



ב"ד - ל' בכסלו תשפ"ג December 18 - 24, 2022



## קַה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ Pharaoh has two dreams that he can't understand.
- ◆ Pharaoh's cupbearer remembers Yosef and recommends him to interpret the dreams. Pharaoh sends for Yosef, who says that God is sending a message that there will be seven years with plenty of food followed by seven years of famine.
- ◆ Yosef advises Pharaoh to store food during the years of plenty. Pharaoh appoints Yosef as his most powerful advisor.
- ◆ Seven years later, a famine begins. Yaakov sends his sons to מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt) to buy food, but he does not send Binyamin.
- ◆ Yosef recognizes his brothers, but they do not recognize him. Yosef accuses them of being spies, imprisons Shimon, and insists that the others return with Binyamin.
- ◆ Yaakov first refuses to let Binyamin go to Mitzrayim. When Yaakov finally allows him to go, he's still nervous about losing him like he lost Yosef.
- ◆ The brothers go back to Mitzrayim with Binyamin.
- ◆ When Yosef sees Binyamin, he leaves the room to cry. But he still doesn't tell his brothers who he is.
- ◆ Yosef gives the brothers the food they came to purchase. But he secretly has his silver goblet placed in Binyamin's sack. When the goblet is discovered, Yosef accuses Binyamin of stealing from him and says Binyamin should stay behind as his slave.





## פֶּשֶׁט הַפְּסוּקִים • Understanding the Verses

Before or after Shabbat,  
scan to listen to a  
discussion of these pesukim!  
The Mikeitz episode of  
TORAH TIME  
will be live on  
December 19, 2022.



Yosef has become a very important person in מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt). He's in charge of selling food from Pharaoh's storehouses.

Back in כְּנָעַן (Canaan), the people are suffering from famine. Yaakov sends his sons from Canaan to Mitzrayim to buy food. Here's what happens when they arrive:

### Bereishit 42:8-9

Yosef recognized his brothers, but they didn't recognize him.

Yosef remembered the dreams he had dreamt about them, and he said to them, "You are spies. You have come to see the land look bad."

### בראשית מב:ח-ט

וַיִּבֶר יוֹסֵף אֶת אָחָיו  
וַיֹּאמֶר לָא הִבְרָהוּ:

וַיִּזְכֹּר יוֹסֵף אֶת הַחֲלֻמוֹת אֲשֶׁר חָלַם לָהֶם  
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מְרֻגְלִים אַתֶּם  
לְרֹאוֹת אֶת עֲרֹת הָאָרֶץ בְּאַתְּם:

- What do you notice? What sticks out to you?
- Why do you think Yosef is able to recognize his brothers, but they can't recognize him?
- Why is it important that Yosef remembers his dreams? What might he have been remembering about them? How does that connect to what Yosef says next?
- If Yosef recognizes his brothers and knows they aren't spies, what's his goal when he accuses them? What do you think he was trying to accomplish? If you could talk to Yosef right now, what do you think he would tell you?





## מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash



For a really long time, Yaakov absolutely refused to send Binyamin to מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt). What made him finally change his mind?

Bzzzz  
A lot of midrashim are **bugged** by something unusual in the Torah text

### Midrash Hagadol

Once, two pious people set sail on their way to do a mitzvah. A storm threatened to sink their boat.

### מדרש הגדול

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּשׁוּנֵי חֲסִידִים שֶׁפָּרְשׁוּ בַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל לְדַבֵּר מַצְוָה, עָמַד עֲלֵיהֶם נְחֹשׁוֹל בַּיָּם וּבְקֶשׁ לְטַבְעָם.

לִיחַ בֵּישׁ מִן דָּא.

Nothing could be worse than this.

אֵיחַ בֵּישׁ רַב מִן דָּא!

Yes, there is something even worse than this.

אָנוּ עַל שַׁעַרֵי מִיתָה,  
וְאֵיחַ לָךְ בֵּישׁ מִן הַדָּא?

Here we are at the gates of death, and you know something worse than this?

הֵן!

Yes!

וְאֵיזָה זֶה?

What?

זֶה יוֹם שֶׁבְּנֵנוֹ אֹמֵר לוֹ: תֵּן לִי פֶת וְאֵינְךָ לוֹ מָה יִתֶּן לוֹ.

It's the day your child says to you, give me something to eat, and you don't have anything to give them.

The proof is from Yaakov. As long as they had food at home he wouldn't let Binyanim go to Mitzrayim. But once they ran out, Yaakov said: "Take your brother too..." and he prayed for them, "May El Shaddai give you mercy..."

תַּדַּע לָךְ הָרִי יַעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ, כָּל זְמַן  
שֶׁהָיְתָה קֶפֶה מִלֶּאֱהָ פֶת הָיָה לוֹעֵס  
וְאוֹמֵר: לֹא יֵרֵד בְּנֵי עִמְכֶם. בֵּינָן  
דִּחְסַלְתָּ אָמַר: "וְאֵת אַחֵיכֶם קָחוּ"  
וְהִתְחִיל מִתְפַּלֵּל עֲלֵיהֶם: "וְאֵ-ל שַׁדַּי  
יִתֵּן לָכֶם רַחֲמִים..."

Our midrash suggests that Yaakov might have let himself be hungry for longer. But once his own children were experiencing hunger, he was in the worst possible situation. So he changed his mind and let Binyamin go.

- ◆ Why do you think a situation of not having enough food to give to children can be worse than a situation of being in great danger? What does that say about how we're supposed to look at our own suffering as compared to someone else's suffering?
- ◆ Can you think of things that you are willing to tolerate yourself, but you wouldn't want your friends or family to experience?



## פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

Yosef's brothers are dismayed after the Egyptian ruler (whom they don't know is Yosef!) treats them harshly. They say to each other:

### Bereishit 42:21

We are guilty because of what we did to our brother. We saw his pain when he begged us for help, but we didn't listen. This is the reason we're having this problem now.

### בראשית מב:כא

אָבָל אֲשָׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל אָחֵינוּ  
אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ  
בְּהִתְחַנְּנוּ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ  
עַל כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת:



Send us your thoughts or questions from the parashah!  
 We'll write back to you, and some will get published in future issues of Devash.  
 Write to us at [devash@hadar.org](mailto:devash@hadar.org)

The brothers are remembering the time when they put Yosef into a pit. Then he was sold as a slave and ended up in Egypt. Our פְּרָשָׁנִים (parshanim, commentators) wonder: **Why do the brothers only emphasize the part where they ignore Yosef's pain? Why don't they mention the crime of selling him into slavery as the reason they could now be having this problem?**

**Ramban (Spain, 800 years ago)**

They thought their cruelty made them deserve punishment even more than the act of selling Yosef. Because their own brother—their flesh and blood!—begged for help, but they did not show mercy.

**רמב"ן**

חֲשָׁבוּ לָהֶם הָאֲכֻזָּרִיּוֹת לְעֵנֶשׁ  
 גְּדוֹל יוֹתֵר מִן הַמְכִירָה, כִּי  
 הָיָה אֲחִיהֶם בְּשָׂרָם מִתְחַנֵּן  
 וּמְתַנַּפֵּל לְפָנֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִרְחָמוּ.



- ◆ Can you imagine how afraid Yosef might have been in the pit, and how he might have begged his brothers for help? What was extra cruel about how the brothers did not listen to those cries?
- ◆ In what way might their own inner cruelty of having no mercy for their brother be even worse than the hurtful action of putting him into the pit in the first place?
- ◆ What do you think is worse - doing an act that causes pain to another person, or not really feeling bad about it afterward?

**Rabbeinu Bahaye (Spain, 700 years ago)**

This is evidence for the opinion that the brothers didn't sell Yosef. If they had sold him, they surely would have said here, "We are guilty for selling our brother!"

**רבנו בחיי**

זֶה יוֹרָה כְּדַעַת הַסּוֹבְרִים שֶׁלֹּא מְכָרוּהוּ  
 אֲחִיו מְעוֹלָם, שֶׁאֵלּוּ בֶן הָיָה לָהֶם לוֹמֵר  
 אֲבָל אֲשָׁמִים אֲנַחְנוּ עַל אֲשֶׁר מְכָרְנוּ  
 אֶת אֲחִינוּ.

Rabbeinu Bahaye thinks that the brothers' words in our pasuk can help us better understand what happened back at the pit when Yosef was sold. In that story, it's not totally clear who sold Yosef.

- ◆ Look it up! In Bereishit 37:26-28, who seems to take Yosef out of the pit? Who seems to sell him? What are the possibilities?
- ◆ What surprises you about the way Rabbeinu Bahaye understands this story? Does it change the way you view the characters?



## שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's Haftarah.**

**aliyot:**  
1) Bereishit 41:1 to 41:14  
2) 41:15 to 41:38  
3) 41:39 to 41:52  
4) 41:53 to 42:18  
5) 42:19 to 43:15  
6) 43:16 to 43:29  
7) 43:30 to 44:17  
**haftarah for Hanukkah:**  
Zekhariah 2:14 to 4:7



1 In this aliyah, who mentions his own sin?

3 What is described as being so much that it was impossible to measure, like the dust of the earth?

5 How much money did the brothers take the second time they went to Egypt?

7 What does Yosef say about how he uses his silver goblet?

9 How many times does the Torah tell us that Yosef's brothers bow to him? When?

2 When Pharaoh describes the dream with the cows, what detail does he include that does not appear in the previous aliyah, when we first hear about this dream?

4 How many times does the Torah mention that Yosef recognized his brothers?

6 When Yosef finally sees Binyamin, he asks: "Is that your youngest brother whom you told me about?" Who answers Yosef's question?

8 What makes Yosef cry in this parashah?



\* Look for the answers on page 12!

To subscribe to future issues or for free downloads, visit: [hadar.org/devash](http://hadar.org/devash)



For support teaching this and other texts in your school, check out PoP! [hadar.org/pop](http://hadar.org/pop)

10 **From the Haftarah:** In this message from God, are חַיִּיל (hayyil, power) and כֹּחַ (ko'ah, strength) considered to be goals to strive for?



## רָגַעַ שָׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

### Bereishit 41:14

Pharaoh sent for Yosef, and **he was rushed** from prison. He had his hair cut and changed his clothes, and he appeared before Pharaoh.

### בראשית מא:יד

וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֵהוּ מִן הַבּוֹר וַיַּגְלַח וַיַּחַלֵּף שְׂמֹלְתוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֶל פַּרְעֹה:

#### לְהָרִיצַת (שׁוֹרֵשׁ ר.ו.צ)

- ◆ To make someone run
- ◆ To run a program (leharitz)

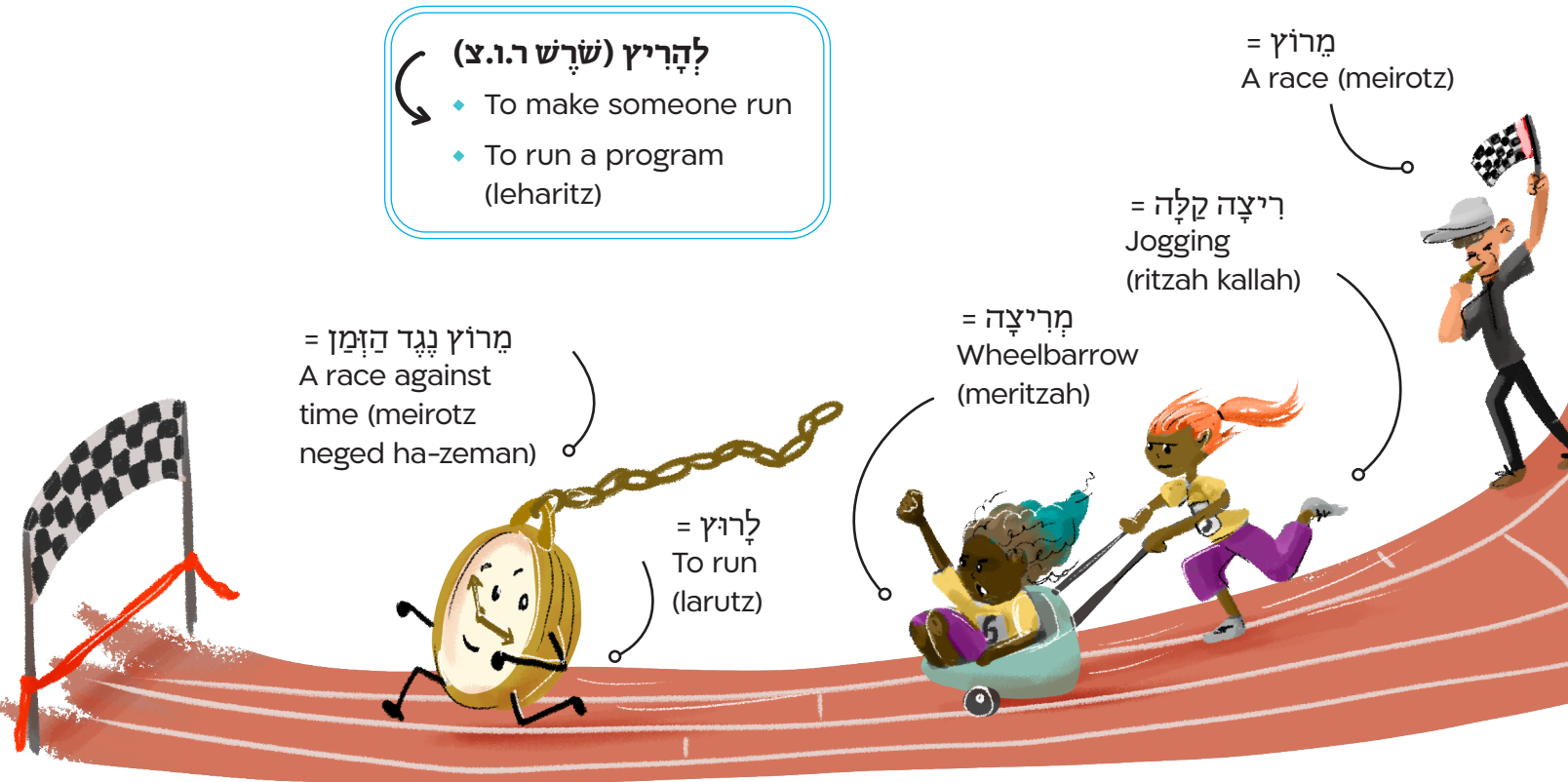
מְרוֹץ =  
A race (meirotz)

רִיצָה קְלָה =  
Jogging  
(ritzah kallah)

מְרִיצָה =  
Wheelbarrow  
(meritzah)

מְרוֹץ נֶגְדַת הַזְּמַן =  
A race against  
time (meirotz  
neged ha-zeman)

לָרוֹץ =  
To run  
(larutz)



### Find the Word!

Who was so eager to welcome guests that he ran over to invite them in? Look at Bereishit 18:1-7. How many times can you find this שָׁרַשׁ (shoresh, root) in these pesukim?



## תְּפִלָּה • Prayer in the Parashah

On Hanukkah, we light candles each night, and this reminds us of the miracle of the little jar of oil. The Talmud (Bavli Shabbat 21b) describes how the Jews found this little jug in the otherwise defiled Temple, used it to light the Menorah, and the oil lasted for eight days!



We also say a special tefillah on Hanukkah, called Al Ha-Nissim. It's inserted in the Amidah and in Birkat Ha-Mazon.

As you read it, consider: **What miracles does Al Ha-Nissim describe?**

We thank you for the miracles, redemption, mighty deeds, saving acts, and wars that You waged for our ancestors in these days, at this season.

In the days of Mattityahu, son of Yohanan the High Priest, and his sons, wicked Greece threatened Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah, and to force them to leave Your rules.

In Your amazing mercy, You rose up for them in their time of trouble; You pleaded their cause, You judged their case, You avenged their wrong; You handed over the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the arrogant into the hands of Torah learners.

You made Yourself a great and holy name in Your world, and for Your people Israel You worked

a great deliverance and redemption.

After this, Your children came into Your house, cleaned Your temple, purified Your sanctuary, lit candles in Your holy courts, and established these eight days of Hanukkah to thank and to praise Your great name.

עַל הַנִּסִּים וְעַל הַפְּרָקָן וְעַל  
הַגְּבוּרוֹת וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת  
וְעַל הַמַּלְחָמוֹת שְׁעָשִׂיתָ  
לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנָן  
הַזֶּה.

בַּיָּמִים מִתְתַּיְהוּ בֶן יוֹחָנָן  
בְּהֵן גְּדוֹל חֲשׂמוֹנָאִי וּבְנָיו  
בְּשַׁעֲמֻדָּה מַלְכוּת יוֹן הַרְשָׁעָה  
עַל עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁכִּיחַם  
מִתּוֹרָתְךָ וּלְהַעֲבִירם מִחֻקֵּי  
רְצוֹנְךָ.

וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים עָמַדְתָּ  
לָהֶם בַּעַת צָרָתָם רַבָּתָ אֶת  
רִיבָם וְדָנַתָּ אֶת דֵּינָם נִקְמַתָּ  
אֶת נִקְמָתָם מִסָּרֶת גְּבוּרִים  
בְּיַד חֲלָשִׁים וְרַבִּים בְּיַד  
מַעֲטִים וְטַמְאִים בְּיַד טְהוֹרִים  
וְרָשָׁעִים בְּיַד צַדִּיקִים וְזָדִים  
בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תוֹרָתְךָ.

וְלָךְ עָשִׂיתָ שֵׁם גְּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ  
בְּעוֹלָמְךָ וּלְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
עָשִׂיתָ תְּשׁוּעָה גְּדוֹלָה וּפְרָקָן  
בְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.

וְאַחַר כֵּן בָּאוּ בְּנֵיךָ לְדַבֵּר  
בֵּיתְךָ וּפְנּוּ אֶת  
הַיְכָלְךָ וְטָהְרוּ  
אֶת מִקְדָּשְׁךָ  
וְהִדְלִיקוּ נְרוֹת  
בְּחִצְרוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ  
וְקָבְעוּ שְׂמוֹנַת יָמִים  
חֲנֻכָּה אֵלֶיךָ  
לְהוֹדוֹת  
וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ  
הַגְּדוֹל.







## דְּקָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

**Debate: Yosef should have reached out to his family sooner to let them know he was alive and well in Mitzrayim.**

Yaakov is clearly devastated over his belief that Yosef has died (Bereishit 42:36-38). And the brothers are put through quite an ordeal thinking the person they're dealing with is an Egyptian ruler, and not Yosef!

### How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



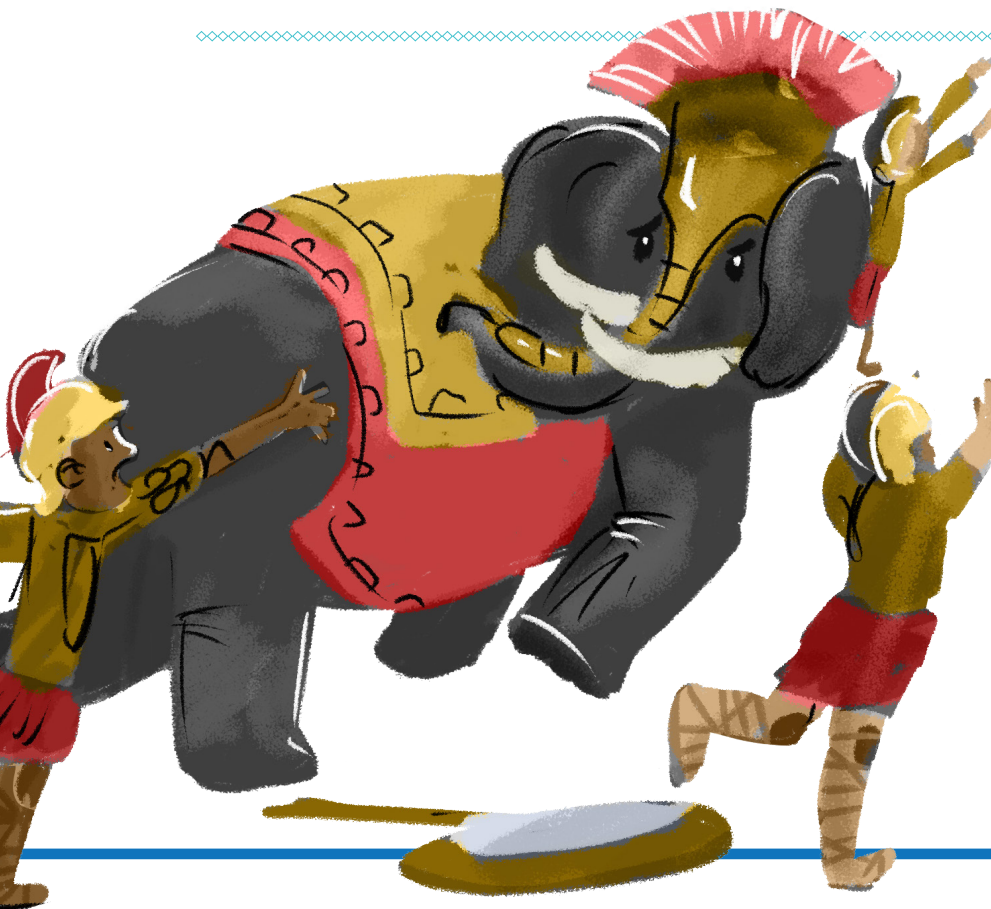
### Agree!

- ◆ Yosef finally wasn't a slave anymore. Now that he had the ability to reach out, he should have done that.
- ◆ His family missed him!

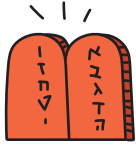


### Disagree!

- ◆ Yosef didn't know what they were thinking. All he knew is that he was sold into slavery. That sounds a lot like they didn't want anything to do with him anymore.
- ◆ Maybe Yosef needed to make his dreams come true, or make sure Binyamin was safe.
- ◆ They didn't have cell phones or email back then!



- ◆ Al Ha-Nissim focuses on the miracle of the Jews' military victory against the Greek army. How is this miracle different from the miracle of the jug of oil?
- ◆ What's God's role in each of these miracles? What's the role of humans?
- ◆ Do you think one is a greater miracle than the other? Why?
- ◆ Which kind of miracle would you more like to see in the world today?



## הַלְכָּה • Halakhah



Learn one way  
the parashah  
practically impacts  
our lives

Why do we add one Hanukkah candle each night of the holiday?

Actually, the Talmud records two different opinions about how many candles to light each night of Hanukkah:

- ◆ Beit Shammai say to start with eight candles on the first night and then decrease one candle per night.
- ◆ Beit Hillel say to start with one candle on the first night and then increase one candle per night.

There are different explanations given for each position. For example:



### Talmud Bavli Shabbat 21b

Beit Shammai's reason was to be like the sacrifices on Sukkot (which were offered in decreasing numbers, one less on each day of the holiday). And the reason for Beit Hillel was that we go up in holiness, not down.

### תלמוד בבלי שבת דף כא עמוד ב

טַעֲמָא דְבֵית שְׁמַאי כְּנֶגְדַּי פְּרִי הַחֵג,  
וְטַעֲמָא דְבֵית הִלֵּל דִּמְעַלִּין בְּקֹדֶשׁ  
וְאִין מוֹרִידִין.

The explanation of Beit Hillel's position is a principle that comes up in a bunch of other areas of halakhah.

Here are some other places you can see this idea in halakhah:

- ◆ Head tefillin are considered more kodesh (holy) than arm tefillin, and for that reason the correct way to put on tefillin is to start with the arm part and then place the head part. (See Kitzur Shulhan Arukh 10:18.)



- ◆ A mishnah (Megillah 3:1) lists the special objects in a shul, organized from least to most kodesh:



- ◆ The shul building
- ◆ The אָרוֹן (aron, ark)
- ◆ Coverings that go over scrolls
- ◆ Scrolls of נְבִיאִים (Nevi'im, Prophets) and כְּתוּבִים (Ketuvim, Writings)
- ◆ סִפְרֵי תוֹרָה (Sifrei Torah, Torah scrolls)

If a community has to sell one of these things, they should use the funds to buy something **more** kodesh, because of the principle of ma'alim ba-kodesh. (See Rashi on Megillah 25b.)



- ◆ A person who served as a substitute כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל (kohen gadol, high priest) would still retain the special קְדוּשָׁה (kedushah, holiness) of that role, even when the official kohen gadol came back to work. The substitute went up in holiness, so he can't come back down!



- ◆ Can you think of ways to integrate ma'alim ba-kodesh ve-ein moridin into your religious life? Are there practices you do that you can build on, or add to, to make sure that you're always heading upwards?

## Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. Pharaoh's cupbearer (41:9)
2. That after the skinny cows ate the fat cows, the skinny ones were unchanged, and looked just as bad as ever (41:21)
3. The food that Yosef collected (41:49)
4. Twice (42:7 and 42:8)
5. Double the amount they first brought (43:15)
6. Nobody! (43:29)
7. For drinking and for divination (a kind of magical practice) (44:5)
8. Overhearing his brothers talking about their guilt for mistreating him (42:24) and seeing Binyamin together with the other brothers on their second trip to Mitzrayim (43:30) (Stay tuned for more crying next week in Vayigash!)
9. Four times: (1) When they come to Mitzrayim for food for the first time (42:6); (2) when they arrive in Mitzrayim the second time and present their gifts to Yosef (43:26); (3) when they tell Yosef that their father is alive (43:28); (4) when they are brought back to Yosef after the goblet is found in Binyamin's bag (44:14)
10. No. God tells Zerubavel (a leader in the Jewish community) that hayil and ko'ah are not what matter; God's spirit is most important. (Zekhariah 4:6)



## בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

Did you notice Yosef does a lot of things to blend in with the Egyptians? He shaves when he is brought before Pharaoh (Egyptian men were usually clean-shaven). He takes on an Egyptian name: Tzafnat Paneiah. And he clearly speaks Egyptian, because he posts a translator between himself and his brothers (before they know it's him).

Our Rabbis recognized that sometimes it can be important to fit in with the culture around us. Here is one tradition about Rabbi [Yehudah Hanasi]:

### Talmud Yerushalmi Shabbat 6:1

They permitted those in the house of Rabbi to do three things: to look in a mirror, to get Greek-style haircuts, and to teach their children Greek, because they had to interact with the government.

### תלמוד ירושלמי שבת ו:א

שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הִתִּירוּ לְבֵית רַבִּי  
שָׂיְהוּ רֹאִין בְּמַרְאֵהוּ, וְשָׂיְהוּ  
מְסַפְרִין קוּמִי, וְשָׂיְהוּ מְלַמְדִין אֶת  
בְּנֵיהֶן יְהוּדִית, שְׂהִיו זְקוּקִין לְמַלְכוּת.

Sounds a lot like Yosef, right? Rabbi's family was very politically involved, and they felt they had to blend in with their appearance and speak the language of the day (Greek) in order to do their job.

But our Sages were also nervous that if you do too many things to fit in, there's a risk you might lose what's special about you! In fact, a midrash praises Benei Yisrael for not changing their names or their language to be like the Egyptians.

This is also a theme in the Hanukkah story. One big concern for the Maccabees were מְתִיבִינִים (mityavnim, Jewish people who tried too hard to be like the Greeks).

- Are there times that your choices make you feel different from the people around you? Are there times you do things to fit in? When is the right time for each?
- Do you think you are mostly the same as everyone around you, or mostly different? How so?
- Devash is mainly written in English, but we make sure to have tons of Hebrew. What do you think - is that a good balance? How else can we insert our Jewish individuality into our lives?

