

Torah: B'resheet (Genesis) 41:1 – 44:17
Haftarah: M'lakim Alef (1 Kings) 3:15-4:1
B'rit Hadashah: Philippians 2:1-11

	<i>year 1</i> 41:1-52	<i>year 2</i> 41:53-43:15	<i>year 3</i> 43:16-44:17
1	41:1 – 4	41:53 – 57	43:16 – 18
2	41:5 – 7	42:1 – 5	43:19 – 25
3	41:8 – 14	42:6 – 18	43:26 – 29
4	41:15 – 24	42:19 – 28	43:30 – 34
5	41:25 – 38	42:29 – 38	44:1 – 6
6	41:39 – 43	43:1 – 7	44:7 – 10
7	41:44 – 52	43:8 – 15	44:11 – 17

and the seven years of abundance came to an end / that were in the land of Egypt	<i>va'tik'léynah shéva' sh'ney ha'savá' asher hayah b'éretz Mitz'ráyim</i>	וַתִּכְלֶינָה שְׁבַע שָׁנֵי הַשָּׂבַע אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
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Aliyah Highlights

- Gen. 41:53-57** The occurrence of severe (7-year) famines appears in ancient Near Eastern non-biblical literature (e.g. Epic of Gilgamesh). This not only affected Egypt, but “all lands.” Under the authority of his adopted father, Pharaoh, Yosef’s salvific actions unfold.
- Gen. 42:1-5** Ya’aqov saw others returning from Egypt with grain. He orders his helpless sons to take action. It’s been 20 years since we last saw the mourning Ya’aqov, inconsolable at the loss of his favored son. Binyamin has replaced his full brother Yosef in this role. The brothers “descend” to Egypt as the “sons of Israel,” suggesting the shift from “family” to the seed of a “nation.”
- Gen. 42:6-18** Yosef’s childhood dream is fulfilled (Ge. 37:7). He now schemes against the schemers, who have not been together in over 20 years. But where is his younger brother? His first test is to imprison the brothers together for three days knowing that the fate of all would be placed in the hands of one who would return home and bring Binyamin back as proof of their story.
- Gen. 42:19-28** Yosef compassionately changes his mind to allow all but one to return home with the precious lifesaving relief. The brothers unknowingly confess their guilt (Ge. 37:22) before Yosef. Yosef wept. Containers filled with grain, and money unknowingly returned, the brothers set off for home. Finding their money restored creates a sense of foreboding.
- Gen. 42:29-38** They return, carefully crafting their story for their father. The (re)discovery of their bags of money (v.35) seems prearranged. Re’uven’s strange attempt at leadership misses the point for Ya’aqov. The perspective of “my son” instead of “your brother” implies a rebuke and echoes what the brother’s said when Ya’aqov was presented with Yosef’s bloody garment (Ge. 37:32).
- Gen. 43:1-7** Reu’ven has lost credibility (Ge. 35:22). Shim’on is in Egypt. Levi likely lost status when he slaughtered the men of Sh’khem with Shim’on (Ge. 34:30). So it is Y’hudah who steps up.
- Gen. 43:8-15** Y’hudah’s approach is solid, sober, and real. Yosef responds to the inevitable. The “gift” (*minkha* – מִנְחָה) is similar to the wares which accompanied Yosef on his caravan into Egyptian slavery (Ge. 37:25)

Parashah 10-2 Mikketz מִקֵּץ

Theme

Brothers – Its been 20 years since Yosef was exiled from his family, without a word about his brothers, except for Y'hudah's "chapter" of self-discovery. Why? Because there was simply nothing to say about them. They led empty lives, accomplishing nothing under the weight of what they did to Yosef and to their father. These were grown men who had their own families to provide for, yet it takes the grieving Ya'aqov to kick them into action (Ge. 42:1). They are living in The Land, physically free yet enslaved in spiritual exile, while Yosef is physically enslaved in Egypt but living in spiritual freedom. What's more ironic is that the brothers now need Yosef, and he will walk them through the process of coming to terms with what they have done, freeing them from their self-imposed prison, their self-imposed spiritual exile, to take responsibility for what they did and find forgiveness. And here's the beauty of it – they all see God's hand in ALL of it.

Repentance: Maimonides asks, "What proves complete repentance?" He who is confronted by the identical situation in which he transgressed and it lies within his power to commit the transgression again but he nevertheless abstains... out of repentance and not out of fear [of being caught]..." Yosef crafts such a situation: would his brothers protect Binyamin or betray him as they did Yosef?

Thought Focus

What is the difference between Yosef and his brothers? Yosef found the *moral clarity* to act in a way that expressed a victory of light over darkness. His actions were relatively simple (not easy!) and consistently revealed the ability to extend himself and care for those around him. His success was self-defined when he said to his brothers, "Do what I say and stay alive, for I fear God" (Ge. 42:18).

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (41:1) For what are you waiting on God's timing? (1Ki 18:21, Psa 13:2, Dan 8:13, Jer 12:4, Mar 9:19, Joh 10:24, Rom 5:1-5, Heb 12:1-3)
2. (41:15) Are you prepared to answer those who ask for your help? (1Pe 3:15, Rom 10:14-15, 2Co 5:19-20)
3. (41:30) Do you bless God because He is in control of today's world events? (Isa 7:18-19, Isa 44:28, Psa 2:1-12, Isa 45:1-7, Rev 19:11-16)
4. (41:53) Not one bushel of grain was missing from God's plan. Do you trust God to provide abundance for the lean times? (Jos 23:14, 1Ki 8:56, Isa 55:10-11, Psa 34:8-14, 1Th 5:23-24)
5. (42:19-20) Are you honest? Do your actions and words confirm each other? (Psa 119:57-60, Jer 11:4-5)
6. (43:16) Do you meet with God on His schedule, or yours? (Joh 9:4-5, Mat 24:36-37, Hab 2:3, Rom 13:11, 2Pe 3:9-10)
7. (43:30) How are you moved to action by true compassion? (Mat 9:36, Luk 7:11-13, Joh 11:35, Luk 10:33-34, Mat 20:32, Luk 19:41-44, Psa 119:57-60, Luk 13:34-35)