

A Gallery of Photos Is Available At

<http://picasaweb.google.com/jewishadventist>

Join Our Forum of Discussion on Internet

<http://groups.google.com/group/jewish-adventists>

Visit our website

<http://www.jewishadventist.org>

Shabbat Miketz

December 19, 2009

2 Tevet 5770

News

CONGREGATION BETH OHAVEY TORAH

Congregation Beth Ohavey Torah celebrated Hanukah on Sunday, December 13th, with a Hanukah party attended by a small but spirited group. Christa Reinach prepared a traditional Hanukah meal of latkes, glazed carrots, gefilte fish, salad and Challah bread, and a dessert table featuring macaroons and a host of sweets. Although it was only the second night of Hanukah, we lit the entire menorah. Alan Reinach presented the Hanukah story, under the title: "What did Jesus do in December." The congregation immediately responded by reminding us what Jesus did not do in December, which was to be born. We read John 10, where Jesus was in the Temple during Hanukah, and used the occasion for the most direct revelation of His identity as the Messiah, and His unity with the Father. We also discussed the spiritual significance of the rededication of the Temple for Seventh-day Adventists, and how we have the privilege of defending the Holy Name of God, His Character and restoring the true temple – the heavenly sanctuary, in preparation for the coming of Christ. Rachel Hyman supplied some Hanukah music; we told some Hanukah stories, and ended the evening with a spirited game of dreidel, wherein everyone "won" a gift that we had all brought for a gift exchange. A good time was had by all, as we experienced the joy of blending the social and spiritual, with some good clean fun. We are praying for Paul Lippi to be able to come from New York to lead our congregation. Rachel Hyman, a very gifted singer, is also feeling led to work with Paul in adding her music ministry to the congregation, and assisting in promoting the ministry, and doing Bible

work. We welcome your prayers for us, as we do not despise the day of small beginnings, but trust in God to bless our efforts.

CHANUKAH IN FLORIDA



Chanukah in St-Peterburg

Jeff wrote to us this email: The Chanukah services on Friday in St. Peterburg (Florida) and on Saturday in New Port Richey (Florida) went on without me (I was sick, laryngitis) and for what I have heard everyone pulled together and the services went over great. We had a good turnout of visitors and contacts in both places and everyone was blessed. I am very happy to see the maturity of the congregation to handle such an important service without me



Chanukah in New Port Richey

Overview

Miketz

Genesis 41:1-44:17

It is two years later. Pharaoh has a dream. He is unsatisfied with all attempts to interpret it. Pharaoh's wine chamberlain remembers that Yosef accurately interpreted his dream while in prison.

Yosef is released from prison and brought before Pharaoh. He interprets that soon will begin seven years of abundance followed by seven years of severe famine. He tells Pharaoh to appoint a wise person to store grain in preparation for the famine.

Pharaoh appoints him as viceroy to oversee the project. Pharaoh gives Yosef an Egyptian name, Tsafnat Panayach, and selects Osnat, Yosef's ex-master's daughter, as Yosef's wife.

Egypt becomes the granary of the world. Yosef has two sons, Menashe and Ephraim. Yaakov sends his sons to Egypt to buy food. The brothers come before Yosef and bow to him. Yosef recognizes them but they do not recognize him.

Mindful of his dreams, Yosef plays the part of an Egyptian overlord and acts harshly, accusing them of being spies.

Yosef sells them food, but keeps Shimon hostage until they bring their brother Binyamin to him as proof of their honesty. Yosef commands his servants to replace the purchasemoney in their sacks.

On the return journey, they discover the money and their hearts sink. They return to Yaakov and retell everything.

Yaakov refuses to let Binyamin go to Egypt, but when the famine grows unbearable, he accedes.

Yehuda guarantees Binyamin's safety, and the brothers go to Egypt.

Yosef welcomes the brothers lavishly as honored guests. When he sees Binyamin he rushes from the room and weeps.

Yosef instructs his servants to replace the money in the sacks, and to put his goblet inside Binyamin's sack. When the goblet is discovered, Yosef demands Binyamin become his slave as punishment. Yehuda interposes and offers himself instead, but Yosef refuses.

It Looks Bad, But Later It Is Good

When the food ran out from the brother's first trip to Egypt, Jacob wants to send them back for more food. Yehuda informs his father that they cannot return to Egypt without bringing their brother Benjamin. The man (Joseph) explicitly told them not to return without Benjamin. Then Jacob reprimands Yehuda: "...Why did you cause me bad by telling the man that you had another brother?" (Genesis 43:6).

The Midrash (Braishis Rabba 91:13) censures Jacob for evaluating the situation as bad. The Almighty said, "I am involved in having his son rule in Egypt and he says, 'Why did you cause me bad.'"

There are many events in each person's life that might appear to be negative when they first happen. However, if a person were to know the entire picture and the consequences of these events, he would readily see how the Almighty planned them for good. What is needed is patience. When an event that seems to be against your interests happens, ask yourself, "How can I be certain that this will turn out bad in the end?" The answer is that you never can. It is always premature to evaluate non-tragic life situations as bad. Acquire a "wait and see" attitude towards events. This will prevent you from much needless suffering in your life.

To internalize this principle, make a list of events that happened in your own life that at first seemed to be negative, but which you later saw were positive.

Manashe and Ephraim

Rabbi Rabbi Yissocher Frand gives a very interesting interpretation about the way Yosef named his son Menashe. Yosef had two children, whom he named Menashe and Ephraim. Regarding the naming of Menashe, the verse states: "G-d has made me forget (nashani Elohim) all my hardship and all my father's household." (Genesis 41:51) This verse should raise an immediate question in our minds: How could Yosef name his child Menashe and proclaim proudly that the Almighty helped him forget the household of the Patriarch Yaakov?

Rav Simcha Zissel in "Som Derech" explains this by citing a Gemara [Bava Metziah 85a]: When Rav Zeira went up to Eretz Yisrael from Bavel, he first fasted 100 fasts—in order that he might forget the Babylonian Talmud that he studied in Bavel. He

Yosef and His Brothers

wanted to be able to study the Jerusalem Talmud without being distracted by preconceived notions that he had acquired while studying in Babylonian Yeshivos. Rashi explains that the Talmudic methodology in Eretz Yisrael differed from that of Babylonia. In order to acquire the new style of learning that Rav Zeira was hoping to acquire in Eretz Yisrael, the best thing for him to do would be to forget the methodology of the learning he had been accustomed to until now.

Rav Simcha Zissel said that Yosef HaTzadik learned in the house of Yaakov Avinu and he learned the Torah of Yaakov Avinu. He learned his way of life and his system of values. But Yosef knew that the approach that worked in the house of Yaakov was not going to work in Egypt. If he tried that approach in this foreign land, he would be doomed.

Yaakov's home was one of sanctity and purity. The approach that worked there worked perfectly for an environment in which one was surrounded by brothers who were all sons of the same father—the Tribes of G-d. But now, Yosef said, I am in a hostile environment. I am in the decadent land of Egypt. If I try to use the same approach and lifestyle that worked for me in my father's house here in this land, it will be disastrous for me and my family.

Rabbi Rabbi Yissocher Frand continues: Therefore the righteous Yosef prayed to G-d for the insight and wisdom to adapt to his new surroundings with a new spiritual approach. In order for him to do that, he needed to forget "all my toil and all the household of my father." Yosef did not proclaim that he named his son Menashe in order to thank G-d for His help in forgetting Yaakov's household because he demeaned his father's household, but rather because he now needed a different approach. He now needed a new approach that would enable him to survive and prosper in the environment of Egypt.

However even in his new environment, Yosef did not forget the moral laws and principles he learned from his father and refuses the immoral proposition of Potiphar's wife. It is a great example for us. We have learned the Torah in different context, we could live in much more different context of our childhood, which requires from us adaptation and contextualization, but the principles of the Bible are still valid. We just need to find a new way of applying them in accordance with G-d's will.

In his deep distress Judah now drew near to the ruler and exclaimed, "Then Judah approached him, and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh" (Gen 44:18) In words of touching eloquence he described his father's grief at the loss of Joseph and his reluctance to let Benjamin come with them to Egypt, as he was the only son left of his mother, Rachel, whom Jacob so dearly loved. "Now therefore," he said, "Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, it will come about when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. Thus your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow. "For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame before my father forever.' "Now, therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. "For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest I see the evil that would overtake my father?" (Gen. 44:30-34)

Joseph was satisfied. He had seen in his brothers the fruits of true repentance. Upon hearing Judah's noble offer he gave orders that all but these men should withdraw; then, weeping aloud, he cried, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" (Gen 45:3)

His brothers stood motionless, dumb with fear and amazement. The ruler of Egypt their brother Joseph, whom they had envied and would have murdered, and finally sold as a slave! All their ill treatment of him passed before them. They remembered how they had despised his dreams and had labored to prevent their fulfillment. Yet they had acted their part in fulfilling these dreams; and now that they were completely in his power he would, no doubt, avenge the wrong that he had suffered.

Seeing their confusion, he said kindly, "Please come closer to me;" and as they came near, he continued, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. "And now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5). Feeling that they had already suffered enough for their cruelty toward him, he nobly sought to banish their fears and lessen the bitterness of their self-reproach. (PP 230-231).

WHO MUST HAVE MERCY?

The expression, “may Almighty G-d give to you mercy in front of the man” seems strange. Why did Yaakov pray the the Almighty give the brother’s mercy? Shouldn’t Yaakov have prayed that Hashem give Yoseph the attribute of mercy, saying, “may G-d let the man have mercy upon you.”

Why is Yaakov asking Hashem to bestow the brothers with mercy instead asking the Almighty to bestow the attribute of mercy upon the antagonistic Viceroy whom they would soon face?

Rav Yoseph Chaim Sonnenfeld would tell the story of the Rav of Shadik, Poland. He was newly appointed when he was warned of a particular Jew who was known as a government informer, who would strong-arm the previous Rabbi and community leaders into giving him high honors in the synagogue and into allowing him to lead the rituals.

The new Rav would stand for none of this. When the man was called for the sixth aliya the first Shabbat, he began making his way from his seat on the eastern wall of the synagogue to the bimah, when suddenly the new Rabbi began to shout. “Where do you think you are going? You are known as an informant to the government which is of the worst crimes a Jew can commit. How dare you show your face in the synagogue, let alone take a place for an aliyah? Get out of the shul! The man froze in horror. Then, before storming out of the synagogue, he shook his fist at the Rabbi while muttering, “I will teach you all a lesson.”

A few months later, the Rav who was also a mohel, was on his way to perform a brit milla (circumcision). He was a mile or so outside the city when suddenly a wagon containing the informer overtook his own coach. The informer jumped to the footrest of the wagon, and while the Rabbi’s two students recoiled in fear, the man threw himself in front of the Rabbi and began to beg for forgiveness from the entire community.

The Rabbi explained, “Shlomo Hamelech tells us, ‘Like a reflection in the water so is the face of man to man’ (Proverbs 27:19). From the moment after I admonished this fellow, all I did was try to find out about his good qualities. Then I concentrated my hardest on creating a deep love for this Jew and that love exuded from my soul. When the alleged

informer saw me today, he experienced that love that I had for him and he reciprocated. As he felt the same way about me as I did for him. He understood his terrible misdeeds of his past life and repented with a sincere heart. It is only through that love that he repented and we became endeared to each other.

Rabbi Avraham Chaim of Zlatchov explains: Yaakov explained to his children that in order for the Viceroy to have mercy upon them, they must approach him with mercy as well. Thus he says, “may Almighty G-d give to you mercy in front of the man.” Sometimes it is we who must fill our hearts with love in order to get that same love and mercy back in return.

Nobel Prize and Torah

In preparation for his appearance at the Nobel Prize presentation ceremony in Stockholm on December 10th, 2005 to receive his award, Prof. Robert J. Aumann, faced a problem he never encountered in all his years of developing the game theory which made him famous. The professor of mathematics, who is a founding member of Hebrew University’s Center for the Study of Rationality, is an Orthodox Jew who wanted to make sure that everything about his participation in the ceremony was kosher. He arranged kosher food and Shabbat provisions for the many relatives and guests he brought along. But that wasn’t enough. He began to wonder whether the formal white tie and tails outfit which all male attendees must wear was free of shatnez, the mixture of wool and linen forbidden by the Torah. A sample suit that was flown to Israel and tested in a laboratory confirmed his suspicion.

The happy ending was that a source was found in Stockholm to have the alterations made in time for Prof. Aumann to receive the Nobel Prize in truly noble attire.

EDITOR

A newsletter published by the
World Jewish Adventist Friendship Center
Under the umbrella of the
General Conference —Global Mission Office

Richard-Amram Elofer
4, Abraham Lincoln
94186 Jerusalem
Israel

Tel. +972 504 535 121
Fax +972 2625 1319
email: richard@elofers.com
web: jewishadventist.org



Haftara

1Kings 3:15-4:1

PARASHA: Yosef is well known as the one who can solve problem, and explain dreams. “And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” (Genesis 41:15-16).

HAFTARAH: This text of 1Kings 3 is about Salomon the wisest man on the earth. “God gave Solomon very great wisdom” (1Kings 4:29). Here is the most famous story about the wisdom of Solomon: “Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. The one woman said, “Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. Then this woman’s son died in the night, because she lay on him. She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne.” But the other woman said, “No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours.” The first said, “No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine.” So they argued before the king. Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead’; while the other says, ‘Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one.’” So the king said, “Bring me a sword,” and they brought a sword before the king. The king said, “Divide the living boy in two; then give half to the one, and half to the other.” But the woman whose son was alive said to the king—because compassion for her son burned within her—“Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!” The other said, “It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.” Then the king responded: “Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.” All Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice (1Kings 3:16-28).

Besorat Yeshua

Mark 13:5-17

PARASHA: Yosef announce to Pharaoh what will be the future. Years of abundance and years of famine. “Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one and the same; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, as are the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind. They are seven years of famine. It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do.” (Genesis 41:25-28).

BESORAH: Yeshua is the one who is full of wisdom and who is able to reveal the future. He announces to his disciples what will be the signs of his coming back ““Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs. “As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. , ” (Mark 13:5-13)

The description of our world is exactly what Yeshua announced, earthquake, war, lack of love and the good news is now spread all over the world. Yeshua’ prophecy is true and will be, exactly like the prophecy of Yosef was true.

