

# Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick  
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פרשת שמות תשע"ו

וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פְּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבוּ וּגְו': וַיִּקָּם מֶלֶךְ-הַדָּרָשׁ עַל-מִצְרַיִם: (א' ח-ז)  
*The children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and increased and became very very strong, and the land became filled with them. A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know about Yosef. (1:7-8)*

Why does the parshah inform us of the Israelites' extraordinary fecundity so early in the saga? We bring to bear on this question one of several understandings of why the Yidden sojourned in Mitrayim for "only" 210 years, instead of the initially-destined 400. The enormous burgeoning in their population compensated in labour output what the shortened duration might otherwise have diminished. The Gemara (Megila 13b) teaches that when it comes to Jews, Hashem provides the remedy before the malady. Our posuk conforms with this clearly: *The children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and increased.* Here was the remedy (which shortened the prison sentence). The malady? *A new king arose*, who imposed the slavery. Their population explosion came first, and mitigated the hardship imposed subsequently by the new monarch. In a similar vein, Posuk 12 also reflects this cause-and-effect relationship: *וּכְאֲשֶׁר יַעֲנֶה אֹתוֹ בֶן יִרְבֵּה וְבֶן יִפְרֹץ (יב)*  
*But as much as they would afflict them, so did they multiply and so did they gain strength.* When the oppression began and intensified, so did the increase in numbers, which itself hastened the Redemption. (שרגא המאיר שנייבאלג)

וַיִּקָּם מֶלֶךְ-הַדָּרָשׁ עַל-מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדָע אֶת-יוֹסֵף: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-עַמּוֹ הִנֵּה עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וְעַצוּם מִמֶּנּוּ: הֲבֵיאָה נִתְחַכְמָה לּוֹ וּגְו': (א' ח-י)

*A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know about Yosef. He said to his people, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we are. Get ready, let us deal shrewdly with them (1:8-10)* Rashi writes: *נתחכם למושיעין של ישראל*. Let us deal shrewdly with the Saviour of Israel. (*The "shrewd strategy" was to thwart Hashem's protection of the Yidden by resorting to execution by water, totally misunderstanding Hashem's promise after the Flood.*) In all generations, in the face of endless persecutions and evil decrees, it was Klal Yisroel's chachamim and rabbinic leaders who infused the breath of courage and strength into them to fight despair among the Jews. Paro aimed to destroy and nullify the rabbinic leaders so that the Jews would lack the determination to withstand evil decrees. Further, the psukim *וּכְאֲשֶׁר יַעֲנֶה אֹתוֹ בֶן יִרְבֵּה וְבֶן יִפְרֹץ עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וְעַצוּם מִמֶּנּוּ* hint at the message Paro had for his people: How are the Jews able to withstand harsh decrees? It is because they have a

powerful Rav from whom they draw spiritual reinforcement, so therefore *לוֹ הֲבֵיאָה נִתְחַכְמָה* let us outsmart him. Whom? The Saviour of Klal Yisroel -- their main Rabbinic leader -- so that they will have no champion, and thus we will defeat them. (נועם מגדים)

During World War Two, the arch-villain Hitler ימ"ש chillingly emulated his genocidal forbear Paro, by purposefully targeting and hunting down Rabbanim to deprive Yidden of the leadership and encouragement needed to withstand the Nazi onslaught. [YZK]

עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וְעַצוּם מִמֶּנּוּ: (א' ט)  
*Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we are.* (1:9) Another view of the teaching of the word *מִמֶּנּוּ*: What is the source of the Yidden's strength to withstand harsh decrees against them? It is *מִמֶּנּוּ*: from the Eternal One, Hashem. Their pure, unsullied Faith (Emunah) in the One Above, is what kept them strong and constant, and able to grow in spirit, until the arrival of King Moshiach ב.ב"א. (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick וזבולון)

וַתִּפְתַּח וַתִּרְאֶהוּ אֶת-הַיֶּלֶד וְהִנֵּה-נֶעֱרַר בֶּכָה וְתַתְּמַל עָלָיו וְהֵאמֶר מִי־לִדֵי הָעִבְרִים זֶה: (ב' ו')  
*She opened [it], and she saw him the child, and behold, he was a weeping lad, and she had compassion on him, and she said, "This is [one] of the children of the Hebrews."* (2:6) The meforshim ask, how did Paro's daughter knew that she had found a Jewish baby? Merely hearing his wails and pitying him provided no proof of his ethnicity. The Tzaddik Aharon, son of the Divrei Chaim of Tzanz explains. Among the cardinal character traits of Jews is that they are *רחמנים בני רחמנים* "merciful sons of merciful fathers." The Egyptians, on the other hand -- the women no less than the men -- had cruel hearts of stone, utterly devoid of pity. Our Holy Seforim teach about an amazing phenomenon: By merely gazing at a tzaddik, one can draw a portion of the tzaddik's holiness and refined character traits unto himself, depending on his spiritual level. [The source for this is Isaiah 30:20, *Your eyes shall behold your teacher.*] This is what happened to Paro's daughter. When she looked into the floating basket, she felt an inexplicable and unaccustomed wave of pity wash over her. She understood then and there that the child at whom she was looking had to be from the Ivriim, since from no other people could she experience such an upsurge of rachmonus/pity. Baby Moshe's lineage was thereby confirmed. (מקור חיים - צאנז דף 151)

## STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick and translated by Dovid Pinchas Rose)

\*\*\*\**A haunted kretschma provides parnassa for a Chosid of the Mezritcher Maggid*\*\*\*\*

The Heiliger Ruzhiner Rebbe זצוק"ל once related a story about the *Ruach Hakodesh* displayed by his holy grandfather, the Mezritcher Maggid. This was the story he told to an old merited gentleman -- who had merited himself to see the Baal Shem Tov in his day.

A certain wealthy Reb Moshe would regularly travel to be with

the Maggid, but he suffered a reversal in his fortunes and wanted to share his tale of woe with his Rebbe.

The accepted protocol at the Maggid's court was that the gabbai solicited money from a petitioner "up front," without which he would not have an audience with the Rebbe. Our Moshe, since he had no funds, was not admitted. Other friendly chassidim,

who remembered Moshe from days when he was better off, advised him that the Rebbe would be serving as *sandek* at a *bris* the next morning, and that would be a favourable time to approach the Rebbe and lay forth his plight. "What have I got to lose?" thought Moshe, so after the *bris* meal, he caught up with the Rebbe as he was going into his reception room, somehow eluding the usual gatekeeper. After hearing his tearful plaint, the Maggid advised him, "You should rent out a *kretschma* tavern and Hashem will come to your assistance." "But I have no money for an investment like that!" The Rebbe repeated his counsel and gave Moshe a special coin, wishing him success and prosperity. Moshe had true *emunas tzaddikim* (faith in the powers of *tzaddikim*) and that perked him up as he left the Maggid, confident that Hashem would surely help him. On the way home, he stopped at a rest stop frequented by wagon drivers and asked one of the teamsters where he was headed. Moshe asked to ride along with him, again confident that the Maggid's *brocho* would guide him on the right path. The man kindly agreed to the arrangement. On the way, Moshe noticed a number of wagoneers stopping to rest near a certain *kretschma*, but with not a single one going in. The place seemed deserted. With the Maggid's *brocho* in mind, he asked his new-found companion to stop, so that he could do some exploring. He mingled with the other wayfarers and learned that the *kretschma* had been standing vacant for quite some time, with no one willing to rent it because it was reputed to be haunted, teeming with *shedim* and *mazikim* (demons) who harmed any visitor to the place. This did not dissuade Moshe and he said he wanted to lease the *kretschma*! The teamsters thought he was deranged, since several others had tried to make a go of it, but went on to suffer from the *mazikim*, and eventually walked away. Nevertheless, at Moshe's insistence, they took him to the *poritz* landowner and introduced him as a customer to rent the haunted tavern. The *poritz*, although hungry for a deal, had pangs of conscience and informed Moshe that the place was dangerous even to enter, not to speak of conducting business there. "Do you still want it?" he asked skeptically. "Absolutely!" was Moshe's answer. "I have full trust in the One Above that He will not allow any force to harm me there." The *poritz* -- an unusually generous and beneficent nobleman for that time and place -- was impressed with Moshe's seriousness and offered him very good terms. "The lease is yours at a bargain price, and I'll even let you have it on credit, since I see you can't pay anything now. You can start paying the rent later, when the business starts to yield a profit." As another accommodation to Moshe's needs, the *poritz* loaned him several ox-pulled wagons to transport his family and belongings to his new business location. With Hashem's providential help, business boomed at "Moshe's *Kretschma*": old customers returned, new ones discovered the place. In a word, Moshe became a rich man again, surpassing even his earlier standard.

Dark clouds began to form when the *poritz's* general manager began harbouring a jealous hatred for Moshe for ingratiating himself to his boss the *poritz*. But the manager bided his time

and concealed his envy, waiting for a chance to take decisive action against Moshe. It wasn't long in coming. One day the *poritz* entrusted Moshe with five thousand rubles to buy two oxen from the local livestock fair (known in Yiddish as '*yarid*.' ). "I know I can rely on you and I'll pay you well for your trouble," said the *poritz*. Moshe's wife was pleased that his standing with the *poritz* seemed to be on the rise, but still she advised him to ask the Rebbe for a renewed *brocho* for success, since so much was riding on the assignment.

The *yarid* was to take place the following Tuesday. Moshe planned to spend *Shabbos* in the Rebbe's court, from where he intended to travel to the *yarid* in time for the livestock sale. The evil manager got wind of Moshe's plan and hatched a nefarious plan of his own: to waylay Moshe before he reached the fair, murder him and abscond with the purse of money. Not wanting to sully his own hands, he hired three thugs to carry out the scheme. Moshe reached the Rebbe's court, but not before the Rebbe saw with *Ruach HaKodesh* that his life was in danger. He gave firm instructions to the *gabbaim* not to admit Moshe for an audience, no matter how much he would protest. An exalted *Shabbos* ensued, after which Moshe's pleading and yearning to be alone with the Rebbe knew no bounds, but despite all remonstrances, the door remained barred by the attendants. Sunday and Monday passed with Moshe still "out in the cold." Finally, on Tuesday morning, the very day of the *yarid*, the door flung open and after giving *shalom* to the Maggid, Moshe anxiously told the Rebbe that if he failed to bring two good oxen that day for his boss the *poritz*, things would go badly for him, with uncertain repercussions sure to await him. The Maggid reassured him: "I know of a better *yarid* for you in a different town. Go there, and you'll find even better oxen, for a better price. The *poritz* will be pleased, and I bentsch you with *hatzlocho/success*."

The Maggid's plan came to fruition, to the last letter. Moshe did go to the other livestock market and bought two fine bovine specimens which he delivered to the *poritz* with money to spare. The *poritz* was delighted with Moshe's successful mission, and as they were reviewing the details, in burst the three hired "hit men." Their conscience had apparently gotten the better of them, since they revealed the evil conspiracy which had been hatched by the manager. They told Moshe, "You should thank your G-d that you were saved from certain death, since we waited three days for you to come along, at the manager's behest and were ready to kill you to get the big payment he promised us. But we never caught you coming." That's all the *poritz* needed to hear. With the power of life and death wielded by *poritzim* in that province at the time, he ordered that the cruel death to which the manager had schemed to subject Moshe be inflicted on him instead. In a flash, the reason behind the Maggid's superficially cold treatment of him now became pellucidly clear to the *chossid* Moshe. This open act of *Ruach Kodesh*, clear for all to see, was what the *Ruzhiner* related to his elderly companion.

(סיפורי צדיקים החדש תרס"ט)

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