# Tzafnat Paneach Dream Interpretation

Section 1: Who is the Oneirocritic (Dream Interpreter)?

1) Genesis 37:5-10 בראשית ל״ז:ה-י

- (5) Yosef dreamt a dream, and told it to his brothers—from then on they hated him still more—;
- (6) he said to them: Pray hear, this dream that I have dreamt:
- (7) Now here, we were binding sheaf-bundles out in the field, and here, my sheaf arose, and it was standing upright, and here, your sheaves were circling round and bowing down to my sheaf!
- (8) His brothers said to him: Would you surely be king over us? Or would you surely rule us? From then on they hated him still more—for his dreams, for his words.
- (9) But he dreamt still another dream, and recounted it to his brothers; he said: Here, I have dreamt still [another] dream: now here, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!
- (10) [When] he recounted it to his father and his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him: What kind of dream is this that you have dreamt!
- (11) Shall we surely come, I, your mother and your brothers, to bow down to you to the ground?

וַיַּחֶלֹם יוֹסֵף חָלוֹם וַיַּגָּד לְאֵחֵיו וַיּוֹסְפוּ עוֹד שְׁנֹא אֹתוֹ:

ַויֹאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שִּׁמְעוּ־נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתִּי:

וְהִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ מְאַלְמִים אֲלֻמִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה קָמָה אֲלֻמָּתִי וגם־נִצָּבָה וְהַנֵּה תִּסְבֵּינַה אֲלֵמֹתֵיכֶם וַתִּשְׁתַחֵוֵין לַאֵלֵמַתִי:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֶחָיו הֲמָלֹךְ תִּמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ אִם־מָשׁוֹל תִּמְשׁלֹ בָּנוּ וַיּוֹסְפּוּ עוֹד שׁנֹא אֹתוֹ על־חַלמֹתיו ועל־דּבריו:

וַיַּחְלֹם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אַחֵר וַיְסַפֵּר אֹתוֹ לְאֶחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה חָלַמְתִּי חַלוֹם עוֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיֵּרֶח וְאַחַד עָשָׂר כּוֹכָבִים מִשְׁתַּחָוִים לִי:

וַיְסַפֵּר אֶל־אָבִיו וְאֶל־אֶחָיו וַיִּגְעַר־בּוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתָּ הֲבוֹא נָבוֹא אֲנִי וְאִמְךְ וְאַחֶיךְ לְהִשְּׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךְ אַרְצַה:

Question: Do you need to be prophetic to interpret dreams?

#### 2) Genesis 40:5-19

- (5) both of them—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—dreamed in the same night, each his own dream and each dream with its own meaning.
- (6) When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were distraught.
- (7) He asked Pharaoh's courtiers, who were with him in custody in his master's house, saying, "Why do you appear downcast today?"
- (8) And they said to him, "We had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." So Joseph said to them, "Surely God can interpret! Tell me [your dreams]."
- (9) Then the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph. He said to him, "In my dream, there was a vine in front of me.

וַיַּחַלְמוּ חֲלוֹם שְׁנֵיהֶם אִישׁ חֲלמוֹ בְּלַיְלָה אֶחָד אִישׁ כְּפִתְרוֹן חֲלמוֹ הַמַּשְׁקֶה וְהָאֹפֶה אֲשֶׁר לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר אֲסוּרִים בְּבֵית הַסּהַר:

ַנַיָּבֹא אֲלֵיהֶם יוֹסֵף בַּבּקֶר וַיַּרְא אֹתָם וְהִנָּם זֹעֲפִים:

וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־סְרִיסֵי פַּרְעֹה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בְמִשְׁמַר בֵּית אֲדֹנָיו לֵאמֹר מַדּוּעַ פְּנֵיכֶם רָעִים הַיּוֹם:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו חֲלוֹם חָלַמְנוּ וּפּתֵר אֵין אֹתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא לֵאלֹהִים פָּתְרנִים סַפְּרוּ־נָא לִי:

וַיְסַפֵּר שַׂר־הַמַּשְׁקִים אֶת־חֲלֹמוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בַּחֲלוֹמִי וְהִנֵּה־גֶפֶן לְפָנִי:

- (10) On the vine were three branches. It had barely budded, when out came its blossoms and its clusters ripened into grapes.
- (11) Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."
- (12) Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: The three branches are three days.
- (13) In three days Pharaoh will pardon you and restore you to your post; you will place Pharaoh's cup in his hand, as was your custom formerly when you were his cupbearer.
- (14) But think of me when all is well with you again, and do me the kindness of mentioning me to Pharaoh, so as to free me from this place.
- (15) For in truth, I was kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews; nor have I done anything here that they should have put me in the dungeon."
- (16) When the chief baker saw how favorably he had interpreted, he said to Joseph, "In my dream, similarly, there were three openwork baskets on my head.
- (17) In the uppermost basket were all kinds of food for Pharaoh that a baker prepares; and the birds were eating it out of the basket above my head."
- (18) Joseph answered, "This is its interpretation: The three baskets are three days.
- (19) In three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale you upon a pole; and the birds will pick off your flesh."

וּבַגֶּפֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׂרִיגִם וְהִוּא כְפֹרַחַת עַלְתָה נִצְּהּ הִבְּשִׁילוּ אַשְׁכָּלֹתֵיהַ עַנַבִּים:

וְכוֹס פַּרְעֹה בְּיָדִי וָאֶקַח אֶת־הָעֲנָבִים וָאֶשְׂחַט אֹתָם אֶל־כּוֹס פַּרְעֹה וַאֶתֶּן אֵת־הַכּוֹס עַל־כַּף פַּרְעֹה:

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יוֹסֵף זֶה פַּתִרנוֹ שָׁלֹשֶׁת הַשַּׂרְגִים שָׁלֹשֶׁת יַמִים הָם:

בְּעוֹד שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים יִשָּׂא פַרְעֹה אֶת־רֹאשֶׁרְ וַהֲשִׁיבְךְ עַל־כַּנֶּךְ וְנָתַתָּ כוֹס־פַּרְעֹה בִּיַדוֹ כַּמִּשְׁפַּט הַרָאשׁוֹן אֱשֵׁר הַיִּיתַ מַשְׁקָהוּ:

> ּכִּי אָם־זְכַרְתַּנִי אָתְּךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטַב לָךְ וְעָשִׂיתָ־נָּא עִמָּדִי חָסֶד וָהזָכַרְתִּנִי אַל־פּרָעה וָהוֹצאתני מן־הבּית הזַה:

ּפִּי־גֻנֹּב גֻּנַבְתִּי מֵאֶרֶץ הָעִבְרִים וְגַם־פֹּה לֹא־עָשִׂיתִי מְאוּמָה כִּי־שָׂמוּ אֹתי בּבּוֹר:

וַיִּרְא שַׂר־הָאֹפִים כִּי טוֹב פֶּתָר וַיִּאמֶר אֶל־יוֹסֵף אַף־אֲנִי בַּחֲלוֹמִי והנה שׁלשה סלי חרי על־רֹאשׁי:

וּבַסַּל הָעֶלְיוֹן מִכּּל מַאֲכַל פַּרְעֹה מַעֲשֵׂה אֹפֶה וְהָעוֹף אֹכֵל אֹתָם מן־הסל מעל רֹאשׁי:

וַיַעַן יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה פַּתְרֹנוֹ שָׁלֹשֶׁת הַסַּלִּים שָׁלֹשֶׁת יַמִים הָם:

בְּעוֹד שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים יִשָּׂא פַרְעֹה אֶת־רֹאשְׁךָ מֵעָלֶיךְ וְתָלָה אוֹתְךְ עַל־עֵץ וְאָכַל הָעוֹף אֶת־בְּשָּׂרְךָ מֵעָלֶיךְ:

Question: Why does Yosef offer to use God's power to interpret these dreams?

Question: Must dream interpretation be prophetic or not? Yosef said "God will interpret!" Bonus: Did Yosef abuse this power for his own well-being, i.e. to get out of prison?

#### 3) Rashi on Genesis 40:5

AND BOTH OF THEM DREAMED A DREAM — This is the real meaning. A Midrashic explanation is: each dreamed the dream of both of them — i.e. he dreamed his own dream and the interpretation of the other's dream. This is what it means when it states (v. 16) "And the chief baker saw that he had interpreted well". (Genesis Rabbah 88:4; Berakhot 55a).

ויחלמו חלום שניהם. וַיַּחַלְמוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם חֲלוֹם, זֶהוּ פְשׁוּטוֹ, וּמְדְרָשׁוֹ כָּל א' חָלַם חֲלוֹם שְׁנֵיהֶם – שֶׁחָלַם אֶת חֲלוֹמוֹ וּפִּתְרוֹן חֲבֵרוֹ, וְזֶהוּ שָׁנֶאֱמַר וַיַּרְא שַׂר הָאֹפִים כִּי טוֹב פָּתָר:

Question: Why do the baker and butler get the privilege of interpreting dreams by default and Yosef has to summon the power of God?

# 4) Ibn Ezra on Genesis 40:8

DO NOT ('HALO') INTERPRETATIONS BELONG TO G-D? Its meaning is that the interpretations of dreams belong to the Lord because He knows the future. He has revealed what is going to come to pass in a dream to one whom He selected and it therefore makes no difference whether I interpret the dream for good or ill. Since this is so, and all interpretations belong to God, do not be concerned about telling me your dreams. The Rabbinic statement that all dreams follow the interpretation is the opinion of an individual sage.

הלא לאלהים פתרונים. כי פתרון החלומות לשם הוא. כי הוא יודע העתיד והראה בחלום מה יהי' למי שירצה. ואם אני אפתר אותו לטוב או לרע לא יועיל ולא יזיק ואחר שהדבר כן ולשם פתרון כל החלומות. אל תחושו שתספרו חלומותיכם לי. וכל החלומות הולכים אחר הפה דברי יחיד הם:

Question: If interpretation cannot influence the outcome of the dream, then why perform them?

# 5) Ramban on Genesis 40:8

DO NOT ('HALO') INTERPRETATIONS BELONG TO G-D? Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra explained it as saying that "future events destined to come as indicated in dreams belong to G-d, for He alone brings on the dream and lets the future be known, and it is *He who makes peace, and creates evil, (Isaiah 45:7).* but in my speaking to you there is neither benefit nor loss." This he said <u>so that they should not punish him if evil should befall them,</u> or so that they should tell him the dreams and not scorn him.

But if so, there is no sense for the word *halo* (do not) in this context. Perhaps its meaning is the same as that of the word *hinei* (behold). Thus Joseph is saying, "Behold, to G-d alone interpretations belong, but not to man the interpreter."

In my opinion the correct interpretation is that Joseph is saying; "Do not interpretations of all dreams which are obscure and confined belong to G-d? He can make known the interpretation of your dreams. Now if it is obscure to you tell it to me; perhaps He will be pleased to reveal His secret to me."

הלוא לאלהים פתרונים פירש רבי אברהם (אבן עזרא על בראשית מ׳:ח׳) כי יאמר כי המקרים העתידים לבא בחלומות לאלהים הם כי הוא לבדו המחלים והמודיע העתיד והוא העושה שלום ובורא רע ואין בדבורי לכם תועלת או הפסד וזה אמר שלא יענישוהו אם תבא להם רעה או כדי שיספרו אותם אליו ולא יבזוהו ואם כן אין למלת "הלא" בזה טעם יבזוהו ואם כן אין למלת "הנה" יאמר הנה ואולי יהיה פירושו כמו "הנה" יאמר הנה לאלהים לבדו הפתרונים ולא לאלהים פתרונים והנכון בעיני כי אמר הלא לאלהים פתרונים בכל החלומות הנעלמים והסתומים והוא יכול להודיע פתרון חלומכם ואם הוא נעלם בעיניכם ספרו נא לי אולי יישר בעיניו לגלות סודו אלי:

Tldr; interpretation is god given, and he could share it with anyone he chooses. Thinking Question: What to do if no interpretation is given with a dream?

#### **6)** Daniel 2:1 Genesis 41:1,8

(1) In the <b>second year</b> of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had a		(1) וַיְהִי מִקֵץ <b>שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים</b> וּפַּרְעה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַיְאֹר:
dream; his <b>spirit was agitated</b> , yet he was overcome by sleep.	(8) Next morning, his spirit was agitated	(8) וַיְהִי בַבּ <del>ֹ</del> קֶר <b>וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ</b> 

# 7) Daniel 2:2

Genesis 41:8

sorcerers, and Chaldeans to be summoned in order to tell the king what he had dreamed. They came
the king what he had

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לִקְרֹא לַחַרְטֻמִּים וַלַאַשַּׁפִים וַלַמְכַשָּׁפִים וַלַכַּשְׂדִים לָהַגִּיד לַמֵּלֶךְ חַלמתַיו וַיַּבאוּ וַיַּעַמָדוּ לְפְנֵי הַמֵּלֵךְ:

... and he sent for all the magician-priests of Egypt, and all its sages: and Pharaoh told them his dreams, but none could interpret them for Pharaoh.

(8)...וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֱת־כָּל־חַרְטַמֵּי מִצְרַיִם ואת־כל־חכמיה ויספר פרעה לַהֶם אֶת־חֵלֹמוֹ וְאֵין־פּוֹתֶר :אוֹתַם לְפַרְעֹה

# 8) Daniel 2:11

Genesis 41:15

The thing asked by the king is difficult; there is no one who can tell it to the king except the gods whose abode is not among mortals."

וּמִלְּתַא דִי־מַלְכָּה שָׁאֵל יַקּירַה ואַחַרן לא איתי די יַחוּנּהּ קַדם מַלְכָּא לַהֵּן אֱלַהִּין דִּי מִדַּרְהוֹן ַעִם־בִּשְׂרָא לָא אִיתוֹהִי:

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it. Now I have heard it said of you that for you to hear a dream is to tell its meaning."

ווֹאמֵר פּרעה אֵל־יוֹסף חַלוֹם חלמתי ופתר אין אתו ואַני שמעתי עליך לאמר תשמע חַלוֹם לפָתֹר אֹתוֹ:

# 9) Daniel 2:28

Genesis 41:16

(28) But there is a **God** in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to be at the end of days. This is your dream and the vision that entered vour mind in bed:

בַּרם איתי אֱלהַ בּשַׁמיּא גּלא רזין והודע למלכא נבוּכדנצר מַה דּי לַהָוא בָּאחַרית יוֹמיַא חַלְמָּךְ וְחָזְוֵי רֵאשָׁךְ עַל־מִשְׁכְּבָךְ דָּנַה הוּא:

Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "Not I! God will answer to Pharaoh's welfare."

ויען יוֹסף אֶת־פּרעה לאמר בָּלְעַדַי אֱלֹקִים יַעַנֶה אֶת־שָׁלוֹם :פַּרְעֹה

## **10)** Genesis 28:12,17

בראשית כ״ח:יב,יז

(12) He had a dream; a ladder was set on the ground and its top reached to the sky, and messengers of God were going up and down on it.

(17) Shaken, he said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the abode of God, and that is the gateway to heaven."

ויחלם והנה סלם מצב ארצה וראשו מגיע השמימה והנה מלאכי אַלהים עלים וירדים בּוֹ:

וַיִּירַא וַיִּאמֶר מַה־נוֹרָא הַמַּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֵין זֶה כֵּי אָם־בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וַזָה שָׁעַר הַשָּׁמִיִם:

Question: What is the meaning of the dream?

Question: Do dreams always have a clear meaning?

# Section 2: Dream vs Prophecy - Which is Which?

#### **11)** Brachot 57b

The Gemara says: There are five matters in our world which are one-sixtieth of their most extreme manifestations. They are: Fire, honey, Shabbat, sleep, and a dream. The Gemara elaborates: Our fire is one-sixtieth of the fire of Gehenna; honey is one-sixtieth of manna; Shabbat is one-sixtieth of the World-to-Come; sleep is one-sixtieth of death; and a dream is one-sixtieth of prophecy.

ְחֲמִשָּׁה אֶחָד מִשִּׁשִׁים, אֵלּוּ הֵן: אֵשׁ, דְּבַשׁ, וְשַׁבָּת, וְשֵׁינָה, וַחֲלוֹם. אֵשׁ — אֶחָד מִשְּׁשִׁים לְגֵיהָנָּם. דְּבַשׁ — אֶחָד מִשְּׁשִׁים לַמָּן. שַׁבָּת — אֶחָד מִשִּׁשִׁים לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא. שֵׁינָה — אֶחָד מִשִּׁשִׁים לַמִּיתָה. חֲלוֹם — אֲחַד מַשִּׁשִׁים לֹנָבוּאַה

# 12) Brachot 55b

With regard to the veracity of dreams, Rabbi Yoḥanan said: One who awakened in the morning and a specific verse happens into his mouth, it is a minor prophecy and an indication that the content of the verse will be fulfilled.

אָמֵר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: הִשְׁכִּים וְנָפַל לוֹ פָּסוּק לְתוֹךְ פִּיו, הֲרֵי זוֹ נָבוּאַה קָטַנָּה.

#### 13) Rambam, Introduction to Mishnah, 7

And there is one large topic that remains, [that] is fitting for us to elucidate; and that is when the prophet prophecies drought in their land or that hailstones should come down on them, and similar to it; and afterwards none of this matter materializes, and they are shown mercy from the Heavens and all of their concerns ended in peace and tranquility.

The deceit of the prophet is not shown by this, and it is not fitting to say [because of this] that he is a false prophet and that he should be obligated in death; [as it is] because the Holy One, blessed be He, thought better about the calamity. And it is possible that they repented and left their vexations or that the Holy One, blessed be He, delayed their deserts in His compassion and stayed His anger until a different time – as He did with Achav, when He said through Eliyahu (I Kings 21:29), "I will not bring the disaster in his lifetime; I will bring the disaster upon his house in his son's time." Or He may have had mercy upon them for the sake of the merits of those that came before them. And it did not say about a thing like this, "the oracle does not happen and does not come."

<u>But if he promised good proclamations</u> that will arise at a specific time, and he says, There will be quiet and tranquility this year," and there were wars in it; or he said, "This year will be rainy and blessed," and there was famine and drought, and similar to it – <u>we know that he is a false prophet</u>, and that the negation of his claim and his falsehood have been established.

ונשאר בכאן פרק גדול ראוי לנו לבארו. והוא שהנביא כשיתנבא בצרות ארצם או ירדו עליהם אבני אלגביש וכדומה לו ואחר כן לא יתקיים דבר מן הענין ההוא ורוחמו מן השמים ועמדו כל עניניהם בשלום .ובשלוה

לא יודע בו כזב הנביא ואין ראוי לומר
שהוא נביא שקר ושיהיה חייב מיתה מפני
שהקב"ה ניחם על הרעה ואפשר שעשו
תשובה וסרו מנאצותם או איחר גמולם
הקב"ה בחמלתו והאריך אפו להם עד זמן
אחר כמו שעשה לאחאב באומרו על ידי
אליהו (מלכים א כא) לא אביא הרעה בימיו
בימי בנו אביא הרעה. או ירחם עליהם
למען זכיות שקדמו להם. ולא אמר על דבר

אבל אם הבטיח בבשורות טובות שיתחדשו לזמן קצוב ויאמר בשנה זו יהיה השקט ושלוה והיו בה מלחמות או אמר שנה זו תהיה גשומה וברוכה והיו בה רעב ובצורת וכדומה לו. נדע שהוא נביא שקר והתקיים ביטול טענתו ושקרו

# 14) Malbim on Zecharia 1:5-6

I will not send new prophets, since there is no longer any need for prophets as you have seen all the (5) כי <u>נביאים חדשים לא אשלח עוד, כי עתה א"צ עוד לנביאים</u> אחרי שראיתם שכל היעודים הרעים שנבאו הנביאים כולם באו prophecies of doom fulfilled against you ... there is no longer any need for prophecy since you already understand God's hand in history.

עליכם

(6) <u>וא"צ עוד לנביא</u> מיעד את העתיד לבא על עונותיכם שכבר באו הצרות והנם עוד במציאות, כי עדיין לא נגאלתם מרשות כורש, וגם <u>שכבר הכרתם את השגחת ה'</u>

Question: What are the differences in opinions here as to whether prophecy must be fulfilled?

Question: How can we (mortals) change the outcome of a dream?

# Section 3: I had a bad dream, what do I do?

# **15)** Brachot 55b

All dreams follow the mouth of the interpreter. "כָּל הַחֲלוֹמוֹת הוֹלְכִים אַחַר הַפֶּה״.

#### 16) Brachot 56a

The Gemara relates: Bar Haddaya was an interpreter of dreams. For one who gave him a fee, he would interpret the dream favorably, and for one who did not give him a fee, he would interpret the dream unfavorably. The Gemara relates: There was an incident in which both Abaye and Rava saw an identical dream and they asked bar Haddaya to interpret it. Abaye gave him money and paid his fee, while Rava did not give him money. They said to him: The verse: "Your ox shall be slain before your eyes and you shall not eat thereof" (Deuteronomy 28:31) was read to us in our dream. He interpreted their dream and to Rava he said: Your business will be lost and you will derive no pleasure from eating because of the extreme sadness of your heart. To Abaye he said: Your business will profit and you will be unable to eat due to the joy in your heart.

Ultimately, Rava came and gave bar Haddaya a fee. And then Rava, said to him: I saw my wall fall. Bar Haddaya said to him: You will acquire property without limits. Rava said to him: I saw Abaye's house [appadna] fall and its dust covered me. Bar Haddaya said to him: Abaye will die and his yeshiva will come to you. Rava said to him: I saw my house fall, and everyone came and took the bricks. He said to him: Your teachings will be disseminated throughout the world. Rava said to him: I saw that my head split and my brain fell out. He said to him: A feather will fall out of the pillow near your head. Rava said to him: The Egyptian hallel, the hallel that celebrates the Exodus, was read to me in a dream. He said to him: Miracles will be performed for you.

בַּר הָדְיָא מְפַשַּׁר חֶלְמֵי הָוֶה. מֵאן דְּיָהֵיב לֵיהּ אַגְרָא — מְפַשַּׁר לֵיהּ לְמְעַלְיוּתָא, וּמַאן דְּלָא יָהֵיב לֵיהּ אַגְרָא — מְפַשַּׁר לֵיהּ לְגְרִיעוּתָא. אַבָּיִי וְרָבָא חֲזוֹ חֶלְמָא. אַבָּיִי יְהֵיב לֵיהּ זוּזָא, וְרָבָא לָא יְהֵיב לֵיהּ. אָמְרִי לֵיהּ: אַקְרִינַן בְּחֶלְמִין ״שׁוֹרְךְ טָבוּחַ לְעֵינֶיךְ וְגוֹי״. לְרָבָא אֲמַר לֵיהּ: פָּסֵיד עִסְקָךְ וְלָא אַהַנִי לָךְ לְמִיכַל מֵעוּצְבָּא דְּלִבָּךְ. לְאַבָּיִי אֲמֵר לֵיהּ: מַרְוַוּח עִסְקָךְ וְלָא אַהְנִי לָךְ לְמֵיכַל מֵחָדְוָא דְלִבָּךְ.

לְסוֹף אֲתָא רָבָא וִיהֵיב לֵיהּ אַגְרָא. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: חֲזַאִי אֲשִׁיתָא דִּנְפַל. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: תָזַאִי אֲשִׁיתָא דִּנְפַל. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: נְכָּסִים בְּלֹא מְצָרִים קְנֵית. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: חֲזַאִי אַפָּדְנָא דְּאַבָּיִי דְּנְפַל וְכַסְיַין אַבְקֵיהּ. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אֲבָּי דְּנְפַל וְכַסְיַין אַבְקֵיהּ. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אֲבָּי וּמְתִיבְתֵּיהּ אָתְיָא לְגַבֶּךְ. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: חֲזַאִי אַפַּדְנָא דִידִי לְגַבֶּרְ, אֲמַר לֵיהּ: שְׁמַעְתָּתֶךְ מִבַּדְּנָא בְיִּרְ לְבֵינְהָּא שְׁקוּל לְבֵינְהָּא לְבֵינְהָּא לְבֵינְהָּא בְּעַלְמָא שְׁקּוּל לְבֵינְהָּא בְּדְּנְ בִישִּׁי לְבֵינְהָּא. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: חְזַאִי דְּאִבְּקע רֵישִׁי וּנְתַל מוּקְרִי. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אוּדְרָא מִבֵּי סְדְיָא נְפֵיק. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אַקְרִיוּן הַלֵּלָא מִצְרָאָה בְּיסִר, אֲמַר לֵיהּ: בְּחָלְמָא. מִצְרָאָה בְּיסִר מִיהַ: מְתְרַחְשִׁי לָךְ.

tldr; always pay the pied piper.

### 17) Brachot 56a

On a similar note, the Gemara relates that the Roman emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua, son of Rabbi Ḥananya: You Jews say that you are extremely wise. If that is so, tell me what I will see in my dream. Rabbi אֲמַר לֵיהּ קֵיסָר לְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּרַבִּי חֲנַנָיָא: אָמְרִיתוּ דְּחָכְמִיתוּ טוּבָא, אימַא לי מאי חַזינַא בְּחַלְמאי. אֵמר Yehoshua said to him: You will see the Persians capture you, and enslave you, and force you to herd unclean animals with a golden staff. He thought the entire day about the images described to him by Rabbi Yehoshua and that night he saw it in his dream.

King Shapur of Persia said to Shmuel: You Jews say that you are extremely wise. If that is so, tell me what I will see in my dream. Shmuel said to him: You will see the Romans come and take you into captivity and force you to grind date pits in mills of gold. He thought the entire day about the images described to him by Shmuel, and that night he saw it in his dream.

לֵיהּ: חָזֵית דִּמְשַׁחֲרִי לָךְ פֶּרְסָאֵי וְגֶרְבִי בָּךְ, וְרְעַיִי בָּךְ שִׁקְצֵי בְּחוּטָרָא דְּדַהֲבָא. הַרְהַר כּוּלֵיהּ יוֹמָא, וּלְאוּרְתָּא חֲזָא. אֲמֵר לֵיהּ שַׁבּוּר מַלְכָּא, לִשְׁמוּאֵל: אָמְרִיתוּ דְּחָכְמִיתוּ טוּבָא, אֵימָא לִי מֵאי חָזֵינָא בְּחֶלְמַאי. אֲמֵר לֵיהּ: חָזֵית דְּאָתוּ רוֹמָאֵי וְשָׁבוּ לָךְ, וְטָחֲנִי בָּךְ קַשְׁיִיתָא בְּרִחְיִיא וּלְאוּרְתָּא חָזָא.

tldr; hypnosis tricks work in talmudic times.

Question: What type of control do we have over dreams and their interpretations?

# **18)** Brachot 56b

He said to Rabbi Yishmael: I saw that they said to me in a dream: Your father left you property in Cappadocia. Rabbi Yishmael said to him: Do you have property in Cappadocia? The heretic said to him: No. Did your father ever go to Cappadocia? The heretic said to him: No. Rabbi Yishmael said to him: If so, it must be understood as follows: *Kappa* in Greek means beam; *deka* means ten. Go look at the tenth beam in your house and you will find that it is full of coins. He went and found that it was full of coins.

אֲמֵר לֵיהּ: חֲזַאי דְּאָמְרִי לִי: שְׁבַק לֶךְ אֲבוּךְ נִּכְסֵי בְּקַפּוֹדְקָיָא. אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אִית לָךְ נִּכְסֵי בְּקַפּוֹדְקָיָא? אֲמַר לֵיהּ לָאו. אֲזַל אֲבוּךְ לְקַפּוֹדְקָיָא? אֲמַר לֵיהּ: לָאו. אִם כֵּן: קַפָּא כְּשׁוּרָא, דֵּיקָא עַשְׂרָה. זִיל חֲזִי קַפָּא דְּרֵישׁ עַשְׂרָה שֶׁהִיא מְלֵאָה זוּזֵי. אֲזַל אַשְׁכַּח שֶׁהִיא מָלֵאָה זוּזֵי.

Fun fact: Cappadocia in Hittite cuneiform is:

# 19) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 220:2

It is good to fast to nullify a bad dream. Like fire on wood chips. Gloss: Specifically, this applies to yom tov and even Shabbat.

יפה תענית לבטל חלום רע כאש לנעורת: הגה ודוקא בו ביום ואפי' בשבת וע' לקמן סי' רפ"ח:

# 20) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 288:5

Some say that there's no justification to fast for a dream on Shabbat unless it's a dream one saw three times. And some say at this time we don't fast dream fasts on Shabbat because we aren't experts in dream interpretation and don't know which dreams are good and which are bad. And everyone says that it's found in ancient books that on three dreams we fast on Shabbat: one who sees a Sefer Torah burnt, or on Yom Kippur at neilah, or the beams of one's house, or his teeth that fall. And some say that one who sees Yom Kippur, even not at neilah, and some say one who sees that they are reading from the Torah, and some say one who sees that they have married off a woman, and he sees his teeth fall out, specifically his teeth. If, however, he sees that his jaws fell off, it is a good omen; [it is] a sign that those who offer harmful counsel against him have died. It seems to me that the dreams delineated in the paragraph

יש אומרים שאין להתענות תענית חלום בשבת אלא על חלום שראהו תלת זימני וי"א שבזמן הזה אין להתענות תענית חלום בשבת שאין אנו בקיאין בפתרון חלומות לידע איזה טוב ואיזה רע והעולם אומרים שנמצא בספרים קדמונים שעל שלשה חלומות מתענים בשבת ואלו הן הרואה ספר תורה שנשרף או יום הכפורים בשעת נעילה או קורות ביתו או שיניו שנפלו ויש אומרים הרואה יוה"כ אפי' שלא בשעת נעילה וי"א הרואה שקורא בתורה ויש אומרים הרואה שנושא אשה והא דרואה שיניו שנפלו דוקא שיניו אבל הרואה לחייו שנשרו חלום טוב הוא שיניו אבל הרואה לחייו שנשרו חלום טוב הוא דמתו היועצים עליו רעה ונראה לי שהחלומות

that one sees that they are bad, also over them one may fast on Shabbat.

שאמרו בפרק הרואה שהם רעים גם עליהם מתענין בשבת:

Question: Will a bad dream come true?

Question: Must a bad prophecy come true?

#### 21) Brachot 55b

The Gemara relates: Ameimar and Mar Zutra and Ray Ashi were sitting together. They said: Let each and every one of us say something that the other has not heard. One of them began and said: One who saw a dream and does not know what he saw should stand before the priests when they lift their hands during the Priestly Blessing and say the following: "Master of the Universe, I am Yours and my dreams are Yours. I dreamed a dream and I do not know what it is. Whether I have dreamed of myself, whether my friends have dreamed of me or whether I have dreamed of others, if the dreams are good, strengthen them and reinforce them like the dreams of Joseph. And if the dreams require healing, heal them like the bitter waters of Mara by Moses our teacher, and like Miriam from her leprosy, and like Hezekiah from his illness, and like the bitter waters of Jericho by Elisha. And just as You transformed the curse of Balaam the wicked into a blessing, so transform all of my dreams for me for the best." And he should complete his prayer together with the priests so the congregation responds amen both to the blessing of the priests and to his individual request. And if he is not able to recite this entire formula, he should say: "Majestic One on high, Who dwells in power, You are peace and Your name is peace. May it be Your will that You bestow upon us peace."

אמימר וּמר זוּטרא ורב אשׁי הווֹ יתבי בּהדי הַדְדֵי. אמְרִי: כֹּל חֲד וְחֲד מִינַן לֵימֵא מִלְתַא ּדְלַא שָׁמִיעַ לֵיהּ לְחַבְרֵיהּ. פָּתַח חַד מִינַיִיהוּ ואַמר: האי מאן דּחַזא חֵלִמא וַלא ידע מאי ַחַזַא, לִיקוּם קַמֵּי כַּהַנֵי בָּעִידַנַא דְּפַרְסִי יִדַיִיהוּ וְלֵימָא הַכִּי: ״רְבּוֹנוֹ שֵׁל עוֹלַם, אֲנִי שַׁלַרְ וחַלוֹמוֹתי שֶׁלַרְ, חַלוֹם חַלמִתּי וָאיני יוֹדֵעַ מַה הוּא. בֵּין שֶׁחָלַמְתִּי אֲנִי לְעַצְמִי וּבֵין ָשֶׁחָלְמוּ לִי חֲבֵירֵי וּבֵין שֶׁחָלַמְתִּי עַל אֲחֵרִים, אָם טוֹבִים הֶם — חַזְּקָם וָאַמְצֵם כַּחָלוֹמוֹתַיו שַׁל יוֹסף. ואם צַריכים רפוּאה — רפאם כָּמֵי מַרַה עַל יִדֵי מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ, וּכְמִרְיַם מָצַרַעתַּהּ, וּכָחָזְקָיַה מֵחָלִיוֹ, וּכְמֵי יִרִיחוֹ עַל יִדי אֱלישַׁע. וּכָשׁם שֶׁהַפּכְתַּ קּלְלת בּלְעַם הַרַשַּׁע לְבָרֵכָה, כֵּן הַפּוֹרְ כָּל חֵלוֹמוֹתַי עַלַי לַטוֹבַה״. וּמְסַיֵּים בַּהַדִי כַּהַנִי דְעַנִי צְבּוּרַא "אמֶן". וָאִי לַא, לֵימַא הַכִי: ״אַדִּיר בַּמַרוֹם, שוֹכֵן בָּגָבוּרַה, אַתַּה שָׁלוֹם וְשָׁמִךְ שָׁלוֹם. יְהִי רצון מלפניר שתשים עלינו שלום״.

#### Summary

- 1. Anyone can interpret dreams. There may or may not be a godly interpretation. If there is one, he may or may not let it be known to someone.
- 2. Like dreams, prophecy may or may not come true.
- 3. If you have a bad dream you can (a) fast, (b) pray for the dream to be changed.