

Torah Portion Miketz

Miketz means in Hebrew “at the end” from the second word in the portion. This Torah portion is taken from Genesis 41:1 – 44:17. It tells of Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph's rise to power in Egypt, and Joseph testing his brothers.

In Genesis 41:16 when Joseph is asked by Pharaoh to interpret his dreams, Joseph assures Pharaoh that the interpretation will most certainly not come from any power or source from within him, but that Elohim will give him the interpretation and a word that will calm his heart and give him peace; shalom.

Continuing on in the reading we find that Pharaoh calls Joseph wise; in Hebrew *chakam*.

When Joseph has completed his interpretation of the dreams, he then gives Pharaoh some sound and wise advice which is recorded in verses 33-36.

As Pharaoh considers what man in his kingdom could possibly fit the role required, he turns to Joseph. After all, if Joseph was wise enough to interpret the dream and give credible advice for keeping the kingdom safe during these years of famine, then surely he would be the one who should be selected to oversee the kingdom for a time such as was about to come.

The point that I would like to address is the wisdom given to Joseph. In verse 16 Joseph is the first to admit that no glory should rest upon him. It is Elohim, the Elohim that Joseph serves, that should receive the glory for the interpretation. How often mankind likes to heap glory upon himself instead of the Elohim of heaven.

As mentioned above, the Hebrew word for wise is *chakam*. In understanding this word we must realize that it is used around 150 times in the TaNaKh. It can have a secular as well as a religious meaning.

Great artisans that built the temple were said to be *chakam*, meaning that they had great skills ; they were great craftsman. This is the secular meaning of the word.

The religious meaning of the word, which is where Joseph comes in, means that God is the source of the understanding and the acting upon that understanding.

In other words, what is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Knowledge is just knowing something that you have been taught. A person with this kind of knowledge can be said to have the secular *chakam*. However, wisdom in the religious *chakam* understanding, is a knowing/understanding that only comes from God and it comes with the ability to make wise decisions in life based upon the knowledge/understanding given to that person by God.

A person with true wisdom has an understanding/knowledge given by God and the ability to know how to apply that knowledge in their life's decision making. They are able to give good council and

advice to others based upon the Godly wisdom, *chakam*, that they have received from God.

They have the ability to apply the concepts and instructions of God to their lives in the most Godly manner.

Joseph showed his knowledge/understanding by the advice he gave to Pharaoh. He was able to give this great advice based on a wisdom, *chakam*, given to him by God alone.

Solomon, who asked God for wisdom, showed this same ability when he gave his judgment on the two women that fought over the same baby. Wisdom given to him by God allowed him to make judgments, not based on what he had been taught by man, but by what he had received from God.

In our lives, we are bombarded by decisions. Oftentimes we ask council from others. We must be careful from whom we take advice. From where does that person draw their advice? Where did their wisdom come from? A knowledge taught by man's ways or institutions? Or did they receive their wisdom based upon God's ways and His wisdom? Can you look at their life and see a life of wise choices?

Knowledge itself is not wisdom. The person with the highest degree or IQ in the world may not offer you the Godly wisdom of Joseph and Solomon. Instead, that great wisdom for living out life and the choices it brings, may come from a high school drop out that gave up going to college to be a missionary in Africa.

The Greeks sought after wisdom in the secular manner, but God favors the one who asks Him for wisdom in the religious manner.

Be wise (*chakam*) and seek for the heavenly wisdom of God to walk out your life.

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