



**#10 Miketz Gen 41:1-44:17
2023
by Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed

Moshe – Moses

Shaul – Paul

Shlomo – Solomon

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Y'hudah – Judah

Yochanan – John

Yosef – Joseph

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Miketz – 10th Torah portion

The portion for this week is Miketz and means, "at the end of." The portion Miketz begins with Pharaoh having two dreams that were given to him from God.

I would like to begin today by talking about having spiritual peace.

There are many ways in life to achieve peace. We desire peace in our everyday relationships and in the activities we participate in every day; we desire peace in those areas of life where we encounter requirements and limitations; and we desire peace with new or different people or activities that we encounter. We interact in many ways with life, but as believers, we are to interact and apply our spiritual know-how to life.

Psalms 34:12-18 NKJV says,

Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit."

Don't we all want a good life? Do not use your speech for evil; do not mislead others. Do what is "right and good" in God's eyes and do not do what is wrong. Remember, doing what is "right and good" is to keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). Doing evil is to not keep God's commandments because God knows what is best for us, cares about us, and has our best interests at heart.

When people don't do what is right, God is upset with them because of the evil they bring into the world. God is the provider for the whole world, but God especially helps those who are righteous (righteous means to do what is right) and God is not far from those who listen to Him and are willing to do what is right. A "right and good" spiritual life requires that we live our life

God's ways and not our own ways.

We look different to those who do not know God. We have a different appearance, much like we can have a good or evil appearance depending on how we dress or act. If we do not act like we are God's people, then we are not His people. We need to be enthusiastic and zealous about being God's people and acting like His people. Romans 12:9-12 NKJV says, "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer." Cling to what is good, be kind, be diligent, fervent spiritually, and pray.

Take the steps to be clothed with spiritual peace.

How do we appear to others? Do your best to be adorned in the ways of God. Keep the 10 commandments and learn how they can be applied to life. Keep God's feasts. Perhaps you have heard that they are just Jewish feasts but that is not what the Bible says. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." God's feasts are for all His people both in the Old Testament portion and the New Testament portion.

Learn and keep the other commandments in the Torah, which are the first 5 books of the Bible. For example, it says we are to put a parapet wall on top of our buildings for safety. Deuteronomy 22:8 NKJV says, "When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it." God wants us to be concerned with safety.

So, we should have handrails on our stairs and be committed to safety both for ourselves, our family, and others. This is a good example of applying God's commandments without adding unnecessary commands to God's commandments. Deuteronomy 4:2 teaches us not to add misapplied or tedious commands to God's commandments. A multitude of extra commands can be inappropriate and micromanage life.

Do not be too proud to do what is right and be safe. I remember not wanting to wear safety glasses at work, but if I hadn't, I would have lost an eye. People will sometimes take chances with safety, but one slip up can result in an injury. Sometimes, safety measures will only take you seconds to do.

Also, in this Messianic age, we have the Holy Spirit as our helper. Yeshua said that God's commandments are our helper, and He gave us another helper for life, the Holy Spirit (see John 14:15-16). Shaul commands us to desire spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts." These gifts of the Holy Spirit are for our benefit and are good. Yeshua said in Luke 11:13 NKJV, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" If you haven't been taught about these spiritual gifts, then you have not heard all you are supposed to have heard.

Luke 24:49 NIV says, "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Remember, we talked about looking

like God's people by behaving like God's people? We are to be clothed with the Holy Spirit which is the power of God at work in us. Yeshua said in Acts 1:8 NKJV, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. The work of the Holy Spirit in our life is also necessary in this Messianic era. Begin learning and growing in all the spiritual fundamentals of life.

Do more than just look for peace. Spiritual peace is there but we must not act on our worldly thoughts but act like we believe.

James 1:21-24 NKJV says,

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

Get rid of the evil and sin in your life. Do what God tells us to do and do not forget who you are supposed to be. We are God's children if we act like God's children, and we love each other by keeping God's commandments. 1 John 5:2-4 NKJV says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world." We are to overcome worldly sin. God's commandments are not a burden like some say. They are from a good God who knows what is best and wants what is best for us. Amos 5:14 NKJV says, "Seek good and not evil, that you may live," So, keep God's good commands and do not live in sin.

If we want to please God and do better spiritually, we need to pursue spiritual things.

Most anything that we want to do well requires that we work at it so that we get good at it. We do not become good at something without applying ourselves.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 NKJV says,

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

We are to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength. We are to make every effort possible to love God and how do we love God? Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." This is a good scripture to memorize. We love God when we keep His commandments because He knows what is best for us and wants what is best for us. We are to also diligently teach our children. We are to teach our children to do what is right at every opportunity. We should even set up physical reminders to help us keep God's commandments. Pursue God in your life and in all you do.

In order to achieve spiritual peace in life, we need to take the necessary steps in life to achieve spiritual peace. Do more than just look for peace. Avoid acting on your worldly thoughts and act

like you believe in God. If we want to please God, we need to pursue God's ways in all we do and do what He says we should do.

Torah Study

Miketz means, "at the end of." The portion Miketz begins with Pharaoh having two dreams. One dream is about 7 good looking cows getting eaten by 7 lean looking cows and the other is about 7 fully ripe and good looking ears of corn getting eaten up by 7 bad looking ears of corn. Pharaoh is upset and asks all his magicians and wise men if they can interpret the dreams, but no one can. We should probably understand that they tried but could not interpret the dream to Pharaoh's satisfaction.

It has been two years since the cup bearer returned to Pharaoh's court and he then remembers Yosef interpreting his dream and it coming to pass. Yosef tells Pharaoh that the dream was repeated twice because it is going to happen. God can repeat things either to get our attention or to establish something. God told Pharaoh that there will be 7 good years followed by 7 years of famine and that Pharaoh should find someone who will manage and gather food during the good years.

Pharaoh says to his officials that Yosef would be good for the job because the Spirit of God is in him, and they pick Yosef to be in charge. Pharaoh gives Yosef the authority of second in command when Yosef was only thirty years old and gives Yosef his signet ring and the people bowed down before him. How is it that Yosef is given so much authority so quickly?

If you remember, Yosef was in charge of Potipher's household before he was unjustly accused and Potipher was in the court of Pharaoh. Yosef also did a good job for Potipher, so it is likely that like the cupbearer was restored to his position, Yosef was restored to his position only this time instead of Potipher, Yosef is put in charge of Pharaoh's affairs.

When Yosef was jailed, he was put in the royal dungeon. That is why Pharaoh's cup bearer ended up there. Yosef was put in charge of the prisoners, so he proved himself responsible even while in jail. When Yosef was called to appear before Pharaoh to interpret his dreams, they make Yosef appear presentable. Namely, they probably dressed him up to look like an Egyptian.

It is interesting that Pharaoh seems to be familiar with the power of the true God. Perhaps some of Shem's (Melchizedek's) followers had introduced Pharaoh or his family to the true God because Salem is not that far from Egypt. Salem is the ancient name for Jerusalem where Shem (also known in the ancient writing as Melchizedek), was the son of Noah and he had a school of prophecy and worshiped El Elyon, God Most High.

Yeshua gives believers the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament portion, Shaul tells us to seek God's spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." There are believers in Messiah that say we are not to prophecy. They contradict the Bible. Are believers in the Messiah somehow less capable than those in the Old Testament portion? Of course they are not less powerful; it says in Acts 2 there will be lots of prophecy in this Messianic age. Acts 2:17-18 NKJV refers to Joel 2:28-29 and the Messianic age we now live in:

"I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy." The Holy Spirit and its associated gifts are available to the believer in the Messiah in this era.

I should also point out that Yosef does not complain about his unjust imprisonment but sticks to the task. He instead points out the necessity for someone to address the problem at hand. He conveys God's message and the need for Egypt to respond or face a serious upcoming situation.

Yosef gathers grain for seven years before the famine hits and then sells the grain to the people needing it during the famine. Jacob's family hears there is grain in Egypt and go there to trade for some grain.

Yosef just happened to be at the place where they traded for grain when some of his brothers arrived. He probably knew that his brothers would have to come and get grain and God had told him years before in a dream that his brothers would bow down before him. He was now in the position for this revelation from God to take place.

He didn't tell them who he was. He seems prepared to meet them and even has an interpreter. He accuses them of being spies perhaps to find out more about them and perhaps to see if they mistreated their younger brother as they mistreated him. They must bring their youngest brother if they need to come back. He keeps Simon in prison. Yosef's brothers returned home and also find the money in their packs that they gave for the grain.

After they had depleted all the food they had traded for, Yosef's brothers returned to Egypt, and they brought their younger brother Benjamin with them as Yosef had demanded. Ya'akov was very upset, and Judah says that he would be responsible and take his place if anything should happen. We speculate that Judah, the 4th child, becomes the brothers' spokesperson because Reuben, the firstborn, slept with Bilhah, and Simon and Levi, the 2nd and 3rd of the 12 male children, had killed the men of Shechem. We are told that Jacob did not approve of what Simon and Levi did.

They bring gifts to Yosef and also bring the money they found that they should have originally paid for the grain. When they arrive, Yosef sees his brother Benjamin and he is overwhelmed emotionally; he decides to feed his brothers. He seats them by birth order. Yosef returns Simon to them. In Genesis 43:32, it tells us that the Egyptians felt themselves superior to other people groups and would not eat with Yosef's brothers.

Attachments to our conclusions and the problem of developing sinful concepts.

Along with God giving us a free will, there seems to be a strong level of attachment to our opinions or we would not be able to come to conclusions. Once we become convinced of something, we are not likely to change our minds. For example, many people call the resurrection of Yeshua, Easter, the bare-breasted goddess of fertility, simply because that is what they think Easter refers to. They use a despicable name for the resurrection of Yeshua because they are convinced somehow that it the correct name. I suggest just calling it the resurrection of Yeshua (Jesus).

While it is important to hold onto truth. It is also important to be humble enough to accept truth. That is why God tells us to be a humble people, first to God and also towards others because of the convictions we can develop, either true or not true. Also, Leviticus 19:33-34 tells us that we are to also love the stranger as ourselves so that we are able to look past non-sinful differences and see these non-sinful differences in that way.

From a drive to protect what we perceive to be true can come all kinds of sin. Superiority was used by Hitler to claim Aryans are superior and he used that and other concepts to get rid of and kill all those who had perceived flaws. That included anyone who differed from his views. 11 million people were put to death by this evil system.

We can convince ourselves of evil concepts like communism and of other autocratic type governments which were responsible for over 100 million murders of their own people in the 1900s, because for example, people become convinced that the communist idea of equity must be forced on people. People often accept the ideals of these murderous systems without even knowing it. While we are all equal in God's sight, we do not all act in equal ways. It is not just to treat someone who works hard with the same equity as someone who is lazy.

We can become strongly attached to almost any idea or concept, even ridiculous ones. Atheists, those who do not believe in God, often develop their own strong religious like belief system. One famous atheist that I know of suggests some of the same things that Hitler believed in. That is why our beliefs need to be based on something outside of our own like the truths from an all-knowing and good God.

Even Atheists would be better off believing in the Bible because it has been proven to produce a person who has better reasoning ability. For example, the commandments not to murder and to not to covet would reduce significantly human abuse and war. That is only two of the commandments in the Bible. Think about what observing more of God's commandments could accomplish.

Our reasoning of course can apply to any concept. That includes our reasoning about other countries, other belief systems, other economies, and other governments. People tend to think their own reasoning, their own country, their own economy, their own ideas on life, etcetera are superior to those of other people even if history reveals their reasoning could come from a dangerous and faulty system. Even the wealthy people of Russia thought communism would be good for their society. The communist ideals of Russia must now be perpetuated by constant propaganda, oppression of the people, and murder.

Back to the Torah. Yosef agrees to give them food and send them back and he orders their packs filled with supplies. He has his servants put a goblet in Benjamin's pack. After they start their journey back, he orders their belongings to be searched, and they find the goblet in Benjamin's pack. As the portion ends, Yosef tells his brothers that they can return, but Benjamin has to stay there and be his slave. We see in the next portion that Judah acting as spokesman for the brothers, and he offers to give himself for Benjamin. Just as Yeshua gave himself for us, Judah is a Messianic type who was willing to give himself for Benjamin.

Yosef's success can clearly be attributed to God. It was not an easy rode of success, but God

made Yosef to prosper because he listened to God. It appears that Pharaoh, besides probably knowing of Yosef's capabilities, also sees that Yosef hears from God and is willing to use him to prosper all of Egypt. This should remind us that listening to God is the best way to live and to bring the blessings of God to us and others in every way in life; physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

Yosef's success also came from God.

Yosef brings deliverance to his family and the whole region because he hears from God, he is another messianic type because the deliverance the whole region experienced. The Messiah Yeshua also gives believers in the Messiah blessings and deliverance. Yosef and Yeshua were both rejected, but both end up saving others. There are many similarities between Yosef and the Messiah Yeshua. Both are favored by their fathers. Yeshua's Father was God who created life in Miryam's womb.

The Haftarah for Miketz is 1 Kings 3:15-4:1; Zechariah 2:14-4:7 is the Haftarah read during Chanukkah. In the Haftarah for Miketz in 1 Kings, King Shlomo had just been given wisdom and a long life by God. Like God helped Yosef, God is going to help Shlomo and give him wisdom and understanding. Two women come to Shlomo and are fighting over a child. He is able to trick the woman into revealing who the real mother is and the people hear about Shlomo's wisdom. Just as through God's Spirit, Yosef was to become a great leader in Egypt, Shlomo through God's Spirit became a great king with wisdom. 1 Kings 3:28 CJB says, "All Israel heard of the decision the king had made and held the king in awe, for they saw that God's wisdom was in him, enabling him to render justice properly."

Zechariah is read for the Haftarah during Hanukkah. We will include it today because it is still near Chanukkah and is relevant to this portion. It begins by saying that someday God will live among His people Israel and also that many nations will believe in the true God. Obviously, this is a prophecy about the Messiah Yeshua who not only came and lived among mankind but will someday come back and reign as our king.

**Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts.
(We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)**

It is up to God to give the interpretation of a dream or vision. When a believer receives a dream or vision, the interpretation of a dream or vision is given to the person who receives it. That information may just be knowledge or sometimes there is accompanying wisdom that needs to be acted on. The knowledge that Yosef received was about the impending famine. The wisdom was to prepare by collecting food. We may seek additional confirmation at times; especially for big endeavors as was the case with Pharaoh's two dreams. God gave an unbeliever a dream, but it required a believer to interpret it unless God chooses to give the unbeliever the understanding. We are to never come up with our own ideas and say it was from God. Genesis 41:16, 32-36.

It is good practice to find out others' intentions as Yosef did with his brothers in this portion.

This should especially be done for big decisions. For example, I made sure my future wife was a committed believer before I married her.

In closing, let us say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.