

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah insights translated and revised by Dovid Pinchas Rose, based on the Yiddish פארש'ס יהודה יודא by Yehuda Zvulun Klitnick

פרשת שמות
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לעילוי נשמת אביו מרדכי בן ראובן ואמו שרה לאה בת אביגדור ע"ה

VIEWING FUTURE GENERATIONS IS NOT ALWAYS THE RIGHT COURSE OF ACTION

ונתהר האשה ותלד בן ותראה אותו כייטוב הוא ותתקנהו שלשה ירחים: (ב) ב
The woman conceived and bore a son, and [when] she saw him that he was good, she hid him for three months. (2:2). "He", ordinarily a semantically simple personal pronoun yields a discovery. A posuk from II Melachim (4:9) (the Shunamite woman describing Elisha to her husband) Behold now I know that he is a holy man of God... evokes this comment from the Gemara (Brochos 10b) הוא קדוש ומשרתו (גיחזי) אינו קדוש "he (Elisha) is holy but his servant (Gechazi) is not holy" -- giving powerful exclusionary powers to that "he." "He is holy, but the other is not." [Apparently, this one occurrence of "he" stands out from many hundreds of others in Tanach.] So if the pronoun is capable of wielding such force, what are we to say about our posuk: that only "he (Moshe)" was good -- to the exclusion of anyone else? Not exactly. We posit that a descendant of Moshe Rabbeinu, Yehonoson, reveals the explanation: וינקימו להם בני... the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image. And Yehonoson the son of Gershom, the son of Menasheh, ... were priests to the tribe of the Danites...(Shoftim 18:30) [The Nun in Menashe is superscripted, implying that the real word is Moshe. [Bava Basra 109b] Out of respect for Moshe Rabbeinu, the Nun was inserted and we read "Menashe", but they are one and the same]. Yehonoson ben Menashe was a notorious idolator. It is likely that Yocheved, Moshe's mother, saw with the power of prophecy, that Moshe would have an idolatrous descendant, and that only HE -- Moshe -- could be termed good, and surely not that grandson. But since the infant Moshe himself was unblemished and untainted, she guarded and concealed him for the three months, regardless of what she knew about the future generations. [But note the full picture: Yerushalmi Sanhedrim 11:30 reveals that Yehonoson eventually repented of his sin and became a ba'al teshuva. [YZK]] (ספר אברהם) ר' אברהם רב רומאנו ירושלים תרפ"ז

OUR GLIMPSE OF THE PRIMEVAL LIGHT

Further on Moshe's birth and infancy: Rashi teaches: כשנולד When he was born, the entire house was filled with light. How are we to understand this type of light? The posuk would surely not mention ordinary daylight! We turn the cosmic clock back to Maaseh Beraishis/the Creation of The Universe. Upon creating the Primeval Light on Day One, the Borei Olam's verdict was וירא אלקים את האור כי טוב . This was light by which Adam HaRishon was able to gaze from one end of the world to the other. But this light was hidden away, concealed for tzaddikim in the future. "Good"(said of the light) is linked to the tzaddik. (ישעיהו ג י) . (אמרו צדיק כייטוב, וישעיהו ג י) . But see Iyov (38:15) וימנע מרשעים אורם From the wicked, their light is withheld. And for whom? Tzaddikim of the future. A measure of the Hidden Light forged on Day One of Creation was what illuminated Moshe's nursery, proving his status as a tzaddik. [Sforim teach that the sparks of the Primeval Light יצויצי

אר -- are also visible to tzaddikim -- and even lesser Jews -- as they gaze for half an hour into their Chanukah lights. [DPR]]. (שמח זבולון תשע"ז)

GRATITUDE: THE HALLMARK OF THE YID

ויקם מלך חדש על מצרים אשר לא ידע את יוסף: (א' ח')

A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know about Yosef. (1:8)

Rashi states; "he pretended as if he did not know about him." [This would hold true whether the monarch was a new individual or had merely changed his attitude and policy, (reflected in Rav vs. Shmuel.)] This stance showcases gentile ingratitude for all to see -- "forgetting" (in contemporary terms, can we say denying? [DPR]) Yosef's saving of the life and country of Egypt. --! -- This base trait is eternal. The Medrash teaches that one who denies the goodness shown him by a friend will eventually come to deny the goodness of Hakodosh Boruch Hu. The monarch of whom we read אשר לא ידע את יוסף (above) descends (above) the Oibershter Himself ח"ו. The hallmark character trait of Klal Yisroel, on the other hand, is resounding gratitude, הכרת ועתה לכה ואשלחך: והוצאת את עמי בני ישראל ממצרים: (ג' י) (ואלפרעה והוצאת את עמי בני ישראל ממצרים: (ג' י) ויאמר לו אלכה נא ואשובה אל אחי אשר במצרים: (ד' י) ... Moshe went and returned to Yeser, his father in law, and he said to him, "Let me go now and return to my brothers who are in Egypt... (4:18) Medrash Tanchuma teaches that Moshe felt gratitude to Yisro for all the kindness he had shown to him and, as a direct result, and in deference to Yisro's feelings, felt obliged to express his gratitude and seek his permission for his mission to Mitzrayim. This is the main mussar-thrust of our parshah. The gratitude for goodness displayed by Moshe, the loftiest of the Yidden, stands in stark contrast to the abject ingratitude exemplified by Paroh, highest-ranking of the gentiles. [A recurrent theme of the great Gaon, Rav Avigdor Miller's teaching was that conscious, constant gratitude to the Ribbono shel Olam lies at the heart of a modern Yid's avodas Hashem. [DPR]]

(תפארת מרדכי - דחוק)

WHAT DREW MOSHE TO THE WELL AS HE WAS ESCAPING?

וישמע פרעה את הדבר הזה ויבקש להרג את משה ויברח משה מפני פרעה וישב בארץ מצרים וישב על הברא Pharaoh heard of this incident, and he sought to slay Moses, so Moses fled from before Pharaoh. He stayed in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.(2:15) Rashi supplies details: מסרו לקוסטינר להרוג ולא שלטה בו ההרב He delivered him to the executioner to execute him, but the sword had no power over him. (We also learn about Paroh's striking Moshe from 18:4 and rescued me from Pharaoh's sword.) But Moshe fled and tarried by a well. What role did the well play in the flight from Paroh?) [CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE>>>]

[CONT'D FROM PAGE 1] [The conventional answer is Shemos Rabbah's, that Moshe sought a wife and stationed himself at a well, following Yitzchak's and Yaakov's precedent. But there can be alternative answers, as we so often find in Torah exegesis. [DPR]] The Gemara (Brochos Artscroll English 33a1,n11) tells of a nettlesome, poisonous reptile called "arod" which was menacing the public. Rashi (ד"ה וּמַת הַקְרוּד) mentions that "If an "arod" bites a person and the victim reaches water before the reptile, then the creature will die; but if the "arod" reaches water first, the person will die." Now we cite the Novi Yechezkel (29: 3) הַנְּחִי עֲלֶיךָ פְּרֵעָה מִלְּקַח מִצְרַיִם הַתַּנִּינִים הַגְּדוֹל, Behold I am against you, Pharaoh, ..., the great crocodile that lies down in the midst of his streams... Moshe feared that Paroh shared crocodilian powers with the biting "arod", which would surely harm him. Accordingly, he absconded at top speed to the well of water so as to arrive before Paroh, thereby rescuing himself. (בית ישראל השלם למוח"ז האדמו"ר ממואטטערסדארף זצוק"ל)

STORY OF THE WEEK:
EVER-FLOWING BARRELS OF HONEY WINE REPAY A KIND DEED - IF ELIYAHU HANAVI IS INVOLVED

Reb Zusya of Tilmashov related how he once drank mehd/honey wine directly from the hand of Eliyahu HaNavi. It happened at a Sheva Brochos celebration in a town where the mehd was a local delicacy, and it flowed copiously, to the extent that guests went home toting whole bottles under their arms. At the stroke of midnight, the ba'al simcha called a halt to the intoxicant flow, to the grumbling of the celebrants. By way of explanation, he told the following story: "After getting married, I opened a kretschma, but there was very little money to purchase stock. All I had was one barrel of mehd, which would not take me very far as an innkeeper. So I decided to learn shechita and mila. After circumcising my own children, my reputation grew and people started calling for my services. One day, a nervous young man from a village came and told me that he needed to make a bris for his son on Erev Yom Kippur, and asked me to come to perform the mitzvah. Why me? Because the other mohalim declined to come, because they would be busy with shechting the Erev Yom Kippur kapporos chickens, which brought in some nice tips. The fellow lived four hours out of town, so planning backwards, I told him my idea: shlug kapporos at midnight, travel to his village, where he was to have a minyan waiting, perform the bris, and leave by nine to reach home by two or three in time to make proper preparations for Yom Kippur. The young father agreed, down to the last detail. But things did not go smoothly. The young kimpeturin informed me that her husband was trying to round up a minyan, so I went to the local beis medrash to say tehillim while I waited. The hours dragged on, and not only was a minyan lacking, but so was a suitable sandek, and I did not want to serve both as mohel and sandek, although it would have been halachically acceptable to do so. It was eight o'clock already and men were no longer about on the streets, since they were at home in advance of Yom HaKodosh. Tearfully, I beseeched HaKodosh Baruch Hu to solve my dilemma. I had come not for money or honour, but solely to perform a holy Mitzvah. Surely I could daven justifiably for siyatta dishmaya to be back home before Yom Kippur. Suddenly, I spied a bedraggled

pauper in the distance, ambling through town, carrying a rucksack. I accosted him and begged him to be the sandek for the bris I was intending to perform. He scornfully rebuffed me. "I have enough mitzvos already in my pack and I have to keep moving until I collect two more silver Rheinish coins." "That's your whole problem?" I retorted. "Come and be the sandek and I'll give you the two coins." "Ha! That's what you say now, but I don't trust you. How do I know that you won't just laugh me in the face once the bris is done with?" "So take my talis and tefillin as a guarantee that I'll give you the silver coins." He begrudgingly agreed. We made the bris hastily in the baby's house, but I had not yet davened shacharis, and had to "borrow" my own tefillin back from the vagabond, promising to return them as a pledge. This I did, and went to find an old friend who could loan me the two silver coins I had promised to the drifter. Meanwhile, the man had vanished without a trace, along with my precious talis and tefillin. I had no choice but to strengthen my bitachon in Hashem that just as He had helped me earlier in this maaseh, likewise, everything that was unfolding was for my good. I set out for home. When I stumbled breathlessly into my house, my wife greeted me with a whopper of a kushya. Why had I left my talis and tefilin at home the whole time, when I always take them, as a Yid is supposed to do, wherever I traveled. "What are you talking about, Yiddeneh? I certainly did take them and davened with them this morning. Just so happens that I don't have them now." She proceeded to tell me what had happened that day, and the tale opened my eyes."

Around noontime, a dissheveled pauper knocked on the door and said that he had not eaten or drunk anything for two days and begged for a tankard of mehd. I told him that he was out of luck, since we had not had the funds necessary to lay in a stock of mehd. He implored me to search through all the barrels; maybe I would run across an amount I had overlooked, which could sustain him for a bit on his wanderings, since he was at the end of his rope, mamash. Wonder of wonders, I checked one barrel and out streams mehd into my bottle, which needed to be restoppered! I filled up the man's tankard, which he drained. He asked for more, stating the obvious, that if there were one barrel of mehd, there could be others as well. I filled up four bottles for him, whence they came I cannot explain. In return, he pronounced this brochoh: '*Since you treated me well, I bless you that your barrels should flow with mehd sent from Shomayim, up until the last sheva brochos of your youngest child.*' In an eyeblink, he disappeared." After this account, I understood immediately that our largesse had come through the hands of Eliyahu Hanavi. To prove the point, a Yid came in just then and asked for mehd. It continued to flow from our barrels and we have become quite wealthy from the trade. But now that we have reached the end of all my children's Sheva Brochos, the flow must stop and we must content ourselves with what we have saved up. The reward for performing a mitzvah with mesirah nefesh was palpable." מר' נדפס סאטמאר - מר' אליעזר זאב שטערן ז"ל

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