

Shiur L'Yom Chamishi¹

[Thursday's Study]

READINGS:	<i>Torah Miketz:</i>	Genesis 42:27-38
	<i>Haftarah:</i>	II Chronicles 6:1-11
	<i>B'rit Chadasha:</i>	I Corinthians 2:4

In each man's sack was his pouch of silver.

[Genesis 42:35]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 75:8;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition #7, *Kabat* [Ingathering]

We are presently in the midst of a season when the Holy One has been *moving behind the scenes* – doing *special-ops* under the radar, so to speak. The Creator of Heaven and Earth is on a *stealth mission*, as it were. And so are *His angels*. It is, you see, not time for visible miracles. Not *yet*, at least. But rest assured that the Holy One *has a plan*, and that *He is about the business of implementing it*.

What plan, you ask? Let's talk about that, shall we?

Under the cover of such things as *surrealistic dreams piped into Pharaoh's subconscious mind* and *mind-blowing rags-to-riches scenarios* - not to mention *alternating seasons of feast and famine* affecting vast expanses of the Middle East - the Holy One has been quietly *rearranging things* on His beloved planet earth. As a result the world in which we live is suddenly changing rapidly. The balance of power is undergoing a radical shift. The influence of the Eastern bloc of kingdoms – Babylon, Assyria, etc. - is waning. All eyes have now turned to the West, to the breadbasket of the world, along the great Nile. Kings, princes, and peasants throughout the world are now suddenly talking about a newcomer to world governance named *Tzafanat-Paneach* – a charismatic fellow nobody had even heard of until Pharaoh's drew him out of prison and appointed him his *right-hand man*. This man is about to play a very important – and prototypical - role in 'the Plan'.

The Plan

The Holy One first revealed the Plan many, many years ago, to Yosef's great grandfather Avraham. Way back in parsha ***Lech Lecha***, as the Holy One was preparing to cut covenant with Yosef's great-grandfather Avram, the Beautiful

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Divine Voice stunned Avram with this announcement:

Yadoa teda
'Know for sure

ki-ger yihyeh zar'acha b'erezt lo lahem
that your zara [seed] will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs

v'avadum v'inu otam arba me'ot shanah
They will be enslaved and oppressed 400 years

v'gam et ha-goy asher ya'avodu dan anochi
and then I am going to judge the nation that enslaves them,

v'acharei-chen yetz'u b'rechush g'dol
and they will then leave with great acquisition/harvest/abundance.

We who are familiar with the events of the Exodus story understand immediately the connection of this declaration of the Holy One with the great deliverance the Holy One is going to bring about through Moshe – something that will not take place until several generations of Ya'akov's descendants have come and gone.

But what does the prophetic announcement of the Holy One to Avram [later to renamed *Avraham*] have to do with *Yosef and his brothers*? Let us pause and consider that in a little more detail.

Yosef and the Holy One's "Four-Step Plan"

First of all, please understand the *overall outline* of the Holy One's prophetic declaration to Avram. The prophecy outlines **Four Distinct Phases** the Holy One intends to bring to pass, as follows:

- Phase I:** Avraham's descendants [in Hebrew, *zara* (seed)] must be ***'foreigners in a land that is not theirs'***.
- Phase II:** Avraham's *zara* will be ***enslaved and oppressed***.
- Phase III:** ***The Holy One will judge*** the people who enslaved and oppressed Avraham's *zara*.
- Phase IV:** ***The Holy One will transfer to Avraham's zara the wealth of the people who enslaved and oppressed them as He delivers them from their enslavement and oppression.***

Consider now *Yosef*. *Yosef* is the *first fruits* of all four phases of the plan the Holy One announced to Avraham. His experience provides the *type* and *shadow*. He has been called to go ahead of his brothers and sever as the *'ensign'* [or **sign**]

of the covenant faithfulness of the Holy One. Let me explain phase by phase how this is so.

Phase I –

The Zara of Avraham Become ‘Foreigners’ in a Land Not Their Own

The first phase in the grand redemptive plan announced by the Holy One in Genesis 15 is that Avraham’s descendants [in Hebrew, *zara* (seed)] must become ‘*foreigners in a land that is not theirs*’.

Seed must be scattered before there can be a harvest.

Yosef is clearly the forerunner in this phase. Where after all has Yosef been for 22 years² as today’s aliyah begins? He has been a foreigner in Egypt – i.e. ‘*a land that is not theirs*’. He is in fact the seed sown in foreign soil that will bring forth of a great harvest of souls.

Phase II –

The Zara of Avraham are Enslaved and Oppressed

Phase II of the Holy One’s announced plan – the decidedly unpleasant part of the plan where Avraham’s *zara* will *be enslaved and oppressed* - will not come to pass in fullness for all of Israel for several generations. We will not begin to read about the enslavement and oppression in any detail until we get to *Sefer Sh’mot* – i.e. the book of Torah most people know as *Exodus*. But Yosef has already served as the forerunner in this regard. He has already personally *experienced enslavement and oppression in Mitzrayim*. He was a slave - and suffered oppression as such - for 13 long years.

Phase III –

The Holy One Judges the Nation That Enslaves Avraham’s Zara

Phase III of the Holy One’s plan is that the Holy One will *judge the nation who enslaved and oppressed Avraham’s seed*. In its fullest interpretation this phase will await a different Pharaoh and a different Deliverer. But in a prophetic sense Yosef has already seen the judgment of the Holy One upon the oppressors of the *zara kodesh* [holy seed]. After all, as we begin today’s aliyah Yosef is now firmly established in the ultimate position of strength. He holds the power of life and death over everyone who ever enslaved and oppressed him. All of Egypt,

² Yosef was 17 when he had his dreams of prominence among his brothers, and was presumably still that age when he was sold into slavery in Egypt. See **Genesis 37:2, 28**. He was 30 years of age when he interpreted Pharaoh’s dream and was elevated to second in command in Mitzrayim, meaning he spent 13 years in servitude and/or prison. The 7 years of plenty have now passed [13 + 7 = 20] and the famine is now in its second year [20 + 2 = 22 years].

including Potifar and his wife among others, bow down to and serve him.

Meanwhile, his original oppressors - the treacherous brothers who hated, schemed against, and sold him into slavery - have now bowed down to him as well. One of them – *Sh'mon* - he has actually enslaved. This elevation of Yosef is indeed the prototype of the greater judgment to come.

Phase IV -

The Wealth of the Oppressing Nation is Transferred to Avraham's Zara

What about Step Four of the Holy One's plan – the *transference of wealth* from the oppressing nation to Avraham's ***zara*** in connection with the deliverance from slavery and oppression?

In the days of the Exodus we know that the people of Egypt will shower gifts of gold, silver and garments on the children of Israel as they depart. But this phase also has begun to manifest in seed form in the life of Yosef. As we begin today's aliyah what do we see Yosef wearing? *The finery of Egypt - from Pharaoh's own wardrobe.* He even wears *the signet ring off of Pharaoh's finger!*

In these symbolic material things the Holy One has given to Avraham's ***zara*** Yosef – even as He was delivering him from slavery and oppression - a '*down payment*' on that which He will give to the remainder of Avraham's ***zara*** – i.e. Israel – ***miketz*** [at the end].

No, Dear Reader, the Holy One has *not abandoned His covenant* with Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov. Nor has He forgotten even a single aspect of His promise. The famine and the present dire-looking circumstances that the world is facing are all *just part of the Plan.* And for those with '*God-eyes*', hidden in plain view within the story of what has happened regarding Yosef in the last 22 years lies proof positive that every single thing the Holy One promised Avraham is indeed going to come to pass.

We will see in today's aliyah however if anyone in Ya'akov's household has the '*God-eyes*' which are needed to see these things.

Sacked!

In the throes of the great famine, Ya'akov sent his ten oldest sons to Egypt. They thought the purpose of the trip was to acquire grain. But that was only part of *the Plan.* Egypt's abundance of grain in a time of great famine was just the hook the Holy One set in their jaw to draw them into the sphere of influence of the man named Tzafanat-Paneach. What the Hebrew delegation encountered when they

got to the land of pyramids, therefore, must have seemed to them like a surreal nightmare. The thick cloak of spiritual darkness that brooded over the land of Egypt was palpable. In the face of the sudden onset of famine, after seven years of plenty, a hoarding mentality had set in among Egypt's population. As a result, all strangers - even strangers like them bringing piles of silver – were viewed with distrust and animosity. Paranoia was rampant. Strangers were not welcome.

When the brothers got to the courts of Pharaoh to present their request to be allowed to purchase a little of Egypt's stored grain with which to feed their starving families, the man in charge of Egypt's storehouses – the man called Tzafanat-Paneach about whom everybody was talking – was anything but friendly. The man stared holes in them. He seemed to be looking right through them. He was not one whit impressed by the silver they had brought. He accused the Hebrews of being spies. He would not listen to their protestations of innocence. He turned his back on them. He interrogated them in depth about their father and their brethren. Even as he did so, however, the man seemed somehow to know more about them and their family than they did themselves. He reiterated his accusation again and again. He ordered them thrown in a dungeon. They had no idea how long they would be there – or if they would ever get out.

After the brothers had spent three days in prison the strange man in charge of the grain bins called back out into the light of day. He told them he 'feared God' – whatever that meant to him. He then ordered nine of them released. But he kept the second-oldest, Sh'mon, as his prisoner. And for some reason none of them could understand he set the nine remaining brothers free, sold them grain to feed the family, and then sent them on their way. But he conditioned the safety of Sh'mon upon them returning, bringing back the younger brother that they had told him they had left with their father, to prove they were not spies. They left in a daze – all, that is, except Sh'mon. He was now Tzafanat-Paneach's slave.

Today's aliyah opens with the stunned Hebrew delegation - minus *Sh'mon* – on its way back to Kena'an with the sacks of grain for which Ya'akov had sent them. Along with the life-saving provisions however they were bearing very troubling news for both their father and for their youngest brother Binyamin. They are, however, about to be confronted by yet *another incident of surrealism*. Let's let Torah tell the story:

V'yiftach ha-echad et-sako

When they came to the place where they spent the night,

l'tet mispo l'chamoro b'malon

one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey.

vayar et-kaspo v'hineh-hu b'fi amtachto

He saw his money right there at the top of his pack.

Vayomer el-echav hushav kaspi

He exclaimed to his brothers: 'My money has returned!'

V'gam hineh v'amtachti

Mine is also in my pack!'

vayetze l'bam v'yecherdu ish el-achiv l'emor

And their hearts sank, and they asked each other with trembling voices:

mah-zot asah Elohim lanu

'What is this that Elohim is doing to us?'

[Genesis 42:27-28]

To their horror, one by one all ten brothers find that the silver that each was to use to pay for the grain they took from Egypt was *still in their sacks*. The sight of the silver had a strange effect on them. There was no joy. Instead their hearts sank. A strange, incomprehensible fear gripped them. They realized this was not just a mistake made by men. “*What is this that Elohim is doing to us?*”, they asked one another. Note that they did not pray. Note that they did not humble themselves and make t’shuvah. Note that they did not even refer to – much less call upon - the Holy One by His Covenant Name. They used the generic term ‘Elohim’ – which can, depending upon one’s culture and mindset, mean ‘the gods’. There was no question in the minds of the brothers that they had a spiritual problem. They just had no discernment yet as to what that spiritual problem was, or from what root it stemmed.

What could the silver in their sacks mean? It could not be good. It meant *at best* that they owe a very powerful man a huge debt; *at worst* it meant that each one of them is now almost certainly *wanted as a thief* by the most powerful nation on earth. It also meant that their father Ya’akov would have to be suspicious, when they returned to the ancestral camp without Sh’mon, that rather than part with the silver which he had entrusted to them when they left, they had *sold their brother into slavery*.

When *Kayin* [Cain] killed his brother what cried out against him was *the blood of the one he had killed*. With these men on the other hand - who had not killed, but had sold their brother for silver - what was crying out against them was *the silver in their sacks*. How fitting. *Measure for measure*, right Dear Reader?

Why Is Egypt's Silver In Our Sacks?

Please note that it is *the very thing for which his brothers sold Yosef into slavery over twenty years previously that now testifies against them*. Silver³ they wanted - silver they have! And now, with their sacks full of silver they must *face their father* and see - and this time begin to *feel* - his pain.

So it is for us. When we transgress against our fellow man we always seem to leave behind *something that testifies against us*. If we **shed our brother's blood** that blood cries out to the Holy One. If we *slander him* the seed of our condemning words grows and produces a harvest of evil that testifies of what we have sown. And if we *profit at our brother's expense* the ill-gotten gains we receive *scream out our crime to the heights of Heaven*.

Nothing goes unseen. No sin is secret. Our sins always find us out. If we do not confess our sins and make **t'shuvah** therefore, well . . . *the witnesses the Holy One has established* will testify of them for us!

Behold: The Next Phase of 'the Time of Jacob's Trouble'

Do not pass over or minimize the gravity of the crisis confronting Ya'akov and his sons at this point in Torah. What began as a simple commercial transaction - the purchase of grain from the storehouses in Egypt - has taken a bizarre, seemingly cruel twist. It has resulted not only in one brother, Sh'mon, being imprisoned, but the placing of Ya'akov and all his children completely at the mercy of the prisoner and accuser, the mysterious new Viceroy of Egypt. And now nine brothers must return to *face their father* and try to explain the extensive 'trouble' that has befallen the family in connection with what was supposed to be a simple journey to obtain food.

Here is how Torah describes the face-to-face discussions between the nine returning brothers and Ya'akov their father:

Vayavo'u el-Ya'akov avihem ar'tzah Kena'an
Then they came to their father Ya'akov in the land of Kena'an,

³ The word translated as 'money' in the King James Version is the Hebrew word **keseif**, *kaf, samech, feh sofit*, Strong's Hebrew word #3701, pronounced **keh'-sef**. Strong's indicates this word can mean either *silver* or *money*. The first usage of this noun in Torah is found in Genesis 13:2, where we find that, after leaving Egypt, Avram was rich *'in cattle, in silver [keseif], and in gold'*. The Hebrew verb root is **kasaf**, *kaf, samech, feh sofit*, Strong's Hebrew word # 3700, pronounced **kaw-sawf**'. This verb root means to *strongly yearn* for, *desire*, or *highly value and esteem* something. The first usage is Genesis 31:30, where Lavan acknowledges that Ya'akov 'sorely desired' [**kasaf**] to return to his father's house. **Keseif**, in its literal meaning, therefore, is merely *something considered valuable enough to use as a medium of exchange; something used as barter* – i.e. something that provides leverage.

V'yagidu lo et kol ha-korot otam l'emor
And they told him about all that had happened to them.

* * *

Vayehi hem merikim sakeyhem
They began emptying their sacks,

v'hineh-ish tzror-kaspo b'sako
and each one's money was [found to be] in his sack.

vayir'u et-tzererot kaspeihem hemah v'avihem vayira'u
[The brothers] and their father saw the money-bags and they were afraid.

V'yomer alehem Ya'akov avihem oti shikaltem
Their father Ya'akov said to them, 'You're making me lose my children!

Yosef eynenu v'Shim'on eynenu
Yosef is no more! And Sh'mon is no more!

v'et-Binyamin tikachu
And now you want to take Benjamin!

alay hayu chulanah
Everything is happening to me!

The situation indeed appears dire. Some today would be certain “the devil” was attacking, would shout “him” down, and do whatever they consider to be “spiritual warfare”. But the truth is that “*the devil*” had nothing to do with the trouble Ya'akov and his children were in. The “accuser of the brethren” in this case, you see, was *not Ha-Satan*. It was *the Holy One Himself*.

There was *unconfessed sin* in the household of Ya'akov. And ***t'shuvah*** had not been forthcoming – for more than twenty years! The household was just now in the very throes of the judgment of the Holy One. Understand this principle of the covenant of the Holy One, Dear Reader: *when judgment is coming upon the world a seed form of the judgment to come always visits the household of the Redeemed of the Holy One first*. This was, therefore, designed by the Holy One to be part of the original “*time of Jacob's trouble*”⁴. And of course as we begin our assigned readings for today it is *far from over*.

The first pains of judgment, which made these strong men tremble and quake, are indeed *just the beginning*. The household of the Covenant has to *be purged* – and

⁴ The ‘time of Jacob's trouble’ is a phrase taken from Jeremiah 30:7, where God speaks through His prophet Jeremiah, telling of an intense period of testing which shall come upon the Nation of Israel. The precise message is: “***Alas! for that Day is Great, so that none is like it: it is even the Time of Jacob's Trouble, but he shall be Saved out of it.***”

purged thoroughly.

And one more thing must happen, Dear Reader. Before judgment on the Covenant Household can ever be complete and redemption accomplished *the anointed son simply must be vindicated.*

Silver = Redemption

Do you see Yosef as behaving *cruelly* toward his brothers? Do you consider the Holy One's judgment on the brothers of Yosef to be *too severe*?

Beloved, if you have problems with what Yosef did in relation to his brothers when they came seeking grain keep in mind that the Holy One's judgments - and Yosef's seeming "cruelty" - are *redemptive*, not punitive, in purpose and effect.

Do you understand what I am saying? I am saying that the Holy One was *not out to punish those who had sold Yosef into slavery*; He was instead out to *redeem* them. Why was such harsh treatment necessary if His plan was redemption? Because these men had demonstrated for over twenty years that *they wanted no part of redemption* according to the covenant formula - i.e., the ' *make t'shuvah and return to Beit-El process* that had been modeled by their father Ya'akov. Instead of making *t'shuvah* they covered up their sin and lied to their father, and spent without repentance - many times over - the silver they gotten for the brother they had sold.

The Holy One would now therefore *pursue* them and would *press* them - and indeed would seemingly *crush* them - until they were brought to the repentant condition to which they would not come voluntarily. They would indeed now have to "*kiss the son*" lest he be angry.

Prophetic Implications

As it was with our ancestors the patriarchs so it is with all of us. *Miketz*, the name of this week's parsha, means "**at the end**" or "**at the conclusion**". The events depicted in this parsha are not just *historical* - they are *prototypical*.

Events remarkably similar to these will occur again "at the end", or "at the conclusion" of history. Yosef, you see, is a **prototype** of Messiah. After Yosef's suffering Yosef was raised to the throne and was given the right to judge. So it is with Messiah. This was the heart and soul of the message of the First Century talmidim of Y'shua. See Acts 2:22-36, 3:13-23.

We too absolutely must "kiss the Son". We too must throw ourselves totally

upon His mercy.

We are the brothers who have sold Him. The silver for which we sold Him is *in our sacks* – and even now it testifies loudly against us.

The time has come for us to *fall at His feet, to call upon His Name, and to declare Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Holy One!*

Questions For Today's Study

1. Let's continue our study with a few questions:

[A] In verse 29 the Torah states that the brothers told Ya'akov "all that had happened to them". Imagine you are Yissakhar [Issachar] and rather than trust your ability to explain what happened "off the cuff" decide to write, in a letter form addressed to Ya'akov, a journal of the events which transpired on the first trip to Mitzrayim. Write this letter for Yissakhar, trying not to leave out anything.

[B] What part of the events and conversations that transpired in Mitzrayim did the brothers not mention to Ya'akov?

[C] Verse 35 says that Ya'akov and the brothers were "afraid" when they opened their sacks and found, still in their respective sacks, the silver each one had taken to purchase the provisions they had acquired. In Strong's look up the word translated as "afraid" [KJV]. Write the Hebrew word and its definition.

[D] Why do you think Ya'akov and the brothers were "afraid"? Hint: look back at verse 28.

[E] What did Ya'akov mean in verse 36 when he said the brothers had "bereaved" him? Were the brothers 'at fault' in any way in connection with the loss of Sh'mon?

[F] Which of the brothers had a proposal to make to convince Ya'akov to let them take Benjamin (the only remaining son of Rachel) go with them to Mitzrayim to 'ransom' Sh'mon? What was that proposal?

[G] What was Ya'akov's response?

2. In today's Haftarah aliyah Shlomo [Solomon] completes the building of the Temple on Mount Moriyah.

Then Shlomo said:

*"The Holy One has said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.
But I have built you a house of habitation, and a place for you to dwell in forever."*

*The king turned his face and blessed all the assembly of Yisra'el:
and all the assembly of Yisra'el stood.*

He said, "Blessed be the Holy One, the God of Yisra'el,

*who spoke with his mouth to David my father,
and has with his hands fulfilled it, saying,
Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Mitzrayim,
I chose no city out of all the tribes of Yisra'el to build a house in,
that my name might be there;
neither chose I any man to be prince over my people Yisra'el:
but I have chosen Y'rushalayim, that my name might be there;
and have chosen David to be over my people Yisra'el.*

*Now it was in the heart of David my father
to build a house for the name of the Holy One, the God of Yisra'el.
But the Holy One said to David my father,
“Whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name,
you did well that it was in your heart:
nevertheless you will not build the house;
but your son who will come forth out of your loins,
he will build the house for my name.”*

*The Holy One has performed his word that he spoke;
for I am risen up in the room of David my father,
and sit on the throne of Yisra'el, as the Holy One promised,
and have built the house for the name of the Holy One, the God of Yisra'el.*

*There have I set the ark in which is the covenant of the Holy One,
which he made with the children of Yisra'el.*

[A] Did the Holy One ever tell Shlomo (or anyone else) to build Him (or Israel) a Temple to replace the Tabernacle? Explain your answer, and give scriptural references that support your position.

[B] In verse 1 Shlomo demonstrates his knowledge of Torah by referencing a somewhat obscure verse of the Torah. What book, chapter and verse does he reference, and what was the context of what was said in that verse?

[C] Beginning in verse 4 Shlomo blesses the Holy One with the traditional “*Blessed are You . . .*” formula. List the things for which Shlomo blesses the Holy One.

[D] In the years that have transpired between yesterday’s aliyah and today’s have you noticed any change in Shlomo’s attitude toward the Holy One or toward his reign? Explain your thoughts.

3. In today’s B’rit Chadasha aliyah Shaul of Tarsus asks the Corinthian believers who worship in their homes (there were no “churches” as we know them today anywhere in Biblical times) to recall the manner in which he had brought to them the message that the Messiah promised in the Torah and by the prophets had indeed come. He reminds them:

*My speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of human wisdom,
but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.*

The message Shaul delivered was not geared to the mind, will, or emotions at all. Only the *spirit* would - or could - respond. The “flesh” - emotions, intellect, and mindset - had to *follow*, not lead. Had it been otherwise (as it often is today) it would have been *emotionally charged but spiritually bankrupt*.

Whatever **starts in the “flesh”** will never end in “the Spirit”. The *flesh* only reproduces the *flesh*. What you sow, that shall you reap. What starts in the Spirit however will not only end in the Spirit, but *will also draw the “flesh” - emotions, intellect, and mindset – along* with it, and thereby bring about a ***dramatic, lasting change***.

So as you walk out the covenant in Messiah don't *try to please people or appeal to their emotions, intellect or mindset*. Just speak the truth in love, and keep your focus on *Messiah*, not on the people around you. The **truth**, delivered without hype, emotion, or arrogance, works like *silver in a sack*.

[A] In Strong's look up the words translated in verse 4 as “speech”, “preaching” (two different things), “enticing”, “words” and “demonstration” and “power”. Write each Greek word and its meaning.

[B] Reread Genesis 42:28 and 42:35. How was the speech and preaching of Shaul similar to the silver that Yosef ordered placed in the sacks of the brothers when they returned to Kena'an?

*This day, when you find silver in your sacks,
May you know immediately what to do with it.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 75:8

*For in the hand of the Holy One there is a cup,
Full of foaming wine mixed with spices.
He pours it out.
Indeed the wicked of the eretz drink and drink it to its very dregs.*