

PARSHAT MIKETZ
2 KISLEV 5782/02 DECEMBER 2021
GENESIS 41:1-44:17
5TH CANDLE OF HANUKKAH



Shattered
Painting by Heather Ernst

BROKENNESS AND IMAGINATION

1. The synapses in our minds carry the sparks of imagination....That's where it all comes from...we create that which carries the earth through time. (Heather Ernst)
2. Imagery is the production of images of previously experienced material. Imagination is the power of forming mental images of what is not actually present or has never been actually directly experienced. (Luigi F. Agnati, Diego Guidolin, L. Battistin, G. Pagnoni, and K. Fuxe, "The Neurobiology of Imagination: Possible Role of Interaction-Dominant Dynamics and Default Mode Network," *Frontiers in Psychology*)
3. Jacob saw that there was שֶׁבֶר in Egypt. (Genesis 42:1)
שֶׁבֶר – corn, grain (שָׁבַר - break, break into pieces)
שֶׁבֶר - hope (שָׁבַר - inspect, examine; wait, hope)

There was *shever* in Egypt (that is the famine). There was *sever* (that is the plenty). There was *shever* (for Joseph had been taken down to Egypt). There was *sever* (for Joseph became the ruler). (Bereishit Rabbah 70:17)

4. The shattering of the vessels (*Shevirat haKeilim*) does not signify a flaw in the creative process. On the contrary, it serves a very specific and important purpose, which is to bring about a state of separation or partition of the light into distinct qualities and attributes, and thereby introduce diversity and multiplicity into creation.

5. In the presence of certainty who would need faith at all? (Philip Yancey, *Reaching for the Invisible God: What Do We Expect to Find?*)

6. וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיִּפְרָם וַיִּתְנַפֵּר אֵלֵיהֶם

When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them and he made himself strange to them.....Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. (Genesis 42:7-8)

נָכַר - to be unknown, strange

נִכְרָה - to treat as a stranger

נִכְרִי - a stranger

הִכִּיר - to recognize, know

הוּכַר - to be recognized

The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognize God's image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, ideals are different from mine? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing him to remake me in God's. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *Dignity of Difference*)