



Daf Hashavua

4 January 2020
Shabbat ends

7 Tevet 5780
London 4.59pm
Jerusalem 5.28pm

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Vayigash ויגש

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The Fast of 10 Tevet is on Tuesday, starting in London at 6.16am and ending at 4.56pm

In loving memory of Devorah Bat Avraham



"Now there was no bread in all the earth for the famine was very severe; the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan became weary from hunger" (Bereishit 47:13).

Sidrah Summary: Vayigash

1st Aliya (Kohen) – Bereishit 44:18-30

22 years after Yosef was sold by his brothers, they now face the prospect of their father Yaakov 'losing' another one of his sons, Binyamin. Yehuda does not yet know that the viceroy of Egypt standing in front of him is actually Yosef. He approaches Yosef, recounting Yosef's demand to see Binyamin and Yaakov's reluctance to let Binyamin leave. Having already 'lost' Rachel's other son (Yosef), Yaakov did not want disaster to befall Binyamin.

2nd Aliya (Levi) – 44:31-45:7

Yehuda states that if they return without Binyamin, Yaakov will surely die. Yehuda offers to take Binyamin's place and remain as a slave to Yosef. Yosef orders everyone apart from his brothers out of the room. He reveals his identity and asks if his father is still alive. He tells his ashamed brothers not to be sad; God had sent him on this mission in order to sustain them during the famine.

3rd Aliya (Shlishi) – 45:8-18

Yosef tells the brothers to go back to Cana'an to relate to Yaakov that he (Yosef) is alive and is the viceroy of Egypt. Yaakov should come immediately to Egypt; Yosef will ensure their safety and sustenance in the remaining five years of famine. Yosef and Binyamin cry on one another's necks.

4th Aliya (Revi'i) – 45:19-27

Pharaoh instructs Yosef to give his brothers wagons. Yosef sends them back with money and provisions for the journey. He sends 20 laden donkeys for Yaakov. The brothers return home and tell Yaakov that Yosef is alive and is ruling over the land of Egypt. Initially, Yaakov does not believe them.

Question: *What money and provisions did Yosef give to Binyamin for the journey? (45:22) Answer on bottom of page 6.*

5th Aliya (Chamishi) – 45:28-46:27

Yaakov travels to Egypt, stopping at Beersheva to bring an offering. God appears to Yaakov in a night vision, allaying his fears of leaving Cana'an to go to Egypt, and promising to make his progeny into a great nation. The Torah lists the 70 members of Yaakov's household who came to Egypt.

Point to Consider: *Which person is missing from the list of 70? (see Rashi to 46:26)*

6th Aliya (Shishi) – 46:28-47:10

Yosef and Yaakov meet in the region of Goshen. Yosef falls on Yaakov's neck and cries. Along with five of his brothers, Yosef goes to inform Pharaoh of his family's arrival and tells him that they are sheep and cattle farmers. Pharaoh grants them the right to live in Goshen. Yosef brings Yaakov to meet Pharaoh. Yaakov blesses Pharaoh, who asks him his age.

7th Aliya (Shevi'i) – 47:11-27

Despite the famine in Egypt, Yosef makes sure that his family has food. The starving Egyptians give Yosef their animals in return for bread. The following year, they sell their land to Pharaoh in return for food and seed. They become serfs to Pharaoh, and are to give him one fifth of all produce from that land. Yosef fixes this as a national statute. Yaakov's family increases greatly.

Haftarah

Yechezkel prophesies that the tribes of Israel will eventually be reunited and will reject idol worship and sin. They will be ruled over by a king from the House of David.



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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“He Appeared to Him”

by Rabbi Sam Taylor, Community Rabbi, Western Marble Arch Synagogue and Young US Rabbi



After twenty-two years of separation, Yosef finally went to meet Yaakov. The Torah describes this dramatic reunion in great detail. “Yosef harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Yisrael his father; he appeared to him, fell

on his neck and wept on his neck excessively” (Bereishit 46:29).

The Ramban (1190-1274), in his commentary, raises the question of why the Torah found it necessary to inform us that Yosef “appeared to his father”. Clearly, once he went to greet him, as first described in the verse, and before Yosef cried on his father’s shoulder, they saw each another. What did the Torah intend to convey with the expression “he appeared to him”?

The Ramban explains that Jacob did not initially recognise Yosef as he had not seen him since he was a teenager. Yosef was now adorned in the attire of Egyptian royalty. The Torah therefore tells that after a few moments, “he appeared to him”, meaning that Jacob only then recognised Yosef and identified him as his son. At that point, Yaakov fell on Yosef’s shoulder and wept.

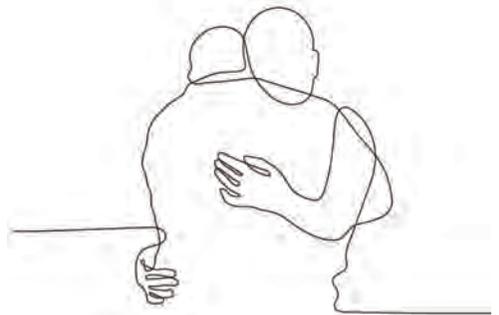
A different approach is taken by Rabbi Ovadia Seforno (1475-1550) in his commentary. The Seforno explains “he appeared to him” to mean that Yosef stepped away from his entourage so his father could see him. Before this happened, Yaakov was not able to distinguish between Yosef and the other men who were with him. According to this interpretation, the phrase should be understood as “he made himself visible.”

An intriguing explanation is offered by the previous Bostoner Rebbe, Rabbi Chaim Avraham Horowitz (1933–2016), in his commentary *Netiv Yashar*. He suggests that the phrase “he appeared to him” might be understood as an allusion to Yosef’s revelation of his true self to his father.

Ordinarily, people should not put their piety and religious devotion on public display. Genuine spirituality is not flaunted or openly broadcast; a truly righteous person conducts himself with humility, engaging with other people without condescension or detachment. However, when Yosef was reunited with his father after spending twenty-two years in Egypt, fully integrating in Egyptian society and even rising to become the country’s second-in-command, Yosef appeared to Yaakov in the fullest sense of the term. He openly displayed to Yaakov his faith, morality, devotion to his family traditions as well as his commitment to the spiritual legacy of the Patriarchs in general.

On this occasion, Yosef made no attempt to humbly keep his religious devotion private. Instead, he presented himself openly to Yaakov, reassuring his father that, despite living and integrating into a foreign culture, he remained steadfastly committed to his family’s spiritual heritage.

This understanding of the verse from the Bostoner Rebbe provides an important insight for us all. There are times when it’s important for us as a community and individually to hide our piety. However, we learn from Yosef, that there are also times where we must proudly and publically demonstrate our commitment to our faith because of the significant message that it sends to those around us.



Asarah B'Tevet

by Rebbetzen Abi Kurzer, Pinner Synagogue, Ma'ayan



I recently came face to face with a Dodo, Quagga and even a Great Auk – or at least the stuffed version in the Walter Rothschild collection in the Natural History museum at Tring, Hertfordshire. I found it

poignant that I was looking at animals that became extinct 100 years ago and I would never live or experience a world with those animals in it. That same week I saw in the news that the last Sumatran rhino died, meaning that the species is now officially extinct in Malaysia.

I wonder whether my children or grandchildren will grow up in a world where the only way to see a rhino will also be through taxidermy, while currently I can still see one in London Zoo? Just as it is hard to imagine creatures that once roamed the planet, it is possible that there exists in history a time that we just cannot comprehend as we have no context through which to navigate our thoughts about it.

In this context, it is hard to imagine a time when the focus of the Jewish world was centred around the Beit Hamikdash, the Temple in Jerusalem. It was a hub of activity, a place of prayer, social gatherings, music and news. Everything and everyone was focused on the Beit Hamikdash: people made three pilgrimages there a year at the time of the festivals and gathered there for a myriad of other reasons.

Since it is hard to imagine such a time, it is even harder for us to feel a sense of mourning at the loss of our Beit Hamikdash, nearly 2000 years ago. Asarah B'Tevet is the first of the fast days in the Jewish calendar which creates a space for us to contemplate what the Beit Hamikdash was and what we lost. It commemorates the beginning of the siege that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, laid to the city of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. It was the beginning of the end of the first Beit Hamikdash.

In parashat Vayigash we learn how Yaakov and his family went down to Egypt. The Meshech Chochma (Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, 1843–1926), notes that Yaakov was the first of our forefathers to prophesy at night and the first to prophesy outside of Israel. This was only possible as Yaakov had previously prophesied in Israel and therefore maintained a connection to the manifestation of God's presence there.

The lesson, he explains, is that even in this dark, drawn-out exile, where we have no Beit Hamikdash to connect to, we still have within us the capability to connect to God and feel His presence in our lives. We can do this by connecting to our traditions and linking ourselves to the chain of the Torah which once existed together with the Beit Hamikdash.

We cannot fully comprehend or experience an extinct species of animal and are only reminded of their existence when we are confronted with images of them in museums. So too, we have Torah, synagogues, traditions and culture which provide times such as Asarah b'Tevet to help us comprehend the grandeur of what once was. However the difference is that we wait, pray and believe every day that we will see the Beit Hamikdash rebuilt in the future, the heartbeat of the Jewish people restored.



Model of Second Temple, Israel Museum

Rabbi Meir Shapiro and the *Daf Yomi* Revolution – Part 1

by Rabbi Yoni Birnbaum, Hadley Wood Jewish Community



The date was 19th August 1923. A delegation of some 600 prominent rabbinic leaders from across Europe and America had gathered in Vienna for the first International Congress of “Agudath Yisrael”, an

umbrella body for many communities around the Jewish world. The conference had the stately dignity of a European parliament in sitting, with many delegates wearing top hats in honour of the occasion. Then, doubtless to the surprise of many of the senior rabbis present, a young 37 year-old-rabbi arose to address the plenum. His name was Rabbi Meir Shapiro, and his plan for a global project of the daily study of a page of the Talmud (*Daf Yomi*) would transform the world of Torah study.

Rabbi Shapiro was born in Shotz, Poland, in 1887. A child prodigy, he was appointed the rabbi of Galina at the age of 23. In that position, he demonstrated both his breadth and depth of learning along with stellar leadership skills, building innovative educational institutions for both teenagers and advanced scholars. He joined the leadership of Agudath Yisrael at this time, was at the forefront of efforts to rebuild Eastern European Jewry after the devastation of World War One and became a member of the Sejm, the Polish Parliament.

Perhaps his most famous institution was the renowned Yeshivat Chachmei Lublin, which opened in Lublin in 1930 at a celebration attended by thousands of people. It attracted students of the highest quality and contained both a scholarly library of over 30,000 books and a large model to scale of the Second Temple.

In this short series of articles commemorating the recent completion of the thirteenth cycle of the ‘*Daf Yomi*’ on January 4th, I would like to tell the story of Rabbi Shapiro’s idea, the rationale behind it, and the reason why it continues to grow in

popularity nearly a hundred years after it was first launched. The story is an inspirational one, not only because of the example set by Rabbi Shapiro that day, but because it demonstrates the unique potential of Torah study to unify the Jewish people.

Addressing the assembled rabbis, Rabbi Shapiro told a story from the Talmud itself (Yevamot 121a) to help explain the importance of his new study plan. The leading Talmudic sage, Rabbi Akiva, was once shipwrecked and tossed into a stormy sea. In retelling the circumstances of his rescue to his colleague, Rabbi Gamliel, he described how, “a *daf* (literally, a plank), from the ship passed by me and I clung to it. With every wave that surged over me, I held tight to the plank of wood, and in this manner, I was saved”. Rabbi Shapiro explained that in the stormy seas of the twentieth century, the Jewish people needed a ‘*daf*’ of their own to hold onto, something that they could cling to when the waves of political turbulence and secularisation threatened to engulf them. Only the *daf* of Talmud, the traditional Torah study of our people, can fulfil this role for us, he declared. It is only through uniting around the one thing which defines our people, the Torah that we will be able to remain strong and committed to our tradition.



Rabbi Meir Shapiro

Shefford – Dr Judith Grunfeld ב'ד

Dr Judith Grunfeld was the headmistress of the Jewish Secondary School in Stamford Hill in 1939, whose 450 children and staff were evacuated to Shefford and the neighbouring towns in Bedfordshire for the duration of World War Two. This latest extract from her book, comes from the Chapter "Gems in My Office".

I fondly remember some encounters in this small turquoise office of mine. One day there was a knock at the door. It was quite a manly knock. I thought I would probably have a visitor of some importance. In came a boy of eight whom I had never seen before. "I want to see the Headmistress," he said in a firm voice. I explained to him that he was speaking to the Headmistress. "I want to come to your school," he said. "Who are you?" "My name is Manfred, I don't live far from Shefford, in Henlow, just twenty minutes away by bus. I am a Jewish boy and I live in a non-Jewish house and I go to a non-Jewish school. I have heard that this is a Jewish school. I think I am entitled to come." He did not plead, he demanded.

Little boy of eight, whence did you derive so much initiative? And who tuned your heart to respond to the call of living Judaism on your own? Was it your mother when she first held her baby in her arms, somewhere in Vienna, and blessed him and said, "May God make you like Ephraim and Menasheh", princes in Egypt, who kept their identity in spite of strange surroundings? Or was it the merit of your father who prayed on the day of your *Bris Milah* in a world still free from fear that you should grow up *LeTorah, LeChuppah, u'leMa'asim Tovim*, (to a life of Torah, Chuppah and good deeds), a worthy link in the family?

One day a little girl arrived at my office. She also came from a neighbouring village, a little further away, to which she had been evacuated. She had become a pupil in a local school, but she too insisted that she wanted to throw her lot in with us rather than stay comfortably where she was billeted with her kind foster mother, as the only

Jewish child in that village. I showed her our small and dingy schoolrooms, our ramshackle accommodation. She remained determined to join us. I asked her, "Tell me, my child, why do you want to leave your kind foster-parents and your very nice local school and come to us?" and the girl of eleven, with her round childish face, eyes like cherries and dimpled cheeks, answered simply: "Because here you make *Kiddush* and *Havdalah*, don't you? I have not heard *Kiddush* and *Havdalah* for such a long time, that's why I want to come to you." (Peppy spent the following six years with us. She is now a happily married mother with a fine family in Los Angeles.)

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Answer: 300 pieces of silver and five changes of clothing.



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VAYIGASH: DO-NUT LOSE YOUR COOL!



WHEN PEOPLE FEEL TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THEIR REACTION IS OFTEN TO EITHER GET ANGRY OR GIVE IN. THIS WEEK IN THE PARASHA, YEHUDA SHOWS US THE THIRD, MOST EFFECTIVE OPTION. STAND YOUR GROUND AND BE POLITE AND RESPECTFUL.

Page Editor: Rabbi Nissey Goldmeier Writers: Shira Chalk Cartoonist: Paul Solominis

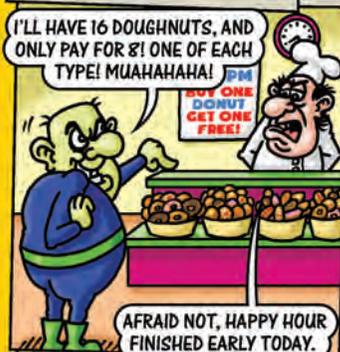


HAPPY HOUR, HERE WE COME!



DINA, THERE'S STILL TIME TO GET TO HAPPY HOUR.

YAY - DOUGHNUTS!



I'LL HAVE 16 DOUGHNUTS, AND ONLY PAY FOR 8! ONE OF EACH TYPE! MUHAHAHA!

HAPPY HOUR 4 - 5PM BUY ONE DONUT GET ONE FREE!

AFRAID NOT, HAPPY HOUR FINISHED EARLY TODAY.



HOW DARE YOU! THAT'S UNACCEPTABLE - THIEF! AAAGHHHH!

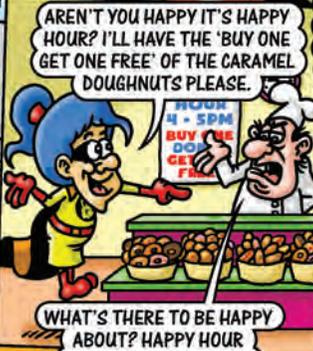


I'M HERE FOR HAPPY HOUR - SO 2 CHOCOLATE DOUGHNUTS PLEASE!

AFRAID NOT, HAPPY HOUR FINISHED EARLY TODAY.



SHAME - WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT.



AREN'T YOU HAPPY IT'S HAPPY HOUR? I'LL HAVE THE 'BUY ONE GET ONE FREE' OF THE CARAMEL DOUGHNUTS PLEASE.

WHAT'S THERE TO BE HAPPY ABOUT? HAPPY HOUR FINISHED EARLY TODAY.



EXCUSE ME SIR, BUT IT DOES SAY ON YOUR WALL THAT HAPPY HOUR IS 4 - 5PM. LOOK, IT'S ONLY 4:45PM. DO YOU THINK IT'S FAIR TO ADVERTISE ONE THING AND DO ANOTHER?

HUMPH! ALRIGHT YOU CAN HAVE YOUR FREE DOUGHNUT.

HOW WOULD YOU REACT?



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