



Ohr Yerushalayim News

י"ח טבת תשפ"ה - שמות - 18th January 2025 - Volume 17 - Issue 24

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Bobbie and Rochel Graham on Shmuli's engagement to Rivky Blum

To'ameho

There will be no To'ameho this week.

Kiddush

There will be a Kiddush this week sponsored by Nati Sebbag in honour of the upcoming Yahrzeit of his father.

Chaim Aruchim

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

Shabbos, 18th Teves - Henry Brownson for his father

Weds, 22nd Teves - Nati Sebbag for his father

Fri, 24th Teves - David Lewin for his father

Shalosh Seudos

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 Complexity Of Every Divine Plan

Rabbi J Rubinstein

The question is often asked on this week's Parshah, and on the following Parshios, why did the Jewish people only ask to borrow gold silver and clothes, surely they had no intention of returning them? Similarly why did משה רבנו (Moses) only ask that they should be allowed to leave Egypt for a distance of three days, when they really had no intention of returning at all?

Perhaps it can be understood in the following way. Anybody who has ever bought a property, may be familiar with the frustrations which can occur because of the chain of events which are dependent on one another. For example, you may have a buyer who wants to buy your house by a certain date, but you can only move out of your house, when the house you want to move to is vacated, and that will only be at a slightly later date, This could serve as an analogy for what is described in the coming Parshios. On the one hand, the Jewish people had to leave the land of Egypt at precisely midnight on the 15th of the month of Nissan. A later date would have been too late for them, because of their precarious spiritual state. On the other hand, Hashem could only bring about the complete destruction of the Egyptians when they absolutely fully deserved it, and Hashem knew that point would only be reached after another six days, on the 21st of Nissan. That is in fact when the splitting of the Red Sea occurred, which completely destroyed the Egyptian nation.

This means, after the 21st of Nissan there would be no need for the Jewish people to have permission from the Egyptians to go free, or to take their gold, silver, and clothes, because the Egyptian nation would no longer exist. But the Jewish people had to leave on the 15th of Nissan, that is why they had to ask permission to travel a distance of three days which would take three days there and three days back, and it is also why they needed at first to ask whether they could borrow the gold and silver etc. Afterwards they would not need to ask for anything in any case.

This also explains why Rashi says in the Parshah of Bo, that Hashem told משה רבנו to instruct the people to borrow gold and silver, so that אברהם אבינו (Abraham) would not complain Hashem had kept His word about enslaving the Jewish People but had not kept His word about bringing them out with great wealth. It goes without saying that Hashem keeps His word irrespective of whether someone is going to complain. But here, אברהם אבינו would not know that the real deliverance was only going to come a week later with the splitting of the Red Sea, therefore it would look as if the promise they would have great wealth was not being fulfilled. The real gold and silver came from the booty captured at the Red Sea (Explanation given by the Vilna Gaon)

Behind this explanation lies a great principle. Hashem decides what is going to happen to different people, or different groups of people, according to what they deserve. But the lives of different people meet and interreact with one another. So Hashem arranges the circumstances of their interreaction in such a way, that each individual experiences what he deserves in his life. This is part of the complexity of how Hashem organises the world. In fact the complexity of how Hashem choreographs the lives of every person and nation, and their interreactions with one another, is far beyond our comprehension. But the above example from the Parshios we are now reading gives us a slight insight in to the idea.

Yosef Was In Mitzrayim

Rabbi Asher Richman

After informing us that Yaakov and his family had travelled down to Mitzrayim, we are then told that, "Yosef was in Mitzrayim" (Bereishis 50:26). Do we not already know that Yosef was in Mitzrayim?

Rashi informs us that these words are coming to teach a profound lesson. Yosef had remained the same Yosef, the same righteous individual who tended to his father's sheep. Even after enduring betrayal, slavery, prison and an eventual rise to power, Yosef HaTzaddik never changed, he remained steadfast in his humility and Emunah. He was that very 'same Yosef who tended to his father's sheep.'

This humility becomes even more striking when contrasted with Pharaoh, who epitomizes a complete denial of gratitude in both people and Hashem. We are informed that a "new king arose over Mitzrayim, who did not know Yosef" (Shemos 1:8). The Midrash

Davening Times

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| זמן שבת & Candle Lighting | 4.09pm |
| Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos | 4.14pm |
| 15 Minute Parsha Shiur | Following |
| Shacharis | 7.25am / 9.15am |
| סוף זמן ק"ש | 10.16am |
| Mincha | 1.30pm / 4.02pm |
| Seuda Shlishis | Following Mincha |
| Motzei Shabbos | 5.22pm |
| Ovos uBonim | 6.22pm |
| 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 | 4.20pm |
| Late Maariv | 8.00pm |

debates whether this was literally a new king or the same Pharaoh who 'conveniently' chose to forget the savior of Mitzrayim. Regardless of which approach one chooses, this denial of Yosef's contributions demonstrates a complete lack of gratitude. The very same Midrash goes on to teach, "Today (he acts as one), 'who did not know Yosef,' tomorrow he is destined to say: 'I do not know Hashem,'" referring to Pharaoh's infamous reply to Moshe and Aaron (Shemos 5:2).

How does Yosef maintain his humility and faith, whilst Pharaoh spirals into arrogance and denial?

The answer lies in Yosef's recognition of Hashem's guiding hand throughout his life. When sold into slavery, Yosef did not despair. When falsely accused and imprisoned, he stayed faithful. When an opportunity to be freed arose after twelve years of false imprisonment, he informed Pharaoh, "It is not me, Hashem will provide Pharaoh with a favorable answer (dream interpretation)" (Bereishis 41:16).

When Yosef finally revealed himself to his brothers, he reassured them, saying, "It was not you who sent me here, but Hashem" (Bereishis 45:8). Despite having every reason to assert his superiority, he chose humility, acting towards them with compassion, viewing himself as a tool in Hashem's hand. After all, he was that 'very same Yosef who tended to his father's sheep.' This humility, even when in positions of greatness, is not unique to Yosef.

Moshe Rabeinu, whom the Torah itself describes as "the most humble of all men" (Bamidbar 12:3), a great leader, a navi who communicated with Hashem like no other, "Never again did there arise in Israel a prophet like Moshe, whom Hashem knew, face to face" (Devarim 34:10). Yet, despite his unparalleled stature, Moshe perceived himself merely as a servant of Hashem. Yet, this same Moshe confronted Pharaoh, the most powerful ruler of his time, repeatedly demanding, "Let my people go!" (Shemos 5:1).

Pharaoh, on the other hand, represents the opposite trajectory. At first, Pharaoh celebrates Yosef's wisdom, even mentioning Hashem, stating to his servants in amazement, "Could we find another like him (Yosef), a man with such divine wisdom (Ruach Elokim)?" Yosef's advice is followed and Mitzrayim is saved from impending disaster. Yet this gratitude is short lived. Pharaoh chooses to erase Yosef's legacy from memory and reveals his underlying arrogance. Eventually, as the Midrash warned, one who fails to acknowledge the kindness of others, loses the ability to recognize the kindness of Hashem.

"Yosef was in Mitzrayim," is not just a fact about our ancestors' geographical location, it is emphasizing Yosef's very essence had remained unchanged. Whether in the depths of the pit or the heights of the palace, Yosef saw himself as a servant of Hashem. His external circumstances changed, but his internal connection remained intact.

Pharaoh chose to forget; Yosef chose to remember!

Burning Interests

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

In Jewish history, there is hardly an object more expounded upon than the burning bush. Its symbolism is analyzed, its significance expounded upon, and its impact is noted for generations. This week, rather than discuss the actual burning bush and its meaning, I'd like to view the event from a totally different approach – Moshe's.

The Torah tells us in Exodus 3:1- 4 that Moshe was shepherding the sheep of Yisro, his father-in-law, when, "an angel of G-d appeared to him in a blaze of fire from amidst the bush. Moshe saw the event and behold, the bush was burning in fire and yet the bush was not consumed. Moshe said, 'I will turn from my course and see the marvelous sight – why does the bush not burn?' Hashem saw that Moshe turned from his path to see the sight and He called out to him from amidst the bush and said, 'Moshe Moshe...'" The conversation ultimately leads to our exodus from Egypt. However, the entire narrative, from the moment that Moshe

notices the burning bush until Hashem speaks to him from its midst, seems overstated. After Moshe sees the amazing sight, why does the Torah mention that Moshe says "I will go look at the amazing sight?" Further, why does the Torah preface Hashem's charge to Moshe with the words, " Hashem saw that Moshe turned from his path to see the sight, and He called out to him from amidst the bush?" It seems that only after Hashem openly acknowledges Moshe's interest in the spectacle does he call out, "Moshe, Moshe," thus beginning the process of redemption.

The Torah, which never uses needless words, could have simply stated, " Moshe saw that the bush was burning and yet the bush was not consumed. Moshe turned to marvelous sight, and Hashem called out to him from amidst the bush and said, 'Moshe Moshe...'"

The Midrash Tanchuma expounds upon the verse, "Moshe turned from his path to see the sight." There is an argument whether he took three steps or just craned his neck. The Midrash continues. Hashem said, "you pained yourself to look, I swear you are worthy that I reveal myself to you."

The Medrash was definitely bothered by the extra wording regarding Moshe's decision to look and Hashem's open commendation of that decision. But it is still very difficult to understand. Moshe sees a spectacle of miraculous proportions and looks. Why is that such a meritorious act? Doesn't everyone run to a fire? Aren't there hoards that gather to witness amazing events?

In the early 1920's, Silas Hardoon, a Sephardic Jewish millionaire, made his fortune living in China. Childless, he began to give his money away to Chinese charities. One night his father appeared in a dream and implored him to do something for his own people. Silas shrugged it off. After all, there were hardly any of his people in China. But the dreams persisted, and Silas decided to act. The next day he spoke to Chacham Ibrahim, a Sephardic Rabbi who led the tiny Chinese Jewish community. The Chacham's advice sounded stranger than the dreams. He told Silas to build a beautiful synagogue in the center of Shanghai. It should contain more than 400 seats, a kitchen, and a dining room. Mr. Hardoon followed the charge to the letter. He named the shul "Bais Aharon" in memory of his father. A few years later Mr. Hardoon died leaving barely a minyan to enjoy a magnificent edifice, leaving a community to question the necessity of the tremendous undertaking.

In 1940, Japanese counsel to Lithuania Sempo Sugihara issued thousands of visas for Kovno Jews to take refuge in Curaçao via Japan. Included in that group was the Mirrer Yeshiva. They arrived in Kobe but were transported to Shanghai where they remained for the entire war. The Mirrer Yeshiva had a perfect home with a kitchen, study hall and dining room – Bais Aharon! The building had exactly enough seats to house all the students for five solid years of Torah study during the ravages of World War II. The dream of decades earlier combined with action, became a thriving reality. Moshe our Teacher knew from the moment he spotted that bush that something very extraordinary was occurring. He had two choices: approach the spectacle or walk on. If he nears the bush he knew he would face an experience that would alter his life forever. Hashem knew that Moshe had this very difficult conflict. His approach would require commitment and self sacrifice. He took three steps that changed the course of history. Hashem understood the very difficult decision Moshe had made and declared that such fortitude is worthy of the redeemer of my children.

In many aspects of our lives we encounter situations that may commit us to change. It may be a new charity we decide to let through our doors, or a new patient we decide to see, or even a new worthy cause we decide to entertain. They all require us to take three steps and look. If we walk away, we may not just be ignoring a burning issue. We may be ignoring another burning bush.