

פרשת  
מקץ  
Parashat Miketz

*Bereshit / Genesis 41:1-44:17, Zechariah 2:14-4:7  
Luke 4:16-31*

## How Much Time Should we give to Waiting upon the Lord?

This week's Torah portion begins with the dreams of Pharaoh of the seven healthy and sickly cows and of the seven healthy and sick stalks of corn. The dream disturbs Pharaoh and we are told in *Bereshit / Genesis 41:9*, וַיְדַבֵּר שֵׁר הַמְּשָׁקִים אֶת-פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר אֶת-חַטָּאֵי אֲנִי, מִזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם: *41:9 Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, 'I would make mention today of my own offenses.(NASB)* After the cupbearer tells his story, he mentions Joseph saying, *Bereshit / Genesis 41:12-13*, וַיִּפְתֹּר-לָנוּ אֶת-חַלְמֹתֵינוּ אִישׁ כַּחֲלֹמוֹ פִּתְרוֹ: יֵג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר-לָנוּ כֵּן הָיָה: *41:12 'Now a Hebrew youth was with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related them to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his own dream. 41:13 'And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.'* (NASB) Here we have the cupbearer recounting what had happened to him. How long did Joseph have to wait before he was brought up out of prison? The Scriptures reveal to us that he spent between 12-13 years in prison. The opening verse in the Torah portion reveals to us

the length of time Joseph spent waiting on the cupbearer to remember him. *Bereshit / Genesis 41:1*, וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים וּפְרָעֹה חָלַם, א 41:1 Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. (NASB) Notice how the text is written, specifically, it says “and it was at the end of” (וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ) “and it was at the end of”) and then writes שְׁנַתִּים, which is a measure of time from the root word שנה meaning year, written in dual form and so means “two years,” with the word days (יָמִים, plural) is also added to this. The Talmud has the following to say concerning this verse.

### ***Talmud Bavli Nazir 5a:5***

ואימא ב' שנים דכתיב ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים דנין ימים  
שאינ עמהן שנים מימים שאין עמהן שנים ואל יוכיח זה  
שיש עמו שנים

*The Gemara asks: But say that yamim means two years, as it is written: “And it came to pass at the end of two years of days [yamim]” (Genesis 41:1). The Gemara rejects this: We derive the meaning of the term yamim in a case where it does not have the term years mentioned with it, as in the case of Absalom, from another usage of the term yamim that does not have the term years mentioned with it, i.e., the verse about houses of walled cities. And this usage of the term yamim that does have the term years mentioned with it will not prove otherwise.*

The rabbis speak on the issue of the plural word “days” (יָמִים) and say this refers to “days of years.” Looking at the introduction, the first two words “and it was at the end of” (וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ) this is also interesting, because if we examine the Hebrew language closely we find that this word does not always mean “end,” for example in *Bereshit / Genesis 47:2* (ב) וּמִקְצָה אֶחָיו לָקַח חֲמִשָּׁה אָנָשִׁים וַיַּצְגֵם לְפָנָי פְּרָעֹה: presents some of his brothers to Pharaoh and the word chosen for “some of” is מִקְצָה. We also find this word used in *Jeremiah 34:14* (ד) מִקֵּץ שְׁבַע

שָׁנִים תְּשַׁלְּחוּ אִישׁ אֶת-אָחִיו הָעֶבְרִי אֲשֶׁר יִמְכַר לָהּ וְעַבְדָּהּ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁלְ-  
 (הָתוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעֶמְקָהּ וְלֹא-שָׁמְעוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אֵלַי וְלֹא הִטּוּ אֶת-אָזְנוֹם:  
 and here it means “*at the beginning of seven years.*” (Chizkuni on Bereshit / Gen-  
 esis 41:1, Part 1) Something very important to note here is as Moshe  
 wrote the Torah, the Spirit of the Lord God of Israel inspired him to  
 let us know that Joseph spent an entire two years extra in jail because  
 the chief cupbearer did not keep his promise. We note here that Joseph  
 most likely thought he was going to be delivered from prison when the  
 cupbearer left, but he needed to wait on God’s timing to be released. It  
 is doubtful that he would have become viceroy of Egypt if he had been  
 delivered out of prison earlier. From man’s point of view, it may have  
 appeared that God was not listening or working. It could even be ques-  
 tioned “*why did the Lord wait until an entire two years before giving  
 Pharaoh the dream?*” Many times the process of waiting is meant to  
 increase our faith, to dig deeper into God’s Word, to seek daily draw-  
 ing near to the Lord for the purpose of growing us spiritually. From  
 God’s point of view it may be that Joseph trusted in the cupbearer and  
 needed an entire two years to realize that he should be trusting in the  
 God of Israel as opposed to trusting in the cupbearer. Because of this,  
 the Lord God may have added to his time in jail.

The Scriptures we are reading for this week are from *Bereshit / Genesis 41:1-16*.

### ספר בראשית פרק מא

א וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנַת־יָמַיּוֹם וּפְרֻעָה חֹלֶם וְהִגָּה עָלַי-  
 הַיָּאָר: ב וְהִגָּה מִן-הַיָּאָר עֹלֹת שָׁבַע פָּרוֹת יְפוֹת מְרָאָה  
 וּבְרִיאַת בָּשָׂר וַתִּרְעֶינָה בְּאַחוּ: ג וְהִגָּה שָׁבַע פָּרוֹת אַחֲרוֹת  
 עֹלוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן מִן-הַיָּאָר רַעוֹת מְרָאָה וְדַקּוֹת בָּשָׂר וַתַּעֲמִדְנָה  
 אֶצֶל הַפָּרוֹת עַל-שֹׁפֵת הַיָּאָר: ד וַתֹּאכֲלֶנָה הַפָּרוֹת רַעוֹת  
 הַמְרָאָה וְדַקּוֹת הַבָּשָׂר אֶת שָׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת יְפֹת הַמְרָאָה וְהָבֹ-  
 רִיאַת וַיִּיקֶץ פְּרֻעָה: ה וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּחְלֹם שְׁנִית וְהִגָּה | שָׁבַע  
 שְׁבָלִים עֹלוֹת בְּקִנְיָה אֶחָד בְּרִיאוֹת וְטֹבוֹת: ו וְהִגָּה שָׁבַע  
 שְׁבָלִים דַּקּוֹת וְשָׁדוּפֹת קָדִים צְמֻחוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן: ז וַתִּבְלַעְנָה  
 הַשְּׁבָלִים הַדַּקּוֹת אֶת שָׁבַע הַשְּׁבָלִים הַבְּרִיאוֹת וְהַמְלָאוֹת  
 וַיִּיקֶץ פְּרֻעָה וְהִגָּה חֲלוֹם: ח וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַתִּפְּעֶם רוּחוֹ

וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-כָּל-חֲרֹטְמֵי מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת-כָּל-חַכְמָיָהּ  
וַיִּסְפֹּר פְּרֻעָה לָהֶם אֶת-חֲלֹמוֹ וְאִין-פֹּתֵר אוֹתָם לְפְרֻעָה:  
ט וַיַּדְבֵּר שֹׁר הַמְּשֻׁקִּים אֶת-פְּרֻעָה לֵאמֹר אֶת-חֲטָאֵי אָנִי  
מִזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם: י פְּרֻעָה קִצְצָה עַל-עֲבָדָיו וַיִּתֵּן אֹתִי בְּמִשְׁמֵר  
בֵּית שֹׁר הַטְּבָחִים אֹתִי וְאֶת שֹׁר הָאֲפִים: יא וַנִּחַלְמָה חֲלוֹם  
בְּלִילָה אֶחָד אָנִי וְהוּא אִישׁ כְּפֹתֵרוֹן חֲלֹמוֹ חֲלֹמְנוּ: יב וְשֵׁם  
אֲתָנוּ נֶעַר עֲבָרִי עֶבֶד לְשֹׁר הַטְּבָחִים וְנִסְפָּר-לוֹ וַיִּפְתֹּר-לָנוּ  
אֶת-חֲלֹמֹתֵינוּ אִישׁ כְּחֲלֹמוֹ פֹּתֵר: יג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פִּתַּר-לָנוּ  
כֵּן הָיָה אֹתִי הַשִּׁיב עַל-כַּנִּי וְאֹתוֹ תִּלְהֶ: יד וַיִּשְׁלַח פְּרֻעָה  
וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיזֵהוּ מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיַּגִּלְחָה וַיַּחֲלֵף שְׂמֹלֹתָיו  
וַיָּבֵא אֶל-פְּרֻעָה: [שְׁנִי] טו וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרֻעָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם  
חֲלֹמְתִי וּפְתֹר אֵין אֹתוֹ וְאָנִי שֹׁמֵעְתִי עָלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע  
חֲלוֹם לְפֹתֵר אֹתוֹ: טז וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף אֶת-פְּרֻעָה לֵאמֹר בְּלִעְדֵי  
אֱלֹהִים יַעֲנֶה אֶת-נְשֹׁלֹם פְּרֻעָה:

**Bereshit / Genesis 41:1-16**

41:1 Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. 41:2 And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass. 41:3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt, and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. 41:4 The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke. 41:5 He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good. 41:6 Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them. 41:7 The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. 41:8 Now in the morning his spirit was troubled, so he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh. 41:9 Then the chief cup-

bearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, 'I would make mention today of my own offenses. 41:10 'Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, both me and the chief baker. 41:11 'We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. 41:12 'Now a Hebrew youth was with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related them to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his own dream. 41:13 'And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.' 41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. 41:15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.' 41:16 Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, 'It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.' (NASB)

Even after two additional years added to his prison time, Joseph remained faithful to God as we see in His response to Pharaoh saying, *Bereshit / Genesis 41:16*, וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף אֶת-פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר בְּלִעְדֵּי אֱלֹהִים, 41:16 Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, 'It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.' (NASB) Here Joseph speaks saying it is "God who will answer peace." The commentaries *Or HaChaim on Bereshit / Genesis 41:16, Part 1* and Rashi have the following to say concerning the text.

### ***Or HaChaim on Bereshit / Genesis 41:16, Part 1***

וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף אֶת פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר, *Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, etc. The word "לאמור" here refers to Pharaoh's claim that Joseph claimed he only had to hear a dream and he already had its interpretation ready.*

בלעדי, “this does not depend on me.” Joseph corrects the impression Pharaoh entertained about him. He explains that G’d knows the interpretations of dreams and informs certain human beings of this. The same had taken place when Joseph had told the chief butler and the chief of the bakers that the interpretations were G’d’s, not his. He had invited those men to tell him their dreams in the hope that an interpretation could be found. He had never claimed an exclusive on that knowledge. This is also why he added: אלוקים יענה, “G’d may provide the answer.” He added the word שלום in order to warn Pharaoh not to take offence if perchance the interpretation would not be to his liking and would presage something unpleasant. He should not accuse Joseph on the basis of “the dreams follow the interpretation chosen by the mouth” (of the interpreter). Even if he were to come up with an interpretation that forecast trouble, he was only G’d’s mouth-piece, the source was G’d.

### **Rashi on Genesis 41:16, Part 1**

בלעדי NOT I— (the word is compounded of בל and עדי, it does not extend to me) The wisdom to interpret dreams is not my own, but God will answer — He will put in my mouth an answer that will be for Pharaoh’s welfare.

The rabbis are speaking of the way in which Joseph responded to Pharaoh saying, אלוהים יענה את שלום פרעה, “the Lord will put Pharaoh’s mind at rest.” Based upon this response, Joseph attributed all intelligence and wisdom to the Lord God Almighty. It is the Lord alone who possesses the power to interpret dreams. These things can be seen while reading the book of Daniel. Joseph said that it would be the Lord God who gives him peace of mind so that he would be delivered from what troubled him at that moment. Joseph may also have had something quite different in mind when he said, “may God

*answer the peace of Pharaoh.*” The emphasis Joseph made is upon God who will give the interpretation. This is in contrast to man (ordinary interpreters) who would manipulate the meaning of the dream according to their choice. Joseph however is stating that he will do no such a thing. Joseph would only relate the objective meaning of what Pharaoh had seen in his dream. In the *Talmud Bavli Berachot 56* we find a list of a variety of dreams where the rabbis discuss how the interpretation seemed to contradict the impression left on the dreamer came true, thus proving that much depends on the person who interprets the dream. In Joseph’s case, his interpretation was in submission to God’s will and so would be only what the Lord God Almighty revealed to him.

As we continue reading the Torah portion, we read Joseph saying the following:

### ספר בראשית פרק מא

כה ויאמר יוסף אל-פרעה חלום פרעה אחד הוא את אשר האלהים עשה הגיד לפרעה: כו וְשֵׁבַע פְּרֹת הַטֹּבֹת וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וְשֵׁבַע הַשָּׁבָלִים הַטֹּבֹת וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה חֲלוֹם אֶחָד הוּא: כז וְשֵׁבַע הַפְּרוֹת הַרְקוֹת וְהָרְעֵת הָעֵלֶת אֲחֵרֵיהֶן וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה וְשֵׁבַע הַשָּׁבָלִים הַרְקוֹת שְׁדָפוֹת הַקָּדִים יִהְיוּ שֵׁבַע שָׁנֵי רָעָב: כח הוּא הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל-פְּרֹעֶה אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה הַרְאָה אֶת-פְּרֹעֶה: כט הֵנָּה וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנִים בָּאוֹת שֵׁבַע גְּדוֹל בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: ל וְקָמוּ וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנֵי רָעָב אֲחֵרֵיהֶן וְנִשְׁפַּח כָּל-הַשָּׂבַע בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וְכָל־הָרָעָב אֶת-הָאֶרֶץ: לא וְלֹא-יִנְדַע הַשָּׂבַע בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם הָרָעָב הַהוּא אֲחֵרֵי-כֵן כִּי-כָבֵד הוּא מְאֹד: לב וְעַל הַשָּׁנֹת הַחֲלוֹם אֶל-פְּרֹעֶה פִּעְמָם כִּי-נִכּוֹן הַדְּבָר מֵעַם הָאֱלֹהִים וּמִמֶּהָר הָאֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ:

### ***Bereshit / Genesis 41:25-32***

*41:25 Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, ‘Pharaoh’s dreams are one and the same; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do. 41:26 ‘The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one and the same. 41:27 ‘The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven thin ears scorched by*



*the east wind will be seven years of famine. 41:28 'It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do. 41:29 'Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; 41:30 and after them seven years of famine will come, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will ravage the land. 41:31 'So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it will be very severe. 41:32 'Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, it means that the matter is determined by God, and God will quickly bring it about. (NASB)*

We note in *Bereshit / Genesis 41:32*, Joseph added כִּי-נִכּוֹן הַדָּבָר מֵעַם הַאֱלֹהִים וּמִמָּהֵר הָאֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ, “for the matter is already ready before God and He will proceed forthwith to carry it out.” Here again Joseph attributed everything that would occur to the Lord God and not to anything man could do. Notice at the same time Joseph was showing Pharaoh that man is not a robot. But that everything in his life is in the hands of the God who is above. The words בְּלִעָדֵי אֱלֹהִים “it is not within me, God” is a statement about our freedom of choice whether we will listen to God or to listen to ourselves/man/the-world. The Lord God Almighty is in control, and we are to trust and rely upon the Lord and His will in our lives. The rabbis say that if we examine Joseph’s words carefully, we will find that they parallel the Torah’s report of the story of creation. That report began with the words בְּרֵאשִׁית אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ “at the beginning, G’d created, etc” and ended with the words (Bereshit / Genesis 2:3) אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת, “which God had created as an ongoing process.” Joseph commenced with telling Pharaoh that first and foremost there would be an activity by God, and then concluded saying, לֵב וְעַל הַשָּׁנוֹת הַחֲלוּם אֶל-פְּרֻעָה פֶּעַר, with the words כִּי-נִכּוֹן הַדָּבָר מֵעַם הַאֱלֹהִים וּמִמָּהֵר הָאֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ exactly like we read in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:3*.

These things that we are being taught in Parashat Miketz are related to our being steadfast in waiting upon the Lord and His timing in our lives no matter how long it takes for our deliverance. These are the things that we know, God knows what He is doing (*Tehillim / Psalms*



145:17-19), We are to keep praying, don't faint (*Luke 18:1*), we are to be of good courage (*Tehillim / Psalms 27:14*), and we are to exalt and glorify God in everything, even our pain and persecution (*Tehillim / Psalms 37:34*).

***Tehillim / Psalms 145:17-19***

*145:17 "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. 145:18. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. 145:19. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."* (NASB)

***Luke 18:1***

*18:1 "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"* (NASB)

***Tehillim / Psalms 27:14***

*27:14 "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."* (NASB)

***Tehillim / Psalms 37:34***

*37:34 "Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."* (NASB)

All of the Scripture reveals to us that wisdom is of God and not of ourselves. The life of Joseph teaches us to be courageous in the midst of some of the worst life can throw at us. There are seven lessons Joseph provides for us, (i) to trust in God not in our circumstances, (ii) to have integrity, (iii) to rely and depend upon God, (iv) to manage our successes well and not poorly, (v) to be humble, (vi) to forgive others, and (vii) to pursue God always. The life of Yeshua the Messiah also demonstrates these things for us too. This is why Yeshua said to those he called, "Follow Me" (*Matthew 4:19*) we are to walk in the way

that Yeshua walked, and live by faith and truth in the same way that Yeshua did these things. In this way we demonstrate our faith in the Lord, in his Word, and in His Messiah Yeshua. Remember, salvation is fully an act of God and so the Lord God Almighty, rightly so, receives 100% of the glory. This is also why Yeshua said a person who is born new is born from above (*John 3:3-7*). It is an act of God that is part of the will of God. And so we seek the Lord God Almighty, in the Name of His Son Yeshua, that He would grant us mercy and repentance, such that by our faith (which is given by God) in Yeshua we receive the Spirit of God in our lives, and receive the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life!