

RED ALERT!

Vayeishev-Chanuka

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DIVREI TORAH

- When Yaakov concluded that Yosef was dead, he cried over his loss (B'reishit 37:35). The Midrash commented over the verse and quoted Yaakov as saying, "Woe unto me for I married two sisters." What connection is there between these two events: marrying two sisters and the death of Yosef? The Midrash is relating a comment on the existing question: we say that the Patriarchs observed all the Mitzvot of the Torah, even before the Torah was given. If so, how could Yaakov marry two sisters, a clear violation? The basis of this Halacha is that marrying two sisters would create jealousy and hatred in the family, between the two sisters! But Yaakov reasoned that since Leah and Rachel loved each other so much, this won't be the case. And it wasn't. But with the children, it happened. The sons of Leah hated the son of Rachel. So now it is logical for Yaakov to say... Woe unto me because I married two sisters.

- One time a student asked Rav

Soloveitchik the following: If Mikeitz is always Shabbat Chanuka, why is there a Haftora listed for Shabbat Mikeitz? We never read it! The Rav quickly corrected him. Mikeitz is not always Shabbat Chanuka. Like this year. Shabbat Chanuka is Vayeishev, and next week is regular Shabbat Mikeitz. (This happens 10.1% of years, when Chanuka is Friday to Friday.)

But then the Rav added the next statement which surprised all of us listening. The Rav stated that only one Haftora is read publicly. But the other Haftora still must be read privately. So if Rosh Chodesh falls on a Shabbat, for example, that Shabbat's Haftora is for Rosh Chodesh. But the regular Haftora for that Shabbat still must be read privately. It can be read after Shabbat morning services, anytime during that day.

- We celebrate Chanuka this Shabbat, miracles orchestrated by a family of Kohanim. They were motivated by what they saw the Greek-Syrians did in the Beit HaMikdash and elsewhere in Israel. The Greek-Syrians were joined by Jews who converted to Hellenism. Their efforts were to destroy Judaism, not to destroy or kill Jews. Besides being courageous fighters, the Chashmonaim were determined

to revive Judaism among the people, and in so doing resanctify the Beit HaMikdash. They could not create a new Menorah out of gold, but nevertheless built a Menorah out of wood or tin (which is permitted), but until enough gold was acquired to do the job the way the Torah said. They displayed great determination to accomplish these tasks; Hashem helped them!

Questions by RED

From the Text

1. Why did Yaakov love Yosef more than any other son? (37:3)
2. What were Yosef's two dreams? (37:5...)
3. What did Reuven have in mind when he advised his brothers to throw Yosef into the pit? (37:22)
4. What pledge did the supposed harlot (Tamar) ask from Yehuda for being together with him? (38:18)
5. Who bought Yosef as his slave when Yosef was brought to Egypt? (39:1)

From Rashi

6. Why did Yaakov love Yosef more than the others? (37:3)
7. What terrible events occurred in Shechem? (37:14)
8. How long did Yaakov mourn the loss of Yosef? (37:34)

9. When Yosef prospered as Potifar's slave, he started to groom himself. What divine punishment did he receive? (39:6)

10. What were the sins of the Chief Butler and Chief Baker that got them imprisoned? (40:1)

From the Rabbis

11. What is the source of the Pidyon HaBen costing five shekels? (Rabbeinu Bachya)

12. Why does the Torah repeat three times, identifying Potifar as an Egyptian? (39:1,2) (Hirsch)

13. Why did the warden of the prison put Yosef in charge of the prison? (Targum Yonatan)

From the Midrash

14. Who argued on Yosef's behalf and told Potifar that Yosef was innocent of Mrs. Potifar's accusation? (Yalkut)

From the Haftara (Zecharia)

15. Why was Zecharia disappointed with Yehoshua the Kohen Gadol?

Relationships

16.

- a) No'ach - Arpachshad
- b) Terach - Haran
- c) Nachor - Milka (2 answers)
- d) Chushim - Guni
- e) Machli - Mushi

ANSWERS

1. Because Yosef was born when Yaakov was older.

2. The brothers' sheaves bowed down to Yosef's. And the sun, moon, and stars bowed down to Yosef.

3. Reuven intended to retrieve Yosef from the pit and return him to their father.

4. Yehuda's signet, his wrap, and his staff. (All things that would prove his identity.)

5. Potifar, Pharaoh's Chief Butcher.

6. Yosef was born when Yaakov was older. Onkelos: Yosef was the smartest (Yaakov taught him what Yaakov learned with Shem and Eiver.) And Yosef looked like Yaakov.

7. The tribes erred there; Dina was raped and kidnapped there; and the kingdom of Israel was split there after King Solomon died.

8. 22 years.

9. Hashem sent the bear to trouble him (Potifar's wife).

10. The Chief Butler: a fly was found in Pharaoh's wine goblet. The Chief Baker: a pebble was found in the king's bread.

11. The brothers sold Yosef for 20 pieces of silver, which equals 5 shekels.

12. The Egyptians abhorred all Canaanites, especially the Hebrews. It was an act of Hashem that Yosef was

treated so well.

13. He saw that Hashem made Yosef successful in everything, and he really believed that Yosef was innocent of Mrs. Potifar's charge.

14. Osnat, Potifar's daughter, who later married Yosef.

15. Yehoshua's sons married non-Jewish women, and Yehoshua did not chastise them.

16.

a) Grandfather - grandson

b) Father - son

c) Husband - wife, and uncle - niece

d) First cousins (Chushim was Dan's son, Guni was Naftali's son)

e) Brothers (sons of Merari)