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# Pearl Seeking

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## TREASURING HIS WORD

Let's do a quick overview of the entire Torah portion:

Monday:	Gen. 41:1-44	Pharaoh's dreams; Yoseph appointed to be 2 <sup>nd</sup> in command
Tuesday:	Gen. 41:45-57	Yoseph marries and has 2 sons during the 7 years of plenty; The 7 years of scarcity begins
Wednesday:	Gen. 42	Yoseph's 10 brothers appear before him in Mitsrayim
Thursday:	Gen. 43	Ya'aqob sends his sons back to Mitsrayim with Binyamin
Friday:	Gen. 44:1-17	The incident of the 'stolen' cup

Some remarkable things happened to Yoseph after he was taken to Mitsrayim (Egypt) and sold to Potiphar. As a slave, he was given complete oversight of Potiphar's home, and greatly prospered his master. But then he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, which caused Yoseph to be thrown in jail. While in prison, he interpreted the cupbearer and baker's dreams, which soon came to pass. Although he requested the cupbearer to please remember him to Pharaoh, it appeared he was forgotten. Two years later, Pharaoh suffered from 2 disturbing dreams. Yoseph was then called before Pharaoh, both interpreting the dreams and advising Pharaoh what to do about them. Because of his wisdom, he was immediately elevated to 2<sup>nd</sup> in command over the entire nation of Mitsrayim. In this week's lesson, the 7 years of plenty that Yoseph had foreseen have now passed, and as the 7 years of scarcity begin to take place, all the earth is driven to come to Mitsrayim to buy food. We will now see how the widespread famine causes Yoseph to be reunited with his brothers. Now, let's read Gen. 42 & 43.

## PARSHA POINTS

- When the patriarch Ya'aqob saw that the grain (**shever**) in Kena'an had diminished, he sent his sons to Mitsrayim to buy enough to feed them - 42:1-2, 5
- Yoseph's 10 (**eser**) brothers went down to Mitsrayim to buy grain, but Ya'aqob kept Binyamin at home with him, lest harm came to him - 42:3-4
- As governor over the land of Mitsrayim, Yoseph was the one his brothers had to approach when they arrived there - 42:6
- His brothers bowed before him with their faces to the earth - 42:6
- Yoseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him - 42:7-8
- He spoke harshly to them and demanded to know where they came from, acting as though he didn't already know - 42:7



- When they answered, he remembered the dream that he had dreamed, and accused them of being spies (**meragelim**), coming in order to see the nakedness (functioning) of the land - 42:9
- His brothers told him that they were (42:10-13):
  - not spies but merely there to purchase food
  - all 1 (**achat**) man's sons
  - trustworthy
  - 12 (**shtayim esre**) brothers - the youngest remained with his father and one is no more
  - from Kena'an
- Yoseph still accused them of being spies - 42:14
- Yoseph told them (42:15-16):
  - You do not leave this place until your youngest brother comes
  - Send 1 of you to go get him while the rest of you stay in prison
  - This way your words will be proven, to show whether they are truth or lies
- Yoseph then shut all of them in prison for 3 (**shalosh**) days - 42:17
- After 3 days, Yoseph came to them with instructions about what they must do to prove themselves to him, explaining that he also feared Elohim - 42:18
- He told them (42:19-20):
  - If you are trustworthy, have 1 brother stay in the prison while the others leave
  - You may bring grain back with you to Kena'an
  - Bring your youngest brother on your return, so that the words you told me are proven true
- The brothers talked among themselves, recalling the evil that they did to Yoseph many years earlier. They all agreed that they were guilty in those matters, and were being punished because they had showed no mercy when their brother pleaded with them - 42:21
- Re'uben reminded them that he had tried to prevent them from harming Yoseph, saying that because they had not listened to him, their actions had now brought them all here to reap what they sowed - 42:22
- Yoseph had been using an interpreter to address them, so they did not suspect that he understood every word they were speaking among themselves - 42:23
- As he overheard them, Yoseph's emotions caught up with him and he went off in private to shed his tears. After a while, he was calm enough to return and speak to them - 42:24
- He bound Shim'on before all his brothers and had him taken to the prison - 42:25



- After this, Yoseph commanded his servants that (42:25):

- his brother's sacks (**kelehem**) be filled with grain
- the silver they brought be put back in their sacks
- they be given food for their journey



- On their journey home, one of them opened their sack to give their donkey (**chamor**) some feed and saw his bag of silver bag resting on top of the grain - 42:27
- Upon hearing this, the other brothers became afraid and were anxious to know what Elohim was doing to them - 42:28
- After they arrived home, they told their father Ya'aqob everything that had happened to them - 42:29-35
- Ya'aqob complained that they had caused him much sorrow; his son Yoseph was dead, now Shim'on was in prison and their latest plan was to take Binyamin as well - 42:36
- Re'uben assured his father that he would personally be responsible for Binyamin's safety, and vowed that if he failed to honor this by returning Binyamin to his father safely, Ya'aqob could take the lives of his own 2 (**shtayim**) sons - 42:37
- Still, Ya'aqob vehemently refused to consider letting Binyamin go with them, warning that if any harm came upon their youngest brother along the way, he himself would die of grief - 42:38
- After a time, when nearly all the grain had been eaten, Ya'aqob urged his children to go back to Mitsrayim to purchase more food - 43:1-2
- Yehudah reminded his father that the man had warned them not to show their faces unless they returned with their youngest brother - 43:3-5
- Ya'aqob demanded to know what in the world had possessed them, that they had revealed to the man that they had a younger brother - 43:6
- His children told Ya'aqob that the man kept asking them personal questions about their lives such as (43:7):
  - Is your father still alive?
  - Have you another brother?
- They protested that they had simply been answering his questions, never imagining that the man would require their brother to come back with them - 43:7
- Then Yehudah urged his father to allow Binyamin to go with him, so that everyone could live - 43:8
- He guaranteed his father that Binyamin would return; and if he did not, then he himself would take the blame - 43:9
- He also pointed out to his father that if their departure had not been delayed over this, they could have left and returned again by this time - 43:10

- Ya'aqob relented, but told them to bring to the man gifts of (43:11-12):

- the best fruit of the land in their vessels
- a little balm
- a little honey
- spices
- myrrh
- nuts and almonds
- double silver in their hands
- the silver that was returned in their sacks



- He wanted them to add the silver they had brought the 1<sup>st</sup> time; in case it had been a mistake - 43:12
- Then he also told them to take Binyamin with them - 43:13
- He prayed that El Shaddai (meaning, 'God Almighty') would give the man compassion for them and return Shim'on and Binyamin; but if he was to have sorrow, he would accept the answer - 43:14
- The brothers did exactly as their father commanded. They arrived back in Mitsrayim and stood before Yoseph once again - 43:15
- Yoseph spotted his brother Binyamin standing there with the other brothers. He asked his personal overseer to bring all of them to his home, prepare a meal and be ready for him to come and eat with them at noon - 43:16
- The overseer did exactly as Yoseph asked him to do - 43:17
- When Yoseph's brothers realized they were being taken to Yoseph's house, they were very afraid. They questioned among themselves whether this special invite was because of the silver that followed them home, and feared that perhaps the man wished to take them all as slaves - and their donkeys as well - 43:18
- They then spoke to the overseer of Yoseph's house, explaining how they had discovered their payments of silver inside their sacks of grain, and had brought it all back to him - 43:19-22
- Yoseph's overseer reassured them that he had all their silver. He told them to be at peace and not afraid, for their Elohim must have provided for them - 43:23
- Then they released Shim'on out of the prison - 43:23
- The overseer showed hospitality to the guests by giving them water, washing their feet and feeding their animals - 43:24
- The brothers had heard that Yoseph was coming home at noon to eat with them, so they made their presents ready to give to Yoseph when he arrived - 43:25
- When Yoseph appeared, they offered him the presents and bowed down before him to the earth - 43:26
- The first thing that Yoseph asked them was about their own well-being, then he inquired about their father - was he still alive? - 43:27
- The brothers told Yoseph that their father, his servant, was in good health, and bowed their heads in obeisance to Yoseph - 43:28

- Then Yoseph glanced at Binyamin and asked them if this was the younger brother they had spoken of. When they said yes, he turned and said to Binyamin, "Elohim show favor to you, my son" - 43:29
- At this, Yoseph became overwhelmed with emotion and left the room in search of a place where they would not see or hear him weeping - 43:30
- When he regained control over his emotions, he washed his face, returned to them and told his servants to serve the meal - 43:31
- Yoseph and his servants were seated separately from his brothers, because it was an abomination for Mitsrites to eat food with Hebrews - 43:32
- The brothers looked at each other in astonishment when they realized that they had been seated in the exact order of their birth - 43:33
- Yoseph gave out portions of food to his guests, but to Binyamin he gave 5X (**chamesh**) as much as he gave the others. Then they all feasted and drank with him - 43:34



## DIGGING DEEPER

Parents/Teachers may choose to use these prompts for further discussion of the Torah portion.

- Not only did the whole world come to Mitsrayim to buy food at a very high price, but the Mitsrites also were required to pay more and more for the grain that kept them alive. Do you think that resentment over this made them angry enough to enslave Yoseph's descendants many years later? Discuss how this resentment may have festered after Yoseph had died, resulting in possible retaliation from Mitsrayim's new leadership.
- We are told that Yoseph chose Shim'on, the 2<sup>nd</sup> born, to be his prisoner. Do you think he passed over Re'uben, the firstborn, because he believed what he had overheard - that it was Re'uben who had tried to stop the others from doing what they did? (42:22-23)
- Look at Re'uben's proposal to his father regarding taking Binyamin back with them, and how Ya'aqob had dismissed him. After that, we don't hear any more about Re'uben; from that point on, Yehudah took over the dialogue. Why do you think Yehudah became the spokesman for all the brothers?
- Mitsrites viewed shepherds as the lowest class of people, and to eat with them would have been an offense. (42:32) As their god was a bull, they valued cattle, not sheep. Since most Semites (Hebrews) were shepherds, they certainly would view Yoseph's brothers as inferior. Later, when Yoseph's family moved to Mitsrayim, he cautioned them to not mention that they were shepherds. (46:31-33) Research the location of Goshen, where Yoseph's family was given to live. Does it seem that Goshen might be a place where they would be away from the bulk of Egyptian society?
- Why was Binyamin given 5X as much food as his brothers? Was it because Yoseph was showing him favor, or was there another reason? It was understood that royalty would receive 5X more. Is it coincidence that the first king of Yisra'el was from the line of Binyamin?