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News

CHAG CHANUKAH SAMEACH

On behalf of the entire Jewish Adventist Friendship family, I would like to wish you all a most joyous Chanukah. May the light of the Menorah shine forever in your hearts and homes as the light of Yeshua the Messiah.

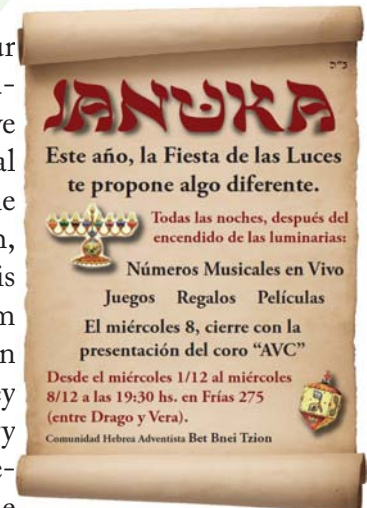
STUDY CENTER DIRECTORS MEETING IN AMMAN

Every year in December, the General Conference Global Mission Study Centers meet somewhere in the world to speak about the specific ministry of the five study centers that lead the work among unreached people. Let me remind how this is organized. The Secretariat Office at the General Conference among its many responsibilities takes care of the Mission Board which deals with the Inter-Division Missionaries and also Global Mission. Global Mission which is dedicated to reach the unreached people is organized around five "Study Centers" for Buddhism, Hinduism, Muslims, Judaism and Secular-Postmodern people. Each year these groups meet with Gary Krause, Director of Global Mission who is also a Secretariat Associate, Mike Ryan, vice-President of the GC, G.T Ng, Secretary of the GC, Homer Trecartin, Undersecretary of the GC and the people of the World Mission Institute at Andrews University. We are about 25 people meeting together. I have presented a report of our work and it is good that I receive regularly news from our Jewish Adventist Congregations, thanks to these news I have presented a report that pleased everyone.



CHANUKAH

Many of our congregation have done some special program for the feast of Chanukah, I received also this good news from David Barzola in Buenos Aires. They have prepared a very attractive advertisement to invite people to their meeting, this one can be a good inspiration for our congregations all over the world.



Shabbat Mikets
December 4, 2010
27 Kislev 5771

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During that meeting I have presented also a strategic plan for the next five quinquennium (2010-2015). I hope to share that with each leader of Jewish Adventist congregation very soon. I hope that everybody will accept some of the suggestions of this plan in order to improve our ministry



OVERVIEW

MIKETS מִקֵּטִים

GENESIS 41:1-44:17

It is two years later. Pharaoh has a dream. He is unsatisfied with all attempts to interpret it. Pharaoh's wine chamberlain remembers that Joseph accurately interpreted his dream while in prison. Joseph is released from prison and brought before Pharaoh. He interprets that soon will begin seven years of abundance followed by seven years of severe famine. He tells Pharaoh to appoint a wise person to store grain in preparation for the famine. Pharaoh appoints him as viceroy to oversee the project.

Pharaoh gives Joseph an Egyptian name, Tsafnat Panayach, and selects Osnat, Joseph's ex-master's daughter, as Joseph's wife. Egypt becomes the granary of the world.

Joseph has two sons, Menashe and Ephraim. Yaakov sends his sons to Egypt to buy food. The brothers come before Joseph and bow to him.

Joseph recognizes them but they do not recognize him. Mindful of his dreams, Joseph plays the part of an Egyptian overlord and acts harshly, accusing them of being spies. Joseph sells them food, but keeps Shimon hostage until they bring their brother Binyamin to him as proof of their honesty.

Joseph commands his servants to replace the purchase money in their sacks. On the return journey, they discover the money and their hearts sink. They return to Yaakov and retell everything. Yaakov refuses to let Binyamin go to Egypt, but when the famine grows unbearable, he accedes.

Yehuda guarantees Binyamin's safety, and the brothers go to Egypt. Joseph welcomes the brothers lavishly as honored guests. When he sees Binyamin he rushes from the room and weeps. Joseph instructs his servants to replace the money in the sacks, and to put his goblet inside Binyamin's sack. When the goblet is discovered, Joseph demands Binyamin become his slave as punishment. Yehuda interposes and offers himself instead, but Joseph refuses.

WHAT TYPE OF PERSON ARE YOU?

The Torah states: "And Jacob sat..." (Genesis 37:1). Rashi, the great commentator, cites the Sages who say that Jacob wanted to live in peace and serenity. However, this was not to be. The troubles of his son Joseph began. The Almighty said, "Is it not sufficient for the righteous that they receive their reward in the world to come? Why do they need to live in serenity in this world?" What is wrong with wanting to live in serenity? Jacob desired serenity not so that he could devote his time to personal pleasures, but rather to be able to engage in spiritual pursuits.

Rabbi Yeruchem Levovitz explains that the purpose of this world is for a person to elevate himself by passing the numerous tests that come to him. The goal is spiritual growth from every life situation. Therefore, it was considered improper for Jacob to place his focus on serenity.

This, says Rav Yeruchem, is an attitude we should all internalize. Every occurrence in this world can make you a better person. When you have this awareness your attitude toward everything that happens to you in life will be very positive. Before, during, and after every incident that occurs reflect on your behavior and reactions. Ask yourself, "What type of person am I after this happened? How did I do on this test? Did I pass it in an elevated manner?"

HOW DO YOU SPEAK ABOUT OTHERS?

Pharaoh dreamt two disturbing dreams and all his wise men failed to interpret them to his satisfaction. Pharaoh's chief butler had previously been in the same jail as Joseph, where Joseph successfully interpreted his dreams. The butler now suggests that Pharaoh seek the advice of Joseph. Note how the butler recommends Joseph's talents to Pharaoh: "And there was with us there (in jail) a Hebrew lad (na'ar), a slave to the Captain of the Guard and we told him (our dreams), and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he interpreted" (Genesis 41:12). Rabbi Packouz asks the question: What lesson for life can we learn from analyzing the butler's words?

Rashi comments on the butler's statement to Pharaoh: "Cursed be the wicked, for even their goodness is not complete. The butler praises Joseph's ability, but in contemptuous terms:

- a) na'ar (a lad) — a fool, and not fit for greatness,
- b) Hebrew — he doesn't even know our language,
- c) a slave — it is written in the statutes of Egypt that a slave cannot rule nor don royal garments.

Rabbi Yeruchem Levovitz comments that the butler actually meant to speak well of Joseph, for Joseph had been kind to him. Nevertheless, a completely favorable statement will never emerge from the lips of a wicked person. Even when praising someone, he will off-handedly add a derogatory comment.

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin says "Every person should check his own behavior with regard to this pitfall. When you speak favorably of someone, do you habitually add something unfavorable? For example: "She is very charitable, and always makes sure that people know it," or "He's very kindhearted now, but you should have seen him five years ago."

WHY DID NOT JOSEPH TRY TO CONTACT HIS FATHER DURING ALL HIS TIME IN EGYPT?

In his commentary on the Torah, Nachmanides (Ramban) poses this question: Why didn't Joseph try to contact his father during all his time in Egypt? After all, the distance between the land of Israel and Egypt is only few days of travelling. Why, when he became the head of Potiphar's household — and could easily do such a thing — did not Joseph send a letter to his father, informing him that he was alive and well? Certainly, once he became viceroy, the second most powerful man in Egypt, he could have done anything he wanted. All those many years of Jacob languishing, mourning for his favorite son, could have been avoided. Didn't Joseph miss his father just as much? How could he be apart from him all those years?

The Jewish tradition give several answers to this question: Nachmanides says that Joseph could not contact Jacob until the dreams of his youth had come true. Joseph had dreamt that his brothers would one day bow to him, and his revelation of this dream had set off the brothers' jealous rage that led to his eventual sale into slavery. Only when the dream came true could Joseph be vindicated and reveal himself.

Rabbi Shimshon of Sens, one of the authorities in the school of Tosafot suggests: "Had Joseph sent a message about everything which happened, his brothers would have scattered in every direction, because of the embarrassment. Therefore, Joseph worked slowly to bring them back to avoid embarrassing them. His intention was good." (Tosafot Hashalem)

According to Rabbi Shimshon, the dreams of Joseph's youth had nothing to do with his plan. Rather, he had a problem: How to inform his father that he'd been in Egypt all this time, because his brothers sold him as a slave. Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch says; "... Joseph's consideration in not sending a letter to his father in his years of success was: What would Jacob gain in getting one son back, if in the process he would lose ten? ... Therefore, Joseph used all the subterfuge, and in this was certainly worthy of the wisdom of Joseph." (Rabbi Shimshon R. Hirsch 42:9)

JOSEPH'S BEAUTY

The Torah's comments on Joseph's physical appearance are interesting: "Joseph was handsome and of fine appearance. (Genesis 39:6) This comment is not made in Joseph's youth, or in the most logical context, the first time that he is introduced in the text. Rather, it appears only after Joseph has endured the ridicule of his brothers, sale and enslavement. The simple understanding is that the information is conveyed to explain why he attracts the attention of Potiphar's wife.

What is the source of Joseph's good looks? The last person the Torah described as possessing beautiful looks was his mother Rachel: "And Rachel was beautiful and of fine appearance." (Genesis 29:17) We may therefore conclude that Joseph looked like his mother. In fact both the Midrash and the Zohar allude to this connection. Rabbi Yitzchak said, "Throw a stick to the ground, and it will land near the place you found it. For it says 'And Rachel was beautiful, and of fine appearance.' Therefore Joseph was handsome. [Midrash Rabba 86] The Midrash is saying that "an apple doesn't fall far from the tree" and the source of Joseph's beauty was Rachel. The Zohar goes a bit further: Whenever Joseph would walk by Jacob, he would look at Joseph, and his (Jacob's) soul would be restored, as if he was looking at the mother of Joseph, for the beauty of Joseph was similar to the beauty of Rachel. (Zohar 216b)

A CHANUKAH STORY

A woman named Yehudit played an important part in the story of Chanukah.

Yehudit was an exceptionally beautiful woman. She asked to be introduced to the Syrian General Helifornos, who was impressed with her beauty and wisdom. At their meeting, she offered him salty aged cheese and strong wine which she brought with her. The cheese made him thirsty so he drank much wine which put him into a deep sleep.

With a silent prayer on her lips asking G-d for strength, she beheaded him with his own sword, placed his head in a basket, and returned with it to Jerusalem. The Macabees placed Helifornos' head high up on a pole for everyone to see.

When his soldiers saw that their general was dead, they became frightened and ran away. Thus, Yehudit contributed greatly to the victories of the Macabees. To commemorate the heroism of Yehudit, many women refrain from working while the Chanukah candles remain lit. Some have a custom to eat cheese on Chanukah in remembrance of Yehudit's brave act which came about as a result of serving cheese to Helifornos.

HOW TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD?

A senior rabbi once gave advice to a younger rabbi, "When I assumed the rabbinical position in this town, I was full of enthusiasm and ready to change the entire town for the better.

But very soon I realized that it was no easy task. In fact, it was impossible, so I decided to concentrate on my neighbors. But even that wasn't working so I decided to put all my energy into bettering my family. When I realized that I wasn't as successful as I had planned, I decided to concentrate on improving myself!"

"Then it all came together. When my family saw how hard I was working at improving myself, they tried to better themselves too. When my neighbors saw the change in my family, they

too were affected for the better. And soon, the entire town started improving and bettering their ways!"

This is one of the lessons which the Chanukah candles teach us. The Chanukah candles are lit within the home to illuminate the outside. To illuminate others with the light of the Torah, one must begin within their own home. Only then can one expect to affect others as well.

CHANUKAH

Before the USSR let the Jews leave for Israel, Jews used to hire a guide to smuggle them out of Russia. One Chanukah a group of Jews were playing "cat and mouse" with a Soviet army patrol as they approached the border. When the guide thought they had lost the patrol, he announced an half-hour break before continuing the trek. One of the escapees, hearing the "magic" number of "one-half hour" - the minimum time a Chanukah candle must be lit to fulfill the mitzvah - pulls out his menorah, sets up the candles, says the blessing and starts to light the candles. The other escapees immediately pounce upon him and the menorah to put out the candles - when the Soviet patrol moves in and completely encircles them. The head of the army patrol speaks: "We were just about to open fire and wipe you out when I saw that man lighting the Chanukah candles. I was overcome with emotion; I remember my *zaideh* (grandfather) lighting Chanukah candles I have decided to let you go in peace."

EDITOR

A newsletter published by the
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HAFTARA

1Kings 3:15-4:1

PARASHA: Joseph is well known as the one who can solve problem, and explain dreams. “And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” (Genesis 41:15-16).

HAFTARA: This text of 1Kings 3 is about Salomon the wisest man on the earth. “God gave Solomon very great wisdom” (1Kings 4:29). Here is the most famous story about the wisdom of Solomon: “Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. The one woman said, “Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. Then this woman’s son died in the night, because she lay on him. She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne.” But the other woman said, “No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours.” The first said, “No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine.” So they argued before the king. Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead’; while the other says, ‘Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one.’” So the king said, “Bring me a sword,” and they brought a sword before the king. The king said, “Divide the living boy in two; then give half to the one, and half to the other.” But the woman whose son was alive said to the king—because compassion for her son burned within her—“Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!” The other said, “It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.” Then the king responded: “Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.” All Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice (1Kings 3:16-28). The wisdom of Joseph and Salomon are similar that is why the Rabbis have chosen this haftara to go with the story of Joseph.

BRIT HACHADASHA

Mark 13:5-17

Joseph announce to Pharaoh what will be the future. Years of abundance and years of famine. “Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one and the same; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, as are the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind. They are seven years of famine. It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do.” (Genesis 41:25-28).

Yeshua is the one who is full of wisdom and who is able to reveal the future. He announces to his disciples what will be the signs of his coming back “Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs. “As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ,” (Mark 13:5-13)

The description of our world is exactly what Yeshua announced, earthquake, war, lack of love and the good news is now spread all over the world. Yeshua’ prophecy is true and will be, exactly like the prophecy of Joseph was true.

