



שבת שולחן ניצוצות

Shabbat Table Sparks

Igniting Torah Learning at the Sabbath Table

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Insights & Questions From the Parashah

“One should wear nice clothes and celebrate the arrival of Shabbat like the greeting of the king or the greeting of bride and groom. RAMA: and one should dress himself in Shabbat garments immediately after he bathes himself and this is an honor for Shabbat, and because of this, one should only bathe close to the evening [approaching Shabbat] so that he may dress himself immediately.”

Shulchan Aruch, Siman 261

Parashah Breishit Vayigash 44:18-47:27

א *G-d has made me master of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry...Gen. 45:9* As we have discussed, the primary purposes of the Egyptian exile was for the Jewish people to elevate the sparks of holiness trapped in Egypt. HaShem has chosen the Jewish people in order to elevate mankind. **Why is it healthy to stay mindful of our mission?**

ב *is my father still alive?...Gen. 45:3* Rabbeinu Bachya comments, “According to Tanchuma Vayigash 5 Joseph said to them: “did you not say: ‘this one’s brother is dead?’ I shall call upon him now and he will come to me.” Thereupon he started calling: “Joseph, son of Yaakov, come to me!” The brothers looked at each of the four corners of the room and nothing happened. Then Joseph said: “what are you looking for, I am your brother Joseph!” When the brothers heard that they lost consciousness. This is why they could not answer him. Rabbi Yochanan used this experience of Joseph’s brothers to exclaim “woe to us on the day of our death, woe to us when we will be called upon to answer for our sins.” If the brothers were so stricken when they heard Joseph reveal himself to his them, how much more will we be frightened when we stand before G-d to be judged! This is what is meant by the verse in Isaiah 10:3: “What will you do on the day of punishment, when the calamity comes from afar?” Another verse on the same theme is found in Maleachi 3:2: “But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can hold out when he appears?”” **Notice the verse in Maleachi says “the day of his coming”. What parallels do we see with the coming of Messiah?**

Psalm of The Parashah

Psalm 48

How great is HaShem! How much we should praise him. He lives upon Mount Zion in Jerusalem. What a glorious sight! See Mount Zion rising north of the city high above the plains for all to see Mount Zion, joy of all the earth, the residence of the great King. G-d himself is the defender of Jerusalem. The kings of the earth have arrived together to inspect the city. They marvel at the sight and hurry home again, afraid of what they have seen; they are filled with panic like a woman in travail! For G-d destroys the mightiest warships with a breath of wind. We have heard of the city’s glory the city of our G-d, the Commander of the armies of heaven. And now we see it for ourselves! G-d has established Jerusalem forever. HaShem, here in your Temple we meditate upon your kindness and your love. Your name is known throughout the earth, O G-d. You are praised everywhere for the salvation you have scattered throughout the world. O Jerusalem, rejoice! O people of Judah, rejoice! For G-d will see to it that you are finally treated fairly. Go, inspect the city! Walk around and count her many towers! Note her walls and tour her palaces so that you can tell your children. For this great G-d is our G-d forever and ever. He will be our guide until we die.



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א *“step closer to me! They stepped closer.”...Gen. 45:4* When Joseph saw that the brothers were frightened and were trying to retreat he told them to come closer to him in order to calm their fear. The commentaries agree that he was wanting to show them his brit in order to prove that he was, in fact, Joseph their brother. ***How is this similar to Yeshua asking Thomas to draw near to Him and see the proof of His crucifixion marks?***

ד In order to prove his identity further, Rabbi Chaim ben Attar brings down that he spoke the Lashon HaKodesh (the Holy Tongue); Hebrew. This, by itself, was not convincing as any world leader would have known multiple languages. However, the Rabbi mentions that the brothers did not recognize Joseph’s voice until he spoke Hebrew. ***How does this fit the pattern of “My sheep will know my voice”?***

ה *I will give you the best of the land of Egypt...Gen.45:18* Rabbi Munk comments to this verse, “They took with them [when they left Egypt at the Exodus] all the valuable elements of the Egyptian population - those who believed in G-d and who joined the Jewish people as proselytes. Thus they liberated all the “sacred sparks which were smoldering under the embers.” ***What was the real treasure of Egypt?***



A Mikvah Moment

“On the seventh day [of purification,] during the daytime, before sunset, she should wash herself thoroughly with warm water, especially in places where there are wrinkles, and her hidden parts. She should wash thoroughly and examine her whole body in a room where she can see and feel efficiently with her hands. There should not remain any interposing particle or any dirt on her body. She must also thoroughly cleanse and comb all of her hair with a comb, and disentangle them so that they will not be matted together or knotted. This whole process is called chafifah.”
Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Siman 160

An Inspirational Story

Keeping the Law

Disciples asked the maggid of Zlotchov: “In the Talmud we read that our Father Abraham kept all the laws. How could this be, since they had not yet been given to him?” The maggid replied, “All that is needful is to love G-d. If you are about to do something and you think it might lessen your love, then you will know it is sin. If you are about to do something and think it will increase your love, you will know that your will is in keeping with the will of G-d. That is what Abraham did.” Tales of the Hasidim page 149

Learn from All

They asked Rabbi Mikhal: “In the sayings of the Fathers we read: ‘Who is wise? He who learns from all men, as it is said, ‘From all my teachers I have gotten understanding.’ They why does it not say: ‘He who learns from every teacher?’” Rabbi Mikhal explained: “The master who pronounced these words, is intent on having it clear that we can learn not only from those whose occupation is to teach, but from every man. Even from one who is ignorant, or from one who is wicked, you can gain understanding as to how to conduct your life.” Tales of the Hasidim page 146

A Spark Of Mussar

“One needs to *ignite* one’s candle and make of it a great *torch* to enlighten the whole world.”

— Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, contributed by Batyah Gage