

## פרשת מקץ וחנוכה

The event is true. It happened over one hundred years ago, but the specific details are sketchy, to say the least. They are sketchy because I only heard this from my father *olov haShalom* when he was elderly and the event itself took place when he was a boy at the age of 8.

The location is a village in northeast Poland called *Knyshin*. It is in the Bialystok area, a few kilometers from the well-known city of Tiktin. It was 1917 and the suffering that was endured because of World War I was still ferocious. My father's father had gone to America in 1912, prior to the war's outbreak, to try to find a *parnosoh* there. My father, his mother and his siblings were eventually reunited with my grandfather in 1921.

During the war years, my father's family were literally starving. What little support that they had, the key to their survival, came from my grandfather's brother and their father, my great-grandfather R' Avraham Eliezer.

I know very little, and even less than that, about my *alter zaydie z"l*, but I do know that during the war he was able to get a concession to sell kerosene – a basic fuel for heating in the fierce Polish winter as well as for cooking and lighting.

And, sometime in that winter of 1917 when the cold was intense and the supply of kerosene was limited and the lines were long, some of the *goyim* there were terribly angry. They did not want to wait in line at all and especially not behind the Jews who were in front of them and fuming because the fuel was rationed and costly and that a Jew had the concession. They attacked my great-grandfather and beat him to death. Hashem Yikom Domo.

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And now we come to our Parshas Miketz. Parshas Miketz presents us with a stark contrast. Yosef is freed from prison and is elevated to a high rank and position. He knows where he is at. He seems to be secure.

On the other hand, not so far away, Yaakov Ovinu continues his years of mourning. We learned in last week's Parshas Vayeshev (B'reishis Perek 37/P'sukim 34-35):

וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב שִׁמְלֹתָיו וַיִּשָּׂם שֶׁקַּבְּ בְּמִתְנָיו וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים: וַיִּקְמוּ כָל בְּנָיו וְכָל בָּנֹתָיו לִנְחָמוֹ וַיִּמְאֵן לְהִתְנַחֵם וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶרְדָּ אֶל בְּנֵי אָבִל שְׂאֵלָה וַיִּבְרַךְ אֶתֹּ אָבִיו:

Yaakov rent his garments and he placed sackcloth upon his loins and he mourned for his son many days. All of his sons and all of his daughters arose to comfort him and he refused to be comforted; he said, 'I will go down to the grave, to my son, mourning'; his father cried for him.

Rashi writes:

ימים רבים - עשרים ושנים שנה משפירש ממנו עד שירד יעקב למצרים, שנאמר (פסוק ב<sup>1</sup>) יוסף בן שבע עשרה שנה וגו' וכן שלשים שנה היה בעמדו לפני פרעה (מא/מו<sup>2</sup>), ושבע שני השובע ושנתים הרעב כשבא יעקב למצרים הרי עשרים ושנים שנה:

*Many days* – Twenty-two years from when Yosef separated from his father until Yaakov went down to Egypt as it says, 'Yosef was seventeen-years old etc. He was thirty years old when he stood before Par'o and then there were seven years of plenty and two years of famine before Yaakov came to Egypt. That is the twenty-two years.

And now, for a period of two years, when the famine began, history unfolds anew and Yaakov Ovinu's anticipated respite from his ongoing troubles<sup>3</sup> were dashed once again.

As Rashi teaches us in our Parsha (Perek 43/Posuk 14):

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<sup>1</sup> The entire verse reads:

אלה תלדות יעקב יוסף בן שבע עשרה שנה היה רעה את אחיו בצאן והוא נער את בני בלהה ואת בני זלפה נשי אביו ויבא יוסף את דבתם רעה אל אביהם:

These are the generations of Yaakov: Yosef was seventeen years old; he shepherded with his brother with the sheep; he was a lad with the sons of Bilho and the sons of Zilpa, the wives of his father; Yosef brought their bad reports to their father.

<sup>2</sup> The entire verse reads:

יוסף בן שלשים שנה בעמדו לפני פרעה מלך מצרים ויצא יוסף מלפני פרעה ויעבר בקל ארץ מצרים: יוסף יצא מלפני פרעה מלך מצרים ויצא יוסף מלפני פרעה ויעבר בקל ארץ מצרים: Yosef was thirty years old when he stood before Par'o, the King of Egypt; Yosef went out from before Par'o and he passed through the entire land of Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> Rashi writes at the beginning of Parshas Vayeshev (Perek 37/Posuk 2):

ביקש יעקב לישב בשלוח

Yaakov sought to live in tranquillity.

ומדרשו מי שאמר לעולם די יאמר די לצרותי, שלא שקטתי מנעורי, צרת לבן, צרת עשו, צרת רחל, צרת דינה, צרת יוסף, צרת שמעון, צרת בנימין:

The Midrash teaches that Yaakov said, 'Hashem Who said to the world [at Creation] 'enough', He should say 'enough' for my troubles. I have had no quiet since my youth: the troubles of Lovon, the troubles of Eisav, the troubles of Rachel, the troubles of Dina, the troubles of Yosef, the troubles of Shimon, the troubles of Binyamin.

This list is incomplete. What is missing? The 'troubles of the famine' is missing. It seems that the famine *per se* was not the issue for Yaakov Ovinu. The personal issues, in their various forms, were.

That does not mean, however, that Yaakov Ovinu was oblivious to the hardships that were facing the whole world, including his family. Such a thought is patently false.

Thus, we read in our Parshas Miketz (Perek 41/P'sukim 56-57; Perek 42/P'sukim 1-2):

וְהָרַעַב הָיָה עַל כָּל פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ וַיִּפְתַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר בְּהֵם וַיִּשְׁבֵּר לַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּחֲזֵק הָרַעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: וְכָל הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרַיִמָּה לִשְׁבֹּר אֶל יוֹסֵף כִּי חָזַק הָרַעַב בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ: וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ שָׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לְמָה תִּתְרָאוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר הֲיֵהָ שְׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֵשׁ שָׁבֵר בְּמִצְרַיִם רְדוּ שָׁמָּה וְשִׁבְרוּ לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנָחִיָּה וְלֹא נָמוּת:

The famine was over all the face of the land and Yosef opened all that was in the storehouses and he supplied<sup>4</sup> Egypt; the famine became harsh in the Land of Egypt. All the lands came to Egypt to be supplied by Yosef because the famine was harsh in all of the land. Yaakov saw that there was a supply in Egypt and Yaakov said to his sons, 'why are you seeing<sup>5</sup>?' Yaakov said, 'I heard that there are supplies in Egypt, go down there and supply us from there so that we will live and not die.'

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<sup>4</sup> The term שִׁבֵּר in its various forms will be explained shortly. 'Supply' is a reasonable translation.

<sup>5</sup> This translation is inexact. The meaning(s) of תִּתְרָאוּ will be explained at length.

Let us learn some Rashi and other *meforshim* to understand the words in the first verses. Rashi writes:

וישבור למצרים - שבר לשון מכר ולשון קנין הוא, כאן משמש לשון מכר, (להלן מג/ב<sup>6</sup>) שברו לנו מעט אוכל, לשון קנין. ואל תאמר אינו כי אם בתבואה, שאף ביין וחלב מצינו (ישעיה נה/א<sup>7</sup>) ולכו שברו בלא כסף ובלא מחיר יין וחלב:

*He supplied Egypt* – *shever* is an expression of ‘selling’ and of ‘acquisition’. In this verse it means ‘sale’. Later on, when Yaakov says *shivru*, it means to acquire. Do not think that *shever* is used in the context of grain only, because it refers to wine and milk also. We find the verse that says, ‘Go acquire, *shivru*, without money and without a price, wine and milk’.

Radak explains the origin of this term. He writes here:

כי הפעולה בזה על שם התבואה שנקראת שבר לפי שהיא שוברת הרעב על דרך ישברו פראים צמאם (תהלים קד/יא<sup>8</sup>) והנה המוכר נותן השבר והקונה לוקח השבר, והפעולה על שניהם. אבל בענין הפעול ממנו אינו נופל אלא על המוכר לפי שהפעולה יוצאת מאתו. ובנין הפעיל ברוב הוא יוצא:

The action in this regard regarding grain<sup>9</sup> is called *shever* because it ‘breaks hunger’ [and that is why it refers to both the seller and the buyer<sup>10</sup>]. This is

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<sup>6</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר כָּלוּ לֶאֱכֹל אֶת הַשֶּׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר הֵבִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם אֲבִיהֶם שִׁבוּ שִׁבְרוּ לָנוּ מֵעֵט אֶכֶל:

It was when they finished to eat the supplies-*shever* that they brought from Egypt, their father said to them, ‘Return and acquire-*shivru* for us a little food.’

<sup>7</sup> The entire verse reads:

הוֹי כֹּל צִמְאָ לָכוּ לַמַּיִם וְאֲשֶׁר אֵין לוֹ כֶּסֶף לָכוּ שִׁבְרוּ וְאָכְלוּ וּלְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ בְּלוֹא כֶּסֶף וּבְלוֹא מַחִיר יַיִן וְחֶלֶב: Oh! Anyone who is thirsty, go for water and one who has no money, acquire-*shivru* and eat and go and acquire-*shivru* without money and without a price, wine and milk.

<sup>8</sup> The entire verse reads:

יִשְׁקוּ כָּל חַיֵּי שָׂדֵי יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְּרָאִים צִמְאָם:

The waterways give drink to all living creatures in My field; they supply the wild animals from their thirst.

<sup>9</sup> Clearly this opinion disputes Rashi.

in accord with the verse, 'the wild animals break their thirst'. Behold, the seller gives the *shever* and the purchaser takes the *shever* – the activity includes both of them. But the action that derives from it comes only from the seller – since the action emits from him. And the *hif'il* structure most refers to the one who enacts the activity<sup>11</sup>.

Now that we have defined *shever*, we are ready to proceed to Yaakov's request from his sons.

Yaakov says to his sons:

למה תתראו

We tentatively translated those words as 'why are you seeing?'

It is understood by seeing the word *תתראו* that such a translation is not sufficient and it is even more understood that the translation itself does not say much – there is no indication as to the point that Yaakov Ovinu was trying to make with his rhetorical question.

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<sup>10</sup> The buyer wishes to 'break' his hunger; the seller provides him with the means to perform that 'break'.

<sup>11</sup> Unlike Rashi who holds that *shever* refers both to the sale and to the acquisition, Radak holds that *shever* means 'supply' and thus it can be used in connection with both sale and acquisition.

However, Radak explains, the one performing the act of *shever* is the seller only, not the purchaser.

Radak's unstated proof is from what we read later on in our Parsha (Perek 42/Posuk 6):

וְיֹסֵף הוּא הַשְּׁלִיט עַל הָאָרֶץ הוּא הַמְּשָׁבִיר לְכָל עַם הָאָרֶץ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵחָיו יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לּוֹ אַפַּיִם אֶרְצָה:

Yosef – he is the ruler over the land, he is the seller-*mashbir* for all of the people of the land; the brothers of Yosef came and they bowed before him to the ground.

מִשְׁבִּיר – meaning seller is in the grammatical *hif'il* form. It is causative.

Radak points out that even though *shever* can refer to supplies sold or supplies acquired, the one doing the action can be called a *mashbir*-a seller, the one who supplies. He is never referred to as *shover* – a purchaser.

However, it is not only we who have difficulty with this verse. Across the board, our meforshim attempt to define its meaning and the message that Yaakov Ovinu was giving to his sons and to his descendants and to us.

In one of his explanations, Rashi writes:

ומפי אחרים שמעתי שהוא לשון כחישה, למה תהיו כחושים ברעב. ודומה לו (משלי יא/כה<sup>12</sup>) ומרוה גם הוא יורא:

From others I have heard that it [the meaning of תתראו] is an expression of becoming 'weak' and thus Yaakov said to his sons, 'Why should you be weakened because of the famine?' [According

to] is similar to the word מרוה [since the main letter of the root is the *reish*] as we read, 'He who is satisfying others, he, too, will be satisfied'<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, Yaakov Ovinu is giving a warning to his sons that they need not suffer and wait until the last minute when their suffering would be great – 'go and bring the supplies that are available', he tells them.

Ramban understands that the word תתראו does come from the root of ראה, meaning 'seeing'. He writes:

והנכון, למה תתראו במקום הזה, כי היה לכם ליסע מיד כאשר שמעתם שיש שבר במצרים כי כבר בסכנה היו אם לא ימהרו לדבר. וזה טעם ונחיה ולא נמות:

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<sup>12</sup> The entire verse reads:

נֶפֶשׁ בְּרָכָה תִּדְשֵׁן וּמְרוֹה גַם הוּא יוֹרָא:

A literal translation is:

The blessed soul will be treated well; one who is generous will also be generous.

Rashi explains the verse as follows:

נפש ברכה - שהוא ותרן בממונו:

*A blessing soul* – one who is generous with his money.

ומרוה - שמשביע את העניים:

*He is satisfying* – and he who satisfies the poor.

גם הוא יורא - ישבע טוב:

*Also he will be satisfied* – he will be satisfied pleasantly.

<sup>13</sup> As is well-known, in *lashon haKodesh* many root words have two meanings – the common meaning and a meaning exactly the opposite case, the word מרוה with its root letter *reish*, means plenty, such as we see in Tehillim Perek 23/Posuk 5.

In its opposite form it refers to a lack of plenty – a state of being weakened.

The correct explanation is ‘why are you being seen in this place?’ Yaakov said to his sons, ‘You should have immediately traveled when you heard that there are supplies in Egypt. Already we can be in danger if you do not hasten for this matter. That is the meaning in the words that follow (Posuk 2), ‘We will live and not die’.

Seforno also sees the root of תתראו being related to seeing. He writes:

למה תתראו. למה תביטו זה אל זה וכל אחד מכם מצפה שילך חבירו ויתור כאמרם  
ז"ל קדירה דבי שותפי לא חמימא ולא קרירא (עירובין ג א)  
*Why are you seeing* – ‘why are you looking at each other? Each of you are expecting for someone else to go and to scout out [Egypt]?  
This idea is similar to what we learn in Maseches Eiruvim: A pot that is being cooked by two chefs is neither hot nor cold.

Prior to learning what seems to be the most accepted explanation of תתראו, we first need to understand the extra words in the last two verses we have been quoting. We read:

וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ שָׂבָר בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לְמָה תִּתְרָאוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנֵה שְׁמַעְתִּי  
כִּי יֵשׁ שָׂבָר בְּמִצְרַיִם רְדוּ שָׁמָּה וְשַׁבְּרוּ לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנַחֲיָה וְלֹא נָמוּת:

Yaakov saw that there was a supply in Egypt and Yaakov said to his sons, ‘why are you seeing?’ Yaakov said, ‘I heard there are supplies in Egypt, go down there and supply us from there so that we will live and not die.’

First we read the narrative of “Yaakov saw” and then we read the words that Yaakov spoke, ‘I heard’. How do we understand the need to use both expressions? What do they teach?

Rav Hirsch sees a synthesis of ideas and writes:

וירא יעקב. נראה כי יעקב היטיב לראות מבניו. הוא שמע כי במצרים היה רק שבר, מכרו רק בקמעונות. הבנים לא האמינו לדבר והביטו זה בפני זה, חיכו שאחד יחליט לנסוע בשליחות כולם. אך יעקב ראה את השמועה כמהימנה, מחמת דוחק הנסיבות, ולפיכך אמר: למה תתראו, למה תביטו זה בפני זה? כולכם תיאלצו לרדת.  
*Yaakov saw* – it appears that Yaakov’s ‘vision’ was better than that of his sons. He heard that in Egypt there was *only* supplies – they sold the supplies in small amounts. The sons did not accept that idea – they assumed that they could purchase wholesale supplies, large amounts at one time [and therefore they were not so pressed to travel]. They looked at each other to

see who would go. But Yaakov saw that the information was correct – because of the dire circumstances [of having a great amount of demand and a seemingly limited supply]. Therefore Yaakov said to them, ‘Why are you looking at each other [as if only one needs to go and bring back a huge quantity that would be sufficient for all]? You all have to go.’

*Da’as Zekeinim*, echoing those who preceded them, see both verbs, seeing and hearing, as reflecting Divine inspiration. We read:

וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים. זה שאמר הכתוב, (משלי כ"ב<sup>14</sup>) עין רואה ואזן שומעת ה' עשה גם שניהם:

*Yaakov saw that there were supplies in Egypt* – this is what the verse says, ‘the eye sees and the ear hears; Hashem made also both of them.

It is that idea that Rashi incorporates when he writes:

וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים - ומהיכן ראה, והלא לא ראה אלא שמע, שנאמר הנה שמעתי וגו', ומהו וירא, ראה באספקלריא של קדש שעדיין יש לו שבר במצרים. ולא היתה נבואה ממש להודיעו בפירוש שזה יוסף:

*Yaakov saw that there was a supply in Egypt* – From where did he see? Was it not that he heard as it says, ‘Behold I heard, etc’? What is the meaning of ‘He saw’?

Rather Yaakov saw with a Divine vision of sanctity that *he* still has a supply in Egypt. But it was not a full prophecy that would have let him know clearly that it was referring to Yosef.

Now although Yaakov’s full *Ruach HaKodesh* did not return to him until he learned Yosef was alive<sup>15</sup>, that does not mean that he was without Divine inspiration. Chazal teach us (Masseches Bava Basra 12 a):

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<sup>14</sup> The entire verse reads:

אֶזְנוֹ שִׁמְעַת וְעֵינָיו רְאָה ה' עָשָׂה גַם שְׁנֵיהֶם:

The ear hears and the eyes see; Hashem made also the two of them.

<sup>15</sup> See next week’s Parshas Vayigash (Perek 45/Posuk 27):

וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהִים וַיֵּרָא אֶת הָעֵגְלוֹת אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח יוֹסֵף לְשֵׂאת אֹתוֹ וַתְּחִי רוּחַ יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם:

They told him all of the words of Yosef that Yosef spoke to them; Yaakov saw the wagons that Yosef sent to carry him; the spirit of Yaakov their father became alive.

## חכם עדיף מנביא

The wise person is greater than a prophet.

And, of course, that Divine vision continued to be part of the wisdom of Yaakov Ovinu and of the level of Ruach haKodesh that he had at that time.

This insight into Yaakov's vision allows us to תתראו and examine it in a new light.

Rashi writes:

למה תתראו - למה תראו עצמכם בפני בני ישמעאל ובני עשו כאלו אתם שבעים, שבאותה שעה עדיין היה להם תבואה.

*Why are you seeing* – Why do you show yourselves before the Ishmaelites and the children of Eisav as if you are satisfied? Because at that time they [still] had grain.

We see variations on this theme from Radak and Rashbam.

Radak writes:

למה תתראו - למה אתם מראים עצמיכם שיש לכם תבואה ושאר בני אדם הולכים לקנות תבואה ואתם יושבים:

*Why do you see* – Why are you showing yourselves that you have grain and everyone else is going to purchase grain – and you are just sitting [around]?

We read in Rashbam:

למה תתראו - כמו (מלכים ב יד/ח<sup>16</sup>) לכה ונתראה פנים דאמציה, שהגיס דעתו להראות גדולתו ליואש מלך ישראל. אף כאן למה תתראו בפני [בני אדם כמון] האנשים שיש להם תבואה כל צורכם שאתם מתעכבין כאן ואין לכם תבואה וכל העם יורדים מצרימה לקנות תבואה ואתם יושבים ומתראים כאילו יש לכם:

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Rashi writes:

ותחי רוח יעקב - שרתה עליו שכינה שפירשה ממנו:

*The spirit of Yaakov came alive* – the Shechinah that separated from him came upon him.

<sup>16</sup> The entire verse reads:

אז שלח אמציה מלאכים אל יואש בן יהואחז בן יהוא מלך ישראל לאמר לכה נתראה פנים:  
Then Amatzya sent messengers to Y'ho'ash ben Ye'ho'achaz ben Yei'hu the King of Israel, saying, 'Go and let us make ourselves seen.'

*Why are you seeing* – This is similar to what we read, ‘Go and we will show our face’ in regards to Amatzya. He became conceited to show his greatness before Yoash, King of Israel. Here, too, the explanation is, ‘Why are you showing yourselves before people as if you had sufficient grain when, in fact, you do not have grain. Everyone is going down to Egypt to purchase grain and you are sitting here and appearing as if you had grain.’

Based on all of the above, I would like to suggest that we translate the words:

למה תתראו

as:

Why do you make yourselves visible?

Whether the fact is that Yaakov Ovinu and the Shevatim still had an ample supply of food or whether the fact is that they were also being plagued by the famine at that time, the question:

למה תתראו

Why do you make yourselves visible?  
remains valid.

Yaakov Ovinu was objecting to the fact that his sons would be calling attention to themselves for one reason or for the other.

Yaakov Ovinu was remonstrating with his children that their goal was not to be the center of attraction.

Yaakov Ovinu was commanding his future generations:

למה תתראו

Why do you make yourselves visible?

It is for that reason that Yosef, as *Tzofnas Pa'aneach*, found a way to undermine the brothers' claim that they were not spies.

We read (Perek 42/Posuk 12):

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם לֹא כִי עָרֹת הָאָרֶץ בָּאתֶם לִרְאוֹת:

Yosef said to them, ‘No. You have come to see the hidden parts of the land.’

Rashi writes:

כי ערות הארץ באתם לראות - שהרי נכנסתם בעשרה שערי העיר, למה לא נכנסתם  
בשער אחד:

*Because you have come to see the hidden parts – ‘Because you entered the city from ten different gates. Why did you not enter together from one gate?’*

Midrash B'reishis Rabba (Parshata 91) writes that למה תתראו means:

ואל תיכנסו כולכם בפתח אחד מפי העין.  
All of you should not enter in one entrance because of *ayin ha'ra'ah*.  
למה תתראו

Why make yourselves visible?

One may certainly attribute this to the jealousy that would be engendered by the Israelites having supplies and the rest of the world not having them. This would certainly be in consonance with Rashi. And, of course, without levelling even an iota of criticism, we would understand that was the reason my great-grandfather was killed – he had and they didn't. The result was tragic. He was visible and they didn't like it.

But this does not explain why, if in fact the brothers were hungry, that would be an issue.

We would expect the Ishmaelites and the children of Eisav to say, 'If they want to starve themselves to death, let them do so'.

However, if we refer back to the vision that Yaakov Ovinu had:

וירא יעקב  
Yaakov saw

we understand that Yaakov was not giving a lecture on political science or even the causes of anti-Semitism. Since the vision was Divinely inspired, then its message had to convey more than a warning of 'be careful'.

And in fact, the warning was more profound than an urgency to take protective measures of self-defense.

The message that Yaakov Ovinu shared was a message of life: you do not have to make yourselves prominent!

The wrong type of prominence can lead to the trait of conceit, a trait greatly despised by our sages.

Therefore, the Rashbam's citing of the verse of Amatzia as a proof text is very telling because there the subject is conceit.

The source for avoiding this improper prominence is from the verse in Michah (Perek 6/Posuk 8):

הַגִּיד לְךָ אָדָם מָה טוֹב וּמָה ה' דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת עִם אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

He told you, man, that which is good and that which Hashem seeks from you: only to do justice and to love kindness and walking 'hidden' with your G-d.

This means that when a person has the awareness that he is with G-d, he will not think or even imagine to make himself prominent. By definition, Hashem is prominent!

And it was the holy vision of Yaakov Ovinu that brought the message to the *Shevatim*. 'It is my vision that teaches you to make yourselves relatively less visible. That is your way of showing your fealty to G-d.'

On Chanukah we light the Menorah and, in addition to saying a *Bracha* on the act of lighting, we say a blessing on the visibility of the lights that we lit:

שַׁעֲשֵׂה נִסִּים לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנָן הַזֶּה.

*He* has performed miracles for our fathers in those days at this time.

The lights of Chanuka are only visible when those who light them secede from prominence and allow the light of G-d and His Torah be in the spotlight.

When we secede from seeking prominence, we make room for the Ribbono Shel Olom in Whose shadow we shall walk so that (Zecharia Perek 14/Posuk 9):

וְהָיָה ה' לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה ה' אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד:

Hashem will be the King over all of the land; on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.

And it is that same Novi, Zecharia, who has presented us with the selection that is the Haftarah for Shabbos Chanukah.

The Haftarah concludes (ibid. Perek 4/P'sukim 6-7):

וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְבַר ה' אֶל זְרֻבָבֶל לֵאמֹר לֹא בְחַיִל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם בְּרוּחִי  
אָמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת: מִי אַתָּה הֵר הַגְּדוֹל לִפְנֵי זְרֻבָבֶל לְמִישֵׁר וְהוֹצִיא אֶת הָאֶבֶן הָרִאשֹׁנָה  
תִּשְׁאוֹת חֵן חֵן לָהּ:

<sup>17</sup>The angel answered and said to me saying, 'This is the Word of Hashem to Zerubavel saying, "Not with an army and not with strength [will the Beis HaMikdosh be built] but only with My Spirit", says the Hashem, the G-d of Hosts. Who are you, nations of the world appearing before Zerubavel as a great mountain blocking the building of the Beis HaMikdosh? You will be flattened into a plain. Zerubavel will bring out the first building stone and there will be praises for its beauty as the Beis HaMikdosh will begin to be constructed.'

As we *bench* our Chanukah lights and recite *Al HaNissim*, let us pray that the miracles that were בְּיָמֵינוּ, in those days should appear once again before us בְּזַמְנֵנוּ, in our own days.

Chanukah Sameach  
Shabbat Shalom  
Chodesh Tov

Rabbi Pollock

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<sup>17</sup> Our translation is paraphrased based on the commentators.