

OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

PARSHA INSIGHTS

Living It Up!

"And Yaakov lived..."

How would you define "living it up?"

Going to all night bashes? Being driven around town in a chauffeur-driven limo while you sip champagne, gazing from the windows into the envious eyes of those poor pedestrians marching to their 9 to 5 jobs?

Life at "the top" looks glamorous from the outside, but you only have to look at the number of drug addictions, nervous breakdowns and broken marriages amongst the "glitterati" to realize that "living it up" has its downside.

What's the Jewish concept of "living it up?"

Last summer, on our yearly pilgrimage to Marks & Spencer, my wife and I were wheeling our two year-old down those hallowed aisles. We were struck by how many people would come over, coo and say "Look! A baby!" When we walk through the streets of Jerusalem we spend most of our time avoiding collisions with all the other strollers and prams.

One of the most striking facets of a Jewish lifestyle is how one's daily life is defined by the momentous moments of man's brief walk on this planet. The cycle of life literally blooms and blossoms all around you: A *kiddush*, a *bris mila*, redeeming a first-born, an engagement party, a bar mitzvah, a wedding and the week-long celebration afterwards, accompanying a deceased to his place of rest, visiting the mourners.

The daily life-cycle of the Jew is replete with the cycle of life itself. From the cradle to the grave. Sharing joy and sharing sadness.

The first words of this week's Parsha are "And Yaakov lived." From

the time Yaakov came down to Egypt there was literally a population explosion in the numbers of the Jewish People. Within a mere 17 years, Yaakov saw their numbers swell from a mere 70 souls to many thousands. As Yaakov was the "zeide" of all these offspring, his entire day must have been filled with celebrations — a birth, a *bris mila*, a *kiddush*, a wedding — of this teeming multitude.

Now that's really living it up!

"The daily life-cycle of the Jew is replete with the cycle of life itself. From the cradle to the grave. Sharing joy and sharing sadness."

"Ah, But I Was So Much Older Then..."

Yosef saw that his father (Yaakov) was placing his right hand on Ephraim's (his younger son's) head ... And Yosef said to his father, 'Not so father, for this is the firstborn ... But his father refused saying 'I know, my son, I know.'" (48:17-19)

A famous writer once wrote: "When I was sixteen, my parents didn't know much about the world, but when I got to twenty I was amazed at how much they had learned in those

four years."

The Midrash says that the seeming redundancy of "I know, my son, I know" was Yaakov's way of telling Yosef that there were many hidden things of which Yosef was unaware. If it was Yaakov's wish that Ephraim receive the primary blessing, then this was sufficient reason in itself.

WAR GAMES I

"...With my sword and with my bow." (48:22)

"...With mitzvos and good deeds." (Midrash)

The strategy of a conventional war is to attack the enemy first with a long range weapon — like a bow. If that fails and he gets close, then you resort to the sword.

This is true only in conventional warfare. But if you're talking about a spiritual enemy, then things are different.

From the order of the verse — the sword preceding the bow — it is clear that the Torah is not talking about any enemy, rather a person's life-long enemy — his own selfishness.

The nature of person is to be self-centered. A baby starts with no other thought than his own gratification and employs all available means to gain his desires. Only after many long years can a person eventually overcome his natural selfishness.

In the constant battle with self-centeredness, a person starts off with hand-to-hand combat, using the sword at close quarters to oust the natural impulse for selfishness. However, even when one has beaten back the enemy till he is out of range of the sword, one still needs to keep the enemy's head down by constantly firing salvos of mitzvos and positive actions from the bow.

continued on page four

PARSHA OVERVIEW

After 17 years in Egypt, Yaakov senses his days drawing to a close and summons Yosef. He makes Yosef swear to bury him in the cave of Machpela in Chevron, the burial place of Adam and Chava, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivka. Yaakov becomes ill and Yosef brings to him his two sons, Ephraim and Menashe. Yaakov elevates Ephraim and Menashe to the status of his own sons, thus giving Yosef a double portion which removes the status of the first-born from Reuven. As Yaakov is blind from old age, Yosef leads his sons close to their grandfather. Yaakov kisses and hugs them. He had not thought to see his son Yosef again, let alone Yosef's children. Yaakov begins to bless them, giving precedence to Ephraim, the younger, but Yosef indicates that Menashe is the elder. Yaakov explains that he intends to bless Ephraim with his strong hand because Yehoshua will descend from him, and Yehoshua will be both conqueror of Eretz

Yisrael and teacher of Torah to the Jewish People. Yaakov summons the rest of his sons in order to bless them. Yaakov's blessing reflects the unique character and ability of each tribe, directing each one in its unique mission in serving Hashem. Yaakov passes from this world at the age of 147. A tremendous procession accompanies his funeral cortege from Egypt to his resting place in the cave of Machpela in Chevron. After Yaakov's passing, the brothers are concerned that Yosef will now take revenge on them. Yosef reassures them, even promising to support them and their families. Yosef lives out the rest of his years in Egypt, seeing Ephraim's great-grandchildren. Before his death, Yosef foretells to his brothers that Hashem will redeem them from Egypt. He makes them swear to bring his remains out of Egypt with them at that time. Yosef passes away at age 110 and is embalmed. Thus ends Sefer Bereishis, the first of the five Books of the Torah.

HAFTORAH: KINGS I 2:1-12

THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN

As in the Parsha where we read the final will and testament of Yaakov, so the Haftorah deals with the final words of King David.

David commands his 12 year-old son, Shlomo, to act as a man of wisdom and piety despite his tender years, and to guard and uphold the Torah.

David promises Shlomo that if he serves Hashem in truth with all his heart and soul, he will merit that all

the kings of Israel will descend from him.

In the same way that Yaakov illuminated the path to make his children into a people, King David illuminates the path that will make Shlomo the father of Kings.

However, there is a striking difference between the death-bed scene of Yaakov and that of David. When Yaakov took leave of this world, he summoned all 12 of his sons, whereas David calls for only Shlomo, for he alone was a comfort to him and worthy to inherit the Davidic line.

• Rabbi Mendel Hirsch

OHRNET
is now available via
email in PDF format

To subscribe, send the message
"sub ohrnet {your name}"
to "listproc@virtual.co.il"

OHRNET
THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

Published by
OHR SOMAYACH
TANENBAUM COLLEGE
POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel • 02-581-0315

General Editor:
Rabbi Moshe Newman
Editorial & Web Advisor:
Rabbi Reuven Lauffer
Associate Editors:
Rabbi Mordechai Becher,
Rabbi Reuven Subar
Contributing Writers:
Weekly Daf, Love of the Land:
Rav Mendel Weinbach
Insights, Overview, Haftorah:
Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

Web Production: **Lev Seltzer**
Produced and Designed by the Office of Communications
Rabbi Eliezer Shapiro, Director

© 1997 OHR SOMAYACH INSTITUTIONS - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
PRINTED IN ISRAEL AT OLD CITY PRESS 02-651-1529

• THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS WORDS OF TORAH. PLEASE TREAT IT WITH DUE RESPECT.

OhrNet is available from several sources:
• E-MAIL VIA INTERNET: Write to ohr@virtual.co.il for information.
• WORLD WIDE WEB: Our address is: www.ohr.org.il
• FAX AND REGULAR MAIL WITHIN ISRAEL:
To subscribe, mail us a letter, or fax a request with your name & fax number to 02-581-2890.
• US-MAIL WITHIN NORTH AMERICA:
Call 1-800-431-2272 for subscription information.

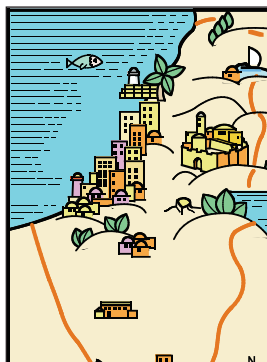
• You can submit your questions to Ask The Rabbi with your web browser at <http://www.ohr.org.il/ask/page/ask.htm>. Or to use standard E-Mail address it to "ohr@virtual.co.il" To insure correct handling set the subject to "Ask The Rabbi".

LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

MADE FOR EACH OTHER

The unique relationship between the People of Israel and the Land of Israel is expressed in two Biblical passages: "This inheritance is suited to me" (Tehillim 16:6) "I clothed myself in righteousness and it clothed me." (Iyov 29:14) Sometimes there is a per-



son who is of pleasant appearance but his garments are unsightly, and sometimes there is a person who is unsightly but his garments are of a pleasant appearance. The People of Israel and the Land of Israel, however, are both pleasant and suited to each other.

• Midrash Rabba Bamidbar 23:6

לע"נ
רחל בת צבי ע"ה
ת.ג.ב.ה.

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Why is kindness towards the dead called *chesed shel emes* — true kindness?
2. Give three reasons why Yaakov didn't want to be buried in Egypt.
3. What do we learn from Yaakov bowing toward the head of his bed?
4. "When I was coming from Padan, Rachel died on me...I buried her there on the way to Efrat...." Why did Yaakov say all this to Yosef?
5. Initially, why was Yaakov unable to bless Ephraim and Menashe?
6. What burial ground did Yaakov give to Yosef?
7. How did the neighboring Canaanites react when Shimon and Levi killed the people of Shechem, and how did Yaakov react to their reaction?
8. What did Yaakov want to tell his sons but was unable to?
9. What privileges did Reuven forfeit as a result of his rash actions?
10. What congregation from Yaakov's offspring did Yaakov not want to be associated with?
11. What did Yehudah do after he heard Yaakov rebuke Reuven, Shimon and Levi? Why?
12. Who is "Shilo?"
13. Why is Yissachar compared to a "strong-boned donkey?"
14. What is a "sheffon?"
15. With what resource did both Yaakov and Moshe bless Asher?
16. To whom was Yaakov referring in Yosef's blessing when he said "They embittered him...?"
17. Which descendants of Binyamin "will divide the spoils in the evening (49:27)?"
18. From whom did Yaakov buy his burial place?
19. What oath did Yosef make to Pharaoh?
20. Which two sons of Yaakov did not carry his coffin? Why?

BONUS QUESTION?

Yaakov made Yosef swear that he would not bury him in Egypt. Why was this oath necessary? Didn't Yaakov trust Yosef to do as he requested?

answer on page six

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

The fruits from Yissachar's land were so huge that all the other nations that bought them were astonished. The Jews told them, "Do you wonder about these fruits? If you saw their owners, who study Torah day and night, you would understand that Hashem gave them tremendous fruits in proportion to the tremendous effort they invest in Torah!" As a result, many people realized the power and truth of Torah and converted to Judaism.

• *Bereishis Rabba*

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 47:29 - Because the giver expects no reward from the recipient.
2. 47:29 - a) Egypt's ground was to be plagued with lice; b) At the time of the resurrection, those buried outside of Israel will suffer; c) so the Egyptians wouldn't make him into an idol.
3. 47:31 - The Divine Presence is manifest above the head of a sick person.
4. 48:7 - Yaakov thought Yosef harbored resentment since Yaakov had not buried Yosef's mother, Rachel, in the *Ma'aras HaMachpela*.
5. 48:8 - The *Shechina* departed from him.
6. 48:22 - Shechem.
7. 48:22 - They gathered against Yaakov to attack him. Yaakov defended himself with sword and bow.
8. 49:1 - When *Mashiach* was going to arrive.
9. 49:3 - Priesthood and Kingship.
10. 49:6 - Korach and his congregation.
11. 49:8 - He drew back. He was afraid that Yaakov would rebuke him for the incident with Tamar.
12. 49:10 - *Mashiach*.
13. 49:14 - Just as a donkey bears a heavy burden, so the tribe of Yissachar bears the yoke of Torah.
14. 49:17 - A type of snake.
15. 49:20 - Oil-rich land.
16. 49:23 - Yosef's brothers, Potifar and his wife.
17. 49:27 - Mordechai and Esther.
18. 50:5 - From Esav.
19. 50:6 - Yosef swore not to reveal Pharaoh's ignorance of the Hebrew language.
20. 50:13 - Levi, because he would carry the *Aron* (Holy Ark). Yosef, because he was a king.

WEEKLY DAF

SHABBOS 37 - 43

WHAT LANGUAGE DO YOU THINK IN?

Do you think in the same language that you speak?

This fascinating speculation arises in the story told by Rabbi Yitzchak bar Avdimi of his visit to a bathhouse on Shabbos, in the company of his mentor, Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (Rebbie). When he asked Rebbie a question about the laws of Shabbos pertaining to cooking congealed oil he received a detailed halachic response.

"How could Rebbie discuss a topic of Torah in the bathhouse?" asks the gemara. After all, it has already been ruled by Rabbi Yochanan that one may not even think thoughts of Torah in a bathhouse or bathroom because of the unclean nature of those places.

The first attempt to vindicate Rebbie is to suggest that he made his Torah statements in a secular tongue and not in the sacred language of Hebrew. This is rejected, however, because the Sage Abaye has already taught us that in such places secular matters may be discussed even in the holy language, while sacred matters may not be discussed even in a secular tongue. The gemara's conclusion is that since it was necessary to issue a halachic ruling in order to prevent the asker from violating Shabbos

law, it was permissible to do so even in the bathhouse.

Tosefos raises the question as to how the gemara initially suggested that it was permissible to speak words of Torah in a secular language. Before uttering such words one must think, and thinking Torah thoughts is also forbidden in the bathhouse!

The gemara's initial suggestion, answers Tosefos, was based on the assumption that if Rebbie said his words of Torah in a secular language, he probably thought of them in that language as well.

• *Shabbos 40b*

THE MITZVAH OF LIVING IN ISRAEL

"They shall be brought to Babylon and there remain until the day that I remember them, says Hashem, and I shall bring them up and return them to this place." (*Yirmiyahu 27:22*)

Does this prophecy concerning the Babylonian Exile refer to the Jewish People and constitute a ban on leaving Babylon for *Eretz Yisrael*? Or does it simply refer to the sacred vessels of the *Beis Hamikdash* mentioned a few passages earlier and spell out the exile of those vessels?

This was the subject of a dispute between two great sages, Rabbi Yehuda

and Rabbi Zeira. The former interpreted this passage as a ban on leaving Babylon for *Eretz Yisrael*, while the latter contended that it applied only to the sacred vessels. Because Rabbi Zeira was anxious to make *aliya* to *Eretz Yisrael* he avoided any encounter with Rabbi Yehuda, whom he greatly respected, lest Rabbi Yehuda forbid him to make such a move. But he was so anxious to hear some words of wisdom from him before leaving that he surreptitiously came to overhear him dispensing advice to his attendants, advice which he considered most valuable.

(In the classic debate between Rambam and Ramban as to whether settling in *Eretz Yisrael* is considered one of the 613 *mitzvos*, the position of Rabbi Yehuda is cited by one of the commentaries as support for Rambam's opinion that there is no such command after the Jews were exiled from *Eretz Yisrael*. Had the command in the Torah to conquer and settle *Eretz Yisrael* been incumbent on every generation, how could a later prophet, Yirmiyahu, counter a prophetic command of the Torah? Refutations of this challenge have been made, and the relevant issue today is not whether it is permissible to leave Babylon but whether it is obligatory to settle in *Eretz Yisrael*.)

• *Shabbos 41a*

continued from page one

PARSHA INSIGHTS

WAR GAMES 2

"...With my sword and with my bow." (48:22)

Why is it so important to pray using set texts of prayer? Doesn't G-d hear my prayer anyway?

The difference between praying the set prayers and praying one's own individual prayer can be explained as follows:

Praying the set prayers is like using a sword in battle. Even if you are not particularly accurate, the sword used in close combat can be a very effective weapon. Similarly in the set prayers, even if one's concentration is not 100% precise, it will be effective.

A bow, on the other hand, is only effective if it hits the bull's eye or close to it. Otherwise, the arrow merely falls to the ground uselessly. When someone prays his own individual prayer he is like an archer. If he is able to aim every word and thought with total accuracy, his prayer will be effective, but if he takes his mind off the target for

an instant, his prayer will fall by the wayside like a mis-spent arrow.

GENERATION GAP

"...In you shall all Yisrael bless, saying 'May G-d make you as Ephraim and as Menashe.'" (48:20)

On Friday nights throughout the Jewish world, parents bless their children with the words of this verse — "May G-d make you like Ephraim and Menashe."

Why, of all our towering spiritual giants, are Ephraim and Menashe singled out to be the paradigm of blessing? Why don't we say "May G-d make you like Avraham and Moshe?"

If there is a "generation gap," that gap is the discrepancy between the spiritual attainments of one generation and its predecessor.

From that moment of supreme encounter with the Divine at Sinai, the march of history *spiritually* has been relent-

lessly and consistently downward.

The reason that we bless our children to be like Ephraim and Menashe can be found in what Yaakov says to Yosef a few verses earlier — "Ephraim and Menashe will be to me as Reuven and Shimon." (48:5)

Ephraim and Menashe, although Yaakov's grandchildren, had reached the level of their uncles Reuven and Shimon — the level of the previous generation. They hadn't descended the spiritual ladder in any way.

Thus, on Friday nights, parents bless their children that they should absorb all the spiritual attainments of the preceding generation and escape that downward spiritual spiral — the *generation gap*.

Sources:

Living It Up! *Baal HaTurim*, Rabbi Reuven Subar

WarGames 1 - Kehillas Yitzchak in *Mayana shel Torah*

WarGames 2 - Meshech Chochma
Generation Gap - Rabbi Michael Schoen in *Prisms*

GET CONNECTED TO OHR SOMAYACH ON THE WEB

WWW.OHR.ORG.IL

OVER A BILLION BYTES OF TORAH LITERATURE AND INFORMATION

THIS YEAR IN 1000 OAKS. NEXT YEAR...?

Dov Ben Essine from 1000 Oaks, CA
<Foundry@elume.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
Why is it that we are still saying “Shana Haba B’erushalayim — Next Year in Jerusalem,” since any Jew can now go there and live there of his own free will? Thanks for your answer.

Dear Dov Ben Essine,

The story is told of a poor man, Shmelke, who lived in a small village. The town folks wanted to support him, but without him feeling like he was accepting charity. So they came up with a plan: They hired him to sit at the city gates and wait for the Mashiach.

One day, a traveler approached the city and asked Shmelke what he was doing. “This is my job,” Shmelke said. “My job is to wait here to greet the Mashiach.”

“Does it pay well?” asked the traveler.

“Not really,” said Shmelke, “but it’s steady work.”

When we say “Next year in Jerusalem” we mean that all Jews should actually be in Israel and in Jerusalem (not just as tourists!). We mean Jerusalem as it is ideally meant to be — with the Temple, the Sanhedrin and a Jewish Monarch. We’re still waiting. Even we here in Jerusalem say “Next year in Jerusalem!”

EDIBLE OINKERS — WILL HAM BE “LEGITIMEAT?”

Dvora from New York, NY
<Scorpion@nac.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
I have heard that it is mentioned somewhere in the Talmud that in

the future, pork will no longer be trefah — unkosher. I find this hard to believe! Is there anything you can find to back this up?

Dear Dvora,

The Sages say, “Why is a pig called ‘chazir?’ Because it is destined to ‘chazor’ — return — to a state of purity.” It’s not clear if this is literal or allegorical. Either way, the idea is this: Everything, even evil, is ultimately rooted in holiness. The good is merely hidden and covered up. In the future, when Hashem “slaughters the evil inclination,” evil will vanish and everything’s inherent good will be revealed. Even pig, representing everything “not kosher,” will find its proper place.

Sources:

- Shelah Pesachim 504
- Kohelet Rabba 1:9

A BLESSING ON YOUR NECK

<name and email withheld> from
Alabama wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
Would you please tell me what the writing is around the neck of the tallit (prayer shawl)? Could you please write it in English and in Hebrew/English? I’m not sure I worded that correctly, but what I mean is I can’t read the Hebrew writing too well. Thanks!

Dear <name and email withheld> ,

Before putting on a tallit, we say the following blessing: “Baruch Ata Ado-noi Elo-heinyu Melech ha’olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu l’hit’atef batzitzit” which means “Blessed are You L-rd, our G-d, King of the universe, Who made us holy with His commandments and commanded us to wrap ourselves in a [garment with] tzitzit.”

Recently, some people began writing this blessing on the neck of the tallit. This has a practical advantage for someone who doesn’t know the blessings by heart: He can hold up the tallit, read the blessing and then put it on. Traditionally, however, the tallit has no writing on it. Indeed, Maimonides in one of his letters maintains that it is forbidden to embroider verses from the Torah and blessings on a tallit. One reason he gives is that a person may inadvertently wear the tallit in a place like a bathroom, where it is forbidden to bring written words of Torah.

TODAY, I AM A MAN

Sharon from Chickasha, Oklahoma
<sharon@net2go.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
My son and I are trying to research the Biblical age of accountability and the Bar Mitzvah. We would appreciate any help. Thank You.

Dear Sharon,

The age thirteen for a boy is derived from a verse about Yaakov’s son Levi. Referring to Shimon and Levi, the Torah says “each man took his sword ...” At that time Levi was thirteen years old. He is thus the youngest person the Torah calls a “man.” The Torah specifically referred to him as a “man” in order to imply that thirteen is the age of male adulthood.

By age thirteen, it can be assumed that a boy has reached physical and mental maturity and is therefore responsible for his actions. For a girl this is at age 12. By Torah law, a 12 year-old girl or a 13 year-old boy can enter into legal contracts, incur legal obligations, and must observe all the commandments like keeping kosher and observing Shabbat.

Sources:

- Rashi Tractate Nazir 29b
- Tractate Sanhedrin chapter 8

continued on page six

New Feature!

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features

Re: "Watching the Detectives" (Ohrnet Vayeitzei) concerning the New York police detective who feels guilty about extracting confessions from violent criminals by feigning friendship:

Would you please forward my sincere appreciation to this cop. I'm a Dutch trainee police-officer and I have struggled with the same issue for a long time.

- Arthur Swart from Amsterdam, The Netherlands <arthur_swart@usa.net>

Re: "Subway Psalms" (Ohrnet Toldot) about saying Tehillim [psalms] in the subway:

You probably should have mentioned to him that when he says *Tehillim* he should make an effort not to arouse any "bad feelings" by his neighbors on the subway (See *Orach Chaim 1:1 MB 5*).

- Micha Males <males@actcom.co.il>

Re: "Every rule has an exception" (Ohrnet Toldot):

This rule is, in fact, self-contradictory! What would be the exception to this rule? A rule *without* exceptions. If such a rule exists, then the "rule" that "every rule has an exception" is false!

- The Ziskinds, Cannery Row, Monterey, Cape Town <az@uctvms.uct.ac.za>

Even if there are *no* rules without exceptions, then this rule itself is the exception.

- Yd.katz@juno.com

Re: Parsha Q&A - Vayeitzei:

I love your publications! But I was shocked that you quoted the Daas Zekainim about the discussion between Yaakov and Leah without any explanation! Someone could have assumed that Yaakov and Leah were just having a petty argument, G-d forbid. Rabbi Yochanan Zweig, Rosh HaYeshiva in Miami, explained that Leah was telling Yaakov that at the time that he took the birthright (and the blessings that went along with it) from Esav, he also switched his "zivug"— "soul-mate"— and now that he is the "first-born" it is only proper that he should marry Leah.

- Ahron S. Golding <agolding@juno.com>

YIDDLE RIDDLE

Last week we asked: "Here's a Yiddle Riddle my son Dovid is submitting: Which person in Tanach was born before his mother ever was, died before his father, and is buried in his grandmother?"

- Rabbi Chaim Salenger <Chaim@ohr.israel.net>

Answer: Hevel [Abel]: Born before his mother ever was — his mother, Eve, was never "born." Died before his father Adam — Hevel was killed by his brother. Buried in his grandmother — his father, Adam, came from the earth, so the earth is his "grandmother."

continued from page three

BONUS ANSWER!

This oath was not to imply a lack of trust in Yosef. Rather, Yaakov assessed the political problem that would arise when Yosef asked permission to bury Yaakov outside Egypt. Pharaoh might take it as an insult to the land that had given such generous hospitality to Yaakov and his family, and therefore not allow Yosef to leave. Only if Yosef were to take a solemn oath would Pharaoh deem it improper to stand in the way. Indeed, when Pharaoh granted permission to Yosef (50:6) he emphasized that he was doing so only because Yosef had sworn to do so.

- Ramban

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

RAMBAN

47:28 Egypt and Rome
47:31 Necessity for the Oath
48:1 The Division of Eretz Yisrael
48:7 Rachel's Tomb
48:15 (first part) Yosef's other children
49:10 (first part) Kings of Israel
49:17 Shimshon

49:31 Burial in the Ma'aras HaMachpela
49:33 The Death of Yaakov

SFORNO

47:31 Yosef's Oath
48:18 The Laying of Hands
49:7 The Humility of Dispersion
49:11 Signs of Mashiach