

PARSHA PERSPECTIVES RABBI CHAIM NECHAMKIN

Makas Choshech was the penultimate plague, the one right before the Jews left Mitzrayim. The Egyptians were stuck in total darkness for a terrifying six days, and when it was finally over it was the last straw for Pharaoh. He offered for the Jews to leave, with conditions, and when Moshe refused those conditions, he told Moshe to leave and never show his face again.

Rashi comments that there was something else going on during the plague. Many Jews did not want to leave Mitzrayim, and these Jews died during the plague so the Egyptians wouldn't think that the plagues were also affecting the Jews.

This sounds very strange. The Jews were slaves, forced into cruel slave labor their entire lives; they were beaten to death, and their children were cruelly murdered. How could any Jew not want to leave Mitzrayim? Don't think that this was a small minority either, as the Pasuk says that one fifth of the Jews left Mitzrayim and Rashi explains that the other 80% died because they did not want to leave. How is this possible?

Rabbi Shalom Shechter, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Ner Moshe, explains that when Hashem told Moshe that He would take the Jews out of Mitzrayim, He said that the reason He was taking them out was to be His nation and to keep His Torah. Of course all of the Jews wanted to leave Mitzrayim; however, there were many who did not want to serve Hashem, they just wanted to be free. Since the whole point of Yetzias Mitzrayim was to serve Hashem, those who didn't want to serve Him were not redeemed.

This is the lesson we learn from Makas Choshech. Just as the purpose of Yetzias Mitzraim was in order for the Jews to serve Hashem, and the Jews needed to internalize this before they were redeemed, so too in our exile we need to internalize this before the final Geula. As the Rambam says, the reason we hope for the future redemption is not for the freedom itself, rather, in order to finally be able to serve Hashem fully without any other worries.

Food For Thought

RABBI ZEVI FARKAS

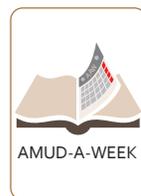


There is an interesting theme throughout the first three parshios in Sefer Shemos where we find time and again that Pharaoh attempts to outmaneuver Hashem. Hashem responds in kind throughout the ten *makkos*, the ten plagues, showing Pharaoh who's really in charge. From the first time Moshe goes to Pharaoh, Pharaoh retorts, "Who is Hashem? I've never heard of him." However, by the end of Parshas Bo, Pharaoh was very clearly aware of who was in control.

In this week's Parsha (10:10-11 and again 10:24) we find Pharaoh yet again trying to negotiate with Moshe and Hashem. Even after nine plagues, there was one last thing that Pharaoh still felt was in his control: letting the Jews go. He felt that at least when he was forced to acquiesce, the 'when' and 'who' would be on his terms. However, Hashem had other plans, and even that would be against his will. As Moshe replied (10:26), "And also our cattle will go with us; not a single hoof will remain, for we will take from it to worship [Hashem], and we do not know how much we will need until we arrive there." What Moshe is telling Pharaoh is, "Don't think you can dictate who and what we can take. We will do whatever Hashem wants."

And as we all know, when Pharaoh finally tried to kick them out in the middle of the night (maybe he was even wearing pajamas...), Moshe told him that they would leave the following day, because that's what Hashem commanded them to do.

The lesson here is very clear. Hashem is *always* in control. We, too, need to remember this every single moment of every day.



YOUR DEDICATION MESSAGE CAN GO HERE
CONTACT THE KOLLEL OFFICE AT 314-726-6047
OR OFFICE@STLKOLLEL.COM

ZMANIM CANDLELIGHTING: 4:59 SOF ZMAN KRIAS SHEMA MA: ? GRA: ? AM
SHABBOS ENDS 6:03 PM RABBEINU TAM: 6:31 PM

Harmonious Home

RABBI GIDON NITSUN STAN JACOBS CHAIR OF SENIOR KOLLEL LEARNING



The following has been adapted from *Raising a Loving Family* by Rabbi Shimon Russell.

When disagreeing with another person, there are three options: two bad and one great. The first bad option is to say, "I'm right and you're wrong." In the case of a marriage, this will trigger your spouse, who will then trigger you, and both of you will end up miserable. The second bad option is, "You're right and I'm wrong." This is also a poor choice because you don't really believe it, and your body language and tone will be a sure giveaway. The one productive option is this, "We're both right and we're both wrong," meaning we each have what to learn from the other, and it's no longer about who's right and who's wrong. Fighting about facts is a waste of time. Disagreeing productively means that we tune-in to who our spouse is and how they feel, whether we agree with them or not. We validate their right to feel differently than us because they're not us, and, consequently, they can feel safe and need not be defensive. This creates an environment where our primary interest is connecting and pleasing.

For example, a man arrives home at 7 pm so he and his wife could get to a simcha on time. He finds his wife extremely upset with him. He asks why she's so upset, as they made up that he'd be home at 7. She replies that she clearly remembers him saying he'd be home at 6 pm.

Applying the first two methods of disagreement wouldn't help the situation, it would only escalate it one way or another. However, instead of arguing about the facts, the husband could say something like this, "I understand why you're upset. You thought I said 6 pm and I turned up at 7 as if nothing happened." She could then reply, "Yes I'm upset. But I realize that you weren't late on purpose." Here he does not agree with her, nor does she with him, but he validates her feelings and they each acknowledge each other's opinion. Therefore, the argument did not spiral out of control and end up with bitter feelings, but rather brought them closer to each other and avoided a potentially distressing experience.



The Stan Jacobs Chair of Senior Kollel Learning is dedicated in loving memory of Mr. Stan Jacobs a"h

What Would You Say?



RABBI ELIYAHU CHAIM GOLDSTONE

Q The small shul was packed. It was Dovid Cohen's Bar Mitzvah, and the seating capacity was doubled. This, together with the low ceiling, created an environment not designed for those with claustrophobia. Suddenly in the middle of Shacharis Shmoneh Esreh, there was a thump. A young boy, a friend of the Bar Mitzvah boy, fainted. "Someone call 911!" somebody shouted. "No!" came the hurried reply. "I am his uncle. The entire family has a history of fainting. Take him outside for fresh air and he will be okay." But Sam felt he knew better. Without consulting the Rabbi, he ran out and called for an ambulance. By the time the paramedics showed up the boy was awake and responsive. However, since his parents were not around, they insisted on taking the boy to the hospital for additional testing. Three hours later he was discharged after being declared in perfect health, albeit with a two-thousand-dollar bill. Sam called the Rabbi after Shabbos. "I feel very guilty. I should have asked earlier if I should call emergency services. But now, am I liable for the hospital bills?"

What do you say?

Have your own question? Email egoldstone@stlkollel.com

Short Story

Just a Child's Dream

Rav Meir Shapiro's groundbreaking idea to establish Daf Yomi, a daily page of gemara learned by Jews throughout the world at the same pace, earned him his greatest recognition.

During one of his travels, his train pulled into a Jewish community. When he climbed down from the train, he was greeted by throngs of Jews, all eagerly waiting to introduce themselves and meet the young Gadol. One of the people at the train station was a distinguished young Rav who made a point to introduce himself to R' Meir. He introduced himself as the son-in-law of the Shotzer Rebbe, a name he'd known that Rav Meir would recognize, as he had grown up in the town of Shotz.

When Rav Meir heard this, he asked what seemed to be a strange question: "Is your Rebbetzin, by any chance, here?" When the Rav replied in the affirmative, Rav Meir asked to speak to her. When the woman came over, Rav Meir looked toward her and asked, "Do you remember how as a young child I studied with your father? And do you remember how I often played with your siblings?" The Rebbetzin replied that she did.

Suddenly, Rav Meir changed the tone of his voice. Neither loud nor soft, it was shaky as if he were holding back much pent-up emotion. "Do you remember how I would share my dream of how one day all of the Jews in the world would learn daf yomi and, thus, be connected through the unbreakable bond of Torah? And do you also remember all of the children made fun of my idea, mockingly calling it 'dach ha'yona' and laughing hysterically at my expense?"

This time the woman did not reply, but a reply was not necessary. The answer was obvious. "Do you know," continued Rav Meir, "that I came close to losing my confidence in the plan and dropping it all together as a result of the teasing? This is why I wanted to meet you. I just wanted to tell you one thing: Never laugh at a child's dream."

Kasha Korner

RABBI CHEZKY FREUND



One of the three things that Beni Yisroel didn't change while in Mitzrayim was their manner of dress. If so, why were they told to "borrow" the clothes of the Egyptians on their way out?

LAST WEEK'S KASHA:

Q. Which person in this week's parsha shares his name with a city in Eretz Yisroel?

A: Chevron the son of Kehas

Congratulations: Shimi, Chananel, Joshua, Akiva, Aryeh, Netanel, Shmuli, Yechiel, Yehudah and Daniel Lefton

Got an answer? Email cfreund@stlkollel.com



It's a great time to buy your
husband life insurance

If you've been thinking about buying life insurance, now is the time. Due to the current situation, carriers are offering incredible rates *without a medical exam!* Grab this opportunity while it's still there.

A 40 year old man can now get a ten year **\$1,000,000** policy for just \$23 a month!

Call Spetner and
we'll get you a deal

314-442-0001

Get more quotes at
<https://www.spetner.com/quotes.asp>

Pictures from the week

This past week the Kollel was privileged to host Rabbi Chaim Gibber, the Rosh Kollel of the Minneapolis Community Kollel. Erev Shabbos he delivered a shiur to the Chavrei HaKollel and Over Shabbos he spent time with the Kollel families and had a special Seuda Shlishis with the yungerleit where he offered guidance and chizuk. On Motzaei Shabbos there was a lavish Melava Malka for the yungerleit of the St. Louis Community Kollel, Chesterfield Kollel, Board Members and wives. On Sunday Rabbi Gibber joined the Chesterfield Kollel where he delivered a shiur and spent time with the yungerleit offering divrei chizuk and insight.





• Amud-A-Week •

COMMUNITY SIYUM & SHABBOS OF INSPIRATION

FOR PARTICIPANTS AND ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

PARSHAS MISHPATIM

FEB 17 - FEB 18



Friday night Oneg for Men
Shabbos morning Drasha
Shabbos afternoon shiur for Women
Seuda Shlishis for Men
Motzei Shabbos Siyum & Melava Malka





SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

GOLD \$500	SILVER \$360	BRONZE \$180
----------------------	------------------------	------------------------

SPECIAL GUEST RAV HENOAH PLOTNIK

Rabbi Plotnik is a Maggid Shiur at Yeshivas Kesser Yonah & was the Rav of Congregation Bais Tefilla both in Chicago.

