Points to Ponder

Beshalach 5780

**וַיְהִ֗י בְּשַׁלַּ֣ח פַּרְעֹה֘  And it was when Pharaoh sent the nation (13:17) –** The Talmud (Megillah 10b) notes that whenever we see the word “Vayehi” it means that there was pain there. Where was the pain and to whom did it affect in our Parasha? The Jews left Mitzrayim! Pharaoh kicked them out! Who was in pain? **Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztl.** explained that Pharaoh was in pain. As soon as he realized how valuable Jewish presence is in a country, and exactly what a Jewish nation could become if properly encouraged, Pharaoh was in pain over the loss of the economic and social potential for his country. This mistake has been mademany times in our people’s history.

**וַיִּקַּ֥ח משֶׁ֛ה אֶת־עַצְמ֥וֹת יוֹסֵ֖ף עִמּ֑וֹ** **Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him (13:19) - Rashi** cites the Midrash that Yosef made his brothers swear that their children would swear to take his bones out with them. They knew that they would not be the ones to fulfill the promise so they needed to bring their children into the picture and into the oath. Now, when it comes to oaths taken by a nation, the nation is obligated to keep the oath even if the people who make up the nation at the time of the oath are no longer present to carry it out. Hence, the **Ragachover *Gaon*** raised the question, why was it necessary for Yosef to have his brothers swear that they would have the next generation swear etc.? Why didn't he simply have the brothers swear representing *Klal Yisroel*, and that *shavua* would automatically be binding on all future generations? He answers that since Yosef died prior to Matan Torah, the concept of a united nation did not exist within Klal Yisrael. Hence, each brother needed to swear personally. **Rav Schachter Shlita** would often note to us that this is the uniqueness of the concept of Am Yisrael. WE are not a band of individuals joined for some personal purpose (like Mishpichos HaAdama). We represent what it means to be an Am – a nation under Hashem that transcends person and time. This is the basis of Arvus and Achdus which exists only by Am Yisrael.

**וַיֵּֽ֠הָפֵ֠ךְ לְבַ֨ב פַּרְעֹ֤ה Pharaoh’s heart was turned (14:5) - Rashi** notes that Pharaoh changed his mind from the position of wanting the Jewish people out. **Ohr HaChaim** asks where there was a choice for them? Pharaoh’s mind was changed for him by Hashem -- to let the Jews go and to not let the Jews go? **Rav Shmuel Berenbaum ztl.** explained that Pharaoh was upset at himself for not sending a guard to make sure that the people would return to Mitzrayim. He refused to see the hand of Hashem in the process and the acceptance of his loss in the battle with Bnei Yisrael. There is a little Pharaoh in each of us and thus we need to accept ourselves and Hashem’s will for us.

**אָ֣ז יָשִֽׁיר־משֶׁה֩ Then Moshe and Bnei Yisrael sang (15:1) – Rashi** notes the Gemara’s use of this verse to prove that there is Techiyas HaMeisim. The Gemara’s proof is that it says Moshe and the Jewish people will sing. What is the Gemara’s lesson? **Rav Dovid Kav ztl.** used to tell us that the proof to Techiyas HaMeisim was that in the future Moshe would sing with the entire Jewish people. That a group can stand together and sing in harmony successfully could only come in the future at the time of Techiyas HaMeisim. **Rav Aharon Lopiansky Shlita** offered a different interpretation. He suggested that the entire Shira written in its unique style allows not only the body of the words to flow but also the soul that comes from the spaces. Those spaces – representing the souls of Torah – sing in the future when unbound from the rules of nature. Hence, Techiyas HaMeisim min HaTorah.

**וַתֵּצֶ֤אןָ כָל־הַנָּשִׁים֙ אַֽחֲרֶ֔יהָ בְּתֻפִּ֖ים וּבִמְחֹלֹֽת The women went out after her with drums and cymbals (15:20) - Rashi** notes that the women took these drums with them from Egypt because they had Bitachon that Hashem was going to perform miracles for them. Why does Rashi wait to make this point here? Why not make it when Miriam took the drum? **Rav Aizik Ausband Shlita** noted the comments of the Rambam (Yesodei HaTorah 7:4) that Neviim need to be ready to receive Nevuah at any moment and in order to be ready they often carry musical instruments with them in order to be b’Simcha. Miriam was a prophetess and therefore, that she had a drum was not a proof to Bitachon. Rather, when the Jewish women as a group carried the instruments, then it was an indication of intent for Bitachon and hence Rashi’s properly placed comment.

**שָׁ֣ם שָׂ֥ם ל֛וֹ חֹ֥ק וּמִשְׁפָּ֖ט There he gave them Chok and Mishpat (15:25) - Rashi** (from Sanhedrin 56a) notes that in Marah the Jewish people received the Mitzvos of Shabbos, Parah Adumah and Dinim. Elsewhere (16:22) Rashi notes that the Jews learned first of Shabbos when they received the Manna. How could they have learned Shabbos in Marah and then not know of it in Parshas HaMan? **Rav Menachem Genack Shlita** explained that they received the Mitzvos to learn about them in Marah but the Mitzvos were not applicable until later. Hence the word “Yisasku” -- that they received the Mitzvos for learning purposes in Marah.

**וַיִּקְצֹ֥ף עֲלֵהֶ֖ם משֶֽׁה They didn’t listen to Moshe and they left food and it became wormy and Moshe got angry (16:20)** - Why did Moshe get angry? Didn’t this show that Hashem’s will is supreme? **Rav Druk ztl.** explains that until Dasan V’Aviram left things over, the people ate the Manna every day with the understanding that they were putting their faith in Hashem to provide for the next day. This would now have to change. Now that they were aware that leaving things over would lead to spoilage, the purpose in consuming every morsel became more mundane -- they would eat so that they would have to deal with the spoilage.

**Haftarah – כִּ֣י בְֽיַד־אִשָּׁ֔ה יִמְכֹּ֥ר Hashem will sell victory in the hand of a woman (Shoftim 4:9)** – Who is the intended woman in this Possuk? **Redak** assumes it is Yael who ultimately kills Sisra. **Ralbag** assumes it is a reference to Devorah to whom the miracle is credited as seen by the song called Shiras Devorah. The **Meshech Chochma** wants to prove that Yael is the intended in so far as it is she who paid a price for the head of Sisra. For as a result of her actions she would no longer be able to be married to Chever HaKeini.