

This essay is taken from the new Shvilei Pinchas on Purim

“Mordechai left the king’s presence in royal apparel”

By Demanding that Binyamin Be Brought Down to Mitzrayim Yosef HaTzaddik Prepared for the Miracle of Purim

In honor of Purim, which approaches auspiciously, it is fitting that we examine a passuk from Megillas Esther. After the downfall of Haman--the wicked enemy of the Jews--on the one hand, and the appointment of Mordechai as viceroy to King Achashveirosh, on the other hand, it states (Esther 8, 15): “ומרדכי יצא מלפני המלך בלבוש מלכות תכלת וחור ועטרת זהב גדולה ותכריך” **“Mordechai left the king’s presence clad in royal apparel of turquoise and white with a large gold crown and a robe of fine linen and purple.**

In the Gemara (Megillah 16a), our sages reveal to us that Yosef HaTzaddik, while yet in Mitzrayim, perceived by means of “ruach hakodesh” that Mordechai was destined to exit the king’s chambers clad in five pieces of royal apparel. They deduce this fact from Yosef’s actions after revealing his identity to his brothers in Mitzrayim (Bereishis 45, 22): **“לכולם נתן לאיש”**—**to each of them he gave changes of clothing; but to Binyamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing.** The sages in the Talmid are astounded by the fact that Yosef HaTzaddik gave Binyamin more than he gave to the other brothers. They are baffled by his apparent insensitivity and lack of concern that this act might provoke his brothers’ jealousy:

“אפשר דבר שנצטער בו אותו צדיק יכשל בו, דאמר רבא בר מוחסיא אמר רב חמא בר גוריא אמר רב, בשביל משקל שני סלעים מילת שהוסיף יעקב ליוסף משאר אחיו [לעשות לו כתונת פסים], נתגלגל הדבר וירדו אבותינו למצרים. אמר רבי בנימין בר יפת, רמז רמז לו שעתיד בן לצאת ממנו, שיצא מלפני המלך בחמשה לבושי מלכות, שנאמר ומרדכי יצא בלבוש מלכות תכלת וגו’.”

Is it conceivable that Yosef should stumble in the very matter that caused his own suffering? On account of the striped tunic given to him by Yaakov, which contained two selas more fine wool than the other brothers’ tunics, it evolved that Yosef

was sold by his brothers and they all descended to Mitzrayim. **Rabbi Binyamin bar Yefes said: Yosef hinted to Binyamin that one of his future descendants would be honored by the king with five royal adornments, as it says (Esther 8, 15): “And Mordechai went out in royal attire of turquoise etc.”**

Truthfully, at first glance, Yosef HaTzaddik’s actions are extremely baffling. Twenty-two years have passed since Yosef has seen his father Yaakov and his brothers. When he finally confronts them and reveals his identity to them, he proclaims (Bereishis 45, 3): **“אני יוסף העוד אבי חי”**—**I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?** Surprisingly, he chooses to give his brother Binyamin five changes of clothing in order to hint to him **“that one of his future descendants would be honored by the king with five royal adornments.”** These actions deserve further explanation. Why did Yosef hint this matter to Binyamin in front of all the other shevatim? Seemingly, he could have done so privately at another time, so as not to incur their jealousy.

How Could Yosef Celebrate with Wine while Yaakov Was Still Suffering?

To shed some light on Yosef’s curious behavior, let us first focus on two other seemingly peculiar acts performed by Yosef. Firstly, when the shevatim descend to Mitzrayim for the second time—this time together with Binyamin—as Yosef, who was yet unidentified, demanded, the Torah relates (Bereishis 43, 31):

“וירחץ פניו ויצא ויתאפק ויאמר שימו לחם... וישבו לפניו הבכור כבכורתו והצעיר כצעירתו... וישא משאת מאת פניו אליהם, ותרב משאת בנימין ממשאות כולם חמש ידות וישתו וישכרו עמו.”

He washed his face and went out; he restrained himself and said, “Set out bread.” . . . They were seated before him, the firstborn according to his seniority and the youngest according to his youth . . . He passed portions from before

him to them, and Binyamin's portion was greater than the portions of all of them fivefold. They drank and they imbibed with him. Rashi explains that from the day they sold him, they refrained from drinking wine; nor did he drink wine; but that day, they drank.

The source for this fact is the Midrash (B.R. 92, 5): "וישתו וישכרו עמו - עמו שתו, אבל חוץ ממנו לא שתו, דאמר רבי לוי כל כ"ב שנה שלא ראה אותן, לא טעם טעם יין, אף הן לא טעמו טעם יין עד שראו אותו, הדא הוא Rabbi Levi states that for the entire twenty-two years that he did not see them, he did not taste any wine. They also did not drink any wine until they saw him. He deduces this point from the fact that the passuk specifically states that they drank "with him."

It is not surprising that the holy shevatim drank wine, even though they were still unaware that it was their brother Yosef standing before them. Seeing as Yosef, the king's viceroy, served them wine and drank with them, they had no choice but to indulge with him. Regarding Yosef, the epitome of a tzaddik, however, we can only wonder! Certainly, he was ecstatic at seeing his brother Binyamin. Yet, it was certainly unbecoming for him to drink with his brothers to a state of drunkenness—especially while their father Yaakov was in Eretz Canaan grieving and full of anguish.

Why Did Yosef Demand Binyamin's Presence Knowing that It Would Cause Yaakov Much Anguish?

Additionally, we should address another peculiarity that perplexes the commentaries. What prompted Yosef HaTzaddik to insist upon the shevatim bringing Binyamin to Mitzrayim? He must certainly have known that this would cause his father Yaakov significant emotional distress. Indeed, Yaakov expresses this fact to his sons as follows (Bereishis 42, 36): "אותי שיכלתם, יוסף איננו ושמעון איננו ואת בנימין תקחו, עלי היי כולגה—**you have bereaved me! Yosef is gone, Shimon is gone, and now you would take away Binyamin?** Hence, we must conclude that Yosef certainly had a very good reason for making this demand. So, let us consider what his motivation might have been.

In fact, the Ramban addresses this issue in his comment on the passuk (ibid. 9): "ויזכור יוסף את החלומות אשר חלם להם עליהם"—**Yosef recalled the dreams that he dreamt about them.**

He resolves the matter quite nicely by explaining that Yosef intended to see the realization of the first dream he dreamt. In that dream, all of his brothers bowed down to him without their father. For the fulfillment of that dream, Binyamin's presence was required without Yaakov. After that, the second dream could become a reality; Yaakov along with his other eleven sons would come to bow down before him. Here is the Ramban's magnificent commentary:

"ויזכור יוסף את החלומות אשר חלם להם עליהם, וידע שנתקיימו שהרי השתחוו לו, לשון רש"י. ולפי דעתי שהדבר בהיפך, כי יאמר הכתוב כי בראות יוסף את אחיו משתחוויים לו, זכר כל החלומות אשר חלם להם, וידע שלא נתקיים אחד מהם בפעם הזאת, כי ידע בפתרונם כי כל אחיו ישתחוו לו בתחילה, מן החלום הראשון (בראשית לז-1) והנה אנחנו מאלמים אלומים, כי 'אנחנו' רמוזו לכל אחיו אחד עשר, ופעם שנית ישתחוו לו (שם ט) השמש והירח ואחד עשר כוכבים מן החלום השני.

וכיון שלא ראה בנימין עמהם, חשב זאת התחבולה שיעליל עליהם, כדי שיביאו גם בנימין אחיו אליו, לקיים החלום הראשון תחילה. ועל כן לא רצה להגיד להם אני יוסף אחיכם, ולאמר (שם מה-ט) מהרו ועלו אל אבי וישלח העגלות, כאשר עשה עמהם בפעם השניה, כי היה אביו בא מיד בלא ספק.

ואחרי שנתקיים החלום הראשון הגיד להם לקיים החלום השני, ולולי כן היה יוסף חוטא חטא גדול לצער את אביו, ולהעמידו ימים רבים בשכול ואבל על שמעון ועליו, ואף אם היה רצונו לצער את אחיו קצת, איך לא יחמול על שיבת אביו, אבל את הכל עשה יפה בעתו לקיים החלומות כי ידע שיתקיימו באמת."

Here the Ramban differs with Rashi, who states that Yosef realized that the dreams had been fulfilled. For, Yosef recalled that all of his brothers had to bow down to him initially, according to the first dream (Bereishis 37, 6). Seeing that Binyamin was absent, he contrived this ruse, so that they would also bring Binyamin to him—in order to initially fulfill the first dream. Hence, he did not wish to reveal his true identity to them, yet. For, in that case, Yaakov would have undoubtedly come with them right away. After the first dream had been fulfilled, he identified himself, so as to fulfill the second dream. Otherwise, he would never have acted so improperly—causing his father such anguish and leaving him to grieve for such a prolonged period over Shimon and himself. And even if he intended to cause his brothers some minor degree of suffering, he would not have done so at his aging father's expense. In conclusion, he knew that the dreams would be fulfilled; therefore, he did what was necessary to bring them to fulfillment with all due haste.

The Galus in Mitzrayim Encompassed All Four Galuyot

I was struck by a wonderful idea! I would like to propose an explanation for Yosef’s surprising behavior based on the teachings of the Arizal in Likutei Torah (Ki Teitzei). He comments on Chazal’s division of Yisrael’s exiles into four distinct galuyot: **בבל—Bavel (Babylon), Madai (Medea), Yavan (Greece) and Edom (Rome)**. We find this division employed in the following Midrash (B.R. 2, 4) regarding the passuk (Bereishis 1, 2):

“והארץ היתה תוהו, זה גלות בבל... ובהו, זה גלות מדי... וחושך, זה גלות יון... על פני תהום, זה גלות ממלכת הרשעה... ורוח אלקים מרחפת, זה רוחו של מלך המשיח.”

The Midrash relates to the second passuk in the Torah. Four elements are mentioned initially: “tohu,” “vohu,” “choshech” and “tehom.” The Midrash associates “tohu” with Galus Bavel, “vohu” with Galus Madai, “choshech” with Galus Yavan and “tehom” with the evil regime of Galus Edom. The passuk concludes by stating that the spirit of G-d hovered upon the surface of the water; according to the Midrash, this refers to the spirit of the Melech HaMashiach. We find a similar division in another Midrash (B.R. 44, 17) related to the passuk (Bereishis 15, 12): “והנה אימה חשיכה גדולה נופלת עליו, אימה זו בבל, ויהנה אימה חשיכה זו מדי, גדולה זו יון, נופלת עליו זו אדום.” Once again, the Midrash associates four elements mentioned in the passuk with the four individual exiles.

The Arizal questions why Chazal only mention four exiles in this Midrash. They neglect to mention the exile in Mitzrayim, which was the most severe of all the exiles. His answer provides us with an essential principle. The four exiles of Bavel, Madai, Yavan and Edom were separate and distinct entities. Each one corresponded to one of the four letters of the holy name Havaya.

Galus Bavel corresponds to the letter “yud”; Galus Madai corresponds to the letter “hei”; Galus Yavan corresponds to the letter “vav”; and Galus Edom corresponds to the second “hei.” Galus Mitzrayim, however, represented a general exile encompassing all of the other four exiles together. Its tumah opposes the power of the tip of the letter “yud”—“kotzo shel yud.” The tip of the letter “yud” encompasses all four letters of the holy name. Therefore, Chazal only mention the four

individual exiles, because the exile in Mitzrayim was not a novel Galus but rather a conglomeration of the other four. This concludes the Arizal’s explanation.

We find a nice allusion to this fact in Simchas HaRegel on the Pesach Haggadah, authored by the Gaon Chida. He cites the aforementioned Arizal and adds that all things are alluded to in the Torah. He points out that the fact that the Galus in Mitzrayim encompassed all of the other four galuyot is alluded to in the very first passuk of sefer Shemos: “ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים—**and these are the names of Bnei Yisrael who came to Mitzrayim**. The passuk employs the word באי”ם (who came), which can be viewed as an acronym for: **ב'בל מ'די י'ון א'דום**—the four exiles contained within the exile in Mitzrayim.

A similar allusion is presented by the Bnei Yissaschar (Nissan 4, 2); however, his allusion employs Rome, which is actually Edom. He refers to the passuk (Shemos 2, 23) which states that the king of Mitzrayim died: “**בנימי הרבים ההם—during those many days**. Here the word **בני** is seen as an acronym for: **ר'ומי מ'די ב'בל י'ון מ'די**—**Rome, Bavel, Yavan and Madai**—alluding to the fact once again that the Galus in Mitzrayim encompassed these four exiles. The source for the allusion involving the word **בני** comes from the Megaleh Amukos (Toldos), where he refers to the passuk in Tehillim (3, 2): “**ה' מה רבו צרי ר'ב'ים קמים עלי—Hashem, how many are my tormentors! The great (ר'ב'ים) rise up against me!** Here, as well, “**the great**”—**ר'ב'ים**—alludes to the four regimes of: **ר'ומי ב'בל י'ון מ'די**.

This helps us understand why the passuk in parshas Vaeira (Shemos 6, 6) mentions “four expressions of geulah”: “**והוצאתי, וההצלתי, וגאלתי, ולקחתי**—the basis for the institution to drink four glasses of wine on the first night of Pesach. In reality, there was only one geulah from Mitzrayim; so why mention “four expressions of geulah”? Now, according to what we have just learned, the answer is quite clear. Seeing as Galus Mitzrayim incorporated all of the four galuyot, the geulah from Mitzrayim also encompassed the four redemptions from those galuyot. Hence, “four expressions of geulah” are mentioned to account for all four geulot.

Four Descents and Four Exits Alluding to Four Exiles and Four Redemptions

Now, I would like to present a wonderful introduction drawn from the magnificent teachings of the holy Admor, the Maharid

of Belz, zy”a. He states in the name of the early sources that the Galus in Mitzrayim encompassed all four galuyot. Then he points out something remarkable. It was precisely for this reason that we find that the shevatim went down to Mitzrayim four times and exited Mitzrayim four times.

They descended to Mitzrayim the first time when they were dispatched by Yaakov, as it is written (Bereishis 42, 1): **“וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים ויאמר לבניו למה תתראו, ויאמר הנה שמעתי כי יש שבר במצרים רדו שמה ושברו לנו משם ונחיה ולא נמות”**—**Yaakov saw that there was grain in Mitzrayim; so Yaakov said to his sons, “Why do you make yourselves conspicuous?” And he said, “Behold, I have heard that there are provisions in Mitzrayim; go down there and purchase for us from there, so that we may live and not die.”** Then they left Mitzrayim in order to bring Binyamin back with them. They descended to Mitzrayim for the second time with Binyamin. They left for the second time after Yosef revealed his true identity, in order to bring Yaakov back with them.

They descended to Mitzrayim the third time with Yaakov and the entire household of seventy people. They left after Yaakov’s death to bury him in the Mearas HaMachpeilah. They descended to Mitzrayim for the fourth time to complete the servitude. They left at the time of the exodus accompanied by supernatural feats. All in all, they went down to Mitzrayim four times and exited Mitzrayim four times. This constitutes an example of “ma’aseh avos siman la’banim”—the acts of the forefathers foretell events that will be experienced by the children, their descendants. These four descents and exits constituted a preparation for the four exiles and four redemptions. This concludes his explanation.

In light of this remarkable explanation, I would like to propose an explanation for Yosef HaTzaddik’s somewhat incomprehensible actions. He demanded emphatically that his brothers return home in order to bring Binyamin back to Mitzrayim; he refused to relent. Now, if we examine the sequence of events, we find something amazing. The shevatim’s second descent to Mitzrayim, with Binyamin in hand, corresponds to the second Galus—the Galus of Madai. As such, when they left that time, it corresponds to the geulah from the Galus of Madai.

As we know, the salvation from Galus Madai and from Haman’s evil decree was facilitated by Mordechai—a

descendant of Binyamin. Therefore, Yosef cleverly ordered his brothers to descend a second time to Mitzrayim along with Binyamin. By doing so, they performed an act of “ma’aseh avos siman la’banim” that would help save their descendants during Galus Madai in the merit of Mordechai, a descendant of Binyamin. This also explains very nicely why during this second visit to Mitzrayim, Yosef gave his brother Binyamin five sets of clothing. We learned from the Gemara the reason for this unique gift: **“רמזו רמזו לו שעתיד בן לצאת ממנו שיצא מלפני המלך—בהמשה לבושי מלכות”**—Yosef was hinting to Binyamin that one of his descendants would leave the king’s chambers adorned in five pieces of royal apparel. So, we see that Yosef intended to set in motion the preparations for the miracle of Purim, in which Binyamin’s descendant Mordechai was instrumental.

We have also achieved a better understanding of the Ramban’s comment. The Ramban claimed that Yosef requested that the shevatim return to Mitzrayim with Binyamin in order to fulfill the first dream—which foresaw eleven brothers bowing down to Yosef, without their father Yaakov. We wondered why HKB”H arranged for there to be two separate dreams. In the first dream, the eleven brothers initially come before Yosef without Yaakov; subsequently, they come together with their father Yaakov. Seemingly, they could have been combined into a single dream; Yaakov could have come down to Mitzrayim along with his eleven sons to bow down before Yosef.

Based on what we have learned, we can hypothesize that HKB”H divided the dream into two, so that the shevatim would descend to Mitzrayim and leave Mitzrayim a total of four times each, as a symbolic preparation for the four exiles and four redemptions. Had Yaakov come down to Mitzrayim with his eleven sons immediately, the number of entrances and exits from Mitzrayim would not have corresponded with the four exiles. Therefore, HKB”H divided the dream into two separate dreams. Seeing as the second descent corresponded to Galus Madai, Yosef was adamant that the brothers bring Binyamin with them. He was intent on preparing for Yisrael’s geulah from Galus Madai in the merit of Mordechai—who was destined to take leave of the king clad in five pieces of royal apparel.

At this point, we have also solved another riddle related to Yosef HaTzaddik’s baffling behavior. We learned that he refrained from drinking wine from the time he departed from his father Yaakov, twenty-two years earlier. Specifically on the brothers’ second visit down to Mitzrayim, he finally decides to

drink: “וּישתו וישכרו עמו”—they drank and became intoxicated together. This ties in very nicely with our explanation that the shevatim’s second descent to Mitzrayim corresponded to Galus Madai—whose hero was Mordechai, a descendant of Binyamin. For, by drinking wine with the shevatim to the point of intoxication, they were fulfilling the mitzvah of feasting and rejoicing on Purim. It states in the Gemara (Megillah 7b): **אמר רבא מיחייב איניש לבסומי בפוריא עד דלא ידע בין ארור המן לברוך מרדכי**—Rava says that we are obligated to get drunk on Purim to the point that we cannot differentiate between “cursed is Haman” and “blessed is Mordechai.”

Due to the Lack of Unity during the Times of Achashveirosh the Sin of “Mechiras Yosef” Was Recalled

Let us now suggest a reason as to why it was Yosef specifically who attempted to make preparations for the miracle of Purim. We find a tremendous chiddush in the Midrash (Esther Rabbati 7, 20). It teaches that Haman’s decree was aimed at atoning for the sin of “Mechiras Yosef”—the sale of Yosef. This is derived from the passuk (Esther 3, 15):

“הרצים יצאו דחופים בדבר המלך והדת ניתנה בשושן הבירה והמלך והמן ישבו לשתות. אמר רבי חנין, מאן דאמר רחמנא וותרן, הוא יתותרון מעוהי, אבל מאריך רוחיה וגבי דידיה. אמר להם [הקב“ה] לשבטים, אתם מכרתם את אחיכם מתוך מאכל ומשתה, כך אני אעשה לכם, הדא הוא דכתיב והמלך והמן ישבו לשתות... ומה אם מי שמחל ואמר (בראשית מה-כ) לא אתם שלחתם אותי הנה כי האלקים וגו’, ראה עד היכן היא מתוקנת, שהרי עד ימי מרדכי אותו עונש של מכירת יוסף קיים, מי שאינו מוחל על אחת כמה וכמה.”

The passuk states that the king and Haman sat down to drink. According to the Midrash, HKB”H tells the tribes that he will do to them as they did to their brother—i.e. negotiate their sale amidst food and drink. Just as the brothers sold Yosef while partaking of food and drink, so, too, Haman and the King negotiated the sale of the Jews while eating and drinking. Until the times of Mordechai, the punishment for “Mechiras Yosef” was still in force.

The great gaon Chida writes in Midbar Kideimot that this explains very nicely why the miraculous geulah of Purim was orchestrated at the hands of Mordechai and Esther. For, they both were members of shevet Binyamin, who did not participate in the sin of “Mechiras Yosef.” Thus, we can conclude that the sin of “Mechiras Yosef” was the underlying cause of Haman’s decree.

The correlation between “Mechiras Yosef” and Haman’s decree can be explained even further based on a statement in Midrash Mishlei (Chapter 1): **אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי, לא נמשכו עשרה לא נמשכו עשרה**—according to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, the ten martyrs were killed as retribution for the sin of “Mechiras Yosef”; Rabbi Avin adds that a taint of that sin remains in every generation. The Meshech Chochmah explains in parshas Acharei Mot (Vayikrah 16, 30) that the sin of “Mechiras Yosef” was due to a lack of unity among the brothers. So, whenever Yisrael are guilty of sins in matters involving man and his fellow man—indicative of division and disputes—the sin of “Mechiras Yosef” is reawakened. The Gemara teaches (Berachos 7a) that when the passuk states (Shemos 34, 7): **“מוקד עון אבות על בנים”**—**“the sins of the fathers are visited on the children”**—this holds true when the children continue to follow in the same sinful ways as their predecessors.

Let us also introduce that which is written in Manos HaLevi on the Megillah, brought by the shu”t Chatam Sofer (Orach Chaim 196), regarding the reason behind the institution of the mitzvah of “משלוח מנות איש לרעהו”—sending gifts to friends—on Purim. The notion is founded on the passuk in the Megillah (Esther 3, 8): **“ויאמר המן למלך אחשורוש, ישנו עם אחד מפוזר ומפורד בין העמים: “מפוזר ומפורד”**—**“then Haman said to King Achashverosh, “There is one people dispersed and in disarray among the nations throughout your realm.”** Haman is indicting Yisrael for their lack of “achdut”—unity. Rather than being “עם אחד”—exhibiting shalom and unity, they are in reality: **“מפוזר ומפורד”**—stricken with disarray and discord.

Therefore, to correct this lack of unity (ibid. 4, 15): **ותאמר: “אסתר להשיב אל מרדכי לך כנוס את כל היהודים”**—Esther suggests that Mordechai gather together all of the Jews; in other words, the plan was to reunite the people of Yisrael as one, with a single heart and purpose. This is the rationale behind the mitzvah of **“משלוח מנות איש לרעהו”**—to encourage unity and to dispel division and disputes. This concludes his remarks. Thus, we can now appreciate the association of Haman’s decree with the sin of “Mechiras Yosef.” They both reflect dissent and discord among the ranks of Yisrael: **“מפוזר ומפורד”**.

Now, it is reasonable to postulate that Yosef HaTzaddik, due to his extreme humility, blamed himself and accepted responsibility for his being sold by his brothers. By reporting their gossip back to their father, he caused them to hate him. Now, the sin of the

sale, which in his mind he caused, was reawakened with Haman's evil decree. Therefore, he felt responsible and made every effort to prepare for Yisrael's ultimate salvation from Haman's decree. So, he prepared for the miracle of Purim by demanding that the shevatim bring Binyamin back with them on their second descent to Mitzrayim; for as we have learned, Binyamin was not involved in the sin of "Mechiras Yosef." Additionally, he gave Binyamin five sets of clothing corresponding to the five royal adornments Mordechai was destined to wear.

Yosef Drank Wine with His Brothers upon Realizing that They Had Overcome Their Jealousy

Let us embellish our explanation a bit further based on the commentary of the Seforno (Miketz). He explains why Yosef chose to give Binyamin a gift fivefold that of the other brothers prior to revealing his true identity to them. The Torah describes the event as follows (Bereishis 43, 34): "וישא משאת—מאת פניו אליהם, ותרב משאת בנימן ממשאות כולם חמש ידות"—**he passed portions from before him to them, and Binyamin's portion was greater than the portions of all of them fivefold.** He explains that Yosef intended to test his brothers—to see if they would be jealous of Binyamin.

The shevatim sold Yosef out of jealousy, as the Torah attests (Bereishis 37, 11): "ויקנאו בו אחיו"—**his brothers were jealous of him.** Now, we have learned in the Gemara (Yoma 86b): "היכי דמי בעל תשובה, אמר רב יהודה, כגון שבאת לידו דבר עבירה פעם ראשונה—how can we tell if a person has performed teshuvah? If he is presented again with the same circumstances with which he initially failed and sinned and yet does not succumb. Therefore, it was important for Yosef to see if they had overcome their failing of jealousy. So, he tested them by giving Binyamin five times more than the others. Upon seeing that their jealousy was not aroused, he was satisfied that they had cured their shortcoming.

We find an explanation that complements the Seforno's explanation very nicely in the name of the great author of the Chiddushei HaRim, zy"a, and in the name of the great Rabbi Yitzchak of Varka, zy"a. They explain why Yosef and the shevatim released themselves from their vows not to drink wine specifically at this juncture.

The shevatim vowed not to drink wine from the day they sold Yosef in order to correct their sin of jealousy. Seeing as they passed Yosef's test with flying colors, indicating that they had corrected this shortcoming, they proceeded to drink wine. This fits in very nicely with the flow of the text: "**He passed portions from before him to them, and Binyamin's portion was greater than the portions of all of them fivefold**"—even so, the brothers were not jealous of him. Thus, they realized that they had overcome their harmful jealousy. This was cause for great rejoice: "וישתו וישכרו עמו"—so they drank to the point of intoxication. This concludes their explanation.

Now, let us connect what we have learned. Yosef HaTzaddik's elusive actions were deliberate and guided by a noble purpose. He was laying the foundation for the miracle of Purim. This is why he demanded that the shevatim bring Binyamin with them on their second descent--corresponding to Galus Madai; because Mordechai, a descendant of Binyamin, was the vehicle for Yisrael's salvation from Galus Madai. This also enlightens us with regards to why Yosef tested them concerning their jealousy and unity specifically during this second descent. He wished to prepare all of Yisrael for the events of Galus Madai. They, too, would need to conquer their discord and jealousy by following the leadership of Mordechai from shevet Binyamin. He succeeded in gathering all the Jews of Shushan together and uniting them. In the merit of this accomplishment, he left the king's quarters clad in five pieces of royal apparel.



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