



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on BO

Year 24

by Dayan Abraham David

Both in this Parasha and in the previous Parashiot, it seems G-d's command to Pharaoh '*Shelach Ami Vayaavduni*' even though not explicitly so, gave the impression that their release was only for a time and purpose. As Moshe tells Pharaoh '*Ki Chag LaHashem Lanu*' It is for a festival in honour of G-d. The obvious question is, why give such a false impression when surely the intention was to take Am Yisrael into Canaan to fulfil G-d's promise to Abraham? Similarly we may ask why did G-d request the Israelites to borrow vessels of silver and gold from the Egyptians; '*Veyisha-alu ish me-et re-ehu ve ishah me-et re-utah keli kesef ve keli zahav*', Why borrow and not ask outright as payment for the years of servitude?

The Eben Ezra explains this was all part of G-d's plan to encourage Pharaoh to chase after the Bnei Yisrael to his final destruction in the Yam Suf for his wickedness.

On hearing that the Bnei Yisrael had gone to serve G-d beyond a distance of three days, which he had agreed to, Pharaoh went after the Bnei Yisrael. But if he had agreed to let them go free unconditionally, he might not have gone after them. Again we see G-d made the Bnei Yisrael turn back and

camp before Pe Hacherut as it says 'Vayashuvu Vayachanu Lifne Pe Hacherut' to make Pharaoh think they were lost and encourage him to come after them, so that he would receive the ultimate punishment he deserved at the Yam Suf. For this reason they were asked to borrow vessels of gold and silver so that the Egyptians should come after them to get it back. The Or Ha Chayim explains: All this was to mislead Pharaoh to make up theories to resist Hashem and this is how G-d hardened his heart. Moshe had asked Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt to serve Hashem. Pharaoh on the advice of his servants, who were terrified, agreed. But when he asked Moshe who would be going, and received the answer. "We will go with our young and old, our sons and daughters and sheep and cattle for it is a festival in honour of our G-d". He immediately refuses saying "only the men should go". What made him think he could still resist Hashem? When Moshe told him they would be taking their children and belongings, he suspected their wanting to escape. He wondered to himself 'why had G-d only asked for this and not their complete freedom in the first place? He then made up a theory that G-d did not have the power to free the Israelites completely against the will and might of the Egyptian forces and had to resort to trickery. G-d had indeed hardened his heart by opening up opportunities to make up foolish theories to resist Him, so he could

continue with the plagues, and eventually pursue them, to his final destruction. This request allowing them a journey of 3 days and the borrowing of the vessels of silver and gold also made sure that the Bnei Yisrael would not feel independent of G-d and become arrogant when they were allowed to leave. For they left knowing that there was a good possibility they would be pursued when they went beyond the 3 days and had taken with them the borrowed vessels of silver and gold. They felt they still needed G-d's protection all the way. Yes, our enemies make us draw close to G-d as it says 'Ve Pharaoh Hekrev' and Pharaoh caused to draw near, it does not say 'Ve Pharaoh Karav' which means 'and he drew near' to tell us that the Bnei Yisrael drew near to G-d when they saw Pharaoh advancing upon them in his pursuit.

TORAH GEMS

'Ve haya hadam lachem le-ot al ha batim'

And the blood should be to you for a sign on your houses.

The Bnei Yisrael were being commanded about the Pesach offering, the blood from this lamb was to be smeared on the lintel and doorpost of their homes, to protect them from the *'mashchit'* who would strike the Egyptian houses and go past the Jewish houses; *'Ve raeti et hadam vupasachti Alechem ve lo yehey bachem lemashchit be hachoti be Eretz Mitzraim'*.

Rashi brings the *'mechilta'* which deduces the blood on the lintels and doorposts were to be smeared on the inside and not outside from the words: *'Vehaya hadam lachem le-ot'*, the blood should be for you a sign. Since it was to keep out the destroying angels, it should really have been on

the outside. As G-d told us: *'Ve raeti et hadam vu pasachti'*; and I will see the blood and I will leap over you and you will not have the plague to destroy you! Rashi explains that even though all is revealed before Hashem, He says, "I will look into your homes to take notice of how you are busy fulfilling My *'Mitzvot'* and leap over you to save you". Rashi seems to be answering why does G-d need to see the blood since everything is revealed before Him and He would know of the *'mitzvah'* they had fulfilled with the blood and since the blood was not on the outside where it could be seen by the *'mashchit'* to avoid their homes or seen by the Egyptians to test their faith it was only for G-d to see?

G-d was looking into their homes to see them busying themselves with His *'mitzvot'*. If so, why need the sign of the blood at all, especially inside, since the *'re-eti'* is referring to seeing the *'mitzvot'* performed at home at the time of the Makot Bechorot and not when they had smeared the blood which was earlier? Furthermore, what other *'mitzvot'* was He referring to, *'she atem asukim bemitzvotai ve pasakti Alechem?'*

In the Parasha of the offering the Bnei Yisrael were given specific *'mitzvot'* how to eat the Pesach on the night, *'Ve achlu et habasar balilah hazeh tzli esh vu matzot al merrorim yoch lu hu'*, it must be eaten roasted on a spit with matzot and bitter herbs, *'matnechem chagurim naalechem beraglechem vu makelchem beyadchem ve achaltem oto bechepazon Pesach hu la Hashem'*. They had to eat the Pesach dressed for the journey they would make in a hurry, girded with their belts, shoes on, a stick in their hands all ready to be on their way. These were the *'mitzvot'* they were busy doing on that night, before Hashem struck the Egyptians' first born. The Jews had to show faith in their readiness, as the Seforno explains that they prepared themselves for the journey even

before the salvation came while still in their prison. Even the matzot they ate showed their faith, for the reason that matzot are eaten on the night of Pesach, *'shelo hispich batzekam le hachmitz'*, that the bread had not enough time to leaven in their great hurry to leave, which in their case had not happened yet. They were requested to eat matzot in anticipation of their hurried departure, requiring great faith in the coming *'geulah'*. The blood on the inside of their lintel and doorposts was a sign to them for doing the *'Mitzvah of Korban Pesach'* with great *'meserat nefesh'*, they would have to believe in the promise that G-d would *poseach medaletehem*, and not allow the *maschit* to enter their homes, they would look at the dam and believe in it, and the merit of their faith that night and in fulfilling the other *'mitzvot'* they kept on that night, that made G-d leap over the houses and not allow the *'mashchit'* to enter. They were to learn the lesson of *'mitzvah be idna matzel'*. *'Mitzvot'* at the time of fulfilment can save and protect a person from *'gezarot'* and dangers, as the Talmud says in Sota. It was not just the sign, but keeping of *'mitzvot'* at the time that saved them from any punishment that might be due to them. They were required to do acts which showed their faith in the coming redemption that they were ready for it, the sign of the blood was to show and remind them of the oncoming *'Geulah'*. The Chafetz Chaim it is known always to have kept a suitcase ready for the *'Geulah'*. Are we prepared?

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

The Yahrzeit of Baba Sali was on Wednesday 9th of January. The citizens of the town of Irfud in Morocco once organised a big Hachnasat Sefer Torah for one of the largest Batei Knesset in town. They invited Baba Sali who came with a number of other

Rabbonim and followers. A Sefer Torah was brought in amid joyous singing and shouts of happiness. Then everyone sat down to hear the different Gedolei Torah who were assembled. Baba Sali was the first to speak.

His addresses were always eagerly anticipated because they contained advice on how to improve one's habits, and increase one's study time. In the middle of his talk however, one of the heads of the community tactfully whispered to the Rav that if he would continue much longer, he would be speaking in a dark auditorium, because the city-owned generator only gave power until 10.00pm. The generator and the switches were in the mayor's building and it would be impossible to ask for more time that night. Baba Sali replied, "As long as there is the sound of Torah, there will be light!" (see Shemot 10:23)

That night, as long as there was study and discussions of Torah, there was light! Hour after hour, the large audience sat enthralled by the stream of Torah that fell like pearls, from the mouths of these great men. As the night wore on, people left for their homes. Slowly, conversations drifted from the Torah subjects that were touched upon that night, and the great miracle that had occurred, to smaller, more mundane things. Then suddenly the lights went out!!

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

1. Kaddish is a *'davar shebe kedusha'* and can only be said with a *'minyán'* of people who are Bar Mitzvah.
2. The Kaddishim we say in Tefillah as we have mentioned are obligatory, but even if we started the subject eg like *korbanot* in Shacharit or *yotzer*

with a minyan and even if only one person walked out we cannot say this Kaddish, but if the Kaddish itself was started and one went out we can finish that Kaddish (of course it is forbidden for someone to walk out and break up the minyan).

3. If there are only ten men in the minyan and some of them are in the middle of the Amidah and cannot answer, as long as there is a majority 6 people who can answer the Kaddish can be said, but not the repetition of the Amidah which needs 9 people to answer the Chazzan.
4. But if there are only ten and one of them is asleep then according to the Shulchan Aruch he is counted but according to the Ben Ish Hai we do not rely on this and should wake him up. If we cannot then he advises not to say Kaddish. Even according to the lenient opinion, it is only one person and not more who is asleep, could be counted.

**Mazal Tov to
Albert & Michelle Corin
on the bar mitzvah of their son
Noah
And to the grandparents and
families**

**Mazal Tov to
David & Sarah Froseth
on the birth of their son**

**Mazal Tov to
Sam & Simone Millet
Michael Millet
Miguel & Fabiana Abadi
and all their families
Lillian Kelaty & family**

**We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by
David Douer followed by a
kiddush**

***Avot vu banim is one and a half
hours after Shabbat
Please try to attend***

***If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush
Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan
07825 871749
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724***

SHABBAT TIMES

| | |
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| Shabbat commences | 3:58 pm |
| Shabbat terminates | 5:13 pm |
| Mincha Erev Shabbat | 3:45 pm |
| Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat | |
| Shacharit | 8:30 am |
| Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit | 3:40 pm |
| Shacharit Weekdays with netz | 7:25 am |
| Shacharit Sundays with netz | 7:25 am |
| Mincha | 1:30 pm |
| Arbit | 7:30 pm |