

OHRNET

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PARSHA INSIGHTS

AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE

"And there arose a new king over Egypt" (1:8)

Rabbi Leib Chasman was the *mashgiach* (spiritual mentor) of the Chevron Yeshiva in the 1930s. A certain problem faced the Yeshiva and it was decided that the issue should be decided in a general meeting of all the rabbis. One of the speakers, a venerable man in his late eighties, rose to the podium. His advanced years and fragility necessitated the help of two of the younger rabbis. Finally, he cleared his throat and began to speak. "My esteemed and honored colleagues, hear my words! My body is weak and old. The natural desires of youth no longer affect my judgment. Nothing clouds my judgment any longer. All life's temptations have no taste for me anymore. Hear my words and be guided by me!"

Rabbi Chasman jumped to his feet and pounded the table. "Not true. All desires may wane with age except one, and that gets stronger and stronger — the attraction to status and honor."

Our internal negative impulse is an opportunist. He's always looking for an opening. When one door closes on

him, he pushes even harder to get in the other.

"And there arose a new king over Egypt."

The people of Egypt came to Pharaoh after Yosef's death to organize themselves against the Jews. Pharaoh wouldn't hear of it. "We only live because of them. How can we turn on them?" Their reaction was to depose Pharaoh. He became a mere commoner, no longer enjoying the position of king and the honor that goes with it. After cooling his heels for three months he suddenly saw the light. He did a 180° about-face and embraced the will of the people. Thus the Torah writes, "*And there arose*" — meaning that the former Pharaoh "arose" from his deposed position.

Such is the power of status. Our deepest convictions can be held to ransom by an offer we can't refuse.

Sources:

- *Da'at Zekeinim miba'alei Hatosefot;*
Rabbi Mordechai Perlman

Our internal negative impulse is an opportunist. He's always looking for an opening. When one door closes on him, he pushes even harder to get in the other.

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PARSHA OVERVIEW

With the death of Yosef, the Book of Bereishet (Genesis) comes to an end. The Book of Shemot (Exodus) chronicles the creation of the nation of Israel from the descendants of Yaakov. At the beginning of this week's parsha, Pharaoh, fearing the population explosion of Jews, enslaves them. However, when their birthrate increases, he orders the Jewish midwives to kill all newborn males. Yocheved gives birth to Moshe and hides him in the reeds by the Nile. Pharaoh's daughter finds and adopts him, although she knows he is probably a Hebrew. Miriam, Moshe's sister, offers to find a nursemaid for Moshe and arranges for his mother Yocheved to fulfill that role. Years later, Moshe witnesses an Egyptian beating a Hebrew and Moshe kills the Egyptian. Realizing his life is in danger, Moshe flees to Midian where he rescues Tziporah, whose father Yitro approves their subsequent marriage. On Chorev (Mt. Sinai) Moshe wit-

nesses the burning bush where G-d commands him to lead the Jewish People from Egypt to *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land promised to their ancestors. Moshe protests that the Jewish People will doubt his being G-d's agent, so G-d enables Moshe to perform three miraculous transformations to validate himself in the people's eyes: transforming his staff into a snake, his healthy hand into a leprous one, and water into blood. When Moshe declares that he is not a good public speaker, G-d tells him that his brother Aharon will be his spokesman. Aharon greets Moshe on his return to Egypt and they petition Pharaoh to release the Jews. Pharaoh responds with even harsher decrees, declaring that the Jews must produce the same quota of bricks as before but without being given supplies. The people become dispirited, but G-d assures Moshe that He will force Pharaoh to let the Jews leave.

TALMUD Tips

ADVICE FOR LIFE

Based on the Talmudic Sages found in the seven pages of the Talmud studied each week in the Daf Yomi cycle

YOMA 44 - 50

Rabbi Yishmael taught: "The incense offering in the Beit Hamikdash served as an atonement for the transgression of lashon hara (evil tongue, slander and gossip). Let something that was done in secret atone for a transgression committed in secret."

• Yoma 44a

Kimchis was a remarkable woman. She had seven sons and each served as *kohen gadol*. When asked how she had merited such great honor, she explained that even the beams within her own home never saw her hair exposed.

The connection between such modesty and its reward is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud cited by Rashi: "The dignity of a princess is in her modesty," writes King David (*Tehillim 45:14*), "and her garment is made of gold embroidery." A woman of such outstanding modesty deserves children who will wear the golden garments of the *kohen gadol*.

• Yoma 47a

A Memorial Tribute on the First Yahrzeit

IN MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED ROSH HAYESHIVA
HARAV MENDEL WEINBACH ZT'L

Rabbis, students, alumni, friends and members of the family have
come together to share their memories, stories and thoughts in the

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE BOOK FOR RAV WEINBACH

The book will be available in print shortly as well as in PDF format on www.ohr.edu

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Why does the verse say “And Yosef was in Egypt”?
2. “...And they will go up out of the land.” Who said this and what did he mean?
3. Why did Pharaoh specifically choose water as the means of killing the Jewish boys? (Two reasons.)
4. “She saw that he was good.” What did she see “good” about Moshe that was unique?
5. Which Hebrew men were fighting each other?
6. Moshe was afraid that the Jewish People were not fit to be redeemed because some among them committed a certain sin. What sin?
7. Why did the Midianites drive Yitro’s daughters away from the well?
8. How did Yitro know that Moshe was Yaakov’s descendant?
9. What lesson was Moshe to learn from the fact that the burning bush was not consumed?
10. What merit did the Jewish People have that warranted G-d’s promise to redeem them?
11. Which expression of redemption would assure the people that Moshe was the true redeemer?
12. What did the staff turning into a snake symbolize?
13. Why didn’t Moshe want to be the leader?
14. “And G-d was angry with Moshe...” What did Moshe lose as a result of this anger?
15. What was special about Moshe’s donkey?
16. About which plague was Pharaoh warned first?
17. Why didn’t the elders accompany Moshe and Aharon to Pharaoh? How were they punished?
18. Which tribe did not work as slaves?
19. Who were the: a) *nogsim* b) *shotrim*?
20. How were the *shotrim* rewarded for accepting the beatings on behalf of their fellow Jews?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to This Week’s Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 1:5 - This verse adds that, despite being in Egypt as a ruler, Yosef maintained his righteousness.
2. 1:10 - Pharaoh said it, meaning that the Egyptians would be forced to leave Egypt.
3. 1:10,22 - He hoped to escape Divine retribution, as G-d promised never to flood the entire world. Also, his astrologers saw that the Jewish redeemer’s downfall would be through water.
4. 2:2 - When he was born, the house was filled with light.
5. 2:13 - Datan and Aviram.
6. 2:14 - *Lashon hara* (evil speech).
7. 2:17 - Because a ban had been placed on Yitro for abandoning idol worship.
8. 2:20 - The well water rose towards Moshe.
9. 3:12 - Just as the bush was not consumed, so too Moshe would be protected by G-d.
10. 3:12 - That they were destined to receive the Torah.
11. 3:16,18 - “I surely remembered (*pakod pakadeti*).”
12. 4:3 - It symbolized that Moshe spoke ill of the Jews by saying that they wouldn’t listen to him, just as the original snake sinned through speech.
13. 4:10 - He didn’t want to take a position above that of his older brother Aharon.
14. 4:14 - Moshe lost the privilege of being a *kohen*.
15. 4:20 - It was used by Avraham for *akeidat Yitzchak* and will be used in the future by *mashiach*.
16. 4:23 - Death of the firstborn.
17. 5:1 - The elders were accompanying Moshe and Aharon, but they were afraid and one by one they slipped away. Hence, at the giving of the Torah, the elders weren’t allowed to ascend with Moshe.
18. 5:5 - The tribe of Levi.
19. 5:6 - a) Egyptian taskmasters; b) Jewish officers.
20. 5:14 - They were chosen to be on the Sanhedrin.

LISTEN NOW TO RABBI SINCLAIR’S PARSHA PODCASTS

at <http://ohr.edu/podcast>

Abarbanel

ON PARSHAT SHMOT

By Rabbi Pinchas Kasnett

In the beginning of this Parsha, Pharaoh says to his people "...behold the people, the children of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we. Come, let us outsmart it lest it become numerous and it may be that if a war will occur, it too may join our enemies and wage war against us and go up from the land."

Abarbanel is puzzled by Pharaoh's concerns. First of all, the children of Israel were clearly not more numerous than the Egyptians. Even if they were more numerous, it makes no sense for him to say, "...lest it become numerous." Secondly, if he was concerned about the Jews' leaving, what difference does it make whether it is peacetime or wartime? Finally, if he was concerned about the Jews' joining with the enemy, he should have been concerned that they would conquer Egypt, not that they would leave.

Abarbanel responds that the expression in the verse, "...more numerous and stronger than we" refers not to their numbers but to their strength, which he recognized came directly from G-d's Divine Providence. It is in the following verse, in regard to wartime, that Pharaoh is concerned about their numbers. To explain this concern, Abarbanel posits that the Egyptians viewed the Jews as their valued property that they wanted to retain, rather than an alien presence that they wanted to get rid of. During peacetime they would have no opportunity to leave Egypt, regardless of their numbers. Pharaoh could easily keep them under control. However, in a time of war an increased Jewish pop-

ulation could join with the foreign invaders to overcome the Egyptians and flee the country. Pharaoh at this point did not see the Jewish population as usurpers or a physical threat to Egyptian hegemony. He was actually worried about the opposite possibility: that he could lose a segment of his population that was making an invaluable contribution to the country.

Pharaoh's solution to this possible problem was to totally oppress them and take away their freedom with a methodical, step-by-step process that started with an increased tax burden, and progressed to back-breaking enslavement. His goal was to arrest their population increase. However, G-d's direct intervention resulted in the exact opposite: the more they were afflicted the greater were their numbers. Additionally, they began to spread out throughout the country. Now the Egyptians' concern shifted dramatically. They were no longer worried about the future possibility that the Jews would assist an enemy invasion. Rather, they had become a present nuisance, taking food and fish from Egyptian fields and the Nile River.

Pharaoh then embarked on history's first attempt to find the "Final Solution to the Jewish Problem." His decision to limit the genocide to the killing of male infants only was based on his calculation that Jewish girls could be much more easily controlled and assimilated into Egyptian society and would pose no military threat if Egypt were invaded.

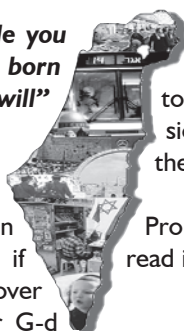
LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

RABBI ELIEZER HAKAPAR - THE TANA

"Let your yetzer hara (evil inclination) not delude you that the grave is a refuge, for you are formed and born against your will, and you live and die against your will"
— Rabbi Eliezer Hakapar (Avot 4:22)

A person often despairs of changing his ways. He therefore resigns himself to behave in a certain pattern and takes the fatalistic attitude that if Heaven should punish him with death, it will all be over and done with. But this is an error. For whatever G-d



expects his soul to accomplish will be accomplished, even if, against its will, his soul is returned to earth time and time again in order to fulfill its mission. So why suffer the pangs of death and burial if there is no escape from G-d, even in the grave?

This message is also the gist of the story of the Prophet Yonah's failure to escape from G-d, which we read in the *haftara* at Mincha on Yom Kippur.

• Mishna Berura, 622, Sha'ar Hatzion 6

UNSOLICITED SUSPICION

From: Manny

Dear Rabbi,
Rabbis collect money and donations for all types of causes and charities. How do we know that the money is used properly and for the purpose for which it's collected?

Dear Manny,

Your concern is certainly valid.

For the record, not every person collecting money who looks like a rabbi is one. Some may be scholars or rabbis, but most are regular observant Jews collecting for either private or communal needs.

In any case, we should assume that these people are, as their appearance suggests, G-d-fearing people, who are honest about their need and purpose for collecting.

Still, we are also required to be responsible in our giving, and when it comes to donating significant sums we should really only give to well-known and reliable organizations or individuals, or ascertain that the solicitor has an authentic recommendation from such a rabbi or organization.

Although it's natural to have these suspicions, particularly when we're "expected" to assume impeccable piety, never-

theless, unless there's some special reason for mistrust, we must really banish these thoughts from our minds.

In fact, this inclination is so strong that people even suspected Moshe Rabeinu of embezzling and appropriating funds and wealth donated for the Sanctuary for his own personal wealth!

The Talmud (Berachot 18b) relates how the father of the great rabbi named Shmuel collected money for orphans. Shmuel was not present when his father died, such that the whereabouts of the money was unknown and people came to refer to Shmuel as "the son of he who stole from the orphans". The soul of Shmuel's father appeared to him and revealed that the money was under the grinding-mill, saying that the upper and lower amounts were their personal monies, while the orphan money was in the middle.

When Shmuel asked why he placed the money this way, his father replied that he put his money on top so that in case a thief should find the cache, his own money would be stolen and not that of the orphans. Similarly, if the earth should damage the money, his own wealth would be damaged while protecting that of the orphans.

So we see that far from people's false suspicions, not only do the righteous not misappropriate others' funds, they actually expose themselves to losing their own money in order to guard and protect that which was entrusted to them by others!

NEW!

"The Talmud Navigator"

Ohr Somayach presents

an innovative package specially developed to assist learning, analyzing and remembering the Talmud!

What is Ohr Somayach's new and innovative feature for assisting everyone to learn, analyze and remember the Talmud? Especially helpful for those learning Daf HaYomi!

Talmud Navigator – "Excel" in Talmud

The Talmud, often referred to as "The Sea of the Talmud", is vast both in breadth and depth. The *gemara* (Megillah 18b) describes the difficulty of maintaining a hold on all the Torah you learn, quoting Proverbs (23:5): "When you lift (or close) your eyes from it – and it disappears".

Chazal (Eruvin 54b) prescribe a method for gaining a true understanding and making a lasting acquisition of all the material you learn. Rav Chisda is quoted as saying, "The Torah can only be acquired with signs."

Talmud Navigator is an attempt to organize the Talmud in database form, mapping and charting the Talmud by tagging the various components and building blocks of the according to type and hierarchy. It is based on the system outlined by the Ramchal in

Derech Tvunos.

This system of textual organization serves as a self-help way to outline the *sugya* in a clearer fashion. It assists in promoting a better understanding of the flow of the *Gemara* and in facilitating summary and review. It is also an excellent tool for a less advanced *Gemara* learner to identify and grasp the logical flow and interconnections of its various components.

Each Thursday we will post a PDF file which maps the *gemara* studied in that week's *Daf Yomi* cycle. G-d willing, we plan in the future to make available the Excel file which enables the user to make his own condensed selections of the *Gemara*. For example: Highlighting the main statements, arguments, questions, conclusions or personalized anchor points of the *sugya* determined by the learner to facilitate his own review.

Talmud Navigator is prepared by Rabbi Hanoach Zweig and is available at www.ohr.edu

PRAYER BUSINESS

“My Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise.”

Today, the true service of prayer has become lost to so many. As if shooting arrows across a field hoping one will hit the target, we shoot out our words into the air. But what is our target? Are we even aiming? Drowning amidst an endless array of words, we look to the clock, waiting for the final moment. With the *Chazan's* last words all rise and head for the exit doors. “Free at last, now back to real business.”

What about the business of prayer? Yes, I call it a business, for just as in any business there is much to be gained when one does the job right and, of course, to lose when done wrong. The words of prayer are holy and powerful. When said with proper intention they pierce through the Heavens, resulting in blessings of abundance for all. We must, however, be careful not to miss our target. Our address is G-d. Stop and think! Remember with Whom you are talking. One may ask, “Can my words really reach G-d?” Not to worry. If we can't find Him, He will find you. The only condition is to be sincere and focused on the words of prayer.

We all need a heart-to-heart every now and then, and that is what G-d is offering us. The words of prayer begin in

the heart. We must turn to Him with all of our “stuff”, whatever it is. He is the address. He is the One behind whatever situation we are dealing with, and it is to Him that we should turn for help

Each person has a direct relationship with G-d, the Ruler over all things. Although it is taught that we shouldn't rely on miracles, we must also keep in mind that G-d is unlimited in his ability to grant a person his every wish. We must remember that everything, even the simplest of things, comes from Him. For G-d — nothing is too small to ask for.

In connection to the above, Rabbi Yonatan Eibeshitz writes:

“One should place his entire faith in G-d, praying to Him for his every need - even for things that may seem insignificant or trivial. Nothing should be excluded from one's prayers. For example: if one were in need of a *shidduch* for himself or for his child, or for success in his business affairs, or for any other endeavor, there is nothing that he should not pray for. Whether it is in times of trouble or on joyous occasions, one should always pray that nothing negative befall him.”

@ OHR *Profiles of Ohr Somayach Alumni and Students*

THE \$98,000 MITZVAH IN THE HEADLINES

Rabbi Noach Muroff, Age: 28
New Haven, Connecticut
Layola University of Chicago
Masters of Education & School Administration
Ohr Lagolah Alumnus

It's rare that one of our alumni is featured in as many headlines as Noach Muroff has been recently. Shortly before last Rosh Hashana, Noach and his wife Esther found \$98,000 hidden in a second-hand desk that they had purchased for just \$150. They immediately followed their conscience and contacted the original owner, who had hidden her inheritance in the desk and then forgotten where she had concealed it.



This event was initially low-key, but after Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky advised them to make their story public it has been steadily building momentum, and this tremendous “Kiddush Hashem” has become headline news across the world.

Speaking at the recent Agudah convention in New Jersey, Noach dismissed the idea that he had done something extraordinary by returning the money. “If we have such a desire for money that it is worth more to us than sanctifying G-d's name then something is wrong”.

Since leaving Ohr Lagolah in 2009 Rabbi Muroff has been teaching in the Yeshiva of New Haven, where he is currently the ninth-grade *mesivta* rabbi.