

Thought of the Week

The book of Bereshith ends this week on a seemingly upbeat note. The family of Yaakov, united and now more numerous, live in an apparently friendly Egyptian environment, rather smugly protected by their political influence and their growing wealth.

The last seventeen years of the life of Yaakov are the most serene of his existence. He studies Torah with his descendants and the Lord does not allow him, so to speak, to truly envision the disaster to his people and family that looms in the coming years. In the back of everyone's mind is the haunting vision shown to Abraham that his children will be enslaved and brutalized, but that prophecy apparently does not yet weigh heavily on the minds and behavior of Jacob's children and family living currently in Egypt.

The nature of humans is to postpone acting on troubling signs and biter forecasts. So the immediate troubles of the book of Shemot do not make their appearance or mark here at the conclusion of the book of Bereshith. The Torah itself apparently wishes to dwell on the good part of the narrative of Israel in Egypt before continuing later to detail the horrors of slavery and persecution that are already lurking in the wings.

Why is this so? Why is the Torah not more straightforward early on in the Egyptian section of the story of the Jewish people? And even more puzzlingly why didn't God speed up the process, so to speak, and begin the bondage sooner so that the redemption would also have happened earlier? What was this 130 year delay meant to accomplish?

There is a pattern set here that continues to appear throughout Jewish history. Our story always goes in waves and not in lurches. The problems that befall us may seem to be sudden and unexpected but in the long view that retrospective history provides, they arrive inevitably and gradually. The Lord, so to speak, provides us with respite between tragedies.

The 130 years of good times in Egypt enabled the Jews to somehow survive the eighty years of slavery and persecution. Spanish Jewry enjoyed a "golden age" of centuries before its three century decline into expulsion and forced apostasy.

[continued inside...]

בס"ד

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Parshas Vayechi
December 17-18

פרשת ויחי
י"א טבת



Shabbos Schedule



Candle lighting:	4:19pm
Mincha - Friday:	4:05pm
Parsha Chaburah by Richie Fine:	7:55am
Rabbi's Mishlei Shiur:	8:15am
Shacharis:	8:45am
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:37am
Kiddush is community sponsored.	
Mincha:	4:15pm
Chabura given by Dov Daniel on the topic of Asarah be-Teves on erev Shabbos.	
Medical Halacha Shiur given by Dr Daniel Eisenberg.	
Maariv:	5:22pm

The fast of Asarah b'Teves ends Friday, Dec 17th at 5:22pm

Questions? Comments! Sponsorships\$ weeklyupdate@yiml.org

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis:	Sunday and Friday:	8:00am
	Monday and Thursday:	6:40am
	Tuesday and Wednesday:	6:50am
Mincha/Maariv:	Sunday:	4:25pm
Maariv:	Monday through Thursday:	7:45pm
Mincha and Candle Lighting	Friday:	4:22pm

Weekday Shiurim

Daily Mussar Shiur:	15 minutes before Shacharis
Mishna Brura:	Mon and Wed after Maariv
Melachim Aleph Shiur:	Monday at 8pm
Halacha Shiur:	Tuesday at 8:30pm.
Nefesh HaChaim:	Thursday at 10:10pm

Check with Dr Daniel Eisenberg to confirm.

The Chevra Mishnayos is learning Seder Moed. See shul bulletin board to sign up or email eisenber@pol.net with your name and the masechta (and chapters) you intend to learn.

Women's Learning Experience - Fall Session

Mon at 9:00am: Tehillim for Cholim, at the Eisenberg home.
Mon at 9:30am: Parsha HaShavua class has been cancelled.
Tues at 9:30am: Rabbi Shmidman teaches Tehillim at LMS.
Tues at 8:00pm: Stacey Goldman teaches about the Imahot at the Werrin home, 161 Highland Circle, Bala.
Wed at 9:00am: Rachael Biberfeld teaches Michtav M'Elياهو.
Thurs at 9:30am: Rabbi Steinberg teaches The Chazon Ish - Faith and Trust.

All classes at 8 Concord Circle, unless otherwise noted. For information or free babysitting, call Janis Fine 610-888-0477.

To subscribe to the YIML email list, visit
<http://mail.chaseplanet.us/mailman/listinfo/yiml>

Thought of the Week, continued

Polish Jews also enjoyed hundreds of years of autonomy and governmental favor and protection before declining in the three centuries which ended with its destruction.

Eighteenth and nineteenth century anti-Semitism clearly laid the groundwork for the murderous Holocaust. Yet, at the same time Western and Central European Jewry enjoyed civil rights and great social and economic success and achievement. In the constant turbulence of First Temple times, the Bible nevertheless records for us peaceful and prosperous times – forty years, eighty years – and diplomatic and military stability. Nothing lasts forever but the history of Israel as a people provides us with the understanding that God's will will be done but that the periods of respite afforded us are necessary for our survival and development as a people. Far be it from me to analyze our current situation and what wave of history we are in. But whatever it is we should attempt to make the most of it for now and for our future.

Adapted from "Make the Most of It" by Rabbi Berel Wein
<http://www.torah.org/learning/rabbiwein/5771/vayechi.html>

Bnos of Bala Cynwyd from 2:45 to 3:45pm at LMS. Please pay yearly membership dues (\$36 per girl) if your daughter attends Bnos. Contact Meira Friedman 610-617-9529 for information.

Pirchei of Bala Cynwyd from 2:45 to 3:45pm at LMS in the Social Hall. Grades K-8th. If you would like to help sponsor a Shabbos or want more information contact Rabbi Ari Silver at 610-6686-6833 or SilverDollar@verizon.net

Communal Rally on behalf of an agunah who is a dear friend and member of our community this Sunday, December 19th, 1 to 2pm in Silver Spring, Maryland coordinated by the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA). Refer to the bulletin board or shul email for more details.