



**Much is learned about Pharaoh from his dreams and his political wisdom. Much is learned about Joseph's keen insight and psychological knowledge from his interpretations.**

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## Weekly Parsha

# Miketz

RABBI BERNARD FOX

“And they said to each other, “Surely we are guilty over our brother in that we saw his anguish when he appealed to us and we did not listen. Therefore this affliction has come upon us.” (Bereshit 42:21)

Teshuva – repentance – is an

*(continued on page 8)*



## Pharaoh's Wisdom

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

In Genesis, 41:45, we find that after Pharaoh sees the undeniable brilliance of Joseph, Pharaoh selects Joseph to be his second in command over Egypt. The passage states three ideas, 1) Pharaoh changes Joseph's name to Zaphnas Paneach, 2) he gave Asnas, the daughter of Poti-Phera (now subtly referred to as Priest of Ohn) to Joseph as his wife, and 3) Joseph goes out on Egypt (to rule).

We have a mesora - a tradition - that when one pasuk (passage) contains many points, they must all

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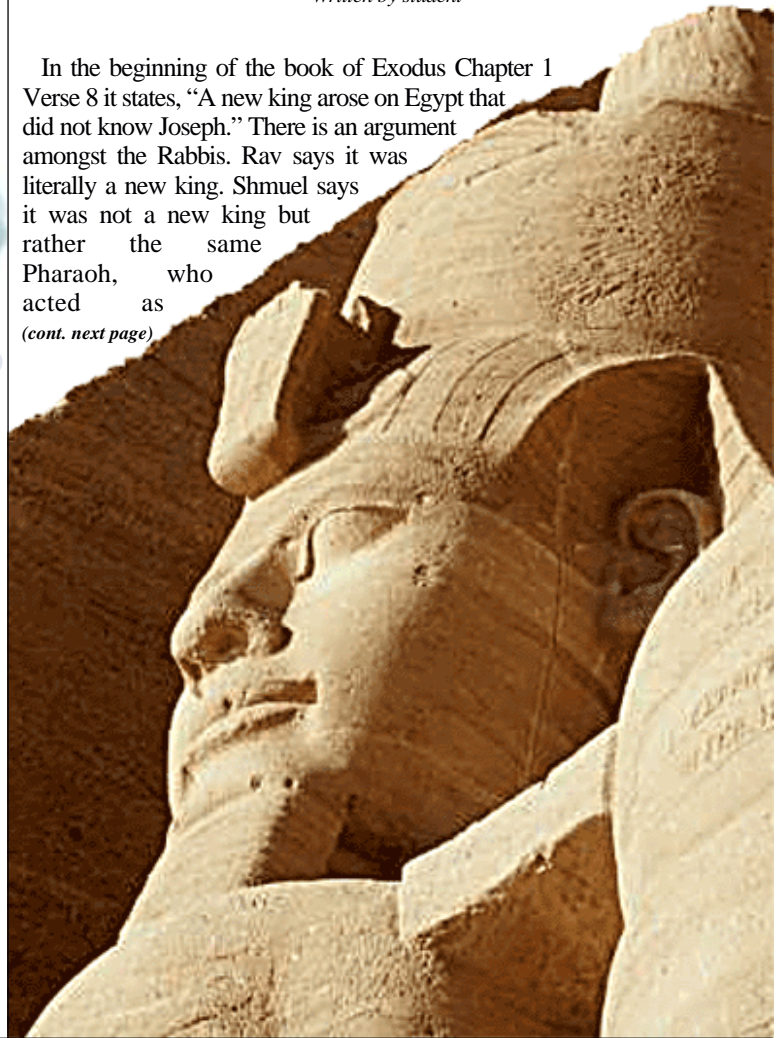
# *the Dreams of* PHARAOH

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

*Written by student*

In the beginning of the book of Exodus Chapter 1 Verse 8 it states, “A new king arose on Egypt that did not know Joseph.” There is an argument amongst the Rabbis. Rav says it was literally a new king. Shmuel says it was not a new king but rather the same Pharaoh, who acted as

*(cont. next page)*



though he did not know Joseph and made new decrees against the Jews. The position of Shmuel seems difficult. A simple reading of the text would indicate it was merely a new king. Why did Shmuel feel compelled to understand the meaning of the verse to such a strained interpretation? This explanation seems to stretch the simple meaning of the verse. It is obvious that Shmuel detected something in Pharaoh's personality that indicates that he pretended as though he did not know Joseph.

In order to properly analyze the personality of Pharaoh and his relationship with Joseph, we must examine Pharaoh's dream and how Joseph's interpretation led to his ascendancy to power. The dreams of Pharaoh can help us examine his personality. There are two causes of dreams. One is a dream of divine origin, a prophetic vision. Another cause is the person's wishes or the thoughts of his unconscious. Pharaoh had two dreams. By analyzing and contrasting both dreams we should be able to determine the portion of the dream, which is prophetic, and the part, which is an expression of his personality. The aspects of his dreams, which are duplicative, are obviously of divine origin. However, if we examine the portions of one dream, which are not common to the other, said portion is not prophetic. It would understandably be an expression of Pharaoh's unconscious.

By analyzing the dreams we note one striking difference with respect to the dreams concerning the cows. Pharaoh sees himself as part of that dream. Genesis Chapter 41 Verse 1 states at the end thereof "...and behold I was standing above the river." Another unique aspect of this dream is that it states the origin of the cows. The cows were coming up out of the river. However, the dream of the bundles of wheat does not state their origin. We must understand; why does Pharaoh include himself in the first dream, and why does he envision the cows appearing from out of the river?

Another clue to Pharaoh's personality would be an analysis of his actions. Upon Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, Pharaoh's response seems overwhelming. He immediately appoints a despicable "Jewish lad, a slave" as his Viceroy, the second most powerful position in Egypt. He dresses Joseph in ornate clothing and extends him a regal coronation. Furthermore, when his subjects come to ask his advise when they were starving, he replies go to Joseph and whatever he tells you to do, abide by. It would seem rather unlikely that Pharaoh was willing to relinquish all control and credit, and suddenly bestow it upon Joseph. His response besides being overwhelming seems incongruous to Shmuel's interpretation of his later actions. At this juncture he seems to be a righteous individual capable of appreciating and recognizing the good of Joseph. However, later after Joseph's death, there is a complete transformation of his

personality and he denies Joseph's existence and in fact, acts ruthless to his people.

An understanding of the extraneous portion of his dreams can give us an insight into his personality and can demonstrate why seemingly incompatible actions are actually consistent with his character.

In his first dream the cows arose from the river. The Hebrew term for river that the Torah uses is ye'or. Rashi explains that this term is used because it is referring to the Nile. The Nile was the source of sustenance for the land of Egypt. Egypt is a dry climate and the Nile overflows and irrigates Egypt. The Nile thus represents the source for the fulfillment of the Egyptians' basic needs. However, in Pharaoh's dream he was standing "al ha'ye'or", above the Nile. This signifies that Pharaoh felt that he was 'above' the Nile. In his own mind he was more powerful than the powers of nature. Pharaoh considered himself a god. In fact, the Medrash tells us, that he even emptied his bowels without anyone knowing. He professed to be above the laws of nature. Thus, the most threatening occurrence to Pharaoh would be if he were not in total control. It would shatter his self image as a god. Thus, the occurrence of a drought was a fearful event to Pharaoh. The Torah tells us va-tapa-em rucho ; his spirit was troubled. Unconsciously, he feared losing control. That is why in the dream he envisioned the cows coming out of the river. He feared a natural event that would be beyond his control. He thus sensed that Joseph's interpretation was accurate. He therefore had to come to grips with the possibility of losing control. However, Joseph presented him with the ability to maintain control. He realized that through Joseph he would be able to retain control and keep intact his image as a god. However, in order for him to view his reliance on Joseph as a situation akin to being in control, he was coerced into viewing Joseph as an extension of himself. Psychologically there was total identification with Joseph. Therefore, his response to Joseph was overwhelming. The deification of Joseph was not an abnormal response, but on the contrary it was necessitated by his identification with Joseph. It was an expression of his vision of Joseph as his alter ego. This relationship reinforced his view that he was the most powerful force in the world. Therefore, when people asked him what to do, he quite naturally responded, "whatever Joseph says, do". It bolstered his image of being in control. Joseph's actions were merely expressions of his own power. Pharaoh and Joseph together, in his mind, were one entity.

We can now understand Shmuel's explanation. After Joseph's death, Pharaoh, because of his psychological make-up, faced a terrible problem. Narcissism, the love of oneself, was a key characteristic of Pharaoh's personality. A

*Was this a new  
Pharaoh, or the same  
Pharaoh as before?*



narcissistic individual's psychic energies are directed towards the love of the self. However, when a person like Pharaoh, strongly identifies with another individual and views him as his alter-ego, that other person becomes a source of his narcissistic, psychic energy. Therefore, upon Joseph's death, the excess psychic energy could no longer be channeled towards his alter ego. He began to confront the same emotions that he previously experienced. He felt threatened by the fact that he was really not in control. However, he could not use the defense mechanism of identification but instead resorted to denial. He was unable to confront the fact that Joseph really allowed him to retain control. Therefore, psychologically, in order to function without feeling threatened, he had to act as though he did not know Joseph.

Any remembrance of Joseph or acknowledging Joseph's value was painful to his self-image of being all-powerful. Accordingly, not only did he have to act as though he did not know Joseph, but that denial coerced him to act in the opposite fashion. His remembrance of Joseph was so painful; it served as the source for his oppression towards Joseph's people, the children of Israel.

Therefore Shmuel stated that "a new king" is only viewed as new, in terms of his actions. However an analysis of Pharaoh's personality indicates that on the contrary, it was the same Pharaoh. That is why the Torah specifically articulates that the new king did not know Joseph. If he were truly a new king the statement would be redundant. The Torah is really offering us an insight into his nature.

An example of this type of psychological mechanism is evident in Christianity. The Christian hates the Jew for ostensibly killing his G-d. However, this is indicative of a psychological defense mechanism. The Christian cannot admit that we gave them their G-d, since Jesus was Jewish.

Jacob upon meeting Pharaoh was keenly aware of Pharaoh's true nature. His response to Pharaoh's inquiry with respect to his age seems rather lengthy and irrelevant. Genesis Chapter 49 at Verse 9, "And Jacob said to Pharaoh, the days of the years of my sojourning are 130, few and bad were the years of my life and I have not



reached the days of the years of the lives of my fathers, in the days of their sojourns." Nachmanides questions this rather lengthy response. However, based upon our insight into Pharaoh's personality, it is understandable. A person, who perceives himself as all-powerful and god-like, feels threatened by someone who possesses something that is desirable, which he does not have. Jacob realized that Pharaoh had such a personality. He sensed that Pharaoh, when questioning his age, noted he was an elder and was asking more, out of a sense of envy rather than curiosity. He sensed that he possessed something that Pharaoh desired. Accordingly, Jacob who was old, at a time when people were not living so long, responded based upon this perception. He stated that he was not so old, and that he did not have a good life nor live as long as his fathers. He attempted to dispel any envy that Pharaoh may have had. He did not want to entice Pharaoh's anger by giving him any cause for jealousy. Therefore, his lengthy response was appropriate and warranted, considering the circumstances.

It also explains the blessing that Jacob bestowed upon Pharaoh. Rashi tells us that he blessed him that the Nile should rise to greet him whenever he approaches it. Jacob was aware of Pharaoh's personality. This blessing Pharaoh truly cherished. It represented that even the most powerful phenomenon of nature would be subordinate to his control. ■

*What is the argument  
between Rav and  
Shmuel?*



be related, as they have been decided by God to be placed in a single verse.

We then have the following questions:

- 1) What is the connection between all the points in this passage?
- 2) Why give Joseph the daughter of Poti-Phera? His wife accused Joseph of attempted rape! Wasn't there a better choice of a mate, if he must have a wife?
- 3) Why is Poti-Phera suddenly referred to as a "priest"?
- 4) What does Joseph "going out on Egypt" have to do with anything?

With a little consideration, the answers leap from this passage.

Pharaoh was in his position - not without intelligence. Upon summoning Joseph from prison to interpret his dreams, Pharaoh was cognizant of the future political problems faced with elevating an imprisoned Jew to viceroy status. More to the point, Pharaoh was appointing one accused of rape. This would not wash well with his subjects, or his country. How would Pharaoh deal with this?

I believe with the following answer, we unveil insight into Pharaoh's wisdom.

Pharaoh attempted to dispel any rumors of Joseph's ill repute by giving him this specific woman for a wife. Who in their right minds would believe that Joseph attempted rape on a woman, the wife of Poti-Phera, and then marries her very

daughter? Pharaoh caused Egypt to believe that the rape accusation was not true. Further, Poti-Phera's wife would no longer accuse Joseph, as any accusation would bring shame to her daughter, and to herself. In addition to silencing the wife of Poti-Phera, Pharaoh sought to silence Poti-Phera himself about Joseph's alleged rape attempt. What do people desire more than anything else? More than money? Power. Pharaoh again displayed his cunning by granting a status of priest to Poti-Phera, in exchange for his silence. Finally, Pharaoh's changing of Joseph's name was an attempt to transform his Hebrew slave reputation, into an Egyptian icon. One's name creates a perceived status.

We now see how these ideas are all connected, and why God desired them to be in one passage. All of the elements in this passage aim towards Pharaoh's one goal. But what about "Joseph going out on Egypt"? What is the Torah's lesson of placing it here? I believe it is to show that regardless of Pharaoh's success in rendering Joseph into a leader acceptable by the Egyptians, Joseph never shed his identity as "Joseph the Righteous". It was still "Joseph" who went out upon Egypt, and not the fabricated, Egyptian veneer created by Pharaoh.

It is enlightening to see the precision of the Torah - how it is written so sparingly. Just enough information is revealed to suggest the problem, and just enough for the answer. It is brilliant that those very statements, which cause the problem, are in fact, clues to the answer. ■



## Channukah

*Introduction and Translation  
by Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim*

## The Channukah Story

# Megilas Antiochos



### Introduction

Upon hearing the threat of destruction of the Jewish nation, the five sons of Mattisyahu displayed much courage, although greatly outnumbered. They were inspired to battle against those who wished to strip them of their Jewish identity. The Greeks were intent on preventing Torah observance, and coercing idolatrous practice. However, Mattisyahu's sons displayed unwavering devotion to what their minds held as true. We read in verse 39, "we remember that which G-d commanded us on Mount Sinai." They were convinced of the reality of G-d's revelation, His existence, and His commanding us in His Torah at Mount Sinai. No enemy could erase G-d's revelation, or the truths contained in His Torah. Without Torah observance, one's life is meaningless. Mattisyahu's sons took it upon themselves to fight to preserve Torah at all costs.

We must take this lesson to heart, as this is the sole reason for our celebration of Channukah: to proclaim G-d's performance of miracles and intervention when we adhere to His word. Conversely, our current leaders omit G-d from all political considerations, as if our history is false. Venomous Arabs attack us daily, but our leaders abandon Torah as a guide for their reactions. To them, world opinion and foreign dollars outweigh human life and Torah truths. These leaders possess no regard for G-d's word, nor the courage befitting a true leader, as displayed by Mattisyahu's sons. This devotion to G-d's word earned the Jews of Channukah their salvation. But our leaders do not learn from history, and keep Israel under the sword. As long as G-d's word is not the essential consideration for all of their actions, G-d will not assist them. Their stubbornness is disturbing, and the silence of world Jewry compounds this crime.

Our leaders' reality is dichotomized; they celebrate Channukah, a publication of G-d's intervention when Torah is upheld, yet, they do not uphold the Torah. By our very act of lighting the menorah with our families, we testify to G-d's intervention, saving those Jews who followed Him by risking their lives. Those of us today cowering from following G-d's Torah due to political pressure, violate G-d's will. It is clear from the Channukah story recorded below, that G-d would have let die, those with no devotion. It was not until the five sons of Mattisyahu risked death for Torah, that G-d stepped in. The abandonment of G-d and His laws makes life worthless. Until the Jews demonstrated their devotion, there was no divine intervention. Once these five, brave souls declared the essentiality of Torah adherence through action, G-d protected them, and gave "the many into the hands of the few, the wicked, into the hands of the righteous."

Today we are slaughtered a great slaughter at the

hands of those like Antiochos. Children of Israel, soldiers of the IDF, and leaders of the Israeli people must wake up. Our history and our very celebration of Channukah attest to G-d's ability to enable five brothers to defeat the armies of our enemies. G-d is not sleeping. G-d is not weak. He sees our travail at this time too. G-d's word and history attest to the fact that He saves those who follow him. Until you follow His Torah, until you see with clear conviction that not based on military tactics alone will we be saved, but with Torah as our guide, we will continue to suffer.

Our nation must no longer deny G-d's ability to save us. See your contradiction, as you light the menorah, while you abandon so many historical events instructing us how we must now act. Have you forgotten Abraham defeating tremendous forces with just a few men? Or Jacob's salvation from his twin Esav? Recall the Ten Plagues, the Manna in the desert, and the splitting of the Red Sea, where every Egyptian soldier perished. And recall this: our claim to Israel is from no other source than G-d's Torah - His promise to Abraham. Yet you refuse His Torah, but desire His land?

We do not rely on miracles; this is against Judaism, and not what I suggest. Living by Torah ideals is the best life, and we do not uphold Torah simply to remove our current pain. But as the Torah is absolute truth, we must be frightened by G-d's promise to abandon us if we abandon Him. But G-d also promises His protection when we live according to His word. In line with this promise, we may seek His assistance. We live by G-d's word, as it is absolute truth, which enables our best existence. When living in line with G-d's word, He has many vehicles to protect us. But as the Shema says, He certainly will not shield us when we abandon His word. Of course it is preferred that we attach ourselves to the truth of Torah when prompted by its perfect and pleasing laws, not because we need salvation. But many times G-d removes His protection to instruct us to return to Him. Now may be such a time.

Remember Channukah. Remember and proclaim it not just with your menorah, but with your daily actions. As someone wishing salvation for yourself and your fellow Jews, act now in accordance with G-d's law. As Mattisyahu's sons lived, and were saved by the Torah, with G-d's help we too can triumph over our enemies. But any leader wishing to lead based solely on political considerations, denying these truths, history, and G-d's abilities, is destined for failure.

Follow His laws, and even the few will be victorious over the many.

Megillas Antiochos was found in an old edition of a siddur printed in Solonika, Greece. Otzar HaTfilos refers to it as a "precious letter".

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*The Greeks defiled the Temple, intent on forcing the Jews to abandon Judaism, and accept their Greek religion. The five sons of Mattisyahu did not tolerate this possibility and immediately commenced a revolt to salvage Judaism and the Jews. They were successful.*

### MEGILLAS ANTIOCHOS

(Arbitrary paragraph breaks have been added every 10 verses for ease of reading. These breaks do not exist in the original.)

1. And it was in the days of Antiochos, king of Greece, a great, mighty king was he, and he was strong in his reign and all kings listened to him. 2. And he conquered many cities and mighty kings, and he destroyed their palaces and their temples he burned with fire, and their men he imprisoned in jails. 3. From the days of Alexander the king, there arose no king like him on all sides of the river. 4. And he built a great city on the sea shore to be his house of kingdom, and Antiochos called the city by his name. 5. And also his second in command Bagris built another city next to it and Bagris called it by his name, and so is its name until this day. 6. In the twenty third year of his reign, it was the two hundred and thirteenth year of the building of the Temple, he gave face to ascend to Jerusalem. 7. And he answered and he said to his officers, "Do you not know that there is the Jewish people in Jerusalem amongst us? 8. To our god they do not sacrifice, and our religion they do not practice and the king's decrees they forsake, to do their religion. 9. And they also hope for the day of the dethroning of the kings and rulers and they say, "When will our King rule the seas and dry land, and the entire world will be given to our hand?" 10. It is not honorable to the kingdom to leave them be on the face of the earth.

11. And now let us come and we will ascend on them and nullify their treaty that was cut with them concerning Sabbath, the new Month and circumcision. And the matter was good in the eyes of his officers and in the eyes of his entire army. 12. At that time, Antiochos the king arose and he sent Nikanor his second with a great army and many people and they came to the city of Judah, to Jerusalem. 13. And they slaughtered a great slaughter and built an altar in the Temple in the place where the G-d of Israel said to His servants, His prophets "Where I will cause to dwell My manifested presence eternally", in that place, they slaughtered the pig and they brought its blood to the sanctified courtyard. 14. And as this occurred, when Yochanan son of Mattisyahu the High Priest heard these doings occurred, he was filled with anger and rage, and the countenance of his face changed, and he counseled in his heart what should be done on this. 15. And then Yochanan son of Mattisyahu made himself a sword two spans long, one span wide, covered under his clothing. 16. And he came to Jerusalem and stood in the gate of the king, and he called to the gatekeepers and he told them "I am Yochanan son of Mattisyahu, I have come to come before Nikanor." 17. And then the gatekeepers and

watchers came and told him the High priest of the Jews stands in the opening, and Nikanor answered and said to them, "Let him surely enter." 18. And then Yochanan was brought in before Nikanor and Nikanor answered and said to Yochanan, "Are you one of the rebels that rebels against the king and desires not the peace of his kingdom?" 19. And Yochanan answered before Nikanor and said, "I am he, now I come before you, that which you wish I will do." 20. And Nikanor answered and said to Yochanan, "If as my will you will do, take a pig and slaughter it on the altar and robe in the king's clothing and ride of the king's horses, and as one of the kings beloved you will be."

21. And as Yochanan listened, he responded a thing, "My master, I fear from the children of Israel, perhaps they will hear I have done so and they will stone me with rocks. 22. Now let all men leave from before you, perhaps they will make the matter known." Then, Nikanor caused all men to leave from before him. 23. At that moment, Yochanan son of Mattisyahu lifted his eyes to the heavens and assembled his prayer before his G-d and he said, "My G-d and the G-d of my fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, please do not give me into the hand of this uncircumcised, because if he will kill me, he will go and praise in the house of Dagon his god, and say "My god has given him to my hand." 24. At that moment, he stepped towards him three steps and plunged the sword into his heart, and he threw that corpse into the sanctified courtyard. 25. Before the G-d of heaven, Yochanan answered and he said, "My G-d, do not place on me sin that I have killed in the sanctified (area), now, so also give all the people that come with him to pain Judah and Jerusalem." 26. Then went out Yochanan son of Mattisyahu on that day and warred with the people and slaughtered in them a great slaughter. 27. The number of the slain that he slayed on that day was seventy two thousand seven hundred that were killed these to these. 28. On his return they built a pillar on his name and called it "Maccabee Killed the Mighty". 29. And it was that king Antiochos heard that his second in command Nikanor was killed, it grieved him much, and he sent to bring Bagris the wicked that mislead his people. 30. And Antiochos answered and said to Bagris, "Do you not know, have you not heard what the children of Israel have done? They killed my army and looted my camp and my officers?"

31. Now, on their money you are trusted or their houses are yours. Come, and ascend upon them and nullify the treaty which was cut with them (by) their G-d, Sabbath, the New Month and circumcision. 32. Then Bagris the wicked and all his camp came to Jerusalem and slaughtered in them a great slaughter and decreed a complete decree on Sabbath, the New Month and circumcision. 33. When this occurred that the

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matter of the king was urgent, there was found a man who circumcised his son and they brought the man and his wife and they hung him in front of the child. 34. And also the woman who bore the son, after her husband died and circumcised him at eight days, she went up to the walls of Jerusalem and her circumcised son in her hands. 35. And she answered and said, "To you, Bagris the wicked, you intend to nullify from us the treaty that was cut with us, the treaty of our fathers will not be nullified from us, Sabbath, the New Moon and circumcision from our children's children, it will not be removed." 36. And she dropped her son to the ground, and she fell after him and they both died together. And many of the children of Israel that did similarly in those days, and they did not veer from the treaty of their fathers. 37. At that time, the children of Israel said, "These to these, let us go and rest in the cave, lest we desecrate the Sabbath day, and they slandered them before Bagris. 38. Then Bagris the wicked sent men girded for battle and they came to the opening of the cave and said to them, "Come out to us, eat of our bread and drink of our wine and our actions you shall do." 39. And the children of Israel answered, "These to these, "we remember that which G-d commanded us on Mount Sinai, 'Six days you shall work, and do all your labor, and on the seventh day rest'. Now it is better for us that we die in this cave than desecrating the Sabbath day." 40. When this happened that the Jews did not come out to them, they brought wood and burnt it at the opening of the cave and there died like a thousand men and women.

41. Afterwards, there came out five sons of Mattisyahu, Yochanan and his four brothers and they warred with the people and slaughtered a great slaughter and drove them to the isles of the sea because they trusted in the G-d of heaven. 42. Then Bagris entered one ship and fled to king Antiochos and with him were men, escapees of the sword. 43. And Bagris answered and said to king Antiochos, "You the king, placed a command to nullify from the Jews Sabbath, the New Month and circumcision, a great deceit and rebellion in its midst. 44. That when there went all the people and nations and languages, they could not defeat the five sons of Mattisyahu. From lions they are stronger, and from eagles they are more swift, and from bears they are more quick. 45. Now king, I offer you good counsel, and do not war with few men, for if you war, you will be embarrassed in the eyes of all kings. 46. Therefore, write and send books in all cities of your kingdom, that there come officers of war and not leave one of them, and also elephants wearing armour with them." 47. And the matter was good with king Antiochos, and he sent books to all cities of his reign, and there came officers of all

the people and kingdoms, and also elephants wearing armour came with them. 48. A second time Bagris the wicked arose and came to Jerusalem, he broke the wall, and he cut off the water supply, and he broke in the Temple thirteen breaches and also from the stones he broke until they were like dust and he thought in his heart and said, "This time I will not be overtaken because of the numbers of my army and might of my hand". But the G-d of heaven did not think so. 49. And when the five sons of Mattisyahu heard, there arose and came to Mitzpeh Gilead, that were there the remnant of the house of Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet. 50. They decreed a fast, and sat on ashes to seek out mercy from before G-d of heaven.

51. Then there fell good counsel in their hearts, Judah the firstborn, Simon the second, the third Yochanan, the fourth Yonasan, the fifth Elazar. 52. And their father blessed them and so he said, "Judah my son, I liken you to Judah son of Jacob who was equated to a lion. 53. Simon my son, I liken you to Simon son of Jacob who killed the inhabitants of Shechem. 54. Yochanan my son, I liken you to Avner son of Ner, officer of the army of Israel. Yonasan my son, I liken you to Yonasan son of Saul, who killed the Philistine people. 55. Elazar my son, I liken you to Pinchas son of Elazar who was jealous for his G-d and saved the children of Israel. 56. On this, there went out the five sons of Mattisyahu on that day, and warred with the people, and slaughtered in them a great slaughter, and there was killed from them Judah. 57. At that moment when the sons of Mattisyahu saw that Judah was killed, they returned and they came to their father. 58. And he said to them, "Why have you returned?" And they answered and they said, "On account that our brother was killed who was equated to all of us." 59. And Mattisyahu their father answered and said to them, "I will go out with you and I will fight with the people, lest the house of Israel perish, and you are frightened on your brother." 60. And Mattisyahu went out on that day with his sons and fought with the people.

61. And G-d of heaven gave all the mighty of the nations into their hands. And they slaughtered a great slaughter, all who seized the sword, and all who drew the bow, officers of war and the seconds in command, there was not left one remnant, and there fled the rest of the people to the cities of the sea. 62. And Elazar was involved in killing the elephants and he was submerged by the chariots of the elephants, and when they returned, they looked for him among the living and among the dead, and they could not find him. And afterwards they found him that he was submerged by the chariots of the elephants. 63. And the children of Israel were gladdened that there was given to their hands their enemies. From

them they burned with fire and from them they pierced with the sword, and from them they hung on trees. 64. And Bagris the wicked that misled his people, the children of Israel burned him with fire. 65. And then, Antiochos the king heard that Bagris the wicked was killed and all officers of war with him, he entered into a ship and fled to the cities of the sea, and it was that each place he came to there, they mocked him and called him "the runaway". 66. Afterwards, the children of the Hasmoneans came to the temple, and they built the broken gates and they closed the breaches, and purified the courtyard from the casualties and from the impurities. 67. And they searched for pure olive oil to light the candelabrum, and they did not find but one canister that had the seal of the ring of the High Priest and they knew that it was pure, and it contained a measurement to light for one day. 68. And G-d of heaven Who causes to dwell His name there, gave a blessing and they lit from it eight days. 69. Therefore there established the children of the Hasmoneans a fulfillment, and they forged a law, and the children of Israel with them as one, to make these eight days days of drinking and happiness as the appointed days written in the Torah, and to light on them lights to make known what was done to them (by) the eternal G-d of heaven. 70. And on them, one may not eulogize, nor to decree fast days, or have a fast, except if it was accepted on it prior to this and pray before their G-d.

71. But the Hasmoneans and their children and their brothers they did not decree on them to nullify service of work. And from that time, there was no name to the kingdom of Greece. 72. And there received the kingdom, the children of the Hasmoneans and their grandchildren from that time until the destruction of the Temple two hundred and six years. 73. Therefore, the children of Israel from that day in all their exiles guard these days and call them days of drinking and gladness from the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, eight days. 74. From that time and eternally, there should not be removed from them, that were in their Temple, priests, Levites and their wise men who established upon them and upon their grandchildren eternally.

Other prayer books add these verses:

"And these days, they arose and accepted on themselves and on their children and on their grandchildren eternally, the priests, Levites and wise men that were in the temple, and they were not removed forever. The G-d that did with them a miracle and a wonder, He should do with us miracles and wonders and sustain with us the verse that was written as the days of your Exodus from the land of Egypt, I display wonders, Amen." ■



(Miketz continued from page 1)

essential element of Judaism and human perfection. Is teshuva accomplished through recognizing that one has acted wrongly? How specific must one be in acknowledging one's errors? Parshat Meketz deals with this issue.

The famine that Yosef had foretold strikes the entire region. Yosef's brothers come to Egypt to seek provisions. Yosef recognizes his brothers but they do not recognize him. Yosef initiates a plan designed to torment his brothers. But through their suffering they will come to recognize their own shortcomings and the injustice in their treatment of Yosef.

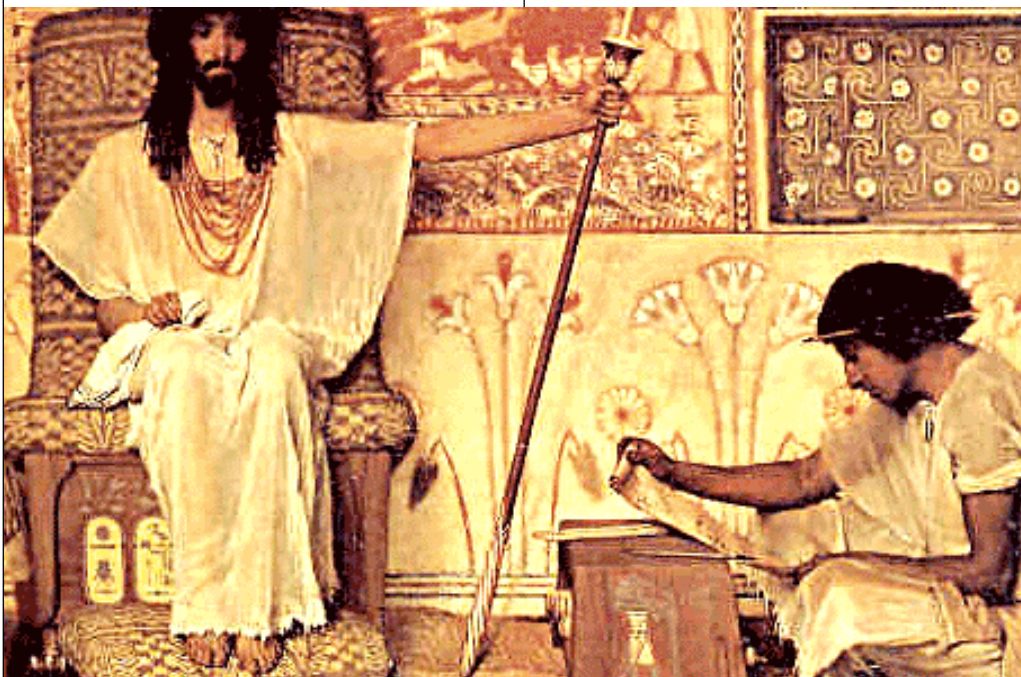
Yosef accuses his brothers of being spies. He tells his brothers that he will provide them with the opportunity to vindicate themselves of this charge. He will permit them to return to Canaan with provisions for their families. However, one brother will be held in Egypt. He will only be released when the others return to Egypt accompanied by Binyamin – their youngest brother.

The brothers conclude that this tragedy is a result of their sin against Yosef. They had thrown Yosef into a pit and they sold him into slavery. Yosef had beseeched them to spare him. But they had ignored his pleas. With this acknowledgement, the brothers clearly began the process of repentance. Yosef's plan to force the brothers to face their mistake was beginning to work. However, Reuven was not satisfied with the brothers' acknowledgement.

**“And Reuven responded to them saying, “Did I not tell you not to sin against the child. And you did not listen and now payment for his life is sought.”** (Beresheit 42:22)

At first glance, it seems that Reuven is attempting to exclude himself from his brothers' sin. He begins by reminding the brothers that he had urged them not to act against Yosef. However, a more careful analysis of the passage indicates that this was not Reuven's intent in his response. The pasuk describes Reuven's comments as a response to the brothers' declaration. The brothers' statement did not contain any judgment of Reuven. They did not make any accusation against him. If his intention was to defend himself, he was not responding to the brothers. He was responding to a personal and internal sense of guilt. Yet, the Chumash describes Reuven's comments as a direct response to the brothers' declaration. He objected to some element of their assessment. What was his objection?

In order to understand Reuven's comments, we must more closely study the brothers' confession. The brothers believed that Yosef's dreams reflected a desire to subjugate them. They interpreted Yosef's behavior towards them as expressions of his desire to dominate them. For



example, Yosef related to Yaakov critical reports on the brothers' behavior. The brothers interpreted this as a calculated attempt to defame them. They were convinced that Yosef ultimately would try to destroy them. Based on this analysis, they believed that they were justified in removing Yosef as a threat. They regarded their actions against him as self-defense.

Now, let us study their confession. Their acknowledgment focused on a single issue. Sforno points out that they confessed to lacking compassion. Yosef had begged them to spare his life. They had ignored his appeals. In disregarding his pleas, they had lacked compassion for their brother. However, the brother's confession did not contain any reevaluation of their assessment of Yosef. In other words, the brothers were saying that their assessment of Yosef had been correct. But their response had been too harsh.

Sforno explains that Reuven challenged their basic premise. He referred to the Yosef whom they sold into slavery as a child. Children do not develop and execute carefully designed plans. Children act out of impulse. Reuven was telling the brothers that they had misjudged Yosef. Yosef was not engaged in an elaborate scheme to destroy them. He was a child, acting out of immature motives. Their resentment of Yosef had allowed them to exaggerate his intentions and to rationalize their hatred.

In short, Reuven was telling the brothers that their repentance was far from complete. It is true that they had acknowledged wrongdoing. But they had not yet acknowledged their true sin. Reuven told the brothers that their repentance could not be complete unless they acknowledged their misjudgment of Yosef and their true motivation.

He was not willing to allow the brothers to continue to deceive themselves.[1]

**“And Yosef bought all of the land of Egypt for Paroh. For every Egyptian sold his field because of the famine became intense. And all of the land was Paroh's. And Yosef transferred all of the people to cities from one end of Egypt to the other.”** (Beresheit 47:20-21)

The famine continued and Yosef feed the Egyptians with the provisions that had been stored during the seven years of prosperity. Eventually, the Egyptians were forced to sell all of their possessions in order to purchase food. Still, the famine continued. With their wealth exhausted, the Egyptians came to Yosef and offered to sell themselves and their land for more food. Yosef – acting as Paroh's agent – agreed to buy their land in exchange for food. Yosef further decreed that twenty percent of all produce must be delivered to Paroh – as the owner of the land. The remaining eighty percent Paroh would allow the people to keep. The Torah tells us that Yosef then redistributed the population. Every Egyptian was required to move off of his land and resettle elsewhere. Why did Yosef require this relocation?

The simplest answer is provided by Radak and others. Yosef realized that the sale of the land to Paroh would have little meaning to the seller if he were permitted to remain on the land. In order to reinforce that one's land now belonged to Paroh, Yosef demanded that each person abandon his land and accept another property – in a different location – given to the person by Paroh. This assured that the Egyptians fully appreciated that they were not longer the owners of their land but were working the land belonging to Paroh.[2]

(continued on next page)



(Miketz continued from previous page)

## Weekly Parsha

This interpretation raises another issue. According to Radak's interpretation, Yosef's purchase of the land and his redistribution of the population were an expression of his loyal and devoted service to Paroh. Yosef took his duties seriously and worked towards strengthening his king's power and influence. Although this is an interesting lesson, the Torah is primarily an account of the relationship between Hashem and Bnai Yisrael. Why would the Torah delve into the nature of Yosef's relationship with Paroh?

Rashi suggests that Yosef's motivations were more complicated. He did want to serve Paroh loyally. However, he was primarily interested in helping Bnai Yisrael. He feared that as immigrants to Egypt, they would be subject to suspicion and discrimination. He saw an opportunity to remove the stigma and being aliens in Egypt. His plan was to make every Egyptian and alien. By relocating the Egyptians, everyone became an exile from his original home. Bnai Yisrael and Egyptians all became aliens within Egypt.[3]

It seems that according to Rashi, this account is not included to demonstrate Yosef's loyalty to Paroh. It is intended to reveal his devotion to Bnai Yisrael. Yosef saw an opportunity to serve Paroh in a way that was invaluable to Bnai Yisrael and he took full advantage of this opportunity.

However, it is possible that there is a further message in Rashi's comments. The Chumash tells us the ultimately, the Egyptians persecuted Bnai Yisrael. To a great extent, this persecution was based upon a suspicion of Bnai Yisrael as foreigners in Egypt. In other words, all of Yosef's careful planning had little or no long term effect. Despite Yosef's efforts to protect Bnai Yisrael from the persecution that is often experienced by foreigners, the persecution occurred.

This teaches us two important lessons. First, the persecution of Bnai Yisrael in Egypt was not the result of poor diplomacy on Bnai Yisrael's part. On the contrary, Yosef exercised excellent judgment and devised and carried out a brilliant plan to protect Bnai Yisrael. Instead, the persecution was part of the Divine plan and was an expression of Hashem's will.

Second, Hashem's plans cannot be defeated. Hashem wanted Bnai Yisrael to be regarded with suspicion and Hashem's will was fulfilled despite Yosef's masterful efforts. Even Yosef could not undermine Hashem's plans! ■

[1] Rabbaynu Ovadia Sforno, Commentary on Sefer Beresheit, 42:21-22.

[2] Rabbaynu David Kimchi (Radak), Commentary on Sefer Beresheit 42:21.

[3] Rabbaynu Shlomo ben Yitzchak (Rashi), Commentary on Sefer Beresheit 42:21.

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Taken from "Getting It Straight"  
Practical Ideas for a Life of Clarity

# Outfielders

**DOUG TAYLOR & RABBI MORTON MOSKOWITZ**



It didn't get much tighter than this.

Bottom of the eighth. Score tied. Two outs. Three men on base. Our pitcher's curve ball had just made it three balls and two strikes. The hometown crowd in the Kingdome was going wild.

I wasn't exactly jumping up and down, but I was paying attention. So were the dozen or so cub scouts camped next to me.

The pitcher threw a fast ball that wasn't quite fast enough. A swing and a loud pop suddenly became a high fly into left field. Even as the batter sprinted toward first, the outfielder's eyes never left that sailing white sphere as it arced toward him. Three steps forward and it was in his glove.

The crowd erupted and for a moment I thought they might mob the field. But the emotion subsided, and soon the familiar background ambiance of "Hot dogs! Get yer hot dogs!" could be heard once again.

"Mrs. Edwards! Mrs. Edwards! Can we stay and get his autograph?" The excited face of an 8-year-old cub scout one row down looked hopefully at the woman sitting next to me.

"We'll see," she said.

"Looks like you've got your hands full," I said, just to be friendly. She was undoubtedly one of the mothers corralling this group of wild young ponies.

She laughed. "They're a handful, that's for sure," she said.

We waited as the teams set up for next inning. Then suddenly, she turned to me.

"You know," she said, "it's amazing how much greatness people attach to such a little thing."

Surprised, I turned back to her. "What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, would you say that these boys - in fact, a lot of people in this stadium - think that the outfielder who made that catch is a great person?"

"I suppose so. He's one of the most highly

paid baseball players in history."

"Right," she said. "But have you ever wondered why they think he's great?"

"Well, because he's a great outfielder."

"Yes, but what does an outfielder do?"

Surely she understood the game better than that. "I'm not quite sure what you mean," I replied.

"Look," she said. "I'm no expert, but it seems to me that an outfielder stands out in the field, waits for the ball to be hit, evaluates its path while it's still moving, and in a split second decides the best way to catch it and pass it on to someone else. Am I right?"

"Well, sure."

"So, suppose he can do it. Is that really such a great thing? Does that make him a great person? Just because he can catch a ball in the air, say, nine times out of ten? I mean, why do people get so worked up about someone who can do that?"

I thought about trying to enlighten her. Except that I couldn't think of anything enlightening to say.

"Actors and actresses are the same way," she went on. "Have you ever thought about what they really do?"

"You mean, star in movies?"

"Yes, but think about the activity. They duplicate emotions. They adjust their faces, hands, and bodies to imitate emotional reactions. Now I ask you. Is that ability - taken without all of the Hollywood hype - something to idolize?"

I wasn't sure if she was just letting off mental steam or preparing for a lecture to the scouts. Either way, I couldn't argue with her point.

"It's crazy," she said. "As a society, we take certain skills - and not even very worthwhile or



important skills at that - and elevate them to a level far beyond their practical use. And then we idolize those who practice them. How did we get like this?"

She was looking out at the field now, talking more to herself than to me.

"I mean, how can you compare that outfielder with, say, a brain surgeon?" she went on. "At the end of his life, the brain surgeon can at least say, 'I saved the lives of hundreds of people'. What can that outfielder say? I caught hundreds of fly balls?"

"Besides," she said, turning back to look at me, "you'll notice that he only has to catch one ball at a time. Do you know what they would call him if he had to catch a dozen balls all at once, coming at him from all directions?"

"Uh, no."

She smiled. "A den mother." ■



# *the* Miracle of Healing

LAURA KOSTER

Laura Koster is an educational counselor, motivational speaker and author. Laura was born with mild cerebral palsy and doctors proclaimed she would never walk, speak, nor live an independent life. Laura has overcome tremendous challenges despite the odds.

The following article is an excerpt from Laura Koster's upcoming book:

"Chanukah is a special time when we remember the great miracles G-d performed for us. The miracle of the oil, which lasted for eight days and the defeat against the Greek empire. Jews were prohibited from studying Torah, keeping the Sabbath and kosher laws. Chanukah is not only about remembering the miraculous occurrence of the lasting oil, and victory won by the Maccabees. It is about our eternal faith in G-d, the underlying force, which saved our nation and precious Torah. We celebrate our holiday with much joy, singing, giving (gelt) money and lighting the menorah. Chanukah commemorates G-d's love and protection over us. During this holiday we light the candles to give thanks to G-d, shed light within our homes and into the world. A time to remember the miracle of how G-d blessed us with the ability to continue our tradition, recite stories, and pass them onto our children. This is my story about the miracles, which have occurred in my life.

I was born with mild cerebral palsy caused by malpractice at the time of my birth. My mother told me that I fought for my life with enormous will and determination. I probably wanted to give the doctor who delivered me a good kick in the nose but restrained myself. Cerebral palsy is a condition, which affects motor coordination and balance, but is not hereditary (Baruch Hashem). As a little girl, I walked with braces, crutches & wore a helmet to protect me from falls.

During the past 2 years, I have experienced tremendous challenges and triumphs in my life. I worked as an educator and coordinator of programs for children and adults with various challenges and have been unemployed due to 911. Since my unemployment, I have encountered tremendous

emotional, physical and spiritual changes. Despite many struggles, I have received incredible blessings and unexpected gifts of healing, love, friendships, new insights, strength, and vision to achieve my goals and dreams!

Throughout this time, I've returned to college and obtained my New York State Certification as a school counselor, organized a benefit fundraiser for the Terror Victims in Israel, studied Torah in various centers, and traveled. This summer, I was granted a scholarship and attended the "Living Your Highest Vision" seminar in Las Vegas with Jack Canfield (author of "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books). I was given a wonderful opportunity and gave a motivational talk in front of 250 people who attended from all over the world. In the summer of 2004, I spoke at the Israelight Retreat in the Poconos on the Labor Day Weekend and shared my miracle of healing which G-d has blessed me with.

A few months ago, a Rabbi from Israel gave me the name Rafaela to add to my Hebrew name Rafaela Chana Leah (I was named after my grandmother). Rafaela means "refuah-to heal" and Baruch Hashem (Thank G-d) my walking, balance and speaking has tremendously improved over the past year. Now I walk without any devices and thanks to my chiropractor/healer, my posture is straighter than a soldier. Although, I still have slight limp and mild speech impairment, people can understand everything I say (I can yak & yak & love to laugh). It is wonderful to have the ability to communicate effectively with people without needing to repeat myself a million times, I mean a hundred, all right just a few times.

G-d created humans with the innate wisdom and ability to heal from "incurable" conditions. We all have the power to heal our bodies and minds, which are incredible machines, created of organs, cells, nerves, bones, etc. Within the past 2 years, my chiropractor has lovingly worked on parts of my brain and miraculously corrected the damage, which occurred at birth. Yes, Hashem has blessed me with the gift of healing and with the "healing assistance" He has given my chiropractor, who works with my body's energy & mind to assist in



restoring my health.

My loving family, friends, teachers, colleagues, rabbis & doctors have always given me love, encouragement & support to be the person I am today. Hashem has blessed me with healing & determination to overcome many challenges in life!

Tonight, I stared at the menorah with tears in my eyes. I felt overcome with joy and awe due the God's miracle of healing. I have eternal gratitude to G-D for healing me and giving me the ability and power to walk, speak, dance, operate my computer, cruise around in my cool, electric blue car (my dad gave me as a gift) and help others. In order to thank G-d for giving me healing, happiness and life, I am giving charity to the victims of terror in Israel who are in rehabilitation to relearn how to walk and heal from their physical, emotional and spiritual wounds. I would like to ask you to join me in giving Tzedakah (charity) to help many, many victims who require medical and financial assistance. If you are not able to give charity, please pray for the victims and everyone who needs healing as well as bringing Moshiach, peace, love and light into the world!"

May you all be blessed with health, happiness, love, prosperity & peace. Happy Chanukah!

With love, blessings, & healing,

*Laura Koster-Rafaela Chana Leah*

*Email: Lauraloveslife@aol.com*

Please write out checks to "NAVAH" and mail donations to:

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Thank you!



# JOSEPH'S DREAM INTERPRETATIONS

**RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM**

*What element in  
Pharaoh's dreams  
indicated it was of  
Divine origin?*

In Genesis, 41:1, we read of the dreams of Pharaoh. He saw seven lean cows swallow up seven fat cows, and no enlargement could be seen in those lean cows. After waking and falling asleep a second time, Pharaoh dreams again, of seven full ears of grain being swallowed by seven thin ears, and again there was no telling that the thin ears swallowed the fat ones.

Pharaoh awoke and called to all his interpreters, but none could offer a pleasing interpretation until Joseph was summoned to interpret.

Joseph told Pharaoh the following (Gen, 45:25):

*"25: The dream of Pharaoh is one, that which God plans to do has He shown to Pharaoh. 26: The seven good cows represent seven years, and the seven good ears represent seven years, it is one dream. 27: And the seven lean, bad cows that came up after them are seven years and the seven withered ears blown by the wind are seven years of famine. 28: This is the matter which I had told to Pharaoh, what God plans to do He has shown to Pharaoh."*

Joseph continues to tell Pharaoh that first, there will be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of great famine, and the famine will be so severe as to wipe away the memory of the plenty. Joseph explains why the dream was repeated, as God was to enact the plenty and the famine immediately. He then advises Pharaoh to store the plenty in preparation, thereby

placing Pharaoh in control of all produce.

The questions which arise are as follows:

1) What did Pharaoh see in Joseph's interpretation, which satisfied him, as opposed to the Egyptian interpreters? The interpreters said that Pharaoh would have seven daughters and bury seven daughters. Joseph said the seven represented years of plenty and famine. What is more satisfying in Joseph's interpretation?

2) In his interpretation, Joseph does not keep to the order of things. His first interpretation is in passage 27, where he commences with mentioning the famine. But this takes place 'after' the plenty, so Joseph should have commenced with explaining that the fat cows or ears represented plenty. (These came first in Pharaoh's dreams.) But he didn't. Why?

3) Very significant is Joseph's statement in passage 28, "This is the matter which I had told to Pharaoh, what God plans to do He has shown to Pharaoh." As if to say, "you see Pharaoh, I have now proved what I was saying, that this is from God". It seems from this passage that Joseph contented himself that he had successfully proven to Pharaoh - already at this point - that it is God's plan. This would mean that in these words alone Joseph feels he has already convinced Pharaoh that the dreams are from God. My question is, what in his words convinced Joseph that he made his point clear?

A closer look at Joseph's words gives us the answer. Notice that Joseph repeats one element, "it is one dream". This repetition is what Joseph is trying to drive home in Pharaoh's mind, and Pharaoh's astrologers do not mention this element of repetition.

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*What was so unique  
about Joseph's  
interpretations, that  
Pharaoh accepted  
only his version as the  
true explanation?*

Joseph differed from the astrologers not so much in the dream's content, but in his explanation of the style of the dreams. Joseph showed Pharaoh that his dreams were exact duplicates, a phenomenon which does not have its source in human dream dynamics, but rather, something only possible when emanating from a Divine Source - God. Pharaoh was wise enough to see this as true. The proof of this explanation is not only Joseph's repetition, but in the fact that Joseph

concluded to Pharaoh midstream in his explanation, that this is already proof enough that your dreams are Divine. Joseph said, "This is the matter which I had told to Pharaoh". Saying in other words, "you see, it is true." Joseph went on with the rest of the interpretation, but not as a proof of Divine origin. Joseph was convinced that this element of exact repetition proves that the dreams were from God. He therefore interrupted his interpretation to impress this upon Pharaoh.

While discussing this explanation with a friend, he quoted verse 41:32 later on, where Joseph said that the doubling of the dreams is to teach Pharaoh that the matter is imminent, and not as I suggested, that it is to teach a divine pattern normally not seen in dreams. Perhaps this question did not bother me as much as the dreams bothered Pharaoh! But it was a good question. However, I then came across an Ibn Ezra which says the doubling of the dreams teaches imminence, is derived not from the dreams' duplication per se, but from the doubling in "one night". According to Ibn Ezra, had the dreams been identical, but took place

on separate nights, we would not learn of the imminence factor. Repeating dreams can take place over time, but Pharaoh's dreams occurred in one night. This taught imminence of the years of plenty and the ensuing famine. But identical dreams are from God according to Joseph. The other idea of imminence is why they both came in one night's sleep, and not over a few nights. This Ibn Ezra allows our original explanation to remain in place. Joseph was in fact stating that the identical nature of the dreams - not their single night's occurrence - taught the divine aspect.

Ramban, quoting Rabbi Eliezer, says that the one fact, that there were two dreams of cows and grain teaches that the matter was true and fixed. The second fact that both dreams occurred in a single night teaches that it is imminent. Again we see that there is a separate element of two distinct objects, cows and grain. This teaches a separate concept, according to Joseph, that the matter is of divine origin.

We see that Joseph dreamt of the sheaves and stars bowing to him. The wine steward and baker had similar dreams too, and Pharaoh also had two similar dreams. This consistent pattern of duplicating dreams reveals to us that such dreams are divine, and something, which Joseph detected in each case, arriving at his determinations in all three instances that each dream was divine.

The reason why Joseph commenced with interpreting the famine aspect first, was that Joseph desired to be freed from prison and avert this catastrophe. His calculation, which proved intelligent, was to hit Pharaoh with bad news before the good news, even though this distorted the order. Joseph is known as the chief psychologist in Jewish history, and he knew that people would attach themselves to the first element of news, even if followed by good tidings. By presenting Pharaoh with the stark reality of an utter and imminent famine, Joseph intended to render Pharaoh helpless, and in need of one who could save him - in need of a Joseph. ■