

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Miketz 5778 year 8 #318

A lechtigen Chanukah to all

פרשת מקץ חנוכה תשע"ח שבת מברכין סבת

A link between the parsha of Miketz and Chanukah.

והנה מן הניאר עלת שבע פרות: (מא ב)

"Out of the river there emerged seven cows..." (41:2) Pharaoh has a dream about seven cows coming up from the river. These cows were healthy looking, robust, full of flesh. After them emerged seven other cows. These cows were gaunt and ugly. The gaunt ugly cows ate the fleshy cows and left no trace of them. The miracle of Chanukah was also מְסַרְתָּהּ מְסַרְתָּהּ that the week Chashmonaim swallowed up the mighty Greeks.

Another point: Seven cows emerged from the Nile River. Seven is the number which connotes this-worldliness. There are seven colors in the rainbow; seven days in the week. Egyptian life was dominated by the Nile. To the extent that the Nile overflowed its banks, to that same degree would there be prosperity and food in Egypt. For this reason, the Egyptians worshipped the Nile. On its variations depended life and death. The idolatry of Egypt was to take the natural world, the Nile, the world of seven, and worship it. To take nature and make into a god. As Pharaoh said to Moshe: "Who is Hashem? I do not know Hashem..." (Shemos 5:2) Pharaoh recognized that there was a "god" in the world, but he only recognized a god of nature. In Hebrew the word אֱלֹהִים -- G-d -- 86 has the same gematria (numerical equivalent) as הַטֶּבַע - 86 which means "Nature." One who worships seven does not worship Hashem. Chanukah is the Yom Tov that we celebrate eight; when we connect to that which is beyond this world. Chanukah is where we take one step beyond. The one flask of pure oil that is found in the Holy Temple can only burn for one day, but it burns for eight whole days. It is not just a miracle -- but a miracle of eight. When we make nature a supernatural force, we take the world of seven and make that into eight. Since Chanukah is a Yom Tov of eight which is beyond this world, therefore Tzaddikim say one can be Mispallel by the Menorah and the Tefilos will be answered.

Another connection between the parsha of Miketz and Chanukah.

וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ: (מג לד)

"They drank and became intoxicated with Yosef" (43:34). Rashi comments, "From the day when they had sold Yosef, the brothers had not drunk wine, but on that day they drank wine." The mefarshim ask what is the reason that day was special that the brothers drank wine? The sefer מעינה של מרה answers that we find in the Parsha that Yosef accused the brother's מְרַגְלִים אֲתֵם being spies. Now the brother's felt that Yosef offered them wine in order for them to become drunk and we know that a drunkard reveals his inner secrets, therefore they will release all the secret information they had gathered. Hence they drank in order to show that they had nothing to hide. According to this pshat the drinking of the wine was to relieve the suspicion against them.

However there is a second reason why they drank wine that day; The reason they sold Yosef as a slave was because they were jealous that Yaakov gave Yosef more than they received. That day they saw that Yosef gave Binyomin larger portions of food than they had, yet they were not jealous of him. They realized that they had removed from themselves the envy that had led them to sell Yosef into slavery, and consequently they felt they could drink wine again. This was a cause to celebrate when one overcomes a bad Middah /trait. Envy is a bad Middah. Removing envy is an area in which we should constantly strive to improve. The Mishna in Pirkei Avot teaches that the three traits of jealousy, desire, and drive for honor take a person away from this world. If we want to succeed in this world we must remove these bad traits from ourselves. Chanukah we also celebrate as the Yidden overcame the Greeks who fought hard that the Yidden should act as the Greeks with their traits and abandon the Torah. For this we celebrate in Chanukah with seudos and happiness. Wine brings happiness. The achdus and unity on Chanukah with gifts and family coming together is the avenue of overcoming envy.

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick) *** *The three wise words of the Barditchover saves the day* ***

R' Chaim was an innkeeper. The inn he leased from the Polish landowner was small, and the earnings were barely enough to keep his family from starvation. He finally decided that he had no choice but to travel far from home to earn the money he needed for his family. R' Chaim was a Talmid Chacham and he had the consent of his wife to travel to become a melamed /teacher in small villages. This will bring him enough money to live and to marry off their children.

And this is exactly what he did. He was away from home for twelve long and lonely years. He managed to accumulate the respectable sum of nine hundred rubles, which would allow him

to marry off his children and still live in relative comfort.

On his way home, R' Chaim passed through Barditchov and decided to stop over and see the holy Rav Levi Yitzchok. His first glimpse of Rav Levi Yitzchok came during Shacharis. The melamed watched spellbound as the great Tzaddik prayed with such joy and fervor. R' Chaim felt an unbreakable bond with him, even though he had never seen him before nor spoken a word to him. After Shacharis, R' Chaim remained riveted to his seat, unable to take his eyes off the Rav Levi Yitzchok, seeing him sitting on the bench after everyone else had left, greeted him warmly and invited him for breakfast. As they sat together, R'

Chaim told Rav Levi Yitzchok his story. "If you wish, said Rav Levi Yitzchok " I will tell you three wise words before you go, but it will cost you three hundred rubles for each wise word."

R' Chaim was shocked. Three hundred rubles! And if he paid for all three words, it would cost him nine hundred rubles. He would go home as penniless as when he had left. But R' Chaim was so taken with Rav Levi Yitzchok that he put his full trust in him. There were important lessons in these stories for him to learn. For sure Rav Levi Yitzchok would only do something that was for his own benefit.

"Very well," he said. "Here is the first story" said Rav Levi Yitzchok. If a person finds himself at a crossroads and doesn't know which way to turn he should always take the road to the right, as our Sages taught (Yoma 15b), "All the turns you take should be to the right." R' Chaim handed over three hundred rubles. "Are you ready for another wise word?" asked Rav Levi Yitzchok. R' Chaim's devotion to Rav Levi Yitzchok and his trust in him was so intense that he nodded his assent. "An old man living with a young wife will invite death," said Rav Levi Yitzchok. R' Chaim counted out another three hundred rubles and gave them to Rav Levi Yitzchok. "Do you want to hear the third wise word?" asked Rav Levi Yitzchok.

R' Chaim had gone this far. He had given Rav Levi Yitzchok most of the money he had earned over the previous twelve years, because he trusted him. He did not understand what was happening, but he took the plunge. He placed his last three hundred rubles on the table and nodded. "Only believe what your own eyes see," said Rav Levi Yitzchok. "When you consider other people, give them the benefit of the doubt. But when you are examining your own deeds, of course, do not give yourself the benefit of the doubt. Now go in peace, and may your journey be successful." The melamed left Barditchov in a daze. After twelve long years, he was returning home penniless. But this was what the holy Tzaddik had apparently wanted him to do, and this was what he had done. He had no regrets. As R' Chaim rode along the road, he heard a lot of noise up ahead. He saw that he was approaching a crossroads where the police asked him. "Did you see the thieves that came through here?" "They stole a great deal of money." Remembering Rav Levi Yitzchok's first wise word, R' Chaim pointed to the right. The police thanked him and ran off to the right in pursuit of the thieves. Shortly thereafter, they returned with the stolen money. "You've earned yourself a reward," said the owner as he handed R' Chaim six hundred rubles.

R' Chaim saw the advice of the Rebbe paid off so handsomely. Darkness was falling, and he looked around for a place where he could spend the night. Up ahead, he saw an inn. The owner of the inn turned out to be an old man with an outspoken young wife. "Sure, I'll rent you a room," said the innkeeper. "Absolutely not," said the young wife. "I guess the room is not available," he said. "You'll have to find other accommodations." R' Chaim went off to find some other place, but there was nothing available. A heavy rain began to fall. He decided to return to that inn to find refuge under the roof of the inn. He lay

down on the ground and dozed off. Around midnight, he was awakened by the sound of a wagon approaching. The wagon pulled up in front of the inn, and a few rough men descended. One of them knocked lightly on the door of the inn, and the innkeeper's wife almost instantly swung it open. They conversed briefly in low tones. "Now go upstairs and put that old husband of mine to death while he sleeps, and then we'll break open his strongbox and see what he has there." The melamed realized that Rav Levi Yitzchok's second wise word was unfolding right in front of him. He jumped to his feet and started shouting at the top of his lungs. The commotion woke the innkeeper, who grabbed a sword he kept under his bed and came out to investigate. Realizing that their plot had been foiled, the robbers fled, together with the innkeeper's wife. The melamed then reported to the innkeeper everything he had heard. "I'm shocked," said the innkeeper, "but not very surprised. You've saved my life. How can I repay you? Ask for anything, and if it's within my power, I'll give it to you." The melamed thought for a moment. "six hundred rubles would be perfect," he said. The innkeeper gave him the money gladly and a room to rest. The next morning, R' Chaim continued on his journey, with his pouch refilled. When he arrived in his town, he stopped at an inn to ask about his family. "The husband is gone," one man said. "No one knows where he is or even if he is alive or dead. And his wife she's friendly with a young Polish Goy!

R' Chaim remembering Rav Levi Yitzchok's third story, decided to give his wife the benefit of the doubt. He would only believe what his own eyes saw. That evening, he visited his own inn in such a good disguise that no one recognized him, not even his wife and children. He pretended to fall into a drunken stupor and pass out under the table, where he was left to sleep it off overnight. In the middle of the night, he saw a young man enter the inn and his wife lead the young man into a room and close the door. The young man did not leave until dawn!

This had to be a final test. R' Chaim shed his disguise. His wife shrieked. "My husband! You're back. Come, children! Your father is back!" "My dear wife," said R' Chaim, "I pretended to be drunk and slept under the table, because I wanted to see how things were with my own eyes". "Stop," she said. "Don't say another word. Let me explain. When you 12 years ago, we still owed money to the Polish landowner, and he took our young son hostage. He grew up in the household of the landowner, but he never lost contact with me. All these years, he's been sneaking away at nights and coming here to the inn. We talk, and I feed him food, as he only eats kosher. I taught him how to daven in a siddur, and some Chumash and halacha. You'll get a better look at him tonight when he comes." That night, R' Chaim was waiting for him. He took one look at his face and instantly recognized the young boy he had left behind. R' Chaim embraced his son. R' Chaim paid off his debt to the landowner and redeemed his son. He also set aside some of the money he had earned for the weddings of his children and lived comfortably on the rest of it together with his wife for the remainder of his life. **Wishing all a Freilichen Chanukah**

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