



A Weekly Dvar Torah from Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin

Rabbi Weissmandl, Reb Pinchas, all my brothers, *askonim*, and all my family *sheyichyu*,

Our *parsha*, Vo'airo, continues with the answer of Hashem to Moshe Rabbainu's question, why did the slavery of the Yidden become more difficult after he was sent to speak to Paroh.

Then, Hashem sends Moshe and he speaks to the Yidden again, but there is a change from the "*Vayaamain ho'om*" of last time, to the inability of the Yidden to listen this time. It is because of shortness of "*Ruach*" and hard labor. The Alshich Hakodosh explains that they believed Moshe that they would be redeemed from their slavery, but they had no more breath left to wait in the hard labor.

Hashem commands Moshe and Aharon to go speak to Paroh the king of Mitzrayim, and tell him to free the Yidden. But, before we are told what happens when they go to Paroh, there is an interruption in the story. We have the *parsha* of *yichus*, of the names of the leaders of their families, starting with Reuven, then Shimon, then Levi - from whom Moshe and Aharon come.

Rashi explains the reason for this interruption. Since Moshe and Aharon are mentioned in the *posuk*, the *parsha* interrupts to teach us how Moshe and Aharon were born and with whom is their *yichus*.

But there is still an unanswered question here. Perhaps we need to know how they were born and with whom is their *yichus*, but why here in this *parsha*? The proper place would seem to be in the last *parsha*, at the time they were born?

One lesson could be that we learn and see the importance of *achdus* and family ties in the hardships of *golus*. We will have *koach* to get through the *golus*, knowing that the *zechus* of our parents and grandparents will help us when we are enveloped in an *eis tzoroh*. This includes our extended family, our *achainu Bais Yisroel* who have so much *achdus*, who are all *bnai Yaakov*. So much so that we see in this *parsha*, when we want to talk about Moshe and Aharon, we must start with and include Reuven and all his children and then also Shimon and all of his children. Also, when we are physically together the family is a source of strength to overcome the *gzairos* of Paroh, the earlier and the current ones.

Actually, even in the prison system, community and family ties are recognized as a positive element inmates needed for the mental wellbeing. The health of inmates is gauged by whether they have community and family ties. Time with family and friends during the visits is essential for both the time they are to spend in prison, for its communication value in the prison itself, and for when the inmate is released, the value of having ties is priceless, so he has where to go and a support to go back into society. Then "*tichbad alaihem hoavoidah*", suddenly there was this need to make life much more torturous by cutting out about half of the days that are available for visits with family and friends. The collateral damage that followed, can not be seen or heard, because the children that used to come are gone and can't come. The talk and maybe some laughter that used to be heard in the visiting room as they sat with their fathers and sit on their laps as they soaked in the energy to continue their growth in school and life, don't come anymore, not that they do not want to come, but because they are not allowed to come.

Another lesson of knowing "how he was born and with whom is our *yichus*" is the need to gather the details of the people on the story we are presented with, in order to fully understand the real truth of the story. If we ignore these details then we will fail to see the truth as it is, and be prone to constant error in judgment.

The *posuk* says "*Hu Aharon uMoshe*" that Yocheved gave birth to, to remind us of when Paroh the king of

Mitzrayim wanted to kill the Jewish people by killing the Jewish babies that were born, he ordered Yocheved who was in charge, to kill the Jewish baby boys. However she had *mesiras nefesh* and did not listen to the orders given her by king Paroh. We see also by Amrom, who was their father who also defied the decree of king Paroh by remarrying Yocheved, and then Moshe was born. His example of ignoring the decree of Paroh and only listening to Hashem by remarrying and growing the Jewish family was emulated by all the Yidden, and the Yidden continued to prosper, even in the terrible *golus* they were in.

This is what Rashi explains, so that "we know how they were born". They were born by parents who had *mesiras nefesh* for Hashem and Yidden. Like the *posuk* says, they had the fear of Hashem and did not listen to Paroh *melech* Mitzrayim. Its important to know who were Moshe and Aharon who are going to fulfill their *shlichus* of Hashem and bring the ten *makos* on Paroh and Mitzrayim. This is a good place to remember the story with Zaide Getzel when he said "*Es hoeloikim anee yorai*" and his *zechus* should come to help *betoiv begashnius* and *begilui* with freedom and redemption for his grandchildren and children.

The purpose of the *makos* was, so that Mitzrayim will know Hashem and listen to him to send out the Yidden free. The record of history, of who Moshe and Aharon were and who Paroh and the Egyptians were, needed to be clarified right in the beginning. There was going to be lots of discussion in palaces on Mitzrayim once the *makos* started, like, who was really doing it. As we see, Paroh argued that it was Moshe and Aharon doing it, and would not believe it was Hashem who wanted the Mitzriyim to see the truth of Hashem hu Eloikim. The *makos* were going to be *mevatel* him and the Egyptians and they were forced to admit they were *reshoim* and "*Hashem hatzadik.*"

When Moshe and Aharon publicly warned Paroh and his people to heed their words and brought the plagues on the Mitzriyim in order to teach them that Hashem is the real power in the world, so they would listen, one could imagine how the reporters of these events spun this story as it was developing. They reported the *makos* as some natural catastrophe for the people in Mitzrayim and their noble king Paroh. They most likely blamed Moshe and Aharon as the aggressors who suddenly appeared to destroy the order and civilization they had created. They would focus on the pain the Egyptians were experiencing, in false denial of why this was happening to them, ignoring the monstrous injustice they have been practicing for so many years by enslaving people that were free. They would ignore their unimaginable evil, of any man which is to repay bad for good that was done. They would ignore the real purpose of the *makos*, which was for them to recognize that Hashem wants them to correct their ways and free the Yidden from bondage. But, rather than admit that they were *reshoim*, they would even accuse Moshe and Aharon for bringing so much pain and suffering on the most civilized world power of their time.

Ever pick up a "Story of Passover" that glosses over the *makos* as if they were not even part of the story of Pesach? Somehow even today there are those that need to hear this lesson of the Torah.

It is here that the Torah brings up their *yichus* "So that we know how they were born" and "With whom is their *yichus*." Because, when we go back to the time of how they were born we will then remind ourselves who the "real" evil king Paroh is, and how cruel he and his nation really were. We will know that the mother of Moshe was Yocheved, who was born right before they entered Mitzrayim, to a free and most righteous family who came to Egypt to live in peace with the people there. They also came to Egypt was by invitation of the king Paroh himself. We will remember the loyal service of Yosef the son of Yaakov, who was a most loyal person to Paroh. It was Yosef who accumulated for Paroh and his people all the wealth of the world, and saved them from death of a famine. It was the wisdom of Yosef the son of Yaakov, that made Egypt a world empire. It was king Paroh of Egypt who invited the whole Yaakov family to leave the land they lived in, and come and settle in his land. They accepted his generous offer and came to Mitzrayim, and it was then, that Yocheved was born, a free person with basic human rights. Yaakov brought further blessing when he blessed king Paroh and the terrible famine stopped, and Paroh himself gave them the place where to live because in those days the Egyptians honored Yaakov and his family, and they repaid the Egyptians and made their host country prosper.

Then suddenly one day, all of this abruptly stopped. King Paroh made believe he never knew Yosef and wickedly plotted to bring cruelty on the very children of those that gave him only good and prosperity. The king and his nation turned treacherously on their family and their members with a cruelty savagery and

barbarism that knew no bounds. They employed the very loyalty this family had to their king and country, and used it to fool them and trick them to work in building the cities for the king. The king himself came out fool them when he made a show, and carried and set the bricks in the buildings, so that the loyal family would follow his example. He led these poor people into a trap and enslaved them, forcing this proud and free family into slavery. He robbed them of their precious freedom and all they had. From there on, it became worse and worse. Paroh and his nation took their children away to be killed, and their babies were killed so that the king could bathe in their blood, literally! This would have been the sad fate of a once free people and would have continued, but Hashem heard our cries and saved us.

All of this comes with knowing the *yichus* of Yocheved and Amrom and the rest, who would all tell us much, much more. And this is why the *parsha* needs to explain who Moshe and Aharon are, that when they come and fulfill what Hashem told them to do, the spin doctors and story tellers of the times will not be able to spin the truth of what really happened. We will know that greatness of Moshe and Aharon and who they came from. We will also know who the cruel Egyptians were.

This also continues into what type of *makos* they brought onto the Egyptians, starting with the *makoh* of blood.

The Medrash brings that the reason the water was the first *mako*, was that the Egyptians used the water as their way to annihilate the Yidden, by causing them not to have children. They knew that the Yidden needed to go to the *mikveh* before they could have children, so they shut the *mikvos* down. This was a sinister clever way to hurt the Yidden without looking so evil, as they were just shutting down the *mikvos* for health reasons or water conservation. Now Hashem punished them with the very water they denied from the Yidden, and turning it into blood with no water available to them, unless they purchased it from a Yid. The Alshich also explains the *makoh* was done by Aharon because it was Aharon who helped the Yidden have children when he made peace between man and his wife, so it was Aharon that came to avenge those that did the opposite of what he did. This *makoh* lasted seven days, the same days of *tuma* that they could not be *toivel*.

This is also why the next *makoh* was with the *tzfaardeim*, the frogs. The Medrash says that Hashem was also doing *midoh keneged midoh* and brought them the frogs who were *mesares* them in direct punishment for their "*Hovo nischakmo loi*". The frogs went into their beds and made noise, so much noise that they could not sleep and plagued them. The loud sounds the frogs made were more difficult than the *makoh* of frogs itself! [There is *makas tzfaardeim* all day all week all month all year in the building units here, because the daily noise level in here is so loud that its punishing in itself!] But for Yidden there were no *makos*!

Yehee rotzoin as it says that by the Yidden they had light in their dwellings even when they were in Mitzrayim, so too should Hashem give us the light of freedom *proti* and *kloi* now and bring Moshiach *tzidkainu*.

A guten Shabbos

A guten tomid

Sholom Mordechai Ha'levi Ben Rivka



Women's Event Tuesday Rosh Chodesh Shvat January 24th 8:30 PM.

Ateres Charna 790 N Main St Spring Valley NY

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