



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

8th February 2025 - Volume 17 - Issue 27 - בשלח - י' שבט תשפ"ה

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Rafi and Yael black on the birth of a baby girl  
Mazel Tov to Avrohom and Leah Lehmann on Chaviva's engagement to Ronny Wolf, son of Yankel and Nomi. The Vort takes place on Sunday from 6-8 in the Shul hall

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeits this week:

Tues, 13th Shevat - Bayla Brandeis and Penina Wieder for their mother

Weds, 14th Shevat - Boaz Dinowitz for his mother

Thurs, 15th Shevat - Sharon Levinson for her mother

Fri, 16th Shevat - Danny Dresner for his father

### Friday night Shiur

This week is the last week of the series and we are pleased to welcome R' Chaim Cohen as the first speaker

### Shalosh Seudas

Please try and assist with the cost of the סעודה by sponsoring or jointly sponsoring a week by putting your name against a Sedra on the list on the notice wall in the foyer

## The Zechus of Suffering on Behalf of Others

Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)

A few years ago, I shared a great vort that I will first review, and then add a story and an incredible observation from the Be'er Mayim Chaim that takes the vort to a whole new level.

After Bnei Yisrael left Mitzrayim, the pasuk says, "V'amar Paro L'bnei Yisrael" (And Pharaoh said to Bnei Yisrael) 'They are confined in the land, the wilderness has locked them in.'" (Shemos 14:3) The obvious question – which Rashi and Targum Onkelos address – is what does it mean "And Pharaoh said to Bnei Yisrael?" Bnei Yisrael had already left Mitzrayim. To whom could Pharaoh be speaking? The people who deserved to leave Mitzrayim had already left. Those who were undeserving, died during Makas Choshech. There were no Jews left in Mitzrayim! Therefore, Rashi and Targum Onkelos do not translate the words "el Bnei Yisrael" to mean "to Bnei Yisrael" but rather "concerning Bnei Yisrael."

However, the Targum Yonosan ben Uziel has an incredible interpretation: "And Pharaoh spoke to Dasan and Aviram, who were of Bnei Yisrael and who had remained in Mitzrayim." Dasan and Aviram were thorns in the side of Moshe Rabbeinu and Bnei Yisrael from the early days of Egyptian slavery all the way until the incident with Korach in Sefer Bamidbar. According to the Targum Yonosan ben Uziel, Dasan and Aviram stayed in Mitzrayim when the rest of the Jews left.

The Maharil Diskin famously asks a simple question: Chazal say that four fifths of the Jews in Mitzrayim died during Makas Choshech. They were deemed wicked and not worthy of experiencing Yetzias Mitzrayim (the Exodus). We would think that if anyone amongst Bnei Yisrael would qualify as wicked and undeserving of Yetzias Mitzrayim, it would be Dasan and Aviram. If they were such wicked people that they did not want to leave Mitzrayim, why were they still alive? Why did they not die during Makas Choshech? How is it that they lived to tell the tale and survived all the way into the midbar, up until the rebellion of Korach, more than a year later? What was their zechus that granted

them this 'longevity'?

The Maharil Diskin gives an amazing answer to his question: Dasan and Aviram had a special zechus. What was their zechus? Dasan and Aviram were employed by the Egyptians as shotrim (taskmasters). Their job was to ensure that the Jews met their daily quota of brick production. Chazal say that even though they had this terrible job of being the taskmasters and the enforcers, they allowed themselves to be beaten by the Egyptians rather than doing their job of whipping the Jews who were not able to produce the required number of bricks. Dasan and Aviram took the punishment of their brethren on their own backs.

In the Nazi concentration camps, in addition to the German officers, there were Jewish kapos, who were given the job of enforcing the labor upon their fellow Jews. They had the same system in Mitzrayim. There were Egyptians who were the overseers, but the people who actually dealt with the Jewish slaves were these shotrim.

In the zechus of the empathy that Dasan and Aviram had for their fellow Jews, they merited survival during Makas Choshech and they were still around after Yetzias Mitzrayim, such that Pharaoh could speak to them and comment that the Jews who left were lost in the wilderness.

The Maharil Diskin even adds that Bnei Yisrael complained to Moshe Rabbeinu earlier, "hiv'asstem es rucheinu" (You made us smell) (Shemos 5:21). We usually consider this to be a figure of speech. The Maharil Diskin interprets it literally: Because of their wounds from the whippings that did not heal, their bodies reeked.

The Maharil Diskin says that the Ribono shel Olam, as it were, has a soft spot in His heart for a Jew who suffers on behalf of other Jews. Dasan and Aviram were wicked. They reported Moshe Rabbeinu to Pharaoh for killing the Egyptian. They were horrible people. But they had one incredible zechus. They literally took it on the chin – if not the back – for other Jews. This is such an enormous zechus that it protected them from dying during Makas Choshech and it allowed them to live to tell the tale even though they did not want to leave Mitzrayim.

I once related this Maharil Diskin to an incident involving Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, that was mentioned by his son, Rav Shmuel Auerbach, in his hesped for his father.

There was a gadol in Europe known by the name of his sefer, Baruch Taam (Rav Baruch Frankel-Te'omim (1760-1828)). Baruch Taam's son became engaged to a girl from a very wealthy and prominent family. At the tenaim, the mechutanim came over and they noticed that Baruch Taam was not really into it. He did not look happy. He looked preoccupied with other matters. The kallah's mother came over to him

## Davening Times

זמן שבת & Candle Lighting	4.48pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	4.53pm
15 Minute Parsha Shiur	Following
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.02am
Mincha	1.30pm / 4.38pm
Seuda Shlishis	Following Mincha
Motzei Shabbos	5.58pm
Ovos uBonim/Bonos	6.58pm
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 & Maariv	5.00pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

and asked why he did not look happy on this joyous occasion. "Are you not pleased with this shidduch?"

Baruch Taam responded that he had no problem with the shidduch. "But the water carrier of the town is very sick and I am worried about him." (In Europe, in the shtetl, before indoor plumbing and running water, there was someone whose job it was to be the water carrier. A water carrier would go down to the river and fill up buckets and then carry the buckets on his shoulders to deliver the water to the town's residences.) In European Jewish society, the water carrier was the low-man on the totem pole. The only requirement for the job was a strong back. Brains were not needed. The mother of thekallahwas shocked: "Because the water carrier is sick, you allow that to dampen your simcha? You let the water carrier effect your mood? I can't understand that!"

Baruch Taam stood up and announced "The shidduch is off! I will not let my son marry into a family that has such a cavalier attitude, which shows no empathy for the misfortune of another Jew."

This was one of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's favorite stories because throughout his life, Rav Shlomo Zalman – among all of his other prodigious character attributes – exemplified the midah of feeling the pain of his fellow Jews.

To return to our topic – the Maharil Diskin says that this was the zechus of Dasan and Aviram.

I want to add an incredible observation to the Maharil Diskin's vort. The Be'er Mayim Chaim (a very famous Chassidishesefer, written by Rav Chaim Tyrer (1760-1816), the Rav of Czernowitz) asks as follows: If in fact Dasan and Aviram stayed in Mitzrayim and had a conversation with Pharaoh following Yetzias Mitzrayim, when and how did they leave Mitzrayim? We know that they certainly wound up with the rest of the Jews by the time of Korach's rebellion and according to the Medrash, they were also the people who left over their portion of manna until the next morning, in violation of Moshe's instructions (Shemos 16:20). This is the question of the Beer Mayim Chayim.

The Be'er Mayim Chaim answers with a very novel idea. The pasuk in Shiras Az Yashir writes: "When Pharaoh's horse came with his chariots and horsemen into the sea and Hashem turned back the waters of the sea upon them, the Children of Israel walked on the dry land amid the sea." (Shemos 15:19) The Beer Mayim Chaim writes that this pasuk is chronologically incorrect. The pasuk should first state that Bnei Yisrael went through the Yam Suf and then then Pharaoh came into the midst of the Yam...." The pasuk records the events backwards!

Because of this observation, the Be'er Mayim Chaim explains as follows: When Klal Yisraeleft Mitzrayim, Dasan and Aviram stayed behind. Dasan and Aviram then realized that they "bet on the wrong horse" because Pharaoh and Mitzrayim were destroyed. So, then they also left. However, when they reached the Yam Suf (Red Sea) to rejoin Bnei Yisrael, they saw that it was impassable.

The Beer Mayim Chaim says that there was actually a second Krias Yam Suf! Not only does "And Pharaoh said to Bnei Yisrael!" refer to Dasan and Aviram, but also "And Bnei Yisrael walked on the dry land in the midst of the sea" refers to Dasan and Aviram.

These two perennial trouble makers were zoche to their own personal Krias Yam Suf. I wish the Be'er Mayim Chaim would buttress this explanation with a Medrash or a teaching of Chazal, but he seems to present it as his own inference. This, however, only magnifies the question: We asked why Dasan and Aviram didn't die during Makas Choshech. The answer was that they had a zechus. But the way it comes out now, not only did they have a zechus that spared them the fate of the wicked during Makas Choshech, but their zechus even allowed them to merit their own Krias Yam Suf!!

With this insight, the Beer Mayim Chaim explains another idea in Parshas Korach. Korach challenged Moshe Rabbeinu. Who else took on Moshe Rabbeinu? Ohn ben Peles and Dasan and Aviram. Why would anyone start up with Moshe Rabbeinu? Isn't it obvious that they are going to lose their battle? The answer is that Dasan and Aviram were overconfident in their personal merit. They felt that they were gedolei yisrael. They even merited their own Krias Yam Suf! That previous personal miracle gave them the impetus and the courage to start up with Moshe Rabbeinu. They felt that they were taking on an equal of theirs and that they could win the battle!

**Words of Remembrance** Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

This week's portion begins with the event that merits the title of the

book – Exodus. The Jews finally are chased from Egypt. Hastily, they gather their meager possessions and with the gold and silver that the Egyptians miraculously gave them they flee.

But one of them, their leader no less, does not take gold and silver. He takes Joseph's bones. The Torah tells us why. Decades prior, Joseph beseeched his children, "pakod yifkod – G-d will surely remember you and you shall bring my bones up with you out of here" (Genesis 50:25). Slavery can make one forget commitments – especially about old bones. However, despite more than a century of servitude, Moshe kept the promise. What baffles me is the wording of the request and its fulfillment. Why did Yoseph juxtapose the words "pakod yifkod" (G-d shall remember) with the petition to re-inter his bones? It is repeated in this week's portion. "Moshe took the bones because Joseph said that pakod yifkod – G-d will remember you and bring my bones up" (Exodus 13: 19).

It is wonderful that Joseph assured redemption, but is that the reason Moshe took the bones? Didn't he take the bones simply to fulfill a commitment to Joseph? What does pakod yifkod have to do with it? Why is it inserted in both the request and response?

Twelve years ago, our Yeshiva established an audio Torah tape library. I looked in the Yellow Pages and found a company that sold tape labels. A very knowledgeable representative took my call. Clearly Jewish, she had a Brooklyn accent, and spiced her words with some Yiddish expressions. I felt comfortable dealing with someone who I believed, knew about Jewish institutions. I said I would call her back and asked for her name. She answered proudly, "Esther." "Last name?" I inquired. After a brief pause, I received an answer that surprised me. "Scatteregio."

" Scatteregio?" I repeated in amazement. Stepping where perhaps I should not have, I explained my perplexity. "Actually," I offered, "I was expecting Cohen or Goldberg." She paused, "you are right, I am Jewish and my first husband was Goldman." Another pause. "But now I'm remarried, and its "Scatteregio." She took a deep breath. "But I have a Jewish son, Rick, and he really wants to observe. In fact, he wants me to allow him to study in an Israeli Yeshiva."

I knew that this was not destined to be a telephone call only about tape. For half an hour, I talked about the importance of Yeshiva, and how Rick could be her link to her past and connection with her future. I never knew what kind of impact my words made. I remember leaving my name and talking about my namesake's influence on an Esther of yesteryear. I ended the conversation with the words "Esther, es vet zain gut!" (Yiddish for it will be well!)

Ten years later, during the intermediate days of Passover I took my children to a local park. Many Jewish grandparents were there, watching the next generations slide and swing. An older woman wearing pants and smoking a cigarette was holding the hand of a young boy who was wearing a large kippah and had thick payos. As one of my children offered to play with the little boy, I nodded hello and smiled. With tremendous pride, she began talking about her grandchildren. "Do you know my son Reuvain? He was studying in a Far Rockaway yeshiva until now and just took a job in the city." "Wonderful," I said, "but I don't know your son." She told me about the struggles of making a living, and I had no choice but to listen and smile. Instinctively I responded, "Es vet zain gut!" Things will be fine. Her eyes locked on me. She stared in disbelief.

"Mordechai?" "Esther?" We just shook our heads in disbelief, and to my amazement, she told me that Rick did go to Yeshiva, these were his children, and they were truly her nachas (pride and joy).

I never will know if my words helped turn Rick into Reuvain, but I am sure that the words, "es vet zain gut" assuring someone that things will be all right, was a statement not easily forgotten.

When Yoseph made his children promise that they will take his bones with them, he added an assurance. He promised them that G-d would surely remember them. Even Hashem, appearing to Moshe said, "pakod pakadti," "I have remembered" (Exodus 3:16). Yoseph, too, requested to be remembered. Two hundred years of slavery can take an awful toll on people. It can make them give up their pride, it can make them forget about family, it surely it can cause them to forget about bones. But when requests are linked with comforting words, they endure. Moshe took Yoseph's bones because they were linked with words of reassurance that remained an anthem of the Jews in exile, "G-d will remember you." And Moses remembered, too.