

Yosef' s Shabbos in Mitzrayim Earned Him
His Dedication of The Mishkan On Shabbos
by Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

In Bereishis 43:16 we read that when Yosef hear that all of his brothers had come to him he ordered that food be prepared that they should eat with him the afternoon meal. More specifically, it states that animals should be slaughtered and prepared. In Bamidbar Rabbah we are told that this verse specifically refers to preparations for Shabbos. This was no small thing in Mitzrayim. Even though he was Viceroy and perhaps we could say he had the flexibility to keep Shabbos unlike when he was a slave, nevertheless, he did not have to. He chose to keep Shabbos. Because Yosef prepared for and kept Shabbos in Mitzrayim he was rewarded that specifically his descendents should bring sacrifices to dedicate the Mishkan on Shabbos. In Bamidbar 7:48 we are told that the Prince of the Tribe of Ephraim, Elishama Ben Amihud, brought his offerings on the seventh day of the dedications, which according to our mesorah was Shabbos.

The Chasam Sofer asks on the above what really is the relevance of Yosef keeping Shabbos in Mitzrayim to the sacrifices brought at the dedication of the Mishkan? It seems there has to be something deeper here. The Chasam Sofer explains that only public offerings are brought on Shabbos and not private offerings. So how were these offerings at the time of the dedication of the mishkan brought every day for twelve days with no break for Shabbos? The Chasam Sofer explains that since each tribe was a kahal, congregation as we are told in Bereishis 35:11, regarding the birth of Binyamin, it comes out that each kahal could bring its respective offerings on Shabbos. But in the end, Yosef got to offer a special set of dedicational korbonos on Shabbos.