



Ohr Yerushalayim News

א"ז שבט תשפ"א – בשלה – 30th January 2021 - Volume 13 - Issue 29

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel tov to Malcolm and Vivienne Fagleman on the birth of a grandson to Rabbi Natan and Avital Fagleman

Mazel Tov to Danny and Reuvena Dresner on the birth of a grandson to Avi and Sharelle Dresner

Mazel Tov to Gary and Orley Zolty on the birth of a granddaughter to Chanina and Tehilla Broder

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Leivy and Dassy Goldman who have Yahrtzeit for their daughter on Thursday 22nd Shevat

The Scene At Yam Suf Vs Life In This World Roy Dinowitz

This Dvar Torah is written in memory of my grandma's Yahrtzeit - Eita Bayla Bas Yitzchok Alter.

Bnei Yisroel reached the foot of the Yam Suf, yet all of a sudden the fear they most dreaded turned into reality! The evil Egyptians who enslaved them for so many years were in sight, armed and rapidly approaching, as well as animals from the desert drawing near, sea waves crashing down behind them, topped off with thousands of angels descending from heaven at the ready to accuse. At this point Moshe did what he does best, beseech to G-d. The outcome was unprecedented, they were ordered to walk into the raging sea! To say the least no easy task!

I would like to compare this scenario to life in this world. The Egyptians compare to the nations of the world who persecute us B'kol Dor Vo'dor. The animals can be compared to the Yetzer Hora [the 'animal instinct' in a person also the snake who seduced Chava to sin ultimately was the Yetzer Hora (also see Avoda Zara 5b)]. Angels are the ones we create with our deeds & speech. Moshe Rabeinu's prayers [which are the equivalent of all of Klal Yisroel] represents all of our prayers and is our mighty weapon we've inherited from our ancestors.

Nonetheless we we're instructed to jump into the sea. This sea is the 'Sea of Torah', the remedy to our struggles in this world, and the key approach is to immerse in Torah together with heartfelt prayers.

Quoting Rav Biderman: The Torah says (26:3) 'Im Bechukoisai Teileichu', and Rashi explains Shetihui Ameilim BaTorah, You shall toil in Torah. [Rashi writes, "Perhaps you would think that Im Bechukoisai Teileichu means keeping the mitzvos? [No, that can't be because] the following words state V'es Mitzvosai Tishmoiru, thus mitzvos are mentioned. So, what is the translation of Im Bechukoisai Teileichu? It means, to toil in Torah]. The purpose of Creation is to toil in Torah. The Gemora (Nidah 30) states that when a child is in the womb, a Malach teaches the child the entire Torah. At birth, a Malach touches the child on the lips so that he'll forget the Torah. Isn't it better that he should remember the Torah? The answer is that the purpose of life is to acquire Torah through toil.

We are taught; 'Borasi Yetzer Hora, Borasi Torah Tavlin ('I have created the Yetzer Hora, but I have also created the Torah as an antidote') which means that only Torah learning is the antidote against the Yetzer Hora, nothing else! Nonetheless we are the ones who must take that first step, just as the Yiden at Yam Suf did. Furthermore we must also fully trust in -d that he can help us in any situation no matter what!

Especially in today's trying times when so many are experiencing many difficulties. We must pray wholeheartedly to our loving caring Father

above, for he put us in our situation and only He knows what's best for us, only He has the power to take us out of any situation instantly. Looking back at past life experiences G-d helped us through so many situations & got us to the other side, have we forgotten?! Let us not fear or worry Kiras Yam Suf is just around the corner!

As for now let's sing Shira for all the positives & good in our lives, that He constantly & graciously showers us with! Ki Lo Samu Chasodecha! May we all merit to sing Shira together with the coming of Moshiach speedily in our day!

Wasting Precious Opportunities

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

The parsha begins with the words "Vayehi b'shalach Paroah es ha'Am" (And it was when Pharaoh sent out the nation) [Shemos 13:17]. Chazal say that the word "Vayehi" usually connotes pain or distress—from the word "vay" (woe). They add that when Pharaoh saw the Jews leaving Egypt, he cried out in pain. (Oy! What did I do!)

The Medrash gives a parable: A person had a string of pearls but he did not know what they were worth. To him, they were just like a string of worthless beans. He met someone and asked him, "Would you like this string of round little balls that I have? I have no use for it!" The fellow took it from him and then went into the city and separated the various pearls by size – large, medium, and small. He proceeded to do a booming business selling the individual pearls to customers who knew their true value. One day the person who gave him the string of pearls came into the store and saw what a fortune this other person was making from his "gift." Once he saw that (and realized what he had given up), he tore his clothes in mourning. He bemoaned the fact that he had this fortune in his hands and he gave it away. "Woe is me!"

The Medrash says that this was the story with Pharaoh. The Children of Israel were the string of pearls that he had in his possession. When he saw them leaving Egypt, he cried out in pain. Vay(ehi) – Woe is me! Look what I had, and I gave it away!

Rav Zevulun Groz was a great man who lived in Jerusalem. He was the Av Beis Din of the city of Rechovot. When he was a young student going away to Yeshiva, his father told him this Medrash. His father asked a question on the Medrash: What is the analogy here? The fellow who gave away the pearls did it voluntarily. No one forced him to give them away.

Davening Times

פרשת בשלה

Zman Shabbos & Lighting	4.31pm
Mincha	4.36pm
Shacharis - Hashkomo	7.30am
2nd Shacharis	9.30am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.09m
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	4.31pm
Motzei Shabbos	5.41pm
Ovos uBonim	6.41pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha	1.15pm
Mincha & Maariv	4.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

He made a silly decision because he did not know the value of what he had. On the other hand, Pharaoh did not release the Children of Israel willingly. He was forced to let them go because his country was falling apart and everyone was dying as punishment for him not letting them go. When someone has a gun to your head or is twisting your arm, you sometimes have no choice but to comply even against your own wishes. His father explained to the young Zevulun Groz that the reason Pharaoh was crying when he saw the Jews leaving was not because he sent them away. He had no choice but to send them away. The reason he was crying was that when he saw them leaving and he saw the formation with which they left – the order in which they left and how civilized they were – he said to himself: I am an idiot! I had such a nation under my power and I had them make bricks. They possess the genius to be artisans. They could have been architects. They could have done so much more with their talents. I had such a talented people, and I made them into ditch diggers. That was why he was now so regretful. Retroactively, he realized he had these pearls, these diamonds, and rather than using them for elevated purposes and for building up the economy of his country, he made them brick makers and brick layers.

Rabbi Groz senior told his son: You are going away to Yeshiva. It is a golden opportunity. It is not always during a person's lifetime that he has the opportunity to use even a limited period of years to accomplish that which is possible to accomplish in Yeshiva. Do not look back at the end of this period and say, "Look what I had, and I did not take advantage of it!" His son took this message to heart and indeed became a great person. If there is one constant message that I try to share with my students in Yeshiva, it is this very message. The limited years a person has available to study in Yeshiva are precious. They are years that will not be duplicated. The rest of our lives are full of the distractions of earning a living and all kinds of family distractions. The ability to be able to sit and to learn in a focused and undisturbed manner during this brief period of our lives is like a string of pearls. They are the easiest years of a person's life. Do not make the mistake of looking back and saying "Ah! Look what I had and I did not take advantage of it!"

After the Shirah, the pasuk says, "Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aharon, took the drum in her hand, and all the women went forth after her with drums and with dances. Miriam spoke up to them (va'Taan lahem Miriam), 'Sing to Hashem for He is exalted above the arrogant, having hurled horse with its rider into the sea.'" [Shemos 15:20-21] The way most of us understand this parsha is that the men did their thing and then the women wanted to do their thing as well – so Miriam led them in an abridged version of the men's Az Yashir song.

The Tolner Rebbe asks four good questions on these last two pesukim:

- (1) Why does the Torah need to tell us here that Miriam is a prophetess?
- (2) What does "Va'Taan lahem Miriam" mean? Literally Va'Taan means she answered them (rather than she led them [in song]). When leading in singing the appropriate verb is, as it says in this week's Haftorah, VaTashar Devorah (and Devorah sang) not Va'Taan!
- (3) The word 'Lahem' means 'them' in masculine. In the context of this narrative, where she is speaking to the women, we would expect to find the feminine pronoun Lahen.
- (4) Out of all the pesukim in the Shirah, why does Miriam choose to repeat the expression "Sus v'Rochvo Rama b'Yam" (having hurled horse with its rider into the sea) to synopsise the entire Shira in this very abbreviated version?

The Tolner Rebbe answers his questions by redirecting our entire understanding of this incident. It is not that Miriam took the drum and then all the women followed her and they did the dances that women do at chassunahs. This is not what happened over here.

The explanation is that this was a protest (Hafganah!). How does the Tolner Rebbe see this? The word "the prophetess" gives us a clue. Miriam saw what was happening over here with Divine Vision. The normal human eye would not be able to discern this. But she saw what was happening. It was a demonstration.

What was the demonstration about? "What about us! Are we chopped liver?" Here, our rabbis tell us that in the merit of the righteous women, our ancestors left Egypt [Sotah 11b-12a]. It was the men who had given up hope, and it was the women who kept them going and encouraged them to procreate. Now, during the final celebration of our exodus, is it just the men who are going to sing praises to G-d? What about us? What are we?

Miriam saw what was happening. She was not happy with the fact that all the women were following after her with drums and dancing because this was not an innocuous celebration. This was a protest! She heard the women complaining, "It is not fair that the men will have all the glory and be the ones who are the celebrants! What about us?"

The pasuk therefore uses the verb "Va'Taan Lahem Miriam" – Miriam responded to them! There was a question here which needed to be answered. The question was "What about us?" And Miriam answered "Lahem" – "Oh! You want to be like the men? Okay, I will answer you like men." She is answering a question that we hear until this very day. "Why can't women do this? Why can't women do that? It is not fair!"

Therefore, her answer was very specifically "Horse and rider were thrown into the sea." The cavalry, the guys who were riding the horses had to drown in the sea as punishment for their cruelty to us. That we can understand. But what was the crime of the horses? Why did they also need to perish?

The explanation is that the Almighty gives as much credit or as much blame to the person who facilitates, as He does to the person who actually does whatever was facilitated. G-d considers facilitators just as important as those who act.

This was the essence of the Tolner Rebbe's lesson: If "all a Kolel wife does is bake and cook and clean and diaper and take care of the children, but as a result, she facilitates her husband to be able to sit and learn, she receives the same reward from Heaven as her husband receives. If someone learns Daf Yomi, and during that time his wife takes care of the children so that he can learn, she receives the same reward.

We see this principle from "the horse and its rider were thrown into the sea." The Ribono shel Olam punishes the horse because it facilitated the rider. If this is the way it works by punishment, by reward it certainly works like that!

Miriam responded to them: "I know where you ladies are coming from, but that is the way the Ribono shel Olam built Klal Yisrael. Judaism is a role-oriented religion. Kohanim do some things, Leviim do other things, Yisraelim do other things. Men do some things and women do other things. The system will not work unless everybody pulls their weight and does what they are supposed to do. These are the words of Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto in the beginning of his Mesilas Yesharim. "A person must know what his responsibility is in this world." (Mah chovoso b'Olam). This is not a popular idea because everybody wants to be the same. Today in "their infinite wisdom" the United States Armed Forces said that women can fight in combat roles just as well as men. I just don't get it! But "it's fair!" Fair is fair! This is not the way Yiddishkeit works. Yiddishkeit works with the principle "I have my role and you have your role!" That is why Miriam told the women "the horse and the rider were thrown into the sea."

The Tolner Rebbe uses this insight to suggest an awesome insight into a pasuk in Shir HaShirim [1:9] "With My mighty steeds who battled Pharaoh's riders I revealed that you are My beloved." Did you ever think about the meaning of this pasuk? It might sound like the Lover is telling his Beloved that she is like a horse! If you go home tonight and tell your wife "I love you like a horse," see where that will get you! The simple interpretation is that the Lover is saying "You are not just an average horse, you are like the best of Pharaoh's steeds, as it were. You are the best of women!" This is the simple interpretation.

The Tolner Rebbe explains differently: "I love you because that is the lesson of the horses of Pharaoh's stables who were thrown into the sea with their riders." You are my facilitator and I owe everything I have accomplished to you!

The Rebbe related an incident of a woman in her nineties who came to him and told him a story involving a conversation she had with Rav Moshe Feinstein several years earlier. This woman was a cleaning lady in a big Yeshiva for forty years. Someone introduced her to Rav Moshe and told him "This woman cleaned the Yeshiva for forty years." Rav Moshe told her: You have the same reward as all the students who learned in that Yeshiva for those forty years. The woman started crying as she related this story to the Tolner Rebbe about what Rav Moshe Feinstein had told her some thirty years earlier!

This is the power of a facilitator. The Almighty grants the same reward (or punishment) to a facilitator as the person being facilitated. Therefore, Miriam told the women they do not have anything to complain about! You are going to get the same Olam HaBah as the men!