

The ספר עיטורי תורה points out that חנוכה almost always coincides with פרשת מקץ. There's more than meets the eye here with the פרשה. Many רמזים appear. His first example is how we can align the scraggly פרות and the שבלים consuming the תבואות and the fat animals with חנוכה, where we say, “מסרת גבורים ביד” - an interesting perspective.

Something he does not mention but which came to mind is an idea that Rabbi Oelbaum frequently brings up in his שייעור: how do you connect the beginning of the פרשה to its end? The beginning of the פרשה states, וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שָׁנָתִים יָמִים וּפְרַעַה חָלָם, - an introduction to a momentous confrontation and meeting between two completely different and conflicting ideologies: פרעה and יוסף. A tremendous פגישׁה, a tremendous confrontation. The end of the פרשה is, חֲלִילָה לִי מַעֲשׂוֹת זֶה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נִמְצָא הִגְבִּיעַ בְּיָדוֹ הוּא יְהוָה לִי עֶבֶד וְאַתֶּם עָלָיו, לְשָׁלוֹם אֶל אֲבִיכֶם.

The concept of שלום appears, but more importantly, יוסף is telling the brothers, after they found the גביע in בנימין's sack, “Go home. I'll take care of בנימין; just send my regards to your father.” This פגישה, this confrontation, sets up another momentous confrontation in פרשת יהודה: בנימין standing up on behalf of בנימין to try to save him from this ruler of מצרים. The confrontation between יוסף and his brothers reaches its climax at the end of this פרשה and is resolved in פרשת ויגש. What can we learn from this?

What we learn is that all confrontations in the world stem from **הקדוש ברוך הוא**. **הקדוש ברוך הוא** sets these things up for our benefit if we recognize they are His doing. We must respond properly to them and learn what we can from them. What can we do in our lives, as individuals and as a people, when we encounter these meetings, these **נִסִּיּוֹנוֹת** in our personal lives?

Here's an interesting vort ascribed to the Gerrer Rebbe. One of the Gerrer Rebbes, R' Avraham Mordechai, passed away very young. It was said about him that he had **אריכות ימים**. People questioned this, saying, "What do you mean? He died very young." The response was, "He did not have **אריכות שנים**; rather, he had **אריכות ימים**." This is an interesting vort. What do we mean by **אריכות ימים**, and what do we mean by **אריכות שנים**?

At the beginning of the פרשה, it says מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתִים יָמִים. This is generally translated as, “And it was at the end of two full years.” The words שְׁנָתִים and יָמִים are used. שְׁנָתִים means years, and יָמִים means days. If days are not years and years are not days, what does this mean? The sefer עיטורי תורה brings in the name of רב יחיאל ממגליניצה, a chassddish Rebbe, quoting his father זצ"ל:

One time, his father's נשמה went up to שמים. In שמים, they brought a young נשמה and gave him the name זקן. Immediately after, they brought an elderly נשמה, a נשמה ימים, זקן ושבע ימים, and called him not only נער but even ילד and תינוק. The Rebbe asked, "How is this possible in עולם האמת? This is עולם האמת, and these statements seem untrue." They replied, "This young man accomplished so much in his short time in עולם הזה. Every day of his life was like a year. The elderly man, despite living many years, accomplished very little. Thus, he is considered like a תינוק." This explains the פסוק וְיָהִי מִקֵּץ שָׁנָתִים יָמִים צרה. צרה is a לשון of ויהי. It is a צרה for a person if after all their years; they have only a few days of accomplishments. Every day must count as a year, not, הם ושלוש, the reverse.

We must utilize our time to its fullest. When we have time for חסד, we should perform חסד. If we have spare time, we should grab a מהילים, משניות, ספר, or anything that allows us to fulfill our תפקיד in life. By doing so, we achieve both אריכות שנים and אריכות ימים.

