Points to Ponder

Shemos 5781

**וַיִּקְרָ֤א מֶֽלֶךְ־מִצְרַ֨יִם֙ לַֽמְיַלְּדֹ֔ת וַיֹּ֣אמֶר לָהֶ֔ן The king of Egypt said to the Jewish midwives (1:18)** - What did he say to them? After all, it DOES say VaYomer TWICE? **Rav Dr. Norman Lamm ztl** explained that he tried to get the women to change their Jewish names to secular ones (Shifra and Puah) but it didn’t stick.

**וַיִּגְדַּ֤ל משֶׁה֙ וַיֵּצֵ֣א אֶל־אֶחָ֔יו Moshe grew big (2:11)** - In what way? **Chasam Sofer** explained that he grew great in the eyes of Hashem as he became aware of the Tzaros of the Jewish people. **Rav Moshe Tzuriel Shlita** added that great people do not merely think about their own interests, they think about the interests of the entire Jewish people.

**מַדּ֖וּעַ לֹֽא־יִבְעַ֥ר הַסְּנֶֽה But the bush was not consumed (3:3)** - Why does the Possuk use the word Yivar (active) instead of Nivar (passive)? **Rav Bernard Weinberger ztl.** explained that the symbol was a reference to the heart of the bush. The amazing thing was that the heart of the bush -- symbolic of the Jew in Galus. On the one hand Galus hides the power of the Jew making him feel low and at the same time Nitzchiyus does not allow him to burn himself out and give up hope.

**שַׁל־נְעָלֶ֨יךָ֙ מֵעַ֣ל רַגְלֶ֔יךָ Take your shoes off your feet (3:5) - Rav Zevin ztl.** explained that shoe serve the purpose of protecting the foot from filth and from thorns -- from dangers of interacting with the world. In the Mikdash or the presence of Hashem, shoes are unnecessary as Hashem provides that protection.

**וְזֶה־לְּךָ֣ הָא֔וֹת כִּ֥י אָֽנֹכִ֖י שְׁלַחְתִּ֑יךָ בְּהוֹצִֽיאֲךָ֤ אֶת־הָעָם֙ מִמִּצְרַ֔יִם תַּֽעַבְדוּן֙  This is the sign that I have sent you, when you take the people out of Egypt you will serve Hashem on this mountain (3:12) - Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that Hashem had appointed Moshe to do 2 different jobs. First, he appointed Moshe as a Shaliach to speak to Pharaoh and also to be the leader of Am Yisrael. Moshe demurred both assignments arguing that he was inadequate for both. Hashem told him that this was not going to be a normal Shlichus -- as Hashem would be there every step of the way and in regard to the second, he was to be the leader not in a secular political way but rather as a teacher. For the second job there was no one as good as Moshe. The proof? The idea that the ultimate freedom was serving Hashem on Har Sinai.

**אֶֽהְיֶ֖ה אֲשֶׁ֣ר אֶֽהְיֶ֑ה Eh-yeh Asher Eh-yeh (3:14)- Rav Schwab ztl.** explained that this name of Hashem describes a mirroring style that Hashem has with us. When we show Ahava to Hashem it is easier for Him to make His love more apparent. It is based on the principle of K’Mayim HaPanim El Panim.

**וַיֻּכּ֗וּ שֹֽׁטְרֵי֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל The Jewish police were beaten (5:14)** - Why was this important? Why does the Torah want us to know about this particular abuse of the Jewish nation? **Rav Yehuda Herzl Henkin ztl.** explained that this group was the closest with the Egyptians -- which is why they were appointed as the police. In order to bring the Geulah, this group needed to be shaken free from the Egypt and brought closer to the rest of the nation.

Haftara

**וְהָיָ֣ה | בַּיּ֣וֹם הַה֗וּא יִתָּקַע֘ בְּשׁוֹפָ֣ר גָּדוֹל֒ וּבָ֗אוּ הָאֹֽבְדִים֙ בְּאֶ֣רֶץ אַשּׁ֔וּר וְהַנִּדָּחִ֖ים בְּאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֑יִםIt will be on that day that we will blow the big Shofar (Yeshayahu 27:14)** - What is the “big” Shofar? What is the difference between the lost ones of Ashur and the trapped of Mitzrayim? In Mitzrayim the Jews were broken down and wanted to run away. In Ashur, the Jews lived in relative physical comfort but were spiritually destroyed. **Ramchal** explains that a Shofar Gadol is the great Rachamim to gather even those who do not deserve Geulah based on the strict application of justice**. The Brisker Rav ztl** adds that this refers even to Jews who might have assimilated, the Shofar Gadol will call to them too.