

## Parsha Points to Ponder

by Rabbi Dov Lipman

### VAYEISHEV

- ① Why does the Torah suddenly refer to Bilha and Zilpa as WIVES of Yaakov (NESHEI AVIV - 37:2) when relating that Yosef told Yaakov how the brothers spoke about their sons, and not as MAIDSERVANTS as they have been called until now (see 32:23)?
- ② Why do the brothers ask Yosef both whether he thinks he will be king over them (HAMALOCH TIMLOCH - 37:8), and whether he thinks he will rule over them (IM MASHOL TIMSHOL BANU - 37:8)? Aren't these the same thing?
- ③ Why does the Torah first refer to the two men whom Par'o imprisoned as MINISTERS (40:2), and then calls them simply THE BAKER and THE BUTLER (40:5)?

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The suggested answers are elsewhere  
Ponder the questions first, then see further

## Parsha Points to Ponder Suggested answers

- ① The Ramban teaches that this choice of words indicates that once Rachel and Leah passed away, the maidservants were elevated to the status of WIVES (while the Torah did not state that Leah passed away, the Ramban takes this as a fact given this change in the maidservant's status).
- ② Ibn Ezra explains the difference between a KING and a RULER. A KING has dominion based on the acceptance and respect of his subjects. A RULER forces himself on the people whether they accept him or not. The brothers were asking Yosef if he really believed that he would rule over them in either of these capacities.
- ③ Chizkuni answers that when they were first arrested and imprisoned they were ministers, but their time in prison lowered them and broke their spirit - leaving them as merely THE BAKER and THE BUTLER.