



# שמע קולנו

“יתגבר כארי לעמוד בבוקר לעבודת בוראו”



## Parshas Shemos

## פרשת שמות

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### Together as One

*Dov Hochman ('23)*

In *Sefer Shemos Parsha Shemos* the first words are שמות ואלה שמות. These words start a section where the children of Yaakov are all listed individually as each are the head of a unique family that settled in *Goshen*. The children are named in groupings that show their unique heritages. The first six are the children of Leah, the four who are the oldest, and then the two who were born after their brothers from Bilha and Zilpa. Then comes Binyamin, the child of Rachel. Finally comes the children of the servants, who were not always given even standing by their other brothers. In *Parshas Vayichi* Yaakov gave a separate *bracha* to each of his sons making it clear that each of his children had a unique personality. These personalities have been explored in prior *parshiyos* and they extended through the sons of Yaakov to their families after their deaths.

According to Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch ואלה is an extension of *Vayichi* in that their families continued on their own individual paths. However, according to Rav Hirsch when it says את יעקב איש וביתו in the same *possuk* it is a sign that each of these sons and their families had one basic trait they shared, that they “came with Yaakov”. Rav Hirsch explains that each of Yaakov’s children taught their families that they came from the household of Yaakov, and were linked together through his teachings. No matter how many branches grew they always were part of the same tree.

This is why in *perek beis possuk chaf gimel* when Hashem heard the cries of *Bnei Yisroel*, all of *Bnei Yisroel* are included, even the tribe of Levi who were never enslaved. Throughout the rest of the Torah the *Bnei Yisroel* are not a collection of families, but they become a nation. They may have a number of different specialties but as a nation they share a

common good. They stay together as a strong tree, even as each *shevet* branches into a different need.

Even Moshe, who was raised in Pharaoh's palace and then forced to flee Egypt, felt a part of this tree. Although he spent very little time raised as a member of the *Bnei Yisroel*, even the little touch he had of it led him to feel that he was a part of this united family, not an individual separate from the whole, rather one who is a complement to the whole. We can see this yearning for his Jewish roots when he named his oldest son Gershom, because he was a stranger in *Midyan* away from his family in Egypt. Even though he was forbidden in Egypt and settled with the family of Yisro, and now a father himself, he still longed to return to his Jewish roots.

This *parsha* shows us regardless of the different manners of practice of Judaism we are raised in or the different neighborhoods we live in each of us are still linked as *Bnei Yisroel*, children of Yaakov Avinu. As we have learned even from the worst anti-semites we are not asked if we are from *Levi* or *Yehuda*, *Ashkenazic* or *Sephardic*, *Chassidish* or *Yeshivish*, from Teaneck or Crown Heights. We are always and forever branches of the same tree.

### The Power Of Tradition

*Isaac Cohen (23)*

*Parshas Shemos* is a *parsha* of excitement. From a young age Jewish children are taught about *yetzias mitzrayim* which begins in this week's *parsha*. Furthermore, the centrality of *yetzias mitzrayim* is evident from the obligation to recall it every day. Thus, it is clear that when writing about this *parsha* there are significant topics to discuss. However, I believe that a much undervalued theme can be found right under our noses at the first *possuk*:

"וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִם אֶת יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בְּאוֹ:"

*"And these are the names of the sons of Israel who*

*came to Egypt; with Jacob, each man and his household came:"(Shemos: 1:1)*

When analyzing the deeper meaning of this *pasuk* there are many questions the *meforshim* have. Firstly, it is obvious that Yaakov's family went to Egypt, therefore what is the purpose/teaching of this *possuk*? In order to answer this it is necessary to understand the context of the *possuk* and the Jewish people's spiritual situation at the time. At the end of *Bereishis* we learn of Yaakov and his family traveling to the land of Egypt. Decades later following the death of Yaakov and his sons the Jewish people are left to their own devices. Without the leadership of Yaakov and his sons the Jewish people started to drift away from their traditions. However, not all is lost, the Jewish people were still separated from the Egyptians. The *Midrash* states that the Jewish peoples survival was the result of four things: (1) They did not change their names, (2) they did not change their language, (3) they did not reveal their secrets, and (4) they maintained their sexual morality (*Vayikra Rabbah* 32:5).

Furthermore, the *Hadrash Veba'yun* teaches us that when a man moves from a village of religion to a city where irreligion and immorality are rampant, he will not be influenced by them due to being raised Jewish. However, his children will grow up in the city and may take to the ways of the city and cast off their religion. The aforementioned *possuk* makes it a point to tell us that this did not happen. Yaakov and his children traveled from *Canan*, in which they led a pious and religious life, to Egypt, an unclean and Godless land. Yet they remained "every man with his household". The *possuk* isn't simply giving us a 'recap' but is instead teaching us something that may be overlooked as we become involved in the culture of others.

The greatest strength of the Jewish people, as shown throughout history, is the integrity of the family. The Jewish people have been kicked out and have traveled from land to land and have suffered persecution, yet they have managed to flourish in new countries

### A SHORT VORT

*Akiva Kra (21)*

וַיָּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיָּשָׁב אֶל-יִתְרֵה חֹתֵנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵלָכָה נָא וְאֶשׁוּבָה אֶל-אֲחִי אֲשֶׁר-בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאֶרְאֶה הַעוֹדִם חַיִּים"

*"Moshe went back to his father-in-law Yisro and said to him, "Let me go back to my brothers in Egypt and see how they are faring."*

Moshe asks Yisro this question right after *Hashem* told him to go to Egypt. The question asked is why did Moshe ask Yisro if he could go? *Hashem* just told him he had to go and Moshe was going to go regardless of what Yisro told him.

The answer is that Moshe asked Yisro the question to show appreciation and gratitude. Yisro had taken in Moshe when he was fleeing from Egypt and had no home. Moshe realized how important it is to show gratitude so before he left the person who took him in, he asked if he can go.

May we all be able to realize the importance of gratitude and always remember to express it.

and lands unknown to them. Their secret for survival has been the preservation of tradition. In the first half of the twentieth century there was a large influx of Eastern European Jews into the U.S. This was characterized by the preservation of the *shtetl* (village). It was not until the intrafamilial bonds began to weaken that mass defection in Judaism occurred. This defection by assimilation and intermarriage has caused a larger loss in Jewish population than the Holocaust.

With the introduction into a “free society” where the debunking of anything old as obsolete destroyed the tradition in which families were rooted in. There was now no longer a scene of responsibility and commitment to a family's tradition and there was no longer a means to pass the heritage to future generations.

Throughout history it is seen that the Jewish peoples' peril doesn't come from foes, but rather from the abandonment of tradition. The first *possuk* of *Parshas Shemos* is teaching us the importance of traditional upkeep and is reminding us, as we see them overcome the urges of Egyptian culture so many years ago, that we too can keep resolute in the practice of our traditions in the face of society's temptations.

### **Moshe Rabbeinu: The Anti-Anti-Semite**

*Aaron Gisser (23)*

This week's *parsha*, *Parshas Shemos*, deals heavily with the concept of anti-Semitism. In fact, we see from as early as the ninth *possuk* in the *parsha* that Pharaoh was not pleased with the fact that the Jews seemed to be prospering in Egypt.

In the ninth *possuk* of the *parsha*, Paroh says to his nation “*hineih am Bnei Yisrael rav vi'atzum mimenu*,” which translates to “Behold! This nation of Israel is more numerous and stronger than we are.” Note how Paroh uses the term “*mimenu*” - “we” when referring to the Egyptians in exclusion to the Jews. The Ohr HaChaim expounds upon this saying that the term *mimenu* in this case more specifically means “from us,” in this case. The Ohr HaChaim says that Paroh was trying to prove to his people that the *Bnei Yisrael* were parasites, leeching off of the Egyptian's wealth and fortune. Paroh uses the words “from us” to try and draw a line of separation between the regular Egyptians and the Jews who were living in Egypt at the time.

Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik learns from this *possuk* one of the first sources of anti-Semitism in history. Rav Soloveitchik explains that Paroh tries to draw this separation between “his people” and the Jews despite the fact that the Jews had at that time been living in Egypt for well over 100 years! Additionally, the Jews had enriched Egypt and made it MUCH more prosperous during their tenure. This is highlighted by Yosef's work during the 7 years of plenty to save up for the 7 years of famine. These events, which took place all those years ago, helped to shape Egypt as an extremely prosperous nation for years to come! However, even though the

## **5 Minute Lomdus**

*Shimi Kaufman (21)*

וַיֵּרָא מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּלֶבֶת-אֵשׁ מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הַסִּנֶּה בָּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ וְהַסִּנֶּה אֵינּוּ אֵכָל:

“And an angel of Hashem appeared to him from a blazing flame within the bush, and he saw that behold, the flame was burning, but the bush was not consumed” (Shemos 3:2)

**Q.** The *halachah* by the *melachah* of *ketzeirah* (harvesting) on *Shabbos* is that if one harvests half a *gargores* (the minimum amount to be liable for doing *melachah* on *Shabbos*), which later lights on fire and burns, if he later harvests another half a *gargores*, he is liable for breaking *Shabbos*. However, we find by the *melachah* of *hotza'ah*, carrying something from one domain to another, that if one carried half a *gargores* which burned, and then carried another half a *gargores*, he is *patur*. Similarly, by *Pesach*, the *halachah* is that if one owns half a *kezayis* of *chametz* and burns it, and he then gets another half a *kezayis*, he is not liable for the *aveirah* of owning *chametz* on *Pesach*. What is the difference between the *issur* of *ketzeirah* and the *issurim* of *hotza'ah* and owning *chametz*?

**A.** The *issur* of *kotzer* is about the action of cutting a full *gargores* of grain from the stalk. Even if that action is broken up into two halves, as long as a full *gargores* was cut, then the *issur* is violated, even if the whole *gargores* no longer exists. However, by both *hotza'ah* and *chametz*, the main *aveirah* is having the *assur* object. In regards to *hotza'ah*, the *melachah* is intended to prevent the transfer of a *gargores* worth of material to a new *reshus*. If the full *gargores* is never in the new *reshus*, then no *issur* can be violated. Similarly, since the *issur* is about owning *chametz*, if you do not have a *kezayis* of *chametz* around at one time, then you do not violate the *issur*.

- Source: *Mishmeres Chayim Chelek 1, "Inyanei Shabbos" 3*

Jews had done nothing but good for Egyptian society, Paroh was still displeased at the fact that the Jews were becoming more prosperous. Rav Soloveitchik concludes that no matter how long the *Bnei Yisrael* stayed in Egypt, no matter how hard they worked for the greater good of Egypt, and no matter how great their impact was on Egyptian society, Paroh and the “regular” Egyptians would always view them as newcomers. The Egyptians would never truly accept the Jews into their society. This shows us a historical reference for anti-Semitism, as similar things are tragically happening in the world that we live in today.

Now, let us take a closer look at the story of Moshe *Rabbeinu*. Moshe *Rabbeinu*, who is known as the greatest prophet that there ever was, ascending to perhaps the greatest spiritual heights that can ever be reached, started out in the lowest of lows. After the short amount of time that he lived with his family, his family was forced to send him away and he was taken in by the daughter of Paroh. Paroh’s daughter decided to raise Moshe as her own, and so Moshe grew up in the most vile of places - Paroh’s palace. As we have established, Pharaoh was an anti-Semite, and Moshe grew up with all of these anti-Semitic influences trying their hardest to become implanted in his brain. However, these harmful influences did not affect Moshe *Rabbeinu*. From the little to no evidence of his previous, true identity as a Jew, Moshe *Rabbeinu* was able to break away from the horrible anti-Semitic society of Paroh and the Egyptians. Despite being treated as the grandson of the King of Egypt, and having anti-Semitism all around him, Moshe was able to fight back and resist. He was able to overcome his surroundings. He was able to persevere, and bring out his true identity - a Jew.

May we all learn from Moshe *Rabbeinu* that even if we are faced with tests that are extremely strong and difficult, we can always persevere and try our best to overcome the challenges that face us. We must always remember to try and be like Moshe *Rabbeinu*, always persisting in the face of adversity, and always staying true to our identity as loving members of *Am Yisroel*. May we all be *zocheh* to be *mikayem* these great feats, and hopefully this will help to bring the coming of *Mashiach*, *bimheirah biyameinu amen!*

### **Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover**

*Meir Ness ('22)*

When *Hashem* appeared to Moshe in the *Sneh* (the burning bush) He told Moshe to go out and to bring the Jewish people back to Him. *Hashem* tasked Moshe with the mission of bringing the Jewish people out of *Mitzrayim*. Moshe was skeptical and didn't believe that the Jewish people were going to believe him. Moshe says “They will not believe me and they

will not listen to me, because they will say, ‘God did not appear to you.’” (*Shemos* 4:1) In fact the opposite was the reality. The Jewish people did believe him! So how could the greatest prophet of all time misjudge his own people and not believe the word of *Hashem*? Furthermore, *Hashem* gave Moshe three signs to prove that he was sent by *Hashem*, a staff that transformed into a snake, a hand that became leprous, and fresh water that turned into blood. What do these particular signs have to do with anything? There aren't any particular omens that correspond with these particular signs, so why did *Hashem* choose these to be the signs?

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook gives an answer to both these questions. Rav Kook says that faith is unlike any other wisdom or intellectual feeling. Faith is an integral part of the inner soul forming the very basis of life and all its splendor. The thing is that since this *emunah* (belief) is hidden, we can't necessarily see it in ourselves and certainly not in others. In *Mitzrayim* the Jewish people sunk to a very low level, where they were indistinguishable from their Egyptian masters. Since the two nations were so similar even the amazing eye of Moshe couldn't see the faith that was hidden in every Jew. The hidden fire and faith was only able to be seen by *Hashem* and that's why he knew that the Jewish people would listen to Moshe. *Hashem* was teaching a big lesson to Moshe, he taught Moshe that although a person can do good or bad deeds there is always a spark inside of them and they will always strive to be better with a little push.

The answer to our second question of why these signs are relevant is because we learn that these signs were in response to the bad things Moshe had said about the Jewish people. *Hashem* however was continuing his lesson about how the outside doesn't always reflect the inside. *Hashem* showed Moshe that even though he had leprosy and his outside was blemished his interior was still intact and remained strong. There is the lesson that we can learn from here, that although someone seems to be a bad person, what really matters is what's on the inside, one shouldn't make quick judgments of someone and should always be *dan l'kaf Zechus* (judge people favorably) and get to know the person.

### **Putting Trust to the Test**

*Elisha Pohen ('24) & Ezra Nenner ('24)*

Many times in life, one may think they are in an impossible situation. Sometimes, it can seem that it will be impossible to succeed. However, in this week's *parsha*, when *Bnei Yisrael* were in a tough situation, *Hashem* told them through Moshe that He would redeem them but they didn't believe him. As the *possuk*

states,

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה בֶּן אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מִקֶּץ  
יוֹם וּמִעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה

*"But when Moses told this to the Israelites, they would not listen to Moses, their spirits crushed by cruel bondage."*

The *Midrash* notes that the *gematria* of the word *Mikotzer* is 430 and *Bnei Yisrael* believed that *Hashem* would only redeem them after 430 years of suffering. Such a belief made Moshe's promises fall on deaf ears.

The *Sforno* offers a similar approach but with a notable difference. The *Sforno* says that they didn't listen to Moshe because they didn't find it believable in their present state of mind, so their heart could not assimilate such a promise.

Lastly, Rashi writes that they were listening but they didn't accept the fact that *Hashem* would be able to save them. Through this last reason, we see all of the previous reasons adding up. The first view is that they

were so convinced from the *gematria Mikotzer*, that they would suffer for 430 years, that they did not believe *Hashem* could change that. The *Sforno* claims that *Bnei Yisrael* were so set on them never being saved they could not believe that *Hashem* was willing to redeem them. These answers have one thing in common: *Bnei Yisrael* does not think *Hashem* will save them. Eventually they are saved much sooner than 430 years later. The mistake *Bnei Yisrael* made in this week's *parsha* was doubting *Hashem*. When they are told that they will be saved, they do not listen, they do not rejoice, and they do not even think what they are hearing is true. We see that even when the odds are stacked against us, we must believe that *Hashem* will still save us in the end.

## GEDOLIM GLIMPSE: RAV MENDEL ZAKS

*Meir Morell ('22)*

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Yosef Zaks (1898–1974) was born in Siluva, Lithuania. He learned in the *Yeshiva Knesses Beis Yitzchok* (while it was still based in Slabodka, before it moved to Kaminitz). He was forced to leave Radin during World War I and studied under Rav Reuven Dov Dessler. Additionally, he also studied under Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk.

Following World War One, Rav Zaks returned to Radin where he studied along with the *Chofetz Chaim*, Rav Yisrael Meir Hakohein Kagan.

In 1922, he married Faiga Chaya, the *Chofetz Chaim's* youngest daughter (the *Chofetz Chaim* was 64 at the time of her birth). After his marriage, he joined the *Chofetz Chaim* as leader of the yeshiva and in all other communal affairs. Rav Zaks was immediately recognized for his teaching and leadership abilities. His vast knowledge of *Halacha* and *Gemara*, coupled with a photographic memory and unending hours spent with his students attracted even more students to the *Radin Yeshiva* at that time.

In 1925, Rav Zaks incorporated the *Yeshiva* in the United States in an effort to raise money there for the operation of the *Yeshiva* and its charities.

Upon the death of Rav Naftoli Trop, *Rosh Yeshivah* in Radin, in 1928, Rav Zaks was appointed the new *Rosh Yeshiva* in the *yeshiva* in Radin. The outbreak of World War II then forced the yeshiva to transfer to Vilna, and eventually Rav Zaks re-established the *yeshiva* in 1943 in New York City.

In 1941 he moved to New York, and then, in 1946, Rav Zaks accepted the position of *Rosh Yeshiva* and *Bochein* (examiner) at Yeshiva University's RIETS. Legend has it that Rav Zaks edited the final version of the Mishnah Berurah in his office (which is currently occupied by our very own Dr. Seth Taylor) in the MTA building.

Following his retirement, he died in Jerusalem on 19 Teves 5734.



# CHUMASH B'IYUN

## Moshe's Preparations

*Rabbi Mayer Schiller*

This week we will depart a bit from our usual method of examining in-depth some aspect of *peshat* which is difficult to translate or understand in its context. Instead, we will focus on the three-pronged actions of Moshe which drew him out of Egypt and eventually settling in Midian.

At first, we read of Moshe that "It happened in those days that Moshe grew up and went out to his brethren and saw their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man of his brethren." (*Shemos* 2:12) And, in order to stop this, Moshe kills the Egyptian.

There is a dispute in the *Midrash* as to how old Moshe was at that time. Some say 20 and others 40. (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:27) There is also a dispute among the *Rishonim* as to whether, or to what extent Moshe was aware that he was Jewish up till that point. The Ramban seems to maintain that Moshe was unaware that he was Jewish and was only then "told that he was a Jew" and, therefore, went out to see them "since they were his brothers." (*Ramban, Shemos* 2:11) But, even according to others (perhaps Rashi among them), despite his having the knowledge of his Jewishness, it was only now that "he focused his eyes and heart to be distressed over them." (Rashi, *Shemos* 2:11)

The very next day Moshe steps beyond his concern over his brethren being attacked by Egyptians. He sees one Jew hitting another and again enters the fray exclaiming to the "wicked one, 'Why would you strike your fellow?' " (*Shemos* 2:13)

This action, to protect Jew from Jew, leads to his awareness that his killing the Egyptian the day before is public knowledge and his realization that, "Indeed the matter is known!" (*Shemos* 2:14)

This prompts Pharaoh "to seek to kill Moshe" and the latter's flight to Midian. There we find him sitting by the well and once again moving into action to protect the daughters of the Midianite priest from having the water stolen or according to various *Midrashim* a host of far worse fates. (*Shemos* 15- 17)

The Rambam in his *Moreh Nevuchim* (2:45) describes the first step of *nevuah* as follows:

"The first degree of prophecy consists in the divine assistance which is given to a person, and induces and encourages him to do something good and grand, e.g., to deliver a congregation of good men from the hands of evildoers; to save one noble person, or to bring happiness to a large number of people; he finds in himself the cause that moves and urges him to this deed. This degree of divine influence is called "the spirit of the Lord"; and of the person who is under that influence we say that the spirit of the Lord came upon him, clothed him, or rested upon him, or the Lord was with him, and the like."

The Rambam continues this explanation as it relates to Moshe himself:

"This faculty was always possessed by Moshe from the time he had attained the age of manhood: it moved him to slay the Egyptian, and to prevent evil from the two men that quarreled; it was so strong that, after he had fled from Egypt out of fear, and arrived in Midian, a trembling stranger, he could not restrain himself from interfering when he saw wrong being done; he could not bear

it. "And Moses rose and saved them." (*Moreh Nevuchim* 2:45)

The **Sforno** probes a bit deeper into Moshe's sense of compassion when he writes that since the battle was between strangers (non - Jews) he did not bother to correct their conduct by admonishment; he only arose to save the oppressed from the oppressors." (*Sforno, Shemos* 2;17)

(Digression Question – It is worth comparing this *Sforno* with that of *Shemos* (19:6) where he states that the purpose of the Jewish people is to be a Kingdom of priests to grasp and teach the entire human race that all shall call in the name of *Hashem* and serve Him in one accord. Thus, it would seem we do have a religious calling to admonish all mankind. Perhaps, we may suggest that the mission demanded in *Parshas Yisro* is to be a long process and not suited to the rough and tumble encounter with the shepherds. Alternatively, the universal religious teachings became obligatory after *Matan Torah* but simply protecting the weak is an all the time obligation.)

In any event, having gone from tribe against outsiders to kindness within the tribe to empathy for those totally outside the tribe, Moshe is now ready for the calling from *Hashem* at the burning bush. (*Shemos* 3:4)

PS -- And in humorous insight, we note that Yisro's daughters described Moshe as an Egyptian. Thus, the oft-expressed excuse that we may be kind to others due to *Kiddush Hashem* is here precluded. No one yet knew that Moshe was a Jew. Ergo, no *kiddush Hashem* was relevant, just simple kindness.

## MUSSAR MOMENTS

*Max Korenman ('22) and Avidan Loike ('22)*

In this week's *parsha*, *Parshas Shemos*, we are introduced to Moshe for the first time. While faced with adversity throughout the *Torah*, he is challenged from the get go with surviving in a basket in the Nile. While any chance of survival is out of his control, Moshe strikes gold as he is found by none other than the daughter of the infamous *Pharaoh*. *Bas Pharaoh* finds pity in Moshe and ultimately cares for him. The *possuk* then says that she named him Moshe rooted in the fact that "[she] drew him out of the water." *Shemos Rabbah* explains that the reason that *Bas Pharaoh* had the *zechus* of naming Moshe was because of the *chesed* she did in saving him. Additionally it comes to teach us the reward of doing a good deed. Even though there were numerous names given for Moshe, the one that ultimately prevailed was based on one act significant enough that even *Hashem* only referred to Moshe by the name that was given to him by *Bas Pharaoh*. So as we go into *shabbos* and *krias haTorah* we should realize that although an act of *chesed* may seem minor and insignificant, the weight it holds is tremendous.



# WISDOM FROM THE HAFTORAH

## Yeshayah 27:6 - 28:13

**Summary:** Yeshayah begins his prophecy on a positive note, stating that the day will come when Bnei Yisroel will blossom and “the face of the world will be covered with fruit”. But, Yeshayah harshly criticizes the people’s evil actions at the time, accusing them of being accustomed to drunkenness and of worshipping the goddess of Assyria. Accordingly, Yeshayah warns that terrible punishments will come to the people, and that nations such as Egypt will worship Hashem in Eretz Yisroel instead. The Haftorah ends with two positive pesukim from later in the sefer (29:22-23), where Yeshayah says that eventually, when Bnei Yisroel see all these punishments, they will finally stand in true fear and love of Hashem.

בַּסֶּאֱמָהּ בְּשִׁלְחָהּ תִּרְיֶבְנָה הָגָה בְּרוּחוֹ הַקָּשָׁה בְּיוֹם קִדְדִים:

“Assailing them with a fury unchained, His pitiless blast bore them off on a day of gale” (Yeshayah 27:8)

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 100a) derives from this *possuk* that Hashem punishes people *middah kineged middah*, measure for measure. This is seen from the word בַּסֶּאֱמָהּ which can be divided into the words סֶאֱמָהּ for a *se’ah*, a *se’ah*. A *se’ah* is a unit of measurement, so this *possuk* tells us that Hashem’s punishment is meted out directly in relation to the crime which was committed. It is a well-known principle that Hashem punishes us *middah kineged middah*, but what is often glossed over is why Hashem conducts Himself in this manner. As an example, if a father responded to his son stealing another child’s toy by stealing his son’s toy, punishing him *middah kineged middah*, there is nobody who would call that good *chinuch*. On the contrary, it is immature and damaging for the young child. So, why does Hashem operate through the principle of *middah kineged middah*?

The Maharal explains that the purpose of *middah kineged middah* is to clearly demonstrate that the punishment Hashem doles out is a direct consequence of our actions. Arbitrary punishments would be vague in the lesson they were communicating, so Hashem chooses to have the punishment fit the crime, such that we become acutely aware of the purpose of the Divine retribution. However, if this is the case, why is it that we find most people do not immediately understand why they have been punished? The answer would appear to be that if Hashem made it overtly clear what the purpose of the punishment was, there would be no choice but to change one’s ways in light of the clear Heavenly sign. By keeping the punishment slightly vague, Hashem reserves the lesson of his punishments only for those who seek it.

In general, assigning a Divine reason for tragedies on this earth is something which must be approached with great caution. Rav Aharon Lichtenstein *zt”l* was once asked why he wouldn’t ascribe certain events to particular sins, like other rabbis would. Rav Lichtenstein responded jokingly “it seems that all these rabbis have a special phone line where they call God directly to ask Him why He does what He does. But they never gave me access to the phone line, so I can’t comment.” But, it is a good habit to examine things which go wrong in our lives and think about what message Hashem could be sending us. We believe that nothing in this world is arbitrary, but few of us take the time to think about what message Hashem could be sending us through the happenings of our lives. When we experience disappointments, whether minor or major, it is worth thinking about what “measure” it is that Hakadosh Boruch Hu is repaying.



# HALACHA HASHAVUAH

Yosef Weiner ('23)

Famously, the first two words of this week's *parsha*, "*v'eileh shemos*" (ואלה שמות) stand for *v'chayiv adam likros haparsha shnayim mikra v'echad targum*, meaning one is obligated to read the *parsha*'s text twice and its translation once. Thus, this week's article, as well as the columns of the coming weeks, will discuss the laws of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*.

The *Shulchan Aruch* writes that even though one will hear the *parsha* in *shul* he is still obligated to read the *pesukim* twice and the *targum* once (*Orach Chayim* 285:1). The *Mishnah Berurah* writes that one may not read the *pesukim* only once and rely on the *leining* in *shul* as the second time. However, the *Mishnah Berurah* does quote the *Magen Avraham* that *bidi'eved* one can fulfill one of the readings with what he heard in *shul*. Yet, there are some who write this does not work even *bidi'eved* (M.B. 285:2). Rav Nissim Karelitz explains that those who are of the opinion that one cannot even do this *bidi'eved* believe that there are two separate obligations. One is to hear *krias hatorah* and the other is to do *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. Thus, when one hears the *parsha* being read by the *baal korei* he cannot fulfill his obligation of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* as he is fulfilling his separate obligation of *krias hatorah*. He adds that according to this even the *baal korei* himself cannot count his reading for the obligation of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:5).

The *Mishnah Berurah* cites two practices in the order of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. He writes that some read each *possuk* twice followed by the *targum*, while others read an entire section twice, until they reach a spot where there is a break in the *Torah* (this is marked by a *pei* or *samech* in a standard *chumash*), and then read the *targum* on the entire section (M.B. 285:2). Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky writes that as a compromise between both opinions one should first read the entire section and then for the second reading one should read each *possuk* followed by its *targum* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:9). Additionally, the Steipler wrote that one may read the entire *sedra* once followed by its *targum* as in his view there is no difference between reading each section followed by its *targum* and reading the entire *sedra* followed by its *targum* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:7). Furthermore, one should not read the *targum* prior to reading the *possuk* and one should not do *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* out of order (M.B. 285:6). The *Kaf Hachayim* is of the opinion that if one mistakenly skipped *pesukim* he must go back to where he skipped from and continue reading from there in order to fulfill his obligation (285:15). However, the *Ketzos Hashulchan* writes that *bidi'eved* if one only reads the *pesukim* he skipped and does not reread the others he fulfills his obligation (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:19). One who is unsure as to where he is up to should begin again from the last point that he is sure he has read according to Rav Nissim Karelitz (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:19).

According to the view that one should read each section, until a break in the *pesukim*, and then read the *targum* the question arises as to what to do when there is a break in the middle of a *possuk* (e.g. in the *Aseres Hadibros*). The *Aruch Hashulchan* (285:5) *paskins* that one should stop in the middle of the *possuk* and read the *targum* while the *Kaf Hachayim* (285:5) as well as Rav Chaim Kanievsky write that one should first read the *possuk* in its entirety (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:7).

Rav Vosner as well as Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach write that it is proper for a child who is of the age of *chinuch* to be trained to observe *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. Furthermore, it is written in the *Otzar Hage'onim* that even a *talmid chacham* who desired to learn *gemara* should complete *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* with the rest of the congregation. Additionally, Rav Moshe Feinstein was of the opinion that one who learns *Torah* full time is obligated in *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:3)

A mourner who is in *shivah* must complete *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* on *Shabbos* (*Yoreh Deah* 400:1). The *Aruch Hashulchan* writes that if he normally does so he may even do it with *Rashi* (*Yoreh Deah* 400:6). However, the *Birchei Yosef* writes that he may not do it with *Rashi* as the real obligation is to do it with *targum* and not *Rashi*. In addition, the *Pri Megadim* writes that if one's last day of *shivah* is *Shabbos* then he should wait to read *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* until after *shacharis* (*Dirshu Mishnah Beru-*

rah 285:3).

Despite the fact that typically one should not read the *possuk* of *Shema* multiple times in a row (*Orach Chaim* 61:69) as it seems as if the reader is addressing two different powers, the *Ketzos Hashulchan* writes that one who is reading *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* may do so as it is clear from his repetition of each *possuk* that he is not addressing two different powers but rather reading *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. Additionally, the *Binyan Tziyon* writes that there is never a problem of reciting the *possuk* of *Shema* twice unless it is in the context of prayer or praise (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:6).

Rav Vosner heard from a trusted person that the *Chofetz Chaim* himself would first read the *possuk* twice followed by *targum*, then Rashi, and then the Ramban (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:6). On the other hand, the *Chazon Ish* would read the *possuk* once followed by *targum*, and then the *possuk* again. Rav Nissim Karelitz explained that the *Chazon Ish* would do this so that the second time he read the *possuk* it would be with the understanding that comes from *targum* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:21).

The *Mishnah Berurah* writes that one who is an expert in reading from the *Torah* should endeavor to read *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* from a *sefer Torah* (M.B. 285:2). However, one who is not an expert in reading from a *sefer Torah* with proper pronunciation and *trop* should read it from a *chumash* (*Dirshu Mishnah Berurah* 285:10).

This week's column has discussed the how of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* next week will focus on what may be used to fulfill one's obligation.

## PARSHA PUZZLERS

Submit your answers to [shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org](mailto:shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org) along with your name and cell phone number to be entered into a raffle at the end of the sefer! 1 answer = 1 entry!

(Hint: Use the commentaries in the Mekraos Gedolos Chumashim, along with the Toldos Aharon on the side to find relevant Gemaras and Midrashim)

1. From which *Midrash* on this week's *parshah* does the Rashba see a source to permit donations to *tzedakah* which are made for the sake of the donor's honor (ex: donating to a *yeshiva* so that your name is on the building)?
2. From where in this week's *parshah* did the *Chashmonaim* see a source for them to rule as kings? (*Tzarich iyun*)
3. Why does the Bahag call *Sefer Shemos* 'The Second Sefer' (*Sefer Hasheini*) while he doesn't refer to any of the other *Sefarim* of *Chumash* by their number?

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## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: ANIMALS IN THE PARSHA

Yisroel David Rosenberg ('23)

### Fight or Flight

In *parshas Shemos*, when Moshe is forced to run away from *Mitzrayim*, he comes to the land of *Midyan* and sits down next to a well. The seven daughters of Yisro try to get water from the well for their father's flock, but are driven off by several shepherds. Moshe rises to the defence of Yisro's daughters and helps give water to their sheep. Yisro's daughters go to their father and tell him what Moshe did for them.

"וַתֹּאמְרֵן--אִישׁ מִצְרִי, הִצִּילֵנוּ מִיַּד הָרָעִים; וְגַם-דָּלָה דָּלָה לָנוּ, וַיִּשְׁקֵן אֶת-הַצֹּאן."

*"They said -- an Egyptian man saved us from the shepherds and also drew for us and watered the flock."* (Shemos 2:19)

It is interesting to note, as the *Bechor Shor* points out, that though Moshe did not tell the daughters his identity, they recognized him as an Egyptian, "*ish mitzri*" as they put it, by his clothing and the language he spoke.

The *Ha'amek Davar* comments on the words "*daloh dalah*" which stand out with their repetitive language. He understands this to mean that Moshe hurried to water the flocks and did so not only for the daughters of Yisro, but for the shepherds who had chased them away as well.

The *Malbim* takes a slightly different approach to the *possuk*, breaking it down into three praises that the daughters were giving to Moshe. 1) "*ish mitzri*" - he was an Egyptian and had no motives to help them as the daughters of the Midianite priest. 2) "*hitzilanu*" - he actively saved them as a man who cared for justice. 3) "*daloh dalah*" - he watered the flocks not because it was just, but because he had an even deeper love for *chesed* and *tzedakah*. And to end, the *Malbim* puts it so beautifully:

"ובזה ספר ממעלת אדונינו שמלבד שהיה מגן לבני עמו, עשה משפט לעשוקים לכל בני האדם בכלל"

*"And in this book of virtue of our Master that beside being a protector of the people of his nation, He made a judgement for the oppressed of all peoples in general"*

We are truly blessed to have the wonderful gift of *Torah* and to be able to learn from it and from the past great leaders of our people.

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## Parsha Summary

Yosef, his brothers, and their whole generation pass away. The new generation of the *Bnei Yisrael* see their numbers grow dramatically. The new Pharaoh, frightened by the Bnei Yisrael's population growth, enslaves the *Bnei Yisrael*, forcing them to serve the Egyptians through hard labor. He also makes a decree that all Jewish male babies should be thrown into the river. Around this time, a descendant of Levi gets married and gives birth to a baby boy. The boy's mother puts him in a basket which she places in the reeds at the bank of the river. Pharaoh's daughter happens upon the baby, takes him as a son, and names him Moshe. When Moshe grows up, he sees an Egyptian man hitting a Jew, so he kills the Egyptian and hides his body in the sand. The next day, Moshe sees two Jews arguing, and he tries, unsuccessfully, to break up the fight. Pharaoh tries to kill Moshe as punishment for murdering the Egyptian, so Moshe flees to Midyan. In Midyan, Moshe marries Yisro's daughter Tzipporah, and they have a son named Gershom. One day, Moshe comes across a bush with a fire in it, but Moshe notices that although the fire is burning, the bush is not being consumed. At this point, *Hashem* reveals Himself to Moshe from the bush. *Hashem* then instructs Moshe to go to Pharaoh and take the *Bnei Yisrael* out of Egypt. Moshe protests, but *Hashem* insists and eventually, Moshe relents. So *Hashem* sends Moshe to ask Pharaoh for permission to leave Egypt for three days to offer sacrifices to *Hashem*. Moshe teams up with his brother Aharon and they come to Pharaoh and demand that the *Bnei Yisrael* be set free to serve *Hashem*, but Pharaoh refuses, instead deciding to raise the amount of work required of the *Bnei Yisrael*.

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