

## INSIGHTS IN THE TORAH

ובני ישראל פרו וישרצו וירבו

*The children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and increased*

Rabbeinu Avraham ibn Ezra comments on the progression of terms used in this passuk. First is says פרו; they gave birth like trees that bear fruit, meaning, none of them were barren. Then וישרצו – they were bearing twins and triplets, even up to 6 children per pregnancy. Then וירבו – there was no child mortality. Then ויעצמו – they were strong physically, and did not fall sick.

Additionally, it is unclear just how big the miracle of multiple births was. Although most say it was up to 6 children born, some say it was up to 60 children born to each woman. They are both learned from the same passuk. ברוך בניך בקרבך – in Tehillim. The first letters of those three words is ב, or 2, multiplied three times is 6. But the last letter is ך or 20, multiplied three times is 60.

## SPIRITUAL CLEANSING.

ותרד בת פרעה לרחץ על היאר

*Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe, to the Nile*

The Gemara says that Pharaoh's daughter's intent in going to the river was to clean herself off of her father's idolatry, and to devote herself to a more spiritual and religious life. This is possibly alluded to in the passuk. We know that one of the idolatries of Egypt was livestock. The letters following י-א-ר, are כ-ב-ש, the term for sheep, the symbol of that idolatry. She was bathing herself clean of that.

## A HEBREW CRY

והנה נער בכה ותחמל עליו ותאמר מילדי העברים זה

*And behold, a crying child, and she had compassion on him, and she said, "This is [one] of the children of the Hebrews."*

How did she know that he was a Hebrew? After all, there were many foreign peoples living in Egypt at the time? But the Jewish people are particularly sensitive and unafraid to cry. A wise man used to say: I learn three lessons from young children: 1: To always be happy. 2: To cry out when in need of anything, and 3: To always recognize that I depend on my Father for survival.

## A SEAL OF TRUTH

ויאמר אלהים אל משה אהיה אשר אהיה

*God said to Moses, "Ehyeh asher ehyeh (I will be what I will be)"*

The Gerer Rebbe z"l had a beautiful understanding of this passuk. Moshe Rabbeinu's concern before God was, if Bnei Yisrael should ask, "Who is to say that all of your promises are true?" how should I respond to them? Hashem's response to Moshe was, אהיה אשר אהיה – meaning, it is known that Hashem's signature is אמת – truth. The gimatria of אמת is 441. If you take the Gimatria of אהיה, which is 21, and multiply is by אהיה, again 21, you get 441. Moshe is proving to the people of Israel that G-d himself is signing that all the above is true and will come true to Bnei Yisrael.

## MOSHE EMET

The name משה carries much symbolism as to the many things Moshe accomplished in this world.

מ – represents the 40 days and 40 nights that he spent on the mountain bringing the Torah down to earth.

ש – represents שמים – an allusion that Moshe went up to Shamayim.

ה – represents the 5 books of the Torah that he gave us and are named after him.

Also, משה רבינו equals 613 in gimatria, representing the 613 mitzvot of the Torah.

Also, משה equals 345, which is the same as חיים ארוכים – long life, which alludes to the fact that when we wish someone a long life, we say עד 120 – until 120, which are the years of Moshe's life.

## G-D'S KINDNESS

מי שם פה לאדם או מי ישום אלם או חרש או פקח או עור

*Who gave man a mouth, or who makes [one] dumb or deaf or seeing or blind*

Human beings must remember that if a person acquired a skill, or a talent, or excelled in a certain field above those around him, its all an expression of Hashem's kindness toward him. This is true of Torah as well. So we read the passuk in light of this: מי שם פה לאדם – Who gives man a mouth, to speak words of Torah, או מי ישום אלם – who makes him mute, so that he could listen to those who teach him, או חרש – or deaf from words of Torah so that he could feel his need for them and seek them out, או פקח – or wise, to write Chidushim, או עור – or blind, from previously having seen G-d's hand in his life, and seeing it finally. Finally, הלא אנכי ה – I am Hashem, who gives people the capacity to engage in the Torah.

### SPIRITUAL CLEANSING.

וּתְקַח צִפּוֹרָה צֶרֶף וּתְכַרֵת אֶת עֶרְלַת בְּנֵהּ וּתִגַּע לְרַגְלָיו  
 So Zipporah took a sharp stone and severed her son's  
 foreskin and cast it to his feet

The foreskin represents the part of the body that we hand over to the Satan to quiet him, and move him away from harming the child or its parents. Tziporah saw that Moshe was in danger for his life because of this, and this is why she acted quickly. This is the meaning of **וּתִגַּע לְרַגְלָיו** - she cast it to his feet - the feet of the Satan, to appease him and stop any harm from occurring.

### THE POWER OF A WORD - A STORY

One time, the Chafetz Chaim; Rabbi Yisrael Meir of Radin, was traveling with a number of other Rabbanim for the purpose of a Mitzvah in another city. When they reached one of their destinations, they stopped to spend the night at a nearby hotel, to rest from the burdensome and difficult trip, and to have some food to eat. They knew of a God-fearing innkeeper in a nearby village and decided to stay at her inn, where many Rabbanim had the custom of staying, and testified to the excellence of her Kashrut observance. They put down their luggage and sat down to eat. While they were eating their dinner, the innkeeper came into the room and asked them, "How is your dinner this evening?" The Chafetz Chaim told her that it was excellent, and filling. The Rabbi who was sitting by his side responded to her, "Indeed, the food is very good... on the whole. But it is lacking salt. But this is a minimal complaint. Overall it is delicious." Having heard their reviews, the innkeeper wished them Bete'avon, and walked back into the kitchen.

As she walked passed the kitchen doors, the Chafetz Chaim immediately look shaken up, and latched onto his beard with both hands. Seeing that he looked disoriented and disturbed, the Rabbi to his side asked, "What's on your mind?" He responded as such:

"Oy Vey! All of my life I have been extremely careful and diligent not to speak or listen to Lashon Harah, and now I have listened to lashon harah and stood by in silence, while it is damaging someone's reputation. I regret even having traveled for this mitzvah now, as it was not worth what I have heard."

The Rabbi, who was also a big talmid chacham, was curious as to why this was bothering the Chafetz Chaim so much. Why was this trivial exchange so problematic? "With all due respect, I did not say anything to the innkeeper about her food that

constitutes Lashon Harah." The Chafetz Chaim responded:

If the innkeeper herself had been the one who cooked the food, there would not have been any Lashon Harah here. What you are not realizing is that she's not the one who cooked the food. She hires a poor Jewish widow to cook the food, and this is her family's only income. When the innkeeper heard you complain about the salt, she went right into the kitchen to reprimand the cook. She went in and yelled, "Why did you not put any salt in the food?" to which the poor cook answered, "I did put salt in the food."

*"The honorable Rabbis sitting in my dining room are complaining that there is no salt their food!"*

This has been going back and forth, escalating with each accusation. The innkeeper just got angrier and angrier, almost certain that the cook is lying to her to cover up her mistake, because you and I would not lie. I did not complain, but you did, and I stood by silently. The innkeeper then became more impatient with the cook. Now, she's telling her, "If you are so brazen and disrespectful as to deny your mistake one more time, I will no longer tolerate having you in my kitchen. You are calling the Rabbis liars and refusing to fess up. I am so angry." But the cook is not giving up. "You know what! You are fired. Pack up your things and go find a job elsewhere." All of this is happening now because you spoke Lashon Harah, and I stood by and said nothing.

The other Rabbi could not help but to doubt the Chafetz Chaim for blowing this small interaction out of proportion. "With all due respect, Kevod Harav, don't you think you are exaggerating a bit? I made a harmless remark in response to the woman's question." But Rav Israel Meir was a Gadol in Torah and understood the impact that small remarks can make. "If you do not believe me, let's go together now to the kitchen, and we will see what is going on." The other Rabbi agreed and they walked together into the Kitchen. There, they found the two women angry and crying, not even looking at one another, and the cook has indeed been fired. The two Rabbis intervened as best they could to repair the damage that had been done and to save the poor cook's job. They succeeded

This story teaches us the power of a single word. We should be very careful not to speak negatively ever. One single word in the wrong ears can be extremely detrimental.

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.  
 Shabat Shalom!!! - Rav David Yaacov