

GREAT FOR SHARING
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

PARSHAS
MIKEITZ

בְּשִׁיטְחָא

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אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

RESPECT THE OFFICE

Our *Parshah* introduces another set of dreams, this time dreamed by Pharaoh. Pharaoh woke up in a fright, and summoned all of his advisors, asking them to explain the meaning of his dreams. None of the explanations sufficed, and Pharaoh was forced to seek additional counsel.

At this point, the cupbearer informed Pharaoh of a prisoner who had a talent for explaining dreams. Without a moment to lose, Pharaoh had Yosef pulled out of prison and standing in front of Pharaoh.¹

In the dizzying speed that catapults Yosef from lowly prisoner to second-in-command we might overlook one small detail. The *Passuk* records that before Yosef was taken in front of Pharaoh, Yosef was given a haircut and a change of clothing. In the normal course of events, this would not be surprising - anyone would dress up properly before meeting a king. However, this was not a normal situation. The *Medrash*² states that the dreams had agitated Pharaoh so deeply that he was on the verge of death! These were no ordinary dreams, and only their true meaning would bring peace to Pharaoh.

With this background, it now becomes harder to understand the need for a new haircut. True, Yosef probably did not look presentable, but the king needed him, and needed him now! The haircut could wait!

The *Medrash*³ explains that while it is true Pharaoh needed him, it nevertheless would be a terrible affront to stand before a king while not properly attired. Pharaoh himself, despite his desperation, was willing to wait until Yosef had tidied up, and was presentable. There is something larger than Pharaoh's personal needs, and that is the kingship. Yes, Pharaoh the person needed Yosef. But Pharaoh the king needed Yosef to be dignified.

The *Ralbag*⁴ applies this to our daily lives. Every day we have the opportunity to speak to the King of Kings. We stand before Him when we pray, knowing the He is in front of us, listening to our prayers. When we stand before Him, the *Ralbag* says, we should not look disheveled or sloppy. By having the proper deference to Hashem during *Tefillah*, we will be able to bring our *Tefillos* to another level.

1 Bereishis 41:1-14

2 Bereishis Rabbah 89:7

3 Bereishis Rabbah 89:9

4 Ralbag on Mikeitz, תועלת הראשון

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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

This section is usually focused on finding ways to practically apply ideas that we find in the *Parshah*. By implementing the exercises in our lives, we are able to grow in a particular area. This week, however, we already find a practical idea in the *Parshah*. However, it would be prudent to explore the benefits of this idea.

Besides looking presentable, is there any value in tidying up before *Tefillah*? There certainly is! If we accustom ourselves to taking a moment before *Tefillah* to tuck our shirts in, brush the dirt off, and wash our hands, we will start to really feel that Hashem is right in front of us, and that we are about to have a conversation with our Creator.

It is a special feeling to know that Hashem is interested in our life, but we often don't take the necessary time to reflect on this. By taking the few moments needed to prepare to *Tefillah*, we are doing an action that tells ourselves, "This is real! Hashem is right here in front of me!" Not only will this augment our *Tefillah*, but it will enhance our overall relationship with Hashem.

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It is imperative that we study from Mussar seforim such as... Chovos HaLevavos, with excitement and vigor, each and every day.

- R' Elimelech M'Lizhensk, Hanhagos Ha'Adam, section 4

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

It was Yechiel Wasserman's* first day on the job. Not a prestigious job, mind you. In fact, not even a paying job. Yechiel was a summer intern at an accounting firm owned by a friend of his father's. However, it was something to keep him busy during the summer, and would give him some valuable experience that he could put on his resume.

His father's friend, Mr. Kaplan, had told him that the firm had a dress code that he must adhere to. White shirt, dark suit, and dress shoes. "I'm just an intern," thought Yechiel, as he made his to work. "I'm not sure why they care what I wear; I'll probably be fetching coffee all day anyway."

Yechiel was wrong, but not by much. He didn't just fetch coffee, he also ran copies in the copy room, and at one point was asked to help move a piece of furniture. Not much accounting on his first day, but he was assured that he would get some hands-on experience at some point.

Later that evening, Yechiel, still in his dress attire, decided to walk to the local grocery store. It was a beautiful day outside, and the walk wasn't very long, especially because Yechiel knew a shortcut.

As he neared his shortcut, Yechiel paused, as if struck by a sudden thought. Yechiel contemplated the same route he had taken for years. The shortcut would require that he cross over a very short fence, about the height of his knees, walk across the grass, and then cross another fence. It wasn't that he was afraid to get his suit or dress shoes dirty. It was that he simply felt that it wouldn't be respectful. Dressed as he was, he felt that it would be ill-mannered to step over the fence and trod upon the grass on the other side.

He was struck by how odd the thought was - after all, he was the same Yechiel, and his new job wasn't particularly respectful. Nevertheless, the clothing simply didn't allow him to act a certain way.

Having a newfound appreciation for his suit, Yechiel continued on to the supermarket - taking the long way.

Dressed as he was, he felt that it would be ill-mannered to step over the fence and trod upon the grass on the other side.

**Based on a true story, names have been changed.*

DID YOU KNOW?

- Learning Torah before *Davening* is one way of giving honor to Hashem.¹
- The *Kohanim* wore special clothing in the *Beis Hamikdash* in order to inspire themselves and remember before Whom they are serving.²
- When the angels praise Hashem, they raise their voices, as they do not know where to direct their attention. But people whisper when they *Daven*, because Hashem is right there in front of them.³

1 *Tanna D'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah*, 2:17

2 *Sefer HaChinuch*, Mitzvah 99

3 *Yalkut Shimoni Devarim*, Remez 825