

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Miketz

2 Tevet 5773/December 15, 2012

Vol.4 Num. 13

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I have a dream?

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

Our parshah, like last week's parshah, begins with two dreams. Last week we read about Yosef's dreams, and this week we read about Pharaoh's. There are many differences between them, but a striking one is frequently overlooked: Pharaoh sought to prevent his dreams from coming true, and the best brains in Egypt worked on the question of how to stop them from being completely realized. Yosef's dreams were of a different type; as understood by Ramban (Bereishit 42:9), Yosef applied a great deal of thought and effort to make them come true. This was the goal behind the strange strategy he employed when his brothers descended to Egypt.

This difference between the dreams raises an interesting question about dreams in general: To what extent should one go, in order to realize his dreams?

Indeed, Abarbanel (41:54) opposes Ramban exactly on these grounds. His comment on Ramban's suggestion is short and sharp – it is not Yosef's duty, claims Abarbanel, to fulfill his dreams. Rather, this responsibility falls on G-d.

As on this Shabbat we conclude Chanukah, let's turn our look to "in those days, at this time", and see if we can gain some insight.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook wrote a responsum (Mishpat Kohen 164),

dealing with a gripping question: How could Yehudah HaMaccabee wage war against the great empire of Antiochus? Why do we praise a suicidal act of declaring war against a superior enemy?

Rav Kook answers that the Hellenists tried to convert the Jewish people, and so it was seen as a time of religious persecution (*she'at hashmad*) which obligates one to sacrifice his life for any of the mitzvot. Others answer that the Chashmonaim were great tzaddikim, and such righteous people are allowed to risk their life for the sake of kiddush Hashem (Kesef Mishneh, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:4).

These answers are all correct, of course. However, reading Sefer Maccabim, or the Scroll of Antiochus, presents a different picture. Matityahu didn't sit and deliberately consider how and if a revolt could be justified in Jewish law; when he saw a Hellenist Jew sacrificing a prohibited animal to an idol, his rage led him to kill both the Jew and the king's officer standing there. After that he fled to the desert, and from there the revolt began.

Matityahu's decision can be rationalized, but it didn't come from reason. It came from the hidden place in the soul where a small jug of pure oil is kept. Throughout our lives, we must respond flexibly to the circumstances around us; as our sages have pointed

out, a talmid chacham without this ability is worse than the corpse of an animal. (Vayikra Rabbah 1:15) But it is of high importance that one also keep one place, in the depths of his soul, where reality has no effect. This space is devoted to the vision of a perfect world; it is our jug of pure oil; it is a dream.

Matityahu came to a point where the gap between this pure vision of his, and reality, became too wide. There was no way to try and meet the outside world on its own terms without contaminating his whole soul. Something had to give – either reality or the dream. At that point, where most people would give up on their purity, Matityahu and his sons acted differently. And from their little dream, a great light came into existence.

We began our article following Yosef and wondering to what extent one should go in order to realize his dreams. In truth, though, there are dreams and there are dreams. Yosef's dreams weren't just a simple prophecy, waiting to come true in one way or another. Yosef's dreams about leadership were part of the essence of his soul, they were his mission statement and life's goal. Yosef knew that he had been designated to help, guide and lead other people, even when he was as low as the pit or the Egyptian prison. His journey through life was a journey of learning; Yosef was taught when to try to fulfill a dream, and when to hold on to it silently as Yaakov had advised at the beginning of the journey.

At one and the same time, our dreams are powerful but dangerous. Without dreams we are empty and shallow, but trying to impose them on a reality that is not yet ripe is disastrous. But as both Yosef and Chanukah can teach us, sometimes dreams can move the world.

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SHEMUEL 1 AND 2 IN 60 MINUTES
MONDAY, 8:00 PM, AT BNAI TORAH (465 PATRICIA)
WITH HILLEL HOROVITZ



HUMAN DIGNITY IN MEDICAL HALACHAH
MONDAY, 8:00 PM, SHAAREI SHOMAYIM (470 GLENCAIRN)
WITH RABBI MORDECHAI TORCZYNER

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According to a tenth century halachic text, Baal Halachot Gedolot, the eighth of Tevet (this coming Friday) will mark the anniversary of the translation of Torah into Greek. The translation is alleged to have happened in the third century BCE, more than a century before the events of Chanukah.

We know little about how this translation came about; we have several different traditions regarding who did the translation, how, and why. We don't know whether the original translation was the Greek Septuagint, although this work is often granted that pedigree. We do know that traditional Jewish texts label the translation a tragedy, but we don't know why.

An early Jewish source, Masechet Sofrim (1:7-8), compared the translation of Torah into Greek with the worst event in our nation's religious history. As the text tells it, "Once five elders wrote the Torah in Greek for King Ptolemy, and that day was as harsh for Israel as the day the Calf was created, because the Torah could not be properly translated. Another time, King Ptolemy gathered 72 elders and put them in 72 houses without revealing why he had gathered them. He went to each one and told them, 'Write the Torah of Moshe, your master, for me.' G-d placed counsel into each one's heart, and each of them wrote an independent Torah. They changed thirteen things: 'Elokim created in the beginning'..." According to the first part of this account, Greek itself is inadequate to translate the Torah, and the disaster of translation was that it necessarily betrayed the original. Of course, *omnis traductor traditor* - every translator is a

traitor - but this passage contends that Torah is uniquely beyond translation. [Of course, later religions made the same claim regarding their sacred texts.]

The explanation found in Masechet Sofrim is difficult, though, in light of a passage in Talmud Yerushalmi (Megilah 1:9), "Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: Tanach may only be recorded in Greek; the sages checked and found that the Torah can be translated properly only in Greek." Based on this text, what was the danger in translating Torah? Why was it considered catastrophic?

One approach is found in a midrash (Tanchuma Vayera 6): "R' Yehudah haLevi b'R' Shalom said: Moshe requested that mishnah be put in writing as well [as the written Torah], but G-d saw that the nations would translate the Torah and read it in Greek and say, 'We are Israel, too.'" In other words, the problem of translation is not in its inadequacy; rather, it is in its authenticity. Once the Torah is available in other tongues, the Jewish nation loses its special character, as anyone can mimic it and claim the heritage of Torah for themselves.

These two ideas - that translation is inadequate and that translation inappropriately shares our Torah - should give us pause in our age of ubiquitous English renditions. The need for translation at this time is clear, but we must be aware of what we are losing; we will be better off when we will be able to leave these treasons behind.

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**613 Mitzvot: #232
Tripping the Blind
Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

Mitzvah 232 is a simple mitzvah with complex ramifications. We are instructed, "Do not place a stumbling block before a blind person," and this includes misleading people who are visually, emotionally or intellectually blind. For example: I am not allowed to offer someone a purchase at an inappropriately high price, if he isn't educated and he won't understand that the price is too high. This mitzvah applies to our interactions with both Jews and non-Jews.

Sometimes the calculation of how

others might stumble is complicated. Thus various halachic authorities rule that one may not give food to someone who will stumble by not reciting a berachah before eating it, but other halachic authorities contend that one should provide the food, since otherwise he will stumble in building enmity for those who follow the Torah. (See Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 5:13, Minchat Shlomo 1:35)

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**Hitoriri:
Jewish Spirituality
Maccabim, Moshe & Menorah
Yair Manas**

Why did G-d perform a miracle specifically with the menorah, as opposed to the other Temple vessels?

In the Al NaNisim prayer, we point out that Greeks attempted to stop the Jews from studying Torah. The battle between the Jews and the Greeks was a battle between two ways of life: a life of Torah and mitzvot, and a life of Hellenism with its own values. The victory of the Jewish people resulted in the continuity of Torah; the Torah-based life prevailed. Thus we thank G-d in Al HaNisim for delivering "the wanton into the hands of the people who are *diligent in Torah*."

In multiple places in the Talmud, the menorah and the oil represent Torah. We are taught that someone who regularly lights candles will merit children who are Torah scholars. (Shabbat 23b) Someone who wants to be a Torah scholar should pray towards the south; the menorah was located along the south wall of the Beit haMikdash. (Bava Batra 25b) Further, one who sees olive oil in his dream should expect to see the light of Torah. (Berachot 57a) Thus, the miracle occurred with the oil and menorah to demonstrate that the victory of Chanukah is a victory of Torah.

When G-d told Moshe to make the menorah, Moshe was confused. Rashi (Shemot 25:31) comments that G-d finally told Moshe to throw a piece of gold into a fire, and the menorah emerged on its own. However, Rashi (Shemot 25:40) comments that G-d showed Moshe a blueprint of the menorah, which implies that Moshe himself made the menorah. Which happened? The S'fat Emet answers that G-d showed Moshe a blueprint in order that Moshe *try* to construct the Menorah. Only after Moshe tried, and failed, did G-d tell him to throw the gold into the fire.

We have said that the menorah symbolizes Torah study. Using the idea of the S'fat Emet, we see that Torah study is about the *process*, the effort we invest. At the culmination of Chanukah, the holiday that represents the strength of Torah, may we all continue to invest energy and vigour in our Torah study.

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**Torah in Translation
Wearing a Gartel****Teshuvot v'Hanhagot 1:69
Translated by R' Ezra Goldschmiedt**

Question: Is it a mitzvah to wear a belt (*gartel*) during prayer?

In Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 91:2 it is stated explicitly that one must have a belt for prayer, even one who has a belt in his trousers, because of "Prepare [to meet your G-d, Israel]" [Amos 4:12, a verse cited in Shabbat 9b as the basis for preparing to pray]. It is surprising then, that most of the [Ashkenazic] Jewish community is not accustomed to wear a belt for prayer. Similarly, the Sefardic community is not accustomed to wear a belt designated for prayers. Indeed, in Beit Yosef (91), in the name of Rebbeinu Yerucham, it is explicit that this applies only if one goes about all day with a belt. If one does not go about all day [with a belt], it is unnecessary. However, the Mishnah Berurah (91:4) writes that there is a measure of piety in this [situation] as well to wear one. Clarification is needed, for we don't practice this.

It seems that since the foundation of the obligation is on account of "Prepare to meet your G-d," meaning that this is an honour to the king - see Rambam, Laws of Prayer 5:2 - it applies specifically regarding clothing that a belt adorns. Examples would be the *chaltal* and long garments like it, that we are accustomed to wear with a belt for beauty. We would similarly beautify them in prayer. However, [concerning] garments for which beautification with a belt is not applicable, which we never wear with a belt, it would seem that there is no relevance in beautifying them with a belt. We never wear them with a belt, and so a belt would not demonstrate preparation or honour for prayer. There would be no obligation for this.

According to this logic, there is not even a measure of piety in wearing a belt for those whose garments are never worn with a belt. It is relevant only where the garment is specifically adorned with this, as it was in their [earlier] time... Everything is in accordance with one's local custom: If one is accustomed to wear a garment like this, then it is included within the parameters of preparing one's garments [for prayer].

However, I have noticed a new issue in this matter: Specifically those who wear a belt in the morning for prayers sometimes fail to

Born in London in 1926 and orphaned at a young age, Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch spent his formative years learning in England and Israel. For many years, he served as a leader in the Jewish community in Johannesburg, South Africa, where he delivered acclaimed Torah lectures on business ethics. His renown grew while there, and he returned to Israel to join the Beit Din of the Eidah haChareidit, which he currently heads.

A descendant of the Vilna Gaon, Rabbi Shternbuch compiled what is considered an authoritative book on his ancestor's customs and rulings, "Hilchos haGra uMinhagav" and has founded a yeshiva-synagogue dedicated to following in his ancestor's traditions. Rabbi Shternbuch has written many other works; he is most renowned for his *Moadim uZ'manim*, which discusses the holidays, and his responsa, *Teshuvot veHanhagot*, which address a wide range of modern-day issues. Rabbi Shternbuch's responsa are particularly noteworthy as a repository of oral traditions from earlier authorities.

This biography includes elements from a biography written by Rabbi Netanel Javasky in a previous issue of Toronto Torah.

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fulfill "Prepare [to meet your G-d, Israel]" when wearing arm tefillin. They are wearing a belt, but since their left arm, together with the tefillin, cannot enter into the sleeve of their jacket, the sleeves are left to rest halfway on the shoulders. This is not an honourable way in which one enters before the King. They are required by the law of "Prepare" to wear their outer garment, a jacket, in its normal manner, their arms inside the sleeves, with the buttons closed. Adding a belt is a measure of special piety, but wearing the garment itself in a casual manner, inappropriate for entering before a king, nullifies the mitzvah of "Prepare". Indeed, an overwhelming majority of those who customarily pray with a belt in the morning are clothed in this manner. Therefore, there is no fulfillment of the mitzvah of "Prepare", even if they then wear a belt. It is surprising that they haven't alerted people to this, which they could repair easily and so fulfill this mitzvah properly.

**This Week in
Israeli History
Tevet 8, 1961
Eichmann Convicted
Adam Frieberg**

Friday is the 8th of Tevet

Otto Adolf Eichmann א"ח was working as a salesman when he enlisted as an SS candidate on April 1st, 1932. He applied for an active duty SS regiment; his application was accepted and he was quickly promoted to the administrative staff of the Dachau concentration camp (which had opened a mere 51 days after Hitler took power). In 1945, when Himmler ordered an end to the Jewish extermination so the evidence could be destroyed, Eichmann disobeyed orders and continued his work in Hungary.

As the Soviets entered, Eichmann fled back to Austria. When captured by US troops, he gave a fake name and managed to flee. He obtained a visa to enter Argentina in 1948, although he didn't make the trip there until July 1950. He lived there under the alias Richard Klement and worked several odd jobs; he managed to bring his family there as well. After much planning, he was captured by a team of Mossad and Shin Bet agents in Buenos Aires in May 1960. They drugged him, and they disguised the entire group as flight attendants as they boarded an El Al plane.

On May 23rd, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion announced Eichmann's capture in the Knesset, receiving a standing ovation. His trial began on April 11th, 1961 and he was indicted on fifteen criminal charges. During a fourteen week trial, more than 90 survivors testified against him. Defense depositions were sent via diplomatic courier from sixteen different countries. On December 11th a guilty verdict was announced, and Eichmann was sentenced to death on December 15th.

Many prominent people sent requests for clemency, but they were all dismissed. Eichmann's wife sent a letter along similar lines. President Ben-Zvi responded to her by handwriting the verse from Shemuel I 15:33, "As your sword bereaved women, so will your mother be bereaved among women."

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Who is the prophet of our haftorah?

Zechariah ("G-d has remembered") was a popular name in the generation that returned to Israel to build the second Beit haMikdash. Our prophet, Zechariah, lived in that first generation, and taught the nation alongside another prophet, Chaggai. Some suggest that he was a kohen, based on Nechemiah 12:16.

Zechariah's audience was among the Jews who returned from Bavel. A small population, indigent and unlearned, they were discouraged by the difficulties of building the Beit haMikdash and establishing their community. Zechariah exhorted the kohanim and political leaders to work in tandem for the national good. Much of his early message is presented through dramatic visions of horses, flying women, and angels; some take his unusual and opaque visions as an indication that his prophecy was on a lower level than that of earlier prophets (Ibn Ezra to Zechariah 1:1; Moreh haNevuchim 2:44; Radak to Zechariah 5:3). Others argue that these visions were a function of the depth and distance of the future he was perceiving. (Abarbanel)

At the end of his book, Zechariah predicts a great battle, Mashiach's arrival, and an expanded Jerusalem.

The message of our haftorah

Our haftorah begins with the pledge that G-d will return to live among the Jews, and that the nations will join us as well. (2:14-16) The passage continues with a vision of Yehoshua, the Kohen Gadol, wearing dirty clothes, facing an angel and a being identified as a "satan". G-d orders the dirty clothing replaced with clean clothing. (3:1-5)

Commentators differ in explaining this:

- According to Rashi, Yehoshua is on trial for the guilt of his children, who intermarried; his dirty clothing proclaims their sin. The "satan" prosecutes; G-d supports Yehoshua. The clothing is replaced because Yehoshua's children ultimately separate from their non-Jewish wives. (Ezra 10)
- According to Ibn Ezra and Radak, Yehoshua represents the Jews who are trying to build the Beit haMikdash, and the dirty clothes represent their poverty. The "satan" represents the earthly forces attempting to prevent the construction, and G-d enables the builders to succeed. The new, clean clothing represents the end of that generation's poverty.

Per Abarbanel, Yehoshua represents his descendants, the Chashmonaim, who are guilty of taking the throne inappropriately; kohanim are not supposed to rule as kings. Their clothing is dirty because they wear royal

garb inappropriately. The "satan" accuses them of guilt, and G-d defends them for their righteousness in battling Hellenization. They are given clean clothing when their monarchy ends.

Toward the end of the haftorah (4:1-7), Zechariah envisions a menorah; this menorah is the simplest reason for us to read this haftorah on Chanukah.

Unlike the menorah in the Beit haMikdash, this menorah receives its oil via channels which stem from two olive trees. Commentators differ in their understanding of how many channels led to the branches; Ibn Ezra saw 7, Abarbanel understood there to be 14, and Rashi calculated 49.

Zechariah asks what the menorah is meant to represent, but our haftorah ends before he receives an answer. After the conclusion of our haftorah, an angel explains the vision of the menorah (4:11-14). Commentators disagree regarding the meaning of the explanation, but Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Abarbanel agree that the two olive trees, and their associated channels, represent the separate roles of priestly authority and political authority. The vision of the two trees fueling the menorah conveys that in the future there will be peace between these two branches of government, as they unite in the service of G-d.

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Highlights for December 15-21 / 2 Tevet - 8 Tevet

Shabbat, December 15

7:45 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Reasons for mitzvot and the parshah, Or Chaim

10:20 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Parshah, Clanton Park

3:25 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Daf Yomi, BAYT

After minchah R' Mordechai Torczyner, Gemara Avodah Zarah: Treating Injuries on Shabbat, BAYT

6:30 PM Parent-Child Learning: Chanukah, Shaarei Shomayim

7 PM The Holiness of Beauty, R' Ezra and Elyssa Goldschmiedt, BAYT Bat Mitzvah Program

7:30 PM Heroism and Chanukah: Movies, Workshop and Food, Hillel and Michal Horovitz, Bnai Torah, *fee*

Sunday, December 16

9:15 AM Hillel Horovitz, Parshah Preview, Zichron Yisroel, Hebrew (Shacharit 8:30 AM)

After Shacharit Adam Frieberg, Is Lighting the Chanukiah so Important?, Shaarei Tefillah, *breakfast*

9:30 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Rambam, Aristotle and the Golden Mean, 33 Meadowbrook #5, *breakfast*

After maariv R' Baruch Weintraub, Contemporary Halachah in Israel, **Hebrew**, Clanton Park

8:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Contemporary Halachah in Israel, **Hebrew**, 4 Tillingham Keep, *mixed*

Monday, December 17

8 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Medical Halachah with CME: Human Dignity in Jewish Law, Shaarei Shomayim

8 PM Hillel Horovitz, Shemuel I and II: Summary, Bnai Torah

8 PM R' Ezra Goldschmiedt, Mesilat Yesharim, Bnai Torah, *high school students*

9 PM Hillel Horovitz, Rav Kook's Ein Ayah, Bnai Torah

8-10 PM Monday night Beit Midrash at Clanton Park

Tuesday, December 18

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Malachi 3: Finale, *Mekorot*

8 PM Yair Manas, Chaburah: Sanhedrin, 33 Meadowbrook

8:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Rambam's Laws of Kings, Shomrai Shabbos, *men*

Wednesday, December 19

10 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Book of Yonah, BEBY, *Melton resumes in January*

8 PM Roving Beit Midrash Hillel Horovitz, Do we really want Mashiach?, Kehilat Shaarei Torah

Thursday, December 20

8:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Sotah, Clanton Park

Sunday-Friday 6 AM Daf Yomi, R' Ezra Goldschmiedt, BAYT