

לעילוי צשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל זרעיתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה

(Monsey, NY)

הדלקת נרות שבת - 4:30

זמן קריאת שמע/מ"א - 9:07

זמן קריאת שמע/הגד"א - 9:43

סוף זמן תפילה/הגד"א - 10:30

שקיעת חמה ליום השבת - 4:49

מוצש"ק צא"כ / מעריב - 5:39

צא"כ / לרביע תג - 6:01

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שבת קודש פרשת וארא - ר"ח שבט תשע"ג

Shabbos Parshas Vaera - January 12, 2013

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות צדור עפי' פרשיות השבוע מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד משרים בק"ק בית שמש

מאצרותיו של המגיד

הם המדברים אל פרעה מלך מצרים להוציא את בני' ממצרים

הוא משה ואהרן (ו-ב) - בענין ענוותנותו של משה ואהרן כתב רש"י, "הוא משה ואהרן - הם בשליחותם ובצדקתם, מתחילה ועד סוף", ודבריו הקדושים הם על פי דברי הגמרא (מגילה י"א) - "הוא אהרן ומשה הן בצדקן מתחילתן ועד סופן", ובביאור כוונת 'מתחילתן ועד סופן', כתב בספר **מלכה של תורה, בשם ספר באר ציחק**, "לפי שלא חל להוציא על ידם את עמו מצד היותם השלוחים הגדולים של המקום ברוך הוא להוציא על ידם את עמו ישראל ממצרים, לכן חתם כאן בפסוק זה **הוא** משה ואהרן, הנקובים ויודעים בשם בכל ספר התורה הוה, אשר הנחו עם ה' במדבר, כרועה המנחה את צאנו, וכמו שנאמר 'נחית כצאן עמך, ביד משה ואהרן' (תהילים ע"ז כ"א), וה' הוריד על ידם את המן והשליו, ועשה על ידם את הניסים והנפלאות הכתובים על הספר הישר הוה, וא"כ מאמר 'הוא משה ואהרן' הנזכר כאן, נמשך למשה בענין, על יתר קורותיהם שמוספר מהם בתורה, וזה שכתב רש"י 'הם בשליחותם וצדקתם מתחילה ועד סוף'.

ומבואר לפי זה, שכוונת רש"י במילים 'הם בשליחותם וכו' מתחילה ועד סוף, היא אל כלל שליחותם בתור רועי בני ישראל, מתחילה והצאתן ממצרים עד סוף שהותן ארבעים שנה במדבר.

והנה הוכיח רש"י את דברי הגמרא הנ"ל-הן בצדקן מתחילתן ועד סופן, ביחד עם מה שהוכיח, שהם **בשליחותם** מתחילה ועד סוף, ואף שניתן לומר, שיש כאן שני דברים נפרדים שהם מתחילה ועד סוף-שליחות, וצדקות, אבל גם ניתן לומר, שאכן יש שייכות בין מה שהם בשליחותם מתחילה ועד סוף, למה שהן בצדקן מתחילתן עד סופן.

ואת ע"פ מה שכתב בספר **תכלת מדרכי' (מהרב שלום מדרכי הכהן שברדון**, רבה של ברעאן, פרשת וארא, אות י"א), לבאר את הכתובים בפרשתנו הנ"ל, "הוא אהרן ומשה אשר אמר ה' להם וגו', הם המדברים אל פרעה וגו', הוא משה ואהרן רצה לומר, שהגם שנתגלה להם נבואת ה', וגם דיברו אל פרעה מלך מצרים ונפל פחדם עליו, וכדאיתא במדרש (שמות רבה ט' ד'), "למה אמר לו נס של תנין, לפי שפרעה נדמה לתנין וכו', וכשהיה משה יוצא ממנו, היה אומר, אם יבוא אצלי בן עמרם, אני הורגו אני צולבו ואני שורפו, וכשהיה משה נכנס, מיד נעשה פרעה כמטה' (של עץ, שאין ביכולתה להיוק כלל, כיון שנפל פחדו עליו), מ"מ הם לא הרגשו שום גאווה וגאון, ואמרו 'ונחננו מה, וא"כ כוונת הכתוב היא, שהגם שהם המדברים אל פרעה וגו', מ"מ **הוא** משה ואהרן-הן בצדקן וענוותנותן מתחילה ועד סוף'.

ולפי' יש לבאר את השייכות בין 'הם בשליחותם וכו' והן בצדקן וכו', דאף שהם בשליחותם וכו' המיוממת, שיש בה במה להתנאות, מ"מ הן בצדקן וענוותנותן מתחילתן ועד סופן.

צמשל: When something is right, you stick with it. When something is wrong, you stay away from it. Although Pharaoh finally relented and was allowing *Bnei Yisroel* to serve their G-d, Moshe refused the offer since the venue was wrong. How

הלכה למעשה **A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY**

Forgotten and Little Known Halachos and Customs (14)

Saying המעלות There is a *halacha* mentioned in the *Mishna Berura* ⁽¹⁾ that many people fulfill partially, but not fully. He quotes the *Shelah Hakadosh* that when a person eats a bread meal on a weekday, he should recite chapter 137 in *Tehillim* - before *bentching*. This chapter is the one in which *Dovid Hamelech*, in his prophetic manner, talks about the future *golus*, when the Jewish people who were taken into exile in *Bavel*, mourn the loss of the *Bais Hamikdash*. In order to fulfill the words of our sages to remember *Yerushalayim* at our joyous affairs (שמחות) ("על ראש שמחות"), we say this at a meal, which is a somewhat joyous occasion. On happy days, or "half-days" when *Tachanun* is not said, (ערב שבת ויו"ט) we also remember *Yerushalayim*, but in a more comforting manner by saying a different chapter (126) "שיר המעלות בשב"ח את שבת ציון". Similarly, on the afternoon of *Erev Shabbos* and *Erev Yom Tov*, we also recite this chapter. For some **unknown reason**, many people are careful to say "שיר המעלות" on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, but not to say "על נהרות בבל" on weekdays. The *minhag* of the **Munkatcher Rebbe ZT"l** and some others was to always recite "על נהרות בבל" even on weekdays and never say "שיר המעלות" ⁽²⁾.

At Joyous Meals. At a joyous occasion during a regular weekday, i.e. wedding, *sheva berachos*, *bris milah*, *pidyon*

הוא היה אומר

Rabbeinu Avraham ben HaRambam ZT"l writes:

"The magicians had attempted to duplicate each of Moshe's miracles, with some success. This allowed them to boast that their power was comparable to Moshe's, although perhaps he was a better magician and more knowledgeable. However, they claimed that the difference was strictly quantitative. They and Moshe used similar means. The plague of boils, however, completely undermined their claim. Moshe overpowered the magicians. The boils debilitated them. They were humiliated. They could no longer compare their power to Moshe's. Moshe had demonstrated that he was not working through the same means as the Egyptians. He was acting as the agent of a greater power."

The Dubno Maggid, R' Yaakov Krantz ZT"l (Ohel Yaakov) would say:

"The first and foremost obligation of a Jew is to serve *Hashem* in every way possible. Thus, we find that *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* told Moshe, 'When you take the people out of Egypt, you will serve Hashem.' After that, the *Torah* provides the details that are necessary to go about serving *Hashem* properly. It cannot be the other way around, for when a person performs the *mitzvos* but lacks the proper intentions, he is compared to a contractor who prepares all the necessary materials for construction - but fails to construct the house at all!"

A Wise Man would ask:

"Some people make headlines while others make history. Which one are you?"

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מוקדש לנתי"ה הרב צבי הירש ב"ר משה דוד ז"ל (י"ד שבט) ואשתו חנה בת אסתר נ"ה (ט' שבט) בלונדון - תנצנ"ה

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

כי ידבר אליכם פרעה לאמר תנו לכם מופת ואמרת אל אהרן קח את מוטך והשלך לפני פרעה ידי לתנין וגו' (ט-ז)

In the context of the bitter 18th century battle between *Chassidim* and *Misnagdim*, it is important to note that the all-encompassing belief in the power to do “wonders” (מופתים) of the *Tzaddik* - otherwise known as the “*Rebbe*” - became one of the Chassidic movement’s strongest and most controversial ideas. The **Mezeritcher Maggid, R’ Dov Ber ZT”L**, who took over the reigns of the relatively small faction after the **Baal Shem Tov’s** death, taught that *Hashem* reveals Himself through a *Tzaddik’s* most trivial actions and the ideal *Tzaddik* has a closer relationship to *Hashem* than the average Jew, thus allowing him the ability to bestow blessings and miracles on people. The *Misnagdim*, Chassidism’s main antagonists, charged that the *Tzaddikim* often enriched themselves at the expense of their followers. The **Vilna Gaon ZT”L** and the *Beis Din* of Vilna went so far as to place at least one severe *cherem* upon the *Chassidim*, officially excommunicating them, which they in turn copied and did likewise to the *Misnagdim*. The bitterness and animosity between the two camps ran deep, and basically whoever joined one wing, did not attend or pray in the same synagogues as the other wing, nor have the same *Torah* teachers, and they would not marry into each other’s families.

During this time, in the renowned *Yeshivah* of Volozhin, some of the boys used to sneak out and go to the *tischen* (Chasidic gatherings) held by the **Admor, R’ Mordechai of Lechovitz ZT”L**, a widely revered chasidic leader and renowned miracle worker. He had a great influence on the *Chassidim* who believed in his wonders, and this attracted others to visit him and learn what he was all about. For this reason, the group of Volozhiner students were curious and wished to meet the *Admor* and witness his “wonders.” The *Rosh Yeshivah, R’ Chaim Volozhiner ZT”L*, however, was not pleased with this development and as the foremost disciple of the Vilna Gaon, he was dead-set in his opposition to *Rebbes* and their *Chassidim*. When he learned that boys from his own *yeshivah* would travel the approximately 100 kilometers to Lechovitz to visit with the *Rebbe*, he strictly forbade his students to leave the *yeshivah* for this purpose.

As it happened, one time R’ Chaim had to be away from the *yeshivah* for a *Shabbos*. The students, disregarding their *Rosh Yeshivah’s* missive, seized the opportunity to leave as well and go to Lechovitz, to the *Admor*, R’ Mordechai. *Hashem* ordained it that on their way home, who should alight in their very coach but R’ Chaim himself, also homebound. They quavered at the sight, but he merely smiled at them and asked them genially what they had seen in Lechovitz.

They eagerly began to describe the deep impressions of their visit and cited several examples of amazing powers and *Ruach Hakodesh* (Divine Spirit) they had witnessed on the part of the *Rebbe*. The *Rosh Yeshivah* listened and then said, “And for that you had to leave the *yeshivah* and travel all that distance? I can also show you similar examples of prophetic insight.”

Their eyes opened wide in amazement and they were “all ears” as R’ Chaim began to to relate a vivid and detailed description of events back home in Volozhin. Closing his eyes tightly, his brow furrowed in concentration, he said, “At this very moment, I can tell you exactly what is going on in my house. My *Rebbetzin* is right now spanking one of our children for having sat in my seat and transgressing the commandment to honor one’s father.”

The students took note of the exact time this was said, intending to verify it. Upon reaching Volozhin, they quickly went to the home of the *Rosh Yeshivah* and learned, to their astonishment, that what they had heard was perfectly true. R’ Chaim had known exactly what was going on and had not omitted or changed a single detail. They were quick to spread the word that their *Rosh Yeshivah* was also a miracle worker who possessed great abilities and *Ruach Hakodesh*.

When they returned to the *yeshivah*, R’ Chaim called in the students for a serious talk. He wished to explain to them that he was no “miracle worker” but rather that such supernatural vision stemmed from the prodigious power inherent in *Torah* study. When a person learns *Torah* purely for its own sake, he gains a great many things, including the power to dominate nature and rise above it. “Focus on your *Torah* learning,” he admonished, “and you won’t need to go to see ‘miracle-workers’ again!”

משל למת הדבר דומה

ויאמר משה לא נכון לעשות כן וכו' (ח-כב)

משל: Close to sixty years ago, a petition was circulated that sought to end the current format of the *Daf HaYomi*. Certain people felt that learning both sides of the *daf* in one day was unrealistic and too difficult for the masses to maintain. They felt the whole idea would soon fail if it wasn’t adjusted. Someone came to the *Lakewood Rosh Yeshivah, R’ Aharon Kotler ZT”L* to ask if he would sign the petition that he believes there should be just one side to the *Daf HaYomi*, instead of a front and back page.

R’ Aharon said to the man, “You should know that I was

in attendance by the first *Agudah* gathering in Vienna, when the *Lubliner Rav, R’ Meir Shapiro ZT”L*, announced the idea of *Daf Hayomi*. At the time, I was sitting next to the holy **Chofetz Chaim ZT”L** and I will never forget how he kept whispering to himself, ‘Yisroel Meir, how come you couldn’t think of this?’ He was so taken by the idea.”

R’ Aharon concluded, “After hearing those words from the Chofetz Chaim, you want me to go now and cut it down to only one side of a page? If this was correct in the eyes of the Chofetz Chaim, do you think its correct for me to change it?”

וישליכו איש מטהו ויהיו לתנינים
ויבלע מטה אהרן את מטותם וגו' (ז-יב)

Moshe instructs Aharon to cast his staff in front of Pharaoh. It miraculously transforms into a serpent. Pharaoh summons his magicians and instructs them to duplicate the miracle. The sorcerers do so to Pharaoh’s satisfaction. However, Moshe and Aharon prove that their miracle is superior. Aharon’s serpent swallows the serpent produced by the Egyptians.

How were the Egyptians able to duplicate the miracle? **R’ Meir Leibish Malbim ZT”L** explains that the sorcerers were masters of illusion. They used their skill to create an illusion of a serpent. When *Hashem* instructed Moshe to transform his staff for *Bnei Yisroel*, in that incident, the staff had been converted into a snake (נחש). The transformation performed in Pharaoh’s presence, however, was much more impressive. The staff became a serpent (תנין). A snake has dimensions similar to the staff. A serpent is a large creature.

The magicians used the serpent’s size to their advantage. Their illusion required the coordinated efforts of two men. One threw forth his staff. A second was hiding nearby disguised as a serpent. As the staff flew through the air, the second magician jumped out from his hiding place and caught the staff in mid-air, hid it within his disguise and landed on the ground. They were experts in this type of deception. They carefully arranged the lighting and other factors and made it appear as if the magician’s staff had been transformed.

In 1481 a Jewish traveler, Meshulam ben Rav Menachem, traveled through much of the Middle East. He kept a diary of his travels. As Meshulam traveled along the Nile, he encountered very large serpents. Many were larger than humans. He describes these serpents in detail. He also indicates the name given to these serpents in various languages. In English, they are called crocodiles. According to this, the magician’s serpent costume might well have been the complete skin of a crocodile. Unfortunately for the Egyptians, a man in a crocodile suit is no match for the real thing - Aharon’s staff!

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

ראייתך

Here’s a question: If *Hashem* is invisible, how did He “appear” to Avraham? Was Avraham actually able to see *Hashem*? Well, explains the **Chasam Sofer ZT”L**, the word “וראיתם” - “*and you will see*,” appears in the *Torah* three times. The first time is in *Parshas Shemos*, where it states: “וראיתן על האבנים” - “*and you will see on the birthing stone*.” The second is in *Parshas Shlach* where it says: “וראיתם את הארץ” - “*and you will see the land*.” The third place is in the *parsha* of *Tzitzis (Shlach)* where the *Torah* writes: “וראיתם אותו וזכרתם את כל מצות ה'” - “*And you will see it and remember all the mitzvos of Hashem*.”

The Chasam Sofer says that all three can be connected in the true purpose of “seeing.” Everyone is meant to open up their eyes and look to find meaning in everything in life; to avoid sin and strive to come closer to *Hashem*. This can be derived from the *mishna* in Avos (3:1): “*LOOK at three things and you will not come to sin: Where did you come from? From a putrid drop*” - this refers to “seeing” the birthing stone. “*Where are you heading to? To a place of dust and worms*” - this connects to the *posuk* of “seeing” the land. “*And before Whom will you give an accounting for all your deeds? Before the King of all Kings Hakadosh Boruch Hu*” - This is clearly a reference to the *posuk* that tells us to “see” and remember all of *Hashem’s mitzvos*.

The Almighty appears to us, each and every one of us, all the time; we just have to choose to “see” Him. Seeing is not always what is apparent but rather it is the meaning behind what one is looking at that is truly meant to be seen. Let us open our eyes and make the effort to look at what is hidden, thereby seeing and and truly internalizing every “וראיתם” in our lives.

TORAH GEMS

וידא פרעה כי חדל המטר והכדר והקלות
ויספח לחטוא ויכבד לבו הוא ועבדיו וגו' (ט-פ-לה)

The concept of free will is very deep and profound.

Without it there would exist only the power of the Creator and, as a result, the entire universe would be impotent and passive. By giving man free will, *Hashem* endowed him with power so that two forces would exist in the universe. As a result of this endowment, it became possible to have a covenant between the Creator and creation. It became possible to have commandments and a relationship with *Hashem*, both of which are meaningless without man’s free will. We have free will only because *Hashem* grants us this magnificent gift. On the other hand, explains **R’ Yaakov Weinberg ZT”L (Ner Yisroel)**, in examining the story of Pharaoh in Egypt, we can understand that just as *Hashem* grants man this free will, He can also deny it when man no longer deserves it. Because of the evil that Pharaoh had perpetrated, *Hashem* “hardened his heart,” taking away his free will in order to use him as a pawn in history.

The greatest paradox of existence is therefore the independence which the Almighty gives to a totally dependent creature. This gift is the immeasurable kindness the Sages speak of when they describe how the Almighty gives man the strength and intelligence to rebel against Him. A comparable situation would be a government that supplies rebels with the guns, ammunition, clothing, and food with which to carry on a revolution.

The gift of free will is such an act of loving-kindness, because without the potential to rebel, man could never come close to his Creator. A covenant or treaty necessitates the participation of both parties. It can never be unilateral. The uniqueness of the Jewish nation, the relationship that is based upon a covenant between *Hashem* and His people, would not be possible without free will. That relationship, which was the purpose of Creation, and that pleasure - the greatest of all pleasures - would be denied man.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHILOMO

וארא אל אברהם אל יצחק ואל יעקב (ז-י)

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