

Miketz

מִקֵּץ

“From the end”



Discernment

הִבְחָנָה

Hav'chanah



Torah Portion Preview

In today's Torah Portion Yosef (Joseph) remained in prison two additional years after the cupbearer had been released and restored to his previous position. Only when Pharaoh had two disturbing dreams was Yosef remembered by the cupbearer. Yosef's status was then changed from prisoner to second in command of Egypt. In one day Yosef was cleansed, received new garments to wear and given a new name. In one day he was put in the position of ruler over the entire house of Pharaoh. He ruled all the people of Egypt. Only with regard to the throne would Pharaoh be greater. Pharaoh gave Yosef his signet ring and garments of fine linen. He put a gold chain on Yosef's neck and had him ride in the second chariot as the command of “bow the knee” was pronounced before him. All these things occurred after Yosef had suffered in prison approximately twelve years.

Then it came to pass, from the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river.

Genesis 41:1

As Yosef ruled in his position of authority, his brothers were forced to bow down before him to buy grain for food. They had to rely on his grace and mercy to receive life when they deserved death.

~ Focus Passage of Scripture ~

Genesis 42:1-28 & 44:1-17

In Genesis 42:1-6 Ya'kov (Jacob) sent ten of his sons down to Egypt to buy grain. He did not send Binyamin (Benjamin) the second son of the beloved wife, Rachel, because Ya'kov was afraid something might happen to him. Binyamin was his twelfth and youngest son whose mother had died while giving birth to him. Ya'kov believed Binyamin's older brother Yosef had been killed by wild animals, and he was very protective of Binyamin, his only remaining son of Rachel.

When the ten sons of Yisrael (Israel) arrived in Egypt to buy grain, they had to appear before their brother Yosef because he was in charge of all the land and sold grain to all the people. They bowed down before him with their faces to the ground.

Pray First

Father God,

We praise You today because You are a patient God. You desire that no one perishes. Your timing is perfect to bring us to repentance so that we might be reconciled to You.

In Yeshua's Name we pray.

Amen

Read Next

Genesis 41:1-44:17

In Genesis 42:7-14 we learn that although Yosef immediately recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. Yosef restrained himself from revealing his identity to them and treated them harshly. He remembered what God had revealed to him in dreams and acted accordingly. He accused them of being spies as he remembered their cruelty to him, only sparing his life for the profit they received from selling him into slavery. The brothers denied being spies and testified to their innocence, proven by their elderly father and youngest brother back at home. Yosef did not reveal himself to them and continued to accuse them of being spies. Yosef was being patient and using discernment so that his brothers would admit their sin and seek forgiveness.

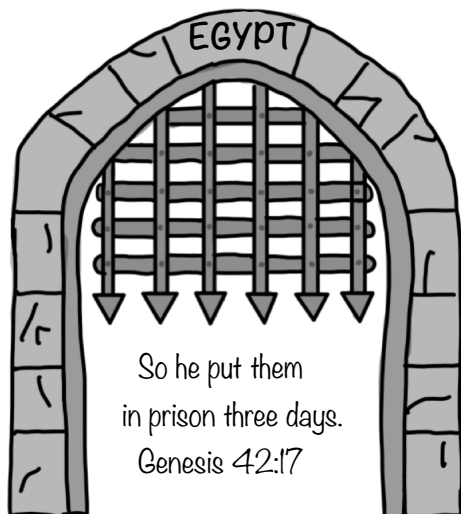
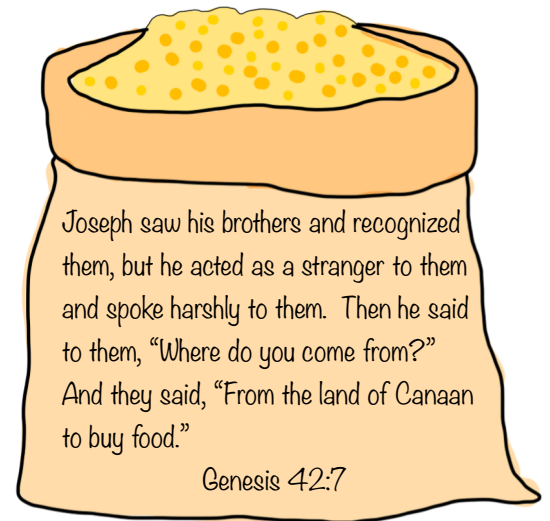
In Genesis 42:15-20 Yosef explained to his brothers what they had to do in order to prove they were not spies. He told them that one would have to return home and bring the brother they spoke of to Egypt. This would be the only thing that would save their lives. He then held all of them in prison for three days. When the three days were completed, he released all but one and sent them home with grain for their families.

In Genesis 42:21-23 Yosef heard his brothers confess their guilt for wanting to kill him and only sparing his life in order to profit money. The brothers confessed their sin against Yosef when they were placed in a similar hardship. They realized they deserved the treatment they were receiving because of what they had done to him.

In Genesis 42:24-28 Yosef turned away from his brothers and wept. He took his brother Shimon (Simeon) and bound him before their eyes just as they had bound him and thrown him in the pit to die alone.

Before the brothers departed Yosef instructed his steward to fill their sacks with grain and return their money in each man's sack. The brothers departed to return home. When one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey, he found the money in the mouth of his sack and told his brothers. They were very troubled and more afraid than before. They realized that not only had they sinned against their brother Yosef, but they had sinned against God. God had chosen their brother Yosef to lead the family, and they had rejected God's perfect plan.

The brothers returned to Ya'kov and told him all that had happened to them. When more grain was needed for food Ya'kov was very reluctant to allow Binyamin to travel back to Egypt with his brothers. Everyone was suffering because they had not agreed with God's plan for Yosef. Finally, Ya'kov allowed Binyamin to go down to Egypt with the others to prove their identity, redeem their brother Shimon from prison and buy more grain.



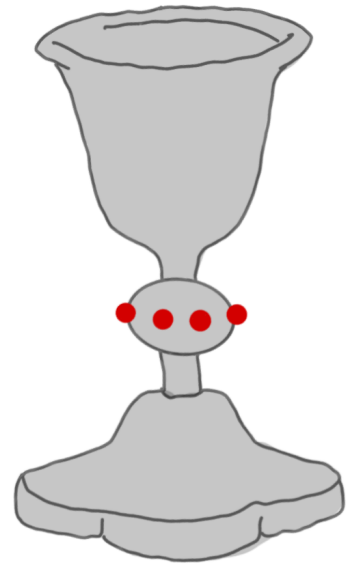
Yosef saw his brothers coming and commanded that they dine at his house. The next day as they were leaving for home, once again, Yosef commanded that each man's money be put in the mouth of his sack of grain. In addition Yosef commanded that his silver cup be placed in the mouth of the youngest brother's sack.

After the brothers departed from the city on their journey home, Yosef sent his steward after them to accuse them of stealing his silver cup. He commanded his steward to ask them, "Why have you repaid evil for good?" When they were overtaken and questioned, they denied that they had done nothing wrong. They stated that if the cup was found amongst them, then the one who sinned against the leader of Egypt by taking the cup would die, and the rest of them would be his slaves! The cup was found in Binyamins's sack, and each man's money was found in their sacks of grain as well. They tore their clothes and submitted fully to Yosef for mercy.

In Genesis 44:16 Yehudah (Judah) spoke to Yosef. He confessed that they had sinned and that God had delivered them into Yosef's hands as slaves.

In Genesis 44:17 Yosef agreed to show mercy on them all by taking only Binyamin as his slave and allowing the rest to return home to their father. Yosef was showing discernment so that his brothers could fully realize what they had done. Yosef's only desire was for his brothers to confess their sin and seek forgiveness from God and man.

When we disagree with God, we are opposing Him, and this is evil in His sight. God never blesses evil. He always uses His perfect discernment to discipline us so that we can realize we have sinned against Him, confess our sin and ask for His perfect mercy and grace to forgive us. The consequences of our sin remain in our lives, but our relationship with God can be restored once we repent and return to follow Him.

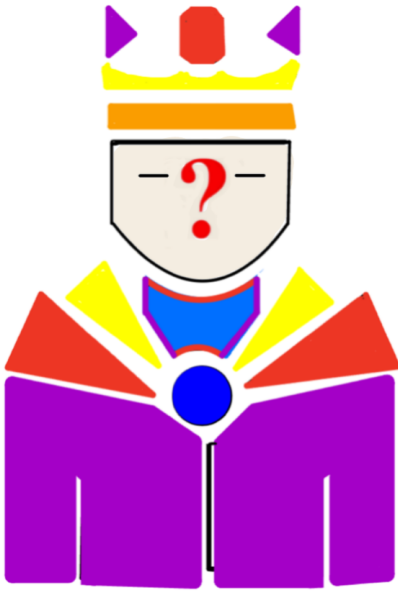


Dreams

When the cupbearer was released from prison, he neglected to speak to Pharaoh on Yosef's behalf. As a result, Yosef remained in prison two more years to the exact date! At that time Pharaoh had two dreams. His dreams were very disturbing to him, and he did not understand their meaning. He called all the wise men and magicians of Egypt to interpret his dreams, but no one could. Suddenly, the cupbearer remembered Yosef and told Pharaoh about the innocent Hebrew man in prison who had rightly interpreted his dream.

In Pharaoh's dreams there was a river, fourteen cows and two stalks of grain each with seven heads. Read Genesis 41:1-7 and draw each of Pharaoh's dreams while he sleeps.





Haftarah

1 Kings 3:15-4:1

In this week's Haftarah we learn that King Shlomo (Solomon) had just awoken from a dream God had given him. In the dream King Shlomo asked God to give him wisdom or an understanding heart to judge the people and discern between good and evil. God said He would grant Shlomo's request in addition to other blessings, if he would walk in God's ways to keep His statutes and commandments. The very first thing King Shlomo did in response was to lead the kingdom in proper worship of God. Therefore, God granted the request of King Shlomo.

After these things, two women who lived in the same house came to King Shlomo. Each woman had given birth to a son. The babies were born only three days apart. One woman's son had died in the middle of the night, so she switched her dead son with the living baby. When the other mother awoke and found the dead baby, she examined him and realized he was not her son. She told the other woman that the living baby belonged to her, but the woman refused to agree. The woman continued to claim the baby she had stolen from the mother of the living son belonged to her. There was no one other than the two women present in the home to witness and testify to the truth. Therefore, the two women brought the dispute to King Shlomo.

After hearing the testimony of the two women, King Shlomo proclaimed there was no way to determine who the living baby's mother was. He ordered a sword to be brought to him and commanded the living son be cut in half with one-half given to each woman. The real mother of the living child spoke first to King Shlomo with compassion for her son, stating: "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!" But the other said, "Let him be neither mine or yours, but divide him" (1 Kings 3:26). Thus, the King had used his God-given gift of wisdom to discern or determine the matter correctly. King Shlomo then ordered justice be done, giving the living son back to the first woman who was the baby's mother.

We must study the Scriptures to know the character of God! Knowing God's character allows us to discern good from evil. If the matter agrees with God's character, it is good. If the matter does not agree with the character of God, it is evil. King Shlomo was able to determine which woman was the mother of the living baby, using the gift of wisdom God had given him. Wisdom is knowing and believing in the word of God and always acting accordingly. We can confidently ask God to give us wisdom when we lack it just as King Shlomo did! God will grant our request for wisdom to discern good from evil when we humbly ask Him, having faith that His thoughts and ways are superior to ours and He desires to guide us into all truth (James 1:5-6).

Pray First

Father God,

We thank You for freely giving us discernment when we agree to follow Your commandments and statutes, desiring to walk in Your ways.

Please increase this desire in us daily as we follow You.

In Yeshua's Name we pray.

Amen

Read Next

1 Kings 3:15-4:1

New Testament

1 Corinthians 2:1-5



In this week's New Testament passage of Scripture we learn that the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God are two different things. The Apostle Sha'ul (Paul) explains this difference in his letter to the Corinthians. Isaiah the prophet of God also proclaimed this truth when he spoke these words from God:

**"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,"
says the LORD. Isaiah 55:8**

Because our thoughts and ways are not like God's, it is very important that we know God's character and focus on making our words and actions line up with Him. We must not rely on the opinion of others or concern ourselves with what they might think of us. Whenever we have a feeling of confusion, anxiety, anger or fear, it is important to humbly pray to God, admitting that we need His help because His thoughts and ways are superior to ours. We need to ask God the Holy Spirit Who lives within us to guide us into a place of peace with full knowledge of how to respond to a situation without sinning against God the Father. After we have asked God the Holy Spirit to help us, it is important to wait until we sense the peace that He will give us, confirming our prayer has been heard and answered before we respond. God the Holy Spirit will then guide us in a manner that will glorify our Heavenly Father Who has perfect thoughts and ways!

The wisdom of God is not only perfect, it is powerful! God desires to give His wisdom to us when we faithfully ask Him with no doubts of its perfection or power. God clearly hears and answers our prayers when we demonstrate our need for His help by depending on Him instead of ourselves or others. It makes God very happy for us to obey His commands while confessing our need for His guidance. Today, believers have God the Holy Spirit within them Who freely gives us the power to think and act in a way that will bring glory to God the Father.

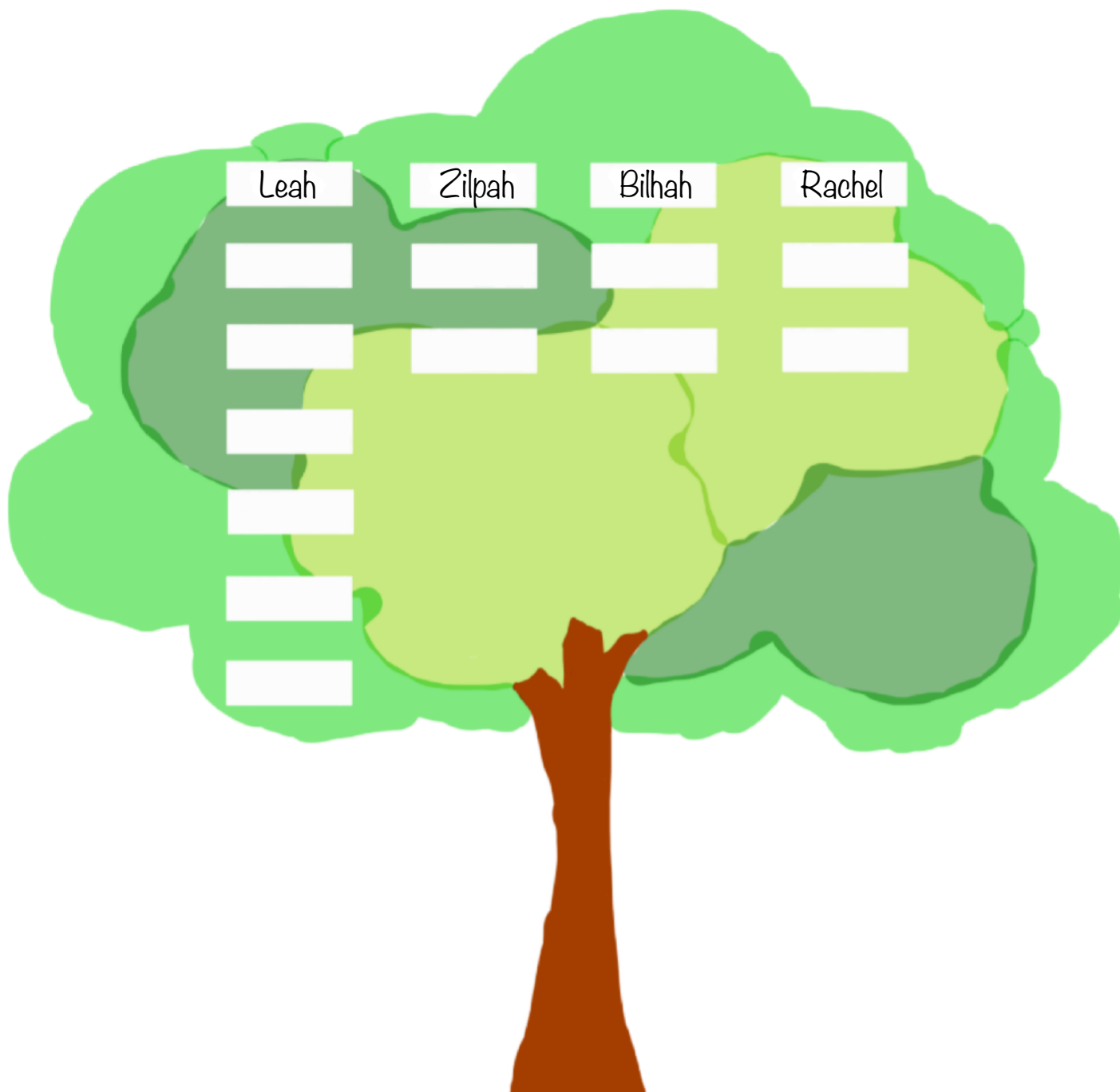
King Shlomo demonstrated discernment for us no in today's Haftarah as he rightly judged between the two women after God granted him the gift of wisdom. King Shlomo did not seek the opinion of others nor was he concerned about what others thought of him. His only concern was to administer justice that would be pleasing to God.

Yosef demonstrated Godly wisdom and discernment in today's Parasha as he patiently continued to interact with his brothers despite his emotions or feelings. He did not react based on his own understanding! Instead he responded in a way that was pleasing to God. Instead of reacting in anger or vengeance he was careful to demonstrate God's character which led to the repentance of his brothers, allowing his reconciliation with them to occur.

Neither Yosef nor King Shlomo had the gift of God the Holy Spirit within them because both men lived before this gift was given to believers. These men knew the character of God and pursued glorifying Him with their lives. As a result, God the Father gave them a special anointing of His wisdom and discernment. Today, believers in Messiah Yeshua have been given the gift of God the Holy Spirit placed within us from God the Father. He is always available to teach us and guide us into all truth. All we need to do is submit to Him humbly in prayer and wait for his guidance.

Mothers and Brothers Review

Directions: Read Genesis 35:22-26. Fill in the names of Ya'kov's 12 sons under the correct wife or maidservant.
(Remember: Zilpah was Leah's maidservant, and Bilhah was Rachel's maidservant.)



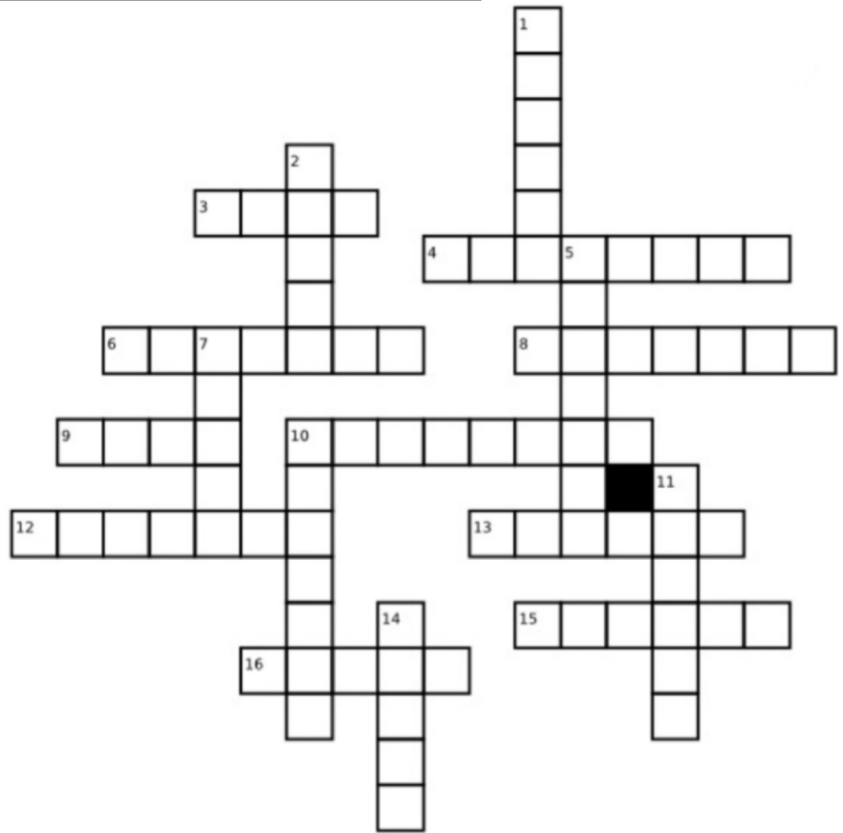
Crossword Puzzle



Directions: Complete the crossword puzzle using the word bank below.

Word Bank

Bilhah	Sarah
Leah	Yitz'chak
Yisrael	Ishmael
Yosef	Rivka
Shimon	Esau
Pharaoh	Ya'kov
Yehudah	Rachel
Binyamin	Zilpah



Down:

- Which brother was bound and left behind in an Egyptian prison (Genesis 42:24)?
- Who was Yitz'chak's mother (Genesis 21:3)?
- What did God change Ya'kov's name to (Gen.32:28)?
- Who was Yitz'chak's wife (Gen. 24:67)?
- Which one of Ya'kov's sons assumed responsibility for Binyamin's safety in order to purchase food from Yosef (Gen. 43:8-10)?
- Which one of Lavan's daughters did Ya'kov work for fourteen years to marry (Gen. 29:30)?
- Which one of Ya'kov sons did God choose to lead the family (Gen. 37:5-10)?

Across:

- Which one of Ya'kov's wives bore him six sons and one daughter (Gen. 29:32-35; 30:17-21)?
- Which brother's sack did the steward find Yosef's cup in (Gen. 44:12)?
- Who was Yitz'chak's father (Gen 21:3)?
- Who was the son of the flesh -born from Abram and Hagar (Gen. 16:16)?
- Who sold his birthright for a bowl of stew (Gen. 25:33-34)?
- Who was the promised son of Avraham and Sarah (Gen. 21:3)?
- To whom did God give two dreams foretelling a seven year famine (Gen. 41:25-32)?
- Who was Leah's maidservant (Gen 29:24)?
- Who was Rachel's maidservant (Gen 29:24)?
- Which one of Yitz'chak's sons pursued the will of God (Malachi 1:2)?

