

# the SHABBAT Talk



## MAKE A NOTE OF IT

**Friday Evening**  
**23rd December**  
 Service at 3:30pm

**Saturday Evening**  
**24th December**  
 Quiz at the Shul at 7:30pm

**Friday Evening**  
**30th December**  
 Service at 3:30pm

**Shabbat 21st January**  
 Harry Green and Jamie  
 Scott's Bar Mitzvahs

**Wednesday Evening**  
**25th January**  
 Holocaust Day showing of  
 paperclips film See Ad.

**Shabbat 28th January**  
 Alexander Reuben's Aufruf

There is **NO Cheder** this week

## Shabbat Times

**Shabbat Begins:**  
 3:39 p.m.  
**Shabbat Ends:**  
 4:50 p.m.

**Next Week:**  
**Shabbat Begins:** 3:39 p.m.  
**Shabbat Ends:** 4:50 p.m.

PARSHAT "MIKEITZ"  
 28 KISLEV 5771 - 24 DECEMBER 2011  
 FRIDAY EVENING: 7:00PM - SHABBAT MORNING: 9:00AM  
 SHABBAT CHANNUKAH \* SHABBAT MEVARCHIM TEVET

### THIS WEEK'S SEDRAH

Soncino Chumash: p252 Hertz Chumash: p155 Living Torah: p200 ArtScroll: p222  
**Haftorah:**  
 Soncino Chumash: 1187 Hertz Chumash: p990 Living Torah: p1365 ArtScroll: p1212

**Mikeitz:** Two years have passed. Pharaoh dreams that he is standing near the Nile river, and sees seven healthy cows emerge, followed by seven lean cows. The lean cows devour the healthy ones. He then dreams of seven good ears of corn growing on a single stalk. Seven parched ears swallow up the seven good ears. Pharaoh awakes and summons the interpreters of Egypt, but no one gives him the correct interpretation. The wine steward remembers Yosef (Joseph) who is in jail and tells Pharaoh. Yosef is summoned from the prison and brought before Pharaoh.



Yosef tells Pharaoh that all answers come from G-d, but interprets the dream as representing seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. He tells Pharaoh to appoint a wise man over the country to stockpile the grain during the years of plenty. Pharaoh recognises that Yosef is the most suitable person for the task and appoints him "Prime Minister" to oversee the storing of grain. Pharaoh calls Yosef Tzafnat Paneach, and gives him Osnat the daughter of Potiphar as his wife. Yosef is thirty years old at this time. Yosef inspects the entire land of Egypt and collects food for seven years. He has two sons, Menashe and Ephraim, before the onset of the famine. When the famine begins the people of Egypt come to Pharaoh asking for food. He sends them to Yosef and instructs them to do whatever he tells them. People from all over the world come to Egypt in search of food. Ya'akov sends Yosef's ten brothers, without Binyamin, to Egypt to buy grain. Yosef recognised his brothers, but they do not recognise him. Recalling his previous dreams, he accuses them of being spies and places them under arrest. After three days he lets them return home except for Shimon. He instructs them to prove that they are not spies by bringing their brother Binyamin back. The brothers realise that all of this is happening as Divine retribution for the way they treated Yosef. Yosef sends them off with bags of grain, and returns their money in the top of their sacks. They return to Ya'akov, and report on all that has happened to them in Egypt. Ya'akov initially refuses to let Binyamin leave, but as the famine gets worse he concedes that there is no alternative. Yehuda (Judah) undertakes to guarantee Binyamin's safety, and Ya'akov lets them leave. They return to Yosef bearing gifts, and present Binyamin before him. Yosef invites them all to dine with him, and releases Shimon from jail. Yosef is

overcome with emotion and is forced to leave the room. He returns and personally serves them food. He again instructs his overseer to fill each of their sacks with food, and return their money at the tops of the sacks. He also places his silver chalice in Binyamin's pack. After the brothers have departed, Yosef sends the overseer after them and accuses them of stealing his chalice. When it is found in Binyamin's pack the brothers tear their garments in grief and throw themselves on the ground before Yosef. They offer themselves as slaves on the condition that Binyamin be set free, but Yosef demands that Binyamin alone be kept as a slave.



**This week's Haftorah** - relates to the theme of Shabbos Chanukah.

At the end of the Babylonian exile, nine years before the story of Purim (3390-371 b.c.e.), 40,000 Jews, led by Zerubavel and Yehoshua the Kohen Gadol (High Priest), returned to Israel. They began to rebuild the Bais Hamikdash, (Temple) but Cyrus withdrew his permission and the construction was halted. Following the story of Purim and a prophecy from Chagai, the rebuilding resumed 18 years later (3408-353).

This week's Haftorah is the prophecy of Zechariah which preceded the inauguration of the second Bais Hamikdash. It describes the status of the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) and the people as seemingly unfit to carry out the service. Hashem (G-d) relates to Zechariah that in fact, Yehoshua and the nation are ready to resume full service in the Bais Hamikdash. The prophecy includes a vision of the Menorah with a continuous supply of olive oil, reminiscent of the miracle of Chanukah.

## The Essential Attributes of Being a Visionary by Rabbi Yissacher Frand

When Pharaoh's could not find a satisfactory interpretation for his dreams, Yosef was called from prison to interpret them. Not only was Yosef able to interpret the dreams, but he gave Pharaoh advice as well: "Now let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh proceed and let him appoint overseers in the land, and he shall prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. And let them gather all the food of those approaching good years; let them amass grain under Pharaoh's custody for food in the cities, and safeguard it. The food will be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine which will come to pass in the land of Egypt, so that the land will not perish in the famine." [Bereshis 41:33-36]. Pharaoh and all his servants were very pleased with Yosef's advice and Pharaoh appointed Yosef to fill the role of the "discerning and wise man" in his advice scenario. He became the second most powerful person in Egypt ("Only by the throne shall I outrank you.")

In effect, Pharaoh created a new department of government (Food supply security) at that time. Normally, to run such a major government agency, one looks for an extremely organised person with bureaucratic skills. One would think that one would look for a person who has experience in agriculture, food storage, and food distribution. However, there is no indication that Pharaoh took any of these qualifications into consideration – either in Yosef's advice or in Pharaoh's appointment. The primary quality emphasised in the Torah's description of this new cabinet position is that it required a person who was extremely wise – ish navon v'chochom.

In Biblical and Rabbinic vocabulary, the words navon and chochom have specific implications. A chochom is not only one with a high IQ, but is one who foresees the future [Tamid 32b]. Likewise, a navon is not only a wise person but is specifically one who understands one thing from another (mayvin davar m'toch davar) [Chagiga 14a]. Yosef called for a person who had tremendous insight and tremendous foresight. Why was such a person necessary?

In times of plenty, it is extremely difficult for people to begin imagining what it is like not to have food. Thank G-d, in this country we have never experienced famine. I recently read a memoir of someone who lived in Vilna who recalled a famine that claimed the lives of 50 people a day. We cannot imagine such a thing!

The truth is that we do not need to experience famine to relate to this concept. At the end of the nineteen nineties, there was a tremendous economic boom. All of these high tech industries and "dot coms" sprouted up. Everyone thought that this was "the new economy" and that there would be no end to this prosperity. People were making so much money that they did not know what to do with it. The luxury car dealers in New York City could not wait until December because that was when Wall Street gave out their bonuses and people were receiving seven figure bonuses. What happens to a 27-year-old person working on Wall Street who gets a million dollar bonus (on top of the good salary that he has been making all year)? What does he do? He goes down to his Lexus dealer or his BMW dealer and he puts down 10 or 20 thousand pounds on a car. It means nothing to him. People thought that there would be no end to the dot com boom and to the soaring stock market. People could simply not relate to what it would be like to

be out of work. Last year he received a million pound bonus and this year he should be concerned about having a job?

When the 7 years of plenty were occurring, with bounty crops year after year, people could not imagine that a famine would ever occur. During those years of plenty, the most important thing was for a leader to get people to pick up the scraps of grain that would have been discarded. Just as the person who receives the million-dollar bonus does not concern himself regarding the following year's livelihood, the farmers laughed at Yosef's government collectors, who were busy picking up the scraps of those bumper crops.

The Chacham – who foresaw the future – was able to imagine that a time would come when there would be no crops and the Navon saw the implications of that future situation such that every little stalk of grain would become valuable. They needed a person who would inspire the people and foster a mentality within them that the good times WOULD eventually end and that the bad times were just around the corner.

We can view this phenomenon as a parable for the dichotomy between this world and the next. As long as we are here and can fulfil mitzvos with very little cost or effort, people do not appreciate the time that they have in this world. Especially when people are young, it is hard for them to imagine that there will come a time when they will not be able to do this.

There is a famous story told of the Gaon of Vilna. On his deathbed, he picked up his tzitsis and noted that in this world, for a few rubles one could buy a garment with fringes and fulfill a great Biblical commandment. "I am soon going to a place now where this will no longer be possible."

We are living in the "years of plenty" in terms of spiritual opportunities. We do not realise that there will come "years of famine" as well, regarding opportunities to do mitzvos and earn spiritual reward. Putting this into more of a micro-context – I teach boys in Yeshiva in their late teens and early twenties. They often treat their opportunity to learn and study Torah very casually. "We have plenty of time to learn all that we want to learn." These years pass by all too soon. That golden opportunity to learn a whole day will not return. It quickly slips away. One must be an "ish chochom v'navon" to appreciate what one has – what one has while he is in Yeshiva and what he has while living in this world.

Rav Eliyahu Lopian gave a parable of a king who fought an extended war. He was unable to win the war until finally he appointed a new general who was able to turn the tide of battle and won the war. The king was extremely appreciative and in recognition of the accomplishment of the general, he offered to allow the general to go into the king's treasury house and spend an hour there taking out whatever he wanted for himself.

The general was thrilled. He prepared a large sack and waited anxiously for the day when the king would allow him to enter the vault where the king's wealth was stored. In the meantime, the king regretted his decision. While the king did not want to renege on his promise, on the other hand, he did not want to sit by and let the general clean out his most valued possessions. The king's advisors gave him a plan. The general had a passion for good music. The advisors told the king to place the greatest musicians in the country in the vault and have them play the world's most beautiful compositions. This would distract the general from despoiling the king's treasury.

Sure enough the plan worked. The music of the orchestra so mesmerised the general that each time the general told himself that he should be filling his bag instead of listening to the music, the musicians began a more dramatic composition. The general became paralysed and fixated with the music. By the time the general realised that he was losing the opportunity of a lifetime, the hour of opportunity had passed. He wound up with a few small items, but lost all that potential for riches because of his distraction with the orchestra.

Rav Eliyahu Lopian said this parable refers to this world. HaShem [G-d] puts us in this world and tells us to "grab the jewels", i.e. – do the mitzvos. However, at the same time, HaShem gives us all of the familiar distractions of life – both valid and invalid distractions. We become fixated with these distractions. There are times when we wake up and say, "Hey, life is passing us by" and then we are once again distracted with something else! One day, someone taps us on the shoulder and says, "It is time to leave this world." We look back and bemoan the fact that we have missed our opportunity of mining this world for the spiritual treasures that were available to us. We leave the world empty handed or at best, we leave with our sacks half full.

When we have it so good, when the mitzvos are just there for our taking, it is hard to imagine that there will come a time that they will not be there anymore. That is why we need to have the attributes of ish chochom v'navon. We need to foresee the future and take the proper implications from that vision.

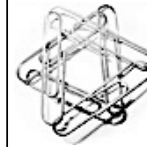
Something to think about.... Shabbat Shalom

#### THOSE OBSERVING YAHRZEIT IN THE COMING WEEK:

- 28 Kislev [24 Dec.] Mr Maurice Selwyn for his mother ה"ע Sheina bas Aaron  
Mrs Sandra Peters for her mother ה"ע
- 29 Kislev [25 Dec.] Mr Jeffrey Witzendorf for his father ה"ע Shmuel ben Elimelech HaLevi  
Mrs Millicent Newman for her mother ה"ע Sarah Bas Mordecai Berel  
Mrs Jeanne Diamond for her father ה"ע Avraham ben Yosef
- 4 Tevet [30 Dec.] Mr Mark Levy for his father ה"ע Moshe ben Mordecai HaLevi  
Mr Norman Pushkin for his father ה"ע Yehuda ben Mordecai

PLEASE HELP PERPETUATE AND RESPECT THE MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES BY ENSURING THAT KADDISH IS SAID FOR THEM ON THE APPROPRIATE DATE AND ON THE SHABBAT PRECEDING THE YAHRZEIT.

## Paper Clips



It began as a lesson  
about prejudice...  
What happened next  
was a **MIRACLE**

Lest we forget ... to mark Holocaust Day  
- an amazing movie!

Loughton Synagogue

Wednesday 25th January 8pm

£3—Refreshments will be served

Reserve tickets at 0208 508 0303 or

Email: [shirlylane@yahoo.com](mailto:shirlylane@yahoo.com)



## Join us for an in depth parsha shiur

Every Thursday evening at 8:pm Rabbi Aronovitz will give an interactive, contemporary and in-depth study on the week's parsha.

3 Alderton Mews

**No experience necessary!**  
Commencing 12 January 2012

### Shiurim

Discuss - Learn - Grow

@ 8 p.m.

@ Dennis & Shelley Posner 67 Church Lane  
How are Rabbis trained - what really happens in Yeshiva?

16 January 2012

The Written Word & The Jewish Library - Torah, Mishna, Talmud, Medrash and Shulchan Aruch - What are they?

14 February 2012

Zionism and the rabbis why were some pro and others anti?

28 February 2012

See you there **BRING A FRIEND**

## Children's Service @ Loughton!

Starting Shabbat 8 January, and subsequently on the first Shabbat of each month, there will be a children's Service on Shabbat Morning

10:30am - 11:30am.

Followed by a sweets kiddush (and cholent for the adults!)

**KIDDIES DAVENING - FUN - GAMES - ACTIVITIES**

### Security Rota:

23/12/2011 Friday

Adam Waldman  
Simon Schaffer

24/12/2011 Saturday

Paul Joseph  
Gary Rosenbaum

30/12/2011 Friday

Danny Prever  
Simon Raine

31/12/2011 Saturday

Irving Austin  
Martin Bradley