



Jewish Community Center of Paramus
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A Shabbat Message from Sami Vingron

Friday December 15, 2023 ~ Parsha: Miketz

To Dream of Israel

Dear JCCP/CBT family,

During my time as a student in Jerusalem, I liked listening to a [song](#) by Uzi Hitman. It began with the following lines

“My God, I wanted you to know about a dream that I dreamed at night in my bed. And in this dream, I saw an angel and he said to me: ‘I am coming from heaven, I have gone a long way, in order to bestow a blessing of peace upon all the children’. But when I awoke, I was reminded of that dream. And I went out to search for a little bit of peace. But there was no angel and there was no peace. He is long gone and I am [left] with the dream”

As I listened to this song, I thought about the importance of hope.

I was and I am still hopeful that Israelis and Jews around the world will live in true peace. Yet I was holding two truths at once. On the one hand, I was told that with Israel’s enemies, no lasting peace could ever be accomplished. Even before October 7, this often seemed true. But on the other hand, I was holding the truth that once we lose our ability to dream, we also lose any dreams worth pursuing.

Dreams also play a dominant role in our Torah portion this week, *Parashat Miketz*. Pharaoh dreams of seven thin cows eating seven fat cows and of seven thin ears devouring seven full ears. Alarmed, he is desperate to know what these dreams mean. Pharaoh learns about a man named Joseph who is allegedly able to understand the hidden meaning of dreams. Joseph is summoned and he explains to Pharaoh what the dreams are all about.

We learn from our Torah portion that dreams are meaningful. Our ancestors dreamed for two thousand years of the existence of the modern State of Israel. What Israel has achieved since its birth is beyond their wildest dreams. The modern State of Israel

was established because our ancestors dared to dream. They never lost hope in the reestablishment of our homeland. But, what ought we to do, now that this dream has become reality?

Amos Oz, the Israeli writer and public figure, held the belief that the problem with dreams is the question of what to do with them once they are realized? Reality might in fact be disappointing since it might fail to live up to the standards of the dream we once had. The State of Israel today is caught up in a terrible war. The wounds that October 7 has inflicted upon the Jewish people might never fully heal. Before the war, Israeli society had been torn by social and political polarization. Looking at the sinister situation that Israel is in right now I often ponder the significance of Oz`s warning. It would be easy to despair now. But we must not do this. Like our ancestors, we must hold on to our hopes for the future of Israel and the Jewish people. *Od Lo Avda Tikvatenu*, as it states in the *HaTikvah*, Israel`s national anthem, our hope is not yet lost.

Now is the time to think about what the State of Israel should be like one day. What are our dreams for the State of Israel? I strongly believe that the fate of the Jewish people is intertwined with the destiny of the State of Israel. Israel is too important for us not to care deeply about it. It has been the hope for the generations before us and will continue to be just that for future generations. More than half of world Jewry lives in Israel. *Kol Israel Arevim ZeBaze*, the Rabbis say, all of the people of Israel are responsible for each other. We cannot and must not be indifferent to the Jewish state of the State of the Jews.

The Jewish people are called upon to be a light to all nations. From where should this light shine if not from our homeland? It is our duty, as faithful Jews all over the world, to think about what values we want to see implemented once this tragic war is over. When victory is achieved, with the help of God, in what direction will the State of the Jews develop? It is time to dream again.

Shabbat Shalom,

Sami Vingron, Rabbinic Intern