

DAF TSAFON

21 December 2024
20 Kislev 5785

Parashat Vayeishev
ArtScroll 198 Hertz 141



In our Parasha we are introduced to the tension that reigns within Jacob's family. Joseph, the dreamer, had angered his brothers by revealing two dreams which predicted that they would bow down to him. The story continues of how the brothers hatch a plan to rid themselves of their brother. Their first suggestion is that they just kill him. Reuben, the eldest brother, saves Joseph from this plot by suggesting that they place him in an empty well. The Torah testifies to his true intent, so that he could save his brother and return him to his father. Reuben leaves the scene and returns to find that Joseph had been sold to Egypt. The brothers swear a pact of silence. They will never reveal to their father, what happened to Joseph.

This event is a watershed moment in the history of the Jewish people. The people would eventually descend to Egypt and the well-known story of the Egyptian exile and suffering would take place.

There is a startling midrash – rabbinic teaching – which states, had Reuben known that this is what the Torah would have written about him, he would have taken Joseph straight back to his father. Had he been able to read the Torah, he would have acted differently, and Jewish history would be very different.

He didn't, he stopped too soon. He had accomplished part one, he had saved Joseph. This idea of stopping too soon is one that we deal with every day. If only we could read the book of our lives and know what the impact would be. Were we to know how our actions, words and thoughts impact, not only on ourselves but those around us, we would act differently. We would not stop in the middle but see the task through to the end. Unfortunately, the human condition and the world we live in means that we can never know the impact.

In mathematics, there is a theory known as the Chaos Theory. When you have a complex system, small changes lead to ripples of consequence. This is not only in terms of history but in terms of virtue as well. Any deed that we do, word that we say, prayer that we utter, creates a ripple, a butterfly effect and we never know the impact that this action will have.

Reuben saved his brother from certain death, this is true. However, his actions unleashed a chain reaction which transformed Jewish and world history. Would Reuben have stopped had he known that his actions would lead to the family being in exile for 210 years and suffer at the hands of the Egyptians? I think the answer is clear.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Lewin

Haftarah

ArtScroll 1142

Hertz 152

INDICTMENT OF ISRAEL

Amos II, 6-III, 8

Having declared that the neighbouring countries of Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon and Moab would be severely punished for their wickedness, the prophet proceeds to indict the Northern Kingdom for its crimes of injustice, cruelty and immorality. 'They sell the righteous for silver (as Joseph was sold by his brothers) and the needy for (a debt to the value of) a pair of shoes'. Because they were God's chosen people whom He had delivered from Egypt and brought to the Promised Land, they should have set an example and therefore their punishment would be all the more severe. Their doom was inevitable; they had received ample warning from the prophets to whom God reveals His counsel.

מזל טוב

Wedding anniversaries

Erroll and Vivien Dembo
Michael and Margot Hurwitz
Jeremy and Amy Kofsky
Mark and Lisa Krischer
Justin and Gabrielle Lipman
Andrew and Gillian Samuel

מזל טוב

Bar and Bat Mitzvah anniversaries

Lindsay Phillips

Michelle Walter

Chanukah on the Green

First night, Chanukah

25 December 2024 – 5.00 to 8.30pm

St Ives Village Green,
St Ives

Join us for

CHANUKAH

6.00pm, Friday, 27 December 2024

latkes and doughnuts
followed by Ma'ariv.

We look forward to sharing lighting the third
Chanukah candle with you.

**Our congregation acknowledges the following
yahrzeit anniversaries and wishes long life to those
who are commemorating a yahrzeit
during the coming week.**

חיים ארוכים

Farcha Agami	grandmother of Mirah Teichtahl
Martin Ball	father of Harold Ball
Rachel Been	mother of Michael Been
Etta Flax	mother of Graham Flax
Joan Yvette McGuire	sister of David Landor
Marie Morris	grandmother of Sarah Zukerman
Arthur Priester	grandfather of Marion Blitz
Valerie Zukerman	mother of Harley Zukerman, grandmother of Zara Zukerman, Leah Kirsner and Lana Oxnam