

צום עשרה בטבת תשפ"א  
**A ROUNDUP OF JEWISH HISTORY**

וידברו אליו את כל דברי יוסף אשר דבר אלהם וירא את העגלות אשר  
שלח יוסף לשאת אתו ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם<sup>1</sup>

**A**fter many years of being away from his family, a lot has changed for יוסף. He started out being singled out as the favorite son of יעקב אבינו. This, along with the dreams, led the brothers to hate יוסף, and sell him. He then rose to power in the house of פוטיפר, only to be thrown in jail. When in jail, he rose to the top as well, and later found himself staying 2 years longer.<sup>2</sup> This was to be his last moments at a low point in his life. He eventually redeems himself and rises to power yet again after successfully interpreting פרעה's dreams. Now, as the famine affects the world, יוסף is sitting pretty in מצרים, and everything is going his way. When the brothers come to get food, he realizes it's time for the truth to come out. The brothers are shocked! However, יעקב was a bit unsure. It wasn't until he saw the עגלות, the wagons, that he knew יוסף was alive. What was the significance of the wagons? רש"י brings down the מדרש<sup>3</sup> that the עגלות symbolize the ערופה, which was the last סוגיא that יעקב and יוסף learned together. A few years ago, I heard a very simple, yet amazing question. Why was this the last סוגיא they learned together? What are the lessons of ערופה that יוסף needed to take with him on this journey?

I heard a great answer from Rav Ari Kahn about responsibility as it relates to brotherhood, but that is not for now. I have alluded to this in the past. What I want to suggest is that עגל, while meaning wagon, also means circle. Similar to the wagons of those times, a circle completely surrounds and encapsulates whatever is inside of it. The first idea is that just as יוסף was completely enveloped in the סוגיא all those years ago when he learned it with יעקב, he is still just as focused on it, even after everything he has been through. The message יעקב was imparting is that no matter what the circumstances in life may be, always have דברי תורה on your mind. Let the תורה surround your thoughts. By constantly thinking about תורה, we can constantly live a תורה lifestyle.

Additionally, a circle is a very unique shape. The גמרא<sup>4</sup> says that הקב"ה will make a dance, or מחול, for the צדיקים, and He will be among them, and they will all be able to point to Him. רש"י points out that מחול also has the לשון of surrounding. This means that the צדיקים will be standing in a circle, and הקב"ה will be in the middle. The significance of this is that in a circle, each radius is equal, no matter where it is on the circle. In other words, all points on the circumference are equidistant from the center. No one צדיק is better than the other; they will all be the same distance from הקב"ה, and will all see Him clearly, as the גמרא proceeds to explain. Not only is every point equidistant from the center, but they are all looking at the center object from a different point of view. Even seeing only part of the picture, each צדיק on the circumference can state with true clarity "זוהו' קוינו לו". The גאולה will be so great, that everyone will have knowledge of הקב"ה, even if only seeing part of the picture.

Lastly, the circle can also represent a siege. עשרה בטבת פרשת ויגש always falls out around בטבת, which commemorates the siege of נבוכדנצר around ירושלים, paving the way for the ultimate destruction of the first המקדש. While it was actually the *second* המקדש that was destroyed due to שנאת חינם, we can still take a lesson to today. We may all have different perspectives on how to worship הקב"ה properly. However, we are all still equidistant from הקב"ה. It's not *how* you do עבודה that gets

<sup>1</sup> בראשית מה.כז

<sup>2</sup> בראשית רבה פט.ג.

<sup>3</sup> שם צד.ג.

<sup>4</sup> תענית לא.

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you closer, but it's about how *much* you do. There are פנים לתורה, שבעים, but whichever way we believe, we have to do it to the utmost degree. We may be different, but we all have that common goal. We have been in this גלות for too long; we want to bring משיח. In order to do that, we have to unite not despite, but specifically because of, our differences. I believe that this was the message יעקב wanted to leave יוסף with. All of the brothers may be different, but to get anything done, you have to unite. The other brothers understood that quite well in the beginning. They had a goal to get rid of יוסף, and they all came together under a common leader to figure out the best way to go about it. Seeing this, יוסף realized in מצרים that the only way for history to properly play itself out was to build a commonality with the brothers. The פסוק we started with says that after seeing the עגלות, the spirit of יעקב was revived. רש"י brings down from אונקלוס that this means the שכינה had returned. When we come together as one, הקב"ה will see that, and the שכינה will return in the third המקדש. We should be זוכה to experience this moment soon.