

ב"ה Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1550

JAN. 27 2024 • י"ז שבט תשפ"ד

פרשת בשלח
PARSHAT BESHALACH
SHABBAT SHIRA



United We Stand



Rabbi Nachman Winkler
Probing the Prophets
Page 22



Ricka Razel (Van Leeuwen)
Shabbat Shira: The Universal
Language of Song Page 56

ובני ישראל הלכו ביבשה בתוך הים
שמות ט"ו: י"ט

YERUSHALAYIM SHABBAT PARSHAT BESHALACH ZMANIM
CANDLES 4:31 PM • HAVDALA 5:47 PM • RABBEINU TAM 6:25 PM



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for this weeks Dvar Torah by
Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

HELPFUL REMINDERS



Kiddush Levana:

Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana until - 16 Shvat/Thurs. night Jan. 25

Tu BeShvat is observed this Thursday, January 25

In memory of our beloved father,
grandfather and great grandfather

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May the Torah learned from this issue
be in loving memory of and לע"נ

Debbie Markowitz a"h

אסתר דבורה ע"ה

בת אליעזר וחנה לאער יבלחט"א
on her First Yahrzeit, ט"ט שבט

Sorely missed by her parents,
husband, children, grandchildren,
sister, extended family
and the known and unknown
thousands she helped over her lifetime

Gershon Markowitz & family

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



	BESHALACH		YITRO	
	CANDLES	HAVDALA	CANDLES	HAVDALA
Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	4:31	5:47	4:38	5:53
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	4:50	5:50	4:56	5:56
Beit Shemesh / RBS	4:50	5:48	4:57	5:54
Alon Shvut	4:47	5:47	4:54	5:53
Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	4:47	5:48	4:54	5:54
Modiin / Chashmonaim	4:47	5:48	4:54	5:54
Netanya	4:47	5:48	4:54	5:54
Be'er Sheva	4:49	5:49	4:56	5:55
Rehovot	4:48	5:48	4:55	5:54
Petach Tikva	4:31	5:48	4:38	5:54
Ginot Shomron	4:47	5:47	4:53	5:53
Haifa / Zichron	4:36	5:46	4:42	5:53
Gush Shiloh	4:46	5:46	4:52	5:52
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	4:48	5:48	4:54	5:54
Givat Zeev	4:51	5:47	4:57	5:53
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	4:48	5:48	4:54	5:54
Ashkelon	4:50	5:50	4:56	5:56
Yad Binyamin	4:48	5:48	4:55	5:54
Tzfot / Bikat HaYarden	4:38	5:44	4:44	5:50
Golan	4:44	5:44	4:50	5:50
Nahariya/Maalot	4:44	5:46	4:51	5:52
Afula	4:45	5:45	4:52	5:52
Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem) - 6:25 PM • Next Week - 6:32 PM				

All Times According to MyZmanim (20 mins before Sunset in most Cities;
40 mins in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva; 30 mins in Tzfot and Haifa)

Daf Yomi: Bava Kama 86

JERUSALEM

Ranges 11 days Wed - Shabbat
Jan. 24 - Feb. 3 / 14 - 24 Shvat

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin **5:43 - 5:39**
Sunrise **6:37 - 6:31**
Sof Zman Kriat Shema **9:14 - 9:12**
Magen Avraham **8:36 - 8:35**
Sof Zman Tefila **10:06 - 10:05**
(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)
Chatzot (Halachic Noon) **11:51 - 11:53**
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha) **12:21 - 12:23**
Plag Mincha **3:59 - 4:07**
Sunset (Including Elevation) **5:09 - 5:19**



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
Executive Director, OU Israel

This week, I had the *zechut* of driving out to Har Bracha with Mitch Aeder (OU President), Rabbi Menachem Genack (CEO of OU Kosher), Rabbi Dr. Josh Joseph (EVP & COO of the OU), alongside OU Kashrut rabbis, Rabbi Ezra Friedman and Rabbi Yisrael Breish. Why did we go there? Because there is a beautiful boutique winery in Har Bracha that is under the OU *hechsher*, and we went to take *terumot* and *maasrot* on behalf of the winery.

Let me give a bit of the halachic background. In a non-*shemita* year, a person who picks fruits or vegetables, and brings them into their property is obligated to take the tithes of *terumot* and *maasrot*. However, grapes and olives destined for wine/grape juice and olive oil, respectively, do not have *terumot* and *maasrot* taken off when they are brought in. Rather, only after their final product.

Thus, for many kosher wineries, it has become a *tekes*, a celebratory ceremony, when it is time to take the tithes from the wine. Those in charge of the *kashrut*, the *mashgichim* and *kashrut* administrators, as well as the owners and staff of the wineries, attend this significant ceremony. While most *terumot* and *maasrot* of vegetables and fruits go to animals afterward so it does not go to waste, this would not be a good idea with wine (for obvious reasons), and so part of the ceremony is to tastefully dispose of the wine that was taken off.

I have been to many of these *tekesim*,

Baruch Hashem. It's beautiful to see when the owner of the winery, through this *tekes*, yearns for the *Beit HaMikdash*. He is performing the mitzvot of the Land of Israel and hopes for a future where he can hand a bottle of wine to his local Kohen for his *terumah*. For two thousand years, the Jewish People outside of Israel were unable to do this. Yet here we are, back in our Land, and we are able to perform the mitzvah even when we know something is still missing. We yearn, alongside the owner, for a time that *terumot* and *maasrot* can be part of Israel's economy. To go to the poor for *maaser ani*, or to Jerusalem's market for *maaser sheni*. That the kohanim and leviim would get their due as our representatives in the *Beit HaMikdash*.

Just last week, we read how the Jewish People prepared to leave Egypt, and took Yosef's bones with them. We were able to see from the winery in Har Bracha the area called Mitzpe Yosef, which is just down the road, and Shechem, where the *kever* of

לעילוי נשמת

Our beloved husband, father,
grandfather, and great-grandfather

PROF. YECHIEL (CYRIL) DOMB z"l

חיאל בן יואל ז"ל

On his 12th *yahrzeit*
which falls on 22nd Shevat

How we miss his wisdom
and inspiring Yiddishkeit

יהי זכרו ברוך

Yosef is located. Standing there, I couldn't help but think of *Am Yisrael* coming to the Land of Israel after forty years of being in the desert, and the whole time with Yosef's bones, and they go directly to Shechem to bury him (Joshua 24:32). Why did everyone have to go to Shechem? Why couldn't they simply send a small team of people to do it, and let everyone else take a break, a rest?

I once heard the following answer. The Jewish People had just entered the Land, but it wasn't just any Land. It had tremendous meaning. Their history is here. Yosef served as that link. The entirety of the Jewish People witnessed the return of Yosef to his homeland, and they would see that act as a representation of the Jewish People themselves. We have come back. We are here because *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* promised it to Avraham Avinu in Shechem. The Jewish People were reminded through the burial of Yosef to their own link to the Land, by our history, our beliefs, and our love for our homeland.



To stand on Har Bracha and be reminded of this link not only to the past, to our own *berachot* and promises, but to see the blessings coming to fruition

in our present day, was such a powerful moment. To hear the winery owners telling us that the vines are producing more each year, that the *beracha* is increasing, I can't help but think of the passage in Sanhedrin 98a that says, "Rabbi Abba says: You have no clear evidence of the end of days than

this, as it is stated: 'But you, mountains of Israel, you shall give your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel' (Yechezkel 36:8)." To quote Rabbi Shalom Gold, z"l, "If you want to speak to G-d, go to the Kotel. If you want to see G-d, go to the *shuk* at Machaneh Yehudah." When you see the abundant produce of our

May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits
be in loving memory of and לעילוי נשמת

BENNET I. KFARE ז"ל
בן-ציון ישראל בן יהודה לייב וחנה ז"ל

On his second yharzeit - י"ז שבט
Beloved Grandpa, Dad,
Husband and Uncle
The Kfare family

לעילוי נשמות
In memory of our beloved parents
Ernest Goldschmidt ז"ל
אלעזר בן שמעון ואידה ז"ל
on his 34th yahrzeit - ט"ז שבט
and
Beatrice Rudman Adelstein ע"ה
ברכה בת שמחה זאב ובסה צייטל ע"ה
on her 40th yahrzeit - י"ח שבט
יהי זכרם ברוך
*Rudman, Mescheloff
and Manesberg families*

Land, you can see we are receiving those *berachot*. We can see the Jewish People coming home. It gives us comfort and clarity in a time of war and distress.

I hope that Hashem looks at us and sees the beautiful *yishuvim*, Har Bracha, Elon Moreh, and the rest, which are filling the Land with beautiful agriculture and homes, and continues to grant us these *berachot*. We ourselves should pay attention to the fulfillment of the predictions of our prophets and see how much the Land is giving to us - endless fruits and vegetables and our grapes winning awards around the world. We should recognize and appreciate that this is the Land the Jewish People entered and were immediately shown as the Land of meaning and history. It is not about real estate, but our roots in this Land, our connection.

When I attend these *tekesim* of the wineries, I remind myself that *B'ezrat Hashem* soon this wine that is being disposed of will go to the kohanim, the leviim, when our Beit Hamikdash is rebuilt, *bimheira beyameinu*.

I want to thank the OU Kosher team for their hard work in making sure there are so many wineries in Israel under *hashgacha* and are performing these *mitzvot kehilcheta*.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Rabbi Ezra Friedman for his tireless efforts putting out the new OU Kosher Israel Guide, one of the many important initiatives of the Gustave & Carol Jacobs Center for Kashrut Education. It is being distributed with Torah Tidbits, or you can pick up your copy at the OU Israel Center. Finally, I want to thank you, the consumers, for buying OU wines and other OU certified products. *B'ezrat Hashem*, we will continue to see more and more *berachot* in our days.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman

Executive Director, OU Israel

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on the birth of their granddaughter
to the grandparents:



Feivy & Rachel Leah Berman
and Alex & Daniella Kuflik
daughter of Shlomo & Tamar



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FROM THE DESK OF RABBI MOSHE HAUER

OU EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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היהודים
אמריקאים
Enhancing Jewish Life

From the Depths, From the Heights

How prominent a place does our faith occupy in our lives and mindset? To what extent do we really see G-d as the defining factor in our fate and future?

When the Jewish people engaged in their war against Amalek, Yehoshua led the battle in the valley while Moshe stood atop the overlooking mountain with his hands raised to the heavens in prayer (Shemot 17:8-12). From a Halachic perspective this is unusual, as the Talmud (Brachos 10b) instructs us not to stand in an elevated place when *davening*, but rather in a lower spot, as noted in Tehillim (130), "From the depths I call out to you, Hashem."

While a typical prayer requires us to assume the posture of utmost humility, expressing our vulnerability and our dependence on G-d, in this situation we did

not require that as we found ourselves in a position of obvious weakness, engaged in battle with a formidable enemy. What was needed at this point was an elevation of the role of G-d in the conflict, an adjustment of focus from the swords that we were bearing to the raised hands of Moshe on the mountaintop.

"His hands were *Emunah*, faith." When Moshe stood on the mountain top, he was not simply offering a prayer for that moment of battle; he was setting the stage for how the Jewish people should forever see prayer and G-d's role as the most relevant factor in our lives (Mishna Rosh Hashana 3:8). Prayer and G-d's role must be lent prominence in the structure of our lives and communities. Moshe chose the elevated spot for prayer for the same reason that the *Beit HaMikdash* – our ultimate house of prayer - stood atop a mountain, and every shul is to be built at the high point of the city (Shabbos 11a). This positioning makes a critical statement of the prominence of prayer and faith in our lives.

This is a valuable perspective on how we should view prayer. On the one hand

In memory of
our beloved Daughter,
Sister, and Friend
21 years later we still miss you

ליעם חיה ז"ל

A day does not go by where you are
not our first and last thought

May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits be לע"נ
my father, אבי מורי

Kalman (Kelly) Winkler z"l
קלמן שלמה בן שלום יוסף ז"ל
טז' שבט

Rabbi Yehoshua and Yocheved Bienenfeld

there is the experience of prayer itself, the private and momentary pleading to G-d from our personal place of vulnerability. The significance of that prayer hinges on the extent of the emotion and *kavanah* that we can summon for it, the extent to which we pray from the depths of our hearts. On the other hand, there is prayer as a structural affirmation of the place of G-d and faith in our lives. This value is expressed both in the physical architecture of our Jewish communities and in how we as Jews structure our days, including prayer at every critical juncture. This aspect of prayer transcends the feelings we may manage to summon at the moment, and instead creates the framework of *Emunah* and G-d-consciousness that we build around our lives, elevating faith as our most profound reality. ■



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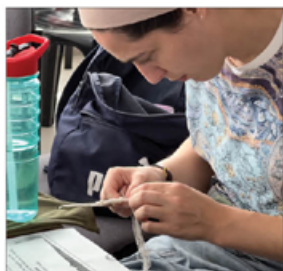
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OU... BEYOND KASHRUT

Tzitzit Tying for Our Incredible Chayalim



"I get a lot from it because I know it's something the Chayalim want now. We meet twice a week and are all happy to get together to do an important Mitzvah."

- Esther R., Yerushalayim



Our brave IDF soldiers are fighting for Am Yisrael. Among the countless initiatives to support them is Tzitzit tying. Shuls, Yeshivot and schools around the world are tying army green Tzitzit that are being requested by the soldiers. This is an incredible example of the unity the Jewish people are experiencing. For the past three months, since the start of the war, OU Israel has been providing opportunities for people to come and tie Tzitzit for the Chayalim.

OU Israel's Tzitzit tying initiative, led by Ruti Younker, started with a group of inspirational young women from OU Israel's **Midreshet Zusha** program. Midreshet Zusha is a learning program for young women with at-risk backgrounds who learn in a supportive environment at the Pearl & Harold Jacobs Zula Outreach Center. Since the start of the war, they have taken on countless volunteering opportunities, including Tzitzit tying. The OU subsequently invited the broader OU community to join, and each week **Olim and visitors** tie Tzitzit at OU Israel.

Join our volunteering WhatsApp group to stay up to date with Tzitzit tying and other volunteer opportunities.

Each week we share one of OU Israel's impactful programs helping English-speaking Olim with their Klita and impacting Israeli society.



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STATS

16th of 54 sedras; 4th of 11 in Shemot.
Written on 215.33 lines (17th).
14 parshiot; 9 open, 5 closed.
116 pesukim - rank: 23 (6th in Shemot).
681 words - rank: 19 (4th in Shemot).
6423 letters - rank: 18 (4th in Shemot).

MITZVOT

Beshalach contains a single mitzvah of the 613, the prohibition of leaving one's Shabbat boundary - T'CHUM SHABBAT.

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Yeshiva University





ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

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PARSHAT BESHALACH

Paro pursues, the sea splits, the people sing. The people traveled and complained for water in Mara, for bread and meat in the Desert of Sin and for water in Refidim. Amalek attacked and was defeated.



1ST ALIYA (13:17-14:8)

G-d guides the Jews in the direction of the Sea. Moshe takes Yosef's bones. A cloud guides them by day, fire by night. G-d instructs them to avoid the straight route to the Land of Israel for fear that return to Egypt will be too easy. Rather camp at the sea so that Paro will notice. I will harden his heart and he will pursue, in order that Egypt will know that I am G-d. Paro led his elite chariots in pursuit.

Hoping for freedom is over; now we are actually free. Freedom has its own challenges; it is a life of uncertainty, of decisions. The slave, while deprived of freedom, has little uncertainty, few decisions. It is almost easier to live hoping for freedom than to actually be free.

Even G-d Himself is concerned that the people will balk at the uncertainties of freedom; they will wish for the comfort of the certainties of slave life. And will want to return to Egypt. Hence, He diverts them to a circuitous route.



2ND ALIYA (14:9-14)

When Paro's army approaches, the people are afraid. They cry to G-d and say to Moshe: why did you bring us

out of Egypt to die in the desert? We would have preferred to be slaves in Egypt than die in the desert. Moshe tells them not to fear, for they are about to see G-d's redemption.

The focus of the Torah changes dramatically. There have been 4 main players in this story: G-d, Moshe, Paro and the Jewish people. But one has been absent from most of the narrative of the story; the Jewish people. We have heard precious little about the Jewish people in the entire story of the Exodus. Moshe, upon G-d's direction, confronted Paro. Moshe received the mitzvot before the plague of the firstborn. All we hear of the Jews is that they did all that G-d commanded concerning the Pesach offering. Even the dramatic night of the Exodus, when Paro ordered them to leave, we hear only of their receipt of gold and silver and scrambling for provisions, with no time for the dough to rise.

What about joy and celebration? And of fear; concern, fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of vulnerability, fear of retribution from Paro? What of their emotions, their thoughts?

All of that changes here. Now we hear of their struggles, their worries, their concerns. Because up until here, the narrative has been from G-d's perspective – in order to teach the lesson of G-d's Hand in the world. Now the focus shifts to the Jews. We have learnt His lessons. Now we shift from the story of the Divine to the story of the people. And that brings us to fear, joy, uncertainty,

disappointment, and vulnerability – all that makes people human.



3RD ALIYA (14:15-25)

G-d instructs Moshe to raise his hand so the sea will split. And that He will harden the heart of Egypt in order that He be glorified through Paro and his entourage. And Egypt will know I am G-d. Moshe did so; the people entered the dry land in the sea with the waters as walls on both sides. The Egyptians followed; in the morning they became trapped in the sea.

The splitting of the sea renews the theme of water as a symbol of beginnings. Water featured in Creation, in Moshe's cradle in the river and now. Beginning of the world, beginning of the Exodus and now, the beginning of Jewish national life. Jewish national life begins with the Jews stepping into the water. It is no longer just His miracles; we participate as partners in His plan. Taking that first step into the water.



4TH ALIYA (14:26-15:26)

The water returned and drowned all the Egyptians. The Jewish people saw the Egyptian dead, saw the Hand of G-d, feared G-d, believing in Him and Moshe. Moshe and the people sang "Az Yashir: I will sing to G-d, my strength, my savior, my G-d. He is the One of War. Your Hand is powerful, Your Hand vanquishes enemies. Nations will fear Him. G-d will reign forever." Miriam led the women in song. Moshe led the people to the desert to Mara. The people complained for water. G-d instructed Moshe to throw wood and sweeten the water.

In the great song at the sea, we have emotion released. The people sing. Divine redemption demands a human response.

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In fact, when we quote the exodus from Egypt in our tefila, we inevitably mention the Shira – people need to sing when blessed with redemption.

Here we find joy, appreciation, elation and faith. And while the entire people sing with Moshe, the song is curiously in the first person singular: I sing. My strength (the English doesn't note singular but in Hebrew "Azi", my, singular, strength.) This is personal, individual – mine, not ours. We all sang the song at the sea; yet in the singular. My G-d saved me.

In fact, though I am merely speculating, this could be the source for the phrase in the Haggadah "Each person is required to view himself as leaving Egypt". If we are exact in recounting the story in Egypt, we must note that each person, individually, personally sang the song in the singular: My G-d saved me, My G-d fought the battle.

And so, if we want to tell the story of the Egypt accurately at the seder, we too must feel individually our place in that story, just as the individual Jew did at that time.



5TH ALIYA (15:27-16:10)

They traveled to the desert of Sin. They complained: oh, that we would have remained in Egypt with the abundance of bread and meat. The manna was provided in the morning; gather enough for a day, on Friday for 2 days. G-d appeared in a cloud.

The series of complaints begins the sticky business of being a people. However lofty freedom be, human concerns are often more immediate. They complain for water, bread, meat and water again. Moshe is exasperated.

Moshe's frustration is highlighted - in order to emphasize the real Leader. The entire Exodus story is the story of Divine intervention. *He* freed us; Moshe merely raised his staff. *He* split the sea; Moshe merely raised his staff. And *He* cares for us; Moshe merely hit the rock with his staff. It is not the story of Moshe, the charismatic leader, taking his people to freedom. It is the story of G-d, using His trusty servant to take His people to freedom. And to care for them.



6TH ALIYA (16:11-36)

Meat will come in the evening. Each person shall gather manna daily for their needs. Some people saved for the next day; it spoiled. And some went to gather on Shabbat. G-d questioned: how long will you resist doing My commands? G-d has given you Shabbat, hence give you double on Friday. Aharon, take a portion of manna to preserve forever. The Jewish people ate the manna for 40 years.

Shabbat precedes the giving of the

Torah. The Mitzvah of Shabbat is the 4th of the Ten Commandments. Yet, here already, before Mt. Sinai, is the notion of Shabbat. Prepare what you need on Friday. Gather double on Friday. Do not gather on Shabbat. Because none will fall.

There is an irony in giving manna and Shabbat at the same time. 6 days you shall work. The seventh is a day of rest. But, they are being given their food falling from heaven. What work are they doing for six days?

Here, in a non-work environment, there is Shabbat. It is meant not only as a day off from the hard work of the week. It is a holy day, a rendezvous with the Shechina. The lack of work is a means to the end of spiritual focus. An intimate day with the Shechina is meaningful – whether after 6 days of work or not.



7TH ALIYA (17:1-16)

There was no water in Refidim. The people complained, as did Moshe. Moshe was instructed to hit the rock; water was produced. Amalek attacked in Refidim. Yehoshua defeated Amalek. A remembrance of this war needs to be recorded.

The juxtaposition of the war of Amalek with all that came before is instructive. The Divine provided us with: redemption from slavery, intervention at the sea, water, food, meat, water again. It would seem that Amalek is attacking that reality. A people with a G-d that protects and provides – that is a people I attack.

The enemies of the Jewish people view us as the people of G-d. A people protected by His Hand. That provokes jealousy, resentment and denial. Of that we need no commentary. ■



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The Power of Ruach

In September 2010, BBC, Reuters, and other news agencies reported on a sensational scientific discovery. Researchers at the US National Center for Atmospheric Research and the University of Colorado were able to show - through computer simulation - how the division of the Red Sea may have taken place.

Using sophisticated modelling, they demonstrated how a strong east wind, blowing overnight, could have pushed water back at a bend where an ancient river is believed to have merged with a coastal lagoon. The water would have been guided into the two waterways, and a land bridge would have opened at the bend, allowing people to walk across the

exposed mudflats. As soon as the wind died down, the waters would have rushed back in. As the leader of the project said when the report was published, "The simulations match fairly closely with the account in Exodus."

This is how the Cambridge University physicist Colin Humphreys puts it in his *The Miracles of Exodus*:

Wind tides are well known to oceanographers. For example, a strong wind blowing along Lake Erie, one of the Great Lakes, has produced water elevation differences of as much as sixteen feet between Toledo, Ohio, on the west, and Buffalo, New York, on the east... There are reports that Napoleon was almost killed by a "sudden high tide" while he was crossing shallow water near the head of the Gulf of Suez. (Colin Humphreys, *The Miracles of Exodus*)

To me, though, the real issue is what the biblical account actually is. Because it is right here that we have one of the most fascinating features of the way the Torah tells its stories. Here is the key passage:

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind all night, turning it into dry land and dividing the water. So the Israelites walked through the sea on dry land. To their right and left, the water was

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like a wall. (Ex. 14:21-22)

The passage can be read two ways. The first is that what happened was a suspension of the laws of nature. It was a supernatural event. The waters stood, literally, like two walls.

The second is that what happened was miraculous, but not because the laws of nature were suspended. To the contrary, as the computer simulation shows, the exposure of dry land at a particular point in the Red Sea was a natural outcome of the strong east wind. What made it miraculous is that it happened just there, just then, when the Israelites seemed trapped, unable to go forward because of the sea, unable to turn back because of the Egyptian army pursuing them.

There is a significant difference between these two interpretations. The first appeals to our sense of wonder. How extraordinary that the laws of nature should be suspended to allow an escaping people to go free. It is a story to appeal to the imagination of a child.

But the naturalistic explanation is wondrous at another level entirely. Here the Torah is using the device of irony. What made the Egyptians of the time of Rameses so formidable was the fact that they possessed the latest and most powerful form of military technology, the horse-drawn chariot. It made them unbeatable in battle, and fearsome.

What happens at the sea is poetic justice of the most exquisite kind. There is only one circumstance in which a group of people travelling by foot can escape a highly trained army of charioteers, namely when the route passes through a muddy seabed. The people can walk across, but the chariot



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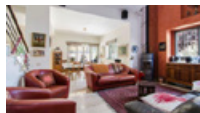
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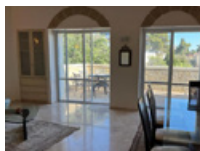
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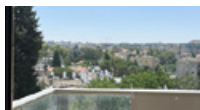


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wheels get stuck in the mud. The Egyptian army can neither advance nor retreat. The wind drops. The water returns. The powerful are now powerless, while the powerless have made their way to freedom.

This second narrative has a moral depth that the first does not; and it resonates with the message of the book of Psalms:

His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse,

Nor His delight in the legs of the warrior;
The Lord delights in those who fear Him,
Who put their hope in His unfailing love.
(Psalm 147:10-11)

In Bereishit Rabbah, it is indicated that the division of the sea was, as it were, programmed into Creation from the outset. It was less a suspension of nature than an event written into nature from the beginning, to be triggered at the appropriate moment in the unfolding of history.

Rabbi Jonathan said: The Holy One, blessed be He, made a condition with the sea [at the beginning of creation], that it should split asunder for the Israelites. That is the meaning of “the sea went back to its full flow” – [read not *le-eitano* but *letenao*], “the condition” that God had earlier stipulated. (Bereishit Rabbah 5:5)

A miracle is not necessarily something that suspends natural law. It is, rather, an event for which there may be a natural explanation, but which - happening when,

where, and how it did - evokes wonder, such that even the most hardened sceptic senses that God has intervened in history. The weak are saved; those in danger, delivered. More significant still is the moral message such an event conveys: that hubris is punished by nemesis; that the proud are humbled and the humble given pride; that there is justice in history, often hidden but sometimes gloriously revealed.

The elegantly simple way in which the division of the Red Sea is described in the Torah so that it can be read at two quite different levels, one as a supernatural miracle, the other as a moral tale about the limits of technology when it comes to the real strength of nations: that to me is what is most striking. It is a text quite deliberately written so that our understanding of it can deepen as we mature, and we are no

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longer so interested in the mechanics of miracles, and more interested in how freedom is won or lost.

To be clear, it's good to know how the division of the sea happened, but there remains a depth to the biblical story that can never be exhausted by computer simulations and other historical or scientific evidence and depends instead on being sensitive to its deliberate and delicate ambiguity.

Just as *ruach*, a physical wind, can part waters and expose land beneath, so too *ruach*, the human spirit, can expose, beneath the surface of a story, a deeper meaning beneath. ■

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Two Songs; Different Motives

The connection of this week's haftarah from Sefer Shofetim to our parasha of B'shalach requires little explanation. We have previously discussed the many parallels between the parasha and the haftarah, including the miraculous victories over Israel's enemies, the defeat of the foes' chariot brigades and the respective songs of praise that followed the victories. But we would be mistaken were we to equate both events and ignore the important difference between these two momentous miracles that brought forth such song. My dear brother-in-law, Rabbi Bienenfeld, shared with me an approach of Rav Soloveitchik regarding Hashem's miracles, explaining a subtle-but crucial- difference between wondrous events. In doing so, we can also get an insight into our observance of Tu B'Shevat, that we mark each year during this week of Shabbat Shira..

The Mishnah in Masechet Rosh Hashanah (1:1) enumerates the four "new years" (Roshi Shanah) in the annual Hebrew calendar, the days that mark the beginning of a new "cycle" for specific halachot. They include the dates

that begin the count of a king's reign (necessary for proper dating of legal documents), the date that starts each year of the Shemitta cycle count and even the specific day when the count for animal tithing (Ma'aser B'heima) begins. These are all days of halachic import with little connection to the world of nature. However, Tu B'Shvat seems to be an exception. According to the Gemara, Tu B'Shvat marks the date when the majority of the year's rainfall has already accumulated and, therefore, is responsible for the development of last year's fruit (it is actually the new year for fruit rather than for trees). As a result, Tu B'Shvat is a day of "demarcation", defining in which year the fruit is to be tithed. But, as this is a simple result of nature, why do we "celebrate" this new year more so than the others; why do we rejoice over a natural phenomenon that occurs each year?

The Rav's addresses this question by raising his own query:

Who would we regard as being "greater": Moshe or Avraham?

Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest of all

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prophets [D'varim 34:10]

Or Avraham Avinu, the first of all prophets? [B'reishit 20:7]

The Rav felt that Avraham was greater for one clear reason. He explained that there are two ways for an individual to fully recognize the greatness, the magnitude of Hashem. One way is in the wake of the miraculous, for when G-d performs miracles, one can hardly help but acknowledge His existence and believe in His Providence. Moshe's path to his recognition of Hashem's omnificence and acceptance of His mission was brought through the wonder of a burning bush. The second path - that of Avraham - was reached by a recognition of a Divine Being in the wonders of nature. Avraham "discovered" G-d through the natural order – indeed, the Rav pointed out, there are no miracles to speak of in the entire Book of Bereishit. And so, it was this one attribute that made Avraham even greater than Moshe, for when Hashem acts through the cosmic and universal laws He created, His Presence is not that obvious, it demands significant effort and sharp perception and cannot be hurried.

Perhaps now, we may see the significance of Tu B'Shevat in a new light. Once a year, we are asked to peer behind the curtain of nature and, there, to discover G-d. The plain fruit, the common tree, beckons us to look beyond the obvious. It asks us to make a simple blessing and "Mi bara eileh"

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(Who created it all). (Yeshayahu 40:26)... and to celebrate!

Which, finally, brings us to the difference between our haftarah and our parasha.

Yes. B'nai Yisra'el sang praises to G-d after they witnessed the wondrous splitting of the Reed Sea and the miracle of their escape from her waters. But the Israelites of Devorah's time sang their praises to Hashem after witnessing no more than simple acts of nature: a heavy rain that soaked the banks of Nachal Kishon, caused it to overflow, which, in turn, made the enemies chariots useless – and Israel's army, victorious. Simple acts of nature which D'vorah and her army recognized as wondrous acts of G-d.

So. Whose song was greater?

Indeed, as Rabbi Bienenfeld subsequently commented, if we can learn to detect HaShem in the workings of nature, we might also learn to see HaShem ever active and deeply involved in our own human affairs ■



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Mitzvot in Marah?

In Parshat Beshalach, following the crossing of the Red Sea, Bnei Yisrael traveled for three days without water. Chazal explain that this is actually a symbolic description of going three days without Torah, for which one “thirsts”. Then we are informed that at that very location, in Marah, where water was provided, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to fulfill certain mitzvot.

שם שם לו חק ומשפט ושם נסהו: (שמות יד:כה)

...There He gave them a statute and an ordinance, and there He tested them. (Shemot 14:25).

Rashi interprets this statement as follows:

בְּמַרָּה נָתַן לָהֶם מִקְצַת פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תּוֹרָה שִׁיתַּעֲסֻקוּ בָּהֶם, שִׁבְתָּ וּפְרָה אֲדָמָה וְדִינֵי:

In Marah, He gave them some sections of the Torah so that they would busy themselves with them, namely [they were given the laws governing] the **Shabbat**, the **Parah Aduma**, and **monetary laws**.

Bnei Yisrael are on their way to Har Sinai to accept the Torah. Why suddenly at Marah are they given these three mitzvot – Shabbat, Parah Aduma and monetary laws

? It could not wait another few weeks?

The Maharal (Gur Aryeh) explains why these laws specifically were selected. It seems that these must be the foundation for all of Torah. These three mitzvot represent different ways of exploring the Torah.

Shabbat: The laws of Shabbat are very complex. There are 39 *avot melachot* and many more *toladot*. The breadth is so vast.

Parah Aduma: It is so deep, that one cannot truly understand the reasoning behind this mitzvah. The one who purifies, becomes impure? There is such depth to this mitzvah and most of it is beyond our comprehension.

Monetary Laws: Although most nations have monetary laws, when examined closely one can easily notice the differences. The Torah exemplifies a morality that is second to none! There is no other court system where returning a lost object is an obligation. Where the performance of acts of *chesed*, like charity, is mandatory.

Prior to receiving the Torah, Bnei Yisrael got a taste of the unique quality of its contents. These three mitzvot highlight the **breadth, depth and distinct nature of the Torah**.

KIBBUD AV V'EM

There are some sources that suggest that one of the mitzvot transmitted at Marah was the mitzvah of *kibbud av v'em* (Sanhedrin 56). Why would it be so crucial to highlight this mitzvah at Marah? The Ketav Sofer suggests that given that this generation was comprised of individuals who were slaves, the parents who left Mitzrayim were unable to provide



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their children with basic necessities. It is typically a given that a parent provides food, shelter and clothing for their children. In the desert we are told that these three items were provided by Hashem. The man and be'er sustained the children, their clothes grew with them and the *ananei hakovod* offered shelter. Irrespective of the lack of the provision of these basic items, children were commanded to obey and respect their parents, solely for having brought them into this world. The obligation to respect one's parents is not conditional on "owing" them anything. Perhaps that is why it was specifically transmitted at Marah, when their water was miraculously provided to them.

May we appreciate the unique nature of the Torah and significance of each mitzvah and be able to fulfill all of the commandments to the fullest. ■



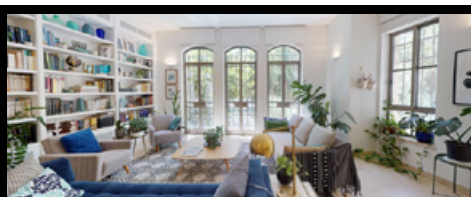
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Chazal teach (*Otiot d’Rabi Akiva*): the world was created and is sustained through saying *Shirah* each day. The Zohar explains that this *Shirah* is unique in that it encompasses every song in all of history until the end of time. What does this really mean?

The *Mishnah Berurah* writes that one should say the verses of *Az Yashir* with great joy as he imagines that he is crossing the sea! Further, by doing so, it is a *segulah* that his sins will be forgiven. As we know, one who sings praises to Hashem for a miracle that occurred, has his sins forgiven. *Ya’avetz* notes that saying *Az Yashir* with great joy is a great *tikun* for the soul.

When one says the *Shirah*, he can imagine the various miracles that transpired as *Am Yisrael* crossed the dry seabed. This will strengthen his love and connection to Hashem. The Midrash points out that the very fact that the Jews said the *Shirah* together with

Moshe Rabbeinu was a miraculous feat. The entire nation was roused together with Divine inspiration to say the same words at the same time. They were so overwhelmed with the vision of Hashem’s tremendous love that the song came bursting forth from their souls. “*Vayomeru l’emor* – and they spoke, saying...” These words imply that *Am Yisrael* wanted the moments of clarity to last forever so they took it upon themselves to say this *Shirah* each day for all generations to come. Tapping into this clarity of *emunah* each day can help us feel more connected with Hashem.

Eretz Zvi teaches that when we say *Az Yashir* we bring Hashem’s love for His people to the fore and create an *et ratzon* through which our *tefillot* can be accepted. Accordingly, we mention the miracle of *Keriat Yam Suf* at the end of *Shema* and describe *Am Yisrael* as “*yediddim* - the beloved ones.”

The *Chatam Sofer* explains that when one speaks of the miracles of *Yetziat Mitzrayim*, he arouses Hashem’s mercy to perform miracles in the present. Thus, we find that King David writes in the present tense, “*legozer yam suf legezarim* – who divides the sea into parts,” (*Te-hillim 136:13*), since the miracles are continuously happening. Therefore, Rav Meizlish encourages us to take advantage of this tefillah to thank Hashem for the miracles we find in our lives each day. We can then say the *Shirah* with vibrancy as we open our eyes to the personal and national experiences, past and present, in which we see the wonderful manifestations of Hashem’s never-ending love. ■

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RABBI JUDAH MISCHEL

Executive Director, Camp HASC
Author of *Baderech: Along the Path of Teshuva* (Mosaica 2021)

Holy Pride

A revolutionary educator and builder of Torah, the famed Alter of Slabodka, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, zt'l, reoriented the focus of avodas Hashem on *gadlus ha-adam*, the inherent greatness of the human being. The Alter's son-in-law and successor Rav Yitzchak Eizik Sher zt'l, transmitted the *derech* of Slabodka to the post-War generation of *bnei Torah* in Eretz Yisrael. A role model in *midos* development and a *gaon* in Torah, "Reb Eizik" provided inspiration, instruction and spiritual guidance to students throughout the Land.

Among those drawn to Reb Eizik was a young student at Yeshivas Chevron who had the privilege of escorting Reb Eizek home from yeshiva after davening each day. One morning, as they reached the door of Reb Eizek's apartment, the Rosh Yeshivah shook his head and declared, "*Nisht azoi*, not like that...." Reb Eizek then turned around and began to make his way back to the yeshivah. When they arrived, Reb Eizek nodded to the young man, saying, "*Noch amohl*, again", and began to walk back home, following the very same route as they always took. The young man looked quizzically at the Rosh Yeshivah.

Rav Eizik then adjusted his frock, rolled back his shoulders, stood up straight and tall, and looked the *bachur* in the eye: "*Azoi*,

like this... *geit a general*, the way a general walks..." Standing tall and proud, together the Rebbe and talmid walked home.

וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵצְאוּ בִיד רָמָה...

"...And the children of Israel went out (of Egypt) with an upraised arm." (*Shemos*, 14:8)

Targum Onkelos translates, בִיד רָמָה an upraised arm, as בְּרִישׁ גָּלִי literally with *head* held high, implying that they left Mitzrayim with a sense of holy pride, empowerment and confidence. This uplifted posture is later contrasted with the constricted, disempowered posture of the slaves in Egypt, bent under the heavy yoke of oppression:

אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵהֵיטֵב לָהֶם עֲבָדִים... וְאֵלֶיךָ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמְמִיז

"I am Hashem, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt from being slaves to them; and I broke the pegs of your *yoke* and led you *upright*." (26:13)

Indeed, Rashi quotes *Midrash Toras Kohanim*, saying that *komemiyus*, 'upright', means *בְּקוֹמָה זְקוּפָה*, 'upright in stature', due to your relief from bondage. After generations of suffering and slavery Hashem delivers us from exile, and not just physically, but by restoring our posture, our true 'stature'.

Sefas Emes unfolds this insight. Each of us is made up of two '*komos*': a קוֹמָה רוחנית and a קוֹמָה גשמית, a physical level and a spiritual level. Our physical body, whose height we can measure on the outside, is the 'vessel'. Our spiritual soul, the light within the vessel, has its own kind of 'stature'. Although there

is a tension between the priorities and needs of the physical and spiritual, by observing *mitzvos* and committing to living *Yidishkeit* with passion, we can achieve balance of these two *komos* and achieve the fullness of our potential by ‘standing tall’. We can assume our ultimate form and express our inherent spiritual level of greatness. This is the essence of our *komemiyus*: standing in the posture of our inner greatness, with uplift and pride in our identity and our observance.

This past week marked the day upon which the Lubavitcher Rebbe assumed the mantle of Jewish leadership in the shadow of the Holocaust, and breathed new life, hope and confidence into a broken nation emerging from darkness and the brink of decimation. Throughout more than half-century of leadership, the Rebbe launched campaigns toward restoring ‘authentic Jewish pride’, based on a return to Jewish identity, practice, values, ritual and tradition.

The Rebbe referred to this mission as *Gaon Yaakov*, manifesting it geopolitically as a national sense of self-respect, empowerment and pride, openly encouraging the most natural way for a Jew to express their identity: by “doing Jewish”. He called to a downtrodden, beaten nation to stand tall once again. He envisioned public expressions of Jewish life across the globe flourishing, celebrating *Yidishkeit* without compromise.

The Rebbe’s spiritually radical model of “mitzvah campaigns” still challenges members of our community to step out of our comfort zone and share our wealth of knowledge, opportunities and blessings with others. From going out onto city streets to ask men to lay tefillin and women to light Shabbos candles, to holding massive Lag b’Omer parades and public Menorah lightings, the Rebbe made it his mission, and every Jew’s mission, to reach out and reveal the greatness,

the treasure, of every *Yidishe neshamah* — to sing, unabashedly, the song of a Nation reborn.

וַיֵּאמְרוּ בְּרַ' וּבְמִשְׁחָה עֲבָדוּ:

“And they had emunah in Hashem and in Moshe, His servant....” (14:31)

At the Yam Suf, not only did we awaken to emunah in Hashem, but also to emunah in ‘Moshe His servant, meaning all the *Tzadikim* and true leaders of the Jewish nation in every generation. Such luminaries restore our faith in ourselves, and redeem us from our personal enslavements, allowing us to emerge from our particular ‘exiles’ standing tall and confident. They guide us to live בְּרִישׁ גָּלִי, with our head held high, striding through life in our full *komemiyus* stature.

וְהִבְיָאנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנָפוֹת הָאָרֶץ וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ
קוֹמְמִיּוּת לְאַרְצֵנוּ:

“Hasten and bring upon us blessing and peace quickly from the four corners of the earth, and speedily lead us *upright* to our homeland!”

(Blessings of the Shema of Shacharis)

May we be blessed to see miracles as at the Yam Suf, and to emerge from all our personal and national challenges standing tall, unapologetically confident in our unfolding redemption. May all our exiles return home to our Land with heads held high in holy pride.

.....

P.S. The young man who escorted Reb Eizek each day and learned the lesson in *gadlus ha-adam*, Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi zt'l, grew to become one of our generation’s great progenitors of the honor of Torah. *Zechuso yagen aleinu!* ■

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Rabbi Anthony Manning

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12:15 PM

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Wine and Milk of a Non-Religious Jew

Our Sages decreed that one may not eat even kosher food that was cooked by a non-Jew, a prohibition called *bishul akum* (see *Avodah Zara* 38:b) . As previously discussed, the main reason behind this decree is to prevent unnecessary mingling with non-Jews that could eventually lead to intermarriage. Later rabbinic authorities debate whether food cooked by a non-religious Jew is also forbidden; although marriage with non-religious Jews is completely permitted, some authorities have ruled that *bishul akum* does, in fact, apply to them. This article will examine the question of non-religious Jews in other rabbinic decrees regarding food.

The term “non-religious Jew” in this article refers to Jews who worship another god or publicly, openly, and knowingly desecrate Shabbat with no shame. Our Sages ruled that in certain areas of halacha, such Jews lose their status as halachic Jews and are in the category of a *mumar*, an apostate. It is important to note that while many kashrut organizations and rabbis operate according to the strict view that equates modern secular Jews with *mumarim*, this conclusion is not universal, especially in the complex reality of 21st century Israel. The designation of a non-religious Jew as a *mumar* should be in consultation with a competent orthodox rabbi, and not applied arbitrarily or universally.

WINE

There is a Biblical prohibition to derive any type of benefit from any object used for idol worship. This includes a statue which was worshipped or leftover sacrifices from idol worship. The libation of wine for idol worship prohibits the consumption of or benefit from such wine, called *yayin nesech*, on a biblical level (see *Avodah Zara* 29:a). This includes any other type of foreign worship where wine is involved. Because of the severity of the biblical prohibition, our Sages added an additional decree that any wine used or even touched by a non-Jew is prohibited for drinking. This decree, called *stam yeinam*, applies to the wine of all non-Jews, regardless of whether they are idolaters or even monotheists of another religion, such as Islam (*Shulchan Aruch* YD 124:6).

Regarding a *mumar* who touches or uses wine, all early rabbinic authorities prohibited the wine for drinking, just as with any non-Jew (even one who does not perform idol worship). Virtually all later authorities codify this opinion regarding wine of a *mumar*, whom they include in the same category as a non-Jew (see *Bein Yisrael Le'amim* 19:16-20). What is perplexing is, why we are so strict about a *mumar* touching wine? To make this question stronger, *poskim* such as Rav Moshe

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Feinstein (*Igrot Moshe* OH 5:37) and Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer YD 5:10), who rule leniently on *bishul akum* of a *mumar*, rule strictly regarding wine touched or used by a *mumar*.

The answer to this conundrum is based on *Rivash* (responsa 394), who explains that specifically regarding wine, a *mumar*'s status is more severe. Although *bishul akum* and *stam yeinam* seem similar, the basis for the two decrees is different. As mentioned above, wine that was actually used for idol worship is biblically prohibited from any type of benefit; our Sages expanded this to any wine touched by any non-Jew or even a *mumar*. Clearly, if a *mumar* were to actually use it for idol worship, the wine would certainly be prohibited; thus, even in a case where he just touched the wine, our Sages extended the decree. This is quite different from *bishul akum*, since that decree is to prevent intermarriage, and the *poskim* clearly differentiate between the two.

On a practical level, pasteurized wine is considered *yayin mevushal*, "cooked wine," such that the prohibition of *stam yeinam* does not apply. However, wine that was never "cooked" would still have the prohibition of *stam yeinam*.

MILK

Our Sages decreed that milk from a kosher animal milked by a non-Jew without Jewish supervision is prohibited, out of concern that the non-Jew might mix in milk from a non-kosher animal (see *Shulchan Aruch* YD 115:1). Later authorities debate whether this decree, called *chalav akum*, applies to a *mumar*.

Since there could be malicious intent or financial benefit from adulterating the milk, it is not surprising that a Jew who flagrantly desecrates Shabbat or worships according to another religion would be included in the decree. *Responsa Levush Mordechai* (YD 56) and others (see *Darkei Teshuva*, YD 115:4; *Responsa Salmat Chayim*, YD 22) rule strictly and include a *mumar* in the decree of *chalav akum*. According to this opinion, only a religious Jew milking the cow or proper supervision renders the milk permitted. However, Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Igrot Moshe* YD 2:47) and Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (*Koveitz Teshuvot* 3:115) are both lenient on this

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matter. Rav Feinstein explains that the decree was only on a non-Jew, and additionally, where there is no actual concern of mixing non-kosher milk, such as on a farm with only kosher animals, our Sages did not extend the prohibition to a *mumar*. Somewhat similarly, Rav Elyashiv explains that while the purpose of *bishul akum* is to differentiate between Jews and non-Jews and to distance ourselves from their inappropriate culture and lifestyles, *chalav akum* is a halachic concern of non-kosher food which applies specifically to a non-Jew and not to a *mumar*.

The consensus is that the halacha follows the lenient opinion (see *Bein Yisrael La'nochri* 12:2).

IN SUMMARY:

- According to certain authorities, the decree of *bishul akum* applies to a *mumar*.
- An open bottle of non-mevushal wine that was touched or used by a non-Jew is no longer kosher; the same applies to a *mumar* handling the wine.
- Kosher milk that was milked by a *mumar* is permitted and does not require additional supervision.
- The designation of a non-religious Jew as a *mumar* should be approached with sensitivity and in consultation with the local orthodox rabbi. ■

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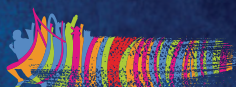


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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

On Thursday of this week of Shabbat Beshalach, we commemorate Tu B'Shevat, referred to in the oral tradition as Rosh HaShana La'Ilanot- The New Year of the Trees.

As a child, I never really understood this idea of a new year for the trees. I recall eating fruits including that very peculiar looking and even more peculiar tasting piece of carob, and remember getting those certificates saying that my parents had planted a tree in Israel in my honor on Tu B'Shevat, but that was about the extent of my Tu B'Shevat commemoration.

For many here in Israel today, Tu B'Shevat has become a Jewish "Arbor Day", when schools typically schedule trips to plant saplings. Of course there is also practical halachic reasoning behind a new year for the trees. Tu B'Shevat has significance in calculating several of the mitzvot hatluot B'Aretz-the many laws regarding planting and harvesting outlined in the Torah for produce grown in Israel.

In recent years, I have begun to reflect upon, and consider this idea of a Rosh Hashana La'Ilanot, a Rosh Hashana for the trees. What are the many familiar themes associated with Rosh Hashana? Self evaluation, reflection, examining and working to better our interpersonal relationships, achieving spiritual and physical fulfillment in our daily lives, etc.

How can these themes be understood within the context of a Rosh HaShana La'Ilanot?

There is a beautiful Chasidic teaching from Rebbe Yisrael of Chortikov zy'a,

which I feel really clarifies the parallel to be drawn between our more well known Rosh HaShana in Tishrei, and Tu B'Shevat.

"When a person takes a fruit in his hand, he must contemplate how it is that this fruit exists. Seeds are planted in the ground, and the seeds begin to decay, and just as it appears to be disintegrating it gains strength, and begins to grow and becomes a tree and produces fruit. So too, a human being, even if capable and of good character, involved in Torah and mitzvot, whenever he acts with haughtiness, then man loses his equilibrium. Only when a person recognizes and works at improving this deficiency can they begin to grow upwards and be capable of receiving the sparks of holiness, and become a 'respectable tree.' And this is the meaning of the verse: '...for man is a tree of the field... (Devarim 20:20).' If a person desires to ascend spiritually to the highest level of humanity, he should look to the trees of the field, and ponder 'how do these trees continue to exist?' A tree is planted and remains anchored in the ground, and from this we learn that in order to grow branches that reach great heights, in order to achieve and approach the highest spiritual realms, we must begin grounded, anchored in humility..."

One of the great religious personalities of the pre-state Yishuv and early years of Medinat Yisrael, was the Ohalei Yaakov of Tel Aviv, Rebbe Yaakov Friedman, the Admor of Husiyatin zy'a. The Rebbe

of Husiyatin, was fortunate to make aliya from Poland, just ahead of the Nazi onslaught, settling in Tel Aviv in 1938, where he lived until his passing in 1956. Within the Rebbe's beautiful teachings we not only find depth and inspiration, but are often given a glimpse of this very challenging period in Jewish History.

In a stirring teaching which the Rebbe delivered at his TuBishevav tisch, on the eve of Tu BiShevat in 1951, the Rebbe gives us perspective not only on Tu BiShevat as the Rosh HaShana of the trees, but also of the reality of life here in Artzeinu HaKedusha during those difficult formative years of Medinat Yisrael. The Rebbe shared these powerful words:

“ The minhag on Tu BiShevat is to eat the fruits of Eretz Yisrael, but sadly we are unable to fulfill this custom at this time here in Eretz Yisrael, the many fruits for which the Land of Israel is praised, are not growing here at this time. To our great distress, during the many years of galut, Eretz Yisrael has ceased being a Land flowing with milk and honey. But now, with the miraculous establishment of Medinat Yisrael, it would seem that now is the time that the Land will soon once again return to being that eretz zavat chalav udvash...

...Indeed these great revelations of divine kindness that Hashem has revealed to us, are just the very beginning of our redemption, the salvation we continue to long for each and every day. The siman (sign), that indeed that geula is coming closer, will be when the Land once again returns to be an eretz zavat chalav udvash. When the Land begins to fully blossom once again, and produce the many sweet fruits, then we will know that

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our redemption is coming closer..."

Baruch Hashem, in our day, more than seventy years since the Rebbe uttered these poignant words, Eretz Yisrael has indeed returned to being that eretz zavat chalav udvash.

Yehi Ratzon, as we reflect on the Rosh HaShana La'Ilanot, may we heed the beautiful advice of the Rebbe of Chortikov zy'a, and may we merit to see the geula shleima, which this powerful teaching from the Ohalei Yaakov zy'a suggests, is just around the corner.

Shana Tova, Moadim Lisimcha L'geula Shleima! ■

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GEULAS YISRAEL

BY RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN
Ram, Yeshivat Har Etzion

The Amalek Monster

Our everlasting battle with Amalek is described as a multi-generational struggle:

כי מלחמה לה' בעמלק מדור דור

Why is this battle eternal and when will it end? What sits at the core of the struggle? Why did the battle, essentially, take a 2000-year hiatus, only to be resurrected in modern times? To decipher these mysteries, we must first return to the origins of Jewish history, in Sefer Bereishit.

Sefer Bereishit details a selection process. Initially, all of humanity was expected to directly encounter Hashem. Sadly, this experiment failed miserably, as Mankind fell into moral chaos and intellectual confusion. Shifting to a different model, Hashem chose one people and one family to represent Him, in modeling a life of covenant and commitment. To emphasize the concept of a selection process, it was applied even within the chosen family. Yitzchak was selected while Yishma'el was discarded. Selection of the chosen people didn't just occur at a macro level but within a family. Similar to his father, Yitzchak also had two children and it was clear that only one would be chosen.

Eisav, the older brother and the natural candidate proved unworthy to steer religious

history and, moreover, he voluntarily bartered destiny for a plate of beans. Subsequently, Rivka reinforced this sale by engineering the delivery of Yitzchak's historical berachot to Ya'akov. Jewish history would now be safeguarded in the capable hands of Ya'akov.

Despite his tragic blunder, Eisav never gave up hope of reversing his "nakba" or his own historical catastrophe. He waited patiently for the first opportunity to thwart Ya'akov's selection and to reclaim his natural rights. His first opportunity arose at a critical stage of Jewish history, as Ya'akov returned from a two-decades exile outside the chosen Land. Eisav confronts Ya'akov, surrounded by an armed band of 400 mercenaries, hoping to block Ya'akov's return to history. Though the brothers reconcile, and a bloodbath is averted, Eisav never abandons hope of reversing the nakba.

His next opportunity to redress the horrible injustice occurred as Ya'akov was buried in Chevron. Obviously, whichever child would be buried next to the ancestors of history would lay legitimate claim to Jewish destiny. The midrash portrays Eisav confronting the funeral procession, literally blocking their passage into Me'arat Hamachpeilah. Eisav never gave up hope but, once again, failed, as Ya'akov was interred next to our Avot and Jewish history marched on.

AMALEK, THE SUCCESSOR

What happened after Eisav died? According to Chazal he was actually killed during

the faceoff in Chevron. Who would succeed Eisav and oversee the struggle against Jewish destiny? Eisav's successor would be, none other than his grandson, Amalek, whose rage against our people was fomented by his furious and resentful mother.

Amalek's outraged mother, Timna, the mistress of Eisav's son Elifaz, had prior history with our nation. According to the gemara in Sanhedrin (99b) she had repeatedly attempted conversion to Judaism, but had been denied by each of our Avot. Spurned and envious of our people, she planned her revenge. On her deathbed she designated her son Amalek as Eisav's successor in the battle against Jewish history (as described by a midrash cited by the Tzeror Hama'or, a 15th century commentary on Chumash written by Rabbi Avraham Tzaba). As Timna dies in convulsions of revenge, Amalek is born into his new role as the heinous villain of Jewish history. Like his grandfather Eisav, Amalek would select strategic historical moments to frustrate the advance of Jewish destiny.

THE FIRST INTERVENTION

Amalek's first attempted intervention occurs just as Jewish history was launched. Having been liberated from slavery, we were primed to enter the Land of Israel and launch the kingdom of Hashem. The mighty empire of Egypt had been humbled by a volley of divine plagues and the entire region quaked at the thought of opposing the people of Hashem. Nothing stood between us and the end of history, aside from Amalek. Their militias ambushed our defenseless civilians in the open terrain of the desert, as we journeyed to our date with history in the land of Israel: אשר קרר בדרך. In hindering the

advance of Jewish history Amalek was trying to make his angry mother proud.

The first war with Amalek ended in a stalemate and the battle was deferred to a later date. It was now abundantly clear that Jewish destiny, and the spiritual and material redemption of the entire planet, could not succeed if the Amalek threat weren't neutralized. For this reason, Hashem instructed us to perform the unthinkable act of eradicating every Amalek citizen. Though it baffles human imagination and confounds moral instincts, Hashem's divine command serves the larger purposes of universal prosperity.

ILL-ADVISED COMPASSION

Hundreds of years later, as Jewish history was progressing, we were instructed to initiate a battle with Amalek. We had already conquered and settled most of the chosen Land and had crowned our first Jewish king. Now that Shaul was crowned, we could complete the conquest of Israel, construct a Mikdash and, possibly, close history. For history to conclude and Hashem to fully enter our world, Amalek, the enduring adversary of Jewish history, had to be purged.

Unfortunately, Shaul flinched, spared an aging Amalek ruler, thereby allowing the historical struggle to continue. Unintentionally, Shaul became an accomplice in Amalek's historical battle. He was, therefore, dethroned

THE SHIFT

Approximately two and a half centuries later, the Amalek battle would be transformed. In the 7th century much of the Levant, including Northern Israel, was conquered by the Assyrian empire. The conquered populations, including Ten Jewish tribes, were relocated to different regions. The scrambling of

indigenous populations made it impossible to trace genetic descendants of Amalek and, for this reason, the legal mitzvah to eliminate Amalek became inoperative. Amalek, as a distinct ethnic race, ceased to exist. However, the spirit of Amalek and of everlasting hostility to Jewish history remained deeply embedded in human consciousness. There would be many further attempts to block Jewish destiny, particularly at critical historical junctures.

Haman and the Return to Yerushalayim

About two hundred years after the scattering of the Amalek tribe, an actual descendant of Amalek tribe revived the ageless battle. After a 70-year Babylonian exile, Jewish history experienced a renaissance, as we gradually returned to Israel, settled our ancient Homeland, and laid foundations for the second Mikdash. Amalek could not allow this to occur. Haman Ha'aGagi, who Chazal identify as a descendant of the original Amalek King Agag, schemed a genocidal plan.

At this stage, the Amalek strategy battle took on two new dimensions. Firstly, it became genocidal. It was obvious to Amalek that Jewish history could only be choked if Jewish people went extinct. If Jews remained alive, Jewish history would always rally. Secondly, Amalek began to recruit other nations in the battle against Jewish history. By colluding with a Persian king, Haman reframed the Amalek strategy: Amalek would now build multinational alliances, in its attempt to reverse the nakba of Sefer Bereishit.

MODERN AMALEK

The Amalek struggle took a 2000-year hiatus. As Jewish history hibernated, the forces of Amalek felt little need to intervene. Though Jewish experience was flourishing in exile, Jewish history had stalled, and there

was nothing pressing Amalek into active intervention. The 20th century changed everything. As our people returned to Israel, the spirit of Amalek awoke from its slumber. The monster of Amalek, which had lied dormant in human history, rose in fury and in blood. As our people began to reclaim our Homeland and to revive Jewish history, Hitler, imbued with Amalek venom, attempted the complete annihilation of our nation. Once again, the forces of Amalek tried to block the people of Hashem from redeeming history by returning to the Land of Hashem. Though Hitler didn't articulate his genocide in historical terms, it was still driven by the Amalek impulse to rid the world of Jews and to suppress Jewish destiny.

Currently, we are ever closer to the end of history. We have settled over 7 million Jews in our Homeland and have established Israel as the epicenter of Jewish religious, cultural, and national experience. We have even begun the laborious process of forging peace alliances with neighbors who desire to live side-by-side, in peace and prosperity. Amalek is fuming. It cannot allow this to occur. The spirit of Amalek has, once again, risen up against Jewish history, mounting a full-scale assault against our people. Islamic fundamentalism, Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah are all infected with Amalek poison. They may not possess the legal status of Amalek, but they are the modern forms of the Amalek monster.

Our ageless battle continues. It is the battle of Jewish history against zealous enemies. It is a battle for Jewish destiny and for the kingdom of Hashem in this world. It is eternal. Like Eisav, original Amalek, Haman and Hitler, the modern Amaleks will be swept away into the dustbin of history, in ignominy. ■



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Songs of the Soul

We find the words Shira and Zimra in this week's Haftorah as Devora begins her song. She uses the two words אָזַמַר, אֲשִׁירָה, two words that seem to mean the same thing, "I will sing". These two words are found all over our Tefilot and in fact, one whole section of our Tefillah is called Pesukei D'Zimra. What is the difference between the two seemingly similar expressions of song?

Rav Schwab in his book on prayer suggests that these two words complement each other. He explains that the root word Shir connotes connection, based on the way the term is used in the Mishnah in Shabbos in the context of an animal on a leash (Shir). Singing to Hashem attaches us to our G-d - we are tethered and connected through the musical aspects of prayer.

By contrast, the root of the word Zimra is pruning - we become closer to Hashem by removing any extraneous thoughts, by eliminating misdirected intentions. When singing a zemer, the world of the physical is removed and our thoughts are purified and elevated directed toward our Maker.

Shira and Zemira connect us to our Creator by moving us away from our mundane lives toward holiness - all through music. Pesukei D'Zimra is our daily space

to enact these two ideals - Shira and Zimra - "attach" and "remove". Our Tefillah experience creates the environment through song where we find Hashem and connect to Him while removing ourselves from the physical distractions of our everyday life.

אָנְכִי אֲשִׁירָה אֲזַמֵּר לָהּ!

These words resonate for me personally as we celebrate the conclusion of the second cycle of Torat Imecha Nach Yomi. Participants across the world are connecting daily through the words of our sacred texts. Knowing that there are women in France, Germany, Australia, South Africa, Canada, America and tens of other countries listening to the same holy words binds us together. Regardless of our native tongue, we offer



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RABBI AARON GOLDSCHIEDER

EDITOR, TORAH TIDBITS
RAV, THE JERUSALEM SHUL - BAKA, JERUSALEM

Eradicating the Amalek Within

At the very end of *Parashat Beshalach*, we meet the archnemesis of the Jewish people: Amalek. Historically, Amalek was a band of marauders who shrugged off reports of miraculous intervention, cocksure of their own prowess and ability to identify and prey upon weak stragglers. But Amalek has been understood by many Jewish thinkers to represent a tenacious threat, even after all nations have lost their identity by being dispersed by *Sanheriv*.¹ Amalek is a dangerous mindset that poses a psychological danger to our religious belief and observance. This “Amalek within” is a devious enemy and we must be vigilant to combat it.

What is the nature of this threat? The Friediker Rebbe, Rebbe Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, saw it embedded in Amalek’s very name. The *gematriya* or numerological value of the Hebrew letters that spell “Amalek” (240 = עמלק) is equivalent to that of the

letters that spell “doubt” (240 = ספק). Whatever is holy is certain and absolute; Amalek is baseless doubt and icy cynicism that chills the fervor of holiness until all passion has dissipated. It introduces rot into the core that spreads and grows.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook found profound meaning in two other words that appear in this episode. Following Amalek’s unprovoked surprise attack, Moshe deputizes Yehoshua to muster men



and lead a counterattack. He then says, “Tomorrow (מָחָר), I will stand atop the hill with God’s staff (מִטָּה) in my hand” (Exodus 17:9). Why “tomorrow,” and why with the “staff” in hand? Rav Kook explained that Amalek wanted to knock down the divine commands (מִצְוָה) and obligations (חֻבָּה) incumbent upon a Jew to the

level of the optional (רְשׁוּת). “Things are not as important as you make them out to be,” says Amalek. “They can wait until tomorrow.” The very word for “tomorrow” (מָחָר) is composed of a *mem* (מ) representing the commandments (מִצְוָה); a *chet* (ח) standing for the obligations (חֻבָּה); and a final *resh* (ר) for what is optional (רְשׁוּת). The order of the letters reflects how Amalek ultimately wanted to devalue everything.²

How is Amalek’s onslaught countered?

1. See *Berachot* 28a.

2. *Mei Marom, Nimukei Mikra’ot*, 125, s.v. מחר
אנכי נצב על ראש הגבעה.

Moshe led the offensive by raising his hands and the “staff” (מַטֵּה), which was to help direct (לְהַטִּיחַ) the hearts of the Jewish people to God and reverse this process.³ By placing God at the center of our lives, we assign our responsibilities the proper weight and treat them as we ought to. By feeling God’s presence during our waking moments, we can stoke a passion for Him that cannot be extinguished.

Rav Kook personified this. In the summer of 1913, he and a group of colleagues went on a trip to visit and inspire the new settlements in the fledgling Yishuv. One night, towards the end of the trip, Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Charlop, a confidant and disciple of Rav Kook, woke to find his teacher restlessly pacing their small, shared room. As he watched, he noticed that Rav Kook’s face was flushed with passion and excitement. Rav Kook realized that he was awake, and slowly put his hands on his disciple. “What is wrong, rebbe?” asked Rabbi Charlop. Rav Kook answered, “Nothing is wrong. I am consumed with a burning love of God.”⁴

3. Ibid

4. Rabbi Hillel Rachmani, “The Fruit and The Tree,” <https://www.etzion.org.il/en/philosophy/great-thinkers/rav-kook/fruit-and-tree> (accessed October 20, 2021).

Every day we recite during the *Shema*, “You shall love Hashem your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5). Rav Kook did not only verbalize these words but actualized them, and it was his belief that everyone is capable of doing so. He showed us that the brighter our passion burns, the more it can resist the irrationality—or even cold rationality—of Amalek and stay the course.

Amalek attacked the recently freed Israelites “on the road” (Deuteronomy 25:17-18). But this was not just any road. The Jewish people were on a direct route to Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, and it is the Torah that shows us the optimal way to live our lives. Amalek, on the other hand, has no path. It follows no road to enlightenment. It knows only how to steer others off course and to relieve them of their hard-won spiritual possessions. By pursuing a life of faith and fervor we can overcome the pathological pathlessness of Amalek, but we would do well to pay attention to suspicious movement in our peripheral vision as we blaze paths to spiritual glory. ■

Rabbi Goldscheider is the author of the newly published book ‘Torah United’ (OU Press), featuring divrei Torah on the weekly parasha from Rav Kook, Rabbi Solovetichik, and the Chassidic Masters.



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לעילוי נשמת
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Trying on a Beged without Tzitzit

Question: I saw someone shopping for a *tzitzit beged* without *tzitzit* (so he could attach them), and he tried it on for size. I thought it was forbidden to wear a *beged* requiring *tzitzit* without them. Was he right to do so?

Answer: We will explore three possible reasons to permit this, proceeding from the possible to the definite.

The Torah presents a positive *mitzvah* to attach *tzitzit* to four-cornered garments (Bamidbar 15:38; Devarim 22:12), and the *gemara* discusses at what point this must be done (Menachot 41a). One who has a *beged* that requires *tzitzit* and wears it without attaching them violates a Torah commandment. However, it might be a *bitul aseh* (failing to do an imperative positive *mitzvah*) or possibly (also) an *issur aseh* (a forbidden action derived from a positive command).

This distinction is likely connected to the following *machloket*. The *gemara* (Menachot 37b), after bringing a story, seems to conclude that if one's cloak's *tzitzit* became *pasul* on Shabbat when he

was in a Rabbinic-level public domain (without an *eiruv*), he can keep the cloak on until he gets to a "private place." The reason given is that the resulting Rabbinic prohibition of carrying [worthless fringes] is pushed off by the disgrace of being mainly undressed. Commentators note that the *gemara* seems to ignore the Torah-level problem of wearing a garment without valid *tzitzit*. The Ri Halavan (cited by Mordechai, Menachot 944) explains that it is not prohibited to wear the garment because *tzitzit* is a positive *mitzvah* to attach (or have attached) the *tzitzit* without a negative element, and the requirement to attach does not apply on Shabbat, because tying is forbidden. R. Shmuel (cited *ibid.*) opines that it is forbidden from a *tzitzit* perspective to put on such a garment even on Shabbat.

Acharonim see in the Ri Halavan's opinion and in Tosafot (Yevamot 90b) the idea that, fundamentally, the commandment of *tzitzit* begins when the garment is on, requiring one to attach *tzitzit* if they are not yet on. Arguably, one can try on the *beged* because, **similar** to on Shabbat, it is inappropriate to attach *tzitzit* considering that the store owner, who owns the *beged*, is

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selling it without *tzitzit*. We would be reluctant to rely on this idea alone, considering that not everyone accepts the Ri Halavan and this application of the approach is not simple.

A likely reason for leniency is that trying on a garment is not classic “wearing” of a garment. There is Talmudic precedent for this distinction regarding *sha'atnez*. The *mishna* (Kilayim 9:5) says that one who sells *sha'atnez* clothing (to non-Jews) can, due to technical need, wear them as long as he does not intend to get physical benefit from them. Tosafot (Nidda 61b) applies this idea to *tzitzit*, i.e., if one “wears” a garment in an abnormal context, he is not obligated in *tzitzit*. Not all even agree that the *mitzvah* of *tzitzit* applies (*nafka mina* for a *beracha* before putting it on) when one puts on his *tallit* to honor a setting (e.g., getting an *aliya*, being a *sandek*) (see Be'ur Halacha to 60:4). Briefly trying on a garment seems to be an example where there should be no obligation of *tzitzit* (Be'ur Halacha *ibid*. apparently confirms this). Nevertheless, this conclusion is not trivial (see the lack of full clarity concerning how far to apply this leniency regarding *sha'atnez* in Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 301:5,6 and Taz and Shach *ad loc.*).

The clearest reason that one can try on the *tzitzit*-less *begeid* is that one is obligated in *tzitzit* only for his own *begeid*, not for a borrowed one (Shulchan Aruch, OC 14:3, based on Menachot 44a). (After having it for 30 days, it requires *tzitzit* because it looks like the *begeid* is his – *ibid.*). Trying on the *begeid* in the store is no more than borrowed. While sometimes it is



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proper when using another's *tallit* to get permission to acquire it and make a *beracha* on it (see Mishna Berura 14:11), when it does not have *tzitzit* on and attaching them is impractical, there is no reason to do so.

Therefore, what the person did was fine; the question is, for how many reasons. ■

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RICKA RAZEL (VAN LEEUWEN)

RENOWNED ISRAELI MUSICAL ARTIST

Shabbat Shira Guest Article

Shabbat Shira: The Universal Language of Song

My musical journey began before I could even spell my own name. Music, integral to my life, was woven into my upbringing by my parents. They made sure we understood the importance of not just appreciating but actively engaging in the world of music. Each one of my siblings, including Yonatan and Aaron Razel, had to choose their second musical instrument, with the piano being a mandatory first.

As teenagers, we formed our own band, performing both in Israel and the US. We made our TV debut, produced our album, and music became the familial glue, proving the age-old adage that “a family that plays together - stays together,” and, thank goodness, it holds true.

Music, as a universal language, possesses the remarkable ability to transform one's mood in an instant, transporting individuals back through the corridors of time. This realization has become even stronger for me in recent days as I find myself performing for families evacuated from their homes, particularly those from the North and South of Israel. Through my musical endeavors, I've had the privilege of hearing their stories and establishing connections through song.

It deeply touches me when women approach me after a performance, sharing

how it was the first time they allowed themselves to shed tears, the initial moment of release since the onset of the war. It was during this conflict that I truly grasped the immense power of music. It possesses the ability to melt hearts, fostering a sense of closeness and comfort. Music has a unique way of bringing people together; individuals who may be strangers, coming from different corners of the world, can forge an instantaneous connection when united in song. Each person contributes their own voice and harmony, creating a beautiful collective symphony.

Over the past year, every Rosh Chodesh, I've been organizing a musical women's Hallel. (Feel free to join this Rosh Chodesh Adar at the Yeshurun Shul, Jerusalem.) This gathering is a dedicated space for collective singing, shared emotions, and unified prayer, resulting in a profoundly powerful experience.

As we find ourselves in the midst of Shabbat Shira, I am reminded of the profound influence of music in Jewish life. Everything, from prayers to Shabbat celebrations and family gatherings around the table singing Zmirot, is intertwined with melodies. Even the lighting of Chanukah candles becomes a musical celebration.

In the temple, my tribe, the Levites, aptly named for their role in accompanying people

on their spiritual journey, exemplify the power of music. Music has the remarkable ability to guide individuals through difficult times, serving as a source of comfort for the soul. Miriam Peretz, in an interview, shared her personal remedy for sadness — singing a Nigun, a tune whose letters spell out the word “Yagon” (sorrow). Gradually, the Nigun takes away the sorrow, starting from the little toe and gently swaying through the entire body.

Beyond the public sphere, music extends its influence into our homes, shaping the emotional dynamics within our domestic spaces. The melodies that reverberate through the walls of our homes have the potential to soothe, inspire, and foster a sense of unity among family members. Thankfully, today we have a vast array of excellent contemporary Jewish music, making it effortless to fill our homes with positive messages.

Fundamentally, my journey as a musician has taught me that music isn't just about entertainment; it's a force that breaks boundaries, links hearts, and offers comfort in times of need. As I continue to share my music, I'm reminded of its profound impact on individuals and communities, reinforcing the belief that, in the language of music, we find a universal means of expression that binds us all together.

May we sing with the Levites together soon in Beit Hamikdash. ■

Ricka Razel will be leading a musical Hallel for women on February 9, 2024, Rosh Chodesh Adar Aleph, 9 am at Beit Knesset Yeshurun in Jerusalem

Ricka Razel (Van Leeuwen) is a musician and singer who performs for women. She was born in Jerusalem and is married with 8 children and 5 grandchildren. She is the owner of Crave restaurant.



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WELL, BOYS, I CALLED YOU IN TODAY BECAUSE I THOUGHT WE'D DO SOMETHING FUN THIS WEEK.

IN ALL HONESTY, SIR, VERY FEW THINGS IN THIS WORLD TERRIFY ME QUITE AS MUCH AS WHEN YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT!

SHUSH, DAD! I MEAN, DUDE!

WHAT'S THE PLAN, DUDE? I MEAN... DAD?

I'D LIKE TO CONVEY TO THE VIEWERS THE EXPERIENCE OF ISRAELITES STARTING THEIR JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN WILDERNESS...

OH, NO, MR. CODSHOW, SIR, YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS...

SOON AFTERWARDS

AMUSING MAN, YOUR FATHER. "HEY, LADS, WHY DON'T YOU WANDER AROUND AIMLESSLY THROUGH ONE OF ISRAEL'S MANY DESERTLANDS UNTIL YOU DROP DEAD OF FOOD DEPRIVATION OR BOREDOM, I'M NOT TOO FUSSED WHICHEVER COMES FIRST...?"

THAT'S NOT WHAT HE SAID, DUDE!

AFTER ALL, WHAT COULD BE MORE FUN THAN ROASTING IN THE SUN UNTIL WE'RE TWO SCARECROWS, LYING, WAITING FOR THE VULTURES AND BUZZARDS TO FEAST ON US?

SHALL WE SING "FEED THE BIRDS" WHILE WE'RE AT IT?

WHAT'S THAT?

SIGH. ALAS, SUCH LAMENTABLE IGNORANCE... IT'S A SONG FROM "MARY POPPINS", PERFORMED BY JULIE ANDREWS IN 1964...

NO, NO - THAT!

IT'S A FARM... OR A TOURIST ATTRACTION... OR...

WE CAN'T JOLLY WELL CONVEY THE EXPERIENCE OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS, BECAUSE THEY HAD MIRACLES SURROUNDING THEM ALL THE TIME!

HOW, FOR ONE THING, ARE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND OURSELVES SOME "MANN"....?

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Devorah Yael Cohen
Raanana Madricha

Singing Our Way to Geulah!

This Shabbat in Parshat Beshalach, Bnei Yisrael experiences one of the most defining miracles for the Jewish people, Kriyat Yam Suf (the parting of the Red Sea)! After safely reaching the other side, despite being chased by Pharaoh's army, Bnei Yisrael, led by Miriam Haniviah, sing praise to Hashem. Shirat Hayam is so powerful and enduring that we call this Shabbat, Shabbat Shira. Likewise in this week's Haftorah, Devorah Haniviah celebrates Israel's victory over Sisra (with the help of Yael) again in song.

According to the midrash Miriam's Shirat Hayam is the first time in history that Bnei Yisrael sing to Hashem in praise, and according to Rashi, what made the song so special was that we sang **אחד, בלב אחד**, as one. In the Parsha we learn that not only did Miriam sing, she was accompanied by her Tof (drum/tambourine).

Imagine that, rushing to pack your belongings to leave Egypt, rushing so much that there was not even time for the dough to leaven, but making sure that you brought your Tof with you, a musical instrument!?

Miriam and the women of Israel bringing their Toffim is evidence of their pure Emunah in Hashem! Miriam carries her Tof because she is absolutely sure that she

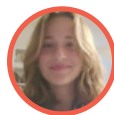
will need it to celebrate Hashem's glory and miracles as the Jewish people are freed at last. Her optimism and faith, and that of the women of Israel are instrumental in bringing Geulah to Bnei Yisrael.

Likewise Devorah's song praises Hashem, but also praises the Jewish people, leading to 40 years of Peace for Israel.

What we learn from Miriam and Devorah, is that the keys to Geulah and Peace, are both optimistic faith in Hashem, and the Achdut of the Jewish people. When our faith in Hashem is pure, and our unity as the Jewish people is solidified, redemption is not only possible, it is closer than ever.

In these challenging times for Am Yisrael we learn from Miriam and Devorah. So pack your Tof, and have it on you at all times, B'ezrat Hashem Geulah is coming, so get ready to sing!

Mazal Tov to Devorah
on her recent engagement!



Talia Goldblatt
10th Grade, Tel Mond

My Aliya Story

When reading this week's Parsha, a question arises. Why did Hashem send Bnei Yisroel the long way through the Red Sea as opposed to the short way through the land of the Plishtim? After reading a dvar Torah by Rabbi Sacks, a conclusion is presented. He suggests that the reason Hashem sent Bnei Yisrael the longer and harder way was not

to make them want to return to Egypt, but to make them unable to return to Egypt. He explains that the hard way entails effort and determination. It was necessary for Bnei Yisroel to make mistakes on the way and realize that the journey wasn't going to be perfect. However, had the Jews not been completely forced to take the hard way through the Red Sea, a difficult one-way ticket with no possible return, it was unsure whether they would have made it to Canaan or not.

When reading this dvar torah, it immediately made me think of my Aliya story. My family and I moved to Israel three years ago, in the peak of covid. Our journey was definitely the hard way. Moving to and assimilating into a new country is hard on its own, but with the added restrictions and lockdowns it was a very difficult start to our new life.

However, just as it was with the Red Sea, all of the things that made it that much more difficult to live in this new environment made it almost impossible to return to the States. Even if we decided that it was much too hard to deal with everything happening around us, our fate was sealed. The only way forward, just like Bnei Yisroel in the times of Exodus, was into the land of Israel.

Three years later, I'm living an amazing life in Tel Mond, Israel. Covid is long gone, and the struggles it produced are only memories. Occasionally I find myself looking back on our chaotic earliest days here. I remember how our family pushed through with determination, endurance and stamina, and I'm so grateful that just like in the exodus of Bnei Yisroel, the circumstances around us made it easier to stick with our ultimate goal. ■



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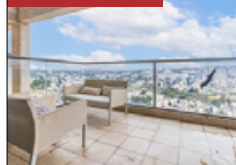
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Real Life Rescues

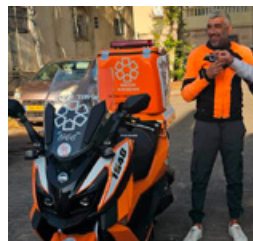


Moner Kawas puts his whole heart into his life saving efforts. Nearly six years ago, his mother had a heart attack at home. He was there with her and did not know what to do. Part of his process of making peace with her loss was to go and learn what to do in case he ever found himself in a similar situation again. Volunteering with United Hatzalah allows him to intentionally make himself available in such situations.

Moner supports his family by working with youth at risk in Akko and the surrounding area. Due to this, Moner is familiar with a variety of educational institutions throughout his region. Moner was at home in the village of Julis, east of Acco, enjoying a morning off when he received an alert to a child suffering a seizure in a facility for autistic, developmentally challenged, and special needs teenagers located in Yarka. Knowing exactly where the school was, Moner mounted his nimble vehicle and raced over. He reached the scene in 2 minutes and 50 seconds. He was the first medical responder on the scene.

Moner was told by an eyewitness that the 16-year-old boy in front of him had just finished a seven-minute-long seizure. Moner rolled the boy onto his side for the postictal stage and felt for a pulse. It was weak, slow, and barely perceptible. The boy was not breathing.

The EMT immediately started doing chest compressions. Soon, another responder arrived and took a turn doing compressions, allowing Moner to set up a bag valve mask and begin ventilations. Compressions are grueling, fatiguing work. The two EMTs kept swapping positions until some members of the school's staff began taking turns. This continued for 30 minutes until the boy's pulse returned. The boy gasped and took a breath on his own. At about that same time, a local intensive care ambulance finally arrived. Thanks to the efforts of Moner, the other responder, and the school's staff, the ambulance crew had a viable patient to rush to Rambam Medical Center for definitive care.



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The MMY Family
extends our heartfelt condolences
to our dear alumna,
Talía (Friedman, MMY 5771) Haber
on the loss of her husband,
Zechariah Pesach Haber HY"D

Zechariah fell in battle in Gaza
protecting Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael.

Our love and support are with
Talía and the Haber and Friedman families
during this difficult time.

Rabbi David Katz
Dean

Rabbi Eliezer Lerner
Rosh Beit Medrash



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"And they believed in G-d and in Moshe His servant." (14:31)

ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו (יד:לא)

Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, known as the Baal Haturim (1269-1340 Spain) analyzes the word "Vaya'aminu"- "And they believed". This word is found only in two places in the Tanach, here and in the Book of Yonah, "And the people of Ninveh believed" (3:5). This was their response upon hearing the forthcoming doom to their city. What is the connection between these two episodes?

The Midrash gives us the insight that although all the Egyptians were wiped out at Yam Suf, Pharaoh himself survived. Pharaoh, after the loss of his army, instead of returning to Egypt, traveled to Ninveh to become the new king there. When Yonah then appeared and foretold their impending upheaval, it is Pharaoh, the new leader of Ninveh, who remembers his calamity at Yam Suf and where he leant his belief in G-d, and convinces the people of Ninveh to repent—"Vaya'aminu" -And they believed.

Shabbat Shalom