

JewishTimes

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UN VOTE: **BETRAYAL**

RABBI REUVEN MANN

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**"UN: THINGS WILL BE
DIFFERENT JAN. 20TH"**
PRESIDENT-ELECT DONALD TRUMP

**"STOP FUNDING UN
OVER ISRAEL VOTE"**
SENATOR TED CRUZ



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Among the Democrats are Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Bob Casey (D-PA), Richard Blumenthal (D-VT), Mark Warner (D-VA), and Chris Coons (D-DE), all of whom echoed Republican President-elect Donald Trump's call just one day earlier for America to veto the resolution that he said would put "Israel in a very poor position" and be "extremely unfair to all Israelis."

Dec. 30

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RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

Pharaoh's Wisdom

Faced with the daunting task to pull the wool over Egypt's eyes concerning the new viceroy's (Joseph) past, Pharaoh was cunning. He knew Egypt would reject a governmental appointment of a Hebrew, and a slave at that. Pharaoh was equally concerned that Potiphar, and his wife would expose Joseph as a rapist, although the charge was trumped up. How did Pharaoh address his dilemma?

He changed Joseph's name to an Egyptian name, "Tzaphnas Phaneach" to cast a veneer; he promoted Potiphar to a priest; and he gave Potiphar's daughter to Joseph as a wife. Potiphar was silenced in exchange for fame, and his lying wife would not accuse Joseph now, as that would only shame herself, the mother of Joseph's wife. ■



BETRAYAL

RABBI REUVEN MANN



This week's parsha, Mikeitz, continues with the fortunes of Yosef in Egypt. After an amazing string of successes and promotions in the house of Potiphar, things took a negative turn when he fell prey to the fatal

attraction that seized Potiphar's wife.

Yosef resisted the temptation with all his might, but this only increased her sinful determination. He endeavored to explain to her in cogent terms how evil it would be to betray the master who had invested all his confidence and trust in him.

But she would not hear it. It appears that reason and morality are no match for unbri-dled, lustful desire. Her unrequited passion soon turned to hatred for what she perceived as his rejection.

When she sought revenge by falsely accusing Yosef of attempted rape, Potiphar was placed in an impossible position. He had no choice but to accede to his wife and condemn Yosef to prison.

While imprisoned, Yosef interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's chief baker and butler, both of whom had sinned against their master. The former was executed, while the latter was exonerated and restored to his position, exactly as Yosef had predicted.

Yosef confided his innocence to the butler and entreated him to intercede with Pharaoh to secure his freedom. Last week's parsha concludes with this verse: "And the chief butler did not remember Yosef, and he forgot him."

So much for gratitude. We have all found ourselves in Yosef's position at some time in our lives. I often say, "If you live long enough, you will never be surprised." Betrayal is the one human propensity we can almost always count on.

While considering this phenomenon, we should also look within and ask whether there have been times in our lives when we emulated the butler's behavior; when we failed to remember someone who had greatly benefitted us and subsequently "forgot" him.

At present, this matter is very much on my mind, as I know it is on the minds of many of my fellow Jews and decent people of all backgrounds. I have been writing this weekly Torah article for seven years and have steered scrupulously clear of any political issues or personalities. This is the exception.

While on the subject of betrayal, I am compelled to express my distress concerning the U.S. decision to abstain from the U.N. Security Council vote that declared the Jewish presence in Judea, Samaria, and East Jerusalem (the "West Bank") to be illegal.

This is a betrayal of U.S. policy established by President Lyndon Johnson after the Six-Day War (and endorsed by every subsequent administration, including this one) that the status of the conquered territories would be exclusively decided by the disputing parties in free and direct negotiations.

Israel has been a faithful ally of the U.S. and, as the only democracy in the Middle East, has carried the torch of freedom in a region otherwise governed by brutal dictators and terrorist regimes.

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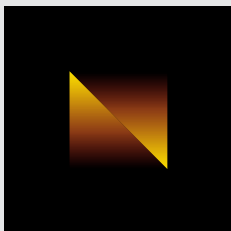
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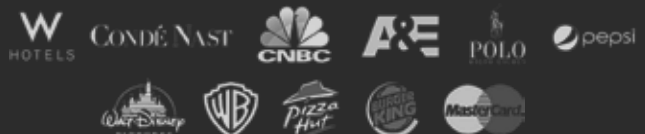
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America has been a great friend of the Jewish state and, until now, has vetoed every U.N. resolution that was harmful to Israel's interests. President Obama has now decided to break with our country's long-standing policy and align with Israel's enemies, who support and glorify terrorism, in his effort to brand her as a violator of international law.

The U.S. abstention constitutes a blight on our record of solidarity with our closest ally, and on our unequivocal support for democratic societies above primitive, barbaric ones. It constitutes a betrayal of American values, our special relationship with Israel, and our commitment to the war against terrorism. This vote is a shameful endorsement of the anti-Semitic Palestinian Authority, which not only refuses to recognize the Jewish state, but is sworn to its destruction.

THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT SHOWN SIMILAR VIGOR IN DENOUNCING THE ENDLESS INCITEMENT TO VIOLENCE PROPAGATED BY PALESTINIAN OFFICIALS AND EDUCATORS. THEIR CONSTANT DEMONIZATION OF JEWS AND INDOCTRINATION OF SCHOOL-CHILDREN IN THE CULTURE OF JIHAD AND GENOCIDE HAS RENDERED TRUE PEACE AN IMPOSSIBILITY.

Yet Obama has chosen to reward their intransigence and to punish Israel, the only place in the Middle East where Arabs, Christians, and Jews can live peacefully with full human rights and dignity. America's misguided abstention brings shame to all U.S. citizens who have been proud of their nation's long history of support for freedom and democracy and its forceful opposition to tyrannical regimes.

President Obama was not compelled to do this. His presidency is in its final moments. It is standard operating procedure for a departing leader to defer major policy decisions that will impact our future to his successor. He should have allowed the vote to be postponed until the new president, who will have to deal with its consequences, is in office. That would have been the appropriate and fair

thing to do.

Yet he chose to make his exit on this terrible note of betrayal to Israel and the Jewish people, even though Jewish Americans have overwhelmingly supported him in both of his presidential campaigns. So much for gratitude.

In this season of Chanukah, we are filled with faith in Hashem. Let us hope and pray that the new president will take a different approach and rectify the horrible wrong that has been perpetrated. This will restore the dignity, righteousness, and pride of our wonderful country.

Shabbat shalom v'chag sameach. ■



OBAMA'S FITTING FINISH

BRET STEPHENS, WSJ

In the list of low points in U.S. foreign policy, the betrayal of Israel ranks high.

Barack Obama's decision to abstain from, and therefore allow, last week's vote to censure Israel at the U.N. Security Council is a fitting capstone for what's left of his foreign policy. Strategic half-measures, underhanded tactics and moralizing gestures have been the president's style from the beginning. Israelis aren't the only people to feel betrayed by the results.

Also betrayed: Iranians, whose 2009 Green Revolution in heroic protest of a stolen election Mr. Obama conspicuously failed to endorse for fear of offending the ruling theocracy.

Iraqis, who were assured of a diplomatic surge to consolidate the gains of the military surge, but who ceased to be of any interest to Mr. Obama the moment U.S. troops were withdrawn, and only concerned him again when ISIS neared the gates of Baghdad.

Syrians, whose initially peaceful uprising against anti-American dictator Bashar Assad Mr. Obama refused to embrace, and whose initially moderate-led uprising Mr. Obama failed to support, and whose sarin - and chlorine - gassed children Mr. Obama refused to rescue, his own red lines notwithstanding.

Ukrainians, who gave up their nuclear weapons in 1994 with formal U.S. assurances that their "existing borders" would be guaranteed, only to see Mr. Obama refuse to supply them with defensive weapons when Vladimir Putin invaded their territory 20 years later.

Pro-American Arab leaders, who expected better than to be given ultimatums from Washington to step down, and who didn't anticipate the administration's tilt toward the Muslim Brotherhood as a legitimate political opposition, and toward Tehran as a responsible negotiating partner.

Most betrayed: Americans.

- Mr. Obama promised a responsible end to the war in Iraq: we are again fighting in Iraq.

- He promised victory in Afghanistan: the Taliban are winning

- He promised a reset with Russia: we are enemies again

- He promised the containment of Iran: we are witnessing its ascendancy in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen

- He promised a world free of nuclear weapons: we are stumbling into another age of nuclear proliferation

- He promised al Qaeda on a path to defeat: Jihad has never been so rampant and deadly

These are the results. They would be easier to forgive if they hadn't so often been reached by disingenuous and dishonorable means.

The administration was deceptive about the motives for the 2012 Benghazi

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attack. It was deceptive about Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl's service record, and the considerations that led it to exchange five Taliban leaders for his freedom. It was deceptive about when it began nuclear negotiations with Iran. It was deceptive about the terms of the deal. It continues to be deceptive about the fundamental aim of the agreement, which has less to do with curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions than with aligning Washington's interests with Tehran's.

Now the administration is likely being deceptive about last week's U.N. vote, claiming it did not promote, craft or orchestrate a resolution that treats the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City as a settlement in illegally occupied territory. Yet in November, John Kerry had a long talk on the subject with the foreign minister of New Zealand, one of the resolution's sponsors.

"One of the closed-door discussions between United States Secretary of State John Kerry and the New Zealand

government today was a potential resolution by the United Nations Security Council on a two-state solution for the Israel-Palestine conflict," the New Zealand Herald reported last month. "It is a conversation we are engaged in deeply and we've spent some time talking to Secretary Kerry about where the U.S. might go on this," the paper added, quoting Foreign Minister Murray McCully.

The Israelis claim to have more evidence along these lines. If so, it means the administration no longer bothers to lie convincingly.

Even this might be excusable, if Mr. Obama at least had the courage of his mistaken convictions, or if his deception were in the service of a worthier end. Instead, we have the spectacle of the U.S. government hiding behind the skirts of the foreign minister of New Zealand—along with eminent co-sponsors, Venezuela, Malaysia and

Senegal—in order to embarrass and endanger a democratic ally in a forum where that ally is already isolated and bullied. In the catalog of low points in American diplomacy, this one ranks high.

After the Carter administration pulled a similar stunt against Israel at the Security Council in December 1980, the Washington Post published an editorial that does the paper honor today.

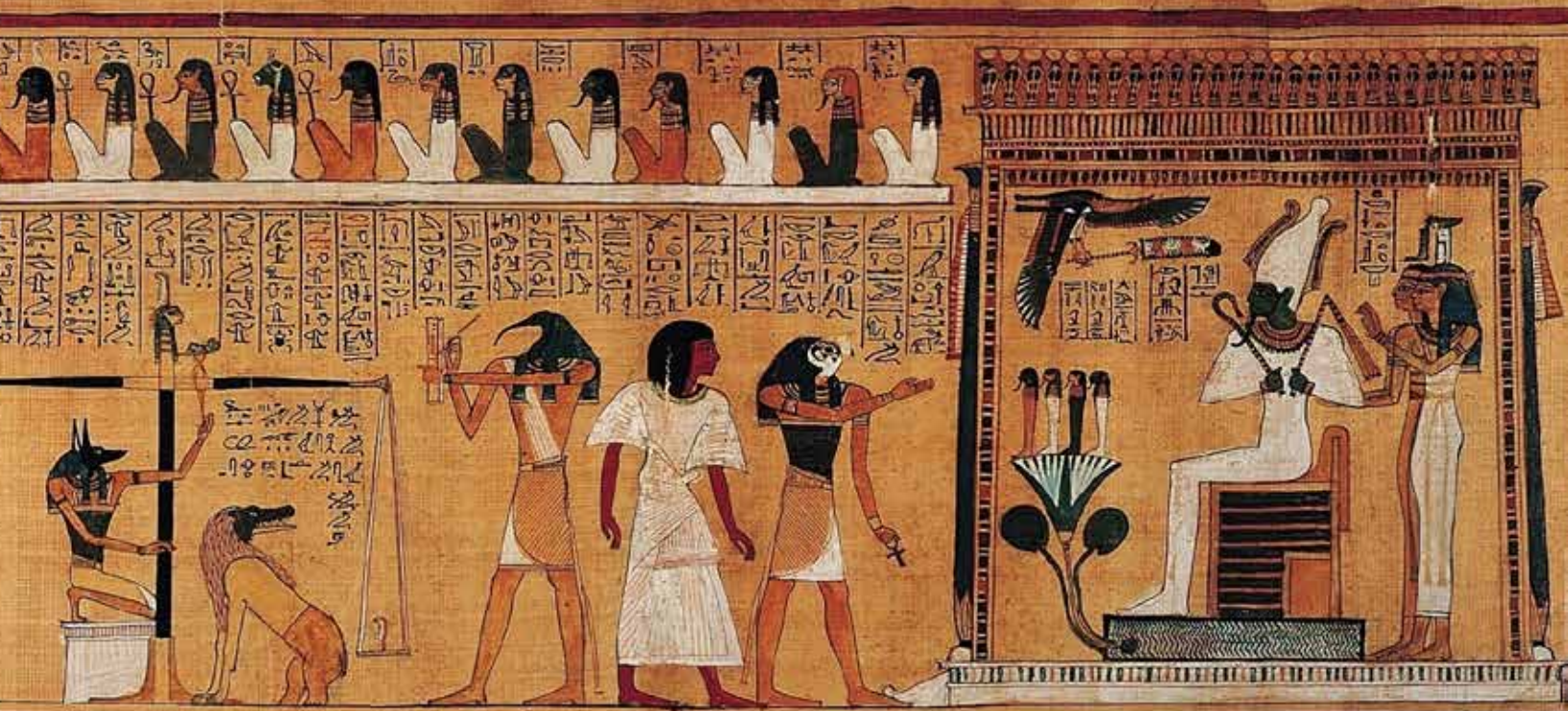
"It cannot be denied," the editors wrote, "that there is a pack and that it hounds Israel shamelessly and that this makes it very serious when the United States joins it." The editorial was titled "Joining the Jackals."

Unlike Mr. Carter, Mr. Obama hasn't joined the jackals. He has merely opened the door wide to them, whether at the U.N. or in the skies over Syria or in the killing fields in Ukraine. The United States abstains: What a fitting finish to this ruinous presidency. ■

**"THERE IS A
PACK, AND IT
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SHAMELESSLY.
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VERY SERIOUS
WHEN THE U.S.
JOINS IT."**







PHARAOH'S DREAMS



RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

WRITTEN BY A 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 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

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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 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 ruthless 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 thus represents the source for the fulfillment of the Egyptians'

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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 threatened view that he was not 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 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: 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 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. ■



PARSHA

NOT JUST A NAME

RABBI DR. DARRELL GINSBERG

*"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet"*

The above words, written by Shakespeare to be recited by Juliet, stand in stark contradistinction to the Torah's view of names. There are countless times throughout the book of Bereishit where a child is named based on a specific concept. These names actually reflect deep and powerful ideas, more often than not concerning God's unique relationship to humanity. In the Torah portion of Mikeitz, there are two more births and two more names. These names offer us a tremendous insight into the personality of Yosef, helping us to understand the arc of the storyline, and reinforcing the unique emphasis Judaism places on what others merely view as a label of convenience.

Yosef's meteoric rise to power and fame are well documented in the Torah. Immediately after his public display of power, the Torah records the following (Bereishit 41:50-52):

"And to Joseph were born two sons before the year of the famine set in, whom Asenath the daughter of Potiphera, the governor of On, bore to him. And Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, for 'God has caused me to forget all my toil and all my father's house.' And the second one he named Ephraim, for 'God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.'"

The tone of the Torah is almost a retroactive one, meaning it does not appear to be recording the historical time of the births of Menashe and Ephraim. Rather, the Torah is, in some sense, making sure we know that the two were born and that Yosef named them. This is certainly not a normative way of describing births and names.

The names themselves require some further explanation. With Menashe, we see Yosef thanking God for allowing him to forget. What exactly was he trying to forget? There is a Midrashic interpretation offered to as an answer, and many of the commentators fall in line with this approach. Basically, through the incredible prosperity he accumulated, alongside the tremendous honors offered him, Yosef was able to forget the sufferings he encountered in being separated from his father as well as the sufferings heaped upon him by those in his father's house.

This interpretation is quite baffling. Is repression of the past the proper path a great person like Yosef should take? Is this repression the true benefit of his material success? Why enshrine this idea in the name of his son?

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JOSEPH'S DREAM INTERPRET- ATIONS

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM



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. Then, using only one stroke, he would move his brush across a blank canvas. Suddenly, 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 perfectly harmonious and picturesque scene. God's two dreams granted to the young Joseph paint such a picture.

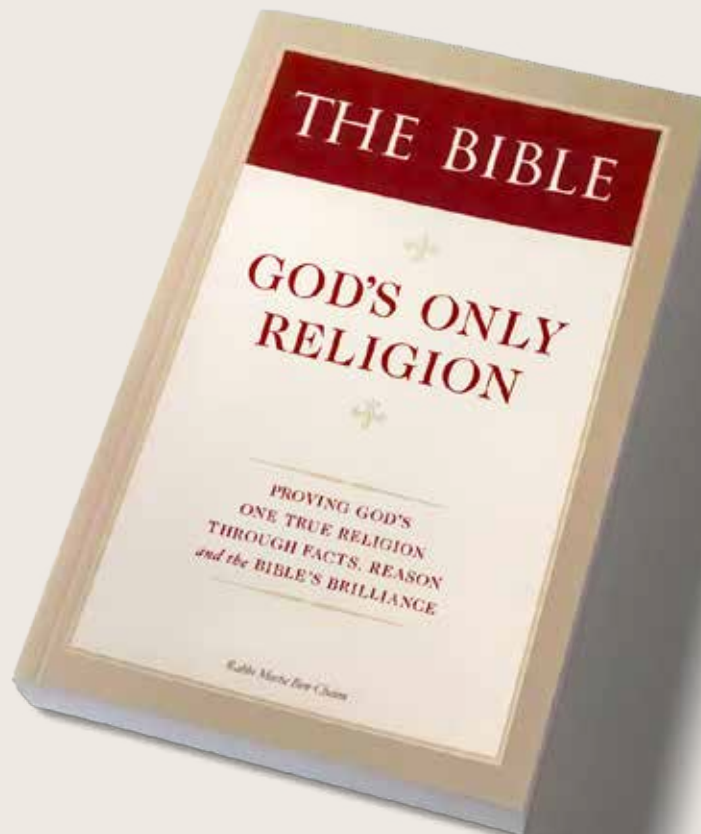
When he was 17, Joseph dreamt of eleven sheaves bowing to him. And then in another dream, he saw eleven stars and the sun and moon bowing to him. Even after seeing his brothers' dismay at his retelling the first dream, Joseph nonetheless felt compelled for some reason, to repeat his second dream to his brothers and his father, in a second recounting. It was due to these

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dreams that the brothers conspired to kill Joseph...eventually selling him instead. It was his father who suggested and rejected an interpretation that they would all bow to Joseph: the eleven stars being his eleven brothers, and the sun and moon representing Joseph's parental figures. At this stage, it does not appear that Joseph offered his own interpretation. Yet, thirteen years later, Joseph accurately and astonishingly interprets not only the dreams of Pharaoh's stewards, but also Pharaoh's dreams. All three dreams came true exactly! But how did Joseph know their interpretations? This question is strengthened by Joseph's apparent lack of interpretative skills with regards to 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.

When Joseph sees his brothers, he "recalls the dreams". According to a wise Rabbi, 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. Would they abandon the accused Benjamin now, who ostensibly stole Joseph's goblet, as they had done 20 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 else under such a trial, but Joseph recognized his dreams as Divine in origin, and as a license to perfect his brothers. As this wise Rabbi 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 eleven 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 in regards

to their perfection, symbolized by higher bodies: the luminaries.

Subsequent to his dreams, Joseph understood their meaning; and not necessarily 39 years later when he first saw his brothers...but perhaps much earlier. The 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.

We must now ask: when did Joseph become such a great 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 outset, 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 perhaps 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 nature 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. God's dreams prophetically sent to Joseph also had many ramifications.

The wise Rabbi I mentioned 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.

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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.

So 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.

DREAM INSTRUCTION

We asked earlier how Joseph transformed into such a brilliant dream interpreter. How did he know that the dreams of the stewards and Pharaoh were true and Divine? What did Joseph know about dreams? All he had were his two 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 this entire time? 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

Ten years elapsed in prison. One day, Joseph saw the wine and bakery stewards were 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. Two more years go by, 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". I believe God gave Joseph two 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': the chosen dream recipient, and dream duplication.

Joseph received these dreams, and none other. He also received "two" dreams. Ramban states that two separate but similar dreams are unnatural: Pharaoh could have naturally seen both of the dreams' content concerning the cows and the ears in one 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 two stewards who dreamt similar dreams. And Joseph knew this. Joseph too had two separate dreams with similar

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content. (Gen. 37:9) In Numbers 12:6 Ibn Ezra teaches that duplication in dreams indicates their Divine origin: “[Divine] dreams are doubled, as is the manner of prophecies”.

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 two elements were contained in the stewards’ dreams, and in Pharaohs 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 two individuals. Pharaoh also had two dreams, and of additional significance, 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 dream as opposed to another indicates its 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 our Jewish history. The design of Joseph’s dreams contained the blueprint for determining the Divine nature of the other dreams he would confront. 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 perfecting of his family. But the dream “design” (selected recipient and duplication) taught him how to unravel dreams in general.

God, with a single brush stroke of Joseph’s dreams, 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!

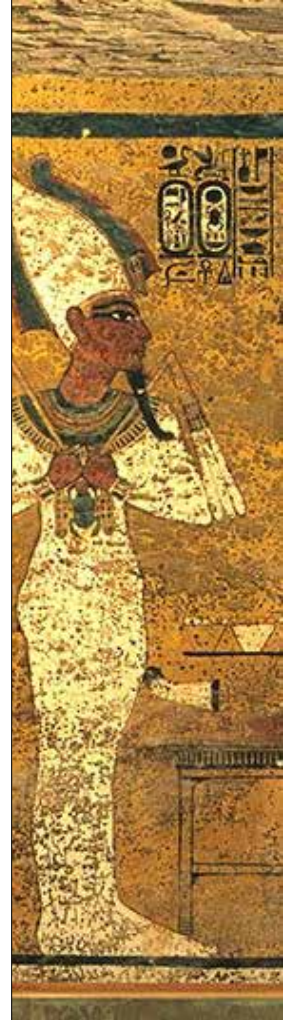
The very dreams that caused Joseph’s imprisonment, also provided his escape, and helped sustain that generation.

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, he turned all his efforts while in prison 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 are – by definition – a manifestation of “hidden” material. Understanding this, Joseph knew that if God communicates with His prophets in dreams, as stated in Numbers 12:6, it is for this reason. God wishes to indicate that just as dreams conceal deeper ideas, so too do God’s dreams, and even more so. 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.

(CONT. ON NEXT PAGE)



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 two 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, so as 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. Despite the fact that God did not reveal Pharaoh's or his stewards' interpretations; 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 not in conflict with God's world that functions according to that same, singular wisdom. Rather, he was perfectly in line with it, as his successes teach. 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.

Responding to our misfortunes with safe-sounding beliefs that "it's all for the good", man deceives himself, and will repeat his errors that caused him to say that the first time. It is only through analyzing our ways and seeing if they match Torah ideals, that we will terminate 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 us to the truly good path, one that God wills for all mankind, and is readily available without further intervention.

The Torah has all we need. No quick fixes, amulets, or blessings will address what God says requires wisdom and personal perfection. "For only with this may one glorify himself: understand and know Me; for I am Hashem who does kindness, justice and righteousness in land, for in these I desire, so says Hashem." (Jeremiah, 9:23) ■



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The naming of Ephraim draws a similar amount of attention. The idea of being fruitful, according to many commentators, refers to the accumulation of wealth in contrast to his previous impoverished state. While this idea seems simpler to understand, the relationship to the naming of Menashe requires some degree of context.

There are a minority of commentators, such as Daat Zekainim MiBaalei Tosfot, that offer a completely different interpretation. The name Ephraim contains within it the word “efer,” which means ashes. Yosef was naming his son in the spirit of the patriarchs Avraham and Yitzchak. Avraham referred to himself as “afar v’efer,” while Yitzchak compared himself to the ashes left on the altar. What is the significance of ashes in this context? Furthermore, while the novelty of this approach is fascinating, we must develop some deeper understanding of why these commentators stray so far from what would appear to be the simple reading of the verse.

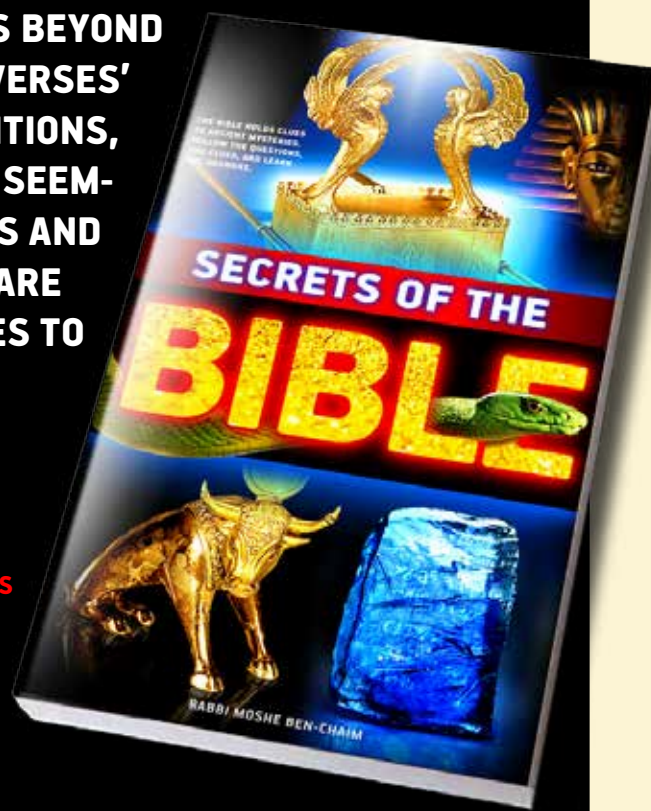
When reading through Yosef’s rise to prominence, God’s role seems to be minimized. Yosef does reference the fact that any of his insights into Pharaoh’s dreams was due to assistance from God. Outside of this clarification, one could attribute what occurred with Yosef to a sequence of unlikely events dominated by shrewd thinking on the part of Yosef. The “missing” role of God to this point is the focus of Yosef in the naming of his children. The Torah places the naming of Yosef’s children at the transition point between the climax of Yosef’s rise and the visit of the brothers to Egypt due to the onset of the famine. Why mention the event of their births then? It is possible the reason was to consecrate in the names of Menashe and Ephraim the great extent of God’s involvement in the dramatic shift in Yosef’s fortunes and how Yosef understood through God’s actions the next steps in the Divine plan.

Was Yosef trying to forget his past troubles? While there were moments of success, Yosef’s life up to the point of his being summoned before Pharaoh was quite traumatic. However, Yosef now understood completely how his behaviors and imperfections played such a prominent role in the process. He had engaged in teshuva, repentance, and now understood his unique situation and its

GOD CODED HIS BIBLE WITH HIDDEN MESSAGES BEYOND THE WORDS. THE VERSES’ ORDER, JUXTAPOSITIONS, CONTRADICTIONS, SEEMING REDUNDANCIES AND OTHER PATTERNS ARE PURPOSEFUL CLUES TO GOD’S WISDOM.

BY JEWISHTIMES PUBLISHER
RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

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ability to unite together his brothers and father in order to build the nation. His view of the previous dreams was now in line with reality, and any ego gratification was removed from the interpretation. Yosef also realized how important his gaining of wealth and honor were critical to the repentance process. On an intellectual level, Yosef was able to realize during his time in the Egyptian prison the errors in his ways. However, as long as his living environment was defined by his current conditions, imprisoned and impoverished, there would be an element of resentment against his brothers present in his psyche. The constant reminder of his current state presented a formidable obstacle to Yosef’s complete repentance. We see this is in the two reasons cited above. First, Yosef was separated from his father, which meant he lost out on years of education and guidance. Yosef also reflected on the way he was rejected by his brothers’ outright, cast away from them. It would be normal to expect someone to bear resentment against those who brought about these terrible conditions. And this was not an abrogation of responsibility on the part of Yosef. Yosef understood that the change in his circumstances was a necessary component to help bring about his complete repentance and allow him to become the leader he had to be. This is reflected in the name of Menashe.

What about Ephraim? The conventional interpretation adopted by most commentaries is the contrast in situations, a true “rags-to-riches” journey. Therefore, the name of Ephraim reflects the other aspect of Divine Intervention. The idea of someone in Yosef’s state of existence becoming the viceroy was so unlikely, that one would have to see God’s guidance throughout. Thus, Yosef was recognizing both the phenomenon of God’s intervention alongside the benefits afforded him in repentance. However, as noted above, there is another interpretation given, one that seems to be way off the literal reading in the Torah. We do see an important theme in this approach, that of humility. A primary component of Yosef’s flawed character was his ego, his overestimation of self. In many ways, this flaw was what led to his being driven away from his brothers. In naming his son Ephraim, Yosef may be expressing the conviction that his repentance is complete. He no longer had any attachment to that former self. In the name of Ephraim we see the completion of a process necessary to bring about the next stage in God’s plan.

What’s in a name? As we see from Menashe and Ephraim, quite a lot indeed. ■



THE SOLACE IN BEING HATED

RABBI BERNIE FOX



On the miracles, on the redemption, on the mighty acts, on the salvations, and on the wars that You performed for our fathers in those days, in this time. (*Al HaNisim prayer*)

THE CHANUKAH AND PURIM VERSIONS OF THE AL HANISIM PRAYER

Chanukah and Purim both recall dramatic episodes in Jewish history. In both of these episodes we were confronted by threats of annihilation and in each we were rescued by Hashem. There are also similarities in the observance of these two celebrations. On both, we insert into the Amidah and into Birkat HaMazon a version of the Al HaNisim thanksgiving prayer.

Let us compare and contrast these two versions of the prayer. Both versions share a

fundamental theme – salvation from our enemies. This theme is presented through the three basic components of the prayer. The Al HaNisim prayer opens with the above statement of thanksgiving. We acknowledge the salvation of our people by Hashem. Second, the prayer describes a conflict that threatened to destroy us. In regards to Purim, this is the plan of Haman to annihilate the Jewish people in the kingdom of Achashverosh. Chanukah recalls our conflict with the Hellenist Assyrian kingdom. The third element describes our triumph over our wicked adversary or our salvation from catastrophe.

The Purim version of the Al HaNisim prayer is briefer than the Chanukah version. The reason for its brevity is that it does not include as elaborate a description of our rescue. The Purim version merely states that Hashem undermined Haman's plans. Rather than annihilating the Jews, Haman and his sons were destroyed.

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You adopted their grievance. You enforced their judgement. You avenged them. You delivered the mighty into the hand of the weak, the many into the hand of the few, the defiled into the hand of the pure, the wicked into the hand of the righteous, the willfully evil into the hand of those who study Your Torah. And for Yourself, You made Your name great and sanctified in Your world.
(Al HaNisim prayer for Chanukah)

THE UNIQUE ELEMENTS OF THE CHANUKAH VERSION OF AL HANISIM

In the Chanukah version the third element is much more elaborate and descriptive. It includes the following material:

1. Hashem is described as working through the Jewish people. He empowers them to overcome their adversaries.
2. Two paradigms are used to describe the Jewish people's triumph over their enemies. One paradigm is military. The might and superior numbers of the enemy were overcome by a smaller and weaker force. The second paradigm is a moral one. The righteous and pure defeated the wicked and defiled.
3. The triumph of the Jews over their enemies is described as a sanctification of Hashem's name. Let us consider these last two components.

In the days of Matityahu the son of Yochanan, the Kohen Gadol of the Hashmonaim family and his sons. When the evil Hellenist kingdom arose against Your nation to force them to forget Your Torah and to violate the statutes of Your will. (Al HaNisim prayer for Chanukah)

THE CHARACTER OF THE CHANUKAH CONFLICT

In order to appreciate the significance of this added material, we must consider more carefully the fundamental nature of each of these conflicts. The Purim miracle was that Hashem saved His people from Haman's plan to destroy the Jewish nation. It is true that he was motivated by issues stemming from our commitment to Torah. Specifically, he understood that Judaism opposes the exaltation and worship of any human being. He resented the Jewish people because they were an obstacle to his promulgation of the self-myth of greatness. However, despite this religious underpinning, the conflict did not manifest itself as a religious struggle. Haman was not interested in altering the religious doctrines of the Jewish people. He wished to annihilate us. In short, the religious conflicts were in the background and latent. The manifest expression was a campaign to destroy our people.

In contrast, Chanukah focuses upon an historical religious conflict. The Hellenists were not bent upon destroying the Jewish people. They sought to convert us to their world view. This was a conflict between perspectives and cultures. The Hellenists directed their aggression against our Torah. They

suppressed Torah study and observance and they defiled the Bait HaMikdash – the Sacred Temple. This battle was over religious issues.

This difference between the two conflicts is reflected in the way they are respectively described in the Al HaNisim prayer. The Chanukah victory is not described merely in military terms – the few and weak overcame the strong and the many. It is described in religious and moral terms. The righteous overcame the wicked and the sacred vanquished the defiled. Why is this religious/moral paradigm employed? It provides a description of the conflict – it was religious in nature.

THE CHANUKAH VICTORY SANCTIFIED HASHEM'S NAME

Understanding this difference between the two conflicts explains another aspect of their respective treatments in the Al HaNisim prayer. The defeat of Haman and the preservation of the Jewish people is not characterized in the Al HaNisim prayer as a sanctification of Hashem's name. This is because the overt conflict was not focused upon good versus evil. It was a conflict between two peoples. The defeat of the Hellenists is described as a sanctification of Hashem's name because this conflict was focused upon issues of right and wrong, good and evil. It is the triumph of righteousness over wickedness that sanctifies Hashem's name.

THE FOUNDATION OF OUR ENEMIES' HATRED

As noted above, both conflicts were motivated by religious antipathies. They differ in the manner in which the religious resentments were expressed. Haman's strategy was to destroy our nation. The Assyrian Hellenists sought to uproot our commitment to our Torah. In both instances we survived and our enemies were defeated. These are two of many instances in which our enemies have tried to destroy us. We have survived these countless persecutions only through the intervention of Hashem. However, despite the incessant nature of the antipathy directed against our people, we have reason to actually derive solace from our historical plight. If our enemies truly believed in the superiority of their own world-view, they would have no reason to wish to destroy us. They would merely dismiss us as a clan of primitives. Why did Haman and the Hellenists not merely ignore us? Implicitly expressed in our enemies' consistent hatred and aggression is their acknowledgment of their insecurities. Haman, the Assyrians, and so many other subsequent adversaries could not dismiss us because they knew deep in their hearts that we represent a truth that they could not ignore and that threatened their own world-view. So, although we continue to be the target of hatred and aggression, we receive some comfort. We know that their regard for the truth of our Torah underlies their behavior. ■

**IMPLICITLY EXPRESSED
IN OUR ENEMIES' HATRED
AND AGGRESSION IS
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TRANSCRIPT CLAIMS TO SHOW U.S. WORKED WITH PALESTINIANS ON UN RESOLUTION

**REPORT PUBLISHED IN EGYPT HAS KERRY AND RICE ADVISING SENIOR
PALESTINIANS ON STRATEGY AT UN AND AFTER TRUMP TAKES POWER**



BY TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF December 27, 2016, 10:56 pm

An Egyptian paper published what it claims are the transcripts of meetings between top US and Palestinian officials that, if true, would corroborate Israeli accusations that the Obama administration was behind last week's UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlements.

At the same time, a report in an Israeli daily Tuesday night pointed to Britain helping draft the resolution and high drama in the hours leading up to the vote, as Jerusalem tried to convince New Zealand to bury the Security Council measure.

In a meeting in early December with top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat, US Secretary of State John Kerry told the Palestinians that the US was prepared to cooperate with the Palestinians at the Security council, Israel's Channel 1 TV said, quoting the Egyptian Al-Youm Al-Sabea newspaper. Also present at the meeting were US National Security Adviser Susan Rice, and Majed Faraj,

(CONT. ON NEXT PAGE)

director of the Palestinian Authority's General Intelligence Service. Kerry is quoted as saying that he could present his ideas for a final status solution if the Palestinians pledge they will support the proposed framework. The US officials advised the Palestinians to travel to Riyadh to present the plan to Saudi leaders.

Israel fears that Kerry, who is slated to give a speech Wednesday on the subject, will then lay out his comprehensive vision for two-state solution at a Paris peace conference planned for January. Israel has refused to attend. Israel further fears that this Kerry framework could be enshrined in another UN Security Council resolution.

The Egyptian report fits with Israeli claims that it had received "ironclad" information from Arab sources that Washington actively helped craft last week's UN resolution declaring Israeli settlements illegal. "We have ironclad information that emanates from sources in the Arab world and that shows the Obama administration helped craft this resolution and pushed hard for its eventual passage," said David Keyes, spokesman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The Egyptian report did not detail whose transcripts of the meeting it had obtained or how it had obtained them.

Responding to a question about the Al-Youm Al-Sabea report, State Department Spokesman Mark Toner denied that the US discussed the language of the resolution with Erekat or in a meeting with officials from New Zealand.

The Obama administration has denied it was behind the resolution, saying that it only decided not to veto it after reading the final text.

Meanwhile, a report in the daily Haaretz Tuesday cited Western and Israeli officials detailing how Britain, and not the US, worked with the Palestinians to craft the text of the resolution, toning it down to make it palatable enough for Washington to avoid a veto.

"The Israeli diplomats say that from information that reached the Foreign



US National Security Adviser Susan Rice speaks during the American Israel Public Affairs Committee 2015 Policy Conference, March 2, 2015 in Washington, DC. (photo credit: Mark Wilson/Getty Images/AFP)

Ministry in Jerusalem, British legal figures and diplomats had been working directly with the Palestinians on the wording of the resolution even before it was distributed by Egypt," Haaretz said.

According to Haaretz, in the hours before the resolution went forward, Netanyahu phoned New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully, and warned him that going ahead with the resolution "will be a declaration of war."

"It will rupture the relations and there will be consequences. We'll recall our ambassador to Jerusalem," Netanyahu is reported to have said.

Since the resolution passed, Netanyahu has taken a series of measures against the states that supported the resolutions, minimizing ties with some and calling in their envoys for rebuke.

According to the Egyptian report, the US diplomats expressed their mistrust of Netanyahu, saying he wanted to destroy the two-state solution and was only interested in maintaining the status quo between Israel and the Palestinians.

The transcript showed Kerry and Rice advising the Palestinians not to make any provocative moves when US President-elect Donald Trump takes office on January 20, calling him dangerous.

They warned against such steps as ending security cooperation with Israel, pursuing legal action against Israeli officials in the ICC, or dissolving the Palestinian Authority.

They also said Trump's administration was likely to adopt a policy on the Israel-Palestinian conflict that would be totally different to that of previous administrations going back to 1967.

When asked how the Palestinians would react if Trump carried out his promise to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, Erekat reportedly said the Palestine Liberation Organization would rescind its recognition of Israel and ask Arab states to expel their US envoys.

Erekat made precisely that threat in a December 19 conference call organized by the Wilson Center policy forum. He said he would immediately resign as the chief Palestinian negotiator, and that "the PLO will revoke its recognition of Israel" as well as all previously signed agreements with Israel. Furthermore, said Erekat, all American embassies in the Arab world would be forced to close — not necessarily because Arab leaderships would want to close them, but because the infuriated public in the Arab world would not "allow" for the embassies to continue to operate. ■

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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