

## PARSHAS MIKEITZ – “BE FIT AND READY” – BY DAVID FREEDMAN

וישלח פרעה ויקרא את יוסף  
**ויריצהו מן הבור**  
 ויגלח ויחלף שמלתיו  
 ויבא אל פרעה

**And Pharaoh sent, and he called Joseph, and they rushed him out from the pit, and he shaved, and he changed his clothes, and he came to Pharaoh ( 41.14 )**

So why the rush to stand before Pharaoh? Once out of prison, Joseph prepares himself to stand before Pharaoh. Why does our history repeat itself time after time that we leave in such a hurry? Yes, you can be lucky with last minute travel bargains, but the early booking will give you more certainty of a better ticket.

Joseph is rushed out. One moment a prisoner in jail, the next minute Joseph is standing in front of Pharaoh, interpreting his dreams. The Chafetz Chaim informs us that every decree from Hashem is of fixed duration, and once the time has arrived, Hashem will waste not a moment in carrying out His decree. The Gemorra (Rosh Hashanah 10b) states that Joseph was released from prison on Rosh Hashanah.

The same speed of events happened when the Jews were released from Egypt. (Shemos 12.41) "...and it happened at the end of 430 years, and it happened on that very day..." Rashi explains that once the duration of the decree has ended, Hashem would not allow the Jewish nation to endure Egypt for a moment longer. (Avraham was promised at the Covenant of the Parts, on 15 Nissan (15.13) and Isaac was born on 15 Nissan and the redemption was also on that day).

The Chafetz Chaim informs us that the ultimate redemption will take place in the same manner. When Moshiach, comes, it will be very sudden and unexpected. Just like Joseph, we will be spirited out of our suppression and the "pit of exile".

How fitting it is that just as Joseph rushed out of the temptation of Potiphar's wife (39.12), so too his personal redemption, he was rushed out of the pit.

R Yerucham Levovitz shows us the contrast of Divine redemption to that brought about by man. With Hashem, once the time has arrived, there is not a moment of delay.

With mankind, once man decides to free his fellow man, many stages of form filling and procedures occur before the actual release. A government might decide on a policy change or different course of action, but debate and legislature regulation means it will not be law (and therefore not carried out), for some time. A human ruler might declare the release of a prisoner, but the paperwork must be completed before he is set free.

Once Hashem decides, then the release is immediate.

Yet Joseph took his time. He shaved. He changed his clothes and he came, not ran, to Pharaoh. Rashi explains Joseph did not yet know whether he was freed permanently, while others, Mizrachi etc, explain Joseph knew that his salvation was not Pharaoh's actions, so he need not rush to stand before Pharaoh, because his release was Hashem's doing, so once out of prison, he could take his time.

Joseph had been in prison for 12 years and would need to be dressed in a fitting state to stand before Pharaoh. Yet earlier he had groomed himself excessively (37.2). Joseph could not stand before Pharaoh dishevelled or with undue delay.

Yalkut Meam Loez submits that our verse implies if we must stand before a mortal King dressed appropriately, how much more so the Kings of Kings. Just as Joseph stood before Pharaoh on Rosh Hashanah, so when we stand before our King on the Day of Judgement, we must be clothed in our finest and be fit and ready.

R' Munk states that the downtrodden Jewish nation will be redeemed by miraculous salvation. The Sforno explains that the coming of Moshiach will be very sudden and unexpected.

May Moshiach come speedily in our days

*In Memory of my mother, Braina bat Tzvi, whose Yahrtzeit is 30 Kislev*