

INSIGHT INTO THE PARASHA

וַיְהִי בְשַׁלַּח פְּרַעֲהַ אֶת־הָעָם

"It came to pass when Pharaoh let the people go"

Each of the letters in the word בשלח alludes to the following inappropriate things. ב stands for ביטול annulling time set for Torah study. ש stands for לשון בטלה - idle, or gossip talk. ל stands for הרע talking badly about others, and ח is חמדה - jealousy. We are obligated to let all these things go.

SPLITTING HASHEM'S NAME AT SEA

וַאֲתָהּ הָרִם אֶת־מִטְכָּךְ וַיִּטְּהָ אֶת־יָדְךָ עַל־הַיָּם וּבִקְעָהּ

And you raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and split it

The Great Rav Shimshon of Astropoli ob"m teaches us a beautiful Gematria (numerology) from this Passuk. We know that Hashem split the sea through two of his names, א-ד-נ-י and י-ה-ו-ה. The passuk says ואתה רם מטכך, as if to say, raise one letter above מטכך. If we were to replace every letter of מטכך by the letter following it, we would have ל-י-ט, the numerical value in Gematria of 90. The Passuk continues, ונתה ידך, which too could be read as if to request we reduce one letter from ידך. If we were to replace every letter of ידך with the letter before it, we would be left with ט-ג-י, the numerical value of 22. The Passuk again continues על הים, which could again be read as a request to add to the word ים. Doing so again would transform it into the word כן, whose numerical value is 70. Now if we take all these values and add them together we get 90+22+70=182. Finally then the Passuk ends with the word ובקעהו, literally translated as "Split it," and this too could be read as a request to split the above number in half. We are left with 182/2=91. 91 is the numerical value of א-ד-נ-י and י-ה-ו-ה, the very names with which Hashem split the sea, as the Torah tells us. How marvelous.

LOVING HASHEM

זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶנְהוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמָמְנָהּ

This is my God, and I will make Him a habitation, the God of my father, and I will ascribe to Him exaltation.

In this passuk we allude to two different types of believers in Hashem. The first is represented by זה אלי - a person who develops a relationship with Hashem via personal effort, while the second type is אלקי אבי - a person who just relies on his family's beliefs and practices with minimal effort of his own. The first type is ואנוהו - he is good and worthy. The second type is ארוממנהו - usually a haughty person, lacking noble attributes.

THE CONSTANT ENEMY

אָמַר אוֹיֵב אֶרְדֹּף אֲשִׁיג אֲחַלֵּק שָׁלַל

"The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will share the booty"

The great Rema of Paano found that the five first words of the Passuk begin with the letter א, followed by the word שלל, whose Gimatria is 360. Add them all together and you get 365, the value of all the negative Mitzvot in the Torah, as well as the value of the days in a solar year. In the context of the Passuk, this alludes to the Yetzer Hara - the evil inclination. This is the אויב - the enemy. It says ארדוף אשיג, meaning "I will pursue and overtake". 365 days a year the enemy, our Yetzer Hara, attempts to pursue and overtake us to deviate from the will of Hashem. Then אחלק שלל - I will share the booty. The Yetzer professes that it will take all of our misdeeds and occupy or time with them. Additionally תמלאמו נפשי, the Yetzer professes that he will infuse our holy souls with his filth and evil, until finally אריק חרבי - he will draw his sword to kill us, because the Yetzer Hara is also the מלאך המות - the angel of death, and under the Yetzer Hara's influence, man will be liable of death. These are the desires that drive our Yetzer Hara. His desire to destroy us resembles that of our physical enemies. But just as Hashem saved us from the hands of our physical enemies, so too he will save us from our spiritual enemy, the Yetzer Hara.

AWARENESS OF LASHON HARAH

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָשְׁבוּ וַיָּחֲנוּ לִפְנֵי פִי הַחִירָת

"Speak to the children of Israel, and let them turn back and encamp in front of Pi habiroth"

The Opter Rav ob"m, known as the Ohev Yisrael, teaches us that in this passuk, we may find an allusion to the severity of speaking Lashon Harah. The advice is to always think before opening our mouths. ויחנו means to encamp, but it also means to wait and deliberate. פי החירות in the passuk refers to the name of a location, but if translated literally, it means the free-speaking mouth. So פי החירות, and ויחנו לפני פי החירות, then, reads as - One should pause and deliberate before allowing his mouth to speak freely. This would prevent us from speaking words of Lashon Harah without thinking twice beforehand.

THE POWER OF TORAH

וַיֹּרְהוּ יְהוָה עֵץ וַיִּשְׁלַךְ אֶל־הַמַּיִם וַיִּמְתְּקוּ הַמַּיִם שֵׁם שֵׁם לֹחַק וַיִּמְשַׁפֵּט וְשֵׁם נִסְהוּ

the Lord instructed him concerning a piece of wood, which he cast into the water, and the water became sweet. There He gave them a statute and an ordinance, and there He tested them

Hashem sent the wood from Gan Eden. It was so sweet it sweetened the water. Furthermore it was a technique

to be used over the 40 years in the desert, to sweeten the water wherever they went. But all of this alludes to the life of a person. The term **ץע** alludes to Torah, called **ץע החיים** – the tree of life. Whenever life is hard or bitter, infuse it with Torah and the Torah will sweeten it. Furthermore, the Gimatria of **ץע** is the same as that of **כסף**. This passuk alludes to the importance of sending money toward Torah. Those who have the **ץע**, or wood, which symbolizes sustenance, which is why it equals **כסף** numerically, should send out that money to support **מים**, which is symbolic of those who learn Torah. Doing so will lead to **"וימתקו המים"** the water being sweetened, meaning Torah study will be less burdensome.

HUMAN OR LION

One day, a young man came to the Employment Services office in Tel Aviv, and begged before the clerk that he find him some work, no matter how difficult or degrading it would be. He was a bright guy, was a bright guy, but because of the great financial distress that he was in, he was willing to take any job at all. The clerk looked at him and said, "If you are really willing to work at any job, then I have something for you. The zoo's lion died the other day, and we have not been able to get a new lion yet. They are looking for someone to play the lion. The job description states you must be able to: Dress up in a lion costume, roar occasionally, and pace around in a cage for hours on end. These are, more or less, the job requirements. The hours are also pretty convenient, as well. You must be in the cage from eight to one, and then from three to five, and that's it." The young man gladly agreed, and began working shortly after. The first hours of work were pleasant and quiet, but then he heard a frightening sound, turned around, and saw a powerful lioness enter the cage, roaring. He felt immediately threatened and afraid. As she roared, he peered off into the corner of the cage and bundled up into a ball. She came toward him, and he was certain that she knew he wasn't a real lion and would harm, or even kill him. The lioness moved closer and closer, causing him to shake uncontrollably all over. She came within two inches of him, and then he heard a human voice from her mouth saying, "Hey. Did you get this job at Employment Services too?" He breathed a huge sigh of relief. It was just another human being in a costume. "Ya. Glad to know I'm not alone," he responded, and they walked out together toward the zoo spectators, roaring away. A few weeks went by, and the job starting becoming boring and burdensome. Towards the end of one boring Tuesday, the lioness looked at the lion, and felt like saying something to him. She looked right and left, and saw no visitors within earshot. He turned to the lion,

and asked: "Tell me, Do we finish at five today, or at six?" The lion replied, "At six." Unfortunately, They may not have noticed, but there were two people, a father and son, who were standing not far from the cage, and heard them talking. The two ran immediately to the office of the director of the zoo, and shouted at the manager: "Thief! fraudster! Those are not actual lions in the cage; they are two people in costumes!" The manager, obviously nervous that his scheme was discovered, replied, "What are you talking about?! Let's go there now and listen to them; they are both roaring like lions. They are real." The father replied, "True, they are roaring now, but we also heard them talking like human beings before, debating whether they end work at 5:00 today, or at 6:00." The manager didn't know how to respond. "So what!" he said, "For three weeks they have been roaring like lions. What difference does it make if once in a while they speak like humans. They are still lions!"

This satirical story has a profound message. They extend to which we behave like the human beings Hashem expects us to behave can be determined with just one word, or one phrase. God created humans and animals, and there is one major difference between them. Animals are not in control of their impulses. If they need to eat, they cannot discipline themselves mentally to regulate their appetite, and if they have the urge to mate, they cannot discipline themselves mentally to control those urges and drives. Human beings can. We have the ability to express ourselves verbally, and to regulate our emotions. And this is what sets us apart from animals. If we allow our impulses to govern our decisions, and if we allow ourselves to behave improperly just because "We feel like it," then we are no different than animals. It is important to make the greatest effort to be in control of our impulses, and to be "More human than animal." Exercising this type of self regulation is very gratifying and spiritually empowering, and is the key to growing spiritually and becoming closer to Hashem. As one Chacham once said: It never occurred that a person abandoned a material desire for the sake of Heaven and then regretted it - Never!

רציתי לברך אתכם ביום שמה, שפרנסתכם
פורח. בריאותינו תתמיד ולא כאורח. חיוך על תצמח כעציץ
לא יתאדה כריח שפתינו כאור זורח, וכספנו
ונזכה לראות בביאת משיח
אמן ושבת שלום

Shabat Shalom!!! - Rav David Yaacov

לעילוי נשמת ה"ה יצחק טוויטו בן מרים
ת"נ'צ'ב'ה'