



KINDER TORAH

ת"ט

PARASHAS MIKETZ

PERFECT EMUNAH

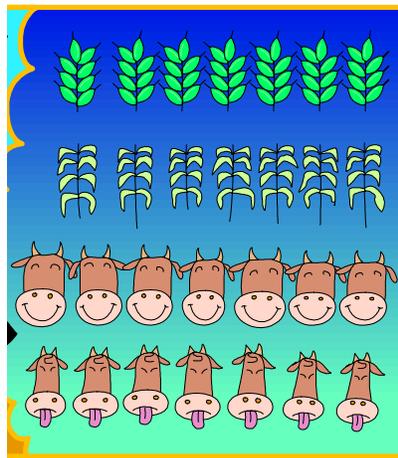
Paroh was upset. Very upset. His sleep the past night had been disturbed by two very troubling dreams. "In the morning he felt agitated, so he summoned all of the magicians and wise men of Mitzrayim. Paroh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them" (from Bereshis 41:8).

How did Paroh behave when he was upset? Not very nicely. He had previously condemned the chief baker to death because a pebble found its way into his loaf of bread. He threw the chief wine steward into prison for allowing a fly to fall into his cup of wine. Paroh was a cruel king who was merciless to those who did not meet his expectations. This particular day, after the dreams, he was angry, agitated, and extremely dangerous. In this frame of mind, he sent for Yosef. The King's messengers arrived in the pit dungeon of Mitzrayim. They quickly washed, shaved, and dressed Yosef, then whisked him off to the Royal Palace to interpret Paroh's dream. Yosef must have been terrified.

What are Paroh's first words to him? "I have dreamed a dream, but there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard about you, that you can understand a dream and interpret it" Bereshis (41:15). Rav Mattisyahu Solomon, in his sefer "With Hearts Full of Faith" considers Yosef's possible responses to statement. He could have agreed with Paroh and said, "Yes your majesty." Alternatively, he could have nodded meekly and bowed his head. The last thing that one would have expected him to do was contradict Paroh. That audacious act could incur the death penalty. Yet, that is exactly what he did. "And Yosef answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is beyond me. God will respond with Paroh's welfare!" (41:16). Why did he have to answer Paroh in this way? He could have at least first interpreted the dreams, calmed Paroh down, and then told him that the interpretation came from Hashem. Instead, as soon as he comes in facing this cruel and agitated despot, he instantly declares that his interpretative talents are not his own. They are from Hashem.

Rav Solomon calls this the ultimate expression of Yosef's *emunah* (faith). He sees with perfect clarity that the Divine Hand is guiding every event in his life. Therefore, he has nothing to fear. Paroh presents no threat to him. Furthermore, he cannot allow even a moment's misconception about the source of the dream's interpretation. Paroh must know

immediately that it is from The Almighty. This strong conviction apparently had a profound effect on Paroh, and brought him around to Yosef's way of thinking. After the dream is interpreted, Paroh tells him "Since Hashem has informed you of this, there is no one as intelligent and wise as you" (41:39). Paroh has apparently been convinced that Yosef's abilities come directly from Hashem. This is the awesome power of perfect *emunah*. It is unshakeable. It maintains a person's calmness and poise in all situations. In addition, it is so compelling, that it can change the heart of even the cruelest despot. This is the perfect *emunah* of Yosef HaTsaddik.



interpreted the officer's strange dream. In three days he would be released and restored to his Royal position. Yosef requested that he ask Paroh to release him from this prison. Because he placed his faith in the officer, and not in Hashem, Yosef stayed an additional two years in prison.

What actually happened? "The Royal Cupbearer did not remember Yosef, rather he forgot him" (Bereshis 40:23). The Keli Yakar explains that this is the way of the world. One who feels that he is important forgets those whom he feels are beneath him. However, Hashem's ways are different. He is greater than all of creation, yet He remembers each one of us, and our deeds. This is a sign of His great humility.

"It happened at the end of two years to the day" (Bereshis 41:1). Rabbeinu Bechaye relates that the word *miketz* comes from the root word *ketz*, which means end. It also can mean fixed amount. Each and every decree that comes from Hashem's mouth is exact. On Rosh Hashanah He evaluates all of our accomplishments of the past year, and then fixes our financial, health, and overall physical situation for the next year. Precisely. That is what He did with Yosef. His punishment was to stay exactly two extra years in prison. To the day. The very next night Paroh dreamed his dream.

Kinderlach . . .

Emunah is a wonderful thing. It is the knowledge, deep in the heart, that Hashem is with you at all times. He is directing your life, and everything that happens to you. Everything that He does is good and perfect; therefore, whatever is happening to you is good. There is no reason to panic or be afraid. Things may be unpleasant. They seem bad. Do not worry. Hashem is making them happen, therefore they are by definition good. There is no reason to fear, panic, be angry, or upset. Calmly say to yourself the immortal words of Dovid HaMelech, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me" (Tehillim 23:4).

Kinderlach . . .

We learn two very important things from these events. Hashem is paying attention to everything that you do. Doesn't that make you feel important? He takes note of everything, remembers it, and evaluates it. Then He arranges the events of your life. The things that happen are tailor made exactly for you. That should make you feel even more important. The King of all Kings is paying close attention to you, and helping you by guiding your life every step of the way. What could be better than that?

HE'S PAYING ATTENTION

"Just remember me . . ." (Bereshis 40:14). Yosef HaTsaddik paid dearly for those words. Yosef and the Royal Cupbearer were in prison together. Yosef

Parasha Questions:

- What was the act that made Yosef the second in command to Paroh? (41:42 and Rashi)
- What is the meaning of the word "avreich"? (Rashi 41:43)
- How much produce did Yosef amass? (41:49 and Rashi)
- Why does the verse refer to the sons of Yaakov as "brothers of Yosef"? (Rashi 42:3)