

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE — DREAMS

JewishTimes

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DREAMS

OUR HIDDEN HALF

**HOW JOSEPH
IDENTIFIED
DIVINE DREAMS**

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

**PHARAOH'S
DREAMS & JOSEPH'S
INTERPRETATIONS**

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

THE LIE OF RACISM

EDITORIAL REPRINT



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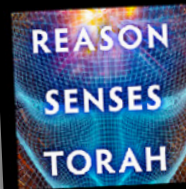
MISSION | **God's Revelation at Mt. Sinai: One Plan for Mankind**
The greatest event ever witnessed forces one conclusion

MESORA
Summer 2020

EVIDENCE EXISTS for only one event of God revealing His religion to man. All other religions claim divine origin, yet provide no validation. This explains their requirement of "blind faith," which is absent in Judaism: a major offering proof. 3332 years ago upon Mt. Sinai, God gave us His Bible: the only time God communicated a religion to man. Masses witnessed this, which is the only validation of any historical claim, and why the major religions accept the Bible. Mesora's mission is to share God's Biblical religion with all who seek it. As every human descends from that first couple; all humans are equals. Jews boasting "Jewish Superiority" and those who discriminate against any race violate the Bible and reason. Nearing a quarter century, Mesora helps others realize God's will for us all, sharing the beauty of Biblical wisdom. Search our 1000s of original essays, publications and audio, and write us with your questions. God determined the Jew's role is to share Torah's history, wisdom, laws and moral code with all mankind. As God created all mankind, He loves each person equally. As science has defined laws, God's will for man also has defined laws and principles, and they delight the soul. The greatest minds spent their lives studying God through Torah and science, as they found nothing that compared to its enjoyment. Let us humble ourselves before Moses, Kings David and Solomon, Maimonides, Aristotle, Newton and Einstein who taught that a life of wisdom is the most fulfilling life. We too can partake of this pleasurable existence.

THOUGHT
FUNDAMENTALS

"WHAT IS UNDETECTED BY THE SENSES, REASON OR TORAH, MUST NOT BE ACCEPTED AS TRUTH." MAIMONIDES



FEATURED
CONTENT



CHARACTER
PERFECTION

"PERFECTION" REFERS TO ONE WHOSE VALUES AND ACTIONS COMPLY WITH TORAH PERSONALITIES AND LAWS: THE MOST PLEASANT LIFE.



KINDNESS

As equals, all humans must fully treat others as we wish to be treated. Charity, kindness and justice demand we rise above personal or selfish emotions and recognize that God made others as He made ourselves. Doing so creates harmony, and earns His kindness to us.



RACISM: A LIE

Mankind descends from Adam. Black and white twins unveil the lie of racism. Bible denounces it: Moses' wife was black, our kings married Egyptians and Messiah descends from a Moabite. "Better is the day of Ache' (Isaiah 54:17). Birth doesn't define us, but how

JewishTimes

THE JOURNAL ON ORTHODOX JEWISH THOUGHT

| Please send letters and questions to: Comments@Mesora.org |

3 Midrash, "Good"

LETTERS

Unraveling the Rabbis' allegories about Judah, and what defines prophetic dreams.

5 Joseph Identifying Divine Dreams

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

Joseph's method of interpretation and dealing with Pharaoh's concerns.

8 Joseph's Dream Interpretations

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

How Joseph learned what divine dreams are and God's amazing plan.

14 Dreams

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

The purpose of dreams.

18 Pharaoh's Dreams

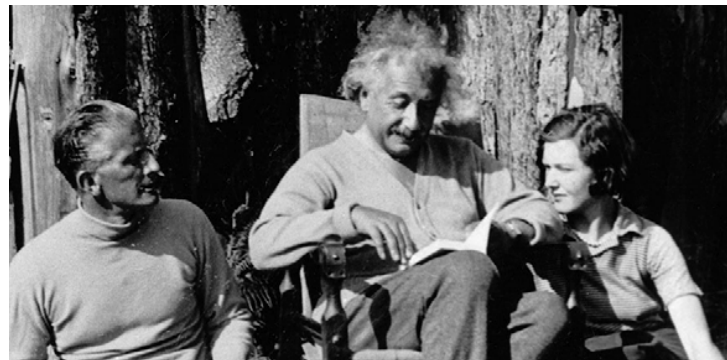
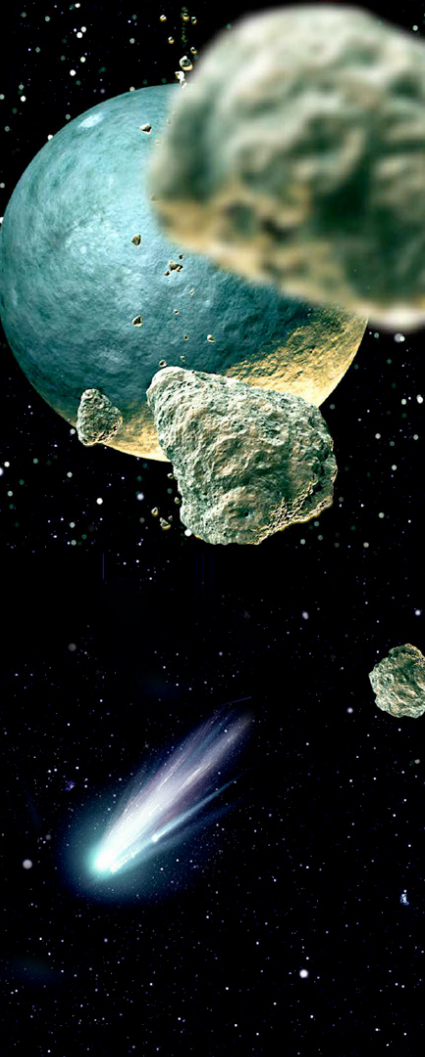
RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

An analysis of Pharaoh's dreams and the Rabbis' deductions.

21 Dispelling Racism

EDITORIAL—2018 REPRINT

National Geographic's "Twin sisters of different races" puts to rest the lie of racism.



"The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious."

ALBERT EINSTEIN

LETTERS

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

Midrash: The Rabbis' Allegories

READER: Can you explain this midrash:

Once he [Judah] recognized him [Joseph], he desired to kill him. An angel then descended and scattered them across the four corners of the palace. At that time Judah cried with a great voice and all the walls in Egypt fell. And all the wild beasts in Egypt fell, and Joseph fell from his throne and Pharaoh fell from his throne and they both fell. And the faces of all the mighty men that stood before Joseph turned away and did not turn back until their deaths, as it states, "The lion's roar, the cub's howl and the teeth of the young lion are lost" (Job 4:10).

RABBI: Judah was angry. Anger is directed either externally—towards others—or internally, towards oneself. I'd like to share 2 possible interpretations following these 2 types of anger.

To spare Benjamin suffering as a slave not due to any wrong of his own, Judah offered to take Benjamin's place as an eternally indentured slave to Joseph. Facing this tragic reality caused Judah tremendous anger, but an anger that he could not express. Although, now that Joseph

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revealed himself and Judah's slavery would not materialize, Judah's contained anger could now outlet itself without repercussion. Judah was furious with that very real prospect that Joseph and Pharaoh (all of Egypt: walls, beasts and mighty men) would have allowed this. Judah was especially angry with Joseph for orchestrating the entire scheme causing Judah and his brothers much anguish and threat of slavery, and this is what is meant that Judah wished to kill Joseph. Divine providence [the angel] was needed to prevent Judah from overreacting.

Alternatively, we can explain this midrash as Judah's displacement of self-blame, and projecting it onto Egypt. Judah was angry with himself for selling Joseph. The entire country of Egypt—people, leaders, beasts and even its walls—represented to Judah the tragic fate he caused Joseph to endure. His anger towards Joseph and Egypt was his displaced anger towards himself.

"The lion's roar, the cub's howl and the teeth of the young lion are lost"

These various rankings of "lions, cubs and young lions" refer to men of various ranks: "Kings, officers and servants" (Rashi). The falling of Egypt's walls and the falling of Joseph and Pharaoh from their thrones means—in Judah's mind—that Egypt's leadership was intolerable. Judah felt aggression towards Egypt and its rulers, as if they should be falling from their thrones. They are all complicit in Judah's fate to be an eternal slave. And according to the second interpretation, Judah was angry with all of Egypt as a displacement of self-blame for Joseph's sale and pain.

"The mighty mens' faces turned backwards and did not return until they died"

As these men were not officers, they posed no threat of repercussion to Judah's anger. This indicates that Judah's anger never completely abated. ■

What's Good is Eternal

READER: In this week's *Jewishtimes* article "Pharaoh's Dreams," Rabbi Israel Chait says there was absolutely no good in Pharaoh's dreams, and therefore they could not be of human origin, as all dreams are wish fulfillment. Therefore Rabbi Chait taught that the dreams were divine. Yes, the abundant years were eventually erased completely, but there still was some temporary good for 7 years. Goodness that is later obliterated is still good while it existed. This is especially true for those who experienced only the 7 good years and not the next 7 bad ones; such as those who died or left Egypt during the first 7 years of plenty. Therefore it could have been a natural dream, and not prophetic.

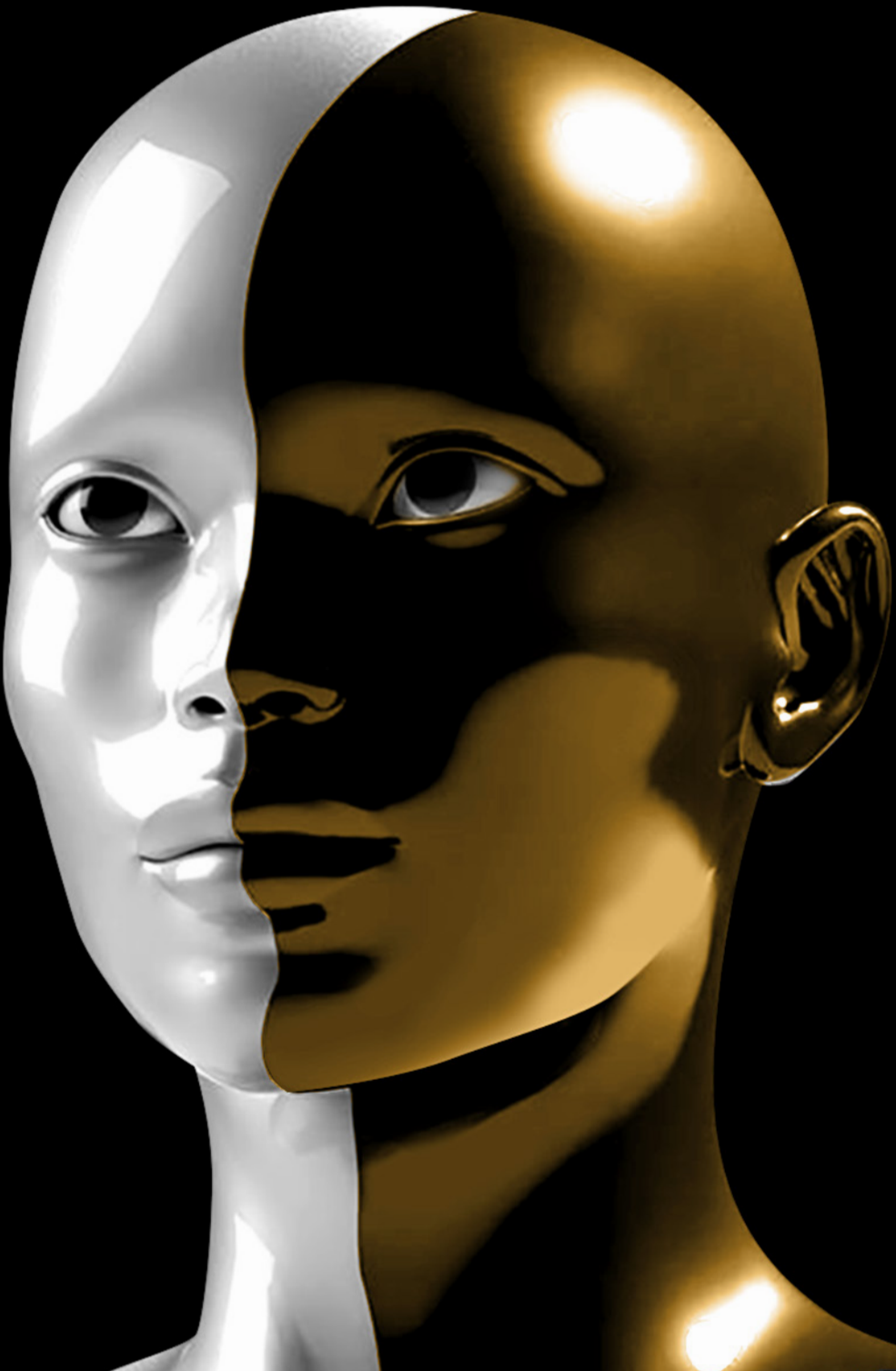
RABBI: Genesis 41:30 says, "and all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten as the land is ravaged by famine." What is good and then forgotten, thereby erases the good. "Goodness" is defined as that which is eternal. As we say at funerals, "A man, whether he be a year old, or whether he lives a thousand years, what does it profit him? For is it not as if he has never been?" (Tzidduk Hadin). Meaning, if something comes to an end, this is like it never happened. Torah teaches us that a true "good" must be eternal. One cannot say about a dead wicked person, "he" had some pleasure, since the "he" does not exist. There's no one to speak about.

Genesis 41:31 says, "No trace of the abundance will be left in the land because of the famine thereafter, for it will be very severe." This is not a repetition. 41:30 refers to man's recollection; the good will be "forgotten." But 41:32 refers to physical reality, "no trace of food in the land." This second verse tells us "in the land," the years of plenty will not leave evidence. Evidently, one looks to placate oneself by substantiating the past, by reminiscing the good times. ■

HOW JOSEPH IDENTIFIED DIVINE DREAMS

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

Written by a student



How did Joseph know that Pharaoh's dreams were prophetic; maybe they were natural nightmares? Reviewing Joseph's first words to Pharaoh, it is amazing, and interesting. It shows you a truly important idea about life, that, perhaps, you would not otherwise know:

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, but no one can interpret it. Now I have heard it said of you that you hear a dream to interpret it." Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not I; God will answer Pharaoh's peace" (Gen. 41:15,16).

Pharaoh praised Joseph and built him up. Joseph responded, ascribing all his wisdom to God. It sounds like a false humility. Rashi comments:

The wisdom to interpret dreams is not my own, but God will answer—He will put in my mouth an answer that will give Pharaoh peace.

On the surface, Joseph appears to be saying the dream is a good one. But how does he know; he had not yet heard the dream? Furthermore, according to Rashi, is it not the height of arrogance to claim knowledge of God's plans? Pharaoh then retells Joseph his two dreams: the 7 healthy and 7 emaciated cows, and the 7 healthy and 7 withered ears of grain, where the latter 7 in each dream swallowed the former 7.

And Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one; God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do. The 7 healthy cows are 7 years, and the 7 healthy ears are 7 years; it is the same dream" (Ibid. 41:25,26).

Later, Joseph tells Pharaoh:

And as for Pharaoh having had the same dream twice, it means that the matter is imminent from God, and that God will soon carry it out (Ibid. 41:32). (CONT. ON NEXT PAGE)

Thus, Joseph first explains the dreams' repetition with this verse. Meaning, when he told Pharaoh earlier that the "dreams were one," he was not yet explaining the duplication, but a different concept. What was that concept?

Joseph did not know that the dreams were prophetic; he hadn't heard them yet. When Joseph said, "God will answer Pharaoh's peace," he was not referring to the interpretation; he was referring to Pharaoh's state of mind. Pharaoh was suffering; conflict is the worst state of mind. Pharaoh was disturbed for he could not understand the dreams' meaning. An ordinary dream will express one's conflict; one can be disturbed regarding an inner conflict of which he is ignorant. Or he can be disturbed because the dream is prophetic and he senses that it is bad, but he doesn't understand it. Either one of these possibilities would disturb Pharaoh. When Rashi says, "God will answer: He will put in my mouth an answer that will be for Pharaoh's welfare," he is not referring to the future. Joseph doesn't know the dreams were prophetic; he hadn't heard the dream yet. Joseph meant that either way, "I am going to alleviate your disturbed state of mind." If it's a natural dream, the disturbance is an unconscious conflict, and Joseph will help to reveal that conflict, and Pharaoh will achieve peace. And if the dream is prophetic and the outcome is hidden from Pharaoh, once Joseph would explain it to Pharaoh, it won't disturb Pharaoh any more, even if it forecasts something bad. Joseph said that either way, he could help remove Pharaoh's suffering. Ignorance traps one's mind; it makes one obsess over a matter. Joseph told Pharaoh he could help remove that ignorance. Understanding the dream alleviates one's mind.

The immediate suffering Pharaoh endured was greater than a bad outcome. The latter is just reality, but the worst thing is the inner struggle. More important than discovering the dream's interpretation, is psychological harmony. Joseph said he will help alleviate this turmoil: "I will make you whole, I will make you at peace with yourself." This is what Joseph meant. The dream could be bad or good;

either way, he would alleviate Pharaoh's distraught state. Joseph was not referring to assisting Pharaoh in the future reality [the dreams' meaning]. He was referring to the fact that once the future reality ceases to be hidden from Pharaoh, the suffering will cease. But a prophetic dream disturbs a person, unlike a psychological conflict; it operates in its own orbit. That is, that the bad subject matter is hidden. In prophetic dreams, the event is hidden. But yet, man experiences the affect of the event. This affect—without a realistic cause—disturbs man. He has a disturbing affect, but he does not know why. He keeps trying to reach out to discover the cause. But once the cause is revealed, that pain is gone.

Let us answer Rashi, which always bothered me: "The wisdom to interpret dreams is not my own, but God will answer—He will put in my mouth an answer that will be for Pharaoh's welfare." This sounds like false humility. Wouldn't that make Joseph arrogant, claiming that God puts into his mouth an answer? Even if God had done so before, how can he know that God will do it again? And if Joseph means God always does this for him, is this not the height of arrogance? How does Joseph know for sure that God—from the heavens—will implant His answer in Joseph's mind? Maybe He won't.

However, the explanation is that this was a prayer, not foreknowledge, for no man knows God's thoughts. Joseph said to Pharaoh in other words, "It is my prayer that God puts words in my mouth." As the Rav said on the words, "And God should give dread; V'chane tane pachdicha" (High Holiday prayers), it is a prayer that God "should" give man proper dread of God's kingship. Joseph said, "I have no special powers, and I can't guarantee an answer." Joseph prayed that God "should" give him an answer so Pharaoh would be at peace, not that God "will" do this.

Now we have the question which we started with: How did Joseph know that Pharaoh's dreams were in fact prophetic?

Dreams are wish fulfillment. Even in a bad dream—a nightmare—there exists some positive element. It may not be

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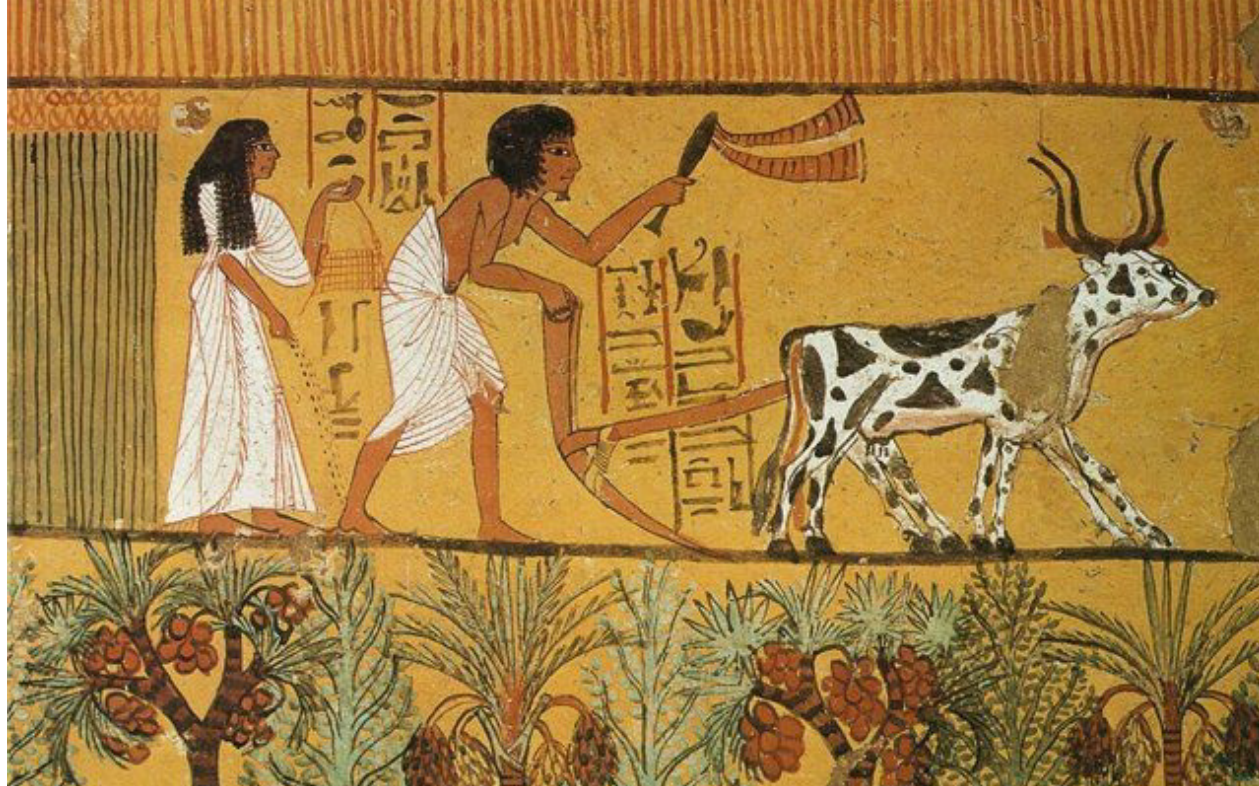


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the essence of the dream, which might be very bad, but there exists some good. However, Joseph said, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one.” Now, if with “Pharaoh’s dreams are one” Joseph meant to address the dreams’ repetition, Joseph’s words later would be redundant: “And as for Pharaoh having had the same dream twice, it means that the matter is imminent by God, and that God will soon carry it out” (Ibid. 41:32). This would be redundant. But the language in 41:32 indicates that Joseph did not yet discuss the repetition of the dreams. In truth, in 41:32, Joseph addresses the repetition for the first time. Thus, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one” stated earlier cannot address the imminent nature of the forecast. It does not mean that there are both: good and bad cows, one good element and one bad. “It’s one dream” means this: “There are no good cows; there is no value in the good cows.” Meaning, the subsequent emaciated cows completely obscured the healthy cows; there was no good in the healthy cows as they will inevitably be swallowed by the famine. The goodness of the healthy cows serves no good element, Pharaoh gains no benefit at all. [We can paraphrase the dream as] “One dream of bad cows completely removing the good of the healthy cows.” The dream is not “good cows” separate from “bad cows.” Both cows are tied together; the good cows are destined to be swallowed by the bad cows. Sum total: there is no good. [The years of

plenty were obscured, as if they never were].

Thus, there was no good element in Pharaoh’s dreams. Thereby Joseph understood these dreams were prophetic, for they contained no positive element [natural dreams are partially wish fulfillment—a positive element—but Pharaoh’s dreams contained no such good; no such wish. Thus, the dreams must be prophetic].

Telling Pharaoh his dreams were one, Joseph was not explaining the duplication, but he was saying that as a whole, the dreams contained no positive element. This was not a simple nightmare with deeply rooted conflicts. As there is nothing good in these dreams, they must be prophetic.

Another important point is that primitive man is fatalistic about dreams. He feels that a dream forecasts inevitable doom. Joseph taught Pharaoh a different philosophy: man can act with intellect to avoid a forecast. [And that’s exactly what Joseph did.] Pharaoh always thought that an interpretation is final. Joseph taught Pharaoh that although the interpretation is horrible, “You are not bound by it.” Free will can override the interpretation [it can manipulate real future factors, and avoid

catastrophe. The forecast was true, but depending on man’s response, he can either sit back and tolerate the doom—a primitive attitude—or he can devise a strategy to alter the outcome].

Pharaoh responded to Joseph’s suggestion to appoint a grain keeper: “Can we find another like him, a man in whom is the spirit of God?” (Gen. 41:38). Pharaoh expressed surprise at this new method: matters are not fatalistic; man his free will. A dream is just a revelation; God is informing man what will happen [without man’s intervention], but it does not have to result this way [it does not have to go unaltered]. All depends on man’s free will. Pharaoh meant to say, “We never viewed life this way; we always viewed life and dreams as fatalistic.”

Pharaoh called Joseph a “man”; one not frightened by superstition. Nevertheless, Joseph is not an atheist; “God’s spirit is in him.” An atheist, you can say, is a man.” Putin said, “I can do as I will; there is no divine retribution.” OK, that’s his view. He is a “man.” But he has no “spirit of God.” But Pharaoh said of Joseph that he is a free thinker; he has free will, he does not fear acting, but he also has knowledge of God through his spirit of God. “Can we find another like him, a man in whom is the spirit of God?” Pharaoh was surprised; usually you find a heretic who is a powerful man, or you find a man with the spirit of God in him, but he cannot act. But Joseph possessed both qualities. ■

PHARAOH'S DREAMS & JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATIONS

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM



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When studying Joseph's dreams and interpretations, the analogy of a genius painter comes to mind. This painter would arrange millions of paint specks on a single paintbrush. He would then move his brush across a blank canvas with a single stroke, and a beautiful scene would emerge: trees with colorful leaves, birds in flight, sun and clouds, mountains, and streams. A passerby witnessing the picture-perfect scene emerge with one stroke, would be in awe of how with one action, this painter anticipated how all the paint specks would fall into place and create a picturesque scene. God's two dreams granted to

the young Joseph paint such a picture.

When he was 17, Joseph dreamt of 11 sheaves bowing to his sheaf. And then in a second dream, he saw 11 stars and the sun and moon bowing to him. Even after seeing his brothers' dismay when telling his first dream, Joseph, nonetheless, felt compelled to repeat his second dream to his brothers and his father. It was due to these dreams that the brothers conspired to kill Joseph...eventually selling him instead. It was his father who rejected an interpretation that they would all bow to Joseph: the 11 stars being his 11 brothers, and the sun and moon representing Joseph's parental

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figures. At this stage, it does not appear that Joseph offered his own interpretation. Yet, 11 and 13 years later, Joseph accurately and astonishingly interprets not only the dreams of Pharaoh's stewards, but also Pharaoh's dreams respectively. All 3 dreams came true exactly. But how did Joseph know their interpretations? This question is strengthened by Joseph's apparent lack of interpretative skills concerning his own two dreams. And many of the Torah commentaries including Ramban and Klay Yakkar do not suggest Joseph was divinely inspired with the interpretations; he succeeded in unraveling each dream solely through his own wisdom.

Later on, when his brothers descended to Egypt to purchase food during the famine, the brothers do not recognize the now 39-year-old, bearded Joseph standing before them. It is suggested that a further denial of this Egyptian viceroy truly being Joseph, was generated from the brothers' rejection of any success Joseph would attain. Having been humiliated by his brothers, they were sure Joseph would be psychologically crippled, and certainly no viceroy.

When Joseph sees his brothers, he "recalls the dreams." Rabbi Israel Chait explained that this means that Joseph would use the divine license provided by these dreams to subjugate his brothers into repentance. Creating a situation where the youngest Benjamin would be imprisoned on false charges, Joseph orchestrated a replica of his very own sale to force his brothers into a parallel dilemma to generate their repentance. Joseph's intent was to benefit his brothers. Would they abandon the accused Benjamin now, who ostensibly stole Joseph's goblet, as they had done 22 years earlier when they sold Joseph? Or, would they display complete repentance, and sacrifice themselves for their brother? Normally, one is not permitted to place anyone under such a trial, but Joseph recognized his dreams as divine in origin: a license to perfect his brothers. As Rabbi Chait taught, the first dream of the brothers' sheaves bowing to his—physical dominance—was the precursor for Joseph's dominance over them in the spiritual realm, symbolized by the 11 stars, sun and moon bowing to him. Then first dream was meant by God to teach Joseph that when the brothers would bow to him for food, Joseph thereby received permission to rule over them concerning their perfection, symbolized by higher bodies: the luminaries.

Subsequent to his dreams, Joseph understood their meaning; and not necessarily 22 years later when he first saw his brothers descend to Egypt...but perhaps much earlier. Torah only tells us that he recalled the dreams upon seeing his brothers, to teach that this was when he would act upon those dreams. But their interpretation may have preceded this by many years.

When did Joseph become such a great dream interpreter? He was in prison most of the time in Egypt, and he didn't seem to offer interpretation to his own dreams at 17 years of age. From where did

Joseph obtain such knowledge of dreams that he would eventually interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's stewards and Pharaoh himself, with such precision? We are aware of the Torah's description of Joseph as "Ben Zekunim" or as Unkelos translates, "a wise son." Jacob taught Joseph all his knowledge attained at the Yeshiva of Shem and Aver. Perhaps this included lessons Jacob learned from his own dream of the ladder, and maybe others. So at the very least, Joseph was a wise individual.

We also wonder why God gave these two dreams to Joseph, as they apparently contributed—if not caused—Joseph's sale. But we cannot approach God's true intent without His saying so. However, we can study, and suggest possibilities.

God's Dreams: Altering History and Offering Perfection

God is perfectly just. He would not jeopardize Joseph's life or well being, had Joseph not warranted this sale. We learn that Joseph beautified himself. He also reported his brother's wrong doings to his father. He had an egoistic tendency, which was rightfully corrected as God humbled him in prison for many years. He publicized his dreams attracting unnecessary jealousy upon himself, which culminated in his sale and ultimately, his imprisonment. Thus, with Joseph's dreams, God clearly intended to perfect him. But that was not the only reason for the dreams. As we mentioned, the genius painter performed one stroke of his brush, and created a perfect picture with tremendous detail. Similarly, God's dreams prophetically sent to Joseph had many ramifications.

Rabbi Chait taught that the dreams also provided perfection for the brothers, as Joseph was licensed through the dreams to place them into this trial regarding Benjamin. Simultaneously, this forced Jacob to part with Benjamin, perfecting Jacob as well, by helping him restrain his excessive love for Benjamin, displaced from his beloved, departed wife Rachel. And we see that Joseph's plan is successful. As Rashi states, when Joseph embraced his father after all those years, we would think Jacob equally embraced his son Joseph. But he did not; he was preoccupied "reciting the Shema." Of course the Shema (Torah phrases) did not yet exist. But this metaphor means Joseph's plan to perfect his father worked: Jacob no longer directed his excessive love towards man, but now, towards God. He re-channeled his passions towards the Creator, as should be done.

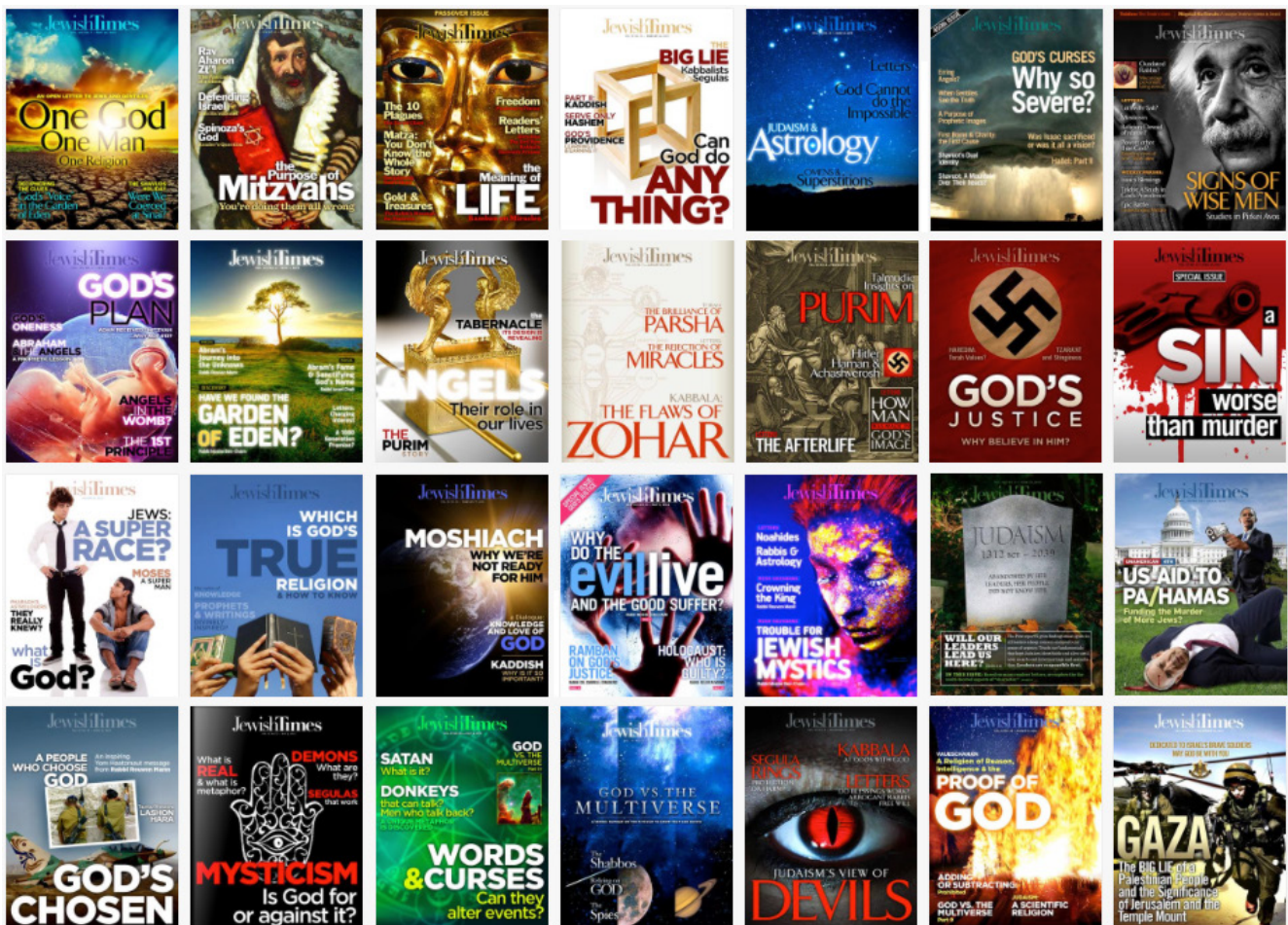
Thus, the dreams perfected Joseph by contributing to his sale and refinement of his ego. They enabled Joseph to perfect his brothers by forcing them to defend Benjamin, and they perfected his father as well, forcing him to break his bond to Rachel expressed in her son Benjamin. We might think these matters alone are amazing: that two dreams might offer so much good for so many. However, there is a great deal more to Joseph's dreams. Something even more astonishing.

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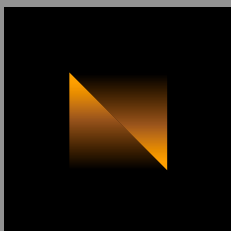
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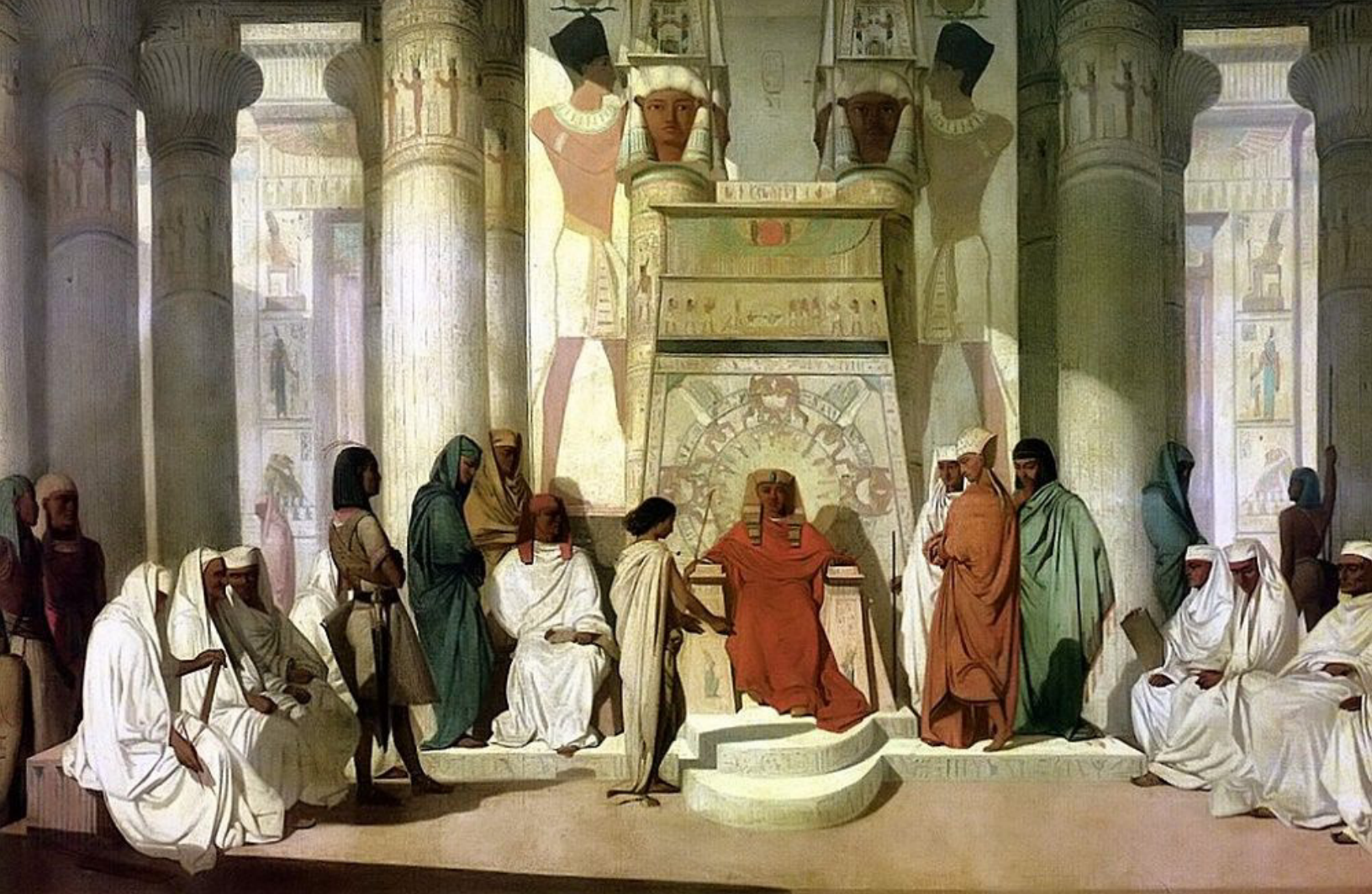
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Dream Instruction

We asked how Joseph transformed into such a brilliant dream interpreter. How did he know that the the stewards' and Pharaoh's dreams were true and divine? What did Joseph know about dreams? All he had were his 2 dreams years earlier. Soon thereafter he was cast into prison for over a decade. However, those dreams offered Joseph more than we think.

What was Joseph doing in prison during these years? Of course he must have had chores, and he was promoted to oversee the other inmates. But he had his solitude as well...time to think.

Having received tremendous knowledge from his father—the teachings of Shem and Aver, Joseph gained deep insight into how God rules the world and interacts with mankind. He knew the concept of repentance, for he was soon to be the conductor of his family's repentance. He too must have reflected on his own state, seeking repentance: "Why am I in prison; what is my sin?" He soon realized his dreams precipitated his descent into slavery, and that God gave him these dreams. He analyzed his dreams, and must have spent many hours, days, and weeks studying God's precise communications of the night. What did he discover?

Pharaoh and His Stewards

10 years elapsed in prison. One day, Joseph saw the wine and bakery stewards troubled by their dreams, and invited them to recount them before him. Joseph interpreted both dreams exactly in line with what happened: the wine steward was returned to his post, and the baker was hung. 2 more years elapsed, and Joseph finds himself before Pharaoh. Pharaoh heard of Joseph's interpretive skills, and he too told Joseph his dreams. Again, Joseph interprets the dreams with exact precision, and they come true. But if God did not tell Joseph the future, how did he know it? We now arrive at the core of the issue...

2 Divine Signs: Dreamer & Duplication

God's dreams granted to Joseph contained content, but they were also "instructive." God gave Joseph 2 dreams, for objectives in addition to perfecting his family and himself. What do I mean? Besides the "content" of the dreams, prophetic dreams also have a "style": 1) the chosen dream recipient, and 2) dream duplication.

Joseph received these dreams, and none other. He also received 2 dreams. Ramban states that 2 separate but similar dreams are unnatural:

Pharaoh could have naturally seen both of the dreams' content concerning the cows and the ears in a single dream (Ramban, Gen. 41:32). Pharaoh didn't wake up and dream similar content again...unless it was divinely inspired. The same rule applies to the 2 stewards who dreamt similar dreams. And Joseph knew this. Joseph too had 2 separate dreams with similar content (Gen. 37:9). Ibn Ezra teaches that duplication in dreams indicates their divine origin: "[divine] dreams are doubled, as is the manner of prophecies" (Num. 12:6).

Joseph had many years to ponder his situation in prison, and much of what he may have pondered was the last event leading him into prison: his dreams. He knew they were from God, as he tells his brothers years later: "God sent me before you to place for you a remnant in the land and to sustain you..." (Gen. 45:7)

What did Joseph determine were indicative of divine dreams? He recognized dream duplication was unnatural. He also recognized that his dreams affected his perfection, so the "recipient" also indicates divine intent. These 2 elements were contained in the stewards' dreams and in Pharaoh's dreams. The stewards' dream duplications were a variation, but no less telling of their divine nature, since they both occurred the very same night, to 2 individuals. Pharaoh also had 2 dreams, and of additional significance,

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it was “Pharaoh”—the man with the wherewithal to address the forecasted famine—who received the dreams.

Joseph understood from his own experience that dream duplication and a strategic dream recipient point to the dream’s divine nature. So convinced was Joseph of their divine origin that the recipient is of a telling nature, Joseph says to Pharaoh, “What God plans He has told to Pharaoh” (Gen. 41:25). Joseph meant to say, “Your reception of this dreams as opposed to another indicates their divine nature.” And Joseph repeats this in verse 28.

Had God not granted Joseph these two divine dreams, Joseph would not have pondered dreams. He would not necessarily have studied their style, to the point that he was able to facilitate the good outcome God desired, by emancipating himself through the stewards’ interpretations, and rising to viceroy applying his wisdom to Pharaoh’s dreams.

Amazing

God used dreams not only to perfect Jacob’s household, but also to train Joseph in dream design and interpretation...the very matter essential for carving-out Jewish history. The design of Joseph’s dreams contained the blueprint for determining the divine nature of the other dreams he would interpret. In other words, his dreams were actually dream instructions, not just messages. This is akin to a coded message in an alien language, where the message content is one lesson, but the textual arrangement also contains hints to decipher this new language. Joseph’s dreams’ “content” contained a message for directing his perfection of his family. But the dream “design” (selected recipient and duplication) taught him how to unravel dreams in general.

With a single brush stroke of Joseph’s dreams, God 1) placed Joseph in prison to humble him, 2) He caused the brothers to repent, this time not abandoning their youngest brother, 3) He caused Jacob to perfect his excessive love, and 4) He trained Joseph in the art of dream interpretation...the science essential for the aforementioned perfections of Jacob, his sons, and Joseph!

The very dreams that caused Joseph’s imprisonment, also provided his release, and helped sustain that generation.

We appreciate God’s wisdom: with one action He effectuates the greatest good for so many. We also realize that without Joseph’s appreciation that God teaches man with sublime wisdom, Joseph would not have engaged his own wisdom to discern God’s will, nor would Joseph acquire the dream interpretation skills he discovered while in prison. But since Joseph had such deep knowledge of how God works, in prison he turned all his efforts to analyzing his dreams, using wisdom to 1) uncover God’s message, and 2) study dream style so as to determine which dreams are Divine, and how to interpret them.

A Fifth Message

Additionally, dreams—by definition—are manifestations of “hidden” material. Understanding this, Joseph knew that as God communicates with His prophets in dreams (Numbers 12:6) it is for this reason. God wishes to indicate that just as dreams conceal deeper ideas, certainly God’s dreams conceal deeper ideas to a greater degree. God’s selected mode of communicating with His prophets via dreams is meant to underscore the principle that God’s words too must undergo man’s interpretation, if the intended message is to be discovered. With that appreciation, Joseph delved into the study of dreams, both prophetic and mundane. He also determined that dreams of divine origin contain a code, and once detected, can be understood. Joseph knew that wisdom is how God designed the world. Therefore, it is only with wisdom that man succeeds.

Relevance to Us

Does this lesson have any relevance in our lives? Without witnessing a miracle, we certainly cannot determine with any certainty that a given action is the hand of God. Maybe it is, maybe not. We do not know. We must review our successes and failures with the possibility that God’s education of man can take one of 2 roads: 1) divine intervention for the individual, as with Joseph’s dreams; or 2) natural laws of general providence, such as “boredom” with new acquisitions. God designed man’s psyche to be frustrated with overindulgence in the physical pleasures, to redirect our energies back to the world of Torah wisdom. This is not individual providence, but a law of nature that applies equally to all members of mankind. Our consideration of our travails must straddle both spheres of God’s workings. And since the Talmud teaches that prophecy has ceased, our dreams are not prophetic. However, there is a primary lesson that does apply to us all.

A Life of Wisdom

Joseph’s approach to life was based on his knowledge that God created all. Thus, the world “naturally” functions according to God’s wisdom. Although God did not reveal to Joseph neither the interpretations of Pharaoh’s or his stewards’ dreams, Joseph secured perfection and sustenance for his family and all of Egypt using wisdom alone. Since he guided his actions purely based on wisdom, he was in sync with God’s world that functions according to wisdom. We too can perceive God’s wisdom if we earnestly seek it out from His Torah. Wisdom is the key to success and happiness in all areas. We do not need God telling us anything more, or sending signs, just like Joseph did not need God to interpret the dreams. In fact, God has already intervened by giving His Torah to us all.

Viewing our misfortunes as divinely intended—“It’s all for the good”—man deceives himself, and will repeat his errors. Maimonides teaches that most of our misfortunes are self-inflicted. It is only through following Torah—“Let us search our ways, analyze, and return to God” (Eicha 3:40)—analyzing our ways and determining whether they match Torah ideals, that we will avoid many misfortunes and our need to falsely pacify ourselves with “It’s all for the good.” Using reason in all areas, and admitting our errors with a responsible analysis and internal change, we can engage wisdom to steer ourselves to the truly good path—as God wills for all mankind—which is readily available without further divine intervention. Torah is all we need. ■



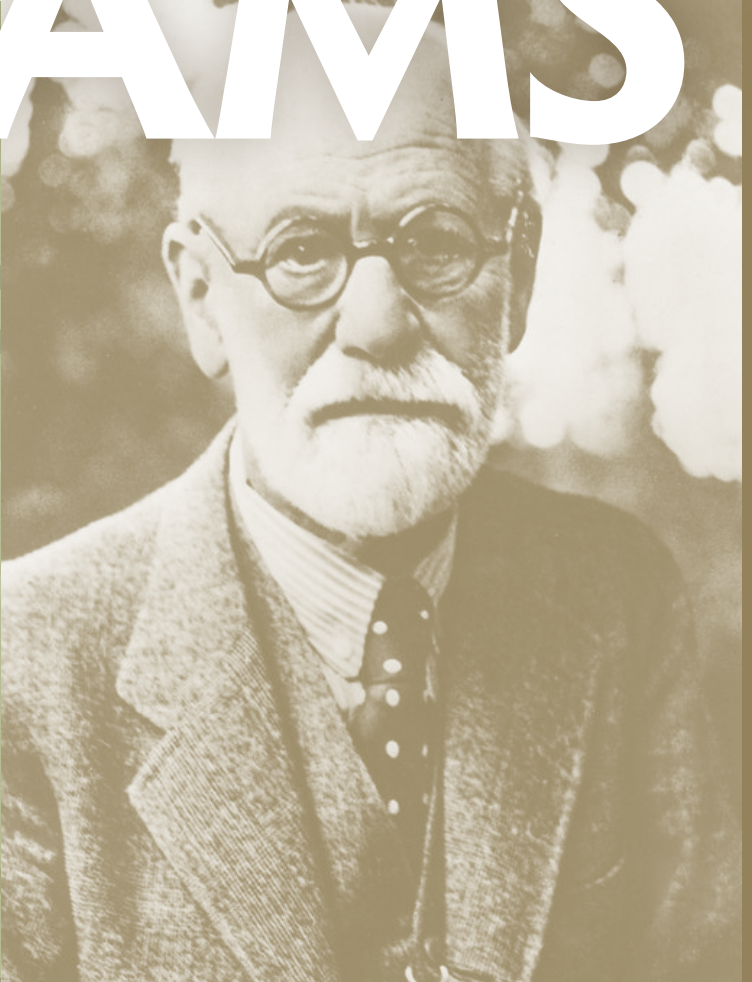
prophecy
imagination
ACTIVE
INTELLECT

DREAMS

Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim

wish
fulfillment
guardians
of sleep

REDUCED
CENSORSHIP



“**D**reams are the guardians of sleep and not its disturbers” (“Interpretations of Dreams,” Sigmund Freud, 1900). “Dreams are wish-fulfillments” (Ibid.)

God created our dream life; a creation like all others. The Menorah’s 3 designs—spheres, flowers and cups—indicate that wisdom is derived from God’s design of 1) matter—spheres, matter’s 2) form—flowers and its 3) function—cups respectively (see bit.ly/themenora). This means that all creations (substance), their design (form) and their natures (function) intend to offer man a glimpse into God’s wisdom. For example, we derive wisdom from the tree’s material, its branch design and its seasonal changes.

Dreams have no substance, but contain much wisdom in their design and function. Through their wish fulfillment, man continues to sleep; the dream is satisfying so man remains asleep and continues dreaming. Man benefits not only physically from rest, but frustrations and unfulfilled wishes find fulfillment in dreams. Apparently, God wishes that man is not constantly frustrated, but has some release and expression of suppressed or frustrated hopes. Talmud Brachos (chap. 9) states that if one does not dream for 7 days, he is considered a wicked person. The meaning is that as one is living out all his fantasies while awake, there is no conflict or frustrated desires for dreams to resolve. Hence, one who does not dream, is fulfilling his instinctual drives while awake, is in violation of halacha, and is termed a wicked person. It is only the person who is correctly controlling his instincts (his yetzer hara) who will dream. Since he is frustrating his desires while awake, as he should, dreams function for him as a form of release. This release functions to alleviate desires while keeping the person asleep so he may gain rest. Many times, if one is thirsty, he will dream of drinking, so as not to

awake. If however the thirst is too strong, he will wake up, because the dream cannot mimic reality 100%. If one’s boss was overbearing, his control of verbal defense in that confrontation will find expression in sleep, in the form of yelling at his boss.

But on a metaphysical plane, sleep is the removal of sensory perception. The mind is not distracted and man can focus on thought. Sleep becomes the perfect state for a prophet to receive God’s communications. Except Moses, all prophets received God’s communications in dreams or visions:

Hear these My words: When a prophet of the Lord arises among you, I make Myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream” (Num. 12:6)

Sleep was created for this reason too: that God can communicate with His prophets. While awake, the prophet is distracted by his need to stand, walk, sit, eat, converse, work, and other activities requiring focus on the senses. These distractions inhibit man from the full attention required to perceive and grasp prophecy. Maimonides writes, “In a prophetic vision the senses cease to act, and the [Active Intellect] influences the rational faculties, and through them, the imaginative faculties, which become perfect and active” (Guide, book II, chap. xli). And as divine communication is of a metaphysical nature, one must be operating on this plane to perceive prophecy. That plane is when one is unconscious and partaking of thought alone. That is, one must be existing solely in the medium of prophecy—the world of the soul—to receive prophecy.

Sleep and dreams, then, serve to provide physical rest, psychological equilibrium, and as the medium to receive prophecy. (CONT. ON NEXT PAGE)

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How Did Joseph Know?

Dreams are manifestations of hidden phenomena. Understanding this, Joseph knew that God engages dreams to communicate with man (Numbers 12:6), indicating that just as dreams contain hidden meanings, certainly God's dreams contain hidden truths, and to a far greater degree. God's mode of communicating via dreams teaches that God's words too must undergo interpretation, just like dreams. God's wisdom is deep and man must "search for it like silver and chase after it like buried treasures" (Proverbs 2:4).

How did Joseph know the dreams' meanings?

Cows are used to plow and grain is the produce—food. Plowing and harvesting are seasonal, which, by definition, is a yearly phenomenon. Pharaoh saw healthy cows and healthy grain—abundant food. The 7 healthy ears of grain "growing on a single stalk" also indicate abundance: much grew on a single stalk. Emaciated cows and grain indicates lack of food. The emaciated cows and withered grain both "came after" the healthy ones. "After" indicates time. Joseph knew that some negative agricultural occurrence would follow a positive occurrence. Joseph interpreted this as famine following abundance. For negativity regarding food, is the lack of food.

As Rabbi Chait explained, the dream recipient is also indicative. Pharaoh controlled the country. Therefore, he—and no other—was the recipient of this dream so he could use this information to manage Egypt's affairs. As Joseph said, "What God plans to do, He has shown Pharaoh" (Gen. 41:25).

Seven other cows followed them, scrawny, of very bad appearance, and emaciated—never had I seen such bad cows in all the land of Egypt. And the seven lean and ugly cows ate the first seven cows, the healthy ones; but when they had consumed them, one could not tell that they had consumed them, for they looked just as bad as before (Gen. 41:19-21).

What was significant about Pharaoh's reaction of never seeing such emaciated cows in Egypt? This bothered Pharaoh in his capacity of the country's leader; he could not tolerate failure. A leader remains in power only if he secures success. Failure spells the end of his reign. Another person would not sense concern or responsibility for the country. The dreams disturbed Pharaoh (Gen. 41:8). Emaciated cows compelled Pharaoh to somehow correct Egypt's poor—impending—status and accept Joseph's solution of storing grain, as was God's plan with these dreams. The dreams' ultimate intent was that Jacob and the tribes descend to a plentiful Egypt due to the famine: the first step in creating the Jewish nation.

Hear these My words: When a prophet of the Lord arises among you, I make Myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream" (Num. 12:6)

God teaches that only prophets receive divine dreams. As prophecy has ended, our dreams are merely manifestations of our own thoughts and feelings. They are not premonitions of true events, or divine forecasts. But they should be analyzed to discover truths about ourselves (Tal. Brachos chap. 9). ■

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THE DREAMS OF PHARAOH

Rabbi Israel Chait

TRANSCRIBED BY A STUDENT

Exodus 1:8 states, “A new king arose on Egypt that did not know Joseph.” There is an argument amongst the Rabbis. Rav says he was literally a new king. Shmuel says he was not a new king but rather, the same Pharaoh, who acted as 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 he was merely a new king. Why did Shmuel feel compelled to understand the meaning of the verse in such a strained interpretation? 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 ascendance to power. Pharaoh’s dreams can help us examine his personality. There are two causes of dreams: 1) divine/prophecy, 2) a 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 duplicated 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 41:1 states, “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?

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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 advice when they were starving, he replies "go to Joseph and whatever he tells you to do, abide by it." 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 ruthlessly to his people, the Jews.

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 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, so as the feign divinity in front of his people, never needing to relieve himself. 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 "vatepaem 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 reinstated his self-image as the most powerful force in the world: with Joseph, he now resumed his self-image as a god. 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 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



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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, "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 god. However, this is indicative of a psychological defense mechanism. The Christian cannot admit that we gave them their god, 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 49:9 says, "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: old age. 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 had lived 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. ■

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Human Equality

As Clear as Black & White

EDITORIAL (REPRINT: JEWISHTIMES APRIL 2018)

Black people descend from the same first couple from whom white, Asian, and Indian people descend. Adam and Eve are mankind's grandparents. God never reinvented man that one race is lesser or better. Some Jews feel they are better, and that is racist arrogance. We all have the identical psyche, body and soul. Moses married a black woman, and Abraham cared for all walks of life. Judaism does not judge a person by how we are born, but how we die; were we righteous? God is the authority, and His Torah (Bible) says "One Torah for the Jew and convert." Meaning, all humans possess the identical potential. And consider this: God could have created any white Jew as black or gentile. Therefore, take no baseless pride in how your Maker made you..."He made us, it was not we [who did]" (King David, Psalms 100:3)

It behooves an intelligent person to study the words of our greatest Torah teachers, starting with Maimonides. I quote him verbatim below where he states that every human being has equal potential in God's eyes. This is not to be taken lightly, and one must have great respect for great minds.

Not only the tribe of Levi, but every person from anyone who enters the world whose spirit generously moves him, and he understands from his own thinking to separate himself to stand before God, to serve Him and to worship Him, to know God, and he walks uprightly as God made him, and he breaks off from his neck the many calculations that people seek, this person is holy of holies and God is his portion and his inheritance forever and eternally. And he merits in this world a means to sustain him just as the priests and Levites. Behold, King David, peace be upon, said, "God is my portion and my cup, You support my lot" (Psalms 16:5). (Maimonides, Laws of Sabbatical Year & the Jubilee 13:13) ■





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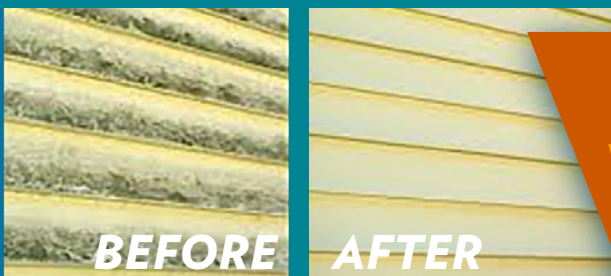
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