

Shemos | Teves 16 - 22 | January 16 - 22

וַיִּרַע מִלֶּאֱךֹּף ה' אֵלָיו
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Shabbos Zmanim

2025 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
12:36pm and every 15 minutes until 3:00pm

4:37pm Candle lighting	4:47pm Mincha in tent נ	4:47pm Chabad Mincha	4:55pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

6:38am <small>Vasikin, followed by a Daf Yomi Shiur 20 ↑</small>	8:00am <small>Shachris 2 18 main</small>	9:15am <small>Shachris 3 Tent נ</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20 ↑</small>	10:30am <small>Shachris 5 18 main</small>
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2:00pm Pirchei	4:35pm <small>Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos</small>	4:56pm Shkiya	5:36pm Maariv 1	5:41pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
6:15 pm and every 15 minutes until 8:45pm | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of January 19-25

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	7:18am	8:59am	9:42am	10:30am	12:07pm	3:56pm	4:57pm
Monday	7:17am	8:58am	9:41am	10:30am	12:07pm	3:57pm	4:58pm
Tuesday	7:16am	8:58am	9:41am	10:30am	12:07pm	3:58pm	4:59pm
Wednesday	7:16am	8:58am	9:41am	10:30am	12:08pm	3:59pm	5:01pm
Thursday	7:15am	8:58am	9:41am	10:30am	12:08pm	4:00pm	5:02pm
Friday	7:14am	8:58am	9:41am	10:30am	12:08pm	4:02pm	5:03pm
Shabbos	7:13am	8:58am	9:40am	10:30am	12:08pm	4:03pm	5:04pm

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Be Like the Stars

Shemos 1:1 “And these are the children of Israel who were coming to Egypt”.

Rashi states, “Although Hashem counted them during their lives, by name, He recounts them in their death, to make their endearment known – that they are compared to stars, which he brings out and in by number and by name, etc.”

What is the purpose of bringing out the stars by number and name? Generally, a name describes purpose or an assignment of duty, and a number expresses that something is finite and not infinite. But what is the message here? What is the job of the stars, and for all humanly purposes the stars are infinite? *Bereshis* (15:5) states in regards to Avraham Avinu “He brought him outside and said, now look down at the heavens and count the stars if you are able to count them”. Clearly the intention of stars is that they are infinite. Also numbers are infinite because you can always add a zero at the end or a one at the beginning. It’s the act of counting that is limited to having what to count.

On a deeper level, the concept of bringing out the stars by number is that although they are inherently beyond number to us, Hashem can bring them out by number. This is the perfect metaphor to describe the essence of the Jewish people in the eyes of Hashem. We are in a quasi-state of nature; on one hand we are within nature; being human and having all the physical limitations. On the other hand, we are above nature that we can survive; a sheep among 70 wolves. In every generation there is an effort to destroy us and Hashem saves us from our enemies. The stars have a number that Hashem counts them every day, but they can’t be counted by humans. Just as the stars are untouchable by humans so too Am Yisrael, when we do the will of Hashem, we are untouchable by the world.

The stars have names that define their purpose. The spiritual energy that comes to the world passes through the constellations. The constellations are a combination of stars that direct the energy to earth with a definitive objective to enhance humanity. Each Jew has the same objective; to enhance the world with his and her unique abilities. We were chosen to be a light (as a star) onto the world and this is the meaning of us being likened to stars.

Just as the stars have a specific job that they have been programmed to do, we also have a mission that we need to accomplish. Hashem therefore watches over us and is involved in our lives to enable us to accomplish this mission. This is the concept of *Hasgacha pratis*; Hashem’s personal interaction in our daily lives is a source of love and endearment to us.

In order to achieve success in our mission, we must be like the stars. When the two big luminaries were at odds, Hashem made the moon smaller, and the moon was upset. Hashem then introduced the stars to create peace and harmony between the sun and the moon. When we become one that generates peace and harmony, we will be real stars, and our mission possible.



No Expectations

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

The Ramban has a beautiful introduction to *Sefer Shmos*. His premise is that although Hashem said through Moshe Rebbainu that the Jewish people are destined to be taken out of Egypt and brought to the land of Israel. *Lemaseh*, that doesn’t happen in *Sefer Shmos*. However, the Ramban says, the *geulah* did take place, because redemption doesn’t necessarily depend on a physical place. Rather, one can reach *geulah* wherever they are, as long as they make themselves worthy of having *השראת השכינה*, just as the *Avos* were considered a *מרכבה לשכינה*.

So how does one get to this state of redemption? The Ramban explains that it’s learned from the *Avos*. *Sefer Braishis*, which focuses on the *Avos*, is also called *Sefer Hayashar*. The *passuk* says *ועשית הישר והטוב*. Being *yashar* means to be upright and to go beyond the letter of the law, as the Gemara interprets in *Baba Metzia*. *Yashar* is about perfecting one’s character traits - *middos*. This is what the *Avos* did to reach *dveykus* with Hashem, and to merit to be the chariot of the *shechina*.

Perhaps one can also add that the name of *Sefer Shmos* alludes to the significance of one’s name. A name represents our mission in this world. Hence when parents give their children names, they are divinely inspired. When a person lives his name, he is striving to reach his own personal redemption.

Many times a person finds himself in a situation or relationship and he feels challenged by the situation or the person. The natural reaction is to blame the situation or the person, and to make oneself the victim. However, a higher level is to see the situation and the person as a conduit for growth, and as an opportunity to reach personal greatness and redemption.

I recently heard something very powerful in the name of Reb Elimelech from my dear friend Harav Ben Tziyon Sneh. In *Parshas Vayechi*, we are taught by Rashi that *chesed shel emes* means doing kindness without expecting a return from the person for whom you did kindness. The depth of this concept is that when we are focused on the opportunity to do *chesed*, then expectation doesn’t mix in.

It’s fascinating to note that the *gimatriya* of *chesed v’emes* is the same as *chosson vekala*. Both are 519, which is also the numerical value of *baal habayis*. When a *chosson* and a *kallah* work to do *chesed* without reward, but simply for personal growth, then they are the real *baal habayis*, they are the true kings and queens. We know that the *chosson* and *kallah* are called king and queen, and the well-known question is, until when? The classical answer we usually tell the husband is “you’re a king so long as you see your wife as a queen.”

However, based on Reb Elimelech, so long as a person isn’t focused on what he is supposed to get, then he is still a king. As we know, the *middah* of *malchus* is *לית מגרמיה כלום*; it has nothing from itself, it’s about giving to others. Hashem is the *Melech Haolam*; He doesn’t need anything from us; He created us so that He can give. The only thing that we can do is be a nation that receives, or more precisely, a nation that deserves to receive. When a person lives according to the concepts above, and not with personal expectations from others, then he is on the road to greatness and true redemption.

The Master Key



Rabbi YY Jacobson

With the sight Moses beheld in the wilderness, the burning bush that was not consumed, he was shown one of the fundamental truths of Judaism: More than anywhere else, G-d is present in the flame of the thorn-bush. The prerequisite to Moses' assuming the role of the eternal teacher of the people of Israel was his discovery that the deepest truth of G-d is experienced in the very search and longing for Him. The moment one feels that "I have G-d," he might have everything but G-d.

When Moses observed this spiritual truth, he exclaimed: "I must depart from here and go over there and gaze at this great sight—why isn't the bush burning up from the flames." This vision inspired a transformation even in Moses himself. This saintly man, the greatest prophet in history, recognized the infinity one encounters only in the void, in the longing, in the hunger, in the fire that never ceases to burn, because the thorns refuse to quench the flames.

A story

One year, the Baal Shem Tov said to Rabbi Ze'ev Kitzev, one of his senior disciples, "You will blow the *shofar* for us this Rosh Hashanah. I want you to study all the kabbalistic meditations that pertain to *shofar*, so that you should meditate upon them when you blow the shofar." Rabbi Ze'ev applied himself to the task with trepidation over the immensity of the responsibility. He studied the kabbalistic writings that discuss the significance of the shofar and its mystical secrets. He also prepared a sheet of paper on which he noted the main points of each meditation he needed to reflect upon while blowing the *shofar*.

Finally, the great moment arrived. It was the morning of Rosh Hashanah and Rabbi Ze'ev stood on the platform in the center of the Baal Shem Tov's synagogue, surrounded by a sea of worshippers. In a corner stood the Baal Shem Tov, his face aflame. An awed silence filled the room in anticipation of the climax of the day -- the piercing blasts and sobs of the shofar.

Rabbi Ze'ev reached into his pocket and his heart froze: The paper had disappeared. He distinctly remembered placing it there that morning, but now it was gone. He searched his memory for what he had learned, but his distress over the lost notes froze his mind. Tears of frustration filled his eyes as he realized that now he must blow the shofar like a simpleton, devoid of spiritual meaning and ecstasy. Rabbi Ze'ev blew the litany of sounds required by Jewish law and returned to his place, an emptiness etched deeply in his heart.

At the conclusion of prayers, the Baal Shem Tov approached Rabbi Ze'ev, who sat sobbing under his tallis. "*Gut Yom Tov, Reb Ze'ev!*" he exclaimed. "That was a most extraordinary *shofar*-blowing we heard today!"

"But Rebbe... Why?..."

"In the king's palace," said the Baal Shem Tov, "there are many gates and doors leading to many halls and chambers. The palace-keepers have great rings holding many keys, each of which opens a different door. The meditations are keys, each unlocking another door in our souls, each accessing another chamber in the supernal worlds.

"But there is one key that fits all the locks, a master key that opens all the doors, that opens up for us the innermost chambers of the Divine palace. That master key is a broken heart."

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
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Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
 Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
 Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.

Chazal (Taanis 8:) say that one can't daven for two things at once. One should only daven for one thing at a time. The question is, we daven Shemonah Esrei, which includes so many requests. How do we daven for so many things at the same time? The Chasam Sofer answers that our request is really just one: to serve Hashem. The rest are details. We ask for health, parnassah, wisdom, but they are all for the same purpose: To serve Hashem.
 ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

UFARATZTA

Vatechayena es hayelodim Shmos 1,10.

CHINUCH: LIVE IT AND YOUR CHILDREN WILL LIVE IT ...

Experience shows that it is frequently easier to have the desired influence on one's children if this influence comes from good friends rather than directly from the parents. For nowadays children are apt to consider the advice and guidance as an effort to "boss" them, in the belief that their parents do not consider them sufficiently grown-up or mature....

....It should also be borne in mind that if parents want to have an influence on children, they must first and foremost, themselves present a living example. Moreover, whatever the measure of a certain good thing that the parents desire to see in their children, they themselves must have and demonstrate that quality to a much higher degree. Even if this means a special effort on the part of the parents, surely nothing is too hard for parents to do where the welfare of their children is concerned. Actually, the difficulties, if any, are more imaginary than real, and where there is a true determination to overcome them, the difficulties turn out to be much smaller than imagined....

==== Rebbe Responsa #79. Part of letter 4.





As we begin *Sefer Shemos*, it is appropriate to discuss the *mitzvah* of mentioning *yetziyas Mitzrayim*. Every morning and evening, during *Krias Shema*, we mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* in the 3rd *parsha*. What is the source for this requirement?

The *Hagaddah* quotes the *Mishna* in *Brochos* (12b), which says that there is a *machlokes* if one is required to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* at night, as we do in the morning. According to Rav Elazar Ben Azaryah and Ben Zoma, one must mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* at night, as we do in the morning. According to *Chachamim*, there is no such requirement.

The Source

Ben Zoma explains that the source for this requirement is from the words of the *pasuk* in *Parshas Re'eh* (16:3) לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת יוֹם יְצִיאַתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּלֵיל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ – צָאֲתָךְ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּלֵיל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ – “you shall remember the day that you left Egypt, all the days of your life.” Ben Zoma explains: יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ – “all the days of your life” comes to include the nights, as well. The *Mishna* continues with the opinion of *Chachamim*: לְהַבִּיאַת לְיָמֵינוּ הַיְמִיּוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחִים אוֹמְרִים, יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ, הַעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. בְּלֵיל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ, לְהַבִּיאַת לְיָמֵינוּ הַמְּשִׁיחִים According to *Chachamim*, on the other hand, the *pasuk* teaches us that we will be required to continue to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* even after *Moshiach* comes.

Thus, we have a *machlokes* if the word בְּלֵיל teaches us that one is required to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* at night, or that we will be required to continue to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* even after *Moshiach* comes. The Vilna Gaon explains that this *machlokes* is dependent on the two ways to explain the word בְּלֵיל. The word בְּלֵיל can mean “the whole day,” or it can mean “all the days.” For example, a person can daven the whole day or daven every day. According to Ben Zoma, the word בְּלֵיל means “the whole day” – to include even the night. According to *Chachamim*, it means “all the days” – even after *Moshiach* comes.

לְהַבִּיאַת לְיָמֵינוּ הַמְּשִׁיחִים – to include the days of Moshiach

If we take a closer look at the *Mishna*, we will see a difference between the language used by Ben Zoma and that of *Chachamim*. Whereas Ben Zoma just says the word בְּלֵיל means the nights, *Chachamim* add the expression “לְהַבִּיאַת לְיָמֵינוּ הַמְּשִׁיחִים – to include the days of *Moshiach*.” Why do they add the extra word לְהַבִּיאַת?

Rav Akiva Eiger explains that the word לְהַבִּיאַת has the connotation of something that is being added on. The reason for this usage is because, as the *Gemara* tells us, when *Moshiach* comes, the *mitzvah* of mentioning *yetziyas Mitzrayim* will still be performed, but it will no longer be at the forefront. The main focus will then be on the future miracles, but we will also make mention of the miracles of leaving Egypt. That is why the expression לְהַבִּיאַת is appropriate, because it will be something added on. According to Ben Zoma, on the other hand, the *mitzvah* at night is equal to the daytime *mitzvah*, and this expression לְהַבִּיאַת – something added on – does not fit.

The Times of Moshiach

The Brisker Rav offers another reason for the change in the expression. There is a big difference between the opinion of *Chachamim*, that we will be required to continue to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* even after *Moshiach* comes, and that of Ben

Zoma, that one is required to mention *yetziyas Mitzrayim* at night. According to *Chachamim*, the same *mitzvah* will continue even after *Moshiach* comes. That is why the expression “לְהַבִּיאַת לְיָמֵינוּ הַמְּשִׁיחִים” “to include the days of *Moshiach*” is used, which means that the times of *Moshiach* are also included in the requirement.

On the other hand, according to Ben Zoma, besides the daytime *mitzvah* of mentioning our exodus from the land of Egypt, there is an **additional** *mitzvah* to mention it at night, as well. This is a totally independent *mitzvah*, and, as we will see, each *mitzvah* has its own timeframe. The daytime *mitzvah* is only fulfilled during the day, and the nighttime *mitzvah* only at night. That is why the expression “לְהַבִּיאַת – to include” does not fit, since it is not included in the same *mitzvah*, but is rather an independent *mitzvah*.

SUMMARY

There is a *machlokes tannaim* if the *mitzvah* of mentioning *yetziyas Mitzrayim* applies at night. We *pasken* that the *mitzvah* does apply at night, and we fulfill this *mitzvah* when reciting the 3rd paragraph of *Shema*.

Rabbi Scheiner

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It's All in the Family

Rabbi Shalom Rosner

The opening of *Sefer Shemos* references the 70 offspring of Yaakov that descended to *Mitzrayim*. Yet, the actual names specifically mentioned are limited to the eleven sons of Yaakov (Yosef was already situated in *Mitzrayim*). Rather than rename all of the individuals as appears in *Parshas Vayechi*, the Torah uses the phrase "And these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt; with Jacob, each man and his household came."

The emphasis at this juncture is twofold. One on the "family" unit. Each of the tribes arrived in Egypt with their respective children (households). Second, each tribe had their own family but the common denominator was that they were tied to Yaakov, not only physically, but in the spiritual arena as well.

Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch explains the significance of the family at this time. As we embark on the second book of the Torah, referred to by the Ramban as "*sefer hagalus v'hageula*" (the book of the exile and exodus), the book that relays the story of the creation of the Jewish nation, we must understand that a nation is comprised of not only individuals, but of families. Tradition is transmitted from parent to child. In order for a nation to survive, family must serve as its foundation. As the tribes entered *galus*, they took with them what they learned from their father Yaakov and transmitted it to their children. Only by combining the strength of each family are we able to build an everlasting nation.

We not only descended to Egypt as families, there is an emphasis on families when we exited as well. The *korban Pesach* which was sacrificed on the eve of *yitziyas Mitzrayim*, had to be eaten together with one's family. The salvation was not merely on an individual level, but for it to be eternal, it had to encompass the family.

It is no coincidence that we refer to a family structure as a "family tree" rather than a family map or chart. A family tree is comprised of many branches – each representing another family unit, yet they are all connected to the same trunk or roots. Essentially, they receive their "nourishment" from the same source, even though they are independent from each other. Each child builds their home based on the *masores*, the morals and principles received from their parents.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach explains why we compare a *chasan* and *kallah* to "*invey hagefen*", the vines of grapes in a similar manner. Vines, unlike trees, cannot stand on their own. They require something upon which to lean. Both the bride and groom should lean on each other and use the lessons they learned from their parents as a foundation upon which to build their *bayis ne'eman b'Yisrael!* We may add that families are referred to as "*mateh*", a stick, perhaps to highlight that they serve as that backbone.

As we begin our journey through *sefer Shemos*, let us utilize this time to fortify our household. To appreciate the unique attributes of each child, while maintaining a cohesive family unit. To avoid the sibling rivalry that permeates the *parshiyos* in *Sefer Bereshis*. To be able to properly convey the beauty of the Torah and our excitement when engaging in the performance of *mitzvos* to our children. By transmitting the *masores* to the next generation, we are ensuring the eternal blossoming of the Jewish nation.



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מצרימה

לבוש 1:658

“And these are the names of the *B’nei Yisroel* who were coming to *Mitzrayim*; with Yaakov each man and his household came.” Why does sefer שמות start with “ואלה”, “and these”? What is the “and” connecting? On Shabbos, *parshas* שמות we learn the *haftorah* Yeshaya 27:6 “הבאים ישרש יעקב” – “Days are coming when Yaakov will take root.” The reason that we learn this *haftorah* is because the *haftorah* is like the “הבאים” of *Parshas* שמות. What are we to learn from the connection of “הבאים”?

Mishlei 14:15 “פתי יאמין לכל דבר”- The literal translation is, “A fool believes everything”. The *Midrash* says a “פתי” is a “נער”, a youth. The *Midrash* continues:- R’ Yehoshua Hakohen Bar Nechemiah tells us about the first time that Hashem wanted to reveal Himself to Moshe – Hakodosh Boruch Hu said, if I reveal Myself in a loud voice, I will scare Moshe. If I reveal Myself in a low voice, Moshe will not hear it and will pass by. Therefore, Hakodosh Boruch Hu revealed Himself using the voice of Moshe’s father. Moshe responded, “What does my father request of me?” Hakodosh Boruch Hu responded, “I am not your father; rather I am the G-d of your father”. What is the connection between “פתי” that the *Midrash* quotes and the incident about how Hakodosh Boruch Hu revealed Himself to

Moshe for the first time?

A “נער” is called “פתי” from a *lashon* of *pitui* (easily convinced). Children generally accept and believe everything that their fathers and mothers tell them. Although in life it is not good to be a פתי, in *avodas Hashem* it is proper to be a פתי. The first step in *emunah* in *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* is when one is a child. The child is *mekabel emunah* in the *Ribbono Shel Olam* from his parents. This is the foundation of building a proper *emunah*, and attaining the highest levels of *Emunah*. The *yesod* of *emunah* is “שהשריש” “בו אביו בהיותו פתי” – “That which takes root from the father when one is yet a פתי”. The very first time that the *Ribbono Shel Olam* called out to Moshe was in the voice of Moshe’s father, to teach us the importance of our *shoresh*. (מעין בית השואבה)

ואלה, “And these”, connects *Klal Yisroel* to their *shoroshim*, their roots. *Sefer Bereishis* goes to great lengths to delineate our roots. *Sefer שמות* is about *Klal Yisroel* surviving in *Golus*, specifically *golus Mitzrayim*. We must remember our *shoroshim*, our roots. We have a *mesorah* going all the way back to the *avos hakodoshim*. “ואלה שמות”, and these are the names”. לא שינו את שמם - *Klal Yisroel* had a great *zechus* in that they did not change their names. Our Jewish names help us stay connected to the previous generations. The *posuk* says, “הבאים”, who were coming. They were not settled in the *tumah* of *Mitzrayim*; they were still coming. The key to survival in *golus* is to keep in mind our *shoroshim*. Our *emunah* in the *Borei Olam* comes from our *shoroshim*. We must always stay connected to our *shoroshim*.

Learning from Our Enemies

Pharaoh was starting to get nervous. Yaakov Avinu’s children were once honored guests, but times had changed. The fear of losing his kingdom was getting him more nervous with each passing day. What to do? After convening a meeting of his executive advisers-among them Yisro, Bilam and (some say) יעקב, the press release was published: הבה נתחכמה לו פן ירבה ועלה מן הארץ.

Pharaoh lost it all because he, as many others who have tried since, became obsessed with destroying our people (ר"ל), even at the expense of destroying their own kingdom.

But we can also learn from Pharaoh's behavior how not to act. Pharaoh's error as a leader teaches us many lessons. It teaches us to build and not destroy, improve ourselves rather than blame others, and, most importantly, look inside for correction rather than point to others to excuse our mistakes.

The story is told of a world-famous scientist who was working round the clock to develop a theory, when his curious 7-year-old son approached him – “I see you’re working so hard, Daddy, can I help you?”

Nervous from all the work he was doing, the scientist tried to placate his son with a treat, maybe a promise for the future - if the little boy would just find something to do. But the boy wasn’t biting. Out of the corner of his eye the scientist noticed a big map of the world. “You like puzzles, right?” He asked his inquisitive son.

He then took the map and cut it into many pieces giving them all to his son- with a board and some glue.

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



“This is the map of our world, go and fix it up. When you finish, there’s a big prize waiting for you.”

Knowing that it could take his son days to complete this project, not knowing the continents, the scientist relaxed and went back to work. Imagine his surprise when a few hours later the boy brought an entire world back to his father, put together correctly!

“How in the world did you do it so fast? How did you fix the world?” “Daddy, I have to tell you” I don’t know what the world looks like, but there is one thing I did discover. There was a picture of a man on the back of the map you gave me. I simply turned the world around, fixed up the man’s image and presto, the world was arranged correctly!”

We can all appreciate the message. If we would only fix ourselves first, our world, and the world around us, would be changed for the better so much sooner! If Pharaoh would have taken this approach rather than the stubborn path he eventually chose – he and his country might not have been brought to their knees. Evil is slow to change, if at all – but we can learn. Evil will always choose to destroy and in the process usually destroy itself, as we see from our enemies in the Middle East today. We must double down in battle. But if we at the same time look inwards at our own behaviors and resolve to change, rather than blame others, we can be successful in building ourselves and our future generations. What will we do to become better? Is there anything we can change? May Hashem help us make all the right choices and may we merit seeing the fruit of our labors and the beautiful outcome of those decisions.

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I am a shadchan. One problem that comes up is when one side wants to pursue the shidduch, while the other side doesn't. Then, the interested parents beg me to tell them exactly why the other side said no. To answer them truthfully, I'd be saying things like, "They heard that some of her brothers are a bit..." or "Her outer appearance is not so..." Am I allowed to tell them why the other side turned down the shidduch?

THE DILEMMA

THE HALACHAH

Telling a person that someone said something negative about him is rechilus. So, if the shadchan repeats the negative comments, she is speaking rechilus. For example, a comment like "She was too stubborn" is very negative. It's also onaas devarim, because no parent wants to hear that their child has a bad middah.

However, comments like "they're looking for someone less yeshivish" or for someone "more outgoing" are not objectively negative, and they can help the family understand how others view their child. This helps to ensure that future suggestions are more on target. Therefore, what the shadchan can relate to the other side depends on the type of comment.

Someone once asked the Gaon of Tchebin zt'l what qualities he should look for in a shidduch. The Gaon replied: "Three things: Good middos. Good middos. Good middos."

Zera Shimshon

לזכר נשמת רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

Fleeing Evil

Moshe fled from before Pharaoh (2:15).

On this *passuk*, the *Yalkut Shimoni* teaches (§168) the following timely lesson:

The *passuk* says (Yeshaya 26:20), "Go my nation, come into your room, until the wrath has passed". When you see that the times are fierce, do not stand against them; rather give the fierce time its space. Whoever takes a stand against fierce times falls into their hands (either the fierce rulers of the time or the bad happenings that are coming due to the fierce times). And whoever gives the fierce times their space, the fierce times fall into his hands.

Navos stood up to those that were fierce in their times and fell into their hands. (This refers to when the wicked king and queen, Achav and Izevel, ruled. Izevel wanted Navos' field and he would not agree even to sell it. Achav came up with a plot, and had him killed and took his field (*Melachim I 21*). Avraham Avinu ran away from Nimrod instead of fighting him, and Nimrod eventually fell. Moshe Rabbeinu ran away from Pharaoh when he was in power, and eventually Pharaoh came to admit to Moshe Rabbeinu's greatness (see *Yalkut* for more examples).

The Zera Shimshon explains this concept as follows.

The *passuk* says (*Shemuel I 2:9*) ורשעים בחושך ידמו, "And the wicked are wiped out in darkness". The Rama Mipano writes that the word ידמו in *Att Bash* (a form of deciphering a hidden intent encoded in the words of the Torah, in which the first letter, א, is switched with the last, ת, hence א"ת. The second letter, ב, is switched with the second to last letter, ש, hence ב"ש, and so on), makes the word מוקף, surrounding. This is because when a person does the will of Hashem, he is protected by what is called an *ohr makif*, a Surrounding Light. When he sins, this protection is removed, and he is susceptible to punishments. This Surrounding Light stays in a certain place in Heaven until the person repents. This is the meaning of the *passuk*, "And the wicked are wiped out in darkness."

With this, the Zera Shimshon explains the *Yalkut*.

Sometimes, the times and the influence of good are held back for whatever reason. (In the case of the wicked person, it is due to his actions. In the case of *tzaddikim*, it can be the overall state of the world at that time and therefore, they too are not immune to the happenings in the world.)

This is what the *tzaddikim* listed in the *Yalkut* knew. Sometimes, judging by the power of the side of evil, one can only lose by taking a stand against it. He will only fall into its hands. The wise choice is to get out of its reach until the situation calms down, or until our good deeds alone overpower the evil and it falls into our hands.

This is what Moshe Rabbeinu chose to do – run away from Pharaoh. Eventually, Pharaoh fell into his hands.

Using this principle, the Zera Shimshon now explains why the curses – which result from the Jews who do not do the will of Hashem – were given to the Jews on the mountain called עיבל - Eival (*Devarim 27*). The word עיבל stands for the *passuk* that says (*Koheles 9:8*), ככל עת יהיו בגדיך לבנים, "At all times, your clothes should be white." This means a person should always be clean from sin. The first letters of the words עת יהיו בגדיך לבנים, make up the word עיבל, the name of the mountain the curses were given on. The message is that if a person always makes sure that 'his clothes are white' and he is clean from sin, he will be protected from the curses of עיבל.

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Reggio, Italy. His Seferim were named, Zera Shimshon (al HaTorah) and Toldos Shimshon (Pirkei Avos). He passed away on the 6th of Elul 5539 (1779). His passionate plea and promise regarding learning his Chiddushim:

my soul etc...

"This righteousness will stand by you forever - to eat in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.

"...and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children..."

I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth

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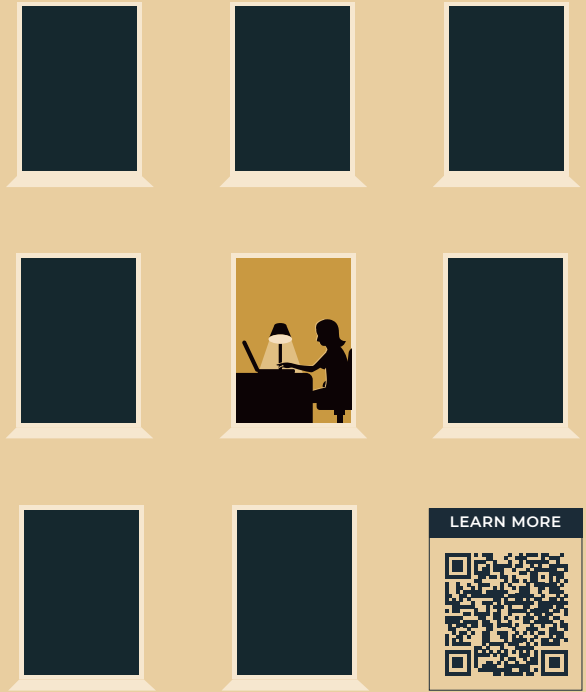
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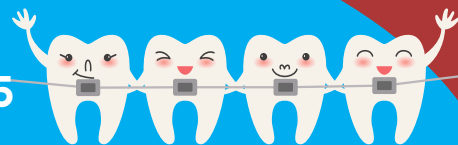
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A Script Without Credits Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

“And these are the names of the Children of Israel...” (1:1)

The name given to both the new *Sefer* and *Parsha* is “*Shemos*” – “The Book of Names”. Aside from the introductory verse which recalls the names of the twelve tribes, one is struck by the lack of names in this week’s *parsha*; the midwives are not identified by their real names, Amram is referred to as “a man from the house of Levi”, Yocheved is referred to as the daughter of Levi, Moshe is referred to as the “boy” or “youth”, Miriam as “his sister” and Bisya as the daughter of Pharaoh. Why does there appear to be a concerted effort to conceal the identities of the characters in this week’s *parsha*?

Rashi cites the Talmud as saying that Yocheved was one hundred thirty years old when giving birth to Moshe. The Ibn Ezra is perplexed as to why the Torah should highlight the miraculous nature of Sarah giving birth to Yitzchak at the age of ninety, yet make no mention of Yocheved giving birth to Moshe at the age of one hundred thirty.

When she descended to the river to bathe, Bisya, the daughter of Pharaoh saw the basket containing Moshe floating among the reeds of the Nile. According to the Talmud, she extended her arm toward the basket which lay far out of her reach. Bisya’s arm miraculously became elongated so that she was able to reach the basket. If the basket was far from her reach, what could have motivated Bisya to stretch forth her arm? Surely she could not have expected her arm to extend miraculously.

There is a fundamental difference between *Sefer Bereishis* and *Sefer Shemos*; *Bereishis* focuses upon the character development and the actualization of potential of the individuals who supply the genetic basis for the Jewish people, while *Shemos* focuses upon the formation and development of the national Jewish entity. Consequently, *Bereishis* highlights the lives and accomplishments of individuals. In contradistinction, because of the miraculous nature of the events which transpired to create the Jewish corporate entity, *Shemos* downplays individual accomplishments within the formation of the nation.

The formation of the nation follows the blueprint set by Hashem to bring the Jewish corporate entity into existence. Each and every move made by the individuals involved has been carefully and miraculously choreographed by the Almighty. Emphasizing an individual’s accomplishments diminishes Divine involvement in the unfolding events. Therefore, the names of individuals are rarely mentioned in this *parsha*, to create the sense that their actions are preordained by a higher authority.

Since *Sefer Shemos* follows Hashem’s miraculous script, extraordinary events are treated as commonplace. Therefore, no mention is made of Yocheved’s ability to bear a child at the age of one hundred thirty. In *Sefer Bereishis* the accomplishments of the individual are emphasized resulting in the highlighting of Sarah’s ability to bear Yitzchak. Just as the actions of other individuals mentioned in this *parsha* were prompted by Hashem, Pharaoh’s daughter stretched out her hand because it was the will of Hashem that Moshe be saved. She too was a tool in the formation of the Jewish nation.

The Thankless Job Rabbi Efreim Goldberg



Parshas Shemos tells of the heroism of Shifra and Pu’a – *Benei Yisrael’s* midwives who defied Pharaoh’s command to kill every newborn boy. In reward for their courageous decision to keep the boys alive, the Torah tells, ויעש להם בתים – God “made homes for them” (1:21).

Rashi, based on the *Gemara* in *Maseches Sota*, explains the word בתים (“homes”) in this *pasuk* as a reference to dynasties. These women were Yocheved and Miriam – Moshe’s mother and sister – and the dynasties of the *kehuna*, *leviyya*, and kingship descended from them. Yocheved was Levi’s daughter, and thus the *kohanim* and *Leviyim* descended from her, while the royal line of David *Ha’melech* descended from Miriam. Why was this the reward for the midwives’ heroism? God normally rewards מידה כנגד מידה, in a manner that resembles the deed that was performed. Why was the midwives’ refusal to kill the infants rewarded specifically with the dynasties of leadership?

Rav Yosef Sorotzkin, in *Megged Yosef*, answers this question by noting the previous *pasuk*: “God brought goodness upon the midwives; the nation multiplied and became exceedingly numerous.” The Torah seems to interrupt the story of God’s reward to the midwives by telling us of the nation’s continued rapid population growth. Rav Sorotzkin explains that the phrase implies that this was the midwives’ greatest reward – seeing *Bnei Yisrael’s* sustained growth. Their sole concern was the wellbeing of their people; they were not interested at all in any sort of personal reward. The satisfaction of seeing that the nation multiplied and became exceedingly numerous, that *Benei Yisrael* continued growing, with more and more healthy babies being born, provided them with more joy and satisfaction than

any reward could have possibly provided.

When Hashem saw the midwives’ selflessness, how their display of courage and self-sacrifice was intended solely for the benefit of the nation, without any ulterior motives, and without any desire for fame or recognition, ויעש להם בתים – He decided that the nation’s leadership would descend from these women. The most important quality of a leader is sincerity, a genuine devotion to the people, without any interest in “kickbacks” or prestige. A true leader feels rewarded by seeing his success, by witnessing the benefit he brings to the people under his charge. He does not need any feedback, praise, compliments or public recognition. And so Hashem wanted the leadership of *Bnei Yisrael* to emerge from Shifra and Pu’a, the two women who wanted nothing in return for their self-sacrifice other than the joy of seeing the fruits of their labor.

There are many “thankless jobs” that involve a great deal of work, and tend to invite complaints and criticism, instead of compliments and praise. Personally, in my experience, I am privileged to receive warm, positive feedback for my efforts, but many rabbis do not. The role of *gabbai* in shul is notorious for its thanklessness; the *gabbai* puts in time and effort to ensure that everything runs smoothly, but receives only complaints when he forgot to give someone *aliya*, without ever receiving a compliment. When one chooses to serve in any sort of leadership position, he must go into it expecting nothing in return. These roles demand an attitude like Shifra’s and Pu’a’s – seeing the success of one’s work as enough of a reward, such that no fame or recognition is needed.

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JOKES

Did you hear about the first restaurant to open on the moon?

It had great food, but no atmosphere.

◇◇◇

What do dentists call their x-rays?

Tooth pics!

◇◇◇

What does a house wear?

Address!

◇◇◇

Two hunters are out in the woods when one of them collapses. He doesn't seem to be breathing, and his eyes are glazed. The other guy whips out his phone and calls the emergency services. He gasps, "My friend is dead! What can I do?" The operator says "Calm down. I can help. First, let's make sure he's dead." There is a silence, then a gunshot is heard. Back on the phone, the guy says "OK, now what?"

◇◇◇

A grizzly walks into a bar and sits down.

Says to the bartender "Can I have a rum and..... coke?"

Bartender says "sure, but what's with the big pause?"

Bear says "oh these? I've had them since I was born"

◇◇◇

A snail walks into the bar and orders a drink.

The bartender says, "sorry we don't serve snails" and throws him out.

A couple of weeks later the snail goes into the bar again and says, "What did you do that for?"

◇◇◇

Three guys go into a bar, order a round. "Seventeen

days!", they yell, then slam the drinks. Order another round. "Seventeen days!" slam the drinks, order another round. "What's the celebration?" says the bartender. "We just finished a jigsaw puzzle in seventeen days!" Slam drinks. "What's so great about that?" says the barkeep. "Hey", says one, "the box said 4 to 6 YEARS!"



◇◇◇

A man walks into an inn and greets the innkeeper at the front desk. The man asked the innkeeper for a room and the innkeeper says

"Ok, \$15 for a room, \$5 if you make your own bed."

So, the man says

"Ok I will make my bed"

Then finally the innkeeper says

"Great, here is some wood and nails. Get working."

◇◇◇

A little girl walks into a pet shop. Seeing an unattended child, the cashier asks if she needs any help. "Yes, do you have any bunny rabbits?" The man takes her to the rabbits. "Do you want this little black one, or maybe the fluffy brown one over there?" The girl looks up at him and says, "my python isn't a picky eater."

◇◇◇

Questioning a class, a teacher asked: "If you were to say to me, 'You was here yesterday,' would that be right?" "No, sir," was the reply.

"And why not?"

"Please, sir, because you wasn't."



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