

Congregation T'shuvat Yisrael – www.Yeshuati.com

Rabbi Bob Benbow

For those who do not know, the Portion name comes from the first word or words of the portion in Torah. This week Miketz is translated as "At the end of"

The Torah Commentary:

Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him. (Gen. 40:23)

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof; and Pharaoh told them his dream; but none that could interpret them to Pharaoh. Then spoke the chief butler to Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved, and changed his raiment, and came in to Pharaoh. (Gen 41:1,8,9,14)

The Torah portion this Shabbat, "Miketz", means "At the end of". The Hebrew word "ketz" means: "*end, limit, [of space, time, condition, or circumstances]*", "*at the end of, after, end, termination, destruction*". God has set limits, times, and seasons for this world.

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up the planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time

of peace. He has made everything beautiful in His time; also He has set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end. I know that, whatsoever God does, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it: and God does, that man should fear before Him. That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been; and God requires that which is past. I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for a time there for every purpose and for every work. (Ecc. 3:1-8,11,14,15,17)

For Joseph, there was a time to be bound and a time to be free, and now his time had come, he would be remembered and called to be presented before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh recognized that the Spirit of God was within him, and placed all the land of Egypt under him. In Egyptian culture, Pharaoh's status was that of a god. He had the power of life and death over his servants and people, and now he had given his power to Joseph:

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh. And without you no man may lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah [he who explains what is hidden] and he gave him Asenath daughter of Poti-phera, priest of On, for a wife. (Gen. 41:44-46)

Joseph was given a new name, a name that would reflect his new position. In this portion, one of the dreams that Joseph had would also come true: his brothers bowing down before him. In all that Joseph went through, he remained dedicated to God. He did not compromise his beliefs, he knew everything came from and belonged to God. He knew there was coming a famine to the land, and laid up stores for that time. There was going to be a scarcity of food that could result in extreme hunger, starvation, and even death. This was food of a physical nature. Equally important is food for the spiritual nature. There was a four- hundred year famine of not hearing from God, or from His prophets, until the time of John. Malachi speaks:

"Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and YHVH, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, He shall come, says YHVH of Hosts. (Mal. 3:1,2)

There is no compromise with YHVH! You are either for Him or against Him, there is no middle ground. He does what He says He will do, we are the ones who need to look at our actions and attitudes. Are we following what He has said to do? We need to dedicate ourselves to following Him, to see Him as He is, to hear and hearken to His voice, and to perceive what He wants us to do – to walk in His ways and obey His

statutes. This is the time of Chanukah, the Feast of Dedication; the Festival of Lights; the time when the Maccabees stood up to the Greeks and refused to follow their edicts for the land of Israel: to profane the Sabbath or God's Feasts; pollute the Sanctuary; practice idolatry and uncleanness of sacrifices; eat unclean foods; forsake and forget the Torah of YHVH and His Covenants, including circumcision; to change all His ordinances; and to do evil in the land. The Maccabees, and others, were zealous in their love for YHVH and His Torah. There would be no compromise, and for those who did not compromise, there was the threat of, and fulfillment of death. In their eyes, there would be no blasphemy committed in Judea and in Jerusalem. They fought for what they believed in – the Covenants of God given to their forefathers, and the Torah and ordinances given at Mt. Sinai. They would not deviate to the right or to the left from what God had commanded. Their trust was in God; they fasted and prayed and called out to Him for His help and His deliverance, for strength to fight the enemy, and for the Lord to remember His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They did triumph over the enemy and were able to take back the Temple that had been desecrated. They went up to cleanse and dedicate the Sanctuary on Mt. Zion. When they saw what had happened to it, the desolation of the sanctuary, the defilement of the altar, the dis-repair of the building itself, they rent their clothes, put ashes on their heads, fell face down on the ground, blew an alarm with the trumpets/shofars, and called out to heaven. Then certain priests who had kept themselves blameless in word and deed were appointed to cleanse the Sanctuary and altar, and men were appointed to fight those who were still in the fortress. The Altar was rebuilt, holy vessels made, the Menorah re-lit to bring light into the Temple, the Altar of incense, and the Table with showbread were made ready, along with the veils.

At what time and day the heathen had profaned it, even in that was it dedicated with songs, and citherns, and harps, and cymbals. Then all the people fell upon their faces, worshipping and praising [the God of] heaven, who had given them good success. And so they kept the dedication of the altar eight days, and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise. ...for that the reproach of the heathen was put away. (1 Macc. 4:51-58)

How is your walk with Him? Your temple? Any compromise? Any thing you need to change? God will judge, in His time.