

Miketz

December 18-19, 2020

Kislev 3-4, 5781

The weak will rule the mighty

Parshas Miketz is usually the parsha of Shabbos Chanuka. That being the case, and as the Ba'al Shem Tov explains, the weekly parsha is appropriately related to the week in which it falls. That being said, what is the connection between Parshas Miketz and Chanuka?

Aryeh Pinchas Strickoff in his wonderful book "Inside Chanuka" offers insights into many facets of the chanuka. In one of his chapters Aryeh offers the following connections between Miketz and Chanuka.

The gematria of the name Yosef is the same as Antioches and Melech Yovon, the Greek emperor responsible for the evils that befell the Jews during the Chanuka era. This is paralleled by the fact that Paroh was responsible for the evils that befell the Jews at the beginning of the Egyptian exile. Furthermore, the Greeks enforced a law on the horn of oxen to inscribe that the jews didn't believe in Hashem (the horns were used as a rudimentary baby bottle, and the idea was to have the babies from infancy see that they didn't believe in hashem so later in life they would denounce their religion). Yosef based on the posuk in Devarim 33:17 compares Yosef to an ox. It is also said by the Bnei Yissascher that the story of chanuka is a tikkun for the sale of Yosef by his brothers.

A few other gematrias, in most chumashim at the end of the parsha the number of psukim is recorded, in parshas miketz the number of words in the parsha is uniquely recorded, which is 2025. The word Ner equals 250 which is lit for 8 days gives us 2000, and we celebrate

chanuka on the 25th day of Kislev, put it all together that is 2025 same as number of words in Miketz.

Finally, after Yosef explained to Paroh the meaning of his dreams, Yosef suggested that Egypt be prepared for the days of famine. The word for prepare is Chimesh:

יַעֲשֶׂה פָּרֶעָה וַיִּפְקֹד פְּקָדִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַחֲמִשָּׁל אֶת־אֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם בְּשָׁבַע שָׁנֵי הַשָּׁבַע:

And let Pharaoh take steps to appoint overseers over the land and organize the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty.

The word Chimesh is a mnemonic for Chodesh (establishing the new month), Mila (circumcision), and Shabbos, which are three fundamental mitzvos that represent pure leaps of faith by Jews, and without which would debase the basic tenets of our faith¹.

Yosef by preparing in Egypt was setting the stage for the protections the Jews needed later in their trials and tribulations.

The theme of the past parshas is showing the depth of the prophecy of Ever that was told to Rivka when she was pregnant with what we now know as the twins Ya'akov and Eisav. This prophecy is for the future, and for the messianic era. The theme includes the fact that human intervention has the power to accelerate and change a prophecy, and even though there were multiple promises, prophecies and covenants, all thematically similar, there is no guarantee one can recuse themselves of the active role needed to fulfill the promise- that is the brining of Mashiach.

The prophecy of Ever being that that young will serve the old, and the strong will rule the weak, is similarly found in the language of Chanukah (Al Hanisim), that few conquered many and the weak persevered over the mighty.

¹ Chassidus and practical halacha offer in depth reasoning into the precepts of these particular mitzvos and their importance to the basic tenets of the faith.

Chanuka is a messianic holiday in that it will persist as a holiday even after Mashiach comes. Perhaps because it is a holiday of triumph of weak over strong, it is a predecessor to the fulfillment of the Ever prophecy that the young will rule the old, and therefore be a glimpse into the miracles that will come in Mashiach's time.

Finally, Chanukah is the holiday of spreading light. May it be that the lights of Chanuka shine forth in dark times, and we hastily greet Mashiach. Good Shabbos.