

"And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt, and his baker had sinned against their master, the king of Egypt."(40:1)

Later on in the story the *pasuk* refers to them in a slightly different way. *"And Pharoah became angry against his two officials, the prince of the butlers, and the prince of the bakers." (40:1)* While in the first *pasuk* they are simply referred to as butler and baker, they are referred to as "prince" of the butlers and "prince" of the bakers in the second *pasuk*. *Horav S. R. Hirsh, z.l.*, notes the apparent mockery reflected in the pathos of these "princes." They are princes to those beneath them in status, but to those above them they are merely slaves to be manipulated at the whim of their superior. When one's stature is dependent solely upon his relation to the king, his princely position is -- at best -- precarious. The king holds the life of these "princes" in his hand, as if they were his chattel. To him they are not princes; they are simply butlers and bakers.

This would seem an appropriate message for those who delude themselves with self-aggrandizement as soon as they ascend to a position of semi-importance. The opinion of underlings is of little consequence. What really matters is one's image in the eyes of those to whom he is beholden. We may extend this to a spiritual perspective. We often concern ourselves with the opinion of man, while we neglect to reflect upon the only opinion which is of primary significance - that of Hashem.