

****MAZAL TOV** WE ARE PLEASED TO INFORM YOU OF THE BIRTH OF OUR "GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER" BORN TO OUR GRAND CHILDREN, NOAM & BRACHA COHEN, MAZAL TOV TO SHLOMO & MIRIAM ZIEGLER PARENTS OF BRACHA AND IRV & CHAYA COHEN THE PARENTS OF NOAM**

I will share with you the way Rav Soloveitchik viewed some aspects of this parasha. Upon being told that Yosef was still alive, Ya'akov at first refused to believe his sons. Finally, after seeing the Agalot (chariots) that Yosef sent to carry them he believes them and Ru'ach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) again rested upon him.

What was the significance of the chariots? Rashi writes that they were meant to remind Ya'akov of the last thing that he and Yosef studied together before Ya'akov sent him on his fateful journey. This is derived because the Torah describes them as the chariots that Yosef sent and not Par'oh. Apparently, Yosef sent his father a spiritual chariot, to lift his spirit by hinting to him that he remembered the last topic they studied together, "Egla Arufa". Par'oh on the other hand wanted to transport Ya'akov in the coveted chariots that he sent. Par'oh thought that the importance of Ya'akov demanded that he ride in comfort, in the royal chariots. The Torah characterizes Par'oh as a very unusual person who had great respect for Ya'akov and his family.

Par'oh was very pleased to learn that these 11 men from K'na'an were Yosef's brothers. Par'oh was intrigued by the fact that Yosef was so brilliant. Not only did he correctly interpret his dreams, but he provided him with a plan on how to prepare for the coming famine. He designed and implemented an unprecedented food collection and storage program as well as the intricate distribution network. Yosef introduced the first recorded rationing plan in history.

Par'oh had a great appreciation of genius. He surmised that if one brother was so brilliant the others must also possess the genes of brilliance. Par'oh concluded that Yosef derived his brilliance from his father. So Par'oh was intrigued to meet Ya'akov face-to-face. Also, Yosef left a lasting impression on the people of Egypt. The people of Egypt were desperate for food due to the famine and then Yosef gave them seeds to plant and he demanded that they contribute a mere 20% to Par'oh, keeping 80% for themselves. In times of antiquity through the middle ages it was unheard of that a ruler would restrict himself to a mere 20% tax on the produce of the country. Yet, Yosef enacted just such a fair tax system in Egypt thousands of years ago.

We also find that the famine affected other nations besides Egypt. If a country exercises complete control over a highly desirable resource that country would surely exact a high price for it, especially from foreigners, and to use the food as a political weapon. Yet Yosef insisted that the food stores be open to all, Egyptian and foreigners alike. Par'oh was impressed with Yosef's strong sense of Chesed and realized that this sensitivity was inherited from his parents. Thus, Par'oh was very excited to meet the father of such a wise individual.

In sending the Agalot to Ya'akov, Yosef was saying that you, father, have taught me well. The Egla Arufa symbolizes responsibility of a leader to his people and I have tried to become that kind of a leader - a leader of Chesed and Yosher

When Ya'akov saw the Agalot he understood the message. He realized that his Mesorah could have a Nesiah that would carry him through the exile. With that in mind, Ya'akov was enveloped by Ru'ach HaKodesh, -Vatechi Ru'ach Ya'akov.

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim

Rabbi Aharon and Libby Ziegler