

Joseph's Temptations and Chanukah:
Delivering the Powerful into the Hands of the Weak

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1. The Garden of Eden and Cain and Abel

Cain and Abel	The Garden of Eden
וַיִּקַּם קַיִן אֶל הָבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ:	וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִי הַיָּדָר וַתֹּאכַל
-----	וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֶחֶם וְלֶחֶם לֶחֶם
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵל קַיִן אֵי הָבֶל אָחִיךָ	וַיִּקְרָא... וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵיפֶה:
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי	וַיֹּאמֶר... וַאֲיִרָא כִּי עֵרִים אָנֹכִי וְאֶחָבֵא:
הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי אָנֹכִי:	וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הוּא נָתַתָּה לִּי
וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה עָשִׂיתָ	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵל הַיָּדָר לֹאֲשֶׁה מֶה זֶאת עָשִׂיתָ
וַעֲתָה אָרוּר אַתָּה	וְלָאָדָם אָמַר ... אָרוּר הָאָדָם בְּעִבּוֹרְךָ
לִפְתַּח חֲטָאתְךָ רֹבֵץ גְּדוֹל עֹנֵי מִנְשׂוּא	-----
וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשׁוּקָתְךָ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בּוֹ הֵן גִּרְשָׁתְךָ אוֹתִי ... וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ נוֹד קְדַמַּת עֵדֵן	אֵל אִישׁךָ תִּשׁוּקָתְךָ וְהוּא יִמְשַׁל בְּךָ וַיִּגְרַשׁ אֶת הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכַּן מִקֶּדֶם לְגֵן עֵדֵן
וַיִּשֶׂם יְהוָה יְהוָה לְקַיִן אֹתָהּ לְבִלְתִּי הַכּוֹת אֶתוֹ כֹּל מִצָּאוֹ:	וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֵל הַיָּדָר לָאָדָם וְלָאִשָּׁתוֹ כְּתַנּוֹת עֹר וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁם:
וַיִּדַע קַיִן אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ	וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ:

She took from the fruit and ate	Cain arose over Abel his brother and killed him
The Lord commanded... “do not eat (of the tree)”	-----
He (the Lord) called and said, “ <u>Where</u> are you?”	The Lord said to Cain, “ <u>Where</u> is Abel your brother?”
He said, “I was afraid because I was naked and I hid...”	He said, “I do not know...”
The woman you put at my side—she gave me from the tree	Am I my brother’s keeper?
What have you done?	What have you done?
To the man He said, “ <u>Cursed be the ground</u> for you...”	And now, <u>you are cursed</u> ...
To your husband is your <u>desire</u> and he shall <u>rule</u> over you	Its <u>desire</u> is to you and you may <u>rule</u> over it
-----	At the doorway <u>sin</u> couches My <u>sin</u> is too great to bear
He <u>banished</u> Ha-adam... and stationed <u>east of the garden of Eden</u> the cherubim...	Behold, You have <u>banished</u> me... And Cain left the presence of the Lord and dwelled to the <u>east of Eden</u>
The Lord God made garments of skins for the man and his wife and dressed them	The Lord put a mark on Cain, lest anyone who met him should kill him
The man knew his wife Eve	Cain knew his wife

2. Cain and Abel

א) וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת חוּהָ אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר קִבִּיתִי אִישׁ אֶת יְדֵי יְוָה (ב) וַתֵּסֶף לִלְדֹת אֶת אָחִיו אֶת הָבֶל וְיְהִי הָבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה (ג) וְיְהִי מִקֶּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה (ד) וְהָבֶל הֵבִיא גַם הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ וּמִחֲלִבְהֵן וַיִּשַׁע יְדֵי יְוָה אֶל הָבֶל וְאֶל מִנְחָתוֹ: (ה) וְאֶל קַיִן וְאֶל מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מֵאֵד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו... (ז) הֲלוֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לְפָתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בּוֹ: (ח) וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל הָבֶל אָחִיו וְיְהִי בְהִיּוֹתֶם בְּשֵׂדֶה וַיִּקָּם קַיִן אֶל הָבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ: (ט) וַיֹּאמֶר יְדֵי יְוָה אֶל קַיִן אֵי הָבֶל אָחִיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֵׁמֶר אָחִי אָנֹכִי:

י) וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן הָאֲדָמָה: (יא) וְעַתָּה אֲרַר אֶתְּךָ מִן הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת פִּיהָ לִקְחוֹת אֶת דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ מִיָּדְךָ:

And the man knew Eve his wife; and she... bore Cain, and said: 'I have acquired a man with the LORD.' And she continued to give birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of

sheep, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the course of time, Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD paid heed to Abel and to his offering; but to Cain and to his offering He did not pay heed. And Cain was very angry... And the LORD said to Cain: Is it not so: if you do well, there will be uplift, and if you do not do well, sin couches at the door; and to you is its desire, but you may rule over it.' And Cain said to Abel his brother... when they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and killed him. And the LORD said to Cain: 'Where is Abel your brother?' And he said: 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?' And He said: 'What have you done? the voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. And now, you are cursed from the ground, which opened its mouth to take your brother's blood from your hands.'

3. Abarbanel on verse 1:

It seems to me that she said this in order to brag: if the first time, woman was created from man—flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones—now the man Cain is made from the woman, Havvah... Therefore, man has no superiority over woman, since now man comes from woman. 'I have acquired a man with God' means she attributed (Cain) to herself and not to his father.

4. Rashi on verse 3, "of the fruit of the ground":

מפרי האדמה: מן הגרוע. ויש אגדה שאומרת זרע פשתן היה.

From the inferior [fruits]. And there is a midrash aggaddah that says it was flax seed.

Rashi on verse 7, "to you is its desire":

של חטאת הוא יצר הרע, תמיד שוקק ומתאוה להכשילך.

Of sin, that is the evil inclination, which constantly desires and craves to make you stumble.

Bereishit 49:3

רְאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אֶתָּה כֹּחִי וְרֵאשִׁית אוֹנִי יִתֵּר שֵׁאת וַיִּתֵּר עָד:

Reuben, you are my first born... exceeding in rank and exceeding in honor.

5. Joseph and Abel:

ותוסף ללדת את אחיו	יוסף ה' לי בן אחר
ויחר לקין מאד	וישנאו אותו
ויהרגהו	לכו ונהרגהו
ויקם קין אל הבל אחיו	כי אחינו בשרנו הוא, וישמעו אחיו

She continued (added) giving birth to his brother	May the Lord add another son for me
Cain was very angry	And they hated him
And he killed him	Let us kill him
Cain arose over Abel his brother	He is our brother, our flesh; his brothers agreed

6. Joseph and Cain:

דבתם רעה, ולא יכלו דברו לשלום	ויאמר קין אל הבל אחיו
אם משל תמשל בנו (השמש והירח ואחד עשר כוכבים)	ואתה תמשל בו
את אחי אנכי מבקש... איפה הם רועים	אי הבל אחיך

Cain said to Abel his brother	Bad reports, they could not speak a friendly word to him
You many rule over him	Do you mean to rule over us?
Where is Abel your brother?	I am looking for my brothers... where are they pasturing?

7. Joseph and his brothers

וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת דְּבַתָּם רָעָה אֶל אָבִיהֶם... וַיִּשְׁנְאוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם...
וַיִּחַלֵּם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיְגִד לְאָחָיו... וַיּוֹסְפוּ עוֹד שִׁנְאָה אֹתוֹ עַל חֵלֶם מִתְּיוֹ וְעַל דְּבָרָיו:

Joseph brought bad reports of them to their father... they hated him so that they could not speak a friendly word to him.

Joseph dreamed a dream which he told to his brothers; and they hated him even more...for his dreams and for his words.

וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף מִן הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף לִישְׁמַעֲאֵלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף...

They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites...

8. Joseph and Potiphar's Wife, Genesis 39

וַתִּשָּׂא אִשְׁתֹּ אֲדֹנָיו אֶת עֵינֶיהָ אֶל יוֹסֵף וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁכַבָה עִמִּי: וַיִּמָּאֵן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵל אִשְׁתֹּ אֲדֹנָיו... וַיְהִי כַדְּבָרָה אֶל יוֹסֵף יוֹם יוֹם...

his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph and said, "lie with me." He refused, and said to his master's wife... She spoke to Joseph every day, but he did not yield to her request ...

וּתְתַפְּשֶׂהוּ בְּבִגְדוֹ לְאֹמֶר שְׁכַבָה עִמִּי וַיַּעַזְבֵּן בְּבִגְדוֹ בִּידָהּ וַיֵּנֶס וַיֵּצֵא הַחוּצָה

She grabbed him by his garment and said, "Lie with me!" He left his garment in her hand and fled...

וַתִּקְרָא לְאִנְשֵׁי בֵיתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לְאֹמֶר רְאוּ הָבִיא לָנוּ אִישׁ עִבְרִי לְצַחֵק בָּנוּ... וַיַּעַזְבֵּן בְּבִגְדוֹ אֶצְלִי...

She called to her household staff and said to them saying, "Look, he brought to us a Hebrew man to dally with us... he left his garment with me and he fled..."

וַתְּדַבֵּר אֵלָיו כְּדִבְרֵי הָאֵלֶּה לְאֹמֶר בָּא אֵלַי הָעֶבֶד הָעִבְרִי... וַיַּעַזְבֵּן בְּבִגְדוֹ אֶצְלִי וַיֵּנֶס הַחוּצָה

She spoke to him (her master) about these things saying, "He came to me--the Hebrew slave ... And when I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment with me and fled outside.

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחִיו אֲנִי יוֹסֵף... וְלֹא יָכְלוּ אַחִיו לַעֲנוֹת אֹתוֹ כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפְּנָיו.. וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף גִּשׁוּ נָא אֵלַי וַיִּגְשׁוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יוֹסֵף אַחִיכֶם אֲשֶׁר מָכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי מִצְרִימָה... וְעַתָּה לֹא אֶתֶם שְׁלַחְתֶּם אֹתִי הִנֵּה כִּי הֵאֵל הַיָּם

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph... and they were unable to answer him because they were dumbfounded... Joseph said to his brothers, "Draw near to me," and they drew near. And he said, "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold to Egypt... now, it is not you who sent me here, but God..."

וַיִּפֹּל עַל צוּאְרֵי בְנֵימִן אָחִיו וַיִּבְכֶּה... וַיִּנְשֵׁק לְכָל אָחִיו וַיִּבְכֶּה עֲלֵהֶם וְאַחֲרָיִם כֵּן דִּבְרוּ אַחִיו אֹתוֹ

He fell on Benjamin's neck and cried and Benjamin cried on his neck... and he kissed all his brothers and cried upon them, and afterwards his brothers spoke to him.

9. The Money (Genesis 42, 44, 47)

וַיִּצַו יוֹסֵף וַיִּמְלֵאוּ אֶת כְּלֵיהֶם בָּרֶ וְלִהְשִׁיב כֶּסֶף אִישׁ אֶל שְׁקוֹ...

Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with grain, to return each one's money to his sack...

וַיִּצַו... וַיִּשִׂים כֶּסֶף אִישׁ בְּפִי אֲמַתְחָתוֹ: וְאֵת גְּבִיעִי גְבִיעֵ הַכֶּסֶף תִּשִׂים בְּפִי אֲמַתְחַת הַקֶּטַן...]

... and put each one's money in...his bag. Put my silver goblet in the...bag of the youngest one..."

וַיִּלְקֹט יוֹסֵף אֶת כָּל הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן... וַיִּתֵּם הַכֶּסֶף מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֵאוּ כָּל מִצְרַיִם אֶל יוֹסֵף לְאֹמֶר הִבֵּה לָנוּ לֶחֶם וְלָמָּה נָמוֹת נִגְדָךְ כִּי אַפְסֵ כֶּסֶף

Joseph gathered all the money... And when the money gave out in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, lest we die... for the money is worthless..."

10. Genesis 50

וַיִּרְאוּ אָחֵי יוֹסֵף כִּי מֵת אָבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ יִשְׁטַמְנוּ יוֹסֵף... אָבִיךָ צִוָּה לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר: כִּי הִתְאַמְרוּ לְיוֹסֵף אָנָּה שָׂא נָא פֶשַׁע אָחִיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי רָעָה גָּמְלוֹךְ וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לִפְשַׁע עַבְדֵי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ וַיִּבְרַךְ יוֹסֵף בְּדַבְרָם אֵלָיו... וְאַתֶּם חֲשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה אֲלֵהֶם הֵימָּה חֲשָׁבָה לִטְּבָה... וַיְנַחֵם אוֹתָם וַיְדַבֵּר עַל לִבָּם:

Joseph's brothers saw that their father had died and said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us..." So they sent a message to Joseph, "Before his death your father left this instruction: 'Forgive (lit. 'lift up') ...the crime and the sin of your brothers who treated you with evil... forgive ('lift up') now the crime..." And Joseph cried as they spoke to him.

"You intended evil for me, but God intended it for good..." Thus he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

11. Levit. 19:16-18

לֹא תֵלֵךְ רֹכִיל בְּעַמֶּיךָ לֹא תַעֲמִיד עַל דַּם רֵעֶךָ אֲנִי יְיָ: יוֹ) לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת אָחִיךָ בְּלִבְּךָ הוֹכֵחַ תוֹכִיחַ אֶת עַמִּיתְךָ וְלֹא תִשָּׂא עָלָיו חֲטָא: יח) לֹא תִקֵּם וְלֹא תִטֹּר אֶת בְּנֵי עַמֶּיךָ נֹאֲהַבֵת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךְ אֲנִי יְיָ:

Do not go about as a talebearer among your countrymen. Do not stand by upon the blood of your fellow; I am the Lord. Do not hate your brother in your heart; reprove your kinsman and do not bear sin because of him. Do not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your countryman. Love your fellow as yourself; I am the Lord.

About Judy Klitsner

A senior faculty member at the Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, Judy Klitsner has taught courses in Bible and biblical exegesis for more than two decades. She lectures to diverse, multi-denominational audiences in Israel, the U.S., and Europe and is the author of *Subversive Sequels in the Bible: How Biblical Stories Mine and Undermine Each Other* (Jewish Publication Society, 2009; Koren, 2011). The book was awarded a 2009 National Jewish Book Award.