baker and chief cupbearer's dreams in *B'resheet* 40, Pharaoh had a significant dream – two dreams, actually, both pointing to the same conclusion. The ArtScroll commentary notes that this was twelve years after Yosef was first imprisoned. (*Pharaoh* is from the Egyptian word *Phre*, signifying the sun, and was not a name, but a title of the Egyptian kings of this period.) The dreams were so vivid that only when Pharaoh awoke did he realize they were dreams. Being naturally disturbed, he called for all those who were “expert” in dream interpretation from throughout the land of Egypt. But the hand of the Creator was involved here, and the meaning of the dreams was hidden from all of these “magicians and wise men”.

Then, as if coming out of a mental stupor, the chief cupbearer, whose life had been spared as prophesied by Yosef's interpretation of his own dream, recalled his error. Some commentators believe the cupbearer's announcement was not so much regretful and apologetic, but rather was a statement to make himself look good to Pharaoh – “I remember that I once met someone who can interpret dreams.”

So Yosef was brought up from prison, cleaned up, and taken before Pharaoh, who then related his two dreams of the seven fat and seven lean cows, then the seven full ripe ears of grain and the seven thin ears of grain.

You may wonder why Egypt was the land that the family of Yosef came to when they were nearly out of food. How was Yosef so easily accepted into Pharaoh's court? To briefly look at a lengthy historical account, there is about a 150 year period during this time when official Egyptian government records ceased to exist. This is because the Pharaohs of the period would not record their defeats. There have been private writings found that did record events of the period. One account, by a historian named Manetho, records a time that raiders from the east came and defeated the Egyptian king. These raiders were of Arabic descent – thus they were Semites; Semites are descended from Shem. Arabs and Jews are both Semites, although the modern usage of *anti-Semitism* refers to anti-Jewish sentiment. The Egyptian king of that era who had been defeated did not record this fact, so official Egyptian history was lost for a season and the Egyptian Pharaoh's for a season were in fact not of Egyptian blood. They apparently opted to retain the royal terminology of the newly conquered people.

So yes, the Pharaoh of Yosef's day was not of Egyptian blood, but of Arabic blood, from this band of Arabic raiders. This would explain why Yosef was able to be received so readily in Pharaoh's court – they were “cousins,” and the Egyptian-Jewish hostility of course did not then exist – at first. This also explains how the nation of Israel was able in their beginning stage to grow and prosper in Egypt under the Semitic Pharaohs, thus eventually incurring the jealousy of their native Egyptian neighbors.

The religion of Egypt at this time was Babylonian based, and had many gods and goddesses, and included much magic and sorcery. This religion was a very important part of the life of many of the Egyptian rulers, from Pharaoh on down. The *magicians* that Pharaoh called on were the experts in this religion. The *wise men* he called on were the ones who represented worldly science and wisdom. Both groups were stumped by Pharaoh's dreams. The dreams that Pharaoh had were sent by HaShem, thus only HaShem could reveal the meaning of them, and this is what Yosef told Pharaoh. Yosef not only gave the interpretations, he basically took over, telling Pharaoh how to best deal with the coming years of prosperity, which would be followed by years of famine. Pharaoh was so impressed, he put Yosef in charge of all details of preparation for the famine.

Because Pharaoh was “religious,” he had the ability to believe in a word from a “god;” as it turned out, this word was from the only true God, the Creator of all. If only in our own time would our highest ranking rulers bypass the “wisdom” of religious and secular leaders and seek the counsel of the Most High. However, what we have are vain religious leaders pushing an agenda of “anti-Semitism (anti-Israel, anti-

Jew) and replacement theology,” while secular leaders yet exalt “science and wisdom (of man)” and scoff at anything to do with a righteous Creator. “The wisdom of this world is foolishness before God” (1 Cor 3.19).

The fact that Yosef and the Egyptian government exacted grain from the Egyptian farmers during the years of prosperity no doubt remained in the minds of the Egyptians in later years. Even though Yosef provided for them in the years of famine, still in their minds was the fact that the government in essence “stole” from them. This no doubt played a part in the Egyptian people growing to hate the descendants of Yosef and his family, for Yosef was the visible one in these transactions. We will see in a later parashah that he was the one who traded grain to the Egyptians in exchange for their livestock and their lands; thus the current “non-Egyptian” Semitic Pharaoh became owner of most of Egypt. This would of course incur the wrath of the native Egyptians upon the Israelites, who were prospering under this Pharaoh’s hand while the “natives” sank deeper into debt to him.

In later centuries, after Egypt defeated the foreign raiders who had taken over the government, the Pharaohs of Egypt were again of Egyptian blood, and were now in power to come against the people of Israel. Even though it was Israel that was prospering in the land of Egypt, and were living in freedom, the tables were turned when Egypt began enslaving them.

Back to our chapters for this week. The brothers of Yosef went to Egypt for food, because the famine had extended to their region. They didn’t recognize Yosef, because of his Egyptian appearance, but he recognized them. B’resheet 42.9 says that Yosef remembered the dreams he had had about his brothers. What followed were times of testing of the brothers by Yosef, a family reunion, a “return from the dead” in a sense for the old father Ya’akov, and more times of testing of the brothers, and a greater family reunion.

I was recently asked why we see the terminology *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* more often than *Abraham, Isaac and Israel*. In B’resheet 43, the name Israel is used for the father of the brothers; the ArtScroll Commentary says it is because, “Israel is the name used to depict Jacob in his spiritual role as Patriarch of the Jewish nation.” I would imagine then that Jacob is used when referring to the human blood relationship – Jacob is a blood father of the Jewish nation; Israel is a spiritual father of the Jewish nation. But that reasoning is not set in stone, for if you do a study on the two phrases, they are often-times used interchangeably; that is, sometimes Jacob is used in the spiritual sense and Israel in the human sense.

One thing to point out is in B’resheet 43.33-34. Here the brothers were seated according to age when being served before Yosef, and the youngest, *Binyamin*, was given five times as much as the others. Commentators give various possible reasons for the preferred treatment of Binyamin – 1) to test the others to see if they were jealous of this one as they were jealous of Yosef; 2) Yosef was honoring the one brother with whom he held a common mother; 3) Binyamin was innocent of anything to do with Yosef being sold into slavery. Perhaps it was because of this blessing from the hand of Yosef upon Binyamin that the first reigning King of Israel in later centuries was from the tribe of Benjamin – King Saul.

Yosef has been given to us as a picture, a “type,” of Yeshua. Not that Yosef is in any way an incarnation of Yeshua; rather, when we look at how Yosef lived his life, how he treated others, we see Yeshua. Yosef was, in a sense, a pattern that Yeshua would follow. Yosef was only a man, so he cannot compare to the stature and holiness of Yeshua, but we can learn some valuable principles of Yeshua in what we read of Yosef.

Would that modern Israel (Jews globally and in the Land) would recognize Yeshua through Yosef. Pray for the *Ruakh HaKodesh* (Holy Spirit) to open spiritually blind eyes and change spiritually darkened hearts.

שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם – *Sha’alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

B’rakhot v’todah rabbah
(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you
into heaven, will come back to you in just the
same way as you saw him go into heaven.
(Acts 1.11 CJB)